



Assistant Compensation

By Monroe S. Miller

Two things inspired the theme and questions in this edition of the SURVEY.

Initially, the results of the GCSAA survey that were summarized in this feature of the last issue of *THE GRASS ROOTS* got me thinking about doing a little more investigating of the level of pay and benefits for Wisconsin's assistant golf course superintendents.

I thought about it even more when Pat Zurawski left for Reedsburg Country Club and I was confronted with filling that position on my own staff.

So while everyone else was gambling, going to Vegas shows and playing golf in the desert at the recently completed GCSAA conference, I was slaving away on this SURVEY.

There are a lot of qualifiers impacting on these questions. Obviously, only those WGCSA members who belong to the GCSAA were questioned. The interviewees were further narrowed by the fact I only talked to WGCSA and GCSAA members who attended the 1991 conference. The implications and bias are obvious. And I did not consider term of service or years of experience when asking the following questions. Obviously, compensation is closely tied to those important factors.

Nevertheless, the brief survey should give some clue as to where we are at in our state in compensating these extremely valuable people. I think that has importance.

Here are the questions:

1. Is your assistant golf course superintendent salaried or paid by the hour?
2. Which of the following benefits does your assistant golf course superintendent receive?
 - health insurance
 - educational considerations
 - vehicle
 - pension
 - housing
3. How much is your assistant golf course superintendent paid?

RESULTS

1. I questioned 30 WGCSA members representing 30 golf facilities in our state. Of the 30, 13 paid their assistants by the hour and 17 paid them an annual wage.
2. The benefit breakdown is as follows:

| | |
|----------------------------|----|
| Health Insurance | 25 |
| Educational Considerations | 28 |
| Vehicle | 1 |
| Pension | 7 |
| Housing | 4 |

3. The pay ranges were as follows:

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| SALARY | |
| Less than \$20,000/year | 3 |
| \$20,000 - \$25,000/year | 7 |
| \$25,000 - \$30,000/year | 2 |
| More than \$30,000/year | 5 |
| WAGE | |
| Less than \$8.00/hour | 4 |
| \$8.00 - \$9.00/hour | 5 |
| \$9.00 - \$10.00/hour | 2 |
| More than \$10.00/hour | 2 |

Several observations are worthy of note. Most assistant golf course superintendents are young and expect to move on to manage their own golf courses someday.

Those at the high end of the pay and benefits scale are somewhat older, have been with the same club and golf course superintendent for a longer period of time and derive great satisfaction from their work. Their value is generally recognized by the club and they are compensated fairly for their experience, value and loyalty. Frankly, I am impressed by that group.

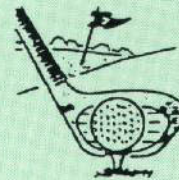
The question of hourly versus salary precipitated lots of discussions about which way to go on this decision. Most of those paying an hourly wage were concerned about state and federal labor laws and rules in the areas of management/ work ratios and overtime. They felt the hourly wage solved the problem (real or imagined) and was fair to the individuals involved.

The matter of wage versus salary merits investigation to pin down details. That information would make for a great informational piece for *THE GRASS ROOTS*.

Any volunteers?

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