

group in our Association may not have had formal education in business or technology management, and they are in the whole process of adapting right now. For the generation coming out of college, this is not something we have to teach them, but they need other issues addressed—career-building, and of course, real-turf experience, for instance. For all groups, MAGCS needs to give them the tools to advance their careers. We must make sure the education we provide matches specific needs.”

Finally, the definition of career advancement has expanded. No longer is it confined to moving from one superintendent position to another, or ascending into a superintendent job from the assistant ranks. Today, it could mean gaining skill sets and experience to transition into an entirely different role within the golf industry. It might involve supporting the roles of the assistant superintendent and technician—spray, irrigation, equipment, etc.—so they are truly career positions. It could translate to exposure to new ideas and techniques that make an existing job more fulfilling.

As much as the draft mission reiterates, much more succinctly, concepts integral to the original mission, it also clearly extends the reach and benefits of MAGCS beyond the superintendent ranks. The 1926 mission speaks directly to greenkeepers and golf course superintendents. The refocused mission clearly pertains to superintendents, in that it cites the Association’s name right up front, yet it speaks to “those who facilitate the growth and enjoyment of golf.” Why the change?

“As our profession evolves and our knowledge base grows, we increasingly rely on other qualified professional individuals,” Luke explains. “We need to look to foster their growth as well as our own.

“The key person at any golf course property, whether a private club or public facility, is the superintendent. The physical grounds of the golf course outweigh any other asset an owner or club possesses,” continues Luke. “With this notion that the golf course superintendent is a leader at his or her property, it follows that our Association would encompass, promote and provide professional resources to everyone involved with the golf course operation.”

In short, says Luke, “This mission sets up the MAGCS as the leading local organization for the golf course management profession.”

(continued on page 23)

As much as the draft mission reiterates, much more succinctly, concepts integral to the original mission, it also clearly extends the reach and benefits of MAGCS beyond the superintendent ranks.

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The Vision

Demographic analysis suggests that by the year 2020, MAGCS membership will be younger and quite diverse. By that time, Luke feels some of our current members will have become general managers or assumed roles similar to directors of whole golf course operations. The ever-changing and complex role of the golf course superintendent is a natural stepping stone to a facility manager, and the best experience any manager of a golf course operation could have. Furthermore, as the profession evolves, the supporting roles of the assistant golf course superintendent, equipment technician, irrigation technician and spray technician will take on more importance and responsibility. It is up to the MAGCS to make sure the individuals that will hold these positions are educated and prepared for the tasks at hand.

The draft vision is holistic and inclusionary, presenting the MAGCS of 15 years hence as encompassing the entire golf course management profession. It does not speak to superintendents alone; although superintendents remain the priority constituency, the vision speaks to the aforementioned managers, assistants, technicians and beyond. It foresees an organization that has a greater impact on legislation that affects our industry, successfully promotes a higher positive profile for the profession and generates significant funds for turf research.

The proposed vision in the draft strategic plan reads as follows:

By 2020, the MAGCS will:

- Broadly represent the golf course management profession.
- Be viewed as a professional resource for golf course management professionals.
- Be viewed as a resource for surrounding GCSAA chapters.

This will result in:

- Increased recognition for legislative issues relating to environmental issues.
- Increased public exposures for golf course management professionals in the area.
- Increased funding for research.

The Board, Luke says, intends through this vision that the MAGCS should remain and solidify its position as a leading GCSAA chapter and

an example and/or benchmark to other chapters.

Goals to Meet the Vision

Of course, formulating a vision is not enough. Realizing the vision means crafting attainable, measurable goals, the steps that take us from point A to point B. The draft strategic plan concludes by outlining five such goals that read as follows.

1. Increase membership.

According to Luke, MAGCS membership currently stands at 640. Of that total, 270, or 40%, are golf course superintendents. The next largest membership class is E, or commercial, with 177 members. What does that tell us? Analysis by Board member Tim Anderson suggests that some 80 facilities within our geography have no representation in the MAGCS. We could expand our penetration to those facilities. More paramount, of course, is growing our ranks in other membership classes, especially C (assistant) and D (student and employee of golf course superintendent). This, says Luke, is absolutely consistent with the mission and vision for MAGCS.

