

Grass Clippings



July
2014

Position Your Course Ahead

Be ahead of the game through continuing education and experience a little international flair with the participation of Micah Woods, Ph.D. at the Idaho GCSA Fall Meeting, October 6 & 7, 2014 at Pinecrest Golf Club, Idaho Falls, ID. Woods is Chief Scientist at the Asian Turfgrass Center and an adjunct



Micah Woods, Ph.D.

professor in the Department of Plant Sciences at the University of Tennessee. Since founding the Asian Turfgrass Center in 2006, he has since been doing research and sharing turfgrass information in more than 20 countries. The Pacific Northwest is home to Woods. He grew up in Oregon and studied

horticulture at Oregon State University, and then worked for three years as a golf course superintendent in China and Japan. From 2001 to 2005, he studied at Cornell University in New York, writing his dissertation about nutrient availability to turfgrass grown in sand rootzones. After speaking to the NTA at their annual meeting, he will take a side trip to participate at our conference. Woods will offer, **“A Modern Method for Estimating Turfgrass Nutrient Requirements.”**

A highly recommended speaker, Mike Richardson, Ph.D., offered several topics of real interest to the education committee and it was tough to narrow it down to the final selections. Richardson is a professor in the Department of Horticulture at the University of Arkansas, where his research has focused on cultural practices that includes the impact on cool-season turfgrass production. In addition, he has been actively involved with research to screen



Mike Richardson, Ph.D.

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We Aren't Asking for Much

You make a living by what you get, but you make a life by what you give. Winston Churchill

And we are only asking for basically a handful of hours out of your year to help make the decisions in your professional community.

Please contact Josh Tolman, Nominating Committee Chairperson, if you are interested in serving on the Idaho GCSA Board of Directors (Cell: 208.940.0825, or joshkala@yahoo.com)

Gearing Up for the Fall Meeting Silent Auction!

The array of offerings at the annual Silent Auction is impressive – especially thanks to our allied members and their pretty awesome contributions each year. This auction is an important part of our annual budget. Start planning your donation for this popular event held during the Fall Meeting at Pine Crest Golf Club. All donations are appreciated!

Our committee, Jon Atkins, Assistant Superintendent, Elk Horn Golf Club, and Jamie Wilson, Assistant Superintendent, The Club at Spur Wing, will solicit donations and make sure the event is another success.

It is important to remember – we can invoice you! Many of these products you have waited to try, or you already use at your facility. It is money budgeted regardless - so benefit YOUR association by bidding high and bidding often!

Please contact, Jon Atkins, Cell: (208) 870-0482, jonatkins37@gmail.com, or Jamie Wilson, Cell: (208) 631-3467, jamiewilson1979@yahoo.com

Stay on the San Antonio River Walk

Enjoy all of the “perks” when staying at the Idaho GCSA (and neighboring chapters) room block at the Drury Plaza. Located on the San Antonio, Texas, River Walk, you are in the midst of all the great things the River Walk offers. With only a

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Upcoming events:

Idaho GCSA Fall Meeting:

October 6 & 7, 2014, Idaho Falls, Idaho

Idaho GCSA Spring Meeting:

February 10 & 11, 2015, Boise, Idaho



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Grass Clippings is published three times a year. Our newsletter is not copyrighted, but we would appreciate credit for original material.

