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FRONT COVER

Hole no. 16 on Olympia Fields' North Course is a stunning, 212-yard par 3. It will play as hole no. 7 during the 2003 U.S. Open. Photo by Glenn Dreesen, Dreesen Photography, Inc. Glenn is an Olympia Fields member who turns in 150+ rounds annually. Over the last 12 years, he has photographed all the holes at Olympia Fields and neighboring Flossmoor Country Club and Calumet Country Club. Reach Glenn at 708-799-9515.

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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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I believe that every now and then, it is good to get away for some much-needed rest and relaxation. I mean this not only from a physical standpoint, but from a mental one as well. We need to step outside of our daily routines and take a real good look at the direction in which we are heading. To escape from the forest, to view the trees. A much needed recharging of the batteries, so to speak.

Fortunately for those of us in this profession, there is a slow time during which we may take full advantage of any opportunity that may present itself. Such was the case for me in January when an invitation to go skiing for a week in Jackson Hole, Wyoming crossed my path. Needless to say, I did not have to be asked twice. There is nothing like standing atop a snow-covered mountain peak at 10,000 feet, gasping for air, with two boards strapped to your feet to clear your head, is what I always say. Focusing on the immediate task at hand—survival—is certainly one of the first and foremost concerns that quickly comes to mind.

Now, ordinarily I would not even make mention of this expedition, but considering the crew that accompanied me, I hope you will find my story most appropriate and possibly a bit entertaining. You have all heard of *The Magnificent Seven*, *The Dirty Dozen* and *Ocean's Eleven* . . . well, I am here to relate the epic of *The Terrific Ten* (movie rights pending). I wish I could tell you that the story is about ten people from different walks of life, backgrounds and culture coming together for the sole purpose of conquering the slopes of Jackson Hole, certainly the makings of another reality show. (But frankly, does the television audience need another reality program?) The truth of the matter is, we were ten guys with similar backgrounds and lifestyles, all friends and acquaintances. Brought together into one house, at the base of one very large and very steep mountain, all with some common goals. One of which was to successfully navigate these slopes without breaking anything and secondly, to find time to unwind from the rigors of our chosen professions and have some good ole-fashioned fun.

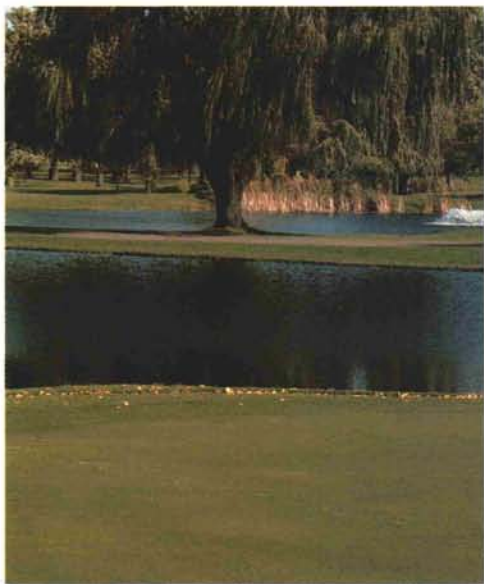
To tell of our week's adventures would only be redundant; once you know the cast of characters your mind will take you on your own journey. First (in no particular order) we have Don "I'll Ski Where I Want to Ski" Cross. Don has a very distinct way of skiing down a ski hill. He is very direct. He skis to his own "code." And if you accidentally cross Mr. Cross, plain and simple, he'll take you out. This was not known until the second day of skiing when an unsuspecting Jon Jennings innocently trespassed in Don's ski-line. Needless to say, he made that mistake once, only once. That brings me, of course, to Jon "Iron Man" Jennings. For most "humans," skiing/snowboarding all day, everyday for a week would push physical endurance levels to the max. Not Jon; no, Iron Man Jennings had to run a mini-marathon every morning before we took to the slopes. Stud that he is, it seemed like he even enjoyed making the rest of us look like spineless wimp-a-zoids. Next, there was Joel "The Bionic Man" Purpur. The fact that Joel was always the first one to the hill, and the last one to leave, was not what impressed me the most. The fact that Joel went a whole week without being surgically repaired in any way, now that was stupendous. Although, I have

