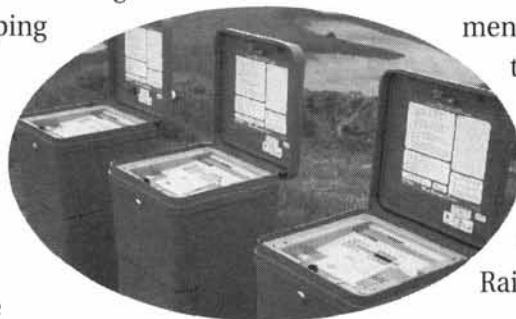




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FRONT COVER

Hole #7, White Course, at Gleneagles Country Club.
(Photo by Jim Trzinski/Compliments of Waupaca Sand & Solutions)

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John Gurke

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.



The Character of Leadership

After reading over president's messages I had previously written, I have decided to revisit a subject I first discussed back in April. My message that month was about change and handling change in a positive way. In that message, I asked you to question, how have I adapted to change during this past season? I undertook this recently and was a little surprised by my own answer . . . maybe because it is towards the end of the season and fatigue has set in, or I am constantly frustrated by my golf game, or the Cubs still have not won the World Series. Nonetheless, I do not have any good reason to be cantankerous. I recently took some comments made by longstanding MAGCS members in a negative way. I justified my decisions to myself and did not consider the comments seriously, dismissing them on the rationale that it is impossible to please everyone all the time. Although this is probably true, I should have dissected the comments and evaluated them on character.

The MAGCS Board of Directors has instituted many changes over the past few years. I feel that we have executed very good decisions because our character has been in order. The changes that have occurred in every situation have been made in the best interests of you, the members.

“Leadership is a potent combination of strategy and character. But if you must be without one, be without the strategy.”—General H. Norman Schwarzkopf

Character is defined by a person's core values. These are values one should strive to live by continuously, day in and day out. One should do a checklist on these core values routinely. I have five that I have taught my children and try to abide by. I list them in no particular order, because I feel they all have equal importance.

The first is **integrity**. Webster defines it as uprightness, soundness of character, a moral wholeness. Integrity is really the glue that holds all the other values in place. Next would be **honesty**, the quality of being truthful. If honesty does not exist, everything else is tainted and should be held without trust. The core value that I think is most frequently absent in people of this generation is **loyalty**. To be faithful, and feel a sense of duty, is how we define “loyal.” Maybe the concept is a bit outdated in this corporate world, and that is an example of change in and of itself. I would prefer to think otherwise, but I fully understand the reasons for job relocation and personnel changes. Hand in hand with loyalty is **pride**. Again referring to the dictionary, “pride” means to have feelings of esteem for one's own qualities or achievements. Personally, I don't feel any industry outside of ours could hold a candle to the amount of pride displayed every day on our golf courses. The last value I will list—and

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And Now . . . A “Commercial” Break


For the last year-and-a-half, I have been the chairman of the MAGCS's Commercial Members Advisory Council. Now, you are probably asking, “What the heck is the Commercial Members Advisory Council?” Good question! I myself am not totally sure yet, but I would like to take this opportunity to share some of my views.

