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FRONT COVER

The CDGA's Three-Hole Sunshine Course supports the CDGA Foundation's mission to extend the game of golf to the disadvantaged and disabled, particularly youngsters. The course is also a living laboratory for turfgrass research. (Photo by Peter Wagner)

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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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Making Green

I was raised by educators so I know, firsthand, the effort it takes to teach. Late nights grading papers, preparing lesson plans and patiently nurturing a pupil until the light goes on are just part of the job. I have a tremendous amount of respect for teachers because I find teaching hard to do. (I agreed to spend some time with my daughter's class last year at one of those "parents come to school to talk about their job" days, and in front of 30 seventh-graders I spoke for five minutes that seemed like five hours. I really don't like kids, especially teenagers, in large groups like that. They give me the willies.)

The ability to create is an unmatched power that no one can take away from us. From growing a garden to knitting a sweater to building a birdhouse, we have the power to make something from nothing.

I asked my mom, one day, how she found a sense of accomplishment in her work because a teacher can't stand back at the end of the day and see what he/she "built." She told me about a time in her kindergarten class when she had the kids painting with watercolors. One of the little boys stopped painting, and his head shot up, a look of pure wonder on his face.

"I made green!" he exclaimed. "It's my favorite color and I made it!" He was enchanted as only a six-year-old could be. He had experienced the magic of being able to create. His delight was contagious and so the other children became busy with mixing paint to see what new colors they could create.

Mom told me that it was those times, when the classroom was buzzing with creativity, that got her through when she found herself at loose ends.

Like many of her stories, this story has another meaning (she's a past master at multitasking). What she left for me to figure out for myself was that her little six-year-old artist was experiencing the joy of creation. The ability to create is an unmatched power that no one can take away from us. From growing a garden to knitting a sweater to building a birdhouse, we have the power to make something from nothing. Now, to be the catalyst that precipitates the joy of creation in someone else, like my mom did with her little green-lover, that is a special gift.

That's the case for mentoring.

Those of us who work on a golf course don't have to go far to enjoy the thrill of creation. Whether it is the act of creating a new tee or setting up the course for the day, we can see the fruits of our labor unfold before our eyes, but we can't do it alone. If we want to truly succeed in presenting an outstanding golf experience to our customers, we need to foster an environment that allows our staff to see that they can share in the joy of its creation.

The best boss I ever had once told me that it was his job to help me to do my job. He encouraged questions and made the time to listen attentively to my sometimes outrageous ideas, even letting me try a few out. There were mistakes, to be sure, but I loved working for the guy because he allowed me to share in the joy of his creation. He taught me that mentoring wasn't so much showing someone how to do something; that's only part of it. It's also allowing someone to learn the best way, by personal experience. Remember the last time you made a suggestion and were told to go for it? You "owned" that suggestion and you were going to make it work come hell or high water. Sharing ownership is a big part of mentoring.

The golf course superintendent profession has changed over the years.

(continued on page 4)

Surveys show that more and more of a superintendent's time is being captured by administrative tasks: personnel and human resource issues, governmental reporting and compliance issues, training and safety issues. These management needs siphon off our direct inputs into the presentation of our golf courses. Gone are the days when a superintendent could get lost "on the course" for days on end. It stands to reason that this evolving administrative diversity necessitates sharing the load. A capable assistant superintendent (or two) is fast becoming an absolute requirement for a well-managed golf maintenance operation.

The MAGCS, recognizing the growing importance of the team concept in golf course management, is proud to have an assistant superintendent on its Board of Directors. The position is Class C advisor, and like its Class E (commercial) counterpart, the person holding the appointment is responsible for representing his/her constituency among the MAGCS membership on the Board level. Last year our Class C advisor was Erwin McKone, assistant superintendent of River Forest Country Club under Joel Purpur. Erwin came on board and absolutely blew us away. Under his direction, a committee of Class C members set up and ran a tremendously successful scholarship outing at Orchard Valley, raising \$1,500 for our scholarship fund. In addition, the committee set up the first of what we expect to be an annual Class C education day: the Assistants Winter Workshop, which was held at the Midwest Golf House last month. Erwin was all set to continue his work on the Board this year and unfortunately (for us) got a job as a golf course superintendent. So we fired him—just kidding.

