

## Boca Greens Assistant's Essay Earns Trip to Academy

*Boca Greens Superintendent John Gallagher and his club are proud that Assistant Superintendent Brad Johnson has been selected as one of the 50 winners of a national essay contest conducted by Bayer Environmental Sciences and John Deere Turf One Source. Winners will attend the two-day Green Start Academy in North Carolina at the companies' headquarters.*

*The goal of this program is to give assistant golf course superintendents a rare opportunity to get to know Bayer and John Deere better and hear from industry experts on a variety of topics, including golf course care and maintenance, products, regulations, science and research. This knowledge will help any assistant continue to build a strong foundation for their career, as well as help ensure the future of a course's business.*

*Below is Johnson's winning essay on the topic, "Where do you see yourself professionally in ten years? What will the role of the Golf Course Superintendent be in ten years?"*

### ESSAY BY BRAD JOHNSON

Where do I see myself and others in my profession in ten years? Because I am in my tenth year of working in the field of golf course maintenance, I find this question interesting to answer. In the next ten years I envision the role of myself and others in this business to evolve to higher, more positive levels of perception. I can envision where I and others will be politically, typographically, and technologically.

Politically, I see myself as being highly involved in the environmental image of the golf courses. I expect this role to be one of communicating viable alternative, environmentally friendly, plant management techniques. I also see myself as playing an interactive role in the local superintendent's chapter in the area wherever I am working. I very much desire the industry's perception of myself to be a positive one. Moreover, I also expect the political role of the golf course superintendent to continue to evolve towards one of environmental stewardship. I think we will see more superintendents taking an active role in ensuring that society's

perception of the impact that golf courses have on the environment as being a positive one.

My goals of where I will be typographically are harder to pinpoint than where I envision myself politically. I very much enjoy managing warm season grass in a tropical to subtropical climate. Therefore, I can say that I will definitely be managing warm season turf somewhere in the world. I am open to living in the United States or other friendly countries that have the correct climate for warm season grass. Therefore, I will be going wherever the opportunities present themselves. In regards to locations where other superintendents will be playing their roles, I think we will see more courses pop up in Asia and Central and South America. More specifically, China and Costa Rica. Therefore one of the challenges of more golf course superintendents in ten years will be adapting to foreign cultures.

One of the biggest changes that will happen over the next 10 years will be how modern technology is applied to golf course management. In ten years I see myself as being a twenty first century golf course superintendent. I will embrace every chance I get to learn new technologies and apply them to my operation. Moreover the golf course superintendent will have to become technologically adept. Blackberries, electric mowers, and remote moisture sensors are just the beginning. The technology will also go beyond individual devices. There will be new genetically engineered grasses that both simplify and complicate the job at the same time. In ten years a golf course superintendent in South Florida might have to choose between ultra dwarf paspalum and Southern Roundup-ready bent grass. These are both, of course, fictional grasses; however they are not far-fetched in the least. Those of us who choose to embrace these new technologies will excel, while those who don't will be left behind.



Brad Johnson

## Newsletters: A Key Communication Tool

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** *Superintendents get into hot water because members — and even management — don't know or understand what's going on with golf course maintenance, whether it's projects or problems. They can deflect a lot of criticism and build up good will by educating members in a proactive yet passive way, especially if they find it difficult to engage members in conversation around the clubhouse or on the course. Here are some*

*tips from GCSAA that can help kick-start or improve your newsletter articles.*

Are you responsible for contributing to your facility newsletter? Are you confused about what to write and how? A good newsletter article can be a key communication tool. Following are a few tips to help you get started.

### WHY CONTRIBUTE ?

There are only so many hours in the day and superintendents already work long hours. However, golfers may not see the superintendent as often as they

see the rest of the golf course management team, which makes it important for superintendents to connect through other means, if possible. Providing content for your facility's newsletter is a quick and easy way to stay in touch with golfers, let them know what is going on with the course and why. Newsletters also are good for getting employees, the media, sales reps, and others excited about your facility and projects.

### WHERE SHOULD I START?

The first step is to develop an editorial calendar — having a plan will allow

you to efficiently gather the information you need for each issue. Outline topics you'd like to cover during the year, including key projects.

#### HOW DO I BEGIN?

Identify your audience. Are you writing to golfers, employers or potential members? Make sure the newsletter content is relevant and important to them.

#### KEEP IT SIMPLE.

Precise editing for grammar and facts is more important than an exciting look. Pictures can help tell the story, but too many pictures or irrelevant pictures can make a newsletter too confusing or busy. Remember, newsletters are meant to be quick reads, so keep the stories short and to the point. If you're writing on a topic that's too long to be fully discussed in the newsletter, you may want to summarize your topic and provide a link directing readers to your facility's Web site for the full story.

#### WRITE WHAT YOU KNOW

Potential topics to address include new staff members, facility changes, upcoming events, specials, golf car rules, ball marks, divots, aerification, winter play/frost, raking bunkers and pesticide applications. If you're still stumped, search chapter and industry publications and Web sites, as well as [www.gcsaa.org](http://www.gcsaa.org) which have a wealth of resources on industry topics that can be easily applied to your facility and situation.

#### PERSONALIZE YOUR CONTENT

Make your stories personable and phrase articles with a positive, informative slant. Include quotes, interviews and even tasteful jokes (if applicable) and be sure to cite your sources. By telling your golfers what you and your crew are doing and writing in a way that lets them get to know you better, they'll feel more included and be able to understand and appreciate the work you do.

#### GATHER FEEDBACK

Ask your patrons for their opinions – are you hitting the mark with your articles? By tracking reaction, you'll be

able to better meet your golfers' needs.

With the proper set-up and writing, a newsletter can be a tool for reaching your audience in a quick, concise way. It allows you to reach out and tell your golfers the enjoyment you get from your job and how the work you do contributes to their recreation and enjoyment of the game.

#### SOURCES:

• <http://www.gcsaa.org/industryclients/re->

[search/print/newsletters.asp](http://www.gcsaa.org/industryclients/research/print/newsletters.asp)

- [http://www.riches.com.au/articles/writing\\_email\\_newsletters.htm#how\\_to\\_write](http://www.riches.com.au/articles/writing_email_newsletters.htm#how_to_write)
- <http://www.email-marketing-reports.com/emailnewsletters/newsletterwriting.htm>
- <http://www.publications.pdx.edu/tips.html>
- <http://www.topstory.ca/newsletters.html>
- <http://www.gcsaa.org/gcm/2002/dec02/12Write.asp>

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