



// ON THE ROAD AGAIN

The fraternal order of greenkeepers

➔ My most recent journeys have been to state and local chapter events. They were reminders of the positive benefits of the camaraderie of people with similar interests, common goals, and challenges.

One of these events was the Florida GCSA Golf Championship. All eleven local chapters had a team competing for the Chapter Team Trophy and state bragging rights. The Palm Beach Chapter swept the event with Low Individual and Team victories. It was a bittersweet victory. While they were victorious on the course, back home they have been inundated with torrential rains from April to August, with reports of double-digit daily rains and 20- to 30-inch monthly totals. Renovation and re-grassing project costs escalated, as continuous washout repairs were required and opening dates were postponed.

The other journey was to the annual Palm Beach and South Florida Chapters

joint meeting. The South Florida GCSA was formed in 1939. As golf expanded northward the Palm Beach GCSA split away in 1978, and in the early 1980s they began these joint meetings to share their common history.

I had lunch at the joint meeting with Kevin Downing, the third president of the Florida GCSA. Now a supplier, Downing and I reminisced about common experiences we've had and people we've known over the years. These lifelong friendships provide continuity and fond memories. These relationships combine the old adage "It's who you know" with "what you know" which can lead to personal and professional growth opportunities. I know that my volunteer participation and involvement led me to a rich and satisfying career in this industry.

Do yourself and your career a big favor — go to meetings and get involved!

Joel Jackson, CGCS-Ret., is a contributing editor for *Golfdom*.



GO FIGURE

1

The number of readers who said if they could have any superintendent job in the world, would choose Bushwood CC.

See full story on page 20

// ACQUISITION

EAGLE ONE GOLF FOLDS WESTERN GOLF UNDER WING

Eagle One Golf recently announced the acquisition of Western Golf. Western Golf is a leading manufacturer and distributor of golf course equipment and golf course accessories. Products made by Western Golf are sold to thousands of golf courses throughout North America as well as 38 countries worldwide.

"The addition of Western Golf to our portfolio of companies will help broaden our product offerings to better serve our customers," said Paul Cherrie, president and CEO of Eagle One Golf.

Western Golf is a third generation business headed by Bob Wagner. Wagner will continue to play a key role in the company going forward.

// THAT-A-BOY!

FISHER HONORED BY CAROLINAS

Georg Fisher, who spent more than 20 years as a sales manager and manager of customer relations for Smith Turf and Irrigation, will be honored with the Carolinas GCSA Distinguished Service Award. He will be presented the award this month at the Carolinas annual Conference and Trade Show.

"Superintendents, architects, owners, developers, builders, PGA pros, turfgrass industry leaders, educators, fellow distributor personnel and countless others call on George and rely on his guidance and more importantly, his friendship," said Steve Smith, president of STI.

Golfdom Gallery



1 The big tuna Now *that's* a tuna! Visitors to Lebanon Turf in Lebanon, Pa., will see this bad boy greeting them in the lobby.



2 Last call Following the end of the Palm Beach GCSA golf tournament, (from left) Bob Jacks, Stonebridge G&CC, Boca Raton, Fla.; John Spiwak, Eastpointe CC, Palm Beach Gardens, Fla.; Jim "Jimmy Mac" McDonald, Florida Superior Sand Inc.; Seth Jones, *Golfdom*; and Larry "Biff" Balko, Presidential CC, West Palm Beach, Fla. decided that "last call" didn't apply to anyone so handsome. Boy, were they wrong.



3 Fishing for Pro V1s Jacks asked for us to look away — LOOK AWAY! — as he and his playing partner went fishing for a lost tee shot. Our question: If you hit your drive there, how did you still card a birdie on the hole? Turns out that tuna photo isn't the only thing that's fishy here...



4 It's gotta be the shoes! Biff wails away for the fences, but it's all good... he can't swing out of his shoes when he's wearing flip flops.



5 Vulcan nerve pinch Robert Anderson, Royal Palm Yacht & CC and Tom Phillips, Floratine, smile for a photo. Moments after this shot Anderson blacked out — the apparent victim of a Vulcan nerve pinch.

6 Characters welcome (L to R) Smithco's Jim Block, Jones, *Golfdom*'s Pat Roberts and Smithco's Don Smith at a recent lunch at the Palms in Philadelphia. The Palms is known for its many caricatures painted on the walls. We're pretty sure we saw Roberts' likeness painted near the men's room. Or was that Stone Cold Steve Austin?



PHOTOGRAPHY BY: SETH JONES



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“The ideal job has something to do with work you have an intense passion for and never grow tired of. I personally think that most superintendents already have that job.”

