



## A Profile (Cont'd)

mentions of participation by Mr. Graves or staff at H.V. Carter Company in GCSANC functions. In continuing the active involvement from the company, Rex Gentry was the 1st affiliate BOD member to cast a vote after the recent bylaw change giving the affiliate representatives a vote.

Mr. Graves enjoyed his many years of active involvement with GCSANC and his family was truly honored when the Scholarship and Research Tournament was named in his honor. Some of his greatest memories were of working with his friends in this organization. Over the years he looked

forward the GCSAA Conference and Show and had many great moments there with his good friend Cliff Wagoner CGCS. You'll have to talk to Cliff to get further details of those days. He never lost his love for the great industry we all work in. Let's hope that we all can share the same passion for our industry and be active participants for over 50 years as Mr. Graves was. Hope everyone can attend the tournament and enjoy a day of camaraderie with friends. I also hope this article has offered those of us who really did not know him a little more insight into Mr. Herbert Graves. /

## 2002 GCSANC Meeting Hosts Still Needed

If you would like to host a GCSANC meeting in 2002, please contact GCSANC Board Members Roger Robarge or Jeff Shafer. There are still many opportunities available.

## Membership Report from the June 13th Board of Directors Meeting

New Member:

Alberto Julian Canedo Gilroy Golf Course Class B

## A Superintendent's Dream *By Terry Buchen, CGCS, MG*

If I could imagine the worst day for a greenkeeper, it would go something like this

5:05 a.m. — Wake up an hour late as alarm clock fails. Take alarm clock to back yard and strike it crisply with 9-iron.

5:35 — Arrive at office and play answering machine. Five employees call in sick.

5:37 — Go over crew assignments with both assistants. Decide we can't rake bunkers or mow fairways because of absent employees.

5:50 — Instruct the second assistant to put out the pink colored, ladies day flags while performing the daily course setup.

6:01 — Second assistant calls on radio to tell me of many severe indentations in the practice putting green, likely cause during the previous night's wedding rehearsal from high-healed shoes. Says there must be 1,500 holes in the putting green.

6:11 — While touring the course, find severe vandalism to No. 1 green from 4-wheel drive vehicle doing "donuts" on the putting surface. Call police, general manager, insurance company and green chairman to notify them of the damage. 9:45 — Head Pro calls to tell me (for the first time) that there is a 10:00 a.m. ladies shot-gun today with two groups on all 18 holes. He asks if we will have enough time to get everything ready, including placing flower pots on every tee.

11:05 — Club accountant calls and says I am \$120,000 over budget for the fiscal year maintenance budget that ends in June.

Noon — Have lunch with the new green chairman. His first question is where can he buy a Stimpmeter. He asks why we always do all of the maintenance on men's day instead of on other days. He has a third martini for dessert, then excuses himself to chair his first green committee meeting.

1:32 p.m. — Back in the office I

have a message on the answering machine from the new green chairman instructing me to firm up bunkers ASAP

1:33 — Get a call from my former green chairman. He says the bunkers are playing too firm and I am "advised" to "loosen them up."

1:37 — Club president calls. He says the bunkers are just right and finally playing exactly the way he wants and expects.

1:40 — Fill sink in bathroom with very cold water and soak my head for as long as I can.

1:44 — Excedrin headache No. 77, called "why can't they ever make up their mind?"

1:55 — Ladies' committee chairwoman waves me over to the side of No. 8 fairway and scolds me for putting out the pink-colored flags. I am told to never, ever patronize her or the other female golfers again.

2:01 — Have meeting with the general manager. She wants the

greens faster ASAP to a consistent 10.8 feet on the stimpmeter all season long, no excuses. I explain that the green committee wants them at precisely 11.5 feet for the season, the head pro wants them at 10 feet during the season, the ladies committee wants them at a uniform 9 feet all season; and the junior boys and girls committee wants them at a uniform 9 feet all season.

2:11 — Run into the men's club champion in the locker room who wants the greens to roll 12 feet immediately and wants to know what is taking me so long to get the speed increased on all of the greens. When I tell him about the pro's suggestion of 10 feet, he provides some instructional advice about the pro which, I respond, would be anatomically impossible.

2:31 — Head lifeguard calls me on the radio. Says there is a brown-colored object at the bottom of the swimming pool and that I should send over a crew to clean it up. I tell him it's a Baby Ruth, remind him of the

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## A Superintendent's Dream (Cont'd)

scene in Caddyshack" and ask him to clean it up himself.

