

# *Generations of Success*

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A solid foundation was firmly established in 1955 with the birth of Penncross.

The Penn Bent family continued to grow, thanks to the introduction of the Penn A's & G's and Seaside II, followed by Penneagle II & PennLinks II.

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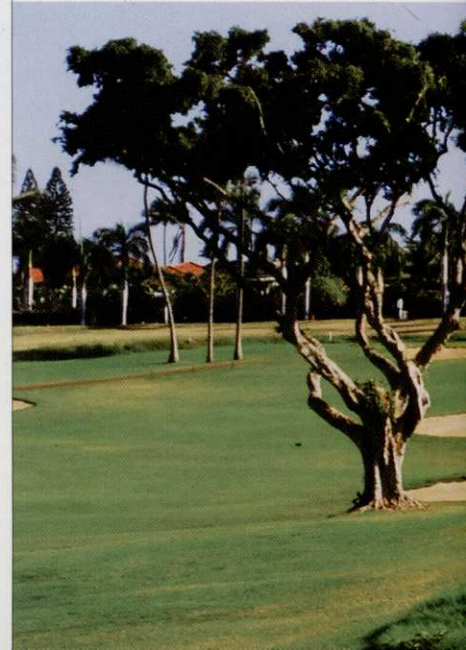
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Did You Know?

A turf area 50 feet by 50 feet produces enough oxygen to meet the everyday needs of a family of four.

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### STRESS TEST

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### ONLINE POLL

How important is diversity in the industry? Visit the GCI home page to cast your vote.

### AIR IT OUT

Voice your opinion about a topic or bring attention to something you believe deserves it. Visit our message board at [www.golfcourseindustry.com/messageboard](http://www.golfcourseindustry.com/messageboard) and speak your mind.

### GCI.TV

Welcome to Golf Course Industry TV – a one-stop Web site designed to enrich your business acumen as well as communicate with your peers through forums, blogs, groups and polls. Videos, podcasts and an extensive photo gallery also will provide you with an array of business and industry knowledge. Visit our new interactive site today – [www.golfcourseindustry.tv](http://www.golfcourseindustry.tv) – to create your profile and start networking.

**GOLF COURSE**.tv  
INDUSTRY

### EDITORIAL MISSION STATEMENT:

*Golf Course Industry* reports on and analyzes the business of maintaining golf courses, as well as the broader business of golf course management. This includes three main areas: agronomy, business management and career development as it relates to golf course superintendents and those managers responsible for maintaining a golf course as an important asset. *Golf Course Industry* shows superintendents what's possible, helps them understand why it's important and tells them how to take the next step.



**John Walsh**  
Editor

## FOCUS ON OPPORTUNITIES

**P**eople keep asking the same questions: When is the economy going to improve? Are we headed into a recession? When is the housing market going to turn around? When are gas and food prices going to come down?

Frankly, no one knows the answers to these questions, not even experienced economists – so stop worrying about them. Instead, focus on your facility and address your strengths and weaknesses. How is current business? How can it improve? What is management doing to better your business? Seek growth opportunities for your facility. Focus on your micro world, and let policymakers and governments worry about macroeconomics.

When the economy is booming, managers tend not to look at their operation as closely as when the market is slumping. During difficult economic times, cutbacks happen here and there in various areas of the business. Fewer crew members, a smaller marketing budget, fewer pesticide applications, no new equipment. Yes, expenses are one side of the business equation, but generating revenue is another – membership drives, special deals, giveaways, outings, leagues, events. There are many options.

Consider what's worked for you in the past and what hasn't, and analyze your short- and long-term business plans. For those who've been in the industry many years, think about what helped you through the recessions of the '70s (1973-1974, oil prices and unemployment), '80s (1980-1982, inflation) and '90s (1990-1991, the Gulf War and tax increases). Can what you did successfully then be applied to the current market? Or, did you determine what not to do during a recession back then?

It's obviously difficult for golf course operators to improve business significantly in the current economy. But the bottom line is that a successful golf facility comes down to two things: course conditioning and service. Simply put, those two aspects of an operation are going to carry a facility through difficult economic times. Many people say above-average service doesn't cost anything, and it's just a matter of stepping it up a notch. A successful business starts with employees who go the extra mile to make customers – regular and new – feel welcomed and appreciated.

