



Candidate name: Cary Rivard

KCDG: #2403

Education:

Lee's Summit High School

B.S. Truman State University

- Agriculture and Biology Double Major

M.S. North Carolina State University

- Plant Pathology

PhD North Carolina State University

- Plant Pathology

Occupation: Associate Professor, Extension Specialist, and Center Director

Year of Birth: 06/26/1981

How to contact Cary: caryrivard@gmail.com, 785-320-3033, Facebook Messenger, SMS text

Disc Golf Experience (including the year you first played):

Although I grew up in the KC metro, I began playing disc golf while in graduate school in Raleigh, NC in 2004. For me, it was a great way to get outside and socialize with friends. I fell in love with the sport in the woods of NC and traveled to places like the IDGC, Winthrop, Sontag, Charlotte (too many courses to mention), and other great courses in the southeast. In 2010, I returned to Kansas City for work and began enjoying the courses in KC, especially the Down Under, Cliff Drive, Swope Park, and others. I have never played competitively, nor have I been in a league. I am not a PDGA member and the first tournament that I have ever witnessed/participated in was one that I organized last fall. For me, disc golf is all about "most fun wins," and you'll find if we play together that I have a ton of fun, but also hit a ton of trees.

In 2019, I was able to mobilize a group of volunteers and secure permission from Kansas State University to establish the Spoon Creek Disc Golf Course. I developed the initial maps of the course and then worked with our volunteer group (aka Spoon Creek Disc Golf Club) to finalize the course design. We began cutting the fairways in February 2019; set the baskets at the end of May; and added concrete tee pads in 2020. Spoon Creek DGC continues to evolve today thanks to the hard work and buy-in from our volunteers. Club members raised funds on their own to buy the first 18 baskets and we hosted a fundraiser tournament in October 2019 that paid for tee pads on the half of the course. Donations from our club members as well as greens fees paid for the rest of the tee pads in addition to extra baskets, benches, tables, and other upgrades to the course. Course design, construction, and maintenance are complex and oftentimes require a lot of work. My experience at the Spoon Creek DGC has been a new and fun challenge and has changed the way I look at disc golf courses now.

Professional Experience:

I am a horticulturalist by training and have spent most of my life working with and around plants. My family owned a small garden center business in South Kansas City where I grew up working in greenhouses, landscaping, large-scale gardening, etc. I attended Truman State University for my BS and spent about 18 months as the head brewer of a new microbrewery before leaving for grad school. As a graduate student, I studied Plant Pathology, which is the science of plant diseases. My thesis and dissertation focused on disease management of tomato, but I also worked with strawberries, peppers, and other produce crops. In addition to Plant Pathology, my academic training has been in sustainable agriculture, which was a theme throughout my education and still continues today. While a student, I also worked part-time as a landscaper and general caretaker of an 8-acre, approximately \$6 million residence. I did everything that the "mowers" didn't do, which included planting and maintaining all of the gardens, landscapes and ponds, as well as tree maintenance and pruning of large and small shrubs. I also did some irrigation and hardscaping, and ran a small greenhouse where we raised annual flowers and vegetables.

Currently I work as an extension specialist for Kansas State University and have been in this position since 2011. Extension is a unique profession that is oftentimes difficult to describe, but there are a few things that I currently do:

- 1) Conduct applied research in fruit and vegetable crops and run a research farm in western Olathe (Olathe Horticulture Center)
- 2) Conduct training and support produce farmers and others working in the food system to support farming in Kansas
- 3) Assist with the delivery of the Urban Food Systems MS program at K-State Olathe

Although my experience sounds atypical for a role on the KCDG BOD, I believe it actually fits very well. As the Director of a research station, I need to know about infrastructure, landscape and ecosystem management, and especially project execution. My job is to oversee a 350-acre research farm and that includes everything from organizing storage barns to developing a prototype movable greenhouse that is the only one of its kind. It has also given me perspective on the challenges that parks departments and other municipalities face when trying to maintain their landscapes. As an Extension Specialist, I have done a lot of event planning and regularly lead or assist in the delivery of conferences that host 100-400 participants. We also host workshops and field days at the research station and have had as many as 700 people at the farm for our public field days. I also have a fair bit of experience with communications and marketing as those skills are required for this role. Lastly, my job has given me the opportunity to work a lot with non-for-profits in the area and I have held leadership roles on several BODs for farming-based organizations including: Cultivate Kansas City, Johnson County Community College Sustainable Ag, the KC Food Policy Coalition, Growing Growers Kansas City, and the Kansas Specialty Crop Growers Association.

Cary's Platform:

An unexpected outcome of opening the SCDGC to the public is that it has allowed me to learn more about the most excellent disc golf community in Kansas City. Through our open days as well as day pass visitors, I have met some incredible folks who have done a lot for the sport in the area. Although I am new to the KCDG, I believe that my skills can help the organization, and it is my hope that I can contribute in a meaningful way towards the disc golf community. I am also interested in helping to develop a collaborative partnership between the KCDG and the Spoon Creek Disc Golf Club/Course. My goal is for the course to be a resource for the KCDG and vice versa.