

# Hole Notes

The Official Publication of the MGCSA

**MGCSA Represents During  
the We Are Golf  
National Golf Day**



**Vol. 54, No. 4 May 2019**



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Host Kyle Kleinschmidt

June 12

Mid-West Exposure at Eagle Creek GC in Wilmar  
Host Tom Wodash

June 13

South West Exposure at North Links in North Mankato  
Host Chris Carpenter



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# Presidential Perspective

by Matt Rostal, Superintendent Interlachen Country Club

May has arrived and I am trying to be patient waiting for warm weather. We all need the warmth for our golf courses, but those who are trying to recover from winter kill really need the warmth to jump start the natural recovery. I am optimistic it will start soon and continue all the way into the fall. The way my greens look, I am sure everyone else who has grass to heal feels the same way. I know how hard it is to be patient as a golf course superintendent and then to pass the message to our golfers to be patient is even more difficult.

Even with the troubles with my greens at Interlachen, I was able to break away from work for a few days to play some golf during the first weekend in May.

It was fun to see and play a

few other golf courses, as each one was outstanding. I was fortunate to play Deacon's Lodge on its opening day, Whitefish Golf Club the next day and, finally, Golden Eagle Golf Club. It is always a good practice to get away from your own facility to play golf and see other golf course conditions and what they are trying to accomplish. Every time I see other golf courses it invigorates me to try new ideas and practices to make the golf course I maintain even better for its members.

Lately, I have been asking myself what inspires me to be better. As I get older, it seems like it takes more to motivate me to be a better person, parent and especially a mentor to young aspiring golf course employees. From a MGCSA perspective, we see a trend happening in our membership that new, younger employees are not joining the



Association. As a mentor, I am trying to guide my new, younger employees about the positive benefits of the MGCSA and then encourage them to join the association. I believe it is our responsibility as superintendents to push younger team members to join the association.

I know as managers we can get frustrated at our younger team members' attitudes and perceived determination to be proactive in their careers. But, we must motivate them to work hard and understand

why the benefits of the MGCSA can help them further their careers. As superintendents, we all must stay proactive by pushing young team members to stay in the great profession and join the MGCSA for its supporting benefits.

I must give a shout out to everyone who participated at the National Golf Day in Washington DC. I know it was a challenge to be away from your facility in the spring, but those who attended said it was a very meaningful experience for everyone involved. We were the only state to have

complete coverage of our representatives for the National Golf Day. What a tremendous accomplishment for our association and industry here in Minnesota. Once again congratulations

to all the attendees and the MGCSA!

As we get closer to Memorial Day I hope the weather continues to warm, our golf courses are filled with happy golfers and we all can enjoy some time with our families.

***Do you have an  
assistant or key  
employee who isn't a  
member of the  
association? Be an  
industry mentor.  
Ask them to join the  
MGCSA***

# ***MGCSA Lends Strength in Numbers to the National “We Are Golf” Initiative***

*The following story is authored by Fred Taylor, CGCS and Joe Berggren with edits and transitions by Dave Kazmierczak, CGCS.*

The MGCSA sent a group of eight MN superintendents to Washington, D.C. to represent the eight districts from across the state for National Golf Day, May 1st. The event was put on by WE ARE GOLF and supported by the GCSAA and its affiliate chapters. The event brought in 200 volunteers from across the country. The group included: Fred Taylor CGCS (Mankato Golf Club), Dave Kazmierczak CGCS (Prestwick), Aaron Porter (Giants Ridge), Eric Ritter CGCS (Wild Marsh), Joe Brettingen (Hazeltine),

Tom Wodash (Eagle Creek Golf Club), Troy Tschida (Meadowbrook) and Joe Berggren (The Wilds Golf Club).

The 2019 edition got underway on Monday, April 29th with an afternoon training session regarding the 3rd annual NGD Community Service Project. Over 200 volunteer participants from around the country gathered to get the needed information to carry out a massive undertaking the following morning on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. The event was





orchestrated by Chava (pronounced Hava) McKeel, GCSAA's Director of Government Relations, Peggy Norton with We Are Golf and Michael Stachowicz, Turf Manager with the National Park Service, who oversees the maintenance of the Mall area. These leaders put together a roster of 17 team captains who would supervise a crew of between four, and thirty-two, volunteers on their team. Once the information was shared with the audience, teams met with their respective captains to review the information and clarify the duties for the team.

On Tuesday morning the entire group left on coach buses from the headquarters hotel for the National Mall. Once there, we collected work and safety apparel and gathered for a short ceremony led by Steve Mona, of We Are Golf, highlighted by a few words from the USDA Undersecretary of Agriculture, Bill Northey. A group photo was taken on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial. With the Washington Memorial in our foreground, and the Lincoln Memorial to our backs, it was an inspirational moment. The hallowed grounds of our Nation were to be



***Posed in front of the Lincoln Memorial, the Minnesota Chapter of the GCSAA is ready to enhance the public campus through planned landscape projects. Front row left to right: Joe Berggren, Tom Wodash and Troy Tschida. Back row: Maggie and Fred Taylor CGCS, Dave Kazmierczak CGCS, Joe Brettingen, Eric Ritter CGCS, Aaron (CGCS) and Tinsley Porter.***





***Joe Berggren, Superintendent at The Wilds, lends a hand in the Mall laying bermuda-grass sod.***

our canvas for the next few hours as we would lay sod, plant annuals, trim, mow, clean, and seed the place where 36 million visitors per year come to immerse themselves in the rich history of our Democracy. Other tasks included: shrub maintenance at the Korean War Memorial, GIS information gathering and aerating the lawn, which receives 30 million visitors a year. It is estimated that the community service project will save the National Park Service approximately \$30,000 in contractor costs.

