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This is a glimpse at how golfers' behavior impacts the business of facility maintenance and management. It shows the link between the professional community and golfers. Throughout the year, we'll publish trends, likes/dislikes, suggestions and other information from your customers.

Caught on the game

In a sign of health for the industry, the vast majority of adult golfers (84 percent) say they're hooked on the game or want to be. In our 2007 consumer survey we posed the question: "Even if you don't play golf very often, would you say you are hooked on golf?" Almost three-quarters (72 percent) indicated they're hooked, whatever that term might mean to them. Another 12 percent said they're likely to be hooked in the future.

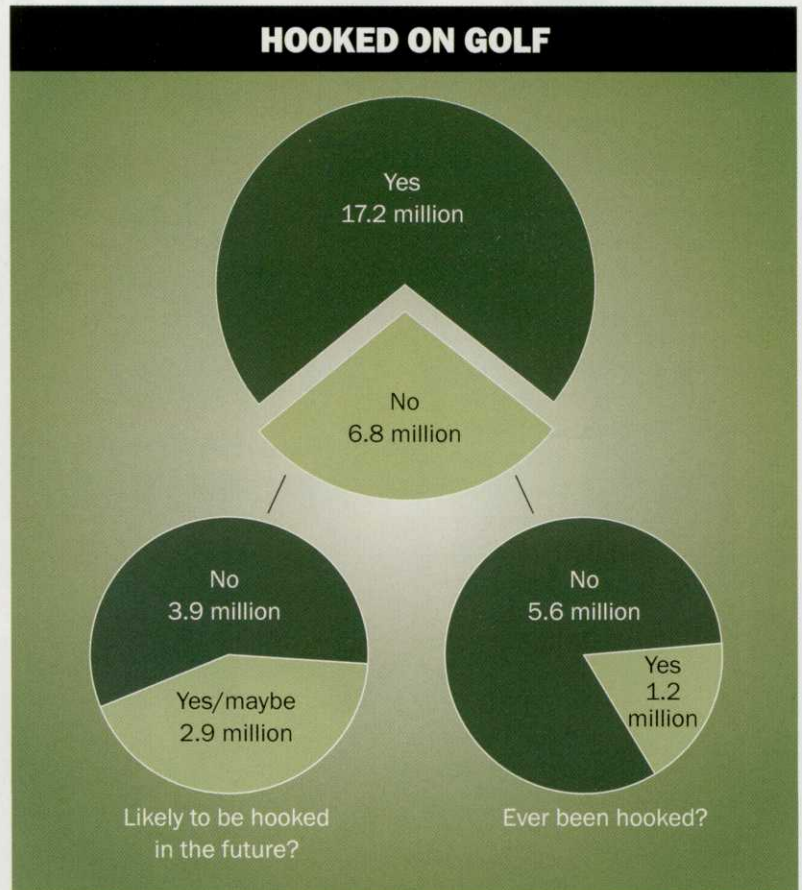
Hooked golfers play and spend three to four times more than nonhooked golfers – all the more reason to try to get them hooked.

The 6.8 million golfers who say they're not hooked are far more likely to say they're intimidated or embarrassed at the golf course. So, efforts to make these players feel more comfortable could have a substantial return on investment. GCI



Source: National Golf Foundation

HOOKED ON GOLF



INTERESTING FACTS

about golfers not hooked on golf

44% are intimidated by other players

20% are intimidated by the environment in general

13% are embarrassed by their lack of knowledge of etiquette

16% are intimidated by facility staff

51% are embarrassed by their lack of skill

15% are embarrassed by their lack of knowledge of the rules

GOLFER PROFILES

	Hooked now	Not hooked now but likely to be in the future
Number of adult golfers	17.2 million	2.9 million
% female	21%	33%
Average age	56	48
Average score	97	106
Average rounds	26	7
Average equipment spending 2006*	\$254	\$89
Intimidated by players/staff/environment	34%	58%
Embarrassed by lack of skill/knowledge	33%	57%