3:00 — Receive notice in today's mail that seven of my favorite pesticides have been banned for all future use on golf courses in our state.

Homeowners will still be able to purchase them at their favorite lawn and garden store, though. Hmm, I wonder whether I can recruit lot owners with lawns fronting the golf course . . . nah, never mind.

3:33 — Longtime ladies day golfer asks why all of the maintenance is always performed on ladies day — for the 122nd Tuesday in a row. She wonders why we can't work at night to stay out of the way of golfers. I tell her I'll consider it.

3:49 — Equipment mechanic tells me that 15 vendor salespeople stopped by the course today, each without an appointment.

3:53 — New greens committee chairman calls again and tells me my \$150,000 capital equipment replacement and additional new equipment budget was not approved. It was tabled indefinitely, largely because of a planned \$500,000 expansion to the tennis facility. Reminds me, too, that I'll be responsible for grooming the new courts.

4:01 — Spouse calls. Mother-in-law will be coming for a three-month stay.

4:15 — Equipment mechanic turns in two-week notice because he has found a better paying job with better benefits at a neighboring course.

4:25 — State agency calls and says irrigation water usage must be cut 33.3 percent daily for the foreseeable future until the drought ends. He will follow up

our conversation in writing.

6:05 — Learn of pythium outbreak on all of the greens. The crew has gone home and I can't get in touch with anyone. I jump on the sprayer and spray all the greens myself.

11:11 — I wake up from an evening nap and realize all this has been a terrible dream.

**But . . .if I could plan a perfect day, it would go something like this . . . .**

5:15 a.m. — Border collie faithfully wakes me up with a lick on my face.

5:22 — Check progress of my golf stocks. All have split 2 for 1, with dividend increases.

4:45 — Arrive at office. Strap on combination cell phone/two-way radio unit and pager. No messages.

5:46 — Check answering machine and voice mail. No Messages.

5:47 — Check e-mail. Three good golf jokes.

5:48 — Check DTN weather computer. Today's high will be 72 degrees with 15 percent humidity; 100 percent chance of rain later in the afternoon.

5:49 — Check irrigation computer and pump monitor. Everything watered as programmed.

5:50 — Staff arrives early and everyone shows up.

5:55 — Go over crew assignments with assistants. They already have anticipated what I wanted to do today.

6:00 — Staff leaves with smiles on their faces, raring to get on the course. They check oil in equipment.

6:05 — I tour entire course. It looks great and is playing great, too. Greens rolling 10 feet, smooth as silk, firm as a table top. Rest of course is firm and fast.

7:30 — Have joint employee annual reviews for entire maintenance staff. They take my constructive criticism, praise and recommendations seriously and ask if there are any other ways they can improve their job performance and attitude. Way to go.

8:42 — Club president calls and states new course policy that all department do not have to do business with members, or their friends, anymore.

9:55 — Green chairman calls and asks me to prepare the agenda, as usual, for tonight's

green committee meeting. Also asks if I will play golf with a different foursome each week to get golfer feedback. Why, of course!

10:04 — Mother-in-law calls and delays month-long visit. Indefinitely.

10:10 — Review employee applications on waiting list of those who want to work for me.

10:15 — Go back out on course and run into a member known as "Mr. Grumpy," my No. 1 nemesis. He says that he is playing much better now and that the course really has improved and is in the best shape ever (even though it is in the same shape as always). I finally tell him that his perception of course conditioning is always in direct relation to how

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### GCSANC Quick Profile

Name: Andy Slack

Employer: Spot Water Management

Position: Owner/Peon

Years in the Golf Business: 13

- ◆ Previous Employment: Sierra Pacific, West Star, Golf Enterprises, Kerrey Machinery in Indiana
- ◆ Education: BS in Turf Science - '91 Purdue University
- ◆ GCSANC Work or Interests: Scholarships, Scholarship Tournament, Web Stuff, or wherever I can help.
- ◆ Other Organizations: SNGCSA, Cactus & Pine GCSA, Midwest Regional Turf Foundation, GCSAA, Furry Friends, Purdue Alumni Assn.
- ◆ Family: Dog - Zoysia, Wife - Bish (Elizabeth).....in that order!
- ◆ Interests Outside of Golf: Friends, traveling, spending time with Zoysia, basketball
- ◆ Favorite Vacation: Honeymoon in New Zealand
- ◆ Favorite Course to Play: San Francisco Golf Club
- ◆ Course You'd Like to Visit: Pine Valley
- ◆ Strangest Thing You've Witnessed On The Golf Course: 10th Wonder of the World - the water bubble under sod, or 110v felt through wet grass when there was a nick in the wire!
- ◆ What You'd Be Doing If You Weren't Involved With Golf: High tech sales/service of some kind, or I'd love to own/operate a bar/restaurant.