Important, too, is an assessment of what MAGCS offers these constituencies. "Reviewing membership benefits occurs on an ongoing basis," says Luke. "We need to define why people become members and always make sure we're meeting their needs."

2. Enhance communication with members and the public.

"Public and media relations . . . this is where we lack the most experience and where we can grow our efforts the quickest," comments Luke, adding that the Board was generally pleased with print and online communications. Gary Hearn is the current chair of our Media and Public Relations Committee and plans to develop a short- and long-term strategic plan at present.

3. Continue to offer a high-quality professional development program.

Relating directly to the draft mission statement, this goal comprises scholarship offerings, career assistance and continuing education. The MAGCS scholarship program continues to flourish, with fundraising generating enough proceeds to

(continued on page 24)

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increase the number and amount of scholarships. Under investigation is setting up an endowment for the disbursement of scholarship funds. With respect to continuing education, the Board feels strongly that MAGCS excels in this area, and will continue to pursue the finest speakers, seminars and workshops.

Career assistance is an area where opportunities abound. Under discussion is establishing a mentor program for first-year superintendents. As the MAGCS works toward elevating the superintendent profession, so too its efforts should elevate the other roles within the industry. Says Luke, "Today's superintendents wear so many hats, and they can't possibly be an expert in every facet of this profession as it has evolved over the years. They need highly qualified people working for them. We now have long-term assistants, irrigation technicians, equipment technicians and so on. With so many good people working in the industry, we're going to see career positions created out of jobs once viewed as transitory, and it's up to the leadership within the Associa-

tion to advocate for these positions entailing the salaries and benefits that will make them true career positions."

4. Develop a leadership and volunteer management plan.

Essentially, this goal encourages MAGCS to bring more resources to bear by getting more people involved. "The more people you reach, the more people you are able to help and meet their needs," notes Luke.

5. Continue to develop a more strategic Board.

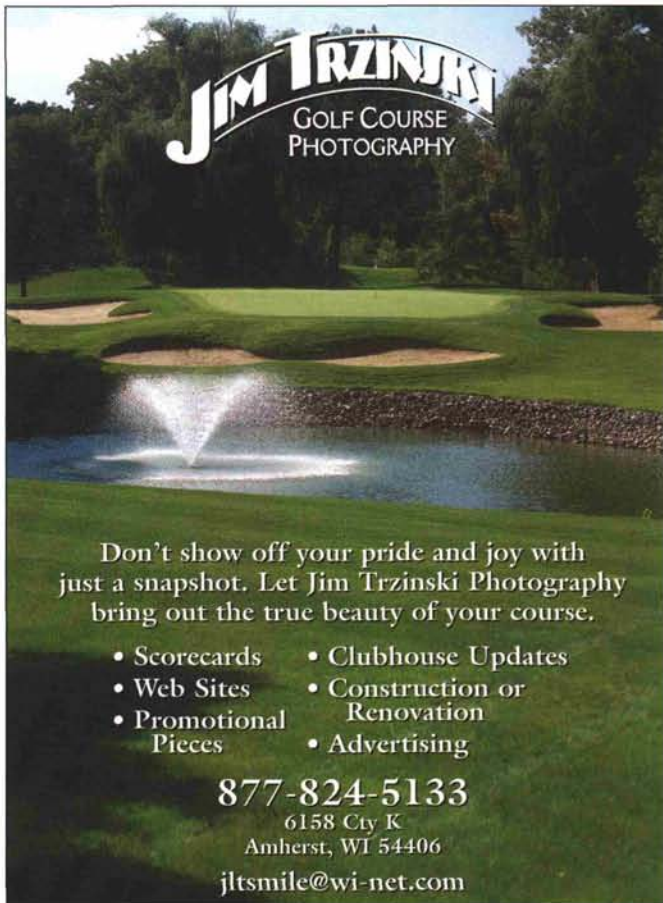
Turnover is a fact of life on the MAGCS Board. Yet one of the best techniques to ensure continuity from Board to Board is to refine our focus, which the present Board has done in shaping a mission, vision and goals for the future. Luke feels that the Board actually having the time to reflect on the big picture is an advantage of the creation of the executive director job. Says Luke, "Instead of having to focus all their time and energies on committee, task-oriented work, the Board can take a more global stance, refocusing every year and taking a fresh look at the mission and vision . . . making sure they still work for us and what we are doing to

fulfill them. We need to make sure that long term, we are ahead of the game. Of course, the leadership of our committees must continue to meet the high standards set by previous leaders of this organization to ensure future success."

