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A Legend and His Leading Lady: Ray & Julia Gerber



“A golf course superintendent must be many things. To his club he should be a willing and tireless worker. He should be a loyal man who likes his job. And he must be able to get along with everybody and have a smile ready even when the going gets tough.” —Ray Gerber


Born in 1899 on a small farm in rural Minnesota, Raymond Gerber faced adversity—the loss of his father at age six, formal schooling cut short after eighth grade—and emerged with a passion for education and a sterling character that served him well as he forged an illustrious career in the greenkeeping profession.

That career spanned several noteworthy golf courses and garnered Ray a host of honors. Woodhill C.C. in Wayzata, Minnesota, Pine Valley C.C. in New Jersey and finally Medinah C.C. were on Ray’s resume when he applied for the position of golf course superintendent at Glen Oak. Ray not only won the Glen Oak job—he spent the next 35 years at the helm there, until his retirement at age 72.

Retirement is a misnomer, however. Ray became editor of *the Bull Sheet*, the original incarnation of this very magazine, and served in that post until his death in July 1983.

A three-time president of MAGCS (1943, 1944, 1959), Ray served as GCSAA’s president in 1950. In 1971, he received the Charles Bartlett Award for Public Relations; in 1975, he received the GCSAA’s

Distinguished Service Award. The boy who never attended high school went on to publish articles in the U.S., England, Australia and Canada; speak at more than 100 local, state, national, international and university programs; author a textbook chapter; and gain the admiration and respect of his peers.

Accolades notwithstanding, Ray was a mentor to many and a devoted husband and father. He married Julia Perry, pictured with him here, in 1925. Julia, it seems, is why the MAGCS can claim Ray Gerber as one of our own. Homesick for Minnesota during their time in New Jersey, Julia was a force behind the Gerbers’ return to the Midwest—but Illinois rather than Minnesota. Lucky for Ray—and lucky for us. 

Oops!

We thought we had identified everybody in the group photo that appeared in February’s edition of *The Way We Were*. We were wrong. Far right is Kenny Goodman. Our apologies to Kenny!

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John Gurke, CGCS,
Contributing Editor

DATES TO REMEMBER

March 6 — "Diversity in the Landscape—Incorporating Native Plants" seminar sponsored by Midwest Groundcovers. Cal MWG (quickly) for info.

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

March 10 — Illinois Landscape Contractors Association's Landscape Equipment Auction in Crystal Lake. Contact ILCA at 630-472-2851.

March 15 — CDGA Green Seminar at Medinah Country Club.

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

April 23 — MAGCS monthly meeting—the first golf event of 2001—at Ruffled Feathers Golf Club, **Dan Albaugh** host.

MAGCS hats off to **Dan Quast**, CGCS of Medinah Country Club, who announced his retirement effective April 1 of this year. Dan is heading up the road a ways, but will no doubt keep in close touch with his friends in the Chicago area. The many people who learned the trade under Dan's tutelage are fortunate to have had such a teacher. We wish Dan good luck and good fortune, and thank him for bettering our lives here these past 12 years—he has been one

of our profession's greatest advocates in furthering our cause.

.....
Kenny Goodman of Bull Valley Golf Club is recuperating from bone cancer treatments in Arizona. If you feel like checking in and saying hello to a friend, Ken can be reached at 623-972-6450. We hope to see Kenny back our way real soon.

.....
This spring marks the scheduled opening of the Midwest Golf House Complex at Cog Hill Country Club in Lemont, which also means MAGCS will be moving in shortly thereafter. You can have a bird's-eye view of our future home's progress by logging onto www.cdga.org, and clicking on the "Midwest Golf House" link. This is a really huge event for MAGCS and the other organizations that will share space at the Complex—turf research will be performed onsite in actual golf course conditions, and a plethora of resources will be available to us all in one place. Check it out.

.....
Another of our MAGCS members is on the move—**Al Pondel**, CGCS has moved from Deerfield Golf Club to Rockford Country Club, effective January 22.

Al replaces **Dan Wyatt**, CGCS, who had been at Rockford for 23 years. Congratulations to Al, and best of luck to Dan, as they embark on new challenges.

.....
For the second (non)consecutive time, a group of MAGCS's hockey-playing members rose to the challenge and participated in the Annual Golf Course Hockey Tournament in Fort Erie, Ontario, Canada. Twelve teams (only three from

below the border) did battle on the frozen tundra, leaving it all on the ice (all stamina, vigor, heart, lunch, etc.). In the bloody aftermath, one team stood proud—it was Northern Ontario—but Team Chicago, a.k.a "Old Steel on Ice," accomplished an even haughtier goal of not completely sucking.

