

The End of an Era

I feel that I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge the closing of Illinois Lawn Equipment—so here goes.

After a grueling three-hour interview, Richard Johnson welcomed me on board and on March 7, 1990 my journey began. I ventured in on my first day to a hustle and bustle of activity. The LF-100 had just hit the marketplace and Illinois Lawn was in the midst of flooding the field with them. The introduction of the unit changed our industry. From the LF-100, many fine pieces of equipment have been spawned and evolved.

Life was good!

I had the distinct pleasure of being surrounded by some of my greatest mentors. Richard Johnson, Pete Vandercook and Joan Cygan were the powerhouse of that group. I became a sponge and absorbed as much from these fine individuals as I could. They have each molded a part of me that will forever remain at the core of my being. Illinois Lawn had the unique ability of finding some of the best professionals this industry had to offer. I am proud to have been part of this group, which is too extensive to name, but we all know who they were. Some have passed to greener pastures, some have found the joy of retirement, some have moved on to other endeavors within the industry, some have moved on all together, and some are carrying on the legacy today.



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"Vintage" and 2003 ILE advertising.

I believe that the soul of this industry is its people. Thanks to ILE, these people had the means to provide for their families in an environment where they served people.

The journey for ILE began in 1954, when Robert Johnson had the ambition to start from absolutely nothing. It's truly an American success story from the heart of the Midwest. In its 49 years, the company developed, through many pitfalls and struggles, to be a well-respected industry stalwart. As with many other companies, the economic hurdles became too extensive for our little company wearing very large shoes. The decision to "let it go" was excruciating but also inevitable.

It is with no regret that I have spent the last 14 years of my life in this wonderful industry. I have so many memories and stories that have been passed to me by the great people with whom I've had the pleasure of developing relationships. I know that ILE has not always been measured as "perfect" from the outside. I can tell you that the little company of great people has always strived to help in any way they could. It was more than business, it was friendship.

I am delighted that the heart of ILE lives on with the new company we have become. The owners of Burris Equipment have allowed us to remain a team as we embark on a new journey together.

Life is good!



Director's Column (continued from page 5)

discovering new insights and intriguing possibilities that this position can facilitate for the MAGCS. For me, it is an exciting opportunity to define and create the dimensions of this post. I hope to find new ways to help assistants in their daily jobs and give them chances to better themselves professionally.

Finally, I must mention that my meaningful involvement would not be possible if it were not for my committee members, who have given their time and commitment to help me out in this journey. These gentlemen have continued to selflessly endeavor to make my role as the class C advisor an easy one. Many thanks

to Nick Baker—Ruth Lake C.C.; John Ekstrom—Cantigny G.C.; Keith Krause—Aurora C.C.; Matt Kregel—Ivanhoe Club; John Maksymiu—River Forest C.C.; Brian Mores—Inverness G.C.; Doug Pool—Sunshine Course; Scott White—Links at Carillon; and Aaron Willing—Chicago G.C.