What's Next

As mentioned previously, the Board is actively encouraging us, the members of the MAGCS, to get involved in this process by asking questions, providing feedback, lending insights and generating ideas. The Past Presidents Council reviewed and discussed the document at their March 11th meeting. Further opportunities for discussion include upcoming monthly golf meetings, the message board at www.magcs.org and this very publication, in our "Midwest Voices" column.

As our executive director states: "This should be the mission and vision of the entire membership. The people you elected, who represent you on the Board, came up with this—now what are **your** thoughts?"





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Fred Opperman.

These are excerpts from a letter authored by Fred Opperman in response to a request from Brian Bossert, CGCS, during the latter's research phase for the feature article on the Illinois Golf Hall of Fame (March 2005). Fred's reflections concern his unique position, having worked with all three superintendent members of the Hall of Fame.

You hit the jackpot as far as a person who has worked with those three "Hall of Famers." I believe that I may be the only one to have worked for, with and alongside of all the three men.



Bob Williams.

I first started with Bob Williams in the spring of 1961 as one of 10 college students at the Bob O'Link school of budding future superintendents. I returned in the spring of 1962 and by the fall of that year was the assistant superintendent at Elmhurst C.C. What impressed me immediately was the organizational skills that Bob had. Everything was written down. Details of how a job or function

was to take place and happen. Daily, monthly and yearly records kept to substantiate his reports to the BOD. His manners with the crew were always excellent and there was never a doubt on what you were asked to do or how a project was to be accomplished. When you worked for Bob, it was always black and white, meaning there were no gray areas. Bob asked the best of you at all times and you were told in private that you hadn't lived up to the standards that he had set. His dress at the time was the same as the members', which was very unusual at that time. Most superintendents were "working superintendents" during the early '60s and before. What was the greatest impact? Bob set the standard for the superintendents of today.



Oscar Miles.

Oscar and I worked together at Bob O'Link in '61 and '62. Oscar and I had a month of night-watering together in 1962, so we got to know each other pretty good. I have always respected Oscar in his organizational abilities and being one of the best "grass growers" in the Chicagoland area. Oscar was no doubt one of the first to jump on the computers as a tool for managing a golf course and his

courses have shown the dedication that he 100% puts into it. He should be given an honorary Ph.D. for his accomplishments in turf and the way he has advanced the profession. Greatest impact? Oscar has a tremendous drive to produce only the finest course possible.



Ray Gerber.

Ray Gerber . . . your report isn't long enough to get into this dedicated person. When Ray retired in 1970, I replaced him as superintendent at Glen Oak. My training in "greenkeeping" was just beginning. Ray never had the "school book learning," but believe me, he was a sponge for learning and experiencing the art of "greenkeeping." Ray had the ability to listen. He did more of that than talking. His memory

was so wonderful of the past experiences and knowledge. Ray seemed to be unflappable under pressure. I respected him for his dedication to improving the superintendent and his love of the local association and GCSAA. His service to the two associations during the war years was outstanding and kept them both going during such hard times. Ray was very giving of his time and knowledge to anyone who asked. But, you needed to ask for his help and it was always given. I was always amazed as a young superintendent (30 at the time) that once I was in charge, he never questioned my decisions. But seldom a day went by that I did not ask, why this, what if or what do you think? We had lunch everyday at the club and he was always my greatest supporter. Greatest impact? Being my best friend, mentor and his knowledge of greenkeeping.

All I know is that all three of these men helped me be a better person and I am what I am today because of them and others along my life's journey. 🌾

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the Bull Sheet

John Gurke, CGCS
Contributing Editor

DATES TO REMEMBER

April 12 – The first informal assistants' "Shop Talk" event at the Links at Carillon in Plainfield, IL, **Scott White** host. More information follows.

