

- Solving construction issues.
- Hiring a maintenance crew.
- Training a maintenance crew.
- Acquiring the proper equipment in a fiscally responsible way.
- Maintaining without damaging, young and very sensitive turf.
- Working successfully without a central facility.
- Due diligence in decision-making and record-keeping.
- And last but not least, a requirement for unlimited patience!

The above challenge list just begins to describe the demands faced by the turfgrass professionals responsible for the grow-in of a new golf course.

The first action item I recommend is to read all of the different agreements of the many contractors involved. You must have a thorough understanding of the stated specifications and the fiscal responsibilities for each part of the construction and grow-in process. It will go a long way as daily workloads and responsibilities increase and the speed of construction and seeding program gains momentum. Once you have an understanding of the different contractors' responsibilities, the ensuing, sometimes daily, but always weekly, meetings will go more smoothly. This understanding will insure better communication and cooperation between the interested parties. The work performed will be more efficient and successful. Keep detailed daily logs. It does not happen as often as it should, but if you have the opportunity to be involved in the negotiation of the contracts and the planning and the design of the golf course and maintenance facility, DO IT! Your responsibility as manager of the grow-in staff will be judged on the opening condition and daily and yearly maintenance of the course and its facility, not on the construction process or its problems. Your input will go a long way in insuring a golf course that can be maintained effectively and successfully. Get and give as much input as you can.

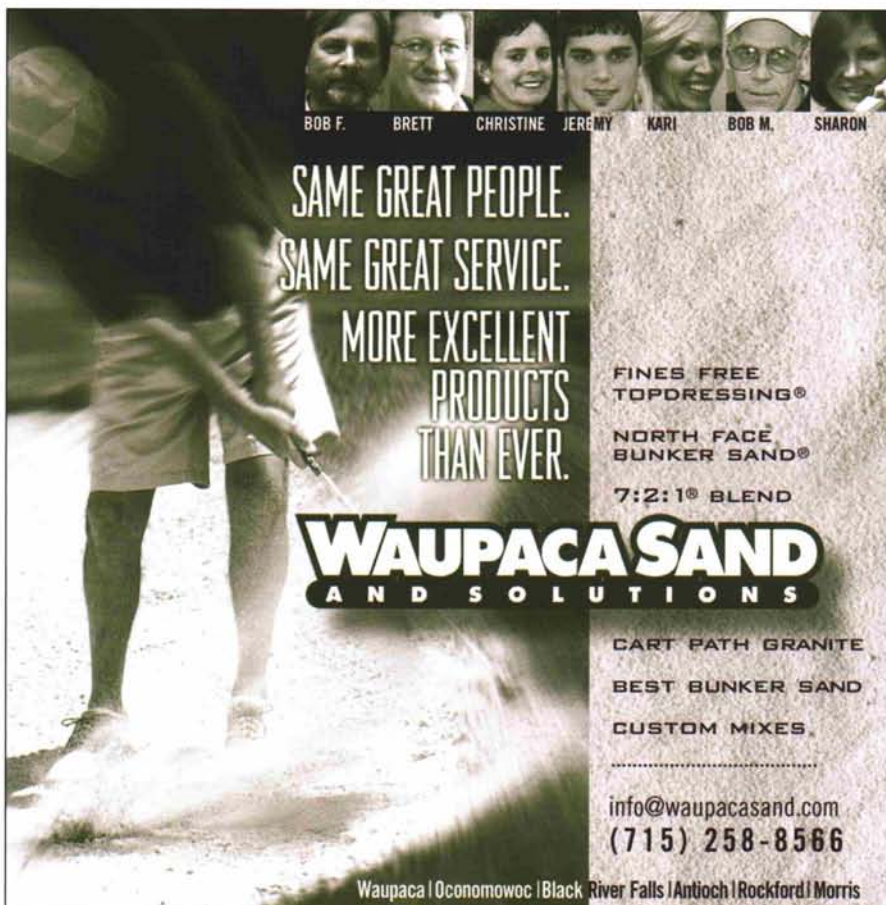
In accordance with the above, make sure that your daily record-keeping is extensive and precise. Your logs and your record-keeping will be invaluable in improving your own systems. As well, you can identify

construction problems and prevent their repetition. As future punch lists come into play, you will be able to sort out the varied fiscal responsibilities of each.

