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2015 Champion  
Jeff Pint

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Presidential Perspective
by Jake Schmitz, Superintendent at Olympic Hills Golf Club

I absolutely love the month of October. Major League Baseball playoffs are always exciting, the NFL season is in full swing, and hunting / fishing seasons are here or right around the corner. Likewise, golf course conditioning is on autopilot with cooler temperatures and low light producing firm, fast conditions that require minimal inputs. Brilliant colors this year are the icing on the cake, as evening shadows are set ablaze when the sun is just at the right angle.

October is my favorite month of year for all of these reasons, but it foremost has a special place due to the anticipation of what this month brings. Setting an expectation for something in the future is often times as important as the event itself. Having something to look forward to can be the driver for increased performance and efficiency as well. Golf course maintenance teams experience this each fall, as the final push is made before buttoning up the golf course – we look forward to the winter as it allows for time to do things that are otherwise not possible in-season. Perhaps this is the sole reason why many of us love October…the end is right around the corner!

The challenge with anticipation is when the end is not in sight or the finishing touches are somewhat cloudy. The MGCSA is currently navigating a difficult path where it concerns the endorsement of Best Management Practices and how they relate to looming regulations with water usage. As I write this article, another meeting with the Legislative Water Commission is scheduled for
Monday, October 26th. Our goal is to make sure that the various agencies view golf as a responsible water user and conserver. Through the demonstration of responsible irrigation via Best Management Practices, our goal is to secure water usage for the sustainability of our businesses. Thus far, the road has been difficult to navigate, but the resilience of the initiative and the ability to forge ahead has put us in position to articulate our needs. Stay posted, as we continue to anticipate positive outcomes of these very important meetings.

In closing, I wish you all the best as you make your preparations for winter. The feeling of having everything wrapped up before the snow flies is definitely something I look forward to every year. The 2015 golf season is nearly in the books; hopefully it was a season that makes you look forward to another great year in 2016.

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“Because the pool was closed.”
It was a simple and very explanatory reason to drive 240 miles round trip from Fairbanks to Denali the day prior to an even longer excursion- a 400-mile long canoe expedition north of the Arctic Circle. In truth, it was the reasonable excuse my new friend Barry and I told the facilitator of the wilderness experience upon returning a bit late for the pre-adventure planning meeting following the day trip. The pool at the hotel really was closed and we had 12 hours to kill in Alaska. A trip to Denali? Why not? Live a little, live a lot.

Up until last spring, I had had no interest in going to Alaska and up until four years ago, I honestly never thought I could get away “in season”. Times change, job roles are reversed, we grow older and priorities are adjusted based upon current situations. Life is full of adjustments and we have to be prepared to adapt to the new redesigns.

In my current position as your Executive Director, my predictably busy schedule is completely opposite from when I was in your shoes, ultra-busy in the growing season and more relaxed in the winter months. Now my normal super-active time of year runs from September through later May accompanied by conferences, member renewal, legislative sessions and agency activities, outreach programing and allied association meetings with a slow down in the months of June, July and August. As a superintendent, I only infrequently allowed myself to dream about “summer” vacations and as a cold baby, winter weather was just something to muddle through until the first signs of spring.
In hindsight, which is ever so clear, I was such a fool to have not taken advantage of this hard earned free time. In fact, more years than not, I rarely used my allotted vacation time because it was only available in the winter and I perceived that I didn’t have anywhere to go or anything to do that warranted being absent from my club. What an idiot. I was so stupid for not using my entire gross income package.

Also, I suppose I considered my family responsibilities were fairly confining and wouldn’t accommodate a freer spirit when it came to what I desired in life. Then again, my job was self-absorbing and to think outside the box never occurred to me. Such bunk…no, double bunk. I encourage you to never get caught in this quagmire of ridiculous thinking.

You only get to live now. Without quitting your career, pursue your dreams and aspirations. Conjure up your craziest vision and just do it, you likely will have no regrets and only rewards. You cannot imagine, if you do not imagine.

My expedition group was made up of adventurers of varying sexes and ages. At 55, I was the third youngest with three in their seventies and the rest in their sixties. Delivered to the headwaters of the Noatak River, for 16 days we depended upon each other for sustenance. It was an expedition and not just camping. We encountered large and small mammals (numerous grizzlies too), whirlpools, whitewater and hellacious winds. Although nobody was injured, we were each secretly grateful to have a doctor on board.

A common message thread from the senior members of the group to the youngsters was to never defer your dreams. “You just can’t wait,” one said to me, “or before you know it-your life will pass you
by and you will be sitting in an old folks home with nothing. Just memories of working your ass off for people who forgot who you were as soon as you left. If you don’t live your dreams then you will live to regret them.”

Upon arriving back to Forest Lake, I can say that the wilderness adventure did indeed change me. Was it the enormity of Alaska? Perhaps it was the reliance upon others to not screw up and assurance that they would be there if by change I did. Or maybe it was the fact that I took a risk and committed myself to an unexpected adventure. But most likely it’s the fact that my dreams will wait no longer.

My wish for you is that some days your “pool is closed” and you can escape, spur of the moment, upon an unexpected adventure. A trip to the zoo, a walk in the park, a drive along the north shore. If you can think it, do it. Have fun, explore and your dreams, for life truly is here today and gone tomorrow.
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Being a leader is difficult. That’s why most of us end up taking direction from others in our professional lives. But the ranks of the self-employed are swelling, hinting that more people are getting comfortable taking the reins in their own hands. And in fact, becoming a leader (even if it’s just of yourself) is something anyone who’s committed to the task can master. There’s no inborn quality that leaders possess. They’re ordinary people who decide at one point or another to do extraordinary things.

That doesn’t just take courage, it demands creativity—the kind you need to actively nurture and practice. I’m an artist, so I like to think about leadership as an art form. And I’ve found that in order to become a leader, you need to develop similar qualities to an artist—to tap into your creative intelligence in order to keep ahead of the crowd, stay nimble, and inspire those around you to push themselves, too.

Here are five traits the most creative driven leaders—and therefore the best leaders, generally speaking—all possess.

