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On Course welcomes your letters on subjects covered in the magazine, matters of green industry interest and topics pertinent to the MAGCS/GCSAA. While each submission must carry a signature and identifying information, we will consider on a case-by-case basis withholding an author's name upon his/her request. Please note that the opinions expressed herein are those of the author(s) and not necessarily those of On Course or the MAGCS.

Greetings from Sunny Arizona!



Juanita and John Ebel

A special thank-you to editors Cathy Miles Ralston and John Gurke and all Midwest members for the December *On Course* issue. It has inspired me to tell you all how much I enjoyed it. While you are battling all that snow and cold, we are just having boring days of sunshine and 70°. Perfect golfing weather! Ho hum.

First of all, the *On Course* cover photo is a bit of photographic art. Tom Maple shot a perfect scene for the December cover. Thanks, Tom. Juncos have always been a favorite feathered friend of mine. I'm somewhat of an amateur bird-watcher, having been encouraged by Mr. Watson, a schoolteacher, many years ago. We tend to think of the robin as a harbinger of spring. Even the cardinal starts singing in February, stimulated by the increasing daylight. Years ago, when the

Chicagoland area was more rural and we had more open land, I remember meadowlarks returning while there was snow on the ground.

This said, the junco is my favorite forecaster. After a long, hot and sometimes troublesome summer, suddenly the first juncos would appear in my yard and I knew easier days were ahead. All through the winter, these little feathered friends would give me much pleasure watching them cope with extreme cold and snow at my bird-feeders. Somehow, they seemed to enjoy the winter. Then one day, as the snow melted away, they were gone, just as quickly as they had appeared in the fall. This was a sign that warmer weather was imminent. Spring and summer were a-comin'! Busy days ahead. We do not have juncos in southern Arizona and I miss them.

It was not just the *On Course* cover that pleased me, but its contents. The Bull Sheet (I'm still partial to that name) section is always of interest to me, but the December issue had two fine articles.

Brian Bossert's president's message is a reflection of his character and who he is. His appreciation of others and his gratuitous spirit show a true humility coupled with steadfastness and dedication to our profession. A fine message, Brian. It reminds all of us that we have had some help along the way.

Tony Rzadzki's story, "Looking for Greener Grass," was unique. As some of you might expect from me, the spiritual part of our being is highly important, but often neglected. Where you are going to spend eternity is a good way to jump-start that spirit. Tony's willingness to share his inner conflict and personal feelings took great courage. I compliment him and encourage others to share God's help in their lives. The life of the golf course superintendent is not always a piece of cake. When the pressures seem overwhelming, **taste the Lord and see that He is good!**

Finally, I would like to thank the MAGCS for sending me a Christmas card greeting! A very nice touch. You youngsters have a lot of class! Here's wishing you all a great and green new year.

John C. Ebel,
Retired Keeper of the Green

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“Everybody’s Crazy ‘Bout A Sharp-Dressed Man”



“A Study in Golf Fashion” would be an apt description of this photograph. Taken in 1980 during GCSAA’s annual postconference tour and tournament in Guadalajara, Mexico, the photo is a time capsule of the styles of the era. Pictured from left to right (in and amongst the plaids, paisleys, stripes, checks, herringbones, polka dots and oversized collars) are Carl Langrebe of Hinsdale C.C., Joe Williamson of Briar Ridge C.C., Bill Saielli of Indian Hill Club, Mike Bavier of Inverness G.C., Alex Eguiarte of Guadalajara C.C., Adolph Bertucci of Lakeshore C.C. and John Beraducci of Skokie C.C.

The adventurous group was among a small contingency of MAGCS members who ventured to Mexico after the 51st Annual Golf Course Conference and Show in St. Louis, MO (where Mike Bavier was elected vice president of GCSAA). Mike was able to recall several interesting stories—most of them unprintable—about the trip, with the most memorable being the lack of respect our profession still suffered. “When we arrived at the airport,” Mike recounts, “they loaded our golf bags in a dump truck and hauled them off to the golf course like a load of

gravel.” Mike also relates that back then the wives of the contestants had a tournament as well, which was played at the Guadalajara Country Club; while the men played at the Club de Golf, Santa Anita Country Club and the San Isidro Country Club, shown here.

Thanks to all of these unwitting models for allowing us to get a glance back at the way we were.



