



## President's Message

# MURPHY'S LAWS (FOR GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENTS)

Have you ever had one of those days when nothing goes right? Well, I have, and I'm getting a little worried because I'm well into the second day of it. It has convinced me, more than ever before, that Murphy must have been a Golf Course Superintendent. You remember Murphy: he's the wise acre who came up with the phrase "Anything that can go wrong — will." Every season his laws are proven true with unbelievable and disgusting consistency; so much so, for me, that I had to write them down. Are there any here that you recognize?

## LAWS OF THE GOLF COURSE

The weather is either too hot, too cold, too dry, too wet — or too good to last.

Next year's weather will be better for us.

More often than not, bad weather reports will be right and good weather reports will be wrong.

The Greensaire will always break down with three greens to go — too late to cancel aerifying and with enough left to aggravate play tomorrow.

The sprayer breaks down when pythium is running wild on your fairways.

The impeller on the Lely spreader will break when it's full of fertilizer.

The seeder breaks down the day before a rain. And it will rain right after contact fungicides have been applied.

## BUDGET LAWS

Everything you decide to do on the golf course costs more than first estimated and budgeted. It also will always take longer than you planned and more time than you have.

The cost of fertilizer drops \$40 a ton the day after you buy.

Bentgrass seed will be sold out the day before you order.

Discrepancies in your budget never will be in your favor.

## SHOP LAWS

Your distributor's parts department will always lack one part — the one you need.

The wrong part will come in the right box.

A machine will break down immediately after the warranty is up.

A battery will go dead the day after the warranty expires.

Leftover nuts never match leftover bolts.

You will have every size of bolt in your bins except the size you need.

The right tool isn't ever in the right toolbox.

If you tinker around with something long enough, it will break or malfunction.

Anything used or loaded to its full potential or capacity will break.

If something jams, force it; if it breaks, so what? You needed to replace it anyway.

## LAWS OF GOLF COURSE MANAGEMENT

The day; no, the very minute you lean back to relax is the very time the Club President and the Green Committee Chairman stop by. They also like to stop on those rare occasions when you are gone — usually only on a parts run.

Precise, conscientious planning and minute attention to detail will never succeed like blind dumb luck.

A Golf Course Superintendent always thinks next year will be better.

The first place to look for something is in the last place you'd expect to find it.

Just when you think things are going pretty well on the golf course, something really ugly is right around the corner.

If you faithfully work ten hours a day for long enough on your golf course you may eventually be successful enough to work twelve hours a day. (Thank you, Robert Frost!) You will never "have it made."

And finally, as my Dad used to tell all of us kids as we walked through the barnyard, **never** step in anything soft!

I think I'll go home and take a nap. Wonder if my pickup will start?

Monroe S. Miller  
President

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## A Player's Perspective

# THE ROLE OF THE GREEN COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

By Dr. David U. Cookson



Your editor assigned me this topic this month; but in thinking about what I would say and reflecting on experience, it is obvious that a complete summation would include both the ideal and hoped for exemplary role of the Green Committee Chairman, but also recognize the too often opposite example of the Green Chairman who fails to play his role effectively. Both results, success and failure of accomplishment, can best be noted by outlining the Green Chairman's role in golf club interaction.

The fundamental duty of the Green Chairman is to serve as liaison between the club membership and the Green Superintendent. All else is peripheral to this basic obligation. If the Green Chairman fails this role, he fails completely. He succeeds by earning and maintaining the confidence and respect of both the membership and the Board as well as the Green Superintendent. He must be politic enough to recognize and deal with the various interest groups within the club, and maintain lines of communication with all, yet tactfully synthesize these concerns in presentations to the Green Superintendent such that advice and counsel is not perceived to be arbitrary and unrealistic. At the same time he must be cognizant of the real needs of the Green Superintendent in performing his job to his best capability, and be prepared to lobby the club membership and Board to support the necessary expenditures and policies to keep the golf course in top condition. Unhappily, this ideal Green Committee chairman is too infrequently found; generally due to either inexperience, lack of interest in or understanding of the position, or commonly, a dogmatic and authori-

tative approach to problems which leaves little room in the mind for breadth of understanding or interest in accommodating diverse points of view. A wise Green Superintendent would spend some effort subtly promoting the concept of the ideal Green Chairman to the club leaders in hope of influencing selection of the appropriate type of individual to this position.

