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THIS IS HIS TIME

After bidding his time for nearly 30 years, Ronald McWhorter shed his title as a career assistant and took on the mantle of superintendent.

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No Boundaries

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THE CONTENT OF CHARACTER

About 25 years ago, my friend Dave Heegard and I cooked up a crazy idea. A lot of you probably know Dave from his days with the Pursell/Polygon crew at FarmLinks and, more recently, his leadership of LebanonTurf. Back then, Heegs was running the old Scotts Professional business and I was overseeing the GCSAA Foundation (the forerunner to today's awkwardly named EIFG).

People forget what a powerhouse the Scotts Company was in the golf business in the second half of the 20th century. They were dominant players in the fertilizer, seed and chemical business thanks to a world-class network of tech reps who we're consulting agronomists as well as salespeople. And, under Heegard's watch, their support for GCSAA and the profession was boundless.

Dave and I got to talking one day about a nagging problem for golf at large...the lack of diversity. Not only was it an issue in the pre-Tiger days of the Tour but a surprising number of clubs still excluded blacks and women. Moreover both the GCSAA membership and the famed Scotts tech rep network were virtually 100-percent white guys. This was a perception problem for GCSAA and, to some extent, a business issue for a big public company like Scotts.

So we cooked up a scholarship/recruiting program with a goal of attracting "non-traditional" students to the golf/turf business. Scott's put a pile of money behind the idea and the foundation jumped into action to bring it to life in 1990. And voila! The new scholarships would help bring more African-Americans and women to our business.

The Scott's Scholars program was well-

conceived, well-intentioned, well-funded, well-promoted and, well...largely ineffective in achieving its original goal.

Why?

Well, for one thing, there are many scholarships and programs targeting the best and brightest young people of color. They can choose many paths and, to some I've spoken with over the years, this profession appeared to be awfully close to farming.

And, despite Tiger Woods, the First

Tee and dozens of other programs, far too few young African-Americans are exposed to or interested in a career in golf course management. There is very little here to attract people of color. Or women for that matter. We may think we're welcoming to all but, outside looking in, it must still appear to be pretty homogeneous.

I hope you'll read our cover story on the long journey Ron McWhorter made from laborer to superintendent at The Landing in Georgia. He's black but it's not a story about overcoming racial bias. Yes, the fact that he is now one of only perhaps 25 black superintendents in the U.S. is cause for a small celebration. But the fact that he was a career assistant who persevered at the same facility for a quarter-century and, in a job market overflowing with good supers, was chosen to lead his operation is cause for a blowout bash.

In my mind, the color of the very humble Mr. McWhorter's skin had zero to do with his promotion. Instead, I believe he was chosen — as Dr. King said — on the content of his character. That's exactly the kind of story Dave Heegard and I hoped for way back in the day. GCI



Pat Jones
Editorial director and publisher

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GIE Media, Inc.

4020 Kinross Lakes Pkwy, 2nd floor

Richfield, OH 44286

Phone: 800-456-0707

Fax: 330-659-0823

EDITORIAL

Pat Jones Publisher/Editorial director pjones@gie.net	Bill Brown Contributing editor
Mike Zawacki Editor mzawacki@gie.net	Bruce Williams Senior contributing editor
Kyle Brown Associate Editor kbrown@gie.net	

SALES

Russell Warner National account manager 216-236-5802	Dave Szy Account Manager 216-236-5764
Traci Mueller Account Manager 216-236-5895	Bonnie Velikonya Classified sales 330-523-5322
Ted Schuld Account manager 216-236-5937	Maria Miller Conferences manager 330-523-5373

ADVERTISING/PRODUCTION INQUIRIES

Jodi Shipley jshipley@gie.net, 216-236-5867

GRAPHICS / PRODUCTION

Jim Blayney, Art director
Justin Armbrurger, Graphic designer
Helen Duerr, Production director

CORPORATE

Richard Foster Chairman
Chris Foster President and CEO
Dan Moreland Executive Vice President
James R. Keefe Executive Vice President
Marco Urbanic Integrated Data Systems Director
Helen Duerr Production Director
Lindsey Betzhold Audience Development Director
Maria Miller Conferences Manager
Kelly Orzech Accounting Director
Irene Sweeney Corporate Communications Manager
Kevin Gilbride Business Manager, GIE Ventures

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Greensmaster® TriFlex™

Bayer backs bees

Bayer CropScience opened its North American Bee Care Center April 15 in Research Triangle Park, N.C. The 6,000-square-foot, \$2.4 million center will support scientific research, product stewardship and sustainable agriculture to protect and improve honey bee health, as well as educate stakeholders and the general public about the beneficial insects.

