

# On Board

## Q&A with Members of the Board of Directors

*Considering the unusual spring weather...how will the delay in opening change your business management plan? Budget, staffing, strategies?*

*Jeff Girard, Superintendent at StoneRidge Golf Club*



With the later than normal start to the season, we have tried to keep our start up of the staff somewhat the same. While we haven't brought back as many seasonal staff to this point, we have had 3-5 of our hourly guys return over the past 3 weeks. We realized that once it is finally time to open, we need to hit the ground running...fast. We probably won't have that nice extended period of time between snow melt and opening

to prep and ready the golf course for opening day.

In regards to our business management plan, we will hopefully try and keep things as usual, despite the late start. Our hope is that people will be flooding thru the door after being locked inside all winter and spring. So we want to make sure that things are 100% ready to go and presentable come opening day.



*Jamie Bezanson, Superintendent at Oneka Ridge Course*

Oneka Ridge Golf Course is a public golf course

that relies heavily on public play for revenue. With this spring being a delayed start we are predicting revenue shortages. To offset these shortages our proposed plans and budgets will have to be modified to maintain our

financial security.

Our largest areas where we can potentially realize savings and make changes will be in pesticide and fertilizer applications, and fuel and labor expenses. At Oneka Ridge Golf Course we have a lot of capital improvements planned for this coming season. To insure everything will be completed reducing labor costs will be limited or projects possibly put off to the following season.

Other reductions in costs that

will be noticed because of the late spring may include less fuel used because of less mowing. I will be able remove an application or 2 of pesticides and fertilizer and carry the inventory over to next year. There may be opportunities to skip a cultural practice such as verti-

cutting or topdressing this spring which will also save on labor and sand. By now we are all a little Vitamin D deprived and anxious to get the season going. On the positive side of things, my family gets to see a little more of my thick eyebrows.

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*Mike Kelly, Bayer Science and Environmental*



This spring has been one of those seasons that makes me ask why I live in Minnesota? After pondering long and hard, it is because of the seasons, and most of all, the type of people that also choose to live here. Believe me, in all my travels, there is such a thing as “Minnesota Nice”.

From a Manufacturer Representative’s perspective, the unusual weather we are experiencing means that I will be able to complete a Business Plan this season. Typically, I am traveling from course to course and spend very little time in the office doing the tedious reports, expense accounts, etc. The phones have definitely been quiet, however it is a great opportunity to do some research on my own

regarding chemistries, new research at the University level, and the latest and greatest products and procedures for managing the golf course. Bayer is continually monitoring strategies in the turf industry and it seems that meetings have been on going at the company level, which means more travel within the US.

I am eager for the season to get underway just as most of you, and soon the courses will be full, and you will be complaining about cart traffic, unfilled divots, ball marks, un-raked bunkers and before you know it-geese. So when you’re given lemons, make lemonade and make the best of an uncontrollable situation.

Cheers to a great season.

*Casey Andrus, Assistant Superintendent Interlachen  
Country Club*

The weather is what it is; allocating energy into why or when weather conducive to golf arrives is one headache I know to avoid. How does this delayed opening affect our budget? It doesn't; budgets had been approved months ago, back when snow was the norm. This year will not affect our decisions for next year. Rather than worry about weather, we focus on things within our control: equipment preparedness, staff in-line ready to go, projects planned, goals made and procedures in place to ensure another great season.

At the end of the day, we are at Mother Nature's whim; hopefully, the law of averages will come into play. In 2012 we saw a very early start with some long stints of hot dry weather. So far in 2013, we are seeing a later start with lots of precipitation; precipitation many of us would like to see recycled back into our lakes and ground water.

Staffing? That is hardest on the crew; they came in for two days before the early April snow. We looked at the long range forecast and made decisions accordingly. I am grateful that we have such an understanding staff; they are aware the current conditions are out of our control. Many of them also know that once this season does begin, it will be like a huge switch being flipped ON! Another certainty is that, they, and we,

are raring to go! Strategies? Our strategy is the same for any spring; once the course is ready

to handle our traffic we will be in full force clean-up. For the time being, we are walking out and doing chores by hand with ease of clean-up in mind, piling branches near trees or cart paths.

An interesting part of this job is that we are typically the "End of the Line." We are people who make things happen when others may balk. It is very exciting to see what a grounds crew can do to a property in a short time. I could tell you that this year players will be antsy to get down the fairway, but that is true every year. Minnesotans are known for our enjoyment of all four seasons, though we can be extremely anxious to begin each new season. We have sound practices and know what works, by following our plan we set ourselves up for another successful golf season. Here's wishing you all a wonderful season.



**June 3rd, Medina Golf and  
Country Club  
*THE SCRAMBLE  
A Fundraiser Event***