



Our Renewed Commitment to PR

Public relations – *‘The business of inducting the public to have understanding for and goodwill toward a person, firm or institution.’* – Webster’s Dictionary

So what is the MAGCS doing in terms of public relations?

As chair of the Media/Public Relations Committee, my goal this year is to get the local media involved with the MAGCS by inviting them to attend our monthly meetings; in the near future, we’d like to have a “media day” golf tournament with superintendents and make this an annual event. I would also like us to have a booth at the annual Chicago Golf Show that is held during the month of March at the Rosemont Convention Center, as this event is well-attended. We need to be more visible at the local golf tournaments, from the Western Open to the Walker Cup. We could resume our involvement with CLTV, maybe make a DVD on IPM.

To get a better feel for dealing with media/public relations, I attended a Chapter Leaders/Executives Symposium with Luke Cella at the GCSAA Headquarters in Lawrence, Kansas during the month of April. This symposium was well-attended by a wide variety of people from both the USA and Canada. This was my first visit and hopefully will not be my last; GCSAA has an impressive building. Our speaker for this event was Jeffrey Cufaude from Idea Architects; the sole purpose of this seminar was to enhance the chapter by incorporating new ideas, engaging volunteers and members, and undertaking strategic goals and action planning.

What I liked about this seminar was that Jeffrey broke the larger topic into categories that were important to individual chapters. Luke and I participated in separate categories to gain more information. This took place throughout both days; unfortunately, Jeffrey became ill on the second day and the “inmates” (attendees) took over after Steve Mona gave his speech. If you ever get a chance to take a seminar by Jeffrey Cufaude, please enrich yourself with his ideas. I took a Personal Development Profile (DiSC) and really found out what kind of person I am and how to work with others who have completely different personalities or traits.

Jeffrey also talked about maximizing the staff-volunteer partnership by defining roles and expectations of the Board/staff, updating SOPs, believing in your mission and vision, and effectively managing/developing needs of the membership. Another session talked about trends impacting the golf course superintendent’s profession, from chapter operations to what members find meaningful. The biggest concerns are TIME, placing a premium on fun because of information overload, people wanting clear value for their time/money, and people wanting to network with others who are most like them and get real-time solutions. People are going to communicate more via the Internet by accessing interactive chat rooms and links to turf schools.

The last session was entitled “Securing the Future” and dealt with mentoring your successor, creating a vision for your association, creating a strategic plan and using a chapter assessment tool. You can see that our chapter has already implemented these ideas. This seminar gave me a good base to work

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*The Media/
Public Relations
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of ideas for getting
the local media
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with the MAGCS.*

with on establishing better working relations with both media and the public.

I gained a lot of ideas that could improve others' awareness of us and enhance this chapter's visibility, for instance:

- Adding GCSAA or MAGCS logo on your course's scorecard next to your name.
- Inviting sports media to your course to play golf or holding a sports media tournament with superintendents.
- Implementing a First Tee program or putting course for kids; inviting teachers/professors, having a five-minute education at each hole, talking about IPM.
- Inviting city commissioners to your maintenance shop for a shop/course tour.

Both Luke and I also met with Jeff Bollig, GCSAA public relations officer, about what steps are needed to get our Committee going. As of now, we (as a chapter) are taking baby steps, thanks to Tony Kalina who

started last year in sending out press releases on a timely basis; hopefully I will keep this going and try to build momentum. Jeff Bollig had some good suggestions, including that our chapter build a media list and attach this list to the Midwest Family Tree. We could send our directory to the media, including phone numbers. We need to stay on top of news releases and get all information from all our members on golf events at their clubs. We should also keep pumping the local newspapers, try to get help from CDGA and USGA, write turf tips, perhaps send the "Super-n-Site" article from each *On Course* to the facility's local newspaper. We might solicit college interns who understand media and public relations to aid with this committee and Luke Cella. Another avenue for our enhanced visibility is the Illinois Green Industry; Luke Cella is strongly involved with this along with being a GCSAA advisor for Executive Officers.

Personally, we all can get involved by being visible in the pro

shop and attending local events, social activities and church. Remember, we are trying to reach the other 90% of the people THAT don't play golf. Reaching out to our #1 resource and the future of the game—our kids—by educating them, makes our jobs more fun and ultimately easier.



Weathering . . . (continued from page 3)

With all the adversity experienced by a weather-dependent industry, it is no wonder that we have developed so many ways to lessen weather's effects on scheduling, revenue and safety of our patrons. I'm sure the year 2005 will throw a few weather curves our way, but we can all be glad we have many tools at our disposal with which to cope.



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