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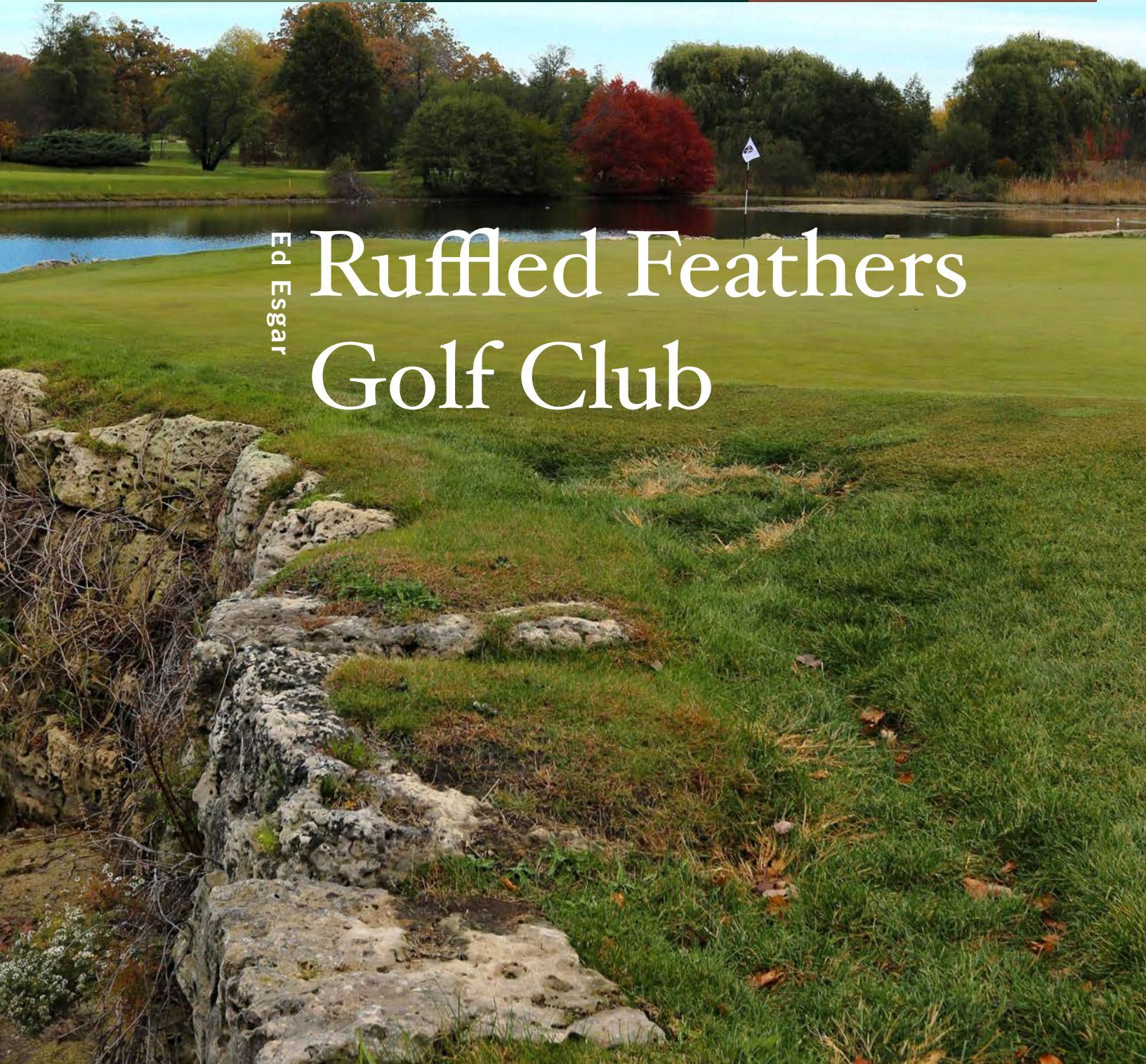
THE ASSISTANT GAP

HIVE TALKING

THE PLACE TO BE

Ed Esgar

Ruffled Feathers Golf Club



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front cover

Ed Esgar will host the Midwest on April 26 at his facility, Ruffled Feathers Golf Club. Pictured is the 11th hole, the short par 3, that usually plays into a cross wind from behind the green. Learn more about our host on page 18 in this month's Super-n-Site.

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2016 UPCOMING MIDWEST EVENTS

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- 5/16 Midwest/ITF Play Day, Makray Memorial Golf Club
- 6/21 NCERA Research Tour, North Shore Country Club
- 6/27 Midwest June Meeting, Bryn Mawr Country Club
- 7/25 Midwest Nine Hole, Geneva Golf Club

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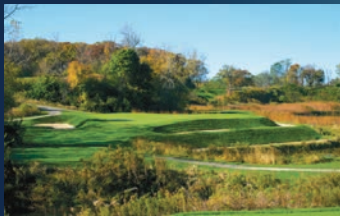
Midwest Association of Golf Course Superintendents (MAGCS) exists to promote professionalism and integrity, to provide networking, education and career enhancement opportunities to all members who facilitate the growth and enjoyment of golf.

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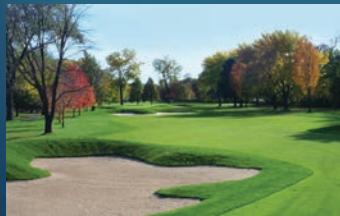
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The Place to Be



Justin VanLanduit
Briarwood Country Club

Well, here we are embarking on yet another golf season. I hope everyone had a productive and relaxing winter. Winter is always a cherished time getting caught up with family and friends after the hectic season.

