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MIDWEST ASSOCIATION OF GOLF COURSE  
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**PRESIDENT' MESSAGE**

**MARCH 1984**

My congratulations to GCSAA for an excellent conference show in Las Vegas. Like many of our members, I participated in a pre-conference seminar and was very pleased with the content and the presentation by the instructors. I can't recall anyone telling me that they hadn't gained some information and insight into their profession from those seminars. Congratulations to Pete Leuzinger and the people who helped him for all their successful effort in coordinating the GCSAA Disease Seminar at Pheasant Run. It set a GCSAA record for attendance at a non-conference seminar and I'm sure we will see a seminar in our area again next year.

On behalf of the MAGCS, I would like to thank Paul Boizelle for all of his years of service to GCSAA. The MAGCS is proud to have supported all of his efforts and endeavors during his tenure on the GCSAA Board of Directors. Behind every cloud is a silver lining, and our silver lining is having Paul Boizelle a little closer to home to share his knowledge and expertise with us here in Chicago. Welcome back Paul!

While in Las Vegas, I attended a luncheon for CGCS members. I can tell you that this controversial form of recognition is as strong and vibrant as ever. A long range plan has been drawn up for the future of this program, and it is an exciting one! The long range will improve the integrity, exposure, and accreditation, of the title CGCS. The CGCS program will remain a voluntary program while increasing the standards for those who wish to aspire to this mark in their career. It will not hamper anyone in becoming or remaining a viable member of GCSAA. The long range plan, presented to us in rough draft at the luncheon, has some inadequacies and is inconsistent in some areas in this form. Those problems present very small obstacles to overcome. The overall direction that the certification program is taking is right on course and headed for bigger and better things. We will see an increase in the number of GCSAA members who will want to participate in this program as the program's growing pains begin to subside. My hat's off to the Certification Committee for their forthright perseverance under sometimes unrelenting criticism.

Now Fred tells me I have run out of space so I have to climb down off my soapbox until next month.

**Roger Stewart, CGCS**



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## DIRECTOR'S COLUMN

### A WHOLE NEW LOOK FOR OUR CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

The G.C.S.A.A. Certification Committee unveiled in Las Vegas their first rough draft for upgrading the certification program. It was easy to see after reading their twenty-nine draft, that many hours of hard work and serious thought went into their proposal. This rough draft should be required reading for anyone considering entering the program, and especially those who have been opposed to certification.

In their first draft, the committee attempted to make major changes in the program, respective to the criticism that many members have voiced over the young life of the certification program. They proposed future minimum education requirements beginning with an associates degree or equivalent, escalating to a bachelor of science degree or its equivalent by the year 2005. This approach should end the criticism of no educational requirements. Another criticism has been that only "textbook" knowledge is necessary to become certified. The G.C.S.A.A. Committee has come up with some changes to make entering the program a little tougher. One area where they suggest a change is eligibility. Their plan is to, in the future, require an applicant to have completed an internship under a class "A" professional superintendent, and in the year 1995 making only C.G.C.S.'s mentors of interns.

There is also a requirement in the rough draft that each applicant be attested and recommended by two current C.G.C.S. or by two club officials. This is one part of the draft that I believe will be dropped or changed prior to approval. I do not think it is workable to have superintendents inspecting other superintendents to see if their course is good enough for them to enter the certification program.

For those of you who are currently C.G.C.S.'s, they propose dropping the renewal exam and requiring 15 C.E.U.'s every five years. Not only are they planning to make the entrance requirements tougher, but you have to work to stay in the program.

There are many other points mentioned in their rough draft that I didn't touch on, that are equally important, such as:

- 1) Going to a closed book exam
- 2) G.C.S.A.A. offering all of the C.E.U.'s needed to enter the program and continue in the program
- 3) Regional and chapter educational programs will be assigned a C.E.U. value
- 4) College credits can be transferred to the program
- 5) The G.C.S.A.A. educational programs are to be submitted for accreditation, which will assure the universal acceptance of our C.E.U.'s

The entire certification will be, in the very near future, going through a face lift. The look may not be exactly as proposed in the rough draft, but it will definitely be improved. When all changes are in place there will be a media blitz to promote the program so anyone connected with golf will know about the program.

