

Put Away All Papers and Reading Materials and Take Out Your #2 Pencils . . .



All of us as superintendents, at one time or the other, have had the same need to address our assistants and/or staff collectively concerning problems or incidents that arise during the course of the season. Some situations require monthly, weekly or even daily attention, while others merit attention only annually. The most expedient method

generally involves direct, immediate oral communication where we dictate policy and state that compliance is non-negotiable. Other variations of this oral communication may include a question-and-answer session or an open forum. I may have one extra tool that you can add to your task bar in pursuit of sharpening your staff and attaining that cutting-edge performance that we all expect and demand. If for nothing else, use for comic relief!

After years of quarterly staff meetings, which are generally received with sometimes expressionless faces or the “Why am I here?” attitude, I decided to move in what I considered a somewhat radical direction. . . . I decided to conduct my first-ever staff-wide written examination.

After years of quarterly staff meetings, which are generally received with sometimes expressionless faces or the “Why am I here?” attitude, I decided to move in what I considered a somewhat radical direction. Given the fact that some people just do not express themselves verbally very well, I decided to conduct my first-ever staff-wide written examination. (It should be noted that along with my duties as golf course superintendent, I also serve as director of golf operations, so this exam also included pro shop personnel.)

Composed mainly of multiple-choice, my low-intensity, 35-question test also included true/false and one essay. The questions were designed to address reinforcement of existing safety issues, protocol and daily procedure, and incident-specific items—not intended as a learning tool for new trainees, although that presents another option. With this in mind, I created questions that were obvious, such as ‘what is the normal color of grass in spring?’ (green), but did not delve into the more difficult aspects of how that same grass becomes yellow or brown during summer stress. I had hoped to gain some personal insights with my one essay question, which asked: Why are you here? After all, I was trying to build an awareness or even a confidence in each staff member

(continued on page 32)

rather than creating a demoralizing or humbling sense of self. I had hoped to create a fun, introspective challenge.

As the rain splashed against the window, I wondered how I was going to add 'proctor' to the ever-expanding job description on my resume. I decided that some incentive should be added to this experimental undertaking: something that would discourage the playful mocking and ridicule of future endeavors of this sort. A Cross pen/pencil set, a plaque or trophy, paid time off, or playing privileges at an amenable facility are all plausible rewards. I remain undecided.

Another thought: since language barriers are not uncommon in our industry, the extra effort to provide multilingual editions of a test, or to have a translator available, could pay dividends in the

long run. Who knows from whom, and when, the next great idea is going to come?

As the last student submitted his exam, I wondered how this measure of knowledge (or luck) could be applied toward staff recommendations for promotion and pay grade changes, but reserved judgment. At the very least, creating and administering this evaluation had prompted me to do some self-examination into what kind of manager I am and what kind of manager I can be at any given moment. It also prompted me to create my first published work. I am a better person for the experience.

"And now, class, time is up. Please exchange papers with the student in front of you . . ."



At the very least, creating and administering this evaluation had prompted me to do some self-examination into what kind of manager I am and what kind of manager I can be at any given moment.

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thing to the membership that we ourselves do not buy into 100%. We all know what has happened to some of the fixed costs of doing business over the past five years (postage, utilities, printing, etc.). I would, however, like to list but some of the recent expenses added to the Association.

- *On Course* at its current level of publication quality.
- MAGCS Web page.
- Annual certified financial audit.
- Monthly bookkeeping for financial numbers required by the government.
- Hospitality room that has increased in size and quality.
- Affiliation with the Midwest Golf House Complex at Cog Hill coming in 2001.
- Monthly meetings at a reduced cost to the membership.
- Added staff, personnel and expenses.

- 30% increase in the number of our members.
- Greater responsibility for turf-grass research support.
- Scholarship programs for our members' children.
- Increased and more current education for our members and staff.
- Computers and office supplies.
- Small miscellaneous items that add up.

The above list represents only some of the added expenses to the Association over the past five years, with more to follow. We have advanced our profession greatly in the past 10 years with very little cost to our membership. The MAGCS has been very fortunate to have received the support of our commercial members, whenever asked. I would like to even out the funding of our pro-

grams through our dues structure. This will actually allow our commercial members to receive a bigger bang for their dollar with a new sponsorship program next year. Currently, our dues structure pales in comparison to many other large superintendent chapters throughout the country.

I sincerely hope I can count on your support upon the announcement of a new proposal in October. Discussion and approval will be conducted during the Midwest Turf Clinic at Medinah Country Club in November. I am always available, as are the rest of the Board of Directors, for comments and suggestions concerning this or any other topic. God bless, and enjoy the colorful onset of fall.



