

on 05/2015

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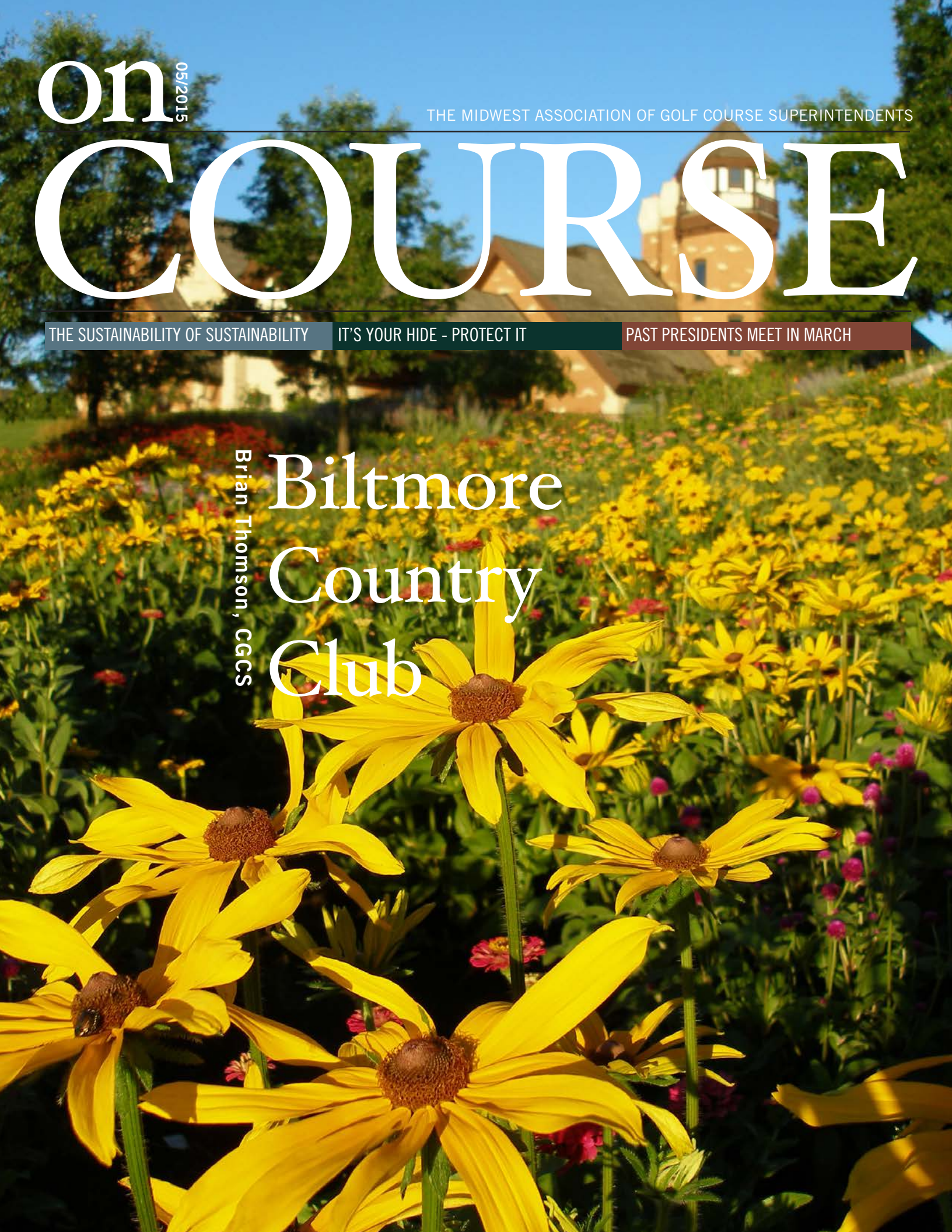
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PAST PRESIDENTS MEET IN MARCH

Brian Thomson, CGCS

Biltmore Country Club





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front cover

Biltmore Country Club has been maintained by Brian Thomson and crew for the past 18 seasons. Two things come to most everyone's mind when they think of Biltmore. The first is the peat bog it is built on and the second are the flower beds around the clubhouse and on the course.

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2015 MIDWEST EVENTS

- 5/12 Midwest / ITF Meeting, Biltmore Country Club
- 6/22 Midwest June Meeting, Flossmoor Country Club
- 7/14 Midwest 9 Hole Event, Flagg Creek Golf Course
- 8/25 Midwest Golf Championship, Prairie Landing GC

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Pass the Gravy



Ed Braunsky, CGCS
Geneva Golf Club

One of the traditions in March is the coming together of the Midwest Past Presidents for their annual council meeting. For the past eight years we have met at Geneva Golf Club and for the past two we've shared a home-style turkey dinner.

We have the meal catered by a local restaurant and we keep remarking how much we enjoy it, months after Thanksgiving. Most celebrate Thanksgiving with their families, and it made me think, the Midwest is one big family, and the past presidents are one small group within that family, somewhat similar to a parent or maybe now, a proud grandparent. Proud, because they are each responsible in some way for what the Midwest has become. This annual event gives the council a platform to continue guiding and caring for the Midwest and this year was no exception. There were 13 past presidents and four current board members in attendance.

Many of the issues the group talked about were similar to past year's discussions. We are fortunate the Midwest is managed well by those that continue to care about the profession and the impact each one of us makes at our own golf course. One of the items we discussed was making sure the Midwest continues to grow at the member level. We're not as much concerned with having more members for the sake of being larger, but being inclusive, and making sure those who should be members are encouraged to join.