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**The new Idaho GCSA
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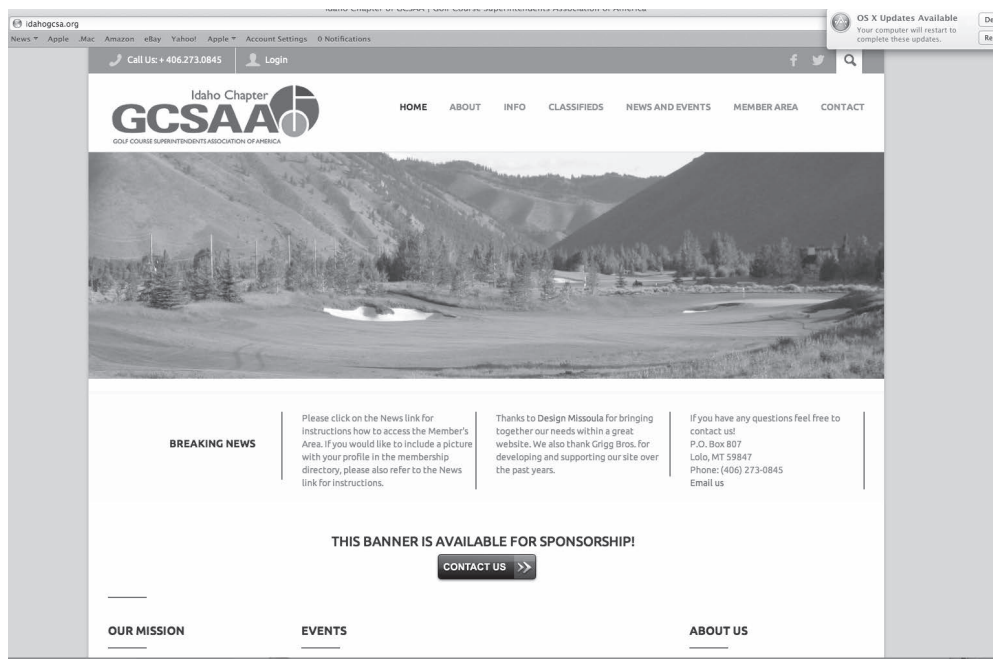
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* Do you have an address change, for example? Changing the information in Your Profile in the Member's Area will automatically update the association's database!

* Do you have any classified items? Please be sure to complete the classified section in the Member's Area.

* We will continue to develop the website with added features.

www.idahogcsa.org



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“The Idaho Golf Course Superintendents Association is dedicated to helping its members provide the best playing conditions in an environmentally friendly manner.”



President's Message

Adam Bagwell, CGCS
Crane Creek Country Club, Boise, Idaho

July 1, 2014 seems to be the yearly start of summer, when you can almost bank on 95° for the rest of July, in Boise, anyway.

The Idaho GCSA recently committed to a combined meeting with the Peaks & Prairies and Inland Empire GCSA for the fall of 2017. The meeting will be in Coeur d'Alene, at the Coeur D'Alene Resort, and will include a trade show. The opportunity to interact with different regions and steal some of their ideas to bring back is invaluable.

Recently, I've had the chance to meet with four golf course construction contractors, each for a day, as part of our bidding process. I was extremely happy with the professionalism of each representative, and their acknowledgement of the importance of proper planning and teamwork. Sometimes, when adversity strikes our industry, the light at the end of the tunnel is brighter than before. Each company got leaner and meaner, but seemed to retain the best crew members. Higher quality and more efficient processes are the result. I don't think that should

come as a surprise to any of us. We all have to get leaner and meaner, and change the way we do things. I believe economic adversity in the past has helped us march into the future as better golf business professionals.

That's enough writing for today. I need to go back and watch the greens recover from a bayonet tining yesterday, timed of course so they breathe freely before the 100° temperatures tomorrow. Y'all enjoy the heat. Frost will be here before we know it!

*Adam Bagwell, CGCS, adam@cranecreekcc.com
208-514-4363*

If you have a blog or a maintenance facility website or page, please provide the link to be included on our new Idaho GCSA website - www.idahogcsa.org

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Fall Meeting

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and develop new turfgrass for a wide range of turfgrass environments. He has received numerous awards for his research, including being named a Fellow in the American Society of Agronomy and the Crop Science Society of America. Presentations offered at the Fall Meeting will be **“Using Soil Moisture Meters and Sensors to Improve Irrigation Efficiency,” “Soil Surfactants and Irrigation Management,”** and **“New Trends in Cool-Season Grasses – an Overview of New Species.”**

It is pretty cool when we have a Brigadier General participating in the meeting. “Classroom” posture seems to improve when Bill Bankhead enters the room. Bankhead is the Boise Area Office Compliance Assistant Specialist (CAS). In this capacity, he has conducted hundreds of training sessions and outreach events across the state of Idaho. After first speaking to our association at the 2013 Spring Meeting, we have been looking forward to his return.

