

Going Postal

WE'VE GOT MAIL

Degrees vs. Experience

Bravo to Ron Furlong and his article, "To What Degree?" (January). A four-year degree shows that a person has the drive to excel in his or her field, but doesn't experience count for anything?

I hired two employees who both have four-year turf degrees (the universities will remain unnamed), and they both know their ways around a golf course. Unfortunately, their practical knowledge is lacking.

This is not to say that they aren't learning, and they are getting some great hands-on experience in all facets of the business. If I thought a four-year degree was the only qualification necessary to do golf course maintenance, however, I would have been disappointed. To gain experience, you must be willing to learn, and to learn you must be willing to put in your time. No one knows everything and if a question or problem arises you can fall back on your schooling and training.

In this business, the greatest classroom is the property you were hired to care for, and the best teachers are your peers.

**John Connor, Superintendent
Plymouth CC
Plymouth Meeting, Pa.**

Restrictions Require Input

I read Joel Jackson's column (Shades of Green, November) and agree with most of his comments. Unfortunately, ordinances and watering schedules are often established because utilities and state water agencies hear nothing from golf course and landscape professionals. How can they understand the reality of golf course water management unless superintendents take the time to explain?

Perhaps Jackson doesn't understand why water restrictions are necessary for many water utilities. It's strictly an issue of pumping capacity for many water purveyors. This is an important reason for superintendents to sit down with their water utilities and explain their situations. I don't believe water restrictions are "phony." Instead, they were developed because water utilities had little or no input from golf course and landscape professionals.

In my educational programs, I always explain that golf courses are typically good water managers. I have not met another water purveyor that bad-mouthed golf courses. I believe golf courses are wildlife sanctuaries and have a cooling effect on the environment. This is even more reason for superintendents to be pro-active with local utilities, the public and even environmental activists.

I'm currently working on a document that addresses golf course water management and drought water management. I will do my best to get input from local superintendents to review the document before it's finalized.

My bottom line for superintendents is this: What are you doing to pro-actively work with your water utility?

**Robert Reaves
Landscape Water Conservation
Specialist
Austin, Texas**

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.

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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. MANAGING EDITOR 440-891-2708 fandorka@advanstar.com
Geoff Shackelford CONTRIBUTING EDITOR 310-451-5877 geoffshackelford@aol.com
Joel Jackson CONTRIBUTING EDITOR 407-248-1971 flgm@aol.com
Mark Luce CONTRIBUTING EDITOR 785-841-6044 mluca@sunflower.net
Dave Wilber CONTRIBUTING EDITOR 916-630-7600 dave@soil.com
Dr. Karl Danneberger CHIEF SCIENCE EDITOR danneberger.1@osu.edu
Lisa Lehman CORP. CREATIVE 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 mike@golffoto.com
Sue Porter GROUP EDITOR 440-891-2729 sporter@advanstar.com
Vernon Henry CORP. EDITORIAL DIRECTOR 440-826-2829 vhenry@advanstar.com
Lynne Brakeman WEB EDITOR 440-891-2869 lbrakeman@advanstar.com

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American Society of Irrigation Consultants 221 N. LASALLE ST., STE. 3500
CHICAGO 60601; 312-372-7090; WWW.ASIC.ORG

GOLFDOM ADVISORY STAFF

Joe Baidy, CGCS,
TURNING STONE GC
Jim Barrett, ASIC
JAMES BARRETT ASSOCIATES
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THE WESTIN SALISHAN LODGE &
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ASSOCIATIONS



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



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



Golf Course Builders Association of America
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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; WWW.NGF.ORG



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