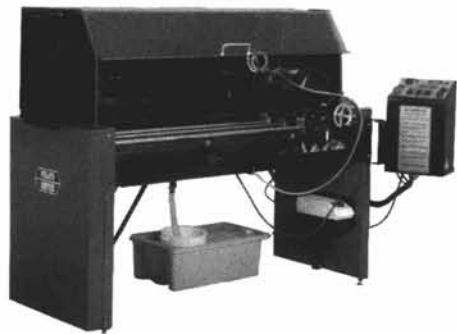




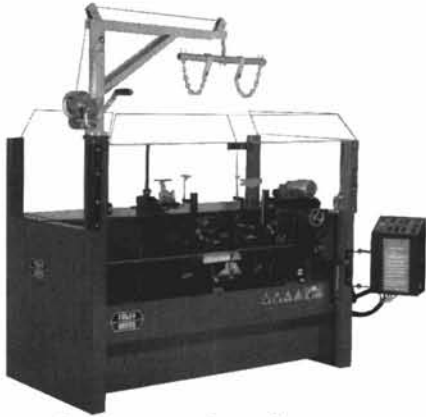
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On Course is published monthly. All articles, double-spaced, are required by the first of the month to make the next issue. Advertising is sold by the column inch, sixth page, quarter page, third page, half page and full page.

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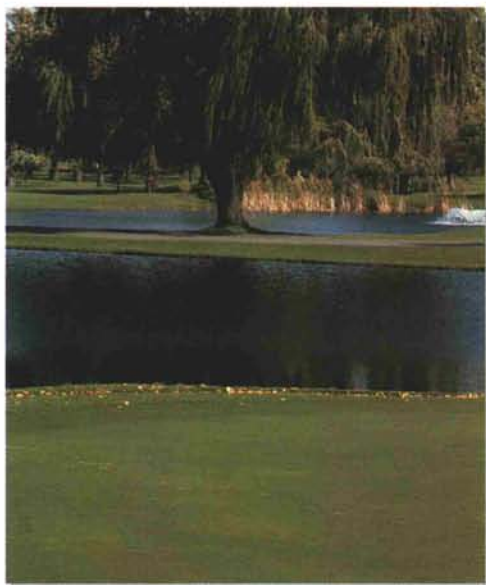
The Midwest Association of Golf Course Superintendents (MAGCS), founded December 24, 1926, is a professional organization whose goals include preservation and dissemination of scientific and practical knowledge pertaining to golf turf maintenance.

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Bob Maibusch, CGCS, MG
Hinsdale G.C.

As most of you are probably aware by now, Fred Opperman will be leaving his post as the Editor of *On Course* magazine sometime in the next few months. Fred and his wife Judy are moving to Montana to pursue new opportunities and dreams.

Rest assured that the Board of Directors and the Editorial Committee will do everything within their power to assure that the quality and timeliness of your magazine will continue. To that end, a search committee, headed by Jim McNair, was formed the day we received notice of Fred's resignation and has been hard at work identifying possible successors. Their collective attitude is to approach this challenge as an opportunity.

Instead of bemoaning Fred's departure, I believe it is an appropriate juncture to give thanks for the time that Fred spent serving the association in the capacity of Editor since 1983. Anyone who has served on the Board of Directors in the last 15 years can relate at least one story about the intimidating voice on the other end of the telephone line reminding you

that your "Director's Column" article was soon due, or, heaven forbid, late. For most of us, that call only needed to be made once during our Board of Directors tenure. A second transgression would have been too frightening to ponder. This, however, speaks volumes for Fred's dedication to providing a quality product, on time, month in and month out.

I will remember Fred as a consummate professional. He brought to the position a passion for excellence which translated into the magazine becoming an extension of himself. At times, we all took for granted the quality of work which he gave us every step of the way. Fred also occasionally found himself on the opposite side of the fence of some vocal critics of the magazine's direction. Oftentimes, people's visions of the future do not mesh, but through it all, nobody ever questioned his commitment to quality and the betterment of the magazine. A less principled individual, or a person of diminished resolve, integrity, passion or dogged determination, would have abandoned his position long ago. We may find another person to assume the role of Editor, but it is safe to say that Fred will never be replaced.

Appropriately, *On Course* was recently awarded First Runner-up in its competition category for chapter magazines through GCSAA. This is quite an accomplishment considering that the other magazines in this category generally have higher budgets and multiple staff members overseeing their production. Congratulations, Fred!

With sincere appreciation for all that Fred and Judy have done for the association, because I am sure that in more ways than any of us realized, she has been a signifi-

cant part of the collaborative effort in assisting Fred in maintaining such high standards, I wish them both the best of luck in the future.