The center has a laboratory with a teaching and research apiary, honey extraction and hive maintenance space; interactive learning center; meeting and

training facilities for beekeepers, farmers and educators; office space for staff and graduate students; on-site honey bee colonies, pollinator-friendly gardens and a screened hive observation area.

The North American Bee Care Center, part of the company's \$12 million corporate-wide investment in bee health in 2014, brings together experts in agriculture and apiculture to develop comprehensive solutions for bee health, including entomologists and apia-



rists, graduate researchers and more.

The facility complements Bayer's Eastern Bee Care Technology Station, a 1,200-square-foot field station that opened in November in nearby Clayton, N.C. Bayer's first Bee Care Center opened in 2012 at the company's global headquarters in Monheim, Germany.

Setting a sustainable pace for golf

The 2013 Global Soil Survey showed how turf quality and playability didn't necessarily mean heavy applications – nutrient levels could be much lower than previously thought possible. Researchers at PACE Turf and the Asian Turfgrass Center built sustainable soil guidelines using information from the survey to cut back on nitrogen, potassium and phosphorus by more than 50 percent without negative impacts to the turf.

Now in 2014, survey researchers are seeking additional turf managers who want to learn how to implement the new guidelines at their locations.

"Our findings challenge the soil nutritional guidelines that most of us have been using for years," said survey researcher Dr. Larry Stowell of PACE Turf. "While these older guidelines all produced good quality turf, they frequently resulted in unnecessary applications of fertilizer. Today, when everyone is concerned about budgets and environmental impact, anything we can do to reduce inputs is going to be incredibly beneficial."

The Global Soil Survey invites turf managers from around the world to participate by submitting three soil samples for analysis. Participants receive a kit

that contains all of the materials needed to package and ship the soil samples taken from good performing areas of their facility. The samples are analyzed by Brookside Laboratories and the data interpreted by Dr. Micah Woods of the Asian Turfgrass Center and Dr. Stowell.

Survey participants receive a report that shows soil nutrient levels, predicts how much of each nutrient is required as fertilizer and shows where each nutrient is on a sustainability index. The data from each participant is also added to a large database of more than 17,000 soil samples, so that it can be used to refine and validate new, more precise soil guidelines. Available on the Global Soil Survey webpage at bit.ly/1kTbLT4, these "Minimum Levels for Sustainable Nutrition" guidelines and methods for implementing them will be updated periodically as the Global Soil Survey progresses, and will be accessible, free of charge, to the public.

For more information on the Global Soil Survey for Sustainable Turf or to order the \$250 Global Survey kit, visit the Global Soil Survey webpage at bit.ly/1kTbLT4 or the Global Soil Survey Facebook page at www.facebook.com/globalsoilsurvey.

From THE FEED



What do some superintendents have in common with Indiana Jones? As the season warms up, courses sometimes get visitors from the surrounding wilds – and some of them are more welcome than others!



Ed Martinez @emar7236
Found this guy in the pump house!!! #hatesnakes



Kasey Kauff @kaseykauff
Is that a python?



Nick Janovich @njanovich
I would never enter that pump house again.



Vinny @vinnyspano
Damn I'd rather have geese on my course than have to deal with that.



Ryan Howard @TWCRyanHoward
If that were my pump house it would be on fire right now! #ihatesnakes



Anthony Michael @AnthonysShop
Time to get a new pumphouse!



Todd Daniel @wtdaniel1
At least it's not a big one. #ihatesnakes



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on Twitter @GCIMagazine!



Mangum returns to hall of fame

Ken Mangum, certified golf course superintendent at Atlanta Athletic Club, will add another chapter to an already storied career when he is inducted into the Georgia Golf Hall of Fame in January. Mangum will be one of four inductees in the class of 2015 and become only the third superintendent member of the Hall of Fame established in 1989. He will join Palmer Maples, Jr., CGCS, now retired, and Mark Esoda, CGCS, from Atlanta Country Club.



Ken Mangum

Mangum was inducted into the Georgia Golf Course Superintendents Association Hall of Fame in 2013.

This summer, Mangum will serve as host superintendent for the U.S. Amateur Championship. He hosted successful PGA Championships in 2011 and 2001 and the U.S. Women's Open Championship in 1990. He also prepared the golf course for the U.S. Junior Championship in 2002.