One wrinkle to the team this year was the loss of **Dave Schlagetter**, who exercised his free agency to sign with Team TurfNet (the Washington Redskins of the tournament—high-priced free agents from around the country, but no chemistry). After a warm-up whipping of TurfNet in a preseason game, Team Chicago held its own against talent-rich opponent Kitchener 2 (twice as good as Kitchener 1) in a 10-7 defensive struggle (the tenth goal was with one second left into an empty net, so it was really just 9-7). The loss did not dampen the spirits of this team, though, as it capped off the first day of competition by losing a heartbreaker to Niagara by only one goal. The following game against New York proved historic—Team Chicago won its first-ever game in the Tournament, besting its feisty foes 4-2. Next came London, which came back late in the third period to tie the game at the end of regulation, and went on to a 2-1 victory in a shoot-out.

We, the MAGCS members of Team Chicago, thank our sponsors—**John Buck** of J.W. Turf, **Brian Baker** of Simplot Partners, **John Turner** of Bayer and **Kerry Anderson** of Chipco—for their generous support of our mission to suck even less next time. And any interested players are welcome—skates or spiked golf shoes are the only prerequisites. (See photo, page 38.)

.....
(continued on page 36)

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Congratulations to **Kurt Sams** of Idlewild Country Club on his recent nuptials. Kurt married his bride Vanessa in Orlando, where the two originally met while Kurt attended the Conference and Show in 1999. **Jeff Everson** of Green Acres Country Club offered MAGCS moral support as a groomsman. Congratulations again, and best of luck to the happy couple.

MAGCS again extends its heartiest congratulations and thanks to **Dudley Smith** of Silver Lake Country Club as he received the Midwest Regional Turf Foundation's Distinguished Service Award on January 10 in Indianapolis. (See photos, page 38.)

The next generation of golf course superintendents from the Schmitz family tree has made his way into the world—Tina and **Todd Schmitz** (Aurora C.C.) proudly welcomed Aiden Raymond Schmitz into the fold at 6:30 p.m. on February 6. Aiden weighed in at a whopping 9 lb., 7 oz., and mom, dad, uncle **Mark** (Meadows G.C.) and grandparents **Ray** (Flossmoor C.C.) and Jan are all doing well. Congratulations to the Schmitz family on the new addition!

Remember, MAGCS members—*On Course* wants to hear from you! If you have a beef, or just want to vent, write a "Letter to the Editor." If you have any news your colleagues might enjoy hearing, let *Bull Sheet* know. Letters and *Bull Sheet* items can be mailed to Cathy or myself (address on page 1), faxed, e-mailed, even delivered over the phone. Let us know what's on your minds . . .

A group of MAGCS members recently returned from a ski trip to Jackson Hole, Wyoming, where their plane did NOT skid off

the runway. The group included **Dave Blomquist, Erwin McKone, Joel Purpur, John Gurke, Mike Mumper, Don Cross, Tracy Murphy, Dave Schlagetter, Chuck Anfield** and **Mike Sauls**, with a special one-night-only appearance by **Joel Johnson**. Big snow, big sky, big hill. (See photo, page 38.)

A correction from your January issue: In mentioning the recent passing of Don Strode of Don's Sharpening Centre, his daughter's name was mistakenly printed as Brenda. **Rhonda** will be taking the reins, and my apologies for the mistake—good luck to you, Rhonda.

The MAGCS Board of Directors and the entire membership wish to convey their best wishes to good friend John Buck of J. W. Turf for a speedy and complete recovery from recent illness. Our thoughts are with the entire J. W. Turf family.

Attention, MAGCS members: We are attempting to complete our photograph inventory of every member. If you are among those who did not have a photo taken at the Midwest Turf Clinic at Medinah C.C., please send a color photo of yourself for our archives. Send photos to John Gurke, c/o Aurora Country Club, P.O. Box 278, Aurora, IL 60507. Thanks.

These items just in from GCSAA:

- Our national association's membership has hit the 21,000 plateau for the first time ever. It started with 60.
- After seven strong years of service, chief operating officer Joe O'Brien is stepping down to seek new challenges.
- GCSAA has announced that it will sponsor Senior PGA Tour professional Jim Colbert for the 2001 season. Colbert has

promised to follow in the golf course superintendent tradition by playing only used balls found by grounds staffers and wearing dirty shoes.

The MAGCS monthly meeting held at Poplar Creek C.C. featured **Tim Kelly's** fine Power-Point presentation on the finalized format of the proposed Professional Development Initiative (PDI). The result of our vote was overwhelmingly in favor of passing PDI, which is how MAGCS voted through its delegates at the Conference and Show in Dallas. Although this was written before the Show, I will go out on a limb and assume PDI has passed (where MAGCS goes, the rest follow). I hope this is not another "Dewey Defeats Truman" story . . .

