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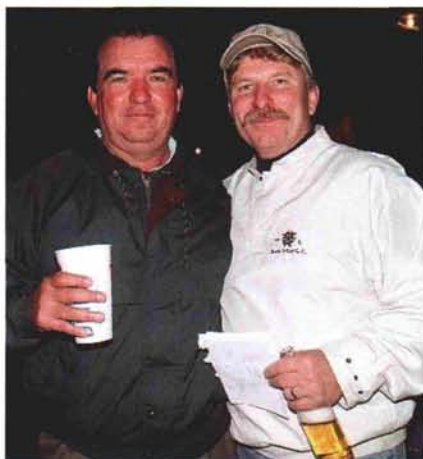
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were no sorority girls). About 100 of Mark's closest friends and family members attended, and a great night was had by all. Happy 50th, Mark!



The man of the hour with his best girl, Barb, and his good buddy Gil.

.....
Congratulations to **Brian Racette** on becoming the golf course superintendent at Lincoln Oaks Country Club in Crete, IL. Brian was most recently assistant superintendent at Bryn Mawr C.C.



Brian Racette.

.....
Also congrats to **Keith Peterson** on being named golf course superintendent of Beverly Country Club.

Keith leaves Calumet C.C. to take on his new position up the road.



Keith Peterson.

.....
On November 8, the Chicagoland Association of Golf Course Superintendents held its 21st Annual Forum at Naperville Country Club (**Tim Anderson**, CGCS host). This event is a one-day education-only affair that caps off the year of education offerings (mostly low-key, roundtable discussion formats where participants share their experiences and knowledge with their peers) in fine style. This year's theme, "Communication is the Key to Success," was expounded upon very capably by the panel of speakers, including **Tommy Witt**, CGCS of Northmoor C.C., **Ken Mangum**, CGCS of Atlanta Athletic Club, **Steve Mona**, executive director of GCSAA, **Paul Vermuelen** of the USGA Green Section, **Mr. Doug Kaiser**, green chairman of North Shore C.C. and **Mr. Joe Valenti**, green chairman of Bob O'Link G.C. Hats off to **Rick Bowden** (Bob O'Link) and all the CAGCS members who ensured the day was such a success. And thanks to Tim and the staff at Naperville for once again hosting.



Joel Purpur accepts the Founders Cup from Rick Bowden.



Ken Mangum of Atlanta Athletic Club.

.....
Speaking of Naperville Country Club, **Tim Anderson** will soon be a very busy guy. The club voted to proceed with an extensive course renovation to begin next summer. The **Arthur Hills/Steve Forrest** project will include the rerouting of several holes, complete regrassing of all surfaces, a new well and irrigation system, and a new maintenance facility. Good luck in the exciting months ahead, **Tim!**

.....
If college-tuition bills are staring you in the face, **Aquatrols** is sponsoring its third annual Scholarship Essay Contest for children of turf management professionals who will be attending an accredited college or university during the 2006-07 academic year. Entrants will compete for a \$2,000 first-place scholarship, with runner-up taking home \$1,000. Full instructions, rules and eligibility requirements are available at www.aquatrols.com or by calling 800-257-7797.

.....
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53rd Annual Midwest Turf Clinic Hits New Heights



Big crowd in a big room with big guys holding up a big balcony with their big heads.

*From the get-go, it was apparent that this was not to be “your father’s turf clinic.” The full house of more than 200 attendees learned that at the sound of the morning’s first bell, when President (for the remainder of the day, anyhow) **Phil Zeinert** made his annual meeting presentation via a PowerPoint “year in retrospect” format. **Tony Kalina’s** Education Committee had a really excellent program in store for all, featuring a mixture of interesting “imported” speakers, local superintendents, colorful moderators and a bring-down-the-house keynote speaker.*

The day’s sponsors—Anton’s Greenhouse, Arthur Clesen, Inc., J. W. Turf, Nadler Golf Car Sales, Nels J. Johnson Tree Experts, Palatine Oil Company and Turf Professionals Equipment Company—got their money’s worth for their generosity, what with the outstanding program and attendance. The day’s overarching theme was “Change Change Change,” and the morning lineup certainly addressed that motif from a wide array of angles. Morning moderator **Paul Voykin** kept things moving at record pace while introducing speakers and interspersing his humorous anecdotes. The first speaker of the day was Mark Esoda, CGCS of Atlanta Country Club, with his presentation “Managing Change for Personal and Facility Growth.” Good thing Mark brought along a large supply of business cards, as every MAGCS member who shook his hand afterward now has a game lined up at his club during the Golf Industry Show (which is, I’m told, still scheduled to be held in Atlanta). Next up was Doug Sisterton, M.S., research meteorologist at Argonne National

Laboratory, speaking on “Preparing for Climate and Weather Change.” Though thoroughly interesting, Doug’s talk was also somewhat alarming in its outlook for our weather future here in the Midwest—more of the same, according to his computer models.