During a time when many golf facilities are reducing expenses or erecting for-sale signs, be aggressive and think seriously about investing in your course. Maybe it's a greens renovation, or a complete redesign. Maybe you're able to do it all at once, or perhaps you'll progress nine holes at a time. Funds, ownership's goals and golfers' input will help determine the scope, but a renovation could give your business the big boost it needs during a sluggish period of economic growth. If you can pull it off, it's a great time to do it. An investment in your course now could pay off tenfold when the economy takes off in the right direction. Then, you can ride the wave of increased business while your competitors scramble to catch up to you.

And if you can't manage to spend a decent chunk of change renovating your course, hone in on the details of your facility and the little things that cause golfers to return to your place. Refurbish your signs and tee markers. Purchase new flags. Spruce up the areas around the clubhouse. Hire a photographer and promote your golf course as an oasis from stress. Survey your players and find out as much as you can about their likes and dislikes. Use your e-mail database to promote specials and offer incentives. Do simple things such as provide free tees and ball-mark repair tools. Most of all, find out why customers don't return after they've visited. Remember it's much cheaper to keep a customer than acquire one.

Last but not least, remember that without great course conditions and attentive customer service, you won't be successful – regardless of the state of the economy. **GCI**

We would like to hear from you. Please post any comments you have about this column on our message board, which is at [www.golfcourseindustry.com/messageboard](http://www.golfcourseindustry.com/messageboard).



## GOLF COURSE INDUSTRY

Serving the Business of Golf Course Management

Vol. 20 No. 8

### EDITORIAL

GIE Media, Inc.  
4020 Kinross Lakes Pkwy, 2nd floor  
Richfield, OH 44286  
Phone: 800-456-0707  
Fax: 330-659-0824

### Cindy Code

Editorial director  
330-523-5331  
[ccode@gie.net](mailto:ccode@gie.net)

### John Walsh

Editor  
330-523-5361  
[jwalsh@gie.net](mailto:jwalsh@gie.net)

### Margaret Hepp

Associate editor  
330-523-5384  
[mhepp@gie.net](mailto:mhepp@gie.net)

### Heather Wood

Web editor  
330-523-5348  
[hwood@gie.net](mailto:hwood@gie.net)

### CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

**Terry Buchen, CGCS, MG**  
[terrybuchen@earthlink.net](mailto:terrybuchen@earthlink.net)

### Pat Jones

[psjhawk@cox.net](mailto:psjhawk@cox.net)

### David Wolff

[dgwolff@charter.net](mailto:dgwolff@charter.net)

### EDITORIAL ADVISORY BOARD

**Terry Buchen, CGCS, MG**  
Golf Agronomy International

**Raymond Davies, CGCS**  
CourseCo

### Tim Hiers, CGCS

The Old Collier Golf Club

### Laurence Hirsh

Golf Property Analysts

### Ted Horton, CGCS

Ted Horton Consulting

### Michael Hurdzan, Ph.D.

Hurdzan/Fry Golf Course Design

### Pat Jones

Flagstick LLC

### Joe Livingston, CGCS

River Crest Country Club

### Jim McLoughlin

TMG Golf

### Matt Rostal

Interlachen Country Club

*Golf Course Industry* is published 12 times a year by GIE Media, Inc., which also publishes *Lawn & Landscape*, *Commercial Dealer*, *Snow Magazine*, *Pest Control Technology* and *Recycling Today* magazines. GIE Media is a leader in custom publishing, book publishing, database marketing, conferences and special events.



# GOLF COURSE INDUSTRY

Serving the Business of Golf Course Management

**SALES**

GIE Media, Inc.  
4020 Kinross Lakes Parkway, 2nd floor  
Richfield, OH 44286  
Phone: 800-456-0707  
Fax: 330-659-0823

**Kevin Gilbride**  
Publisher  
330-523-5368

**Amee Robbins**  
Account manager, West Coast  
310-546-6060

**Dave Szy**  
Account manager, Northeast  
330-523-5338

**Russell Warner**  
Account manager, Southeast  
330-523-5385

**Bonnie Velikonya**  
Classified sales  
330-523-5322

**Debbie Kean**  
Manager, books  
330-523-5341

**Maria Miller**  
Conferences manager  
330-523-5373

**GRAPHICS / PRODUCTION**

**Mark Rook**, Creative director  
**Andrea Vagas**, Managing art director  
**Helen Duerr**, Production director  
**Samantha Gilbride**, Production coordinator