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The big cheese retires

After 35 years on the job, Wisconsin's **Monroe Miller** plans to move on

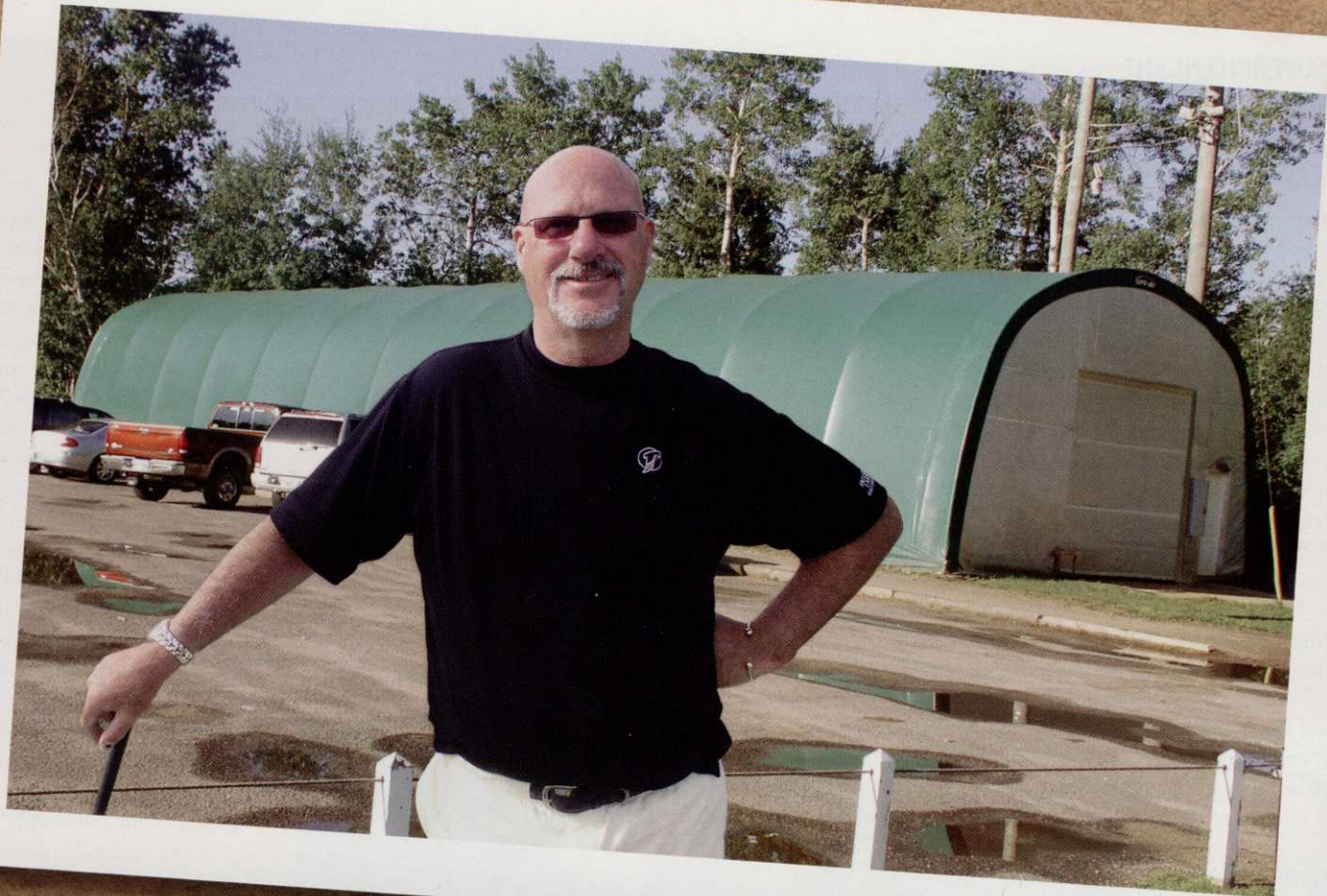
By Pat Jones

I have a confession to make: Monroe Miller pisses me off.

It's irritating the guy can write circles around me, a so-called professional journalist. But he also can grow grass with the best of them, has stayed in the same job for almost 40 years, is a stalwart supporter of his university and has provided mentorship and wisdom to hundreds of young people and peers throughout his career. And he's a great guy.

It's just not fair. Miller is a thorn in the side of full-time golf/turf writers like me. That's why we've all banded together to petition to force him into retirement at the end of this year.

Monroe Miller's work ethic is a result of growing up on a dairy farm.
Photo: Chad Kempf



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COVER-ALL

SUPERINTENDENT PROFILE

But seriously, folks, for as long as I've been in this business, I've looked forward to receiving *The Grass Roots*, the official publication of the Wisconsin GCSA. That's because Miller, the magazine's tireless, unpaid editor for 24 years, put together a great product and interjected his own candid thoughts and editorial spin in an amazingly high-quality way that defied the term "volunteer." There are many unsung chapter editors out there, but, along with my fabulous friend Joel Jackson in Florida, Miller helped to redefine what an "amateur" could do in this critical but often overlooked position.

