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Phil Zeinert, Elgin C.C.

Home: 815-748-5730, Office: 847-622-4823

E-mail: Zeinert5@tbcnet.com

VICE PRESIDENT

Gary Hearn, Salt Creek G.C.

Home: 630-540-1460, Office: 630-773-4790

E-mail: g.hearn@worldnet.att.net

SECRETARY / TREASURER

Tim Anderson, Naperville C.C.

Home: 630-718-9601

E-mail: tjanderso@aol.com

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Luke Cella

MAGCS, 11855 Archer Ave., Lemont, IL 60439

Office: 630-243-7900, Fax: 630-257-0362

E-mail: luke@magcs.org

BOARD

Paul Bastron, Glen Flora C.C.

Home: 847-746-7212, Office: 847-244-6305

E-mail: pdbastron@sbcglobal.net

Dave Braasch, Glen Erin G.C.

Home: 608-373-7081, Office: 608-346-9009

E-mail: junior12i@aol.com

Jay Druhan, Palos Hills Municipal G.C. Home: 708-824-9493, Office: 708-599-0202

Tony Kalina, Prairie Landing G.C.

Home: 630-690-2683, Office: 630-232-1650 E-mail: tkalina@prairielanding.com

Todd Schmitz, Phillips Park G.C. Home: 630-851-5636, Office: 630-898-5296

E-mail: tschmitz@aurora-il.org

Scott Witte, Cantigny G.C.

Home: 630-497-1909, Office: 630-260-8182

E-mail: switte@tribune.com

PRESIDENT EMERITUS

Fred Behnke, Mount Prospect G.C.

Home: 773-774-1486, Office: 847-632-9331

E-mail: Fbehnke@mppd.org

COMMERCIAL REPRESENTATIVE

Sharon Riesenbeck, Waupaca Sand & Solutions

E-mail: sharon@waupacasand.com

CLASS 'C' REPRESENTATIVE

Chad Kempf, Hinsdale Golf Club

Home: 630-759-4348, Office: 630-986-1323

E-mail: chadk@hinsdalegolfclub.org

TURFGRASS ADVISOR

Dr. Randy T. Kane

University of Illinois & CDGA

630-257-2005

Cathy Miles Ralston

Phone & Fax: 847-740-0962

E-mail: oncourse@comcast.net

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

John Gurke

E-mail: Boomding@aol.com

GRAPHIC ARTIST

Mark Karczewski

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JANUARY 2005

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FRONT COVER

Your 2005 MAGCS Board of Directors and staff.

Front row (L to R): president emeritus Fred Behnke, Mount Prospect G.C.; vice president Gary Hearn, Salt Creek G.C.; president Phil Zeinert, Elgin C.C.; secretary/treasurer Tim Anderson, Naperville C.C.; executive director Luke Cella.

Back row (L to R): On Course editor Cathy Miles Ralston; director Todd Schmitz, Phillips Park G.C.; director Scott Witte, Cantigny G.C.; On Course contributing editor John Gurke, Aurora C.C.; Past Presidents Council chair Ed Braunsky, Geneva G.C.; and director Tony Kalina, Prairie Landing G.C.

Not pictured: director Paul Bastron, Glen Flora C.C.; director Jay Druhan, Palos Hills Municipal G.C.; class 'C' representative Chad Kempf, Hinsdale G.C.; and commercial representative

Sharon Riesenbeck, Waupaca Sand & Solutions. (Photo by Jim Trzinski)

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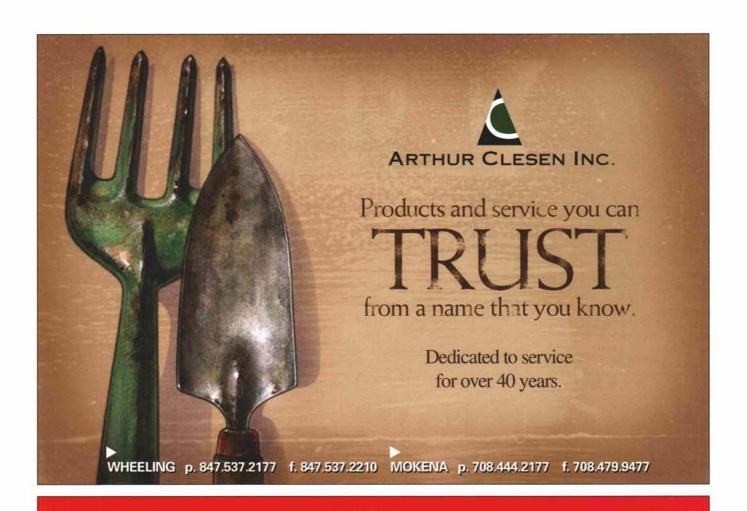
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John Gurke