Jon Atkins is the assistant superintendent at the Elkhorn Golf Club at the Sun Valley Resort, as well as our assistant liaison to the Board of Directors. We are fortunate to have an active member like Atkins, who considers it to be an honor to give of his time to the Idaho GCSA and to share his experiences with his fellow members. At the Fall Meeting, Atkins will offer, **“Drier Greens are Faster, Right? Soil Moisture & Green Speed: A Field Research Summary.”**

Chapter Room Block at GIS

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four-block stroll to the convention center, GCSAA bus service will *not* be available.

Formerly the Alamo Bank, Drury Plaza was renovated to maintain its historical character. The lobby features 50-foot ceilings, travertine flooring and stained glass windows. There is even a rooftop pool on the property.

All rooms include microwaves and refrigerators, and free wireless throughout the property.

You can also enjoy two complimentary meals a day! Enjoy a free breakfast that includes hot items such as biscuits and gravy, scrambled eggs and sausage. From 5:30 - 7:00 p.m. each day, enjoy three beverage tickets for beer, wine, mixed drinks, or soda, as well as what you could enjoy as a snack or a meal – a variety of hot food that changes daily, including chicken strips, macaroni & cheese, hot dogs, baked potatoes, broccoli cheddar soup and more!

GIS conference properties are running from \$149 - \$225 a night. For location, location, location, we have selected The Drury Plaza, with all the extras, for \$162 a night.

Hotel reservation information will be available in a few weeks and communicated through email blasts. The reservation due date will be before the end of 2014. Even if your attendance is not confirmed, you can make your reservation and cancel without penalty following the hotel’s cancellation policy.



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Reflecting on my turf “career,” I can’t explain how I arrived where I am. A little over ten years ago, I had no plans to become an assistant, nor did I even know what one was. In truth, the last ten years of my life have been, as B.F. Skinner described his own life,” I did not direct my life. I didn’t design it. I never made decisions. Things always came up and made them for me. That’s what life is.”

The “thing” that came up in my life ten years ago was a desire for an enjoyable job, and I thought that it might be fun to work on a golf course because it was outside, you get free golf, and those golf course “dudes” just “ride around on mowers.” Soon after starting, like the first hour, I learned that the “fun” job and free golf came at a price. It was hard work. At that time, Elkhorn was preparing to reopen after a remodel, and the new guys laid sod, day after day after day. Even so, the job was fun because of the back-drop and camaraderie.

About the time that I had resigned to being a sod layer, they trained me to walk-mow greens. Then, on an early, drowsy morning, the Superintendent trained me on a sprayer. This was when the idea popped in my head that turf management was what I wanted to do. For the next couple of years, I continued working at Elkhorn during the summers and Sun Valley Company in the winters. In 2007, Elkhorn kept me on through the winter and promoted me to Assistant in the spring. Though I’d like to think this was a result of my efforts, it probably had more to do with the financial situation of the club. An inexperienced guy without an education was cheaper.

Elkhorn continued to struggle financially, but I enjoyed my job and started taking online turf classes through Penn. State’s World Campus. Then, in the fall of 2009, Elkhorn laid me off, and I soon realized that it was going to be hard to get another quality Assistant’s position without a certificate or degree. So, I moved back home (Mom’s), went to school full-time, and worked the following season at The Country Club in Salt Lake. After another winter of school, part-time work, and living at Mom’s house, I finished the required coursework, but still needed an internship for the certificate. Luckily, the Broadmoor in Colorado Springs, host of the U.S. Women’s Open, offered me a spot.



Ken Thornock

Spotlight on Assistants

Ken Thornock

The Valley Club

Hailey

Idaho

Following the internship, I needed a winter job again and returned to Sun Valley. By chance, Elkhorn had been bought by Sun Valley Company and the new Superintendent was looking for a seasonal Assistant. Chris Gray offered me the job, and I was grateful to return. Then, a year and a half later, an opening came available at The Valley Club, and, at the present, I am fortunate to be back doing what I always wanted to do full-time. B. F. Skinner’s description of life is right on. We don’t design or direct our lives. Stuff happens, we roll with it, and who knows where we’ll end up.