The current board does a good job of reaching out to superintendents who are new to the area and inviting them to join or attend a meeting, but they can't know everyone who is new. Each one of us has a responsibility to invite others to join the Midwest. If a new sales representative walks into your office, make sure they know about the Midwest. If you hire a new assistant, or intern, sign them up. They are the caretakers of the future. It is important they learn the value of the Midwest and it starts with you. Even if you can't make it to a meeting, send your assistant. Even though you may think a meeting or educational event is not worthwhile at this point in your career, it may really open up the eyes of some of our younger members. Think about one of your first Midwest meetings. (It's hard not to think about some of the dinosaurs that were in the room, a class that I'm almost one.) It is good for the young folks to see that there are many people out there just like them, who share the same passion and zeal for their profession. It is up to you to make sure they are part of the family by encouraging them. And you young guys seek out the older members of the Midwest. They have a lot to share and most of them are happy to help guide you along your way – if you can, remember to speak loudly and slow.



The two Eds look over some photos at the Past Presidents Meeting in March

Support the companies that support the Midwest. If you are working with a company that doesn't, ask them to – it can only help them in the long run – and if they don't want to – maybe you should think about how long they plan to be around. We're coming off a couple of great events that we couldn't do without our associate members' support – the Hospitality Reception and the Wee One Auction. The production of *On Course* continues to be covered by our advertisers each year. It is truly a family that takes care to preserve itself. Please do your part. Now what's for dessert? @

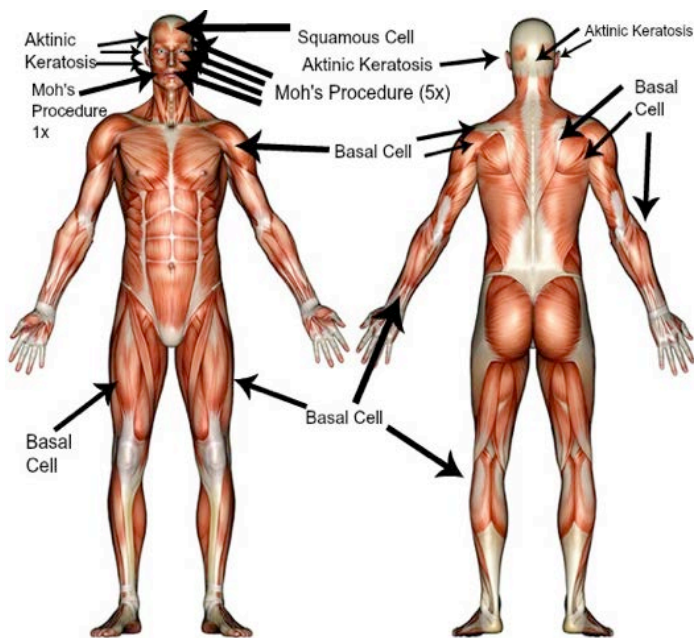
It's Your Hide Protect It

Tim Anderson, CGCS MG Naperville Country Club

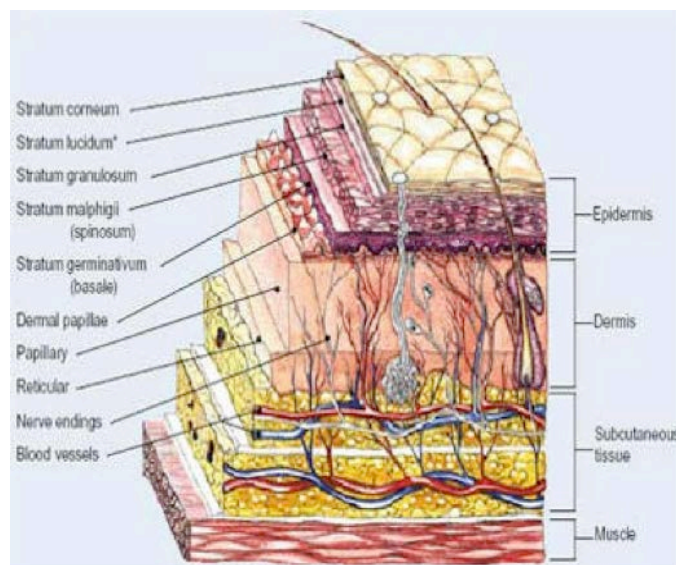
This year the Editorial Committee will be writing a series of articles with a focus on health and fitness. For some reason they thought I might be well suited to write an article on skin cancer.

That's me (back before my 6-pack turned into a keg). Or at least that is who I am in the eyes of my dermatologist. I was first diagnosed with a non-melanoma form of skin cancer in 1994, at the age of 30. But I am not alone. About 1 million people a year learn that they have skin cancer.

cells. The deepest part of the epidermis (outer layer of the skin) contains melanocytes. Melanocytes produce melanin, which is what gives the skin its color. The dermis layer (inner layer of the skin) is located underneath the epidermis. The dermis contains blood vessels, lymph vessels, hair follicles and sweat glands. These glands can also produce oil, which helps to keep the skin from drying out.



Tim Anderson from the eyes of his dermatologist.



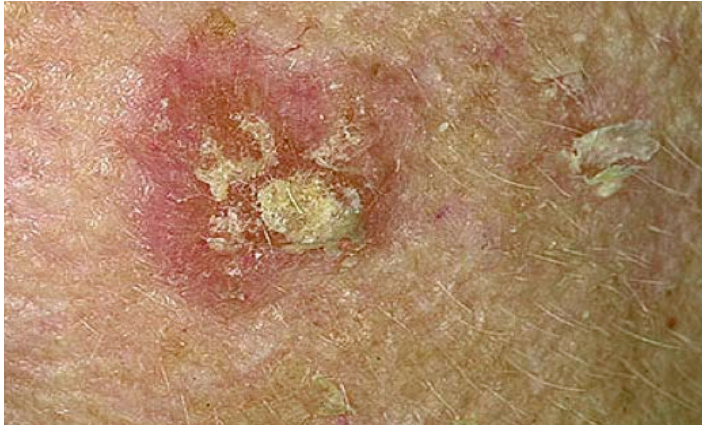
The skin is the body's largest organ.

