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JANUARY 2003

Volume 56 No.8

FRONT COVER

The MAGCS 2003 Board of Directors and staff.

Front row (L to R): president emeritus Luke Strojny, Poplar Creek C.C.; vice president Fred Behnke, Mount Prospect G.C.; president Kevin DeRoo, Bartlett Hills G.C.; secretary/treasurer Phil Zeinert, Elgin C.C.

Back row (L to R): Cathy Miles Ralston, editor, *On Course*; George Minnis, executive secretary; director Tim Anderson, Prestwick C.C.; director Luke Cella, Tamarack G.C.; director Dave Braasch, Glen Erin G.C.; director Scott Speiden, Itasca C.C.; director Tony Kalina, Prairie Landing G.C.; and John Gurke, Aurora C.C., contributing editor, *On Course*.
Not pictured: director Gary Hearn, Salt Creek G.C., and commercial representative Dave Armentrout, Turf Professionals Equipment Co.

(Photo by Bill Ficht)

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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

Kevin DeRoo *Bartlett Hills Golf Club*

The Time Is Now

The end of another golfing season is upon us. To that, my only reaction is . . . whew!!!

. . . as golf course superintendents in a geography that has changing seasons, we have this time during our "off-season" to evaluate every aspect of our operations . . . While all of us apply these thought processes at our individual facilities, the same tasks and concerns are being addressed by the MAGCS Board of Directors concurrent with the changing of the guard.

Sometimes the seasons change faster than we might hope. Having done this for many years, I am here to tell you all that nothing spells relief to a superintendent like having the irrigation system blown out before the snow falls. I can still remember the last time my staff and I froze our tails off while bowing out the system in the middle of an early-season snowstorm. I told myself that would never happen again. I should know by now that in this business, never saying "never" is a conceptual approach closer to reality. I need to remind myself of that every now and then, especially after once again, blowing out in a blizzard. "Not until the next time" shall be my new credo. Equally reassuring to the superintendent is, of course, the completion of all snow-mold applications before the real winter sets in. Unfortunately, in the Midwest, we never really know when winter will arrive, and when it arrives, is it going to stay? In any event, until these tasks are completed, our season is not quite over at all. Lucky for me, I can sit back and relax now, at least for a bit. Time to start work on next year's budget! I believe it to be Homer Simpson who said it best (on behalf of superintendents everywhere) and I quote: "DOH!!!"

From a management perspective, now is also the time for superintendents to look back and study the season just past. By identifying our organizational strengths and weaknesses, we can determine the areas in which we need to improve. Fortunately, as golf course superintendents in a geography that has changing seasons, we have this time during our "off-season" to evaluate every aspect of our operations. We can analyze our list of last year's accomplishments and set new, attainable goals for the upcoming year. Working within our budgetary constraints is always one of the utmost concerns. Especially during these slow economic times, the decisions on how we spend our dollars are more crucial than ever. While all of us apply these thought processes at our individual facilities, the same tasks and concerns are also being addressed by the MAGCS Board of Directors concurrent with the changing of the guard. As the newly elected president of this Association, it will be my formidable task to help set new goals for the Board and for the membership, and assist in guiding our future as a professional organization.

The new Board of Directors met for the first time on November 19. After introductions for the two new kids on the block (Tony Kalina and Scott Speiden), we dove right into issuing committee chairperson assignments, co-chair assignments and director's column due dates. Each committee chair will be responsible for the organization of his committee and performing the duties thereof. Completing the updating of every committee's SOP (standard operating procedures) will be the first and foremost priority for each chairperson individually. Collectively, the Board must move swiftly towards filling

(continued on page 27)



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With All Due Respect

If you attended the MAGCS Annual Meeting during the Medinah clinic, you heard that I am stepping down as chairman of the Past Presidents Council. Ed Braunsky has agreed to take the reins, which should guarantee a smooth transition as well as a laugh or two. I was not able to attend many golf events last year, mainly due to two elbow surgeries followed by a torn rotator cuff. On the bright side, my surgery punch card is almost full. One more operation and I get a free knee! Eddie Braunsky has been able to be more involved recently and I am sure he will provide strong leadership.

On that note, what are the skills of good leaders? Remembering back to a January Arrowhead meeting, a speaker on the topic of leadership had us think of someone that we respected as a leader. We were instructed to reflect on the personal qualities of that individual. What sets leaders apart from others? The qualities these people possess as role models and mentors are what we should strive to attain ourselves.

We have all dealt with people whose minds are already made up, adamant about what they want and unwilling to hear others' opinions. This can be frustrating, especially when their ideas are seriously flawed. Good leaders have good listening skills. They will always listen to what you have to say. There is also much to emulate about how they react to the ideas of others. Good leaders react in a respectful manner, whether or not they agree with a particular comment. A big difference exists between reacting with "I disagree" and "That is a stupid idea." Talking down to others in a disrespectful fashion does not promote productive brainstorming, and destroys confidence and self-esteem. We should extend the same respect to coworkers and colleagues as well.