The second action item I recommend is to have a thorough understanding of your irrigation system and the programming of the central computer prior to seeding. I cannot overestimate the importance for proper coverage of the seeded and germinating areas. Also, the better your understanding of the system, its programming and its hydraulics, the better able you will be to prevent contamination or erosion by managing the amount and frequency of your watering programs and better insure proper head-to-head coverage. Computer-driven irrigation systems are becoming more and more sophisticated. Your ability to refine your irrigation system will be invaluable in a successful grow-in. Central control and communication to the controllers in a residential development under construction requires regular testing of home base-to-controller communi-

(continued on page 23)

... Make sure that your daily record-keeping is extensive and precise. Your logs and your record-keeping will be invaluable in improving your own systems.



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cation. As homes are being built, the ability to communicate to individual controllers from home base will change. Sometimes, controller booster antennas will be necessary. Invest in a few extra and have them on hand. I guarantee you will find a use for them and minimize your frustration. Also, if you think you need six hoses, get ten. Hand-watering, especially on tees and greens, is key to consistent and complete germination and the rooting of newly sodded areas. No matter how meticulous the design of the system, wind and the inevitable irrigation problems that arise will require the precision of hand-watering. Extra-quick couplers and aqua-quicks are also important. In line with this theme, take extra time in training your syringing crew in proper technique of hand-watering: not only seeded areas, but sodded areas as well. Proper installation and removal of couplers and their reinstallation must be emphasized.

In new construction, power issues oftentimes require the use of portable generators to power up pumps and controllers. Even though it might or might not be your responsibility to fuel and maintain these generators, check fuel levels and be involved in coordinating their proper maintenance to insure it does not happen during a period that is 90° with the wind blowing at 20 mph. These steps insure that a pump or series of controllers do not lose power, disrupting your watering plans.

Regarding training: in a new restaurant, it is not unusual for newly hired staff to be trained and tested for weeks prior to opening day. In new golf course construction, oftentimes you will not have that luxury. If you have a sister course or have the opportunity to leverage a friendly relationship with a neighboring course to train your staff in watering, edging, sod installation, mowing, and the proper and safe way to operate golf course equipment, I recommend you do it! It will be a great investment of your labor dollar paying huge dividends through the grow-in process. Your sister course or your neighbor can benefit from these free labor dollars. As the construction speeds ahead and more young turf

requires more and more of your attention, and as the varied fiscal responsibilities increase hole by hole, your ability to devote time to PROPER training will continued to be tested. We all know the most difficult part of our jobs is human resources. Do not depend on hiring an experienced, capable, golf course maintenance crew; you will probably



*The author's friend JJ,
an expert in goose control.*

have to create one!

One recommendation I know to be worthy of repetition is take advantage of today's technology. I for one know that there is a lot more my computer can do to make my life less cumbersome. I know my computerized irrigation system has many more aspects of refinement I still need to internalize in my programming skills. I

ask for and receive invaluable technical support from our vendors. Also, I utilize the many specialty software systems available for record-keeping. These resources will pay for themselves in the extra time you are able to be on the golf course and not in the office.

I have been fortunate to have as my supervisor an experienced, capable, accomplished and often very patient grow-in superintendent to guide me through the bumps and sometimes bruises of my learning curve in golf course grow-ins. A great deal of work and planning was done this past winter. However, as the spring came and the first nine holes of tees, fairways, greens, rough and natural areas came out of dormancy, I cannot put into words the sense of satisfaction as all the hard work and sacrifice of last year produced what has started to really look like a golf course. I look forward to finishing the process and setting up this golf course for play. If the opportunity knocks for you to do a grow-in, DO IT! The experience is terrific and with the daily challenges, I guarantee that boredom will not be an issue.