The Minnesota contingent for this event was 13 people strong- a fabulous showing from the Gopher state! Our group was split up among the 17 work teams, and we all got our sweat going in the later hours of the morning. One of the areas of work was a sod project on what is known as the Polo Field. Our team of nine laid six



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pallets of bermudagrass sod in an area that had been a worn out path. We finished the sodding and then walked over to help the team that was planting 5,000 Mondograss plants near the entrance to the Martin Luther King Memorial. We pitched in, trowels in hand, to get most of the planting done. Others from our Minnesota group helped clean benches, plant annuals, sod near the Washington Monument, clean river debris and mow selected lawn areas.

At the end of the morning, the entire group of volunteers enjoyed a box lunch and a welcomed chance to rest and look out over the Mall. It gave us a chance to reflect on

the work that we accomplished and the opportunity to give back to the country we love. One could not help to feel the pride as our golf industry professionals made a positive impression on the landscape of our nation's capital. It was an awesome experience!

After the community service project, the group had a quick turnaround to attend a speech given by the keynote speaker, Eugene Robinson. Mr. Robinson is a Pulitzer Prize award winning columnist for the Washington Post and a Political Analyst on MSNBC. He discussed the pulse of today's politics and gave his opinion on the future of politics. The group was then shuttled to the



***Left, Superintendent at Eagle Creek Tom Wodash, plants Mondograss near the entrance to the Martin Luther King Memorial.***





***Above and left, Giant's Ridge Superintendent Aaron Porter CGCS mows laser lines across the Mall in front of the Lincoln Memorial.***

congressional reception at the U.S. Capital Visitor Center for an evening event.

On National Golf Day, the entire group met with staff from Senator Tina Smith and Senator Amy Klobuchar's offices. They then split into multiple groups to meet with Representatives from their Minnesota districts. In those meetings, they reminded the legislators of some important issues that help the turf industry. They lobbied for the National Turfgrass Research Initia-

tive which is included in the Farm Bill, WOTUS (Waters of the United States), NPDES Pesticide General Permits, H-2B Visa Program Caps, the Overtime Pay Rule, listing of golf courses on the "sin list" and including golf in the PHIT act.

The objective was to ensure that laws and regulations impacting the golf industry are appropriate to a nearly \$84 billion industry which impacts close to two million American jobs and generates nearly \$4 billion in charitable giving and the



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group helped to achieve that goal. They represented the turf industry, the GCSAA and MGCSA respectively.

While the service project was, well, work and the brisk walks between the Senate and Representative buildings hard on the feet, all who participated agreed it was a worthwhile experience. Not only was there satisfaction gained knowing they volunteered to help maintain the amazing National Mall and surroundings, but also knowing they helped make an impact for

their profession and its organizations. Seven of the eight attendees were participating for the first time. Many had attended the MGCSA's day on the hill locally, but not nationally.

One was Dave Kazmierczak, CGCS:

*I had spent 50 plus years of my life never setting foot in our Nation's Capital until a family trip a year and a half ago. It was a fabulous experience sightseeing and soaking in the history. Little did I know, I would*



***Dressed for business, the MGCSA cotenant prepares for their meetings with legislative staff. Left to right: front row: Joe Berggren, Joe Brettingen, Tom Wodash, Fred and Maggie Taylor CGCS. Back row: Tinsley and Aaron Porter CGCS, Judd Duininck, Dave Kazmierczak CGCS, Troy Tschida and Eric Ritter CGCS***

*be back a year and half later at the same place, only this time as one of the guys walking around in a suit and entering the important buildings with an agenda.*

*Structurally, it was just like the Minnesota Day on the Hill, only on a grander scale. The only real difference was we did not get to meet with the actual Senators and Representatives like in Minnesota, which was to be expected. They were a little busy at the time with the Attorney General. Staff members for each Senator or Representative usually met with us, seemed attentive and knew what we were asking for, for the most part. The staff members from Minnesota were easy to make a connection with and, overall, the meetings went very well. It may not seem like a small meeting can have an impact, but it can and will if repeated with a consistent message. Over time we as an industry will become a recognized entity and our voice will be heard.*

*Overall, this was a fabulous experience and I can not recommend it more to anybody in the MGCSA who may be interested in years to come. The service project*

*was fantastic, even though I somehow got the least desirable job (I helped clean up flood debris from the Potomac River along a narrow park past the Jefferson Memorial - dead fish and all) but did it proudly along with the dozen or so other volunteers who drew the short stick. Please see the pile below.*



*The trip was well organized and was an easy thing to do. I would do it again in a heartbeat if asked, but honestly think new people should be able to experience this and help*



*make an impact. I would also be remiss if I did not mention the best thing gleaned from this experience and that was getting to get to know other brothers of turf. Whether it was making new friends nationally or getting to know the eight local guys we came with, it was a blast being with fellow Superintendents, sharing triumphs and miseries and always exchanging ideas. Thank you to the guys who went on the trip, for being open, cool and fun to hang with. And a very BIG thank you to the MGCSA for their commitment to Advocacy and all of us as an association.*

There was one individual for whom this was not a new experience. Eric Ritter CGCS was attending his second NGD and had a little different perspective as well as being very valuable to all the new attendees.

