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# Directors Column

by Kevin Czerkies

**B**y now you all should know that a dues increase was voted on and passed at the annual meeting last November. There were 33 yes votes, and 16 no votes. It's unfortunate that only 49 of the 318 voting members took the time to be at the annual meeting and vote.

The \$30 across the board increase was the first significant dues increase in quite some time., Every year the costs of running this association continue to climb.

The MAGCS Board felt that the best way to get the necessary dollars was the dues increase. We explored other means of raising additional monies, perhaps by increasing fees at our monthly meetings or charging more for "On Course" advertising. This would not be fair to the monthly meeting participants and vendors. Why should they have to absorb higher costs to support the entire association?

The Executive Committee met November 21 and formulated the 1996 MAGCS operating budget. I am happy to say that because of the dues increase we are able to provide better services and maintain a break-even budget while reducing our dependency of

dollars from *On Course* advertising. The actual income generated from *On Course* advertising is still somewhat hard to pinpoint because we don't know what percentage of the advertisers will want color ads.

I am very excited about the new look to our newsletter and I hope everyone is as proud of *On Course* as I am.

I Hope everyone enjoyed the holidays with their families, My wish from Santa this year was for 70° summer days with low humidity in 1996. I think we all deserve that after "The Summer of 1995".

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## A Letter from James M. Latham

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the courses, both have traffic wear problems. These mountaineers have some good ideas for steep slopes, using rail lifts on very steep areas and endless belt people movers on lesser slopes,

We often forget that the neighbors of these countries aren't exactly friendly. In Korea, there are big steel sawhorses and coils of steel cable back in the roughs of the longest, flattest fairways, Whenever there is an alert, they are put across the fairways to prevent small plane landings, There are also armed guards around the perimeters of airports and their backs are toward the airplanes - same thing in Tokyo, its not a comforting feeling.

Another of my activities is a steering committee to generate endowment funds to support the turfgrass teaching, research and extension facilities at Texas A & M University. Public funds for agriculture in general are shrivel-

ling and turfgrass work is seldom at or near the top of the list. It seems that we are reverting to the time of Piper, Oakley, Monteith, Grau et. ai. Turfgrass work will have to get its sources and golf is going to be the prime contributor, even though every other turfgrass user will benefit directly or indirectly. Golf is the only large, organized group with a truly vested interest in improvements.

Private funds got the turf business where it is today, especially in the education of leaders in the industry at research facilities, few of which existed before the days when Fred Grau and O. J. Noer conducted meetings with superintendents and green committee chairmen all over the country. They did more toward getting turfgrass separated from forage grasses than anyone I can think of or have read about- (That's another retirement project - writing a history of the USGA Green Section.)

Any way you cut it, get ready

for more fundraisers - real money - if you want to sustain the pace of advances in turfgrass maintenance and management techniques. Federal, State and other public agencies just ain't gonna come up with the scratch needed to provide first class turfgrass programs. The USGA is the big spender now, but some kind of permanent funding plan should be developed in every area that wants continued local progress in our field.

Sincerely,

Jim

*P.S: While attending the 30th Symposium in Milwaukee (one of the best ever), had the pleasure of experiencing the first "good" snowfall of the year, Do I regret moving back to Texas? NAW!*