

ON COURSE WITH THE PRESIDENT
Bob Kohlstedt, Fox Bend Golf Course



Time Flies When You're Having Fun

I am very grateful to the board of directors and the membership for allowing me to serve as the president of the Midwest Association of Golf Course Superintendents. It seems like yesterday when I was asked to serve on the board. At the time, my decision to run took some thought and I had my concerns: Will I do a good job? Do I have enough time to dedicate to serve? What are the responsibilities? Will I get elected? Am I ready to go the full term?

I figured I would try and do my duty to serve the membership of an association I had been a part of for almost two decades. In the back of my mind I thought "Heck, I might lose in the election and all my worries will go away." Little did I know I was running unopposed!

My time on the board has been hastened due to changes within the typical board order and in four short years I get to serve as president. Time flies when you're having fun.

My duties as a board member have been event arrangements, editorial chairman and partnership task group chairman. I did not have an opportunity to chair golf or education. Each of these tasks is assigned to board members and they are responsible for putting together a committee and completing each element. All the committee assignments come together and rely on each other to orchestrate the season of events and operation of the association. The time commitment varies with each task and the board works in teams to get it done. None of the tasks I chaired were overly time consuming. During my time on the board we have gone to a chair/ co-chair structure which helps to "break-in" new board members into new tasks. I found this to be very helpful and made for smoother transitions. I would encourage any member to consider board service. The rewards outweigh any challenges that one might think of to not get involved.

I am always amazed when I have to sit down and reflect on where I currently stand in life. My story is typical in that I started working at a golf course as a summer job and ended up choosing it as a career. The part I have difficulty with is where did all the time go? I started working at Silver Lake Country Club in 1983 washing dishes for banquets and in 1990 I was on the grounds crew trying to become the next Dudley Smith. The next year I started as an assistant super-

intendent to Jack McCormick at Calumet Country Club. During my seven year stay there I married my wife Robyn and had my first child Kelli. In 1997 I left CCC and took my first superintendent position at Wedgewood Golf Course to fill some big shoes left by Kenny Shepherd. Currently I am employed by Oswegoland Park District as the superintendent at Fox Bend Golf Course. I started in 2000 which is the birth year of my son RJ. I also have another daughter Kyra who is 9 years old. RJ will be 12 years old in July and I use that as a benchmark for my tenure. Again I wonder where all the time has gone.

I don't regret any of the career choices I have made. I have met some great friends and experienced some unforgettable moments. The people I have worked with and for have left a permanent impression in whom I have become. The rewards are endless and the great fortune of working with nature brings constant challenges. The trick is to forget the rough times and keep the good times in your memory banks. Time flies when you're having fun, maybe that is why it all goes too fast.

As I begin my term as president I would like to thank the current board members for their hard work and dedication. I want to welcome Matt Harstad and Matt Kregel to the Midwest board of directors and thank them for their willingness to serve. Thank you to all the past presidents that have set a standard I hope to achieve. It is an honor to be involved in an association that is nationally recognized as a leading chapter. All of which rests on the shoulders of our executive director who makes all things possible. Thanks Luke.

I want to wish the membership and their families a happy and healthy Christmas and New Year. Enjoy your "down time," surround yourself with friends and family, create memories and let the good times roll. -OC