

EDUCATION REVIEW

Charles Anfield, CGCS, *Heritage Bluffs Golf Course*



MAGCS Assistant Winter Work Shop

The MAGCS Class C Members met at the Golf House in Lemont for the Assistant Winter Workshop. This event was planned, organized and implemented by the Class C Members. Nick Marfise of Cog Hill Country Club is the Class C Representative for the MAGCS Board. After coffee, donuts and around-the-room-stand-up-introductions it was time to get down to business.

Dave Marquardt of Dirt-n-Turf Consulting was the first speaker of the day. His topic was "Managing Turf Maladies, Fixing the Problem at the Root." He challenged the Members to pick the best starting point for an agronomic program. Of course he was talking about soil, water and tissue testing data. Things like budgets, staff, equipment, logistics, and expectations will dictate how far a program can/will go. The physical conditions of the soil will dictate the agronomy. Soil chemistry is affected by inputs and the subsequent applications of programs. The turf and profile must work together. The importance of the interaction and balances of major and minor nutrients was discussed.

Dave Esler of Vintage Golf Designs presented "Chicago Architecture Primer". This was an overview of influential Golf Course Architects who have created or worked on courses in the Chicago metro area. From a historical perspective, Dave considers some of these courses as "national treasures."



Dave believes the economics of "over grooming" of courses is not sustainable for the future of golf. "The previous 25 years of golf course design, construction, maintenance and marketing have taken our industry down an unsustainable path. We have an economic and social responsibility make golf more affordable, less maintenance and more fun. Most guys are just looking for camaraderie and a few stiff drinks at the end of the round. Dave explained, "I have had a number of Jesus meetings with banks and Boards as to how to continue to do business. This current recession with Clubs closing and/or changing hands is a wake- up call. The sh#! has hit the fan."

Greg Martin of Martin Design Partnership presented on "Trends in Golf Course Design, Development and Renovation." Greg continued on the theme of the golf industry changing. Greg made a point of emphasizing that we are in the *golfer*

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business. The players have increasing expectations and are looking for the best facilities that will engage them. There are more and more choices locally for golf. "Just like the skiing industry, we need to create bunny slope courses. We need right sizing for specific players to enhance their experience." Greg cited other trends in the industry that include: renovations, infrastructure improvements and cost benefit analysis. "At this time in the golf industry you need to be committed. The current trends in golf course architecture philosophy are fewer, smaller bunkers. As an organization you need to understand the benefits of improvements

and the potential loss of revenue of ongoing maintenance issues. It is important to do a cost analysis and record labor issues of high maintenance areas."

A lunch of pizza and pop was served and the speakers came back out to answer questions at length about a number of subjects and topics. The attendees then broke up into small groups to answer a trivia quiz for prizes. The event was a good opportunity to network, create new friendships and gain more knowledge of current trends within the industry.

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