To faithful old friends—
to cherished new friends—
to those whose friendship
we hope to earn—

it is a pleasure to extend best wishes
of the season... may your new year
be one of happiness and prosperity...

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Happy New Year!! I hope that everyone had a happy holiday season. I would like to thank all of you for allowing me to serve as your president. I look forward to the opportunity to have an influence on the association. There are many irons in the fire from the last Board and I am hopeful we will be able to bring some of these items to fruition. I would like to thank the outgoing president Tom Fischer, CGCS, for his service and leadership this past year and hope to follow his example of presidential leadership.

The Annual Conference was a success. There were many great speakers with loads of information to share. I hope everyone was able to take advantage of all of the opportunities to increase your knowledge. Remember that knowledge is power. The preliminary numbers for the conference indicate that attendance is a little above last year, and that the MGCSA continues to have the majority of the attendees.

The new Board was elected at the Annual Meeting. Four new members were elected who have never served before, maybe a shot in the arm for the Board. New ideas about where we should be headed are always welcome and a new perspective on old ideas sometimes leads to great successes. I look forward to working with the new Board for the betterment and growth of the association. My hope is to keep the membership informed on all of the issues facing our group in the most timely manner possible.

On that note I would like to remind everyone that our web site, MGCSA.ORG is now up and running. It will provide the most up-to-date information about the association, Board Meeting highlights, and other job postings the minute we receive them, committee members phone numbers and hundreds of links to other sites. Check it out at least once a month for the latest.

Steve Shumansky and I will be attending an affiliated chapter conference January 12-15 at the Lawrence headquarters building. The MGCSA is one of only 20 chapters invited to attend this conference. We will be discussing how the GCSAA can help us and what resources they have in place that we can take advantage of. Our hope is that we will discover some new ways to do things and increase the value of the association to you the members.

Please remember that the Board of Directors is always here to serve you. If you don’t know whom to call, call the association office and Scott will point you in the right direction. If you need to contact me, you can call me anytime at (612) 440-6494 or send me e-mail at epeckholm@msn.com. I look at my mail everyday that I am in town and can access it from home or work so you can be sure that I will read it and respond to you promptly.

Have a great New Year and I hope that all your systems were Y2K compliant.

Respectfully,
Paul Eckholm, CGCS
President
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By Steve Shumansky

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DEC.-JANUARY 2000
The First Tee was formed by the World Golf Foundation in the fall of 1997. In its first two years it has made great strides in accomplishing its objectives to support the development of 100 new, affordable and accessible golf facilities with a primary emphasis on serving youth up to age 18. The First Tee is managed by an oversight committee including representatives from the PGA Tour, the LPGA, the PGA, Augusta National and the USGA and has a talented marketing and program staff stationed in Pontre Vedra, Florida. Among the many supporting organizations is the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, which has actively come forward and committed its expertise to The First Tee facilities and programs. The Golf Course Superintendents Association is an important part of The First Tee. Nationally, the GCSAA has committed its membership to the following:

- Donation of quality used golf course equipment
- On-going maintenance and initial grow-in support and counsel
- Creation of environmentally friendly education programs
- Provision of a Best Practices Golf Course Maintenance and Operations Manual to all First Tee Sites

Many other vendors and associations are providing discounted and complimentary services to The First Tee chapters in order to keep the construction and operating costs down so that savings can be passed on to create the affordable golf to encourage youth participation.

The Minnesota Amateur Sports Commission has worked to secure some state funding to provide grants for some of the Minnesota projects and is currently seeking additional funding from the legislature to provide grants to other amateur sports projects, including golf facilities not funded in the initial allocation.

A number of communities in Minnesota have been working with The First Tee to set up chapters within their communities. The following is a listing and description of Minnesota projects that are currently in the development or planning stages:

**The National Youth Sports Center in Blaine**

The National Youth Golf Center (NYGC) will be Minnesota’s flagship junior golf facility. The facility will include an 18-hole bent grass green putting course opening in the spring of 2000, an 18-hole events course able to host major junior golf events, a 3-hole learning center with practice range and chip and putt area, and a 9-hole course. All components of the golf facility, with the exception of the 9-hole course, will open in the year 2002. The Minnesota Amateur Sports Commission has received funding for the project from the State of Minnesota. The First Tee and other contributions. Project contacts are Paul Erickson, Executive Director of the Minnesota Amateur Sports Commission, or Neil Ladd, Golf Programs Administrator at (612) 785-5643.

