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SPOOKY

I used to hate Halloween. It always seemed to be a well-intentioned kiddie holiday that had devolved into an excuse for moronic behavior by grownups who believe it's acceptable to drink until they puke on their shoes as long as they have a lame costume on.

In my days as a serious professional drinker, I considered Halloween (and it's equally idiotic cousin, New Years Eve) to be amateur hour. I shunned those holidays in much the same way I avoid air travel during the summer when the entire Clark Griswold clan is almost certain to be in front of me in the TSA line at the airport or clogging the overhead storage bins with lacrosse sticks and skateboards on their way to a Wally World vacation.

(Grumpy Business Traveler Side Note: For the love of god, if you don't travel a lot, try not to be an idiot in the security screening. Your little joke about having a bomb hidden up someplace where the sun don't shine will screw up both of our schedules. Seriously...)

But, I've mellowed a bit with age (and nearly two years of sobriety, thank you very much) and I see Halloween in a new light. I now see it as a warm, wonderful event where I get to pollute other people's kids with candy, ogle the occasional Naughty Space Girl... and find the premise for a column just as my deadline approaches.

So, here's my Halloween-inspired column idea: Let's look at the spooky season that just concluded and I'll hand out an assortment of tricks, treats and lumps of coal to mark the occasion.

Trick: Mother Nature tricked us into thinking that the Northeast might have a decent golf year when the snow melted early and we had about a day and a half of nice weather in March. That changed pretty dramatically and spring was washed out. The real trick will be for superintendents whose facilities were underwater during some prime playing weeks to avoid budget cuts due to cash-flow shortfalls caused by the weather.

Treat: A giant-sized chocolate bar goes to the United States Golf Association Green Section for continuing to step forward and educate golfers about the realities of weather,

disease and other unavoidable consequences of their demands for fast, firm and perfect conditions. As disappointed as I was to see the old Green Section Record go out of print, the new newsletter version is a fabulous way to distribute ammunition to supers who need a credible, third-party explanation of why the course isn't up to standards. When the folks in the Blue Blazers step up and defend the maintenance staff, it matters.

Lump of Coal: A serious lump of coal goes into the bag of a supplier who would file a questionable defamation lawsuit against a fantastic superintendent and outstanding human being who had just hosted a very successful major championship. Enough said.

Treat: Yay! It stopped raining in the Northeast and we finally got some rounds in and helped the cash flow situation a bit.

Trick: It never rained in Texas.

Lump of Coal: Earthquakes, hurricanes and cicadas in the same week. It was truly biblical.

Treat: Watching China emerge as the global hot spot for golf.

Lump of Coal: To those unscrupulous few involved in the China golf development business who make it a habit of not paying for services provided by the designers, builders and agronomic consultants they have hired. Doing business in the "new China" shouldn't be that scary.

Treat: Basic chemical manufacturers continuing to invest in R&D to prove plant health benefits beyond just pest control (see our cover story).

Trick: Archaic patent laws that only allow original manufacturers a few years to recoup those enormous R&D costs before others can bring similar products to market.

Lump of Coal: Activist groups that will use any tactic – including wheeling children with cancer into public hearings – to cast doubt on the safety of those products.

Trick: Using a weak premise like this to get a column done.

Treat: I worked in a "National Lampoon's Vacation" reference for you. GCI



Pat Jones
Editorial director and publisher

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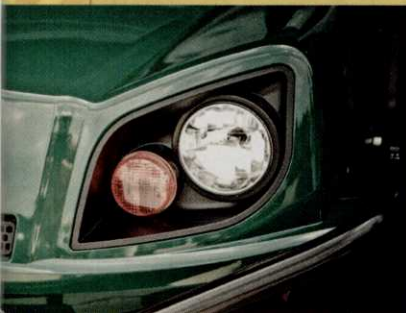
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We'd like to hear from you.

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FEEDBACK

Correction

In September's "Precision and strategy" the images from another of Frontier Golf's 2011 Builder Awards submissions were erroneously used. GCI regrets this error.

The following are images from Frontier Golf's Legacy Award winning project at Army Navy Country Club, Arlington, Va.



More turf wives

My name is Beth McDonald and I wanted to invite you to visit my Facebook page and blog, Turf Wives, which originated prior to Wives of Turf.

Turfwives Facebook page can be located by following this link (<http://www.facebook.com/?ref=home#!/pages/Turf-Wives/157816847625604>) and Turfwives blog can be located through this link: (<http://turfwives.blogspot.com/2011/08/girls-nights.html>).