The birth of my first child in October gave me a whole new perspective on the off-season this year for sure! With the season upon us it means we have some great education and golf events coming up. The lineup this year will not disappoint, and we greatly thank all those who have offered up their facilities to host the Midwest Association of Golf Course Superintendents.

We'll be starting the season out on the south side of the Chicago region at Ruffled Feathers in Lemont. April 26th is the date that Ed Esgar and his team hosts the Association for the Annual Spring Scramble. I personally have never played Ruffled Feathers but have heard fantastic things about the course. The course has the designation of being the only Pete Dye designed golf course in the state of Illinois, and we all know how devilish Pete's courses can be. So grab a group and plan on a fantastic day of education and golf at Ruffled Feathers.

May 16th we head to the Northwest suburbs as Superintendent Tim Christians host the ITF/MAGCS combined meeting. Makray is another phenomenal golf course that will test everybody's shot making abilities. This is a great event when the members of Midwest support the Illinois Turfgrass Foundation. Education prior to golf will consist of USGA Regional Agronomist Bob Vavrek; "Quick Fixes on Your Course - Best Methods to Fix Turf Failures".

Brian's goal for the event is to really accentuate the Assistants and cater to them.

June consists of one the best events of the season in the Dom Grotti, Annual Assistant/Superintendent Championship. Alongside the Dom Grotti the Assistants Championship is held at the same time. This year, Brian Bossert, CGCS welcomes the Association to the Bryn Mawr Country Club on June 27th. Brian's goal for the event is to really accentuate the Assistants and cater to them. Mark this date on your calendar and show your appreciation for your assistant by getting away from your club and coming and enjoying a day of great golf with them.

Two years ago we instituted a 9-hole event that has really taken shape. The last few years we've been hosted by Chuck Barber at St. Charles, then Bob Kronn Sr. at Woodstock Country Club, followed up by Doug Davis at Flagg Creek. This year the man, the myth, the legend; Ed Braunsky, CGCS is welcoming us to the prestigious Geneva Golf Club. I personally am very excited for this event! Again, this is an event where walking is the method of transport. The event continues to grow so be sure to sign up fast!

August will take us north of the cheddar curtain. MAGCS President Matt Kregel and his team at Strawberry Creek welcome us for the MAGCS Championship. This is a must attend; Strawberry Creek is a special place. The Championship is always an enjoyable event. I know that for me, it gets the competitive juices flowing even though we're playing against friends and colleagues. If you have never played Strawberry Creek, I highly recommend taking this opportunity. It's a unique golf course that tests your skill and is a great deal of fun as the guys at Jacobson Golf Course Design really get you to use all clubs in your bag.

Hive Talking

Erwin H. McKone, CGCS, Briar Ridge Country Club

In October of 2006, reports of large and mysterious losses of honeybee colonies began to be reported. Many colonies had simply disappeared; no dead honeybee bodies were present, only immature bees and a live queen.

In June of 2007, the USDA's Research Service held a workshop to develop a Colony Collapse Disorder Action Plan. Almost a decade later, we are still talking about the bees, but what is really going on? What is at stake and what does the future hold? Some media stories make it sound like we're on the brink of losing civilization and decimating our food supplies because they pollinate nearly everything. In order to understand the current situation, let's look at the larger picture of apiaries, the places where bees are kept, and how they impact our communities and even our country.

The honeybee is an amazing creature. Inside the hive lives a solitary queen. The queen bee is the only source of regeneration in a hive. She will lay around 2500 eggs a day in a hive that is approximately 30,000 strong. She tirelessly works to maintain the hive and will lay over 2 million eggs in her lifetime. The hive is made up of two other types of bees, the female worker bee, and about one hundred male

drones.

The worker bee carries out many functions in the hive. One important responsibility of the worker bee is to regulate temperature of the hive, which is closely monitored, to allow for the eggs to hatch. The worker bees also serve to keep the hive clean, feed and groom the queen, feed drone bees, collect pollen, nectar, and propolis. Propolis is a resinous mixture that is gathered from plant parts such as buds and sap flows. The mixture is often used to seal up spaces inside the hive such as small cracks.

Worker bees will fly up to three miles scouring the land for favorable sources. One of the most fascinating aspects of the honeybee is the "bee dance." Bees communicate the location of food sources to each other by an intricate series of symbolic movements. This "dance" also known as a waggle dance or run, is interpreted by the other workers as specific directions to the food source. The direction and duration of the waggle correlates with the direction and distance the food source is from the hive.

The drone bee is a male bee with large eyes and no stinger. The drone is strictly responsible for mating with a fertile queen. The male drone is the result of an unfertilized egg. Drones leave the hive to recognized congregation sites where they mate with the queen. Mating takes place outside the hive during mid-flight. Drones only mate once as the endophallus that is used to inseminate the queen is ruptured and torn off during the process. The drone dies shortly after mating is completed.

Worker bees pollinate plants during the gathering process. The process of pollination of plants by insects is called Entomophily. Honey bees will pollinate many plant species that are not native to their natural habitat. In the pollinator world, honeybees are seen as inefficient due to the fact



McKone set up hives on his course in 2011. Over the past 5 years he's learned much about bees and shares his knowledge here.

that so many different species are visited during food gathering. Other bees tend to favor one species at a time, therefore do most of the actual pollination. Native bees, which are twice as abundant as originally thought, are more efficient pollinators.



The Varroa mite has been found in all areas that have experienced a decline in honeybee populations. .