Congratulations to these MAGCS members who are chapter winners in GCSAA's 2001 Environmental Steward Awards: **Chuck Anfield**, CGCS of Heritage Bluffs G.C.; **Kerry Satterwhite**, CGCS of The Den at Fox Creek; and **Dan Dinelli**, CGCS of North Shore C.C. Kudos also to merit winners **Mark Petitgoue** at Thunderhawk G.C. and **Roger Stewart**, CGCS at TPC at Jasná Polana in Pennsylvania.

Congratulations also to **Brian Thompson**, CGCS at The Biltmore C.C. on recently being certified by GCSAA.

Assistant superintendent's position sought: Paul Fisher, who will graduate from the University of Illinois this May, is seeking a position as assistant superintendent. Paul has worked for **Kerry Blatteau** at Oak Brook Hills and **Scott Witte** at Cantigny, and served an internship under **Steve Cook** at Oakland Hills. Contact Paul at 217-367-2293.

The capital budgets must have been approved, and the following items are for sale:

Dave Groelle of Kemper Lakes G.C. is selling a Toro 325-D with recently rebuilt 72" deck in great condition (2,800 hrs). Asking \$4,500—call 847-913-0687 or e-mail at dgroelle@yahoo.com.

Kurt Galisdorfer at Exmoor C.C. has a 1991 Toro 223-D fairway mower with 4,100 hours for sale. Mower is equipped with hydraulic leak detection, and cutting units have combs. Asking \$2,000—call Kurt at 847-433-1177.

Kurt Sams at Idlewild C.C. has an International 2444 gas tractor for sale. Call Kurt for details at 708-798-4927.

Kerry Satterwhite has an extensive list of equipment for sale due to the closing of a course in central Illinois. Call Kerry for details

at 309-434-2247, or e-mail him at PnStU85@aol.com.

For sale: 1993 Toro Grounds-master 325 with 72" Recycler deck, 3300 hours. Asking \$2,500, and will consider partial trade for Jacobsen Blitzers. Call **Henry Michna** at 847-501-2056.

Golf course mechanic wanted. Bloomingdale G.C., an 18-hole public course in Bloomingdale, is seeking a mechanic to perform maintenance and repair of all turf equipment. Turf experience preferred, but all knowledgeable applicants will be considered. Must have knowledge of electrical systems, hydraulic systems and diesel engines. Competitive pay and excellent benefits. For consideration, submit your resume to **Bret Collins**, Superintendent, Bloomingdale Golf Club Maintenance, 303 Carriageway, Bloomingdale, IL 60108. Phone 630-307-0139; fax 630-307-3786.

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Dudley (R) and Marlene Smith after Dudley accepted the prestigious MRTF Award.



Things got a little carried away at the post-ceremony party back stage. A sneaky paparazzo got this shot of Dudley leaving the party at dawn. Photograph courtesy of Marsha Traves.



Mike "Half-Pipe" Mumper performs his favorite trick on the slopes of Jackson Hole. Snow boarders came from miles around to ski in his wake. Only one was lost . . .



"Old Steel on Ice," front row, L to R: Dave Fischer, Dave Maksymiu (the ringer), Rob Shedden (turf student in Niagara—looking for an internship—his mom brought us resumes), Tom Wilson—the hands-down MVP of the team for blocking more shots than Rob, and Greg Gordon. Back row, L to R: Erwin McKone, Doug Tisdahl, Pete Kiraly, Kerry Anderson, John Gurke, Joel Purpur and Kevin DeRoo.

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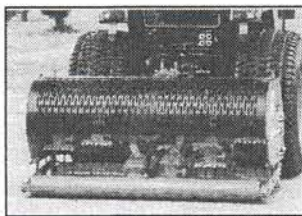
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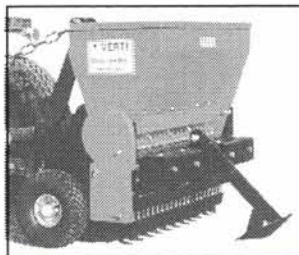
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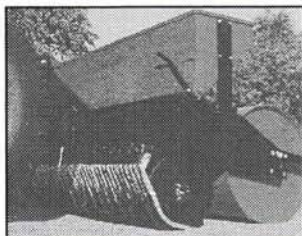
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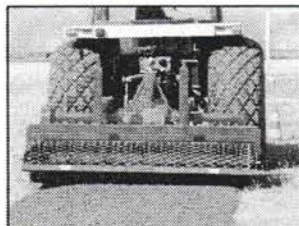
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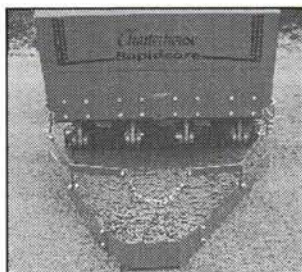
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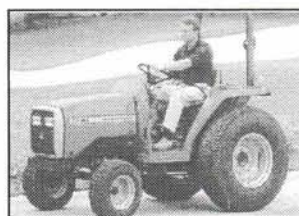
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