



“You know there is always a place you can go to get away from it all — a place that just gives you a good feeling every time you step upon it.”

MARK WOODWARD, *Contributing Editor*

Best offices in the world

World headquarters for DaMarCo Golf and Mark Woodward and Associates is the fourth bedroom of my house in Mesa, Ariz. The only green space near my office is my yard and the park across the street.

As I was sitting around my office the other day, I began reflecting on the wonderful places we as superintendents have had the honor of working each and every day — our golf courses. We are blessed to have the opportunity to be responsible for such beautiful tracts of land, land that each and every day changes. A golf course is a living and breathing place that continues to give great joy and occasionally takes a little away as well.

I have friends who are accountants, computer techs, doctors, dentists and stock brokers, and I can't even imagine being stuck in an office for eight to 10 hours each day without having the freedom to get out of the office and make a quick spin around the golf course.

I remember my days at Torrey Pines. Even though I was dealing with prepping for a U.S. Open, a ton of political

stuff, attending meetings, giving presentations, preparing for public hearings and in general performing the bulk of the administrative duties of my position, the absolute best part of the job was the fact that I had the flexibility to get on my golf cart and make a tour of the facility.

In that case, approximately 450 yards from my office was the Pacific Ocean. If I was feeling stressed, needed to get the cobwebs out or just needed time to think things through, I would go out to one of the holes that front the ocean, stand on the cliff and watch the dolphins and whales swim around and the paragliders fly by. For some reason it always seemed to put things in perspective for me and would allow for a great moment of self-reflection.

It doesn't matter if your

golf course is on an ocean, a national forest or a park. It doesn't matter if it's at a resort, within the downtown area of a major city or out in the country. Wherever it is, you know there is always a place you can go to get away from it all — a place that is green (in color and environmentally), beautiful, full of wildlife. A place that just gives you a good feeling every time you step upon it.

On top of that, for the most part you are surrounded by people who genuinely want to be there and actually pay money to be there. The best thing is, they want to be there because of you and the work you and your staff do. There are not too many professions that can offer that intangible, rewarding feeling.

There also aren't too many careers where the professionals can go outside, breathe some fresh air, enjoy the best

that Mother Nature has to offer and on top of that, be involved in one of the greatest games in the world.

It's not even close to being the same thing as stepping out of your office into a parking lot or garage, going out on the street or driving on a crowded freeway. The atmosphere is not the same, the air quality is not as good and these places just don't make you feel good about your job and your life in general.

I don't mean to be unkind to people in other professions. Everybody is different, and some seem to enjoy that atmosphere. My only point is to highlight how fortunate we are in our profession to have the luxury of working indoors when we have to, but more importantly, having the privilege of working outdoors when we want to. Most superintendents I know are able to find the necessary balance between being in an office and being on the golf course. Most are happiest out on the golf course.

If you really think about it, it's the best of all worlds. After all, most of us got into this business because we wanted to spend time outdoors, preparing our golf courses for the golfers who come to enjoy this great game.

We really do have the greatest offices in the entire world.

Mark Woodward is president of **Mark Woodward and Associates**, principal of **DaMarCo Golf**, CEO of **MasterStep Golf Group** and a contributing editor for *Golfdom*.