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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ON COURSE WITH THE PRESIDENT

Phil Zeinert, CGCS Elgin Country Club

A Career Genealogy

I hope everyone had a great holiday season. The holiday season for the Zeinert family involves a four-hour trip northward to cheese land. The destination is an 80-acre farm that now serves as my parents' Christmas tree farm. The farm resembled Old MacDonald's Farm when I was growing up. The farm had an assortment of cows, beef cattle, hogs, a horse, a sheep, chickens, ducks, dogs and cats. Now the farm sells Christmas trees as cut-your-own and wholesale. For several years, a Christmas tree lot in St. Charles sold my family's trees.

During the holiday season, my three brothers and sister and their respective families gather to celebrate the holiday season. The children play their games while the adults play cards and Trivial Pursuit and watch a few bowl games. While watching our children play, we also find time to reminisce what our childhood was like growing up at the farm.

My childhood was very busy. I helped with the care of the animals and also worked for a little spending money by picking cucumbers, picking rock and baling hay. When I could drive, I picked up a full-time summer job at the local golf course. This nine-hole undulating course, Maple Hills, was my introduction into the care of turf. We mowed the fairways and roughs with the same gang mower—we just adjusted the height. After working two years at Maple Hills, I was able to secure a much higher-paying job at a lumber mill. The Tigerton Lumber Company employed my grandpa as an engineer for most of his adult life and that was my ticket to the great job. I was very fortunate to work with my grandpa on several projects, fortunate to experience Grandpa's thought process and wit that I now, being older, can appreciate as bordering genius.

Life wasn't all work and no play while growing up. It seemed as if I was all work and play, and very little sleep. Some things never change. I love competition and participated in all sorts of sporting activities. These activities included football, basketball and baseball, hunting and fishing. I also found time to participate in 4-H, FFA and student council. I have many fond memories of the people and the relationships developed during competition on the field, while fishing trout at a nearby stream, and showing livestock at the county fair.

I left the secure world of a high school that graduated 120 students to attend a university that enrolled 40,000 students. The baseball coaches at the University of Wisconsin enticed me to play for the Badgers. Although my talent fell short and my baseball career lasted only one year, I fell in love with the university. I switched majors from agricultural business to soil science during my junior year. The soil science department had a specialty in turf care. I managed to graduate in four years during the summer of 1985.

My first assistant position was working for Pat Norton at Cherokee Country Club in Madison, Wisconsin. Pat is now managing Nettle Creek Golf Course in Morris, Illinois. After two years of invaluable experience and very little pay, I headed south to Genoa, Illinois as superintendent at The Oak Club of Genoa. This position demanded being a jack-of-all-trades and master of most. The job required wearing the hat of superintendent, mechanic and irrigation technician. I was welcomed and befriended by MAGCS

(continued on page 4)

When I could drive, I picked up a full-time summer job at the local golf course. This nine-hole undulating course, Maple Hills, was my introduction into the care of turf.

member Dan Murray, who was then working at Kishwaukee Country Club in DeKalb. Dan helped me join the MAGCS and the NWGCS.

After eight years at The Oak Club of Genoa, my career took me still further south to DeKalb as superintendent of Kishwaukee Country Club. It was a new challenge. The challenge was communicating with a green committee and board of directors. The challenge was balancing member expectations with money. My experience with a very lowbudget course prior to Kishwaukee Country Club proved invaluable in meeting the expectations of Kishwaukee's members. I also became involved with the MAGCS by serving on the Golf Committee, which led to running for the Board of Directors.

My next career challenge came with assuming the role of superintendent at Elgin Country Club. It has been a fun challenge meeting the expectations of the members here at Elgin. They are very supportive of my serving the MAGCS members, and especially this year, serving as president of the MAGCS.

