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# Golfdom

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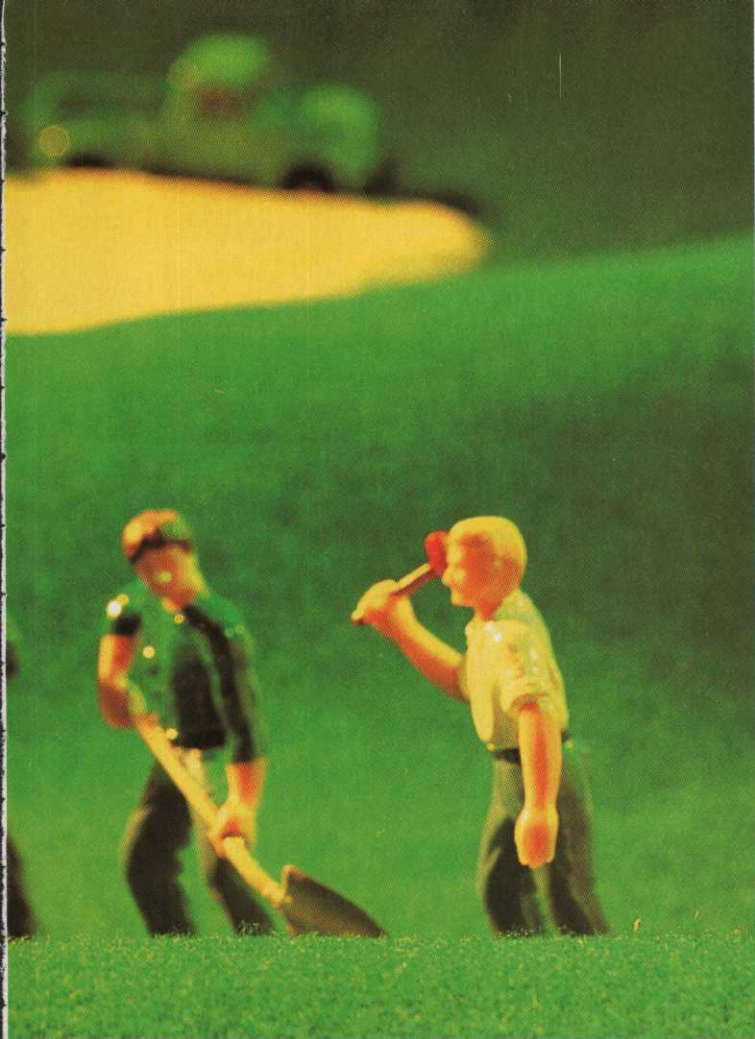
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# Going Postal

■ WE'VE GOT MAIL

## Pretty Damn Important

Congratulations on your recent article on PDI (February). It was both informative and neutral — not easily attained with such a controversial subject.

PDI could be a wonderful program as long as it's available to all members. When I reflect back on my own career, I have ridden the roller coaster of career highs and lows. I was a superintendent at two separate golf courses for 13 years after graduating from the Penn State University turf program. I desperately wanted to move up into bigger jobs, but I just wasn't postured for those positions. Then Paul Latshaw (the superintendent at Augusta National at the time) threw me a rope, and I became his assistant. My career path has changed ever since. With all I learned from Paul and working at Augusta, I was able to explore and reach plateaus that I had only dreamed of.

Not many people are as fortunate as me. I would like to think that PDI could be the rope that helps good superintendents at obscure, low-budget clubs reach their dreams and high plateaus. If I could be convinced that this is in fact the case for PDI, then count me in, and I'll put every ounce of my energy behind it.

**Matthew G. Shaffer**  
Superintendent, The Country Club  
Pepper Pike, Ohio

I'm a 30-year-old superintendent at a mid-level private club in central New York. I'm not living in the national limelight of a Major, a PGA Tour stop or an LPGA event. I'm the average Joe of our profession.

Even with PDI looming on our horizon, if your course does not meet the reasonable playing expectations of your membership, then there's nothing any organiza-

tion can do to promote any public perception of you to your membership. I realize I have not covered the entire point of the issue, but for many of us just keeping our courses in top shape demands most of our energy and focus.

**Thad Thompson**  
Superintendent, Seneca Falls CC  
Seneca Falls, N.Y.

## Use This Rag

I, being quite the unconventional superintendent, find your rag to be very refreshing, to say the least. There are just far too many stuffed shirts in this business that play everything by the book, not to mention the butt kissing. Just thought you needed to hear that some of us superintendents are loving your stuff. Keep up the good work.

**Jerry Whiteaker**  
Superintendent, Myrtle Creek GC  
Myrtle Creek, Ore.

**Feel like going postal? We want to hear from you. You can e-mail your letters to Pat Jones at [patrick.jones@advanstar.com](mailto:patrick.jones@advanstar.com), fax to 440-891-2675 or send them via snail-mail to: 7500 Old Oak Blvd., Cleveland, OH 44130. Make sure to include your name and phone number for verification. Letters may be edited for length or relevance.**

## We Messed Up

Ted Cox Jr., superintendent at Running Fox GC, was misidentified as a certified superintendent in Golfdom's February issue, which he is not. Also, Paul Illgen is the superintendent at Rolling Oaks GC at World Woods in Brooksville, Fla. We mistakenly identified Quinn Kuite as the superintendent in the March issue. While Kuite was superintendent when the story, "Practice Facility Makes Near Perfect," was written, he left World Woods soon after.