(continued on page 33)

*... even if you
absolutely love
what you do
(and most of us do),
everyone should still
take some time,
get away and
recharge those
batteries.*



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Fortifying Our Resources, On and Off the Course

Thank you, MAGCS members, for electing me to the secretary-treasurer office. Fred Behnke handed over the books with great attention to detail and accuracy, and I can assure you all that my efforts will be to do the same. Early this past winter, the MAGCS officers met with representatives of Arnold N. Schorn & Co., which performs our annual audit. The accountants requested the meeting to relay the importance of having 20-25% of our annual budget held in reserve as readily available monies. This means we need to nearly double our current reserves. As explained by the accountants, money is hardest to get when you need it most. We will not try to obtain monies of this magnitude in the short term, but will capture the funds needed to achieve this goal over several years.

By increasing the amount of the reserve fund to reflect 20-25% of our budget, the Association will be fully prepared financially during times of opportunity and growth and able to avert possible financial hardships during the worst of economic times.

It has been a very busy winter for us at Elgin Country Club as we look towards the arrival of spring. We have several projects in the works, all with the hopes of being completed by Memorial Day. A new high-capacity well has been drilled into the St. Petersburg sandstone formation nearly 900 feet below the surface. This well tested a sustainable delivery of 550 gallons per minute. Two ponds on the property have been dredged to clean out leaves and silt. A new pump house, along with wet well and flume, has been installed at pond's edge on no. 16. New mainline piping has been installed with lateral piping scheduled for spring installation. Five new tees will be finished this spring. All the fairways will be rebordered with new bluegrass to redefine the fairway edges. In addition, we are nearly finished with the removal of 200 trees that inhibit the ability to grow turfgrass due to shading and root competition. These improvements to the infrastructure of the golf course and our improved access to the basic needs of sunlight and water will provide the tools necessary to provide excellent turf conditions.

Just as we make improvements to the infrastructures of the golf courses we manage, we as an Association and particularly as a Board of Directors also must continue to explore ways in which we can improve our Association's ability to serve its members. By increasing the amount of the reserve fund to reflect 20-25% of our budget, the Association will be fully prepared financially during times of opportunity and growth and able to avert possible financial hardships during the worst of economic times. As is often the case, opportunities and hardships occur without enough prior notice. Having this reserve fund will position us to take advantage of opportunities and lessen the hardships during rough economic times.

Once again, thank you for your confidence in allowing me to serve our great Association.



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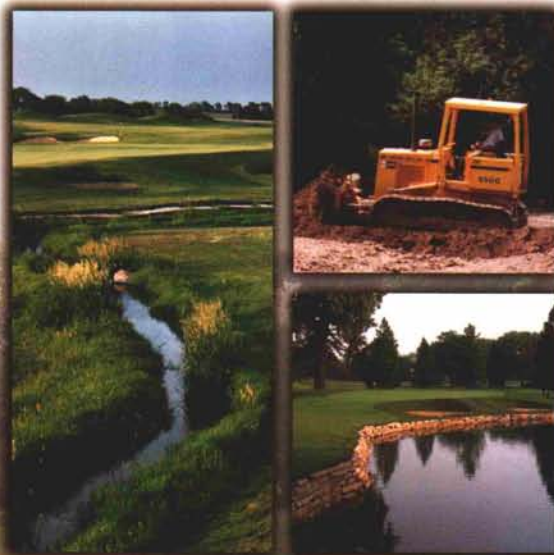


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Carl Hoppahan -N- Midwest Golf House

Photo by Peter Wagner/courtesy CDGA



Photo by Dr. Randy Kane



Carl Hoppahan is overseeing development of the Short Course at Midwest Golf House as well as the realization of an arboretum on the grounds there.