1. THEY RATTLE CAGES
Change is a constant. In the natural world, in politics, in business, the only thing that stays the same is the fact that nothing stays the same.

Some people wait until they’re propelled into leadership positions by forces around them. But the best leaders—from Joan of Arc to Martin Luther King, Jr. to Steve Jobs—first provoke themselves into action, then the people around them. They’re constantly imagining new possibilities. They instigate change that they envision even when others don’t.

TO RISE TO YOUR TRUE LEADERSHIP POTENTIAL, CHANCES ARE YOU’LL NEED TO RATTLE A FEW CAGES . . . STARTING WITH YOUR OWN.

Yet perhaps the only major difference between these great leaders and the average person is that
they’re willing to do something rather than let circumstances dictate life for them. That typically means rattling cages and shaking up long-standing beliefs and institutions—which is never easy or universally well-received. But that’s precisely what makes them great. To rise to your true leadership potential, chances are you’ll need to rattle a few cages as well, starting with your own.

2. THEY LISTEN TO INTUITION
There are things we know to be true and things we feel to be true. Thanks to our education, most of us tend to lean on our existing knowledge base to solve problems and make decisions. But the best leaders are those who realize that the things they sense—those possibilities that lie just beyond the realm of the known—hold a special value, too. Listening to them is how real breakthroughs happen.

Most of us have problems balancing logic with intuition. But the truth is that those faculties aren’t opposed
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to one another. In fact, you need to figure out how to get them working together if you’re to become a truly creative leader. Intellect without intuition makes for a smart person without impact. Intuition without intellect makes a spontaneous person without direction.

3. THEY MOVE FAST
One of the biggest stumbling blocks for anyone trying to accomplish something is perfectionism—the need to get it exactly right before taking the next step. But the best leaders realize that perfection is impossible, and pursuing perfection often stands in the way of what’s most important: progress. Leadership requires making consistent strides, no matter how big. And the quicker the stride, the greater the progress.

INTELLECT WITHOUT INTUITION MAKES FOR A SMART PERSON WITHOUT IMPACT. INTUITION WITHOUT INTELLECT MAKES A SPONTANEOUS PERSON WITHOUT DIRECTION.

Don’t buy into the notion that you can take a giant leap if you spend enough time carefully mapping it out. By the time you get done planning, others will have lapped you twice and already taken that leap you spent months mulling over. Opt instead to “just go” and let the sparks fly. You will make mistakes. But in the process, you’ll learn quickly and keep moving—refining your skills and igniting new levels of creativity you didn’t know you had.

4. THEY HAVE CONVICTIONS AND STICK TO THEM
“Don’t ask what the world needs,” the great civil rights leader Howard Thurman once said. “Ask yourself what makes you come alive and then go do that. Because what the world needs is people who have come alive.” There’s something compelling about a person with conviction, whether or not you agree with everything he or she represents. But conviction is rare, because in our longing for stability and security, we often make the mistake of looking outside ourselves for direction when we should be looking inside. And over time we can lose sight of who we truly are and what’s really important to us. Conviction can be cultivated, though—and it starts with you individually. While those who live with great conviction can always
inspire you, they don’t know your passions and beliefs. Only you can ask, “What makes me come alive?” From there, the gaps between who you are and who you can still be will become clear. You might find you need something dramatic like a career change, or the exercise of answering that question might help propel you down the path you’re already on. The key is to find something that you feel you’re meant to do and give yourself to it.

5. THEY DON’T (ONLY) DO WHAT’S EXPECTED OF THEM

The ability to come up with new ideas is a defining characteristic of great leaders. They’re able to step out of the common view and imagine new possibilities that set the course for others to follow. Each of us has a tremendous capacity for originality—we’re each unique, after all—but activating it can be difficult. Why? Because our lives are full of other demands—our jobs, our families—and we spend most of our precious time and energy just trying to keep up.

THE REAL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN YOU AND THE CREATIVE LEADERS WHO INSPIRE YOU IS ACTION.

In order to free your own originality, you need to be willing to stop doing only what’s required and expected of you and start doing the things that only you can do—those ideas and projects you keep shelving until you’ve got time for them. But the
truth is there’s never a convenient moment to tackle them. There’s never going to come a time when you’ll be 100% certain you’ll succeed if you do. Get started on those things today and work on them every day thereafter.

Ultimately, the real difference between you and the creative leaders who inspire you is action. You have the innate capacity to develop all the qualities they possess. The key is to start. Start today. Start now. Don’t wait around until life demands something of you—it always will. That’s not what leaders do.

Erik Wahl is the author of the bestselling book Unthink: Rediscover Your Creative Genius. He is an entrepreneur, graffiti artist, and successful speaker who helps people unleash their creativity to achieve superior levels of performance.
Tied at the end of the round, an exciting one hole play-off eliminated Mike Kelly, center, and Kevin Milbrandt, right, leaving Jeff Pint the 2015 Champion.
**Nitrogen study looks at sources, pathways**

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

The MPCA recently conducted a study of nitrogen in surface waters so that we can better understand the nitrogen conditions in Minnesota’s surface waters, along with the sources, pathways, trends and potential ways to reduce nitrogen in waters.

**Why is it important?**

- Elevated nitrate levels may harm fish and aquatic life.
- Because nitrate moves primarily via groundwater (not surface runoff), it can pollute drinking water wells.
- Nitrate leaving Minnesota via the Mississippi River contributes to the oxygen-depleted dead zone in the Gulf of Mexico.

**About the study**

The study was a collaborative effort led by Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, with assistance from the University of Minnesota and the U.S. Geological Survey. The report team used more than 50,000 water samples collected at 700 stream sites and used 35 years of monitoring data and findings from 300 published studies.

