

*Don Ferreri*

As the golf season reaches the last autumn of the 20th century, we are submerged in projects, aerating and leaves. Our ground crews are a little on the worn side and thinking of winter hiatus. So, if you are like

me, you rely on your full-time employees to keep the crew productive. This is not always the easiest task, but the right supervisors can achieve it.

Which leads me to my point. Art Benson, an individual I highly respect, told me 20 years ago, "The key to being a successful superintendent is to surround yourself with GOOD people." Many of you have heard this before, and I am sure many of you practice it. This happens to be, for me personally, my number one rule in business. I believe I have been very successful in this endeavor. Through good, attentive interviewing, strong communication and a positive gut feeling, hiring great team members is as easy as the Bears reaching the end zone (bad metaphor). I have been blessed with good assistants in the past

and Dave Gelino is no exception. He picks up all the slack, unsolicited, and delegates as necessary. Steve Arch, equipment technician at Seven Bridges G.C., works much the same way, as do the horticulturist and my student intern. This allows me to be away from the course worry-free. I also receive sound, contributing information continually. If you get an opportunity to take the GCSAA seminar titled Human Resource Management taught by Brec Hayes, it is very worthwhile.

If you are wondering where I am headed with this, it is simply that as Employment Committee chairman, I urge you to use all your resources when hiring employees. If possible, use the MAGCS employment referral service. This year I have talked with many fine young graduates and

(continued on page 30)

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Director's Column

(continued from page 8)

seasoned veterans alike. Employment opportunities in the Chicagoland area are not abundant, so when you create openings, spend the time and energy necessary to surround yourself with good people. It might be the only thing that stands in your way of playing a couple more rounds of golf.

Roughly \$300 covers the expense of producing a job announcement and mailing it. If we can mail two announcements together, the cost is \$150 each. All superintendent positions are mailed individually, no exceptions. We mail employment announcements to all Class A, B and C members of the MAGCS. All turf programs at colleges in Illinois and surrounding states will now receive job postings as well. We will also post announcements on our Web page at www.magcs.org. So avail yourself of the opportunity to post those job announcements with MAGCS. Then sift through all the resumes and surround yourself with good people.

The MAGCS/ITF connection

Another commitment I made this year was to serve on the Board of Directors for the Illinois Turfgrass Foundation (ITF). I would like to briefly describe the relationship the MAGCS has with the ITF. The Midwest has agreed to route our turf research contributions through the ITF as long as research committees are in place and directly involved with our turfgrass advisors at the University of Illinois and Southern Illinois University. This procedure gives us substantial input on the types of projects to be invested in. We will also require two updates a year as to the programs the advisors are working on; these updates should be suitable for publication in *On Course*.

The ITF raises funds for research in a variety of ways. The Sunset Ridge Plan receives contributions from private golf clubs through monthly assessments to its membership. We also run a number of golf days to raise research dollars, the next being the combined MAGCS/ITF Northern Golf Day on October 12 at Prairie Landing Golf Club. The annual NCTE at Pheasant Run is about education and raising money for turfgrass research. Please do your best to support all of these programs. Many devoted people are working behind the scenes, doing a great job for you to insure success prevails for the ITF.

I would also like to give a heartfelt thank you to the charter member public golf clubs for their fundraising efforts this year. Public golf courses receive the benefits of turfgrass research just as private clubs do. Why not ask public links players to share in the cost of developing new and improved methods of golf course management? Carl Hopphan and myself, along with a volunteer committee of dedicated superintendents, developed a number of ways to be successful at this. The participating clubs to date (your club can

still join!) are Mount Prospect, Orchard Valley, Bartlett Hills, Seven Bridges, Woodbine, Prairie Landing, Sportsman's and Poplar Creek golf courses. Our combined efforts during the last weekend of July raised more than \$3,000, with additional funds to come.

In closing, I will remind you of the same reality we impress upon golfers. There is no guarantee that your golf course will look as good tomorrow as it looks today, and that's a fact. Recent legislation has reduced the amount of funding available for turfgrass research. Over the years, turfgrass research has enabled us to keep the turf on Illinois' golf courses among the best in the nation. Ongoing research and education is vital if we are to keep disease and unwanted infestation off of our courses. Loss of revenue severely impedes our progress and that's why we need your help. If you would like to be involved with our program, please contact me at Seven Bridges G.C., 630-852-1746. For the good of the game!



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