

Peer To Peer, Better Turf Through Networking

Question: How do you communicate to your membership?

(Editor's Note: Superintendents were asked how they communicate with membership.)

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At **Como Golf Course** we have a running projects newsletter that I send up to the pro shop and office, to post, that states what we will be doing and what we have finished in the next or last 2 to 3 weeks. It is very simple and easy to change and keep up with because as each project gets done the next is started and added to the bottom of the form. I give date of start and approximate time of finish. No commentary; just a way to contact me if they have questions. I also add any safety issues and slip in a few golfing etiquette statements now and then. I have pretty much answered the "what are they doing out there question."

- Stephen R. Dinger
Como Golf Course

At **North Oaks Golf Club** I write a column each month, send out e-blasts over the internet when necessary and post special Attention Notices throughout the clubhouse when something has to be broadcast quickly. My first stop is always the Pro Shop so they are never out of the loop. And my aerification dates are posted on the annual calendar. When examples are available on the course, such as the mis-application of bug spray, I will post a proxy sign on the spot to inform my patrons of their damaging actions.

- Jack MacKenzie
North Oaks Golf Club

At **Windsong Farm** the golf shop is the most important to keep in the loop. I also try to make myself available to play with the members at least once per week. I try to make it an experience where they will feel comfortable asking questions.

- Scottie Hines
Windsong Farm Golf Club

Forest Hills Golf Club has a website with "open forum" site for everyone to use. I do write-ups there. Last season the club went with a new vendor for on-line tee times called "fore-tees." This site has an area for "current course conditions"

(that they can't miss when making a tee time!) that I do postings on almost daily. This has been quite effective.

- Marlow Hanson
Forest Hills Golf Club

Here at **Marshall Golf Club** we implement and distribute to the membership a quarterly paper called the "Mulligan." This helps in relaying messages to our members about up-coming events and cultural practices we will be performing on certain days. We also have a web-site that we use for this same avenue that the members use to check menus, league schedules and up-coming events that we want them to be aware of. Remember, communication is the key.

- Kurt Hovaldt.
Marshall Golf Club

"If there would be an issue on the golf course I post a memo right away. I feel the lack of communication will only hurt me than help me."

- Jeff Vinkemeier, Glencoe Golf Club

At **Glencoe Country Club** I post a newsletter each month on our web site, and also a hard copy in our clubhouse. I always feel I need to keep our membership up to date, on everything that I do for their course. So if there would be an issue on the golf course I post a memo right away. I feel the lack of communication will only hurt me than help me. And the membership has told me how they appreciate the news I give them.

- Jeff Vinkemeier
Glencoe Country Club

I e-mail my green committee at **Somerset Country Club** at least once a month. If an issue comes up, like TAP, they will get an extra email explaining the situation. The pro shop is a part of the green committee so they are informed. Our aerification is on the calendar as well. We also have information notes at the pro shop in case people have questions. We also post things in the grill and locker rooms. We do quarterly newsletters at

SCC.

Communication as you well know is extremely important. When Hartman was coming I wrote a note on when they would be disturbing ground on certain holes. Today I e-mailed the tree chair in regard to the Emerald Ash Borer and copied it to the green chair and President. We also communicate during the annual spring and winter meetings.

- James Bade
Somerset Country Club

In addition to the monthly newsletter at **Midland Hills Country Club**, I send out e-mails to the membership when I think it's important... construction progress, weather conditions, etc. I've heard a lot of positives when the emails go out; they like knowing what's going on with their course. I make regular stops at the Golf shop each day and swing through the dining room a few times each week during the lunch hour to answer any questions and get feedback. I also post a few things in the locker rooms. My aerifying dates are on the annual touring calendar- usually the same weeks each year.

- Ben Just
Midland Hills Country Club

It's always a good idea to inform your Green Chair of your plans, in detail, so he/she can answer questions or respond to comments that invariably come up. Green fees are a large part of our business so communicating with them is more difficult. We give the pro shop as much information as we can and, when applicable, let the starter know if there are any maintenance procedures the golfer should be aware of. Last summer I completed a 'Standard of Maintenance' manual that answers most of the whys and whens of our maintenance procedures. Pro shop employees and interested golfers have it available. I encourage all employees to talk with golfers about course maintenance. As you know, the goal is to get the information out and hope to reach most golfers but it is impossible to get 100%.

- Tom Johnson
New Richmond Golf Club