The skin is our body's outer covering. It protects us against heat, light, injury and infection. It regulates our body temperature and stores water, fat and vitamins. Our skin is made up of two layers: the outer layer, which is called the epidermis, and the inner layer, which is referred to as the dermis. The epidermis is primarily made up of squamous cells. Squamous cells are flat, scale-like cells. Under the squamous cells are round cells called basal

What Is Skin Cancer?

In a perfect world, healthy cells grow, divide and replace themselves in an orderly manner. When normal cells lose their ability to replace themselves in an orderly manner, then chaos rules and the cells grow at an accelerated rate. Too much tissue is produced and tumors begin to form. Tumors are classified as either benign or malignant. Benign tumors are not cancer.

They do not spread, and are seldom life-threatening. Malignant tumors are cancerous. They can spread (metastasize) to other organs. When this abnormal growth involves skin cells, then it is identified as skin cancer.



Actinic Keratosis (Solar Keratosis) is caused by too much sun and can be an early warning sign of skin cancer.

Types of Skin Cancer

There are three types of skin cancer: basal cell carcinoma, squamous cell carcinoma and malignant melanoma. Carcinoma is a term used to refer to any cancer that begins in the cells that cover or line an organ. Your skin is an organ. Basal cell and squamous cell carcinoma are sometimes collectively referred to as non-melanoma skin cancer. Melanoma is a skin cancer that develops in the melanocytes. Melanoma is more serious than basal or squamous cell cancer. Melanoma can spread (metastasize) quickly to other parts of the body through the lymph system or blood. If left untreated, melanoma can advance, resulting in terminal skin cancer. Another term common to any discussion of skin cancer is actinic keratosis. Actinic keratosis can appear as a rough, or red, scaly patch on your skin. Technically, actinic keratosis is not classified as cancer. However, such areas are important because they frequently indicate a precancerous condition and they can serve as early warning indicators for squamous cell skin cancer. Both basal cell and squamous cell cancers are found mainly on exposed areas of the skin (head, face, neck and arms). However, skin cancer can occur anywhere on the body.

Actinic Keratosis (Solar Keratosis)

These small, scaly patches are caused by too much sun, and commonly occur on the head, neck, or hands, but can be found elsewhere. They can be an early warning sign of skin cancer, but it's hard to tell whether a particular patch will continue to change over time and become cancerous. Most do not, but doctors recommend early treatment to prevent the development of squamous cell skin cancer. Fair-skinned, blond, or red-haired people with blue or green eyes are most at risk.

Cause and Prevention

Skin cancer is the most common type of cancer in the United States. The incidence of skin cancer is on the rise. One estimate

suggests that 50% of all Americans will have skin cancer at least once. Ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun is the main cause of skin cancer. Your risk of skin cancer is affected by what part of the country you live in as well as your lifetime exposure to UV radiation—in other words, how much time you have spent in the sun.

Most people receive 80% of their lifetime exposure to the sun by 18 years of age. Obviously this statistic doesn't hold true for people who work outdoors, such as golf course employees. People most at risk for skin cancer have fair skin, freckles, blond hair and light-colored eyes. Some studies have found that as few as one blistering-type sunburn during your childhood can increase your chance of developing skin cancer by 50%.

Most skin cancers don't develop until after age 50, but keep in mind that skin cancer is very slow-growing. A sunburn received this year could initiate a change in the growth of your skin cells that may take up to 20 years to develop into a cancerous condition. The American Academy of Dermatology and the Skin Cancer Foundation recommend the following steps to reduce the risk of skin cancer:

- Minimize your exposure to midday sun (10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.).
- Apply sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher to all exposed areas.
- Reapply sunscreen every two hours (or as needed due to perspiration) even on cloudy days.
- Wear clothing that covers your body and shades your face and neck.
- Avoid exposure to UV radiation from tanning booths.
- Protect your children. Severely limit exposure of children under the age of 6 months to UV rays.
- Protect your eyes from UV rays. Absorption of UV rays by the eye and surrounding area can cause benign or malignant growths on the eyelids or surface of the eye.
- Initiate these preventative measures at an early age and continue them through adulthood.

Symptoms

The most common warning sign of skin cancer is a visible change in the texture and/or appearance of your skin. This is especially true if you experience a new growth, notice a mole that changes size or color or develop a scab that doesn't heal. Skin cancers don't always look the same. Most commonly, skin cancer appears as:

1. A small, smooth, shiny, pale or waxy lump.
2. A firm red lump.
3. A lump that bleeds or develops a crust.

Look for the following early warning signs (see images A, B, C, D, E):

Just because you notice a change in your skin does not mean that you have cancer. However, if a change persists, then you should have it checked by a physician. Remember, you can have symptoms present without feeling any pain or discomfort.

Continued on next page.



A - asymmetry means one half of a mole does not match the other half. Normal moles are symmetrical. When checking your moles or freckles, draw an imaginary line through the middle and compare the two halves. If they do not look the same on both sides, have it checked by a dermatologist.



D - a mole is suspicious if the diameter is larger than the eraser of a pencil.



B - if the border or edges of the mole are ragged, blurred, or irregular, have it checked by a dermatologist. Melanoma lesions often have uneven borders.



