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front cover

Dave Ward and Kati Benardy have a hit on their hands with their new column "Nature of the Game". This month's marvel is the Red-tailed hawk - a resident of most golf courses in the Midwest. This one seems to be up to something.

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FEATURE

2017 Year in Review

David Marquardt



As most turf managers welcome December, the 2017 season was one that'll be remembered for years to come: We experienced barely any snow cover in winter, record stretches of warmth in February, torrential rains in July followed by drought into October. It is safe to say, most on the maintenance side are ready for a normal winter - whatever that is! Dave Marquardt reviews the 2017 season on page 4.

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2017-18 UPCOMING MIDWEST EVENTS

- 12/6/17 Midwest Turf Clinic and Annual Meeting, Medinah CC
- 01/23/2018 Midwest January Meeting and Wee One Fundraiser, Seven Bridges Golf Club
- 2/07/17 Midwest Hospitality Reception - Rio's on the River, San Antonio, TX
- 3/15/17 March Meeting and Bracket Madness, TopGolf

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*Matt Harstad
Calumet Country Club*

Never Quite Done

I should probably start my final (I think) President's column the way that most have written their final presidential note by saying my year as president had flown by, which of course it has, but my term as president really actually signals that the end of my board service is coming soon.

I'm not actually sure how many years I have served on the board, maybe 6, but it has been for a good portion of my career as a superintendent, and it has become an integral and rewarding piece of what I do. It's been a joy to see different board members come and go, and to see how different people and personalities can come together to continue to move the association forward, constantly looking for new ways to provide the membership the education, networking, and camaraderie that they expect and deserve.

This year has been a very productive year, and I'm proud to say that by the time you read this, we (hopefully) will have wrapped up some items that have been lingering on the "we should do this" list. First off, at the 65th Midwest Turf Clinic and Annual Meeting, we rolled out a new logo for the Midwest. Creating a new logo was something that Chuck Barber had first brought up, and after many iterations, we finally agreed on a new simpler logo, that gives a better visualization of who the MAGCS represents, and what we do and the tasks that we are responsible for. We hope that you all enjoy the look of the new logo and are proud to wear it, show it off on your vehicle, or drink your coffee from it!



Assuming that all the votes passed, the other tasks that we completed were an update of the by-laws and a change in the dues. The by-laws required a few minor changes because of GCSAA changing the Superintendent Member designation back to Class B, so the By-Laws committee, headed by Matt Kregel, took the opportunity to review the whole document and make some minor updates to the language, like removing 'facsimile' and adding 'email.' It was a tedious process, but a great indicator of things that need to be reviewed in order to keep the association up to date and always moving forward.

The dues increase is something that has also been considered for a few years, and thanks to the fiscal responsibility and creativity of the boards preceding us, we have been able to go without an increase for 10 years! The increase will put the MAGCS in position to continue to offer top quality education and events. You will also see that the fee for Class D membership has been reduced to just \$50 per year. This was done to support our coming new initiative to offer education for technicians, and to encourage more future superintendents to take advantage of the association's offerings.

All in all, it has been a great year as president. I'm very proud of what the board has accomplished in 2017, and look forward to seeing what Jim Pedersen and the 2018 Board of Directors will achieve. I hope that my year as president stands up somewhat close to what the great MAGCS presidents before have done, and that we have continued to uphold the legacy of their great work. Thank you to the 2017 Directors for all of your hard work, and to all the Directors that I have worked with in the past, and thank to Luke Cella, our Executive Director, for his efforts with the day to day operation, with the On Course publication, being a great sounding board for ideas, and for providing some continuity to an ever changing board. It has been an honor and a privilege to serve this great membership. Thank you! @

2017 Year in Review

Dave Marquardt, Dirt -n- Turf

PHOTO CREDITS: MULTIPLE

At the close of every season it's always fun to review the year and the things we've seen in the more than 200 course visits I normally make. And what an interesting season it was! Torrential rains and flooding on the north side, which were soon to be followed by the same on the south, brought many management challenges for operators.

