

We are in a "now" business. When the season is here we are in go time. It seems as if the winter season for retooling and getting away is shrinking by the year. The time for thinking about our health and welfare becomes secondary. I beseech each and every member of our association to think about this and reflect on how it affects you.

Have you had the necessary tests to insure everything is fine? Are you content with your doctor's care? Is your perception of the way you feel an accurate reflection of your health? Have you put off going to a physician because of the pressures of work or because you don't want to? I cannot stress enough that answering these questions can make all the difference in the world.

There is an abundance of information on the Internet. WebMD.com is an excellent source on conditions, medications, and general health concerns. Many of the larger Clinics and Hospitals, such as Mayo's, Cleveland, and Loyola, have web sites that explain different surgeries and procedures.

Talk to family and friends about any concerns and questions you may have. Although this might be difficult for you, I have found it to be a source of information and comfort. It's how I found my orthopedic surgeon, my family practitioner, and the cardio surgeon who will repair my aneurysm. Just last Friday, the doctor who did the surgery on my leg told me that he had been diagnosed with the same thoracic aneurysm that

I face. He went to school with the surgeon who did his surgery and who will do mine. He talked about what he endured and what I will face. I can't explain in words what that meant and how it put me at ease with what I face.

We have all known friends and fellow members who have faced difficult times and decisions with their health. Rather than putting it off due to fear, uncertainty, or work constraints, please make it a focal part of your life and make the necessary choices.

If there is anything you take away from this article, I hope it will be these three things:

Take time for your health. Having a yearly physical and seeing the proper physician when you are under the weather is the least you can do for yourself.

Take time for yourself. We are in a stressful industry and some days we try to pour 10 hours into an 8-hour day. Take fifteen or twenty minutes, no matter how hard that might be, when you feel overburdened and catch your breath. I started that routine this year, and I can tell you it works wonders.

Take time for your family and friends. Let them know how much they mean to you. Remember tomorrow is not given, nor is it promised.

Ok, Bob, now it's your turn.... -OC



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## SUPER -N- SITE

Joe Schneider, *Beverly Country Club*

# Kurt Sams, CGCS -N-



*"Call me Kurt". From the second email I received from Kurt Sams, CGCS, at Idlewild Country Club, I could tell a lot about Kurt's nature. He isn't a flashy guy. He doesn't demand the spotlight. He is just a laid back individual from Ohio that loves his job. And he is pretty good at it.*

Idlewild Country Club, located in Flossmoor, celebrated its Centennial in 2008. Although, Idlewild is a par 72, it does contain five par 5s and five par 3s. Butterfield Creek flows throughout Idlewild giving it some scenic views but also giving challenges to the golfers and to Kurt and his staff. The creek does flood on occasion and can leave some turf covered in water. Adding to the water features at Idlewild are two ponds and a pool. As you move through the grounds, you notice there are many memorial trees and benches in place. Kurt considers being a steward of the environment a must. Idlewild has continued to maintain its Audubon Certification. Yearly they add and replace birdhouses. They also have some areas of native prairie and a variety of trees. Although the course sits surrounded by houses and right along the Dixie highway, you might as well be in the middle of the quiet countryside.

As you pull up to the maintenance shop you are greeted by Brutus, Kurt's Lab. And if naming his Lab Brutus didn't give it away that he was an Ohio State guy, the decals all over his truck would. Kurt was born in Ohio and went to Ohio State University (OSU), originally for engineering. After two years, he decided that engineering wasn't the right path for him. Kurt then met with Dr. Danneberger, thus starting his career in turf. Later that day, he talked to Carl Wittenaur, CGCS at Brookside Golf and



*The Sams, Kurt and his wife Vanessa with Hunter, Nolan and Lexy.*

Country Club in Dublin, Ohio and started work the next day. Kurt credits Carl with giving him a great start in his career. After graduating from Ohio State, Kurt ventured out to the New York Metropolitan area. From New York, Kurt made his way to Chicago and to Idlewild and has been happy ever since.

During Kurt's tenure at Idlewild he has made many changes and improvements to the grounds. Year by year, Kurt and his staff have renovated bunkers and added and moved tees. They have also expanded a few of the greens and improved the overall aesthetics of the course, all in-house. But true to Kurt's nature, he takes little credit for it. He insists that the credit go to his crew and to his assistant Dion Pearce. He said that he is only steering the boat, they are doing all the paddling.