April 25 – MAGCS monthly meeting at White Pines Golf Club in Bensenville, IL, **Steve Partyka** host.

May 1 – J.W. Turf's annual equipment auction in Hampshire, IL.

May 16 – Penn State Alumni Golf Outing at the Glen View Club in Golf, IL, **Tony Frandria** host.

May 23 – ITF/MAGCS Combined Golf Day at the Ivanhoe Club in Ivanhoe, IL, **Tom Prichard** host.

June 13 – MAGCS monthly meeting at Phillips Park Golf Course in Aurora, IL, **Todd Schmitz** host.

June 29 – Annual John Buck Scholarship Outing at Hughes Creek Golf Club in Elburn, IL, **Darin Ayres** host.

After staging another very successful and entertaining Assistant Superintendent Winter Workshop in late February (more on this as you read on), your Class C Advisory Committee has come up with another innovative idea. As mentioned in Dates to Remember, the first of two planned "Shop Talk" events will be held at the Links at Carillon (**Mark Thibault** and **Scott White**) on April 12. The idea behind these gatherings is to unite assistant superintendents in the Chicagoland area for an informal afternoon of golf and industry chitchat—stressing INFORMAL.

This format will hopefully bring more assistants together, and promote the fellowship and common bonds so important in our industry. Information is forthcoming, and to find out more you can call Committee chairman **Chad Kempf** at Hinsdale Golf Club at 630-986-1323.

Also noted above is the Penn State Alumni Golf Outing on May 16. This year's event will be hosted by Tony Frandria and the Glen View Club, and promises to be another great gathering of alums old and new alike. For information, call Tony at 847-486-6106.

Mark your calendars for the annual J.W. Turf equipment auction and consignment sale, scheduled for Sunday, May 1 at their facility in Hampshire. As usual, a wide variety of used and demo equipment will be available for purchase, so get there early. For information, call J.W. Turf at 847-683-4653.

The February issue of *Golfdom* magazine ran a cover story called "Standing the Test of Time," highlighting six "seasoned" superintendents whose careers have spanned decades. One of those featured superintendents was our own **Eddie Fischer**, CGCS, the 25-year veteran of the Old Elm Club in Highland Park, IL. Ed's unique perspective—especially in regard to how he would describe a good day at work—is something every member of MAGCS can learn from. Congratulations, Mr. Fischer!

Also congrats to **Jon Jennings**, CGCS, who was featured in *Golfdom's* March issue. The article, "Sweet Home Chicago," traces Jon's career to his present post as superintendent of the historic Chicago Golf Club—home of this summer's Walker Cup matches.

This item was printed a year ago, but we have been granted a reprieve, and golf courses can use the soil fumigant methyl bromide for the remainder of this year. Make your gas 'n' grass plans quickly!

The numbers are in, and the Golf Industry Show's attendance was figured at around 23,000—not too shabby. The numbers, however, did not translate to booth visitors, according to several vendors. One in particular commented, "Nobody can convince me that Dallas (2001) didn't have two times the number of visitors." Let's think about that—Dallas . . . Orlando . . . Dallas . . . Orlando. Book Depository . . . Disney World. Perhaps the best way to ensure huge numbers on the floor is to hold the Show in boring cities with no other distractions to lure attendees away. Or not.

MAGCS salutes past Commercial Advisory Committee chairman **Paul Yerkes**—previously key account representative for Lesco—on his promotion to regional manager. Congratulations, Paul!



Paul Yerkes of Lesco (apparently taken about 10 years ago).

In an effort to become more familiar with the actual process involved in producing *On Course* magazine, several MAGCS Board members and employees recently toured the Darwill Press facilities where it all takes place. Senior account executive Mark Pageau and production manager Kurt Paulson led us through the process from start to finish, highlighting the incredible teamwork involved between our editor Cathy Miles Ralston, graphic designer Mark Karczewski and everyone at Darwill in order for this magazine to reach you each month. Everyone came

(continued on page 28)



Says...