Ending on a lighter note, I hope you're lucky enough to have a friend like JJ to chase those geese for you from day one of the fall season to prevent nesting and damage.



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Midwest Breezes



Adventures in Recycling: Bob Lively Builds New Green at Flossmoor Using Soil and Materials From Its Predecessor

The members of Flossmoor Country Club have asked Bob to keep the greens very firm and fast. At the speed which Bob is running, the golf course is very challenging, but the 18th green became almost unplayable. Out of 4,000 square feet of putting surface, only 500 square feet of cupable area remained on the green.

Dave Esler was brought in to design a new green to 3.25% slope—the original green was designed with a 6.5% slope from top to bottom. The members instructed Bob to build a new green that would play in every way exactly like every other green on the golf course. So Bob put together a plan to build the new green with the turf and soil materials from the old green.

On September 21, 2003, a crew lifted the grass exactly as it lay on the green and laid it on the clubhouse lawn directly behind the remodeling site. Contractor Mike Reirdon then harvested the growing medium of the green with a rubber-track bobcat. The first layer consisted of 4.5 inches of sand topdressing accumulations. This layer was stockpiled adjacent to the remodeling site. The next layer consisted of 8 inches of rich topsoil. This was also stockpiled nearby. The clay shell was now all that remained of the old green.

To soften the contours, material was brought in to raise the lower half of the green. This required 38 six-wheelers of fill. As the fill material was brought in and dumped, the bobcat was on hand to spread and compact the fill in 2-inch lifts. Bob felt that this was the most important phase of the project, because he did not want the green to settle in the future.

Dave Esler staked out the final subgrade, and Mike Reirdon performed shaping. Now it was time to respread the topsoil and compact it with the bobcat. The sand was then respread for the final layer. Finally, the crew put back the original sod from the green exactly as it originally lay.

The entire green surface was finished in four-and-a-half days. Bob then concentrated on completing the surrounds with embankment grading and bunkering.

Bob promised that he would have the green opened by June 1, 2004, but only if he could get back down to his standard 0.100" cutting height. With a lot of sand topdressing and rolling, Bob was able to open the green to play on April 28, 2004, 32 days ahead of schedule.

Paul Vermeulen encouraged Dave to install drain tile

(continued on page 26)



(L to R) Applying fertilizer and fungicide to existing green prior to removal of sod; removing sod from green; the green sod laid down just as it came off the green directly behind green complex on the clubhouse lawn; excavator removing 4" topdressing layer.



(L to R) Excavator removing 8" topsoil layer; excavator shaping green with fill brought in to reduce slope of green; hauling old topsoil mix back into green after fill had been added to reduce slope; hauling in old topdressing mix to go on top of old topsoil mix.



(L to R) Superintendent Bob Lively and architect Dave Esler checking grade elevations; final grading and compaction with excavator and machine; Flossmoor grounds crew doing final raking before sod work; sod being put down exactly the way it came off.



(L to R) First rolling after laying sod; second rolling one week later; first mowing 10 days after sodding; TDI installing drain lines in spring 2004.

to the green. At first Bob felt that 3.25% surface drainage would handle all of his drainage concerns, but he did not want to take the risk of the entire project failing on this one issue, so he elected to install tile, but he waited until after the green was grown in. Bob then contracted TDI to install 2-inch tile on 9-foot spacing. But Bob modified the mix that went back into the tile trench to a material that was higher in organic matter than the material that is recommended by TDI. Bob keeps his green very dry and he was concerned that the trench backfill material would dry down faster than the rest of the surface. So Bob developed a 50/40/10 blend to go back in to the trenches. This has worked out very well; the trenches are only visible in the winter when the green is dormant.

