



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Tough Decisions Greet the New Golf Season

By Richard A. (Rick) Traver, CGCS

Recently, I participated in our club's monthly board meeting and I have to admit the room was rather somber. We had some long discussions of how to handle the upcoming season and how to generate more revenue should things not go as were projected last fall. We have had these discussions for some time, although it somehow seemed to be worse last night. Keep in mind that this is coming from a board whose club saw one of its best years last year. We all know that the economy is not where we would like it; however, I had hoped that (*even though I don't agree with it*) the new economic stimulus plan would somehow, improve the public's confidence and as a result, spending would increase. I am afraid that may not be the case and we all need to be prepared to accept the results that may occur. Many of us are going to have to make tough decisions on quality of turf, quality of maintenance and ultimately the toughest decisions I always have to make and that is personnel cuts or layoffs. Now that having been said, I believe that the golf course superintendent or green keeper is probably one of the most resilient and creative individuals on the planet. We will make these cuts and find ways to maintain the turf without loss of quality or respect. Remember that there are always opportunities in economic decline and I am confident that we as a group will most definitely prove our importance to the industry by the way we handle this current economic decline.

That having been said, the economic decline was definitely noticed at the GIS in New Orleans. Those of you who didn't have the opportunity to attend the GIS in New Orleans this year, missed a great time at the MGCSA Hospitality Night. The group of people that attended varied from students to long-time members of the MGCSA. It was a great opportunity for people to network and renew friendships. Thank you so much to all the vendors who supported the evening. I say this a lot, but without the vendor support many of these events wouldn't take place or certainly would not be as successful. While we want everyone to support all our vendors, please take a special note of the vendor members who participated in supporting these events. (*Hospitality Night Sponsors on Page 3.*)

The GCSAA has informed us that due to diminishing interest, the Regional Educational seminars that they have sponsored are now going to be discontinued throughout the country. The number of chapters participating in 2004 was 37 and in 2008 it was only 18. They will continue to hold web casts and make chapter web casts available. In response to this your board is looking at options of expanding the March Mini-Seminar or make some other form of education available. Look for options on the upcoming survey and please give us your input.

Staying on an educational theme, inside *Hole Notes* is an opportunity to renew your certification for phosphorus applications. All that is needed is to read the article and send in the signed response form. This is extremely important to the MGCSA, MTGF and MNLA, as it was a mode of handling a hot issue with the legislation. If we can prove to the legislation that we can self regulate, it will help us to continue to get written out of some upcoming regulatory bills. If you are participating, encourage others to do so as well.

Well I am a little long winded this month so I will end this column and wish you a wonderful month.

*Take Care,
Rick Traver*

HOLE NOTES (ISSN 108-27994) is published monthly except bi-monthly November/December, January / February for \$2 an issue or \$20 per year by the MGCSA, 217 Minnetonka Av. S., Ste. D, Wayzata, MN 55391. Scott Turtinen, publisher. Periodicals postage paid at Wayzata, MN. **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to **HOLE NOTES, P. O. BOX 617, WAYZATA, MN 55391.**

HOLE NOTES

Official publication
of the MGCSA

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