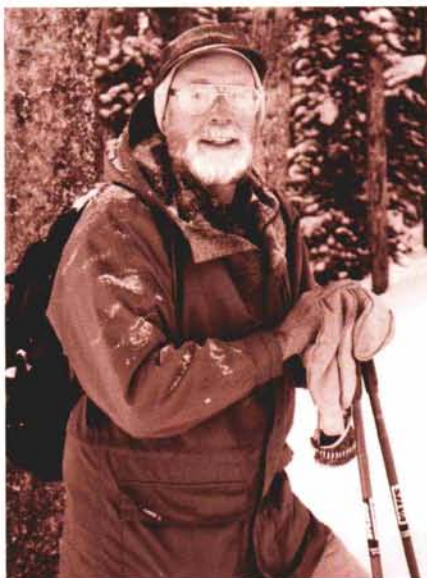


In 1999, after 16 years of tireless service, Fred Opperman steps down as editor of *On Course* to move to Montana with his wife. Fred began as editor in 1983, taking the reins from Ray Gerber and making many positive contributions to the Association and newsletter. No stranger to the world of golf, Cathy Miles Ralston is selected by a search committee comprised of Fred Opperman, Jim McNair and a select group of past presidents to become the new editor. John Gurke is enlisted as contributing editor to assist with collecting information for "the Bull Sheet" and soliciting articles. The July 1999 issue of *On Course* sees the torch officially passed from Fred to Cathy and John.



*Fred Opperman hiking, somewhere in Montana.*

Western Open moves from its home of many years at Butler National to Dubsdred at Cog Hill. The 1995 Ameritech Senior Open is held at Stonebridge Golf Club. The LPGA *Sun-Times* shootout is held at Oak Brook Golf Club. Graham Marsh of Australia captures the U.S. Senior Open championship title, the first major championship of his 28-year career, in 1997 at Olympia Fields Country Club. Marsh pars the 18th hole to beat South Africa's John Bland. And the last Major of the millennium, the 1999 PGA Championship, is held at Medinah Country Club. Tiger Woods holds on to win the PGA by one shot over Sergio Garcia in one of the most competitive and memorable Major championships in recent history.

### Championships Come to Chicago-Area Golf Courses

Throughout the century, a number of Major championships have been played in the Chicago area. This tradition continues in the

'90s. At age 45, Hale Irwin becomes the oldest U.S. Open champion and the fifth player to collect three titles when he prevails over Mike Donald on the 19th hole of a playoff in the 1990 U.S. Open at Medinah. 1991 is the year the

### Computers Become Commonplace

The Internet started when the military planners of the U.S. Defense Department (Advanced

*(continued on page 22)*

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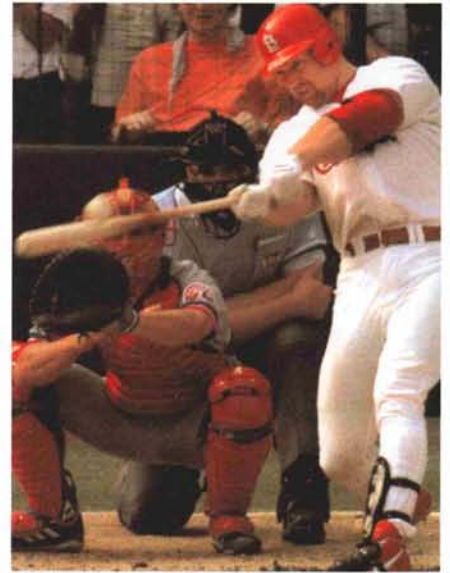


Research Project Agency) sought to design a computer network that could withstand partial destruction (such as a nuclear attack), yet still be able to function. Every computer on network should be able to communicate with other computers on the same network. Thus, if part of the network were destroyed, the surviving part would be able to automatically reroute communications through a different path. This project eventually attracted networkers outside the military.

In the '90s, the Internet becomes part of our everyday life. Russ Fink of Tamarack Golf Club introduces Turftalk online to the Chicago area in 1990. This is a bulletin-board service that sets the prototype for the forums of today. In 1994, Peter McCormick creates *Turfnet*, a monthly publication later joined by a Web site providing information to subscribing mem-

bers. *Turfnet* covers equipment reviews and offers unbiased member discussion in the world of golf maintenance. GCSAA launches its new Web site in 1996 to disseminate information to the public about golf course superintendents and act as a source of information for its membership. MAGCS launches its Web site to provide local updates and offer a forum for members to discuss problems and ideas and offer insights to situations that are regionalized to our area.