**Hennepin Parks - Eagle Lake Regional Park Golf Center**

Hennepin Parks is building a 9-hole executive course, 9-hole lighted pitch and putt course, lighted driving range and practice area. This facility is to be located in Plymouth, Minn., at the intersection of Bass Lake Road (County Rd. 10) and Zachary Lane. The golf course was designed by PGA Tour Design Services. The project will go out to bid in January and commence construction in the spring of 2000. Project contact person is Keith Greeninger, Hennepin Parks Golf Course Superintendent at (612) 473-3369 or Margie Ostlund, Director of Enterprise Operations (612) 559-6746.

**City of Hibbing**

The City of Hibbing is planning to build a 30-hole golf complex on a 1200-acre site in northern Minnesota. The First Tee component will be a 9-hole short course as well as different practice facilities. The city has selected an architect and hopes to start construction in the spring of 2000. Project contact person is Dale Gaasland, Hibbing Parks and Recreation Department, at (218) 263-8851.

**City of Rochester**

Hawthorne Hills Golf Learning Center

The City of Rochester has built a large-scale driving range, 1,400-sq. ft. practice green, 3-hole learning center and renovated an old schoolhouse that will serve as the clubhouse. The projected opening is in the summer of 2000. Project contact person is Tim Higgins, Rochester Parks and Recreation Department at (507) 281-8851.

**Ramsey County**

Productive Day/First Tee Golf Facility

Ramsey County is looking to build an expanded learning center with pitch and putt areas, driving range, 3-hole learning center and regulation 9-hole course to accommodate youth of all ages. The county will build the facility on 80 acres currently owned by the Ramsey County Golf Facility.
Be Thankful
Spend Time with Family
Celebrate the Season

May the happiness and good cheer of the Holiday Season be yours throughout the New Year.

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Aerification Produces Healthier Golf Courses
Golfers Grumble...But Advise Them of Long-Term Benefits

BY JAMES STAMMER
Sports Columnist, Port St. Lucie News

(Ed. Note: Following is a column written by James Stam-
mer, a sports columnist for the Port St. Lucie News in Flori-
da. It is reprinted by permission from the Stuart News/Port
St. Lucie (Fla.) News.)

* * * * *

The time has arrived.

The moment when golfers across our area cause the ears
of every greenkeeper and superintendent in town to burn
with a fiery glow. Within the next several weeks every
course in the area will undergo aerification as courses ready
themselves for the busy winter season.

Nearly every golfer, myself included, despises this prac-
tice. It always seems that just when the course is at its best,
that is the time for major work to be done. We all hate
putting on aerified greens and blame the little holes for
every missed putt.

When you look at the long-term benefits, however, it's
easy to understand why aerification is a necessary long-
term evil. Just as any good car owner would change the
oil in his or her car to prevent future problems, the golf
course superintendent uses aerification as a form of main-
tenance.

Aerification is an integral part of a successful golf course
management plan. The job of every superintendent not only
is to make the course look fabulous today, but also tomor-
row and down the road.

It's important for everyone to understand how important
aerification is to producing healthy turf and a healthy golf
course in the future. Aerification achieves three major ob-
jectives:

• First, it relieves soil compaction.
• Second, it provides a method for improving soil mix-
ture around the highest part of the grass root system.
• Finally, it reduces or prevents the build-up of thatch.

When golfers by the thousand walk on the greens and
drive carts on the fairways, the traffic causes the soil near
the surface to compact into a hard layer. Over time, the soil
becomes so tightly compacted that water and air have a
difficult time penetrating the surface to reach the root sys-
tem of the grass.