Tony Kalina with Doug Sisterton, Paul Voykin and Mark Esoda.

After a break in the action, the last morning topic was a roundtable Q-and-A session with three MAGCS superintendents who, in the last year, were "Shifting Service—MAGCS Veterans on the Move Discuss Their 2005 Relocations." **Tim Anderson, CGCS** (Prestwick C.C. to Naperville C.C.), **Dave Blomquist, CGCS** (Naperville C.C. to Twin Orchard C.C.), and **Joel Purpur, CGCS** (River Forest C.C. to Park Ridge C.C.) all shared the trials and tribulations of their recent career moves as Paul Voykin kept the tough questions coming rapid-fire.



Tim Anderson, Dave Blomquist and Joel Purpur.

By the way—future moderators, please turn off your cell phones, pagers, pacemakers and any other electronic devices prone to ringing, beeping or playing show tunes before taking the podium, thank you. The favorite sound of the day followed ("lunch is served"), and the morning session came to an end.

Before getting down to business after lunch, some other business had to be seen to—namely, the presentation of the various awards and scholarship checks, and the annual election. Leading off was the announcement and presentation of the Ray Gerber Editorial Award for the best-judged superintendent-written original article published in *On Course* over the past year. The 2005 winner for his article "Time to Run" was **Jon Jennings, CGCS** (his second consecutive triumph).



Gerber winner Jon Jennings.

Next, the Fred Opperman Editorial Award for the best-judged nonsuperintendent-written original article published in *On Course* over the past year was presented to winner **Greg Martin** for his article "The Golf Paradox." **Don Ferreri** then took the podium to update us on all the latest GCSAA chapter delegate information, followed by Phil Zeinert's presentation of the President's Award for Meritorious Service to Kishwaukee College's Larry Marty.



Phil with Larry Marty.

Next up was **Holly Gilmour**, presenting a check for the John Buck Memorial Scholarship fund in the amount of \$5,000, and **Dan Howard** of Master of the Links, presenting a check for \$1,000 for the Paul Burdett Scholarship fund. **Ed Braunsky** and **Don Ferreri** proceeded to run a flawless election where **Gary Hearn** was announced as our new president, **Tim Anderson** as vice president and **Dave Braasch** as secretary/treasurer. Directors elected were **Scott Witte**, **Dan Sterr** and newcomer **Tom Prichard**.

(continued on page 26)

The afternoon session began with moderator **Oscar Miles**, CGCS introducing a panel of gentlemen who shared their thoughts on "Changing Hats—MAGCS's Newest Supers Discuss Their First Season as Superintendents in 2005." **Nick Baker** (Riverside G.C.), **Jeff Pozen** (Downers Grove G.C.) and **Tim White** (Prestwick C.C.) fielded a barrage of queries from Oscar, each doing a fine job on the panel.



Nick Baker, Tim White and Jeff Pozen.

Next up was Keith Krasemann, Ph.D, from College of DuPage with his ideas on "Changing Direction—the Ethics and Leadership of Change."



Keith Krasemann with Oscar Miles.

Saving the best for last (no offense intended to those who came prior), Oscar introduced our keynote speaker, Mike Ditka. As it was a 70° day in November, it was apparent that the Coach was eager to get outside and play a little golf (as evidenced by his "Oscar, you're killing me!" plea to speed up the intro just a bit). The Coach spoke of leadership, character, integrity and all the other ingredients of a winner, sounding very much like he did in his press conferences after a victory. He spoke of his sports heroes—Vince Lombardi and Stan Musial, and the things that made them winners, and of the biggest influence in his life—Michael McCaskey. NOT! Okay, it was Tom Landry, but he did manage to get a jab in at the end about his buddy from his Bears days. He was also very generous in fielding questions from the audience about any number of topics, including one from the biggest Vikings fan in the room (Braunsky) that elicited the response, "Row, row, row your boat"—you figure it out.