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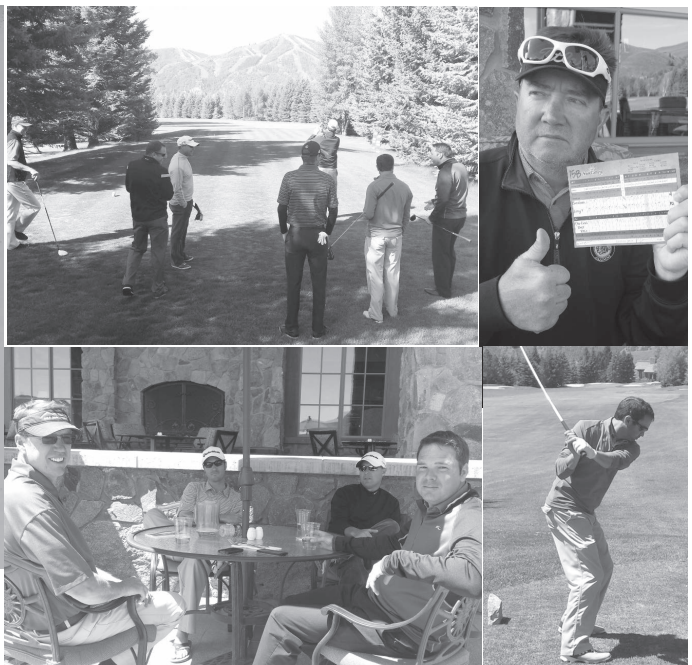
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Contest Holes
 Long Drive #9 Ryan Meredith
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Pictures by Dave Phipps

Congratulations Crane Creek Country Club for the big win and to Richard Strautman for a hole-in-one!

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Trying to Educate a Thoughtless Mind

**Mark Spraktes,
Pinecrest Golf Course,
Idaho Falls, Idaho**

Through the decades involved with golf, I have come across many educated people. Most of these people are very understanding and can appreciate the complexities and science of golf course maintenance. These people are respected and easily understand the procedures and reasons why specific tasks are performed on the course. You hope the information *Spraktes attending the 2014 Chapter*



Leadership Conference at GCSAA - shown with Old Tom Morris is shared with layman friends, making

your job of educating the masses a little easier. Oh, if I only lived in that perfect world! Without question, an elected individual to the advisory board, homeowners association, country club board, city council, not to mention the facility owner, will claim to have the club at heart. Too often, his or her best interest for the whole actually has a very selfish agenda.

We all understand the trials associated with educating the “knowing.” Even if a person doesn’t know anything about golf course maintenance, a receptive mind will listen. But, the selfish mind has their own agenda and gives no regard to the club as a whole. The motivation of a selfish person is to change the world, even their small world on the golf course. After all, these changes will improve their game. How do we deal with the narrow minded? Some think you should coddle the narrow minds and smooth them into understanding and acceptance. Others tend to use the forceful approach and make them understand. Others try to educate with fact and illustration. Personally, I have tried every approach just mentioned. Sometimes with success and sometimes not. What is the best solution? I beg for an answer.

The logical method will be to keep a steady mind and have patience. Understand, you may never enlighten these people, but keep a step ahead (if possible) and answer the questions before they are presented. Just an example of the perfect world in which I long to live. Keep in mind the consequences of your actions. I know a couple cohorts, including myself, who have lost a job by choosing the wrong path to educate the masses. Beware of the chosen pawns

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supported by the influential club members. They have been pawned to set out to destroy your perfect world, whether they are self-motivated or driven by the crowd. The outcome can be disastrous.

Always remember, your efforts to improve the golf course you love will be tampered with by the unknowing. The biggest struggle for victory is who will outlast the other. Politics really are difficult, so combine the efforts to educate. Dismiss the arrogant mind in your head, and deal with fact and illustration. Find an influential supporter - before they are supporting someone else - and continue to educate for better understanding and acceptance. Your job longevity depends on it. On a rare occasion, you may be successful and win the understanding and education of the thoughtless mind. There may be some gratification in that. I don’t know personally, but I can always hope the masses will be conquered, and life will get a little closer to the perfect world we all desire.



