

The Idaho Golf Course Superintendents Association

Grass Clippings

April 2022

26th Super/Pro Golf Challenge

You need this. To maintain the high level of standards you set for yourself and your facility — you need a mental and physical break from your own golf course. Take that pause and go play in the Super/Pro Golf Challenge! This event will give you an opportunity to spend time and pick up tips from the people who are dealing with the same issues as you. In addition, this is one tool available to help strengthen the relationships between the facility's key employees — which also benefits the facility's operations. All great reasons to participate.

Enjoy this opportunity on Thursday, June 16, to golf Sun Valley Trail Creek Course, Sun Valley, Idaho, 1:00 p.m. shotgun. This championship course was designed by Robert Trent Jones, Jr. and has been recognized by Golf Digest as one of the top 75 resort courses in North America. Our hosts are Alex Bliss, golf course

superintendent, and Dominick Conti, head PGA professional.

Everyone is welcome to play and we offer two flights to accommodate all teams.

Hole sponsors are greatly appreciated. To register,

please visit the calendar event of our website, idahogcsa.org.



New Location for the 2023 Spring Meeting & Trade Show

We are excited to announce the 2023 Idaho GCSA Spring Meeting and Trade Show will remain under one roof — but this time at The Riverside Hotel, BW Premier Collection, Boise, Idaho! This full-service hotel and convention center is located along the beautiful Boise River, and is along the Boise River Greenbelt. The Greenbelt is a 26-mile paved trail open dawn to dusk, running from Eagle to downtown Boise. The property offers generous space for our education and trade show. It also includes onsite restaurants and bars known for featuring local musicians and as a great place to watch games. You will find area options to explore that include a winery, brewery, restaurants and comedy club, all within a half-mile walking distance. Downtown is easily accessible two miles away — an easy Uber ride.

Along with the change in venue, another notable change will be the days of the week. With so many members in the region, the size of our hotel room block has been a challenge with venues in the

area. Our opportunity for change came with a Thursday/Friday format, and we took it! Change can be exciting and we look forward to enjoying this new location with all of you February 23 & 24, 2023. The board meeting will be Wednesday, February 22.

Fall Meeting & Silent Auction – Hailey, Idaho

It may only be spring, but we are already looking ahead to our Fall Meeting & Silent Auction, October 3 & 4, 2022, at The Valley Club, in Hailey, Idaho. This beautiful facility last hosted our event in 2015 and we

can't wait to return. Changes have taken place, including a \$7.5 million dollar renovation of the

original 18 holes. Of course we are taking full advantage of our visit and suggested to Flaherty that he should offer a little insight of the renovation! He accepted the invitation happily (probably knowing he didn't have a choice.)

Our July issue will offer more information about the event and registration will be open in August. Our hosts are Gerald Flaherty, CGCS, Jason Sigmund and Ken Thornock.



Supportive Facilities Ensure a Successful Auction

The courses in the region once again stepped forward with incredible support participating in our silent auction held at the Boise Golf Expo. We can't thank you all enough!

Our auction committee, lead by Travis Rose, worked hard to connect with our superintendents and gather rounds. Rose made it back from the GCSAA Conference and Show just in time to set up and work the booth with Charisse Rose and retired superintendent, Brian Mickels, CGCS. Distributing the rounds with handwritten notes were Jason Sigmund and Ken Thornock, The Valley Club. Thank you, all!



idahogcsa.org



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Did you know the events shown on our website homepage
are only a portion of events listed?
Click on the News/Events tab to see a larger list.

linked together. Visit our links
to see what organizations we proud
to link up with. »



A letter to encourage your facility to participate in the upcoming silent auction
with your donation of rounds and carts at the Boise Golf Show is available for
download. Please click »



Idaho GCSA Spring Meeting & Trade Show - 2022

See you at the Spring Meeting & Trade Show - Feb 2022! All under one roof!
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Boise, Idaho, at the Red Lion Downtown. Our »

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in the region to offer continuing

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Info about Idaho GCSA website!

- * Do you have an address change? Changing the information on Your Profile in the Member's Area will automatically update the association's database! Use of proper capitalization and spelling is appreciated.
- * Do you have any classified items? Please be sure to complete the classified section in the Member's Area.

