

Iwish I had a great Rhett Evans personal anecdote; it would have been great for my cover story this month. But alas, despite working with him for 18 months at GCSAA, I just don't. Well, there is a funny one, but there's no way it could have worked in my feature story. It goes like this:

I was on a conference call with the folks at Mirimichi Golf Course in Millington, Tenn., the same course *Golfdom* coincidentally profiled last month. There were four voices on the other line, and I was conducting an interview... not an easy task to keep four voices straight over a phone.

And then, the next thing I know, it sounded like some wild animal had invaded my office. It was a loud honking noise, like a clown's nose had been caught in a fairway mower. *Wobba-wobba-wobba!*

It turned out that Rhett had just acquired a new turkey call from Cabela's, and he wanted to demonstrate its usefulness to my former neighbor at GCSAA headquarters, Mark Johnson, senior manager of environmental programs.

After my initial freak-out, I shot a terse email to Johnson alerting him that I was conducting a phone interview, and the turkey call quickly went away. Once I was done with the interview, I stormed into Johnson's office to find out what the heck had just happened. "Wasn't me, man!" he told me.

I took a breath and said, "cool." (Mark's a good dude, and always hooked me up with awesome cigars, so I could never be mad at the guy.)

So did I say anything to the Turkey Caller himself? Heck no! Rhett was, after all, the boss, and I was happy to remain as anonymous as possible during the frequent staff cuts we were going through at the time.

But now the kind folks from Mirimichi know why it sounded for a minute like a wild turkey burst into my office that day. That was the new CEO. Apologies.

What else? ... There was another time when Rhett's team beat my team at the company golf scramble. But there's no story there. Ev-

Rhett Evans... he's no turkey

BY SETH JONES



THERE'S A REASON

RHETT EVANS IS

THE NEW CEO

OF GCSAA.

everyone beats me at golf. The day I beat someone, that'll be a story.

So then what is the story on Rhett Evans? I profiled him in this issue for our cover story. He was named GCSAA's CEO shortly before our deadline, and Rhett was kind enough to sit down with me for an interview immediately afterward.

The story on Rhett is, though he may have awful timing with his turkey call, he is no turkey himself. He's driven. He's determined. He's one of those guys who accomplish more by breakfast than many of us do in an entire day.

His tenure at GCSAA has been during a rough patch. There were some tough days and some tough decisions that happened on his watch. I don't agree with all of the decisions that were made. But I know for a fact he didn't make any of those decisions lightly.

"It never gets any easier," Rhett told me of days like the one he experienced last November, when a handful of long-term GCSAA employees suddenly found out that it was their last day. "But you just have to keep telling yourself, 'There's a reason for everything.'"

I agree with him. There is a reason for everything. And there's a reason Rhett Evans is the new CEO of GCSAA.

No, I wouldn't say I know Rhett well. But what I do know of him is that he seems like a sincere, passionate guy. I'm rooting for him to succeed.

I might not have any great stories about Rhett right now, but it is my hope that in a few years, I'll have a great story about him to tell: the story of the guy who took a floundering national golf association and made it vibrant again.

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