*2019 was my second attendance at National Golf Day in as many years. I was looking forward to the visit very much as the annual event in 2018 was a tremendous experience for me in developing a better understanding of the work-*

*ings of politics in Washington, D.C., while honing my skills as a Grass-roots Ambassador.*

*The 2019 schedule and programs were nearly identical to 2018. One thing I picked up on was the noticeable difference of the*



***Above: Looking fine, seasoned NGD Veteran Eric Ritter CGCS is all set to support the great game of golf with his legislators.***

*congressional representatives from Minnesota. Five of the eight Minnesota House districts were new representatives as result of last No-*





Photo courtesy of the  
Minneapolis Golf Club

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vember's election. I also noticed there seemed to be a fair amount of turnover in the staff members of these congressional offices. While I did meet with a familiar face in my home district office (Tom Emmer), three of the other five meetings were with either newly elected or recently hired staff members of the correlating congressional office. Most of these new staff members had never heard of or were unaware of the challenges we face. It felt even more important to have our representation present to inform the new representatives of the issues we deal with and garner their support for the golf industry.

My favorite aspect of the entire event was the opportunity to meet with the members of congress and their staff. The information and background knowledge picked up was interesting as we heard significant impacts that are not mentioned in the press. One member of Congress spoke about the difficulty in H2-B expansion as it revolves around immigration reform including border protection. He mentioned the Border Patrol is not allowed to patrol over half of our

borders with any motorized vehicles because they are deemed protected wilderness areas. Conversations like this have helped broaden my viewpoint and I recognized that potential solutions (and causes) of problems can be inhibited by factors not always noted or discussed. Maybe dealing with the political issues like removing a tree or relocating a bunker at my own course is not so bad after all.

The 2019 National Golf Day was a great success. It felt great to contribute the time and service in both the Congressional meetings and Community Service Project. I met several new faces and revisited with old, all of which will be longtime friends. In one brief moment of excitement, we saw the Presidential motorcade make its way through the streets. I could picture President Trump riding in the back of the limo directing, "I want more motorcycles, more sirens, the most of any President!" Ahh...at least I laughed to myself. It was a great trip.

While the majority of the attendees were from the GCSAA overall, and most of them superin-

tendents, there was one assistant superintendent along, Joe Brettingen from Hazeltine.

*First of all, I would like to thank the MGCSA for sponsoring the well represented Minnesota contingent at National Golf Day 2019. Without your support, this certainly would not have been possible. As for the event itself, wow, what an experi-*

*ence. It was really cool to see all sorts of people from the golf course industry come together from across the country, all pursuing the same goal of spreading the word about the golf course industry and the issues directly related to it.*

*Being a first-timer at this event, I was honestly a little nervous about meeting with members of*



**Left to right: Joe Brettingen and Assistant Superintendent at Hazeltine National Golf Course, Grant Young and Randy Harris TORO, Tom Wodash at Eagle Creek GC, Judd Duininck of Duininck Golf and Troy Tschida from Meadowbrook Golf take in the ambiance of Representative Collin Peterson's office.**



congress. That nervousness and fear evaporated quickly as the board for We Are Golf did a fantastic job the day before to prepare us for our meetings on Capitol Hill. A few issues our groups addressed included H2-B labor, the National Turfgrass Research Initiative, and the PHIT act. I am personally passionate about the environment and protecting our green spaces as we become a more environmentally conscious nation, therefore, in our meetings, I spoke about turf managers being environmental stewards of our land and asked for support for funding of the National Turfgrass Research Initiative. This plea, along with the other issues that were brought up to staffers, seemed to be well received across the board. My fingers crossed for improved support of our great industry moving forward.

In the end, this was an incredibly valuable experience and I would encourage anyone to give it a shot if they have the chance. The connections and the impact we hope we made was well worth the effort.

Not only were MGCSA Superintendents and assistants along repre-

senting the state, but also a couple locals guys from TORO's corporate office in Bloomington and Judd Duininck from Duininck Construction as well.

Duininck Golf was honored to be able to support the on-going efforts of We Are Golf at the 2019 National Day of Golf. What stood out to me the most over the three days in Washington were as follows. First, was the organization and preparation that We Are Golf does for this event. The We Are Golf team prepared everyone attending with video and literature before the event and again at the event. Each team received a packet that explained in detail the topics to be discussed, referencing bill numbers and fellow legislators that support the bills. These packets were left with those that we meet with. The day before going to the capitol and meetings, individuals prepared all the teams on what to say, what not to say and how to say it. This helped those who may have been nervous or had not had the experience of attending a National Day of Golf event in the past.

*During our actual time spent on the hill, we met with the legislators from the state of Minnesota. It was interesting to watch their body language and piqued interest as our teams would bring up various topics. Being involved in previous years, there were topics that were not new, or topics that were at a heightened level already to the individuals we were meeting with.*

*Topics such as: WOTUS and immigration/H2B, for example, the staffers were concerned about, but it was obvious they were extremely well informed with them. Other topics, such as the PHIT Act, or removing golf courses from the “sin list,” it appeared the aids we were meeting with did not know anything about. These topics sparked their interest as they were new to them. Notes were being scribbled down on these topics so they would not forget them and bring them the attention of our Representative or Senator.*



***Left, Tom Wodash and right, Judd Duininck await their turn with Representative Collin Peterson to share the great story about Minnesota Golf.***

*A final note was that Minnesota had one of, if not the best representation of support having eight GCSAA superintendents, two manufacturer reps from Toro, and me, representing the Golf Course Builders Association of America. That was eleven of the just over 220 indi-*



*viduals from Minnesota attending under “We Are Golf”.*

*I would like to give a special thanks to the MGCSA board for the vision and support in assisting individuals from different areas of the state, enabling them to attend. For those who have not attended this event in the past, I would encourage you to consider attending in the future.*





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Being an Ambassador is a reasonable time commitment. Ambassadors should only spend only two hours a month – one hour for an educational session and one hour for another to communicate with your paired representative. Ambassadors should commit to a two-year appointment.