There are of course other important roles for the Green Committee chairman. He must be knowledgeable about the best turf conditions for playing golf, and have travelled sufficiently and visited enough other clubs to have a general appreciation of this subject. This is necessary to be able to convey meaningful suggestions to his Green Superintendent as to whether things are on the right track, and also that the Superintendent will respect the opinions he is hearing. The Green Chairman must play his own course enough so that he is always aware of the current status of its condition. He must educate himself to some understanding of the kinds of grasses and disease processes prevalent on his golf course, as well as acquire knowledge of the usual problems of cultivation and maintenance of turf. Lastly, he must be able to make a decision, and then to take responsibility for those decisions made even if adverse consequences occur, without placing blame on other factors or trying to shift responsibility to the Green Superintendent.

The successful Green Chairman will certainly maintain a close relationship with the Green Superintendent, close enough so that policy questions are clearly understood and acknowledged by both, but not so close as to interfere with day

to day management, decisions of the Superintendent in relation to his crew, or in the details of precise utilization of fertilizers or pesticides. He will be available; and an individual that the Superintendent will feel comfortable in presenting problems to and recommending solutions, feeling that the Green Chairman will listen fairly and be reasonable in his evaluations.

Finally, I feel the Green Chairman should provide continuity in the ongoing relationship between the club and the Green Superintendent. Every successful and continually smooth interaction involving the club and the Green Superintendent that I have observed has also included a Green Chairman providing continuity in service. Short term Green Chairmen lead to inconsistency of direction and disruptive operations and policies, and should be resisted. Clubs which pursue this practice feel they are promoting healthy conditions by bringing in fresh faces to try new approaches; but in fact, there are few members at any club whose talents exist in broad enough measure to be good Green Chairmen, and they should not be wasted once they have undertaken these duties by being too often rotated out and retired.

These then are what appear to me to be essential in the role of the Green Chairman, at least in a good Green Chairman. Most Green Chairmen will fall short in some or perhaps most of these attributes, but there are also a number who do successfully combine these qualities into their performance, and serve to show all of us how effective and important a good Green Chairman can be; the club and Green Superintendent who have one of these working right now are fortunate indeed.

Editor's Note: Dr. Cookson has accepted the Green Committee Chairman assignment at Maple Bluff Country Club for 1985. It is a role he previously held for 8 years at Maple Bluff.





## An Architect's Opinion

# THE ART OF PUTTING GREEN DESIGN

By Bob Lohmann

No one part of a golf course has as much effect upon the golfer's score as the putting green. The ideal round would require 18 approach shots to the green and 36 putts on the green's putting surface. Over 75 percent of the strokes in an ideal round are decided on or in the approach to one of the smallest areas on the golf course. Rarely is an ideal round played, but even the average golfer who has a 17 handicap accumulates 55 to 60 percent of his score on or around the green area.

Putting greens and the adjacent area form the most important part of the golf course and are often the most costly items to construct and maintain. Because of their importance in both use and development of character, each dollar spent on them is well worth it. A. W. Tillinghast, famous American architect of Winged Foot and Baltusrol Golf Clubs, once said, "A controlled shot to a closely guarded green is the surest test of any man's golf." The quality of the putting greens are determined by design, construction, and maintenance.

