

Midwest Breezes



New Irrigation and April Showers, Bring Deerpath May Flowers

When the Director of Parks for the city of Lake Forest asked Craig Joscelyn what his biggest need was on the golf course, Craig indicated that the club was due for a new irrigation system.

Craig was operating with one of the oldest functioning automated systems in Chicago: a hydraulically-controlled system originally installed in 1968. In the process of obtaining funding for new irrigation, two additional upgrades were planned for Deerpath.

"We had been receiving negative feedback about the bunkers in our golfer surveys. After rainfall the bunkers would hold water and the sand texture was inconsistent throughout the golf course," said Craig. "Another issue of concern was surface drainage. There has been a lot of development to the north and west of the golf course, and

tremendous volumes of water are moving across the property after the rains."

During the permitting and funding stages of the project, Craig was the point-man in bringing multiple agencies and contractors together including the Illinois EPA, Bleck Engineering, Applied Ecological Sciences, Army Corps of Engineers, The Friends of the Chicago River and The Lake County Stormwater Management Commission – all were involved.

After Labor Day 2005, the project began. A new Rain-bird system was installed by Midwest Irrigation, the same company which installed the original water system in 1968.

All of the 55 bunkers on the golf course were remodeled, and eight more fairway bunkers were added.

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The 175 yard par 3, 5th hole at Deerpath Golf Course. Large Cottonwood trees encroaching on the left side of the hole and the Skokie River in foreground.



5th hole as construction begins and cottonwoods are absent. Pond excavation and weir structure are underway.

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Todd Quitno, of Lohmann Golf Designs, designed the new bunkering bringing the golf course up-to-date with contemporary distances and playing conditions.

A water management system was built by Ryan Incorporated Central, beginning with the construction of a wetlands on the western edge of the golf course, which captures the surface run-off as it enters the club property. The wetlands are designed to filter the surface run-off before it passes into a system of ponds, which eventually overflow through a stone weir into the River Canal on the

eastern edge of the golf course.

As the work progressed, the golf course remained open to normal rounds of play, and the staff received few complaints from the golfing public.

The two biggest things which Craig valued through the project were the dependability of his staff to manage things while he was absorbed in the details of the project, and also the importance of effective communication, especially during the planning stages as everybody was involved up front.



View from green to tee.



*Course stays open throughout whole project.
Golfers and machinery mingling.*



5th hole. Moving along.



Beautifying the weir with ledge rock.



All that remains is pond fill and grow in.

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Digging Away at the Links of Carillon Golf Club

For the past three seasons Superintendent Mark Thibault and his staff have been performing a master bunker renovation at The Links at Carillon Golf Club in Plainfield. The 27-hole golf complex had 79 large bunkers, most with high flashing, contaminated sand, and little or no drainage.

In his original design, Golf Course Architect Greg Martin strategically placed the bunkers with the concept of needing large bunkers to offset the lack of trees and houses. Over the past 15 years, the once open farmland of Plainfield has been developed with a retirement community and hundreds of trees have been installed.

Visually, the large bunkers were no longer needed and the increasing bunker maintenance cost has become a nightmare. Daily maintenance requires three trap rakes for three to four hours each. With the rising cost of fuel and labor coupled with the poor playing conditions, a bunker renovation was needed.

Thibault proposed an in-house renovation plan using skid loaders, dump trucks, shovels and only the core maintenance staff. After much discussion with the owners and the director of golf, the decision was made to begin bunker renovation during the off-season months. This would allow minimal interference during the peak golf season and normal golf course maintenance to be performed. If this plan was to succeed, it had to be cost effective without sacrificing current conditions.

In order to control cost and maximize this opportunity Thibault decided to first reuse the original bunker mix to expand other tee surfaces on the par 3 holes and to renovate the first tee on the white course. Scott also decided to harvest out-of-play bluegrass rough for sod. The sod, in turn, would be used on the newly created slopes around the expanded tees. The areas vacant of turf in the rough would then be converted to a links style fescue mix, and further increase savings of labor and moving on the property.

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Bunkers on the Blue Course No 6 Green ready for sand.



Laying out the bunkers on the White Course, No 6 Green.



Bunker complex completed on the Blue Course adjacent to the 7th Fairway.



Changing the shape of the bunkering around the 8th Green on the Blue Course.

The last resource Thibault tapped, was contacting local developments for clay and topsoil. Luckily, in the fall of 2003, a chain restaurant was starting construction across from the entrance to Carillon Drive. By working with the contractor, Thibault was able to obtain 3,000 cubic yards of black topsoil delivered on-site for a very minimal cost to the club.