The current MAGCS team serving our membership shares the same goal of providing our members with opportunities to learn, obtain and utilize information and develop relationships. The team consists of: past president Fred Behnke, in charge of benevolence and by-laws; vice president Gary Hearn, organizing efforts in media relations and public relations; secretary/treasurer Tim Anderson, recording minutes and sending notices; director Dave Braasch, securing arrangements; director Tony Kalina, lining up edudirector Scott Witte, cation: drumming up editorial; director Paul Bastron, in charge of golf and scholarship; director Todd Schmitz, heading advocacy and compliance; and director Jay Druhan, in charge of membership.

We also have new commercial advisor Sharon Riesenbeck providing input from our commercial members, class C advisor Chad Kempf working with the assistant superintendents and Ed Braunsky relating what has and has not worked in the past with updates from the Past Presidents

The members at
Elgin are very
supportive of
my serving the
MAGCS members,
and especially this
year, serving as
president of the
MAGCS.

Council. We have once again gladly entrusted Cathy Ralston as editor of our great *On Course* magazine and John Gurke and his writing skills as editor of "the Bull Sheet." Our team looks forward to meeting your expectations.

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DIRECTOR'S COLUMN

Luke Cella, CGCS Executive Director



A Mission with Vision

On December 9, 2004, your new Board of Directors met officially for the first time to discuss some issues very important for the future of the Midwest Association of Golf Course Superintendents. First, a warm welcome to our two newest directors, Jay Druhan of Palos Hills Municipal Golf Course and Todd Schmitz of Phillips Park Golf Course, and our new commercial advisor, Sharon Riesenbeck of Waupaca Sand and Solutions. I look forward to working with each of you and am sure your ideas, thoughts and efforts will foster the Association.

Every organization has a mission, a purpose, a reason for being. The need for greenkeepers to group together was identified years ago and the MAGCS was formed.

This first gathering of the Board was not your typical slam-the-gavel, look-for-a-motion and jump-into-an-agenda meeting. It was an introspective look at the MAGCS. Simple questions were asked by our facilitator, Hannes Combest, CAE, the senior director of membership and professional development for the GCSAA; we are in debt for her time and forthrightness in assisting the Board throughout the day. The first task at hand was to simply answer the two-part question: Why does the MAGCS exist and for what purpose?

Look to our by-laws, as we did in the meeting. There is a description as to the purpose of the Association. It reads:

"To advance the rights and sciences attendant upon, pertinent or related to the occupation of greenkeeping, to unite the greenkeepers and golf course superintendents of the Chicago Metropolitan area into a cooperative group for the collection, preservation and dissemination of scientific and practical knowledge and information, thus effecting more efficient and economical maintenance for golf courses and thereby improving and enhancing the individual and collective prestige and efficiency of the members; the creation of an instrumentality of entity of record capable and susceptible of procuring all benefits to the members both individually and collectively."

While certainly descriptive and in-depth, it's a tough statement to design into a letterhead and explain to the golfing community, let alone the nongolfing/nonturf world. Backing up a step, we have fielded much discussion as to why it is necessary to develop a mission statement. The answer to this is simple, although the mission itself is sometimes very difficult to articulate. Every organization has a mission, a purpose, a reason for being. The need for green-keepers to group together was identified years ago and the MAGCS was formed. The overall core purpose and objective has not changed as it reads in our by-laws, however, the way we interact with the world has changed significantly. This is one of the key reasons we need to look at our mission statement and update it to reflect how we have evolved with time.

Our refined mission statement will accurately explain why we exist and what we hope to achieve in the future. As our mission statement has done in the past, the updated version will define the Midwest Association of Golf Course Superintendents' essential nature, its values and its work. Believe me, adhering to a mission is not new to the MAGCS: all the past presidents and Board members who have volunteered their time and efforts have followed and upheld the mission of the MAGCS. What we did in early December was just the formal process of examining, once again, why we are here. Updating the

(continued on page 6)

mission statement will work to the advantage of this Board and ultimately, the entire membership. The purpose of the MAGCS has not been reinvented, but by going through this process, **reinvigorated** as each member felt an authentic sense of ownership of our Association.

I really feel this couldn't have happened at a better time. With our new Board members in place, committee chairs assigned and my position as executive director finishing its maiden year, the leadership of the MAGCS is making strides to meet the needs of its individual members and to prepare for future leaders. Look for our revisited mission statement to resonate with each of you, as well as all the differing constituencies that we impact now and in the future. By no means is this an easy task, but your Board will be contacting you for your input. The MAGCS mission will inspire commitment and innovation, and be clear to all. Look for our statement to contain words similar to: networking, education, advancement, opportunity, growth and golf.

