

Good-Bye



Fred Opperman, Editor

As I look back over the years, I recall how fortunate I have been. I started my apprenticeship at "The Finishing School for Students in Turf Management," alias Bob O'Link Golf Club, under the tutelage of Bob Williams. What a great learning experience that was. If anyone has an old copy of *Golfdom*, August 1961, page 21, there you will see a young Fred Opperman, no beard and with hair. After two summers at the "Finishing School," I went on to be the assistant at Elmhurst C.C. (now renamed Oak Meadows G.C.) and spent two years there before becoming the superintendent at Riverside G.C. I returned to Elmhurst C.C. the next year as superintendent and remained for four years.

At the annual MAGCS meeting at Cypress Restaurant in 1969, Ray Gerber asked if he could buy me a drink; and from that conversation, I ended up as the superintendent at Glen Oak C.C. when Ray retired in May 1970. In a matter of a few years, I had as mentors two of the deans of turf: Bob Williams and Ray Gerber, both GCSAA past presidents and recipients of the Distinguished Service Award.

During that time, I was blessed by having a good-looking blond pick me up for a blind date. That date has never ended and is going on 35 happy years. In 1969, Judy and I were again blessed with our son Todd, who has turned out

to be the pride of our lives. Yes, I have been fortunate.

I would also like to mention some other people who over the years helped me along this path of life that one takes. Everyone has his or her own list if you just think back, but these are others that I need to mention: Bob Hammer-schmidt, who was the green chairman at Glen Oak C.C. for quite a few years and has since been a dear friend and sounding board.

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Greg Oltman and Art Clesen, two of the most honest, sincere, hard-working businessmen I have ever met and worked with. Then there is Bob Baker, a mentor who took me under his wing. Wow, what a knowledge of trees he has and what a gentleman he is.

In 1983, when I started as editor of *The Bull Sheet*, I never imagined that it would last for 16+ years, 194 newsletters. It really seems like only yesterday that it all started. I must point out that what makes the newsletter run and what ultimately puts it in your home or

office is the advertisers. The Chicagoland area is fortunate to have such loyal advertisers as the newsletter has enjoyed over the years. My hat is off to them, and I personally want to thank them.

While I have always kept "nagging" you at just about every meeting to write articles for your newsletter, it has paid off. That is one of the areas that our association can take pride in, the membership's participation in writing articles. So many of the other newsletters I receive have few, if any, articles from their superintendents.

It has been a rewarding 16 years serving as your editor, and I will truly miss it. The joy of seeing a well-written article by a superintendent has been very satisfying, and the pride in presenting the "Ray Gerber Editorial Award" has always been special to me. The feeling of accomplishment in providing you with tools to better do your job is incomparable. For the last 10 years I haven't been a superintendent, but believe me, I've always thought of myself as one and tried to provide the articles that would be of interest to you.

The MAGCS is a great association; it is that way due to its loyal and hard-working board of directors and members who make it so. I regret leaving so many friends and associates here in the Chicagoland area and not being active in the affairs of the association. As I have mentioned before, change is constant. Judy and I are looking forward to our new adventure and to making new friends in Montana. One must remember where your priorities are. If you have your love of God, family and friends and your health, you are truly blessed. And I have been blessed. This is my last issue as editor. Once again, thank you for your trust in me as your editor for all these years. 