

Adolph's Christmas Party — A Tradition Ends

by Pete Vandercook

It was known for years as "Adolph's Christmas Party" and in later years became known as "Adolph and Billy's Christmas Party". Everyone knows that Adolph is Adolph Bertucci, superintendent Emeritus of Lake Shore Country Club and most people know that Billy is Bill Aiston, Adolph's son-in-law and successor, who has been superintendent at Lake Shore since Adolph's retirement in 1991.

This long-time Christmas tradition (which is really a social event) draws a diverse crowd. Included are Lake Shore members, local police and fire departments (who have their police cars, fire engines and ambulances parked out front). Many judges and attorneys also attend. Local politicians and officials make their appearance, many golf course superintendents with select members of their crews attend. Most of these are Northsiders, but there is always a good representation of South and Westsiders as well. It is not unusual to see superintendents from Milwaukee, LaSalle, Streator, Peoria, Valparaiso, and other locations out of the Chicago Metropolitan area as well. Present and former Lake Shore employees comprise another group. Illinois Lawn Equipment, Inc., Arthur Clesen, Inc. and Nels J. Johnson Tree Experts, Inc. lead a group of vendors that attend and aid this endeavor. Many manufacturers are also represented.

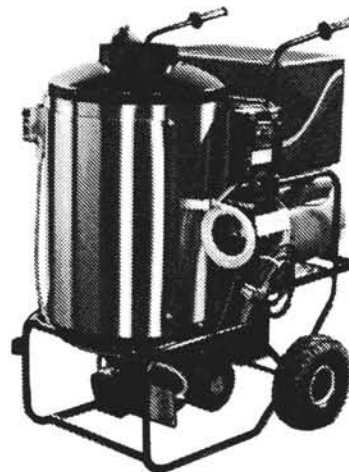
There is also a guest celebrity list which over the years has included former broadcasters Jack Brickhouse, Lou Boudreau and Vince Lloyd; former Cubs players Scott Sanderson, Jody Davis and Keith Moreland, former Bears football players Mike Pyle, Bobby Douglas, Ted Albrecht, Ronnie Bull and the late Brian Piccolo, and long-time Chicago Club clubhouse man Yosh Kawano.

For many years the party was held in the old Lake Shore equipment building. The heated portion of the building was not large. The crowd was packed in (like sardines in a can) and there was a great picture above the urinal in the men's room. With the construction of the new equipment building in the mid 1980's, the old building was torn down and the parties were moved into the new building. There was a lot more room. The floor was level and it was warmer, but the party had lost a certain part of its mystique and ambiance. The menu usually included ham and/or turkey, Adolph's special recipe Italian sausage, assorted Italian lunch meats and cheeses, smoked pheasant and fish — courtesy of Ed Smith, ravioli, polenta, various breads and a great assortment of olives, pickles, peppers and other condiments. Each year pictures were displayed and slides were shown depicting previous parties.

In the early years, the hard core card players would stay after the crowd thinned out, play cards, drink and finish off any left-over food until 10:00 or 11:00 p.m. when it was necessary for Adolph to announce that the party was over. Now, in the 1990's, much less alcohol is consumed. The designated drivers drink cola and the card games end around 6:00 p.m. The memory of the big poker games with Bill Stupple, Frank Dinelli, Joe Canale, Oliver Miles, Art Clesen, Sr., Clarence Mitchell, Amos Lapp, and Dom Grotti (all now deceased) as well as Ben Coker, Bill Kraft, John Potthoff, Sr.,

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(A Tradition Ends continued)

Les Mach, Wayne Trometer, Harry Neilson, Jr., Ben Kronn, Ed Polheber and others will remain only that — a memory.

Unfortunately, as the old saying goes, "things change" and this wonderful tradition has come to its end. There was no party in 1993 or 1994. An older Adolph felt that it was time to end this tradition. And he was probably right, but this wonderful tradition will not be easily forgotten. Adolph says that in 1999, when he has reached 80 years of age, if he is still alive and if he can still do it, he will hold the 'grand-daddy' of all Christmas parties.

TIME FOR A CHANGE Revisiting Fairway Conversion

by R. Brian Green, C.G.C.S.
Sunset Valley G.C.

For many years I stood in defense of ryegrass fairways. However, the bentgrass conversions of the 80's kept my attention. Especially when fairways better than mine, like the excellent bluegrass fairways of Jim Evans at Turnberry received their dose of Round-Up. I rationalized my need to keep seeding ryegrass into our public fairways as cost efficient and the quickest way to continuously replace turf following the constant flooding of the Skokie River. 1994 marked the year for Sunset Valleys' time for a change.

Having seen the light, I proceeded to sell the program to the public, the golf advisory board, park board and to myself.

The following are **negatives** of ryegrass fairways.

- 1) **Perennial rye and winter hardiness**, always a concern. Nothing like 50% winterkill of fairways to get a season off to a hair raising start.
- 2) **Playability and appearance**. Flyers R' Us, our logo, consistent with the rapid upright growth habit. Also difficulty mowing at times will lead to shaggy fairway lies.
- 3) **Pythium loves ryegrass!** (This speaks for itself).

The **positive** influences for making the Change.

- 1) Fairways that were inferior in appearance and playability.
- 2) Purchase of lightweight mowers.
- 3) Plant growth regulators and Poa controls.
- 4) Golfers pressure of the public layouts old and new that have bentgrass fairways. Especially thanks to Kevin C. at Sportsmans and Jerry M. at Lake Bluff.
- 5) Improved bentgrass varieties.
- 6) Bentgrass has cool diseases. I wanted to see some Brown Patch as big as my truck.

Having seen the light, I proceeded to sell the program to the public, the golf advisory board, park board and to myself. The idea was well received until I told them about roping the fairways from August 1, 1994 thru the Spring of 1995. My plan was to convert nine holes in 1994 and finish the remainder in conjunction with a major renovation in 1995. Golfers were informed of all the plans one year in advance.

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