

Going Postal

WE'VE GOT MAIL

Mixed Reviews

The time has come for Pat Jones, GCSAA's former director of communications, to bury the hatchet and get over the fact that he is no longer a member of the GCSAA management team. His continued harassment of the organization and its management is both immature and boorish (Flagstick, August).

There is no doubt that GCSAA, like any organization, is open to criticism and justifiably so. But Jones's remarks go beyond the professional and become attacks which embarrass the organization and its leadership.

The latest attempt to embarrass GCSAA came in the form of a comment from a supposed "longtime industry executive" about the funding of the 75th anniversary celebration.

[The remark] only trivializes what should be meaningful commentary on various aspects of the golf turf industry.

The members of GCSAA do not need Jones to be the conscience of their professional association. They are perfectly capable of both demonstrating and communicating their likes, dislikes, compliments or criticisms in a manner far more sophisticated than what is published in the Flagstick forum.

Stephen G. Cadenelli, CGCS
GCSAA Past President '91
Cape Cod National GC
Brewster, Mass.

Your viewpoints about GCSAA are beneficial for the industry and GCSAA. If constructive criticism is handled in a positive manner, GCSAA will become a much better organization.

A Dale Carnegie instructor

recently suggested I move around less during my presentations because it distracts the audience. After thanking her for the constructive criticism, I tried it and soon noticed the audience was more attentive. Handling constructive criticism in a positive manner will improve anyone's performance, including an association's.

Douglas Linde
Assistant Professor of Agronomy
Delaware Valley College
Doylestown, Pa.

Focus on Family

I had the opportunity to read your article "Career and Family: The Balancing Act" (July). I thought it was brilliant and faxed it to all of the wives around the New England area.

My husband is an associate superintendent at Pine Brook CC in Weston, Mass. Therefore, I could more than identify with the subject matter. I have spoken to many wives in the past few months, some of whom have been married for years while others are just newlyweds. It certainly is a challenge juggling a husband's long work hours with family time.

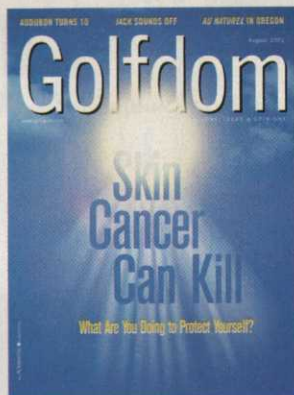
I believe you must savor every moment and enjoy not the amount of time your family has together, but the quality of the time spent instead.

I'm sure all the families and wives appreciated this topic. I know I did, and I hope that in the future there are more articles like this.

Stephanie Carter
Weston, Mass.

Skin Cancer Alert

I wanted to let you know how much of an impact your August cover story ("Serious About Skin Cancer") has made. There have



been numerous comments on the GCSAA Web site about the seriousness of skin cancer [since the article appeared].

Many supers feel this [article] may be the best eye-opener to our industry in some time. It was also well-written. I've made a doctor's visit to get a spot on my ear examined and a physical for an overall examination.

Charlie Fultz
CC of Culpeper
Culpeper, Va.

Cowardly ELFs

I was baffled when I saw that the Earth Liberation Front had burnt down the University of Washington's Center of Urban Horticulture (Pin High, September).

As a superintendent, I'm not sure what possessed me to attend a seminar at the school to obtain pesticide applicator points. I warily eyed the other participants as I ate my sprout sandwich and drank my juice. We spent the morning discussing the evils of pesticides and what we could do to reduce them. The day was filled with organic fertilizer alternatives, corn gluten for weed suppression, various torch models for weed burning and hot water as an excellent weed killer.

I have used some of these methods to help in our golf course maintenance practices, and I made a good contact for organic fertilizers at the seminar. The people who run the Center of Urban Horticul-

ture should have been the last people targeted for an act of arson. If the ELF truly cared about the environment, it would not have attacked the Center of Urban Horticulture. The ELF is just a group of petty vandals and terrorists who will eventually become murderers through their reckless actions.

NAME WITHHELD

Editor's Note: Golfdom withheld this writer's name and location to protect him from becoming a target of ELF.

Heat on Heacock

I read Mike Heacock's article ("CGCS Implies Something That Doesn't Always Deliver," August) with great interest, but felt that I needed to comment on a few of the items that he brought forward.

The title CGCS means many things to different people. To a person with that title, it means that he or she has spent the time, money and effort to study for a test and make a commitment to a career path. I agree that CGCS does not always mean that a person is a competent superintendent. I don't think that was the intention of it.

When you study to become a CGCS, no one tells you which seminars you must take. You decide in which competencies you are deficient and make the decision yourself. If that means that you have to travel to attend the seminars, the decision to do so is a choice you and your employer have to make. If your employer sees merit in what you are doing, maybe it's mutually beneficial to both parties to have a CGCS onboard.

I'm sure there are many superintendents who use the CGCS label as a steppingstone. Like everything else in life, you must look beyond the label to see

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whether the content itself is worth an investment. Just because it says CGCS on the outside doesn't mean the content is good. It just means that this person has a set of competencies that he or she can apply to his or her job.