Almost 2,500 years ago, Aeschylus wrote, "Time as he grows old teaches many lessons." There are many lessons to be gleaned from this month's profile of Carl Hoppahan.

"Golf is a service industry, and our primary function as superintendents is to communicate with and service the needs of our customers, employers and members. How we portray ourselves through our words and actions widely impacts our credibility and success more so than the turf itself."

—Carl Hoppahan

It is a cool, crisp, sunny morning in early January as I write. Worsening weather conditions were imminent. I had the high honor and profound privilege to visit with Carl as we reflected back on his career, the substructure that shaped it, and the advice and experience he could share with us.

Carl's career as a superintendent began at Aurora Country Club in 1956. He worked there for 28 years. In 1983, Carl moved to Evanston Country Club. Fifteen years later, Carl became the director of development for the Illinois Turfgrass Foundation (ITF). I saw his passion for our profession in his heart through his eyes. His hands displayed his craftsmanship and success, and as he spoke of the fun he has had these past 50 years, I listened.

Carl has big, muscular hands; undoubtedly, so did his father. Carl was the son of German immigrants. A first-generation American, he grew up in the blue-collar neighborhoods of rugged East Aurora. Carl's father was a craftsman. He used his hands to fabricate precision machine parts as a tool-and-die maker. He worked hard to support his family. His wife, Carl's mother, raised and nurtured their children. That was the tradition. They were proud. He learned to work hard, very hard. Carl is proud.

Carl had an early interest in being an architect. Thankfully, he admits, it did not pan out. As fortune would have it, after serving in the Marine Corps during the Korean conflict, he would soon succumb to the passion inherent in our profession after working on a golf course. That was in 1953, many lessons ago.

I asked Carl, what advice would you give to one aspiring to become a superintendent? "First, there are significant advantages to developing a core
(continued on page 9)



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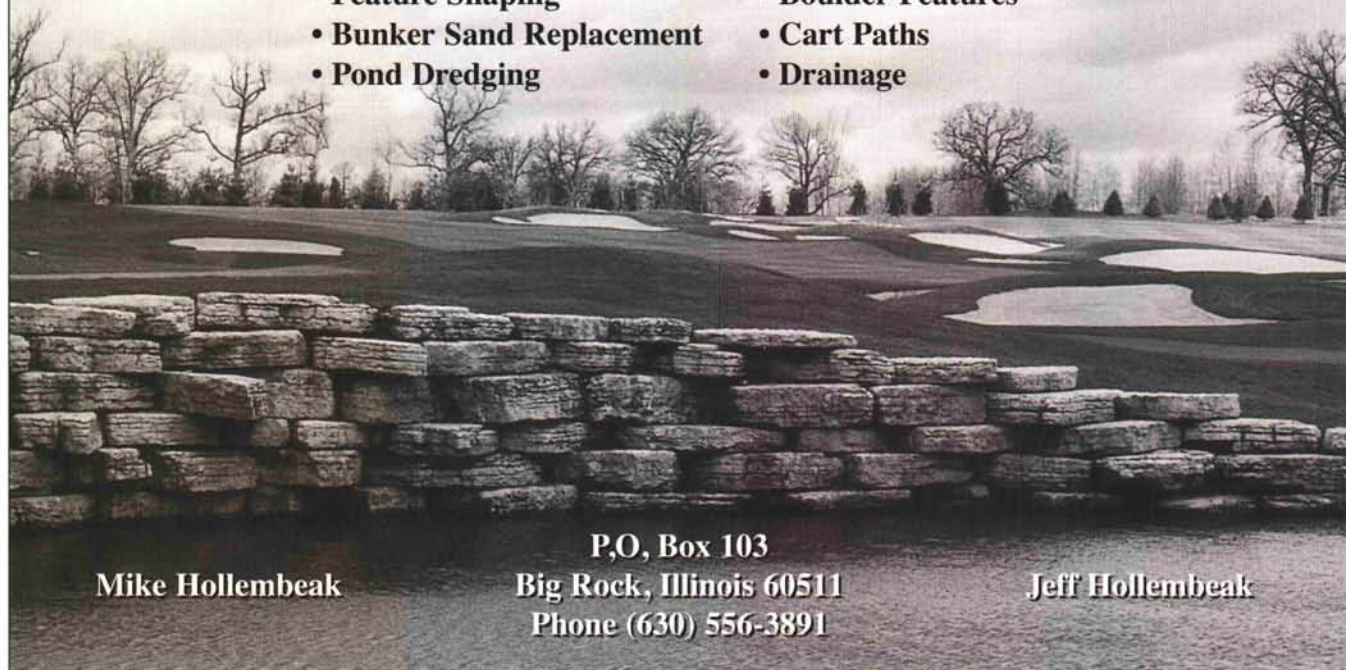
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Jeff Hollembeak