*"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

Bryce Burton, President
Star Valley View, Afton, Wyo.



There were four holes to play and they were even. By now, most of the country was riveted.

Since NBC.com was streaming live, a lot of people sitting at their desks in their offices were watching on their computers. During the last two hours of the playoff, trading volume on Wall Street plummeted.

It was said the coolest person in the storm was Rocco. He hit another perfect drive on 15. "I was in the zone then," he said. "I'd hit the ball, look at it in the air and say 'Yup,' and then move on to the next shot, if it wasn't exactly what I wanted, I was surprised." He had gone from three strokes down on the 11th tee to one up on the 16th tee.

The tension was now officially unbearable. The crowd had been riding along, perfectly happy to see Woods win but when Rocco turned things around so quickly, they began to sense that they were witnessing one of the great golf duels, and perhaps one of the greatest golf upsets in history.

The US Open in June of 2008 produced one of the most unexpected, dramatic and memorable showdowns in golf. Day after day, Rocco Mediate pushed the seemingly invincible Tiger Woods to his physical and mental limits.

Although very exciting, my thoughts are that not many of us were surprised by the outcome of the Open that year. I have always enjoyed that the US Open is not decided by a sudden death playoff. If that were the case, Rocco would have been

down the road after his bogey on the first hole and we would have missed out on an exciting clash.

Fast forward a couple years and my wife's entire family was vacationing in Southern California in the spring of 2010. I begged and pleaded to be allowed to sneak away from the family to go down to Torrey Pines on a day that wasn't booked already with Disney or Sea World. Spending less time around my wife's sister and playing a round of golf was a win-win for me (did I just say that?).

Sure enough, I found myself milling around the pro shop in La Jolla early in the morning with another gentleman, who was from Alabama, waiting to see if we could get out. James had the same idea as I did, only he was sloughing a business conference. He and I quickly became friends, having to burn some time waiting to golf. Being there on a Wednesday, the women's league had the course full in the morning. Not having a tee time, I was prepared to wait as long as needed to check this course off of my bucket list. Finally, the time came and my new friend and I were paired with a little old local man and given a time behind the league.

What happened over the next five hours is one of the highlights of my life. (Remember, I'm away from my sister-in-law.) Seriously though, it was a great day of golf. I was still young and probably dumb at the time and wanted to play the back tees to experience what tour players do. During the round, the little old man

gave us a play-by-play of the battle Rocco and Tiger had. He would point out a spot on

the course and say, "This is where Tiger's drive was," and "This is the spot Rocco had to try to save par from." That commentary really added to the experience. I had one of the best rounds that day in San Diego. It definitely wasn't a great day because of the shots I hit, but because of the fun I had with guys I didn't even know. Hearing stories, seeing the course, and understanding how my 4 wood goes as far as a tour players' 8 iron were some of the things I still remember. Also, getting to know how different things seem from what a person views on television. It was also surprising to me to see the "lake" on the finishing hole. What seems to be a giant water hazard on TV isn't any bigger than the putting surface. Rocco typically draws the ball and the majority of the shots at Torrey demand a fade, making the story of Rocco trying to take down one of the best players ever, even more amazing. That 18 holes of golf was an experience that I think of still. I'm glad I took the opportunity to sneak away and play.

This spring has been unusual here in Star Valley. Over the weekend we had mid

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The complex block features a green header with the company name and services. Below is a topographic map of a golf course with various colored lines (red, blue, black) indicating paths, holes, and hazards. The map includes numbers 3 and 4 in specific areas. At the bottom, there is a green footer with contact information.



What I did over Winter Break

Alex Bliss, Sun Valley/Elkhorn,
Sun Valley, Idaho

For most of us winter is our time to rest, recover, and reflect on our long summer season behind us. This winter was going to be a little bit different for me than past ones. After putting the golf courses to bed in late

terrain with a fleet of nine snow cats. Now that sounds pretty easy — schedule what days people work and then tell them what runs they need to groom. Just like golfers think that we superintendents just water the grass, fertilize and mow it. It's pretty simple, right? Anyone can do it!