**CORPORATE STAFF**

**Richard Foster**, Chairman and c.e.o.  
**Chris Foster**, President and c.o.o.  
**Dan Moreland**, Executive vice president  
**Jami Childs**, Director, business resources and IT  
**Kelly Roop**, Manager, accounting department

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Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment

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## Same name, different course

After reading your June 2008 edition, I want to point out what I think is a misleading statement. In "Curators of the course," author Peter Blais writes (on page 59), "Alex Findlay ... designed more than 100 courses, including ... Aronimink Golf Club in Philadelphia." Findlay helped design Aronimink when it moved from its 1896 original location in West Philadelphia to Drexel Hill, an immediate suburb of Philadelphia, and merged with the Belmont Cricket Club. But about 10 years later, in 1928, Aronimink expanded and bought a piece of property in Newtown Square, a western suburb of Philadelphia, and hired Donald Ross to design what is now known and recognized as the famed Aronimink Golf Club. So while Findlay did design the second site of Aronimink, he had nothing to do with the

third and current famous course that Ross designed, which it seems the writer implied. I don't want readers to be confused or misinformed.

**Michael Blake**  
Business development  
Nuzzo Course Design  
Houston

## Brotherly love

I just love Pat Jones' "An Unbreakable Bond" article (page 82, June 2008). Even as a chapter executive, my major professor is still important. In fact, Nick Christians, Ph.D., was in the Iowa GCSA office recently. Jones continues to amaze me with his understanding of this brotherhood. I thank him for his efforts.

**Jeff R. Wendel, CGCS**  
Iowa GCSA  
Ames, Iowa

## CALENDAR

Sept. 12  
**UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS TURFGRASS FIELD DAY**  
Urbana, Ill.  
Visit [www.illinoisturfgrassfoundation.org](http://www.illinoisturfgrassfoundation.org), or call 630-243-9483.

Sept. 16 - 19  
**FLORIDA TURFGRASS ASSOCIATION'S 56TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND SHOW**  
PGA National Resort & Spa  
Palm Beach Gardens, Fla.  
Visit [www.ftga.org](http://www.ftga.org), or call 800-882-6721.

Oct. 23 - 25  
**THE GREEN INDUSTRY AND EQUIPMENT EXPO**  
Kentucky Exposition Center  
Louisville, Ky.  
Visit [www.gie-expo.com](http://www.gie-expo.com), or call 800-558-8767.

Nov. 9 - 11  
**CALIFORNIA GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENTS ASSOCIATION STATE MEETING**  
Morongo Casino Resort and Spa  
Cabazon, Calif.  
Visit [www.californiagcsa.org](http://www.californiagcsa.org).

Nov. 9 - 11  
**KENTUCKY TURFGRASS CONFERENCE**  
Sloan Convention Center  
Bowling Green, Ky.  
Visit [www.uky.edu/Ag/ukturf/](http://www.uky.edu/Ag/ukturf/).

Nov. 17 - 20  
**2008 CAROLINAS GCSA CONFERENCE & TRADE SHOW**  
Myrtle Beach (S.C.) Convention Center  
Visit [www.cgcsa.org](http://www.cgcsa.org).

Dec. 8 - 10  
**TEXAS TURFGRASS ASSOCIATION'S ANNUAL CONFERENCE & SHOW**  
Fort Worth Convention Center  
Visit [www.texasurf.com](http://www.texasurf.com).

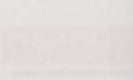
Dec. 8 - 11  
**OHIO TURFGRASS CONFERENCE & SHOW**  
Greater Columbus Convention Center  
Visit [www.ohioturfgrass.org](http://www.ohioturfgrass.org).

Dec. 9 - 11  
**ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGIONAL TURFGRASS ASSOCIATION'S 55TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND TRADE SHOW**  
Holiday Inn Denver International Airport  
Visit [www.rmrtta.org](http://www.rmrtta.org).

Jan. 20 - 22, 2009  
**IOWA TURFGRASS CONFERENCE & TRADE SHOW**  
Polk County Convention Complex  
Des Moines, Iowa  
Visit [www.iowaturfgrass.org](http://www.iowaturfgrass.org).



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**JOHN DEERE**  
GOLF





**Tavis Horton** is an assistant superintendent at Birmingham Country Club in Michigan. He can be reached at [horton31@aol.com](mailto:horton31@aol.com).

## PERSONAL WEB SITE VALUE

Personal Web sites are playing an increasingly important role in our careers. Individuals and employers are depending on them more frequently for hiring decisions. People who've invested time and effort creating interesting Web sites have a distinct advantage because they expose their capabilities in a unique way.