The Coach still has the fire in his eyes (thanks in part to lack of red-eye reduction).

Once our keynote speaker was on his limping way, the gavel was passed from Phil to Gary and the meeting was adjourned—RIGHT ON TIME! Congratulations to everyone involved in this year's clinic, and thank you to **Tom Lively** and the staff at Medinah Country Club for again graciously hosting this event.



Phil ceremoniously passes the gavel to our new president, Gary Hearn.



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Length and Design

"The object of golf architecture is to give intelligent purpose to the striking of a golf ball." –Max Behr

Each day, we hear more and more talk about length, the professional game and their impact on the golf course industry. These are necessary discussions, for it is here that golf begins to establish its identity for the next generation of golfers. In fact, golf is at a crossroads. There are parts of the golf industry that want golf to be about equipment, length and longer, tougher golf course design. There is another part of the industry that is tugging to gain back golf's soul. You needn't look any farther than the success of Bandon Dunes. Golf desires to be more intimate, more appealing, more open and engaging.

The pursuit of length is a byproduct of the aim of "protecting par" and continues while the rest of the golf course industry struggles to accommodate their existing clientele.

The fascination with length is never more apparent than each week as we watch the handiwork of the PGA Tour. Longer, more demanding and narrower golf courses present the best golfers with the next challenge. How these golf courses stack up is not the question, rather, the question is: How are these facilities, players and equipment impacting the game? The race for the next, longest and toughest golf course continues. I will leave that race to those who are willing to run it.

Interestingly, I recently heard about plans for a new golf course in Illinois. This new facility will augment an existing golf course and be designed by a touring professional. The plans call for an 8,200-yard golf course including 600-yard par 5s and par 4s measuring no less than 450 yards. While intriguing, this facility will leave a smear on the game and Chicagoland golf for decades.

The pursuit of length is a byproduct of the aim of "protecting par" and continues while the rest of the golf course industry struggles to accommodate their existing clientele. The current generation of golfer has high expectations, less time, more choices and coincidentally, can hit the ball farther. So an 8,000-yard golf course, while a seemingly appropriate novelty, will do nothing but distort an industry that needs simplification. Certainly, some golfers will be intrigued enough to try it once, maybe twice, or maybe even make it their home course.

In fact, this golf course may go on to have architectural significance with wonderful entertainment value. It may be a boon for the Village and become a huge economic success. I doubt it. In fact, even if the above holds true, the repercussions will be significant and notorious. Like a tattoo, it will be a regretful reminder and it can only be removed [or transformed] with painful and expensive surgery. Golf is a multidimensional game: horizontal, vertical and "between the ears." The constant fascination for length on a golf course will only melt the beauty, charm and spirit off of golf's bones, leaving a bare, naked skeleton left for play. Golfers who are brutalized will not return. So what's the point?

A recent study on "What Golfers Want" indicated the preferences and expectations of 18,400 golfers. This is the most widespread and comprehensive study of its kind. There were interesting, but not surprising, results. For instance:

- Most golfers prefer to play golf courses that are shorter than those presently being designed.
- Golfers overestimated the distance they drive the ball . . . by 30 yards!
- Time, cost and money are the three most important factors that cause golfers to give up the game.
- Current golf course design is catering to a fractional percentage of the golfing population.

I have a solution . . . Forget about length and limit the need to "protect"

par. Allow a golf course to be defensible with strategy, not length. These are matters of intelligent design and purpose. A.W. Tillinghast may have said it best with: "The merit of any hole is not judged by its length but rather by its interest and its variety as elective play is apparent. It isn't how far, but how good!"

In fact, the design of a golf course has more to do with thought than any other component. Difficulty and length is rather easy to design. To create an engaging and inspirational facility is quite challenging. Does your golf course have a personality and an allure? Does it tempt and engage? Not once, but every day? Does it create "lines of charm," as Alister Mackenzie stated? Does it challenge a low handicap while engaging an average golfer? Does it hold interest and require skill, or does it demand brute strength? Does it yield to wisdom while providing for talent? Does it reward cleverness?

The race for length and difficulty will continue. I will have none of it. We as golfers, architects, superintendents, golf professionals and club members, all need to stand and resist the lure of "length."