Still, in the simple mindset, turf grass management and grooming are very similar. At the end of the day we are both preparing a surface for people to recreate. In the summer I mow and roll to provide a smooth surface, in the winter we groom to knock down bumps and provide a safe and enjoyable surface. As we all know, it's not that simple and there is so much more that we do to provide the product we strive to showcase.

We all have our own agronomic and cultural practices that are dictated by the seasons and most importantly, the weather. Grooming is no different. What we groom and how we groom is dictated by season and weather. Early season we deal with man-made snow that is very firm and dense; we hope that we receive natural snow to mix. While in current spring conditions, we deal with 60-degree days and the snow is a slushy like material that when it does freeze later, it sets up harder than concrete. On the other hand, grooming in a blizzard at 9000 feet can be utterly terrifying and exhilarating all at the same time, compared to an average night of sub-zero temperatures and a clear full moon

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November and taking a little time off to handle some family matters, I was up on the mountain helping out, running snow cats a few nights a week. For some of you who know me, that's not all that unusual for me to help with the grooming department in early winter. I have run snow cats in the past and ran a graveyard shift for a few years early in my career at Sun Valley. However, come mid-January, I was asked if I could fill in as the grooming manager to finish out the winter ski season.

It was an honor and a privilege to be asked to bring my leadership to such a distinguished department of this company. Sun Valley Resort has been named #1 ski resort the last two years by SKI Magazine's readers' poll, and last year grooming was ranked #1 in its specific category. In the ski industry this is a very big deal and why I felt honored to take on this new challenge. By the end of January, I was scheduling for over 24 employees and planning nightly grooming calls that averaged 500 acres of

President's Message continued from page 3

40s Saturday, (which for us is nice), snow on Sunday and single digits this morning. I know some of you have irrigation systems already charged up and are working steady. Last week I found myself running a snow blower around the perimeter of all our greens, desperately trying to get some heat into the ground in order to facilitate some snow melting instead of reflecting away. I swear the snow is still 12" deep here and I'm getting nervous! I really have no idea if my efforts are helping or if I just sleep

better at night knowing I did something. With all that has been said, I truly hope the best for everyone this coming season. I also hope that we all can take a day or two and check something off of our bucket lists this year. After all, I have had an invitation to visit a friend of mine named James for almost twelve years. He's been imploring me to come visit in early April, apparently there is a golf tournament close to his house that he thinks we should go watch. Maybe I should beg and plead to sneak away again.

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Winter Break

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night. All the different weather events dictate where and what needs to be groomed. Most times that decision is made on a safety aspect — safety of the employees and machinery and most importantly, the safety of our guests.


On big snow cycles we tend to groom less terrain versus sunny clear days. With fresh snow, more people want to ski off pistes away from groomed terrain. Challenging conditions and guests wanting untouched snow naturally lead us to groom less terrain in large snow storms. Heavy snow storms bring another challenge of having to watch for safety of our operators and equipment due to avalanches. Our grooming takes place after hours of ski patrol. They come in the morning to detonate explosives to clear the mountain and make it safe for us and guests. On these mornings the cat operators usually stay later in the morning to clear off roads and runs of snow debris after avalanches have been intentionally set off. Large amounts of snow also make it challenging for the machines to operate on such steep terrain, leading us to wait for the snow to get compacted by skiers or the use of our two winch cats. Winch cats are normal snow cats with the exception they have a large hydraulic winch that assist them up and down steep terrain. The winch is strong enough to pull the machine up and safely lower it down. Our cables are up to 1200 meters long, or nearly $\frac{3}{4}$ mile long!

Sunny days are what we are known for, it is Sun Valley, after all. Bluebird days and perfect pistes are what we strive for and we prove it with our number one ranking. When all the powder skiing has been bumped out, skiers filter their way back to the

smooth groomed runs. During the winter we run two shifts: swing, 4:00 p.m. - 12:00 a.m. and graveyard, 12:00 a.m. - 8:00 a.m. Depending on staffing levels, those two shifts cover an average of 500 to over 700 acres groomed across the total 16 hours of work. It's incredible to watch a skilled operator use all functions of the cat from the blade, the tracks, and manipulation of the tiller, to turn a mine field of bumps into a perfectly flat groomed surface behind it. Having such skilled operators and the pride they take in their work is why we rank so highly in this field.