- **Attend half of the events and activities on the 12th Annual Ambassador Engagement Calendar**
- **Meet personally with assigned policymaker or his/her staff at least two times each year\***
- **Attend Grassroots Ambassador Bootcamp at the National Golf Industry Show (if attending and available)**

\*Options: attend an August recess town hall, have a meeting with a policymaker, attend National Golf Day and/or host a golf course site visit.





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- National Golf Day issue preparation
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- How to set up productive site visits

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# ***All In The Family On Capitol Hill Father/Daughter Observations at the We Are Golf National Golf Day Opportunity***

***By Aaron Porter CGCS and Fred Taylor CGCS***

## ***The Porter Prespective:***

*National Golf Day 2019 celebrated its 12th year in Washington D.C. on May 1st. I had the opportunity to participate as a first time attendee following four years of being a Grassroots Ambassador in North Dakota, and now Minnesota's 8th district. I was also fortunate to have my 14-year-old daughter Tinsley by my side giving her insight to the "other" side of golf. Taking in the sights of the memorials, the national mall, the Capital, and the offices of the House and Senate were all part of the entire experience.*

*Tuesday was the 3rd annual Community Service Project where over 200 individuals worked on beautification projects between the Lincoln and Washington Memorials; 17 total projects, 4 hours each, saving the U.S. National Park Service nearly 4 months of labor costs. Of*

*the 17 different projects, Tinsley and I were assigned the Lincoln Memorial Project. As you can see in the picture below, it was a pretty good gig. How many people can say they "striped the Lincoln Memorial"?*





**Below, In the midst of trying to keep a straight line I glance over and see Tinsley in front of a camera talking to a reporter about her experience and how cool it is to be here with her Dad. Pretty neat....**



*Wednesday was key legislative visit day where we asked for support in key environmental laws and regulations that promote the values of turfgrass professionals while allowing us to grow this \$84 billion golf economy. Actions needing legislative support discussed throughout the day's visits were supporting the \$3 million in the FY 2020 agriculture appropriations bill to fund the Na-*

*tional Turfgrass Research Initiative. Repealing and replacing of the 2015 WOTUS rule with one that protects water and does not hurt business, jobs, and communities. Passing H.R. 890 reducing EPA duplication or the "REDTAPE Act". Increasing H-2B visa cap numbers by allowing 30,000 additional worker visas for 2019. Finally, support legislative action removing golf and the golf busi-*



*ness from section 144 of the U.S. Tax Code where we currently are lumped with massage parlors, casinos, horse tracks, tanning facility, and others from the outdated "sin list".*

*I was assigned to Minnesota Team 2 along with Dave Kazmierczak and Eric Ritter. Our day started with the office visit of Sen. Tina Smith's staff, followed by Rep. Tom Emmers staff, Rep. Betty McCollums staff, Rep. Pete Stauber, and lastly Sen. Amy Klobuchar staff. We were welcomed with great interest in supporting issues related with our industry by all our representatives and I feel our representatives value the impact of golf in Minnesota now and more importantly our future.*

*As caretakers of our courses and landscapes, we ourselves act, implement, and invest our available resources at the thinnest of margins. Inherently we are not*



Rep. Pete Stauber took the time to speak with the 3 of us directly and it was one of my personal highlights of the event. Rep. Stauber cares about our industry and this great game we manage, and as long as he is in Washington know we have an ally in the Minnesota 8th.

*wasteful in our operations and use the best management plan without very little effort or planning every day. This is why we are, and will be looked to, in setting examples*



*for our policy makers to use legislation that doesn't penalize us, but instead help us as being the best stewards for our environment there is.*

*Don't forget, we are a \$200 billion industry that employs 1 out of every 75 jobs currently in America. We're no longer knocking at the doors, we're welcomed in and asked the hard questions that truly impact our professional lives. National Golf Day will be a memory I keep with me and share long after I'm finished with this career, and it's one if you ever get the opportunity to experience that you shouldn't pass up on. Finally, I'm thankful to the MGCSA for allowing this opportunity in representing this great state and great game. Coming from a kid that was schlepping mower blades as a kid on the lower east side of Des Moines IA to this stage was pretty cool. Best to everyone on the coming season.*

*Have a great year!!!*

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## The Taylor Tribute:

*When the call came to my office that the MGCSA was looking for a representative from the First District to go to Washington, D.C. to participate in the National Golf Day, I stumbled for a minute with my answer, finally telling the caller that I would need a day to think it over. After ruminating over the potential of being away from home and family for several days, it struck me that this could turn into a family event! My youngest daughter, Maggie, is a senior in high school who is planning on majoring in Politics in college next year. This could be an opportunity for her to experience first-hand the political process from the grass roots level, while meeting the people who help shape the laws and policies of our country. In addition, after some briefing and coaching, I thought that she could be an asset in our delegation, bringing diversity of gender and age to our group.*

*Unsure if she could participate, I called GCSAA headquarters to get an approval and even tracked down Steve Mona from We Are Golf to get*

*his opinion on a daughter's ability to attend the event. Both resources were encouraging of the idea, so I arranged travel and accommodations for the two of us. In the back of my mind, I was hoping to be able to go out to Washington a day or two early to get a chance to visit our oldest daughter who is attending the Naval Academy in Annapolis – less than an hour's drive or train ride away from DC. Unfortunately, that plan was quickly scuttled as she told us that she was going to be having surgery on her knee just two weeks before we were to arrive. In our place, my wife flew out to be with her for the operation and a few days of recovery.*

*Maggie and I left early Monday morning from MSP and flew to BWI airport to take advantage of a great price on tickets. We then took an Amtrak train from BWI to Union Station in D.C., just blocks from the Capital. At that point we Ubered to the headquarters hotel, the Sheraton Pentagon City, completing our one day version of "Planes, Trains, and Automobiles". Having never*