Our certification program has been the subject of much criticism, some of it was justified, however, I believe that the forth coming changes in education and eligibility requirements, will successfully put to rest most of the criticism I have heard.

You must remember that no matter what requirements are finally decided upon, no matter how strict they are, being a Certified Golf Course Superintendent does not guarantee performance and only the superintendent's employer will be the judge of his, or her, performance. I strongly believe that, if given the chance, this revised program will benefit us all by providing the means that a superintendent can use to help make himself more valuable to his employer and a better professional turfgrass manager.

**J. Michael Hart, C.G.C.S.**

### HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW YOUR TREES?

The loss of vigor, or death of a plant is usually the result of one or more of the following conditions. Disease, insects, mechanical damage, drought or flooding. This is true of all vegetation that exist on the golf course.

As golf course superintendents we are primarily concerned with the plants that are predominant on the golf course; Grass! That is unless you have devised a mode of existence where the necessities of life are eliminated or have a wife, girlfriend or combination thereof that will support you when your unemployment compensation expires.

A plant whose health and general condition is often overlooked until it has deteriorated into a dangerous state is a tree. This in spite of the fact the high wind and lightning are additional perils to those mentioned previously. It is not unusual when faced with conditions as hostile as was last summer that we tend to be concerned only about the grass and realize too late that many of the trees on the course were also adversely affected by the same conditions. The big difference is that there is no quick fix for a tree that has succumbed to conditions. A couple of yards of sod or a few pounds of seed will not replace a tree by the next season. It was with this in mind that we at Arrowhead contacted Dr. Thomas Green, plant pathologist at the Morton Arboretum.

Dr. Green has devised a system to rate trees as to size, shape, age, and general health on a scale from one to six. He also provides a service, at a cost that is nominal, that surveys all trees and furnishes a report that includes a reference number for each tree, identifies to species, height, shape, as well as plotting all trees on a plan of the golf course.

The report covers the condition of each tree and rates it on a scale that covers the entire spectrum from 1, a tree recently planted in good condition that has not yet reached its full height or shape; to 6, a tree that needs to be removed. Dr. Green also furnishes a plastic overlay that shows what any area will look like when the 5 and 6 are removed. Suggestions as to replanting are included with regard to both species and density.

The dimension of such a report coming from an acknowledged expert is more than enough to get a tree program out of the talking stage into reality as well as creating an awareness of the problems that can still be corrected and prolong the life of existing trees.

**Robert K. Breen**

## G.C.S. TRIP

I like to consider myself a loyal member of our national association, G.C.S.A.A., so a couple of years ago when they recommended we use a particular airline for conference travel I did so willingly. This year they made arrangements for us to have access to a travel agency to handle all the mundane tasks of lining up air transportation for "Vegas". Now my loyalty was put to the test. I contacted this travel agency, told them where I was leaving from, when I was leaving, and when I was coming back, and requested two tickets, one for me and one for my wife. The fun now begins. When I received the tickets they were both in my wife's name, I quickly told them that if only one of us can go to "Vegas" it was going to be me. No problem, just scratch out her name and write in mine.

The travel agency decided that the best way for us to get from O'Hare to Las Vegas was by way of Minneapolis/St. Paul. So when I received the tickets, it showed us going from O'Hare to Minneapolis then to Las Vegas, our return tickets simply said Las Vegas to O'Hare. Okay, I can handle one stop over in Minnesota, after all the tickets were at a good price.

