

Going Postal

■ WE'VE GOT MAIL

Teed Off

I've been a PGA member since 1986 and director of golf at Buck Hill GC in the Pocono Mountains of northeast Pennsylvania for the last nine years. Some of my best friends are superintendents.

At every club I've worked, I've made sure to have a cordial working relationship with the superintendent and his or her staff, gathering any information that could help me help them do their jobs for the good of the courses. Having said that and after reading your article on compensation for superintendents ("For What You're Worth," November), I must say that it appears some superintendents don't have a grasp of the team concept. I know there are members of my association who have not had an ideal relationship with their superintendents, but for you to highlight K. Clark Rowles dealings ("Payback Time" sidebar) with his pro is irresponsible. I know most superintendents share the beliefs of Gale Hultquist, as does the PGA, to strive to raise the profile of our positions through positive means so everybody wins.

But superintendent Greg McDaniel admits he wouldn't want the pro's job because of the stress, but he adds it would be nice to have some of the pro's financial opportunities. Hello? It's laughable and a blot on what has usually been a distinguished and enlightening publication.

Are the thoughts of McDaniel and Rowles a trend in the industry? Not according to my friends who are superintendents. The game of golf has always run on higher ground, and hopefully McDaniels' view is that of the minority.

It's my hope that all deserving superintendents and pros will be compensated fairly. I will continue to further the cause of deserving pros and superintendents. As

Lankau said, "The business can't operate if we don't work together." I believe it will flourish if we do.

Tom O'Malley, PGA Pro
Buck Hill GC, Buck Hill Falls, Pa.

Grass Is Greener ...

Boy, can I relate to this article (Pin High, November). You bust your butt to provide excellent conditions, only to be told how to manage a course by a member who can't take care of his own yard. Where were you when we (the profession) needed someone to speak up?

I'm not one to ask for a pity party, but I was once too devoted to the golf industry for my own good. What did it get me? No respect, damaged health and a bitter feeling toward the industry.

But I can say that after 22 years in the profession, I've found life elsewhere, and I'm having more fun than ever. I'm lucky in the respect that I found work in a field closely related to the golf course industry. I'm making more money, I have a retirement plan and great benefits, weekends off and 11 holidays. And did I mention I love killing those imaginary greens every year that I don't have?

The main drawback for me is that I miss the free golf. My usual 175-plus rounds a year has been drastically cut back to about six rounds, and the 1-plus handicap has suffered. For the first time, I enjoy taking care of the yard, and I'm rediscovering the family and enjoying life as a reward for getting out of the business.

B. Bird, CGCS
Oklahoma

Feel like going postal? We want to hear from you. You can e-mail your letters to Larry Aylward at laylward@advanstar.com, fax to 440-891-2675 or send them via snail-mail to: 7500 Old Oak Blvd., Cleveland, OH 44130.

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www.golfdom.com

EDITORIAL STAFF

Pat Jones PUBLISHER/EDITORIAL DIRECTOR 440-891-3126 pjones@advanstar.com
Larry Aylward EDITOR 440-891-2770 laylward@advanstar.com
Frank H. Andorka Jr. ASSOCIATE EDITOR 440-891-2708 fandorka@advanstar.com
Geoff Shackelford CONTRIBUTING EDITOR 310-451-5877 geoffshac@aol.com
Joel Jackson CONTRIBUTING EDITOR 407-248-1971 flgm@aol.com
Mark Luce CONTRIBUTING EDITOR 785-841-6044 mluce@earthlink.net
Dr. Karl Danneberger CHIEF SCIENCE EDITOR danneberger.1@osu.edu
Lisa Lehman ART DIRECTOR 440-891-2785 llehman@advanstar.com
Kim Traum SR. GRAPHIC DESIGNER 440-891-3175 ktraum@advanstar.com
Mike Klemme CHIEF PHOTO EDITOR 580-234-8284 mkleme@golffoto.com
Sue Gibson EXECUTIVE EDITOR 440-891-2729 sgibson@advanstar.com
Vernon Henry GROUP EDITOR 440-826-2829 vhenry@advanstar.com

GOLFDOM ADVISORY STAFF

Joe Baidy, CGCS, TURNING STONE GC
Cliff Beckmann, THE WESTIN SALISHAN LODGE & GOLF RESORT
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ASSOCIATIONS



American Society of Golf Course Architects 221 N. LASALLE ST., CHICAGO 60601; 312-372-7090; WWW.GOLFDDESIGN.ORG



Golf Course Superintendents Association of America 1421 RESEARCH PARK DR., LAWRENCE, KS 66049-3859; 800-472-7878; WWW.GCSAA.ORG



National Golf Course Owners Association 1470 BEN SAWYER BLVD., STE. 18, MOUNT PLEASANT, SC 29464; 843-881-9956; WWW.NGCOA.ORG



National Golf Foundation 1150 SOUTH U.S. HIGHWAY ONE, SUITE 401, JUPITER, FL 33477



Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment 1156 15TH ST. NW, SUITE 400, WASHINGTON, DC; 202-872-3860; WWW.PESTFACTS.ORG

United States Golf Association P.O. BOX 708, FAR HILLS, NJ 07931; 908-234-2300; WWW.USGA.ORG