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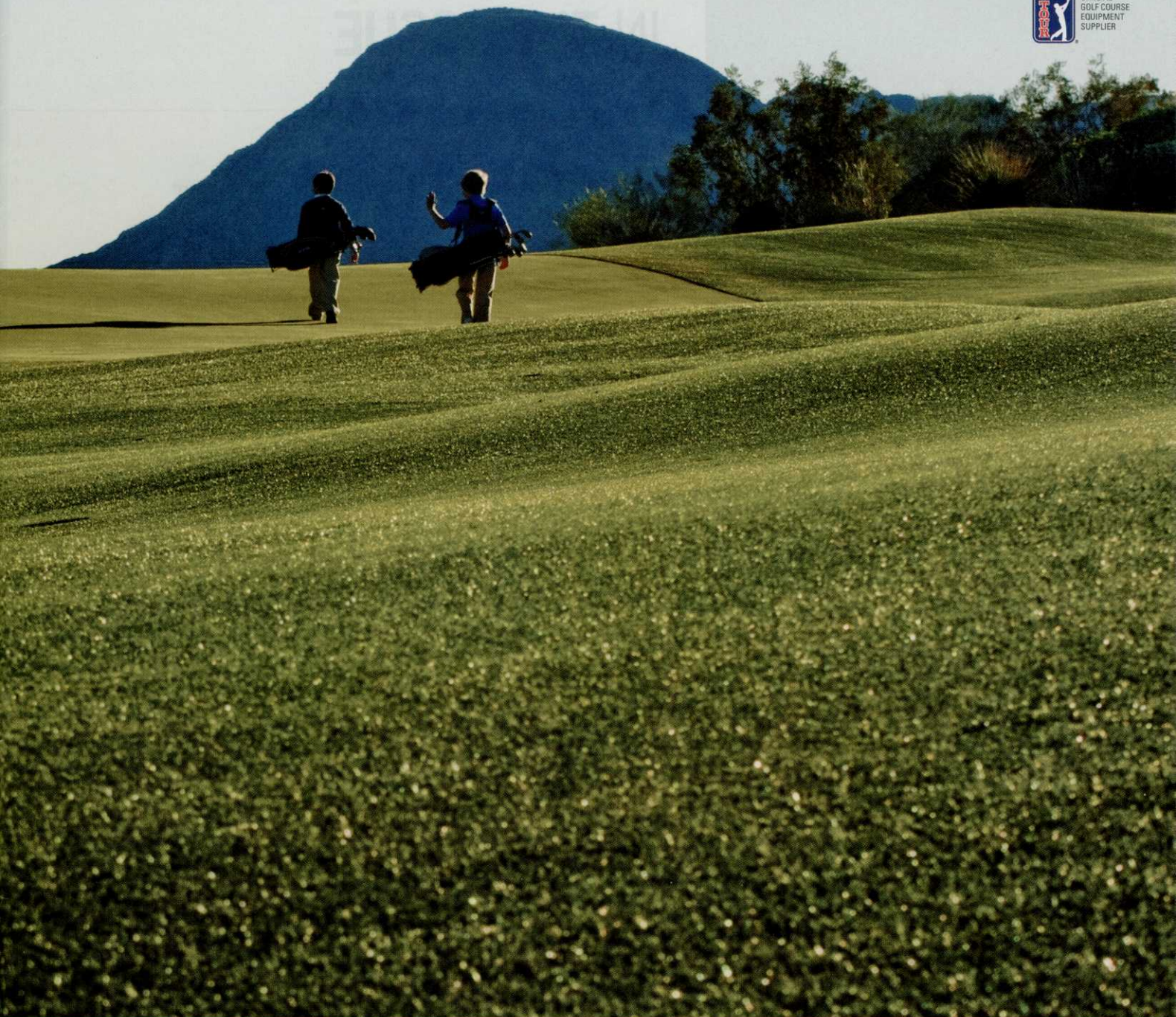
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# IN THIS ISSUE

## DEPARTMENTS

- 6 **Teeing off**  
Pat Jones:  
Blink, Blink, Blink...
- 8 **Letters**
- 14 **The Whiteboard**
- 68 **Travels with Terry**  
Equipment ideas
- 88 **Classifieds/Ad index**