Well, we didn't just stop in Minneapolis, we had to change planes with an hour and a half lay over. Only a slight inconvenience, right? On our next plane our seats were located in the last row next to the bulkhead (wall). No window. We did, however, have a rather large and extremely loud engine located right where the window should have been (DC-9). Fortunately, we soon discovered that we were only going to Denver instead of Las Vegas, fool that I was. By the time I got to Denver, I had a terrific headache from the engine noise and vibration. No problem, the captain said we'll be on the ground for 30 minutes, and the stewardess said if we checked at the counter they could probably change our seats. Great! Good seats for the rest of the flight to Vegas. Went to find some aspirin for my headache. When we returned to our gate 20 minutes after disembarking, I saw our plane pull out. No problem, the clerk said they have another one going that way at 8:30 p.m. It was 12:30 at the time. After an exchange of words, (I had two years in the Marine Corps, the clerk couldn't compete with me on that one) they found us a flight leaving with only two and a half hour wait. Denver is pretty in the winter, at least that's what they say.

Alas, we arrived in Las Vegas only 10½ hours after leaving home. We were, of course, concerned about which of the three plans that we had flown on had our luggage. Our bags made the trip ahead of us. (They didn't have a headache in Denver). Someone did manage to run over one of the bags — that one that is now six days old.

Needless to say, my luck continued through our stay in Vegas. I dropped enough money that they won't have to have a state income tax for at least one more year.

Back to the airport in Las Vegas. My ticket, remember, says Las Vegas to O'Hare, right? Wrong! The clerk said Las Vegas to Minneapolis again, then to Rochester, Minnesota, change plans there, then to Chicago. Too late to change now, away we go.

About ten minutes into the flight our pilot mentioned that the air would be a little choppy for about sixty miles. Needless to say, it remained bumpy for the whole flight. We arrived in beautiful Minneapolis airport once again. While sitting there waiting for them to board for the next leg of our flight to

(cont'd. pg. 9)



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**VOX POP "LOW BIDDING"**

Or maybe this should be entitled, "Don't kill the goose that lays the golden egg". Whatever. There is one thing that is very disturbing - it is the insidious poison of jumping on the ridiculous low bid.

When they asked the astronaut what his thoughts were during the blast off, he responded, "It was assuring that the program and capsule did not go to the lowest bidder!"

The Super has been trained to save money, which is good, as opposed to wasting money. But where does that money go that he has saved? To the Club House for draperies? Or for the ladies powder room again? Or maybe to replace last year's new rugs? Actually, what you save on low bids is a very small part of your budget.

A manager does not ask for low bids on steaks, or on roasts, or on liquor. A pro does not seek low bids on sets of clubs. A member does not request the lowest bid for membership dues. I feel that you are deceiving the golfer if you give him the poorest return for his money. Low bidding degrades the Super and eventually he strangles himself by continually lowering his and the club's standards.

Another cause for concern is that the supplier who gives service - and that is an intangible that no price can set - will no longer be able to finance that service, and he is the one who has regularly supported the National, State, and local turf grass programs. Also, you can write off any donation for the local association's summer picnics and Christmas parties. He has always been the mainstay of educational meetings. It becomes a two way street. The supplier must survive to help you, the Super, and the Country Club to survive.

If the unreasonable low bidding continues, one competitor will drive out all the rest, and then a monopoly will be created. This is a big worry to interested people. If you think supplies, equipment, etc. are high now, wait until you deal with a monopoly with no healthy competition. The Arab oil monopoly will be a mickey mouse operations compared to this!

Why am I interested? I'm afraid that you, the Super, will get burned - and badly. The service you have been accustomed to will falter. The part you wanted at 5:00 a.m. Monday may take 3 days in the mail. The warm friendship of the supplier, who you need every bit as much as he needs you, will become very cold and businesslike. Sometime take time out to ponder what you, the turf man, owes the green industry. The tremendous strides we have made in turf grass management has been a cooperative effort of education, industry, and you. In our golf operations, we need all the help we can get. Don't sell yourself cheaply - or your Club. (If your committee or members complain, then how come they play, eat, and drink at the Club and pay dues for the privilege, when they could do the same elsewhere and save the dues?) Far-fetched? I don't know!