Larry Flament -N- Stonewall Orchard Golf Club (continued from page 17)

If you bring your binoculars to Stonewall Orchard Golf Club for our September meeting, you will find a vast array of nature's best, but you had better bring your best game as well. This course is a thought-provoking layout, with strategic flat sand bunkering, and some of the most interesting putting contours that you will ever encounter. It's a fair but chal-

lenging test of golf that can play to 7,049 yards, and several tees require a sure carry over water and marshland.

Larry Flament has a lot to be proud of, and even more to be thankful for. He feels especially blessed to be married to Lisa for 12 years. They have four lovely daughters: Cristina, 14, Ashley, 13, Mary, 9, and

Savannah, 6. As a family, the Flaments enjoy their home in rural Richmond, going to Great America, bowling and playing an occasional round of golf together.

Now if Larry could just get his hands on a blue '64 Chevelle.



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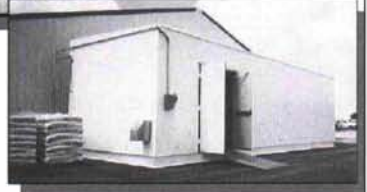
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Contenders for the 2000 Award

During the past year, the following superintendents have qualified for consideration for the Ray Gerber Editorial Award. Articles eligible for the award must be written by an MAGCS member who is currently a golf course superintendent. All articles published in *On Course* meeting this requirement will be considered; however, "On Course with the President," "Director's Column," and "Super-N-Site" articles are not eligible. Articles eligible for the 2000 award, to be presented at the Midwest Turf Clinic on November 9, are those published in the September 1999 through August 2000 issues. Articles originally published elsewhere and then published in *On Course* are not eligible for the award.

Month	Article	Author
1999		
September	None	
October	"Biological Alternatives"	Kerry Satterwhite
October	"Just Shut Up and Play!"	John Gurke
November	"The Birth of a Golf Course"	Tony Kalina
December	"Do It With Someone, Or By Yourself"	Dan Murray
December	"The Winning Team: Audubon International and Golf"	Tod Hopphan
2000		
January	"How to Create an Equipment Replacement Program"	Mike Mumper
February	"Pondering the Salary Issue and Claiming Time for Golf Course Maintenance, Sans Golfers"	Fred Behnke
March	None	
April	"The Good, The Bad and The Ugly"	Fernando Fernandez
May	None	
June	"Basic Medical Procedures You Should Know"	Dave Braasch
June	"Rolling With The Changes"	Randy Wahler
July	"Hell Hath No Fury"	Brian Bossert
August	"What Color Is Your Turf?"	Gregg Rosenthal
August	"Fee or Free? You Don't Have to Pay for Internet Access"	Nick Hongisto
August	"Zen and the Art of Equipment Maintenance"	John Gurke

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the Bull Sheet

John Gurke, CGCS
Contributing Editor

DATES TO REMEMBER

September 14-16 — 2000 LaSalle Bank Chicago Open at Beverly Country Club, **Les Rutan** host.

September 18 — MAGCS monthly meeting at Stonewall Orchard Golf Club, **Larry Flament** host.

October 10 — ITF Fall Golf Day at Gleneagles Country Club, **Keith Fuchs** host.

October 19 — University of Illinois Turf Alumni Golf Outing, Olympia Fields Country Club, **Dave Ward, CGCS** host.

November 29 — Second Annual U of I Alumni Breakfast at NCTE.

The official groundbreaking ceremony for Midwest Golf House took place on July 5, with CDGA executive director **Bob Markionni** and president **Jerry Maatman** on hand for the honors. MAGCS will have an office in the new complex on the grounds of Cog Hill Country Club, along with its name on the entrance sign. Further details about all the Golf House activities and plans can be obtained through CDGA.

Congratulations to **Ken Goodman** of Bull Valley Golf Club for winning the Old Elm-Elmer Bertucci Trophy for low senior superintendent at the July 18 MAGCS meeting at RedTail Golf Club. **David Mayzel** of Eagle One

Golf Products gets a big pat on the back for his overall senior low net score of 73 (I witnessed it—the guy's got game). Thanks from all of us at MAGCS to **Pat McDonagh** and his staff at RedTail for a great course and a great event.



Mike Mumper, CGCS, of Park Ridge C.C. presenting the coveted framed On Course magazine featuring RedTail Golf Club to our gracious and talented host Pat McDonagh.

