



# Presidential Perspective

by Roger Stewart, CGCS Superintendent at TPC Twin Cities

I finally got around to reading a backlog of trade magazines this morning and while there were the usual compliment of technical articles and advertisements, there was also the section in GCM that lists all the member job changes that have come in since the last issue. I always seem to peruse these to see if there is anyone I know or if there has been a change at a course I may be familiar with. I have worked in four different states and have around 20 or so former assistants who are scattered around the country and I like to follow their careers, so this is a great way to do it. This exercise reminded me how quickly things can change and you need to keep up.

It is really a demonstration of the importance of staying connected. Everyone now relies on social media to stay connected and I guess if you are on Facebook or Twitter, you can pretty much accomplish that most of

the time. I noticed a friend of mine from the east coast who lost his job a couple years ago and has been looking ever since finally landed a superintendent position all the way across the country. I noticed that a superintendent (who I don't know) who was at a former TPC facility landed the job at Davenport C.C. and realized that a few other people from TPC facilities didn't get that same job. I doubt I would have known those things even if I was on Facebook, and nothing like this usually shows up on Twitter.

What does that mean? Well for me, it means that there is still more to networking than social media. Staying connected in this profession yields so many opportunities in addition to job opportunities. Then I realized why the BOD of MGCSA is so adamant about providing those opportunities for face to face networking for our members. When the economic downturn started in 2008, everyone hunkered down,

didn't leave their course for anything, lost funding for education and thus networking, and just plain did everything to keep their job. We, as a profession, and MGCSA as a professional organization, lost something when that happened. We have been able to resurrect the networking, camaraderie and personal exchange of information. But like the golf business itself, we never got it all back. Take some time this fall, now that the hustle and bustle of the season is behind us and get together with other members at the Wee One event or the Fall Shoot and reconnect, recharge and participate in something we are all proud to be a member of, MGCSA.

Here's a topic that face to face networking could yield some really valuable information about, the Minimum Wage increases. Next year, in August, the minimum wage goes to \$9.00/hour. I recently surveyed a number of clubs in the metro area about their current situation and what their plans were for the impending minimum wage. Most responded that they would

be raising their entry level pay to meet the minimum wage and most likely be raising the wages of at least their laborer staff a commensurate amount. Most of the respondents indicated a .50 raise would be what they anticipated.

Good information. But if I would have been able to speak to them face to face or in a discussion with several of them at the same time, I might also have learned what the estimated impact to their budget would be, whether they thought they might not be able to have the same number on their staff next year, or whether they thought that the increased wage would provide better, more stable seasonal workers, or how they felt about now being a minimum wage employer. Instead, I got raw data which was very helpful and in some cases revealing, but didn't provide some of the details I could have gotten out of a conversation at a MGCSA event. For me, there is still great value in the MGCSA "get togethers".

Just sayin' .....