***"A controlled shot to a closely guarded green is the surest test of any man's golf."***

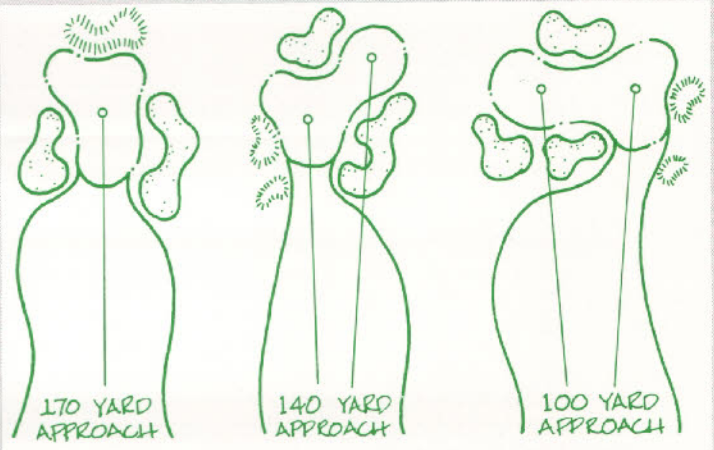
During the design phase, the putting green area is considered the most important part of the golf hole, the one target area every golfer is aiming for. Unlike the target areas in the fairway, the putting surface must be kept closely mowed, firm, and consistently smooth to provide the best possible putting surface. It is designed to fit the adjacent ground, but varies in size and contour relative to the length of the golf hole, position in the round, placement of adjoining hazards, and eye appeal as determined by the architect.

Assuming that the technology involved during construction is proper and consistent, as well as the maintenance of the putting green, the design will determine the appearance and playability of each individual putting green. The skill and imagination of the architect will set the groundwork for developing putting greens that are attractive, playable, and maintainable. Differing from the precisely engineered highway bridge, the drawings for putting greens are only guides, and the final touches need to be completed in the field by the architect during construction. Avoiding the architect's onsite inspection will cause the putting green to be somewhat different from that originally envisioned by the designer. The most obvious are the golf courses designed by famous architects who were seldom or never onsite during construction. These courses lack the character and quality of natural blending that were present on their masterpiece designs.

Two important items necessary for ease of

maintenance are good drainage, and the use of internal components that resist compaction. The superintendent, through maintenance procedures, can then determine the putting speed of a green regardless of its size, shape, or slope. Pin placement on fast, undulating greens can become out-of-hand if not carefully monitored. Because there are few relatively flat areas, the pin is sometimes unfairly placed on a slope. The superintendent, attempting to keep the putting surface in perfect condition, must use the sloped area in order to avoid excessive wear on the continually used flatter areas. Many older golf courses have small and sloping greens that, because of modern maintenance procedures, have become unfair for today's golfer.

As the amount of play increases, and smaller greens with limited pin placements receive heavy traffic concentrations, the options available are placing the pin on the slopes more often, wearing out the flatter areas because of excessive use, or enlarging the putting surface. When the green is enlarged or rebuilt, the architect's design should provide for multiple pin placements with at least one difficult area for tournament play. The shape, size, and angle of the putting surface is determined by the adjacent hazards and the approach shot that will be attempted.



Depending on the pin placement, the golfer aiming for the fat of the green assumes two putts will be needed to hole out, but if he plays for and successfully negotiates a shot at the pin, the reward is the possibility of needing just one putt.

Slopes on the putting surface vary from relatively flat for pin placements to undulating for character development. The undulating ground should be between and adjacent to the potential pin placement areas. This guards the pin placement area, demanding a controlled approach shot, while allowing for a challenging, but fair, putt. Placement of undula-



tions behind the putting surface improves visibility and helps hold shots from rolling off the back of the green.

The putting green should be contoured to accept and hold good golf shots while guiding water off the surface in multiple directions. A crowned putting surface provides good drainage, but will direct golf shots into adjacent hazards or off the back of the green.

The total green area should be built to blend with the adjacent terrain and the putting surface itself. Small mounds and grassy hollows develop

character that, along with the undulations on the putting surface, will demand accurate approach shots and will provide challenging chip and pitch shots for the golfer that misses the putting surface.

With all the numbers, charts, and specifications provided by different golf organizations, it is important to remember that putting green design is an art as much as a science and that the aims are still the same—to blend all the elements together to create a unique character, and to provide pleasure for each individual golfer.



