

You have been given notice that somebody's gone behind your back and is in your bosses' ear saying:

- 1) We can do it cheaper,
- 2) We can do it better, or some variation on that theme such as:
 - A) Utilizing a contractual maintenance agreement relieves the golf course of a lot of human relations/employment headaches: Paperwork, payroll taxes, worker compensation, unemployment insurance, etc., etc., etc. Or how about:
 - B) In the unlikely event that something is out of sorts, we have professional agronomists available at a moment's notice to swoop down and help your assigned staffer fix your turfgrass problems and get you good-to-go lickety split. Or:
 - C) Our buying power is enormous; we can get stuff for you for a lot less than you get it now. Or:
 - D) Your equipment fleet is excessive. We can come from off site with aerifiers and punch your greens in one day. Boom - in and out - and then we go away. Why keep the machines sitting around 90% of the time? If something on your course goes down, we can get a replacement piece in there the same day.

Compelling arguments – especially if the boss is unaware that:

- A) Your staff members are not numbers on a time card. They are reliable and competent workers who know the golf course in and out. They produce a product to your (super's) specifications that in turn came from the board or governing body of your golf course. In addition, you and your staff are loyal to your operation. You don't answer to someone else's bottom line.
- B) You, as a competent, active member of your professional association, have a network of peers with an incredible amount of "local knowledge" in fixing or better yet - anticipating problems and heading them off before they get out of hand. The USGA Green Section turf advisory service, the CDGA turfgrass staff and the Illinois Turf Foundation are wonderful and responsive aids to the individual superintendent.
- C) You have complete control of the types and composition of the consumables you acquire for your individual operation. You can tailor your plant protectants and fertilizers to your site's needs and idiosyncrasies. You are not limited by some purchase agreement made by someone in the home office, wherever that is.
- D) The maintenance equipment your course owns (or leases) is supported by a competitive and capable distributor that stands ready to get you whatever you need to keep things moving along smoothly. They rely on your business and will step up when the chips are down.

Pat Jones, a good friend of golf course superintendents everywhere, recently wrote an article suggesting that if you are satisfied with letting your work speak for itself, you are headed for a rude awakening. Get in the bosses' ear before they do. The best defense is a good offense. **-OC**

ELIMINATE GUESSWORK WHEN SPRING FEEDING

Spring fertilization varies greatly on a number of factors. Cultural practices performed, soil amendments made, irrigation and drainage upgrades, fertilizers applied, and what happened last fall plays a significant role with this season's success. However, having a sound fertility program will provide you with your best chance of success for the upcoming season.

Typically, spring applications are applied after the early flush of shoot growth has occurred, but predicting spring weather can be a challenge when it comes to soil and air temperature, and precipitation. That's why choosing a fertilizer that performs in cool climates is so vital.

The nitrogen applied with UMAXX, a top performer in cool weather, is plant available as soon as watering in occurs. In addition, what the plant does not immediately use will be held onto the soil colloid as a reserve for future use.



John Meyer
Regional Manager
AGROTAIN International, LLC

This is a drastic change from other fertilizers.

Coated products are a great example of fertilizers that don't offer immediate plant nutrition and are subject to leaching once the protective coating breaks down.

Still other products rely on a process called mineralization, depending on soil microbes to break down nitrogen. Whereas soil microbes aren't fully active until the soil temperature reaches 55 degrees – which might not happen until late spring depending on the region – UMAXX begins working immediately and is not dependent on soil temperature for nitrogen release.

Although fine-tuning a spring fertilization program varies on many factors, its importance will be felt all summer long and even into the fall. The benefit of using an all-weather, long-lasting performer such as UMAXX provides immediate benefits, as well as a positive long-term impact. UMAXX gives the freedom to apply as a nitrogen component in a blend or part of a soluble fertilizer program. UMAXX offers consistent performance regardless of temperature or application type.

For more information on UMAXX contact me at 952-334-6845 or jmeyer@agrotain.com

UMAXX is a registered trademark of AGROTAIN International LLC

We're all about **Water**,
budgets in the **Black**
and your course staying **Green**



Customized System Design

Controls & VFD Service

Pump Station Retrofits

Irrigation Pump Repairs

Remote Control Systems

Preventative Maintenance

System Startups

Well Pump Repair

Well Drilling & Rehab

24 hr. Emergency Service



**"Honesty, Integrity
and Complete
Customer Satisfaction"**

Serving Customers throughout the Midwest
Toll-Free 800-383-7412 Fax 920-324-3431
www.pumpstationpros.com

Courtesy of Kohler Co.

