

When only perfect is good enough!



Before putting for a birdie or installing a drainage system, weigh your options carefully. "Good enough" might be acceptable on some courses but your golfers deserve the best in playing conditions and that's what Multi-Flow provides.

After considering surface area, flow rates, strength, ease of use, and installation costs, your choice is clear. Installed in fairways, bunkers, or greens; horizontally or vertically; deep or shallow; using 6, 12, or 18-inch Multi-Flow, your course will have the best in drainage.

There is a world of difference between the Multi-Flow system and ordinary drainage products. When nothing less than perfection will do, install a Multi-Flow system.



MULTI-FLOW
drainage systems by Varicore

In light of the recent rash of several states' proposals to ban phosphorous, do you need a good keynote speaker for your annual turf conference who can address the issue? I'd like to recommend Dr. Jay Lehr. He works for the Potash Corp. of Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. This company has single-handedly decided to educate people about fertilizers with a program called Fertile Minds.

Dr. Lehr, who helped draft the Clean Air and Water Acts in the 1970s, walks the audience through a compelling presentation on how the industry is losing the battle over environmental issues through its silence and inaction. Clips from a video show how ignorant and uninformed the public is on basic nutrients and where they come from. In a man-on-the-street interview sequence done in Chicago, one respondent said, "Potash? Oh, that's what's left when you smoke marijuana."

The Fertile Minds program gives people the real facts. Fertilizers aren't manmade synthetic compounds, contrary to activist rhetoric. They are natural elements being returned to the soil after the crops take them out during harvest. The potassium and phosphorus in your diet comes from the soil, and it needs to be replaced or the soil goes sterile.

Here are some of the nutrients the environmental lobby targets as being some foreign substances despite their common everyday sources:

- **Nitrogen** – It's in the air you breathe daily.
- **Potassium** – It comes from sea-salt residue, which occurs because this country sits in an ancient sea bed.
- **Phosphorous** – It comes from the skeletal remains of marine and terrestrial animals that once roamed the earth.

For all those environmentalists out there who might miss the point, let me make it abundantly clear: *These are natural ingredients.* Man can grind them up into small particles, mix them together, bag them up and spread them on crops, but they are still just *natural products* recycled to grow food or keep turf-grass healthy.

While the Fertile Minds program is targeted mainly for agricultural fertilizer use, any enterprising golf industry group can easily make the connection to turfgrass uses. You can

Program Pushes Great Message

BY JOEL JACKSON



POTASH CORP. HAS
SINGLE-HANDEDLY
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EDUCATE PEOPLE
ABOUT FERTILIZERS.
YOU CAN DO YOUR
PART, TOO

log on to www.fertile-minds.org or call 800-524-0132 to order "The Fertile Minds ProAction Kit." This tool kit can help your associations reach out to local governments and business leaders, local media, local school systems and your own friends and family. (In fact, start with the latter. If you can't convince *them* about the facts, don't bother with the others.)

This kit includes printed material, a VHS tape and four CDs. What you will find will be templates for fill-in-the-blank educational materials: customizable speeches, PowerPoint presentations, press releases, audio files, radio scripts, letters to the editor, frequently asked questions (FAQs), facts at a glance and much more. All these presentations can be tailored for the audiences listed above.

Did I mention the cost? It's free for the asking. As the kit says on the inside cover, "Presenting the easiest way to dispel the myths and misinformation about crop nutrients. With the Fertile Minds Proaction Kit, you can represent the fertilizer industry in the area that matters most — your hometown." We all know politics are local. This kit provides virtually everything you need to approach your key local audiences in an easy-to-use format.

Our cash-strapped superintendent chapters are always looking for help in fighting the well-funded environmental lobby. Here is one program that's already done it for you. All you have to do is present it. You can thank the Potash Corp.

You can do your part. Order the kit today and plant the seeds of truth into the fertile minds in your own backyard.

Joel Jackson, CGCS, retired from Disney's golf division in 1997 and is director of communications for the Florida GCSA.



