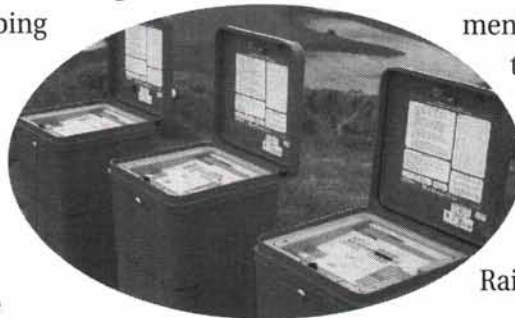




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## FEATURES

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Hole #21 (third practice hole), par 3, 200 yards  
at Prairie Landing Golf Club

Photo by Jim Trzinski

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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.

We endeavor to increase efficiency and economic performance while improving and enhancing the individual and collective prestige of the members.

The MAGCS member is also an environmental steward. We strive to uphold and enhance our surroundings by promoting flora and fauna in every facet in a manner that is beneficial to the general public now and in the future.



*Bob Maibusch, CGCS, MG  
Hinsdale G.C.*

October is a good month to assess the successes and failures of our operations over the past season. It is late enough in the year to give us some breathing room to critically evaluate how we managed conditions. It is early enough to still see any lingering effects from a difficult summer, and begin to affect changes this year that will carry forward to next season.

While many of us were licking our wounds after the brutal weather of July, we should all have come away with an increased knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of our facilities. As an aside, I was particularly pleased to see in the press that Danny Quast was not apologizing for the condition of the greens during the PGA Championship, despite unfair criticism from some of the Tour players. It is amazing how many excuses some of the players can come up with for not winning the tournament three days before it has even begun. He undoubtedly had done an enormous amount of preparatory work leading up to the tournament, and, faced with the extraordinary conditions in the weeks prior to it, he was confident that his staff had done everything possible to ensure that the best

conditions possible were achieved. It was obvious that the greens were smooth and fast as desired. Hats off to Danny and his staff. Maybe you are one of the lucky ones who did not have any difficulties, but by and large I think all of us encountered some problems.

One of the challenges, frustrations and appeals of this profession is attempting to compensate for the things that are out of our control. Record temperatures challenge us to “think outside the box,” as does the fact that, although it may be imperceptible to most people, the golf course does change every year. Additional topdressing applications, segregation of bent varieties and the continued growth of trees—which increases shade and root competition—are just a few of the many factors that require an adjustment in our management from year to year.


There are no cookie-cutter management programs that will provide the best conditions possible for a given facility. Every successful management plan needs to be custom-tailored to the current conditions. Exceptional golf course superintendents recognize this and are constantly tinkering with their management plans to compensate for the ever-changing conditions of the dozens of microclimates they manage. It makes a pretty good argument for retaining your experienced golf course superintendent, because his history at that facility has allowed him to assess a number of successes and failures in arriving at the best maintenance plan for that golf course in that particular moment.

Conversely, it sometimes makes sense for a club to bring in a new superintendent. If the existing golf course superintendent has fallen into the rut of doing the same thing year in and year out for no better reason than, “That’s the way

we’ve always done it,” then a new perspective may be the proper solution. Part of our continued success is tied to constantly taking calculated risks in an attempt to provide better or more consistent conditions. This requires regular evaluation and experimentation.

Despite what we may be told, there are no magic bullets. I cannot begin to count the number of times I have been solicited to try something new because, I am told, it is the thing that will make my facility turn the corner to achieve Augusta National conditions every day. Often these suggestions have come from a member who was playing at another club and was told by someone other than the golf course superintendent that they were using some new product or piece of equipment that had completely turned around their conditions.

A basic management plan addresses the most critical issues of drainage and irrigation. Any deficiencies in these two areas were readily apparent last summer. A truly successful program is a comprehensive plan that may include the use of plant protectants, soil amendments, wetting agents, water conditioning, topdressing, growth regulators, cultivation, new seed varieties, specialized equipment and a limitless number of other factors.

This month and the months to follow will give us many opportunities to evaluate current and new technologies and information through seminars and trade shows. Take the time to learn and experiment as you prepare to close down this season and plan for continued success in the next one. 

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Robert Quast".

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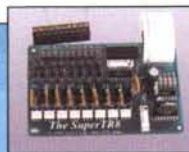
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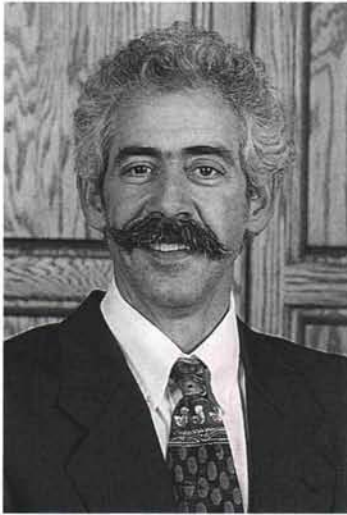
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*Greg Thalmann, CGCS  
Fox Run Golf Links*

The economy is rocking and rolling. People are working and have leisure time and dollars to play. Golf courses are being built and people are using them.

