



More Than You Ever Wanted to Know About Our Monthly Golf Events

The dawn of a new millennium (I promise, that's the last time I use the word 'millennium') brings on new challenges to us all. For me, as a director of this fine Association, I have been handed the dubious honor of chairing the Arrangements Committee for the year 2000. If memory serves me, I believe the appointment went something like this, and I quote, "Kevin, I am appointing you as chairman of the Arrangements Committee for the upcoming year 2000." To that, my response could only be, "In that case, Mr. President, I volunteer." Democracy, you gotta love it.

If you have never hosted a meeting or golf event, or have not hosted in a long while, do it. Having done it myself, I can attest to no more meaningful fulfillment in my career as a golf course superintendent. To have your peers witness the fruits of your labor and compliment you on your efforts . . . WOW, I wish I could bottle that stuff.

So, as newly "volunteered" chairman to the Arrangements Committee, I have elected to sail through some fairly uncharted waters here and share with the membership a few of the duties and responsibilities of my new position. Granted, having coordinated only two golf events thus far, I am the first to say, "Young grasshopper, has much to learn." But having accomplished the organization of the April and June golf events somewhat successfully, I have learned one important lesson. And that is: As much as the MAGCS Board of Directors tries, we will never please all the people all the time. I know that is a bit harsh, but it is also very realistic. To this truism, I can only think to respond in the infamous words from Spock (the Vulcan, not the doctor), and I quote, "The needs of the many, outweigh the needs of the few." (Okay, so I'm a Trekkie.) With this said, I will begin with a little background information.

To assure meeting affordability to all of our membership, it has been the policy of the MAGCS, carried out by the Board of Directors, to simply "break even" at our monthly golf events. For all those who assume our Association is making a killing on these monthly meetings, I am here to tell you that at present, it is a false and inaccurate assumption. That is not to suggest that in the future this break-even policy may have to change. However, with the Association continually trying to provide additional services to our membership (the MAGCS Web page, MAGCS scholarships, turf-grass research donations, etc.), it is easy to explain the added expenses that accompany increased services. Someday, we may need to look at our monthly golf events as an additional revenue source. That is for the membership to decide. But for now, our policy for monthly golf events remains: Don't make any money . . . but, don't lose any, either. That is where the Arrangements Committee comes in.

It is rather early in my tenure as chairman of the Arrangements Committee, but near as I can tell, my title should be changed to "Head Plea Beggar." The main duties and responsibilities of the committee I oversee are threefold:

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- Plead with fellow superintendents to host a meeting for the upcoming season or the season thereafter.
- Beg the host course to give our Association a professional courtesy break.
- Plead and beg our commercial membership to sponsor one or more golf events for the season.

First (without playing my harp), I just want to say one thing. If you have never hosted a meeting or golf event, or have not hosted in a long while, do it. Having done it myself, I can attest to no more meaningful fulfillment in my career as a golf course superintendent than when I hosted a golf event. To have your peers witness the fruits of your labor and compliment you on your efforts . . . WOW, I wish I could bottle that stuff.

Second, in this day and age, golf like everything else has become big business. Today we face private country clubs opening their doors for Monday outings at a premium price. We see public, daily-fee golf courses with greens fees in the \$75-100 range as almost the norm. And yet, we as an Association continue to ask these courses to give us a break for the day. And as a professional courtesy, they try to oblige us the best they can. But with the price of poker going up, I am seeing a trend in the not-too-distant future that says it will be very difficult to keep golf and a cart in the \$50/player range. Then, add in the cost of a continental breakfast (\$2-5/person), box lunch (\$5-7), dinner (\$15-25), cold beverages (\$2-5), golf prizes (\$7-10), scoring and pro shop amenities

(\$2-5), and membership meeting announcement mailing (\$2-5). Lo and behold, the cost of the day just skyrocketed to the neighborhood of \$85-110/player—something our Association is trying desperately to avoid.

Which brings me to my third, and last, point. The MAGCS is very lucky to have full support from our commercial members. We rely on them heavily to lessen the burden of our monthly meeting costs, as well as for other sponsorship fees. For their generosity, we owe them a

great deal of gratitude and thanks. And more important, we owe them our business. Early this spring, we sent a letter to our commercial members asking

for their sponsorship support at any one of our monthly meetings for the 2000 season. To date, a total of 12 commercial members have responded and \$10,850 has been raised from their generosity. These commercial members are as follows:

- Chicago Turf & Irrigation, Inc. (6 sponsored meetings)
- Palatine Oil Company, Inc. (5)
- Nadler Golf Cart Sales, Inc. (5)
- Nels J. Johnson Tree Experts, Inc. (3)
- J.W. Turf, Inc. (3)
- Turf Partners, Inc. (2)
- Zeneca (2)
- Waupaca Sand and Solutions (2)
- Arthur Clesen, Inc. (1)
- Northfield Block Company (1)
- Nugent Golf Associates (1)
- BOJO Turf Supply, Inc. (1)

To translate this general information into specific circumstances, the April meeting hosted by Elgin Country Club cost our membership a total of \$70/player

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Root Branching

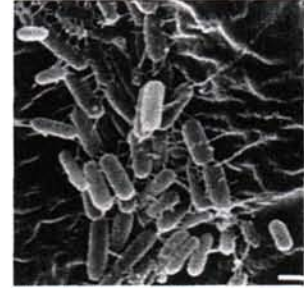


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Photos from American Society of Microbiologists Newsletter, 1997 Wheat Roots

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The Meier family: Joseph, Stephanie, Jaclyn and wife Joanne.