CLOSEST TO
THE PIN

*Before you put your
name down, take a look
at the quality cut on
this green, courtesy of
the John Deere 220B
Walk-Behind Mower.
Your shot might
not stand up, but this
mower sure does.
Have a great day.*



Maybe they don't understand what it means to cut a green to the width of a quarter. But you certainly do. And no walk-behind greens mower does it better than our B Series Walk-Behinds. From adjustable handlebars to efficient grass catching, our B Series walks are without peers in their category. We also have large mufflers for lower sound levels. Bedknife-to-reel knobs allow for easy adjusting. And a forward mounting pivot point to minimize operator effect on the cutting plane. To see them in action on your greens, call your local John Deere Golf & Turf Distributor. Or dial toll-free 1-800-537-8233.

JOHN DEERE GOLF & TURF
ONE SOURCETM



Hole of the

■ No. 17
Tournament Players Club at Deere Run
Silvis, Ill.

Month

Like a Postcard

An architect couldn't be paid a nicer compliment than the one D.A. Weibring received from his wife, Kristy, regarding his design of the Tournament Players Club at Deere Run in Silvis, Ill.

"She said each hole looked like another postcard," Weibring says.

In essence, that was Weibring's goal. He says he wanted to create a course that had memorable holes with dramatic views of the rolling hills and vistas.

No. 17, pictured here, looks like a postcard. The par 5 is named "Stadium," and Weibring warns, "Miss the green, and you will have a very tough up-and-down."

Golf fans will find out how the pros play the hole during The John Deere Classic, set for Sept. 8-14. J.P. Hayes will defend his title against such names as Vijay Singh, who's ranked No. 3 in the world, and Greg Norman, a 20-time winner on the PGA Tour.

The John Deere Classic is the only event that holds a pro-am for superintendents.

Golfdom's Hole of the Month is presented in partnership with:

www.johndeere.com



JOHN DEERE

MIKE KLINE

CARTS

Hey, before you leave the fairway, did you notice how nicely it's striped? And how you don't really see any grass clippings? That's the beauty of the John Deere B-Series Lightweight Fairway Mowers. Anyway, thanks for noticing. And don't leave your sunglasses in the cart like you did last time.



Okay, so they really don't have to know why your fairways are looking sharper than the creases on their khakis. But we guarantee they will come to appreciate the consistently clean cut from our B Series Lightweight Fairway Mowers and our Fairway Tender Conditioners (FTCs). Just by putting FTCs on our 3215B, 3225B, or 3235B units, you'll immediately discover what clean really means. The 38 vertical blades on the FTC rotate to slice stolons and reduce grain in the turf. Grass stands up for an even, clean cut and a true playing surface. And the rear roller power brush removes built-up material as well as dispersing any leftover clippings.

For a better look at our B Series lightweight fairway mowers, call your local John Deere Golf & Turf Distributor or 1-800-537-8233.

JOHN DEERE GOLF & TURF
ONE SOURCETM



From Your General Manager

Dear Members,

You go on vacation for three weeks before the club invitational, and it's amazing how much happens while you're gone. Well, now that our summer is wrapping up and we are sending the little ones back to school, it's time to prepare for a busy fall schedule.

I trust you all had a wonderful time at our Labor Day barbeque. I do apologize for the hamburger bun mix-up. Even though we knew exactly how many of you fine members were signed up, next year the \$39.95 cover charge will guarantee that everyone gets a bun. But I'm sorry to report, especially to my good friend Biff Pinkface III, that we still don't have room in the budget for an open bar.

Now, if you look closely at your member invoice for the month of October, there is another \$150 assessment to cover the costs related to our "French purge" operation here at Gluttony Creek. As you may recall from my February column, a time of war required that we drop all French wines, cheeses, bottled waters, breakfast toasts and other items from the dining room and half-way house menus. And since the purge has been so well-received, we are printing up new permanent menus which reflect those changes. (Those menus should last until the board raises the food minimum and dining-room prices next week.)