C - a mole that does not have the same color throughout or that has shades of tan, brown, black, blue, white, or red is suspicious. Normal moles are usually a single shade of color. A mole of many shades or that has lightened or darkened should be checked by a doctor.



E - a mole that is evolving – shrinking, growing larger, changing color, begins to itch or bleed – should be checked. If a portion of the mole appears newly elevated, or raised from the skin, have it looked at by a doctor. Melanoma lesions often grow in size or change in height rapidly.

When you are doing a self-exam, you should check your skin in a well-lit room using a full-length mirror. Check all areas, including your back, scalp, underarms, feet, hands, etc. Make notes of anything that is different since your last exam. By checking your skin regularly, you will become familiar with what is normal and it will be easier to detect any unusual changes. Schedule an annual skin cancer screening with a physician. Make them aware of your above-average UV exposure. Draw the doctor's attention to any questionable areas that you have identified while conducting self-exams. Diagnosis usually involves the surgical removal of all or

Continued on page 9.

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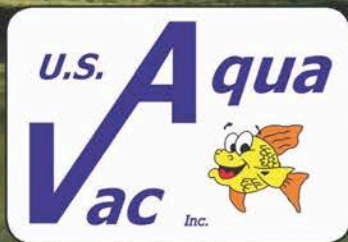
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A Tribute to Wayne Otto, CGCS

part of any abnormal growths. This is called a biopsy. The biopsy is sent to a pathologist, who examines it under a microscope to determine whether or not it is cancerous. If it is cancerous, then it is classified as either local (affecting only the skin) or metastatic (spreading beyond the skin). If it is metastatic, then the physician may conduct additional biopsies of the adjacent tissue and lymph nodes, prior to determining a treatment plan.

Treatments

Any treatment plan should be developed and implemented by a trained physician. Doctors specializing in diseases of the skin are called dermatologists. When treating skin cancer, the doctor's main goal is to remove or destroy the cancer completely. Treatment methods may include surgical removal, radiation treatments, chemotherapy, Mohs' surgery, electrodesiccation, cryosurgery, laser treatments, skin-grafting or topical chemotherapy lotions.

Developed by Dr. Frederick Mohs in the 1930s. Today, Mohs' surgery has come to be accepted as the single most effective technique for removing Basal Cell and Squamous Cell Carcinoma, the two most common skin cancers. Mohs' surgery preserves the greatest amount of healthy tissue while completely removing cancerous cells; cure rates for Basal Cell and Squamous Cell treated with Mohs' is unparalleled at 98 percent or higher. This is significantly better than the rates for standard removal methods.



*Scar from a successful Mohs' Procedure
(photo by and of John Gurke)*


New treatments currently being researched include photodynamic therapy, which combines the use of drugs (which make the cells sensitive to light) in combination with the use of a laser. Biological therapy (also called immunotherapy) is a treatment aimed at improving the body's natural ability to fight cancer. Interferon is an experimental type of biological therapy.

As important as early detection and treatment is proper follow-up care. Once cured, skin cancer can recur in the same spot. After you have been diagnosed with skin cancer, you have a higher-than-average risk of developing a new skin cancer somewhere else on your body.

Are you Willing to Pay a Pound of Flesh?

When it comes to skin cancer you need to consult a qualified physician. References for board-certified dermatologist can be obtained by contacting the physician referral service at your local

hospital, contacting the American Academy of Dermatology, contacting the Illinois State Medical Society or obtaining a referral from your primary care physician. My hope is that this article will convince you that:

- Given our profession, we are all at an elevated risk for skin cancer.
- Each of us needs to make a serious commitment to self-examination, early detection and routine skin cancer protection.
- Before things get crazy this season, take advantage of the opportunity to make an appointment with a Board Certified Dermatologist for a skin cancer screening. 

Skin Cancer - Fact vs. Fiction

- Fact = Nearly half of all new cancer cases reported in the United States annually are skin cancer.
- Fact = More than 1 million new cases of skin cancer will be diagnosed this year.
- Fact = Basal and squamous cell carcinoma have a better than 95% cure rate if treated early.
- Fact = 9,800 people will die from skin cancer this year.
- Fact = In the United States, one person dies from melanoma every hour.
- Fact = Caucasian males over age 50 have the highest mortality rates from melanoma.
- Fact = Since 1980, the incidence of melanoma has more than tripled for Caucasians.
- Fact = Currently 1 in 39 Americans will develop melanoma.
- Fact = Currently 1 in 67 Americans will develop metastatic melanoma.
- Fiction = Skin cancer only affects the elderly.
- Fiction = Tanning booths and sun lamps are safe sources of UV rays and do not increase the risk of skin cancer.
- Fiction = Individuals that tan or have dark complexions are not affected by UV rays and do not need to be concerned with skin cancer.

SUPER-N-site

Brian Thomson, CGCS
Biltmore Country Club

Nate Bolhous, Briarwood Country Club

PHOTO CREDITS: BRIAN THOMSON, WYATT BYRD, PETER WESTFALL

It seems spring has finally decided to show it self this week; fingers crossed no more snowy surprises, and most everyone is hitting the ground running. After a moderately mild winter it appears everyone has come out all right and can focus on wrapping up fall projects and clean and prep the course for play.

Brian Thomson, CGCS, has a little more time to prepare his course for the upcoming May MAGCS event when the association heads to Biltmore Country Club.

Biltmore Country Club sits in the northwest suburb of Barrington and was formed back in 1926. The course was designed by local golf course architect, Leonard Macomber. During this golden age of golf, Macomber also designed Mission Hills in Northbrook, Cedardell Golf Club in Plano and Euclid Hills Country Club (now Silver Lake Country Club's North Course in Orland Park).