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the Bull Sheet

John Gurke, CGCS, Contributing Editor

DATES TO REMEMBER

February 14-15 — MAGCS Hospitality Suite at Adam's Mark Hotel, 6 to 9 p.m. in Dallas, TX during the GCSAA International Conference and Show.

February 17 — GCSAA Prayer Breakfast from 7:00 to 8:00 a.m., location TBA at the Show.

February 20-21 — 19th Annual Southern Illinois Grounds Maintenance School in Collinsville, IL. *More below . . .*

February 26-March 2 — Indiana-Illinois Turfgrass Short Course in Willowbrook, IL. *More below . . .*

March 7-8 — The Chicago Area Conference on State and Federal Personnel Laws in Chicago, IL. *Yep—below . . .*

March 15 — CDGA Green Seminar at Medinah Country Club.

March 20 — MAGCS monthly meeting at Schaumburg Golf Club, **Nick Hongisto** host.

As mentioned in Dates to Remember, several very beneficial seminars will be held during the winter months in our area. The 19th Annual Southern Illinois Grounds Maintenance School in Collinsville, Illinois, offers a two-day program featuring talks from the state's leading extension specialists. GCSAA has approved 0.9 PDUs toward recertification. Obtain information by calling the

Madison-St. Clair Extension Unit at 618-236-8600. The Indiana-Illinois Turfgrass Short Course, sponsored by the Midwest Regional Turf Foundation and the Illinois Turfgrass Foundation in cooperation with Purdue University and the University of Illinois, offers basic training and information for those who are employed or are considering employment in the turf industry. This seminar will be held at the Willowbrook Holiday Inn on March 2, and more information is available by calling Bev Bratton at 765-494-8039 or **Tom Voigt** at 217-333-7847. Finally, the Chicago Area Conference on State and Federal Personnel Laws is designed to update personnel managers on the latest rulings that affect employer liability. Three locations are available: March 7-8 in Chicago, March 5-6 in Schaumburg and March 15-16 in Lisle. To enroll, call 1-800-601-4636.

MAGCS sends its best wishes out to **Russ Stachlewitz**, formerly of Prestbury Golf Club, who has embarked on a new career in academia. Russ began his new position as turf instructor at the South East Technical Institute in Sioux Falls, South Dakota on January 3, heading a department of over 40 students. He inherits a strong program that includes a 180-acre corn field to be transformed into research plots, along with two greenhouses and an experimental green, tee and fairway. Russ looks forward to seeing his MAGCS friends in Dallas during the conference, where he and his

student contingent will be sharing a double room with 39 cots . . .



Congratulations to our editor emeritus **Fred Opperman** on receiving his 35-year pin from GCSAA. Fred was the first MAGCS president to be a certified golf course superintendent, and one of the first 40 in the country to attain certified status—the year was 1972.

In case you didn't know, MAGCS offers a \$1,000 scholarship to the children of MAGCS members who are either college-bound or already in college. The deadline is March 1, so act fast. Contact **George Minnis** at MAGCS at 630-406-5356 to obtain an application form. Hurry!

A re-reminder: *On Course* magazine wants to hear from you! If you have something to get off your chest, if something bugs you about YOUR magazine or if you just want to see yourself in print, send us a letter. It will be reprinted in the "Midwest Voices" section for all to see. Send your letters to **Cathy Ralston**, Editor—*On Course*, 276 Lincoln Terrace, Buffalo Grove, IL 60089-2039. Letters can also be e-mailed to on_course@hotmail.com. Get involved!

Another feather in the cap of **Oscar Miles**, CGCS of Merit Club—Oscar was named one of *Golfdom* magazine's "People of the Year" in its December 2000 issue.

(continued on page 28)

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Quoth *Golfdom*: "Who could ask for a better representative of the profession? Both the Merit Club and superintendents everywhere benefited for Miles' savvy ability to host the Women's Open like no one before him." Thank you once again, Oscar, for helping to elevate the superintendent's profession to such a high level.

While on the subject of feathers in caps, those Penn Staters have another to boast about—the Penn State turfgrass students beat Michigan State in the ninth annual Cutter Cup held on hostile ground in Detroit, Michigan. The event is a match-play format, and actually ended in a 2.5-2.5 draw, but PSU retained the trophy as defending champion.

While you are perusing the many periodicals we receive, look for our old friend and MAGCS member-gone-north **Dan Marco**, CGCS of Country Club of Detroit in the new Tee-2-Green ad about Penn A-4. We can now add golf course superintendents to the list of professions who should NOT be allowed to write their own copy for advertisements (a list that includes car dealers and personal injury attorneys).

