

## EDITORIAL

An old dear friend of mine is very sick. His name is **Walter Pieper**. His friends call him Wally. Some of you older superintendents have known Wally longer than I have. But, I think not many of the younger guys ... except for Dudley, Bruce, Ted, and brother Peter ... ever really got to know this wonderful, quiet man who ran Flossmoor C.C. for almost fifty years before major surgery and continuing illness forced his retirement from the greenkeeping profession and his beloved Flossmoor C.C.

Walter Pieper was born on March 31, 1911 in Matteson, IL and has lived there all his life with his wife Marcia. He began his career at Olympia Fields C.C. (when it had 4 courses) under the legendary superintendent Fred Kreuger. From there he went on to help build Willow Springs Golf Course and then worked with his father, Harry Pieper, who was superintendent at Cherry Hills C.C., and where his son Dale, is now head superintendent. In 1927 Walter started at Flossmoor C.C. under Fred Nuessle and worked there for 49 years.

I met Wally about twenty-four years ago when I got my first job as head supt. at Calumet C.C. I was a young whippersnapper, and back in those days I knew everything there was to know about growing grass. During July and August, when Mother Nature showed me otherwise, I had an emergency "hot line" to Wally's office. He was always there to hear my problems and always available to come over to help me solve them with his sage advice and friendship. Even now I feel his strong hand on my shoulder telling me everything will be alright and then advising me gently what I could do to remedy the condition of my declining turf. I don't know of any teacher who had more patience than Wally.

Wally's golf course was always in superb condition and I must tell you about my first visit to Flossmoor, just a few miles away from my club, during the hot stress month of late July. I couldn't believe what I saw. It was like I was transported into another country ... a paradise, where everything was beautiful, green, and serene. And I felt that way, Wally, everytime I went to your magnificently groomed course. Once in a Matteson bar I almost believed Dudley Smith when he told me: "Wally has a magic wand". But we all knew it was your hard work, your remarkable turf knowledge, and your great dedication that made Flossmoor the outstanding course in the area. You never wrote articles, or books, or made proclamations at our meetings. You never made speeches or told people how to vote, or what our faults were. You just grew grass better than anybody I have ever met, and tried to teach a couple of Canadian prairie boys how to work with nature, with our fellow human beings, and with the people we work for. For that, my dear old friend, you will always have our gratitude. Thank You Wally.

Paul N. Voykin

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Sometimes a solution to a problem that has seemed almost impossible to solve appears almost by magic after you put it out of your mind for a month or so. A kind of "not being able to see the forest for the trees". It was sometime after the annual meeting and I was recalling all that had happened when it occurred to me that of the 42 present, 13 were either on the Board or running for it, 15 were interested members and 14 were past presidents of the Association. The 14 past presidents represented 70% of Association presidents for the last 20 years. It followed then that if we had an election every 6 months, there would be a tremendous increase in the attendance at our monthly meetings. Better yet, let's have an election every month and in 15 years we will have a total of 180 past presidents and should have at least 125 at every meeting. Simple enough!!

I can think of about 4 legitimate reasons for missing a meeting:

1. It is Yom Kipper and you are required to attend services at your Synagogue.
  2. You are a member of the town council and there is a meeting at the time of the M.A.G.C.S.
  3. Your son or daughter is starring in the school play on the evening of the meeting.
  4. You have just been married and your bride insists you accompany her on her honeymoon.
  5. You had to sit up all night with a sick pump.
- God, country, family and job. Who can find fault with these excuses?

Excuses that are not acceptable are:

1. The meeting was on the other side of town.
2. It fell on my bowling night.
3. I didn't have any one to ride with me.

And the grand daddy of them all -- I must have heard at least a hundred times in the last five years -- "I don't like the way the Association is doing things and I don't want any part of it."

Alright, let's assume for a moment that is correct, but let's make it a green that's sick and starting to deteriorate. I am sure that the first thing you would do every morning, and the last thing you would do before leaving in the evening would be to check on that green. Your mind would be occupied with diagnosing the problem, considering the alternatives for correcting the problem and then implement a plan to get the green back in shape.

Why should it be different with your Association? The people who run it are human and as such may see things differently than you do, but you can rest assured that their goals are the same as yours. The best way to have things done your way is to get involved and at least have a voice in the way things are done. If you were in attendance at the annual meeting you would have seen what one person can do when Walter Fuchs Sr., overcame his inherent shyness and softly spoke against the Amendment that would have changed the name of the Association.

So get off your "deceased donkey" and get to the meetings. Every game of golf will not be played at Medinah #3. Every meal will not be a feast fit for the gods and everyone you encounter will not be your first choice for a brother-in-law, but you will meet some people who are very much involved in the same problems as you are and are very willing to share their experiences with you.

Robert Breen