



Engineer. Chemist. Biologist. Plumber. Electrician. Commodities trader. Lobbyist. No, that's not a list of the professions represented within the Crane Creek community. It's a list of the various skills found in one key person on the club's staff, Golf Course Superintendent Adam Bagwell.

As I tell you the stories of key staff at our club I knew I'd eventually get to the man who oversees our biggest physical asset, the 97 acres of rolling turf that encompass the 18 holes that challenge and delight our golfers. With a massively complex construction project on his hands, a tight time line, and an anxious membership eager to play a full 18 holes again at the first sign of Spring, getting an hour of Adam's time is difficult. Still, he invites me into his office in the back corner of one of the shop buildings, the one with the sign reading "Turf Science." Not one to sit at length behind a cluttered desk, we soon hop aboard his "Adam Only" golf cart to inspect and coordinate various construction activities taking place out on the back nine. Note-taking is out of the question now, so I try to listen as closely and fast as possible.

Growing up in the Philadelphia area with a dad who worked for "Ma Bell," one pictures Adam as a city kid with a likely affinity for all things Pennsylvania. But dad hailed from Alabama, so rooting for The Crimson Tide was in his genes. Dad played golf, and a neighbor was a club pro, so Adam was exposed to the game and liked it. Mom's family farmed in the southeastern corner of Pennsylvania. At 13, Adam started helping out at his grandfather's place. After high school in the mid-90s, Adam headed to State College, home of Penn State University. He was aiming for an Engineering degree. Since he could handle a tractor, for school funds he worked as a "Spray Tech" at Wyncote Golf Club in Oxford, PA. Soon the allure of Engineering got lost in the complexity of vectors, and reevaluating his course of study led him to Penn State's acclaimed Turf Management program. He earned his undergrad degree there in 1997 and 15 years later added his Masters.

In 1999, Adam took on two jobs. His grandfather's death led him to take over primary responsibility for a 211 acre farm. But he also became Superintendent at nearby Chisel Creek Golf Club. In one job he expanded the acreage under crops seven-fold, in the other he managed his first "grow-in" project. How he had time to meet Christine, his future wife, is beyond comprehension,

but he did. Then Wyncote came calling with the Superintendent job, so Adam switched to where his turf career started six years earlier, but managing the growing farm was still on his plate as well. Clearly this capable and ambitious young man was in an unsustainable situation; he and Christine saw that better than anyone. So they drew up a list of places around the U.S. where life might be more manageable, and Idaho was on that list. At about this time a Crane Creek board member, a Penn State grad, contacted the Turf Management Director at his alma mater. "Can you refer me to someone who would be a good Superintendent?" might've been the gist of that conversation. In short, that's how Adam and Crane Creek found each other in 2007.

We know what he's been doing since he arrived. The Crane Creek course is and will be a very different experience than it was during the first 40+ years of its existence. As a non-golfer it's easy for me to say that. My game hasn't been interrupted by the changes taking place, but even a non-golfer can feel the excitement of new holes being carved-out and grown-in at the fringes of the property and the multitude of improvements that are underway. I admire Adam as I follow around the course and watch him juggle very complex tasks, and yet I'm seeing only a sliver of it. One moment he's directing the delivery of 12,000 square feet of rolled-up ryegrass turf that will be arriving daily for a week. Then he's assigning his core crew to their various positions. Next he's checking progress on the sculpting of a new green, assuring that every minute detail is as it should be. "We've got to maintain *pinable pitch*," he says. I think, "OK, whatever." He inspects the germination progress of recently seeded fairways and remarks on the damage done by local deer. They can't be controlled as aggressively as the resident gophers with which his crew has been waging war. Every day new obstacles arise — unmarked buried utilities, for example — requiring a solution. Yet two miles of mainline and many more miles of lateral pipe need to be buried. Still, he assures me he's on-schedule and on-budget. He won't let me leave without praising his crew, especially his remarkable and highly experienced assistants: Dylan, Randy, Rich and Tom. Oh, "That lobbyist job?" you might ask. There's the fragile environment and a foreign worker visa program affecting his summer workforce. He helps our Congressional legislators to understand both critical topics. After what I saw and learned over two hours with Adam, I can only express my highest respect... and thanks.