Approximately half of Biltmore Country Club was built on a peat bog, posing potential drainage problems. Throughout Brian's 19 year tenure he has completed close to 40 miles of tile work ranging from small 4" lines all the way to 18" monsters. The peat in some places is 30' deep! Normally, it is best to keep the moisture level low on the bog to promote playability, but Brian does have the ability to reverse irrigate through the drainage system when the bog dries out. Sounds backwards but if the peat gets too dry it poses as a fire hazard and can ignite. In the past few years Brian and the crew have been busy installing XGD drainage in-house to all of their push up greens. This project was recently completed and now they look to design and build a short game facility on recently purchased property.

A big feature of Biltmore Country Club is the 65-acre Honey Lake that offers a private beach for the membership.



The Thomson clan (l to r) brother Mark, wife Karen, sons Colin and Cameron and Brian on the Old Course this past spring while visiting Cameron while he was studying abroad.



Honey Lake is a major draw in the summer months offering swimming, dinner, and a great area to host events. Another feature that Biltmore has been known for are the extensive flower beds throughout the course and surrounding the clubhouse grounds. Brian's wife Karen designs each bed every year. Brian

and his crew have made large efforts with the surrounding wildlife making Biltmore a certified Audubon International Cooperative Sanctuary and work hard to maintain that certification.

Brian didn't grow up with much of a golf background, he just always knew he liked being outdoors and didn't ever want to wear a tie. He started working at Oakland Hills in Detroit while spending the rest of the year attending The Iowa State University where his wife Karen also studied. From there he worked at a trio of clubs at Hilton Head including: Port Royal Golf and Racquet Club, Wexford Plantation, and Long Cove Club. From there he made the trip over to Biltmore Country Club where he has been for the past 19 years. His son Cameron is currently wrestling for his alma mater and they have hopes their younger son Colin will also attend The Iowa State University to continue the family tradition!

The Thomson family has been very involved with the outdoors and adventure. Both of their sons (Colin and Cameron)

are eagle scouts, and Brian and Karen have taken some long bicycle excursions. They have taken two very long trips; the first from Seattle to Pennsylvania, the second from Anchorage, Alaska to Maine. The second trip took them within 200 miles of the arctic circle, through Yellowstone and Teton National Parks; 3,000 miles of the total 7,000 mile trip was over gravel roads and took nearly 5 months! Apart from the bicycle trips; they have favorite spots to hike and backpack through including: Glacier National Park, Waterton National Park, and the Appalachian Trail. Brian doesn't play a whole lot of golf, but he has been on some pretty nice properties aside from the ones mentioned above. His most memorable visits include one to Pebble Beach and more recently he was able to ride along and tour the original St. Andrews course.

Spring is here and it's full speed ahead for the 201516 season; Brian, Peter and the BCC crew are polishing up the course to shine when the Midwest association travels there in May for the second outing of the year! Pictures on page 12. @





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BullSheet



May 2015

Dates to Remember

May 12 – MAGCS/ITF Combined Golf Day at Biltmore Country Club, Brian Thomson, CGCS host.

May 16 – 2015 Par 3 Golf Marathon at Zigfield Troy Golf Course in Woodridge, IL, Dennis Troy host superintendent.

June 2 – CAGCS Founder's Cup at Northmoor Country Club, Tommy Witt host.

June 22 – MAGCS monthly meeting at Flossmoor Country Club, Derek Weber host.

July 14 - MAGCS Nine Hole Golf Outing at Flagg Creek Golf Course, Doug Davis host

July 29 - John Buck Scholarship Fund Outing, Marengo Ridge Golf Club

August 25, 2015 - Midwest Golf Championship at Prairie Landing Golf Club, Tony Kalina host.

It's that time again—when Golf Digest magazine publishes its rankings of golf courses across the land, and we find out whether we made one of the lists. Mine didn't—AGAIN—but it turns out that quite a few MAGCS members are taking care of those courses, so here they are: In the list of America's 100 Greatest Courses, the following members' facilities made it: #4—Shinnecock Hills (**Jonathan Jennings, CGCS**); #14—Chicago Golf Club (**Scott Bordner**); #17—Oakland Hills Country Club South Course (**Steve Cook, CGCS, MG**); #39—Medinah Country Club #3 (**Curtis Tyrrell, CGCS, MG**); #46—Butler National Golf Club (**Mike Sauls**); #60—Canyata Golf Club (**Dave Schingel**); #66—Olympia Fields Country Club North Course (**Sam MacKenzie, CGCS**); #81—Rich Harvest Links (**Jeff VerCautren**); #99—Shoreacres (**Brian Palmer**).

Also notable was that our neighbors in Wisconsin, Indiana, Minnesota and Michigan had ELEVEN of the top 100 courses, proving golf in the Midwest is still the place to go for great golf. In the Top 100 Public Courses, Cog Hill Golf & Country Club's #4 Dubsdread course moved up 11 spots from its previous ranking to #53 (**Chris Flick**), while The Wilderness at Fortune Bay in Tower, MN (**Vince Dodge**) was ranked 57th. Congrats to everyone who are privileged to work at these great facilities.

Congratulations AND condolences to **Jan Jarvis** on his feat of golf wizardry at the MAGCS April golf event at St. Charles Country Club. Congratulations for the hole-in-one he carded on the 7th hole (using his driver for the 158-yard left-to-right skanker) and condolences on the money that left his wallet to buy drinks for everyone in the 19th Hole afterward. Well done, sir!



Congratulations to Oak Park Country Club (Al Fierst and Phil Cuffare) on celebrating its 100th year. OPCC is the first solo effort in the Chicagoland area from famed architect Donald Ross.

