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For me the wake-up call came March 1, 2002. It happened in the NBC Sports compound during the second round of the Genuity Championship at the Doral Resort.

The South Florida GCSA provides the scorers and spotters for NBC during the event, and my wife Susi and I coordinate all those who graciously volunteer their time. Plus, its pretty cool for avid golfers to be inside the ropes with the big boys at the big show.

It was early, about 1:30 pm, and there were a half dozen or so of our people who had arrived. I was being my usual vitriolic self and was taking the "Mickey" out on one of the lads. I saw him make a face at something I said, so I quickly and truthfully told him "I was only kidding." I said, "People always take me so seriously

a month and provides 60 movie channels, all showing the same 30 movies month after month

2. I hate living in the most populous county in Florida and having one of the worst newspapers in the country, particularly the sports section. It's not worthy of gracing the bottom of a birdcage.

3. I hate all of these ordinary restaurants who think they are so wonderful that they do not take reservations. Although, one of them is now doing TV ads for phone-ahead seating, so you only have to wait 30 minutes after you arrive instead of an hour.

4. I hate the traffic in Dade and Broward counties and the terrible drivers who use our roadways. I especially hate young males in Honda Civics that are 2 inches off the ground, with stupid sounding mufflers and tires sticking out 6 inches beyond the wheel wells. They race around like they're in a Porsche.

5. I hate all the local TV stations that sensationalize the news in an effort to outdo the others for your viewing time every late afternoon with their pompous, self-righteous newscasters and live remote reporters bringing me up-to-the-minute information on things I care nothing about. I treat them all equally and do not watch any of their broadcasts except the weather.

6. Local radio stations get the same low marks as their TV counterparts, with the exception of WDNA. Miami and South Florida are so bush they allowed our only classical station to go off the air. WTMI left the air because it could not sell advertising time. So, a two-county area with four million people does not have a classical station.

7. I hate the Miami Dolphins whom I supported from day one, when George Wilson, Sr. was the head coach and his son George Jr. was the quarterback, until they moved to Joe Robbie Stadium. Seems the 25 years of loyal support meant nothing when it came to seat assignments in the new digs. Let's see, double the ticket price, parking and refreshments, and by the way, your seats which were on the 50-yard-line at the Orange Bowl are now on the goal line on the wrong side of the stadium. So for 1 p.m. games you melt in the September and October sun. Hey Joe, put it where the sun never shines!

8. The Miami Heat, whom I have rooted against since their first season. They pulled the same kind of deal on me, Willie Ray Blood, Dr. Funkenstein, and Jeffie the Duke Preppie. We were priority No. 148 and should have been able to choose just about any seat at the Arena, but how could they do that and accommodate all the "suits" and their law firms, banks and brokerage houses downtown. So when they said a computer was going to pick everyone's seats, (and I've got a bridge for sale in

Brooklyn) we said, "Give back our deposit money."

"Oh, we can't do that. Unfulfilled deposit money will buy tickets to games for underprivileged children. (I was just about to call you). We thought about suing but none of our lawyers would take the case. Season ticket holders one and all I assume.

9. While we are on the subject of sports let's not forget the functionally illiterate athletes who are raking in millions to play baseball, basketball and football. These guys want to make enough money by age 30 to take the rest of their lives off. It doesn't matter that the average family cannot attend one of their games for less than half a car payment. It's just "Show me the money baby!"

10. Let's file the entertainment industry while we are at it since sports is being referred to as entertainment these days. What's up with these people getting millions to film a motion picture or do a TV series? Most of the stuff on TV is no more than pabulum for the masses and I know there is not a dozen movies released each year that can keep me awake for more than 30 minutes. And remember, in most cases, money is no object getting these projects completed. You would think they could come up with better stuff than they do.

11. I saved the things I hate about golf for last. I hate weeds. Broadleaf weeds, grassy weeds, all types of weeds. I hate sedge. Yellow, purple, pink and green.

I hate fungus. Rhizoctonia, brown patch, pythium, helminth, fairy ring, grey and pink snow mold, all of them.

I hate insects. Mole crickets, web-worms, bermuda mites, grubs, earthworms, and all the stinking rotten nematodes.

The thing I hate most about golf however, are the chronic malcontents who play our beloved game. Thank God they are in the minority.

You know these guys — the greens are too hard, the greens are too soft. The greens are too slow; the greens are too fast. The fairways are too long, the fairways are too short. The traps are too hard, the traps are too soft. The rough is too long, the rough is too short.

What's wrong with the greens? What's wrong with the fairways? Why are you always verticutting, aerifying, and top dressing? What are you spraying today? You know I am allergic to everything except my silk suits, leather seats in my Mercedes and money.

In 1956 I became addicted to the game of golf. I was hooked the first Sunday I carried my uncle's bag at Miami Springs Golf Course. By age 16, my scores were 70-75. That wonderful ability to score so well lasted into my thirties and afforded me meeting a varied cast of characters. There was George "Dogman" Butler, Skinny Henry "The Diver" who was obviously in the golf ball recovery business. I remember Tony

## Geez, What A Grouch!

### AS IT LIES



Jim Walker

when I kid around. I don't know why."

The fellow I had been good naturedly ribbing said, "You're kind of a grouch so a lot of people don't know when you are joking."

Susi was all over the comment like a hundred pound tarpon going through a school of finger mullet, "I've told you that you are a grouch so many times, but you never believe me. Now maybe you will!"

The other lads piped up and a fairly lengthy discussion ensued. I watched the branding irons heating up on the hastily built fire. Beads of sweat popped out on my forehead. After 57 years on this earth I was about to be permanently marked as a grumpy, grouchy guy.

As the smell of burning flesh dissipated and the branding irons cooled in the shade of a production trailer, I began to take stock of my now "official" labels, pondering if I was indeed grumpy and grouchy and, if so, what had driven me to such heights or depths? I decided I had better come up with some good reasons for my newfound claim to fame.

I initially thought to ask some of my closest friends if they agreed with the kangaroo committee, but they are all congenital liars and would never tell me the truth. Telling me the truth might hurt my feelings and they would not do that to me. So, the following is a list of things that have, over my lifetime, contributed to my being grumpy and grouchy:

1. I hate my cable company who charges \$100.00



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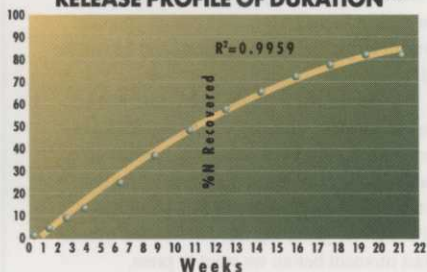
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“Silk” and all his pals from Chicago and Detroit who came here for the winter season. Tony and his friends could not break 80 very often which led to much bickering about how many strokes they received while we tried to separate them from their cash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



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