Rooted in Science

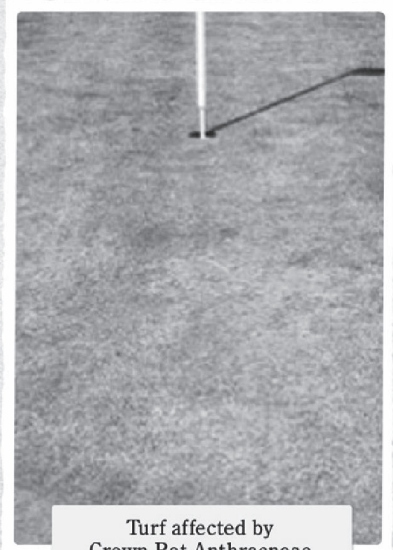


WHAT DOES MICHIGAN STATE ANTHRACNOSE RESEARCH SAY ABOUT FLORATINE NUTRITION?

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RESULTS SUMMARY

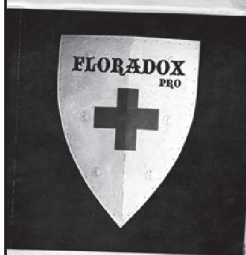
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By **David Phipps**
GCSAA Northwest
Field Staff



Siting Your Bird Boxes

A great way for golf courses to get started promoting wildlife habitat on a golf course is to construct and place nesting boxes. But, did you know that placing a box in the wrong place could attract marauding species such as European Starlings and House Sparrows? If left unchecked, the result can be a proliferation of these species and a reduction in the birds that actually need the boxes for nesting.

The most common nest boxes I have seen in the NW Region are tailored for Western and Mountain Bluebirds. Historically, Bluebirds have been threatened by the removal of their natural habitat such as dead trees. Groups across the country have been successful in building bluebird nesting boxes to a certain specification and monitoring their progress. One such



group in the Willamette Valley is called the Prescott Bluebird Recovery Project (PBRP). I became familiar with them while working for Russell Vandehey,

Russell Vandehey, CGCS, CGCS at The Oregon Golf Club in West Linn, Oregon. As his assistant, I took it upon myself to discover why we had over 20 bird boxes on the property, yet bluebirds inhabited none. I acquainted myself with the PBRP and soon learned it's all about location.

Bluebirds are particular about choosing a nest box or a tree cavity to feed their young. If bluebirds are seen in the area during nesting season (April through August), chances are good that if you put up a nesting box, they will use it. It's all about the available food in the area with which to feed their young, as well as how much competition exists for nesting sites. Often conflicts over nest boxes will result in the loss of eggs and young, as well as the killing of the adults. The most likely culprit will be House Sparrows. This species doesn't normally require cavities to nest, but if given the opportunity, they will take a nesting box over anything else. If nest boxes are placed in an area where House Sparrows are present, it will present an immediate danger to the survival of the bluebirds and their young. House Sparrows can have up to three broods of young, thus increasing the pressure on the bluebird population. This is why bluebirds are not commonly seen in urban settings. The sparrow competition is just too great. If you have a large population of House Sparrows, then I would strongly suggest not putting up any boxes until the population has subsided. Please refer to the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's website, NestWatch, for further resources in dealing with non-native species.

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Siting Your Bird Boxes

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The location of your nesting box can dictate the type of bird that will use it. If you want to attract Tree Swallows, place boxes near a pond. If you want to attract House Wrens, Chickadees or Nuthatches, you can place boxes near heavy brush and undergrowth. Bluebirds prefer to hunt from a perch and like semi-open grassland. Fence lines or vineyards make excellent perching sites. If perching sites are not in the area, a simple T-shaped perching stick can be mounted on the back of the nesting box. Lawns make great areas for bluebird to hunt; this is why golf courses can be such desired locations. Since birds will be feeding their young during nesting times, all pesticide use should be curtailed around areas where they will be gathering their insects.

