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The 537 yard par 5, 5th at Medinah Country Club during the week of the PGA.
Photo Credit: Luke Cella.

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Luke Cella

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.

All editorial and advertisement inquiries should be directed to Luke Cella, Publisher, *On Course*, 11855 Archer Avenue, Lemont, IL, 60439. (630) 243-7900 or visit www.magcs.org for rates and requirements. Statements of fact and opinion are the responsibility of the authors alone and do not imply an opinion on the part of the officers or members.

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ON COURSE WITH THE PRESIDENT

Gary Hearn Salt Creek Golf Club

Passing the Gavel

I looked into the bathroom mirror before I started to shave and took a long look at myself. I haven't changed physically, but I have changed mentally and emotionally. I had fun!!! At times I can look back and say "this wasn't hard; it was kind-of-like 'boot camp' in the service." The anxiety and anticipation before becoming President of MAGCS is harder to cope with than actually doing the time – I am in control. Really, there were some stressful times, but most involved balancing work and family issues against MAGCS concerns or deadlines – thanks Luke.

Now that my Presidency is over, I can revisit my first President's article, "Thanks and Reflections." Again, many thanks to the Midwest Board for their devotion, dedication, and guidance. To committee members who took valuable time out of their busy schedules to get involved – keep up the good work. To all the volunteers who did the 'dirty' work – stay involved. To the vendors for their support and contributions – don't stop. To the families that supported all of us – you make our jobs easier. To Luke Cella, many thanks – your guidance and support will not be forgotten. I would like to thank Tony Perry and the staff at Salt Creek G.C. for letting the Midwest Board have their Board of Director meetings at the clubhouse. This gave us a quiet area in which to discuss issues and have some great food.

I would like to congratulate the new Board members and wish them good luck on their new positions. I would like to wish Phil Zeinert good luck on his new endeavors and challenges as he officially leaves the Board. Your soft-spoken leadership will be missed – good hunting.

I have a few announcements to make before I make my closure official; ATTEND the MAGCS Dinner Dance at Ruth Lake C.C., in Hinsdale, on November 18th. Your host will be Dan Marco. It is a great time – great food and entertainment, dancing, a good time to mingle with colleagues and mentors. ATTEND – the Illinois Professional Turf Conference (IPTC) on November 28th thru 30th. Congratulations to Dr. Randy Kane for being this year's recipient of the "President's Award for Meritorious Service". Dr. Randy Kane has logged many hours in devotion and dedication. He has elevated our awareness of susceptible diseases. He also provided education with seminars and field plot testing. Again, congratulations and thank you – keep in touch.

The gavel has been passed along...I am entering the world of 'President Emeritus'...The doors are opening to the Past Presidents' Council – tough to get past Ed Braunsky...I want to thank all the MAGCS members for supporting me and laughing at my 'corny' jokes. I hope I brought some enlightenment in my monthly articles, and most of all – just by being a friend – you made my tenure enjoyable. Happy Holidays.



*Dr. Randy Kane
has logged many
hours in devotion
and dedication.*

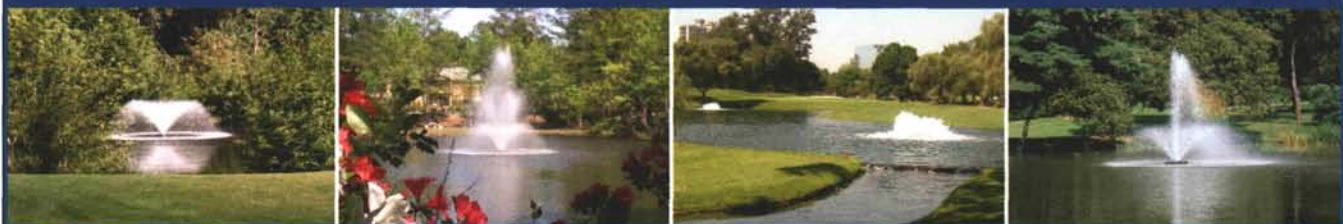


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The MAGCS Strategic Plan Update

On December 9, 2004 the M.A.G.C.S. Board of Directors and Hannes Combest, the Senior Director of Membership and Professional Development for GCSAA met to discuss and develop a Strategic Plan for the MAGCS. The purpose of this strategic plan is to encompass and fulfill the current needs and future goals of the association. The starting point was to define the purpose of the association and what it can provide to its members. These are: to provide networking, education, social/fellowship, service to members, scholarships, and job opportunities; to strengthen career advancement, to support research, to enhance the game of golf, to improve the environment, and to help promote increased salaries. From this a new mission statement was devised which is: "The Midwest Association of Golf Course Superintendents exists to provide networking, education and career advancement opportunities to those who facilitate the growth and enjoyment of golf".