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This year's MAGCS Hospitality Suite in Orlando was a tremendous success. The Association expresses its utmost gratitude to the following commercial members, whose generous contributions made the event possible.



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away from the day feeling assured that our magazine is in very capable hands. Thank you to the fine folks at Darwill for their hospitality.



Mark Pageau of Darwill explains what all is involved in getting On Course magazine to your mailbox.

MAGCS welcomes the following new members to the fold, and wishes them all the best in their endeavors:

- Dustin Hugen**, Class C,
Indian Hill Club
Rick Jones, Class E, J.W. Turf
Jesse Lehman, Class C,
Schaumburg Golf Club
David Kloss, Class C,
Medinah Country Club
Todd Fregien, Class E,
Pendleton Turf Supply
Chad Twaddle, Class C,
Medinah Country Club
Scott Verdun, Class C,
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Nick Nate, Class C,
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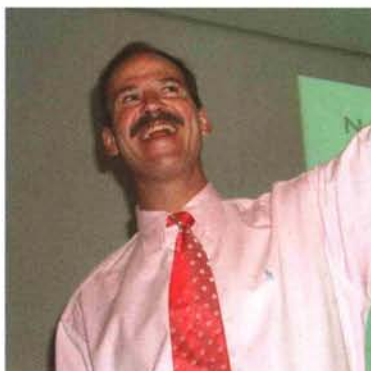
While Medinah Country Club has four new MAGCS members on its team, it has also lost one—**Brian Kimbrough**, formerly at Medinah C.C., is the new golf course superintendent at River Forest Country Club, replacing **Joel Purpur**, CGCS (Park Ridge C.C.). Congratulations, Brian!



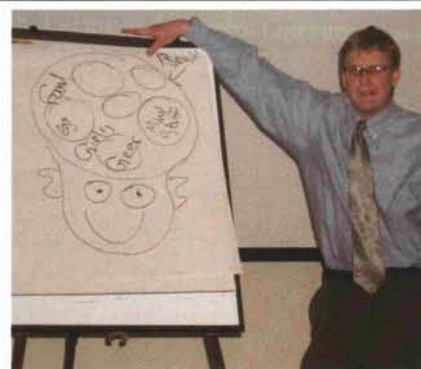
Brian Kimbrough.

Congratulations to Tony Bisbee, formerly assistant superintendent at Flossmoor Country Club, who is now the superintendent of Course No. 3 at Medinah Country Club.

The Class C Advisory Committee, as previously mentioned, has been very busy lately. Chairman Chad Kempf and his able-bodied band of assistant superintendents staged the second annual Assistant Superintendent Winter Workshop on February 24 at Midwest Golf House, and it was once again a stellar show. Keynote speaker Pat Jones of Flagstick Strategic Consulting, LLC (and former publisher of *Golfidom* magazine) gave a rousing presentation titled, “Your Career: Thinking Beyond Turf,” where he focused on the highs and lows of the golf industry as it stands today. Pat’s advice on perfecting one’s “non-turf survival skills” (writing, PowerPoint presentations, public speaking, etc.) was very well-received and pertinent to today’s world. Following a tough act, Chad Kempf gave his presentation on Hinsdale Golf Club’s Visual Improvement Process (VIP), a quality-control program utilizing employee reinforcement through the use of visual aids (digital photographs and graphic data). A roundtable discussion on “Getting Your Point Across—Communication Skills” followed, moderated by **Scott White**, **Aaron Willing** and **John Ekstrom**. Finishing off the day was **Keith Krause**’s examination of what makes the golfer tick—an in-depth and slightly tongue-in-cheek “crawl around inside the pelt” or exploration inside the head of the animal Joe Golfer that drives our industry. In all, the day was a great mix of prepared presentations and lighter-side open discussions that hit on all cylinders. Don’t miss next year’s rendition!



Pretty-in-pink Pat Jones.



Keith Krause crawls around inside the pelt of the golfer.



Class C Committee members Pat Maksymiu, Aaron Willing, Chad Kempf, John Ekstrom, Keith Krause, Brian Mores and Scott White.

