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JUNE 2002

Volume 56 No.1

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Hole #16 at Phillips Park Golf Course is a 448-yard par 4.
(Photo by Jim Trzinski)

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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.

The MAGCS member is also an environmental steward. We strive to uphold and enhance our surroundings by promoting flora and fauna in every facet in a manner that is beneficial to the general public now and in the future.



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Past Presidents Offer Counsel

Another season is upon us. We had better weather in January and February than in March, April and May. We did, however, enjoy a week of "summer" back in April. It was a volatile combination of 80 degrees and the Masters that brought out the flood of "Why don't we look like Augusta?" queries. I really hate Masters week. In any event, cold and rainy have been the buzzwords for the beginning of this year. I hope the latter part of the spring gets better or it will be another very long season.

In early April I was fortune enough to sit down with 15 past presidents at a meeting of the Past Presidents Council. I don't know if it was the lousy weather, the free lunch or my presence, but I was told that this was one of the best-attended meetings in recent years.

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Here are some of the comments and suggestions generated at the meeting.

- Secure future meeting sites earlier. Use the entire Arrangements Committee.
- Improve publicity for the annual dinner dance, a fine event only a small number of members enjoy.
- Develop Midwest Turf Clinic agenda earlier in the year.
- Pleased with the employment referrals and the turnaround time with job postings.
- Very pleased with *On Course*. Are not concerned about lack of recognition from the GCSAA. Like seeing Board meeting highlights in *On Course*.
- Encourage membership to apply for the MAGCS Scholarship. Raise the amount of the scholarships in the future.
- Regarding dues, smaller increases more frequently is most palatable.
- Encourage more assistant superintendents to serve on committees.
- Provide annual financial statements to the past presidents.
- Post Board meeting minutes on Web site to keep membership informed.
- Develop a strategic plan.

As you can see, a wide variety of topics came under discussion. The current Board is very dedicated to improving the Association and we have already begun to implement some of the ideas that came from the meeting. I would like to thank Joel Purpur and the entire Past Presidents Council for inviting me to attend this meeting. It was an extremely educational experience . . . and I can't wait to be on the other side of the table.

Other News

Not to steal anyone's thunder, but our own past president Bob Maibusch will be running for secretary/treasurer of the GCSAA. A letter from the MAGCS nominating Bob was sent in late April (thanks to Al Fierst's noodling). Having MAGCS representation on a national level is important. Please remember to lend Bob your support in the upcoming 2003 election.

(continued on page 32)

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The Dom Grotti Award: A Tribute to Mentoring

One of the highlights of this June's MAGCS meeting at Phillips Park Golf Course will be the presentation of the seventeenth annual Dom Grotti Award. Two-person teams, each consisting of a superintendent and assistant superintendent, vie for the award. The team with the combined lowest gross score wins the award. Last year, Ron Dohman and Mike Alsford took the prize with a score of 159.

The inaugural Dom Grotti Award event took place during the Illinois Turfgrass Foundation's annual golf day at host Evanston Golf Club in September of 1986. Below is a September 1986 letter from Peter Leuzinger to Dennis Wilson that provides some insight as to the history and origin of this award.

*Mr. Dennis Wilson, CGCS
Sunset Ridge Country Club
2100 Sunset Ridge Road
Northbrook, IL 60062*

Dear Dennis:

Thank you so much for sparking the imagination of the Illinois Turfgrass Foundation by introducing the Dom Grotti Award. Our annual ITF golf day is the perfect format to support turf research and enjoy something in common with Dom Grotti: the love for the game of golf and care for our golf courses.

Your club's gracious trophy presentation at this year's site, Evanston Golf Club, was the highlight of the day for me and my friends. The traveling trophy is a splendid treasure for anyone to win. Carl Hoppman and Terry Dillner, from Evanston Golf Club, are this year's lucky winners. I'm sure they share my thank you to Sunset Ridge Country Club and congratulations to you for following through on this year's inaugural presentation of the Dom Grotti Trophy.

*Sincerely,
Peter V. Leuzinger, CGCS
ITF Golf Day Chairman*

The Dom Grotti Award is named after Domenic Grotti. Domenic started his career at Sunset Ridge Country Club in 1933 as the assistant superintendent, earning 45 cents per hour. He became superintendent in 1940 and retired in 1978. He consulted for Dennis Wilson from 1978 to the fall of 1981. Domenic passed away in 1985.

Dennis Wilson, assistant under Domenic, was one of the first assistants to attend MAGCS meetings. Some of the superintendents would give Domenic a hard time over letting an assistant attend meetings. Dennis remembers Domenic's words, "If Dennis comes back from a meeting with one good idea THAT WORKS, then it was worth it."