## COLUMNS

- 18 **Equipment Management**  
Stephen Tucker:  
Equipment technicians prep for  
2011 GIS
- 20 **Outside the ropes**  
Tim Moraghan:  
Hosting a Major and no time to  
spare
- 44 **Design concepts**  
Jeffrey D. Brauer:  
Bunker...r...r tuning
- 58 **Irrigation**  
Brian Vinchesi:  
Irrigating green complexes
- 76 **The Monroe doctrine**  
Monroe Miller:  
I stand corrected!
- 90 **Parting shots**  
Pat Jones:  
The Cash Cow – R.I.P.?

28

## COVER STORY

- 28 **AFTER A PERFECT STORM...**  
Bloggers from around the nation  
share their frontline stories from  
the summer of 2010.

## FEATURES

- Q&A*  
22 **TREADING NEW TURF**  
Brian Zimmerman makes  
the journey from golf course  
superintendent to head one of the  
country's premier park systems.
- Course construction*  
36 **TAKING ISSUE**  
Whether a facility restores  
the course to its former state,  
or renovates using new ideas,  
problem solving is the one  
unifying issue.
- GCI's GIS insider*  
46 **GET READY FOR GIS 2011**  
Sneak peak product previews and  
our insiders' guides on what to  
expect this year in Orlando.

- Irrigation*  
52 **H2O HOCUS POCUS**  
While there's no magical cure to  
fix bad water, there are tools to  
tackle water quality issues.

- Professional development*  
60 **ANY QUESTIONS?**  
A superintendent's guide for crisis  
communication during these  
challenging economic times.

- Course maintenance*  
70 **ON A ROLL**  
Studies say that when it comes  
to maintaining greens, an equal  
combination of mowing and  
rolling works best.

- Turf maintenance*  
78 **POA: WANTED DEAD OR ALIVE?**  
There are two schools of thought  
about our friend *Poa annua* – try  
our best to help it survive through  
the summer, or try our best to  
crowd it out and be done with it.

- Product spotlight*  
82 **METAL MANIA**  
To better combat a brutal summer  
season, some courses opted for a  
solid metal irrigation retrofit.







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# BLINK, BLINK, BLINK...

Over the holidays, I enjoyed an all-too-brief respite from what I like to call the tyranny of the blinking red light.

If you own a mobile phone or a smart phone, you know what I mean. No matter how you mute the ringtone or suppress whatever wacky sounds your device makes when you get a new email or text, that %\$#@! blinking red light still appears and demands your attention.

The blinking light is an equal opportunity annoyer. It doesn't care if you've received an important call from the boss or spam from that Nigerian prince... it blinks the same and cries out for you to stop and check.

I tend to keep my phone on "silent" or "vibrate" most of the time, so the blinking red light is a nearly constant companion. It tells me when a friend has called – or a telemarketer or, God forbid, a PR guy with a great story idea about a revolutionary new wind-powered beverage cart that also mows greens and makes killer blended margaritas.

It also tells me when I have new messages in any one of my four email inboxes (all of them flow into the same place on my BlackBerry). I get about 100 emails a day. Most are crap (thank you PGA of America media relations department!) but many



**Pat Jones**  
Editorial director and publisher

are from readers or advertisers and I truly like to be able to respond right away. When I'm traveling or away from my laptop or iPad, I spend mucho time finding my glasses and figuring out how to get my thumbs to connect with those tiny keys.

Last year, I added Facebook to the mix. Now, every time someone posts something on my wall, the tiny red signal is ignited. I use Facebook to keep in touch with more than 800 friends, acquaintances and young, attractive LPGA players (who all seem to be very interested in being friends with middle-aged turf editors).

Yes, there's a lot of junk on Facebook. Pictures of grandkids, posts about how badly someone's college basketball team sucks and various time-wasting games. But, a good chunk of it is serious and useful. I pick up story ideas and trends from Facebook posts made by superintendents in the U.S. and around the

planet. Last year, during the "summer from hell," it was remarkable how you could track the worst of the weather moving eastward. A guy in Kansas City would post, "Greens are fried," and the next day a guy in St. Louis would say the same thing, then Indianapolis and so on until it hit Baltimore.

