



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

### *It's Time to Take Advantage Of Educational Opportunities*

By James Bade

Thanksgiving is one of my favorite holidays. For me it marks the end of one season and the start of another. Now that the golf course is put to bed for a few months, the season of budgets, equipment maintenance, tree removal, projects and education start. It is a time to go through periodicals, clean the office, go online and go out to breakfast with the staff. It is a time where your mind isn't totally consumed with high maintenance turf and how it is performing. Hopefully it marks a time to do other leisure activities like hunting, ice fishing, playing hockey, reading a book or watching a movie with the family.

**It is that time of year to take advantage of educational opportunities.** For me it starts with the Minnesota Green Expo, January 3-5. What a way to ring in the New Year. Paul Diegnau, Tom Proshok and the education committee have done a great job with this year's program. Just by glancing over the schedule in the MTGF Clippings, it is going to be hard deciding which classes to attend. Take note of Thursday's opportunity. A whole block of time has been dedicated to the topic of foliar feeding. There are a lot of practical classes as well as technical ones. The Green Expo gives us the opportunity to stay certified in certain categories and allows us to network and stay in touch with one another. Be sure to see your vendor representatives in their booths. Along with your attendance, the vendors are the engine that makes this conference move. Thanks to Larry Vetter, Bob Fitch and Dr. Horgan for all their time spent putting this event together.

**Hopefully by now you have heard of the idea regarding a Research Center Golf Course (RCGC).** The Board of Directors has been working very hard on the concept of consulting at a 9-hole golf course. The overlying goal would be to generate revenue for our very own turf pathologist. In 2005 when many of us were struggling with a new disease, wouldn't it have been great to take a sample to someone locally who could grow out the disease. Even this past spring Somerset Country Club had leaf spot so bad it took certain varieties right out. Was it the same old leaf spot or something different? I'm not sure, but it was strange. The possibilities of a turf pathologist teaming up with Dr. Horgan and Dr. Watkins are exciting.

**A place called RCGC could also serve as a site to conduct research.** It would be an opportunity to take TROE Center data to a larger living scale where carts are driven, divots are taken and foot traffic is real. It could be a place where new products are experimented with, either soft goods or hard iron. It could be a place to showcase our association in regards to regulatory matters. It could show how skilled and educated a golf course superintendent is and needs to be. "The standards we set (as an association) determine how high we go." This concept of managing a golf course could be an opportunity to see how high the MGCSA can go. Two other quotes that may apply to the RCGC are "A readiness to ride the waves of change carries us further," and "Clear information guides everyone in the right direction." With the legislature and environment ever changing, the RCGC may be a place to meet challenges head on. And it could be a place that generates clear information that would support you and our industry.

**So I am thankful for a Board of Directors that comes up with new innovative ideas.** I am thankful for a supportive staff that helps manage the golf course in my absence. I am thankful for an active association and industry. I am thankful for a loving wife and family. I am grateful that I have a wonderful job, home, physical abilities, countrymen and women who fight for our freedom, friends willing to put up with my shortcomings...and the list can go on. - James

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# HOLE NOTES

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