The members of Flossmoor love the new 18th green, and Bob is very happy with how Dave Esler's design matches up so nicely with the rest of the greens. If you didn't know it, you would never be able to guess which green on the golf course was remodeled.

As a sidebar, Bob is a firm believer in Vertidrain his greens the first Monday of every month in the growing season with ¼-inch needle tines. The 18th green at Flossmoor had been Vertidrain several times before remodeling, and when the topsoil was being striped from the old green, the Vertidrain channels were evident everywhere; they were still open at all levels, and packed with white roots. Bob started this procedure when he was at McHenry Country Club and he has not core-aerated greens for more than 10 years now.

—Bradley Anderson, Midlane Country Club

Trailblazing with Velocity: Firsthand Experiences with New Postemergence Herbicide

By now, many superintendents have heard about Velocity, a new postemergence herbicide on the market. Velocity has been available for use in Michigan since 2003 and is available for use in Illinois in 2005. It is labeled for use on creeping bentgrass and perennial ryegrass tees and fairways to control *Poa annua*, *Poa trivialis* and other broadleaf weeds.

It is not surprising that a lot of interest has been generated among superintendents by Velocity's potential to control or eliminate *Poa annua*. As with most new chemicals, a lot of hope exists for the product, but with little experience there are also many questions to be answered. For that reason, "Midwest Breezes" contacted several superintendents who do have experience using Velocity. Tim Asselin and Doug Kendzierski are superintendents in Michigan who have applied the product during the past two years that it has been available in their state. Scott Werner is a superintendent from Illinois who has used Velocity on his course in conjunction with some of Bruce Branham's research.

Table 1 contains some general information regarding the areas treated at each course, as well as details about these superintendents' Velocity applications. Here is a summary of each superintendent's thoughts and observations.

Tim Asselin, Shepherd's Hollow, Clarkston, Michigan

Tim applied Velocity to two quarter-acre plots on his 13th and 16th fairways and was happy with the results. Beginning in mid-June, he made three applications at the 20 grams a.i./acre rate at 14-day intervals. After the final application, all of the *Poa annua* had been killed and the *Poa trivialis* was extremely weak. Tim believes the *Poa trivialis* was never killed because the 14-day interval between applications was too long.

Tim made several other observations throughout the Velocity treatments. First, he noticed some bentgrass discoloration that he characterized as Granny Smith apple green. Furthermore, he observed a greater discoloration with the first application than with subsequent applications. Second, there was a reduced but acceptable level of bentgrass vigor. Though, as the *Poa annua* faded, Tim decided to topdress the area with a soil-and-seed mixture. Finally, significant brownish-gray discoloration of Kentucky bluegrass occurred in areas where the applicator had overlapped into the rough.

Doug Kendzierski, Black Lake Golf Club, Onaway, Michigan

Doug applied Velocity to all tees and fairways at his course in 2003 and 2004. In 2003, he made two 30 grams a.i./acre applications at 16-day intervals beginning on July 1. After the second application, Doug observed that none of the *Poa annua* or *Poa trivialis* had been killed. He attributed this result to the interval between applications being too long.

In 2004, he adjusted the rate, frequency and start date. Beginning on June 1, he made six 11 grams a.i./acre applications at seven-to-10-day intervals. Doug explained that he had marginal success at best. By the final application, it looked like the *Poa annua* and *Poa trivialis* were dead but several weeks later both began to recover. In the end, he estimated that less than 20% of the *Poa annua* and less than 30-40% of the *Poa trivialis* had been killed.

Following all applications, he noted a discoloration of the bentgrass described as lime green or Granny Smith apple green. Also, there was no obvious thinning of the turf and no growth regulation was observed.