I added yet more blinks to my phone recently by reinitiating our Twitter feed (@gcmagazine). I resisted Twitter – Lord, I tried – but I finally became convinced it's the best way to keep up on news and to check out the various industry blogs and e-zines that are Tweeted out. I'm now using it to feed out breaking news, retweet interesting stuff from others and send the occasional sneak preview of an article or column out to the 500 or so who follow us to date. During the GIS, we'll use Twitter to send updates, reports and photos out to attendees and those of you at home. If you're going to the show (or not) and you're a Twitter type, make sure to follow us.

I fear that I'll eventually burn out the blinking red light. If that happens, I'd be lost. The blinking red light may be a tyrant that demands my attention, but it's also a beacon to the new world of communications that brings global information – stuff you want and you choose to receive – into your hands nearly instantaneously. In a way, that little red winking eye is telling me, "It's time to learn something new."

Speaking of which, we're delivering something else new besides our Twitter, Facebook and news feeds. We relaunched our e-newsletter earlier this month and renamed it, "Fast & Firm." The goal is to give you news, perspective, analysis and original ideas (not just junk from Google searches) plus video, podcasts and links to the best blogs out there. Look for Fast & Firm every other Monday and our new Video Plus! multimedia e-news and our new product showcase e-news in alternating weeks.

In the meantime, if you simply can't stand that blinking red light, here's a tip: black electrician's tape. Covers the damn thing right up and you can blissfully ignore the outside world if you so choose. It's a wonderful low-tech solution for the tyranny of high-technology. **GCI**

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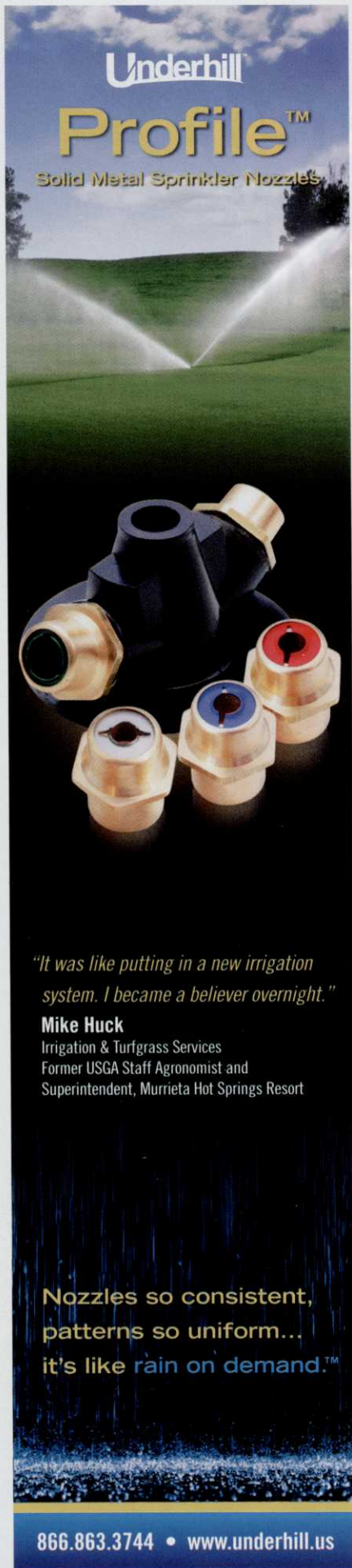
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**FEEDBACK**

**Old school**

I loved Pat Jones' "iCRACK" comments (November 2010, page 6).

Being old, I don't have to succumb to the pressures of having to have a smart phone or, in fact, even a cell phone. I admit I do have a truck phone for emergencies. It amazes me the time people spend staring at a 4-inch screen. It is impossible now to ride an elevator, eat breakfast or lunch without someone talking very loud into their device.

We have even lost contact with our teenage granddaughters because we don't text, Twitter or Facebook. Email is soooo old fashioned and being caught talking on a phone would be devastating.

I will at least go down being able to spend a day doing what I want without one interruption by a ridiculous ring tone.

Keep up the good work.