But what was interesting, was just how quickly superintendents had their courses back in playing condition. I never cease to be amazed at how much better guys and gals get from year to year.

But not everyone was this fortunate. A few guys lost a lot of turf and found themselves closed and reseeding fairways, tees and greens. Fortunately these situations were few and far in-between but that doesn't mean the problems stopped there. For many clubs, and especially those with older profiles, algae and black-layer soon followed and filled where density was lacking and turf suffering. Rooting also took a hit which for many guys meant a bit more TLC when the temperatures finally increased.

Along with the algae we also saw a fair amount of thinning turf due to a lack of nutrition. This was more so in the sand profiles but was also observed in many of the sand capped greens as well. Operators found themselves so busy

containing flood damage and re-opening courses that they failed to realize how much nutrition had flushed. This contributed to the thinning that we observed and no doubt also provided the opportunity for the spread of algae.

Another unanticipated result of the flooding was the onset of LDS in sand based profiles as penetrants and wetting agents were flushed from the system more than expected. Many superintendents replenished the profiles with potash and calcium, increased the conductivity, and recovered quickly. Others who were less responsive saw some thinning and lagged some in their recovery waiting for turf growth and vigor to return.

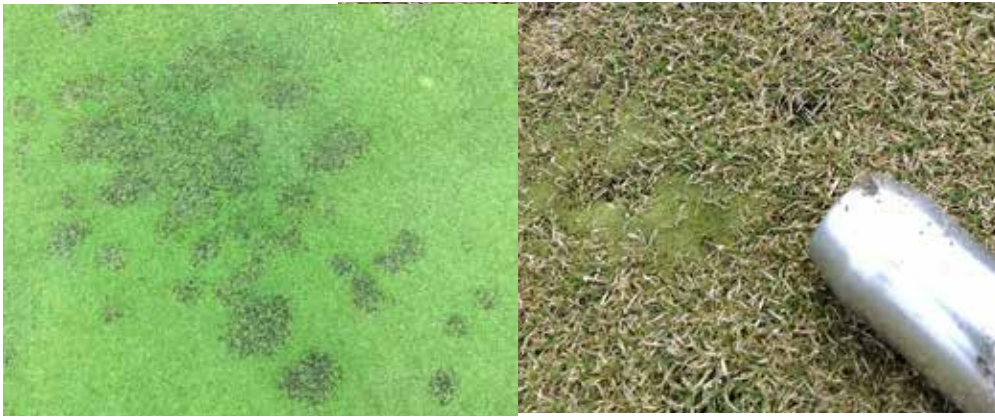
Beyond the flooding and situations that followed, we also saw a great deal of moss this year. As a matter of fact, I'd say I had more complaints about moss this year than I've ever had. And as we're all aware, there were no common denominators. Moss is a predator that fills wherever the opportunity presents itself. It was as prevalent on dry knobs and hills as it

was in the lower wet and traffic areas. It was a problem on newer sand greens as well as older sand capped. And the turf varieties didn't seem to matter either. We saw moss issues on poa/bent as well as on many of the newer 'A' varieties. I will say that to date we have not had a problem on the more dense turfs such as 007 or Pure Distinction. Will we? Only time will tell but I'd guess sooner or later.

Dollar spot is a perennial problem as we all know. This year was no differ-



Courses with older profiles began to experience algae and black layer after the flooding.



Moss popped up on Poalbent surfaces taking advantages of the conditions of the summer.

ent other than the constant complaint about the failure of fungicides to carry through to their label rotations. 'Breakout' as we call it was everywhere this year as the conditions were just very right for this perennial disease. As the year ran on I also wondered if flushed nutrition on fairways and tees, along with shorter rooting from rain soaked profiles, hadn't led to weak turf that was simply more susceptible.

I mentioned wetting agents earlier and that seemed to be another problem for many clubs this year. It seemed that superintendents were rotating one product after another and struggled all year with proper moisture management. Products that clients had relied on over the last couple of years just failed to provide the same expected results and what I found most interesting is how many of the oldest and simplest products seemed to perform better than many of the newer, more expensive alternatives.