Really, respect should be the operating principle in all interactions. That said, remember that the MAGCS is a large association and is "big business" with the majority of work and planning performed on a volunteer basis. Even with committed individuals doing their best for the Association, there are bound to be instances where details fall between the cracks. How do we as members react? Please keep in mind, that when giving constructive criticism, it is best to be positive. It is not always what we say, but how we say it. Be respectful of others!

The Past Presidents Council is a forum for past leaders to help guide the Association. The Council gets together once a year and reviews the operations and activities of the Association in a positive atmosphere. Eddie Braunsky is organizing this year's meeting and will be looking for comments and suggestions from the membership as far as topics of discussion. If you have any ideas that you believe will help our Association or enhance our activity schedule, please forward Ed or myself the message. I look forward to enhancing my involvement next year, and hopefully you will take a more active role, too!



*Please keep in
mind, that when
giving constructive
criticism, it is
best to be positive.
It is not always
what we say,
but how we say it.
Be respectful
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The Original Bob Breen -N-



The "original" Bob Breen amidst the turf he tended. Son Bob Breen recalls, "This picture was taken on the ninth green at Arrowhead Golf Club during my father's 25th anniversary party."

In March of 1956, my father, Robert K. Breen, Sr., came to Arrowhead Golf Club as its superintendent. He replaced Dave Mastoleo, whom I believe is still active in the Los Angeles area. The Arrowhead opportunity saw my father leave his first superintendent job, at Fresh Meadows, where he worked for the Jemseks. Prior to that, he had been Amos Lapp's assistant at St. Andrews. Amos Lapp was my father's mentor and a lifetime good friend.

When my father came to Arrowhead, the club was owned by Bill Hoy, a well-to-do Wheaton attorney. At that time, my father was also responsible for the upkeep of Hoy's estate, High Knob, which was just down Orchard Road from the club. I can remember participating in Easter egg hunts at the estate as a child.

When my father first started, his budget allowed for the fertilization of three fairways a year, a six-year rotation for the 18 fairways. That changed quickly as my father and Bill Hoy established a very good working relationship. In 1964, at the age of 39, Bill Hoy passed away. Arrowhead was part of a trust for Mr. Hoy's two nieces and nephew. At first, the executor of the estate operated Arrowhead. They followed through on the Hoy plan of building a third nine, the West Course, bringing Arrowhead to the 27-hole course it is today. The greens were stolonized to Toronto C-15. As a 15-year-old, I worked for my dad on the grow-in.

During the late 1960s thru the '70s, my father was very involved with the MAGCS. He served on various committees. He was a Board member for eight years, and served as the president in 1979.

The Hoy estate operated Arrowhead in trust until May 1, 1982, when the Wheaton Park District purchased the course. In October of 1989, my father passed away at the age of 70. He was still superintendent at Arrowhead and had maintained the facility for 33 years. I succeeded my father and 46 years after his arrival, it still says Superintendent Robert K. Breen on the scorecard.



*The tradition
holds—Bob Breen
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will host the
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meeting on
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Unquestionably, trees constitute an extremely important design element on virtually every golf course in the Chicago area. Additionally, although exact figures are not available, the amount of money spent by golf courses on tree planting, transplanting, maintenance and removal is a truly staggering sum.

It follows, therefore, that the members of the Chicago-area golf community would benefit from a program designed to popularize the use of tree varieties selected especially for this area. The Chicagoland Grows Plant Introduction Program fits the bill.

Begun in 1986, Chicagoland Grows is a cooperative effort of the Chicago Botanic Garden, the Morton Arboretum and the Ornamental Growers Association (OGA) of Northern Illinois. The concept, initiated by the Chicago Botanic Garden, is to select, test and introduce plants that are well-suited to the growing conditions found in the upper Midwest. After selections are made and approved, large-scale production is undertaken by the OGA, which comprises 23 nurseries located in northeastern Illinois.

Thus far, 12 plant varieties have been approved for production and sale. Of these 12 varieties, four are deciduous shade trees and, for golf course usage, all four tree varieties hold great promise.

Marmo Freeman Maple (*Acer x freemanii* 'Marmo')

This red maple-silver maple hybrid comes from a tree located near Lake Marmo at the Morton Arboretum. The original tree, from an unknown nursery

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*Marmo Freeman Maple
(*Acer x freemanii* 'Marmo')*

Photos Credit, The Morton Arboretum

source, was brought to the Arboretum in the 1920s. When it was chosen for propagation and testing, it had achieved a height of 80 feet and a spread of 35 feet. Its leaves closely resemble the shape of the silver maple leaf, but this adaptable hybrid produces a very strong and regular branching structure (a definite plus when compared to the weak structure often characteristic of the silver maple). The fall color typically does not rival other Freeman maple selections currently in the trade, although some years it can be quite attractive, a blend of scarlet and maroon that outshines anything ever seen on a silver maple. As a final bonus, the tree is seedless.

