

START CUTTING.
NOT JUST MOWING.



Or scalping. Or plowing. Cutting is precise. Cutting is exact.

It's about you out there shaping the course one blade of grass at a time. It's the difference between playable and prestigious. A superior course comes from a superior cut. The kind you can always get from a Jacobsen. 1.888.922.TURF or www.jacobsen.com. **DO MORE THAN MOW.™**



Golfdom

MAY 2004 VOLUME 60 • NO. 5

Your Guide to Greens Care



28

Superintendent Gone Architect

Kris Spence is trying to make a name for himself as a golf course designer.

By Shane Sharp

76

Upgrades Enhance Operation

New software and controller technology helps superintendents manage irrigation more effectively.

By Peter Blais

86

A Second Life

New owners are trying to put the fun back into a Phoenix golf course beset by a series of setbacks when known as the Thunderbirds Golf Club.

By Rebecca Larsen

SPECIAL SECTION: THE PUTTING SURFACE

Grass Roots Campaign



Golfdom's Guide to Greens Care

- 35 The Root of the Matter**
You can't stop root loss from occurring, but you can control it so greens can make it through the summer unscathed.
- 42 Take Charge of Your Topdressing**
Don't just use the same material because you've always done it that way. Some analysis and understanding of your grass will help you make the best choice.
- 46 The Value of Verticutting**
Given the benefits of cleaning up your greens, the only question to ask is you're not "grazing" your greens in. Why not?
- 52 Root Life Rejuvenation**
So Much for Scalping
Superintendent, former assistant superintendent "collar pop" to correct common maintenance headache.

35

Grass Roots Campaign

SPECIAL SECTION: THE PUTTING SURFACE

Golfdom reports on matters from maintaining root mass in greens to the importance of verticutting.



36 The Root of the Matter

You can't stop root loss from occurring, but you can control it so greens can make it through the summer unscathed.

By Larry Aylward

42 Take Charge of Your Topdressing

Don't just use the same material because 'you've always done it that way.' Some analysis and understanding of your goals will help you make the best choice.

By Frank H. Andorka Jr.

46 The Value of Verticutting

Given the benefits of cleaning up your greens, the only question to ask if you're not 'pruning' your greens is, 'Why not?'

By Frank H. Andorka Jr.

Real-Life Solutions

52 So Much for Scalping

Superintendent, former assistant invent "collar pipe" to correct common maintenance headache.

By Mark Leslie

cover story

We know you can't read enough about taking care of your course's greens, so here's our annual section on maintaining the putting surface.

35

About the cover

Illustrator Bonnie Hofkin of Larkspur, Calif., created our Grass Roots cover.

News with a hook

15 Adams Will Miss St. Andrews

18 Tree Disease

columns

- 8 **Flagstick**
Now Introducing:
The Graffie Awards
- 10 **Pin High**
A Superintendent's
Distinguished Mom
- 24 **Shades of Green**
The Latest News
From Lake Omigosh
- 56 **Designs On Golf**
Slow Play Kills
Revenues Quickly
- 96 **Out of Bounds**
Pinball

departments

- 6 We've Got Mail
- 12 Big Picture
- 15 Off the Fringe
- 22 Hole of the Month
- 84 Leaders
- 92 Company Line
- 95 Classifieds

57

TurfGrass Trends

This month, *Golfdom's* practical research digest for turf managers reports on research that defines dead spot more clearly. See pages 57-75.

Font'N-Aire® Fountains

Air-O-Lator fountains enhance the water quality and attractiveness of ponds and lakes. Font'N-Aire fountains are ideal for golf courses, parks, playgrounds and landscaping environments.

Font'N-Aire Fountains include:

- Water-cooled submersible motor
- Choice of one nozzle spray pattern
- 100 feet of power cord (longer lengths available)
- Propeller guard and float
- ETL-listed ANSI/UL 508 control panel
- Three-year limited warranty

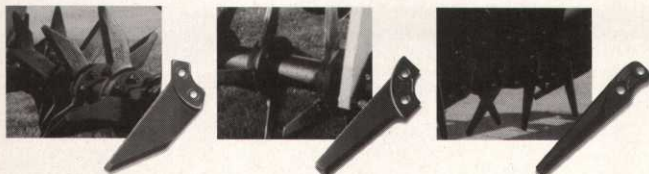
Available in
1/2 horsepower through
5 horsepower models



"THE WATER'S EDGE"

8100-04 Paseo,
Kansas City, Missouri 64131 U.S.A.
1-800-821-3177

www.airolator.com e-mail: sales@airolator.com



Shattertine®

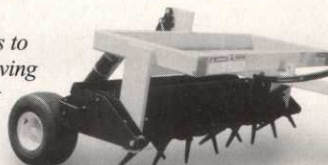
Sportstine®

Finetine®

AerWay® offers low cost, low maintenance, long lasting options for all your turf aeration needs!