No different than golf, it's the little details that really make your product shine. A course with edged cart paths, sprinkler heads, bunker rakes neatly organized... it's all the little details to take things to the next level. With grooming, it's all about moving the snow back to where we need it after it has been skied. Snow migrates toward the edges of the run and obviously gravity pulls it down; it is up to the grooming staff to bring it back up and in. The little details of "edging" are how we cleanly maintain the runs from pulling snow around and away from snow guns, lift towers and signs. These are some of our little tricks we have that elevate us to the high standard that we strive to reach.

As days are getting longer and the temperatures rising, I start the transition from shutting down a mountain to opening golf courses. A great 24 hours of daily planning. While I have two shifts running through all hours of the night, I now have started my golf staff working through the day. It's been a great challenge for the winter and I look forward to the next few weeks to finish strong and start stronger with what lays ahead of the rapidly approaching golf season.



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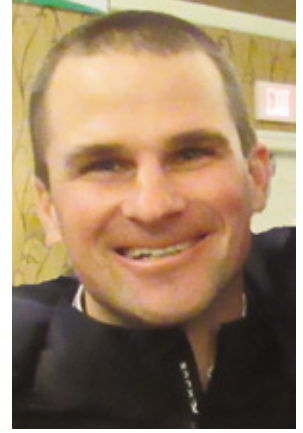
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As I get older it's getting harder and harder to do the right things to keep myself healthy. It seems that I struggle to consistently eat

Tips for a Healthy Living

Jason Sigmund, The Valley Club, Hailey, Idaho



healthy, exercise on a regular basis, and achieve the right amount of sleep. A fact that most people don't know about me is that right after receiving my turf degree from Ohio State, I proceeded to acquire a bachelor's degree in exercise physiology and worked briefly in cardiac rehab at Cleveland Clinic. With a background in health and wellness and seeing the negative impacts of COVID, inflation, and wars, we should remind ourselves of some of the simple concepts to get back on track.

1. EAT A BALANCED DIET.

In most people's lives, food is something that brings great joy, but for most people moderation and eating healthy is difficult. Some easy tips to follow include: make a list and plan before going to the grocery store. This will help ensure that you have a meal plan, preferably healthy, and will also help save time and money by not buying useless food. Shop on the perimeter of the grocery store. Usually, the perimeter includes healthy, less processed foods like fresh fruits, vegetables, dairy products, eggs and seafood. It sounds simple, but we're all guilty — myself included — of going down that frozen section and grabbing that DiGiorno stuffed crust, meat lovers' pizza.

We encourage everyone to fill their plate with colorful foods. When we think about the healthiest foods, most have vibrant colors and are, as I mentioned earlier, on the perimeter of the store. Examples of this include your greens (greens beans, celery, nuts), reds (apples, strawberries, tomatoes, cherries), orange (oranges), yellows (pineapples, sweetcorn, yellow peppers), whites (mushrooms, cauliflower, bananas), and blues (blueberries, prunes). A good check to see if you have a healthy meal is if your plate looks like a rainbow.

2. GET YOUR DRINK ON WITH A TALL GLASS OF WATER.

Approximately 60 percent of our body weight is made up of water, so it's important to stay properly hydrated, even more so when spending time in the sun. The main recommendation is eight glasses a day. That is a good start, but it really depends on how active you are, body size, environment you live in, and overall health. The simplest way to know if you're hydrated, and the one I use as a gauge, is the color of urine. If your urine is clear, then you're good. But if you have bright yellow, smelling urine, then drinking more water should be a top priority.

Remember, being properly hydrated will increase energy levels, help you lose weight, help with constipation, helps lubricate your joints, regulate body temperature, and reduce the chance of the occasional hangover. Make sure you carry that water bottle around and encourage others to do the same. At The Valley Club we are lucky enough to supply employees with water bottles to ensure they are staying hydrated.