Bee pollination is responsible for an estimated \$15 billion in increased crop value per year. The most essential staple food crops on the planet, like corn, wheat, rice, soybeans and sorghum, need no insect help at all; they are either self-pollinated or wind pollinated. However, the honeybee is especially helpful in specialty crops like almonds as they are more prolific and more easily managed than native pollinators. Beekeepers will “manage” hives as they truck bees by semis to agricultural fields and orchards. Bees are sold as a service as they pollinate crops in order to facilitate fruit development. According to the USDA, the California almond industry requires the use of approximately 60% of all managed honeybee colonies in the United States.

There are many different kinds of bees, in fact over 20,000 species in the world, North America alone has over 4,000 native bees. Bryan Danforth, a Cornell entomology professor, discovered an abundance of native bees during research in 2011 in New York apple orchards. He is one of a dozen researchers across the Northeast involved in a five-year, \$3.3 million project to study whether the pathogens, viruses and fungi that are harming the honeybee also affect native bee species. The grant, led by Anne Averill of the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, will also investigate how native bee abundance and diversity are influenced by the size, pesticide use, and landscape and crop diversity on farms.

Honeybees are not native to the United States and their transport into new areas could mean making them more susceptible to fungal, virus, and bacterial pathogens.

In 2006, after many beekeepers reported large losses of colonies, research began being conducted to investigate Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD). The 2006 incidents were not the first time beekeepers have lost hives. Scientific literature has several mentions of honeybee disappearances—in the 1880s, the 1920s, and the 1960s. Researchers looked quickly to find a silver bullet that would explain what was going on with disappearing colonies.

Disappearance of the honeybee is especially alarming because the total number of managed honeybee colonies in the United States has also decreased dramatically in the last half of this century. In the 1940's we had about 5 million colonies. Today, managed colonies are about half that number. Increases in our population, crop yield, and export needs also create greater demand for the managed honeybee. Hives are transported longer distances than ever before in order to fulfill contracted obligations. Honeybees are not native to the United States and their transport into new areas could mean making them more susceptible to fungal, virus, and bacterial pathogens. When the collapse disorder was first reported, environmentalists sounded the pesticide alarms.

The decline of honeybees coincided with the widespread use of a new class of insecticides, the Neonicotinoids. These pesticides became the first CCD suspect and still are under scrutiny as a contributing factor to CCD. But, after a decade of investigation it appears that there is no one single reason for the loss of bee colonies. For example, Health Canada reported bee mortalities correlate with the planting of Neonicotinoid treated corn and soybeans. However, research on the canola growing regions of Canada seem to dispute claims that Neonicotinoids are to blame. The bees surrounding canola fields have been exposed to Neonicotinoids on a large scale with no observed ill effects. Australia presents the most striking dilemma for those isolating their attacks solely on Neonicotinoids. On a per crop basis, Australia is one of the world's heaviest users of this pesticide class but has the healthiest bee colonies in the world.

So, what is going on? Current theories point to several causal agents. Management practices, loss of habitat, disease, cell towers, and pesticides have all been considered as possibilities. The production of honey has led to beekeeping shortcuts. Much of the honey is removed for sale thus requiring beekeepers to feed a sugary substitute in order to keep the hives healthy. Honey is thought to be a healthy immune boost for the colony and its removal is making the bees' immune systems weaker. Other management practices may make hives susceptible to pathogens, such as the transport into new regions. In Australia, where the colonies seem healthy and CCD is not a problem, they find the absence of the Varroa mite. The Varroa mite is found in all areas that are experiencing decline.

Hive Talking continued on page 22



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BullSheet



April 2016

Dates to Remember

April 11-12 – Golf Course Industry's GCI Tech Conference: Forecasting the Future at the Carolina Golf Club in Charlotte, N.C.

April 15 – Deadline for nominations for TurfNet's 2016 Technician of the Year Award presented by the Toro Company. Forms are available at www.turfnet.com.

April 26 – MAGCS monthly meeting and Spring Scramble at Ruffled Feathers Golf Club in Lemont, IL, Ed Esgar host superintendent.

May 14 – 2016 Sunshine Through Golf Par 3 Golf Marathon at Zigfield Troy Golf Club in Woodridge, IL, Dennis Troy host.

May 16 – ITF/MAGCS Spring Golf Day at Makray Memorial Golf Club in Barrington, IL, Tim Christians host superintendent.

May 19-21 – National Club Association's 13th annual conference at the Union League Club of Chicago, IL.

May 26-29 – 77th Senior PGA Championship at the Golf Club at Harbor Shores in Benton Harbor, MI.

May 31 – New deadline for filing Forms 1094-C/1095-C of the ACA with the IRS (June 30 if filing electronically).

We are happy to welcome these new MAGCS members to the family:

Mark Dryndrozyk, Inverness Golf Club, Class C
Patrick Frazier, Mistwood Golf Club, Class C
Paul Rathnau, Stonewall Orchard, Class C
Casey Sheehy, Bryn Mawr Country Club, Class C
Tom Wilson, Stonebridge Country Club, Class C

Last month we lost one of MAGCS' longest-running members when **Julius Albaugh** passed away on the 14th. Julius was the golf course superintendent at Westmoreland Country Club from 1965 until 2001—36 years in the same place! Our condolences to the family and many friends of Julius Albaugh.

Another revered industry friend was lost last month when Lee Record passed away. Lee was the USGA Agronomist for the Midwest Region in the 1970's, when he interacted with many of our predecessors. Rest in peace Mr. Record.

