



"I'm not a Luddite or a technophobe, I just don't feel the need to have constant access to everything and everybody."

MATT NEFF, *assistant superintendent, Wedgewood G&CC, Powell, Ohio*

I'm a flip phone user

That's right. I still use a flip phone and have no intentions of getting rid of it. ¶ Why? Because I like it and absolutely refuse to pay a couple hundred bucks for a smart phone that I will inevitably destroy within a month, not to mention the extra \$35 or \$40 a month for a data plan.

I know what you're thinking: "Matt, you're an assistant superintendent. Surely you have tons of disposable income. You can make it rain at the cell phone store." (Spending money at reputable retail establishments is where the phrase "make it rain" came from, right?)

Even if that were true, I'd still be using a flip phone because the ruggedized ones are hard to kill, I don't have to worry about pocket dialing people and, more to the point, I have an almost pathological aversion to spending money.

My wife would say there's no "almost" about it. To that I'd say, "Quiet down, sweetie. When you decided to live the glamorous life that is being married to a turf guy, you also accepted the drawbacks."

I certainly see the positives of having a smart phone in

this business — turf apps, internet access, high quality camera, etc. — all of which can be very handy, especially if you're using some form of social media to communicate with members and golfers. I'm not a Luddite or a technophobe, I just don't feel the need to have constant access to everything and everybody that the internet has to offer and to pay a small fortune for it. If I need some information that I could get from a turf app, then I look it up the next time I'm on a computer.

The thing that never ceases to amaze me is the number of comments I get on a fairly regular basis from friends, family and even complete strangers regarding my phone. It's like an 8th grade flashback — "Dude, are you wearing last year's Jordans? You can't be serious."

A few weeks ago as I was checking out at the grocery store, I got a text to which I quickly read and replied. When I looked up again to make sure all the prices were ringing up correctly (remember the spending aversion?) the cashier was laughing. He then says, while still smugly chuckling, "A flip phone? Man, I can't remember the last time I saw one of those." You would've thought I had hauled out one of those HAM radio sized things from the movie "Wall Street."

What I wanted to say: "How about probably not too long ago, buddy. And if we're going to judge each other, why are you still a grocery store cashier at age 45?"

What I actually said: (half-hearted fake laugh) "Yeah, everybody's got a smart phone now. Paper bags, please."

I will admit that the performance of my phone has been going downhill lately even though, according to the technician at the store, there's nothing wrong with it. I'm now completely convinced that the major cell phone companies are intentionally allowing the service and operation of older phones to deteriorate to the point that people would rather use soup cans connected with a string while carrying a Polaroid for all photography needs.

I envision the basic phone "engineering team" being composed of a bunch of hungover summer interns from state schools sitting in a rundown office with a broken window air conditioner and water stains on the ceiling, sharing the highlights of the previous night's idiocy via the high quality pics and videos they captured on their iPhone 5s. Meanwhile, the Ivy League nerds are down the hall in the plush confines of the Smart Phone Suite working 24/7 making sure that everyone can Tweet their random musings the instant they pop into their minds.

When the smart phone industry has achieved their goal of world domination, I'll probably have no choice but to get one. Until then, I say "Flip phone users of the world unite!" If for no other reason that I'll need all the help I can get if I ever tell my wife to quiet down...

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