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President's Message

Bruce R. Williams, CGCS
MAGCS President

Role Models

Each of us has probably encountered at least one individual who has made a major impact on our lives. People who have influenced us in such a manner that we have chosen to pattern ourselves after these people. What we feel about these influential people is very difficult to put into words but I hope to describe some of those feelings. I want to share with you the thoughts I have about the people most responsible for shaping my personal life and professional career.

I suppose we all hope that our children will one day grow up to be the spitting image of their fathers. As a child, I felt the importance of the position my father held, and knew that he was not only the leader of our family but also that he played an important role in the golf industry. As a youth, it was hard to conceive the someone could fill both of those roles so well. During my adolescent years, I began to realize the importance of loving your work and the happiness that one could derive from their chosen profession. It certainly took a few years for me to figure out my own career path but I had a firm foundation for whatever career I would have chosen as my father had given me a strong base to develop from. He was my first role model and probably the strongest influence in my life.

During the summers of my high school years, I was fortunate to get my first taste of the golf industry and I worked as a caddy at the Onwentsia Club in Lake Forest. Hubby Habjan was the first person that I ever worked for. One couldn't have chosen a better employer to start off with. During the idle hours waiting for a caddy "loop", I learned how to help around the range house and occasionally change a grip or two on some clubs. Hubby hired me after several years of caddying and I became his shop assistant. Thanks to Hubby, I learned what work was all about at an early age. He instilled in me the proper work ethic and helped me to establish the proper attitude about working. I can assure you that I didn't fully understand all the principles of the proper work ethic at the time, but reflecting back on that period I now realize how important he was as a role model for me.

Several superintendents took me under their wing (in addition to my father) and they were excellent examples of the leaders of our industry. Frank Dobie at Sharon Golf Club and Bruce Sering at Glen View Club were both responsible for bringing me along and were an important part of the maturation process for me. I give them the credit for opening the door to this great industry for me and sharing their knowledge. They not only taught me about turf but more importantly they taught me about people and how to manage them. (cont'd. page 3)

Dr. Ken Payne served an important role in my life as well. He was my professor at Michigan State University and most importantly he was my friend. At a time in my life when I was making a career decision, "Doc" was there to give me the confidence to believe in myself. Those lessons I learned in Turfgrass 101 were inconsequential, in retrospect, to the lessons about life that "Doc" taught me.

These are the men that most influenced my life. Had it not been for them I don't think I would have enjoyed the successes that I am experiencing. They set the tone for what work is all about. They set the standards by which one should model their life. Anyone would be proud to have known or worked for just one of those mentors. I was extremely lucky to have learned from some of the best leaders in our industry. I will be forever grateful for all that they have done for me.

Although it was never said, I always felt that it was my duty to pass on that knowledge that was given to me by those special people. Sharing that knowledge has been one of the major driving forces in my life. I only hope that one day I can aspire to becoming a role model for the people that surround me. I can't think of a more pleasant thought.

Director's Column



Minor Details

by Donald A. Cross, CGCS
Skokie Country Club

There is probably little, if any, of the following that you haven't already heard, seen, or done. It concerns the topic of paying attention to minor details. This probably serves the purpose of reminding me about these things as much as it does for any of you.

Now that we are well into the normally high plant stress period the tendency to get psychologically and physically drained is heightened. We all can begin to get a little tired and occasionally lose sight of some of the things we often routinely perform, the seemingly insignificant, but extremely important, minor details.

One of the most noticeable minor details that comes to mind is with tee and green supplies. Clean ball washers with regularly replaced water and soap, and clean towels should be standard operating procedure. Daily cleaning of the putting cups and painting of aluminum or replacing plastic cups when necessary, and keeping flags and flagsticks in good condition, also go a long way toward projecting your concern for details.

How about your tee surfaces? Are broken tees and debris removed, divots replaced or removed and refilled with topdressing and seed, and divot mix buckets kept filled? Have the yardage markers and sprinkler heads been edged recently? This can apply to fairways as well and include valve boxes and drainage grates. Additional edging would obviously include bunkers and flower beds.

How about traffic control supplies? I dislike ropes and signs but at times there's no alternative. The least we can do is make sure the signs are neat, stakes are set straight and trees are not used for securing ropes. This is certainly a minor detail but you can bet players notice.

How do your trees and ornamental plant materials look? Pruning of dead, damaged, and low hanging branches and removing suckers, broken stems, spent blooms, and the all too occasional wedged-in plastic cup or crushed beer can, will show your concern for more than just turfgrass.

How does your equipment measure up? Our members, and boards spend significant sums of money on equipment and surely expect it to be maintained well and kept clean and orderly. We often have to use some rather antiquated equipment but this is no excuse not to take care of it and besides it's easier to sell them on an additional piece if they know it will be treated properly.

Finally, how do you and your employees look? Our employees appearance, as well as our own, can have a major impact on how we are perceived by the people we work for. Stand back and take a look, are their uniforms or clothes neat and clean, is their personal hygiene appropriate? Remember when you start to point your finger, stand in front of the mirror and try it first.

As I stated before, these items are not in anyway profound or untrodden but merely some thoughts to keep us focused during perhaps the most difficult time of the year. We could all add numerous items to this list.

Just some minor details, but don't forget, several minor details add up to major success.

June 10, 1991 — Golf Event Winners Naperville C.C.

Low Gross	Low Net
1st — Score 146 (+4)	1st — Score 125 (-17)
Bob Kronn	Randy Kane
Al Pondel	Jerry Cooper
Jerry Arden	Rick Wilson
Jim Nulty	Mark Johnson
2nd — Score 149 (+7)	2nd — Score 125 (-17)
Dave Bloomquist	Tom Lively
Bob Mills	Joe Reents
Joel Purpur	Bruce Williams
Tim Davis	Al Fierst
3rd — Score 150 (+8)	3rd — Score 128 (-14)
Mark Johnson	Bob Risney
Tom Robinson	Dudley Smith
Phil Taylor	Ray Schmitz
Scott Nissley	Ron Jones

Closest to Pin — Dave Louttit
Straightest Drive — Ted Mochel