

# The Stories You Guys Tell

*Okay, so I was strong armed into writing an article for On Course. I have been a member for just "a few" years and with every incoming President we all read the same appeal, "Be an active member and please write something for our magazine!"*

As many other writers have wondered, I ponder the same. What to write about? I could pen something on soils, pathology, fertility, growth regulators, or life above the cheddar curtain. As this arm twist happened over the winter months, I took especially good notes when making course visits and the topic just sort of unraveled.

Over these many years as a Superintendent and Sales Representative there has always been one thread that never changes: the stories from the course. I would like to share a few of the good ones with you, to make sure as the summer rolls along, that you know you are not out there all alone. And, yes these events are true but the names have been changed to protect the innocent.

We all are aware, winter golf does happen in the upper Midwest, some years more often than others. This particular day followed cold weather followed by unseasonable warm days in the 50's. A superintendent, I'll call him Steve, was looking at a spring project and thought this would be a great opportunity to get a jump on the planning. Out we go to look at the course and make some much-needed plans. On the way out we passed by the range and he saw that all of the rubber tees used in the mats were missing. He had just put them out the day before. As we approached the first tee we noticed a group were using the rubber tees for their balls.

When we approached the group, Steve mentioned the great idea of the rubber tees and the response went something like this, "Well we would like to take credit for such a good idea but the group in front of us suggested it when they heard our portable drill was low on charge and we would not be able to get a tee in the ground. They said go to the range and take the rubber tees. One of our guys said that would be stealing, they said not to worry about it the pro shop has hundreds of replacement tees and this happens all the time."

Upon hearing this Steve said that they did not have any replacements and could they just share one and replace it once their round was complete. Thankfully they agreed. Steve then made it a point to tactfully correct the group in front of them.

On we went out to see the area around a par three he had plans to re-work. As we arrived, there was a group playing the hole, they had hit so we started to walk around as they walked to the hole. Upon their arrival one player found his ball ten feet out on the ice. Everyone continued to do their thing not paying attention to him any longer until we all heard the commotion as this player fell through the ice as he went to pull his ball back to the shore. Yes he had gone out on the ice to get his \$2.00 golf ball. Everyone ran to the shore and told him not to panic and crawl back to shore. This worked well except he was freezing. He then asked where his ball was and a fellow player told him that when he knocked it back to shore it hit the frozen bank and careened even further out onto the lake. Steve jumped into help mode and brought his cart over to get the guy back to the clubhouse as fast as possible. There was no room for the lowly sales rep so I was elected to pull his clubs back to the clubhouse. As I was about half way back Steve came and picked me up. At the clubhouse he said dump the clubs and let's get out of here fast. As we drive away I asked how the guy was doing? Steve said they got a few towels and arranged a chair close to the fire to warm up the golfer and he said thanks and proceeded to ask for his rain check since he had only played a few holes. Steve was afraid the pro was going to kill him and did not want to be a witness. Things only a golfer could ask for!

Spring always brings a few irrigation stories. Bill gives me a call one morning and asks if I will be in the area anytime that day to look at his fifteenth green. He was very assertive, so I was able to re-arrange my day and head there shortly thereafter. When I arrived we headed out to see the fifteenth green where he explained a head must have broken during the winter. The head was tapped to a two-inch line and broken at the swing joint and the system was fully charged. The right third of his green was a huge turf bubble raised about four to six inches. We headed back to the shop to get something to relieve the pressure. When we returned the bubble had burst and ripped a rather large hole in the

*(continued on page 13)*

green. This should be the end of story, but no, I had told Bill to just let it dry out and as soon as you can walk on the area, relay the sod, roll and topdress it back to normal. The next day he calls me and says it is still not dry, so he waited until the next day to attempt to repair the area. The next day came and the area was still wet. At this point he discovered his irrigation tech had not turned the valve completely closed. The fun continues! It dried out and everything was fine.

