

Off The Fringe

Cast of Characters

YOUR SUMMER IS PROBABLY A LOT LIKE MINE

By Jim Black

Ahh. The mid-Atlantic winter chill is beginning to give way to longer, warmer days and the promise of the coming season. I'm also reminded, by the excessive ringing of my phone, of the onslaught of seasonal job seekers, looking for something to do in exchange for a little pocket change and gas money.

Oh sure, they all seem great when they walk in the door — full of energy and eagerness to be the best employees ever. But once the first couple weeks go by, reality sets in.

One by one they come into your office and sling the proverbial knapsacks off their shoulders,

spilling all the contents of their personal issues on your desk. After they get hired and are somewhat

comfortable in their positions, they all of a sudden can't really do exactly what you need them to do, or work exactly the hours you need them for, but could you please pay them exactly on time anyway?

I'm sure this is a staff we can all relate to. Its members whine about using a shovels with no seats, put away broken equipment without telling anyone for fear they will get in trouble, expend more energy to avoid work than actually doing any, and etc, etc.

That said, here's a sample of anyone's summer crew at Anybody's Country Club and Golf Course:

Tardy Daley — Tardy is somebody who lives two miles away from the club and can't help but be five minutes late for work and 10 minutes late from lunch daily.

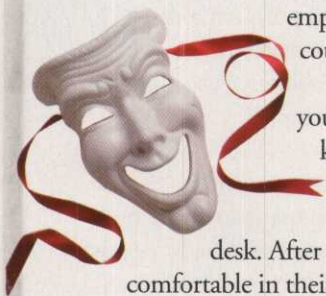
Phil Divots — He's the topdressing applicator. After you set the topdresser to "light-frequent," Phil thinks that not enough sand is coming out, so he changes it to "heavy-quarterly." As a result, you wear out three grinding stones and two extra drag mats.

Harry Vetch — The spray technician, Harry will overdose the back left corner of No. 5 green with 2, 4-D, thinking he can control the oncoming annual onslaught of goosegrass. Nothing will grow there and you will have to blame it on heavy foot traffic.

Nick Wyres — In charge of anything related to irrigation, he will have to redig the malfunctioning sprinkler head in the back left of the No. 6 green seven times until you realize he wasn't careful enough when he dug it up in the first place.

Hank Ford — Retired union worker who always has a better idea on how to do something and spends countless hours convincing everyone he is right.

Russell Feathers — He has a very hard edge along with a



PHOTODISC

Quotable

"Bayer is a basic manufacturer. What we do is bring new technology forward. And shame on us if we don't bring new technology forward."



— Dan Carrothers, vice president of Bayer Environmental Science's Chipco Professional Products.

"Beavers are not always our friends."

— Buck Workman, certified superintendent of Catechee GC, discussing how the animals contribute to his Audubon International Certified Signature Sanctuary course despite the fact that they occasionally take down memorial trees on his course.

"If we stay in Lawrence, (Kan.), we have to say that in 10 more years we'll probably look at this again because that's what good businesses do."



— Mike Wallace, past president of the GCSAA and certified superintendent of Fairview Farm GC in Harwinton, Conn., on the relocation issue.

dry wit. The rest of the staff will have countless complaints about him, but he's really harmless. It's amazing to see how easily grown men get their feelings hurt.

Mai Hiro — Armed with nothing but good intentions, Mai is the puppy dog of the staff who's always trying too hard to be the big problem-solver. His overenthusiastic initiative is usually counteracted in a negative way by his general lack of turf knowledge.

With any amount of dumb luck, maybe one of your walk-ins this year will have a little more experience than just, "I know that you need to spread the roots out on a potted plant before you put it in the ground."

I could go on with this topic, but you'll have to excuse me: My phone is ringing again.

Black is superintendent of Twin Shields GC in Dunkirk, Md.