With notable assistance from Danny Quast, TGIF at Michigan State University is saved from despair when the 10-year period of USGA funding expires. Satellite downlinks for weather become commonplace in maintenance facilities, giving superintendents the ability to have real-time radar and forecasts at their disposal. Considered a luxury item at the beginning of the decade, cellular phones are



Mark McGwire.

now standard gear for superintendents, creating instant access and allowing business to take place in the field. Walkie-talkie features enable individuals to communicate instantaneously with the use of cellular technology. Weather stations

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become integrated with irrigation systems. They provide site-specific data, allowing superintendents to make educated decisions regarding irrigation, fertilizer and chemical application based upon the climactic conditions at their golf courses

### **Improved Economic Times for the Game**

The Dow sets a record at 2810.15 on January 2, 1990—the first new all-time high since October 1987. Following the recession of 1990-1991, the United States economy and consumer confidence take another giant leap forward.

Golf also enters a new era this decade. The professional players are more fit and athletic than in any other period. Golf's popularity sparks a demand for new golf courses throughout the country. As the number of players increases, especially in urban areas, long waits to get onto public golf courses become common. A comprehensive program to "pick up the pace" is instituted in order to make people aware of slow play with the increased number of participants, and to move more people through golf courses. Waiting lists to join some private clubs grow from a couple of months to eight to ten years. The surging demand for golf allows clubs the financial means to improve outdated infrastructure. Irrigation systems, clubhouses and major renovations become commonplace as clubs feel confident of their financial stability. After teasing investors three times by crossing the 10,000 level, the Dow finally closes above the 10,000 mark March 29, 1999.

### **New Courses Open in the Nineties**

Adding to the already wonderful array of courses in the Chicagoland area, the '90s were a busy period of golf development. Courses that opened during this period included Blackberry Oaks

G.C., Boulder Ridge C.C., Broken Arrow G.C., Bull Valley G.C., Conway Farms G.C., Crystal Tree G.C., Dunes Club, Eagle Brook C.C., Heritage Bluffs G.C., Hughes Creek G.C., Merit Club, Mistwood G.C., Nettle Creek G.C., Odyssey Club, Orchard Valley G.C., Prairie Landing G.C., Royal Melbourne, Ruffled Feathers G.C., Seven Bridges G.C.,



*Past president Raymond Schmitz.*

Stonebridge C.C., Tamarack G.C. and the Ivanhoe Club.

### **The Tradition of Leadership Continues**

The MAGCS has produced many great leaders since its inception in 1926. During the '90s, members serving as president of our Association include Bruce Williams, Raymond Schmitz, Timothy Kelly, Alan Fierst, Joel Purpur, Donald Cross, Edward Braunsky, Kevin Czerkies and Bob Maibusch. Bob Williams is elected into the Illinois PGA Hall of Fame in September of 1990. In 1996, Bruce Williams is elected president of GCSAA; Bob and Bruce are the only father-son pair in the history of GCSAA to both preside over the national organization. Later, Tommy Witt of Wynstone Golf Club is elected to the GCSAA Board of Directors.

### **The Nineties Come to an End**

As the '90s conclude, the #1 grossing movie for the year is *Star Wars: Episode I, The Phantom Menace* and the #1 song on the charts is "Smooth" by Carlos Santana and Rob Thomas. The song pervading the airwaves, though, is Prince's "1999" as the country prepares and holds its breath as the new millennium approaches.

The Y2K "millennium bug" resulting from date coding on computer systems prompts companies and individuals to spend billions of dollars worldwide to update and prepare these computers, back up data and increase security. Individuals stock up on food, batteries and gasoline in the event of a disaster. Some people feel that the power will go out and overall chaos will reign in the world as a result of computers being unable to recognize the year 2000. Corporate managers camp out in offices with emergency plans in the event of failure. As we all know now, no major Y2K event occurred and golf, along with the brave new world, marched defiantly into the next millennium.