(continued on page 37)

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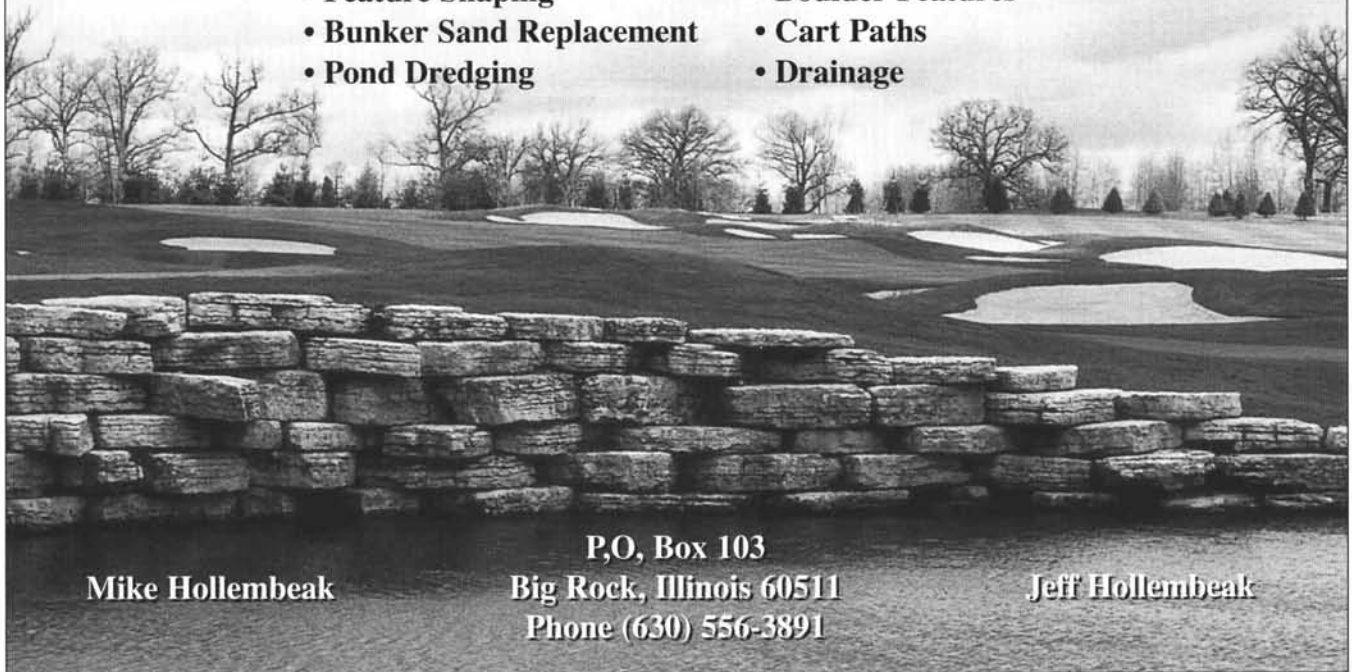
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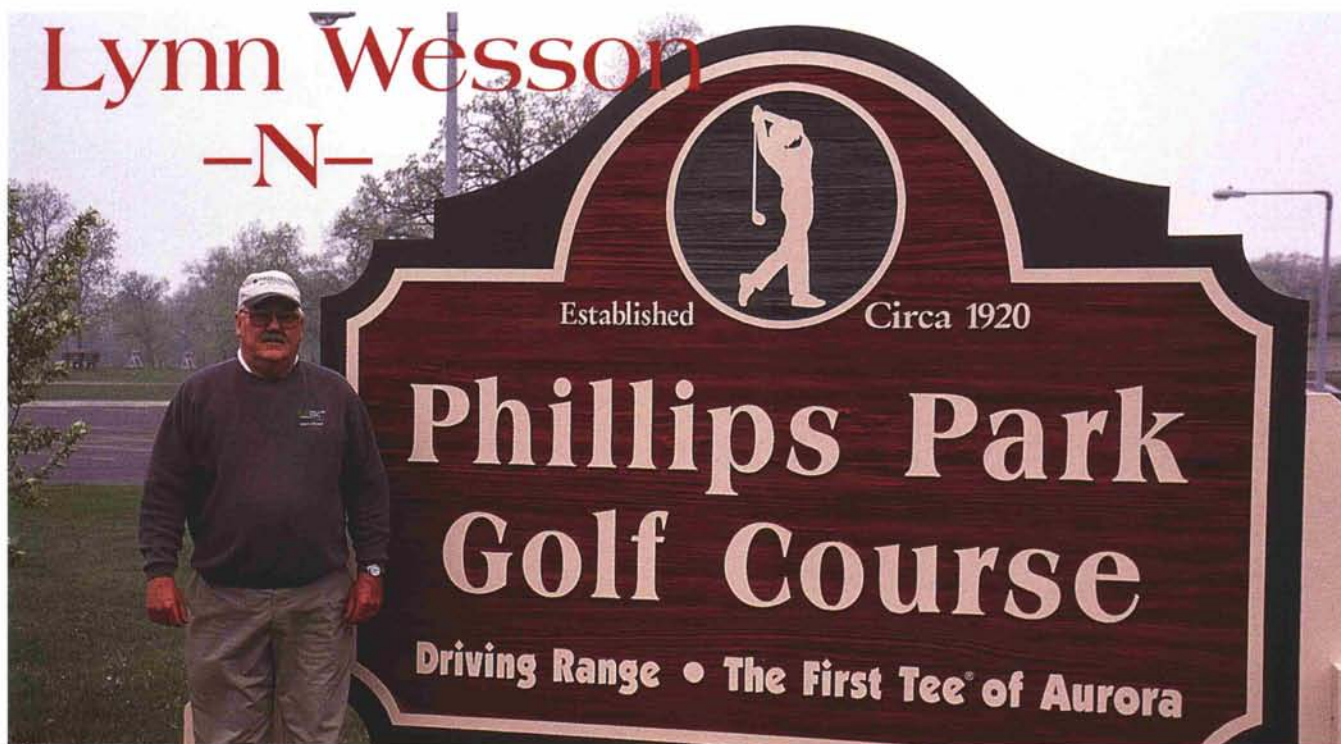
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MAGCS members are in for a real treat this month when we visit the venerable Lynn Wesson and Phillips Park Golf Course in Aurora. The 70-year-old course has undergone a complete renovation by architect Greg Martin and Wadsworth Golf Course Construction. The 64-year-old superintendent claims to have undergone a rebirth of sorts, himself, during the reconstruction.

