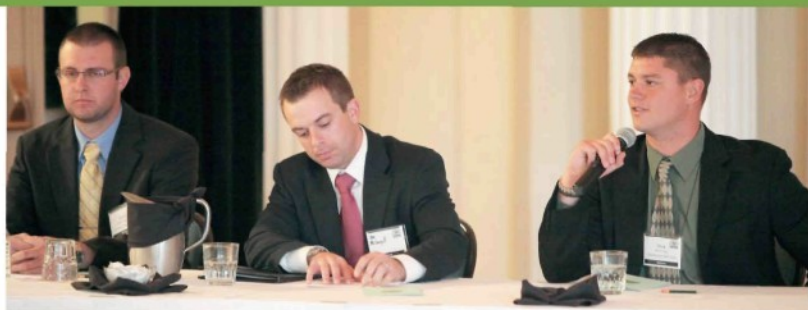


EDUCATION RECAP

Charles Anfield, CGCS, *Heritage Bluffs Golf Course*



58th Midwest Turf Clinic

The MAGCS Members met on a warm November day for the 58th Annual Midwest Turf Clinic. The meeting was hosted by Curtis Tyrell, CGCS at Medinah Country Club. Jan Jarvis of Master of the Links Inc. began the day with a rousing live performance of our National Anthem. After Dave Marquardt of Dirt-n-Turf led an invocation, MAGCS President Scott Witte started the Meeting with a "Year in Review". Scott reviewed the MAGCS Board goals for the year.

- Streamline Board and Committees
- Videotape all meetings
- Evaluation of calendar event schedule
- Introduction of Midwest Core Company Sponsorship Program
- "Get the message out" with Golf and the Environment PR effort
- Ramp up Member involvement
- Partner with ITF and Big Par 3 Contest

Scott commented on the Class C Advisory Committee, "I'm very proud of their efforts and overall involvement".

Andrew Perry, Assistant at Black Sheep Club was the moderator for the morning educational sessions.

"**It's Just Different This Year**" was the theme for the round table discussion of MAGCS's newest, first year Superintendents. Featured speakers included: Nick Leu of Blackstone Golf Club, Ben McGargill of Wynstone Golf Club and Scott Verdun of Kenosha Country Club.

It was a rough year to "get started" as a Golf Course Superintendent. The weather issues were huge and learning a new course maintenance nuances, can be tricky in an "easy year". They all worked long hours to make it through the season. The guys commented on their first years experiences.

Nick: "I wanted to prove what I could do to our GM and owners. I found myself extremely conservative in my approaches to turf maintenance. I didn't feel like I was in a position to take chances. I did have some frustration with communications. Sometimes I wished I had thicker skin. The most rewarding thing was hearing nice comments about the golf course conditions."

Scott: "When I arrived, the course was covered in ice. I had some nervous apprehension. I just jumped right into it. I do need to be more firm with my agronomic practices. The biggest mistakes I made were when I second guessed myself. I need to trust my instincts".

Ben: "I had a big learning curve in annual bed landscape maintenance and design. I also had to adjust my turf management practices and learn how to handle the reclaimed water issues. I wish I had played more golf and practiced more as an Assistant. I'm getting more opportunities to play now with the

Members. The hardest part of the job this year was convincing the people with the money that the practices I proposed were the right thing to do".

The new Superintendents got their feet "wet" this year dealing with the extreme weather conditions, new paper work adventures and pressure from golfers and owners. Every day was a new challenge and learning experience, not the easiest year to be a rookie. Welcome to the "club".

The next session was titled; **It's a Different Language – Part 1**. Several MAGCS veterans discussed their usage of communication technologies. The speakers were: Henry Michna, CGCS of Winnetka Golf Club, Dave Ward of Coyote Run Golf Club and Jeff Frentz, CGCS of Lakeshore Country Club.

Henry led off by going online and showing us his blog. He briefly went over how to set one up. He updates his blog twice a week. He shared experiences with some of the feedback he has received. Henry believes it increases loyalty to the Club through fans and followers. "It's a great tool to help explain our golf maintenance perspective. If we don't do it, someone else will". Henry's blog is integrated with Face Book and the course's website.

Dave took the podium next and went through some of his blogs, also accessed through the course's website. Dave shared some of the witty and humorous blogs he has written. Dave's blog started out with the main focus being on course conditions. Now it has evolved into being more educational, humorous, entertainment, weather, projects, lawn care advice and project work. "I write about 15 minutes per day, it gives me satisfaction and lets me show my creativity".

Jeff came up and made his presentation about his blog. "It's a great form of communication. My goal was to reach my Membership and effectively touch on subjects I want to discuss and to help them understand. I like to keep it simple. I've found that if it is shorter, the more important it seems and the more likely they will read it". Jeff uses his blog to document projects and maintenance practices. Jeff closed his comments with this advice "make sure you have time to dedicate to a blog and know who you are reaching".

After lunch, our very own MAGCS Executive Director and self proclaimed “nerd” Luke Cella, CGCS took the podium and presented on **It’s a Different Language – Part 2**. Luke’s presentation was an informative overview of the numerous social networking technologies. The internet has connected millions of people all over the world 24/7 and continues to grow. There are many different sites available. They are popular because they are free, easy to use and connect people to people. Most sites have some interdependency where people share something in common. They help map out and organize relationships that we couldn’t do alone. Each person has their own connectivity based on *their* relationships. People join groups of similar interests or “likes” or “friends”. A social network can help you brand yourself, engage people of like interests, inform and educate. You can post and receive messages within that network.

