"Summer and winter, spring-time and harvest, sun, moon and stars in their courses above" I just love the seasons. Seasons keep us fresh and renewed. The fall season brings some badly needed rain.

The Field Day at the U of M yielded lots of interesting information again. Dr. Horgan, Dr. Watkins, Larry Vetter and the research staff did a great job. I see the velvet and colonial bentgrasses from year to year to see how they are performing. The Low-Input study for fairways was quite amazing. The varieties were cut at 1.5 of an inch, and they had been watered and fertilized only once. To my eye a few of the varieties were surprisingly in good shape and acceptable for playing golf.

This study coupled with watching the British Open and our drought made me think, how much brown is acceptable on our golf course? As long as the members are having fun does every grass blade need to be a manicured green. Shot quality and having to use your imagination is what makes the brown British Open fun. At Somerset we have made the decision that if we are going to lose grass it is going to be Poa due to dryness instead of overwatering and losing grass to pythium.

A new research project, the MGCSA is helping to sponsor, has to do with water efficiency. Even though we are in the Land of 10,000 Lakes, water is a very precious resource or should I use the word commodity. The experiment is going to measure E.T. rates and use special tools for measuring drought stress. If you ever have the time, there are a lot of neat things going on at the TROE Center preparing us for change.

New things were going on at Windsong Farm Golf Club for the MGCSA Championship. Talk about having to use your imagination and the value of a properly played shot. Scottie Hines, CGCS and his staff had the place in great shape. With the new bentgrasses, like A-4, it was a surreal experience for me. The greens were faster than a pool table but not as flat. After three-putting a few times our group decided to start chipping in. Thanks to all who made that day happen and special.

It is the season where I am able to spend a little more time on the computer. Check out mgcsa.org if you have the time. Scott and Jeff Turtinen do a great job keeping us informed. On the site is a link to the GCSAA which is looking for feedback in regards to our dues. Kevin Clunis has graciously given his time to be our representative or delegate to the national association. The board of directors is always willing to hear what you have to say about all issues.

The U.S. Amateur took place at Hazeltine and the Chaska Town Course in late August. What a great place we live in with so much going on. Enjoy the season of change. I will be enjoying the fall colors and picking a few apples. Life is good.

— James