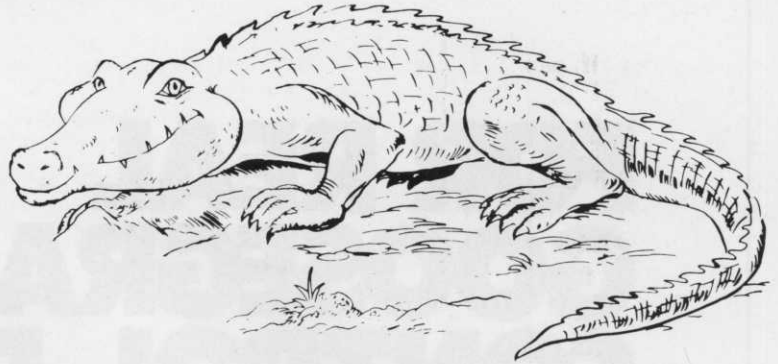


# The Gator Growls



By HANK MAUS  
President, Everglades G.C.S.A.  
Superintendent, The Dunes Golf & Tennis Club  
Sanibel Island, Florida

## What's a Golf Course Superintendent Worth?

Budget time is here, coming up, or has just gone by for every Superintendent. No matter your salary, small or large, you still face the same basic problems as your fellow Superintendent.

Let's assume you are not happy with your present salary. Have you personally discussed your wages with whomever you are responsible? Have you distinguished the significant value of the Superintendent and of the many fields of endeavor in which you must have reasonable expertise just to perform your duties? Do you yourself even know how to figure your worth in dollars and cents to your employer? I doubt it! You take it for granted they already know. Most Superintendents just take a percentage over the present salary, add a cost of living allowance or in some cases, it's always handy to pull a figure out of the blue and hope it passes approval. Many have never offered pictorial or verbal proof of their value during the past year and just hope the present conditions of the course, at budget time, merits a wage increase. In the majority of the business world, it doesn't happen that way. Proof of our increased value must be shown by special project reports, accomplishments resulting in either less monies spent or an increase in values to the assets of your club, but significant end results are required to merit additional value salary-wise.

This way the Superintendent is not taken for granted by upper management and this also shows extreme professionalism.

Regardless, whether you agree or disagree, I am a respected person in my field and among my peers. I grow and maintain golf turf for a living. I love it and it's what I enjoy doing best. I am proud of what I do and of my accomplishments now and in the past. Things might not always be easy, restricted personnel, budgets, old equipment, adverse weather, insect problems, fungi attacks, or whatever, all tend to make our jobs difficult, but we always come through with usually acceptable results. In essence, we are problem solvers and we do get the problems solved.

I don't know about you, but I wear many hats in my profession. I am an electrician, plumber, carpenter, surveyor, drainage expert, irrigation specialist, landscaper, soils expert, pool maintenance specialist, tennis court expert, purchasing agent, personnel director, machine operator, salesman and a half-way mechanic. (I know I have left something out but by now I think you are getting the idea.) I am also expected to solve problems of the unexpected that can arise daily without any outside help. Yet, my position of Superintendent is probably the least secure of any known profession today.

*(Continued on page 29)*

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Just take any fifteen of these hats, put on an annual salary each of \$10,000 per year, except for the mechanic, 'cause I am only half as good at that, we will give him \$5,000 per year and you have a yearly salary of \$155,000. I'll grant you this may sound absurd, but if there is a Superintendent in the country making a base wage of \$155,000 or even half of it, \$77,500, I have never heard of him or her and know of no one else who has.

I grant the figures quoted may seem funny to you but really the joke is kind of on us. We have proven our worth in all of these fields to our employers. Also granted, is that we are not top experts in all of these endeavors, and our employees help with most of these functions, that is what makes them so valuable to us, yet, we are knowledgeable enough to be the responsible employee of our employer and therefore the quoted values are not so ridiculous, are they?

The number of formally educated Superintendents in the field, the millions of hours of on-the-job training, special workshops, seminars, local, state, regional and national educational meetings, reading materials, day to day contact with our peers, are all facts that requires us, as the Superintendents, to take a back seat to no one. Again, I repeat, we have earned the right and proven our worth. We support and are supported by memberships in local, state and regional associations and in the G.C.S.A.A. Our December meeting showed us in black and white slides where we have been and where we might possibly be going in the next twenty-five years; gentlemen, the days of black and white are gone. We are living in the wonderful world of vivid color. I don't want to know the past and don't really care about the twenty-five year plans for the future. I want to know about NOW!!! What does G.C.S.A.A. expect from us and us from them? Why are we so powerless as to even have honorable mention of the host club's Superintendent name mentioned on televised events of the U.S.G.A., P.G.A., and L.P.G.A. tournaments? Television people always seem to mention the host P.G.A. pro. If the G.C.S.A.A. has a promotional department, why can't they get it done? If money is the answer, let's get it! If it is just a matter of work, let's get busy! Let's tell the golfing world who we are and what we do all in living color.

These past six months as President of the Everglades Chapter, I realize now there is hardly enough time to get your feet wet. There is hardly enough time to initiate a project much less ever see it through locally; but just imagine what all of us together, working with our successors on a continuing basis could accomplish. Let's strive to make the golfing public aware of the Superintendent and his love of and value to the game of golf. Our chapter has an excellent promotional committee which monthly sends newsletters to the media and is promptly printed in the Fort Myers News Press. The Florida G.C.S.A.A. with its new public relations committee, led by Past President Kevin Downing,

has already gotten a commitment for a State-wide recognized Florida Golf Day, May 7, 1984, from Governor Bob Graham, with special events throughout the state, all because of a few Superintendents who are working together.

Well, now we know our worth. All we have to do is sell it, but that is not really hard to do because we are the problem solvers and we know our worth. ■



#### SUPERINTENDENT HONORED

Dan Delaney, left, president of the North Florida Section of Superintendents, presents Bardmoor CC superintendent John Luper a special plaque during awards presentations following the JCPenney Mixed Classic at the Largo course. Luper received the plaque for his outstanding work in the overall upgrading of the Bardmoor layout and for his efforts to get the course into excellent playing condition for the annual PGA-LPGA tournament.

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