Being properly hydrated doesn't include throwing down a Red Bull, Monster, Rock Star, or Mountain Dew. I'm usually guilty of grabbing that energy drink on spray days when I need to be up extra early and in my earlier 20s, I was known for drinking the 7-Eleven 64 oz. BigGulp of Mountain Dew. The problem is the amount of sugar and caffeine is only going to make you crash

later and even aid in dehydration. I know caffeine is a useful tool for most but instead of grabbing that energy drink, try drinking a cup of tea and even coffee is okay in moderation, to kick off the day.

3. SWEAT IT OUT AND EXERCISE.

Many of us seem to struggle getting the right amount of exercise in during the week whether because of work, busy family life, just being too tired after work, or being lazy. A recommendation that I learned in school was if you can perform 40 minutes of moderate to vigorous exercise five times per week, include moderate to vigorous muscle strengthening two times a week, and eat a healthy diet, you would remain healthy. The cool part about our job is that we can achieve this at work. Many of our members, whose average age is around 65, request that they walk more greens several times a week to help with their health. If you can't walk mow greens, maybe schedule yourself to walk spread fertilizer. With that, you're killing two birds with one stone by slinging 50 lb. bags and walking several miles. If you're unable to do any of these, Idaho offers many ways to exercise whether its biking, hiking, XC skiing, yoga, trail running or swimming. I find myself struggling to accomplish this after a long day at work, but something that does help is to find a partner or group who will hold you accountable.

4. GET A GOOD NIGHT SLEEP.

This can be a challenging part of living a healthy lifestyle since we're required to be up early and work late, but it is essential to having a productive day and staying healthy. We all know not getting enough sleep can cause depression and weight gain, reduce immune function, increase heart disease and impair memory. Some easy tips for getting a good night's sleep are to set a bedtime schedule and try to go to sleep at the same time every night. Try not to drink caffeinated drinks late in the day that will have the potential to keep you awake. Make sure your bedroom is only used for sleeping, exercise on a regular basis, avoid taking the daytime nap after 3:00 p.m., and probably the toughest one of all, try to solve any worries you have that may keep you up.

5. HAVE REGULAR CHECKUPS WITH DOCTORS.

Again, such a simple idea, but it's surprising how many people neglect seeing a doctor until a problem arises. Regular checkups can help find and diagnose problems before they occur and a doctor can help navigate some of the topics I mentioned earlier. This just doesn't include your family doctor, but make time to see a dentist, dermatologist, eye doctor, or even a nutritionist. These are some very basic tips that most of us know, but I wanted them to serve as a reminder to take control of your health, even if you haven't started. Remember you have nothing without your health, so take that extra time to work out, eat healthy, and get those regular checkups.



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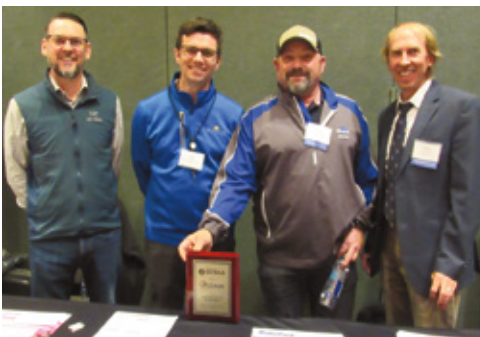
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SILVER CREEK SUPPLY



Yes, It's Spring

Michael Valiant, CGCS

Glenwild Golf Club and Spa, Park City, Utah



Doesn't it seem that since daylight saving time began, it has been harder to get a good night's sleep? At least that's what I'd like to blame. However, as a superintendent, I know it's the fast approach of spring and everything associated with it that keeps greenskeepers tossing and turning this time of year.

I've been a golf course superintendent in the Rocky Mountains for 31 years and each spring is full of anticipation as the snow begins to melt and peel back from south-facing bunker faces and mounds. Usually a week or two after the GCSAA Conference and Show, I strap on snowshoes, grab a scoop shovel and trek out to a few select greens to see how the surfaces are doing under their diminishing white comforters. The best-case scenario is a green's surface frozen as hard as a rock with a stand as short as the day the snow mold treatment hit. Worst-case scenario is a surface that's covered in thick ice or one that shows lush 3/4" bentgrass growing like it is mid-May. Depending on how this seemingly relaxing snow shoe goes, the results of my find will determine how the next three weeks play out.

