

# I Left My Shaving Kit in San Francisco

BY JOEL D. JACKSON, CGCS

The tourists on the interstate seem somehow far away  
The dazzle of the theme parks is for another day  
I've been terribly alone and forgotten at the airport  
I'm heading home from the Conference by the bay  
I left my shaving kit in San Francisco  
High in a hotel it calls to me. . .

I hate to admit it, but I really did leave my shaving kit in San Francisco. Is my advancing age catching up to me? I must have whistled, hummed and sang the original version of that song one thousand-two hundred times as I walked to the Moscone Center, rode the elevators at the hotel, or set up my pan-handling station by the BART entrance.

I'd say pan handling, otherwise known as creative begging, was the number two industry in San Francisco right behind high-priced restaurants. Let's just say that in my travels this has been the only place where you can get a \$3.75 cocktail for \$7.60.

But lest you think I'm bashing the city of seven hills, let me set you straight. I love to travel and the Golden Gate city and the 66th Annual GCSAA Conference and Show gave me plenty of memories. 99.5% of them all good and worthwhile. The people were friendly without exception, well maybe a few territorial disputes between waiters as to who should have gotten that big party in their section.

The views from the hotel rooftop restaurants and lounges were spectacular. The mist and fog was always present. I only saw the sun when I arrived on Wednesday and not again until I was somewhere above the clouds flying home the next Monday. Even then we had to close the window shutters so people could watch the in-flight movie. The same one we saw coming out! You'd think they could have a west-bound movie and an east-bound movie. Aren't most tickets round trip?

This was also the first trip that I can remember experiencing jet lag. The alarm was set for 6 a.m. Left Coast Time but the old bod kept coming alive around 2 or 3 a.m.. That made for some long days. Some people had much longer days and week than I did.

## Education

For the early arrivals, there were sixty one- or two-day seminars to choose from on Monday through Thursday. If you couldn't make the trip until later in the week there is always the Innovative Superintendent sessions beginning at 6:30 a.m. Friday and Saturday. These are great pearls of wisdom from practicing superintendents.

It's like our usual monthly meeting peer networking except with a podium, a microphone and a slide projector. And for those inquiring minds who can't sit still for 8 to 16 hours and don't need the CEU's for recertification, there are the AM and PM Concurrent Sessions with three 25-minute presentations going on simultaneously covering different topics. My only formal class that week was on Chapter Publications. That seemed apropos for an editor to attend.

That's just the formal education. If you don't participate in your local chapter meetings, I can't begin to explain the value of peer networking. If you don't call or talk to your neighboring superintendents at home, how can I possibly tell you about what you can learn from a Ted Horton, or a Bruce Williams that operate world renown facilities with golf histories and traditions that are legendary.

And here at the GCSAA Conference and Show all the best and the brightest, the most successful, the most committed, the most professional superintendents are all gathered in one place to simply learn more and try to become even better. You just don't know what you're missing.

I wish the owners, Budget Committees and Greens Committees could understand that as well. What's \$2,000 in the budget, three hundred pounds of shrimp cocktail? What's more important over the span of a year at the club, the shrimp cocktail or an educated, motivated superintendent who knows he has the club's support to attend the GCSAA event? The answer seems simple doesn't it?

The Environmental General Session was on Sunday and it was one of the best attended I have ever seen. I think the message is finally out, and superintendents are taking responsibility for their stewardship roles. It was refreshing to hear a media person like John Stossel of ABC acknowledge that, if you get past the "need for speed" in reporting environmental issues and look at the facts, the real cold hard facts, the media is misplacing and misreporting the real issues and risks for the sake of headline grabbing "bad news." It was also good to here him tell the world that over-regulation is strangling the economy except for the lawyer's wallets.

## Show Time

What is new? What's hot? What are you going to buy? Well, there are a lot of new companies out there with Natural, Enviro-, Bio-, Organo- in their names. Everybody is trying to capture the interest in doing things the right way. Just check out the research especially in "real world" situations. If you find something that works well for you, let us all know.

More folks are looking at the mid-size fairway mowers. Maybe they can get a little more productivity than the light-weights. And there's a tub grinder for pulverizing limbs and trees when you don't have a place to put dead and damaged vegetation. Grind it into mulch and put it back. How about that satellite tracking system? You can put it on golf cart and track slow play, cart path only violators, send emergency messages to the golfer, they can order food and beverages and get specific yardage to the hole. The list is seemingly endless.

Attention golf course workers, you can put it on turf equipment and track work progress as well! Each superintendent had a different objective and items they needed to research. What a great time for it. Brands A, B, and C all in one place.