Q: What famous feature on the Links of St. Andrews in Scotland does **Dan Stahl's** course have?

A: The Orchard Valley of Sin.

GCSAA is offering its "Thank a Golf Course Superintendent" Sweepstakes, which gives entrants a chance to win a trip to the PGA Championship in August at Whistling Straits, until the end of this month. You may have seen the commercials for the campaign airing on Golf Channel and during televised PGA Tour events, which feature

Continued on page 17.

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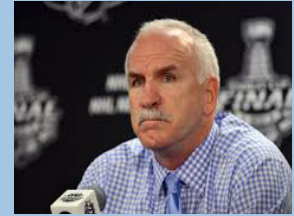
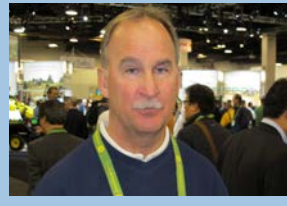
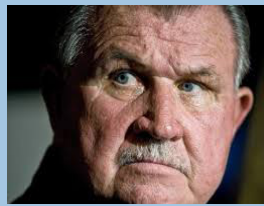
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clips from Jack Nicklaus, Rory McIlroy, Michelle Wie, Nick Faldo, Rickie Fowler, Graeme McDowell, Matt Kuchar, Johnny Miller, Davis Love, Nick Price, Colin Montgomerie, Jason Day and Karrie Webb all thanking superintendents. Entrants need to visit www.gcsaa.org/thankasuperintendent to send a message to their favorite superintendent. GCSAA will then deliver the message, and automatically enter the sender in the contest for a trip for two, including airfare, lodging, and event tickets. Tell all your friends.

MIDWEST Doppelgänger



What is it with angry coaches in Chicago and their uncanny resemblance to the angriest superintendent in Chicago?

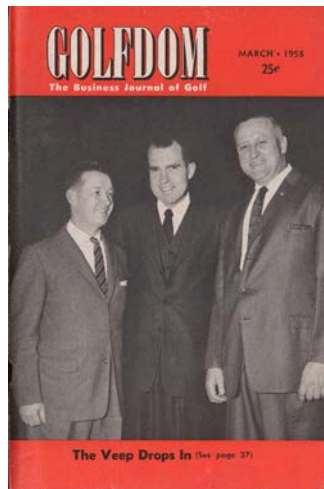
This just in: The IGCEMA is no longer. I know, I know—WHO? The IGCEMA is—I'm sorry, WAS—the International Golf Course Equipment Managers Association, until April 27th when its membership voted to dissolve the association. There is a happy ending, though, as GCSAA had already voted in February at its annual meeting to introduce an equipment manager classification for membership, ensuring strong ties with equipment managers and recognizing them for the vital role they play at a golf facility.

On a recent junket to Pinehurst Resort in North Carolina, ProGro's **Mike Werth** found out that not only do they do the golf thing big, with NINE golf courses and its own town, they do EVERYTHING big, right down to the desserts. Key lime pie anyone?



The USGA is sure stepping up to the tee recently, having contributed \$50,000 to help GCSAA fund new research projects for this year. These funds are earmarked to directly support the Chapter Cooperative Research Program, in which each participating chapter identifies one or more research projects that address a significant local issue for superintendents. THIS is interesting: Can you guess what the number-one sport is in Iceland? Golf! In Iceland. In a country with fewer than 400,000 people, there are 150 golf courses, a ratio of one course for every 2,666 citizens. If we had the same ratio, there would be 11,815,453 golf courses in the United States (with about 600,000 closing their doors annually no doubt).

Cool blast from the past—this 1958 issue of Golfdom magazine cover featured not only then Vice President of the United States Richard Nixon, but another



president who DIDN'T have to resign in shame—our own Robert Williams, who led our association in 1956 and was GCSAA President in 1958.

Congratulations to **Steve Cook, CGCS, MG** on being one of Golf Course Industry (GCI) magazine's 2015 Super Social Media Awards winners. Announced at the Golf Industry Show, Steve won the John Kaminski Leadership Award for his effective and educational communications to his membership through his blog and other social media outlets. That one was pretty much a slam dunk, huh?



The first golf event of the year recently took place, and do you know who won the Spring Scramble at St. Charles Country Club? WHO CARES? It was "**What's Sheppy Wearing**" that had everyone all atwitter. In recognition of our first event being so close to the first of the four Majors in golf, Shep went with the Augusta look, donning the triple green ensemble (quadruple if you count the 7-Up can). VERY nice!

A couple of our local superintendents were spotted recently in the media (which is usually a good thing). **Chuck Barber** was seen on TurfNet TV in a video of his fairway roller conversion procedure; while **Todd Schmitz** of Phillips Park Golf Course was featured in a Kane County Chronicle article about the misconception of golf courses as polluters, and what he (and all of us) is doing to dispel those misconceptions. News you can use!