Luke shared some amazing statistics.

- 50% of users are less than 30 years old
- 96% of users were born between 1975 and 2010
- 1 in 8 couples that are married, met using a social network site

“Facebook” is one of the more common social networking sites. You enter your data or profile into the site. Facebook then shares your information within their network to connect you to “friends”. They make their money off selling ads. It’s a great way to make new friends and connect with old friends. Use caution with this one, they do share everything you share. Ask Gold Medal Olympic Swimmer, Michael Phelps about this draw back. Facebook currently has ½ billion users, uses 5 billion minutes on line each day and continues to grow. They even made a movie about it.

“Linked In” website is considered to be of a more professional nature but functions on the same premise.

Twitter is a “real time” information networking tool that connects you to what you find interesting. It’s considered a “micro blog” in that that it only allows the user to use 140 characters at a time. Many celebrities and athletes have sites

so that fans can directly communicate to them. There are over 50 million “tweets” per day.

Luke’s online tips:

- Create a personal ID and profile ID and keep them separate
- Keep your identity well structured
- Publish “polished” and professional work
- Keep track of where your information goes
- Protect your information

Who’s looking at you? Marketing companies, political interest groups, and employers. We are now officially in the age of George Orwell’s, “Big Brother”. Be careful out there in your online adventures.

The final education offering for the day was **“A Deep Down Different World – The Role and Function of Soil Microbes”**. Gary Campbell, Agronomist, Agri-Energy Resources, Inc. and Roger Blogg, Soil Microbiologist, Agri-Energy Resources, Inc. were the speakers.

The most productive soils have the greatest quantity and diversity of microbial life. Microbes are the smallest form of life and they are found everywhere, including the harshest environments like miles below on the sea floor and the constantly frozen Antarctic. They constitute the largest biomass on the planet! Their main function is decomposing organic matter and recycling nutrients.

Microbes function in two ways. As a photo synthesizer they capture energy and fix carbon. As a decomposer they break down residues, degrade organic matter, enlarge soil structure, improve water flow through the soil, prevent erosion and help degrade chemicals.

Actively growing plants will build their own soil. The goal to improve microbial populations is to keep the plants healthy. 30-60% of photosynthesis is attributed to the plant roots.

Growth stimulation of microbes can be enhanced by:

Addition of soil nutrients and foliar feeding. Foliar feeding

(continued on next page)

Speakers Henry Michna, CGCS of Winnetka Golf Club, Dave Ward of Coyote Run Golf Club and Jeff Frentz, CGCS of Lakeshore Country Club.



has been proven to provide a 95% efficiency rating. Feed existing microbes with fertilizer products, sugars, amino acids, compost teas, plant and animal compounds and microbial enhancement products.

Judicious use of irrigation. A soil that is not saturated will have better water holding capacity.

Cultural processes like aeration increase the oxygen in the soil and enhance populations.

The overall benefits of a sound biological system of a healthy microbial population include:

- Rapid decomposition of thatch
- The ability to maintain longer green growth into the fall

- A faster green up in the spring
- Decreases soil compaction
- Decrease dependence on chemical inputs

Another outstanding day of education offerings of cutting edge topics and career building tools was offered. A special thanks is offered to the MAGCS Education Committee for putting on another great Turf Clinic and to the Speakers for sharing their experiences and information. An "extra" special thanks and "shout out" to all of the Sponsors for making it happen and supporting a great Association and overall industry. **-OC**



Michael J. Benkusky, Inc.
GOLF COURSE ARCHITECTURE

Over 20 years of golf course design experience.
Member American Society of Golf Course Architects



Lake in the Hills, IL 815-474-8385
www.mjbgolfdesign.com mbenkusky@mjbgolfdesign.com



Phoenix
ENVIRONMENTAL CARE

For more about...

Pegasus™ L, Pegasus DF, Firebird® GC,
Vital®, Kestrel®, Lucid™, Current™,
Knighthawk® & Symmetry™

Contact: Rick Grant at 317-776-9983
or visit www.phoenixenvcare.com

Pegasus, Knighthawk, Current and Symmetry are trademarks of Phoenix Environmental Care LLC. Vital is a registered trademark of Luxemourg-Pamol, Inc. Lucid is a trademark of Rotam USA. Firebird and Kestrel are registered trademarks of Phoenix Environmental Care LLC. Firebird GC is a Restricted Use Pesticide. Always read and follow label directions.

RABINE PAVING
DISCOVER THE DIFFERENCE
888-722-4633

PAVING THE WAY WITH
QUALITY FOR OVER 40 YEARS

Cart Paths - Driveways - Parking Lots - Roads

- Asphalt Paving & Engineering
- Concrete Paving / Whitetopping
- IDOT Pre-qualified
- Decorative Pavements
- Infrared Pavement Repairs
- Sealcoating and Striping
- Snow Removal / Ice Control

www.rabinepaving.com

THE PREFERRED SERVICE PROVIDER FOR ALL OF
YOUR PAVEMENT CONSTRUCTION AND
MAINTENANCE NEEDS