In my first blog I discussed what lead to my idea and creation of Turf Wives – to give wives in the turf industry a safe place to share stories, support, advice and love with all the fellow turf wives – and girlfriends and fiancées of course. My page and blog are for all the ladies whose spouses, partners and even boyfriends work in the turf industry: consultants, R&D, developers, pro's, superintendents, assistants, sales reps, etc.

My husband, Steven McDonald, is an independent turfgrass consultant who also has a strong focus on research as well as education. Since I've had the pleasure of meeting such a great deal of his clients, friends and supporters over the past 10 years, I've also had the great honor of meeting most of their wives which brought me to the realization that we're all faced with many of the similar circumstances. My relationship with my husband is very strong and my hope is to encourage my followers to do a few small things during the difficult and challenging times to have similar success as my husband and I have.

Beth McDonald
Spring City, Pa.

To read "Desperate Turfwives" enter <http://tinyurl.com/3bqg6zb> into your Web browser.

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Golfin' on *sunshine*



It looks like the course owners are just trying to provide shade for golfers, but they're really out to catch some rays.

The giant panels covering much of the south portion of the parking lot are one of two solar arrays designed to turn sunlight into free energy for Stevinson Ranch in Stevinson, Calif.

"People don't even realize what it is," says George Kelly, course owner. "They think it's just there for shade. But it really has been win-win."

The course started using solar power earlier this year, with a huge investment in the arrays that will eventually pay for themselves in saved energy costs. The setup in the parking lot provides energy to the clubhouse and electric cart storage, while the second installation near the 17th green powers the course's irrigation pump station.

"The key for us was the ability to finance this," says Kelly.

The whole project from installation to transition cost \$960,000. And while a federal grant will rebate about 30 percent of that back to the course, the cost for responsible energy use seems steep.

But Kelly's taking a long view of the cost and the results of a solar-powered golf course.

"This time of year, we saved just in this month about \$12,000 on our energy because of the solar panels, and our payment on them is about \$10,000," he says. "That'll flip when we go into winter for now, but there's a high degree of probability that rates will go up over time. In seven years, when it's paid off, we'll be in a good position."

Though the array is contributing to the course's bottom line, Kelly says its impact is more about showing their commitment to making golf operate greener.

"It really makes a statement for people who drive in here and haven't seen this kind of setup before," says Kelly. "The fact that we've made a major commitment says something about what we're trying to do."

My other car is a golf cart

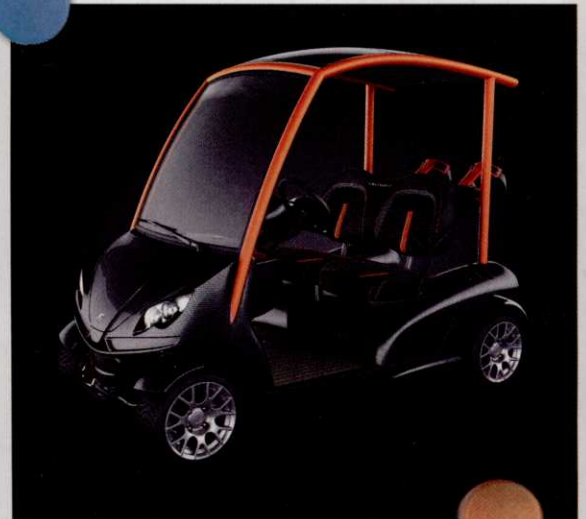
If you're serious about your luxury golf carts, you may want to check out the newly-unveiled Garia Mansory edition, which premiered at the international motor show in Frankfurt this month.

The body of the high-end cart features carbon fiber – usually used in the motor sports and aircraft industries, and teakwood lines the cabin floor. Specially designed headlights, an air scoop and fender gills complete the design.

"When creating the Garia, we set out to build the best golf car in the world, teaming up with the most renowned suppliers in the automobile industry, and with the Garia Mansory Edition our connection to the automobile world is further strengthened," says Anders Lynge, designer of the Garia.

The car comes as a collaboration between Garia and Mansory, which customizes supercars such as the Rolls-Royce, Aston Martin and Bentley, and is available as both street legal and non-street legal.

We at the GCI Intergalactic HQ don't have all that far to travel between offices, but if someone felt like donating, it would make the trip that much nicer.



TOP: GEORGE KELLY; BOTTOM: COURTESY OF GARIA