group of close peers (other superintendents). The success you achieve in part will be dependent on fostering these relationships. I attribute much of my success to the guys I hung around," Carl says. "They lean on me and I on them. We shared ideas and discussed everything pertaining to turf care. We often played golf together, and I have enjoyed that camaraderie ever since. Facing situations and finding solutions through the critical review and consultation of my peers enabled me to enjoy the successes I gained," he adds.

Second, Carl offers additional advice, believing superintendents today need to develop excellent public relations and speaking skills along with a positive attitude. "Golf is a service industry, and our primary function as superintendents is to communicate with and service the needs of our customers, employers and members. How we portray ourselves through our words and actions widely impacts our credibility and success more so than the turf itself," Carl notes.

The third and final piece of advice Carl has to offer is "be humble." To paraphrase Carl, everyone will face challenging situations during their careers. Adversity is going to happen. Be prepared to handle it and learn from it. That core group of peers pays off here. Chances are one of them has had similar situations. Ask for their advice and assistance. There is a tremendous advantage to being open and out-front with regard to club communication. You are often looked upon as the leader, the guy with mean-

ings and skills. Never let an opportunity to impact an audience of members slip past. There are going to be times when playing conditions are not up to standards. Learn to bite your lip, choose your words carefully, be considerate and use tact in addressing these types of concerns proactively.

I asked Carl, what one thing would you change about our profession and Association if you could? Carl points to "those with their hands out" regarding the Association and reminds us that "you have to do it yourself." While the Association provides some tools and networking, you have to get involved and participate. "Our strength as an Association is your participation."

When I asked of his mentoring influences, Carl offered some familiar and not-so-familiar names. John MacGregor, Joe Chapman and Wally Fuchs stood out as men to whom Carl attributes much of his success. "These men had great skills, attitudes and ways of communicating clearly and concisely. Each had special skills and knowledge that I respected, admired and emulated," Carl says.

John MacGregor was the "greenkeeper" at Chicago Golf Club, and was reverently known as the dean of Chicago greenkeepers for those 25 years. John was an original charter member and past president of GCSAA, and Distinguished Service Award recipient in 1935. A Scottish immigrant, John would often visit and console Carl in his early days at Aurora. "John had the uncanny and beautiful ability to get his point across

with so few words. He was a quiet man with a deep Scottish brogue. He encouraged me to learn and excel," Carl recalls.

Like John MacGregor, Joe Chapman's words spoke volumes. Joe was the elder statesman at Aurora Country Club. As Carl's greens chairman, Joe instilled in Carl the necessity to be tactful, honest and respectful of others.

Lastly, "Wally Fuchs supplied me with an immense wealth of technical knowledge, practical expertise and friendly advice. Wally has been my closest friend for 40 years. He entered the Chicagoland market in 1964, and I have been the benefactor of our relationship ever since," Carl says.