The Links at Carillon still needed to find a large source of clay in order to maximize the topsoil as a top layer and not fill. Thibault contacted another local developer requesting to remove a large amount of clay from a nearby site. The developer was happy to allow Thibault to remove the clay for free instead of paying a contractor to do so.

In addition, Thibault decided to reuse old greens covers to line the bottom of the newly shaped flat-bottom bunkers to aid in slowing future contamination. The only major cost to the Links at Carillon would be the new sand and labor.

Before the renovation began, Thibault decided on one style for the bunker design based on a couple of keys principles. He picked a flat-bottom style to eliminate the need to push sand after a heavy rain and to help prevent sand from blowing out of the bunker. Overall downsizing was the key to eliminating labor, but also every slope was designed to be easily cut with a rotary motor and minimize handwork.



Working with the Director of Golf, Jim Long, Thibault was given the freedom to design each bunker and express a little of his artistic ability in golf course architecture. Thibault recalled on past experiences as Assistant Superintendent during the construction of Seven Bridges Golf Club in 1990 along with some bunker renovation projects at Ruffled Feathers Golf Club to aid in the design process.

Over the past three months, the good weather has allowed Thibault and his staff to really "dig in" and currently there are eight to ten bunkers under renovation. Some bunkers have been eliminated and others downsized, but in most cases one large bunker is now two or three smaller flat-bottom bunkers.

It is difficult to figure the labor hours saved to date, and over the long run many dollars will be saved. Flooded bunkers will no longer have to be pumped, there will be a large reduction in the maintenance of the sand surfaces, hand mowing around bunker complexes will be nearly eliminated and the additional native habitats created in out of play areas will all contribute to cost savings. To date the project has been a complete success. Approaching the end of the third year in a very tedious process, Thibault and his hardworking staff are on pace to have approximately 50 percent of the bunkers completed.



—Scott White
Assistant Golf Course Superintendent
The Links of Carillon Golf Club





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the Bull Sheet

John Gurke, CGCS, Contributing Editor

DATES TO REMEMBER

March 2 – I know, it's already over, but just in case, MAGCS monthly meeting at Midwest Golf House in Lemont, IL. Dr. Joe DiPaola, Marketing manager of Syngenta Crop Protection was (will be) our speaker, and his topic was (will be) "Professional Development for Golf Course Superintendents." .35 GCSAA education points were (are) available. That is (was) all.

March 8 – Research Update Seminar On Disease and Plant Care at Butterfield Country Club in Oak Brook, IL, **Mike Vercautren** host. (see below for more information)

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

March 15 – Chicagoland Association of Golf Course Superintendents Annual Meeting at Oak Park Country Club, **Al Fierst** host.

March 23 – Class C Shop Talk at Aurora Country Club in Aurora, IL, **Keith Krause** host.

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

First, if you made the trek to Atlanta, welcome back to the relative warmth of a Chicago winter, 2006-style. Additionally, welcome to our newest MAGCS members:



Vince Dodge.

Vince Dodge – Class A returnee – The Wilderness at Fortune Bay in Tower, MN.

Matt Senatra – Class A returnee – Mill Creek Golf Club, Geneva

Michael J. Heustis – Class C – Chicago Golf Club.

Timothy Peterson – Class C – Boulder Ridge Country Club

Aaron Hearn – Class C –

Stonebridge Country Club

Dan Kissee – Class E – Rabine Paving

Chris Lombardo – Class E –

Rabine Paving

Steve Junk – Class E –

Dryject Chicagoland LLC (new owners of the Dryject franchise in Chicagoland)

William Womack – Class E –

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Also, welcome to the 2 new faces at Midwest Golf House—**Chris Painter**, who is the new golf course superintendent of the Sunshine Course, and **Derek Settle**, the new member of the CDGA turf staff. Best of luck to both of you!

The revolving door just keeps on swinging:

• **Matt Harstad**, formerly assistant at Butterfield CC is now golf course superintendent at Calumet Country Club.



Matt Harstad.

• **Sam MacKenzie**, CGCS, formerly of Broadmoor CC in Indianapolis, IN is the new golf course superintendent at Olympia Fields Country Club.

• **Eric Reed** is the new Lesco sales representative for the northern Chicagoland territory, having been promoted from within the company.

• **Larry Chirico**, formerly in the above job, is the new golf course superintendent at Itasca Country Club.

Bruce Schweiger, formerly with Reinder's in Janesville, WI, is now general manager of Marengo Ridge Golf & Country Club.


• **Scott Klingberg**, formerly of Elgin Country Club, is now the superintendent of Golf Club of Illinois.

Best wishes in your new jobs, gentlemen!