On the down side, these booming economic times have put a real crunch in the available labor pool. An abundance of well-paying construction jobs has cost numerous Chicagoland supers trained and valuable employees. Many of us are unable to match the offers that are coming in. All of us know the value of a seasoned and competent worker. Irrigation repair, equipment operation and fertilizer and plant protectant applications are often detailed to trusted, dependable staff.

I foresee that labor issues, costs and benefits will become much larger issues as we enter the new millennium. The problem of keeping good help that many of us are facing this year is just the tip of the iceberg. I have heard this story from more than a few supers: one of your key staff comes in and says he's been offered \$18/hour at another job—he loves working for you,

loves the job, but... Some of us may have the kind of dough to keep the guy. I think it's fair to say that most of us don't. So you say goodbye, run an ad or put out the word that you're looking for people, and find out that where there used to be a nice selection, there is one guy who a couple of years ago you wouldn't have even interviewed. So you bring him in and true to your gut feeling, he ends up causing more problems than he's worth.

Since paying \$18/hour is out of the question (in this year's budget, anyway), what do you do?

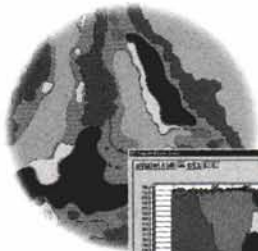
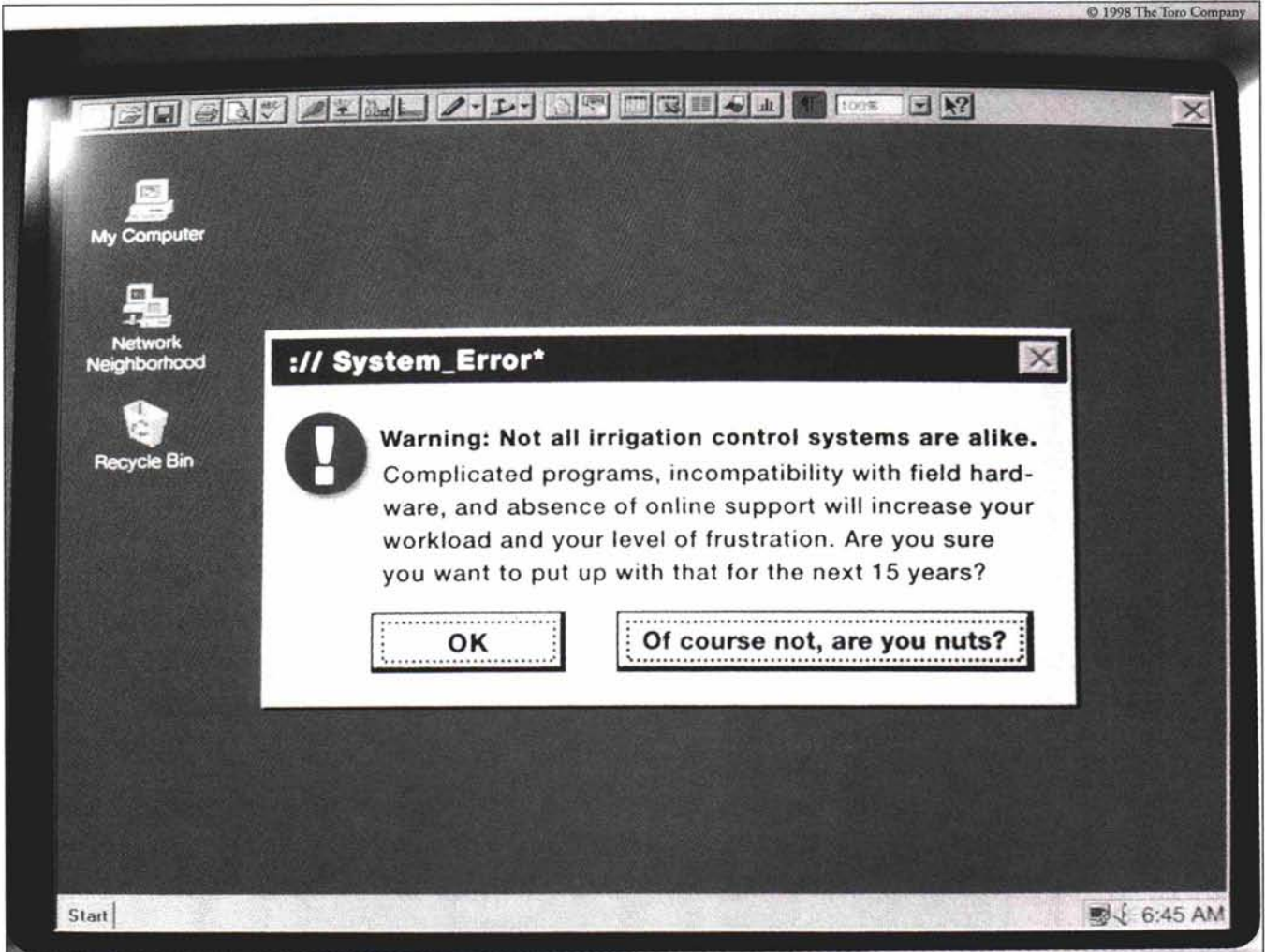
It makes you appreciate the good people you still have and want to keep. One way to do this is to recognize all employees as individuals and acknowledge that cultural diversity exists. Work to assimilate this awareness into your operation to make your employees feel more at home. Many of us employ Hispanic workers who work during the golf season and go home to their native land over the winter. At last year's NCTE, I attended a half-day seminar taught by Jennifer Thomas on understanding the Hispanic culture. During her four-hour presentation, she outlined different situations and explained how a person from the "American" culture might handle something as opposed to someone of Hispanic culture.