LYNN'S LINER NOTES

HIS BIGGEST CHALLENGE:

*The rebuilding of
Phillips Park*

HIS BIGGEST LESSON LEARNED:

*Once is enough
(referring to the above)*

HIS BIGGEST TRIUMPH:

*Getting it up
(on the tee . . .)*

IF HE COULD DO IT OVER:

*"I'd be born to a rich
family."*

SUGGESTION FOR PLAYING THE COURSE:

"Come and have fun!"

Lynn Wesson, our host, actually started out culturing organisms (fungi) that most of us try to eradicate. The former mushroom farmer started in the golf business two decades ago under the tutelage of Jerry Breunig at Edgebrook C.C. in Sandwich, IL. In 1990, Lynn accepted the superintendent job at Phillips Park. A lifelong resident of Sandwich, Lynn spent two years at the University of Illinois before leaving to help with the 700-acre family farm.

In their spare time, Lynn and wife Jane enjoy driving along Interstate 70 to visit daughters Margaret, Debora and Katherine and six grandchildren who reside in Pennsylvania, Ohio and Missouri. Lynn also enjoys golf and collecting 1:64-scale toy farm equipment.

The 130-acre golf course is part of a 102-year-old, 300-acre park on Aurora's southeast side. The "hilly" nine opened in 1925, while 12 years later, the course expanded to 18 holes. The new Phillips Park course is a vast change from the old. Where the old course featured small push-up greens of common bent varieties, the new L 93/Providence hybrids grace the new USGA complexes, which are nearly double the size of the old surfaces. Fairways are of the new "low mow blue" varieties (Nuglade, Liberator, Rugby and Absolute). Where the old course had pop-up sprinklers only at the greens and tees, and a lot of rollerbases, the new course is irrigated with a double-row Rain Bird Maxi system. The new course is more than 500 yards longer than the old 5,600-yard layout. The renovations included the addition of a driving range with grass tees and mats and a three-hole mini-course for juniors that is the centerpiece of the First Tee program. It is thoroughly enjoyable to play and has received rave reviews from all who enjoyed its premiere season last year. So come out to Aurora on June 24 to enjoy a masterful renovation and a lot of fun.



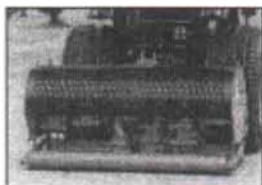
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