

Winter at the Lake Omgosh Golf Club lasted two whole weeks in January. Ever since then it's been "the eternal spring," or as Duffy McDuffy our superintendent would say, "the eternally dry spring!" We're so far behind in our annual rainfall amounts that a light sprinkle makes headlines.

Duffy has just returned from a week in Las Vegas, where he attended the GCSAA Golf Industry Show. I ran into him at our 19th Hole and Whine Bar. "So Duffy, how was Vegas and the show?" I asked.

Duffy replied, "Well, it's been 12 years since the GCSAA has been there and the 'girly shows' are skimpy as ever. Oh, you meant the *Golf Industry Show*? Well, Steve Wynn has a new look going at the Wynn and Encore hotel/casinos. Instead of exploding volcanoes, dancing fountains and neon lights, he installed a mountainside full of rocks and trees to front the hotel. I guess he's going more green than glitzy."

"Did you manage to do any gambling in your free time?" I added.

"Yes," he said. "My wife gave me a \$20 bill and said, 'Go crazy.' I remember they had nickel slots before. Now they have penny machines, which can stretch a tight gambling budget if you only bet 1 cent per one line. But those clever devils have a bank of buttons that you can push and parlay that penny into a dollar bet if you aren't careful. Once, when the machine's bells were ringing and lights flashing I thought I hit the jackpot. Alas, down in the corner it said, 'You won 8 credits.' I did manage to stretch that \$20 into two hours' worth of entertainment and two free drinks.

"Enough on the nightlife," Duffy continued. "I did have some great seminars and general sessions, and the education and networking are always worth the trip. I know that sounds like a paid advertisement, but it's true. Education has always been one of the core missions of GCSAA, and great problem solving ideas and tips are just an informal conversation away.

"Next year," Duffy added, "I suggest the GCSAA offer a free but mandatory orientation session called 'Walking the Trade Show Floor

Duffy's Excellent Trip to the Strip

BY JOEL JACKSON



DUFFY HAD SOME GREAT SEMINARS AND GENERAL SESSIONS, AND HE SWEARS THE EDUCATION AND NETWORKING ARE ALWAYS WORTH THE TRIP.

101.' You know how everyone hates to get behind one of those left lane slow pokes on the interstate? Well, that's second only to having to detour around a roadblock of gabbers in the middle of an aisle. Sometimes it feels just like driving in Florida!"

Duffy added with a slight smile: "There was one big problem with the program. After having booked Peter Jacobsen and David Feherty back to back for the Opening and General Sessions, I don't know how they're going to follow that up in San Diego. Both of these gentlemen are one-third golfer, one-third performer and one-third humanitarian. Jacobsen, also known as Jake Trout of Jake Trout and The Flounders, a musical group of professional golfers that included the late great Payne Stewart, graciously accepted the Old Tom Morris Award.

"Now in the company of the giants who preceded him," Duffy continued, "he advised his audience to be true to the spirit of the game and courteous to all whom you come in contact with, a lesson he learned well from Arnold Palmer.

"The next night David Feherty had folks white-knuckling their grips on propriety with his salty language. Before long, this self-confessed recovering bipolar, alcoholic drug addict had us rolling in the aisles with laughter. In a truly bipolar moment, we soon had tears of raw emotion flowing as this proud new American citizen poured out his heart full of patriotism, compassion and support for our Wounded Warriors of the Mideast wars. It was — unexpected, heart-grabbing inspiration.

"But," Duffy added, "it's good to be home!"

Certified superintendent Joel Jackson is Executive Director of the Florida GCSA.