
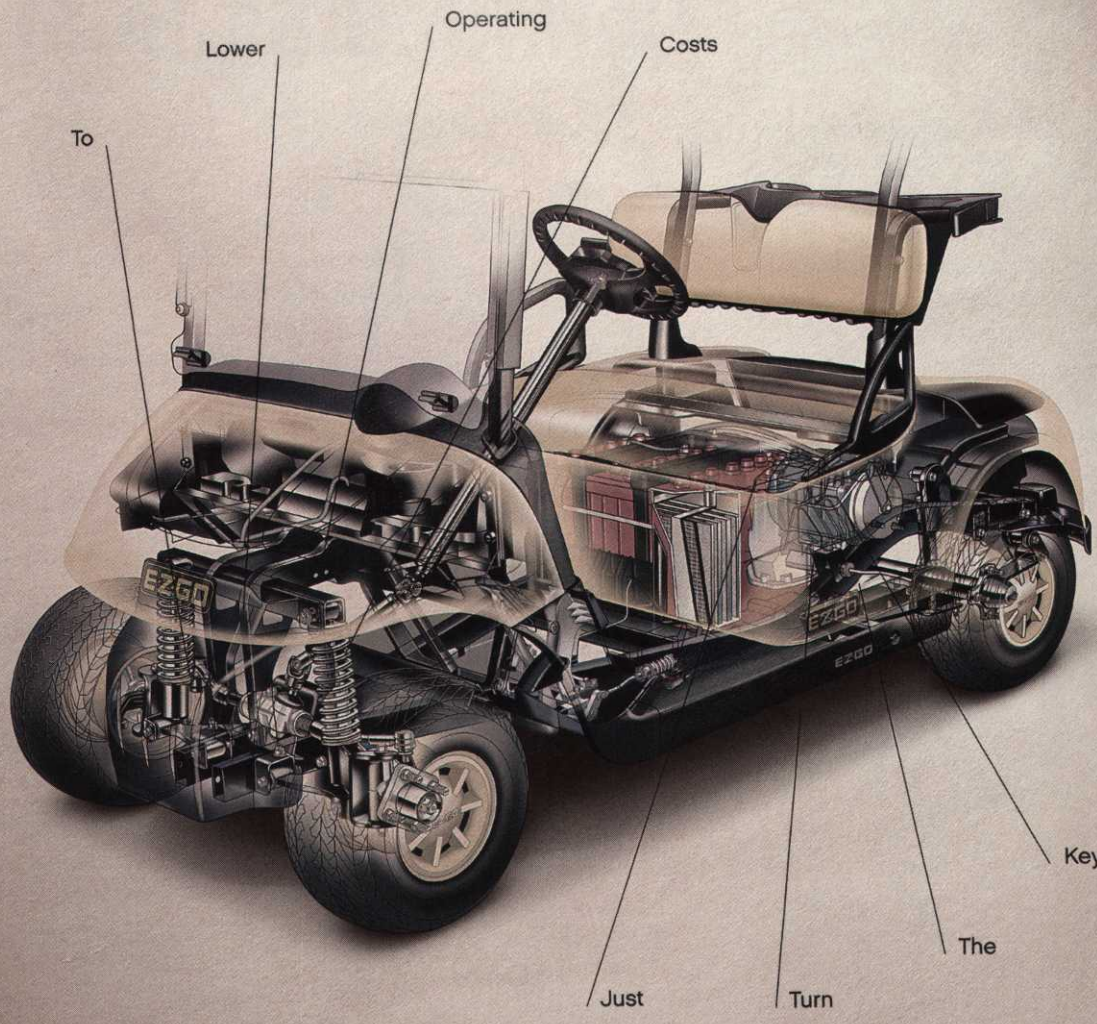


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# Designs on Golf

■ ARCHITECTURE

**H**aving sat through a couple of pretty pedestrian educational seminars at past industry trade shows, I thought I'd offer up a few tweaks to some traditional forums to liven things up.

## Complaining in Contemporary Golf Course Architecture

8 a.m. to 10 a.m.

This popular session features the current president of the American Society of Golf Course Architects, Steven Louis Robertson, moderating a panel of leading ASGCA executive assistants as they moan about today's pertinent issues regarding the hooligans for whom they work. Central to the discussion will be the 10 most common excuses used by assistants to defer clients wishing their phone calls were returned.

## Pre-Storm Tree Restoration for Golf Courses

10 a.m. to noon

The pain and agony of restoring the golf course from years of neglect can be an overwhelming task for any superintendent, his/her staff, green committee chairman and architects. In addition to cleanup and debris removal in the wee hours of the morning, extra care must be paid to convincing members that, in fact, no tree was there the day before and that the members in question must be delusional. With experience in managing many neurotic club members, our speakers will present strategies in spin control, deception and out-and-out lying in the process of restoring a design without anyone actually knowing it.