At the Masters, they give the winner a green jacket. It's nice, and only important people get to wear them. At the American Society of Golf Course Architects (ASGCA), they give their important people a sweet tartan jacket. It's... ahem...nice too, and one of our own is now a very important person. Big congratulations to **Greg Martin** (right), who on the 26th of this month will assume the duties of president of ASGCA for 2016-2017.



Growing Solutions, Inc. is pleased to announce that **Chad Hauth**, whose career stretches over 10 years in the golf, turf, and aquatics industries, is the newest member of their sales team. Congratulations Chad! (pictured left)

Congratulations to Laura and **Craig Shepherd** on the birth of their second child. Hazel Ruth Shepherd joined the

Bull Sheet continued on page 9...

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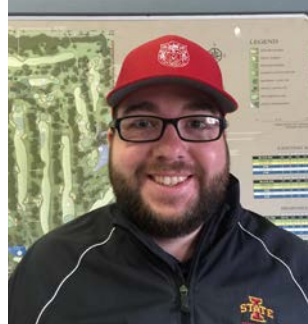
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family on March 12, and everyone is doing great! (picture right).



Also being welcomed to our neck of the woods are a couple of new additions to the Bryn Mawr Country Club maintenance department. **Jayce Conway**, a University of Illinois graduate has joined Brian Bossert's team after spending the last 6 years working in Big Sky, MT; and **Casey Sheehy**, an Iowa State alumnus who was an assistant superintendent in Connecticut for the last 3 years has also signed on. Congratulations gentlemen!



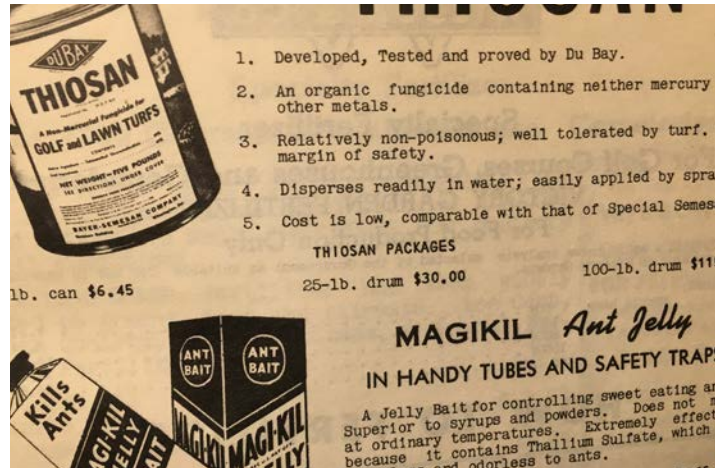
The new Assistant team at Bryn Mawr Country Club, Jayce Conway and Casey Sheehy are two of the MAGCS newest members.

OK, why not?

I went to a bookstore and asked the lady "Where's the Self-Help section?" She said that if she told me, it would defeat the purpose.

It's that time of year again—when Golfweek magazine comes out with its Golfweek's BEST lists. In the 100 Best Classic Courses list (before 1960), MAGCS members were well-represented: #3—Shinnecock Hills (**Jon Jennings**), #10—Chicago Golf (**Scott Bordner**), #19—Oakland Hills South (**Steve Cook**), # 21—Shoreacres (Brian Palmer), #51—Olympia Fields North (**Sam MacKenzie**), #84—Medinah No. 3 (**Curtis Tyrrell**), and #87—Skokie (**Don Cross**). In the 100 Best Modern Courses list we had #6—Whistling Straits (**Travis Schnelle** Assistant Superintendent), #44—Butler National (**Mike Sauls**), and #56—Black Sheep (**Dave Biery**). In the Best Courses You Can Play list, these MAGCS-member facilities were singled out: Cog Hill Dubs Dread (**Drew Kleinmeyer**), Highlands of Elgin (**Brad Legnaioli**), Thunderhawk (**Tom Abbott**), Cantigny (**Scott Witte**), Stonewall Orchard (**Larry Flament**), Harborside International (**Steve Kellerman** and **Ryan Tully**), Pine Meadow (**Scott Denil**), The Glen Club (**Rusty Willard** and **Tim Velicka**), and Mistwood (**Ben Kelnhofer**).

Ya gotta love the occasional walk down memory lane. While browsing through an old catalog the other day, I came across this ad. The product description provides some reassuring information, such as it is organic and contains neither lead nor mercury, that it is well-tolerated by turf, and, oh, it is RELA-



TIVELY non-poisonous. In fairness, relatively is a relative term. This came from the 1944 Paul E. Burdett Company catalog, whose phone number was 232 (suggesting there were fewer than 1,000 phones in operation back then). Some of you may remember Paul, and even more should know his son, current MAGCS member **Jim Burdett**, who ran the company for many years until his retirement.....Ant Jelly?

Sometimes you don't have to travel the world over to find your lookalike. Sometimes your twin is right under your nose, as these two examples confirm.

MIDWEST Doppelgänger



Tracy Murphy or Kevin DeRoo, maybe Tom Prichard or Dave Blomquist. OK, maybe a stretch.

At the Golf Industry Show in February, the Toro Company held its worldwide distributor meeting during which it recognized its top performers in sales. Reinders, Inc., our Toro distributor, is proud to announce that they have two people who were recognized. **Grant Rundblade** was named the

"2015 Rookie of the Year" for commercial equipment sales, and Aaron Goninen was named the "2015 Salesperson of the Year" for golf irrigation sales. Congratulations to Grant and Aaron!



L to R: Pete Whitacre, Jeff Drake, Grant Rundblade and Jim Heinzel



Rules of Golf Quiz:

In stroke play, a player placed a ball when he should have dropped it, and made a stroke with the ball that had been placed. What is the ruling? Answer at the end.