**Corey Eastwood**  
 Owner  
 Eastwood Golf  
 Stockton, Calif.

To read "iCRACK" enter <http://tinyurl.com/3xs65vu> into your Web browser.

**Question about rolling**

While reading "Fix your crown" in the November issue (page 38) I found a major mistake and I am sure you would want me to point it out to you.

They are using a Salsco Greens Roller to repair the course and they referred to it as a "Sidewinder-style greens roller, 1-ton asphalt roller." I know that's wrong because a Sidewinder-style roller was designed to do bowling greens, very flat and very hard. This type of unit would never be able to move in the very soft wet turf with its one drive roll. It would be spinning and stuck in no time.

A 1-ton asphalt roller belongs on the driveway, not on the green. It, too, would be stuck.

**Sal Rizzo**  
 President  
 Salsco

*Author's response:*  
 Most superintendents refer to the non-wheel

driven rollers, which travel sideways as "sidewinder rollers." My only experience with sidewinder-style rollers is with the Salsco. I have no reason to think that the other brands could not accomplish the same result.

Mr. Rizzo commented that a unit would spin or get stuck in very soft, wet turf. I haven't observed this situation. Remember that the target area is a result of a buildup of sand and can only hold so much water.

Personally, I have used, and have heard other superintendents using, 1-ton asphalt rollers to roll putting green surfaces following aeration, especially on sand-based greens when significant rutting occurs following aeration.

Mr. Rizzo is much more familiar with the various roller specs and I am not disagreeing with his concern. However, in my experience we did not suffer any adverse conditions or damage as a result of the procedure described.

Each golf course and condition is unique and it is the superintendent's responsibility to analyze the potential impact of any management practice. Even though I described a specific procedure, it cannot be viewed as a cookie-cutter application that will fit every scenario.

**Dustin Riley, CGCS**  
 Oconomowoc Golf Club  
 Oconomowoc, Wis.

To read "Fix your crown" enter <http://tinyurl.com/23zmo8q> into your Web browser.

**Daydream believer**

I enjoyed Monroe Miller's November column ("Who would you like to have met?" page 35). No doubt I have daydreamed about the same things before.

My grandfather passed away when I was just 3 years old. Being a fifth-generation American, and my brother being the a fifth-generation farmer on the same homestead, how wonderful would it be to have time with my brother, father, grandfather, great and great, great grandfathers, enjoying a dinner on the farm and hearing their stories and seeing their reaction to how much farming has changed.

I would also like to meet with Charlie Erickson, "The General" as he was lovingly called by the membership. He was the head greenkeeper here at The Minikahda Club



for 40 years – 1900-1940. He was a real innovator here in the Minneapolis area and helped Toro get its start in the turf business. It would be a real treat to meet a leader of his generation.

You have a great list of individuals and I know I could add to the list Jim Arthur, agronomist from Great Britain, and legendary greenkeeper at Royal Melbourne Golf Club, Claude Crockford.

This is a great time of year for daydreaming. Thanks for getting my mind off of things for a few moments.

**Jeff Johnson**  
Superintendent  
The Minikahda Club  
Minneapolis

To read this article type <http://tinyurl.com/2cfwqe> into your Web browser.

#### WE'D LIKE TO HEAR FROM YOU

E-mail us at [gci@gie.net](mailto:gci@gie.net) with your thoughts and opinions.

## ONLINE FEEDBACK



### Syngenta interviews

Good interviews, Pat ("Syngenta Business Institute 2011, online video). Where was this type of program 20 and 30 years ago?! Man those fellows were young.

**John Cummings, CGCS**  
(retired)  
Charleston, W.Va.

To view this video type <http://tinyurl.com/2c76336> into your Web browser.

### Government and golf

The (online) article on the subject ("Government's role in golf courses," Dec. 4, 2010) was very hard to take. I do not understand how this community's argument garnered national spotlight. I know you guys think anything about golf is newsworthy. However, such an article is a bunch of golf course owners who cannot compete.

They bought a course. Paid too much. Now they want the competition eliminated. Man, must be nice if you can get an organization such as yours to give the article front page breaking news headlines. Wow. Is there nothing we can do to tell these whinny cry babies that a good stiff round of competition is good for any game.