An example of this occurred several years ago when I was working as an assistant at the Mount Prospect G.C. One of our better employees was mowing greens with a triplex mower on a drizzly fall morning. He was about three-quarters finished with his greens when he noticed that one of the front reel

hydraulic oil hoses was leaking. It only leaked in the mow position and was spraying from the underside of the hose onto the green. As a result, he had striped the last three greens like little football fields. Even though anyone would have had a hard time discovering the leaky hoses, he obviously took it to heart—that was the last day he showed up at work. I could never understand why the employee chose to abandon his job rather than communicate his problem. While generalizations can be dangerous, a cultural difference in the way problems are perceived and communicated is sometimes apparent. I learned at Ms. Thomas' seminar that in the Hispanic culture, people are taught responsibility at an early age and are reluctant to "bear bad tidings." It seems, on the other hand, that we hear "but it's not my fault" all too often in the "American" culture.

By being knowledgeable about some of the differences among cultures in this great melting pot we call America, we can reach out to all of our employees to make their tenure with us more comfortable and productive. Not only is it incumbent upon us in our leadership roles to be sensitive and fair, but as we are learning, labor has become a seller's market!





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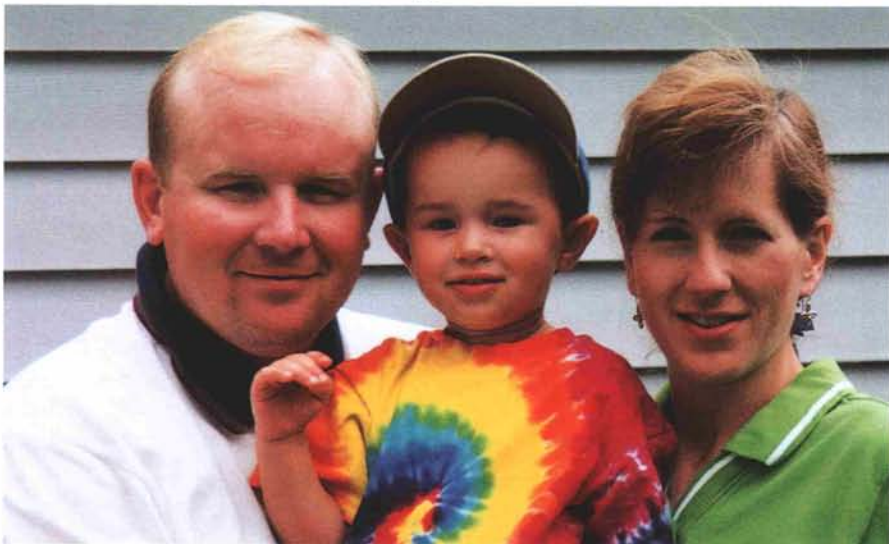
# Tony Kalina -N- Prairie Landing Golf Club

*Dave Braasch  
Hughes Creek G.C.*

Tony Kalina and Prairie Landing Golf Club will host October's MAGCS meeting. This month's outing will be the second held at the course; the first gathering dates back four years to September of 1995.

Tony's team is top-notch, consisting of 22 seasonal employees, two assistants—Derek Florian and Todd Schmitz (son of one of our veterans, Ray Schmitz)—and a mechanic to maintain the equipment used to care for the facility's 277 acres.