-N-



Joe Meier, superintendent at White Deer Run Golf Course—the site of our August meeting—graduated in 1974 from the University of Illinois with a degree in business. Immediately thereafter, he started his own landscape design and construction firm, and after 10 years, he decided to pursue his dream of constructing a golf course. In 1992, he enrolled in night classes at the College of Lake County and earned a two-year degree in horticulture, majoring in turf. Upon graduation, Joe began working at Turnberry Golf Club, where he became the assistant superintendent for four years.

Built on 250 acres surrounded by homes, the course boasts 50 acres of bentgrass; 5.5 acres of bunkers (110 bunkers total—better practice your sand shots); greens averaging 8,500 square feet; five sets of tees that set up from 4,500 yards to 7,300 yards (expect 7,300 for the MAGCS meeting); 7.5 miles of cart paths; and 1,200 sprinkler heads.

During the summer of 1996, Joe met Ray Plote, owner of Boulder Ridge Country Club. Ray was in the process of building a new golf course in far north suburban Vernon Hills: White Deer Run. Joe, along with Todd Lipschutz (land planner-general manager), oversaw every aspect of building White Deer Run, from rough grading to seeding to layout. Both Todd and Joe were instrumental in developing and very involved in the construction of this stunning, upscale, public golf course. Designed by Dick and Tim Nugent and built by Ryan, Inc., White Deer Run is Joe's "diamond in the rough."

A budget of \$650,000 went toward drainage—a major concern, and the course fared well during this wet June of 2000—and the irrigation system was mapped out by using a global positioning system (GPS). Another \$600,000 was spent on retaining walls; Joe notes that some walls are about 20' high. The course opened in August 1998 and during its first full season in 1999, tallied about 24,000 rounds.

White Deer Run is a young course and as such, has a very short history, but impressive vital statistics. Built on 250 acres surrounded by homes, the course boasts 50 acres of bentgrass; 5.5 acres of bunkers

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(110 bunkers total—better practice your sand shots); greens averaging 8,500 square feet; five sets of tees that set up from 4,500 yards to 7,300 yards (expect 7,300 for the MAGCS meeting); 7.5 miles of cart paths; and 1,200 sprinkler heads. Joe started a tree program and is more than halfway there, 1,000 trees planted and 800 more to go. As testimony to its early acclaim, in 1999, White Deer Run hosted the John Deere Team Championship.

Joe is married to a lovely wife, Joanne, and has two wonderful, beautiful daughters: Stephanie (12) and Jaclyn (6). A diehard Cubs fan, having lived only five minutes from Wrigley Field for 20 years, Joe is hoping that the Cubs will not trade Sammy Sosa. When not tending to the course, Joe keeps busy by coaching girls' basketball, reading (when the Cubs are losing) and playing golf. He believes that Tiger Woods is in a class by himself and the other Tour players had better bring their games to his level. Among Joe's other convictions: junior golf needs a lot of attention, as children are our best resource to keep the golf industry alive. Also, Joe sees a dire need for more teaching professionals.

I enjoyed talking to Joe, a very laid-back, hard-working person. Please come to White Deer Run G.C. in August for the Midwest meeting and enjoy this "diamond in the rough."



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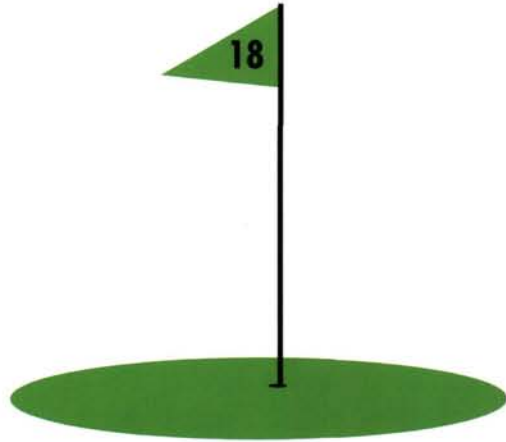
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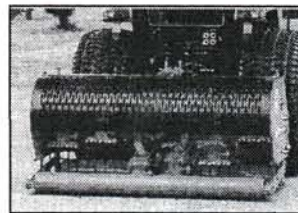
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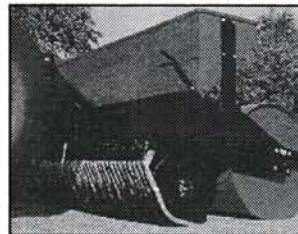
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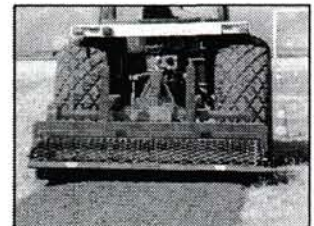
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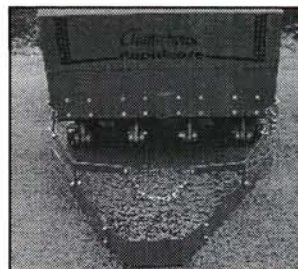
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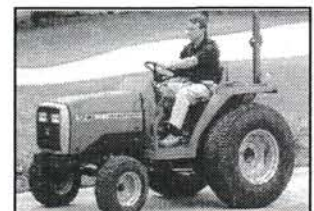
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