



Pat Gross and Larry Gilhuly made great contributions to the Green Section's work in the West, and they managed to have some fun along the way.

A TIP OF THE HAT TO TWO LEGENDS OUT WEST

BY CORY ISOM | AGRONOMIST, WEST REGION

2020 is in the rearview mirror and to say it was an abnormal year would be stating the obvious. In addition to the global health, social and political issues that everyone dealt with, the Green Section's West Region was navigating in unfamiliar waters following the retirement of two long-time staff members. It was the first year since 1983 that neither Larry Gilhuly nor Pat Gross were making golf course visits on behalf of the USGA.

Uncle Larry, aka Clear-Cut Gilhuly, aka Gilhooligan, joined the USGA Green Section in 1983 with a full head of hair that retired long before he did. His quick wit, engaging personality and knack for storytelling quickly endeared him to golf courses throughout the western United States. After a few years working in California, he moved his base of operations up to the Pacific Northwest. Covering the Northwest, Hawai'i and four Canadian provinces meant that Larry was no stranger to travel. By his estimate, he has flown over a million miles, driven more than that, spent more than 3,500 nights on the road and would like to forget how many pounds of restaurant food he has consumed.

Pat Gross joined the Green Section staff in 1991 and was a fixture in the southwestern part of the country. Most people would have thought he was running for mayor with his blonde hair, bright smile and kind words. However, behind the pretty face was a sharp golf mind that golf course managers benefited from throughout Pat's 28 years on the Green Section staff. His proximity to the golf facilities he served meant that he didn't travel as much as Forward Tee Larry did, but he was just as busy. His impact on California golf course maintenance will last a long time.

Between these two Green Section legends, they made over 5,000 Course Consulting Service visits, wrote more than 6,000 reports and articles, spoke at numerous regional, national and international meetings, and helped the USGA prepare for more than 100 national championships. They helped promote game-growing initiatives and water conservation practices that are considered industry standards now. All along the way, they have accumulated a veritable encyclopedia of funny golf stories.

For over 36 years, Pat and Larry were standard bearers for the Green Section's work out west and we missed them in 2020. So, we begin 2021 with a tip of the hat to our longtime friends Larry Gilhuly and Pat Gross. By the way, if you ever want to be regaled with crazy golf stories, look these guys up because they've got some great ones.



WEST REGION AGRONOMISTS:

Brian Whitlark, Senior Consulting Agronomist, bwhitlark@usga.org

Cory Isom, Agronomist, cisom@usga.org

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