**What is the issue?**

The MPCA’s study shows elevated nitrate levels, particularly in the southern third of Minnesota.
Where does nitrate come from?
- More than 70% of the nitrate is coming from cropland, the rest from regulated sources such as wastewater treatment plants, septic and urban runoff, forest, and the atmosphere.
- Municipal wastewater contributes 9% of the statewide nitrate load.
- Nitrate leaching into groundwater below cropped fields and moving underground until it reaches streams, contributes an estimated 30% of nitrate to surface waters,

How does nitrate move from cropland into our water?
- The amount of nitrate reaching surface waters from cropland varies tremendously, depending on the type of crops, tile drainage practices, cropland management, soils, climate, geology and other factors.
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• Tile drainage is the highest estimated cropland source pathway.
• Precipitation amounts have a pronounced effect on nitrate loads. During a dry year, loads may drop by 49% compared to an average year, however during a wet year, overall loads may increase by 51%.
• Nitrate concentrations and loads are high throughout much of southern Minnesota, resulting largely from leaching through large parts of intensively cropped soils and into underlying tile drains and ground-
water.
• Cropland sources account for an estimated 89 to 95% of the nitrate load in the Minnesota, Missouri, and Cedar Rivers, and Lower Mississippi River basins.

Where does the nitrate go?
• Groundwater nitrate can take from hours to decades to reach surface waters.
• The highest nitrate-yielding watersheds are Cedar, Blue Earth and Le Sueur in south-central Minnesota.
• The Minnesota River adds twice as much nitrate to the Mississippi River as the combined loads from the Upper Mississippi and St. Croix Rivers.
• On average, 158 million pounds of nitrate leaves Minnesota per year in the Mississippi River — 75% comes from Minnesota watersheds.
• Nitrate concentrations have steadily increased in the Mississippi River since the mid-1970s.
• Nitrate loads leaving Minnesota via the Mississippi River contribute to the oxygen-depleted “dead zone” in the Gulf of Mexico (currently estimated to be the size of Massachusetts). The dead zone cannot support aquatic life, affecting commercial and recreational fishing and the overall health of the Gulf.

How do we reduce the nitrate going into surface waters?
Tactics for reducing cropland nitrate going into surface waters fall into three categories:
• Manage in-field nutrients (i.e., optimize fertilizer rates, apply fertilizer closer to timing of crop use)
• Manage and treat tile drainage water (i.e., plan tile spacing and depth; control drainage; construct and restore wetlands for treatment purposes; and bioreactors)
• Diversify vegetation/landscape (i.e., plant cover crops; plant more perennials on marginal cropland)

Nitrate fertilizer efficiency has improved during the past two decades. While further refinements in fertilizer rates and application timing can be expected to reduce nitrate loads by roughly 13% statewide, additional and more costly practices will also be needed to make further reductions and meet downstream needs. Statewide reductions of more than 30% are not realistic with current practices.
To see progress, nitrate leaching reductions are needed across large parts of southern Minnesota, particularly on tile-drained fields and row crops over thin or sandy soils. Only collective incremental changes by many over broad acreages will result in significant nitrogen reductions to downstream waters.

What’s next?
A state-level nutrient reduction strategy is being developed to address Minnesota’s contribution to the Gulf of Mexico’s hypoxia issue. Minnesota contributes the sixth highest nitrogen load to the Gulf. The strategy will identify how further progress can be made to reduce nitrate and phosphorus entering both in-state and downstream waters.

The MPCA is also working with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and other states to evaluate the effect nitrate has on aquatic life in order to develop and adopt toxicity standards.
The MEGA-Seminar sponsor, John Spaulding with Syngenta, is very excited about this year’s format and quality speakers. It is expected this event will be well attended so register early.

Thanks to Jeff Girard, Mike Manthey and Brandon Schindele, Co-Chairs of the MGCSA Educational Committee for their hard work in planning this great event and Sygenta for their continued support of the MGCSA educational programming!

**Wednesday, December 2nd:**

7:00- 8:00 Registration/Networking with assorted pastries and coffee  
8:00 - 9:00  
Soils and Compaction by Dr. Beth Guertal

9:00 - 10:00  
Phosphorous and Phosphites - Environment and Nutrients by Dr. Beth Guertal

10:00 Networking Break

10:15 - 11:00  
Foliar Nitrogen by Dr. Beth Guertal

11:00 - 12:00  
Non-herbicidal Strategies for Managing Poa Annua by Dr. Beth Guertal

12:00-1:00 Lunch

1:00- 2:00  
Course Infrastructure Life Expectancy by Jeff Brauer and Terry Buchen, CGCS, MG

2:00- 3:00  
Master Plans/Superintendent’s Role During Construction & Renovation by Jeff Brauer and Terry Buchen, CGCS, MG

3:00-4:30 cash bar service available

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The MEGA-Seminar sponsor, John Spaulding with Syngenta, is very excited about this year’s format and quality speakers. It is expected this event will be well attended so register early. Thanks to Jeff Girard, Mike Manthey and Brandon Schindele, Co-Chairs of the MGCSA Educational Committee for their hard work in planning this great event and Sygenta for their continued support of the MGCSA educational programing!

**Thursday, December 3rd:**

7:00- 8:00    **Registration/Networking with assorted pastries and coffee**

8:00 - 10:00  **Golf Course Equipment Buying/Leasing/Replacement** by Terry Buchen, CGCS, MG

10:00 - 10:15 **Networking Break**

10:15 - 12:00 “Travels with Terry” Equipment Modification and Changes Witnessed in the Golf and Turf Industry Throughout My Career presented by Terry Buchen, CGCS, MG

12:00- 1:00   **Lunch and Networking**

1:00 - 3:00   **2016 Ryder Cup Preperations/The Process to Volunteer** by Chris Tritabaugh

3:00 - 4:30   **Cash Bar Available**

Please use the Universal Registration form to sign up for this event at mgcsa.org

GCSAA CEUS available for this one day or both days of the Mega Seminar Event. Cost for this one day event is $85, both days are discounted at $155.
You could say golf — and entertainment — run in the Murray family. Ed Murray (NU '71) is the oldest of nine children: three girls and six boys, including actor Bill Murray. As teens, the Murray brothers spent their summers caddying at Indian Hill Club on Chicago's North Shore, and these experiences inspired brother Brian Doyle Murray to write *Caddyshack*.

This year, the classic film celebrates its 35th anniversary. In its honor, we check in with Murray, whose quest for a caddie scholarship inspired the Danny Noonan storyline. Murray gives us details on what dinnertime was like in his household, where their senses of humor came from, and some classic filming mishaps.
Q. How did you begin caddying?