Early spring is also a good time to catch up with fellow superintendents around the region to see how their courses are faring. We each have our own challenges from waiting on local municipalities to turn on water supplies, to re-novation or

construction projects delayed by "supply chain" issues, to snow mold or ice damage and its slow recovery. We are looking for sand deliveries for spring aerification, trying to hire staff, dealing with tree cleanup, and looking to see when sod farms open. We know the fast-diminishing snowpack can offer a future threat of an impending drought, and what about the status of H-2B workers? And as we annually juggle all these spring activities, golfers are simply asking, "When are you going to open?"

Couple those expected stresses with things that are occurring off-property, like the war in Ukraine and our country just one bad comment away from nuclear war with Russia, rising fuel prices, inflation numbers not seen in decades, and this list also goes on and on, as well.

How we deal with the stresses of our industry and the outside factors beyond our control builds our character and shapes our lives. Each of us have our personal ways of coping with stress (obviously I am not a licenses psychologist); I just wanted to share some of things I do to make it through these difficult times.

My father passed away four years ago after battling dementia and Alzheimer's, opening my eyes to these debilitating diseases. Some of the risk factors contributing to these diseases are genetics, stress, lack of sleep, and an unhealthy lifestyle (lack of exercise, diet, weight) — all the things golf course superintendents can be exposed to in this industry. That said, I decided it was time for me to take control of some of the things I can control, like my health, my diet, my sleep habits and, in some way, my stress.

The work-related stresses will always be an integral part of our industry and world events will continually be in the background of our thoughts. But we can manage how much these stressors affect us. Like I alluded to earlier, I'm no expert in this, and we've all heard it before, but forcing ourselves to focus on something other than the golf course (the "work/life balance") is critical. We need to vary our work schedules in order to have more hours or days off in the season. Picking up a once-loved hobby, walking/running/hiking/cycling after work either alone or with the family, and coaching a little league team are great ways to de-stress, enjoyably. Shutting down electronics and picking up a book to fall asleep will improve your night's sleep. These types of activities are all things you can do to help relieve the stress of this tough, but rewarding job.

I know many of you are saying, "Yeah right, I'm going to knock off early today so I can take a two-hour hike before dinner. The irrigation charge-up can wait."

But really, I'm just trying to plant the seed. Spring is always a nutty time of year, but once things are rolling, do what you can to balance things. Small steps will eventually lead you to a healthier lifestyle. Good luck this season and I wish you frequent 0.2" rains!