During this meeting, the Board of Directors also tried to answer the question of where will we be in the year 2020? This question was posed for several reasons, but the most important was to ensure that the Association has a plan to meet the evolving needs of the membership as we continue to evolve in our profession. There is no question that the role and responsibilities of the golf course superintendent have changed and will continue to change. The Board of Directors feels it is very important to prepare the Association to assist its members not only today, but also in the future. The Board of Directors developed goals and principles that were felt to be central in achieving the mission and preservation of the Association. As these goals become solidified, they will be assigned to individuals and committees for completion. And just as important, each goal will be reviewed in a meeting such as this on an annual basis.

As the Board of Directors wrapped up the meeting, a strong feeling of unity prevailed as the The Board of
Directors feels it
is very important
to prepare the
Association to assist
its members not
only today, but
also in the future.

group defined the purpose of the MAGCS. I'm quite certain this was felt in 1926 as the original group of greenkeepers left their meeting as one proud Association.

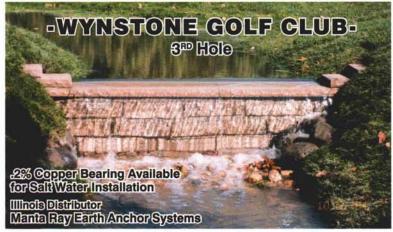




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Fred Behnke, CGCS -N-





Nancy and Fred Behnke.

I have a question for our readership. What do Northwest Hills Country Club; "dreadfully, awful long hair;" an Iranian orphan; a school bus; the intrigue of the American Foreign Service; and fresh-cut flowers have to do with this month's spotlight superintendent and site, Fred Behnke, CGCS and Mount Prospect Golf Club? Answer: just about everything!



An artist's rendering of the new Mount Prospect G.C. clubhouse.

While sitting down to interview Fred about Mount Prospect Golf Club, I soon came to realize that both have a storied history.

In 1923, Northwest Hills Country Club opened for business as the northwest suburbs' newest golf facility. Northwest Hills was the original name of the Mount Prospect Golf Club. "The identity of the original designer of the golf course remains unknown. There is no record of the course's designer. Whoever designed it did a great job. It is a very clever, very fun layout—a true traditional, parkland-style golf course. The golf course rests on approximately 105 acres and plays about 45,000 to 47,000 rounds annually. It is a real community asset," Fred says.

Northwest Hills C.C. roared through the remainder of the 1920s. "In the mid-Thirties, the club was sold to a consortium of businessmen reputedly involved with organized crime. Many fabled and notorious legends soon grew around the club based

on the notoriety of their 'mob' owners. The apparent front-man and manager of the club for many years, an adopted Iranian orphan, mysteriously disappeared without a trace. Rumors spread rampantly around Mount Prospect about his demise. Area lore claimed that he met his fate, and was 'hit' in the basement of the clubhouse. Supposedly, the clubhouse had secret rooms or 'catacombs' where heavy-handed activities allegedly took place," relates Fred, adding, "When the original clubhouse was torn down in 2003 to make room for the new clubhouse built on the same site, no secret rooms, vaults or bodies were revealed."

The Mount Prospect Park District purchased Northwest Hills C.C. in 1957 and changed the course's name to today's version, Mount Prospect Golf Club. Fred has been employed within the Mount Prospect Park District since

(continued on page 8)

1981, serving the past 17 years as Mount Prospect Golf Club's golf course superintendent.

He grew up in northern Wisconsin. Fred's grandfather, Erwin Behnke, was amongst the greatest influences in Fred's life. "My grandfather was a strong, earthy man, brawny physically, sturdy in character, and resolute in all his deeds and duty. He was a dairy farmer. It was hard work. For 50 years he would milk cows twice a day, everyday, 365 days a year whether sick or sound, day or night, sun or snow. When I think back about him, I can only imagine the fortitude it took to keep that farm going all those years. A family farm back then was successful only with tremendous acts of devotion, determination and sacrifice. It was all my grandfather knew. He loved it. Farming was all he wanted to do," says Fred.

Fred graduated in 1974 from Carthage College in Kenosha, Wisconsin with a degree in political science. "I had long hair—dreadfully, awful long hair," Fred recalls. "It was

the late Sixties, early Seventies hippie thing wanting to distinguish myself from everyone else while looking the same. The long hair was part of it. After a couple years I got bored of the long hair. It was just too difficult to care for, and I realized that it (my long hair) wasn't going to get me anywhere." Fred has had his current well-groomed styling ever since.

