



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

### *That was a Long Season!*

By Paul Diegnau, CGCS

That was a long season! I hope everyone made it out alive and are looking forward to the more relaxing pace of winter. As I pen this column, it is raining outside with light ice accumulation. Anytime it rains during the winter, I get a little nervous. However, I am quite sure there is nothing to worry about (smile/wink).

**MGCSA Tournament Re-Organization:** At the October 19 Board Meeting, the Board approved the addition of the Wee One tournament to the MGCSA tournament schedule. To accommodate an extra tournament, the Board approved combining the scholarship and research tournaments into one event and the profits to be split 50/50. This re-organization will occur in the 2012 season. In addition, a suspension of contributions for turfgrass scholarships was approved. Legacy scholarships will continue to be offered to MGCSA family members on an annual basis.

**Fertilizer pricing:** In case you haven't heard, word on the streets is that fertilizer prices are once again on the rise. This situation is driven by the current strong market price of corn. With corn prices up, more acres will be planted to this commodity in 2011. Additional acres of corn will require additional fertility inputs. Demand from the Chinese and Indian markets is also on the increase and will put additional strain on N, P, and K supplies. For what it is worth, it may be wise to consider placing a fertilizer order yet this year.

**Additional Employment Terminations at GCSAA:** GCSAA recently terminated the employment of four more employees, including the GCSAA Director of Research, Dr. Clark Throssel. Your MGCSA Board of Directors has sent a letter to GCSAA expressing our disappointment with this move. In the press release sent out by GCSAA it states, "We will continue to offer a research program by leveraging our relationships with our instructors and others in the industry. We will continue to search for opportunities for increased funding and collaboration to best serve the industry." The MGCSA BOD feels that the research arm of the GCSAA was a very important part of the membership value and should have remained a much higher priority. GCSAA assumes that they can leverage instructors to pick up the research slack. We feel this move was shortsighted and unrealistic.

**PCNB meeting in DC:** Not only did Kevin Clunis, CGCS, recently attend the delegates meeting in Lawrence, Kansas but also, shortly thereafter, joined a GCSAA delegation in Washington D.C. that met with the EPA and AMVAC on the PCNB issue. If I understand him correctly, the political undercurrents were very apparent in their meetings with both parties. The future of PCNB for the U.S. golf industry is still up in the air but I believe Kevin had quite the eye-opening experience on the political front! One thing I found interesting that Kevin shared with me was the EPA officials were unaware that golf courses did not have PCNB product for their 2010 application! Amazing! Be sure to thank him for his time and energy spent representing the MGCSA at the national level.

**MGCSA reps to the MGA BOD:** FYI, MGCSA has two new MGCSA members on the Board of the Minnesota Golf Association (MGA) who will be representing our interests. They are Scottie Hines, CGCS and Jeff Ische. Thank you to Jack MacKenzie, CGCS, who previously served in that capacity. Contact Scottie Hines or Jeff Ische if you have questions or issues concerning the MGA.

**Electronic newsletter transition?** Your MGCSA BOD is looking at changing our *Hole Notes* publication from printed copy to digital copy. We are aware that there would be some resistance to this change. Let me share with you some of the advantages/reasons for pursuing this course of action. Some of these figures were provided by Ed Hisock, the former editor of GCM magazine (he was released from his position at the same time as Dr. Throssel).

- MGCSA would realize a 20% - 50% cost savings over the hard copy.
- Currently up to 50% of all local chapters in the U.S. have gone or are going to a digital format so we are by no means breaking new ground.
- Chapters that have gone digital report that their publications have increased in size without the associated increase in printing costs.
- Advertisers appreciate the ability to link to their websites from the publication.

On the flip side, advertising rates would have to be re-examined. In addition, those vendors requesting a hard copy would receive a black and white printed copy in the mail. Members without computer access could request a hard copy as well. If we decide to move forward with this change, the transition would begin towards the end of 2011. Please feel free to contact me or a Board member if you would like to discuss further. I will keep you posted.

Don't forget to register for the Northern Green Expo coming this January 5-7. Registration is available on line at [www.northerngreenexpo.org](http://www.northerngreenexpo.org) I hope to see you there!

- Until Next time,  
Paul Diegnau, CGCS

# HOLE NOTES

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