Thank you to superintendent **Dan Augdahl** at Lansing Country Club for capturing this soon-to-get-interesting moment.

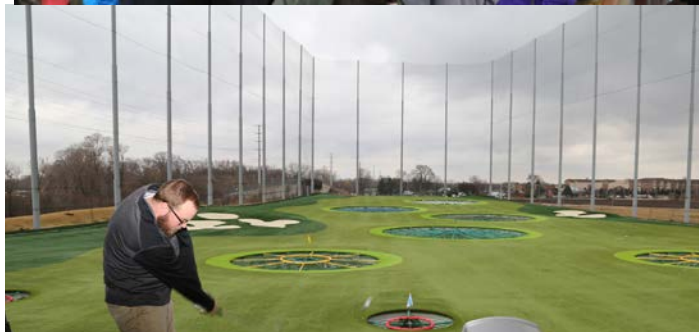
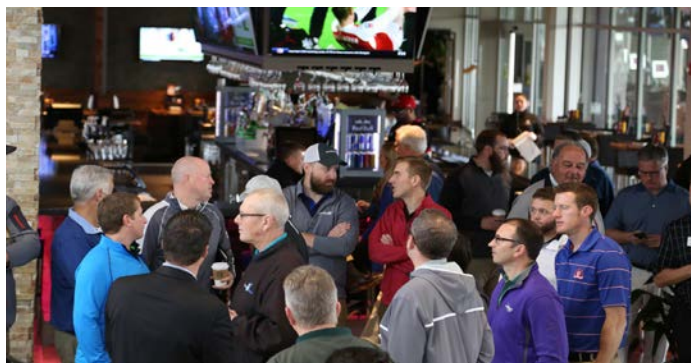


Who blinks first?

The March MAGCS meeting was held on the 9th at a unique location—TopGolf in Naperville. The sunny, mid-sixty-degree day may have forced a few of us to stay on our courses as most were in a frenzy to get open, but those who made it out were not disappointed. The education portion of the day was an enlightening behind-the-scenes tour of the facility led by Brett Hintz, Director of Operations. Hintz noted a few highlights of the facility and program: TopGolf estimates 500,000 customers will come through this facility in their first year, it cost \$24M to build and will be recouped after 2 years of operating, they employ 500 people and are the second

largest seller of beer in Illinois. Nick Scillia, Director of Rules and Competitions for the CDGA followed up the tour with his talk about how the rules impact what we do. After that, it was all hands on deck (literally) for some lunch and golf (and they have really good food there). If you haven't ever played, it's pretty simple—you accumulate points for hitting your ball, which has a microchip in it so the automated scoring system knows it's you, into a variety of target "greens." The closer to the center of each target you hit, the more points you get. Thanks to the folks at Top Golf for a great day, and to our sponsors who made it possible.

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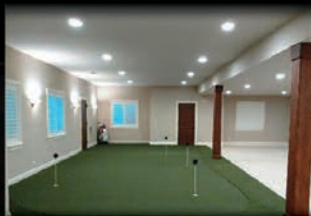
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On May 19-21, the National Club Association will hold its 13th annual conference at the Union League Club of Chicago. Three themes will be highlighted, including Strategic Issues for Private Club Governance, The Club Industry Outlook and Trends for the Future, and Legislative, Regulatory, and Legal Issues for Clubs. If you're interested in attending, go to www.nationalclub.org to register.

Q: Which member at **Jim Evans'** club wears really gaudy suits, has a really bad mullet haircut, and talks NHL hockey 24/7?

A: Turnberry Melrose.



The ad campaign that began last year with top golf professionals urging golfers to "thank a golf course superintendent" has grown legs. This year, it's famous celebrities who are spreading the word. The 30-second spots, featured on Golf Channel,



The 2016 Thank a Golf Course Superintendent Campaign features the likes of Brandi Chastain. The 30 second slot will start airing in April. Participants will have the chance to win a trip to the American Century Celebrity Championship in Lake Tahoe.

include Justin Timberlake, Charles Barkley, Brandi Chastain (who famously ripped off her shirt after scoring the winning goal against China in the 1999 World Cup), John Elway, Jim McMahon, Dennis Haysbert (the Allstate spokesman with the cool voice), the very hairy Willie Robertson from Duck Dynasty, and Larry the Cable Guy (also hairy).

The most recent report released by the National Golf Foundation (NGF) had both positive and negative news about the golf industry. On the negative side, and as reported in the Wall Street Journal, while golf is attracting more new players than at any time since the early 2000's, few new golfers are sticking with the game. Also, there was a drop in the number of golfers from 2014 to 2015 from 24.7 million to 24.1 million, or 600,000 fewer players. On the bright side, interest in playing golf is at an all-time high, with an estimated 37 million non-golfers saying they are interested in taking up the game. Places like TopGolf are helping by attracting non-golfers to the sport and giving them their first taste of what the game is about. Further evidence that golf is on an uptick is its overall reach—an estimated 81 million watched golf on TV in 2015, meaning about a third of our country's popula-

tion either played golf on a golf course or alternate venue, watched on TV or read about it in traditional or electronic media. Can't wait to see what the future has in store...

Having just said all that, one of our members has his glass half full about our industry's future. **Erwin McKone**, the Director of Golf Operations and Chief Operating Officer (well lah-di-dah) at Briar Ridge Country Club recently posted in his blog a finely-written piece titled "Golf Is Not Dead!" in which he cites the many virtues of the game. One of my favorite passages: "I got bad news for all the Golf Is Dead proclaimers.....Golf is Alive and Kicking, and it is a little miffed." It's a really good read, and you can find it in just about every social media outlet, as many folks are posting and reposting it. Nice one, Mr. C-O-O!

