



Recalling Reed Funk, and Hurricane Sandy

We called Rutgers professor William Meyer, Ph.D., recently about the passing of his colleague and mentor, Dr. Reed Funk. Meyer returned the call a couple days after Hurricane Sandy hit, so he had a lot to say about that, as well as ample praise for Funk.

“Everything I learned about breeding I learned from him — and from doing it,” Meyer said. “He worked on me for five years to get me to apply for a job at Rutgers. I cooperated with him from there.”

Meyer sent us one of his favorite photos of Funk, this one of him collecting centipede grasses in a cemetery in Cherry Hill, N.J. in 1996.

To honor Funk’s life and legacy, Meyer said, Rutgers is holding a memorial symposium for Funk on Jan. 11. “It’s an all-day affair,” Meyer said, “and everything is oriented toward him.” Funk’s former students will present at the symposium, including Chris Carson, Al Turgeon, David Kopek and others.

But the conversation also turned to Hurricane Sandy, which had hit New Jersey two days before we spoke with Meyer, who lives just six miles from the ocean. He described the storm this way:

“It just blew and blew and blew. It was blowing at 90 miles an hour, and the sound of that is amazing. It’s like a train blowing through. I’m telling you, I was scared. It was blowing that hard.

It was amazing.

“No trees snapped off but there are a thousand tree limbs in our yard. It was amazing. I just can’t tell you how frightening it was. And then, of course, everybody in New Jersey along the coast, those poor people. They got so much damage. Their houses are gone. They lost everything.

“I’m six miles up the hill from the ocean. Down the hill, all the boats ended up on the parking lot. Being up on the hill, that made the wind even worse. It was crazy. You know, the weirdest thing now is you can’t buy gas. The lines are 300 cars long. I got two-thirds of a tank of gas left in my car. I’m hoping things calm down soon.”

-- Beth Geraci

PHOTO (TOP) COURTESY: ?WILLIAM MEYER, PH.D.

SETH’S TRAVELOGUE:

NW Golf & Environment meeting

I had the good fortune of being asked to speak in Portland recently. Also speaking at the event, held at the Oregon Golf Club in West Linn, Ore., were Steve Kealy, CGCS, Glendale CC; Kevin Fletcher, Ph.D., e-parUSA; Chava McKeel, GCSAA; Scott Dahlman, Oregonians for Food and Shelter; and Andy Staples, ASGCA, The Golf Resource Group.

Kealy discussed the First Green, a program he co-founded that enables golf courses to host area students and use the courses as learning laboratories. Something as simple as gathering a few buckets of leaves provides an educational opportunity for the students, he said.

“We have a contest to see who can find the most bugs, and how many they can name,” Kealy said. “I couldn’t believe how into finding bugs they were.”

The First Green has been asked by the USGA to apply for a grant that would enable them to expand beyond the Northwest.

GCSAA’s McKeel and Oregonian’s For Food and Shelter’s Dahlman then made two presentations that nicely complemented each other, with McKeel speaking about national regulations and Dahlman speaking more with a local focus.

Dahlman told the group that the state of Portland has some citizens who will file 40 to 50 complaints a year. What are they complaining about? Someone spraying something — anything.

“You guys are more at risk of activists,” Dahlman told the group. “You have a lot of people watching you.”



From left to right, GCSAA’s Chava McKeel; *Golfdom*’s Seth Jones; architect Andy Staples; and e-parUSA’s Kevin Fletcher. And no, we’re really not sure why Seth dressed like a preacher.