## Outhouses: The Good, the Bad and the Smelly

1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

Today's modern golf course crappers are engineering marvels distributing uniform defecation control. While specification and construction of comfort stations are typically scrutinized, the actual construction of the outhouse and its supporting infrastructure do not receive the same critical analysis, particularly interior design issues in female lavatories. This session, presented by the Women For Better

# Seminars Never Sounded So Real

BY GEOFF SHACKELFORD



THAT'S RIGHT, WE

THINK THIS SESSION

WILL BE SO DULL

THAT WE'RE

OFFERING EXTRA

INCENTIVES FOR

THOSE WHO CAN

STAY AWAKE

Golf Course Outhouses of America, discusses all of the key elements required for proper outhouse design and construction, including the ideal number per nine holes on your course. Hear from the experts on all the crucial aspects that should be closely scrutinized, from soap dispensers to proper reading material to fresh-cut flower displays.

## You Asked For It ... You Got It!

3 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Join hundreds of bored show attendees for a dynamic session that addresses the top challenges facing today's golf course superintendent while earning you extra credit for remaining conscious throughout. That's right, we think this session — where you came up with the suggested topics instead of letting us experts do it — will be so dull that we're offering extra incentives for those who can stay awake. The votes have been tabulated and speakers identified for the topics you selected. Discover the hot topics this session will offer!

## Repurposing University

5 p.m. to 7 p.m.

We've saved the best for last. Watch as PGA Tour Commissioner Tim Finchem, outgoing GCSAA President Steve Mona and current head of PGA Tour properties David Pillsbury engage in a spirited battle to see who can drop the most MBA-isms a 50-minute session. Expect to hear about bucketizing brands and the joys of "banglorization" in the modern corporate environment.

*Geoff Shackelford can be reached at [geoffshac@aol.com](mailto:geoffshac@aol.com). He's also available to speak at next year's Golf Industry Show.*

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**N**itrogen, a critical component in turfgrass growth and health, is the most frequent and important nutrient applied to turf. It is also rather controversial regarding the rate, method and carrier used.

Historically, nitrogen rates have fluctuated across the spectrum from too much to too little. Appropriate nitrogen input is difficult to gauge because turfgrass managers don't measure success by yield.

Nitrogen is either applied as a liquid or granular formulation. Both methods are used quite successfully in golf course fertility programs. For putting green fertilization, liquid applications are popular.

Broad use of liquid nitrogen was instituted in the 1970s by the lawn care industry. Nitrogen in the soluble form could be dissolved into a spray tank requiring no agitation and applied from the lawn care truck. Besides the advantage of not requiring tank agitation, handling fertilizer bags was eliminated, and the cost of using a soluble nitrogen source was relatively cheap. From an agronomic perspective, a soluble nitrogen response (growth and green color) was observed within days, which satisfied the customer.

Disadvantages of soluble nitrogen included 1) a short lifespan, often not lasting the duration period between applications; 2) the use of higher rates resulted in a growth surge; and 3) the potential for fertilizer burn increased with higher given rate and the soluble nitrogen forms.

In the late 1970s and 1980s, liquid applications became controversial — in some cases — based on misleading information. It was not uncommon to hear or read that continual liquid nitrogen application would lead to root system "atrophy" because of a lack of "nutrient exercise" by the root system.

Unfortunately, this reasoning ignored two basic facts. The first was nitrogen is mobile in the plant — upon entry it freely moves through the plant. The second was the misconception that liquid meant foliar uptake, which was not the case. Liquid nitrogen applications can be

## The Nuances of Nitrogen Programs

BY KARL DANNEBERGER



FERTILIZATION  
TERMINOLOGY CAN  
BE CONFUSING. WHAT  
A TERM MEANS TO  
ONE MIGHT NOT  
MEAN THE SAME  
TO ANOTHER

root absorbed. Interestingly, I now come across almost the same logic for granular applications — the root system is incapable of taking up and transporting nitrogen under stress, and granules can't be foliar absorbed.

In golf, primarily greens management, the liquid evolved into low rates of nitrogen (minimize/eliminate growth surge and burn potential) applied frequently. The term spoon feeding is used to describe this process. The essence of spoon feeding is just-in-time fertilization. It is an intensive practice, often requiring weekly applications due to the rate, soluble source and difficulty or risk in judging if enough nitrogen is being applied for desired turf health.

Given these concerns, the practice is extremely successful and efficient for greens under summer stress conditions. Although spoon feeding is associated primarily with liquid application, I believe the term is becoming independent of the application method because of new granular technology coming to the market.