Be sure to leave your boxes up year around. Pairs will often scout for nesting sites in the fall and come back in the spring. They may also utilize the box to roost during the winter months. It is also important to clean out the boxes after each season. Boxes are designed to have a cavity and if nests are built upon older nests the eggs and the young are close to the opening and can become vulnerable to predation. If your boxes remain empty for two years in a single location, move them around to another spot, perhaps further away from traffic or just

turn the direction of the opening. Always be sure the opening is facing away from the prevailing wind; generally toward the east is a good rule of thumb.

Remember that providing nesting boxes isn't a one-time effort. You need to monitor them on a regular basis. If you find it hard to get around to the boxes, perhaps you can designate someone on your staff, or a volunteer, to make a round once a month or so. It's important to be sure wasps or mice aren't taking up residence. Check around your local areas for bluebird conservation groups. The PBRP will actually come out and band your young before they fledge so the population can be monitored. This also provides a wonderful opportunity to network with conservation leaders.

Invite a local school or a scout troop to participate by helping to construct your boxes and take part in siting them. This could be a great learning module to complement your First Green Program. Providing nesting boxes can be a rewarding endeavor and open the door to many opportunities. Now go out there and help those birds proliferate!



Congratulations to Ken Thornock,

Idaho GCSA

2014 Links Scholarship
Recipient



An excerpt from Thornock's essay:

For many years now, my primary motivation has been to continue progressing in the field of turfgrass management. What began simply as a summer job and free golf has become the driving force in my life. My first experiences of working on a golf course persuaded me that the turfgrass management is what I wanted to do for the rest of my working life. For me, no other work ever compared to working on a golf course. What other job has ever offered such picturesque surroundings and fun people?

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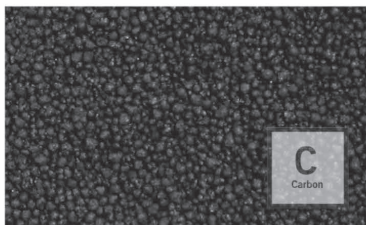


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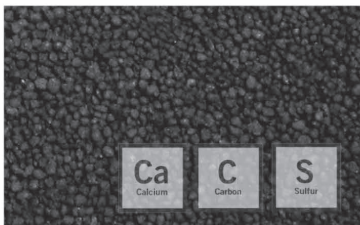
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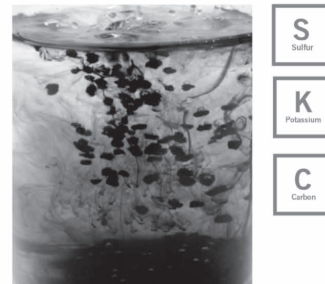
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Adam Bagwell, CGCS, Crane Creek Country Club

Pinehurst #2 was impressively shocking. Those of us in the industry had been hearing and seeing pictures over the last year, but four days of coverage added to the effect. I don't know how the golfing public views a course with no rough and fairways that are dusty on the edges with just a little green in the middle. Does a resort guest want to pay \$250 to play on brown, crusty turf?

I've been told by some of the charter members that Crane Creek in the early days was very similar. The only irrigation was a single row of quick couplers down the middle of the fairways, and there was very little rough! I have to believe that most courses before the late 1970s were likely in the same condition as Pinehurst (albeit with much slower green speed). If those conditions were acceptable 50 years ago, why are they not generally accepted now? I always wonder if it was pressure from the golfing public to water more for aesthetics, or was it somewhat OCD superintendents?

From an environmental and historical perspective, Pinehurst #2 is a step forward. The course uses 40% less water as presently constituted. It would be interesting to see if there is any labor saved. I'd hazard a guess that there are few savings, as the native roughs require weeding that has to be accomplished by hand. The bentgrass greens are being replaced with Champion Bermuda, saving many fungicide applications and babysitting during hot, humid summers. Pinehurst has definitely embraced an environmentally friendly mantra. It will be interesting to see if all the other courses are modified as well.

