



Remember to Laugh

My wife Geri likes to tell me I am quite funny. I ask her, how am I funny? Funny-looking, funny like a clown or am I just peculiar to you? She never answers me. I like to think I have a sense of humor. You would have to, to be in this line of work. It is funny to me that anyone in their right mind could get up at 4:30 a.m. every day and think that is normal. I find it very humorous as well to play a game continually for 20 years, only to say over and over, this is the worst I have ever played golf.

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So apparently there are different categories of humor. Some of the e-mails I receive are hilarious, some are not. I usually have a fellow superintendent to thank for those. I find it funny they had time to find them in the first place. My children think I am funny; they thoroughly enjoy my wardrobe and my uncanny ability to be cool and hip at the same time, in the presence of their friends. I will get the last laugh when they find out I invested their college funds in the stock market. Education is overrated anyway. Sports can be quite entertaining. Rick Aguilera, a relief pitcher? Now that's funny. He is making \$4 million a year; that's definitely not funny. Slapstick is yet another wonderful element of comedy. I recently observed a liquored-up duffer fall backwards into a bunker and his playing partners couldn't putt out for five minutes, they were laughing so hard.

A great philosopher once said, "Humor is food for the soul," or something like that. I don't remember who said it, but I believe in it. We need to take things lightly. Put a positive spin on the worst of situations. I use humor in many different ways. Humor will cross any language barrier that exists. Communicating with my seasonal grounds crew can be difficult at times. But inserting timely comedy, usually at the expense of another crew member, can be a very effective device. It also works advantageously to look for the humor in serious situations; this aids in controlling the scene by maintaining a calm and relaxed atmosphere. The next time you encounter an agitated individual at home or work, interject a bit of humor to the scenario. I guarantee you will put the person at ease and diffuse the problem immediately. My daughter Bridget's eighth-grade classmate bravely battled brain cancer this past year. I was amazed by her ability to laugh and create laughter in all those she touched until the very end. She embodied at age 13 what few understand in a full lifetime. I, for one, saw the power of humor reinforced.


(continued on page 40)

intendent Pat Sisk competed in the New York City Marathon last fall, placing 6,414th and 22,184th respectively out of 31,785 contestants. A marathon is 26.2 miles. I get tired DRIVING 26.2 miles.

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 Deep sympathies to United Horticultural Supply's **Al Van Alsburg** on the tragic loss of his wife Diane. The MAGCS offers its warmest condolences.

Finally, our hearts go out to everyone in the business who survived the severe storms last month. Judging from the comments on the MAGCS Web site, the devastation was incredible. Stories of over 200 trees lost, lawn furniture stuck into building walls, feathers shot through fence posts, the appearance of flying squirrels where flying squirrels don't exist, and the like were common from superintendents whose courses happened to be in

the path of Mother Nature's hissy fit. The silver lining to this dark cloud was the assistance the affected courses received from fellow MAGCS members. Chippers and chainsaws were lent, manpower was sent out and many commercial members were there in a moment's notice to help. I hope things are getting back in order for those of you who had to endure this, and that the rest of your season is not so eventful.




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On Course With the President (continued from page 4)

I know I have written this before, but I find it bears repeating if for no other reason than to remind myself. We always need to keep our priorities in order. This is a challenging time of year and it is very easy to lose our focus. Keep an eye on the big picture and enjoy today. There are no promises for tomorrow.

While scanning the membership at a recent MAGCS meeting, I noticed a similarity among many of us. Quite a few superintendents are becoming light in the hair department. You all know who you are, and those of you with a full head of hair aren't working hard enough. So this being the case, and with my message this month about remembering how to laugh, I thought I would attempt to be funny. If the following makes you smile, I will take the credit. But as with so many

other things around here, if my attempt fails miserably, I blame my assistant Dave.

From the home office in Naperville, IL, the top ten reasons golf course superintendents lose their hair.

10. Children—From 2:00 a.m. feedings to 2:00 a.m. curfews.
9. Pesticides—Mixing Thiram TGF with your arm seemed like a good idea at the time.
8. Mother Nature—The ultimate in a sense of humor.
7. 90-degree rule—30 plus 30 plus 30 = 90.
6. Canadian geese—Being outsmarted by a 20-pound bird with a brain the size of a pea.

5. New employees—That's a string-trimmer, not a chainsaw.
4. Superintendent's wife—If you're not married, you have hair. Enough said.
3. Veteran employees—You did say 30 ounces per thousand?
2. General managers—Is that a copy of *Golf Course Management* on their desk?
1. Golfers—It's a frost delay, I didn't know I couldn't use the putting green.

Time is precious, especially in our line of work. Try to brighten someone else's day with a touch of humor. It will give quality to you as an individual and keep your focus intact. God bless, and keep it light. 