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# the Bull Sheet

John Gurke, CGCS, Contributing Editor

## DATES TO REMEMBER

February 3-7 - GCSAA's National Championship and Golf Classic in Houston, TX.

February 6-11 - Golf Industry Show and GCSAA Education Conference in Atlanta, GA.

February 9-10 - MAGCS Hospitality Suite at the Hyatt Regency Hotel from 6 to 9 p.m. each night.

February 23 - Second Annual Class C Winter Workshop at Midwest Golf House. Details follow.

February 27 - March 2 - The Indiana-Illinois Turfgrass Short Course in Willowbrook, IL. Details follow.

March 2 - MAGCS monthly meeting at Midwest Golf House in Lemont, IL.

March 8 - BASF and Lesco educational seminar at Butterfield Country Club, **Mike Vercautren** host.

March 14-16 & 28-30 - Toro Golf Customer Factory Service Training Programs in Bloomington, MN. Contact your TPEC representative for details.

April 24 - MAGCS monthly meeting at Heritage Bluffs Golf Club, **Charles Anfield, CGCS** host.

'Tis that time of year again when movement within our ranks is at its busiest, and this winter is no exception (though not even CLOSE to what's going on in the NFL coaching ranks).

First, congratulations to **Bob Breen** of Arrowhead Golf Club on his recent retirement. It's always nice to hear about a great guy leaving on his own terms, isn't it? Best of luck to you, Bob!



Bob Breen.

Also, best wishes to **Scott Speiden**, who recently retired from Itasca Country Club to pursue his new career with Growing Solutions, Inc. Scotty has been named vice president of sales and marketing for this provider of irrigation water treatment systems and fertigation to Midwest-area golf courses, and brings more than 25 years of experience in the golf industry to the company.



Scott Speiden.

Finally, **Scott Harris** of Harris Motor Sports announced that **Steve Kashul** is the new director of business development for Harris Yamaha Golf Cars. Most will recognize Steve from his many years as a sportscaster with the Bulls, and more recently on CLTV with his weekly show "Golf Extra." Along with his full-time duties with Harris, Steve will continue to host his show "The Golf Scene" on Comcast Sportsnet, as well as anchor his radio show of the same name on WIND 560-AM. Lastly, Steve will continue as a featured columnist for the *Chicago District Golfer* magazine. Sounds like he'll be a busy man—welcome, Steve!

And while we're at it, MAGCS would like to extend its warmest welcome to its other new members:

**Christopher Plumb**—

Absolute Service, Inc.—Class E.

**Christopher Painter**—

CDGA—Class A.

**Grayson Harms**—

Cress Creek Country Club—Class C.

**Jeff Leuzinger**—

Legacy Products, Inc.—Class E.

**Greg Wiggins**—

Bryn Mawr Country Club—Class C.

**Brad Allen**—

Country Club of Indianapolis—Class C.

**Michael Papineau**—

White Mountain Golf Course—Class B.

**James Lohmann**—

Golf Creations—Class E.

Best of luck to all of you!

The Second Annual Class C Winter Workshop will be held once again at Midwest Golf House on the 23rd of this month and will feature **Phil Schwarz**, meteorologist from ABC-7 News, and **Paul Vermuelen** from the USGA Green Section. This event is not JUST for Class C members—anyone interested can attend. Call Class C advisor **John Ekstrom** at 630-260-8150 for information.

The Indiana-Illinois Turfgrass Short Course is coming to the area at the end of this month (February 27 through March 2). To learn more about this program, call **Jennifer Biehl** at 765-494-8039 or **Carol Preston** at 217-333-7738. You can

(continued on page 14)





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e-mailing **Luke Cella**. Call Luke  
at 630-243-7900, or e-mail him  
at [luke@magcs.org](mailto:luke@magcs.org).