Bob Maibusch, CGCS, MG
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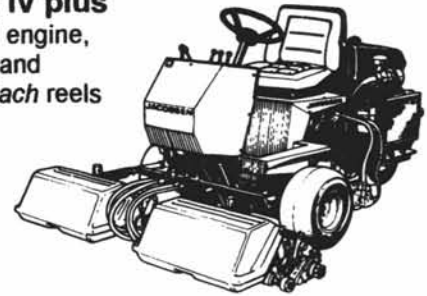


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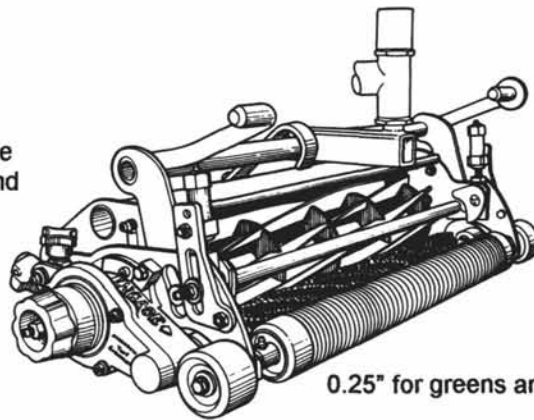
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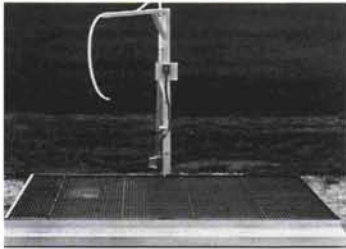
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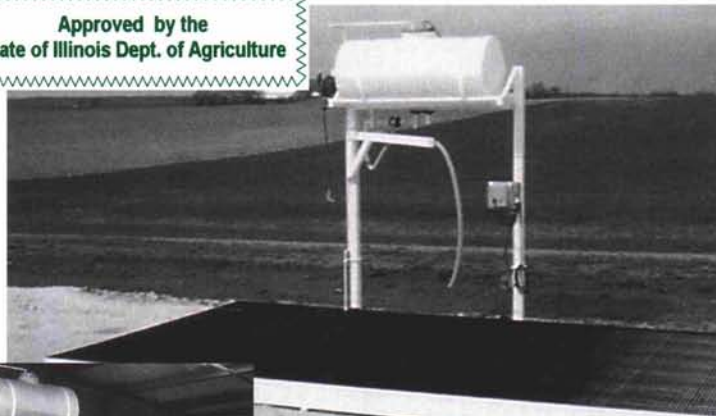
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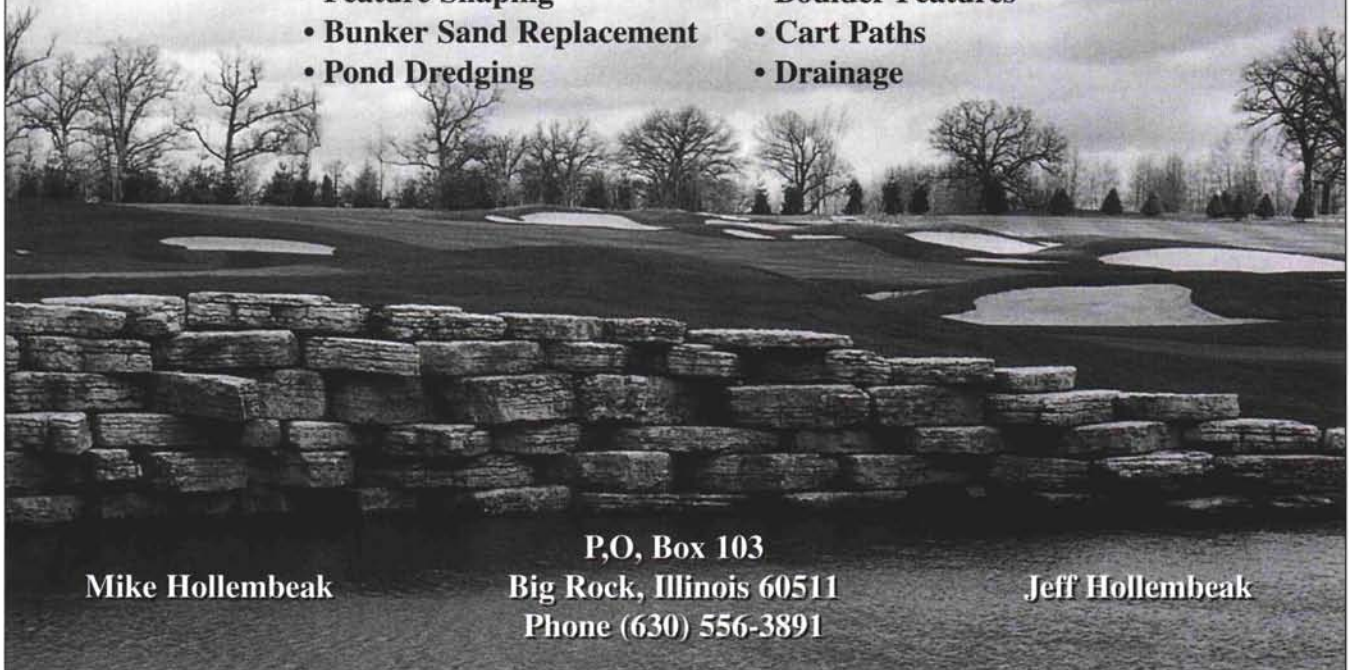
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One of the responsibilities of being a director for the Midwest Association of Golf Course Superintendents is coming up with a topic to write about for my "Director's Column." Now if you think about all the former directors and all the articles that have already been written, you will quickly realize that interesting and pertinent subject matter is becoming a relatively thin commodity. But as an elected official representing my fellow superintendents, I persevere; and in life, perseverance usually pays off, even if the unwritten story I have been looking for has been right under my nose all along.