Anyway, we needed a new Class C advisor so I asked our executive director to put the question to the Class C Committee and Chad Kempf's name came up. Chad is the assistant superintendent at Hinsdale Golf Club under Bob Maibusch. I called Bob to see if he would agree to allow Chad to accept the appointment, and Bob didn't skip a beat in agreeing to give Chad the assignment, also telling me what an

excellent choice he would be. So Chad is our new Class C advisor and if form holds true, Bob will be looking for someone to replace Chad next year, because he'll be a superintendent somewhere—but that's really the point, isn't it?

Our current membership roster reveals a disturbing fact. Our Class C membership is roughly half of the total of Class A and B members. Either half of our Class A and B members don't have an assistant superintendent, or half of our superintendent members don't encourage or permit their assistants the opportunity to participate in this Association. If you happen to find yourself in the latter group, I urge you to consider sponsoring your assistant as a member. Assistant superintendents work hard putting in the time they need to get the experience necessary to compete for the next level, or it may be that your assistant is in a position he/she considers to be his/her life's work. Either way, the benefits of membership in the MAGCS far outweigh the dollars and cents it costs to

If we want to truly succeed in presenting an outstanding golf experience to our customers, we need to foster an environment that allows our staff to see that they can share in the joy of its creation.

join. It's easy to do, just download a membership application from our Web site, www.magcs.org, or call Luke Cella at 630-243-7900 and get the ball rolling. At some point, I promise, you will experience the special thrill of someone under your tutelage coming up to you and saying, "I made green!" 



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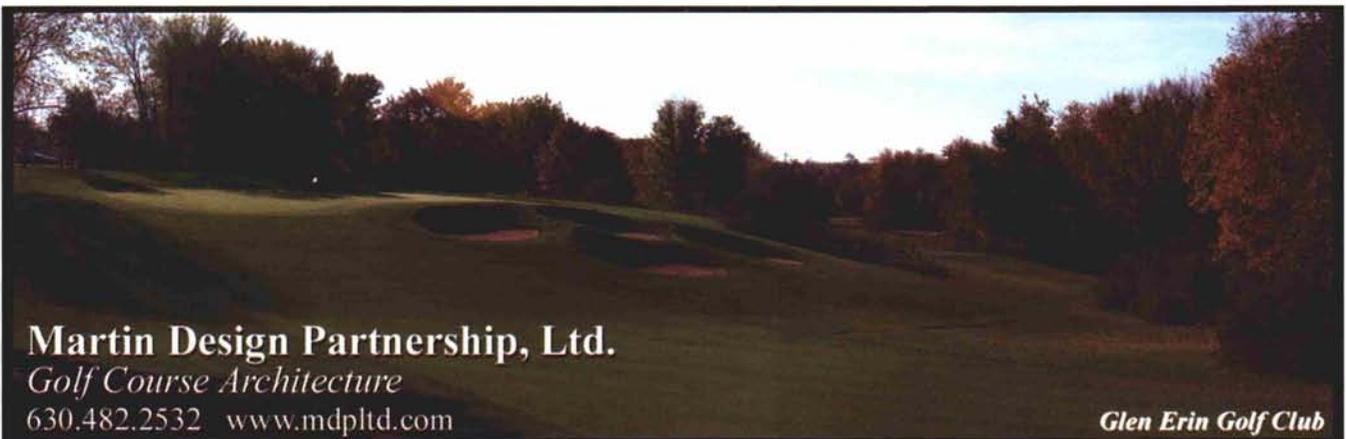
Those who know me know that I usually speak my mind. I have learned to temper this somewhat in my days of rowing toward the other shore. Speaking your mind is not always viewed as politically correct these days, however it is a character trait that serves me well. In my opinion, stating views in a politically correct manner may lead to miscommunication. The point I make here is that while I am a member of the MAGCS Board, please feel free to tell me what you really think.

As a newly elected Board member, I have been appointed to chair the Scholarship Committee. Timing is everything. My plan is to set into motion a series of changes in the MAGCS scholarship funding and selection criteria. If the funding goes as planned there will be two full-ride scholarships available for the start of the 2005 school year. Selection criteria will be as follows: successful recipients must be twin boys, will have worked on the grounds crew at Glen Flora Country Club and will call me dad. That's right, my twin sons, Phil and Pat, will be starting college in 2005. Too bad it's not that simple and I'm slightly less self-serving.