A Full Family of Tines - AerWay® offers you customized aeration options for your greens, tees, fairways and roughs.

Effective Deep Tine Action - goes to the heart of soil problems by relieving compaction. This results in strong root growth and outstanding drought resistance.



**AerWay® - Effective Aeration
When You Need It - Where You Need It!**

for further information call **1-800-457-8310**

Advanced Aeration Systems

www.aerway.com aerway@thehollandgroupinc.com

Golfdom

BUSINESS STAFF

Pat Jones PUBLISHER 440-891-3126 pjones@advanstar.com
Tony D'Avino GROUP PUBLISHER 440-891-2640 tdavino@advanstar.com
Mindy Moczulski ADMIN. COORDINATOR 440-891-2734 mmoczulski@advanstar.com
Jill Hood PRODUCTION MANAGER 218-723-9129 jhood@advanstar.com
Rhonda Sande PRODUCTION DIRECTOR 218-723-9536 rsande@advanstar.com
Jessica Borgren CIRCULATION MANAGER 218-723-9356 jborgren@advanstar.com

ADVERTISING STAFF

CLEVELAND HEADQUARTERS

7500 OLD OAK BLVD.
CLEVELAND, OH 44130-3609

Kevin Stoltman ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER kstoltman@advanstar.com
440-891-2772 FAX: 440-891-2675

Pat Roberts NATIONAL ACCOUNT MANAGER proberts@advanstar.com
440-891-2609 FAX: 440-891-2675

Michael Harris REGIONAL MANAGER mharris@advanstar.com
440-891-3118 FAX: 440-826-2865

Tom Cermak ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE AND CLASSIFIEDS tcermak@advanstar.com
440-891-3170 FAX: 440-826-2865

MARKETING SERVICES

Marcie Nagy REPRINTS (500 MINIMUM) 440-891-2744 mnagy@advanstar.com

Dave Kenney CIRC. LIST RENTAL 440-891-3113 dkenney@advanstar.com

Subscriber, Customer Service 218-723-9477; 888-527-7008

Books, Directories, Current Issues, Back Issues, Photocopies, Microfiche, Film Copies, CD-Rom 800-598-6008; 218-723-9180

CORPORATE



ADVANSTAR
COMMUNICATIONS

Joe Loggia CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Alexander S. DeBarr EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

Daniel M. Phillips EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

Scott E. Pierce EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

Eric I. Lisman EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT/CORPORATE DEVELOPMENT

David W. Montgomery VP/FINANCE/CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

Adele D. Hartwick VICE PRESIDENT/TREASURER & CONTROLLER

Francis Heid VICE PRESIDENT/PUBLISHING OPERATIONS

Rick Treese VICE PRESIDENT/CHIEF TECHNOLOGY OFFICER

Golfdom does not verify any claims or other information appearing in any of the advertisements contained in the publication, and cannot take any responsibility for any losses or other damages incurred by readers in reliance on such content.

Golfdom welcomes unsolicited articles, manuscripts, photographs, illustrations and other materials but cannot be held responsible for their safekeeping or return.

Advanstar Communications provides certain customer contact data (such as customers' names, addresses, phone numbers and e-mail addresses) to third parties who wish to promote relevant products, services and other opportunities which may be of interest to you. If you do not want Advanstar Communications to make your contact information available to third parties for marketing purposes, simply call toll-free 888-527-7008 between the hours of 7:30 am and 5 pm CT and a customer service representative will assist you in removing your name from Advanstar's lists. Outside the U.S., please phone 218-723-9477.



For the deepest greens...



Couer d'Alene Resort Golf Course

For the deepest, most vibrant greens, there's nothing faster or more dependable than Ferromec® Liquid Iron.

- Dependable green-up in 24 to 48 hours.
- Corrects and prevents iron-deficient chlorosis.
- Easy to apply liquid formulation.
- Foliar absorbed.
- Speeds recovery from dormancy.



Always read and follow label directions.

G pbi / GORDON CORPORATION

An Employee-Owned Company

1-800-821-7925
ferromec.pbigordon.com

We've Got Mail

■ LETTERS FROM THE FIELD

Is Perception Reality?