The University of Illinois Field Day, held in Urbana on August 3, was a huge success (although attendance from the northern part of the state was a bit scant). Those who made the trip were treated to a dream day for the turf doctors—central Illinois' heat and humidity gave participants a chance to see active pythium on ryegrass and six-foot brown patch symptoms on Colonial bentgrass. Other ongoing plots were on display, including **Luke Cella's** ball lie/fairway height-of-cut project, **Dr. Branham's** Basamid study focusing on ground preparation and rates applied (being done in conjunction with Purdue University),

MAGCS sends out its thoughts and prayers to Conrad Stynchula and his entire family; Conrad's father Frank is fighting the fight against cancer.

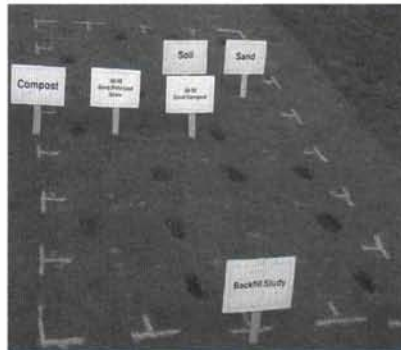
It's official—the drought of 2000 has been cancelled by the Illinois Interagency Drought Task Force. Wonder what tipped them off?

Your Education Committee has arrived at a tentative lineup for the MAGCS 48th Midwest Turf Clinic and Annual Meeting at Medinah Country Club (**Dan Quast, CGCS** host) to be held on November 9. Highlights will include Steve Mona, CEO of GCSAA, speaking on the future of our association and Eddie Adams, greenkeeper of the Old Course at St. Andrews and host of the 2000 British Open Championship. Make your plans now to attend this always-educational event.

Textron Golf & Turf of Racine, WI is looking for all alumni of its 29 "Future Turf Managers"

(continued on page 40)

and Sam Schmitz's divot study with Drs. Branham and **Tom Voigt**, looking at different seed rates and growth media. For information on any of these studies, contact Dr. Voigt or Dr. Branham at the U of I.



Results of Sam Schmitz's divot study at the U of I Field Day on August 3.

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seminars to attend the 30th reunion reception during the GCSAA Conference and Show in Dallas in February 2001. If you are an alumnus, or know of any in the MAGCS, contact Diane Ellsworth, events coordinator, at dellsworth@ttcsp.textron.com. If memory serves, this seminar was previously called the Jacobsen College Student Turf Seminar, and Lake Michigan is VERY cold in Racine at that time of year.

By now, most everyone in MAGCS has received the finalized version of GCSAA's proposed Professional Development Initiative (PDI) from president R. Scott Woodhead, CGCS. This proposal is scheduled to be drafted by the standards and bylaws committee in October, and will be distributed to all voting members with the Notice of Annual Meeting in December. Your Board of Directors strongly encourages you to read this proposal thoroughly, as it will affect all classes of golf course superintendents in the future. Our vote will be cast in February in Dallas, and it carries significant weight!

There is a new hot topic in the industry, as evidenced by the rash of articles in industry publications—trees. Thankfully for those of us with overplanted courses, the articles have been about the removal of trees, rather than addition of more. David A. Oatis has written several very informative articles in *USGA Green Section Record* over the past few months on this subject, and an article appeared in a recent *Golf Journal* whose title began with "Cutdown Clubs." These articles may be blasphemy to many golfers and "tree-huggers," but they are helpful in conveying to our customers the negative impact trees can have on golf



Oops! Although this may resemble the storm damage many of us suffered this summer, the only storm that caused this boo-boo was the brainstorm a certain superintendent had in thinking the tree would fall into the wind. Stupid me . . . er . . . him.

courses if they are improperly sited, of a poor species, overcrowded or simply unsafe. This latter case was brought to the forefront in May, when a woman was killed by a falling tree on a British Columbia golf course, and officials issued a mandate to remove all diseased or dead trees from golf courses there.

Finally, if you are in search of a great read, check out *Royal and Ancient—Blood, Sweat and Fear at the British Open* by Curt Sampson. The book recounts the 1999 British Open Championship at Carnoustie, and highlights the famous self-imposed destruction of Jean Van de Velde (gotta-makeafivegottamakeasixgottamakea seven) and the almost-equally famous greenkeeper John Philp's role in the Open.

The golf world lost a true friend on Thursday, July 20. *Chicago Tribune* outdoors columnist John Husar died at the age of 63. As **Mike Bavier, CGCS**, of Inverness Golf Club pointed out to me, years ago John Husar was a

Trib golf writer who frequently sought out local superintendents to learn of the problems they were facing and make the golfing public aware of our profession through his columns. More recently, John was considered THE MAN when it came to hunting and fishing around the Chicagoland area. MAGCS thanks John Husar for breaking new ground in publicizing our profession long before it was fashionable. He will be missed.

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