And boy did the grass want to grow this year! I can't remember a year when there was more discussion about the need to increase or rotate PGR's in order to control growth. And what was most interesting, were the operators who have been finding that the more they include biologicals in their programs the less nitrogen they need. Many clients who have used simple sugars for several years have not only found nitrogen reductions but they also have less 'unintended' growth spurts and scalping.

This is fodder for another article but let me simply say that everyone should read the October 2006 article in GCM. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/237578239_Chemical_thatch_control_in_a_creeping_bentgrass_putting_green

And what would the year be without something entirely unexplainable! Earlier this fall Dr. Jesse Benelli displayed a photo of some



These dark green patches would be easier to explain if they were in the shape of crop circles.

strange, dark green patches that appeared on a clubs greens. As someone who craves the unusual challenge, I quickly went to see these patches and studied them through the end of the season. The superintendent explained that these patches have been coming and going for a couple of years and we so far have no explanation. Soil and tissue analysis have not revealed anything out of the ordinary and my colleagues from across the country have never seen anything like it. Trust me when I

say that this will be a focus of mine again during the 2018 season.

The one thing other than disease, flooding, and cultural practices that seemed to be a general talk among clubs this year was labor. Course after course operated with less than a full staff and this for some guys has been the 2nd or 3rd year of the same. What's the answer? Well of course it's money and the seasonality of our work. Other fractions of horticulture have stepped up to the plate the last few years and raised wages and in many cases golf has lagged behind. And in some cases, clients told me they are willing to pay more, but the people just aren't out there. No easy answers here, but the one thing I hope we don't start seeing is club management deciding that budget dollars for labor that have gone unused can simply be cut from future budgets.

So beyond what I observed in course conditions this year I also enjoyed seeing how so many superintendents have been going back to basics and looking for and employing simpler products and techniques in their management strategies. For instance, take the sugars I mentioned above. Some 20 years ago I started talking to clubs about the use of simple sugars, humic acids and kelp as ways to increase and improve biological activity for thatch and organic matter digestion. And now, all of these years later, we see that not only have most of the clubs embraced some form of these products, but the vendor community has also jumped on board and are now marketing more compost tea type products than we've ever seen before. My advice; do your homework and compare price and effectiveness just like you would with any other product since the costs for these products can range from \$1000/year to over \$3000, and to date we've not seen any advantage to spending more. I would also caution that unlike some clubs have been told, products such as this WILL NOT replace proper cultural practices such as core aeration.

Another tool and program that has made a comeback is slicing aerification. Specifically, the AerWay and Bannerman slicers can now be found in almost every shop and are being used on greens, tees, fairways and rough alike. These tools are versatile, effective, fast, and kind to the capital budget which is really important in light of the labor issues we've been seeing. One of my favorites for greens



Slicing aerification methods made their way back into many maintenance rotations this year.



is the Bannerman 400 which has interchangeable axels and allows operators to go from slicing to spiking in a very short order. This is really a nice way to quickly vent for gas exchange or open the surfaces for drying. And spiker attachments, whether on this tool, sand pro's, or triplex units, are excellent ways to move sand into these tighter turf canopies prior to a deep watering.

Now as we know, fertilizer products continue to be modified by manufactures who are all looking to get an edge over the competition. What I have found most interesting over the last few years is the return in popularity of water solubles. Clubs that are moving in this direction are recognizing not only the great performance, but also a great deal of savings over premixed jug products. We have found this to be especially true for clubs with some of the newer turf varieties that are so very easy to feed and manage for nutrition. In fact I would say that the number one request of new-client-clubs is for a better, more efficient and cost effective foliar program, and water soluble nutrients seem to be fitting this request. And what's nice, almost every vendor carries them so they are plentiful and available at a range of prices.