*been past the Pentagon, we marveled at the size of the structure, and, at the same time, were silenced by recalling the horrific incidents of September 11, 2001, when American Airlines flight 77 crashed into the building.*

*At the hotel, we were met with a smile and a handshake in the registration area where we signed our documents and picked up our initial packets and door gift. We had about two hours to take a walk through the neighborhood and get ourselves ready for the first meeting – a session detailing the community service project we were going to be involved with the following morning. At the session, we learned who our teams were and got direction on what to expect, what we were going to do and when we needed to get there.*

*Following the Service Project briefing, we were guests at a GCSAA Delegation dinner where we sat with members of the Minnesota group and heard speakers tell the good story of the upcoming events. In addition, Toro company*



*representatives honored several Superintendents with Excellence in Government Relations awards for their work in their home states. I tried to introduce Maggie to all the*





## Green Side Up!

*Minnesota contingent, hoping that she would blend in and be comfortable with the group and that the guys would accept her as one of the gang. Fortunately, everyone was graciously welcoming and warm, easing any apprehensions and worries.*

*Tuesday morning was a great day to be a part of the NGD activities! Over 200 volunteers converged on the National Mall to help with landscape maintenance. I was feeling very patriotic as we stood on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial look-*

*ing over the reflecting pool towards the Washington Monument. On these grounds, millions have demonstrated and protested. On these steps, voices of democracy have been heard. Through these reflections, our future has been forged.*

*Putting on our work gloves in unison, Maggie and I felt the moment. We realized that we were about to do something that mattered. Something that would make a difference to those that visited our nation's Capital. And we were doing it because we were part of an organization that feels the same way. As*



*we marched over to our assigned area for laying sod, our group was all smiles. Maggie had never layed sod before, so I gave her tips as we went along. "Green side up! Keep those edges tight! No overlaps!" We laughed and joked, making it a special bonding time. The feeling continued as we completed the sodding and went over to help plant a perennial bed near the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial. I dug holes while Maggie planted the Mondograss plants. "Team work!", I said out loud. "Si!", the Spanish minor-to-be replied with a smile!*

*After a fulfilling morning of labor, we were treated to a keynote speech from Eugene Robinson, Pulitzer prize-winning columnist for the Washington Post. His talk focused on the current political state of affairs in Washington, D.C. Maggie was diligently taking notes while the inside scoop on our President and the Congress was put forth by Mr. Robinson. This was a dream come true to a U.S. Government student – hearing the background on the people and the issues of the day in Washington. Her teacher was going to get a real run down*

*when Maggie got back to her classroom in Minnesota! At a reception later that evening, we heard from a Georgia Congressman who thanked the group for bringing the good word of golf forward to Washington. In the hour or so following, we met several young legislative assistants and lobbyists who were more than willing to share their experiences with us. They commented that Washington is a place of personal relationships. When you meet someone and develop a friendship, they are likely to help you in any way they can to build your career. Networking is a daily way of life in D.C., and those who work at it and put an emphasis on relationships succeed. We also met several superintendents and industry allies from around the country, each eager to share wisdom and experiences with a high school senior. Maggie learned a lot that night!*

*Wednesday was crunch day. It was the day we were waiting for: we were in D.C. to ask our legislators to fund, back, co-sponsor, or support legislation that helps our industry thrive. Equipped with some crib notes on the issues, we were*



*off to meet our Senators and Congresspeople – or at least their legislative assistants. Our first meeting was with Senator Tina Smith’s assistant, where our entire Minnesota delegation crowded into the office to explain our cause and ask for help in three areas of environmental issues, three areas in labor and tax issues and to support, or co-sponsor the PHIT (Personal Health Investment Today) Act. These were the “Asks” that we were going to focus on at all of our meetings throughout the day.*

*Maggie and I were teamed with Joe Berggren, superintendent at the Wilds Golf Club for the day. Joe is a great guy who was very supportive of Maggie’s participation. Together, the three of us continued on to Congressman Hage-*



dorn's office, then to Congresswoman Angie Craig's office and, finally, regrouped with the rest of the Minnesota folks at Senator Klobuchar's office. Our meeting with Congressman Hagedorn's two assistants went particularly well. We connected right away when it was discovered that one of the assistants grew up near Mankato and had cousins who attended Maggie's high school, and the other assistant worked on the crew at North Oaks a few years back under the leadership of Jack Mackenzie! Our discussions veered off course a few times, but we did find our way back to the reason for our visit: the "Asks". Joe covered three points, I covered three others, and, as the three of us had earlier decided, Maggie discussed the PHIT Act. This was the time and place where I was the most proud of my daughter. She was as well versed on the topic as either Joe or I was, and she made a convincing plea for the congressman to support the legislation.

In the days following our visit to D.C., Maggie and I recalled specific moments and events from our experience that we agree were spe-

cial to both of us. Simple things like ordering lunch, or conversations with our superintendent friends about common frustrations in our business, as well as philosophical questions regarding political ideologies and presidential hopefuls are all memories that we can share for forever. Our experience attending National Golf Day was truly a trip of a lifetime!