State Street® Maple (*Acer miyabei* 'Morton')

The original tree is located in the collection of the Morton Arboretum. This species was brought to this country from Japan before 1900. This maple will achieve an ultimate height of about 50 feet, with a mature spread of 35 feet. It is a moderately fast-growing pest-free cultivar with excellent cold and

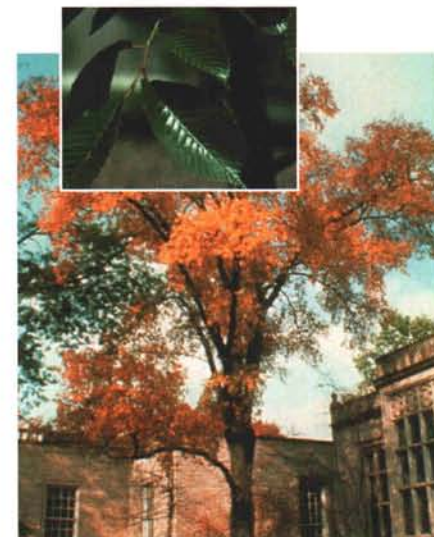


State Street® Maple
(*Acer miyabei* 'Morton')

drought hardiness. This tree is also tolerant of alkaline, high-pH soils typical of many sites in the Chicago area. The leaves resemble hedge maple (*Acer campestre*) in shape and color. A distinct advantage over the commonly planted Norway maple is the ease of growing grass beneath the

tree's canopy. That feature alone recommends State Street® maple for many situations. This selection promises to become a staple of the nursery industry in the years to come.

Accolade® Elm (*Ulmus japonica* x *Ulmus wilsoniana* 'Morton')



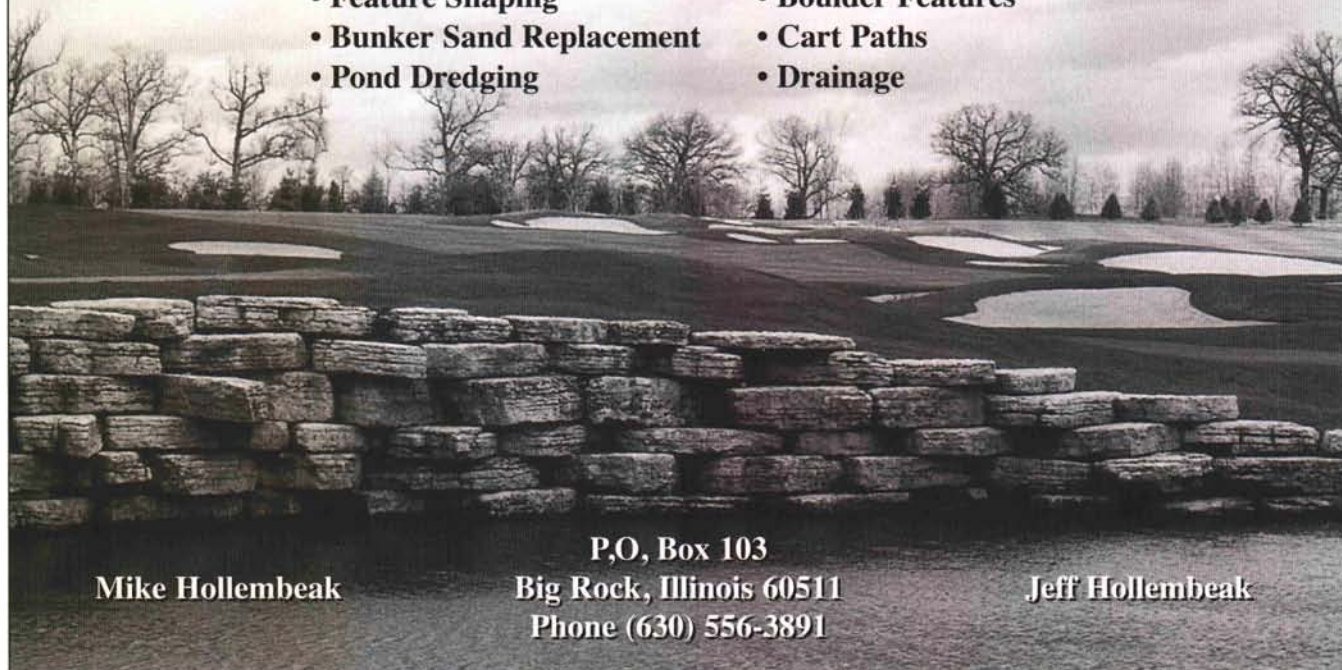
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