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APRIL 2002

Volume 55 No.11

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Lovely Tamarack Golf Club. (Photo by D2 Productions, Inc. Murphy/Scully)

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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.

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ON COURSE WITH THE PRESIDENT

Luke Strojny, CGCS Poplar Creek G.C.

An Orlando Recap

Another GCSAA annual meeting has come and gone. As promised, here are some thoughts about the 2002 Orlando conference.

This year's show was noticeably smaller than in years past. I do not know if that is necessarily a bad thing. It **was** a little easier on the feet. Given the recent mergers of companies and the economic downturn, there just weren't as many companies looking for booth space. Fewer gimmick gifts were in the offing as handouts, as well. Even show pros like Ed Braunsky, who can fill up four to five bags with pens, foam balls and hats, came home with less. The show, however, is still the best place to see some of the new and old products we use. It is also the ideal place to exchange information with your peers while walking the show floor.

For the last 16 years, I have been taking GCSAA seminars. I have attended some really bad ones in my time; this year, though, I was lucky enough to attend two of the best. For those of you who have never taken "The Magic of Greenkeeping," presented by our own Mike Bavier and Gordon Witteveen, you are missing out on an entertaining and educational day. The collective that is Mike and Gordon has probably witnessed all there is to see about greenkeeping, and their insight into the little details is outstanding. The textbook is an excellent reference with many great ideas. (Mike, you can pay me later for the plug.)

The other seminar I took was "Salt-Affected Turfgrass Sites." Well . . . it was not the most stimulating experience, but extremely educational in my eyes. I, along with many others in the area, am faced with using poor-quality irrigation water. After two days of the seminar, I realized that my water wasn't all that bad compared to that of others around the country. I took home ample information to deal more effectively with my problem of poor irrigation-water quality. My hat goes off to the GCSAA for continually offering the best educational opportunities for superintendents. I really don't think that anyone missed the soft drinks at the afternoon break.

Congratulations go out to our own Chuck Anfield for meriting the Environmental Leader in Golf Award and to past president Bruce Williams for receiving the GCSAA's Distinguished Service Award. More congrats to Bob Lively for his first-place finish in the 4th Flight in the golf tournament, and to Don Cross and Bob Maibusch for first place in the four-ball Net IV division. Even Steve Van Acker, who has grown tired of cleaning up at our MAGCS golf events, came in second in the 5th Flight. Good job to all who represented the MAGCS.

While I am on the subject of the conference, I would be remiss if I did not extend a big thank you and congratulations to Paul Yerkes, Kevin DeRoo, Fred Behnke, Gary Hearn and all the sponsors for making the hospitality room another tremendous success. This year's room was very well-attended and

(continued on page 35)

*My hat goes off
to the GCSAA
for continually
offering the
best educational
opportunities for
superintendents.*



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Of Shrimp and Cocktails

It's that time of year again when I have to write a director's column, thereby fulfilling one of my responsibilities as the commercial representative on the MAGCS Board of Directors. Since I was in charge of organizing the Midwest's hospitality suite in Orlando, it's not so very difficult to find a subject to write about. And since I have a subject, my big stumbling block is finding the words to elaborate on the subject. What's really going to stretch my journalistic creativity is doing justice to an event at which I wasn't in attendance. Sitting here on a snowy Saturday morning with my girls wanting to go sledding, my wife waiting for the chores to get done and a Super-N-Site on Luke Cella to write as well, the pressure is on!

Simply put, without the financial commitment our vendors make to the hospitality room, the MAGCS wouldn't be able to afford this type of two-day party at the GCSAA national convention.

First of all, I heard the hospitality room was a great success and I appreciate all the warm comments I've received as I travel the area. But the biggest thank-yous should go to all the vendors that participated in the Golden Tee Club. Simply put, without the financial commitment our vendors make to the event, the MAGCS wouldn't be able to afford this type of two-day party at the GCSAA national convention. To express our thanks, we developed a full-page color ad listing all the members of the Golden Tee Club. The ad will run in several issues of *On Course* this year and indeed, it already graced the back cover of the March issue. This year's Golden Tee Club contributions totaled \$26,500, which was incredible considering all the economic indicators that went south during the year 2001. I would like to personally thank all the companies that made my job easier.

Another success story behind this year's hospitality suite was that we finally stayed within the budget. The total cost for the two-day party at the Rosen Centre was \$33,195.17. With the MAGCS budgeting \$7,000 from its own coffers and the Golden Tee Club's contributions, we had \$33,500 with which to work. Jason Parsons, the banquet manager at the Rosen Centre, also helped out by giving us the room for free and discounting the food and beverage prices. I guess that given the economic slide of the last year, the folks at the Rosen Centre were only more than happy to collect our money. Anyway—that's enough of the financial stuff.