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# Events

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**12 American Society of Golf Course Architects Remodeling University**  
Los Angeles  
Contact 312-372-7090

### MAY

**4 Human Resources Seminar**  
Sacramento, Calif.  
Contact 800-472-7878

**5-11 ASGCA Annual Meeting**  
Ireland  
Contact 312-372-7090

**18 Recycled Water For Turf & Landscape Irrigation**  
Davis, Calif.  
Contact 510-639-1271

**18-21 National Club Association Annual Meeting**  
Washington  
Contact 202-822-9822

### JUNE

**15-16 Warm Season Turfgrass Research Tour**  
Maricopa, Ariz.  
Contact 520-783-2050

**26-28 Conference on the Mathematical Modeling of Golf Ball and Club Performance**  
Bethlehem, Pa.  
Contact 610-758-4111

### JULY

**16-18 Texas Turfgrass Summer Conference**  
Galveston, Texas  
Contact 409-690-2201

**19-21 Turfgrass Producers International Conference and Expo**  
Spokane, Wash.  
Contact 800-405-8873

### AUGUST

**9 Ohio Turfgrass Foundation/Ohio State University Research Field Day**  
Columbus, Ohio  
Contact 888-683-3445

**14-17 Turfgrass 2000**  
Gainesville, Fla.  
Contact 800-882-6721

**16-19 Golf Course Builders Association of America Summer Meeting**  
Louisville, Ky.  
Contact 919-942-8922

### SEPTEMBER

**16-19 Club Managers Association of America Annual Leadership/Legislative Conference**  
Alexandria, Va.  
Contact 703-739-9500

### OCTOBER

**4-5 Turfgrass Landscape and Equipment Expo**  
Costa Mesa, Calif.  
Contact 800-500-7282

### NOVEMBER

**4-7 11th Annual Green Industry Expo**  
Indianapolis  
Contact 770-973-2019

**14-16 The NYSTA Turf and Grounds Exposition**  
Syracuse, N.Y.  
Contact 518-783-1229

**28-30 North Central Turfgrass Expo**  
St. Charles, Ill.  
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### DECEMBER

**4-6 Texas Turfgrass Annual Conference & Show**  
San Antonio  
Contact 409-690-2201

**5-7 Ohio Turfgrass Foundation Regional Conference and Show**  
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Once again, I returned from the GCSAA show with an extensive set of notes about the show. Unfortunately, I couldn't read any of them because — say it with me — “beer and journalism just don't mix.”

However, with the help of Dionne Warwick and the Psychic Friends Network, I was able to divine the meaning of some of the gibberish I'd scribbled on the back of cocktail napkins to provide you with the following insights on the big show in the Big Easy.

### 3-2-1-Launch!

Could any of the 21,000 souls who came to New Orleans have possibly returned home without seeing or hearing the name Golsat? Fly into town — there's a Golsat billboard at the airport. Stroll down the street — there's a little Golsat sign stuck in the ground. Stop for a drink — there's a Golsat coaster under it. Mother Nature calls — there's a Golsat sticker over the urinal. You literally couldn't drive, walk, drink or pee without encountering the Jetsonesque Golsat logo.

This was, by far, the most creative and sophisticated product launch in the history of our happy little industry. Golsat instantly became players by virtue of sheer marketing *chutzpah*. But, more importantly, it looks like Golsat actually has the concept and the capitalization to roll out a serious e-commerce initiative.

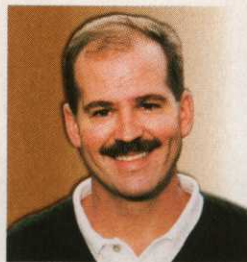
Golsat's dirt-cheap subscription package of hardware, high-speed access and features like DTN is a tempting loss-leader to get you to buy online through the company. Then, when you point, click and spend, Golsat gets transaction fees from suppliers. There are plenty of others (like the user-friendly Green-trac and, apparently, GCSAA) battling for your eyeballs, but Golsat's dazzling ad campaign gives it the early lead in the great e-business race.

### Don't try this at home

Imagine that you walk up to a woman on the main street of your hometown and say, “I'll give you \$500 to expose your chest to me.” Now imagine the stinging slap you'd receive or

# Beer and Scribbles from Bourbon St.

BY PAT JONES



GOLFSAT INSTANTLY  
BECAME AN  
INDUSTRY PLAYER  
BY VIRTUE OF  
SHEER MARKETING  
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the feeling of handcuffs being tightened around your wrists.

Yet, on one little street in one very odd little city, that same woman will happily bare it all in front of hundreds of total strangers for 20 cents worth of costume jewelry. It truly boggles the mind.

### A whimper, not a bang

By all accounts, the Town Hall Meeting about the Professional Development Initiative was a bit of a snoozer. Only about 250 attended and very little of the heated rhetoric that preceded the show was evident (translation: No hitting, spitting or hollering took place). It's now up to the Membership Standards Resource Group to review all of the various comments at a meeting later this month and make a recommendation to the GCSAA Board.

One new twist in the PDI saga: Al Jansen, a member from Wisconsin, has drafted an alternative version of PDI called CDS (Career Development System), which is being hailed by some respected superintendents as a simpler, fairer (and a helluva lot cheaper) way to go. Again, you need to fully explore both of these proposals and make your voice heard through your chapter delegate or an MSRG representative.

### Merci beaucoup

That's French for “thanks a lot for not tripping over me while I was passed out in the middle of Bourbon Street.” Thanks also to all of you who stopped us to say nice things about Golfdom. The comment we heard most often: “Keep it up.” Trust us, kids, we will.

---

Pat Jones is the editor/publisher of Golfdom. He can be reached at 440-891-3126 or [patrick.jones@advanstar.com](mailto:patrick.jones@advanstar.com)