# The Appreciation

## Theodore Wirth Golf Club

### Thank you Host Chris Aumock



***Thank You MGCSA Supporters***



# ***Seasonal Staffing Stories***

## ***An Anonymous Reader's Reflection on Employees***

### ***"Game Time"***

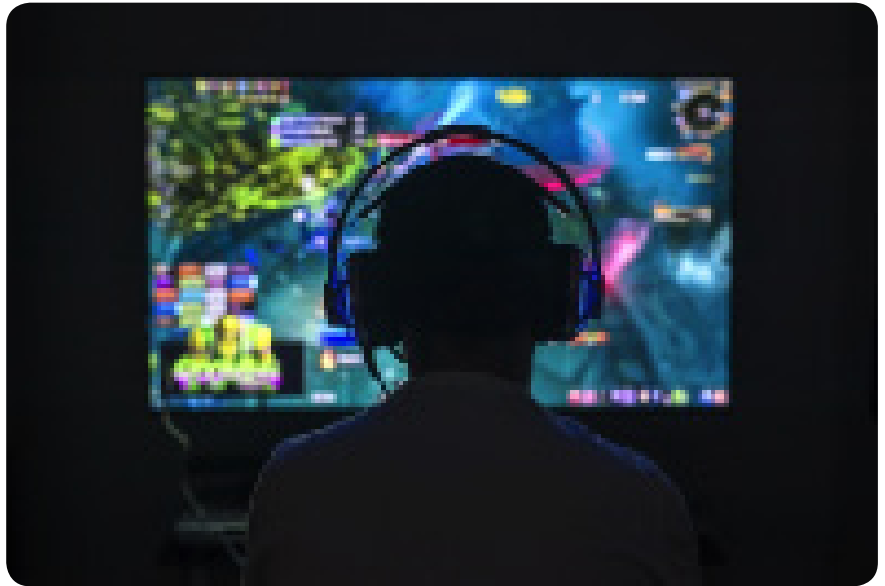
A few years ago I encountered something new with a seasonal employee named Harry. A few weeks into the season I started to get reports that Harry was taking naps in the middle of our morning routine. I had not witnessed any of these naps, but the reports kept coming in. So, I started to observe Harry from afar. Sure enough, Harry had found a favorite spot to take a nap in a spot between the 9th green and 10 tees . I pulled Harry aside one day and asked him what was going on. He was actually pretty honest with me. He said that he was a big "gamer" and would get sucked into playing video games each night until 2 or 3 am so I need to take a few naps because I'm not getting enough at night.

My first instinct was to say that if I catch you taking a nap again, you're done. I tried a different approach though. I told him he could come in later (7am) during the rest of the summer. However, his job would be to pick up trash and fill divots on tees. He agreed to the same mundane job every single day. It actually worked out great. I was getting a job that needed to be done every day and he was getting a little more sleep at night. Win, win. I still think that he could have taken the naps in his creepy, white, windowless conversion van.



## “Turtle Time”

Like many years, I hired a seasonal employee that was clearly not going to work for NASA, but he showed up every day and worked hard. One morning, “Doug” came into the shop and quickly asked for a bandage. I didn’t think much of it, really didn’t look at him and just told



him where to get the bandage. Throughout the day I began to notice that Doug was avoiding me, but I was caught up in a big irrigation leak and so did not pay much attention to him. It was quitting time and when Doug was leaving the shop he quickly walked past me with a hand strategically placed over his face.

The assistant and equipment manager were laughing uncontrollably, as I asked them what was going on. Doug thought it would be a good funny to pick up a giant snapping turtle by the front legs. By looking at the turtle, Doug assumed that the turtle’s neck was only 2 inches long and he would be safe. As many of us know, and Doug soon found out, the turtle lurched forward and took a chunk out of Doug’s cheek leaving an “L” shaped gash across it. It’s safe to say that Doug did not go near any of the snapping turtles the rest of the summer.





**If you have an inspirational, humorous or instructional column you would like to share with the MGCSA membership, please forward it to either Matt Cavanaugh or Liza Chmielewski, editors of the Hole Notes publication for consideration.**

The background of the advertisement is a photograph of a golf course with green grass, sand traps, and trees. Overlaid on the image is the Hartman logo, which features a stylized green tree and the word "HARTMAN" in large, serif, white capital letters with a purple outline. Below the name, it says "Golf Course Construction & Renovation" in a smaller, white, sans-serif font. A purple swoosh underline is beneath the company name. In the top right corner, the text "Quality since 1971..." is written in a red, cursive font. At the bottom left, the text "Specializing in..." is written in a purple, cursive font. Below this, a list of services is provided in a yellow, sans-serif font: "Bunkers • Tees • Laser Leveling • Green Drainage • Irrigation • Design • Pump Station Upgrades". At the bottom left, the company's address and phone number are listed in a white, sans-serif font: "8099 Bavaria Rd.", "Victoria, MN 55386", and "952.443.2990". At the bottom right, the company's email and website are listed in a white, sans-serif font: "info@hartmancompanies.com" and "www.hartmancompanies.com".

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# maggie reiter uc extension

interviewed by matt cavanaugh

*adjective:*

**insensitive to criticism or insults.**

“you have to be thick-skinned to work in the turf industry”

synonyms: **insensitive, unfeeling, tough, hardened, callous.**

My wife recently asked me if I could teach my two boys not to drop their pants all the way to the ground when going number one. Clearly as a child you have no shame or embarrassment and also don't understand the issue with macro and micro droplet overspray falling onto the same floor you





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just carelessly dropped your pants on to. With my hands off approach, I always just thought they would eventually learn there is a better way of doing it.

My sons certainly don't know any different and I swear I have not been leading by example but, I must admit, it certainly seems to work for them especially always wearing some type of sweat pants or shorts. However, maybe they are on the side of, "We've always done it this way". Have you ever used the phrase? It can certainly be easier to use that type of thinking. If my boys thought of a different way of going number one, just imagine the changes. Buttons, zippers, belts and tucked in shirts will all clash with the drop and go method. However, if my boys take this line of thinking it is very likely they will be living at home forever because the fact remains, we don't know what we don't know and you may need to be thick-skinned to hear it.

### **The one simple thick-skinned question:**

Maggie, you visit with and have many conversations with golf course superintendents and assistants. Based on the current facts, research and knowledge, what is one thing you see that we as turfgrass managers could change to help improve turfgrass decisions?