*March 31st
is the deadline
to apply for the
2004 MAGCS
scholarships.*

As I said before, timing is everything. Having procrastinated on my children's college savings plan, the opportunity to chair the Scholarship Committee has encouraged me to focus in the right direction. Although my children will not be eligible for the MAGCS scholarships, serving in this capacity is a learning experience. For those of you who have children or grandchildren preparing to attend college, the MAGCS offers three \$1,000 scholarships. All the information needed to submit an application for one of these scholarships is available on our Web site, www.magcs.org, in the members' area, or by calling Luke Cella. If you have any questions or concerns during the application process, please contact me and I will help however I can. Please keep in mind that the deadline for submitting a completed application is March 31st. Several additional scholarships are offered through the GCSAA. Information on these scholarships can be found on the GCSAA Web site in the Career Center area or by calling Pam Smith, scholarship and programs manager, at 800-472-7878.

The MAGCS Scholarship Committee will be reviewing the application and selection criteria for the 2005 scholarships during the upcoming year. Any suggestions and input you can offer will be appreciated. Please take every opportunity to support our scholarship fundraising. Thank you. 



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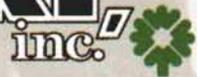
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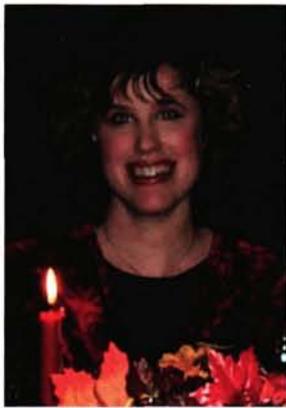
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Show or Tell: What My Dad Does at the Golf Course Each Day

Their words amuse us, touch us, astonish us. They are our kids, and their point-of-view is often priceless.

In anticipation of Father's Day, we are asking the children of MAGCS superintendents and assistant superintendents to weigh in on what dad is *really* doing at the golf course all day. Kids, this is your chance to tell *On Course* "what my dad does at work." Those who are old enough to read and write, please send us a couple paragraphs or just a few sentences on what your dad's job is all about. For children who are too young to write, we strongly encourage parents to take dictation and jot down their thoughts. We'd also love to receive any artwork or photos, so kids, if you have a photo of dad at work, or you'd like to draw a picture showing dad on the job, please send it in!

We will try to publish ALL submissions in our June issue, and I expect some enlightening feedback from the children of MAGCS. I myself grew up the daughter of a golf course superintendent and remember thinking that my dad (longtime MAGCS member Tim Miles) had an enviable job. In the summer, he was lucky to spend a lot of time outdoors riding around on a cart and playing with water (manually changing the sprinklers on balmy evenings). He had frequent opportunities to play golf and taught all of us kids the game, albeit with mixed success. And, he had a running tab in food & beverage, which meant he could grab a candy bar anytime he wanted! This position had its privileges.

Now, as a parent, I laugh with my husband—a high school English teacher and varsity basketball coach—about how our son, Ryan, views his dad's job. As a two-year-old, Ryan believed Daddy was at school con-

ducting circle time and singing "The Hello Song" with his 16-year-old students. This, of course, was what Ryan's adored Miss Michelle did with him and his preschool peers in "Wiggle Jiggle & Sing" class. More recently, Ryan—who is now six—was under the impression that Dad was running drills or playing games with the basketball team all day.

Let's delight our MAGCS dads with a very special Father's Day tribute!



ATTENTION MAGCS OFFSPRING!

Tell us (with words) or show us (with artwork or photos) what dad's job is all about.

E-mail your responses to on_course@hotmail.com or snail-mail material to Cathy Ralston at 68 S. Waterford Dr., Round Lake, IL 60073.

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Doug Pool -N-



Doug and his fiancée, Stefanie.



The CDGA Sunshine Course

Doug Pool's occupation is officially "superintendent of field operations" at the Chicago District Golf Association (CDGA) Three-Hole Sunshine Course located at Midwest Golf House in Lemont. In other words, Doug is the person at the Sunshine Course who knows how to use tools and resources to manage turf. He has a unique opportunity to showcase his management skills as a superintendent.

Managing the Sunshine Course, which serves as a living laboratory for turf research, entails unique challenges. Doug notes that even as he employs his education to protect the vitality and health of his turf, Dr. Randy Kane and Lee Miller are trying to infect, weaken and kill it!