Now that the groundwork has been laid, the Board asked "Where do we want the chapter to be in the future?" The following goals were brought to the table:

- 1) Increase the membership**
 - a) Increase class C and D members by 50%.
 - b) Increase non-member superintendents by 25% over the next three years.
 - c) Review membership benefits.
- 2) Enhance communication with members and the public**
 - a) In Print
 - b) Online
 - c) Through public relations
- 3) Continue to offer a high quality professional development program**
 - a) Scholarships; increase the number and dollar amount.
 - b) Career Assistance
 - c) Continuing Education
- 4) Develop a leadership and volunteer management plan**
 - a) Develop a plan to engage more members in MAGCS.
 - b) Develop a succession plan for the Board.
- 5) Continue to develop a more strategic Board**

Additional memberships have been extended to media, university, and college professors.

Increasing the Membership

Membership has increased with the creation of new classes and sub-classes such as DS (student), DT (technicians; spray, irrigation, equipment), and DE (all other employees). We also increased membership by developing the Facility Membership, the loophole used to avoid the GCSAA dual membership requirement. We also created the Affiliate Membership with TETA. (Turf Equipment Technicians Association) — a win-win situation for both groups. Additional memberships have been extended to media, university, and college professors. Member benefits such as medical and life insurance

(continued on page 7)



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are being examined carefully, as cost is an issue in each. Though both can be beneficial to the membership, we do not want to drastically increase membership dues.

Enhancing Communication with Members and the Public

Our most potent tool in this category would be *On Course*, a publication that speaks for itself. Kudos to all of those who have made the publication what it is today: Cathy Ralston, John Gurke, Scott Witte and his Editorial Committee, and Luke Cella. We are working to gain more personal items such as member submitted articles and notes of interest. One of the most notable steps toward this goal is the monthly submission of the "Midwest Breezes," by Brad Anderson. His scouring of the association has brought us the "who's doing whats and hows" of the business.

Another goal is to increase the MAGCS online presence. We are using the website to a degree for certain association affairs such as employment referral service, monthly meeting notices, and bits of *On Course*. But we need to find a way to utilize it even farther. Thanks to John Ekstrom and the Class C Advisory Committee we now have a quarterly e-newsletter listing workshops and upcoming events.

Public relations continue to be a high hurdle for us, but we are making progress. We will be talking to Jeff Bollig, Director of Communications for GCSAA, to assist us in developing a media and public relations plan. The following are stepping stones the Board has defined to begin: We are looking to reinvent our presence at the Chicagoland Golf Show both to become more appealing to the golfing public and to educate them as to what we are all about and how we impact the game of golf. Most recently Gary Hearn has made an effort to get the MAGCS Championship results posted in various local golf publications.

Continue to offer a high quality professional development program

Enhancing our scholarship program is a good beginning to our professional development program. We currently have four \$1000.00 scholarships awarded annually. In August of 2006, the Board approved doubling each scholarship to \$2000.00 in 2007, contingent on available funding. If there are insufficient funds to increase all four of the current scholarships, they would be increased in the following order until available funds are depleted: MAGCS Scholarship, George Minnis Memorial Scholarship, John Buck Memorial Scholarship, and the Paul Burdett Memorial Scholarship. We will also be looking into setting up an endowment for managing the scholarship dollars. The scholarship committee thought that we didn't necessarily need more scholarships, but we did need to continue to increase the dollar amounts on an annual basis for the ones we already have.

Continuing education is one area where the MAGCS currently excels. We have our GCSAA Regional Seminars, the Superintendent Leadership Series, the Annual Turf Clinic, Assistant Workshops, and various other educational opportunities. We are currently looking into hosting a GCSAA regional seminar (possibly at the IPTC) without logistical support from the national. This may help to increase our revenue.

Develop a leadership and volunteer management plan & Continue to develop a more Strategic Board

Over the years we are finding that more members are becoming active in the association by serving on a committee, by submitting articles, or by hosting a monthly meeting. Though the numbers are up, the Board would like to see a higher percentage of participation.

The Board of Directors has begun work on a succession plan that will include job descriptions to accompany the Veteran Chair Exit

We must recruit the great thinkers and talented individuals of our association both to achieve our goals and to create new ones that will fulfill the needs of our strategic plan.

