

GET TO KNOW 'EM



David Oberle
Owner
Excel Turf & Ornamental

Family and Interests: Married to my wife Dawn for 16 years. Dawn and I have 3 kids, Thomas 12, Elizabeth (Bitsy) 10, and Caroline 8. When not working, we love chasing our kids in sports and school. All

three play hockey, baseball/ softball, soccer and ski. We all live for weekends at the cabin in the summer.

Favorite piece of equipment and why: Any piece of equipment that opens up the surface of a green. Sand pro spiker, aeration device, verticutter, groomer, hand spiker etc. It is critical to open the surface of greens to decrease the build up of bicarbonates and allow air and oxygen to penetrate the subsurface.

Why did I get into the industry? Growing up at the golf course was just a way of life, starting with caddying at the age of 9 and never looking back. I have also always loved to grow plant material. The love of the outdoors and no interest in going to a cubical for work helped guide my career path. Having a great mentor in Jerry Murphy at Somerset also helped.

Golf Industry Commentary: Like most all industries globally, the golf industry will be challenged moving forward. It is our responsibility to be good Stewards of our business by thinking globally and acting locally. Rest assured, golf has been around a long time and will endure for many generations to come. Remember to smile and encourage a kid at your course and introduce another one to the game.



Erin McManus
Superintendent
Medina Golf and Country Club

I currently have four dogs and love to pheasant hunt. I foster a dog from Scattergun Lodge in Pierre, SD and guide there part time in the fall. I enjoy watching the dogs work and I am amazed at the natural abilities they have in tracking and retrieving game.

One life lesson you've learned due to golf/work in golf: The life lesson from working on a golf course is that the sun comes up everyday whether you acknowledge it or not. Being on the course in the dark and watching the sun come up is one thing that does amaze me each day. It reminds me that today is a new day and we can start over each and every day.

Favorite piece of equipment and why: My favorite piece of equipment is a computer controlled irrigation system. I used to do night watering during high school with my dad. We would go in to work and move quick couplers all night and then have to mow greens and change cups. The amount of control and options that the computer has given us for our irrigation is priceless plus I get a little more sleep.

Why did you get into the industry? I got into the industry because of my dad. He was a superintendent at a small public 9-hole course in Wisconsin and I grew up working on the course. Being outside each and every day and not exactly knowing what the next day could bring is intriguing in this industry. The weather, good or bad, dictates what we are doing on a daily basis and that is the challenge.



Nikk Dickerson
Assistant Superintendent
Owatonna Country Club

Family, pets: My wife Molly is a Speech Pathologist in Faribault, MN, and we currently are taking care of her sister's dog Linus while she is deployed in Iraq. And yes, he does love geese.

The funniest thing you have seen on a golf course: This would be a toss up between two things that I've witnessed. I've seen someone try to mow a green with the tires still on the walk behind mower and not realize why they were not picking up any grass. And the other would be when I was playing golf in Florida I hit over a ridge on a fairway where I could not see my ball and then walked to my ball only to realize that there was an alligator within 10 feet of my ball and could only think how different the golf world is from the north to the south.

One life lesson you have learned due to golf/work in golf: Work does not always mean a 9-5 job.

Favorite piece of equipment and why: Eclipse Greens Mower, I think that greens mowers have come a long way even in the few years that I've been in the industry and I don't think you can beat mowing greens in the morning. There is nothing more relaxing.



Roger Stewart, CGCS
Director of Golf Course Maintenance
TPC Twin Cities

Hobbies/interest: Hunting, fishing and golf. I'd like to own a Harley some day.

Life lesson you've learned due to golf/work: Don't take anything for granted.

One piece of advice for your peers: I have been blessed in my career with so many wonderful employees. I am fortunate to count many of them as friends after more than thirty years. There is no magic formula for managing people. Simply treat them with dignity, respect and, when needed, empathy. Be consistent and honest with them. Most of them will return the treatment many times over. Those that don't are worth spending a lot of energy on.

Why did you get into the industry? When I was in high school I worked at The Elks Country Club in St. Anne, IL for John Krutilla and I loved the job. When I graduated from high school I went to Doane College in Crete, Nebraska where my dad went) and worked summers for John. At the end of my sophomore year at Doane, I figured I better decide what I was going to do. I really didn't know what to do, but I knew I liked that summer job, so I decided to transfer to the University of Nebraska and enroll in the Agronomy program and see if I could parlay that into a degree and then get a job on a golf course. John Krutilla's father was a well known Golf Professional in the area and he helped get me a job at Bob O' Link Golf Club as an intern working for Bob Williams. Little did I know at the time the magnitude of that opportunity. The rest is history.