So in recap, it seems that the same issues that plagued superintendents 20 years ago are still providing management challenges. My challenge here would be to the academic world as I suggest that more research and development effort needs to take place on the things that clubs struggle with daily and not so much on the random. (Another article for another day!) Add this wonderful return of 'simpler is better' and I just smile at how wise and dedicated superintendents continue to be. Simpler equipment, simpler products, and simpler methods, all give operators more time to deal with weather related issues and club politics, not to mention giving them more time for hobbies and family. See you in the spring! @

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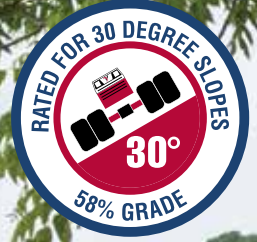
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DATES TO REMEMBER

December 2017

December 4 – Annual South Side Superintendents Holiday Party at Chef Klaus Bier Stube in Frankfort, IL.

December 6 – 65th Midwest Turf Clinic and Annual Meeting at Medinah Country Club, Curtis Tyrrell, CGCS, MG host.

December 13 – CAGCS Annual Meeting at Oak Park Country Club, Philip Cuffare host.

January 9, 2018 - ITF's Turf Conference, Bridges of Poplar Creek, Dustin Hugen and Bill Meyer, hosts.

January 18-26 – TurfNet's BIGGA Turf Management Exposition trip to Harrogate, England.

January 23, 2018 Midwest January Meeting and Wee One Fundraiser, Seven Bridges Golf Club.

February 3-5 – GCSAA Golf Championships hosted at TPC San Antonio, Tom Lively host superintendent.

February 3-8 – Golf Industry Show 2018 at the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center in San Antonio, Texas.

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*Wednesday, February 7, 2018
7 pm*

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Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays to one and all! Special Holiday shout-out to our newest MAGCS members, who are:

- Steve Mezan, Worldwide Battery, Class E
- Tyler Wesseldyk, Reinders, Class E

We also pass along our best wishes to the new MAGCS Board of Directors led by President **Jim Pedersen** of Hughes Creek Golf Club. Joining Jim as officers are Vice President **Justin Kirtland**, Arrowhead Golf Club and Secretary/Treasurer **Jim Canning**, White Eagle Country Club or **Brian Stout**, Arboretum Club (still up in the air at press time) The 2018 Directors: **Todd Schmitz**, Phillips Park Golf Course; **John Ekstrom**, Inwood Golf Course and **Mark Kosbab**, Sportsmans Country Club. **Matt Harstad** is now our Past President, and **Matt Kregel** has completed his Board service. Additionally, Directors **Justin VanLanduit**, Briarwood Country Club and **Kris Kveland**, Ridge Country Club did not seek re-election at this month's Annual Meeting. Many thanks to all of these gentlemen for their commitment to our great association!

Be aware that the maintenance facility break-ins reported a couple months ago are still occurring. Two more courses have experienced break-ins and thefts with similar Modus Operandi—cutting or removing panels from maintenance buildings and stealing small power equipment like blowers, chainsaws and string trimmers. I also read in the news recently that a western-suburban private club experienced vandalism to both the golf course (destroyed greens covers) and clubhouse (smashed exterior light fixtures), and **Brian Bossert** at Bryn Mawr Country Club discovered that the golf cart that went missing months ago, and was presumed stolen, had actually been driven into a pond by vandals and resurfaced last month. Make sure those security cameras are up and running—'tis the season.



Advanced Turf Solutions has lost a good man—Brett Ziegler has officially “retired” from his sales position with the company and is going “off the grid.” Brett and his girlfriend Krista have bought a farm in Muskegon, Michigan where they will start a CSA Farm Share program, selling their home-grown produce to local Farmers Markets and restaurants (and I suspect there will be some hops growing on

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.....Bull Sheet from page 9.

the farm as well, knowing Brett's fondness for home-brewed beer). The property is called Tortoise and Hare Farm, and they have next year's garlic crop already in. Let's wish Brett and Krista the best of luck in their exciting new endeavor.