We're employed in an industry that serves millions of people annually. It can be a very rewarding career — when everything goes right and all is well in the universe. Unfortunately, this cosmic alignment rarely happens. The problem is that for many of us this is expected — everything going right and perfect conditions are *expected* daily. Why does this happen? Why are we subject to such scrutiny?

Recently, I attended the 38th annual Wisconsin Golf Turf Symposium, and some of the top turfgrass experts in the country were featured speakers: Joe Vargas and Ron Calhoun from Michigan State University; Frank Rossi from Cornell University; Craig Currier from Bethpage State Park; Bruce Clarke from Rutgers University; Mike Morris from Crystal Downs Country Club; and Michael McNulty from the Philadelphia Country Club.

Currier, director of golf course maintenance at Bethpage, said something that most of us know, but very few of our customers understand: "It took six years to prepare for one week of golf." Yes, I know this was one the Majors for the year. But that's the point. What the golfing public sees on television weekly, especially if it's a Major, definitely is not the reality that they can or should expect at their local country clubs. Their perceptions are flawed into thinking that if the turf at Bethpage Black, Olympia Fields, Medinah and Oak Hill looks so great and perfect, why can't they have the same conditions at their courses?

With the advent of television taping *everything*, these events must portray "grainless" greens or be subject to the scorn of Johnny Miller. The perception must be perfect. But even with millions of dollars and hundreds of volunteers, the reality is that these fabulous swards of pristine turf are often pushed to near death. And if Mother Nature deems it, turfgrass dies.

So what can we do? When handed a handful of lemons, how do we make lemonade? This is a challenge with which we are all faced with, especially now with our slower economy and golf rounds spiraling. Morris, the certified superintendent from Crystal Downs Country Club in Frankfort, Mich., had some interesting comments. He took the offensive approach. He talked to members and asked them their expectations of the course. He took the initiative and collected data to determine what his daily green speeds were. He surveyed his golfers and asked them what target green speeds they would accept. Surprisingly, when he sped them up for a club event and tried to maintain the same speed afterward, the members asked him to get them back to normal.

I believe we are our own worst enemies at times. One of our greatest detriments is our lack of communication. I know that we preach to the choir in triumphant choruses, but are loath to carry the message to our employers. How well do we know that the squeakiest wheel gets the grease? Well, why not intelligently gather some data as Morris did and start squeaking?

Our livelihood demands the best of our abilities. Most of us strive well beyond the expectations of our clientele, but at what cost? Maybe we could all save a few gray hairs and save our employers some money if we took the initiative to assess our customers' expectations. Maybe that is the reality of our careers and our lives.

Tony Rzadzki
Irrigation Technician/
PGA Construction Specialist
Whistling Straits Golf Course
Sheboygan Falls, Wis.

We want to hear from you. You can e-mail your letters to Frank Andorka at fandorka@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.

Golfdom

www.golfdom.com

EDITORIAL STAFF

Larry Aylward	EDITOR 440-891-2770	larryward@advanstar.com
Frank H. Andorka Jr.	MANAGING EDITOR 440-891-2708	fandorka@advanstar.com
Geoff Shackelford	CONTRIBUTING EDITOR 310-451-5877	geoffshackelford@aol.com
Joel Jackson	CONTRIBUTING EDITOR 407-248-1971	flgm@aol.com
Anthony Pioppi	CONTRIBUTING EDITOR 860-344-8895	apioppi@earthlink.net
Mark Luce	CONTRIBUTING EDITOR 785-841-6044	mluce@earthlink.net
Dave Wilber	CONTRIBUTING EDITOR 916-630-7800	dave@soil.com
Dr. Karl Danneberger	CHIEF SCIENCE EDITOR	danneberger.1@osu.edu
Lisa Lehman	CORP. CREATIVE DIRECTOR 440-891-2785	llehman@advanstar.com
Kim Traum	SR. GRAPHIC DESIGNER 440-891-3175	ktraum@advanstar.com
Mike Klemme	CHIEF PHOTO EDITOR 580-234-8284	mike@golffoto.com
Sue Porter	EXECUTIVE EDITOR 440-891-2729	sporter@advanstar.com
Vernon Henry	CORP. EDITORIAL DIRECTOR 440-826-2829	vhenry@advanstar.com
Lynne Brakeman	WEB EDITOR 440-891-2869	lbrakeman@advanstar.com

