



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dealing With Human and Mother Nature

By James Bade

Last month I had the privilege and honor to speak at the Upper Midwest's CMAA monthly meeting. Just the invitation alone shows how our two groups are closely related. The following are some excerpts of what I had to say.

My family is one reason why I do what I do. As we all know the hours will be getting longer and the weekend work is about to start. However, I do believe that work is a good thing. We were made to work. And we were made for relationships. If today's cultural realized that work is a good thing and we should be able to get along, how might that revolutionize the work place? All this is to say I hope you enjoy what you do and that you are able to share that with someone.

Our jobs are similar because we have the same customer, just a different setting. When I think of the golf course superintendent and the club manager, two natures come to mind: Mother Nature and human nature. Mother Nature is a 24:7 thing; something is always happening to the grass plant. Plus, Mother Nature is very unpredictable and full of extremes. Two weeks ago it was 81 degrees and now tonight it is suppose to snow. Do we bring the crew in or do we leave them home, should we cut grass, put the covers back on? These are all the things that go through our minds. The weather can be quite humbling.

And then there is the human nature that you deal with right up front, because you are seeing the customer face to face. I imagine one of your gifts is to have a good quick answer for many questions. Yet there is an overlap with these two natures. Once we have a green committee meeting or the green speeds aren't fast enough, we are dealing with the human nature. And when your outdoor wedding is about to take place and a thunderstorm is about to roll in, you are dealing with Mother Nature. It would be a wise thing to remember that we can't change the weather or how some people may act.

A golf course superintendent gets satisfaction from having the golf course look and play just right. So I hope you gets lots of satisfaction from pulling off a great party and making wonderful memories.

If I had to sum up the MGCSA quickly, I would say we are about scholarships, education, research, managing the environment and we put out a monthly periodical to keep our members well informed. Research at the U of M is a big priority to help meet the demands of the course conditions we provide. There is an on-going study about phosphorus run-off and the fate of nutrients right across the street at the TROE Center. Studies like this can help us meet the challenge of environmental legislation. However, the environment is an emotionally charged issue and emotions can rule the day instead of good science.

A future issue for our industry will be water usage. I would like to see the golf course superintendent be certified in water use so we can be apart of the water issue instead of being regulated and restricted without any input from our industry. The golf course superintendent uses as little water as possible because we are trying to get bounce and roll on our golf courses. Many have computers and high tech gadgets to use water very efficiently. A golf course uses a lot of water but, put into perspective, a course may use what a big suburb may use in one day.

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President's Message—

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I'm curious about how many of you watched that Masters? What did you think? Wasn't the last day fun to watch. Now pretend you are a legislative environmentalist, now what do you think? Unfortunately, many people think golf courses are places where we pour on the pesticides and fertilizers, instead of green space where abundant wild life can flourish. Somerset Country Club also has 2,174 trees taking CO2 out of the air.

The Masters shows what unlimited resources can do. However that is not the real world for most of us. It doesn't help when greens are stimping off the meter. Resources go up considerably to get conditions like that. The argument for these conditions is that it is only for a one week tournament. But the problem is, that is what people are seeing on TV. We need to be educating our clients that a little bit of brown on the golf course is okay, especially if resources are limited and regulations and restrictions are on the way.

Another challenge for us (and the CMAA) is how you manage your leadership with your membership. They hire us for our expertise, yet it is their golf course

and their money. I have a healthy respect for that, yet I try to do the job they hired me for. I have been blessed by members who don't micro manage and respect what I learn at on-going education conferences.

When it comes to communicating I think e-mail has helped tremendously. Whenever I email the green committee the general manager and golf pro get the same e-mail. That way we are all on the same page as to what is going on. There is an old saying a "cord of three strands is not easily broken". If we see the pro as one strand, the club manager as one and the golf course superintendent as the third what does this say? If we are talking amongst ourselves, have the same goal for our customer and working together, the atmosphere with which we work in will be a much better place.

A member at Somerset Country Club gave me a book to read called "The Experience of Place." And isn't that what we are doing? Providing a memorable experience for our clientele. From the moment they walk in the door to when they leave the 18th green hopefully they are having a pleasant experience.

To conclude, since we have the same customer, whatever affects us on the golf course when it comes to course conditions

and the environment it affects you as well. All of us are environmental stewards. A golf course has the capability of being a sanctuary for wildlife.

Life is good, isn't it! I hope you enjoy what you do even though it can be laden with challenges. Having strength for today and hope for tomorrow will give you the passion for your job and to do

U of M Turf Club Update

The U of M Turf Club participated in the Collegiate Turf Bowl Competition at the Golf Industry Show in Anaheim, Calif. and placed 23rd and 29th. Representing Team 1 was Joel Hanson, Anders Lindberg, Ryan Browning and Jacob Ryan. Team 2 consisted of Charles Fischer, Mark Lambert, Justin Logeais and Christian Dunn.

New officers were elected for the Turf Club in March. Elected were: Christian Dunn, President; Charles Fischer, Vice-President; Joel Hanson, Secretary; Anders Lindberg, Treasurer, and Mark Lambert, Liaison.

We thank Aaron Johnson, Jason Lamers and William Haselbauer for their past work and efforts. - *Christian Dunn*



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