



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

### *What Do MGCSA Members Want or Need to Know?*

*By Paul Diegnau, CGCS*

What an honor it is to lead the MGCSA through the next two years. With appreciation of the challenges ahead, I look forward to the opportunities we will engage during my term as president. I am not sure what direction I intend to take this monthly column. I believe my strength is the dispersal of information. With that realization I ask myself; what do the members of MGCSA really want or need to know about? What information can I share that will enlighten them, provide a heads up or possibly make their life a bit easier?

**OUR America is ill. She faces major issues on many fronts.** These are and will continue to be trying times. Golf course budgets continue to shrink. The battle cry of "do more with less" has become tired and worn. The activities occurring in Washington and St. Paul have far-reaching implications for all citizens and their occupations. Golf course Superintendents are no exception! If it passes, the financial ramifications of the current healthcare reform bill will be significant to golf clubs with employees of 50 or more. Water conservation issues are looming, even in the land of 10,000 lakes. EPA's proposed WaterSense program shows us a sliver of what lies ahead. Reliable sources foresee nitrogen as the next nutrient to be brought up before the Minnesota legislative firing squad. The Clean Water Act in conjunction with the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) looks to set new standards for water quality and to introduce additional permitting programs for pesticide application on or near surface waters. The anti-pesticide movement in the U.S. remains strong. The list is endless.

**For these very reasons, I am pleased to announce the formation of a new MGCSA committee known as the MN Turf Government Affairs Committee.** Jack MacKenzie, CGCS, is the energy and force behind its creation. E. Paul Eckholm, CGCS will be the liaison between the committee and the Board of Directors. MGCSA members, including vendor reps, will populate the committee. The charge of this group will be to monitor all current legislation impacting our industry, establishing and interacting with State Representatives to promote scientific fact, common sense and ultimately, influence legislation for the good of our industry. The title of this committee is indicative of our willingness to join with others in the turfgrass industry to achieve common goals.

**Another feature for 2010 is the addition of a new segment to the Hole Notes publication.** Director Brian Brown will take the lead in establishing a "get to know your colleague" segment that will appear in every issue. Four MGCSA members will be profiled per issue. If you are contacted to participate, please assist Brian in making this a successful segment. All that is required of you is a photo and answers to several standard questions. The hope is to enhance member interaction through name/face recognition. I know I am horrible with names so I look forward to this new offering.

**Rick Traver, CGCS, has assumed the ex-officio role on the current Board.** He was a solid leader and his no-nonsense approach was inspiring for those of us on the Board for the past two years. I feel fortunate to have him as a sounding board and confidant as I begin my two-year journey. Make sure to thank him for his service. I would be remiss if I failed to mention the Board members that retired from service this January. Tom Meier, Jeff Vinkemeier and David Oberle were integral to the function and productivity of the Board. Thank you all for your service!

**The 2010 Northern Green Expo appeared to be relatively successful.** Early reports suggest pre-registration numbers may have exceeded last year though total attendance was down from 2009. In spite of the current economic climate, our Expo is holding its own while other conferences across the U. S. experience serious declines in quality, participation and financial viability. We will weather the storm!

*- Paul Diegnau, CGCS*

# HOLE NOTES

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