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## **GCSAA Convention Site Some tips to help you survive your trip to D.C.**

By David Iyata  
Chicago Tribune

*Editor's Note: The following article, which appeared in the Chicago Tribune, comes your way from Bruce Williams, GCS of the Bob O'Link Golf Club. Williams, a 1984 WGCSA speaker, is editor of Chicagoland's Verdure newsletter.*

TIPS FOR NEWLY elected politicians [and other Washington visitors] on getting around the nation's capital:

• The nation's capital is a great

city for walking—in the daytime. At night the muggers, hookers and drug pushers come out. Some areas such as the central business district in the northwest quadrant are reasonably safe. Most other neighborhoods are not. When in doubt, take a cab. [Chicago's "sides," as in Northwest Side, are called "quadrants" in D.C.]

• If the muggers don't get you, the district fathers will. Every so often they crack down on jaywalkers, and the fines can be hefty.

• When walking around downtown Washington, take your bearings from the Washington Monument, which is on the Mall south of the central business

district and the White House. The giant white obelisk is the tallest structure in town; it towers over other buildings and is brilliantly lighted at night.

Another pedestrian landmark is the Capitol, also lighted, anchoring the eastern end of the Mall. Keep in mind that if you're walking toward Capitol Hill, you're heading away from downtown and into a rougher part of the city; so watch out.

• Don't drive if you can help it, and if you must, do what the cabbies do: Stick to the side streets. And lock the doors. [Never walk down a dark side street at night. Which means never get a flat tire on one, either.]



Venture onto the congested boulevards only after you've become familiar with the city. And whatever you do, steer clear of the traffic circles.

In the late 18th Century, the city's master planner, Maj. Pierre Charles L'Enfant, decreed that the north-south streets would be numbered 1st, 2d and 3d; and the east-west streets, A, B and C. Sounds logical, except L'Enfant doubled everything: There are two 1st Streets, two A Streets and two of every other numbered and lettered street.

So each street has the additional designation of Northwest, Southwest, Northeast and Southeast, depending on which quadrant it's in. It's as though West North Avenue on Chicago's North Side were called 16th Street N.W.; and West 16th Street on the South Side, 16th Street S.W.

Washington's broad, diagonal avenues are named for states, such as Pennsylvania. The real trouble begins when one of those boulevards leads you smack into a traffic circle. Chances are that four major thoroughfares feed into the circle, creating a grand, chaotic, honking melee. It's like driving onto a merry-go-round. You could be heading for Maryland and wind up shooting off toward Virginia before you realize what happened.

- If you opt for a taxi, don't be surprised by its condition. With their bashed-in fenders, gouged door panels and leaky sunroofs, many of the cabs look and ride like veterans of Gen. Patton's 3d Army.

Nor should you be shocked if your cabbie suddenly pulls over to the curb to pick up an extra fare. Two, three, even four strangers to a taxi are common, as long as everyone's headed in the same general direction.

A zoned fare system, which means relatively low fares wherever you go in the city, more than makes up for the occasional inconvenience.

- Washington's subway, the Metro, is quiet, reliable, clean, comfortable and relatively cheap: 80 cents from downtown to most destinations, including National Airport, during non-rush periods.

First, though, you have to figure out the ticket-vending machines. Instructions for using them would take up far more space than this article allows. Don't worry; there's

a human attendant at every station to assist you. Which leads to the question, if you have to employ attendants anyway, why not have them collect the fares?

Another thing: The Metro isn't a 24-hour operation. If you fly into National much before 10 a.m. or after 6 p.m. on a Sunday, you'll have to take a cab or airport bus. Otherwise, the subway stops running at midnight, reopening for business at 6 a.m. weekdays, 8 a.m. Saturdays.

- Say off Int. Hwy. 66, a main thoroughfare into the city, during the rush hour unless you have at least two riders with you. The mandatory car pool rule, dating from

the energy crises of the 1970s, is still strictly enforced. As one might imagine, I-66 is a breeze during rush hour, when secondary thoroughfares and bridges are jammed.

