

DIRECTOR'S COLUMN

John Ekstrom, Hinsdale Golf Club



My Two Years

This past year as Class C Advisor for the Midwest Association of Golf Course Superintendents has been one of the most exciting of my career. I feel that I have had some great experiences and opportunities. The Class C Committee consists of Scott Verdun — Merit Club, Matt Breeden — Seven Bridges, Scott White — Links at Carillon, Michael Heustis — Chicago GC, Jim Chisholm — Naperville CC, and Virgil Range — Aurora CC. This group works very hard at creating programs and ideas that move the assistant superintendents of the MAGCS along toward becoming golf course superintendents. I thank the group for putting up with me and for making great contributions to our chapter and our industry.

At the end of January, I was invited to the Iowa Turfgrass Show in Des Moines, Iowa — which is similar to our IPTC at Pheasant Run — to make a presentation on professional development for the assistant superintendent. This opportunity allowed me to meet turf professionals from Iowa and to share some of the ideas we embrace at MAGCS. In speaking with these folks, I learned that they are looking to create a committee composed solely of assistant superintendents. Iowa GCSA currently has an assistant on their board but no committee to back him up. Admittedly, everyone in Iowa believes they are about five years behind MAGCS. I appreciated the invitation and their hospitality was impeccable.

This year's Golf Industry Show in Anaheim, California, presented opportunities beyond partying at the MAGCS hospitality suite. Nonetheless, MAGCS and all the contributing vendors did a great job hosting a great hospitality suite. I had the pleasure of meeting several assistants from around the country who are either active in their associations or have a position on their chapter boards. These individuals share my goal of wanting all assistants to have the opportunities necessary for success in our industry. The chapters that were represented at this informal dinner were: Iowa GCSA, Southern California GCSA, Heart of America GCSA, and Central Ohio GCSA.

In April, I had the honor of representing assistant superintendents from around the country on the GCSAA Assistant Superintendents' Committee. This group of six was chaired by GCSAA Board Director Sanford Queen, CGCS, and lead by staff member, David Fearis, CGCS. During these two days of meetings, we discussed ideas for furthering the career development of assistant superintendents. The biggest and main idea is to promote the accomplishments of assistants,

depending on education level, continuing education points, and years of experience. Look for changes to come; the committees that prepare these programs constantly look for ways to better our careers.

Lastly, I would like to thank some people who have given me unfailing support during my tenure as Class C Advisor. First and foremost is my wife, Erica. She has been a source of encouragement throughout this journey. Next is Mr. Scott Witte, CGCS, and Mr. Bob Maibusch, CGCS, MG. Both of them are leaders in our industry. Their vision is what has made the MAGCS what it is today. All of the MAGCS Board of Directors along with Luke Cella, CGCS, have provided no end of support for the Class C committee. I cannot stress enough that without board support, none of the Class C efforts are possible. Thank you to all of the Superintendents who have allowed their assistants to get involved. Please continue to do so. Our industry will thrive and improve because of your enthusiasm. It is has been a great pleasure to serve the members and assistant superintendents of the MAGCS. This has been an experience that has enriched my family and me more than you will ever know.

Thank you,
John

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ed note: The Class C Advisor is appointed by the current MAGCS president and the tenure is two years. John Ekstrom will complete his appointed term at the end of this year, and a term very well served.