Front row: Rusty Stachlewitz and Brett Ziegler; Back row L to R: Brian Hissem, John Turner, Todd Fregien, Roy Cranmer and Craig Shepherd. Foreground: Cherry Cheese Kringle—Kris' lesser-known cousin.

The world of Golf Course Architecture has also lost a good man—Roger Packard, once a headliner in the golf design world and well-known for his local projects such as Cantigny, passed away on October 14th in Palm Harbor, Florida at the young age of 70.

Locally, we all lost a good man on November 28th when Kevin Fuchs passed away. Kevin, who was the Midwest Sales Director for Harrells, was the son of Gleneagles superintendent Keith Fuchs, brother of Keith Fuchs Jr. and nephew of Wally Fuchs, and leaves behind his two young sons Asher (12) and Loudon (14). Please remember Kevin in your prayers.



While many of us are finding it harder and harder to see what shoes we chose to wear this morning after another gluttonous Thanksgiving, and contemplating the inevitable truth that Christmas and all its opportunities to overindulge in food and drink is just around the corner, we start to take on the "Bears-think" philosophy, where we realize it's futile to even try to abstain, so why not just punt on third down and worry about getting back into shape next year? Some might even reason that they are already in shape—round IS a shape you know. Then there's guys like George O'Hara of Burris Equipment Company, who will NEVER be round, and who, on October 15th competed in AND finished an Iron Man event in Louisville, Kentucky. In his own words, George battled

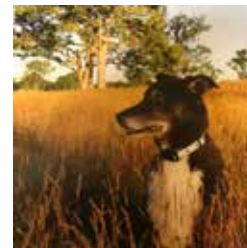
through 40-mile-an-hour wind gusts and pouring rain to haul his 60-year-old ass over the finish line after a 2.4-mile swim, a 112-mile bike ride and a 26.2-mile run in 13:55:38. Congratulations George—you'll never get that 14 hours back!



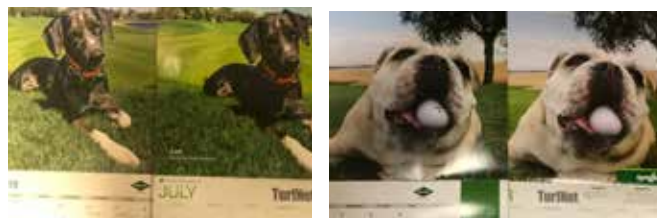
George IM O'Hara

Congratulations to this year's editorial award winners—In very tightly contested races, **Todd Quitno** of Lohmann Companies won the Fred Opperman Editorial Award for his article "Taking a Ride on the Bunker Bandwagon," and **Chuck Barber** of St. Charles Country Club won the Ray Gerber Editorial Award for his article "Bunkers Revisited." Thank you two and all the other authors who contributed valuable content to this publication over the past year—member-written articles are the driving force behind the quality of On Course, so keep those articles coming!

The dog calendars are out! The dog calendars are out! Taking center stage along with Tommy Witt's dog Tu (in TurfNet's Superintendent's Best Friend calendar sponsored by Syngenta) is Scott Pavalko's border collie Broc, the "Mr. October" in the 2018 Dog Days of Golf calendar sponsored by Lebanon—the 15th version of the calendar! At the Golf Industry Show in San Antonio, one of the 14 dogs featured in the calendar will be crowned king or queen for 2018, earning them \$3,000 for his or her owner's local chapter, and a \$500 cash prize—A MAJOR AWARD—to be used for doggie booties and sweat-ers. Congrats Scott and Broc, and good luck in San Antonio!



And on the subject of these calendars, could there be some "Chicago-style" ballot-stuffing shenanigans going on? Not just one, but TWO of the dogs for 2018 made BOTH calendars. It's like Playboy and Penthouse running the same center-fold! Inquiries WILL be made...



Not only the same dog, it's the same pic of the same dog times two!

