Golfdom looks back on a decade of people, places and issues that have helped shape the golf industry.
You've heard all the cliches about how time goes so fast. They might be trite, but they're true.

It's hard to believe that Golfdom is in its 10th year of publishing. It just seems like the other day we were putting to bed our first issue.

But enough talk about the clock ticking and the gray hairs popping. Our purpose here is to provide you with a quick and enjoyable walk down Memory Lane to revisit the people we've met, the places we've been and the points we've made since January 1999. We want to provide you with a synopsis of where we've been and why we went there.

Part one, which begins this page, highlights the people who have adorned Golfdom's covers. We figure this is apropos, considering you're the reason for our existence. Everybody has a story, and I know the people we've put on our cover over the years have had great stories to tell. Part one also features the best "Quotables" of the past decade. This "they-said-it" section has been popular with our readers.

Part two, coming in April, revisits some of the big stories we've covered over the years. Some of these stories, even though they were written several years ago, are still pertinent today. And some are completely outdated.

We hope you enjoy reminiscing with us. Then, it's time to move on. There's another 10 years on the horizon.

— Larry Aylward, Editor in Chief
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Shaffer grew up in Martinsburg, Pa., population 2,500. There was nothing fancy about his upbringing. His mother, however, placed a major focus on living by the golden rule. “Treat people like you want to be treated,” Shaffer said.

While Shaffer and his mother appeared on that cover with beaming smiles, superintendent Peter Carew wore a more forlorn look when he appeared on our May 2006 cover. His morose was understandable. Carew, superintendent of two municipal golf courses in New Orleans, was featured in the story “Picking Up the Pieces,” which detailed how he maintained optimism for his life, his city and his livelihood in the wake of the destruction caused by Hurricane Katrina.

The story reported how Carew did something that was nothing short of amazing. On Dec. 1, 2005, about three months after Katrina struck, he reopened the Brechtel Memorial Park Municipal Golf Course for play. The putting greens were dirt, but the people didn’t care. Golfers came to play Brechtel to forget about their troubled lives, even if just for a few hours.

“People were coming up and thanking me and shaking my hand,” Carew said. “And I had never seen a golf course that looked so bad.”

> New Orleans superintendent

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Carew has worked hard to get that course back up to snuff. We’ve chronicled his efforts in a few stories.

Golfdom has also celebrated the success of women in this industry by featuring female superintendents on our covers. In November/December 1999, Lynn Richert, superintendent of Angushire Golf Course in St. Cloud, Minn., appeared on our cover sans makeup and dressed in jeans and work boots. The headline for the story was “R-E-S-P-E-C-T!”

Incredibly, we had a few comments from male superintendents who said Richert, because of how she appeared, didn’t represent the profession very well. I guess we should have had a make-up artist at the photo shoot.

In August 2006, we featured another woman superintendent on the cover — Nancy Dickens of Kierland Golf Club in Scottsdale, Ariz. — and examined the issue of sexism among female superintendents. Thankfully, we learned that women — who comprise a small percentage of superintendents — don’t feel looked down upon by their male counterparts. “If young girls were to call me, I’d tell them it’s the greatest job around,” Dickens said.

We get the feeling that most superintendents who’ve appeared on our cover feel that way about the profession. That would include Paul Emling, superintendent of Arcadia Bluffs Golf Club in Arcadia, Mich., who appeared on our October 2004 cover. But Emling had to go through hell before he could get to heaven. A lot of people would have left the profession after going through what he had to go through. Emling wouldn’t wish what happened to him at Arcadia Bluffs on his worst enemy.

On Sept. 26, 1998, Emling was six months into his job at Arcadia Bluffs and growing in the course when a 100-year rainstorm caused thousands of tons of soil to erode from the tall bluff bordering the course into Lake Michigan.

The soil created a delta in the shimmering, blue water and formed an ugly, brown plume extending well beyond the shoreline. Environmentalists viewed the accident as an environmental catastrophe.
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and sounded off on anybody having to do anything with Arcadia Bluffs.
Emling wondered what impact the calamity would have on his young career. The golf industry in Michigan had endured an environmental black eye, and Emling was labeled “guilty” by association. Other area superintendents told Emling to quit the job.

“I was devastated,” Emling said.