Miller is a consummate Wisconsin guy – cut him, and he'd bleed cheddar. Born in 1946 in the Madison area, he was – like many superin-

tendents of his generation – a farm kid with a hankering for something more.

"A lot of what I am today, I learned on a 250-acre dairy farm in southwest Wisconsin," Miller says. "I'm now just an urban farmer."

During his undergraduate years at University of Wisconsin-Madison, the legendary professor James R. Love arranged a summer job for him at Nakoma Golf Club, and he was hooked.

"Of all the things I enjoyed about farm life, the thing that wore me out was milking cows," he says. "I didn't want to spend the rest of my life doing that. By noon on my first day on the golf course, I knew that's what I wanted to do. And best of all, I didn't have to milk Holsteins."

After graduation and two years in the Army

as an MP in Vietnam, he returned to school for graduate studies and then landed the job at Blackhawk Country Club in Madison and never left. He's been the superintendent there since 1973. A few years later, he volunteered for what he thought would be a short commitment to serve as the chapter editor for the Wisconsin GCSA's publication. That short stint evolved into 24 years of churning out one of the best magazines in the industry without ever receiving a dime for his trouble. It was truly a labor of love that was rewarded with a zillion GCSAA Chapter Editors Contest awards, the Wisconsin GCSA Distinguished Service Award and the 2004 USGA Green Section Award.

Now, Miller has relinquished the reins of *The Grass Roots* to Dave Brandenburg, CGCS, golf course manager at Rolling Meadows Golf Course in Fond du Lac, and is standing on the precipice of retirement from Blackhawk. He's confident his successor, longtime assistant superintendent, Chad Grimm, will take



Monroe Miller is proud of his contributions to his alma mater, University of Wisconsin-Madison, and of his advocacy for the golf course superintendents in Wisconsin. Photo: Chad Kempf

good care of his baby. He's looking forward to traveling with his wife, Cheryl, and not sweating about article and ad deadlines every day.

Do you ever wonder if you could have gone into journalism full-time?

I thought about it when I was in high school. I enjoyed English, took forensics and made the state championship in play reading. I loved speaking and writing. But I didn't like the idea of someone telling me what to write. I couldn't get into the idea of being assigned a story, so I probably wouldn't have been a good reporter. I wanted to jump right to being a columnist. A column is great because you don't have to worry about it. If readers like it, they like it. If they don't, they don't.

For you, what's the most difficult thing about writing?

I love to write long. The difficult part is to write

short. Mark Twain once said, in a letter to a friend, "I'm sorry this letter is so long. I didn't have time to write a short one."

What article are you most proud of?

That's an interesting question because you forget so much of what you write. The one I probably remember best was "A Super Girl." It was a tribute to my wife written on my 25th wedding anniversary. It evoked a reaction from so many people. You have to be a special person to be married to any of us in golf, because we're not around much. She never complained about me being gone, the fact the lawn wasn't mowed, etc. Cheryl and I are two hearts beating in one line. We both love the same things.

How difficult is it to get other superintendents to write articles?

I quit asking a long time ago because I was afraid I would actually get one. Often they weren't the

best, and I'd spend more time rewriting them than I would if I'd just written it myself in the first place. So, I'd pretty much just ask the guys I knew who could write. And don't get me started on president's messages. Back in the days of fax machines, I'd get these six-page-long faxed messages from the president that I was supposed to boil down to one page. It's a failure of our education system. I sometimes wonder if good writing is going to be a thing of the past in 20 years.

How do you encourage others, particularly younger guys, to get involved in chapter leadership?

The only ones I can influence are the guys who are close to me, and I can only do it by example. I talk constantly about how the guys who influenced me did those things. The young guys just need to get started. The chapter presidency is an eight-year commitment. It's just shitwork mostly - paperwork, meeting notices and such.



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SUPERINTENDENT PROFILE

It's not difficult. You have to have the sense of service and commitment. I haven't noticed it's much different than two decades ago. Some understand the obligation, some don't. My only advice is to just do something.

What have you tried to teach the UW-Madison students who have worked for you throughout the years?

We're lucky to be in a university town with a turf program. But we have strict rules. If you're late three times, you're out. It's a bit of a shock for them, but it's the best thing to do for them. I've taken advantage of my proximity to the school. About 100 former employees of mine are in the business or are superintendents.

Monroe Miller was the unpaid editor of The Grass Roots, official publication of the Wisconsin GCSA, for 24 years. Photo: Chad Kempf



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