Doug offers two tips to anyone considering applying Velocity. First, he recommends spraying an entire tee or fairway rather than just a test plot. He found that when he sprayed a test plot on a fairway, the plot was very obvious to golfers due to the bentgrass discoloration. However, when he sprayed an entire fairway, nothing else was there in the area to compare it to and the discoloration went virtually unnoticed by golfers. Second, Doug observed a severe dark-gray discoloration of Kentucky bluegrass when application overlapped into the rough. To avoid this issue, when spraying fairways he would first spray the entire inside perimeter of the fairway. Then he would spray the remaining inside area and make any necessary overlaps on the fairway rather than the rough. He found that the bentgrass had a much greater tolerance to overlapping than the rough.

Doug's plans for the 2005 season are to tweak the Velocity rates again and make applications to only his three worst tees and three worst fairways. This decision is due in part to the cost of the product. He estimated that his 2004 tee and fairway program cost around \$9,000.

Scott Werner, Lincolnshire Fields Country Club, Champaign, Illinois

Part of Bruce Branham's research on Velocity has been conducted at Lincolnshire Fields with superintendent Scott Werner. In 2003, they tested numerous rates and frequencies of application. After observing the results, Scott applied Velocity to a 30' x 30' plot in his 9th fairway that contained 50% creeping bentgrass and 50% *Poa annua*. He decided to make the first application in mid-September because the turf was actively growing and if overseeding was necessary, he would have an adequate window of time in which to accomplish it. Two 45 grams a.i./acre applications were made at 14-day intervals to the entire plot. A third application at the same rate and interval was then made to half of the plot.

Scott was pleased with the results. The *Poa annua* population came down from 50% to 10% and remained at 10% throughout 2004 without any further applications. Particularly surprising was how quickly the bentgrass filled in the areas where the *Poa annua* had been killed. Even with *Poa annua* spots up to 12 inches in diameter, overseeding was not necessary. Scott points out that it is important to apply the product when the turf is actively growing and that no extra nitrogen was applied at the time of these applications. The fairways typically receive 2-2½ lb. N/M/year with 1 lb. coming from a granular application in November and the remainder being injected through the irrigation system throughout the golfing season.

A faded green discoloration of the bentgrass occurred two to three days after each treatment. The bentgrass typically recovered four to five days later. Also, a slight growth regulation was observed that seemed to coincide with the discoloration. This was followed by a slight surge in growth about the same time the bentgrass began to recover from the discoloration.

—Brian Mores, Inverness Golf Club

TABLE 1.

COURSE	YEAR	AREA	% BENTGRASS/ POA ANNUA/ POA TRIVIALIS	HEIGHT OF CUT	START DATE	RATE/ACRE	FREQUENCY	NUMBER OF APPS.
Shepherd's Hollow (MI)	2004	Fairways	90/5/5	.425	June 15	20 grams a.i.	14 days	3
Black Lake (MI)	2003	Fairways	93/5/2	.375"	July 1	30 grams a.i.	16 days	2
		Tees	90/7/3	.375"	July 1	30 grams a.i.	16 days	2
	2004	Fairways	93/5/2	.375"	June 1	11 grams a.i.	7-10 days	6
		Tees	90/7/3	.375"	June 1	11 grams a.i.	7-10 days	6
Lincolnshire Fields (IL)	2004	Fairway	50/50/0	.437"	Sept 15	45 grams a.i.	14 days	2/3

(continued on page 28)

Dan Nielsen Tackles Greenside Bunker Renovation at Golf Club of Illinois

The Golf Club of Illinois, located in Algonquin, is nearing the end of a greenside bunker renovation project. With all the work done in-house by superintendent Dan Nielsen, GCI has changed the original flashed-sand-designed bunkers over to a flat-sand design. Along with the design change, staff improved drainage in all bunkers and used Meyer Materials' FA-9 mason sand in replacement of the original torpedo sand. Upcoming changes to fairway bunkers will entail replacement of the torpedo sand and fixing any drainage issues. Progress will start up again this spring.

—Josh Murray, *Cantigny Golf*



Greenside bunker at Golf Club of Illinois, post renovation.