When Kurt isn't running the helm of Idlewild or cheering for OSU, he loves golfing and spending

time with his family. Kurt is joined at home by his wife Vanessa, his sons Hunter (11) and Nolan (5), his daughter Lexy (7), and lastly by Brutus. Kurt loves to spend time with his kids doing their sports and activities. He is happy that they are now old enough to start golfing, giving him a chance to share golf with his family. Golf has been very important in Kurt's life. He met his wife, Vanessa, at the Conference Show in Orlando. **-OC**





*One of Kurt's ongoing projects is to clear out the non-native plant species along Butterfield Creek and plant native herbaceous materials.*







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## MIDWEST BREEZES

Charles Anfield, CGCS, *Heritage Bluffs Golf Course*



### The West Winds

I called a few guys from the “west” to find out what’s going on in our western MAGCS territory. Everyone was cautiously optimistic about the upcoming season.

Dan Sterr, Vice President of the MAGCS and Superintendent of Stonebridge Country Club said his course came out of the winter in great shape. Dan said there was not much snow mold or winter dessication damage to speak of. His season started out with a little surprise after he charged his irrigation system and he found a leak in a 12” pipe leading from his pump house. Ever the optimist, Dan commented, “I’m glad I found it now instead of in July”. He found a rust hole, 2 inches below a flange in the steel pipe. He thinks the pipe is either just old or may be prematurely deteriorated possibly from his practice of acid injecting. In order to work around the 90 degree fittings and make the repair, he had to dig a sizable hole by contracting out a backhoe. Welcome to 2010.

Dan said he has been staggering bringing on some of his staff back as the grass has begun greening up and the mowing has started. He expects his crew to be fully staffed by May 1.

Dan got an early start on his greens aerification completing the task on April 5. In other project work and part of the “new design mentality”, the Club had Hollebeak Construction

reshape a fairway bunker complex on hole #7. Dennis Wise, from Fazio Design came out last fall and reduced the fairway bunker complex from a 75 yard long waste bunker to a smaller bunker with mounding placed closer to the fairway. He’ll be back this spring to look at the final shaping. Future plans call for reducing the current 37 acres of fairway to less fairway area in an effort to help reduce maintenance and fungicide costs.

I called up Brad Legnaioli, CGCS. He is the Golf Course Superintendent for the City of Elgin. He oversees Golf Course Maintenance at Bowes Creek Country Club, Wing Park Golf Club and the Highlands of Elgin. Brad said he was busy. Ya think! He said he manages to get around to each course every day, although he spends a lot of time “on the road”.

Bowes Creek Country Club is a new upscale public course that opened last October. (Hey Brad, how about a future MAGCS Meeting site?) It’s a Rick Jacobsen design featuring his unique high face bunkers with the fescue “eyebrows”. The Highlands course has undergone an expansion. Nine holes were re-built in 2002 on the old Spartan Meadows site and ten new holes opened last July that are built around an old quarry on site. The nine hole Wing Park, which opened over 102 years ago

*(continued on next page)*

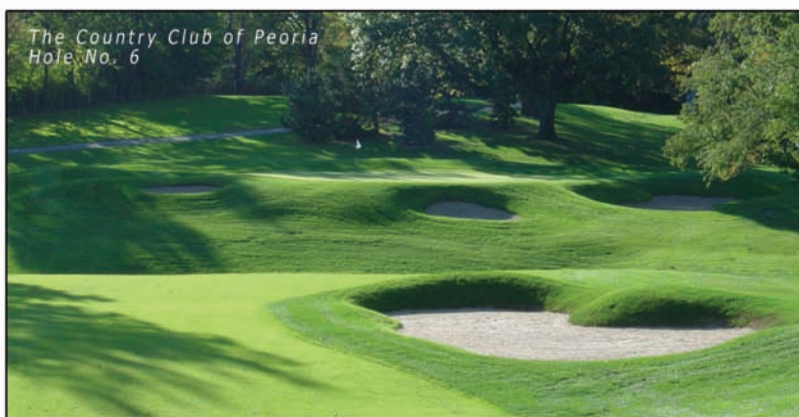


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with its bluegrass fairways and low green fees continues to click along with a loyal local following. Brad said he was very encouraged by the early season golfer numbers on all the courses and is expecting a good year. Brad is looking to get frequent flyer miles for his car and he wears running shoes as part of his daily uniform.

Dan Murray, CGCS of Settlers Hill Golf Course has also seen some good golfer numbers turning out this spring. He opened the course earlier than normal, in the 3rd week of March. For his project work, he expects to continue on his "in house" bunker project work. He is removing sand, re-shaping the sub grade, installing drainage, adding Sand Trapper bunker liners and adding new sand. Dan has observed less sand washing and better overall drainage on the bunkers they have completed work on.

Dan has had to make some budget cuts like everyone else. The ever effervescent Dan Murray: "we've had to trim some costs like everyone else but what are you going to do. Doom and gloom won't get you nothing. We're just trying to be efficient in everything we do". Dan hires a number of retirees to do most of his mowing. I enjoy the retired guys; they've got a great work ethic, except on the cold days". Don't worry Dan; warmer days are ahead of us. Keep up the good work.