CLEVELAND HEADQUARTERS

7500 OLD OAK BLVD.
CLEVELAND, OH 44130-3609

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF



American Society of Irrigation Consultants 111 E. WACKER,
18TH FLOOR, CHICAGO 60601; 312-372-7090; WWW.ASIC.ORG

GOLFDOM ADVISORY STAFF

Jim Barrett, ASIC JAMES BARRETT ASSOCIATES	Steve Hammon TRAVERSE CITY G&CC
Jan Beljan, ASGCA FAZIO DESIGN	Jim Husting, CGCS WOODBRIDGE G&CC
Pat Blum COLONIAL ACRES CC	Robb Dillinger, CGCS MUNIE OUTDOOR SERVICES
Joe Boe CORAL OAKS GC	Jim Loke, CGCS BENT CREEK CC
Jerry Coldiron, CGCS LASSING POINTE GC	Walter Mattison (IN MEMORY)
Bill Coore COORE & CRENSHAW	Steve Merkel, CGCS LANDSCAPES UNLIMITED
David Davis, FASIC DAVID D. DAVIS ASSOCIATES	Bill Montague, CGCS, MG CUYAHOGA COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Tripp Davis TRIPP DAVIS AND ASSOCIATES	Don Naumann SIERRA PACIFIC TURF
Michelle Frazier, CGCS BOSTON HILLS CC	Jim Nicol, CGCS HAZELTINE NATIONAL GC
Charlie Fultz SHENVALEE GOLF RESORT	Steven Numbers WESTFIELD CC
Paul Gillen AERWAY	Ken Sakai, CGCS GOLF PACIFIC MANAGEMENT GROUP
Dean Graves, CGCS CHEVY CHASE CLUB	James Simonini SYNCFLO
John Gurke, CGCS AURORA CC	

ASSOCIATIONS



American Society of Golf Course Architects 111 E. WACKER,
18TH FLOOR, CHICAGO 60601; 312-372-7090; WWW.GOLFDDESIGN.ORG



Golf Course Superintendents Association of America
1421 RESEARCH PARK DR., LAWRENCE, KS 66049-3859; 800-472-7878;
WWW.GCSAA.ORG



Golf Course Builders Association of America
727 "O" STREET, LINCOLN, NE 68508; 402-476-4444;
WWW.GCBAA.ORG



National Golf Course Owners Association 291 SEVEN FARMS DRIVE,
SECOND FLOOR, CHARLESTON, SC 29492; 843-881-9956;
WWW.NGCOA.ORG



Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment 1156 15TH ST. NW,
SUITE 400, WASHINGTON, DC; 202-872-3860; WWW.PESTFACTS.ORG



INDEPENDENCE

CREEPING BENTGRASS

Independence Creeping Bentgrass is a completely new, cutting edge creeping bentgrass developed by LebanonTurf. It has been bred for improved overall turf quality and disease resistance, specifically to



Declare your Independence

The next generation is here and it is called Independence.

exhibit improved dollar spot resistance. Its medium density and upright aggressive growth habit make it the perfect choice for fairways, greens, and tees. Independence is the top performing commercially available creeping bentgrass in recent university trials. Declare your Independence. Get the new University data by calling your LebanonTurf distributor, or call 1-800-233-0628, or visit www.LebanonTurf.com, and find out more about Independence, the next generation in creeping bentgrass.



LebanonTurf

Nothing Succeeds Like Our Seeds

1-800-233-0628 • www.LebanonTurf.com

As faithful readers and golf history buffs probably know, the original *Golfdom* was launched in 1927 by a pair of Chicago brothers named Herb and Joe Grafis. For nearly 50 years, the old *Golfdom* was the leading source of innovative business information for greenkeepers, club managers and golf professionals alike.

More importantly, for our purposes, the Graffis boys used their magazine as a bully pulpit to improve the lot of greenkeepers. Herb, in particular, lobbied for better education and organization in the fledgling profession. He's even credited with pushing for the use of the title, "greens superintendent," as a better indicator of the level of skill needed for the position.

Eventually, the visionary brothers grew old and sold the magazine. Predictably, without the guidance from its fathers, it lost its "edge" and voice, and died a largely unlamented death in the late 1970s. When we launched this thing in 1999, we gulped hard and "borrowed" the title of the legendary old journal. That worked out OK, so now I'm once again going to invoke a name from our past to, I hope, accomplish something positive for the future.