Last but not least, I would like to thank a few Board members who helped out behind the scenes. Brian Bossert used his price-slashing skills to rework the contract with the Rosen Centre such that they agreed to waive the cost of the room. Also, Brian has made my task easier overall by virtue of the outline he created for organizing the hospitality room back when he was in charge. Fred Behnke did a great job of writing the checks. Gary Hearn was on hand to lend a hand on the set-up of the room. Kevin DeRoo took the bull by the horns and volunteered to make sure the room was up to speed and that all the food we ordered was served. Kevin also had the authority to shut the bar down in case we were heading way over budget. Good thing it didn't come to that, or we would have been looking for a new superintendent at Bartlett Hills! Another one of Kevin's responsibilities was providing the two Golden Tee Club banners that were on display. Thanks, Kevin. Oh, there's one more person I forgot to mention. Thanks to Ed (Braunsky) for letting everyone know that we ran out of shrimp! 

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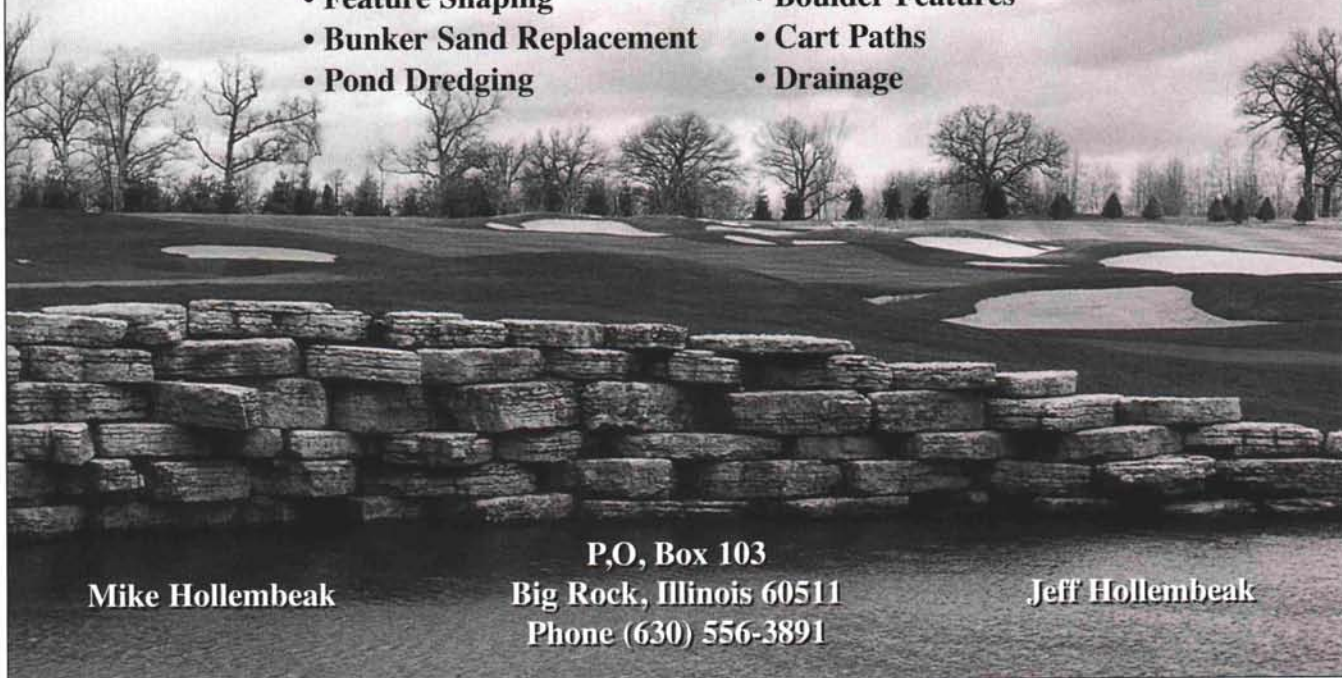
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Luke Cella -N-



The Cellas: Jennifer, Henry and Luke.



This month, the MAGCS will be kicking off the 2002 golf season at Tamarack Golf Club in the fine city of Naperville. Tamarack has 18 holes, and there's some water out there. It was built sometime last century and designed by some architect. The golf course even has a clubhouse and a pro shop. From what I hear, they even serve a fantastic brunch on Sundays. I could tell you a lot more about the golf course, but that is not our purpose here. What I'm talking about is the man—Luke Cella serving as our host.