But Emling remained at Arcadia Bluffs and through his environmental prowess has helped the club heal its neglect-for-natural-resources image by implementing an aggressive and impressive golf course maintenance program with an emphasis on environmental awareness and integrated pest management.

And getting back to the original point: Emling loves what he does.

It’s not often that we put a group of people on the cover. But we did so when we featured Shawn Emerson, director of agronomy at Desert Mountain Golf Club, on our November 2007 cover. The story was headlined “The Dream Team” and also featured three guys who have helped make Emerson’s job easier — Drs. James Beard, Fred Yelverton and Rick Brandenburg.

The story tells how Emerson has surrounded himself with the most prolific turf team he can find, that would be Beard, Yelverton and Brandenburg, who converge on Desert Mountain several times each year to iron out turf troubles at the Carefree, Ariz., facility.

It’s a Dream Team of turfgrass consultants. Beard is a celebrated author and researcher who barely needs introduction in turf circles, and Yelverton (weed science) and Brandenburg (entomology) are noted professors at North Carolina State University. Together with the 180-strong golf course crew at the upscale property, they keep Desert Mountain’s six Jack Nicklaus-designed golf courses conditioned as well as any cluster of courses in the country.

Why would Emerson, who has grown as much turfgrass as any superintendent in the country between his almost 70 overseeding projects and subsequent transitions back to bermudagrass, feel the need to assemble some of the most resourceful turfgrass personalities on the planet?

“Success is fleeting in this business,” he said. “That’s why I wanted my own turf council to keep an eye on me. We don’t always make good decisions, but a mistake doesn’t become an error unless you refuse to change it.”

While we have featured many superintendents on our cover, we have not excluded other golf industry people from that space.

Outgoing GCSAA CEO Steve Mona adorned our cover in January 2003 next to the headline, “Mona in the Middle.” The story detailed how Mona was facing an array of new challenges, from dealing with declining revenues to possibly moving the association to a new city.

For the record, Mona, who has a journalism degree, was one of the most approachable executives a media person could ever meet. Other area superintendents told Emling to quit the job.

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why Matthews purposely designed the
course, which opened in 1998, with the
river obscured from golfers’ views.

In 1996, Matthews, co-president of
East Lansing, Mich.-based Matthews
& Nelhiebel, was asked by Roger Wilson,
a Detroit entrepreneur, and his business
partner, Darin Philport, to design an up-
scale golf course on 240 acres of untouched
land in Brutus, Mich. They wanted the
Maple River to play strategic and aesthetic
roles on the course. They also planned to
build bridges over the river at several junc-
tions along the course. But when Mat-
thews heard their plans, he cringed.

The locals were livid when they
learned of the plan to build a golf
course near the river. About 400 citi-
zens signed a petition to prevent the
course from being built.

“I knew it was going to be an envi-
ronmentally touchy situation,” Mat-
thews said. “I’m a native of Michigan,
and I’ve done a lot of work in the state. I
know the natural resource rules and con-
straints of golf course development.”

Matthews explained to Wilson and
Philport why they shouldn’t incorporate
the river into their building plans. “I told
them that we didn’t want to cross the
river with golf balls,” he said. Wilson and
Philport listened intently. “We were un-
educated on golf course design and how
it affects natural resources,” Philport said.
“Bruce quickly educated us on what’s
good, what’s not good and what’s risky.”

In the end, they called Matthews’
creation the Hidden River Golf &
Casting Club. How appropriate.

We also featured a general manager
on the cover in June 2005. That would
be Jerry Palmer of Latrobe Country
Club, which is owned by his brother
Arnold. By the way, the headline of that
other story read, “The Other Palmer.”

If there’s the slightest concern about
being typecast as the brother of Arnold
Palmer or the son of the superintendent
who had taught Arnold how to play golf,
Jerry didn’t let on in this story about
him. “I guess if I had a life’s ambition, it
was to work for Arnold,” he said. “And
that’s where I am.”

Arnold bought the course in 1971 as
a gift to his father, Deacon, the club’s
longtime pro and superintendent. Jerry,
who wound up succeeding their dad as
superintendent, was promoted by his
brother to general manager in 1989.

“We’re a small-town club that just
happens to be owned and operated by
a big-time guy,” Jerry said.

Speaking of that big-time guy, Golfd-
dom also featured Arnold Palmer, along
with the late Ed Seay, on its March
1999 cover for a story that detailed
their roles in Palmer Course Design.