This just in: Contrary to popular belief, **Eddie Braunsky** CAN actually read! **Dr. Ed Nangle** caught the rare sighting on a recent visit to Ed's "office."



continued on next page

Back to that Spring Scramble at St. Charles on the 27th of April... It really was a perfect day for golf—a wee bit of a nip in the air, but no crazy sleet or snow as we have experienced in years past. **Chris Plumb** gave a very informative presentation on pump house care and maintenance (using a Power Point show that he himself made), followed by the four-person scramble format. The winners—because we DO care—with a net 57 were **John Anderson, Dave Groelle, Matt Kregel and Eric Nadler**. And of course Jan Jarvis for his aforementioned ace on #7. And ultimately **Chuck Barber, Jason Kahlstorf**, and the staff at St. Charles CC for a great course and a great day. Oh, and let's not forget our sponsors, who were **Burris Equipment Company, H & E Sod Nursery, Healthy Grow, Nels J. Johnson Tree Experts, Precision Labs, Rain Bird, Reinders, Inc., Syngenta Professional Products** and **XGD Systems**. Thank you all! @



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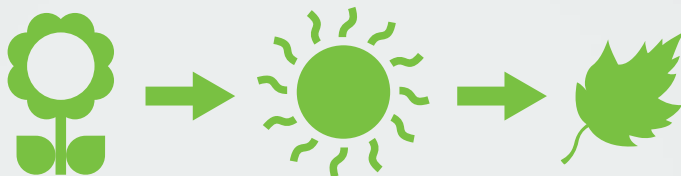
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The Sustainability of Sustainability

Elliott L. Dowling, USGA



Discussing sustainability is a frequent occurrence during all course consulting visits. Golf facilities are striving to be more sustainable, but some are struggling to define what sustainability means to them.

The truth is sustainability is different for every golf course. No “black book” exists that explicitly details what courses must do to become more sustainable, but there are several options. As you will read, many paths lead to sustainability, the difficulty is finding the path that is best for your facility.

Most think of sustainability in two distinct ways, environmental and economic. Both pathways provide significant benefit, but remember golf is a game and enhancing golfer enjoyment is tremendously important.

Environmental

Golf is an outdoor game played on a natural surface during three of four seasons (in the Midwest). This makes available direct connections to the environment, and playing golf is a good way to connect with nature. Most golfers consider themselves environmentalists, and reducing the golf course’s environmental impact can be a popular objective.

There are many ways to reduce golf course’s environmental impact, some of the more common are:

- Transitioning maintained turf areas to less maintained naturalized areas. These areas, if truly maintained, as a reduced maintenance area requires fewer herbicides, fertilizer and water than maintained rough does. Reducing the use rates of herbicides, fertilizers and water are all key objectives to sustainability.
- Install buffer strips around ponds, streams or drainage swales to reduce movement of fertilizer and/or plant protectants into the adjacent water. Water use and quality will continue to be a topic of great debate amongst golfers and non-golfers alike. Whatever your facility can do to improve water quality will pay dividends in the future.
- Utilize improved turfgrass varieties. New bentgrasses and turf-type tall fescue are more heat and drought tolerant than their older cousins and brothers. Additionally, many of them

have enhanced tolerance of various common diseases and insects that require repeat applications just to limit damage. Their tolerance or resistance to certain common afflictions means fewer plant protectants and water is necessary to maintain optimum playing conditions.

- Improve irrigation efficiency. The efficiency of irrigation systems directly affects water use and playability. Old, inefficient irrigation systems provide less uniform coverage versus a new system specifically designed for the contours of the golf course. The net result of inefficient systems is the facility uses more water than necessary in areas that may not need it creating overly saturated soils thus reducing playing conditions. Additionally, efficient irrigation systems use less energy to pump water leading to reductions in energy costs.



Planting naturalized areas around the golf course is an excellent way to reduce inputs. Naturalized areas are low maintenance that will positively affect the environmental footprint of the course, if done correctly.

Economic

Some facilities are unique and unable to make changes to water or fertilizer use. This could be due to recent reductions to one or both, or another circumstance that limit reductions such as golf courses that are unable to plant naturalized areas due to design or golf course style. If this is the case, consider making economic changes to improve sustainability. Economic changes are easy to overlook when considering sustainability because golf is an outdoor game that is best while enjoying Mother Nature's splendor.



Improving or updating practice facilities will attract new players to the course, and help maintain current players. Offering various areas to practice such as a short game, full range tee (if room is available) multiple sand bunkers and practice greens allows players of all skill levels to work on their game.

To that end, some common thoughts on economic sustainability are:

- One economic improvement I see recently is updating/improving practice areas. Golf rounds may be down or flat around the country but time spent practicing is up! Improving practice areas attracts more players to the facility thus improving current player satisfaction and potentially leading to more players using the course. Both instances make the amenity and the facility more economically sustainable.



It is counter intuitive for golfers and non-golfers to consider that increasing the number of irrigation heads actually leads to reductions in water. One can improve irrigation efficiency with increased heads leading to less water waste by trying to water the course with an inefficient system.

- Have you considered solar power? Improving energy use and consumption or, using alternative energy is ways to improve economic and environmental sustainability. Golf courses throughout the United States are beginning to install solar panels on golf carts to reduce the reliability on electricity. If this change is not correct for your facility, simply changing lightbulbs in the maintenance facility and clubhouse from incandescent to LED can reduce energy costs thus, reducing the environmental footprint of the facility. While you are transitioning lightbulbs, install motion sensors in each room



Solar panels are an excellent way to reduce the facilities' energy dependency. Panels can be fit to golf carts, roofs or simply placed in an open area, away from play.

- so that lights are only on when the room is in use.
- Now is the time (or past time) to improve the junior golf program at your facility. This goes hand-in-hand with improving practice areas to attract new players. The viability of golf facilities everywhere depends on attracting new players to the game. Is your facility doing a good job attracting players? New players, that continue to use the facility or potentially join the club one day helps ensure the sustainability of the course into the future.



Transitioning from older variety grasses and Poa annua to newer varieties will reduce inputs such as water use and fertilizer and plant protectants. Reducing one or all of these will improve the sustainability of the facility.