I was on a very special trip with John to take a few soil samples. As we were walking off the eighteenth green we heard a tone and he said your phone is ringing. I informed him that I had left my phone in the truck. We listened and agreed it was coming from the toolbox in the back of his cart. When John opened the toolbox the ringing became much louder and the frantic search for the origin continued. We finally found the culprit tucked neatly away in his glove. At this point it became hilarious, John pulled out the ringing object shook it, said a few select words, hit it with his hand (it did not stop), threw it down hard on the cart path, many times (it did not stop), stomped on it (it did not stop), finally he beat it with handle of the soil probe several times and it finally died. Imagine the sight of John pummeling this object with me laughing out loud and the entire episode right in front of the clubhouse, it was a sight to see. When I quit laughing I had to ask what had just happened? He explained that yesterday he had taken the day off to be a good dad to take care of his sick son and the crew had found a few security devices from some retail clothing store along the road, that had been cut off from stolen clothes. When the crew brought them into the shop they discovered that periodically the alarms would go off. You guessed it. The crew then proceeded to hide them in his office, in his closet, in the club truck and finally on the toolbox of his cart. Oh, to be loved by your crew.

The last, Phil and I were heading out on the course, when we walked out of the shop to get in the cart, there was a mouse sitting right in front of us. We watched the mouse for a moment and you could see his ears moving and we thought it would scamper away. Phil slowly approached the mouse and hit it with a broom, the mechanic immediately started to laugh, it soon became apparent that the mouse had been dead all the time. It was placed there as a joke on us. The mechanic knew I was coming and had tested the prank and found there was just enough breeze to make the mouse appear alive.

I think I have taken up too much of your time. I am sure as you were reading this you had thoughts of the funny things that you have had happen to you. Next time you are with your peers, share, laugh, don't hold back, and enjoy the foibles of your life. By the way, these stories are very fresh in my mind because these are just a few from 2012. Have a great season and laugh a little and share your stories, who knows when I will have to write another article. **-OC**



*Results. Expect it.*



Scan to your contacts.  
Download free app  
at gettag.mobi

**CHIP HOUMES**  
District Sales Manager  
(217) 260-6943 Mobile  
choumes@precisionlab.com  
[www.precisionlab.com](http://www.precisionlab.com)

**Spectrum Technologies, Inc.**  
"To Measure Is To Know"

*Weather Stations  
Data Loggers  
Frost Alert Systems  
Pest Management Tools  
Irrigation Management Tools  
Soil Moisture and Compaction Meters  
pH, EC, and Nitrogen Meters  
Light and Chlorophyll Meters*



**Greg Zumdahl**  
Sales Consultant

12360 S. Industrial Drive East  
Plainfield, IL 60585

toll free: 800.248.8873  
phone: 815.436.4440  
fax: 815.436.4460

gzumdahl@specmeters.com  
[www.specmeters.com](http://www.specmeters.com)

**RIVERWALLS LTD.**  
P.O. Box 562, Barrington, Illinois 60011

**GOLF COURSE ENHANCEMENT**  
Shoreline Stabilization, Creek Crossings  
Stream and Spillway Re-Construction  
Arched Stone Bridges

1-888-254-4155  
OFFICE: 847-382-9696  
MOBILE: 847-366-5400  
E-mail: [riverwalls@hotmail.com](mailto:riverwalls@hotmail.com)

**DARRYL SCOTT BURKETT**  
C.E.O.

Since 1968 Division of STL Corp. BUY EXPERIENCE



Elburn, IL 60119

Lake Villa, IL 60046

[www.wssg.com](http://www.wssg.com)

Please contact us 24/7 for all of your water well pump service, well rehabilitation and irrigation pump repair needs.

**M.A.G.C.S Core Sponsor**

**Todd Kerry**  
Office: (888)769-9009  
Cell: (630)201-0749  
E-mail: [todd@wssg.com](mailto:todd@wssg.com)

**Tim Kelly**  
Office: (888)769-9009  
Cell: (262) 269-6289  
E-mail: [tkelly@wssg.com](mailto:tkelly@wssg.com)



**HALLORAN & YAUCH, INC.**  
IRRIGATION SYSTEMS

28322 Ballard Road  
Lake Forest, IL 60045

Telephone: 847-281-9400  
Fax: 847-281-9780