I hereby announce the creation of a new award, The Graffie, to be presented to those members of the mainstream golf media and establishment who "get it." In other words, we're going to regularly pay tribute to writers, players, association types and other influencers who seem to understand the realities of golf course maintenance and are willing to be credible messengers for the cause.

Although retroactive Graffies should certainly be presented to favorites including Arnold Palmer, Tom Watson, Jim Nantz and David Feherty, I'm going to award the inaugural honor to David Owen of *Golf Digest*.

His piece in the April issue ("Let's go retro — bring back shaggy greens") is simply the most accurate, sympathetic and well-constructed article about green speed to ever appear in a sticks-and-balls publication. If you haven't already seen it, go find it, read it and put a copy on every bulletin board and in every locker in your facility immediately. Just a

Now Introducing: The Graffie Awards

BY PAT JONES



WE'RE GOING TO
PAY TRIBUTE
REGULARLY TO
MEMBERS OF THE
GOLF INDUSTRY
WHO UNDERSTAND
THE REALITIES OF
GOLF COURSE
MAINTENANCE

few quotations to illustrate the magnitude of this public-relations slam dunk:

- "Slow greens require as much putting skill as fast greens do — maybe more."
- "Dialing back the putting speed on almost all golf courses would be good for the game."
- "Like almost all the world's ills, greens that are too fast for their own good can be blamed on TV: Announcers obsess about putting speed, so you and I obsess about it, too."

Johnny Miller, are you listening?

So, Mr. Owen, it's an honor and a pleasure to make you our first Graffie recipient. That, however, begs the question of what the actual award should entail. I'm thinking we'll get an old cup cutter, spray paint it gold, do the proper engraving and ship it off to the winner. It would, at very least, be a nice conversation piece in the winner's cubicle. "What's that?" a visitor to his office would ask. "Why that's the coveted Golden Cup Cutter, of course," our hero would answer.

(By the way, I'm also considering starting an Anti-Graffie for those who consistently demonstrate that they don't "get it." Johnny Grainhead is an obvious choice, as would be noted *Poa*-hater and club slammer Tiger Woods. Instead of the Golden Cup Cutter, they would receive a bag of fertilizer — natural bovine fertilizer, if you catch my drift. But I digress ...)

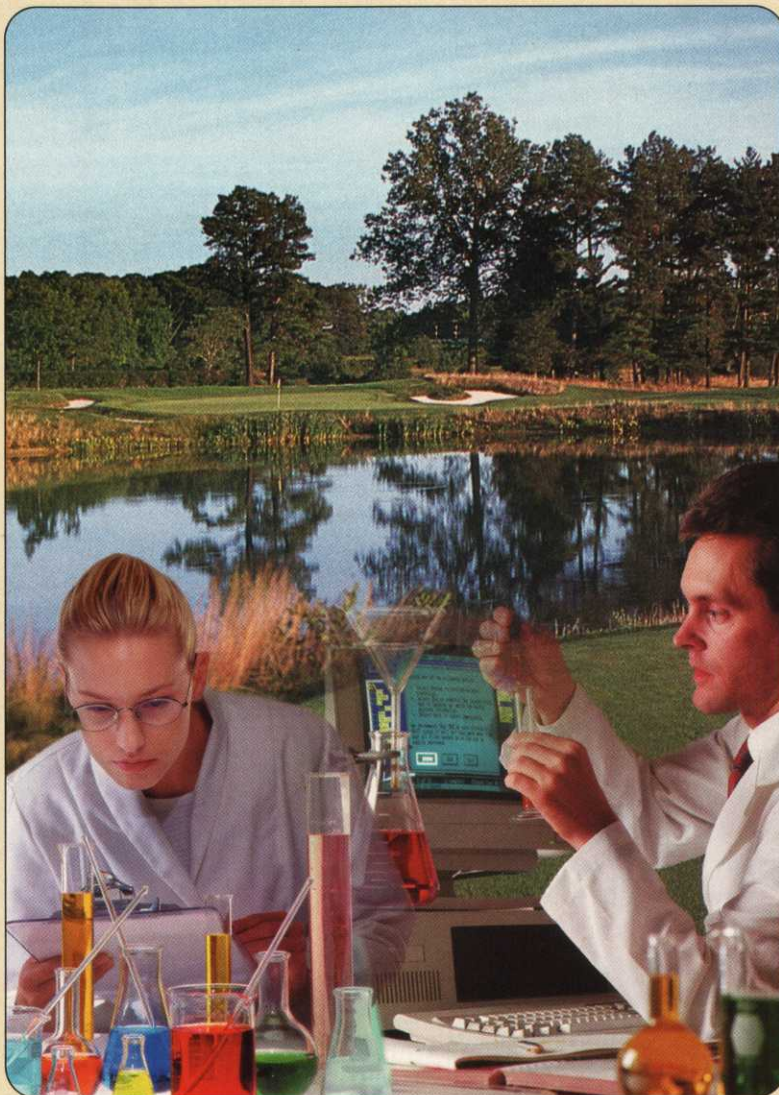
I hope you'll join me in congratulating David Owen and thanking him for using his bully pulpit the way Herb did half a century ago. He can be reached at david.owen@earthlink.net if you'd like to share your digital congratulations with him. He may appreciate your kind words even more than the stupid yellow cup cutter he keeps stubbing his toe on.