The take home message is sustainability is not a straight line. One path does not lead every facility to sustainability; rather there are many paths to sustainability. The difficult part is selecting the path that fits best. I hope that every facility can find ways to become more environmentally sustainable but remember there are economic paths as well. Do not forget to peak down these paths occasionally and see where the road leads. ☺



Pump Station Maintenance

Chuck Anfield, Heritage Bluffs Golf Course



Chris Plumb getting ready to present to the group holding his favorite meter, a T5-600 Fluke Voltage and Current Tester.

The April MAGCS meeting was held at St. Charles Country Club on a beautiful spring day. Chuck Barber and his staff were our gracious hosts. Chris Plumb, owner/operator of Absolute Pump Service was the education presenter for the day. His topic was Irrigation Pump Station Maintenance. Chris has been in and around pumps and pump stations for 35 years. He has worked in the turf industry for 21 of those years. He has seen and worked on the best and the worst of golf course irrigation pump stations.

A normal pump station, brand new out of the box, has a typical life expectancy of 13 years. Reliability becomes the key issue as a pump station wears and ages. A VFD (variable frequency drive) pump has a life expectancy of 10 years. It will fail after 15 years.

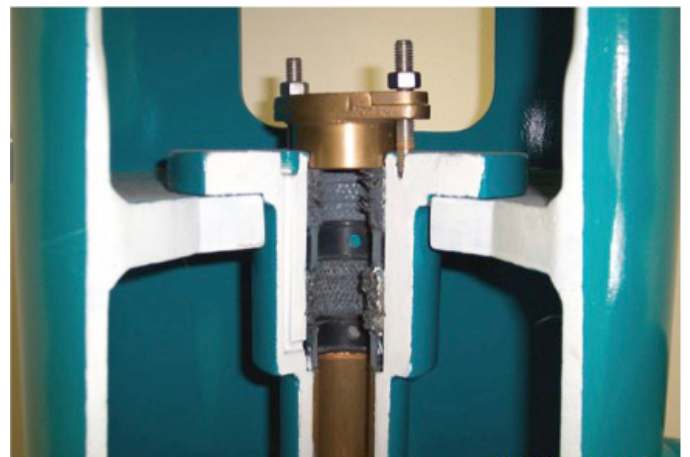
There are some things you to extend the life of your station.

- Keep it clean and spray wax on the working parts. It can extend your pump station beyond 20 years.
- Provide a good environment:
 - Good ventilation is very important to keep pumps cool. Heat and moisture area bad combination for pump stations.
 - Good lighting.
 - Good water quality

The big question to ask, is it worth it to put money into an old irrigation pump station? Rebuilding motors can be half the cost of new motors. However, there is additional cost of renting a crane, down time for repair and the cost of rebuilding. If you are planning on purchasing new pumps, check on service and parts availability of new motors before you purchase.

So what else can go wrong in the pump house that requires regular maintenance?

- Check valves and isolation valves can rot out. They typically have a life expectancy of 13 years.
- Flush valves regularly.
- Pressure relief valves- these need to be taken apart and cleaned or they will rust shut.
- PLC (programmable logic controllers) these, like most computer parts become obsolete after a short time. Replacement parts become difficult or impossible to find.
- Pump Display- most are already obsolete.
- Wet well, intake and flume- these corrode rust and wear out, inspect them regularly.
- Pressure relief tanks - These can rust from the inside



The packing around the shaft of the pump can dry out and become hard over time, losing its lubrication. Packing should be changed annually.

out. They contain compressed air and are under high pressure and they can literally become a bomb and blow the roof off your pump house.

- Electrical connections need to be checked for tightness, especially on newer pumps. A loose connection can heat up and melt contactor.
- Pump packing and seals. These need to be changed every year. If this is done you will have no issues. Neglecting this packing replacement can create unusual wear on the shaft and reduce the life span.



Tanks are pressurized with compressed air and can explode.

Some issues in pump house maintenance and repair that are trending are:

1. Taking annual readings and document head pressure
2. Taking dead head pressure.
3. Meggering motor windings and connections.
4. Measuring flow at duty point with pressure and amps.
5. Measuring volts at no load and full load

RESPECTING VOLTAGE

- Don't wear jewelry when working with electricity (Chris used a graphic photo of a ring finger after a ring melted, no need to reprint picture.)
- Use only fused meters when measuring electricity. Chris' favorite is a Fluke T5-600 - it is \$100 on Amazon. (Apparently no one told Chris the talk couldn't be commercial in nature.)
- Use flash protection
- Do not work on if you are wet or standing in water.
- If you are not comfortable with electricity DON'T DO IT!

A good and reliable irrigation system is the "heart" of a golf course. Most golf courses in our area have a mixed turf stand of poa annua and bentgrass that requires water on a daily basis during the heat of the summer. As we all know, golfers do like their grass green. Do the maintenance before you need to do the repairs. @

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Scott Bordner
Golf Course Superintendent
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Where did you grow up?

Dakota, IL. It is a small town of 500 people between Rockford and Freeport.

First golf course you where you worked?

I started working at Park Hills Golf Course for Dave Fisher when I was in High School.

Do you have a prized possession?

I can't single out one thing, but I have a pretty good golf memorabilia collection in my man cave.

What do you like to drink?

A lot of different types of beer. My favorite is Tripel Karmeliet.

Favorite job task at the golf course?

Hand watering greens right behind the mowers.

Dream car?



Favorite pig out food?

I have a sweet tooth for sure, so there are many options.

What is your favorite restaurant to go to?

Q, it is down in the city. Bring your appetite.

What is your favorite movie and actor?

Honestly I am not into books or many movies. I am more of a magazine and blog guy. Lets go with the political answer....On Course Magazine .

What is your favorite sports team?

The Cubs

What is your best vacation or favorite destination?

Skiing in Colorado



Quite possibly one of the best images for a personality profile: Scott Bordner representing his home team.

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