The show was big! There were two halls. One on either side of Howard Street. There was a connecting underground corridor. The vendors in the North Hall were saying that everyone was in the South Hall, and the vendors in the South Hall were

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# 1995 GCSAA Golf Championship delights all

BY JOE ONDO

The 1995 GCSAA Golf Championship was played in Monterey, California, and in partnership with the Toro Company, was a huge success.

In addition to the full rain suit, shirt, hat and other tee prizes, each player also received complimentary continental breakfast each day and a 19th hole reception after golf was finished. If anyone played in this year's tournament and was not satisfied, he or she must have had a bad golf week.

The tournament was played at five courses in the Monterey area in some of the best weather Monterey and the GCSAA have had in years. Temperatures were in the high 70s to low 80s all week for this event.

The championship division played Poppy Hills and the

Bayonet Course at Fort Ord. In the team competition, Carolina's A Team was the gross point winner, with Georgia second and Florida finishing ninth.

Congratulations are in order to Todd Barker from Utah for firing a great 144 total and a 7 shot win in individual competition over Paul Jeff and Mike Wilson. Low for Florida were Mark Hopkins and Joe Pantaleo, who finished tied for 14th overall.

In addition to everything else, Toro has also donated \$1,000 in the name of tournament winner Todd Barker and \$500 in the name of the low gross Carolina team and low net Midwest team to the GCSAA Scholarship and Research Foundation.

Toro also donated \$100 for every low gross and low net winner in their respective flights.

Congratulations to GCSAA and Toro for a fantastic event.

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saying that everyone was in the North Hall. All I know is that when I worked the Florida booth on Friday, we were in a Side Hall and hardly anybody could find us! We weren't being discriminated against. All the Allied Associations like USGA, NGF, BIGGA, etc were in there along with the main GCSAA booths. It was just out of the main flow of traffic.

### Florida Host Booth

In case you didn't know, the GCSAA 67th International Golf Course Conference and Show will be in Orlando February 5-12, 1996. We handed out a lot of Florida Green copies, FGCSA lapel pins and Orlando activity brochures supplied by the Chamber of Commerce. We played a continuous video on Orlando, gave out lists of Central Florida golf courses accepting GCSAA tee times next February, and answered all sorts of questions in general.

For my boss if he reads this, every time somebody talked about bringing the family, I tried to sell them on staying at Disney. I told them we had a wide price range of accommodations and a shuttle that runs to the Convention Center. I was right about the shuttle wasn't I?

And just who gave freely of their time to work the booth Friday, Saturday, and Sunday? You'll find their pictures in the photo collages. For Marie Roberts our Association Manager, boy those California guys next door were really envious of our planning, organization, and all the goodies! Nice job, Marie!

### FGCSA Reception

While we are leaders in many areas, it took us awhile to finally start scheduling a formal reception at the national conference. This year was our 5th. We started out in a small hotel suite in Las Vegas in 1991. Now we have the hot ticket on Friday night. Many of the other associations, notably the Wisconsin GCSA in partnership with Milorganite, have been doing it for years. It gives everyone a specific time and place to get together and compare notes when we're all far from home. It's a great idea. We also

invite industry leaders and GCSAA candidates to stop by so we can get to know them better. As you can see from our "thank you" ad, we aren't doing it alone. We have a lot of partners that help to make it a success.

### Philanthropy

The FGCSA renewed its annual membership in GCSAA's Platinum Tee Club when Scott Bell handed GCSAA President Joe Baidy a check for \$5,000 for the GCSAA Foundation. The O. J. Noer Foundation also received a check from Scott for \$500 as we continue to support their highly successful research efforts.

### Night Life

Honey, after the classes were over, after the Moscone Center doors were closed and locked, we all went back to our respective hotel rooms and studied our notes and read trade magazines. Once or twice I turned on the PBS channel and watched the Frugal Gourmet and Yanni at the Acropolis.

I heard rumors that some people rode cable cars to Fisherman's Wharf and Chinatown and dined at lavish restaurants. Some even went to a place called Club Oz high atop the Westin St. Francis hotel and danced the night away. I don't know if that's true, but I know I wasn't in Kansas anymore!

### Summary

Another conference has come and gone. New experiences. New memories. I'm glad I got to go. I know how fortunate I am to be able to go. I'd like to think that I'm a better because of the experience. Perhaps a little wiser, maybe more tolerant of shortcomings, certainly more excited about the future. But, I'd like to think that I deserved to go, that I had earned the privilege to represent my club and my association because of what I do the other 51 weeks of the year. That doesn't apply to just me. It applies to every man and woman who bears the title and responsibility of a Golf Course Superintendent.

*See you in Orlando in 1996!*