Other members who've had their blogs published are **Steven Biehl** of Naperville CC, who highlighted the changes coming to their entrance drive; and **Bill Meyer** of Park Ridge CC who described their work involved in opening the course for the 2016 season.

And as we kind of expected, the March issue of *Golfdom* magazine had a heavy dose of MAGCS members in the *Golfdom* Gallery section, with Seth Jones' photos from the MAGCS meeting and Wee One Fundraiser at Seven Bridges. Among those pictured were **Luke Cella**, **John Turner**, **Joe Schneider**, **Aaron Reinhart**, **Kevin DeRoo**, **Bill Meyer**, **Steven Biehl**, **Brett Ziegler**, **Brian Stout**, **Ryan Williams** and **Shane Conroy**.

Classifieds

Need to do some seeding? For sale is a 2011 TurfCo TriWave walk-behind seeder in like-new condition with a mere 154 hours—just ask all the guys who borrow it! Cost new was \$21,000, selling it for \$9,999.99 (you can round it up to 10 gees). Contact **Joel Purpur** at Park Ridge CC at prpsupt@yahoo.com or call him at 630-201-6865.

For Sale: 18 refurbished and near perfect ballwashers, black and green in color. Make **Brian Palmer** at Shoreacres an offer by reaching him at Bpalmer@shoreacres1916.com, or 607-237-1969.

Quiz Answer: There is a two-stroke penalty, per Decision 20-6/1. @



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The Assistant

Gap

Luke Cella, MAGCS

Woes for the green keeping profession continue to be centered around labor and not just the hourly employee but the trained professional too. Assistants are in very short supply, a fact made apparent by the very recent post by member Scott White:

“Attention Chambana/Mahomet friends!!! I lost my new assistant today at the country club, if you know someone who is looking for a good full time job please send them my way. I don't care if they know anything about golf, just looking for a hard worker who is trainable. Spread the word!”

There have been a record number of assistant posts on the Midwest's website this past year. Without counting, it seems there has been a new post every week these past couple of months. Why? Cale Bigelow spoke (via Skype) at the Chica-goland Forum in late March. He started his presentation with the statements he has heard repeatedly over the past five years:

“Do you have any students?”
“How's enrollment?”
“I need a qualified assistant.”

Then he showed a page of the number of open entry-level turf management positions across the country. At that time, there were 269 employers looking for qualified help. Many worry the low numbers of students in turf are the new normal. This trend appears to be bolstered by more difficult admission standards, increased tuition costs, less recruitment, and shrinking programs. Everything is ranked in our world and a profession in turf is buried under many, many layers of static and noise. It is a tough sell not only to students, but parents who only see their child as the next superstar brain surgeon or CEO of a FF500 company.

Labor has always been an issue in the golf industry. It is the largest line item in all maintenance budgets and therefore the most valued commodity. Any company understands the value of a well-hired, well-trained and well-managed workforce. During the last recession, it was the element that kept getting cut because it is could. Golf course labor, to a point,

is not a fixed cost. It is fluid and tied directly to maintenance standards that many facilities were willing to sacrifice to save money. Many superintendents figured out ways to keep standards high by fine-tuning their operations and relying on themselves and their salaried personnel to fill the voids. During this time laborers found work elsewhere, discovered higher wages, more desirable hours and jobs where they didn't have to fight the outdoor elements.

Wages in golf have never been high, and our members and clientele have reaped the benefits of this value for many years. As qualified labor becomes scarce its value has gone up, something golf will have to contend with in the coming years. Some superintendents are combatting this issue by creatively hiring a supplemental seasonal workforce comprised of retirees, teachers, students, firemen, pilots, computer programmers, etc. with the lure of working outdoors, offering more flexible hours (afternoon and evening shifts) and free golf. The labor sector that most worry about in the mid to long term is qualified, professional help, assistants and eventually superintendents. While courses were contracting, there was a surplus of assistants, the demand was low, colleges were still pumping out graduates, jobs were not around and if they were, pay was low, hours were high and many left the industry altogether. The question lies in how long will it take the educational side of the industry to recover to educate a workforce and how many students are needed to meet current and future needs so we don't enter the same pickle at some point in the future. During the CAGCS Forum, Bigelow asked just that, How many students were really needed?

As I researched trends and histories, I found an article penned by our own Bob Williams back in 1975 that figured this out (Bullsheets):

“As we look into the future of our profession, we have to be aware of the old factor of supply and demand. Are we train-

ing enough or too many new men for the field? ...Judging from the mortality rate of GCSAA members, a projection of the entire field would mean a loss of some 120 men annually. So, between the new jobs and the replacements, we would estimate a demand for about 350 new superintendents a year.

Incidentally, I looked at this from another view- point and came up with a relatively similar figure. Taking the 11,000 present courses and figuring that each superintendent will work at his job for 40 years, we would require 275 men a year to keep the jobs filled and perhaps 500 men if the number of clubs were to double in the next 40 years. So I believe 300 to 500 new men annually is a fair ballpark estimate."

Williams went on to look to see how many new people were being trained:

"Dr. Daniels...recently surveyed 56 schools and came up with a total enrollment of approximately 1160 turfgrass students, with 445 graduates this past June. All-in- all, even with rather nebulous figures it appears that we are currently training about 500 men annually for about 300 to 500 jobs."

Has anyone done the math recently?