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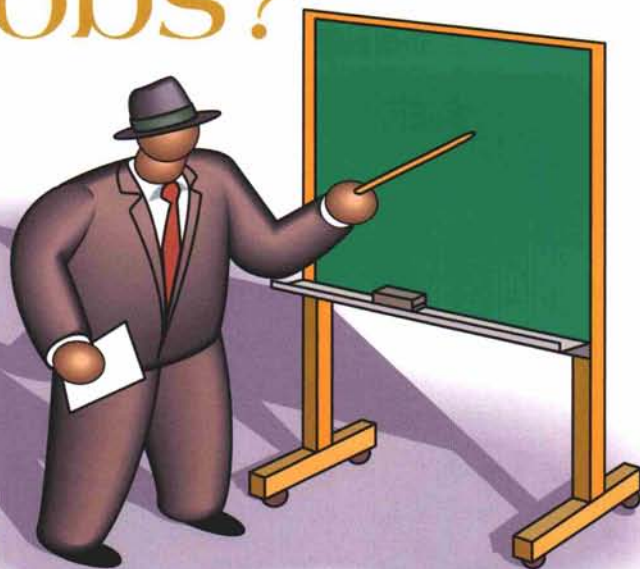
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Changing Jobs? Know Your Options

What to do with your retirement funds when you change jobs



There are many new challenges to face if you happen to be changing jobs or retiring—not the least of which is the decision of what to do with the retirement funds that have accumulated in your 401(k) and other retirement plans over the years of service with your employers. These decisions may have a significant impact on your future financial security in retirement.

Option 1: Your employer hands you a check for the amount in your retirement plan. This may look like a bonanza, but selecting this option could be a mistake. First, your employer is required to withhold 20% from your lump-sum distribution, so you will only receive 80% of the amount you are entitled to. Second, if you are younger than 59-1/2, you may be subject to a 10% additional federal income tax penalty for early withdrawal. Third, you are liable for paying income taxes on the full amount—if you fail to rollover your funds into an IRA within 60 days.

Option 2: Leave the money with your old employer. If you have more than \$5,000 in your former employer's retirement plan, you can usually leave the money where it is. (Check with your employer.) The advantage of doing this is that it relieves you of making a decision for the time being while maintaining the tax deferral of your assets. The downside is that you are limited to the investment choices offered by your ex-employer—or even fewer choices, since some companies have additional restrictions for non-active employees. Additional disadvantages are that you cannot make new contributions to your account.

Option 3: Move your retirement money to your new employer. This option only works if you are moving to another job. Even then, your new employer may not accept rollovers from a previous plan or may impose a waiting period. Also, the investment options offered by your new employer may not be as extensive as you want.

The benefit is that you maintain your assets' tax deferral and benefit from the convenience of having your assets in one place.

Option 4: Put the money into a traditional IRA rollover. By having your former employer's retirement plan pay the IRA custodian directly, you avoid the 20% withholding or any penalties. There are numerous benefits to your own IRA rollover:

- A wide choice of investment opportunities—you can select the stocks, bonds, mutual funds or other investments that are right for you.

- The ability to withdraw without penalty for some purposes. Withdrawals can be made without penalty by taking a series of substantially equal periodic payments for at least five years or until after you reach age 59-1/2. Withdrawals are subject to normal income tax treatment and may be subject to an additional 10% federal income tax penalty. Thus, if you are planning to retire before you reach age 59-1/2, this method can enable you to dip into your IRA rollover without penalty. Please note, there may be other eligible retirement plans that can accept funds.

Contact your financial professional to explore the details and decide if an IRA rollover is right for you.



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GE-31651 (03/05) (exp. 03/07)

the Bull Sheet

John Gurke, CGCS
Contributing Editor

DATES TO REMEMBER

May 1 – Was when J.W. Turf held its annual equipment auction at its Hampshire, IL facility.