As long as you are perusing, check out the Q and A with our own **Hank Wilkinson** in *Golfweek's Superintendent News* on page 8 of its January 5 issue. Topics covered ranged from dollar spot to hockey, about which Hank knows much and little, respectively.

Good luck to our MAGCS competitors in this year's GCSAA Golf Championship—hopefully,

there will be much to brag about at the hospitality suite!

Position available: Fox Bend Golf Course, an 18-hole municipal facility located in Oswego, Illinois, is looking for an equipment technician. Interested parties should contact **Bob Kohlstedt**, golf course superintendent at Fox Bend Golf Course, Route 34, Oswego, IL 60543 for particulars.

Equipment for sale: Northmoor Country Club has the following equipment for sale. Call **Stacy Wallace** at 847-926-5540 for details: 1991 Dual Express Bedknife Grinder; 1965 Ford 3000 Tractor; 1986 Toro Greens Aerator; 1993 Toro 216D Triplex Mower; 1982 Toro GM III; 1979 Toro GM III; 1978 Toro GM III; and two 1975 Toro GM IIIs. Everything listed is in running condition.

Ten years ago this month in *Bull Sheet*: John Krueger, longtime superintendent of Golden Acre C.C. in Schaumburg, passed away, and **Albie Staudt** won the ITF's Distinguished Service Award.

Twenty years ago this month in *Bull Sheet*: **Ed Fischer**, CGCS took over for retiring Al Bertucci at Old Elm Club, and **Dan Murray**, CGCS accepted the superintendent's position at Kishwaukee C.C. Also, **Mike Bavier**, CGCS of Inverness Golf Club was elected president of GCSAA at the conference in Anaheim, CA.

Thirty years ago this month in *Bull Sheet*: Editor Roger LaRochelle interviewed GCSAA president Norm Kramer about the new certification program (sounds eerily familiar), GCSAA was still based in Des Plaines, Illinois, boasting 3,000 members, and Warren's A-20 bluegrass and Toronto C-15 bentgrass were all the rage.

Forty years ago this month in *Bull Sheet*: For the first time, golf course superintendents could gain access to PGA Tour events with their membership cards and not by paying the normal ticket price. Ravisloe, Beverly, Barrington and Edgewater Country Clubs had center-row cast-iron fairway irrigation systems installed, while Bob O' Link, Palos and North Shore Country Clubs had new maintenance buildings erected. Any of these still in use?

And 50 years ago this month in *Bull Sheet*: Ray Gerber, former editor and superintendent at Glen Oak C.C., was president of NGSAA (National Greenkeeping Superintendents Association—the precursor to GCSAA), and the Annual Conference and Show was held at the Hotel Sherman in Chicago.

And finally, to remind us to greet our troubles with a sense of humor, this from Roger Maltbie upon being asked what he needed to shoot to win a tournament: "The rest of the field."

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Yearly resolutions are often a promise we make to ourselves, usually of a self-improvement nature. Come on now, we all know what I'm talking about here. How many times have we promised to lose 10 pounds this next year? In our business, my favorite is the perennial, "I promise to play more golf next season. Well, this year for sure!" On my part, this year's resolutions will be to file extensions on last year's resolutions. It's kind of like requesting an extension on our taxes; eventually, resolutions need to be carried out, taxes need to be done. I am obviously having some fun with you all now, and that is just to make my point, which is simply this: let's have some fun! Life is way too short to be worrying about things that in the whole big picture of our lives are really insignificant! Enjoy!

See you all in Dallas.



and spending it with the family. At our own club, we are researching the history of the golf course. I was extremely impressed by the presentations I saw in November by Dave Ward and John Jennings. I thought pursuing this type of project at Bryn Mawr would be interesting and a way to involve some of our veteran members. On that note, the MAGCS will be putting together a bit of a family tree this year. It will be a history/listing of the golf course superintendents who have served at each course. It's a great idea for our anniversary year and none other than Robert Williams planted the seed. Who says that there is nothing as past as a past president?

On that note—see you all in Dallas!



So, this brings me back to my original question. "Why do I do this?" I'm sure everyone has his or her own way of answering that question. I assume I can speak for most of us when I say it's because we all have a passion for and dedication to what we do. This passion and dedication is what makes our industry thrive.

Well, I'd better hop back into the pickup and keep plowing. It's snowing 2" an hour! "Why do I do this?!"



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