Pat Jones is the publisher of Golfdom. He can be reached at 440-891-3126 or pjones@advanstar.com.

ADVANCED AMINO ACID TECHNOLOGY



- Backed by University Research
- Contains 18 Biologically Active L-Amino Acids
- True Foliar Absorption
- Enhances Efficacy of Nutrients and Chemicals
- Provides Maximum Protection from Stress
- Produced at a Pharmaceutical Facility—ISO 9001 & 14001 Certified
- *Environmentally Safe*



Beechtree Golf Club, Aberdeen, Maryland ~ Hole #2, Par 3



1-800-925-5187 macro-sorb.com

The acceptance speech for the career-recognition award was limited to three minutes. Danny Quast, a veteran superintendent of 38 years and the recipient of the award, could probably talk for three *hours* about the memories and highlights of his illustrious career.

So what would Quast cram into an 180-second speech upon receiving the GCSAA's 2004 Distinguished Service Award? Would he reminisce about his 12 years at Medinah Country Club, where he staged a PGA Championship? Or would he talk about all the fabulous people he met in the business over the years?

When Quast stood in front of the microphone stand to make his speech, he kept his thoughts closer to home. He didn't talk about the glitz of a hosting a Major or working at one of the most revered clubs in the nation.

Quast's speech for the award, the crowning achievement of his career, focused on his mother, Hazel, who died in January at age 90. Quast said he wanted to share his award with his mom, who inspired him to go out in the world and make something of himself.

"When I look back over my life, it was my mother that made it all happen for me — by her examples and her attitudes," the 60-year-old Quast told me. "Her encouragement over the years is what put me up on that stage to accept the award. She was the most influential person in my life."

Quast told the thousands attending the awards ceremony, held during the Opening Session of the GCSAA Conference and Show in February, that his mother quietly went about doing God's work during her life but received little recognition for her efforts. So Quast wanted to recognize her now. His time in the spotlight would also be his mother's time.

For the first time in many years, Quast will not celebrate Mother's Day with his mom this month. There will be a void in his heart on May 9.

But Quast, as he has done already, will find comfort and strength in remembering how his mother lived life with zest — daily.

A Superintendent's Distinguished Mom

BY LARRY AYLWARD



DANNY QUAST
SHARES GCSAA
AWARD WITH HIS
MOTHER, WHO
INSPIRED HIM TO
GO OUT IN THE
WORLD AND MAKE
A DIFFERENCE

"There wasn't a day that I ever knew her where she woke up and wasn't glad she was alive," Quast says.

Hazel taught Danny and his twin brother, Dave, to pursue their dreams. She encouraged them to leave their hometown near Dayton, Ohio, so they could make their marks on the world. Sure, she would miss them dearly when they were gone, but she wanted them to get out and expand their horizons.

"She inspired us to be adventurous," Quast says.

Hazel also inspired her sons through her generosity. Danny was moved by his mother's altruism while growing up.

He says Hazel had a heart of gold — she was always volunteering and helping others at various social centers. Even when she was in her late 80s and living at a nursing home, Hazel would take the elevator to the Alzheimer's ward and help out.

"I hope I can walk in her shadow and do as she did for others," Quast says.

Shortly before she died, Hazel, who had \$144 to her name, told Danny, "I'm sorry I'm not leaving you anything."

To which Danny replied: "You left me *everything*. You left me the ability to go out and *be something*."

Indeed, Quast was "something" — one of the top superintendents in the business. But Hazel also left Danny with something else: She taught him about humility and nobility through her actions.

Think about it: The fact that Quast recognized his mother during his three minutes in the limelight says a great deal about the man — and the way he was raised.

Aylward can be reached at 440-891-2770 or l aylward@advanstar.com.