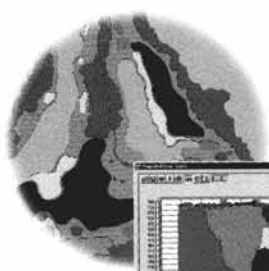
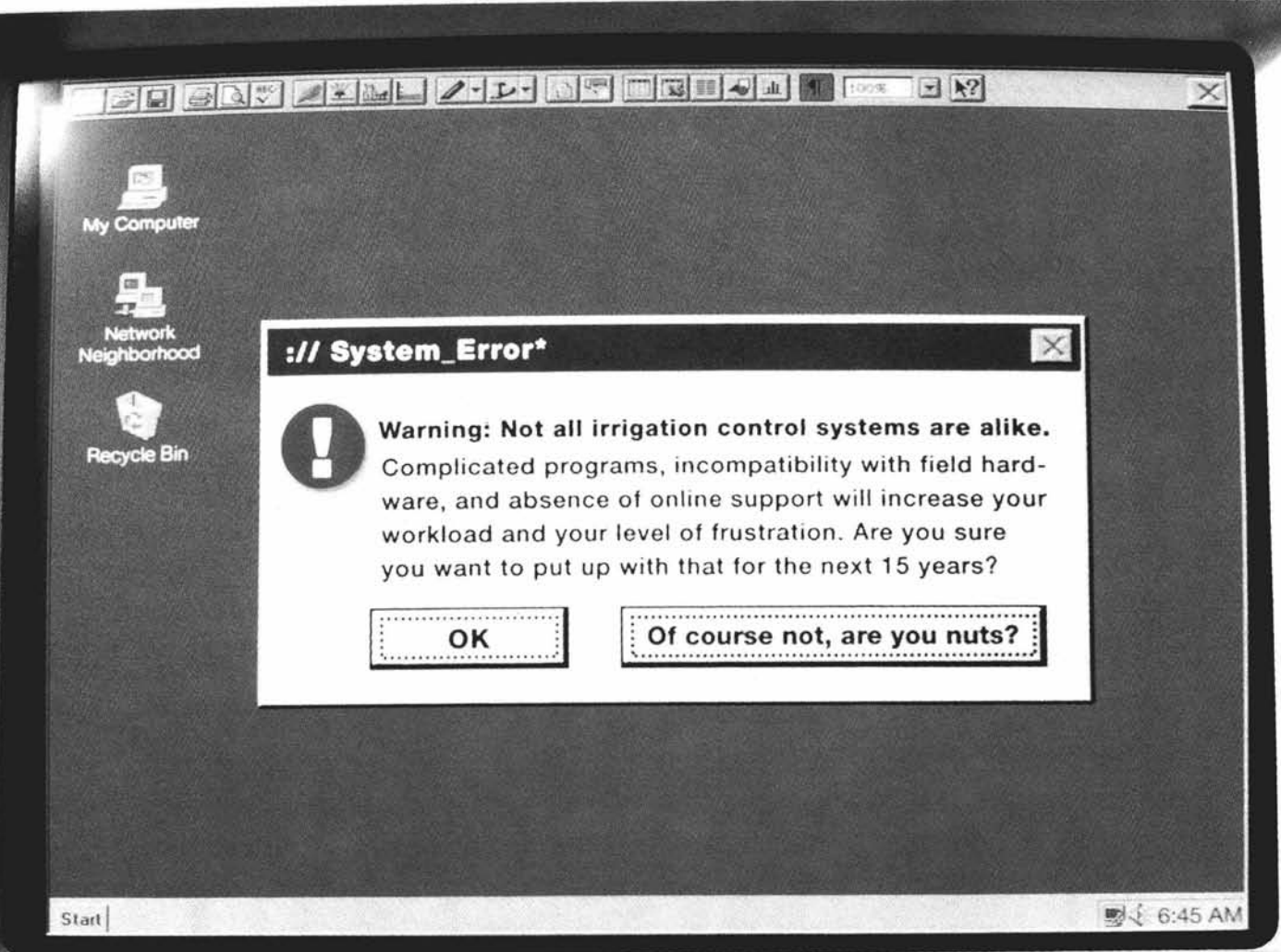
Are you being properly recognized for your contributions? Are you satisfied with the current set-up of monthly meeting sponsorships? Can you think of any changes you'd like to see with respect to the Midwest hospitality suite at the national meeting?

The Council was created for the purpose of establishing better communication between class E members of the Midwest (peddlers) and the MAGCS Board of Directors. Fortunately, I get to sit in on the Board's meetings. While my chair doesn't carry a vote on decisions being made, the Board does frequently ask me for my opinions as a representative of the commercial members' point of view. The Board really does care about the class E members' involvement with the Association.

On the flip side, commercial members could become even more involved. I encourage anyone in this membership category to contact me with your ideas and opinions on how you can derive more benefits from your membership. Are you being properly recognized for your contributions? Are you satisfied with the current set-up of monthly meeting sponsorships? Can you think of any changes you'd like to see with respect to the Midwest hospitality suite at the national meeting?

These are just a few examples of issues on which commercial members can have significant input. As I mentioned, I do chair a committee and we occasionally share our ideas, but it's very difficult to convene meetings given our busy schedules. However, I believe the Commercial Members Advisory Council should include all class E members.

Finally—give me something to do. I'm more than happy to take any of your thoughts to the Board. Please use my e-mail (located in the directory) for any correspondence. I don't want to be known as the guy who goes to the Board meetings just for the free lunch. Drive safely and BUCKLE UP! 



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Localized Dry Spots: Unraveling the Mysteries

Many mysteries surround the formation of localized dry spots; they are referred to as if they were some type of alien life-form from another planet, coming to invade golf courses and make superintendents' lives miserable. In reality, people create localized dry spots. In nature, we would have to look far and wide to find localized dry spots. Dry spots occur for a reason, and that reason is usually associated with salts and/or sodium.

Plants cannot tolerate sodium and/or excess amounts of salts. These substances are extremely toxic to them. When soluble fertilizers (salt) and/or animal waste products that contain high salt indices are used as plant nutrients, inevitably, toxicities will occur.

Plants cannot tolerate sodium and/or excess amounts of salts. These substances are extremely toxic to them. When soluble fertilizers (salt) and/or animal waste products that contain high salt indices are used as plant nutrients, inevitably, toxicities will occur.

Where do these salts and sodium come from? Analyzing the situation will help explain the forces at play that are in part responsible for the creation of localized dry spots.

Analyzing the situation

To facilitate an understanding of why dry spots occur requires introduction and explanation of 10 concepts and/or observations:

- 1) A glass and water evaporation test.
- 2) Removal of mineral deposits.
- 3) High and low pH.
- 4) How water softeners work.
- 5) Splashing water on a hot pan.
- 6) When raindrops dry.
- 7) Using a salt meter.
- 8) Sodium's use as a preservative.
- 9) Table salt on a steak.
- 10) Cigar box humidifiers.