I would like to tell you all an interesting story about an ordinary man. The story is not nearly as interesting as the man behind the story, but I will try. This is a man who has laughed in the face of despair on more than a few occasions. A man who would gladly share his life with anyone who will take the time to listen. A man who is now living out a childhood dream working on a golf course just by driving a tractor and mowing some grass along the way.

His name is Robert Ribbon, born September 20, 1924. Bob quickly fell in love with the game

of golf while growing up in his old neighborhood. He was raised in Chicago across the street from the Mid-City Golf Course (which is now the site of WGN Studios). Bob began caddying there at the age of 13. He continued to caddy all through high school and did so after he graduated until he was drafted that summer of 1943.


He became a Buck-Sergeant as a "tailgunner" in a B-17 bomber and was stationed at Foglia, Italy, with the 15th Airforce Division, 463rd Bomber Group,

*I would like
to tell you all
an interesting story
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the story, but
I will try.*

the 772nd Bomb Squadron. He flew seven missions over northern Italy and Austria in a B-17 bomber named "The Magnificent Malfunction." On April 20, 1945, returning from a bombing raid of a railroad yard in Innsbrook, Austria, The Magnificent Malfunction was struck by a 88mm German anti-aircraft shell and crashed. Of the nine-member crew, five survived; Bob was one of them. The five survivors were all captured, however, by German soldiers and sat out the rest of the war in a P.O.W. compound near Innsbrook. They remained there until being rescued by the 3rd Armor

Division on May 4, 1945, a few days before WWII ended.

After being discharged from the service, Bob became a carpenter's apprentice and learned the trade of carpentry, and worked as such until 1953 when he was sworn in as a Chicago police officer. After 27 years on the force, he retired as a Chicago police sergeant on March 1, 1980. During this time, he not only became a successful husband and friend to many but also a father of six children as well. During this time, he continued to play golf, and in 1964 he moved to the then tiny suburb of Bartlett strictly because of a little-known golf course called Bartlett Hills. In September 1982, Bob was hired on as a member of the Bartlett Hills Golf Course maintenance staff where he works to this day, living out his childhood dream and playing some golf along the way.

I know by now you are all asking yourselves, "Kevin, have you flipped your noodle? What does this have to do with a being a superintendent?" To you I say only this. As supervisors of many different people from many different backgrounds and cultures, I urge you all to get to know the people who work for you. You may be surprised and fascinated what you find. You will also discover that in getting to know the people who work for you, and with you, you may better utilize them to the best of their abilities. I would also like to say thank you to Bob for sharing with me your stories and friendship. I know my words alone could never do them justice. 

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*Luke Cella, CGCS
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Luke broke into the golf business as a caddy at St. Andrews Golf Club in West Chicago in the mid-'70s. His talent and perseverance was recognized, and he soon climbed up the ladder to cart boy. Shortly thereafter, Luke's career path took a turn when he made the change to the maintenance staff. He worked at St. Andrews under John Lapp for five years while at the same time earning an Associates Degree in Ornamental Horticulture from the College of DuPage in June of 1981.

At twenty-one years of age, Luke took the position of golf course superintendent at Maple Grove Country Club in West Salem, WI (located about 13 miles east of LaCrosse). He worked there for two years and then found himself at his present place of employment, Poplar Creek Country Club in Hoffman Estates, since 1984. Luke became certified by the GCSAA in 1987 and has kept this status current.

When I spoke to Luke, he was in the middle of working on bid documents for capital improvements at Poplar Creek. Soon he will be ready to fire up his new irrigation system that will be complete this spring. He is replacing a system that has major components over twenty-three years old.

Luke has been a board member of the MAGCS since 1995 and has chaired the Membership, Golf, and Arrangements Committees during that span. He currently chairs the Arrangements



Debbie, Julie, Kyle and Luke Strojny.

Committee, so we all have another reason to thank him besides hosting our monthly meeting.

Luke finds enjoyment in his work through his love for the outdoors, nurturing growing things, and the day-to-day challenges he faces. The one thing he wishes could change about the profession is the time spent away from his family. He has been married to Debbie since 1987, and they have two children: Kyle who is seven and Julia who is two. Luke coaches Little League in the spring and finds himself watching his son participate in soccer and hockey in their respective seasons.

(continued on page 24)

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