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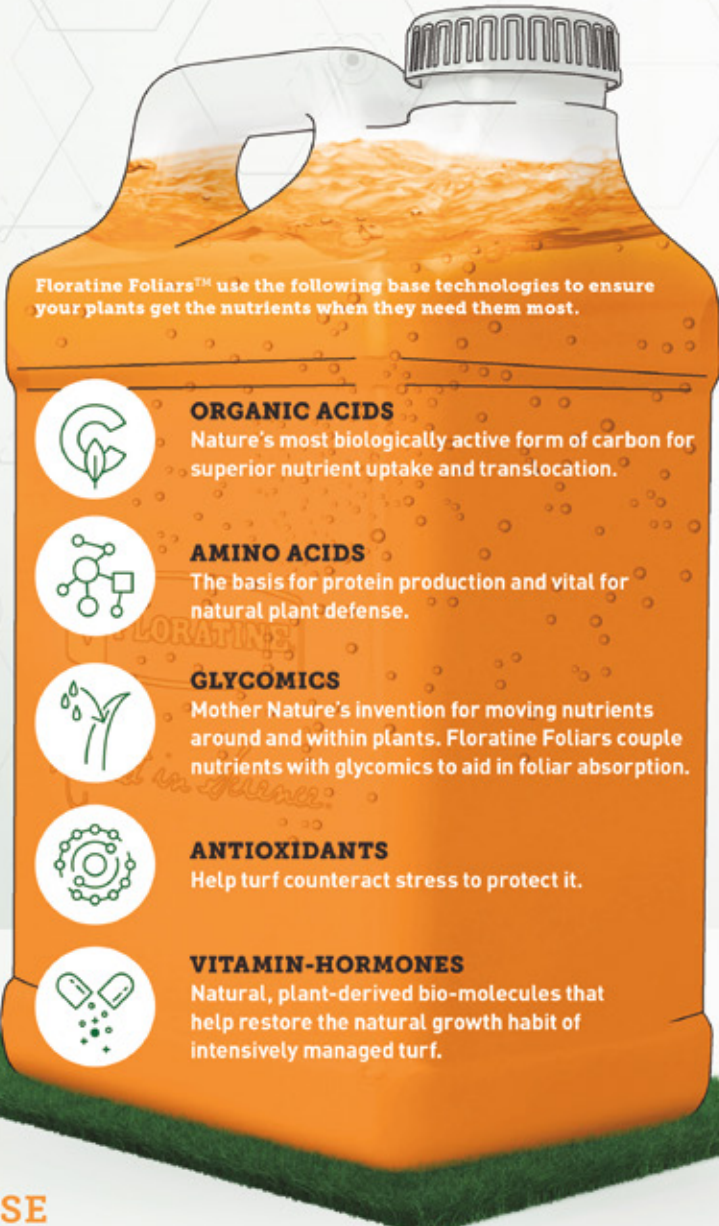
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Chapter Leadership Symposium

Jason Sigmund, The Valley Club, Hailey, Idaho

I recently went to the Chapter Leadership Symposium at the GCSAA headquarters in Lawrence, Kansas, and it was a great experience. Along with Lori and board members from Peaks & Prairies GCSA and Inland Empire GCSA, I felt like we were on a “mission from God,” as the Blues Brothers say. Not only to learn about leadership skills, but to conquer the duck fat fries at the Burger Stand. As Bryce Burton wrote in the previous newsletter, with the first night’s dinner there is a tradition that all three chapters are required to eat the duck fat fries. This tradition started years back when one of our groups stumbled upon the delicacy. Unfortunately, Bryce and his gang were unable to partake due to a Monday closing, thanks to COVID. This year the pressure was on us to rekindle the tradition and make the necessary changes to make it happen. So, on a cold, rainy, and windy



TUESDAY night, we braved the weather and marched down to the Burger Stand for our duck fat fries as an appetizer. Lucky for us, they were open for business. I’m not sure

exactly how they were cooked but they melted in your mouth and hit all your taste buds.

The duck fat fries were not the only mission. We had nearly two days of education to enjoy with topics such as maintaining effective chapter operations, First Green programs, outreach programs, GCSAA fundraising, and ideas for communicating with our members. I was extremely impressed with the passion and dedication that all the chapter leaders and GCSAA employees had. I feel like the industry is moving in the right direction. One aspect of GCSAA that I didn’t realize was the size and number of employees that work for GCSAA. With over 80 employees in over a dozen different departments, it gave me a new perspective on the association.

One presentation that really drew my attention was by Chava McKeel, Director of Government Affairs. She talked heavily on how her team is fighting for us in Washington on issues ranging from removal of products, improving access to the H-2B program, and a bill in California that is trying to convert public golf courses to commercial developments. She strongly advised us all to sign up for alerts from the GCSAA to keep updated on current issues. This will allow all of us to receive info on what topic they are fighting and how we can help. Usually this requires writing a letter to your elected official.

Other topics brought up included the First Green field trips and facility BMPs. With the industry struggling to bring in new employees, the First Green is a great program to get younger talent interested in the industry and going to school for the profession. And I know everyone has been hearing a lot about the



BMPs, but it was stressed that it’s important to get these completed to show we are all good stewards of the environment. The closing presentation was titled, “Understanding Leadership in Changing Times.” This dynamic speaker had practical and valuable points to help us as leaders.

I thoroughly enjoyed going to Lawrence and hope to take the knowledge gained to improve myself.