If we estimate there are 15,000 operating golf courses in the United States, (taking into account the continuing market corrections), one could conservatively estimate there are 14,000 golf course superintendent jobs (estimating for supers that oversee more than one facility and management companies). The average age of a golf course superintendent is 46, (GCSAA current figures) interpolated it means there are 7000 superintendents older than 46 and 7000 superintendents younger than 46 (and a few 46 right now). Assuming a normal distribution, and using as standard deviation of 10, it would equate to 350 being at or over the age of 62 of those about 175 at age 65 or higher. If I figured (and not to mortality, but retirement) halfway between those two numbers 250 jobs opening each year. Remember that number that Bigleow's job search resulted in: 269, makes some sense now. How many students are enrolled in turf programs across the country and how many have an interest in managing a golf course? Golf was always the leading program of study in turf but is not the case anymore; managing the Wrigley Fields of

the world have now jumped into the front seat and are starting to drive the turf bus.

What are the numbers attending schools today? No doubt it needs to be more, and we need to keep them in golf. It is easy to say our schools need to do a better job of recruiting and attracting students into horticulture and turf.



We know what it takes to be a successful superintendent as Bryan Stromme explained last month at the Asst. Winter Workshop. We just need to find Assistants to be successful.

However how can we as an industry stop the pendulum and keep a steady stream of students? One impactful solution is to look at your own facility. If everyone makes it a point to hire one high school/college student each season it will help. If 1% of those people take interest in the profession and think about a job in the industry – maybe, we can create a steady, sustainable stream. Certainly it takes work. The Millennials are a tough generation to read and it may take more effort to employ and show them the industry. I know there are some out there that will love golf maintenance after experiencing it. Who showed it to you?

You do what you do because you love it. Somewhere along the way, you realized this was the profession for you, this was your calling. There are many kids out there today who don't know what they want to do and not everyone is cut out to sit in an office all day in front of a computer screen. Earning MBAs and managing brokerage accounts are not for everyone, just as being outdoors each morning and welcoming the sunrise isn't for everyone either. Each of us is different and we need to do a better job of reaching those who are just like us.







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SUPER-N-site

Ed Esgar

Ruffled Feathers Golf Club

Luke Cella, MAGCS

PHOTO CREDITS: LUKE CELLA

I didn't know that I ever knew anyone from Mazon, Illinois until I sat down with Ed Esgar, Golf Course Superintendent of Ruffled Feathers. You see, during my tenure at U of I, I drove through Mazon countless times on my way to Urbana and back to the western suburbs.

Mazon is located on Route 47, the next town south of Morris and the Illinois River. It is still a small farming community where Ed grew up with his two sisters. Besides Ed, Mazon is known for the Illinois State Fossil, the unique and bizarre Tully Monster, not to be confused with Telly Monster the eternally worrying, red-violet monster on the Muppets and Sesame Street. "Examples of Tullimonstrum (Tully Monster) have been found only in the Mazon Creek fossil beds of Illinois, United States. Until 2016, its classification was uncertain, and interpretations of the fossil likened it to a mollusc, an arthropod, a conodont, or to one of the many phyla of worms."

In his early teens, Ed began working on local farms baling hay like most other kids in the area during his summers before and throughout high school. His love for the outdoors led him to pursue a degree in Recreation Administration from Eastern Illinois in 1991.

His first full-time job in his field of study began shortly thereafter at Sea Pines Resort on Hilton Head Island as the Recreation Coordinator. Ed ran programs for kids while their parents were on other excursions during their vacation on the Island. Wanting to get back home, Ed took a part-time job with the local FS and began to work for Scott Heren at Silver Oaks Golf Course, a 9-hole course in Braidwood, Illinois. Ed had his career calling when realized his love for the outdoors and working on a golf course could be married into a livelihood. He found himself taking classes at Joliet Junior College and shortly thereafter attaining a degree in Turf Management. He began to work for Ray Schmitz as an intern at Flossmoor Country Club for a few years, then began to work for Mike Mumper as the Assistant Superintendent at Ravisloe CC. When Mike left Ravisloe, Ed took over the reigns of the operation until 2008, when Ravisloe closed. Ed moved his way west to Woodbine Golf Course that same year and managed that facility until 2014, when it closed.

"I started shortly thereafter at Ruffled Feathers," he explained to me as we both chuckled and wondered how long Ruffled Feathers will now stay open. With only one year at



The Esgars: Heather, Morgan, Hannah, Taylor and Ed.



When Ruffled Feathers was built and designed its business plan was to be a private club. Lackluster sales of membership and its purchase by American Golf, the model changed to a high-end public facility. The layout was designed when penal courses were in vogue, and water hazards can come into play on 17 of the 18 holes. The undulating greens were designed for championship play and offer a true test to those who have refined their putting stroke. The course sits on 175 acres, supports 28 acres of federally protected wetlands and is surrounded by a 350 acre gated residential community. The course has softened a bit since its original design and many of the homes that surround the property seem to buffer the winds that were not all there in the early days.

Ed credits his immediate success to his staff. “We have a ton of returners each year with experience ranging from 5 to 21 years.” Ed also praises his Assistant, Dan Albaugh. Dan was the Superintendent at Ruffled Feathers in the 90s and is able to share his past knowledge and helps Ed manage the sprawling facility, especially greens, tees and fairways.