It is my promise to construct golf courses that are filled with variety, beauty and balance; build golf holes that are thoughtful, engaging and inspiring that require intelligence, wit, skill and execution; design golf courses that are meaningful for the game and fun for golfers of all abilities, not monuments for any specific golfer, individual or demand. Golf holes should be reviewed based upon their ability to provide for strategic, consistent and compelling match play while allowing for an honest treatment of the land. For, if there is no intelligent purpose to the striking of a golf ball, then there is no golf architecture and the game will not grow.



Difficulty and length is rather easy to design. To create an engaging and inspirational facility is quite challenging.



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Golf Course Builders Association of America Says "I Love New York"

This year's GCBAA summer meeting, held September 10-14, was a huge hit. Not only did we have more than 200 participants, but we also enjoyed an amazing view. Generally speaking, the GCBAA meeting site follows the PGA championship location, and this year's championship brought us to the Big Apple. Our headquarters location was conveniently situated in New Jersey, with a spectacular view of the Manhattan skyline. The opening cocktail reception allowed a view of the city from daylight, to sunset, to the illumination of all the skyscrapers. It was incredible and yet very heart-wrenching as it highlighted a very graceful reminder of Ground Zero: total darkness.



Sam and Lisa Ferro are with
Turf Diagnostic and Design.



Sharon with Lori Klumpner
and Ellen Davis of Greensmix.



Steve Young of Peat, Inc. with
Chris Osborne and Terry Gwinn
of BEST SANDS.

The next morning (September 11), I was awakened by the sound of bagpipes playing "Amazing Grace" outside my window. At first I thought, what a strange wake-up call, and then I realized the date and it made my eyes start to well up. I quickly got ready to attend the opening presentation being held downstairs. Once again, I heard the bagpipers. Their music graced the audience as they paraded in to open the educational seminars. We then witnessed a presentation put on by the Jersey City Fire Department. I am sure not many people know this, but they were one of the first units to respond to the World Trade Center attacks. It was certainly a privilege to hear a man speak of trying to save lives and yet make sure he arrived safely back to his family. As I looked around, there wasn't a dry eye in the house . . . how could there be when there was the dim reminder of Ground Zero within all of our eyesight?

Opening remarks came from representatives of all facets of golf: Tommy Sasser, president of the GCBAA; our own Steve Mona of the GCSAA; Tom Marzolf, ASCGA; Bob Scott of the ASIC; Mike Tinkey, NGCOA; Dave Oatis of the USGA; and Brian Whitcomb of the PGA of America.



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Fall Dinner Dance at Itasca Country Club: More Than A Touch of Class



After a long and exceptionally trying season, one of our first agenda items should be to get out with our significant others and show them our appreciation for putting up with us through our mood swings and long absences.



President Gary Hearn addresses the room.



Line dancing—is there anything funner than this?



Allan and Terry Goldstein.



Mike and Sharon Riesenbeck.

The MAGCS Fall Dinner Dance is just such an opportunity, and Scott and Dawn Speiden and the great folks at Itasca Country Club provided an ideal evening for us to do so. Having played the part of host on several previous occasions, I was going to do my best to find something—ANYthing—that just didn't quite measure up to my club's presentation, but I was stymied. Itasca Country Club and everyone associated with this evening—manager Brian Lasorda and especially catering manager Laurie Kosnik—provided an absolutely perfect party from the minute we arrived until the wee hours when it was past time to go home.

The décor, the appetizer spread (including an ice sculpture of the Wee One logo), the incredible dinner, the very accessible bar (once again sponsored by Dave and Debbie Nadler) and the entertainment were all simply exceptional. One of the great things about an evening like this is to see the respect and friendship between the host superintendent and the people in the clubhouse who go to extra lengths to put on a fabulous show for our group. And if you haven't been to this event recently (or ever), you are missing a really fun and special night. There can be no better way to kick off the holiday season than to don the dress duds and trip the light fantastic with the great friends we all have made in this business. And if nothing else, it's a great way to see who can dance and who is like me—rhythmically challenged. By the way, congratulations to Tim Davis for yet another victory this year—this one for taking first prize in the “most other wives danced with” competition.

We thank the Speidens and all the fine people at Itasca who made our evening so wonderful, the Nadlers for making it so blurry, the various taxi and limo drivers for making it so safe, the folks at TPEC for the music and entertainment, BTSI for the appetizers and the MAGCS members in attendance who made it a part of their holiday season—thank you all!

