



Fred Behnke

Our first Board of Directors meeting during the Bob Maibusch term happened to fall on the coldest day of the year back in January. I woke up that morning and could see my breath in my bedroom! My furnace was out, the squirrel stopped running, and my charming and understanding wife was anything but as she clearly and vehemently explained to me how urgent the reacquisition of heat was to the health of our marriage. Now, I can be pretty sharp when confronting a person with frosty eyelashes and an icy glare. I agreed to get on the job straight away. It turned out that despite the application of my charm, hammer and boot, I was unable to generate any heat other than a few choice words and was forced to call in the professionals. As a result, I missed President Bob's first meeting. However, he had already contacted me about continuing as chair of the Editorial Committee. I knew we had Fred Opperman; the committee would continue to provide grist for his mill and what could happen in January anyway?

I soon learned that my furnace adventure was going to be the high point of that particular day. President Bob called me, made sure that I was seated and informed me that Fred O. had given notice, retired,

hung it up. Before the blackness descended, I heard Bob say, as if from far, far away, "Fred, we need to look at this as an opportunity . . . Fred? . . . Fred?"

On Course has been retooled over the years, upgraded, professionalized, colorized. Circulation is nearing 1,000 and the annual budget has reached six figures. One thing has remained constant

*President Bob called
me, made sure
that I was seated
and informed me that
Fred O. had given
notice, retired,
hung it up.
Before the blackness
descended, I heard
Bob say, as if from
far, far away,
"Fred, we need
to look at this
as an opportunity . . .
Fred? . . . Fred?"*

over the past 15 years: Fred Opperman has been the editor and every issue with his name on the masthead got out on time. Advertisers could count on Fred to deliver their message. Members could count on Fred to give them something to think about in each issue. Four-color formats and glossy paper don't mean much if the product isn't there. The show must go on, and with Fred, it did. Thank you, Fred—

enjoy Montana, you've left large footprints to fill.

In his last president's message, Bob reported on the step-by-step process undertaken by the Editor Search Committee to find someone to continue crafting our award-winning magazine. Chairman Jim McNair drove us relentlessly and when the dust settled, Fred was given the ultimate compliment—two people were hired to replace him. We believe that with John Gurke, CGCS, as contributing editor of the *Bull Sheet* and Cathy Ralston as managing editor of *On Course*, we have a team that has the flair and expertise to keep *On Course*, uh well, on course. Fred has graciously agreed to act as a mentor through the transition process, and when the torch is passed I expect to keep on keepin' on.

In any event, the 1999 version of the Editorial Committee met during the NCTE at Pheasant Run. There, we discussed several new and exciting ways to enhance our publication. A proposal was put before the Board of Directors to provide a professional photographer for our monthly meeting hosts who want help procuring a cover photo for *On Course*—no more blown-up snapshots that result in fuzzy or grainy images. We will also provide meeting hosts with a framed cover of their issue as an additional thank-you. So all you supers who've been thinking about hosting a meeting, won't that framed *On Course* cover of your golf course look good on your (or your boss') wall.

The MAGCS, and I, are lucky to have an Editorial Committee chock full o' enthusiastic and active members. Everyone participates in the process of

(continued on page 28)

Midwest Association Notes

(continued from page 26)

"It is not a common practice to give extra time for overtime on Saturday afternoon or evening work. As a rule the men are glad to earn money that comes from additional time. If clubs were required to pay time-and-a-half or double time for overtime work, it is doubtful if much overtime would be put in as at the extra rate it would not be justified except in rather rare instances. On the other hand, when men are asked to come back in the evening or at times when they have to make a special trip at their own expense for a short spell of work, it seems only fair that their transportation expense should be made up in some way, such as adding enough time to cover this item. Sunday work is generally recognized as justly warranting an extra pay and this is usually accomplished by allowing a third or a half-day's time for mowing greens and general tidying up.


"While at the outside this committee had the intention of making definite recommendations on wage scale rates for the coming season, a close study of the conditions as they exist does not justify so ambitious and sweeping a standardization. It finds that clubs operate under a wide variety of conditions and in a variety of situations. Some are located in residential sections while others are isolated in farming areas, some workmen live within a block or two of the course while others have to drive many miles, some districts are affected in the wage scale by the rates paid to the organized labor trades while others are outside this influence. These and many other factors have their effect in determining the wage scale that individual clubs can offer their employees. It is not out of place to mention at this point that in general, clubs work on a definite budget, and there is so much allotted for course maintenance which can be spent in two ways—many men doing hand work fair to expert

mechanics, accomplishing the same end with power driven machinery. This brings up another vital point and that is this, that if golf labor is to be classified, we must recognize that the mechanic-greensman should not be rated with the hand mower greensman. If the golf clubs should establish wage rates for the district, consideration should be given those clubs who carry a number of men who do not run power machinery, as these men are not entitled to as high rates. Many greenkeepers like to have each man versatile in all operations, but on almost every course there are old hands who are unable to handle the newer equipment. For these a lower rate should be established by those clubs who would wish to take advantage of it."

Fortunately, the date of the last Midwest meeting coincided with Dr. Monteith's stop-over at Chicago, en route on an 18-day western trip.

In Dr. Monteith's talk at the meeting, he touched upon the Green Section's work and pointed out the need for further research. At the conclusion of his talk, he was peppered with questions, mostly in connection with the recent work on weed control.


In discussing the Midwest Turf Garden at Lasker's Estate, Monteith stated that the Section could furnish very little aid, and that probably the work there would have to be entirely discontinued.

A ray of hope for the revival of the garden lies in the plan of the Chicago District Golf Association to raise subscriptions to continue this work. It is sincerely hoped that something definite can be worked out to continue the Midwest Garden as it serves the need of additional research work in the Midwest section. 

Brett Hultquist -N- Mill Creek G.C.

(continued from page 12)

Hultquist family to escape up to their cottage on Lake Montello in Wisconsin. Brett, good luck in finding a replacement for Jason, and if you can't make it up to your cottage as much, I'll be more than happy to fill in.

Given the unpredictable weather in April, we have to hope we won't lose our home opener. So take me out to the golf course, take me out to Mill Creek. I'm not sure about the availability of peanuts and crackerjack, but just remember, if your team doesn't win, now that's a shame. 

Director's Column

(continued from page 10)

providing feature articles, Super 'n' Site profiles, and human-interest articles that help keep our magazine OUR magazine, and among the best in the profession. During the GCSAA convention in Orlando, I was amazed at the number of newsletter editors from across the nation who knew Fred and thanked him for allowing them to reprint articles from *On Course* in their own newsletters. The willingness to share information is one of the strengths of this association; *On Course* represents us well in this mission.

I would like to acknowledge the contributions and assistance of the members of the Editorial Committee: John Gurke, Jim McNair, Ray Schmitz, Dr. Randy Kane, Dan Anderson, Mike Mumper, Paul Yerkes, Pat Norton, Luke Cella, Larry Tomaszewski and David Braasch (I told you it was a big group). Without your participation, the magazine wouldn't be where it is today. Hold on guys, it's going to be an interesting ride. You know how stern Fred could be when it came to deadlines? Well, don't mess with Cathy—she goes right for the ice pick. 