We've made one exception in our French purge. The up-and-coming junior executive chef at the Comfort Inn's Le Deux Cafe, Guy Ardee, is scheduled for our November guest chef night (even though there won't be any French food to prepare). In fact, the lack of French food here at Gluttony Creek has the reservation book filling up for that night. It doesn't hurt that I've managed to lure back the Lou E. Armstrong Band to perform.

In golf course-related news, I played many of the great layouts of Myrtle Beach while on my all-too-short vacation. Several of the courses have incorporated a beautiful, bright-white crushed marble sand. I'm in discussions now with our greenskeeper to see if there's room in the budget to replace our dirty, contaminated trap sand. I have also asked him to

A (Parody) Letter From the GM

BY GEOFF SHACKELFORD



INSTALLING A NEW
BRIGHT-WHITE
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SPRING'S \$500,000
CLUBHOUSE
REPAINTING

talk to the local salt quarry about a less-expensive alternative than the pricey crushed marble. Installing a new bright-white sand will match the shade of white we've chosen for next spring's \$500,000 clubhouse repainting.

I have also ordered the greenskeeper to paint all of our ballwashers dark green. Many of the finest courses I saw in Myrtle Beach camouflage their washers by painting them a color similar to the nearby grass. It's a small touch, but I found it to be very effective, and I think you'll see a big increase in the number of your fall rounds because of them.

I'd also like to thank you for the kind e-mails and letters about our club's new "Commitment to Service" program. We were recently ranked by *Club Service* magazine as one of America's Top 100 clubs. Many of you still ask about those little bronze-plated pins that our employees are wearing. I've explained their purpose in my column here the last four months, but here's a recap.

The "Commitment to Service" medals send a message to you, our wonderful dues-paying members, that our staff is committed to great service. That's why you'll see one on the shirt of Aurelio, who mows your fairways lovingly. And even Tyler Hack wears one. He's our second assistant pro, who incidentally, finally passed his PGA-playing ability test last month.

Way to go Tyler, I never thought a pair of 88s could take someone so far in life.

Hit 'em long and straight!

Yours in Gluttony,

**Peter "Pete" Dorkschtmidt,
General Manager, COO, Gluttony Creek CC**

Contributing Editor Geoff Shackelford can be reached at geoffshackelford@aol.com.

By the Numbers

With the help of financially savvy superintendents, *Golfdom* offers tips to help keep your maintenance budgets in line



BY LARRY AYLWARD, EDITOR

Ten million bucks. That's how much money Allan Pulaski is responsible for as director of golf course and grounds maintenance at the Landings Club, a six-golf course operation in Savannah, Ga. Pulaski would be lying if he said managing that much dough didn't make him nervous.

"It's why I don't have any hair," the 30-something Pulaski says, only half-jokingly.

Pulaski's annual budget at the Landings Club is about \$5 million. Throw in \$3 million to \$5 million more for annual renovation projects and the financial plan is pushing \$10 million. That's a lot of scratch, even by Warren Buffett's standards.

Many superintendents join the golf course maintenance business because they love agronomics and want to work outside where the world is lush and green. But many learn quickly that they also have to know something about that *other* kind of green. While they don't have to have corporate-level accountant experience, they must have some sense about dollars and cents. They must know the fiscal matters of their business because they have to put together that unnerving "B" word — a "budget."

With the help of several veteran superintendents who are well-trained in the art of budgeting, *Golfdom* offers tips to help you keep your maintenance budgets in line, from how to work with financial decision makers to making cuts when necessary.

What they want

Different golf courses have different goals when it comes to budgeting. Some clubs are more concerned about the bottom line, and some clubs are more concerned about having fantastic greens. "Sometimes you don't see the business restraints at a private club that you would see at

a more business-oriented club," says Rick Slattery, superintendent of Locust Hill CC in Rochester, N.Y., who has worked at both types of clubs.

Slattery says members at Locust Hill, a private club, are more liberal with money if it's available to spend. But before coming to Locust Hill, Slattery worked at a semiprivate course where he says the owner was interested in making money before spending it.