FEATURE II

Harry Lovero, Orchard Valley Golf Course



DJ Gregory – Walk On

One Saturday a couple of months ago on a cold wintery afternoon, I was flipping channels on the old tube and I came across a video report on ESPN about a young man by the name of DJ Gregory. After watching the report, I felt compelled to write this.

DJ was born with cerebral palsy. Doctors told his parent that he would be confined to a wheelchair for the rest of his life and that he would never walk. However, after much perseverance on the part of his parents, and five surgeries (by the time he was in first grade) and much physical therapy, DJ learned to walk. He is now thirty years old and walks with only a cane.

DJ loves the game of golf. He began playing at the age of nine and taught himself to play. He shoots between one hundred and one fifteen one handed while holding his cane in the other hand for balance. His father took him to his first tournament when he was twelve years old in 1990 to get autographs when he was spotted by Mr. Ken Venturi who got him to come up to the CBS broadcast booth where he became very good friends with Ken and Jim Nantz. For a while, DJ was a staple in the booth week after week, stopping by to speak with his friends on television.

DJ is a very bright and intelligent individual. He has a Masters degree in sports management, which he received from Springfield College in Massachusetts.

Now that brings us to 2008. DJ expressed a desire to walk every PGA 2008 tournament. Forty-five tournaments in all. Over 900 plus miles. Something that has never been done by someone with his desire or his physical challenges. There were many doubters but the PGA gave DJ his chance with the deal that he would have to interview one Tour Pro every day and blog it on-line. It was something that he was going to have to prepare himself for physically and mentally. With the support of his



DJ Gregory is not slowed down at all.

parents, friends and family, DJ embarked on his mission to walk forty-five PGA tournaments in the 2008 season. DJ walked and fell a "few times keeping track of every time he took a spill. Can you imagine walking every hole of 45 tournaments normally let alone having a disability such as his?

DJ accomplished his goal and made many, many friends along the way. From spectators wishing him "well to the PGA pros and their caddies "giving handshakes and hugs for his undying will and determination. Many noted that they were exhausted after walking eighteen holes and could not imagine what DJ was going through walking every hole of forty-five tournaments.

He became very close friends with Kenny Perry, who in the video told DJ, "I'm so proud of you I love you like a little brother." Moreover, that was on the final day of the final tournament of 2008, which was a very emotional day indeed

for everyone involved in "the walk of a lifetime."

If you ever get the chance to locate the video on "YouTube", please take the time to watch it. DJ is a very inspiring young man and he absolutely loves the game which we are all so dedicated to. I believe that you too, as I did, will find it difficult to keep your emotions intact while watching. **-OC**

Photo credit: Francisco Medina

**MAXIMIZE
YOUR
NITROGEN
DOLLARS
WITH**

UMAXX
STABILIZED NITROGEN

HYDREXX
PROFESSIONAL NITROGEN STABILIZER

MINIMIZE YOUR NITROGEN LOSSES.

For more information contact Arthur Clesen Inc.

www.arthurclesen.com

North: 847-537-2177

South: 708-444-2177



ARTHUR CLESEN INC.

UMAXX® and HYDREXX™ are trademarks of AGROTAIN International L.L.C.
One Angelica Street, St. Louis, MO 63147

Nels J. Johnson Tree Experts, Inc.
Since 1930

A Tradition of Excellence.

More than 75 years of complete, dependable and economical tree service for residential homes, municipalities, schools, industrial areas, parks and over 125 golf courses.

847-475-1877

fax: 847-475-0037

www.nelsjohnsontree.com

MIDWEST BREEZES

Charles Anfield, CGCS, *Heritage Bluffs Golf Course*



The “Secret Sauce”

The sauce is known throughout the culinary world as the “difference maker” in a masterpiece menu item. It’s a special blending of spices, seasonings, vegetables and other food stuff that is combined and mixed together behind the secret closed doors of the kitchen. There is actually a specialization among chefs who take special training and serve apprenticeships to become sauciers. The meal is not complete without the sauce. These sauces are passed down from generation to generation and become closely guarded secrets. Fast food chains market their hamburgers featuring the “secret sauce”. The secret sauce is the coup de gras of the meal. Everyone wants it, everyone needs it.

