

The Superintendent's Wife

by Maureen Kooyer

The phone is jangling and I rouse, groaning as I look at the clock: 4 a.m. — it could only be one thing. My suspicions are confirmed as I answer the phone. "This is the security system calling. Is Don Kooyer there?"

Once again I have had to get up for an emergency at the golf course. As I arouse Don I realize this must be the way a doctor's wife feels.

There was a time when I thought all there was to golf course maintenance was mowing grass. How far I've come since then! When someone asks how my husband makes a living, the questions are always the same. They first ask if he is a pro, then they ask if he mows all day. When they hear how technical the profession is, most are amazed.

I remember feeling the same way at one time. Don started out as many do by mowing greens, edging and raking sand traps, and trimming trees, etc. In no time it became clear to him that this was how he wanted to make a living. He was also sure that he had a lot to learn. Learn he did — and he's come a long way since then.

The pathway has been a rocky one — not just for him, but for me and our boys too. I can think back on the ruined

meals, missed appointments, and lonely weekends we went through.

How many men work on Christmas, Easter and Thanksgiving mornings? Get phone calls at 3 a.m. and have to go shut off a faulty alarm or fish a golf cart out of a pond? Or spend a whole night at the course tending to a temperamental sprinkler system or digging a hold to fix a massive leak in a pipe? I've lived through all this and more.

The brakes have been slammed on more than once to eye another course along the highway. We have to listen to the problems of irresponsible personnel, faulty equipment, diseased greens from heat and humidity or are crying from lack of rain. And we all hear about mole crickets, fertilizers, fungicides — the list is endless.

How many times has our lawn gone unmowed when the golf course looks as though it was trimmed with cuticle scissors. He speaks enthusiastically about planting flowers in parking lot planters but won't touch the flower beds at home!

In spite of all the trials and tribulations, he has given us a lot. He has taught the boys the value of working hard and making an honest living. He has shown them what a continuing education can do for your career. He has shown them dedication and concern. Being a golf course superintendent is more than his profession, it is what he is. So I continue to support and stand behind him because I know what he does is so important to him.

Proud? You bet! Now do you suppose I could get him to mow the lawn?? ■

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The Golf Tournament will begin with a shotgun start at 1 PM at the Sun City Center Golf Course. This is an afternoon of fun and fund-raising. Proceeds of the tournament go to support turfgrass research. Come out and compete for a variety of awards and the prized FTGA Presidents Trophy. (This is awarded to an Association member for the lowest gross score.) Register on the enclosed registration form for a \$45 donation. (Donation includes the cook out.)

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