"He basically told me, 'Rick, if you make the course better and more people come here to play because of it, then I'm going to make more money. So I'll take my share off the top, and the club gets everything else.'"

Slattery improved the course's condition, and more people came to play it. Hence, there was more money in the coffer to spend on maintenance. "Instead of spending money up-front, the owner wanted it in his pocket first," Slattery says.

While golf courses approach budget-making differently, there are also many common denominators that most endure in the process. Slattery says a big problem with many courses' budgets is that they're not rising at the same level of golfers' expectations for outstanding turf.

"That's the most difficult part of forming a budget — assessing those expectations," Slattery says. "So superintendents have to be creative and hard-working to massage their budgets to get more for the same amount."

To better assess golfers' expectations, superintendents must get inside golfers' heads to find out what they're thinking. Then they must communicate with them.

Superintendents also need to communicate effectively with the people they are negotiating with on budgets, whether it's the green committee, the financial committee, the general manager or the

Continued on page 30

Continued from page 29

owner. Slattery advises superintendents to learn business lingo so they can hold informed conversations and understand the logic behind bottom lines and profit margins.

Slattery notes that members, owners, general managers, and members of green committees and financial committees are business-savvy people.

"You have to be able to speak in business terms," Slattery says. "You have to be able to talk their language, just like we try to communicate our language in terms like 'top-dressing' and 'verticutting'."

You also might have to persuade members that the extra money you need for equipment repair will be worth the investment. Sometimes it takes a little politicking, especially at the private level where "everybody is an owner," says Sam Sprague, superintendent of Rainier Golf & CC in Seattle.

Joe Boe, superintendent of Coral Oaks GC, probably deals with more bureaucracy than superintendents at private clubs because his course is owned by the city of Cape Coral, Fla. Boe works with the city's financial advisory committee to plan his course's budget.

Continued on page 32

Credibility Rules in the Numbers Game

One of the most important aspects of a creating a viable budget has nothing to do with keeping numbers. It has everything to do with being forthright.

Many superintendents warn their peers against padding or manipulating their budgets so they can have extra money to spend or look good at the end of the year when their maintenance programs come in under budget.

"It's all about credibility," says Rick Slattery, superintendent of Locust Hill CC in Rochester, N.Y. "The days of trying to obtain all the money you can for the course whether you need it or not are over."

Joe Boe, superintendent of Coral Oaks GC in Coral Oaks, Fla., says padding a budget will only get a superintendent in trouble. He knows some superintendents who splurge and buy items they don't need with the extra money they've placed in their budgets.

"I know some superintendents who say, 'I have to spend this money, or I'm not going to get it next year,'" Boe says. "So the last two months of the year they spend like crazy and buy whatever they want."

Boe says such spending is a waste of the golf course owner's money. It also doesn't say much about a superintendent's credibility in managing someone else's money.



It's vital that superintendents show their employers that they can handle their money with care, Slattery says.

"It's easy to spend someone else's money — and not properly," he adds. "It's vital that you treat employers' money exactly like you would treat your own."

Don't try to hide costs in your budget, such as having the club pay for your family to go with you to the GCSAA conference. It's unethical, and it could get you in a fix.

Eventually, Boe and Slattery believe a superintendent who's throwing money around will be busted by a by-the-numbers green committee member or someone else paying close attention to the budget.

"Don't try to hoodwink anybody," Slattery says. "These people aren't dumb."

If something in the budget runs amok, superintendents should communicate the

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RICK SLATTERY
LOCUST HILL CC

problems immediately to their financial superiors, not six months later, Slattery advises. Then they'll view you as a more responsible money manager.

Last year, Slattery spent more on fungicides than he budgeted because of severe disease pressure created from the fallout of a wet spring and a sultry summer. But Slattery communicated to the board of directors and financial committee members — in person and by e-mail — what was going on and that he would try to make up the excess money spent by cutting in other areas of his budget, which he was able to do in the end.

Keeping his peers apprised of what was going on financially made them realize even more that Slattery was being careful with money, which further added to his credibility as a responsible superintendent.

— Larry Aylward, Editor