David Druzisky, ASGCA

The American Society of Golf Course Architects, of which Donald Ross was a founding member and of which I am a member now, has long promoted sustainable and eco friendly golf. Some situations, such as Pinehurst, suggest that brown and dry is the correct formula in that approach. Truth be known, it is always smart to work with what Mother Nature gives us.

As much attention that the dry and brown conditions garnered, as a Golf Course Architect, I was more excited about a couple other design traits that my fellow designers Bill Coore

Ramblings of a Tired Superintendent plus a guest

Enjoy Two Perspectives of Pinehurst #2 and Sustainable Golf

**Adam Bagwell, MPS, CGCS,
Crane Creek Country Club, Boise, Idaho**

David Druzisky, ASGCA, Boise, Idaho

and Ben Crenshaw instilled in their renovation of no.2. The first being the widened fairways.

"Wider fairways? But this is a USGA Major Championship event!", one would challenge. "Not this time," says Mike Davis of the USGA. For years the approach for major events has been to narrow down fairways and promote rough to challenge the better players. Pinehurst's widened fairways are the result of the fact that after removal of the outer roughs, all

continued page 17



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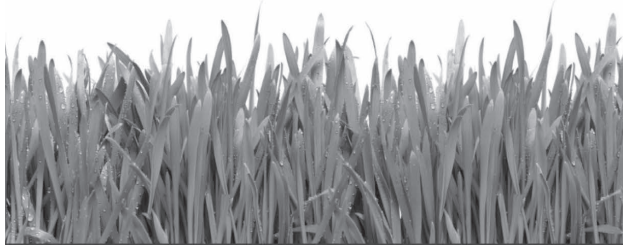
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Sustainable Golf

continued from page 16

remaining maintained turf is now mowed at one low height of cut (other than the greens). Many are a generous 45 to 55 yards in width at landing areas and only slightly narrower at the deepest yardages if pinched by a bunker or dogleg. The wide and accommodating fairways provide more interesting shot angles into those great old Ross greens that fall off in all directions. This translates strategically back to the tee shot and knowing that you want to go to one side or the other to set up your approach angle into a particular pin. It is no longer about hitting it strictly down the middle with no care to the day's hole location. Many of us, as architects have been crying foul on the penal rough trend at the championships and are happy to see our belief in wider fairways and increased choice on approach angles successfully employed.

Secondly, many were worried that the sandy waste native areas that now flank each side of the holes were going to be too penal and unruly. But, you heard throughout the broadcast that the players felt these areas outside the maintained turf were much fairer and, frankly, more fun. Initially, you would think this would lead to low scores posted by these players, but the resulting final numbers proved otherwise. It wasn't ridiculously penal, but it did keep them from scoring. Nobody enjoys tall rough, especially the regular golfer. A course with no rough and wide and accommodating fairway sounds great to me - even if a little brown.

At the end of the day, we architects have long realized the single best place to protect par from the better player, that also does not make the game overly challenging or frustrating for the regular golfer, is with well designed greens. Pinehurst has that in spades. Thank you, Donald Ross. And, thank you, Mike Davis.

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Green Side Up



What's New With You?

Joel Jackson, CGCS Retired
(The Florida Green, Spring 2014)

I came across a quote not long ago that caught my attention. It was a new twist on the old familiar saying, "It's not what you know, it's who you know!" The new version goes like this, "It's not what you know or who you know, it's who knows you!"

In the Hands On section of this issue, four superintendents shared the duties and responsibilities they have at their clubs beyond the normal turf maintenance responsibilities of the golf course. Those examples showcase many ways they have become known as the "Go To Person" in the overall operations, not just turf maintenance.

In the past, other superintendents

have touched on their communications development and increased exposure to the members via blogs, email blasts, Facebook posts and traditional club newsletter articles or bulletin board announcements. Where are you in this modern high-tech and instantaneous communications world? In today's fickle golf environment you sure don't want to be "Out of sight, out of mind!" That doesn't mean you should flood member's email in-boxes, but it does mean you can develop a more regular pattern of updates and photos that showcase your department and your worth.

