

## Off The Fringe

# She's Just What They Needed

CANNON BRINGS VARIOUS TALENTS TO HER ROLE AS CACTUS AND PINE GCSA'S EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

By Larry Aylward, Editor

**A** superintendent gives her a heartfelt hug. Another superintendent kids her about her golf game. Then she greets you with beaming eyes and an expansive smile and apologizes for the Arizona heat, as if she's responsible for it. That's Lynn Cannon, executive director of the Cactus and Pine GCSA, in a nutshell.

Cannon, who celebrated her second anniversary with the association in June, is appreciated and respected by members. They like that she's unassuming, can take a joke and cares how one feels.

"She has made a huge difference in how we're perceived by our allied organizations and our own members," says Kevin Smith, president of the Cactus and Pine GCSA and CGCS at the Golf Club at Eagle Mountain in Fountain Hills, Ariz.

Three years ago, the Cactus and Pine GCSA was floundering.

"We have some of the best maintained golf courses in the country and some of the most talented superintendents, but our association didn't reflect it," Smith says. "Somebody had to change that."

Cannon has. She upgraded the association's educational and social agendas,



Cannon has worked as a flight attendant, management consultant and counselor.

She was poised and amicable at the association's annual spring meeting, which attracted more attendees than ever. "It has been a 180-degree turn for us," Smith says.

Cannon says it was simply a matter of getting organized and implementing a long-range plan.

"We have a great group of men who wanted to see the profession move forward, but didn't have the framework to do so," Cannon says. "I saw my position as pulling them together as a team,

providing the framework and working with them so they could be successful."

Cannon, 56, is the association's first executive director and one of several women to lead state GCSAs. Cannon says Arizona superintendents, mostly men, haven't questioned her abilities.

"They have been perfect gentlemen," she says. "They've been easy to work with."

Cannon has diverse experience from several fields — she has worked as a flight attendant, management consultant and is a certified mental health counselor — and also knows a little about golf. Her former husband, golf course architect Gary Roger Baird, taught Cannon the basics of construction and maintenance.

"I love to be busy and get things done," says Cannon, who operates the Cactus and Pine GCSA office out of her home. "I like to see a good plan come together."

Cannon's not afraid to tee it up with the boys, either, which is a fringe benefit of her job. She did so after the Cactus and Pine's spring meeting with Smith and two other golfers at the Phoenician Resort in Scottsdale. Cannon held her own.

## Bio-Bash

**L**eave it to those wacky folks at the Madison (Wis.) *Capital Times* to raise the specter of "Frankenturf" in opposition to the eventual introduction of genetically modified turfgrass.

A July 14 editorial takes Scotts Co. to task for its efforts to bring Roundup

Ready grasses to America's lawns. It cites a Rutgers academic who is working with Marysville, Ohio-based Scotts to develop "a luminescent gene that would make (lawns) glow." This, according to the paper, would contribute to light pollution. "Imagine," the paper said, "what it would be like if everyone's grass is sending out an

eerie green or purple glow."

The paper also quotes that famously objective scientist, Jeremy Rifkin, as saying that genetically modified turf would put "biotech in everyone's backyard." Rifkin is, perhaps, best known for his assertion that vegetarianism should be mandated because methane emissions from beef cattle (i.e., cow

farts) will destroy the ozone layer.

A bemused but irritated Scotts official said flatly that the company is not working with the Rutgers academic and has no interest in creating glow-in-the-dark lawns. As for Rifkin, the Scotts official suggested that he should refocus his attention on the rear ends of cows.