According to Carl, the largest challenge facing the golf course industry during the next 20 years is excessively high expectations. "We are expecting too much regarding course conditioning, especially green speeds. Grass plants have three basic parts: roots, blades and crowns. Mowing at 1/8th of an inch or less eliminates one of the three parts. When are we going to learn that ever-increasing high expectations are detrimental to turf health in the end!" Carl exclaims.



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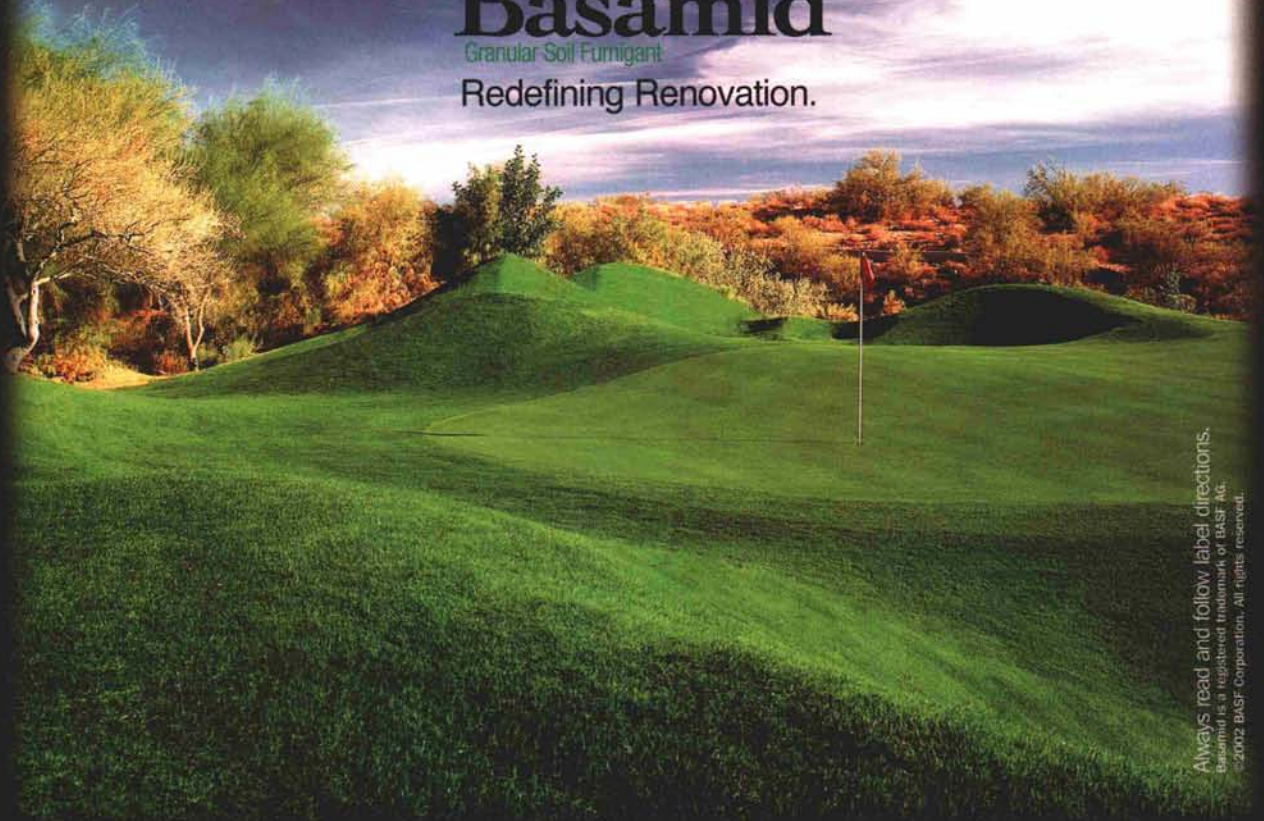
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