A. My dad was a caddie at Edgewater Golf Club in Chicago when he was a kid. He caddied for Chick Evans in the 1930s. I caddied for Chick Evans in the 1960s, so we had stories to compare. Chick was really nice to me, and he had golfed at our course a number of times. I was a lead caddie, so I got to caddie for players like Billy Graham and Bob Hope, who were guests brought out by members.

I actually started caddying when I was 10. After serving mass one day as an altar boy, there appeared this strange man in the sacristy. He told us he was the caddie master at Indian Hill, and he needed caddies. It was Lou Janis, a former Evans Scholar (NU ’57). A few of us went to “the Hill” that afternoon, and I had my first loop a few days later. I was very small, and the bag was very heavy. The member carried the bag the last four holes.

As the summer went on, I wasn’t getting out very often, except to shag balls for the pro’s golf lessons. I asked the pro, Sam Bernardi, if I could be his permanent “shag boy.” He said “OK, but you’ll have to be here sometimes at 7 a.m. and as late as 9 p.m."

At $1.20 an hour, I often was making more money than the top caddies. I eventually worked in the pro shop and was Sam’s caddie for many tournaments and qualifiers, including the 1961 PGA Championship at Olympia Fields and the 1963 Western Open at Beverly. Sam was a great golfer and a great gentleman.

Q. Tell us about a few memorable caddie experiences.

A. There was an amazing lady golfer, Mrs. Cooley. She had won the Woman’s Club Championship as a teenager and in her 70s — and dozens of times in between. She was the first person I ever saw hit cross-handed: left hand low. She did it for every shot inside 100 yards and had many holes-in-one. I witnessed two or three of them.

There was another lady; a large woman who hit the ball a mile, but had a very foul mouth. She really upset the other ladies, but the caddies loved her.

There’s a scene in Caddyshack about a member who had trouble counting his score. He’d say: “That was a five,” and the caddies behind him would hold up six or seven fingers to the other players. This was based on a real experience. But most of the members were very honest, and we learned a lot from them. One experience I’m most proud of was to have occasionally caddied for Carleton Blunt, one of the originating officials of the Evans Scholars Foundation.

continued
Q. How did the opening scene of *Caddyshack* mirror real life?
A. I was the oldest of nine kids. We had a three-bedroom house with two bathrooms and one shower. So there was always someone doing something in the morning. I was usually going off to caddie. There was always a lot of commotion, with kids going to school or to work or to caddie. And there are three girls; they always had priority on the bathroom.

Q. Who inspired the movie’s characters?
A. Many of the characters are based on family, club employees and members, with a degree of exaggeration. I jokingly tell people that I was Danny Noonan — the oldest of nine who won the caddie tournament and the caddie scholarship to college...up to the point where he got intimate with the Irish waitress. When I saw the movie, I knew who Brian was thinking of in most cases. Brian actually played the character of caddie master Lou Loomis in the movie.

Q. Several of the brothers make appearances in the film, including you. What was filming it like?
A. I was there for a week. I got $35 a day. Most of the time, I was in the background as a golfer. The director, Harold Ramis, thought I should have a close-up, so there’s a scene where a lady gets hit by a club and is laying on the deck. I’m standing behind her with a beer in my hand. I was wearing orange plaid pants and have a full head of dark hair, which is long gone. Otherwise, I’m hitting golf balls on the driving range or walking in a foursome. Harold also gave me a special thanks in the end credits. When we weren’t shooting, I frequently played golf with Michael O’Keefe (the actor who played Danny Noonan). He was new to golf, but improved very quickly.

There was a lot of ad-lib in the script, especially with Billy. The shed scene with Chevy (Chase) and Billy was one of the funniest in the movie and entirely ad-libbed. It was their only scene together, and nobody knew what they were going to do.

Q. What was your reaction when you saw the film?
A. I got a big kick out of it and still do. You don’t know from viewing it, but it was a difficult movie to shoot. It was filmed near the Ft. Lauderdale airport, and there were many planes to deal with. Also, the weather in Florida in the summer is unpredictable — you’ll have a 10-minute rainstorm with big clouds. But the movie lighting has to stay the same.

Rodney Dangerfield would get very upset with the delays. He didn’t like to wait for anything and quit the movie a number of times. When they said we had to wait an hour (for the clouds to pass or due to plane noise), he’d walk off. Ted Knight was always the guy who talked him back in, saying “You need to be a team player.” That was fun for me, getting to meet all those people.
Q. Where did the Murray brothers get their senses of humor?
A. The dinner table was always a show. Sometimes dinner lasted two hours, and neighbors would stop in just to watch. Every meal, someone would spit out a mouthful of milk (from laughing). That’s where the real humor started — from my mom and dad. When people ask me if my parents were in show business, I tell them that my dad was Bob Newhart, with his dry wit, and my mom was Edith Bunker, with her high-pitched voice.

Although Billy is best known for making people laugh, he’s not a comedian. He’s a very good actor as best shown in his recent movie, St. Vincent. If he needs a joke, he might go to his brothers Johnny, Joel or Brian. Brian has a great dry wit and has had a very successful career writing and acting.

Ironically, my sister Nancy, a Dominican nun, is the only one in the family with an acting degree. She’s traveled the country portraying St. Catherine of Siena in a one-woman show.

My dad died when he was 46, leaving my mom with nine kids ages 5 to 23. She did an amazing job raising the family and fortunately got to see their successes before her passing at age 68.

Q. Tell us about your years as an Evans Scholar.
A. When I applied for the Scholarship, my three school choices were Northwestern, Marquette and Illinois. I didn’t expect to get my first choice and didn’t apply to NU. When I got the scholarship, I had a problem. At first, NU said no. After some wheeling and dealing by a few Northwestern Alums and Indian Hill members, I got in.

I started at Northwestern in September 1963 and graduated in July 1971. I was out of school on an internship at CBS that I extended too long, and then I got drafted in November 1966. I was in the Air Force till Dec. 7, 1970, and then went back to NU. I had taken a lot of courses while I was serving, so when I came back to school, I only needed two semesters to graduate. I was married and couldn’t live in the ES house but joined in their activities, even though I was a bit older.