Golf, Inc. has published its latest "Most Powerful People in Golf" list for 2018, and not surprisingly, our President (not Jim Pedersen—the other President) is Numero Uno. Also of interest in the list are several items. One is the number of management company executives—they occupied the #2, 5, 6, 12, 15, 16, 25, 26 and 28 spots. Another is that Erik Anderson, CEO of TopGolf was #8; Jordan Speith was the

highest-ranked golfer on the list at #27; and Steve Mona, CEO of the World Golf Foundation moved down four spots from 26th to 30th.

In a more light-hearted list, Golf.com ranked the “Golffiest States in America,” and their #1 choice, based loosely on quality courses per capita was Rhode Island, a state of 1,212 square miles, or slightly more than the Chicago metropolitan area. A state that was recently carpeted. A state that the Bahamas could kick the s##t out of in a war. You get the idea. The author of the list, Michael Bamberger points to the dozens of “good, no-nonsense, pre-Eisenhower walking courses,” along with Newport Country Club, the home of the first U.S. Open in 1895 as major factors in his ranking.

December’s “Clavin-ism:” Did you know—it’s a little-known fact—that there are 143 male professional golfers in the U.S. that earned over \$1 million in 2017? And that doesn’t count the private club pros!

Scott Witte oversees bunkers and beehives. Donald Trump, Jr. oversees business and boardrooms. Although the two are on seemingly divergent paths, I can’t help but see a possible connection.

MIDWEST Doppelgänger



Scott Witte



or Donald Trump, Jr?

Can you believe it’s been 8 years this month that we’ve been doing Midwest Doppelgangers in some fashion? December 2010 was our first member/celebrity lookalike (although the “Midwest Doppelganger” title didn’t take hold until February 2013)—can you remember the first one?



went. Then it dawned on me.

Have you checked out the blog by Gordon McKie, the course manager at the Old Course at St. Andrews, Scotland? It’s fun, if for no other reason



but to see how their maintenance practices differ from ours (and their spelling). Gordon’s most recent blog “Old Course winter work commences” details the annual fairway plugging programme (See? I think they add extra letters to the words over there just for colour), whereby they plug out every single divot in the concentrated landing areas with cup cutters and replace them with fresh nursery plugs. It takes five weeks, and he estimates they replace around 40,000 divots, which must weigh several tonnes. Damme!

In case you haven’t heard, a large, long-term U.S. farm study on the use of glyphosate (commonly known as RoundUp) by agricultural workers has found no firm link between exposure to the pesticide and cancer. The study also concluded that there still is, and always will be a link between homeowners’ access to the pesticide and the deaths of their lawns.

Q: Who does **John Fulling** call when he finds a runaway giraffe on his course?

A: The Kalamazookeeper.

Q: What does he photograph it with?

A: A Kalamazoom lens.

Congrats to **Jeff Pozen** and the Downers Grove Golf Club on obtaining sanctuary designation through Audubon International’s Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses. Downers Grove GC becomes the 54th golf course in Illinois and the 912th in the world to achieve the designation.

Equipment for Sale:

1 Range Picker, slightly used, runs well on alcohol to a point. Make an offer. @



OK, why not? I stayed up all night to see where the sun

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EOP What's with it?

Dave Blomquist, Chicagoland Turf

By now, all of the Superintendents that are reading this are enjoying the cold, snowy tundra that was a lush playground only a few weeks ago. Irrigation systems emptied – playing surfaces protected – leaves blown to oblivion.

Now seems like it'd be a pretty good time to sit back and think on the season that was. What worked? What didn't? What should we add to our spray program? What did every-



one else use and should I try that? Maybe, put a text out to a few buddies and see what they are thinking about adding to their programs for 2018. Maybe I can call on my preferred

vendors and get their opinion about pricing, or potential label changes. Maybe even learn about the new stuff that is in the pipe line... maybe put that in the rotation.

WRONG! WRONG! WRONG! As Mr. or Mrs. Superintendent ponder these ideas over a cup of hot brew, it suddenly occurs to them – Oh yeah, I did that over a month ago. An army of knuckleheads called, texted, emailed, IM'd, cold called... and told me that all life on earth will come to a complete and utter standstill at midnight on October 31 -- if I don't order up my entire year's worth of everything I am sure to need in 2018. WHY?

