



Thanks to the "Vets"

We recently celebrated Memorial Day and already the Fourth of July is upon us. I started to think about the fact that these two days honor veterans of our country's armed forces, many people who gave of themselves and created a better world for all of us to live in. With that in mind, I am officially declaring July 1st "Thanks to Veteran Golf Course Superintendents Day" all over this great land. (July 1st is also my birthday . . . it should be a holiday!)

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The February issue of *On Course* had an outstanding cover that showed a lot of guys who made our jobs a lot better. In March, I ran a meeting of the Past Presidents Council at the Bartlett Hills Golf Club. Those in attendance were Kevin DeRoo, Brian Bossert, Al Fierst, Ed Fischer, John Berarducci, Bob Maibusch, Carl Hopphan, Joel Purpur, Luke Strojny, Don Ferreri, Paul N. Voykin, Dudley Smith, MAGCS executive director Luke Cella and our current president, Fred Behnke. Afterwards I sat down and looked again at that February *On Course* and thought about the fact that some of those individuals have made what we do better for a very long time.

Take, for instance, Dudley Smith; this guy was president of the Midwest back in 1967 and he still is showing up for past presidents' meetings! That's more than 35 years since his tenure, folks. Paul Voykin, president in 1972—how come it took him so long to be recognized as "Super of the Year?" Somebody finally woke up! The list goes on. Carl Hopphan . . . has he stopped giving back? Noooooooo!

Let's talk about all of the things for which we need to thank our "vets." How about all of the labor-saving ideas that many guys have come up with in the past? Then there is the work ethic that goes along with that. I do not know too many professions where guys don't give 150%, but try to give 180% and then some. We all should be proud of the fact that many years ago, these fellows taught us to work hard, but let's also acknowledge the fact that we need to do the same back home.

Many "vets" also experimented with different fertilizers, fungicides and equipment that may not have been the best for their turf. Many of our "vets" lived the phrase "trial and error." They tried it or used it. It may have failed, but suggestions were made and things were "tweaked" and the whole process started all over again. The final outcome helped us today with our turf-care techniques.

So go out on July 1st and shout out loud (the neighbors will love that one) or pop a balloon and give thanks to all of those "vets" who helped make our jobs today a lot easier. You can also give me a call and wish me a happy birthday. I can't believe I'm 35 already! Ha ha! Have a great rest of the season.