*Past presidents Roger Stewart and Bruce Williams.*





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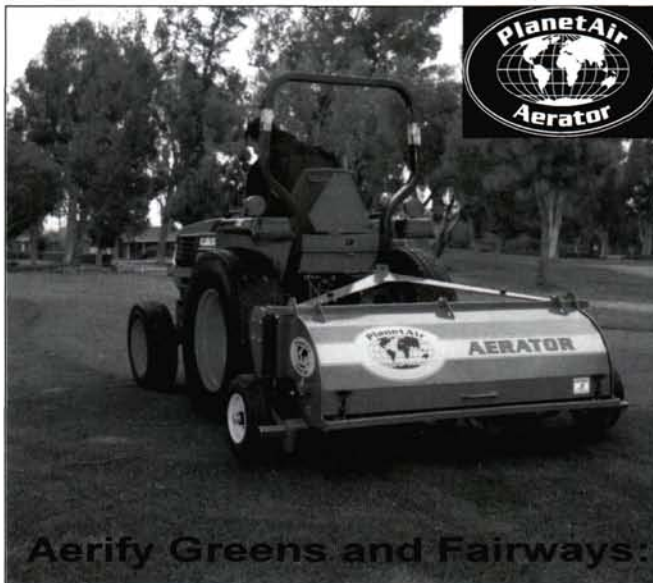
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# A Thanksgiving Reflection: Profound Gratitude

*With the recent tragedy of Tuesday, September 11, still fresh in my mind, I have paused many times during recent days to reflect on my life. It seems that life is a very fragile commodity that is often taken for granted. As I look back on the horror that unfolded here, I realize how truly blessed I am. By sharing some of my blessings hopefully you will realize some of your own.*

In what other country in the world do citizens have as many freedoms, rights and privileges as we do? No place that I can think of! We have the ability to travel with relative ease to any place we choose. The freedom to voice our opinions or disagree with another's is not a liberty many other countries enjoy. A wide variety of entertainment and educational programs are available for everyone. Our children have the opportunity to pursue their wildest dreams and aspirations.

I enjoy my work and look forward to getting up each and every morning. There is nothing like seeing the sunrise, awakening the golf course with all of its beauty and variety of wildlife. I am outside working with Mother Nature when the weather is good and inside using other skills when the weather is bad. I create beautiful vistas for others to enjoy with the plants I choose to use. I have the unique opportunity to work with some of the most talented people in the area. My assistant, Russ Wescott, has the ability to see the things I seem to miss and handle any problems in short order. I am truly thankful for all of his assistance. The rest of my crew brings something special to the equation that helps us work so well together as a team.

I have made many friends with whom I can share all of the different aspects of my life. The friends and family I have are truly the most important and valuable things in my life. My best friend is my wife, Jill. She has stood by me and supported me with everything I have tried. She is the one who provides the balance to my life. It is one of my greatest joys to spend time with my family doing things we all enjoy.

Hopefully, all of my disjointed ramblings will afford you the opportunity to reflect on some of the things in your own life that you are thankful for. Unfortunately, sometimes it takes a tragedy or loss for us to recognize and honor the good things in our lives. 

*Unfortunately,  
sometimes it takes  
a tragedy or loss  
for us to recognize  
and honor the good  
things in our lives.*



# the Bull Sheet

John Gurke, CGCS,  
Contributing Editor

## DATES TO REMEMBER

November 7 — 49th Annual MAGCS Turf Clinic and Annual Meeting at Medinah Country Club, **Tom Lively, CGCS** host.

November 4-16 — “Management Skills for the New or Prospective Manager” seminars. These are two-day seminars offered by SkillPath in the following locations: Arlington Heights, Chicago, Schaumburg, Naperville, Oak Brook and Oak Lawn. Call 1-800-873-7545 for details.

November 13-14 — 36th Annual Wisconsin Golf Turf Symposium dedicated to the memory of O. J. Noer at the American Club in Kohler, Wisconsin.

November 27-29 — North Central Turfgrass Exposition at Pheasant Run Resort in St. Charles, Illinois.

December 5 — “Writing the Employee Handbook in Illinois” seminar presented by Lorman Education Services at the Four Points Barcelo Hotel in Oak Brook Terrace, Illinois. Call 715-833-3959 for details.

Don't forget that November 7 is the 49th Annual MAGCS Turf Clinic and Annual Meeting at Medinah Country Club. Education director Gary Hearn has a great day chock-full o' entertaining and informative speakers, and we know

what to expect from the excellent staff at Medinah as far as hospitality goes. This will also be your chance to help decide who will run your Association by voting in the election and letting your voice be heard. Be there or be blowing out your irrigation systems . . .

A fine golf event—the 2001 John Deere Team Championship—took place on September 24 at Boulder Ridge Country Club with **Paul Wagner** serving as host. Results of this year's event from 1st to 10th place were as follows: Lake View G.C. (57); Midlothian C.C. (58); Orchard Valley G.C. (59); Inverness C.C. (59); Oak Club of Genoa (61); Bryn Mawr C.C. (61); Green Acres C.C. (62); Glen Oak C.C. (62); White Deer Run (62); and Crystal Lake C.C. (62). Congratulations to all teams who took some greenery home, and to their wives and significant others who spent it.