Form for each Committee Chair and Officer. This will assist in a smooth transition for new Committee Chairs and Officers. It will also insure that new ideas do not get lost in translation. To become better organized and to set goals are only two of the ingredients in becoming more strategic. We must recruit the great thinkers and talented individuals of our association both to achieve our goals and to create new ones that will fulfill the needs of our strategic plan.

2007 Outlook

One of the first meetings of your new Board of Directors will look in detail at this now two-year old strategic plan. We will review our accomplishments and goals still open. At the same time, we will discuss changes that may make sense now that we didn't see two years ago. The planning process will continue with the priorities of the membership at the forefront.





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Midwest Breezes



Burning Sulfur, Jeff Leonard, Chalet Hills Golf Club

We generally associate high pH and bicarbonates with water that is drawn from deep wells, but at Chalet Hills the ten-acre irrigation reservoir is fed entirely by surface water. It has tested as high as 8.9 pH, and the bicarbonates are also quite high.

For the 2006 golf season, Jeff Leonard used a sulfur burner to lower the pH of his irrigation water. The concept is fairly simple: elemental sulfur is loaded into a hopper which gravity feeds to a combustion chamber at the base of the unit. As the material burns, sulfur dioxide gas rises into an aspirator where the gas is scrubbed out of the air by irrigation water. The water which flows out of this process is a concentrated sulfurous acid solution in the range of 2.0 to 3.0 pH.

The discharge from the sulfur burner flows into Jeff's reservoir 20 feet away from the pump house intake line where it quickly dilutes. Jeff reports that the irrigation water is in a range of 6.0 pH. The sulfur burner does not provide the precise range of pH control that acid injection does, but for Jeff's purposes the concept has worked very well.

The black layer which had become a growing concern in his USGA greens is almost completely gone after only one season of using the sulfur burner. The overall health and color of Jeff's irrigated turf is noticeably improved. An unexpected benefit is the complete eradication of algae and several aquatic weeds in his irrigation reservoir. Jeff built a trailer for the sulfur burner so that it could be moved to other ponds on the property to clean up algae infestations. Apparently algae can not flourish in

non-alkaline waters; this might explain why the lakes in the north woods are generally so clean.

When the irrigation season began, Jeff connected the sulfur burner to the pump house. The unit ran all day every day until the end of the irrigation season. This year Jeff used 3 to 4 fifty-pound bags of elemental sulfur a day. By the end of the year Jeff used approximately 10 tons of material, at a cost of \$200/ton.

Brad Anderson, CGCS



Elemental sulfur in its purest form.



Jeff's portable sulfur burner on wheels.

(continued on page 10)



Ivanhoe Club, Thom Prichard

On the seventh hole of the Prairie Nine, Thom has built one of the coolest tees that I have ever seen. It occupies the site of what was only recently an overgrown knoll adjacent to the teeing ground. One day Thom climbed up through the brush and realized that he had discovered a great spot for a tee. He brought his chairman up to look at it and he agreed that it should be a tee. There is a hand crafted stone stairwell leading up to it. This tee is used primarily for special events.

Another great idea that I noticed at Ivanhoe was the color-coded CDGA markers on each tee box. This eliminates any possible confusion as to where the tee blocks should be placed, or which tee you may be playing from.

The new Arthur Hills bunkers at Ivanhoe were designed with fairly steep turf slopes. The intent behind this design was for the golf ball to kick off these embankments and roll down into the flat sand interior. In some

places however, the ball is hanging up in the bluegrass embankments. In order for the ball to release into the sand, Thom has been forced to take the height of cut down. Lowering the height of cuts has helped the ball to fall as it was designed to on these slopes, but the health of the bluegrass has struggled, particularly the slopes with southern exposure. Thom is currently removing the existing turf and planting a variety of low-mow bluegrass that should perform better at providing a dense and healthy bunker embankment turf, allowing also for the ball to roll to the sand base.

In our 2007 Midwest Breezes installments, we will be revisiting Ivanhoe to report on Thom's aeration and topdressing practices at Ivanhoe Club.

Brad Anderson, CGCS



The two pictures above show the new tee found on a knoll by Thom on the Prairie number 7. The image on the right depicts the hand crafted stone steps leading to the tee.



From Left to Right: The steep sloping embankments with struggling bluegrass, a bunker with the slopes prepped for sod, and a completed bunker embankment planted with new low mow cultivars of Kentucky bluegrass.