Foliar feeding is a popular term for liquid spoon feeding. By definition, however, foliar fertilization is the uptake of nutrients by the foliage or leaf. An advantage to strict foliar absorption is it provides nutrients to the plant when the root system is incapable because of unfavorable soil or environmental conditions. Foliar fertilization, however, is not an efficient process.

Fertilization terminology can be confusing. What a term means to one might not mean the same to another. My suggestion is to focus on rate, frequency of application and carrier/product for developing your fertilizer program.

---

*Karl Danneberger, Ph.D., Golfdom's science editor and a turfgrass professor from The Ohio State University, can be reached at danneberger.1@osu.edu.*

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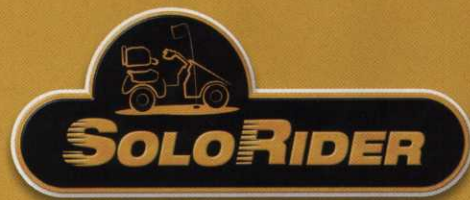
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# Back To School

**M**ost golf course superintendents are horticulturists by trade, but they will be the first to say their jobs go far beyond making the grass grow. They dabble in budgeting, resource management, accounting, public relations, personnel management, mediation, meteorology, maintenance, wildlife habitat — all while keeping 18 fairways, greens and tee boxes in top form.

“There are roughly 50 different hats that we wear,” says Jim Loke, certified superintendent at Bent Creek Country Club in Lancaster, Pa. “We have to be an astronomer, a weatherman and a liaison between governments and the people.”

With so many hats, which one would superintendents wear if they went back to school for 30 days? Ray Davies, director of golf course maintenance and construction for Petaluma, Calif.-based CourseCo, provides an answer

with which many of his peers agree.

“When I went to college, I was going to get a major in ornamental horticulture and a minor in business,” Davies says. “That’s what I did, and now I wonder if I shouldn’t have done it the other way around.”

For all the facets of the job Loke describes, he says he also believes a master’s degree in business administration would likely serve him best. But in the next breath, he acknowledges that perhaps studying psychology would be the way to go.

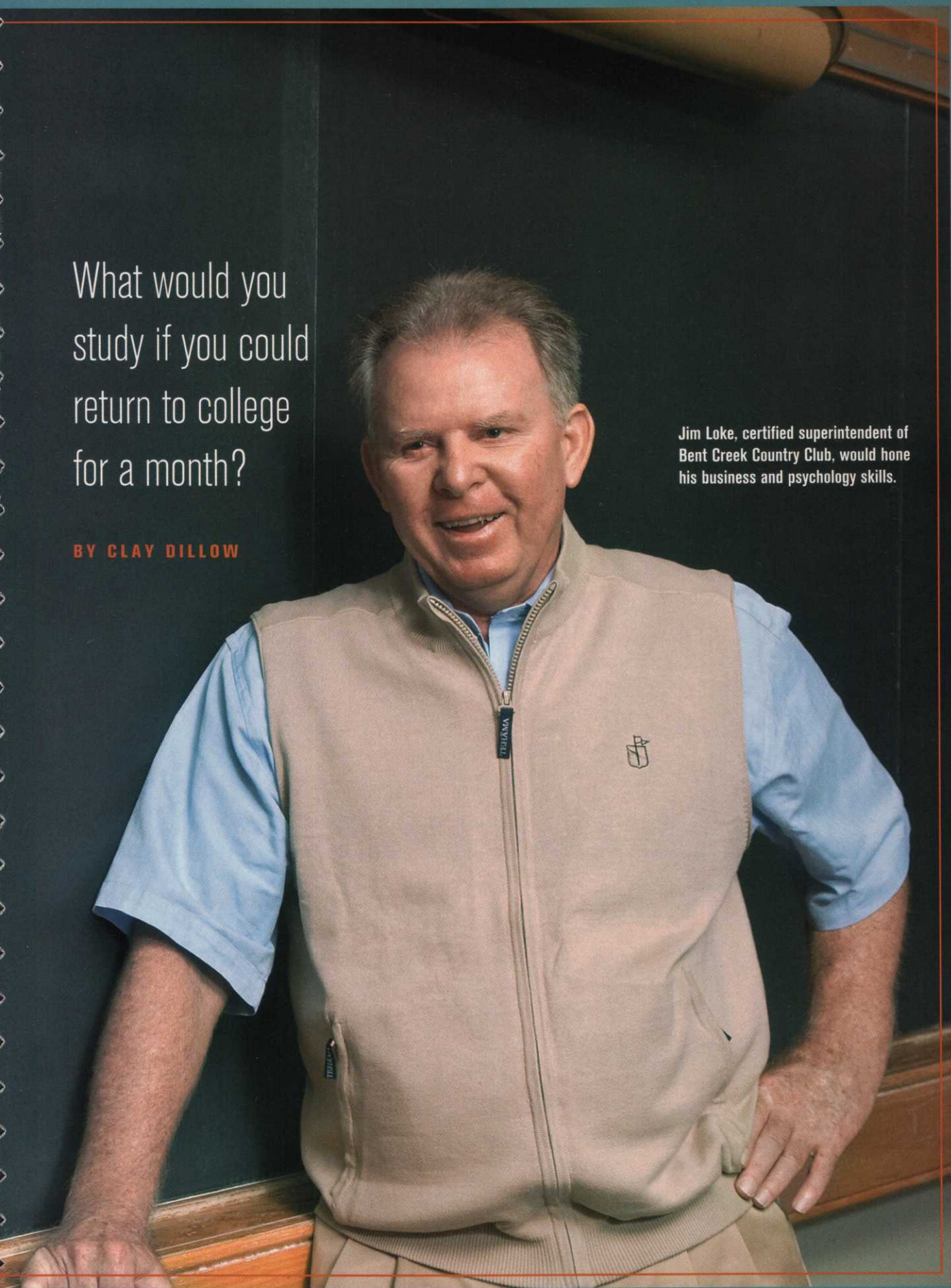
“Understanding people,” Loke says, describing one of his most common challenges. “The psychology of people as in the motivating of people ... directing people.”