I would like to take the opportunity to express my extreme gratitude both personally and professionally to Cathy Miles Ralston. Cathy's work on this publication for the past 7 years has been exemplary, and I attribute my own personal growth and improvement as contributing editor, as well as the national industry-wide success and renown that *On Course* has achieved to her. Cathy made every contributor to this magazine a better writer through her skills and talents. Auf wiedersehen, Cathy!

One of our most renowned and revered members has decided to move up in status. **Oscar Miles, CGCS** announced his retirement in January, and will move back to his hometown of Quincy, Illinois. Oscar's career accomplishments are much too numerous to list here, but I will say that his most impressive achieve-

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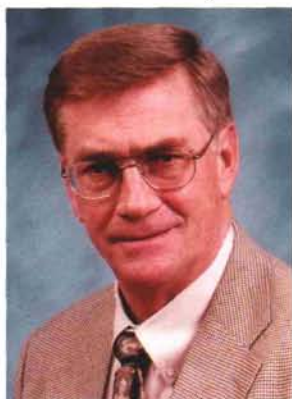
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ment—in my opinion—is the vast number of quality individuals who owe their success and station in life to Oscar's tutelage. Thank you for all you've done to advance the proud profession of golf course superintendent, Oscar, and the best of luck to you in your future endeavors.



Oscar Miles

Another MAGCS member has joined the ranks of the extremely enviable—**Jerry Mach**, longtime superintendent of Lake Bluff Golf Club, has retired. Jerry, if you are looking for some card partners, give Oscar, **Jim McNair** or **Bob Breen** a call. Congratulations!



Jerry Mach.

The CAGCS Annual Meeting will convene at its usual venue this month on the 15th, and Al Fierst will once again serve as Oak Park Country Club's gracious host. If you are a CAGCS member, make plans to attend—the food is always spectacular—by calling Al at 708-453-7525.

I'll go out on a limb and assume this reaches you before the 8th, when the Research Update Seminar on Disease and Plant Care takes place at Butter-

field Country Club. If not, skip down to the next item. If so, the slate of industry experts that co-sponsors Lesco and BASF have put together is pretty impressive, and you should make plans to attend (it IS free, you know— all MAGCS class A and SM members have been invited to attend). Turf research leaders Dr. Bruce Clarke of Rutgers, Dr. Joe Vargas of Michigan State, Dr. Richard Latin of Purdue, and Dr. Randy Kane of CDGA will enlighten the audience with their large brains full of turf knowledge. If you wish to make reservations for this event, call **Paul Yerkes** at 630-904-5255.

Can I get a ruling? This story comes from Sydney, Australia—"Stolen Truck on Golf Course Forces Play to be Suspended." Golfers at the New South Wales amateur championship had to deal with a different type of hazard—a stolen truck crashed on to the course, forcing play to be suspended while police chased an armed man." According to Alex Johnston, director of golf, "The bloke drove down a laneway and straight through a fence onto the sixth hole." As police helicopters hovered overhead and 25 police cars rushed onto the course, a two-hour siege developed before the man surrendered. Most players were allowed to finish their rounds out of sequence due to the disturbance, but the 4 groups that were on the sixth hole when the incident began had to wait out the entire 2-hour siege, as they were part of a crime scene. Funny golf stories without strippers are still funny.

While many MAGCS members were in Atlanta, sad news of the passing of a local legend came across the wires. **Peter Vandercook**, a long time MAGCS member and true southsider to the bone, passed away on Sunday, February 5th, leaving, amongst others, his wife Lois of 47 years. Mr. Vandercook had a long and storied career in the Chicagoland area, including serving as fire chief of the Flossmoor Fire Department while working for over 35 years for Illinois Lawn Equipment Company. Our younger members may recall Pete's article in *On Course* in July of

2001 in which he regaled us with "The Secret World of the Night Water Man," recounting the many wondrous experiences and pratfalls of that bygone era of manual irrigation (apologies to those who still have them). Pete was a larger than life kinda guy who dedicated his entire existence to our industry, and he (and his kind) will be missed. Memorial donations in Pete's name can be made to the Flossmoor Fire Department, per his wishes. Condolences to the family and many friends of Mr. Peter Vandercook.

Big and happy news from Bayer Environmental Sciences—**John Turner**, who recently was named senior sales specialist for the lawn and landscape division, was also honored with the Midwest Regional Turf Foundation's 2006 Distinguished Service Award on February 8th in Indianapolis. This is only the most recent in a long line of honors bestowed on JT, including the Bayer Masters Award, the Bayer Leadership Award, the Howard Johnson's Enterprise Achievement Award, and the Illinois Turfgrass Foundation's 1995 Distinguished Service Award (and who can forget his reaction when he saw that his wife Pam was there for the presentation). Congrats, JT—a most prestigious award for a most deserving recipient.



John Turner.

Hey, assistants! Be sure to sign up

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