BOTTOM LINE Why does this happen you ask, seemingly earlier and earlier every year? Let us take a trip back in time to the day I was privileged enough to sit in on my very first Manufacturer / Distributor EOP planning sit-down. (Early Order Program or Period. We in sales love acronyms: OEM, FYTD, GIS, MR, DR, BMP, BFF, FML, you get the picture).

Having been a Superintendent for 19 years, and on the receiving end of all the fuss, I thought I was finally going to get the "inside scoop". I made it a point to ask to be enlightened early on in

the meet, that way I would be able to better focus my queries later. OK. I'm ready to let you in on the secret. Here we go.

Here's what I got:

"Cause. It's October Dummy".

They all laughed at me and ate another doughnut whilst I sat disappointed with the realization that there is no Bottom Line. Nobody has been able to give me a clear, concise explanation.

EOP DEFINED Different distributors and manufacturers run varying deals, but basically you are encouraged to commit to next year's stuff as early as possible in the fall. They incentivize end users with a combination of: extended terms, rebate

checks, rebate credits, percentage price reductions, gift cards, warehousing specials, delivery deals, free stuff, outright bribes, tchotchkes, payment plans, yada yada yada.



Everyone is trying to beat everyone else to the punch. You won't have to pay until next year and, you can reduce your expenses by quite a bit, maybe up to 20%.

ADVANTAGE TO END USERS

- The earlier you order, the more you'll save. Sounds like a sales pitch but the simple fact is you will not get better pricing, especially with Agency items. While there are some vendors that run programs throughout the season, the prices don't match what is available during EOP. If you know what you will use, you won't find it cheaper.
- Things are fresh on your mind. The longer you wait, the more potential you may have to forget the tweaks. A long cold winter can dull your recollection.



Employee-Owned Companies User Early Order Program

- Rest assured. By getting everything handled before the snow flies, you can take some solace

in the fact that you will have one less thing to worry about going into next season.

- Reaction to Generics. Agency products ordered in October become price competitive with post patents. Get all the support, consistency, and backing that the generics don't have at a discount.

ADVANTAGE TO MANUFACTURERS (what they tell us):

- Inventory and production levels. Kind of obvious but just about everything you use gets made in short production runs. Having an idea of market trends will keep costs under control.
- Better servicing the customer. A stretch, but by knowing what you want and when you want it, you'll be a happier more organized camper.



ADVANTAGE TO MANUFACTURERS (unofficially what may be true):

- Money. Market share. Get it while the getting is good.
- Ricky Bobby Syndrome. If you ain't first, you're last
- Head Office Impact. If they change the program to say... February, and I'm just spitballin here, to coincide with GIS for example, the boys in the home office will interpret this fall as a loss and heads will roll.



While the recent past has been somewhat stable, there is no doubt that over the years all this

has moved from late winter to early fall. The old timers tell us that ordering decisions were made "after the show" in early March. That way any new products or changes to existing ones can be examined at the Annual Trade Show and Conference.

With what seems like an annual influx of new distribution partners, the pressure is not going to ease. Not to be a bearer of bad tidings fuddy duddy, but I'd suggest you accept it and be ready to go next October. Or, maybe September. But it could be late August!



The way I see it, about the only way this is going to change is if all the end users get together and let the manufacturers know how things are going to be.

CONCLUSION There are some bonus advantages to EOP's that maybe you've overlooked. A: You've already seen us in October—your winter is FREE! And B: You'll probably forget half the stuff you early-ordered, why you ordered it, and why you ordered so much of it. Don't fret—your sales guy or gal took notes and will gladly remind you over lunch in March. So with that, I'll see you in March. @



Update from last month's Best Bars and eateries: It was pointed out by more than a few that I left out a couple haunts: Crossroads in Mundelein, located somewhat near Ivanhoe's maintenance facility. Your Neighbors on 75th St. in Naperville, located approximately equal distance from Stonebridge CC, Seven Bridges, and my house.