(continued on page 8)

**Concept/observation #1:
A glass and water
evaporation test**

Take a glass and fill it halfway with tap water. Take another glass, and fill it halfway with irrigation water from your irrigation water supply. Place three microscope glass slides, and three microscope slide covers, inside each of these two glasses. Let them sit for seven to 10 days, and then examine what has occurred. The objective is for the water to evaporate. Heating the water can accelerate the process because evaporation will take place in a shorter period of time.

Because salts are soluble in water, they cannot be readily perceived. One way to actually see the salts is to separate them from the water by the process of evaporation. As the water evaporates, the salts become apparent in the form of hard mineral deposits stuck to the glass surfaces of the glasses, the microscope slides and the microscope slide covers mentioned above. These mineral deposits will be so hard, that it will be almost impossible to remove them from the glass surfaces.

**Concept/observation #2:
Removal of mineral
deposits**

Removal of the mineral deposits from the glasses, microscope slides and microscope slide covers (see #1 above) can easily be achieved with the use of vinegar. It is just like cleaning part of a home's central humidifier.

The glasses, microscope slides and microscope slide covers used in the experiment above are readily cleaned with the use of a low-pH substance. A low-pH substance will dissolve clean a mineral deposit formed by a high-pH substance.

**Concept/observation #3:
High pH and low pH**

Take a handful of baking soda, and place it inside of a jar . . . a one-quart mayonnaise jar will do just fine. (You may use chalk in lieu of baking soda.) Take a match and tape it to the end of a pencil. Light the match at the end of the pencil, and insert the pencil inside of the jar all the way down to the bottom, near the baking soda/chalk, but do not let the match touch the material. Leave it there for a couple of seconds, observe what happens and remove it.

Now take several fluid ounces of vinegar, and pour the vinegar over the baking soda/chalk, stirring lightly. Again, tape a match to the end of a pencil. Light the match at the end of the pencil, and insert it in the jar all the way to the bottom, near the baking soda/chalk, but do not let it touch the material. Leave it there for a few seconds, and observe.

What will become apparent is that the match in the first phase of this experiment stays lit, but the match used in the second phase goes out. The reason this occurs is because when a high-pH calcareous substance is mixed with a low-pH substance, a chemical reaction results, which in the process consumes oxygen.

**Concept/observation #4:
How a water softener
works**

Sodium is a highly reactive ion, and it will, because of its nature, displace other ions. Looking at the periodic table of elements, it is easy to appreciate that Na has a heavier atomic weight than many other elements that are important for turf nutrition.

A water softener works by introducing sodium into a water supply with the intention of cleansing other ions. As sodium is

. . . water evaporates as it touches a hot surface! We can see this occurring during hot weather on many surfaces: a cart path, the hood of a truck or car, the roof of a house and yes, turf areas, especially low-cut turf areas such as greens, tees and fairways, especially if they are grown in sand, because sand is very heat-sensitive.

introduced, and mixed into a hard water supply, mineral salts are displaced, while sodium takes their place. That is how hard water becomes soft. Sodium naturally removes mineral salts from a water supply.

**Concept/observation #5:
Splashing water on
a hot pan**

Splashing water on a hot pan results in the water sizzling and a cloud of steam forming and rising.

What occurs in reality is that the water evaporates as it touches the hot surface! We can see this occurring during hot weather on many surfaces: a cart path, the hood of a truck or car, the roof of a house and yes, turf areas, especially low-cut turf areas such as

(continued on page 11)



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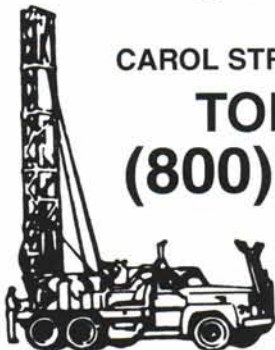
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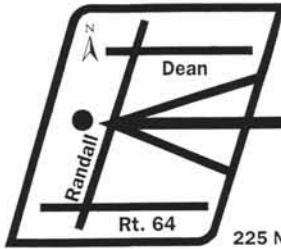
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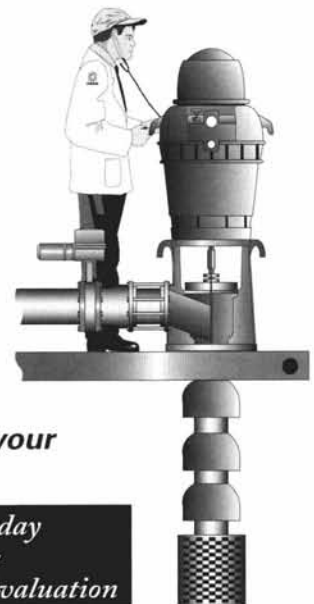
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