In the story the two gentlemen were
asked, what makes a good golf course?
Seay responded: “I think Arnold said it
best. Somebody once asked him what
makes a good golf course and his an-
swer was, ‘Because it is one.’ I think it’s
one of the greatest things he has ever
said about golf courses. He has an even
better quote about golf. Boss, what
were you saying about golf?”

Said Palmer, “Golf is a deceptively sim-
ple and endlessly complicated game.”

Interestingly, Palmer’s line seems
an appropriate mantra for what
superintendents do to keep the simple
yet complicated golf course world spin-
ing. Here’s to another 10 years of your
hard-working faces adorning Golfdom
magazine.
"During Open week, I guarantee there wasn’t a single green out there that didn’t get mowed 28 times."
— Paul Jetty, certified superintendent of Pinehurst No. 2, on greens maintenance during the 1999 U.S. Open

"I’ve seen more golf courses improved by hurricanes than by green committees."
— Golf course architect John LaFoy

"I don’t like the Stimpmeter. I’ve been known to throw one or two into the woods."
— Matt Shaffer, the then-superintendent of The Country Club in Pepper Pike, Ohio, on his disdain for measuring green speed.

"How are you going to get your members to repair ball marks? No way in hell you’re going to do it."
— Joseph Duich, professor emeritus at Penn State University

"I’m willing to have a sex change operation and be referred to as Patricia O’Brien."
— Pat O’Brien, director of the USGA Green Section’s Southeast Region, who said he would volunteer to help Augusta National overcome the problem of not having a woman member.

"I feel like an endangered species."
— Peter Salinetti, the then-certified superintendent at Schuyler Meadows Club in Loudonville, N.Y., before offering strategies for success to superintendents ages 50 and over.

"One time, a representative from a lawn company came to our door. My wife answered and the man said he wanted to know if he could take care of our lawn. My wife told him, ‘No, my husband is in the business.’ The man looked around the yard and said, ‘He is?’"
— Gregg Guynan, superintendent of O’Bannon Creek Golf Club in Loveland, Ohio, on why it’s so difficult to take care of his yard in the summer, especially when he’s working so many hours at the course.

"You’d like to think you could be somewhere forever in this business, but I think it’s almost next to impossible."
— Mark Kuhns, director of grounds at Baltusrol Golf Club, on jumping from job to job.

"We lost part of the roof on the maintenance building. I now have a ‘skylight’ in my office."
— Joe Boe, the then-superintendent of Coral Oaks Golf Course in Cape Coral, Fla., after his course took a hit from Hurricane Charley in 2004.

"I have what they call parrot knowledge. I repeat a lot of things I’ve been told."
— Shawn Emerson, director of agronomy for the Golf Club at Desert Mountain in Scottsdale, Ariz., on learning.

"It looks like somebody who works — and not at golf."
— Jon Jennings, certified superintendent at the Chicago Golf Club, describing what his golf game looks like.

"In this business you will be humbled. I don’t care how good you are or how good you think you are. Mother Nature can take it away from you at any time."
— Jimmy Ellison, vice president of agronomy and golf course maintenance for Arnold Palmer Golf, on course maintenance in the real world.

"I do like disease. If that makes me strange, so be it."
— Bruce Clarke, director of the Rutgers Center for Turfgrass Science and a turf disease aficionado.

"We’re going to lose our ash."
— Dave Shetlar, professor of entomology at The Ohio State University, on the threat posed by the Emerald Ash Borer, an exotic beetle that’s killing ash trees in Michigan, Indiana and Ohio.

"To quote an old superintendent, ‘I should have been a brickmason. Bricks don’t wilt.’"
— Mike Beall, superintendent of the University of Georgia Golf Course in Athens, Ga., on his chosen profession.

"We used to run an alternate-shot couples tournament. We started calling it the divorce open."

"We have moved beyond Carl and ‘Caddyshack.’"
— Tommy Witt, director of golf course operations at Northmoor Country Club, on image in the golf course maintenance profession.

"Turf equipment gets treated worse than any other equipment I’ve seen. And I’ve seen it all. I’ve worked on everything from tanks, hand-mowers and 18-wheel tractor-trailers. Turf equipment gets abused the most."
— Jay Rehr, president of Turf Equipment Consulting and a well-known golf industry mechanic.