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Dave Ward and Kati Bernardy

Buteo jamaciensis

Common Red-tailed hawk, chicken hawk

Family *Accipitridae*

One of the most enjoyable aspects of working outside on a large expanse of open land is the opportunity to observe nature – sometimes in all of its evolutionary predator/prey glory and gore. One fascinating predator, the red-tailed hawk, is a common and easily identified year-round resident and/or visitor on most Midwest golf courses. The perfect mixture of trees, open space and an abundance of prey combine to make golf courses a perfect habitat for hawks. They are tolerant of human activity and even golfers don't scare them away. Through the years, I have watched red-tails feast on birds, squirrels, snakes, fish, frogs, rats, small rodents and an occasional stray house-cat. Every year since Coyote Run opened in 2005, red-tailed hawks have nested on the course, usually producing two chicks. For several years we also hosted a pair of breeding great horned owls. Owls nest in January before hawks and steal the previous year's hawk nest forcing the red-tails to build a new one.



The juvenile red-tailed hawks are often seen on the ground in early summer as they learn that they're on top of the food chain.

capable of breeding in their third year and have been known to live up to 25 years in the wild. Other than humans, adult red-tails have no natural predators but their eggs can be eaten by raccoons or destroyed by owls. Watching newly hatched red-tailed chicks first poke their fuzzy heads out of the nest is a rite of passage each spring. After the young hawks fledge, it takes them a couple of months to figure out how to hunt and behave like adult hawks. One can often find them on the ground crying for their parents to provide a meal and exploring anything unusual on a fairway like a discarded cigar butt or a migrating turtle.. It takes young hawks a while to develop a healthy wariness of humans and they will allow people to get close.



Due to their large population, hunting prowess and trainability, red-tails are often used in falconry. Hawks can only be taken from the wild after they have fledged but are less than a year old.



Perhaps one of the greatest sounds in nature is the screech of a soaring hawk, reminding all who hear that we are somehow still connected to a wild past. Their presence on a golf course is a good indicator of the important environ-

mental benefits of golf in an urban setting. @



It's a common sight to see red-tailed hawks being "bombaraded" by groups of smaller birds trying to protect their nests.

Did you know, Dan Dinelli, CGCS of North Shore Country Club has both a falconry and raptor breeding license in Illinois and the US?

"We have nesting Redtails on the course. Like all raptors, they are on the top of the food chain. So like a canary in the coal mine, we use the birds as a barometer of health of the course. If pollutants were to bioaccumulate, the raptors well-being would be compromised." - DD

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Photo Courtesy of Skokie CC & Don Cross

Peter Killian
Assistant Golf Course Superintendent
Sunset Ridge Country Club



Peter Killian, Assistant Golf Course Superintendent at Sunset Ridge Country Club.



Where did you grow up?
Heyworth / Bloomington, Illinois

First golf course you where you worked?

Bloomington Country Club

Do you have a prized possession?
My dog Sheila and cat Peppers.

What do you like to drink? I drink a lot of water and a little beer. Pipeworks, 3 Floyds & Hop Butcher have good brews.

Favorite job task at the golf course?

I like working on projects that require the use of heavier machinery. It's fun running a trencher or backhoe.

Dream car? 1956 Ford F-100. Matte black.

Favorite pig out food?

Entire bags of chips.

What is your favorite movie, actor?

The Usual Suspects, Leonardo DiCaprio

What is your favorite book?

Memory Resuce by Daniel Amen

What is your favorite restaurant to go to?

Either La Taquiza or Bob Chinn's

What is your favorite sports team?

Arsenal FC

What is your best vacation or favorite destination?

Bangkok, Thailand

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

I received a cat hammock for Christmas one year...



Peter Killian won the 2016 Grotti Tournament with his partner Greg Rounds.

What is your favorite work shoe or boot?

Red Wing 1907s.

What is your best work piece of apparel?

My winter coat, Carhartt Quick Duck

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