Q. What impact has caddying had on your life?
A. From the time I was 10, I always had a job. At Indian Hill, I was a caddie, busboy, waiter, pro shop assistant, and curling hut bartender. I was also an Andy Frain usher, working ballgames, concerts, conventions, debutante parties and race tracks.

Being a caddie had me working with adults, including business executives and community leaders, at a young age. I didn’t realize it at the time, but through golf, I was learning the nine core values that we now teach at The First Tee: honesty, integrity, sportsmanship, respect, confidence, responsibility, perseverance, courtesy and judgement. If it wasn’t for golf and Indian Hill, I never would have gotten the opportunity to earn a Chick Evans Scholarship to a great university.

Ed Murray retired in 2010 after 27 years with Morgan Stanley. His son, Eddie, and his daughter-in-law, Jennifer, took over his practice. Ed and his wife, Lisa, live in Santa Maria, California. They have five children and six grandchildren. His three sons played college golf; two became professionals.

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Club and Host Superintendent Tom Proshek
Tree selection is one of the most important considerations when a homeowner, developer, landscaper or golf course superintendent is deciding what species to grow or plant. My purpose here is to help you avoid the forehead slapping realization that you have planted the ‘wrong’ tree… 5 years ago. Many questions need to be answered including size, location, site characteristics, aesthetic features, pest susceptibility, hardiness, and maintenance considerations.

Some of these trees may do quite well in a forest or other parts of the U.S., so my intention is not to apply a blanket statement for all these trees to all situations. Also, please don’t take this advice as a reason to remove a healthy tree.

This article is based on my conversations with clients, arborists, nurseries, landscapers, and foresters.

1. Lombardy poplar (Populus nigra)

Zone 3 to 9
Avoid this tree at all costs. Characterized by a very tight columnar shape, the Lombardy Poplar can exceed 100 feet in height within 20 to 30 years. However, at that point, it’s also reached the end of its life...
expectancy, so it’s another “disposable” tree as opposed to a permanent landscape addition. Lombardy poplars have structurally weak branches that break easily when stressed by wind, snow, or ice. They are continually dropping leaves, twigs and other debris. Aggressive roots can invade sidewalks and clog sewer lines. There are few redeeming characteristics other than its rapid growth rate. I hesitate to recommend planting Poplars in general as they are poor ornamental trees. Plant instead: Hackberry (Celtis occidentalis)

2. Norway maple (Acer platanoides)

An easily-grown tree, Norway maple will reach 40 to 50 feet in height with an almost equal spread, and it tolerates air pollution and drought quite nicely. It often suffers from girdling roots but the more significant issue is that it is overused and overplanted, especially the maroon leaf color variety called ‘Crimson King’. Its wide leaves cast a dense shade that severely limits what can be planted under the canopy, especially grass. Combine that with the fact that Norway maple is popping up in local woodlands and considered invasive in ever-widening areas of the country, and it adds up to another tree to avoid. Plant instead: Red maple (Acer rubrum)

3. Mountain Ash (Sorbus decora)

A lovely tree that will grow to around 30 feet, with a spread of perhaps 15 feet, the mountain ash is a good food source for a variety of wildlife. That’s all good, but the list of potential problems include; borers, aphids, sawflies, scale,
mites, fire blight, rust, scab, cankers, crown gall, and powdery mildew. Seriously now: do you want a tree with this many potential problems in your landscape? Plant instead: Korean Mountain Ash (Sorbus alnifolia)

4. **Walnut (Juglans nigra)**  
Zone 4 to 9  
Black walnut is a beautiful tree, reaching a height of 75-100 feet, with a spread to match. It tolerates drought, provides fruit relished by wildlife, and makes a lovely shade tree. Unfortunately, its roots produce chemicals called juglones, which are highly toxic to a wide range of desirable landscape plants (azaleas, rhododendrons, blueberries, peonies, tomatoes, peppers, and potatoes). Additionally, the husks of the nuts can stain clothing and sidewalks, so unless you have a really large landscape, this tree is best left in the forest. Plant instead: Kentucky Coffeetree ‘Espresso’ (Gymnocladus dioicus ‘Espresso’).
5. White or Common Mulberry (Morus alba)  
Zone 4 to 8

Growing to 35-50 feet, with a spread of 35-40 feet, these are attractive easily grown trees with interesting foliage and edible fruit. As is common with many exotics, white mulberry is a prolific fruit producer and aggressively colonizes open, sunny sites. The only beneficiaries are the birds and the silkworms; the tree was originally imported from China for the silkworm industry and unfortunately escaped. It is now invasive through much of the country. The fruit is very messy and will stain clothing and patios. Bacterial blight, leaf spots, cankers, powdery mildew, scales, and mites are a few of the other problems that can affect the trees. All in all, best to give this one a wide berth. Plant instead: Bur oak (Querus macrocarpa)

6. The European White birches (Betula spp; B. pendula, B. pubescens, B. platyphylla)  
Zone 4 to 9
Generally reaching 40-50 feet, available as a clump, they are tremendously ornamental. They are splendid in winter when the milky white bark is framed against evergreens. These birch varieties, however, are susceptible to the bronze birch borer and birch leaf miner, both tree killers. Control requires spraying, which is time-consuming and costly. They have a very shallow root system and do poorly when planted in lawns. A short-lived tree, think carefully before planting. Plant instead: the native birches (B. papyrifera, B. populifolia,)

Betula papyrifera (paper birch, canoe birch), especially the Renaissance Series (‘Cenci’ (Renaissance Compact®), ‘Oenci’ (Renaissance Oasis®), ‘Renci’ (Renaissance Reflection®), ‘Uenci’ (Renaissance Upright®) ‘Varen’ (Prairie Dream®), Betula populifolia ‘Whitespire’

7. Colorado spruce (Picea pungens)
Zone 3 to 7

Capable of growing 30-60 feet high with a 20 foot spread, this conifer is in high demand because of its attractive blue-green foliage. Native to Colorado, it suffers tremendously when planted outside its native range. Intolerant to shade, wet soils, heat, pollution, or high humidity. It often looks open, poor, and dingy with age due to absence of lower
branches and needle drop caused by disease. It has been standard practice to use this tree in the front yard where it can immediately detract from the rest of the landscape. Leave this tree in Colorado where it is much happier. Plant instead: Serbian spruce (Picea omorika)