*Continued on page 30*

What would you study if you could return to college for a month?

BY CLAY DILLOW

Jim Loke, certified superintendent of Bent Creek Country Club, would hone his business and psychology skills.



7:08 AM...



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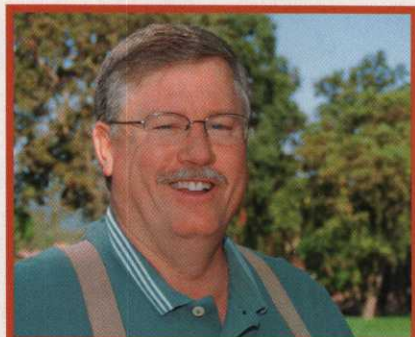


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## Back To School



"You can be the best superintendent in the world, but if you only have half of what you need, you're going to fail."

Ray Davies



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*Continued from page 26*

Davies and Loke essentially represent the field when it comes to the subjects superintendents might study if offered an opportunity to return to higher education. Of the professionals interviewed for this story, almost every one mentioned psychology or business as the subject he or she would most like to study to facilitate his or her day-to-day duties, both on and off the golf course.

Moreover, regardless of the path each would take to get there, a common goal emerges from them: "We need to better articulate the message we need to get out, whether it's to the community, the board of directors and even our own staffs," says Mark Clark, certified superintendent of Troon Golf and Country Club in Scottsdale, Ariz. He says environmental issues, wildlife habitat and day-to-day agronomy naturally consume the golf course superintendent. But in large part, communication is the No. 1 skill the modern superintendent must possess.

"You're not mid-management anymore," Clark says, noting that most superintendents manage a budget that tops \$1 million. "You're key staff. You have to be able to show those that hire you what you are capable of doing. Most of the time, that means being able to communicate what you are trying to do."

Clark, like Loke and Davies, says he would study business, but it's the ability to write and present to others that interests him. In a position that rests semi-autonomously somewhere between the community, the members, the board of

directors and the golfing public, superintendents have found effective communication skills to be some of the sharpest tools in their shed.

"He who gets the best resources wins," Davies says. "You can be the best superintendent in the world, but if you only have half of what you need, you're going to fail."

To that end, Davies believes superintendents are unintentional salespeople. They are knowledgeable advisers who must be able to help boards of directors understand the needs of the course and communicate with them in a way that helps them make good decisions.

"As superintendent, you're in charge of the biggest asset of the golf course: the golf course," says Mike Osley, certified superintendent of Aurora Hills Golf Course in Centennial, Colo. "You're the one who attends board meetings and says, 'This is why we need to spend this money.' You have to be a salesman. You have to be able to go into a boardroom in a business suit and tie and tell the members why you need this money to maintain this golf course."

The communication challenges don't end in the boardroom. With a budget secure, superintendents must turn around and motivate, educate and direct a staff that is often made up of temporary help. Keeping a large staff motivated is a full-time job, says David Phipps, superintendent at Stone Creek Golf Club in Oregon City, Ore. Like Clark, if he were to have another crack at the university, Phipps would consider studying business as it pertains to personnel management.



"I think I could be a stronger motivator."

David Phipps