Among Golf Course Superintendents there is a great desire to find a secret sauce in putting green maintenance. Everyone is looking for the “edge” to make their greens better. Some of the reasons Superintendents create the secret sauce are: stress relief, clipping reduction/growth regulation, disease control, green speed, color, tighter leaf, poa control, improved rooting and overall health. There are numerous products, by numerous manufacturers out there to ready to provide Superintendents with their “need” to find the secret sauce. Some of these products are new, others old. The concept of these products has been around since the dawn of grass growth. Some experts consider some of these products to be “snake oil”. Many Superintendents take a little of this, a little of that, and viola, the secret sauce.

I called a few Superintendents to share their “secret sauce” formula with me. Some were reluctant to reveal their program but with a little coaxing and bribery I was able to convince them to share.

Ed Braunsky, CGCS (Past MAGCS President from Geneva Golf Club) who is never shy about telling you what he thinks, had this to share. “I like using the Emerald Isle liquid fertilizer combined with Primo, fungicides and Signature on two week intervals, the stuff works”.

Mike Siefken from Sportman’s Country Club, “I’m trying reducing clipping yields and improve my wear tolerance”. He uses Cutless and Primo combined with his fungicide program.

Brian Bossert, CGCS from Bryn Mawr Country Club, “I’m not a biostimulant guy”. He uses Signature at 4 oz/m plus Daconil at two week intervals combined with paclobutrazol. “It’s almost like magic how it perks up the greens”.

Dennis Buck from Dwight Country Club: “I don’t want to give away my full secret but I can tell you I use a granular paclobutrazol in the spring and fall at the full rate. I don’t recommend this to anyone who has a lot of poa”.

Derek Settle of the CDGA recently published an article for the USGA. He conducted a Field Study using six different products that contained cytokinins and other plant extracts to evaluate their impact on creeping bentgrass putting green color and summer quality. These products were compared to Urea and evaluated at the Golf House in Lemont and in College Park, Maryland in 2007 and 2008. “Not all products do what we learned. Based on research, I recommend going back to basics and using urea at .15 oz/m every 14 days for a nice, deep green color”.

There you have it, the secret is out. **-OC**

TURF UNIVERSITY CLASS OF 2009

Curalan® EG
Fungicide,
Emerald®
Fungicide,
Insignia®
Fungicide

Iprodione Pro 2SE
Fungicide,
Trinity® Fungicide,
Basagran® T/O
Herbicide



Drive® XLR8
Herbicide,
FreeHand™ 1.75G
Herbicide,
Onetime™
Herbicide

Pendulum®
AquaCap™
Herbicide,
Pendulum® 2G
Herbicide,
Pendulum® 3.3 EC
Herbicide

Segment™
Herbicide

For diseases, weeds or pests,
BASF is at the top of the class.

Contact Randy Lusher at
(630) 235-0104 or randy.lusher@basf.com.
betterturf.com

BASF
The Chemical Company

Always read and follow label directions.

Basagran, Curalan, Drive, Emerald, Insignia, Pendulum and Trinity are registered trademarks and AquaCap, FreeHand 1.75G, Onetime and Segment are trademarks of BASF. ©2009 BASF Corporation. All rights reserved.

Rooted in Solutions



Great Lakes Turf, LLC
6600 Clay Avenue SW
Grand Rapids, MI 49548
(616) 656- 9839

Jim Johnson
Jeff Mazur
Marty Heyen



Visit our award winning website to learn
more about our solutions and find a
Floratine distributor near you.
www.floratine.com

DUNTEMAN
TURF FARMS

Growers of Quality Sod

SERVICE!

LOCAL GROWING FOR
EASY PICKUP OR QUICK DELIVERY.
DELIVERY ON TIME, EVERYTIME.

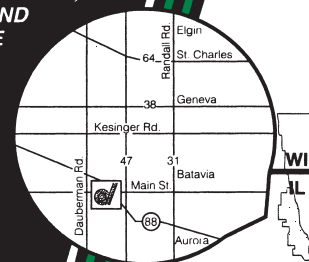
QUALITY!