*In November,
Luke was elected
to the MAGCS
Board of Directors.
The future of the
Midwest only looks
brighter with Luke's
hard work and
dedication to the
industry coming
into play in
a leadership role.*

I believe Luke's first step into the business was taking a job at a putt-putt golf course. He fell in love with the work while syringing the Astroturf in an effort to keep his customers' feet cool. From there, he started working on the maintenance staff at Pottawatomie Golf Course during his high-school years. In 1992, Luke graduated from the prestigious University of Illinois in Chicago, having earned himself a bachelor of arts in English. As a graduate of UIC myself and the only other Midwest "Flame," I know that's an accomplishment.

Luke continued his education at Kishwaukee College, completing a degree in golf course management while serving as an assistant at Pottawatomie. Luke was promoted to the superintendent's position there and remained until 1999. While at Pottawatomie, Luke's accomplishments were many. In 1997, the golf course became the first nine-hole course to achieve certification in the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program. An Environmental Steward Award merit winner in 1998, Luke also found the time to attain his CGCS status that same year.

Looking for new challenges, Luke married Jennifer Joy in 1998 and decided to leave the St. Charles area for yet another diploma. This time, his travels would take him to the other University of Illinois campus. Not only did Luke return with an M.S. in natural resources/environmental science/turfgrass specialization, he also mastered the art of baby-making with the birth of his and Jennifer's son, Henry. This brings us back to the present.

In 2001, many of us were glad to hear that Luke would return to the area as the superintendent at Tamarack Golf Club. In November, Luke was elected

to the MAGCS Board of Directors. The future of the Midwest only looks brighter with Luke's hard work and dedication to the industry coming into play in a leadership role. I encourage you to play at the April meeting and while you're at Tamarack, pull Luke aside and ask him what he's up to now. I'm sure that if you do this, you'll make an instant friend.

A Conversation with Luke Cella

Here are a few further thoughts from Luke Cella, host of our April golf meeting.

On Course: Why did you enter the greenkeeping/golf course management profession?

Luke: *I was attracted to working outdoors but didn't want to be a park ranger.*

OC: What do you consider to be the most challenging aspect of your job?

Luke: *The largest challenge I face everyday is also one of the chief reasons I enjoy what I do. The challenge is staying organized to face adversity everyday, but I also welcome the adversity.*

OC: Do you consider yourself an environmental steward? Why or why not?

Luke: *I'm not sure "steward" is a good word to describe what we do as golf course superintendents. I'm not sure the environment can be managed in the true sense of the word. I would argue that we are more of environmentalists. After all, they are described as advocates of the environment.*

OC: What do you consider to be the most rewarding part of your job?

Luke: *I've always looked at golf as recreation for the mind and body. I like to see people happy and enjoying themselves. I am rewarded when I can offer people a pleasant place to come and play and escape.*

OC: What is your opinion of GMOs (genetically modified organisms) such as resistant bentgrass?

Luke: *I think that we are all GMOs, that is, if you believe in evolution. I think the real issue is who is doing the modification and for what purpose.*

OC: Do you aspire to become the general manager of a golf facility?

Luke: *I would rather become an owner of a facility than a GM. I like the business side of golf, but I love the science side of it much more.*

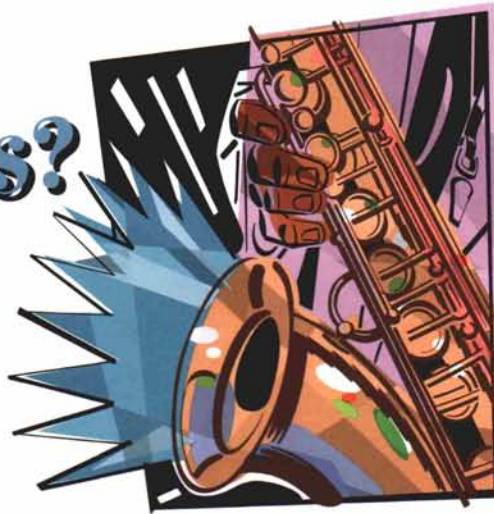
OC: What is your most humbling on-the-job experience?

Luke: *1995, my first year as a superintendent.*



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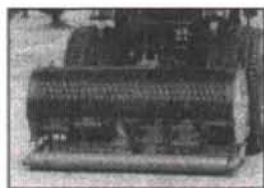
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