8. Flowering Crabapple (malus spp), disease susceptible cultivars

There are few other trees which approach the beauty of a crabapple tree in full flower. Ornamental crabapples are an outstanding group of small flowering trees. They are valued for foliage, flowers, fruit, and variations in habit or size. Unfortunately many crabapples are worthless because of extreme susceptibility to apple scab, which causes the tree to drop most of its leaves by July. It makes no sense to spray or to have half-to fully-defoliated trees in the garden when smart selections are available. Disease resistance should be your first consideration. Plant instead:

- Adirondack (Malus ‘Adirondack’)
- Beverly (Malus ‘Beverly’)
- Calocarpa (Malus x zumi ‘Calocarpa’)
- Dolgo (Malus ‘Dolgo’)
- Harvest Gold® (Malus ‘Hargozam’)
- Lancelot (Malus x ‘Lanzam’)
- Molten Lava® (Malus ‘Molazam’)
- Prairifire (Malus ‘Prairifire’)
- Professor Sprenger (Malus ‘Professor Sprenger’)

Zone 4 to 7
Royal Raindrops (Malus x ‘JFS-KW5’)
Tina (Malus sargentii ‘Tina’)
Sugar Tyme® (Malus ‘Sutyzam’)

9. Little leaf linden (Tilia cordata, especially ‘Greenspire’)
    Zone 3 to 7

Little leaf linden is another overplanted tree in Minnesota. Growing to 40 feet high it tolerates poor soils and tough urban conditions. It often develops tight branching, multiple leaders, and narrow branch crotch angles which leads to included bark formation requiring lots of training pruning. Basal suckering, girdling roots, and storm damage are also frequent headaches. To make matters worse, Japanese beetles love to make lace doilies out of the leaves. Plant instead: American yellowwood (Cladrastis lutea)

10. Japanese maple (Acer palmatum)
    Zone 5 to 8

There are many maple species in Japan, but most of the trees that gardeners call Japanese maples are varieties of Acer palmatum. The species can grow to 20 or 30 feet tall, often in the understory of open woods between larger trees. Japanese maples are at their best in USDA Plant Hardiness Zones 6 through 8. Pushing the zone to include these beautiful plants in our Minnesota gardens often leads to disappointment after a brutal winter. Garden centers do sell these seductively beautiful plants and occasionally one will succeed in a very protected site. But among the hundreds of cultivars, none is known to be fully hardy in zone 4. Save your money and invest elsewhere. Plant instead: Korean maple (Acer pseudosieboldianum).
Austrian pine (Pinus nigra)
Zone 3 to 6

A very hardy tree that withstands city conditions better than many other pines. Very tolerant of soils, it will stand some dryness and exposure and resists heat and drought. It is an adaptable species with very stiff needles making a good specimen, screen, or windbreak. In recent years though, this pine has exhibited severe dieback in Midwestern states, most of which is attributed to Diplodia tip blight and pine wilt. Leave this one at the nursery. Plant instead: Eastern red cedar (Juniperus virginiana)
12. Silver maple (Acer saccharinum)
Zone 3 to 9
This species has been and will continue to be overplanted as consumers demand fast shade. It is one of the nurseryman’s biggest money-makers because of its fast growth and ease of culture. Capable of growing to 70 feet high with 100 foot spread, it becomes a liability with age as it will often break up in wind, snow, and ice. Its aggressive root system can ruin foundations and sewer pipes. Female trees produce copious amounts of seeds that create baby maples everywhere. Forget about the nice lawn under the tree because its roots push up far beyond the canopy creating an obstacle course for the mower. Just say no to silver maple. Plant instead: Sugar maple (Acer saccharum)

Faith Appelquist is Principle Arborist and Designer at Tree Quality. Faith holds TRAQ Tree Risk Assessor, Registered Consulting Arborist® and Board Certified Master Arborist designations in Minnesota.

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As golf course superintendents, there are many demands placed upon us. Our main focus is to maintain a golf course in excellent condition day in and day out, with smooth, true, fast rolling greens while doing so with an ever shrinking budget. I cannot use my budget reductions as an excuse for subpar playing conditions, at least not if I expect to stay in business. My goal has always been to implement practices that not only save money but improve the quality of my golf course. It sounds like an oxymoron, but as superintendents we all do it everyday. For me, I have naturalized out of play areas, as well as cut my fertilizer budget in half by melting down all of my nutrients and spraying them along with my growth regulators. However the one practice that is most unique and has produced multiple direct and indirect advantages is my three cup system.

The first 20 years of my golf career I cut cups just like everyone else- one cup everyday, seven days a week. Maybe if it rained or play was light, I would skip a day. Even then, I hated to do that. A regular player would always come up to me and say, “I see you didn’t change cups today”, or by the evening of the second day the cup wear was excessive. To cut a new cup ev-
Superior Chores

Everyday led to multiple problems. I had to have multiple people cutting cups, which led to inconsistent and sometimes downright terrible pin placements. I was also constantly facing the problem of low or scalped plugs, dried out plugs, as well as too many unhealed plugs scattered across the green that made it hard to find a “new” place to put a cup. I was spending a lot of labor dollars and getting less than perfect results. I knew there had to be a better way, and there was. I thought to myself, why not cut multiple cups in the green at once and rotate the position between them? This way I could have one person cutting all the cups once a week so I would have excellent consistency. I never had to worry about having a fresh cup each day because it was simple for the greens mower to rotate cups as he cut the green. I was...
able to better spread the wear on the green and had far less plugs healing at any given time. This process almost eliminated the problem of low, scalped or dried out plugs. I got almost no complaints about pin placement, and if I did I could easily move the cup on the fly in a matter of seconds. There were a lot of positives and I was saving a ton of labor which I was able to allocate to other tasks. There were a number of problems to solve though, not the least of which was to hide the existence of the extra cups on the green. It wasn’t enough just to hide them; it had to be seamless. Luckily, I was able to come up with a system to do this where not even the most demanding members had a clue what I was doing. People have come up to me all season long telling me that my greens are the best they have putted all year long. That’s all I need to hear to know my little secret is working perfectly. But it was definitely a work in progress, a process that took seven years to perfect.