FEATURING
ELITE KENTUCKY BLUEGRASS,
BENTGRASS SOD, AND
TURF-TYPE FESCUE

- LOWER MAINTENANCE
- MORE DROUGHT & SHADE TOLERANT
- BETTER WEAR RESISTANCE

NEW
PRODUCT

PRICE!
CALL FOR A QUOTE



630-557-2900

MAIN STREET
11 MILES WEST
OF BATAVIA, IL

The Key to Consistency

"Wow, look at that, it turned out exactly the way I wanted." In some fashion I have heard that said many times. There are usually two questions that come with that statement: "What did I do differently to get that result?" and "How can I make it happen every time?" Well, you may not like McDonalds, but you must admire their ability to make a Big Mac in Florida taste like a Big Mac in Illinois. They do this by process.

There are many ways to pass on a process. The one that we are all familiar with is word of mouth. To me this is a marginal way to pass important information. Two weeks ago I told my 3½ year-old son to get his shoes tied before running around the house. Like most word of mouth processes, the information did not transfer well. The next day I was holding a crying 3½ year-old. Again, I explained the need for a shoe tying process. I hoped that with the added personal experience, this time it would take. As of today he is good on the shoe tying.

In the above story what was the difference? The second warning came with some participation on his part. In the last 10 years I have made process participation a huge part of the teams I manage. I have found that I need to manage less often and that we are more consistent. We achieve this with a process meeting and a process chart.

I stumbled upon the process meeting years ago when I began working in the Reinders Service department. The repairs were done well, but the details surrounding them, like scheduling, order processing, and customer notification happened in different ways. I tried developing the system myself and forcing the participants to execute it, but the results were poor. Judging from the complaints I received, I had talented people doing the work, but we could not seem to get all of the details right for the process. We needed to get the whole team working in the same direction at the same time. This is when we had our first of many process meetings.

In a process meeting you get all the key players together and develop a process with their input. Here you, as a manager, need a little trust. You cannot use this as an opportunity to thrust your opinions down their throats. You need to let them handle the details. You gently advise them and log the steps for later use.

For the logging of the steps, I first ask the team how we do the process now. I have large strips of paper covering the wall they are facing (you will need a good amount of room). I let them tell me how they do it step by step. I log each step on a sticky note and put them in order on the papered wall. After this is done, I ask if this is the ideal way to do it. When we all agree it is not, I say, "OK, let's fix it." Start at the beginning and let them fix it. This is where you cannot force them. If you do, you will not have their commitment. It will not be their process. You will have their compliance only, and you will need to manage it every day. Begin by moving or adding steps with sticky notes until you get the ideal process that creates the consistency you desire. Once done, you will use this diagram to make a process map for each team member.

From there I use a computer program called Visio to make a copy of the process map we created on the wall. The program is easy to use. It will only take you a little while to copy the map. I have taken these maps, printed and laminated them, and given them to the team members. We use the maps when there is a breakdown in the process to show where the breakdown occurred, and then we fix it. I have also given these maps to new employees for training. They use it as a visual when they are performing their tasks. You get better performance so much faster than before.

To be consistent you must have a map of the ideal process. There is a time investment to this method, but the value is incredible. The best part of it all is from the manager's point of view. You will now have the team's commitment to a process, because they were the ones who developed it. Best of all, you will have a way to show them the breakdowns in the process, and you will do less managing in order to get a consistent result.

-OC

THE BULL SHEET

John Gurke, CGCS, Associate Editor



May 2009

DATES TO REMEMBER

May 3 – JW Turf's Annual Equipment Auction at their headquarters in Hampshire, IL.

May 9 – North American Birdwatching Open held on International Migratory Bird Day.

May 15 – Deadline for MAGCS Scholarship applications to be submitted.

May 18 – MAGCS/ITF Spring Golf Day at Merit Club in Libertyville, IL, **John Nelson** and **Scott Verdun** hosts.

May 19 – Extended deadline for GCSAA's Energy Use and Environmental Practices survey.

May 19 – CAGCS monthly meeting at Glen View Club in Golf, IL, **Tony Frandria** host.

May 30 – The Sunshine Through Golf Classic 100. Details follow.

