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President's Message

Walter C. Montross, CGCS



As we approach the end of another year, I never cease to be amazed at how fast time seems to go by. As one gets older time becomes a blur, was it only yesterday that the kids were really kids and not the young adults I now have in my household. Was it only yesterday that I graduated from college determined to make my mark in the golf course profession. And was it really just yesterday that I completed my first term as President of the Mid-Atlantic in 1989. As I sit and pen this missive, it is not to admonish everyone to stop and "smell the roses", it is to reflect back over a career and remember the people I have met. I find it a shame that many people have no interest in our history or the people who made it such. At our recent golf championship, the Association honored a group of individuals who played a part in creating the Association and developing its history. George Cornell Sr., Robert Lynch, Alex Watson, C.G.C.S. and Bernard Heilig were these honored individuals and their accomplishments have been duly noted. However, there were so many others I was fortunate to have known over the years, who also were equally instrumental in our history. Some of these fellows have since passed on, but in my mind I am so much the richer for having known them. Through a series of articles in our newsletter, Lee Dieter has been providing a little insight into our history and its membership. I thank him for his efforts

today and the many years ago that he made me see the importance of participating in the Association's business, as well as, not forgetting those who paved the way.

Many thanks go out to Mike Larsen and Woodmont CC for hosting the September meeting. The course was superb as usual and Mike, you may have created some converts to Zoysia grass fairways. Also my thanks to Byron Lash and the Lowes Island Club for hosting the annual golf tournament in October. It was a pleasure to see the new Arthur Hills course and the job you did growing it in.

I just couldn't let an article go by without commenting on the weather. It is amazing or confounding to think that this year will be just another average one when the data is finally averaged out. The drought of the century followed by 16 1/2" of rain from September till now is Mothers Nature way of balancing things out. As I started out my article by saying we shouldn't forget I will do my best to forget the weather. As Little Orphan Annie says, "the sun will come out tomorrow or maybe the next day or the next.

Lastly, since I hold the pen I must mention one of my pet peeves. How

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Be Careful What You Ask For

Many of us spend a great deal of time wishing things were different. We dream of a "better job," more responsibility, less of this, and more of that. Sometimes, the things we spend our energy longing for actually do (or would) improve the quality of our life. Other times, however, the very things we wish for are hardly worth the tradeoffs, or the effort. For this reason, I suggest you be really careful what you ask for.

The purpose of this strategy isn't to encourage you to stop dreaming of, or working toward, a better life, but to remind you that sometimes your life is pretty darn good exactly the way it is. My goal here is to remind you to carefully think through what it is you think you want, because you might end up getting it, which is often more than you bargained for - more frustration, more grief, more travel, more responsibility, more conflict, more demands on your time, and so forth. When you think in these terms, it often helps you reconnect with your gratitude and realize that perhaps things aren't as bad as we sometimes make them out to be.

I've met plenty of people who spent years focused on how much better their lives were going to be when certain things occurred - i.e., when they were finally promoted to various positions-so much so that they took for granted the good parts of the position they already had. In other words, they were so focused on what was wrong with their careers that they failed to enjoy and appreciate the gifts they were enjoying all along.

For example, a man I knew dreamed of a job he felt would be "so much better" within the same company he was working with. He lobbied for that job for quite some time, constantly complaining about his current position. It wasn't until he finally secured that job that he realized the major tradeoffs that were involved. It was true that he had a bit more prestige and a slightly higher salary, yet he was forced to travel several days a week, often much more than that. He missed his

three kids terribly and started missing important events-soccer games, music performances, teacher conferences, and other special dates. In addition, his relationship with his wife became strained as their relatively peaceful routine was set aside for the alleged "better life." He was also forced to scale way back on his much-loved exercise routine due to his busier, less flexible schedule.

A woman I knew worked hard to convince her boss that she deserved to telecommute instead of coming into the office. She succeeded. The problem was, she never realized (until a month later) that, despite the dreaded traffic, she actually loved coming into the city each day. This was structure, her chance to be with people. She also missed lunch at local cafes, her favorite music that she listened to on the way to work, and other taken-for-granted simple pleasures. After a while, she began to feel trapped in her own home.

Other people crave power or fame. Only after they achieve it do they realize that the lack of any real privacy is a drag. Instead of anonymity, which most of us take for granted, people are now looking over their shoulders. They are often exposed to more criticism and closer scrutiny.

I want to emphasize that I'm not taking a negative stance on any of these tradeoffs. Often, making more money is crucial, and outweighs any other consideration you might have. For many people, traffic is almost unbearable and would be worth avoiding at almost any price. Some people love the spotlight and the increased visibility. The important point here isn't the specifics, or any sort of value judgement, but the recognition of the relevance of asking yourself the important questions-"What am I really asking for, and why?"

When thinking about your job or career, it's important to consider what's right and good about your work in addition to focusing on what might be better. Feeling satisfied or being happy doesn't



mean you aren't still working hard to make your career as successful as possible. You can have both-happiness and drive-without sacrificing sanity.

Keep in mind that more responsibility might be a great thing, but it could very well lead to less personal freedom, privacy, and so forth. Similarly, a better paying position might make you feel more financially secure and it might be worth it-but you may give up other things that you haven't considered, or that you simply take for granted. It's all just food for thought. Remember, be careful what you ask for, because you might just get it-and more.

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President

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often to you receive a phone message that ends with the caller leaving a phone number at the speed of light. I don't know about you but I often times have to play the message back numerous times to comprehend the number. Please when leaving your phone number ... "SLOW DOWN"... you might just get a returned call.