**Maggie:** *Select and incorporate new turfgrass cultivars that are better adapted to biotic and abiotic stresses, and will require less overall inputs to maintain. Extraordinary amounts of resources are put into breeding bentgrasses that are disease resistant, tall fescues for lower mowing heights and perennial ryegrasses that are cold tolerant. We should really take advantage of this and put more thought into purchasing seed, especially when designing climate-resilient golf courses for the future.*





*I regularly walk into maintenance buildings and see a bag of ‘Pennncross’ creeping bentgrass sitting around (previously in Minnesota and now in California). ‘Pennncross’ was released in 1954! When I mention it to the superintendents, I get a lot of “I used this at my last course” or “My friend/neighbor superintendent has this”. Granted, there may be a place for deliberately using older varieties, like ‘Pennncross’, to maintain a historical sward or monitor as indicator plots for dollar spot pressure.*

**thick-skinned:** What if someone’s response to always purchasing Pennncross is, “Well, I don’t want to put down an improved cultivar on my tees, greens, fairways... because it may look different than Pennncross”. You mentioned this, but should this be a concern?

**Maggie:** *“Sure, the introduced cultivar might stand out. It could stand out less if you overseed uniformly (like broadcast across aerification holes) rather than concentrated overseeding/sodding to repair bare patches. Still, the newer bentgrass won’t stand out as much as Poa annua. And it won’t die like Poa.”*

*“One consideration is the management implications. Pennncross is less dense and less of a thatch producer. Modern bentgrass cultivars, often described as “ultra” type, are very dense. So, if you’re used to managing Pennncross and you don’t adjust cultivation, N, or topdressing, you could build up thatch on the newer cultivars. To help blend the old and the new, start overseeding with improved, higher-density bents, but don’t go for the newest bents from the most dense “ultra” generation. Overseeded areas will start small and spread over several years. Overall, I recommend newer, improved cultivars, even if you have predominately Pennncross.”*

**thick-skinned:** What is the best way to differentiate between “creative marketing” and actual superior qualities in new grasses?

**Maggie:** *“Data-based decision making. A great starting point is to review data from NTEP variety trials in your region. Additionally, consult with UMN extension. Beyond that, reach out to USGA agronomists, seed company reps, your superintendent colleagues and allied industry. If you have the time and resources, on-course test plots are useful for evaluating cultivar options in your micro climate.”*

**thick-skinned:** What are your thoughts on this...There are certainly issues with cold tolerance and perennial ryegrass in Minnesota. There have been improvements through the University of MN breeding program with the release of Arctic Green. However, even with these improvements, I think that perennial ryegrass in seed mixes is over used. Its germination is just too fast when used in a mix with Kentucky bluegrass (crowds out the KBG) and fine fescue and tall fescue germinate quick enough to not need it in the mix at all for a cover crop. Your thoughts?



**Maggie:** *“Maybe overused in the upper Midwest, but I think that’s driven by consumer demands—both economics and establishment. I mean, the lawn care consumer is much more than golf. Ryegrass seed is cheap, compared to tall and fine fescue, and turfgrass marketing research shows people rate seed price as a priority. I don’t think the fescues germinate quickly enough to satisfy a casual seed buyer, and even once germinated, they’re still relatively slow to establish. For golf, perennial ryegrass can have a place somewhere like the driving range tee, where fescues would probably*



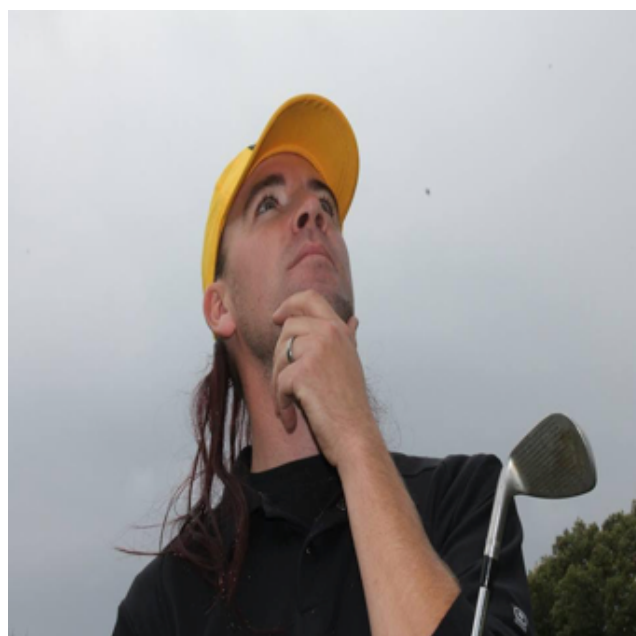
*be too slow to repair divots in that high-traffic area.”*

**thick-skinned:** I find it funny that people care so much about the price of seed. It’s so much more of a technology (breeding) than people realize. Buying the cheap seed is comparable to buying a flip phone and expecting to still use all the apps you want to use.

**thick-skinned:** Change is definitely hard. However, I think people often resist finding new ways to do things not because of change, but because they may have to admit that what they had been doing may not have been the best decision or worse yet, wrong. I’m sure my boys will realize one day that “what they have always done” was likely not the best way to approach going to the bathroom. I just hope they don’t find out at some sporting event trough.



Maggie Reiter is an Area Environmental Horticulture Advisor with the University of California Cooperative Extension. Maggie can be reached at [mkreiter@ucanr.edu](mailto:mkreiter@ucanr.edu) or @maggie\_reiter on Twitter.



