



# Success... The Long and Short of It

*There is something special about the busyness of spring. Most of us are hustling and bustling about trying to meet the demands of another opening day. I'm sitting here attempting to balance the time spent between new construction projects, course clean-up, tidying up around the club house, and every day mowing as the grass begins to scream out of the ground. Spring time seems to resemble every other day in the life of the golf course superintendent. In many ways 2010 is no different from any other year I guess, but how did spring get here so soon? The balancing act begins with everything at the golf course during the day, and then it quickly switches to getting home in time to drive my son to baseball practice. Later on in the evening, I move on to feeling stupid while attempting to help the kids with homework. As the days fly by during the busyness of spring, I can't help feeling that I better stop and smell the roses – in this case, apple blossoms. I also keep thinking back to the toast I made during the Midwest Hospitality event in San Diego, California. I proposed a toast... "To Our Success in 2010," and I'm afraid that it may have come off as a bit trivial and insincere. That toast was anything but insincere. In fact, my vision of success in 2010 goes deeper than you might think.*

The most obvious component of our success in 2010 will be maintaining our facilities at the highest level possible. During uncertain economic times this will require us to step it up a notch throughout the entire season. Our best efforts in communicating strategies to our key constituents, increasing operating efficiencies, and forward thinking will all be a part of our success this year. Stretching staff and resources has become common place throughout our industry, and it seems to be business as usual these days.

Success in our profession is an extremely high priority, but I believe that true success in 2010 will involve a lot more than growing grass and stretching budgets. As much as I enjoy being a golf course superintendent, I'll be attempting to put equal amounts of energy into my responsibilities as a husband and a father. However, the golf course has a strange and powerful allure. It sucks us in and consumes us during the summer, when everyone else is frolicking around and loving the hot, dry weather. I am no different from anyone else in this regard, and striking that balance is a challenge. If I'm going to be honest though, "true success" in 2010 will mean that I have worked hard to schedule time for family and friends.

I believe that another key to success is taking time to recharge. For many of us, the start of the golf season signifies

a 24/7 mentality that ends up being unhealthy if you aren't careful. I think it's important to make a promise to yourself and commit to stepping away from the course if you can. Everyone is wired up different. Only you know your best method of recharging. For me, it's a quick trip up to Portage, Wisconsin, after work on Saturday. A simple 16-hour getaway can work wonders to recharge my batteries. A successful 2010 will definitely involve spending some time recharging and resting when necessary.

When it all boils down, the simple "toast to success," was intended to express my sincere wishes for the well being of the entire MAGCS membership. It is also intended to be an encouragement to everyone in the beginning of this new season. I am able to keep my passion for the profession of green keeping intact by maintaining the right level of balance in the key elements of my life. I'd like to think that I will continue to love what I do even though the economy is less than perfect for our industry. If there was ever a time when our "A" game and passion were required, it's now. Our best efforts to keep our facilities performing at a high level are in high demand. I know the MAGCS membership has the ability to bring it in 2010. I am optimistic about a great golf season, and I wish the "Best of Success" for all of you this season! **-OC**