Let me quote John Ruskin: "The common law of business balance prohibits paying a little and getting a lot - it can't be done. If you deal with the lowest bidder, it is well to add something for the risk you run. And if you do that, you will have enough to pay for the something better!"

I feel that self respect in this wonderful world of golf is important. Please don't take it away from yourself, your club, or your reputable supplier.

**Credit - Patch of Green, 10/83  
Andrew Bertoni**



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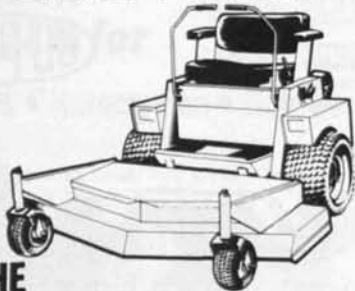
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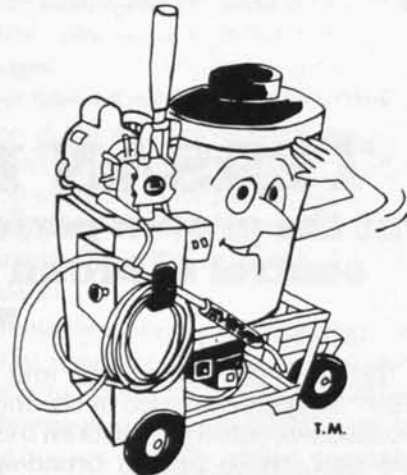
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### GCS TRIP (cont'd.)

Rochester, we were told that we would be delayed for about thirty minutes while the maintenance tried to fix a broken hydraulic something or other. Just enough of a delay to miss our connecting flight from Rochester to O'Hare. No problem, they just happen to have another plane now boarding for CHicago, leaving in five minutes. We ran to the proper gate. (Approximate distance: 1/2 mile) We were told they had only two seats together on the whole plane, we took them. Fortunately, they were in the smoking section. Unfortunately, we still were not headed toward Chicago. The plane was never more than half full. Another slight inconvenience, next stop Central Wisconsin Airport in Wausau, then on to the city of Milwaukee.

We finally arrived at O'Hare Airport at 10:15 p.m. (we left Las Vegas at 1:30 p.m.), we missed our ground transportation home by a mere hour and fifteen minutes. Nowhere would our luggage be. I worried for nothing, apparently they fixed the plane in Minnesota, it made the connecting flight and arrived in Chicago on time, our luggage preceded us by an hour and a half. No problem, I just rented a car (another \$50.00 shot!) and drove the final leg home and arrived there only ten hours after leaving Las Vegas.

I realized that all my problems were not the fault of our travel agency. The airline we flew did very little to instill confidence either. My future arrangements will be made by myself, with an airline I choose to fly with, at a price I am willing to pay. My tickets for this ordeal were **only** \$332.00 each, which, of course, I have found out was not a bargain for a direct flight, much less the milk run we were on.

As a loyal G.C.S.A.A. member, I say let's support education, turfgrass research, our members, and let the travel agents fend for themselves.

P.S. The above information is true in every detail. The trip both ways totaled twenty and a half hours, five different planes, and in and out of airports nine times.

J. Michael Hart

### GOOD TIMBER


The tree that never had to fight  
For sun and sky and air and light;  
That stood out in the open plain,  
And always got its share of rain.  
Never became a forest king,  
But lived and died a scrubby thing.

The man who never had to toil  
By hand or mind mid life's turmoil;  
Who never had to win his share  
Of sun and sky and light and air.  
Never became a manly man,  
But lived and died as he began.

Good timber does not grow in ease;  
The stronger wind, the tougher trees.  
The farther skies, the greater length.  
The rougher storms, the greater strength.  
By sun and cold, by rain and snows,  
In tree or man good timber grows.

-Anonymous-

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### FACT 3

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