On Thursday, March 2, the MAGCS  
monthly meeting will come to Golf  
House. The educational portion will  
feature Dr. Joe DiPoala of Syngenta  
Crop Science, who will discuss  
"Successful Marketing for the Golf  
Course Superintendent." Remember,  
most MAGCS educational seminars  
are good for GCSAA points toward  
retaining your current membership  
status and for recertification, so  
don't miss them.

You heard it here first—the Golf  
20/20 Conference held last fall  
recently announced the findings of  
an intriguing and extensive research  
project: "Study shows golfers

support good course conditions."  
In the words of Messrs. Guinness,  
"BRILLIANT!"

Congrats to our dearly departed  
Vince Dodge (no, he isn't in heaven,  
but is enjoying life in his own little  
piece of it), whose golf course, the  
Wilderness at Fortune Bay in Tower,  
Minnesota, was named "America's  
Best New Upscale Public Course"  
for 2005 by *Golf Digest*.  
Yah hey dere, Vinnie.

Another recently departed (retired,  
actually) MAGCS member has some  
news of his own. Not only have **Jim  
McNair** and wife, Diane, moved  
from their Aurora home to the cozy  
downstate burg of Eureka, where  
they will be closer to family members  
in Pontiac and Bloomington as well  
as to their new house in Arkansas,  
they also are proud new grandpar-  
ents. Alexander James Soares was  
born on December 30, entering the  
world at 7 lb., 10 oz. Congratula-  
tions to the whole clan (they  
officially earned clan status when

they moved downstate, and may now  
call each other "kinfolk").

A big congrats to Dana and **Brian  
Baker** (Chicagoland Turf) on the  
birth of their new 7 pound, 8 ounce  
baby boy Gavin Noel on December  
19. As proud papa puts it, one more  
boy and the Bakers are a foursome!

Finally, best of luck to the MAGCS  
chapter golf teams in the upcoming  
National Championship and Golf  
Classic in Houston. Here's the  
group we're going to war with:

Team #1—**Tommy Robinson,**  
**Al Pondel, Tim Scott** and  
**Dave Kohley.**

Team #2—**Brad Legnaioli, Dave  
Radaj, Tim Davis** and **Dave Arden.**

Team #3—**Brad Johnsen,**  
**Steve VanAcker, Ed Fischer** and  
**Paul Schaefer.**

Team #4—**Al Fierst, Don Cross,**  
**Bob Maibusch** and **Les Rutan.**

Team #5—**Bob Lively, Kurt Sams,**  
**Don Ferreri** and **Tommy Witt.**

Team #6—**Tom Prichard,**  
**Rick Wilson, Justin VanLanduit**  
and **Ernie Kaplan.**  
Go get 'em, fellas!



## CLASSIFIEDS

### For Sale:

- 20 Standard ball-washers, crank-style, red, in good condition with many extra parts. Asking \$20 each. Call Bill at McHenry C.C. at 815-385-0635.
- The Palatine Park District has the following equipment for sale, all in good condition:
  - \* 1999 Toro 5200-D Fairway mower with 4,500 hours.
  - \* 2003 Toro Greensmaster Flex 21 mower with under 100 hours.
  - \* 2002 Toro Greens Aerator, under 50 hours.
  - \* 1999, 2000 and 2001 John Deere 220-A Greensmowers.
  - \* 1992 Ryan GA-30 Aerator.Call **Brad Helms** at 847-359-4022 or e-mail him at [bhelms@palatineparks.org](mailto:bhelms@palatineparks.org) to make an offer or get more information.
- 2004 Toro Sand Pro 5020 in excellent condition—\$6,000 OBO. Call Dan or Mark at Barrington Hills Country Club at 847-381-0140.
- Bryn Mawr C.C. has the following items for sale:
  - \* 4 Jacobsen 22" walking greens mowers (2-1991, 2-1992) with new reels, very well kept and used as backup mowers this past season. Groomers not on, but available. \$700 each.
  - \* 1992 International (Locke now) bedknife AND reel grinder, works very well. \$4,000.
  - \* Very old Jacobsen 548 PTO overseeder. \$350.
  - \* 350 traffic control posts, 6" X 6" X 15" high, wooden with anchor spike, tops beveled and painted white for added visibility—make an offer. Call Brian at 847-677-4112 to steal these items.
- Befco 14' tow-behind rotary mower. Good condition. \$3,000 or best offer. Contact Mike Bavier at 847-358-7030.