Once this begins to occur, the roots decline, the turf be-
comes weak and disease and other problems begin to ap-
pear. Aerification pulls plugs from the compacted soil,
allowing an infusion of life-sustaining water and air to
reach the roots and bring about a resurgence of growth.

On the greens, the holes are filled with a sandy topdressing
that drains well and resists compaction. By introduc-
ing this sandy topdressing periodically, a superintendent
improves the green's top layer and helps avoid the expense
of rebuilding or renovating the green.

The growth of turf adds to the protective layer of organic
material on the surface. This layer, called thatch, is an ac-
cumulation of dead grass, leaves, stems and roots. A strong
and healthy thatch layer helps the turf recover faster from
divots and cart tracks, and it helps prevent the intrusion
of insects and disease.

The newest aerification machines use smaller tongs to
pull plugs from the greens. These smaller holes help the
green to heal faster and allow the superintendent to get
a better dispersion of top dressing.

So before you trash your superintendent the next time
you see him gassing up the aerification machines, remem-
ber that he is only trying to give you the best golf course,
now and in the future.
Thank You 1999 Golf Course Projects

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NEW PRAGUE G.C.  BUFFALO RUN G.C.  CLAM RIVER G.C.
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LEAD C.C.  MADISON C.C.  WESTFIELD DEVELOPMENT
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SUGAR CREEK G.C.  DEER RUN G.C.
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ST. FRANCIS, MN  HUDSON, WI  NORTH BRANCH, MN
COTTONWOOD, MN  FOREST LAKE, MN  SIREN, WI
CLOQUET, MN  CANNON FALLS, MN  JORDAN, MN
FIFTY LAKES, MN  FORT RIPLEY, MN  CHASKA, MN
NEW PRAGUE, MN  BUFFALO, MN  SHELL LAKE, WI
NORTHFIELD, MN  MINNETA, MN  ROBERTS, WI
MOUND, MN  SIOUX FALLS, SD  BROOKINGS, SD
ARLINGTON, SD  FORT PIERRE, SD  LEAD, SD
MADISON, SD  O'KALOOSA, IA  NORWALK, IA
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E. Paul Eckholm, CGCS, Elected New President of the MGCSA

E. Paul Eckholm, CGCS, golf course superintendent at Heritage Links Golf Club in Lakeville, Minn., is the new president of the Minnesota Golf Course Superintendents' Association.

Eckholm, who was vice-president last year, was elected at the association's 72nd business meeting December 9th in Minneapolis. He succeeds Thomas Fischer, CGCS, Edinburgh USA, Brooklyn Park, who remains on the Board as an ex-officio member.

Other officers elected were:
- Michael Brower, Hillcrest Country Club, St. Paul, remains as secretary.

New directors elected were:
- James Bade, Somerset Country Club, Mendota Heights;
- Michael Brual, Faribault Golf & Country Club, Faribault;
- Kerry Glader, Plaisted Companies, Elk River;

Remaining on the Board are Thomas Meier, Worthington Country Club, Worthington; John Queensland, Cedar River Country Club, Adams; Steve Shumansky, Perham Lakeside Country Club, Perham and Bob Simondet, Lesco, Silver Lake.

James Bade was named chair of the MGCSA's Conference and Education Committee and Shumansky was re-appointed as editor of Hole Notes, the association's member magazine.

Eckholm will handle association liaison duties. Jerry Murphy, CGCS will be the MGCSA's Voting Delegate. Keith Scott, CGCS, will be the alternate.

Other committee chairpersons named were;
- Thomas Meier, Arrangements; Richard Traver, Jr., CGCS, Bylaws/Historical and Membership; Jeff Johnson, Environmental; Michael Brual, Human Resources; Bob Simondet, Industrial Relations; Michael Brower, MTGF; Steve Shumansky, Public Relations; Richard Fredericksen, CGCS, Research, and John Queensland, Scholarship.

Twelve members also were honored with Service Plaques at the MGCSA's Business Meeting. They were:
- Thomas Stelter, Highland 9-hole Golf Course; Larry

(Continued on Page 24)
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