I gained insight about personal Web sites after reading an article about their benefits. I investigated online and discovered a few industry professionals had created Web sites. I reached out to a few of them to understand their experience and ask for advice.

As a result, I determined building a personal Web site would be an investment in my future. It would provide me with a unique opportunity to organize my career portfolio and help prepare for the next stage of my career in a demanding and competitive environment. It could be the item in my cover letter that distinguished me from my peers. It would allow potential employers to see my resume in a way paper couldn't portray. It would describe my job experiences through visual exposure and my communication skills through samples of my written work.

My first decision was whether to build my personal Web site myself or hire a professional. I learned to build a Web site through an introductory Web site-building course at a local library. I had built a simple Web site for my hockey team that included season stats and a few team photos. I needed more information before I could make the final decision about a personal Web site.

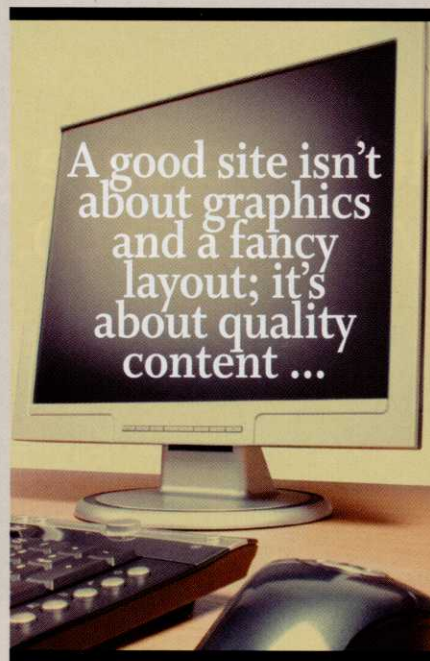
There are three common costs associated with a personal Web site.

- Buying a domain name ([www.your-name.com](http://www.your-name.com)), which costs about \$10 a year.
- Hosting a site (placing it live on the Internet), which starts at about \$10 per month.
- Producing words and graphics specifi-

cally for the Internet.

Also, there are many tools available to help build a personal Web site. Choosing the right tools is a matter of personal preference.

- Common software such as Dreamweaver or Microsoft Frontpage ensures better compatibility with browsers such as Internet Explorer and Firefox.
- Internet programs at [www.geocities.com](http://www.geocities.com) and [www.godaddy.com](http://www.godaddy.com) are available for free download and require no technical knowledge. Both offer free, easy-to-use templates, images, colors and navigation



buttons. You also can define your Web site manually, upload your own images and choose from their extensive font collection, enabling you to create eye-catching headings and quick navigation.

- Software stores also sell good, basic Web site-building programs for a small cost.

I spent many hours searching the Internet, reviewing other Web sites to piece together what I envisioned for mine. I

spent many hours building the content of the Web site I envisioned. I gathered my articles I was most proud of, plus various photos from golf course projects that demonstrated my extensive experience. I updated my resume to include all my most recent experiences, and I wrote a biography explaining how and why I came to work in the golf industry.

In the end, I decided that with the personal Web site I envisioned I'd need to engage a professional for help. I found a Web site designer who was willing to take my ideas and help me create the site I wanted. A professionally created Web site can be built for as little as \$700, depending on what you're looking for.

Explore your options and see what best fits your time and budget. The cost and energy will be well worth it. Following the initial cost of using the professional Web site designer, my Web site, [www.tavishorton.com](http://www.tavishorton.com), costs me \$10 a month. I paid my hosting fees for the entire year in advance and received a small discount.

There are two other items to consider in this process. No matter where you host your Web site or which Internet program you use to build it, always avoid vendor lock-in. Ensure you can move your Web site easily without hassle to any other Web hosting provider. Finally, copyright your site by adding the following to the bottom of each page: "Copyright 2008, by Your Name. All rights reserved."

Remember, creating a Web site is a simple task that can be intimidating because of the time involved and options available. Whether you choose to create a Web site yourself or hire a professional, creating a good one requires a lot of time and effort. A good site isn't about graphics and a fancy layout; it's about quality content, which many people are likely to find useful. A willingness to invest time in learning and experimentation will help, too.

I enjoyed the time I spent building my first personal Web site. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me through my Web site. I would be happy to answer your questions. **GCI**