June 1 – Deadline for applications for the GCSAA Scholars Competition.

June 15 – MAGCS monthly meeting at The Club at Strawberry Creek in Kenosha, WI, **Matt Kregel** host. The Dom Grotti, Class C, and Senior Championships will be contested at this event.

July 8 – Annual John Buck Memorial Golf Outing at Pinecrest Golf Course in Huntley, IL, **Brian Comiskey** host.

July 25 – MAGCS Family Night Picnic-Kane County Cougar Baseball game at Elfstrom Field in Geneva, IL.

July 27-28 – Illinois Open at Hawthorn Woods Country Club, **David Schingel** host.

Happy May, and welcome to our newest MAGCS members!

Michael Miracle, Class C, Exmoor CC

Kevin Goss, Class SM, Sugar Creek Golf Course, (Villa Park, IL)- needs approval.

David Jacobson, Class E, NewStream Golf, Rochester, MI

James Fee, Class E, CP Environmental LLC, Indianapolis, IN

Mark Nega, Class E, Rainbow Treecare Scientific Advancements, Minnetonka, MN


Due to a unforeseen conflict, the **MAGCS 2009 Golf Championship** has moved to September 8, 2009 at Kemper Lakes Golf Club. **Dan Tully** will host this event. Those of you that looked forward to playing Elgin Country Club will have the opportunity in 2010. Thanks Dan and Phil for your hospitality and welcoming MAGCS to your fine golf courses.

We also welcome the new student intern at Midwest Golf House. Devin Reese, a Peoria native attending Joliet Junior College started his internship under the watchful eyes of **Derek Settle**, **Keith Rincker**, and **Chris Painter** in mid-April. His major course of study is athletic turf, but Devin wants to gain a better understanding of golf and the other turf types grown on the Sunshine Course. He will also play an important part in preparing for this year's inaugural I-Turf Expo to be held on August 25th and 26th. Welcome, Devin!

The March MAGCS meeting was held at Midwest Golf House on the 25th, with our own Dr. Derek Settle and Keith Rincker taking center stage along with Dr. Megan Kennelly of Kansas State University for a day of education. Topics covered included moss development on greens, dollar spot

control, abiotic and environmental factors influencing turf decline, fairway fungicide programming, and an evaluation of cytokinin plant extract, iron, and nitrogen products' effects on bentgrass greens (does anyone have bentgrass greens?). Thanks to everyone at CDGA and Golf House, to Dr. Kennelly, and to our sponsors—**Nadler Golf Car Sales, Inc. / Authorized Club Car Distributor**, **Nels J. Johnson Tree Experts, Inc.**, and **Quali-Pro** for a very informative day.

(continued on page 20)



A great start to
a smooth finish.



Putting weight in all the right places. That's the essence of the John Deere C Series Walk-Behinds, mowing machines with proper weight distribution and balance. Being fixed-head mowers, the C Series walk-behinds stay engaged with the turf and always cut at a consistent height. They also feature a narrow front roller to rear drum distance for easy turning, maneuverability and clean-up cutting performance. And a dual-traction drive makes for even straighter tracking on greens.

For the consistent cut your greens deserve, call your local John Deere Golf distributor today.



www.JohnDeere.com

J. W. TURF, INC.
14 N 937 US HWY 20
HAMPSHIRE, IL 60140
(847) 683-4653



(L to R) Ty McClellan, Tony Kalina, Dan Tully and Scott Witte attend the March meeting.



Rick Wilson shares a laugh during a break.



Keith Krause and Tim Keating



Roger Ogalla and Kerry Anderson

Many thanks to everyone who had a hand in making the April MAGCS monthly meeting possible. As I write this, it actually is still 2 weeks away, so I hope I haven't been premature in my assumption that it did in fact take place...

We Make Sure the Grass is Always Greener on *Your* Side.

We combine the world's leading professional turf maintenance brands with a team of local experts to deliver the best overall turf solutions to our customers. From creating customized solutions designed to tackle site-specific issues to building customer specific application programs that achieve maximum results, our customer-driven, expert staff is dedicated to the overall success of each and every customer.



Ph: 630.268.8871 | Fx: 630.268.1357
www.chicagolandturf.com



LEADING TURF BRANDS, LOCAL EXPERTISE