MARK WOODWARD, *Contributing Editor*

The grass may not always be greener

There is no doubt that some “dream jobs” in our industry are very rewarding, exciting and they come with a certain level of gratification and satisfaction with the high-level visibility they bring superintendents. However, it’s also important to point out that not all dream jobs have to do with large salaries, big budgets, prestigious tournaments, television coverage, etc.

The jobs that most people would consider dream jobs in golf are full of politics, challenges, frustrations and headaches that most people might not see on the surface. I personally experienced this concept firsthand in a couple of the jobs that I’ve held over the span of my career.

Most of us at one time or another has thought about what our dream job may look like. Some skeptics among us may even think that there is no such thing as a dream job, particularly in this economy.

A dream job to me is one that makes you happy each and every day you go to it and it can come in many forms. It may be something as simple as a job that affords you the appropriate time off to spend time with your family and

find the ever elusive “work/life balance” that I believe is critical to being a happy, well-rounded individual. Being obsessed or addicted to your job is no different in my mind to being obsessed or addicted to any substance or other part of your life that causes you to lose sight of what’s important.

Some people might think that having a job that allows you to work from home would be ideal. As a small business owner in the golf industry, I can attest to the fact that working from a home office is not always what it’s cracked up to be. It’s hard to get away from your job when it’s right down the hall in your fourth bedroom.

Some young superintendents that I have spoken to about this topic think that

their dream job would be to work at a course that hosts a PGA Tour event or a USGA event. This is a great aspiration. But remember these jobs also come with issues not that appealing when describing a dream job.

Many of the veteran superintendents say that their dream job is one with job security. They don’t talk about money but rather the opportunity to pad their retirement accounts, knowing full well that their careers are winding down.

The ideal job has something to do with work you have an intense passion for and never grow tired of. I personally think that most superintendents already have that job. We obviously love what we do, we can work

both indoors and outdoors (mostly outdoors), we are able to combine our passion with our talents in providing great playing conditions for golfers to enjoy our great game.

I think it’s important to note that more than likely there is not a job out there in golf — or anywhere — that could be considered the perfect job. Every job has its share of challenges and frustrations. If you have the preconceived notion that you will be happy each and every day in your job, you will constantly be disappointed.

To me, the most important part about finding your dream job revolves around what makes YOU happy. You need to focus on what’s important to YOU. In a vast number of the cases it has nothing to do with money. The majority of the people I know put money way down the list of things that are important to them in being happy with their job.

Just remember as you read this issue of *Golfdom* that dream jobs come in many shapes and sizes and what’s important to one person in describing their dream job may not be important to someone else. The bottom line is that we are blessed to be doing what we’re doing and actually getting paid for it.

Plus you may already be in your dream job... you just have to realize it.

Mark Woodward is a senior vice president for OB Sports, principal of DaMarCo Golf, president of Mark Woodward and Associates and a contributing editor for *Golfdom*.

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“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...

Matt Neff (mneff4@yahoo.com) is assistant superintendent at Wedgewood G&CC in Powell, Ohio.



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Living *the* Dream

BY SETH JONES

The work may be strenuous, but many superintendents realize that there's no other place they'd rather be

“I’m happy where I am,” was Daniel McCann’s answer. Honest, to the point and an opinion shared by many of his colleagues. ¶ McCann, superintendent at San Antonio CC, was one of the 661 respondents to a January 2013 *Golfdom* survey. One of the questions we asked: “If you could be the superintendent at any course in the world, what course would you choose?” Respondents could type in any course they wished.

The most popular answer?
“Right where I am.”

What are the qualities of a job that make superintendents love their position? How much of “living the dream” is about attitude? And how can superintendents get their staffs to feel that love?

We asked some of those respondents, and this is what we learned.

Reader responses

Sam Crowe, CGCS at the Reserve at Keowee in Sunset, S.C., scoffed at the idea of chasing after a course that others perceived as being more prestigious.

“This is a great place to work. Some people are driven by getting to a top-50 course, or hosting

a Major. I give them credit. But I’m most interested in being someplace where I’m appreciated, and where I have an effect on the success of the



Sam Crowe

course,” he says. “Everyone has their own criteria. Mine is more simple: I just want to be valued.”
Steve Southard, CGCS, golf operations manager for the city of Loveland, Colo., oversees 45 holes of golf and as many as 40 employees during peek season. He arrived to Colorado via Michigan seven years ago. His experience with a struggling economy in Michigan colors his answer when it comes to what he looks for in a superintendent job.

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