That's a start for improving internal relations at the club, but there are never any guarantees in our line of work. Things can go wrong with course conditions, or changes in management personnel despite WHAT you know, and they just might lead to losing your job. It's not a subject to dwell on, but something to be aware of.

This is where WHO YOU KNOW and WHO KNOWS YOU come into play. In my view, the superintendents who have been involved in their professional associations and local community groups on a regular basis have a distinct edge when voluntary or involuntary job changes occur.

You can spruce up your written resume with all the recommended bells and whistles - and you should - but get-

ting an endorsement from well-known industry or community leaders would go a long way in verifying your character and abilities. The best way to earn your peers' respect and recommendations is to be actively involved in your local, state and national organizations.

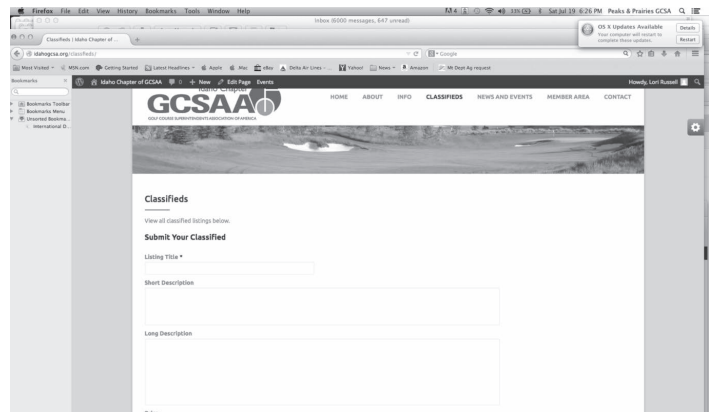
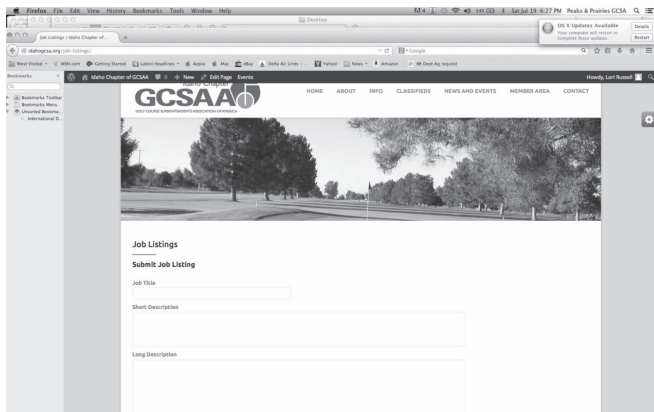
You don't have to run for every office on the board, but showing up and serving on a committee to actually help host an event that helps raises turf research or charitable funds or perform a community service, earns that goodwill and notice you might need one day.

Your participation can help your profession, your personal growth and your club's successful operation at a time when golf and turfgrass in general is under constant attack by activists. In return, the time and energy you invest in these activities earns interest that you can draw on when you might need some help.

It's still early in the year with plenty of time to make a new resolution and reach out to your local chapter leaders and tell them, "I'd to serve on a committee!"

Trust me, you'll be glad you did!

*Joel Jackson, CGCS Retired
Editor Florida Green Magazine
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OUR MISSION

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We are linked together. Visit our links page to see what organizations we proud to link up with.

Idaho GCSA Newsletter

EVENTS

OCT 05 Idaho GCSA Fall Meeting
Idaho GCSA Fall Meeting, Pinecrest Golf Course, Idaho Falls, Idaho, October 6-7, 2014. Our exciting speaker line-up includes Micah Woods, Ph.D., Chief Scientist at the Asian Turfgrass Center, and »

OCT 06 NTA Conference 2014
2014 NTA Conference, Chambers Bay, University Place, Washington. For more information about the 68th annual event, please contact: Paul Ramsdell, Executive Director. »

OCT 20 Inland Empire GCSA Fall Meeting & Trade Show

ABOUT US

ABOUT US

The Idaho Golf Course Superintendents Association brings together the turf professionals of the region to offer continuing education and improve the golf course superintendent's profession. Learn More.

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