Mangum has also shown up on the cover of GCI before, in a Q&A with Bruce Williams after the 2011 championships. Check out the interview at bit.ly/1g5veLP.

CLICK for pics

Notice anything missing in the magazine this month? If you're reading the print edition, you're missing out on an app-exclusive video from Turf Republic's Bill Brown about using a GoPro camera effectively to show off the course. Oh, and the chance to win a brand new GoPro camera!

If you checked it out yet, use any iOS device to download the GCI native app and check out the new issue. Find the page with our exclusive video and just click the button to be eligible to win either a new toy for the course or some sweet GCI swag!





Jeffrey D. Brauer is a veteran golf course architect responsible for more than 50 new courses and more than 100 renovations. A member and past president of the American Society of Golf Course Architects, he is president of Jeffrey D. Brauer/GolfScapes in Arlington, Texas. Reach him at jeff@jeffreymbrauer.com.

GOLF SHOULD BE FUN, DAMMIT, PART 2

Traditionalists be damned, we have to learn new ways to love golf.

I inherited the title phrase from my father, who uttered it during his prolonged golfing slumps. I inherited his tendency towards golf slumps. Restrained language? Not so much.

Golf is inherently fun when I hit great shots, play with my grandson, or see kids hit rocks with sticks. I see it at Top Golf (topgolf.com) a "golf experience" combining the driving range with competition and entertainment. Players hit micro-chipped golf balls at targets and the high-tech balls instantly score each shot's accuracy and distance. Top Golf draws serious golfers, corporate outings, families, dating couples and non golfers from every walk of life.

Yes, golf has "still got it" (meaning the fun factor) even if its leaders clearly "don't get it."

In reality, the USGA and PGA aims mostly to preserve traditions for the 8 million core golfers, for whom golf has always been great the way it is. In preserving "old ways" they seem reluctant to promoting "new ways" of converting the next generation from non-golfers into "real" golfers, sometimes because they fear having to accept "reasonable facsimiles" as part of the bargain.

The persistent idea that traditions should be "preserved as is" ignores the real tradition of change in golf for over 500 years. For example, in the 1850's they removed much whims and gorse from St. Andrews. Many play-

ers of the day resisted the change as too radical, and because it made golf "too easy." Sound familiar?

Nothing is constant but change and the rate of change constantly increases. Can golf really dedicate itself to staying as it is?

Golf has changed with time and society, reflecting real life as we know it. Golf carts mimic the automobile age, distance finders mimic our information age and course within housing tracts reflect our post WWII move to suburbia. For the next generation, instant digital information may be the most important aspect, and hence the

“Golf continues with a single set of rules for all, even as most sports have slightly differing rules for all competitive levels. When asked about initiatives like Hack Golf, one official said, “They can do what they want, but we won’t call it golf.” Isn’t 2-on-2 in the driveway recognized as basketball?”

popularity of Top Golf. Traditional golf won't appeal as much without more tech. I expect this feature to work its way on to the courses within a decade. It might help sell the game to youth as a sort of real life video game. For geezers, it will be marketed as "losing fewer golf balls."

Golf continues with a single set of rules for all, even as most sports have slightly differing rules for all competitive levels. When asked about initiatives like Hack Golf, one official said, "They can do what they want, but we won't call it golf." Isn't 2-on-2 in the driveway recognized as basketball?

Golf also holds strongly to the notion of the par 72, 7,000-yard course,

even when 99 percent of golfers play only 60-90 percent of that yardage. Traditionally, alternative courses receive little acceptance, but I recently played the Challenge Course at Monarch Dunes (in Nipomo, Calif., designed by Steve Pate and Damian Pascuzzo) which bucks that trend. It is a 12-hole, par-3 course designed to championship standards. Each hole has several tees, ranging from a chip shot for beginners up to a full-length par 3. Each green also features both a standard size and large cup.

We played to the large cups from a variety of tees. Some would complain that it wasn't "real golf", but I never had more fun on a course. Our group hit more shots that every golfer craves – one holed out wedge, three chip ins, and a dozen made long putts,

most to win a hole and a nickel. The allure of golf is pulling off wonderful shots and shorter holes and larger cup increase those exponentially.

More excitement, less boredom. How can that not be a good thing?

The next generation needs to shape golf, just as in previous generations. We can't fear what might happen (think how golf carts, jumbo drivers, and female golfers enraged "traditionalists"). It's been said you can't force someone to love you a certain way. You have to accept that they love you their way. The USGA can't insist that everyone loves golf their way, and will eventually accept more golfers loving it in a new way. **GCI**