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I Need Help (and I don't mean labor)

Pete Grass, CGCS

Hilands Golf Club, Billings, Mont. *The Perfect Lie*, March 2022

For many years I have struggled to not let parts of life maintaining a golf course cause me excessive stress and anxiety. In the pursuit of turf perfection — as many of us strive for and hopefully achieve at least a couple times a year — I have always “stressed.” And it seems my stress level has steadily increased over several years, building up to my realizing this last summer that I needed some help.

It was only early June, but we had already experienced several weeks of well-above-average temperatures with little natural moisture. What I call “July weather” had started before Memorial Day. One day the stress of my strive for perfection, mixed with stressed turf and a wind event (those of you with lots of trees on your course understand), led me to break down and cry, thinking I just can't do this anymore. Adding to the stress was knowing the summer was just beginning, I still need to work a few more years (so I can't just quit/retire), and knowing we have an unusually full tournament schedule in 2021. I knew this feeling was not good and I needed some help.

Luckily for me, I knew who to reach out to for help and they agreed to work me into their schedules. I have as club members and friends, a therapist (Kee) and a nurse practitioner (Stacy), who specialize in mental health issues. Explaining to them that I often wake up in the middle of the night and think about the

sticks or a pinecone that were not picked up, or what I should have stayed longer and done, even though I just spent 12-14 hours at work that day. I carry the feeling I shouldn't go home until things are perfect, even when knowing that it is almost impossible to achieve. A windy day or thunderstorm can raise my blood pressure and anxiety to the point of sometimes throwing fits, even though there is absolutely nothing I can do to change it. These traits and feelings can make me feel horrible, along with making it very hard on my family and employees.

My “mental health intervention,” as I call it, was actually a very interesting process of looking inward about what internal and external factors made me feel this way, and basically how I had arrived at this point. Even though some may take being told they have mental health issues as hurtful or embarrassing, I often say and live by, “Sometimes the truth hurts.” My diagnosis? ADD and OCD tendencies, and slightly on the autism spectrum.

OK, if you have these issues, what can you do about it? With their help and encouragement, Kee and Stacy taught me about Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT). It is basically learning to understand what is within your control or truly your responsibility, and how to move on without causing concern or anxiety with

continued page 18

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I Need Help continued from page 16

he things that are not in your control. They helped explain how stress about small things golfers don't notice (like a stick, pinecone, wet/dry spot), or letting one comment/complaint (by someone who just missed a putt or had a bad round), make us feel that we are not properly doing our jobs. For me, one complaint or negative comment would be dwelled upon (even after receiving multiple compliments the same day), still feeling that things could be better and therefore not being happy with the course conditions in that unachievable strive for perfection.

Since that day back in early June, when I knew I needed help and reached out for it, I can honestly say my life has become so much better. I would in no way say perfect, as changing long-term or even lifetime habits is always a work in progress. But now, using the CBT process to think through situations and react accordingly has changed me and how I meet the challenges of each day. In our initial meeting, we discussed that if using only the CBT process was not enough to bring relief to my stress/anxiety, there are also several medication options to try. I said I would first try just the CBT and so far, it has given me the relief I needed—even through the golf season. I am holding open the idea that at some point I still may need something else to help me.

I share my story to have us all think about how we deal with our work and home lives. If there are situations or circumstances in your life that cause extended struggles for you, do not hesitate to reach out for help.

An interesting thing I learned in reaching out was that some of what Kee and Stacy told me about myself, and my needing to let go and not worry about things beyond my control, was what my wife, Charlene, had been telling me for years. Moral of that



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story is we often have family or friends that know us pretty well and can help, if we only listen to them.

Hopefully during "offseason" our lives are more relaxed and we can enjoy our jobs with less stress compared to the summer months. The moral to my story is to realize asking for help is not a sign of weakness, nor should it be embarrassing to you. Realizing you may need help often takes way too long, so the sooner you ask, the sooner your life can improve. In my case, I waited way too long. But, I am so happy I eventually did reach out as it has made a significant positive improvement to each of my days.

If you would like to discuss my experience with CBT and coping with stress further, you are welcome to reach out to me.

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