

"Silk" and all his pals from Chicago and Detroit who came here for the winter season. Tony and his friends could not break 80 very often which led to much bickering about how many strokes they received while we tried to separate them from their cash laden wallets.

My favorite, however, was Gene Clapp. Gene was a mountain of a man, 6-6, 275 lbs. and could hit it out of sight. Gene liked playing partners with me because I was very steady. Our bank accounts got very healthy every winter. I am sad to report the Gene was killed by lightning while playing at Miami Springs in the early 80s. God took the wrong guy that time. He was a wonderful human being.

So maybe I am a little grumpy and grouchy, so what. While I was writing this bit, Craig Perks won the PGA Players Championship. In what other sport can the 203rd-ranked player in the world win such a prestigious event? I love this game. Don't you?

Column writers often get desperate for ideas and I want you to know I don't really have all that much spare time to sit and contemplate the ambulatory habits of the avian community, but I did get a flash. With all the hopping, running, waddling and strutting, birds may share their common ability to fly, but they definitely have different styles when it comes to hunting food on the ground. They share in the common need to hunt and eat, but they do it in different ways. That's when the column idea clicked in.

Golf course superintendents share a common love for the outdoors, working with nature and the game or business of golf. They also share the lofty responsibility to present the best playing conditions possible under the given circumstances of their individual clubs, and they would all like to have reasonable job security. Just like the birds on the ground they have different ways of achieving their results.

Some superintendents are super agronomists with green thumbs firmly on the button that makes turf-grass spring from the ground at a moment's notice. Others are fantastic golfers in their own right with a complete understanding

of how to coax superlative playing conditions out of the turf regardless of conditions. Still others are great planners and organizers who are able to maximize the resources and talents of the club to produce a good golf course. Of course the ultimate goal is to have enough of each of these traits to be a successful superintendent.

They say that birds of a feather flock together, and in bird land that might mean the blue jays and mockingbirds all hang together as separate species. Maybe they can fly, but they only know one way to get it done on the ground. In the golf world, birds of a feather mean that regardless of style and methods, successful superintendents also flock together. They gather at chapter meetings and turf conferences and they talk to each other back at home too, helping each other by sharing solutions to common problems.

If you want to be a better superintendent, then wing it on over to the next chapter meeting, and feather your nest with some education and new friends in the same business. Learning different ways of doing the same basic things is what keeps our profession so interesting. So no matter whether you hop, run, waddle or strut on the ground, you can be a high flying success by joining the flock, gaggle, covey or whatever.

It Has Been a Rough Year

Our profession has suffered another tragic loss this year with the accidental death of Chip Fowkes of The Fountains Club in Lake Worth. I worked with Chip on a couple of projects over the

years and typical of his involvement, he took the time recently to send excerpts from his long-range and maintenance-standards plans to share with others in the Hands On section of this issue.

Flemming W. "Chip" Fowkes III, 47, was killed in a motorcycle accident, June 28.

Originally from Pittsburgh, Pa., Fowkes had lived in Florida for the past 44 years.

For the past two and a half years he was the director of horticulture at the Fountains Golf Club in Lake Worth. Before going to the Fountains, Fowkes was the director of horticulture at Frenchmans Creek C.C. from 1995-2000, superintendent at Emerald Dunes C.C. from 1990-1995 and assistant superintendent promoted to superintendent at PGA National.

He is survived by his wife Helen R. Fowkes and daughter Kalei, 11; his parents Flemming W. and Betty Fowkes Jr. of Port St Lucie; sister Susan Fowkes Skinner and her husband Dean O. Skinner of Port St Lucie; nieces Sarah and Molly Skinner of Port St. Lucie.

Fowkes was a graduate of the University of Florida and also attended one year at Lake City Community College. He served on the board of the Palm Beach GCSA where he was the external vice president from 1995-1998 and president 1998-1999. He also served as a director on the FGCSA board. He was a member of the FTGA and the GCSAA for the past 18 years.

"Chip had a great passion for water sports; boating, fishing and surfing," said David Court, CGCS, FGCSA vice president. "I remember Chip best for a presentation on how to sell a project to a board of directors using Power Point programs on the computer. He was always on the cutting edge of technology using the newest and best equipment, and products available for the job. He always kept a great golf course both in looks and playing conditions."

"Chip was well-liked and a superintendent who contributed to his profession through service and involvement with his professional organizations," said Mark Jarrell, CGCS. "I had lunch with him about two weeks before his passing and learned he was also musically talented; he had a band while at UF, and he recited a 'rap' song he had written while a student there, long before rap was popular — it was quite good. He was a friend and he will be missed."

Every loss is tragic, but to lose two of those special people who step forward to lead in a few short months has been especially hard on all of us. God bless the families of our friends who have left us too soon. My thanks to David, Mark and Steve Pearson for gathering this information literally at the last moment before we went to press.

Contributions can be made to the Chip Fowkes Memorial Fund c/o Banks Atlantic, 520 Toney Penna Drive, Jupiter, FL 33458.



Chip Fowkes

Blue Jays Hop, Mockingbirds Run: This column is for the Birds

GREEN SIDE UP



Joel Jackson, CGCS

The other day while walking through my living room, I glanced out the window and a blue jay swooped into the ash tree in the front yard. I stopped and "bird watched" to see what he was up to. The jay glided into the driveway and began chasing and eating ants, hopping after them like he was on a pogo stick. It was a two legged hop, and I could hear the sound effects going... boing, boing,

boing.

Then a mockingbird landed on the nearby mailbox, eyed the blue jay, and then after flicking its tail a few times flew across the street into the neighbor's yard. The mockingbird ran forward in a quick-step scurrying fashion almost like a mouse scampering along a baseboard. It stopped flashed its wings with their bright white bars to scare a bug into moving, and then sprinted a short distance and repeated the wing thing.

A purple grackle landed nearby and began his swaggering, waddling stride up the sidewalk looking for insects. No sooner had he joined the parade of avian scroungers than a pair of mourning doves landed and began their pigeon toed, chicken strut with their heads bobbing front-back, front-back with each step like a child's pull toy.