### College Tuition Bills Looming?

The MAGCS offers educational scholarships to the children of Midwest members. The scholarship program is administered by the MAGCS Scholarship Committee. All classes of the Association are eligible to participate. For information and an application, please contact the MAGCS business office or Tim Anderson at 630-355-9807.





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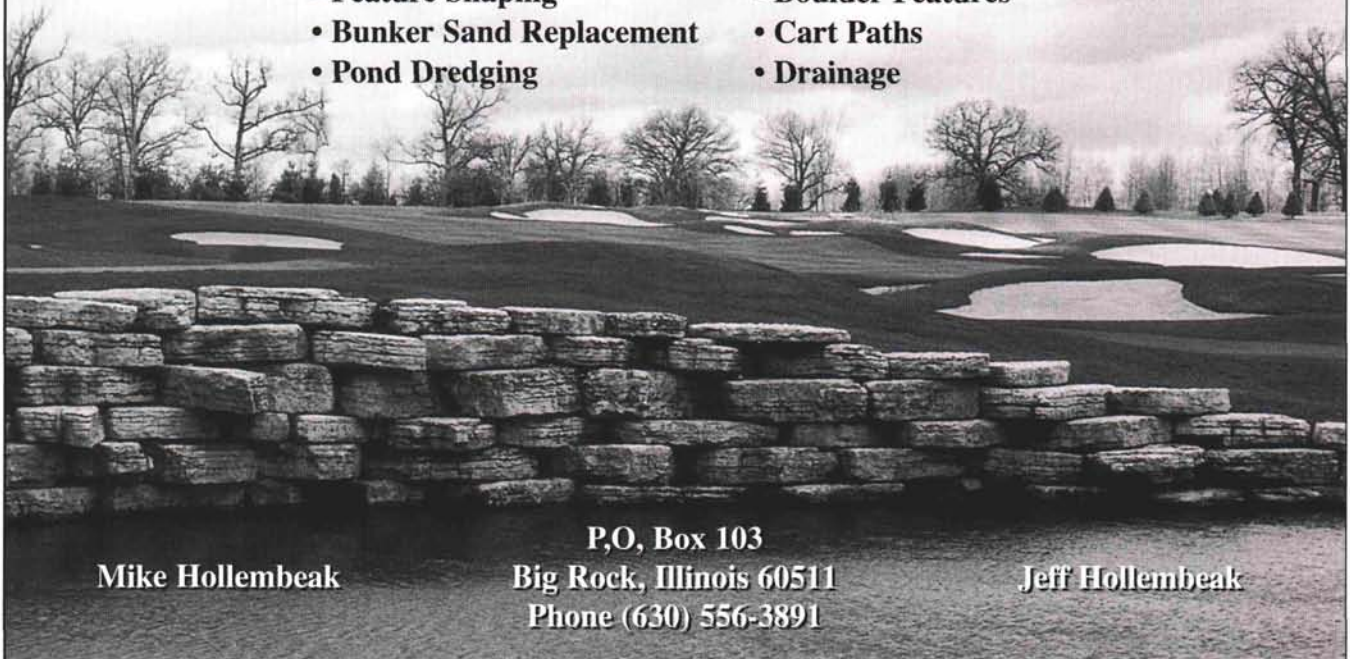
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## TECHNICALLY SPEAKING WITH TETA

Ted Soenksen Wilmette Golf Club

### **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE** **A New Alliance**

Greetings and welcome to a new addition to *On Course* magazine. This segment marks a new beginning for the Turf Equipment Technicians Association. I am proud to announce that the membership has been invited to join the Midwest Association of Golf Course Superintendents. This gives us many opportunities to grow in the golf and turf industry. Over the past 20 years, TETA has been striving to grow as an association in membership and to promote the image, stature, reputation and skills of the professional turf industry equipment technician.

