

Just Today

My Saturday was not unlike any of yours. Our staff was scrambling to keep the “hot spots” wet on a scorching, dry end to the month of June. I was also looking to keep a promise to my wife that I would be home at 9:30 a.m. for a few hours. The hot day would require me back at the course in the afternoon and we would also be driving out of town that evening for a family birthday celebration. Life was zipping along at its usual hectic speed. Then I received the first of several calls regarding Tod Hoppfan’s sudden and fatal accident. Everything just stopped and my thoughts became reorganized. These unfortunate and life-changing moments have a way of forcing things into perspective.

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On behalf of the Association, we extend our deepest sympathy to the Hoppfan family. I hope there is some comfort in knowing that our family of superintendents has sent many thoughts and prayers in their direction. I was not a close friend of Tod’s, but as a husband, father and fellow superintendent, I feel a strong sense of loss. As I mentioned at the Orchard Valley meeting, I also feel a strong sense of gratitude for working in this industry. The camaraderie that abounds in this business is special. I realize that I take for granted the opportunity our Association provides: the simple act of getting together once a month. You don’t get to do that in every line of work and the regular opportunity for fellowship and to educate ourselves is indeed a precious benefit.

Tod was an active member of the Association, having served on several committees over the years. He also hosted a meeting last year, complete with those great complimentary hats and the resurrection of the coat and tie with dinner tradition. To be sure, Tod was following in the energetic footsteps of his father in terms of service to the industry.


In conversation over the past days, I have heard several thoughts and perspectives following this unfortunate tragedy. I can’t help but elaborate on one statement that I think is misinterpreted (and mislived) in this day and age. Living every day “to the fullest” should not mean living to great indulgence. Some people like to call that “living large.” Tod’s death is a grim reminder that today and “right now” is all of which we are assured. Being right with your God and your fellow man should be a priority. “Getting as much as you can out of life” should be less of a priority. If not for one juvenile’s overindulgence, a family may be one father, one son and one husband stronger.

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I realize some of these comments may cross the line for some folk. My apologies, but I don't know enough about growing grass to write even one message. At times, I act like I know even less about managing a staff. I do know a little, and it is a **little**, about letting God guide me through this life. On more than one occasion, I have felt led to send a spiritual message with these

monthly columns. What could be more important in a lifetime than making a relationship with God the highest priority? Putters and *Poa annua*? Not a chance, and I am grateful that these numbing experiences such as Tod's untimely passing cause me to stop and take a look at my life.


Take a break from the rat race. I heard once that the winner

of the rat race is still a rat. Make time to hug your child a second time, take your wife out to breakfast, let your staff know you appreciate them, speak and act true (despite the fear of doing so), rekindle a friendship and/or forgive someone, skip out of work some Sunday to attend a church service, do something kind and don't tell anyone about it. Just today. 

because there it accentuates the lush, deep green colors of bent fairways and greens. Moreover, it is a perfect turf for low-maintenance and light-irrigation areas.

Jeff Leuzinger said, "I'm happy with the results and our membership gives the look high marks. We achieved what we set out to do."

Because this sod is newly developed, it was available only in limited quantities this spring, but availability should be plentiful by fall. All H&E locations—Markham, Harvard, Momence and Wauconda—carry the fescue/bluegrass blend and will cut it in H&E's "BigRoll" or the traditional small rolls.

For more information, contact H&E at 847-526-2300 or check out their Web site at www.hesod.com. 

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