His experience did not start there. It started long ago and far away. Doug was born 24 years ago in Avon, IL, a small, rural town a half-hour south of Galesburg, IL. His first experience with golf course management came at Shaw Creek Golf Course, a nine-hole course in Bushnell, IL. His first steps in golf course work were huge. He cut cups, set up tees, picked up trash, mowed greens, etc., etc. . . . Doug was a part-time employee on a two-man crew made up of him and Larry Ebbert. Larry is Shaw Creek's superintendent. He saw in Doug those certain attributes that all superintendents seek within teenaged labor: a warm body; capable of listening, following directions, waking up early and working hard; someone who didn't let his friends disrupt him from working. At Shaw Creek, Doug learned quickly that he loved using tools and resources while working on the golf course.

Doug's interest in golf course management work brought him to Illinois State University, where he graduated in 2001 with a bachelor of science degree in agricultural business/horticulture. He has worked for Kerry Satterwhite, CGCS at The Den at Fox Creek in Bloomington; Ken Mangum, CGCS at Atlanta Athletic Club, Atlanta, GA; and Scott Witte, CGCS at Cantigny Golf in Wheaton. Doug feels a strong indebtedness to these three men because of the overwhelming experience and guidance they provided him. "I am very appreciative of these three men in the faith and trust they showed in mentoring me. They taught me how to work the tools and resources of our trade into an employable skill," Doug says.

In 2003, the CDGA conducted an employment search for a superintendent's position at the Sunshine Course. Doug earned the job and found that golf course management there came with a twist.

The Sunshine Course, to be dedicated on June 6, 2004, is an ever-changing, living laboratory of research science and an arboretum, all created by the CDGA Foundation. Built with the inspiration and generosity of Joe Jemsek, Brent Wadsworth and I*Mag*Jen Charities, the Sunshine Course is truly a "field of dreams." The Foundation's "Sunshine Through Golf" initiative provides recreation and purpose to lives of disadvantaged children and adults through golf. "It is a special place," notes Doug. "The joy in the eyes of these children as they experience playing golf here on 'their' course is

(continued on page 10)

emotionally overwhelming.” A bit teary, Doug adds, “There’s something very special about watching their joy indeed. The course is there for them to enjoy like they own it.” Ownership has privilege.

The Sunshine Course also serves Illinois’ Green Industry’s allied associations with a resource unmatched anywhere in the U.S. The course is a comprehensive selection, evaluation and research facility for turfgrass, native plants, ground-covers, trees, shrubs, perennials, construction materials and methods, displayed for your knowledge and enjoyment. “There is something here for every profession: golf, sod, nurseries, horticulture, arboriculture, lawn care, academia, research and landscape design,” says Doug. “The Sunshine Course is an unbelievable tool and resource site to further advance their professions, products and research ideas.

“The strangest thing about my job is dealing with turf research pathologists, Dr. Randy Kane and Lee Miller. I was educated and trained to

protect the vitality and health of desirable turfgrasses, while they’re trying to infect, weaken and kill it,” comments Doug. “I think Kane and Miller have a peculiar way of earning a living. I have learned so much from Randy and Lee this past year, and they in turn from me I hope. Not unlike any other superintendent, sometimes this job makes me want to pull my hair out! But they do make working here fun.”

All joking aside, Doug’s job differs from that of every other golf course superintendent’s job in the area because everyday he deals with ongoing research, research plots, data collection, grow-in responsibilities, golfers, administrators, visitors AND daily course-conditioning concerns, all at the same time, on the same place. “Sometimes things can get out of whack but that is the nature and duty of furthering research and recreation,” Doug says. “The varied routine of my responsibilities is one of the reasons why I enjoy my profession so much. There is great variety and personal satisfaction here.”

As if Doug does not have enough variety in his life, he has big plans for the future, including marriage. He and his fiancée, Stefanie Mussman, are planning a September 2004 wedding. Plus, he is working on a project with Dr. Tom Voigt, studying turf and native grasses for naturalized golf course roughs.

Make certain that you take a moment during the March 10th MAGCS meeting at Midwest Golf House to track Doug down and schedule a personal summertime tour of the facilities at the Sunshine Course. You’ll be glad you did.

Doug, on behalf of the MAGCS and the members within, we wish you and Stefanie the very best. It is this author’s opinion that you have the tools and resources to manage, and manage very well. 



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