Since starting in the realm of golf and turf equipment back in 1994, I have enjoyed a broad range of experiences. The people are as different as the equipment. This has been a great time in my life to make new friends and learn from their experiences. Fortunate to have been hired by the Wilmette Park District and then given the opportunity to join TETA, I've since grown in knowledge and expertise on the complex equipment we deal with on the golf course day to day. Now, after 10 rewarding years, I feel fortunate to have been given the chance to give something back, first by being on the board of directors and now serving as president of TETA.

Our association has built a strong support network including many sources of information for educational seminars as well as direct contacts to manufacturers who are willing to help us in our unique situations. We have to educate ourselves to better maintain the complex equipment we deal with at our courses. TETA has built a reputation nationally as an organization of professionals and we have become who we are by doing for ourselves.

We are all volunteers in this association, devoting our own time willingly because we enjoy our careers. The acceptance and positive feedback we get from the superintendent is much appreciated and necessary for the technician to excel in his or her position. However, while there are a great many golf courses in the Chicago area, the proportion of technicians in our association remains lean. I wish to extend an invitation to join to all that do not know the benefits that TETA can bring to your golf course technician and your course. I welcome inquiries, questions and comments.

Consider this. Once a piece of equipment is purchased and delivered to a customer (golf course, park district, etc.), it no longer is the dealer's concern. The technician becomes responsible for that \$35,000+ fairway mower or spray rig. While under warranty or beyond, the equipment requires the technician to fill the manufacturer's shoes. In future issues, you will read of experiences the turf equipment technician has been challenged with and succeeded in. In this section of *On Course*, you will also see service tips offered by member technicians. Through our association, the Turf Equipment Technicians Association, we will find better ways to maintain, adjust and repair our equipment. Did I say "our equipment?" Yes, I did, and I'm sorry if this offends anyone's sensibilities, but this is the way I feel in my shop. Although I do not own the equipment, they are mine in a certain way and there are many others who have the same mindset and are proud of it.

Thank you again for the opportunity to be a part of MACGS. I am excited for the opportunity, as I know this alliance is a first in the industry.

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## SERVICE TIP

### Checking Your Tires? Check Your Gauges First

Did you ever wonder if tire gauges are accurate indefinitely? I for one never gave it much thought, until recently. Think about it; I'm sure that each and every one of you has more than one tire gauge in your facility. I have three different gauges in use. One is the most popular, inline, glass-encased, high-pressure variety, used mostly to check tire pressures requiring 15-65 psi. The second gauge I have is the pocket-style, spring-loaded 20-60 psi gauge. The third and most critical gauge is the 0-20 psi gauge that measures in half-pound increments.

I was curious about the way my own passenger vehicle tires measured when they appeared low. I proceeded to check them with the two proper gauges I have in the shop. I expected to be satisfied with the readings indicated. Both showed the tires to be within 2 psi difference. This is not a very critical difference as long as you are using the same gauge to check all the tires on the vehicle. I proceeded to check the tire pressures again using a similar gauge that I brought from home.

To my surprise, I found the pressures on all four tires to be 5 psi lower than indicated by the other two gauges from the shop. At this point, my curiosity was piqued. I went out, purchased new tire gauges and rechecked the same tires. I found the same difference, each tire about 5 psi shy of being the desired pressure, between the readings measured by the old gauges and the new.

I really took for granted the life of these gauges. The low pressure requirements of the various turf equipment, where tire pressures range from 8 to 10 psi, is very critical for proper operation. The gauge I had been using turned out to be reading almost 3 psi lower than the new gauge purchased. For the minimal cost to replace all three gauges, I feel a lot more confident about the condition of the equipment's tires. The after-cut appearance on greens can be affected, not to mention the life of the tires . . . I've been lucky not to have a Sandpro tire unseat off its rim while in a bunker.