*(continued on page 8)*



*The Kalina family: Tony, three-year-old son Andrew and wife Melora.*



*Aerial view of #8 hole, par 4, 375 yards on left, with #2, par 4, 367 yards on right.*

*Photo by Tony Kalina*



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**Tony Kalina -N- Prairie Landing G.C.**

*(continued from page 6)*

Tony comes from a "golf family." Two of his brothers were golf professionals, and the third brother is a superintendent in Nebraska. Himself a 24-year veteran of the business, Tony started out caddying at age 11 and eventually went to college at age 25 to study turf. His GCSAA scholarship helped pay for his education at the University of Nebraska, where he graduated with two degrees: a bachelor's in agronomy and a bachelor's in horticulture, concentration turf science. While in college, Tony completed several internships, the first one at Southern Hills C.C. in Oklahoma; subsequent internships were done under the tutelage of his own brother, Charles Kalina, CGCS.

Upon graduation, Tony went to work for Oscar Miles at the Merit Club for two seasons.

---

*Complexity, scale and size of design are the biggest challenges Tony faces in managing this Robert Trent Jones, Jr. design. He states that mowing and spraying are difficult because of the sharp undulating mounds throughout the course.*

---

He arrived at Prairie Landing as the assistant superintendent under Scott Nissley. After paying his dues as an assistant, Tony became a chief (the superintendent) in 1995.

Complexity, scale and size of design are the biggest challenges Tony faces in managing this Robert Trent Jones, Jr. design. He states that mowing and spraying are difficult because of the sharp undulating mounds throughout the course.

When Tony is not watching the planes buzz over his head or the grass grow beneath his feet, he spends time with his lovely wife, Melora, and his three-year-old son, Andy. He can't wait until the season slows down so that he can make up for some of the lost family time devoted to the job during the busy summertime schedule.

*(continued on page 24)*

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# "Buyological" Alternatives

Kerry Satterwhite, CGCS  
City of Bloomington (IL)  
Parks & Recreation

The biostimulant market in this industry has increased exponentially over the past five years. There is no shortage of products that make claims to "stimulate phenomenal root growth" or "increase beneficial microbial activity." How do you sort out the good from the bad? What works? What doesn't? What products are cost-efficient and effective?

I have spent the past four or five years evaluating a number of these new age materials and my failures with them have far outnumbered the successes that I have experienced. I believe that we have a responsibility to try and manage our facilities with less conventional pesticides than we have in the past. In my efforts to accomplish that, I have put together a program that has allowed me to eliminate conventional fungicide applications on 10 acres of bentgrass greens on two of the courses that I manage. Although most of this evidence is anecdotal, there is some supporting university research data.<sup>1</sup>

There was no established protocol for the independent trials that were conducted and all of the products that I have utilized over the past few years were paid for in full. I have no allegiance to any of the companies that manufacture these materials nor any relationship to speak of with the distributors from whom I make my purchases. Some marginal success was achieved with each of these products individually but not to the extent that fungicide applications could be significantly reduced and by no means elimi-

nated. However, this season several of the materials were combined under the hypothesis that a synergistic effect could be created, and at this point that seems to have occurred. The control plots and areas that were not treated displayed severe disease activity.

*I have put together a program that has allowed me to eliminate conventional fungicide applications on 10 acres of bentgrass greens on two of the courses that I manage. Although most of this evidence is anecdotal, there is some supporting university research data.*

This program was initiated on two separate courses. Prairie Vista opened for play in 1991 and the predominant bent cultivar on the greens and tees at this course is Penncross. The Den is a new Palmer Signature course that had its grand opening on July 13 of last year. The greens are Providence on a straight sand rootzone and the tees are a blend of Crenshaw, Southshore and Penneagle on native soil. (Dollar spot has been a severe problem on the Crenshaw.)

We use several materials in our program; a couple of them are rotated in and out of our cycle. They are listed below with application rates and frequency of application:

- 1) **Bac-Pack**
  - 1 pt per acre beginning April 15 at seven-to-ten-day intervals to first frost
  - 2 pts per acre from June 30 through August 30
- 2) **Turfshield**  
(formerly BioTrek 22G)
  - 1.5 lbs per 1,000 square feet applied March 27
- 3) **CytoFe**
  - 1 gal per acre (tank-mixed with Bac-Pack)\*  
Frequency of application is once per month.
- 4) **Macrosorb Foliar\***
  - 2 oz per 1,000 square feet
  - Applied about every 14 days—every other Bac-Pack application
- 5) **MicroGro\***
  - 1 lb per acre
  - Once per month
- 6) **HHI 15-4-7 greens grade fertilizer**
  - 0.4 lbs of N/1,000 ft<sup>2</sup>—six-week intervals (new greens)
  - 2.5 lbs of N/1,000 ft<sup>2</sup> per growing season (old greens)

The original plan was to reduce the number of fungicide applications that were made to greens and tees in years past. We were able to make it until late July before greens needed to be treated with a conventional fungicide. The 10 acres of tees were

(continued on page 12)