

SUPER -N- SITE
Josh Cull, *Chicago Golf Club*

Luke Strojny, CGCS -N- Prairie Bluff Golf Club



Doing more with less seems to be the mandate for most superintendents these days. The ever-increasing price of fuel is rapidly driving up operating expenses, and the stagnant economy is driving down the availability of funds for general operations. This is somewhat of a conundrum because golfers' expectations for playing conditions are the only constant. This current state of affairs has forced many superintendents to streamline their operations and look for new ways to become more efficient.

The downturn in the economy may be more difficult for superintendents managing larger budgets generally associated with private facilities; however, superintendents in the public/municipal sector have been maintaining excellent golf courses for decades with significantly smaller budgets. Having met this month's host, I realized this "new" ideology of doing more with less is, in fact, not new at all. Luke Strojny, CGCS is a veteran of the turfgrass industry.

He got his start at age sixteen working for John Lapp and Frank Jemsek at St. Andrews Country Club in West Chicago.

"As a kid working as a caddie, I saw the superintendent (John Lapp) riding around the golf course with his dog and thought to myself that seems like a pretty easy job," Luke told me.

That thought led him to five quick years of tutelage under Lapp, until Luke moved on to become a superintendent at a nine-hole course in Wisconsin. That position predicated a twenty-five year tenure at Poplar Creek Country Club in the northwest suburbs where Strojny mastered the art of providing a championship caliber golf course within a constrained budget. Admittedly, he says his biggest challenge was adjusting to a smaller budget. Four years ago Luke departed from Poplar



*The Prairie Bluff Golf Course Team.
(L to R) Kevin Bauer (Head Technician), Luke Strojny,
Kenny Shepherd, Manny Mascote (Assistant Superintendent)
Luis Guzman (Irrigation Technician)*

Creek and assumed the leading role at Prairie Bluff Golf Course in Lockport, Illinois. Maintaining a championship golf course on a municipal budget, Luke continues to excel in the industry, proving that course conditions do not have to diminish with the budget. When asked about professional accomplishments of which he is most proud, Strojny cites a multitude of in-house capital improvement projects he was able to complete... under budget.

Strojny says his biggest challenge, currently, is following an excellent superintendent and continuing to improve the golf course. He credits the staff around him, including his assistant

Manny Mascote, and his supervisor at the Lockport Township District for all of his successes.

"It is a cohesive and cooperative environment," says Strojny "that has rejuvenated my passion for this business."

Off the golf course, Luke referees an inline hockey league and enjoys thoroughbred racing. When asked what he would do if he were not a golf course superintendent, Luke said he would like to be an NHL referee or possibly get into the horse racing industry as a track superintendent. He has two children: a son, Kyle (19), and a daughter, Julia (14). **-OC**