The next time you're checking tire pressures on your equipment, try using a different tire gauge and see if you could have a problem.



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# Unexpected Treasure



*The barn's exterior.*



*And the interior.*



*Taking it apart.*

When Doug Davis salvaged wood from a century-old barn turned maintenance building slated for demolition, he discovered the perfect finishing touch for a home improvement project.

*Timber Trails Golf Course was built between 1929 and 1930 by Walter Hoyt. Construction took place on land purchased in 1833 by Joseph Vial for approximately \$1.25 per acre.*

About the same time, in 1930, an old wooden barn that stood on Mr. Vial's farm located south of Plainfield Road was torn down and rebuilt as one of the storage barns for the Timber Trails golf course. The barn had been at the Vial farm for more than 30 years before the teardown and reconstruction.

In September of 2004, Dartmoor Homes of Hoffman Estates bought Timber Trails at an auction for \$45 million. I was disappointed to see the course sold and heard many stories about the history of the property from then-course superintendent Don Hoffman.

As the sale unfolded, all the golf course equipment, supplies, etc. were for sale. I watched piece by piece get hauled away in trucks, trailers and car trunks, you name it. It was sad to see a golf facility pass away like that. I was speaking with one of the developer representatives and asked what the intentions were for the maintenance buildings. He said they would be quickly bulldozed and hauled away in large dumpsters to a landfill. I quietly looked at that 100-year-old barn and said to myself, "This can't go to a landfill."

So, after negotiations and providing proof of insurance, I acquired permission to salvage some 100-year-old barn siding to use as I wished. Tearing down the barn siding was tricky in the heat of July but with the help of two of my grounds laborers, various pry-bars and hammers, in roughly 15 hours I had about 150 boards of varying lengths and conditions stacked behind my maintenance shop.

Next came the de-nailing process. This itself was a major undertaking, but it was accomplished with no splinters or flat tires. After that, the boards were all pressure-washed one by one and set out in the midday sun to dry. After drying, the boards were rough-cut to a size within inches of the desired length and set in my garage at home.

Carpenters were already working on finishing our basement and when they saw the boards, one carpenter said, "But you can buy boards at Home Depot!"

I answered, "Yes, but you can't buy 100-year-old boards there."

Nailing the boards to the basement framing was sort of like a jigsaw puzzle, mixing and matching pieces because no two sides were quite the same. When the project was complete, the look was outstanding. For my wife and I, going downstairs into our basement is like stepping back in time with a rustic look that we love. Our two teenage boys have a great room now for homework and to have friends over for a movie or ping pong.



## COMMENTARY

Doug Davis *Flagg Creek Golf Course*



*The treasure—not very pretty with all those nails!*

Dave Loutit of the Andersons told me he thought it would look great to have a 30-inch northern pike or muskie hanging on the wall covered with the antique barn wood. I agree but will have to settle for a plasma television hanging there.

Timber Trails Golf Course may be no more, but a little piece of its history will live forever in my basement.



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# Blitz Build on the

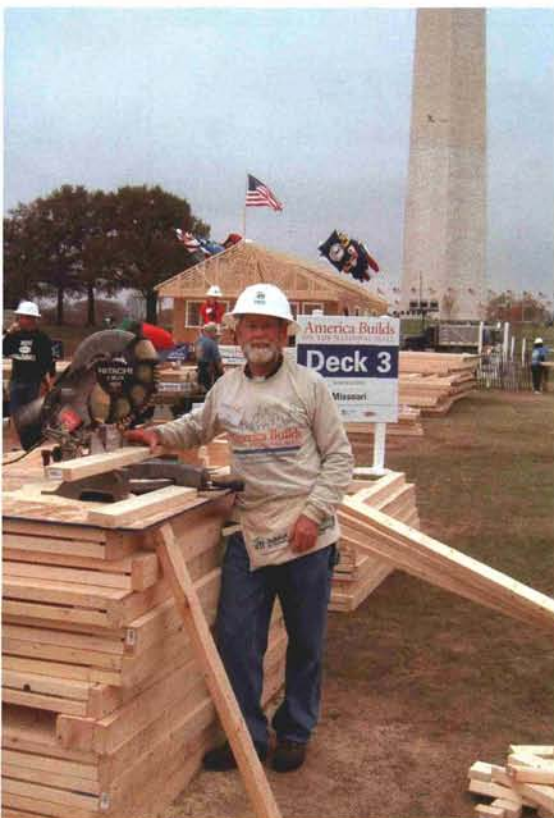
*Fred Opperman has been anything but retiring in his retirement.*