Forced car pooling also has given rise to something that could only happen in Washington: Driver-solicited hitchhiking. At one suburban Metro stop, cars line up, drivers hop out and shout their destinations, and would-be Metro patrons jump in for a free ride into the city. A driver who otherwise would be alone and have to take a circuitous route into town thus cuts about 30 minutes off his travel time.

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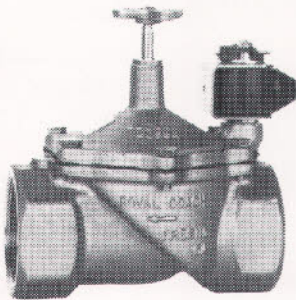
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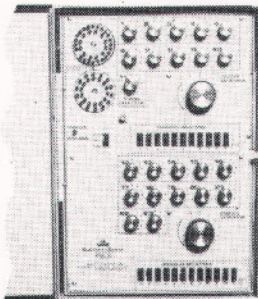


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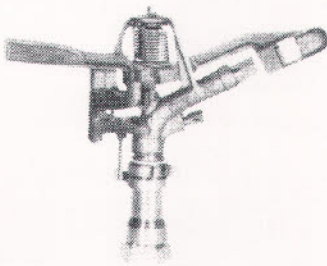
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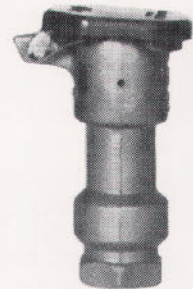
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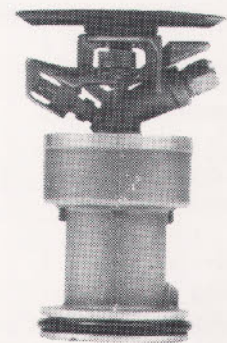
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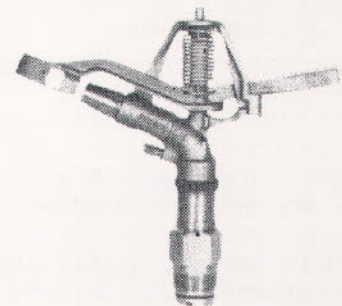
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## Editorial

# WHAT'S IN A NAME?

By Monroe S. Miller

"What's in a name?" — an old question all of us have heard a hundred times in dozens of different contexts. I submit that there is a **lot** in a name, whether it is your own personal lifetime name, the name of your favorite book, or the name of your profession. Names are usually given for some very real and very definite reasons.

Not everyone would agree with me on the importance and significance of a name. Haven't you heard the old line, "I don't care what you call me, just don't call me late for dinner." I've got a friend who once said during a conversation on this topic, "I don't care what they call me as long as they pay me on time."

I have what is, at least, an uncommon first name. I could have been a natural target for a nickname. But I have jealously guarded myself over the years from such an imposition because I happen to like my given name and am extremely proud to carry my mother's maiden name as my first. Similarly, Cheryl and I carefully selected the names of our children. Names are important to me.

I am convinced that now is the time to change the name of my professional career. It's a simple change and an obvious choice. It won't take a Houdini to do it — we can. What I do in my daily professional working life is **manage** a golf course, so shouldn't I be called a Golf Course Manager? Absolutely yes. And so should you. Further, the GRASSROOTS should be the official publication of the

## WISCONSIN GOLF COURSE MANAGERS ASSOCIATION.

At times I have been almost romantically intrigued with the old professional title of Greenkeeper. Actually, maybe the word is more of a job description. It is pleasant sounding and originated as a shortened version of "Keeper of the Green," where green meant the entire golf course. But you seldom hear it pronounced correctly and what usually comes forth is Greenkeeper. If I am the Greenskeeper at my Club, then who is the fairwaykeeper, and who is the Teekeeper? And what do you call the man who manages (there's that word again) the golf course staff? Who is the man with the financial responsibility of the golf course? Greenkeeper might be okay if everyone understood its meaning; but they don't, they never have, and they never will.

Look at the B.C. cartoon below — I clipped it from the comics over ten years ago. It aggravates me more now than it did then.