Many superintendents (like myself) are not using the CGCS label as a steppingstone, but a motivational tool. Your CGCS allows you to say, "I must continue to strive to be the best in what I do. These are the classes and the type of education that I need to help me achieve that level of performance."

I know certified superintendents who are making \$30,000 to \$40,000 per year, so I take exception to Heacock comments that "some [CGCSs] are no better than someone available for \$30,000 or less." I admire the superintendents who make lower salaries and still have a CGCS label. Are they less than full superintendents? No. In many cases, these are people who have dedicated themselves to a profession, and they work on small budget golf courses. These people challenged themselves and are awaiting an opportunity some day to move ahead.

I think the term CGCS does sometimes imply something that it doesn't deliver when viewed in a vacuum. Employers who judge superintendents [strictly on their CGCS status] are narrow-minded. Many superintendents don't have the distinction of having a CGCS label. Many don't need or want it. They are in great positions, and it won't help their careers, so they choose not to obtain it.

For the employer, I feel that CGCS should mean that a superintendent has stayed current with trends in the industry and has tried to do a little more. I agree with Heacock that GCSAA has some

long-term issues it needs to work on, and it is doing that. I also believe there are many other associations and societies that have the same problems.

If superintendents are taking educational classes for the CEUs and getting nothing out of them, they should stop. I've had the the CGCS label for 16 years, and I plan to continue to have it until I retire. I hope I never stop learning and trying to educate myself. I hope that I belong to an association that feels the same way.

**Rick Tegtmeier, CGCS
Elmcrest CC
Cedar Rapids, Iowa**

I must say I was very disappointed in Mike Heacock's recent article "CGCS Implies Something That Doesn't Always Deliver."

I recently completed the certification process and becoming certified was one of the most gratifying experiences I've ever had. The CEUs I obtained on my way to certification were helpful to me and my employer.

I've always believed that if you find something you enjoy and become the very best at it, the money will follow. Receiving my CGCS gave me an avenue to reach the height of my profession. Becoming certified did not happen overnight. It took time, patience and study. I would not be as qualified today to do my job at my club without the GCSAA and the certification process it provides.

If I decide to accept a job at a more challenging course with higher pay, I do not expect to immediately walk in and master the position. But with time, persistence and continuing education, I expect to be worthy of the position. I sincerely hope you haven't discouraged anyone to take advantage of the services

the GCSAA provides, especially the certification process.

**Todd Caudill, CGCS
Franklin CC
Franklin, Ky.**

Builder's Broadside

I read Geoff Shackelford's column about golf course contractors ("Time to Pick on Golf's Contractors," August) and was stunned by his cheeky attack on them. I put it down for several weeks and then reread it again. It is just as cheeky and factless as it was when I read it before.

What was Shackelford trying to accomplish? Just filling a page? That's about all he did. Was it an editorial? Was it an exposé (maybe Shackelford has spent years undercover following the sneaky world of contracting — I don't think so)? Was it a fact-filled article? Not a chance.



Shack: Public Enemy No. 1?

I have been in the golf course construction business for about 20 years and have seen a wonderful maturation of our business. Generally speaking, our business is full of qualified, honest people who enjoy building golf courses. We run into good and bad architects, and we have good and bad clients. We are often called upon to fix a situation that, in the field, is different from what the plans presented. Just as often, we are called upon to find a solution for disagreement between the architect and the owner. We are asked to build golf courses in difficult locations with difficult schedules and often nearly impossible site constraints.

I have no intention of refuting each of the stupid items that Shackelford mentioned — it is a waste of time. You have done some real damage to the fragile

relationship between the press and golf course contractors. You have also done a real disservice to our industry.

**Dan R. Garson
Vice President of Golf
GBS Golf Works
Mountain View, Calif.**

Non-workaholics Anonymous

One of your columns (Pin High, August) covered some remarks about superintendents being poor candidates for marriage, according to one turf professor.

I disagree. I don't feel it's necessary to work 60 to 80 hours a week in the summer season to be successful. What do I do when my crew is gone after its normal 40-hour day (we don't have unlimited funds to pay overtime, so they usually work 40 hours)? I tour the course, finish paperwork and go home to my wife and son. What ever happened to the old business adage of "working smarter, not harder"?

I'm not a workaholic. I've done this through efficiency, motivation and sound agronomic decisions. If I can't get the job done in a reasonable amount of time (less than 50 hours a week on average), I'm not doing it right.

I know that I'll probably never be at an Augusta National or Pebble Beach, but I am nearing the top of my profession in my hometown. Am I lazy and just getting away with it, or am I ahead of the curve?

Name Withheld at Author's Request

Feel like going postal? We want to hear from you. You can e-mail your letters to Frank Andorka at fandorka@advanstar.com, fax to 440-891-2675 or send them via snail-mail to: 7500 Old Oak Blvd., Cleveland, OH 44130. Make sure to include your name and phone number for verification. Letters may be edited for length or relevance.