

## 1989 Board of Directors

President	Bruce Williams (Roxane) Bob O'Link G.C.	Home: 680-1074 Office: 432-0088
Vice-Pres.	Ray Schmitz (Jan) Flossmoor C.C.	Home: 815-469-2773 Office: 798-2498
Sect'y.-Treas.	Timothy Kelly (Linda) Vill. Links of Glen Ellyn	Home: 858-8174 Office: 469-2077
Exec. Sec.	Penny Meyer (Dave) MAGCS (Mailing Address) P. O. Box 248, Eola, IL 60519	Office: 820-8181
Board	Michael Bavier Inverness G.C.	Home: 382-7654 Office: 358-7030
	Ed Braunsky (Sue) Geneva Golf Club	Home: 879-8536 Office: 232-0627
	Donald Cross (Cindy) Skokie C.C.	Home: 965-3435 Office: 835-4296
	Alan Fierst Oak Park C.C.	Home: 456-7815 Office: 453-7525
	Joel Purpur (Debbie) River Forest C.C.	Home: 832-6763 Office: 941-1651
	Kerry Blatteau Woodmar C.C.	Home: (219) 924-6597 Office: (219) 844-0330
Pres. Emeritus	Dave Meyer (Penny) Prestbury G.C.	Home: 820-1040 Office: 466-4177
	<b>Official Photographer</b> Raymond Schmitz	
Dr. Randy T. Kane, Turfgrass Advisor	University of Illinois & CDGA	(708) 954-2753

## ECKHOFF AWARD

For Excellence In Golf Journalism



We are not copyrighted and would like to share our articles with any who would like to use them, but please give the author and "The Bull Sheet" credit.

### Editor —

**Fred D. Opperman, CGCS**  
810 Greenwood Avenue  
Carpentersville, IL 60110  
Phone (708) 428-5009

Fax (708) 669-1013

**Bull Sheet** printed by Ever-Redi Printing, 5100 East Ave., Countryside, IL 60525.

The **Bull Sheet** is published once a month. All articles are required by the 10th of the month to make the next issue. Advertising is sold by the column inch, by the quarter page, half page, and by the full page. All artwork to be finished and in black and white. Circulation is over 600 issues per month.

## President's Message

### Words of Praise

Most golf course superintendents would fall into the category of professions that receive more criticism than praise. The burden of criticism has been on the shoulders of golf course superintendents for many generations and will probably continue in that direction. It seems as though we get it from all sides at times. It might be disgruntled employees one day and dissatisfied members or customers the next day that vent their frustration on us. It seems that all of our dealings with criticism could use some detailed understanding.

Criticism is like any other form of communication. It can be in the form of a monologue or be a part of a dialogue with two-way communication. Accepting or handing out criticism without giving or getting proper feedback is a process that will lead to frustration and low morale. The recipient of one-way criticism becomes a mere whipping post and has no control over the situation. By using dialogue to your advantage we can hopefully turn a negative confrontation into a tolerable situation and possibly a favorable outcome.

When receiving criticism on the condition of your golf course try to avoid the hidden meanings and deal with the real issues. Are your greens too slow? Maybe you should respond with the comment that good greens are consistent in speed and should putt true. A response to criticism can be beneficial in the form of education for the golfer. Now we certainly don't want to get into a war of words as these battles are never won by an employee. Some times we need to ascertain the reasons for the criticism. Did the member have a bad round that day? Isn't it funny how well the course plays when someone scores well and how poor the course is maintained when someone has a bad round. Emotion plays a large part in criticism. Don't get tangled up in an emotional duel. Use logic when handling complaints, it will also prevail over emotional issues with no foundation.

Criticism can be both positive and negative. Try to use positive criticism when dealing with your own staff. We receive enough negative criticism ourselves that it is not necessary to describe the terrible feeling derived from this type of confrontation. By using the golden rule of treating other people like you would like to be treated yourself, we can reap positive benefits from our staff and correct deficiencies without a negative attitude.

Words of praise can go a long way to develop a good working atmosphere. It is something that can become contagious. I've never met a person who is too polite, or too considerate, or too complimentary. We all know someone who shows a lack of the above. In order to create a favorable environment in the workplace I suggest you think of nice things to say that can accomplish the same task as negative criticism. Words of praise will long be remembered after threats and criticism are forgotten. By letting those around us know how much we appreciate their efforts we are acting as responsible leadership rather than insensitive employers.

I would hope that the attitudes of the golfers could learn from our actions. We'll never know until we develop a positive environment in the workplace void of negative criticism. Words of praise are like money in the bank when it comes to personnel management and productivity.

Best of luck for a successful growing season,

**Bruce R. Williams, CGCS**  
President, MAGCS