

DIRECTOR'S COLUMN

Luke Cella, MAGCS



Not New, but Improved

Congratulations to the Midwest's newest board members: Dave Kohley, Silver Lake Country Club, John Nelson, Merit Club and Chuck Barber, Indian Lakes Resort. In late November the board conducts a "transition" meeting where chairmen get together and exchange information, files, SOPs, and goals that their committee worked through the previous year. New chairmen are coached through their new responsibilities and tasks by the outgoing chair. Valuable committee members are mentioned in the process, sometimes not, as chairmen look to "keep" their team intact through their own transition. This meeting works very well and your 2011 board assignments are as follows:

Editorial – Mike Mumper, Chuck Barber
Golf & Arrangements – Dave Kohley, John Nelson
Education – Dave Groelle, Chuck Barber
Class C – Joe Schneider
Class E – Nick Baker
Bylaws & Nominating – Dan Sterr, Scott Witte
Benevolence – Jim Keith
Partnership Task Group – Bob Kohlstedt
Media & Public Relations – Executive Committee

The list may look a little short, and it is in comparison to the number of committees and groups of years ago. The Midwest is consolidating some of its committees. Scholarship, Employment and Membership are primarily taken care of by staff and will operate committee-less. For example, if a golf course or club is searching for a golf course superintendent, the call will come to my office. I will explain the process of the posting, the fees, and even help write an announcement if needed. I explain the benefits of posting and hiring local and am able to answer most questions they may have. The Employment Committee has had no real involvement in this process for many years.

The Scholarship Committee's tasks have become very minimal the past several years and these too are accomplished by staff. Each spring the scholarship applications are reviewed and placed online for the applicants to download. Completed applications are collected, judges are sent judging packets, scores are tallied and winners are announced. All of this work is accomplished by staff.

The Membership Committee too has changed. One of the responsibilities of the Membership Committee was to send out a survey every three years to the all the members. This survey took a lot of work, not only sending, but also collecting and tallying responses as they were returned. Our use of quick, online surveys has changed this process and made it quite simple.

When it comes to making decisions that will impact the way any procedure, regulation, or change is involved with any of these consolidated committees, the board is still involved. For example, when a survey is now sent to the membership, each committee chair is asked for input and the survey is developed around the information they need to know to accomplish their work.

Another change to the committee structure is that Golf and Arrangements will work together as one. By working together and involving the host superintendent, both of these groups will be able to streamline setting up events at our clubs and courses. In the past there has been a lot of overlap with these two groups. By having these two committees work together from the get go, the burden should be less and more streamlined.

Other than the addition of a Class C Advisor, the make up of the board has not changed in the past ten years. However, the one major change the Midwest has gone through is the hiring of full-time staff that oversees the day-to-day operations of the Association. By far, this has been one of the major changes the Association itself has ever had and has changed the responsibilities and tasks each board member now manages. It is time for the board to take a look at itself and make sure it is using the time of its volunteers in the best way possible.

You may have noticed the Midwest is operating one board member short this winter. Rather than finding board member to fill a committee chair position of a committee that really doesn't need to exist, the group decided to see if it could operate one member short. So far, this has worked well. President Sterr always has the option to appoint a new board member if needed, and if not, there may be a by-law change coming down the road. **-OC**