Matt Cavanaugh is an Assistant Superintendent at Rush Creek Golf Club in Maple Grove, MN

# Three Things That Impact Wetting Agent Performance

## 1. Product Rate:

a. Many wetting agents have large rate ranges. Cooler weather (below 70 degrees) will extend the longevity of the product. This may result in decreasing the rate needed during cooler weather. Warmer weather (above 85 degrees) will reduce the longevity of the product. This may result in the need for higher application rates. Microbial activity is a big driver in wetting agent longevity. When temperatures rise, so does microbial activity.



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**2. Product Carrier Volume:**

a. 2 gal per 1000 is optimum. The acceptable range is 1-4 gal per 1000.

**3. Post Application Management:**

a. Irrigating in the product immediately is ideal to get maximum performance.

b. Ideally irrigate the product to a 2-3 inch depth in the soil with initial watering.

c. Never do a light watering to move product off the leaf surface in the morning and then a heavy watering at night. This will result in product getting locked up in the upper soil profile.



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# In Bounds

by Jack MacKenzie, CGCS

During recent years, my alternative professional capacity in the turf industry has afforded me many opportunities that were unavailable while I was a superintendent. Flip-flopped, my busy season from September through early May has provided time for me to develop new passions which include adventure canoe camping. Exploration into the wilderness has, in turn, exposed me to both the very, very beautiful and conversely, the very, very ugly our world has to offer to those with eyes wide open.

So why the sudden concern? Well, I wouldn't say "sudden", but it could be said I feel the exacerbated environmental situations are becoming much more personal and, in turn, disconcerting.

Lets do some math. Born in 1960, I expect to live until the age of 90 or until 2050. It is hoped that my health, both mental and physical,

will be solid and I will be able to maintain my current lifestyle until the year 2035, age 75. 2035 minus 2019 equals 16.

16 years isn't a very long time unless you are waiting to get your driver's license.

Selfishly, and optimistically I wish for a magical time as I wind down, become less active and unable to "get about" as I do today. It is all about me and to say otherwise would be untruthful. Unfortunately, humanity is going to have a greater impact sooner, rather than later, upon my ability to enjoy my swan song years.

In Minnesota we are amazingly fortunate to have some of the planet's cleanest water stored in surface





reservoirs, lakes and underground aquifers. Sadly, and almost incredibly, the residents who live in the land of 10,000 lakes waste this valuable resource. Typically our water use is once and done. On average, everyday, 365 days each year, each of us generates about 20 gallons of waste water or roughly 567,575 gallons in a lifetime. This number does not include bathing, which uses over 700,000 gallons per resident per lifetime. These figures are from Factspy and are generated from the National Geographic program about the Human Footprint.

Back in the day, 1970, the first Earth Day, the talk of the town was, "If its brown, flush it down. If it is yellow, let it mellow". A real simple step toward saving water.

Global Warming, Climate Change, atmospheric carbon dioxide accumulation and correlation with human activities cannot be dismissed. Oh, I suppose that they can, but selfish me, a converted believer, has personally experienced

a few effects associated with this eminent catastrophe.

Weather events have changed over my lifetime. Earlier average course openings take place. 100 year storms, for that matter, 500 year storms have occurred in my life time, distressingly, more than once. And even odder, at my bird feeder I am seeing migratory birds blow through Forest Lake

The watershed I frequent in the Arctic circle really is losing the permafrost. Last summer, more than a half dozen lakes, each lined with permafrost basins, blew out washing huge lodes of sediment into the Noatak River Watershed. The permafrost that had retained the seasonally open lakes had finally melted to the point that these aged bodies of water blew their banks. This impacted the fisheries and also potential landing spots for float planes, an important tool for far north travel. And please don't get me going on the human contribution to the decimation of the



caribou herds as this is a long discussion and worthy of many conversations..

My oh my do we dirty up our world. Beyond air pollution, which we have actually done a good job curbing in the US (does anyone remember smog alerts?), the accumulation of trash, especially non-biodegradable material, is socially irresponsible. Our vacant lots, both rural and urban, roadsides, park lands and private properties, are showing accumulation of debris in amounts that I had, until recently, only associated with third world nations.

However, we have it good, as at the very least, we have infrastructure in place to get rid of our waste. In the above mentioned countries their trash is growing at an alarming rate. In days of old, our cast off trash, mostly organic, down over time. Now, with all the plastic we generate, combined with luxurious consumption, we are building vast areas of plastic deserts.





On a recent trip I experienced the “sharing” of ‘first world’ trash through the action of the ocean currents, to our less fortunate world inhabitants. I couldn’t imagine living amongst the windrows of plastic bottles, clothing, shoes, and consumer goods that simply wash up upon the shoreline with the tide.

The burning of fossil fuels, not really fossilized dinosaurs but ancient algae deposits, is having an impact on the world as we know it. Everything we do as a species seems to me to be adding up to a carbon crisis. We live longer, we consume more, we eat (too) well, we sprawl, we waste, we grow mono-crop systems, we move about the world seeking commerce, we bring world wide products to our door steps, we travel for pleasure....

Hmmm, I travel for pleasure. But remember, I am a selfish individual and acknowledge it. I burn many carbon units looking for unexplored wilderness. I leave behind traces of my visits. I use plastic to

package my gear. I live to live.

But I (we) can do better. I can change to using energy efficient light bulbs, shower heads, toilet valves and windows should they need replacing. I can recycle. I can demand reduced consumer packaging. I can support renewable energy sources. I can purchase a fuel efficient car, control my thermostat to be cooler in the winter and warmer in the summer.

Advocacy for social change will be on my mind. Also, water conservation as easy as turning off the tap when I brush my teeth and energy savings with the flip of a switch.

Yes, I will be active for another decade and a half. Yes, I will live well and use resources. However, I will pledge to do a better job so that not only will my last days be memorable, I will be leaving the legacy of a better place for my kids and grand kids to live.