A new educational event took place last month in northern Michigan; it was originally advertised by Mike Morris, CGCS of Crystal Downs Country Club in his presentation at the Midwest Turf Clinic last November, and a handful of MAGCS members had the opportunity to attend. The first (hopefully) annual Ski and Learn Symposium was held on March 7-8 at the Crystal Mountain Resort, and featured Mike’s presentation of “The Morris Method of Achieving the Ideal Green Speed for Your Course,” along with Dr. Thomas A. Nikolai of Michigan State University’s talk highlighting the findings in his book, *The Superintendent’s Guide to Controlling Putting Green Speed*. This unique format featured educational sessions and roundtable discussions from 8 a.m. until early afternoon, and allowed for the afternoons and evenings to be spent on the slopes of Michigan’s #1-ranked resort. Fortunately, new powder fell as if on cue, and conditions went from icy-treacherous to ideal during the event. The educational presentations were nothing short of outstanding, and the extracurricular activities made the whole shebang a

(continued on page 30)

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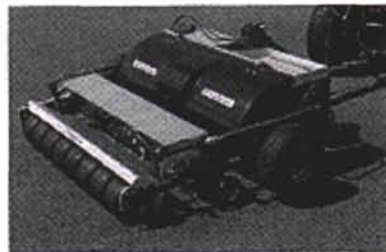
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most of my time communicating verbally, in person, with the crew, staff and members. This daily presence with the crew has elevated worthiness and productivity. The golf staff and clubhouse staff are always on the same page. Furthermore, I can rest assured that the members feel comfortable in communicating their needs to me with respect to playing conditions and the property. Plus, once I leave the

course, my staff is only a cell phone call away and I can make changes to the irrigation settings from my home computer. In many ways, technology has made my life easier.

I'm sure new devices will pop up in the near future and I will be the first to take a look at and utilize them—but only if they will make my life easier.



CLASSIFIEDS

Positions Available:

Due to Tony Bisbee's departure, **Bob Lively** is looking to fill two assistant superintendents' positions at Flossmoor Country Club. Both positions are full-time, and interested parties should contact Bob at 708-798-4700, ext. 241 or at 708-906-8817.

Equipment Wanted:

Jacobsen 30-inch fairway mowers and frames in any condition. Please call Ron at 815-468-3438.

Equipment for Sale:

Bunton Model G813 walking greens mower in excellent condition. This mower was privately owned and was used to mow a personal putting green. It has been meticulously maintained, and the owner will entertain all offers. Call John Beckway at 847-683-0541 or 847-791-6446.

Inverness Country Club has a Jacobsen TriKing 1900D in excellent condition for sale or trade—\$4,500 cash or equivalent. Please call Mike at 847-358-7030 or e-mail questions to MagicGrKpg@aol.com.

- 1988 Toro Greens Aerator: Model 09110, good condition—\$950.
- 1992 EZGO GXT804 with steel cage for range use, needs engine—\$450.
- 1993 Toro Tri-Rollers for triplex, good condition—\$400.
- 1982 Ryan GreensAire II with quadratine coring heads and newer short block—\$350.
- Toro VertiCut units for triplex, age unknown, good condition—\$150.
- (20) Toro 750 complete sprinklers—\$20 each.
- 1982 Turfco Meter Matic self-propelled top-dresser—still runs—almost free!
- 1968 Rogers Model 40 blower for 3-point hitch, well-rested—almost free!

Call Kurt or Mike at Exmoor C.C. at 847-433-1177.

Timber Trails C.C. still has the following items for sale:

- Jacobsen Greens King V diesel with groomers, very good condition.
- Jacobsen Greens King VI diesel.
- Jacobsen TriKing 1900D, very good condition.
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Call Don at 708-372-4482.

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- John Deere 2653, 2,450 hours, make an offer after seeing this beauty!

Call Dave at 847-528-6656 to schedule an appointment and prepare to be wowed. No calls before 8 a.m. please.

Flossmoor C.C. has four complete sets of blue, white, red and gold artificial pine-log tee markers for sale. They are in very good condition and ready to be used. We have decided to use a different style, and would like to find a home for these where they'll actually get used. Contact Bob Lively at 708-798-4700, ext. 241 or 708-906-8817.