The other problem I have with the title "Greenkeeper" is that it sometimes is used in a subordinated sense and even at times with a contemptuous tone. It may be that the word accompanies, fairly or unfairly, a vision of a "good ol' boy" in dirty bib overalls digging a hole on the golf course. That vision is disgusting to me, reflects in no way my duties and is not fitting to any of you in any way whatsoever. Cancel Greenkeeper.

I've never quite been able to establish who and how the word "Superintendent" got into my job

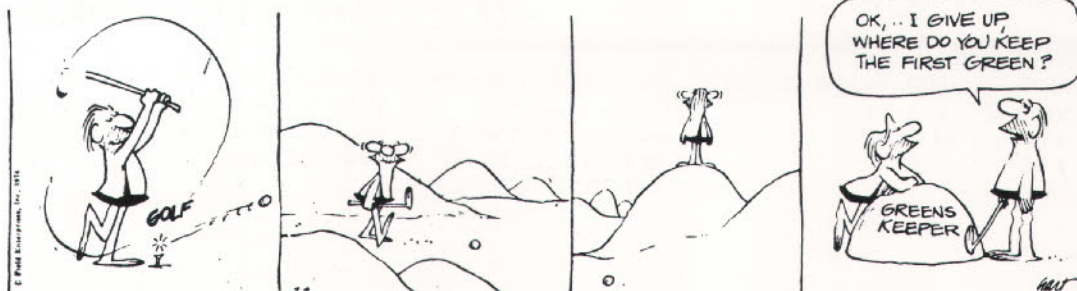
title. The word "superintend" is not a verb in common usage — I don't **superintend** my family finances, I manage them. Bankers don't **superintend** their banks, they manage them. I don't **superintend** my golf course, I manage it. The word, over and over, is **M A N A G E**. I am a manager.

The CMAA and the clubhouse managers have already beat us to the punch. Notice: I think that most of them are **clubhouse** managers — they manage the clubhouse and have no knowledge or responsibility outside of the front door. "Club Manager" implies a position that most do not have — one that is superior to ours. In fact, many outside of our industry believe that a club manager manages what his name implies — the whole operation, which includes the golf course. Wrong, wrong, wrong. Their name implies that they are on turf that is mine. See what a name can do for you? Most only manage restaurant, bar and office, just like I manage the golf course, the building grounds and extensive equipment inventories. Many of you also manage tennis courts, swimming pools and golf car fleets.

We have a chance to clarify these situations. It is incredibly easy — let's call ourselves "Golf Course Managers" because that is exactly and precisely what we are. Why not? What would we be giving up in the name "Superintendent"? A little history and tradition? Maybe. But the gain — an accurate portrayal in a single word of what we do — is worth far more.

Gather your thoughts, please. You'll have an opportunity to express them at our next meeting. I am going to make a motion to change the name of our association to the "WISCONSIN GOLF COURSE MANAGERS ASSOCIATION." Sounds nice, doesn't it?

How will **you** vote?