As long as we're on the subject, there was yet ANOTHER golf event in the recent past—the First Annual MAGCS Scholarship Fundraiser held October 1 at Geneva Golf Club. Host **Eddie Braunsky, CGCS** (a.k.a. Basamid Boy) put on a great show for all in attendance (including his schtick during intros and prize-giving). The cause raised over \$2,800 for our scholarship fund, ensuring that future winners will not have their checks bounce. Aside from the money generated by the registration fee, the betting hole raised \$260, and \$200 was donated by the Turf Equipment Technicians Association (TETA). Big thanks to the many sponsors who donated the prizes, carts, food and drink;

and to the people at Geneva Golf Club for the use of their beautiful facility. By the way, Geneva and Eddie, along with longtime MAGCS member and past superintendent **Albie Staudt**, were featured in *Golf Course Management's* “Back Nine” segment in its October 2001 issue. The article, titled “A Diamond in the Rough,” focused on the family-type environment at Geneva G.C., and even made Eddie look good. Those who played in the fundraiser can attest that, although no diamonds were found, MANY golf balls did find their way into that now-famous rough.



Ed Braunsky models one of the MANY fine prizes given out at the fundraiser.



Brian Bossert accepts TETA's contribution of \$200 from Tim Johnson.

(continued on page 28)





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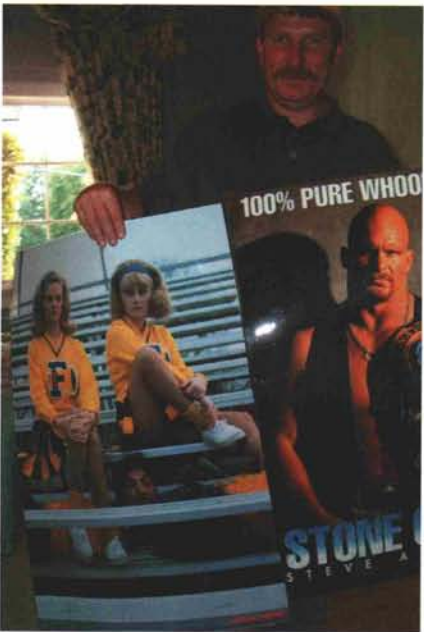
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Don Ferreri and Ed Braunsky yuk it up. Don's daughter Brenda was one of this year's scholarship winners.



Mark Gilmour was a big winner.



Shane Kissack's new bride bears a scary resemblance to Paul Yerkes in certain lighting . . .

Finally, a couple more notes of congratulations go out to some deserving MAGCS members: **Shane Kissack** of Riverside Country Club was finally married to his longtime sweetheart Jill Einfeldt on September 22 in Baroda, Michigan. The ceremony took place at a local winery, and the table of MAGCS members in attendance did its best to run the joint out of stock. Also, **Ryan (Brock) Burton**, assistant superintendent at Skokie Country Club, and his wife, Carrie, welcomed their first child into the world on September 20. Mason (a boy) weighed in at 7 lb., 13 oz. Great news for both gentlemen and their spouses.

Another local course whose superintendent and architect are longtime MAGCS members was featured in the press recently—*Chicagoland Golf* had a great write-up on Phillips Park G.C. and the fine work architect **Greg Martin** and superintendent **Lynn Wesson** have done to give the old muni course a fresh new look. Check it out in the September issue.

Looks like **Tom Lively**, CGCS of Medinah Country Club will have his hands full next fall. Medinah's No. 3 course will undergo a \$3.5 million renovation, including a new irrigation system, repositioning and deepening of bunkers, and seven new green surfaces including the moving of no. 17 green back down by the water and to the right. Rees Jones is the architect who will oversee the project, which will begin in July of next year. Good luck with the exciting project, Tom—the PGA is only five years away!

This was passed along to me by a military person, and it has some eerily strange similarities to our own profession. If you substitute "assistant" for "lieutenant," "superintendent" for "colonel," and "cart" for "jeep," you'll see what I mean: During training exercises, the lieutenant driving down a muddy road encountered another car stuck in the mud with a red-faced colonel at the wheel. "Your jeep stuck in the mud, sir?" asked the lieutenant as he pulled alongside. "Nope," replied the colonel, coming over and handing him the keys, "Yours is."

.....  
Cary Country Club has the following equipment for sale: 1988 Toro Sand Pro 14 with three-year-old Kohler 14 HP motor—\$600. Two (2) 1995 National 84 Triplexes with anti-scalping reels (needs starter)—\$1,200 apiece or both for \$1,600. Call **Dean Tomaselli** at 847-639-2545 for details.

