

# Membership Has Its Price!

*Tod Hoppman  
Eaglebrook C.C.*

Since spring has come and gone, I wanted to write down a few inspiring words to pass on to my friends and associates. As you have probably noticed over the years, my articles have had a certain environmental twist to them. I am a strong supporter of the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program and what it has to offer to the golf course maintenance industry. With increased awareness of environmental issues, governmental regulations and under-the-microscope interrogation by outside groups, we need to be more organized than ever. We need to work together as a group—strength in numbers. If we take on the individualistic idea that we can do it ourselves, then we as individuals will surely fail.

What am I getting at? Well, it is simple. Together we stand; divided we fall. It may sound corny, but I think it fits in this situation. Over the years, I have gained many friends in this industry. I have never been turned down in the time of need with a

question or in search of an answer. Being associated with the MAGCS, I have gained so much more than I would have alone. The educational program has taught me much over the years, but I have gained even more by just talking with fellow superintendents at meetings and on the links. If it has been about the latest trend, newest product, a better way of getting the job done or just to have a shoulder to cry on, it has helped.

For a group to not only survive but to thrive needs commitment from its members. All we have gained so far would not be possible if others hadn't given of their time. As I have learned recently, membership has its price. It is not enough to just say we are members of a group. We have to do more to make the commitment real. To do things halfway is a waste of time. Do it right, or don't do it at all.

With the increased pressure from our employers, members/customers, neighbors and foes, we need our friends more than ever. As a group, be it GCSAA, MAGCS, Audubon Cooperative

Sanctuary Program, we need to make a collective commitment. Most of us are members of the first two, but there are many of us who have not made the commitment to the Audubon Program. Just by enrolling in the program and letting them know what you have to offer is worth so much. Not everyone has to become certified or to go through the whole process. Pace yourself. I know that some courses have more to offer than others. However, if we put our collective effort forward and at least become a member/supporter, we can grow as an association even further. Hopefully as our association with other groups strengthens, the pressures put upon us will lessen. That remains to be seen, but a putting-our-heads-in-the-sand mentality will not get us anywhere.

Search in your heart, and go with what you feel is right. Once you have figured your direction, make the commitment. Not only just say you are a member, but make a difference. Everyone will benefit, and we will all have something to be very proud of. You will be glad you did it! ■

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**Larry Chirico -N- Rolling Green C.C.**  
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Larry broke into the business working on the grounds crew for Wayne Otto at Ozaukee Country Club outside of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. After three years at Ozaukee, Larry moved over to Milwaukee Country Club, where he started his association with Danny. In 1989, Larry joined Dan when he moved to Medinah. In 1990, Larry graduated from the University of Massachusetts Winter Program. When Brian

Bossert moved to Bryn Mawr, Larry became the superintendent on Course 3, where he stayed until moving to Rolling Green.

Last winter, Larry represented the Midwest at the John Deere Tournament in Newport Beach, California. He played with his general manager, golf professional and club president. Larry's team did not fare very well, but he says it gave him the opportunity to strengthen his relationship with the other key members of the Rolling Green management team.

Larry and his wife Nancy reside in Roselle, and they are the proud parents of a 3-year-old son Kyle. On June 2 if Larry looks a little tired, it is probably because of the baby that the Chiricos are expecting the third week of May. Congratulations ahead of time, Larry, and don't forget the cigars. ■