I'm surprised that a rag like yours would publish such dribble. These guys are crying and you guys give them a sympathetic shoulder to cry on. Wow, I thought it was all about the game and making it better. How many of these namby-pamby cry babies

have ever hosted the First Tee or offered free golf to the local high school golfers.

Just like all news articles, there was no mention of the municipal utility companies providing water and sewer. Government-owned power companies are a staple of life in many areas. But those that purchased the flawed feasibility study now want the competition eliminated.

Wow!

**Wendell Nealon, CGCS**  
Swan Lake Golf Course  
Clarksville, TN,

GCI responds:

Without a doubt, this is a hot-button issue for the golf industry. As such, we offered GCI readers this article, authored by the Jackson (Mich.) Citizen Patriot, for consideration online, as we do with other articles of interest published by other media outlets. In addition, we provided a hyperlink to GCI's May Cover story, which we believe provides GCI readers with a more balanced approach to this topic.

To read the Jackson (Mich.) Citizen Patriot article "Government's role in golf courses" enter <http://tinyurl.com/26wftc7> into your Web browser.

To read GCI's May Cover story "In munis we trust" enter <http://tinyurl.com/2d2gcyp> into your Web browser.



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**Adam Bagwell**  
Superintendent - Crane Creek Country Club  
Boise, Idaho

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Chicora Country Club – Dunn, NC  
Choctaw Country Club – Poteau, OK  
Cliffs @ Keowee Vineyards, The - Sunset, SC  
Cobblestone Golf Course – Acworth, GA  
Colonial Country Club - South Course – Cordova, TN  
Contraband Bayou Golf Club - Lake Charles, LA  
Conway Country Club – Conway, AR  
Coral Ridge Country Club - Fort Lauderdale, FL  
Country Club of Sebring – Sebring, FL  
Crown Colony Country Club – Lufkin, TX  
Dancing Rabbit Golf Club - Oaks Course – Philadelphia, MS  
Eagle Hill Golf & Athletic Club – Little Rock, AR  
Emerald Bay Club – Bullard, TX  
Great Outdoors Golf Resort – Titusville, FL  
Green Island Country Club – Columbus, GA  
Irene Golf & Country Club – Memphis, TN  
Jackson Country Club – Jackson, TN  
Joseph Bartholomew Golf Course – New Orleans, LA  
Lane Tree Golf Club – Goldsboro, NC  
Legacy Golf Links – Smyrna, GA  
Links at Audubon, The – Memphis, TN  
Little Creek Recreation Club – Ratcliff, AR  
Lochinvar Golf Club – Houston, TX  
Mirimichi Lakes Golf Course - Millington, TN

Mohawk Park Golf Course – Tulsa, OK  
Moree's Cheraw Country Club – Cheraw, SC  
Morrilton Golf & Country Club – Morrilton, AR  
North Creek Golf Course – Southaven, MS  
Northdale Golf & Tennis Club – Tampa, FL  
Northwood Country Club – Meridian, MS  
Ozona Country Club – Ozona, TX  
Page Belcher Golf Course – Tulsa, OK  
Pelican's Nest – Hurricane Course - Bonita Springs, FL  
Pine Forest Country Club – Houston, TX  
Plantation Golf Club - Olive Branch, MS  
Raintree Country Club – Thomaston, GA  
Rayburn Country Club – Brookeland, TX  
Reserve Golf Club, The - Pawleys Island, SC  
River Hills Country Club – Valrico, FL  
River Landing Golf Course – Wallace, NC  
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Sarasota Golf Club – Sarasota, FL  
Sequoyah State Park Golf Course - Hulbert, OK  
Sherwood Golf Club – Titusville, FL  
Silverado Golf Course – Durant, OK  
Southern Dunes Golf & Country Club – Haines City, FL  
Tennessean Golf Club – Springville, TN  
Tuscawilla Country Club - Winter Springs, FL  
Woods at Jacksonville, The – Jacksonville, TX  
Stoneybrook Golf Club – Estero, FL  
Sugar Tree Golf Club Executive Course – Lipan, TX  
Sweetwater Country Club – Sweetwater, TX  
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