One of the ongoing projects Ed and his staff have been working on are cleaning up lake banks and the landscape beds that dot the property. They are also systematically removing many of the dead ash trees on the course. He and his staff are committed to making Ruffled Feathers the best that it can be. The course is owned and operated by Arcis Golf, a manage-

the facility under his belt Ed is still getting used to the nuances of the course. The amount of hand watering on the sand based greens last season was an adjustment and Ed is still getting used to figuring in travel time for tasks on the course. “You don’t want to forget a tool you need when you have to drive a mile and a half from the shop to the farthest point on the course.” Ed likes the layout of the only Chicagoland Pete and P.B. Dye (and supposedly their first joint venture in golf course design) course and feels the challenge of the course has held up since its original design when it opened in 1992.





house where he grew up.

Ed and his wife of 23 years, Heather have three daughters: Taylor (20) who is attending the University of Findlay in Ohio studying Forensic Science and Criminal justice for now, as Ed explains, Hannah (15) competes on the Dance team and performs on the Pom team at Lincoln Way West and Morgan (11) plays on a travel soccer team. Heather teaches the 3rd Grade in the Mokena school system and the Esgars live in New Lenox.

Ed looks forward to seeing his staff each day and appreciates the hard work that they do. He enjoys the camaraderie of fellow superintendents having worked with several Midwest members through the years. When asked what the best advice he ever heard in his work career, Ed cited Ray Schmitz who told him to make sure he took time out for a little I and I.

Want to find out what I and I are? Come out and ask Ed on April 26 at Ruffled Feathers. I'm sure he'll tell you, and I know he may even share one of them with you. @



ment company that operates/owns Eaglebrook CC, Tamarack GC, Mill Creek, Fresh Meadow and White Tail Ridge in the Chicagoland area.

When I asked Ed his hobbies, he was quick to answer "following my kids in their activities," however when he tours the course in the spring and fall he pays special attention to the wetlands and the water foul that pass through. Ed is an avid hunter and enjoys the cloudy days when birds on the move and he is in a blind. His favorite shot gun is his Binelli Superblack Eagle. He also enjoys fishing local ponds and streams crediting his love of the outdoors to his hero and father, Dick Esgar who still lives in Mazon with his mom in the





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September is always an open month with no events planned for the MAGCS because of Labor Day Weekend and many courses scheduling aerification at that time of year. If you've got the itch to play or have never attended the Wee One Event at Pine Hills, consider signing up for this one. It is a great event and a great cause. I hope you can find the time to make it up there and help support this great organization. I can already taste the brats and tacos!

We're planning our October meeting at Ruth Lake Country Club, Dan Marco, CGCS to host. We're looking to team up with another organization, the Chicago Club Chefs and have a dual meeting at this event. Keep your eye out for details as we work out the particulars.

We'll wrap up our meeting season at Medinah Country Club for the Midwest Turf Clinic and Annual Meeting. After all of the positive comments about moving it later into the year last time, we booked December 7, 2016 for the event. It is always a fantastic way to end the season with great education, a great venue, and with the date in December there is a better chance the season will be over by then.

It is another full year of events. We look very forward to seeing many of you at some if not all events throughout the season. Please encourage your Assistants to become involved as well; these events are a great way for them to further their education and network in our industry. As a reminder every Assistant that was a member as of March 1, 2016 is able to attend one event free throughout the remaining year. I wish you the best of luck this season and I hope to see many of you soon. @

University research is now focusing on the mite as a vector for disease spread. Losses of habitat and climate change are also thought to play a role in the bee disorder. Bees become active earlier in the spring when we experience mild winters but not all flowers may be in bud and bloom. Normal food sources may be scarce. Urbanization and the removal of native plants that bloom during different timeframes mean less



food. The rush to blame insecticides for the decline may have resulted in the dismissal of the real causal agents, thus delaying the identification of a solution. One thing is certain, this is a very complex situation and it is going to take cooperation of multiple agencies to make any significant progress.

The beekeeping industry is beginning to see various hypotheses explaining the phenomenon. Golf course superintendents have recently demonstrated their connection to the environment and their stewardship by managing hives on their property. The more hives and experience we have is important, it contributes to data and knowledge collection. Rearing healthy hives and contributing to a successful genetic adaptation is a role we can all play. By participating in a recognized problem, we contribute to the solution as we attempt to make sense of the world around us. That is what makes golf special. Companies and individuals who care seek to find solutions to seemingly daunting problems. I believe we are on the right track now in addressing the plight of the honeybee, now if I could only figure out a way for ballmarks to disappear...@

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Kevin Goss, Golf Course Superintendent at Sugar Creek Golf Course.



Where did you grow up?

Lombard, IL

First golf course you where you worked?

Sugar Creek is the only course I have ever worked at. I started out changing cups and night watering when I was 16.

Do you have a prized possession?

Not that I can think of.

What do you like to drink?

Coffee, water, Boston lager.

Favorite job task at the golf course?

Anything that involves digging. Preferably with a backhoe.

Dream car?

A green 1970 Jeep Wagoneer with a 4 inch lift that gets 35 mpg. You said "dream" car.

Favorite pig out food?

Pepperoni and mushroom pizza from Gianorio's in Lombard.

What is your favorite restaurant to go to?

Don't have one right now.

What is your favorite movie, book, and actor?

My favorite book is The New York Trilogy by Paul Auster. I know it's obscure and nerdy. I can't help it – I was an English major in another life.

What is your favorite sports team?

I'm not a good fan anymore, but The Cubs.

What is your best vacation or favorite destination?

My favorite vacation was my honeymoon cruise in the Caribbean.

What is the worst gift you have received or bought for someone?

For Valentine's Day, I gave my wonderful wife two Christmas cards (that I forgot to give her on previous Christmases) instead of a Valentine's Day card. I am still alive. She obviously has a good sense of humor.

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