I tried many ideas and with each idea I would solve one problem, but create another. First idea was to place three cups on the green and insert a foam plug inside each unused cup. Then a turf plug was placed on the top of the foam plug. However, the foam flexed causing the turf plug to sink. Also, the foam broke apart over time. So I went back to the drawing board. My second idea was to cut three holes in the green but instead of putting three cups in the holes, I inserted plugs in two holes and put the cup in the third. I fashioned these plugs by cutting down a plastic cup slightly and gluing a cap to the top and bottom, effectively making a solid cylinder. I could then insert this in the hole and put my turf plug over the top of this. The idea worked initially, but it involved carrying a cup puller and was also messy when the greens cutter switched the cup and the plug. Other problems that I noticed were that the turf plugs were actually too thick and would crumble over time. Also, the caps were coming off because of the force needed to pull the plug out of the ground. The concept was doing everything I wanted and was saving so much labor. This allowed me time to more frequently fix ballmarks, topdress, and verticut the greens; cultural
practices that really had a positive impact on green speed, smoothness and overall quality. The members were happy, but the person cutting cups and the greens cutter were not as happy. The plugs were continuing to look worse and worse. It was getting harder to get the turf plug to sit level and stay level over a matter of days. Also, I really thought I should be able to put three actual cups on the green and somehow cover two of them. This would be cleaner and easier to change from one cup to another and would solve all the problems the cup cutter and greens cutter were complaining about. This led to what proved to be my least popular idea. I took a rubber plug and placed it on the top of the unused cup. The rubber plugs did sit perfectly on top of the cups and it was perfectly flush with the green. However, the color was not the same as the color of the green so the golfers noticed them. Even though the ball rolled perfectly over the rubber plugs, the golfers still had a problem with them. I tried to point out that rolling over the rubber plug was no different than rolling over an old turf plug and better than rolling over an old turf plug that was sunk or scalped. My argument didn’t go very far. The job of switching cups was quick and easy.
but it did not fit into my criteria for making a better product. The golfers were right, but I was frustrated because they did not see the upside of what I was doing. But then why should they? All they wanted were perfect greens. They didn’t care how I accomplished this. We are all in this same boat. And besides, I was trying to create a system where the golfer would not even realize I was doing it. I contemplated throwing in the towel and I truly think no one would have said anything if I had. So as with many things in life, the breakthrough moment came right when things seemed to be the most hopeless.

I was sitting in the shop venting to my mechanic, Brandon, about all the injustices I felt were being thrown at me. I thought I had a great idea, but I couldn’t figure out how to make it work. Talking out loud I said to Brandon, “Why can’t I figure this out?” “What exactly are you trying to do?” he asked. “I am trying to come up with something that I can cut to fit perfectly on top of a cup but it has to be thin and strong enough to support a turf plug. Something made out of metal would work, but I can’t cut anything that perfect,” I said. “You can’t cut anything that perfect, but a laser could do the job. In fact, I can probably have 36 cut for you by next week,” Brandon replied. So, I asked: “How close to spec can they get them?” Brandon answered, “Is within 1/1000 of an inch close enough?”

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enough?” So, $300 and a week later I had 36 discs that I placed on top of the unused cups, put my turf plug on top and I had my solution. No one could tell there was a cup sitting under the turf plug. The turf plug was easy to remove with a fork and after drilling a hole in the center of the disc it was easy for me to put my finger in the disc and lift it off the cup. I could then place the disc over the old cup, put the turf plug back on, give it a quick splash of water, step it level, and it looked exactly like I had just simply changed a cup and the process only took 30 seconds. After working with this system for a couple of weeks, the only problem that arose was that sometimes the disc shifted on top of the cup. Brandon suggested that we cut 36 more discs the size of the inside of the cup and weld the two discs together. This way one disc would nest inside the cup and the other would sit on top. The problem was solved. We used the system the remainder of the summer with no further concerns.

There were a number of things I was initially concerned about which did not end up being problems. I was concerned that the turf plugs would not hold up, but just the opposite happened. With a little water each time they were moved, they actually became stronger and the root density in the plug increased, especially at the interface with the metal disc. This helped keep them from drying out and from falling apart. A couple of times the plugs did get hydrophobic and the solution to this was to have the cup cutter take a pail of water and soak

McCarthy says that his system saves him time for other chores.
the plugs while he was changing the cup.

It is year two coming up on the system and over the winter we have made a couple upgrades to it. We replaced the metal caps with molded plastic caps. They do not require painting, they are lighter weight, and they are less expensive. Because of the cheaper price, I was able to get multiple sets, which I will use to cover the cup on the green when I am topdressing or spraying. I am also going to put a cap on the bottom of the cup to keep them from sinking into our sand greens.

Towards the end of last season I also experimented with creating a tool that would remove the turf plug and also double as a ball mark repair tool. In the past I was using a kitchen fork to remove the turf plug and to fix ball marks. But after fixing hundreds of ball marks a day, I had a permanent dent in my finger as well as a blister. So again, Brandon crafted a tool for me that had a wider handle, which made it easier to grip. He made it with three prongs along with a larger flat pan area above the prongs, which allowed me to more easily move turf into larger old ball marks. The final modification we made was to eliminate the hole in the disc and replace it with two indentations, which you can grab to lift the disc up. This way
sand and chemical from the sprayer can’t get through the cover.

So I now have a complete system, which I truly believe has allowed me to provide my membership with a better product. A system that not even my most finicky member is aware I am doing. Like they said, I don’t care how you make the greens better, just do it. Innovation has always been the bread and butter of our industry. I hope by sharing this idea with my fellow superintendents that everyone can benefit the way I have.

John McCarthy is Golf Course Superintendent at Logger’s Trail Golf Club in Stillwater, MN. He can be reached via email: johnmccarthy@live.com.