May 3 – First Tee of Chicago's inaugural Charity Classic at The Glen Club, **Stephen Daurer** host.

May 14 – Audubon International's North American Birdwatching Open (conveniently held on International Migratory Bird Day). Contact **Peter Leuzinger** or **Todd Schmitz** with questions about this fun event.

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

May 23 – MAGCS/ITF 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.

July 16 – Annual Kane County Cougars Outing at Elfstrom Field in Geneva, IL. Note that this IS the July MAGCS monthly meeting.

Make plans for June 29—the 5th Annual John Buck Memorial Golf Outing is coming to Hughes Creek Golf Club, and another great event has been planned. The event, which benefits the John Buck Scholarship and MAGCS Scholarship funds, as well as scholarship funds for the Kane County Farm Bureau Founda-

tion and Northwest Illinois Golf Course Superintendents Association, will be a great way to remember our dear departed friends John Buck and Dave Meyer. It's a four-person-scramble format with a huge raffle (1st prize is a 2005 John Deere CS Gator), drinks, pig roast dinner and other prizes. Call J.W. Turf at 847-683-4653 to make your reservations!

In March, the Chicagoland Association of Golf Course Superintendents (CAGCS) held its annual meeting and election at the Oak Park Country Club (**Al Fierst** host). The board of directors for 2005 is as follows:

Chuck Anfield, CGCS

.....President
Rick Bowden

.....Vice President/Forum
Alan Perkinson

.....Secretary/*Verdure*
Dan Charlton

.....Treasurer
Dan Dinelli, CGCS

.....Director/Education
Jon Jennings, CGCS

.....Director/Arrangements
Mike Matchen

.....President Emeritus
Congratulations to you all and best of luck in 2005!

Breathe easy—Thiram is alive and kicking. According to the February 25th EPA Reregistration Eligibility Decision document, Thiram will remain available for use on golf courses with the following restrictions:

- Restriction to use on greens and tees only.
- Reduction of winter treatments from a maximum of four applications to a maximum of one application.
- Reduction of summer treatments from a maximum of eight applications to a maximum of three applications.
- Restriction of the number of annual applications to 47 pounds of active ingredient per acre (a 40% total reduction in Thiram use on golf courses).

- Increase in the re-treatment interval from seven to 14 days. This is fairly good news for the Midwest market, which accounts for a large part of Thiram use (according to local vendors).

Congratulations to **Joel Purpur, CGCS** of Park Ridge C.C. on yet another milestone—Joel was recently voted Coach of the Year in the Elmhurst Chiefs Hockey League (in which his son Hayden plays). Joel won this award over 17 other coaches, and was honored at a Northwest Hockey League banquet in March. Hayden's (and Joel's) team finished the season 25-4-1, and took home a banner for the accomplishment. Congratulations, Joel AND Hayden.

In case you missed it in the 30 other golf industry publications, Julian Arredondo, CAE has stepped down from his position as chief operating officer of GCSAA after 11 years of service as chief financial officer and COO.

We heard about it last year, and it's making its way toward us . . . I speak not of that pesky ash borer, but of the neighboring states of Illinois that have banned phosphorous fertilizers. The Countryside Lake Association—a homeowners' association in Lake County—voted in March to ban the use of lawn and garden fertilizers containing phosphorous, becoming the first such group to do so in our state. Phosphorous runoff has been linked to the preponderance of unsightly algae blooms in ponds, and by banning its use, it is hoped that ponds and retention areas will improve in quality and clarity. This is just the start . . .

So how did you spend YOUR St. Patrick's Day? Glomming onto the "all things green" theme of the day, the CDGA and USGA teamed up for a very memorable party—the CDGA/USGA Green Seminar—at Medinah Country Club (**Tom Lively, CGCS** host). This year's version featured a very strong speaker list, including Tom Meeks (senior director, Rules and Competitions for USGA), Bradley S. Klein (senior writer, *Golfweek* magazine),

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