With dreams of intrigue and "touring the world," Fred aspired to become an agent in the American Foreign Service after college. "The Foreign Service never turned out. Their entrance exam got in my way. That exam was very difficult. I couldn't get over the threshold score for service entrance," Fred remembers.

While employed as a school-bus driver in 1977, Fred developed an interest in the golf courses he would drive past on his route, and in who maintained them. "After all," says Fred, "I played golf! How hard could it be to care for a golf course? I thought it would be easy to get a job taking care of the greens." Looking for a way in, Fred contacted Ray

Gerber at Glen Oak Country Club about the greenkeeping profession. Ray advised Fred to contact Bob Williams at Bob O'Link. Fred recalls Ray Gerber saying, "Bob Williams is a giant in the greenkeeping world, and the go-to guy, he'll tell you what you need to know."

"I telephoned Bob and struck up the nerve to visit him at Bob O'Link under the guise that I was interviewing him for the local newspaper," Fred says. "It took Bob about one minute to realize that I wasn't writing an article about him, instead I was feeling him out regarding employment opportunities in his profession." After talking with Fred for an hour or two, Bob offered Fred a job. Fred accepted and started working at Bob O'Link with Bob and his son, Bruce.

Mike Bavier, CGCS, hired Fred as an intern at Inverness Country Club in 1980. It was during this time that Fred met and began dating his future bride, Nancy. Inverness' gardener, whose name Fred can't remember, would cut fresh flowers



Check out Mount Prospect G.C.'s new clubhouse at the January meeting.

from the Inverness greenhouse for Fred to take to Nancy on each date. "Nancy and her roommates thought I 'had money' because I would bring her flowers on each date. Boy, were they mistaken," Fred laughs. "They thought I was some catch, when in reality, it was Nancy who was the catch! I've been in love ever since."

Fred and Nancy have been happily married for 23 years. They have two children, Dan, 20 years old, and Marilu, 15.

Fred considers his innovation, composed nature and the ability to fall asleep quickly as among his strengths. "Conversely, my weaknesses are untidiness and procrastination. I'll resolve in 2005 to work on them," Fred says.

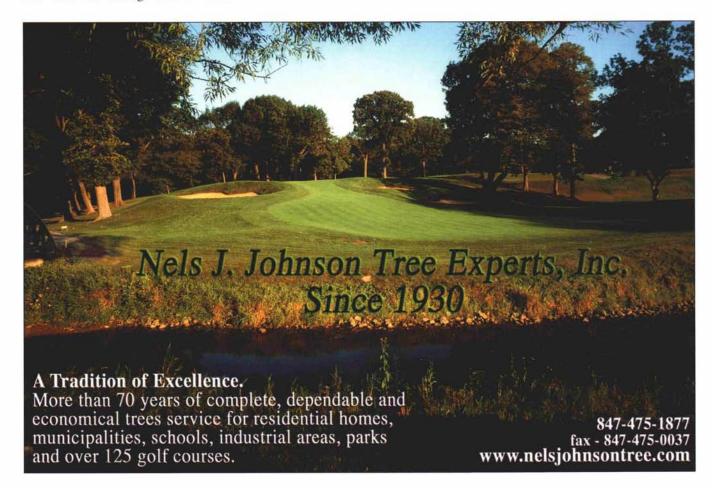
In 2004, Fred completed his year as president of the MAGCS. The impact of Fred's wisdom, knowledge, guidance and servitude for our Association will be felt for many years. "I learned a lot from serving on the Board. I was fortunate to serve with some of the smartest and most dedicated professionals in our industry. It has been rewarding. I'm a better

superintendent and person today because of it," Fred states. "I would strongly urge anyone who has had thoughts about serving on the Board to do so. What a pleasure it has been."

Adds Fred, "I have been blessed with many fine staffs over the years. Brett Barcel, our director of golf, and Lou Ennesser, our director of parks and planning, have made this a great job. Our current ground staff is the best! They are a very tenured, dedicated and talented group and we have fun. I love working here! It's all I want to do."

If he were with us today, I'm certain that Grandpa Erwin would be proud of his grandson. Fred Behnke and Mount Prospect Golf Club—a storied history indeed!

Fred considers
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and the ability
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