

## THE VOCATION

In the crazy week after the holiday in which we all suddenly realized that the #@#! GIS was coming in 30 days and we had a crapload of work to do to get this issue done, plan for the show and launch a new native app version of the magazine, it occurred to me that I hadn't followed the progress of our State of the Industry study as closely as I should have. So, I asked Mike Zawacki for a synopsis.

(Publisher's Note: I am not the editor of this magazine. I'm the editorial director, which means I get to steer the ship a little from time to time and play golf for free in nice events. Mike is the real editor. He does all the work and I get way too much credit. If you like GCI, thank Mike.)

Anyway, Mike is giving me the rundown of the results and he casually mentions something that just stops me dead in my tracks:

Despite the fact that 35 percent of you haven't had a raise in three or more years, nearly 80 percent of you would still become a golf course superintendent if you could magically take a career do-over.

Y'all are some glutons for punishment, aren't you?

I guess it proves my long-held belief that this profession is more of a lifestyle than a career. You're either all-in or you're gone. And nobody's in this to get rich (but an occasional raise might be appropriate, for godsakes). It's like the priesthood...it's a vocation in the truest sense of the word.

There's far more intriguing data in this year's edition of the State of the Industry. Cautious optimism prevails, but I think it's largely a sense among you Mad Monks out there that you can manage under nearly any awful circumstances. The attitude reminds me of that Toby Keith song: "Is that all you got?"

I increasingly realize I suck at predictions, but I will predict that – by and large – those of you who are passionately committed to this business and who have your wits about you

when it comes to your situation will continue to survive and even thrive. Golf is played on grass and golf will prevail.

Speaking of passionately committed to our business, it took about 1.3 nanoseconds for our friends from Syngenta to step forward to sponsor this year's State of the Industry study. Not only did they see this as an important source of objective information for their customers, they jumped at the chance to join us in supporting the Wee One Foundation. They offered to match our \$5 contribution for every completed survey. As a result, we'll be doubling our contribution to our favorite charity this year.

And, thanks to the support from Syngenta and the dozens of other wonderful industry leaders who support GCI through their marketing budgets, you're about to get something very cool for free: our new, native app for iPhones and iPads. (Droid users can access our almost-as-cool new flipbook app. Blackberry users are screwed as always.) As I mentioned last month, this app thing sings, dances, mixes

cocktails and brushes your teeth. Well...almost. What it does do is bring the magazine to life in ways this ink-stained old wretch could have never imagined when I was banging away on my Olivetti typewriter in journalism school. It's great

to be a dumb old dog surrounding by smart young pups!

At this point, I would normally say "see you at the big show" or something related to the national, but the vast majority of you won't be there (see my "Parting Shots" column). So, instead, I'll remind you that we'll be doing daily show newsletters to keep attendees and non-attendees up to date on the GIS in San Diego.

If you're not going, open up those emails, read them and you'll be able to smell the salt air and feel the warm California sea breezes. It'll be just like being there without the long flight, the massive hotel bill or the daily hangover. GCI



**Pat Jones**  
Editorial director and publisher

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## GOLF COURSE INDUSTRY

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