.....  
Blackberry Oaks Golf Course has a 1992 Befco 15-foot PTO Cyclone Flex mower for sale for \$500. Call **Steve Holich** at 630-553-5106 for details.

.....  
Aurora Country Club is looking for two Toro Series IV greens mowers (topdressing mowers) in decent condition and a set of Jacobsen Greens King cutting units in working condition (same use). Call **John Gurke** at 630-892-3600 if you want to get rid of your junk.





Host Mark Bobb is noticeably thrilled to receive his framed On Course from Mike Mumper.



Our annual tournament winners are: back row, L to R, Don Cross, Steve Van Acker, Dave Louttit and Dave Mayzel. Front row, L to R, Ted Fist and Tim Scott.



Dan Golden of Barrington Hills with Patti Thorson of Illinois Lawn and Old Glory.



Ed Fischer, Dave Kohley, Dave Blomquist and Chuck Anfield comprised the "woulda shoulda coulda" foursome.



Randy Wahler, Tim Scott, Bob Kronn and Al Pondel comprised a tough foursome.



Wally Fuchs shows off his Tiger Woods form and his Stevie Wonder eyesight—no, this was NOT a practice swing . . .

September's MAGCS monthly meeting and annual championship was held on the 17th at Barrington Hills Country Club with **Mark Bobb** acting as our gracious host. The golf course, service and amenities were wonderful, thanks to Mark and the folks at BHCC, and the tournament brought out the best in everyone who competed. Results of this year's tournament are as follows: Championship Flight—**Tim Scott**, CGCS (Stony Creek G.C.) and **Al Pondel**, CGCS (Rockford C.C.) with 74. First Flight—**Ted Fist** (Wynstone G.C.) gross with 75 and Mark Bobb net with 68. Second Flight—**Steve Van Acker**, CGCS (Crystal Lake C.C.) gross with 85 and **Brad Johnsen** (Klein Creek G.C.) net with 66. Third Flight—**Don Cross**, CGCS (Skokie C.C.) gross with 100 (yeesh!) and **Hans Hoppman** net with 69. Commercial A Flight—**Dave Mayzel** (Eagle One) gross with 84 and **Dave Nadler** (Nadler Golf Car Sales) net with 77. Commercial B Flight—**Dave Louttit** (The Andersons) gross with 84 and **Jim Trzinski** (Waupaca Sand and Solutions) net with 70. Individual hole prizes were awarded to Dave Nadler for his longest putt of 65 feet, **Eric Foerster** (Simplot Partners) for closest to the pin and Ted Fist for longest drive. Congratulations to all competitors, and many thanks to Mark Bobb and the staff at Barrington Hills for a great day.





is on those involved. More done and done more easily: win-win! Just think what you could accomplish with just two or three more crew members? Or with just one more salesperson or customer service rep? And wouldn't it make life easier for the whole staff? Make this year the year you sign up for a committee assignment.

On our end, committee chairs need to hold a few more meetings and divide up the workload. I know Fred Behnke is making strides with a new long-range plan and that document is very necessary so that we can have a more prioritized approach to our efforts. Trying to put your arms around too many items will lead to being disorganized and falling short of our goals.

I do need to thank a few folks before I step aside. In my first message a year ago, I

expressed gratitude to a number of individuals, but I need to mention my assistant superintendents at Bryn Mawr again. Bryan Widmer and Damon Soderberg did a great job filling my shoes when I was away from the course and/or holed up in my office returning calls and such. I was going by the seat of my pants at times and didn't always handle my additional responsibilities with a big smile. Well done, fellows!

Thanks to outgoing past president Don Ferreri. Don was a true leader on the Board; the type of guy that people listened to when he was talking and still a go-to guy when we had difficult decisions to make. He is a very committed steward to the industry and carries a good attitude along the way. Thanks as well to outgoing Board member John Gurke. John's real passion is for our magazine and he will continue

assisting Cathy and handling "the Bull Sheet" section of *On Course*. John, you did a great job coordinating those decade articles and the authors did a good job following through with the vision you created. I guess this means we won't be e-mailing each other all the time. You can probably live with that.

Last, I'll just thank the members of this Association. It was a privilege to serve during our anniversary year; I do appreciate the opportunity. I received so many positive calls and comments throughout the year. Complaints were few and most of the aggravation was self-imposed. As a past president, I look forward to **not** sitting in the back row with my arms folded and shaking my head at the future hierarchy. Good luck to Luke and our next Board, and to all—a blessed holiday season!



  
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