## A Superintendent's Dream (Cont'd)

he played on any given day He thinks about it and says that I might be right.

10:42 — Run into "Mr. Suggestion Box" on the back nine. He complains that all golfers should repair ball marks on the greens. I tell him that he is the worst offender of anyone who plays on our course and that he better "walk the walk."

11:07 — CFO calls and says monthly financial statements are complete. Maintenance department is right on budget, as usual.

11:33 — Manager calls and asks me to join her for lunch in clubhouse.

11:40 — Chemicals ordered on the Internet are delivered on time, as promised.

Noon — Have enjoyable "working lunch" with manager. She tells me I am doing a great job and hands me a proposed five-year contract extension with a signing bonus and clause detailing terms in case of early termination.

12:30 p.m. — Take 15 minute nap.

12:45 — Give speech to women's golf association. They thank me for the great condition of the course. Chairwoman says the women golfers realize that we do not do all of our maintenance only on ladies day Nirvana.

1:35 — Equipment salesperson calls and asks for appointment to see me - five days later.

2.13 — Finish applying granular fertilizer to entire course. It rains, as predicted, 1 inch immediately after we are finished.

2.17 — Head pro calls and suggests that golf carts be restricted to golf cart paths for the rest of the day because of rainstorm. He adds that he has put on two extra marshals to monitor that the golfers will stay on the paths.

2:37 — Equipment manager reports no equipment breakdowns today

2:40 — Have thank you party for maintenance staff funded by proceeds from the soda pop machine that they faithfully use in the employee lunchroom. Quite a few of my employees tell me that I am a good boss and person and that they really like working for me. They ask if any of their friends can get jobs.

3 13 — Head pro calls and inquires one week in advance about a proposed 11 a.m. shotgun tournament and asks whether I will have enough time to get everything ready or should we do it at noon instead. Noon it is.

3:22 — Three superintendent pals and I set up monthly golf game at my course for next Monday

4:04 — Chapter president calls and asks if I want to be the chapter delegate at the next meeting at GCSAA headquarters. You betcha.

5:30 — Green committee meets in maintenance building employee lunchroom and states course is in great shape and to keep up the good work. Ad-journs 30 minutes early

6:30 — Have wonderful dinner with spouse and family at home. Can't wait to get back to work tomorrow. ♣

Credit: *Divots*. June 2001

## Resolving Conflicts: Prepare for a Tough Conversation

You're about to discuss a delicate issue with a peer or employee and you don't want to blow it.

*Here's how to confront conflict gracefully*

- **Focus on being clear.** Don't worry about how others might react to what you say Replace worries such as, "I don't want Jim to resent me" with "I want to define the problem in fair terms."

*Remember:* You can't control how others react, so don't try

- **Anticipate and rehearse.** Plan how you'll respond to various scenarios.

*Example.* Know what you'll say or do if the other person becomes defensive, criticizes or cries.

- **See the big picture.** If you're losing sleep over tomorrow's dreaded meeting, maintain perspective. Realize that it's just one day out of many this year — in the wider scope of things, it's not so important.

Adapted from *Difficult Conversations*. Douglas Stone, Bruce Patton and Sheila Heen, Viking Press, (800) 788-6262

Credit: *Communication Briefings*, June, 2001

### Did You Know That.....

On October 10<sup>th</sup> 1932 Mr. F J Wellhouse from the Westinghouse Electric Company gave a presentation on lighting the golf course to our chapter.

The 1<sup>st</sup> Superintendent / Professional Tournament was held at Sunol Valley G C. in November of 1978 and was won by Paul Dias, CGCS and Brad Lozares of Saratoga C.C.

In 1975 GCSANC policy was established that the outgoing president and their facility would host the Annual Election Meeting.