*Below: Is the TriCup solution for you?*
Grumpy Old Men

It was a Saturday morning late August this year when it first happened. I was walking mowing greens that morning with a kid from the crew and cutting cups as well. Pretty atypical for me, as I have taken to delegating such duties as my age and career advance, but not on this day. We were short staffed, so there I was.

A single player had caught up to us on the back nine and was waiting patiently for us to complete our tasks. He was cool about it, but we were feeling the pressure and moving quickly. When my partner and I reached the 16th green, we noticed the other duo mowing with us had stopped for a twosome finishing up the green. The pro shop had let these two off on the back, unbeknownst to us. While this probably happens all the time in other places, our guys in the pro shop have been pretty solid at not doing this to screw things up, but not today.

Ok, I will just go get new tee markers for the ladies tee on number eight for the old ones that grew legs and walked away last night, let them tee off and head up number 17 (a par three) and we will be fine, I thought. By the time we came back to 17 they were still on the tee. The patient single was now on 16, as the guys were just getting done mowing it. WTF?

Then I notice about five white specs on the fairway or by the green. Practice time at Prestwick on a Saturday morning. Blood is now starting to boil inside of me.

We proceed to the green and unload, get into position as the twosome is plodding along, retrieving golf balls and throwing them back and forth to each other. As they reach the green I make a couple passes and then stop as the first guy needed to putt in our mowing path. After a couple plumbobs and step backs I’m beside myself. He finally putts and...
I proceed. The second guy is on the other side of the mow pattern but I am about six feet from his ball. As I turn and make the next pass he gives me the “how can you possibly be interfering with me look and raises his arms as I mow past him. I stop the mower and proceed to tell him to hurry up, quit dragging his heels, there are golfers behind him, don’t take 15 shots off the tee and get moving—and in not a very nice tone. I finish my pass and stare at him as I stop the mower. I am pissed off and man, these guys are so in my way. I walk straight to the pro shop to tell them these guys are going to come in and complain about me, and tell them my side of the story. I tell them they can’t just let guys off the back without telling us, or consulting with us. I am so convinced I am in the right—and I am, except for one problem: I’m not.

About ten days later, I found myself in another situation like it. This time the young morons in the golf cart blew past the cart signs and ran over traffic control posts to get to the cart path. I had long given up consternation over such things, as it was neither productive nor particularly good for my health. I always have visions of the tombstone reading: Here lies Dave, he gave his life preventing turfgrass compaction. I guess that day I had had enough and let them have it. Once again, I was wrong.

After apologizing again to the head pro who has to deal with the fallout from such outbursts, I decided to do a little reflection on the past couple weeks and try to figure out why I had turned into a walking Snickers commercial. That confrontational guy just was not me. What was going on? Unless I had consumed large quantities of Gin, I have always been a go-with-the-flow kind of guy, pretty approachable and certainly non-confrontational.

Was I turning into my father? Ron Kazmierczak is a very good guy and personable as well. He’s my dad— I love him but if he thinks you have wronged him or not measured up to his code of personal conduct he will let you know about it. We are talking about
a man who got into fight in the Fiesta Bowl parking lot after the game because the car next to us wasn’t going to take turns getting out. True story. (He even asked me not to tell my mother at In-N-Out Burger afterward when we finally did get out- at age 71.) I have lived 48 years trying not to be that aspect of my father.

Perhaps it was just a mid-life crisis. Well, I think I already went through that a few years ago though, and why would that be my thing? Most guys get a divorce or buy a Corvette, not get snippy with the customers.

I finally settled on the idea that if you let it, this job will turn you into a grumpy old man. I have known a few old superintendents over the years. Most of them are/were crusty old curmudgeons. Most of them stuck in their ways and generally pessimistic about everything. Everybody reading this knows one. My initial first assistant at Prestwick was one. He was in his 60’s and was barely approachable before the hour of 10:00 am. What is it that makes these guys so ornery?

It’s simple, and if you recognize it, it may help you not become a grumpy old golf course superintendent. The bottom line is: everything related to this job is constantly (messing) with you.

Think about it. Just about every aspect of what you do involves someone or something not functioning properly and you are the guy that has to find a way to deal with it.

For starters there is the actual plants you are trying to grow and keep healthy. What’s always messing with you? Fungus, insects, weeds, nutritional demands, varmints including geese, moles, squirrels, deer, gophers, raccoons, vols and muskrats just to name a few. I bet you can name a few other things. How about your employees? How often do you have to fill out an accident report? Reprimand somebody for being late or a no-show? Instruct somebody for the umpteenth time how to do a basic job? Complain about a job? Complain about the weather? Speaking of which- how often is
the weather messing with you? Answer: almost every damn day!

How are the golfers treating you? Any problems with them? We actually had a lady in our Tuesday ladies league tell my assistant we should not be working on Tuesdays because, well, you know. The crew was up for grabs upon hearing we will be off on Tuesdays in the future. How about the people at the clubhouse? How much does the Pro Shop mess with you? How about your members? They love everything you do right? How about the government? Any issues there? What about your irrigation system? That always operates as intended. Heads never stick, the central always runs and nothing ever gets into the system to clog things up, right? The equipment always runs like a champ. It always starts, never gets bashed up because your employees are so good and never, ever does a reel hit a rock or a hydraulic hose fails the day before your biggest tournament of the year.

You aren’t even safe in your office. The computer is always messing with you, the printer as well. Even the XS@*%ing desk drawer handle seems justified to join the fray every once in a while. It’s like when will it end?

Well, it will end one of two ways. It will end when they escort you out the door for upsetting a customer for the last time, or when they pull the sheet over your stiff rigor-mortise laden body if you are not able to sufficiently realize that that is what your job is all about and you need to find ways to deal with the fact that everything is trying to mess with you. The better you understand this, the less likely you will become a grumpy old golf course superintendent.

There are plenty of remedies I suppose, starting with deep breaths, rides on the cart to even seeing a shrink, but ultimately, just rolling with the punches, talking things out with a peer or taking a step back to realize it really isn’t that bad will usually do the trick. If you believe in advertising, keep a box of snickers bars in the desk drawer. It will make it all better. Provided you can get the XS@*%ing thing open.