

My wife shared a fact with me the other night that I hadn't heard before — apparently the antonym of disgruntled is gruntled. As in, content, satisfied, and generally pleased.

I had to look it up to make sure it wasn't one of those things that sounds right but isn't actually real, but sure enough... gruntled is a word. It just doesn't get used very often.

It did make me laugh a bit, but it also stuck with me more than I expected.

Because if you think about it, if there was ever a group of people that could easily be described as disgruntled at times, it would probably be golf course superintendents. Long days, early mornings, unpredictable weather, constant pressure, and a list of things that need attention that never really gets shorter.

And yet, when I really think about the conversations I have with superintendents across BC — whether it's at events, on the phone, or even just quick text exchanges — that's not really the feeling I come away with.

Yes, people are busy. Yes, people are tired. And yes, there are certainly moments where the job pushes back harder than we'd like. But more often than not, what I actually see is something closer to the opposite.

I see people who take a lot of pride in what they do. People who genuinely enjoy the responsibility, even if it weighs on them at times. People who find satisfaction in solving problems, in building teams, and in seeing the results of their work play out across a golf course every day.

In other words, I'd say most of the people in this profession are... gruntled.

It's just not a word we use. Maybe it should be.

Because while it's easy — and not entirely unfair — to fall into conversations about how demanding this job can be, I think there's a quieter truth that sits alongside that. Most of us choose to stay in this industry for a reason. There's something about it that keeps us engaged, even through the challenging stretches.

Whether it's the variety, the autonomy, the people we work with, or the simple satisfaction of improving something a little bit each day, there's a level of fulfillment here that isn't always obvious from the outside. You don't stay in this role for long if you don't find some meaning in it. And I don't think that's something we acknowledge often enough.

Across British Columbia, I continue to be impressed by the level of professionalism in this industry. The conditions we work in aren't always predictable, and the expectations continue to evolve, but the consistency of effort and care is always there. It's easy to take that for granted when you're in it every day, but it's worth recognizing.

So while we may not always describe ourselves this way — and there are certainly days where disgruntled might feel more accurate — I do think it's worth recognizing that, more often than not, we fall on the other side of that line.

We're invested. We're engaged. And, whether we say it or not, we're generally pretty grunted about the opportunity to do what we do.

As the season continues to pick up pace and the days continue to stack on each other, maybe that's not a bad thing to keep in mind — especially on the tougher ones.

Because even then, there's usually a reason we keep showing up.

And most days, whether we call it that or not, that's something pretty close to grunted.

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