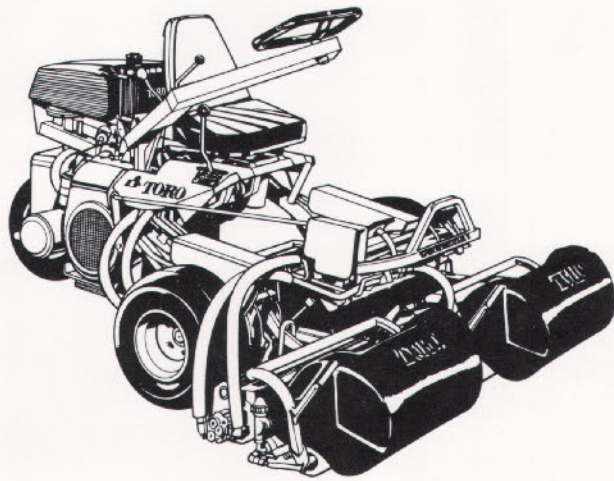




# Reinders



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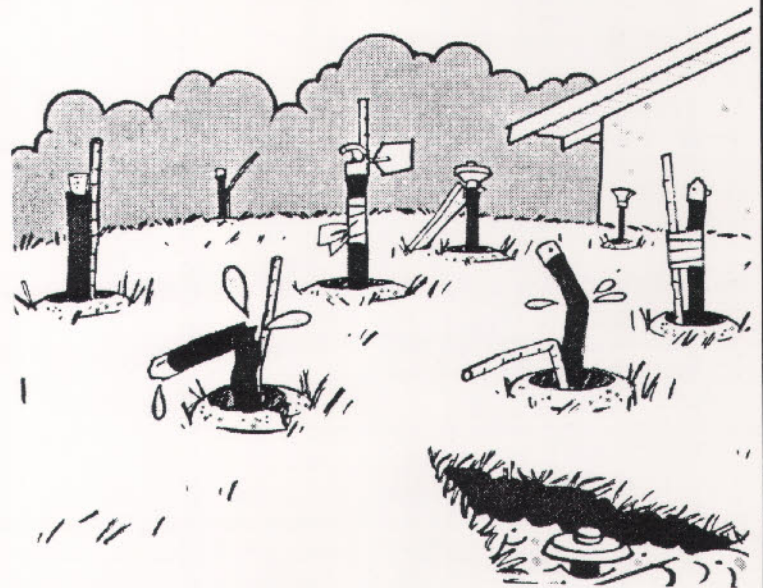
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## HIGH STRESS AND WORKAHOLISM

By Alma S. Baron, Ph.D.  
Professor of Management

University of Wisconsin — Madison

According to Dr. Hans Seyle, the professor from Canada who pioneered the work in stress, stress is a G.A.S.! What Seyle and others in the field mean is that the negative stress you or I feel in our daily round is measured by our GENERAL ADAPTATION SYNDROME, or how we adjust to excessive aggravations in our lives; for everyone has stress and some of it isn't bad.

For example, the energy required for me to write this article, or for you to meet with your Boards of Directors requires stress to even operate; and this stress is good: it arms us with ability to cope with situations; it heightens our perceptions so that we can meet unusual occurrences; it permits us to act as intelligent human beings prepared and ready for what each day may bring. When the coping mechanism gets out of control, however, is when stress begins to have a negative effect.

It is generally agreed that the truly healthy and successful person is one who, when confronted with a powerful stressor in work, for example, has other support systems on which to draw for reassurance. Superintendents have been designated frequently as workaholics. The very nature of managing a golf course places high demands on behavior which is acceptable to a variety of publics despite adverse conditions which another professional might gripe about to colleagues but which a manager, always in the public eye, may not dare do. If managers have other outlets which support him or her away from the workplace, the stress may be held in proper perspective; if indeed managers seek all their successes in the world of work, they may be in for trouble.

Take this non-scientific but generally accepted quiz to see how you fare as a workaholic.

1. Do you seem to communicate better with your co-workers than with your spouse (or best friend)?
2. Are you always punctual for appointments?
3. Are you better able to relax on your day off in the a.m. or the p.m.?
4. Are you most comfortable when you are productive than idle?
5. Do you carefully organize your hobbies?
6. Are you usually annoyed when your spouse (or friend) keeps you waiting.
7. Are most of your recreational activities with work associates?
8. Does your spouse (or friend) think of you as an easygoing person?
9. If you play tennis do you occasionally see (or want to see) your boss's face on the ball before a smash?
10. Do you tend to substitute your work for interpersonal contacts; that is, is work sometimes a way of avoiding close relationships?
11. Even under pressure, do you usually take the extra time to make sure you have all the facts before making a decision?
12. Do you usually plan every step of the itinerary of a trip in advance and tend to become uncomfortable if plans go awry?
13. Do you enjoy small talk at a reception or cocktail party?
14. Are most of your friends in the same line of work?
15. Do you take work to bed with you when you are home sick?
16. Is most of your reading work related?
17. Do you work late more frequently than your peers?