*A past president of MAGCS and editor of On Course from 1983-1999, Fred has devoted considerable time and energy to volunteer work for the Gallatin Valley (Montana) chapter of Habitat for Humanity. Indeed, the Gallatin Valley group is a top-performing affiliate with five homes presently under construction in the Bozeman/Belgrade area. The vitality of the Gallatin Valley group, and Fred's commitment to the cause, led to a great honor for Fred. He was chosen as one of two Habitat for Humanity representatives from Montana to participate in "America Builds on the National Mall," a joint initiative of Habitat and Freddie Mac that saw the construction of 51 homes November 11-18, 2005, in Washington, D.C. These homes were designated for low-income families who were affected or displaced by last year's Gulf Coast hurricanes.*

*"I am very honored to have been chosen," reflected Fred after the event. "It is a pleasure to be able to help a family from the Gulf Coast who have lost everything and have to start over with their lives. It is hard for me to comprehend losing everything, your past life just being washed away. This home we built will be a huge step in the right direction for the start of a family's new life."*

*Here is Fred's account of the work he performed in our nation's capitol.*

*"America Builds on the National Mall" took place in Washington, D.C., November 11-18, 2005, and I was there. I was chosen from my affiliate to represent them and the state of Montana at this "blitz build." One other person from Billings was also chosen to go to D.C.*



*Fred Opperman at the Montana framing site with the Washington Monument in the background.*

I arrived late in the afternoon of Monday, November 14 and was scheduled to help frame the Montana house on Tuesday, November 15 at 12:30 p.m. On Tuesday morning, I caught the shuttle bus from the hotel to the site, which was right across from the Washington Memorial on the National Mall. I arrived at the site about 6:30 a.m., had breakfast and got signed in. Then I walked the Mall to see the new World War II Memorial (it was about two blocks away), the Korean War Memorial, the Nurses War Memorial and the Lincoln Memorial. I was back at the Habitat site before 9 a.m. and asked a supervisor if he needed any help at one of that morning's four building sites. He pointed to a miter saw and said to cut up various lengths of 2 x 4s for the making of window frames. I must have cut up over a hundred 2 x 4s into four different lengths to supply the workbench making the rough window frames. Then, at 12:30 p.m., the framing of the Montana home started.

First, a little background to understand how a blitz build works, or at least how it happened at the National Mall site. A week before the construction, supervisors from Habitat affiliates around the country are chosen and volunteers came to D.C. and built four wood decks the exact size of a house about two feet above the ground. They also built workbenches around each deck for the cutting of lumber and for the assembly of the rough-size opening of doors, windows and the various other special items needed for framing a house. These items were stacked by each deck. The top and bottom plates were exactly marked where each stud, cripple, window or door was to be placed and coded on where it went on the deck. The deck had codes on each wall detailing what went there. The plates were shrink-wrapped together, so all you needed to do was carry them to the deck and find the spot they went, split them apart, place the bottom plate near the outside wall and the top plate into the house, then the studs and windows and doors were to be placed between them.

When we got to the Montana house, the deck was already laid out with all the outside walls of the framing material in the proper place. With a crew of 20-plus on hand, we started to nail everything together and stand the walls up. Each wall was then screwed to the work deck, held in place until an inte-