Tim Anderson, CGCS, MG, Past MAGCS President (that's a mouthful) from Naperville Country Club also had his course up and running with the favorable March weather. Tim was concerned with the expectations of some of the Members with an early opening. He was not budgeted to bring on his staff this early. Tim commented "the normal guys who play early in the season understand we will not have all the bunkers raked or the ball washers out and all of the other accessories available".

He found that there were members playing, who were normally still out of town this time of year. "I don't think some members are travelling as much and they are more available to play their own course". It took some education on his part to explain that there was nothing wrong and they were following a specific budgeted plan. Tim had to call some of his staff to come in to work earlier than normal that lived in Chicago. Many of his staff are still in Mexico. He's glad to see people playing golf and using the club. "I think it's a pent up demand from the long winter".

Tim and I spoke about the "new mentality" of the business of golf course maintenance. All operations are looking to reduce costs. This translates into a reduction in maintenance practices. The buzz words we "kicked around" were cash flow and sustainability. Our job is to give our board members ideas and practices best suited to the individual club on where we can make those cuts. Before we do that, expectations need to change and this may take a generation or more before it can work. We both agree the "shoulder seasons" of March, April, September and October will determine the fiscal strength of the season. It has become very obvious now that the weather can make or break our golf seasons.

I don't often get to chat with a Master Greenkeeper. Tim said the BIGGA (British and International Greenkeepers Association) certification was not that much more difficult to complete than his CGCS certification with the GCSAA. Tim felt that his professional development is very important to his members perception of his connections and commitment to the golf industry.




That's what's blowing in from the west. -OC




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Wes Danielewicz, Executive Director



# TETA Vendor Day

*On March 12, 2010, the Turf Equipment Technicians Association (TETA) held its fifth annual Vendor Day. You're probably asking, what is Vendor Day? Vendor Day began as a day when technicians visited with a variety of vendors and learned about their products. It's a chance to see and learn about new products. These products can help make a technician's job better, easier, safer, and more efficient. We have always invited golf course superintendents to attend along with their technicians. For the last two years, TETA has opened Vendor Day to everyone associated with the turf industry. Today Vendor Day is also a form of fundraising for our association. Why does TETA have Vendor Day?*

The Turf Equipment Technicians Association is funded primarily by the dues it collects from its members. Additional revenue comes from employment opportunity postings and, on occasion, a 50/50 Raffle at our monthly meetings. In 2009, for the first time in the association's history, rather than increase dues, TETA began to charge for monthly seminars. This was done to offset costs such as the mailings, coffee, donuts, beverages, lunch and handouts. Yes, there are times that we have a sponsor for lunch, but that does not always cover expenses. As I am writing this, our membership is down this year by about 10%.

This year's Vendor Day couldn't have come at a better time and place. It was held at the DuPage Airport Authority in an airplane hangar. This venue gave us over 20,000 square feet of space under one roof, more than we have ever had. This unique space made it a very interesting event. The airport equipment and a Cessna Citation jet on display created an unusual ambiance. Almost 30 vendors participated in the event. Attendance was over 70, the largest ever, with superintendents, technicians, various municipalities and vendors who

came by to see what it was about. The participating vendors were equipment distributors, dealers, rental companies, turf chemical suppliers, lubricants, hydraulic supply companies, auto parts companies, fuel suppliers, battery suppliers, and a lot more.

Thanks to Mark Doles (airport director) our host, Tony Kalina (superintendent) and Josh Zartman (technician) of Prairie Landing Golf Club for co-hosting the event. Thanks to Matt Passantino of Stonebridge Country Club for his diligence in making it all come together. Special thanks to our TETA volunteers, Tina, Dottie, Pete Passantino, and Wes Danielewicz, Jr. for making it an enjoyable day for everyone. We must not forget to thank the infamous "Chef Anton" from Riverside Roasters, for cooking us up one great feast.

To all those who attended this year, including the vendors, thank you for making Vendor Day 2010 a great success. Mark your calendars for March 4, 2011, for next year's event. By the way, the TETA board is looking to change the name of the event. If anyone has any ideas or suggestions, send me an email to wes@teta-online.com. Thanks again. -OC



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## THE BULL SHEET

John Gurke, CGCS, Associate Editor



# May 2010

### DATES TO REMEMBER

May 11-13 – International Golf Course Equipment Managers Association's (IGCEMAA) Virtual Trade Show online at a computer near you.

May 17 – ITF/MAGCS Spring Golf Day at Idlewild Country Club in Flossmoor, IL, **Kurt Sams, CGCS** host.

May 28 – Deadline for applications for the MAGCS scholarships. More if you read on.

June 5 – Sunshine Through Golf Foundation's Second Annual Golf Marathon at the Zigfield Troy Golf Course in Woodridge, IL, **Dennis Troy** host.

June 14 – MAGCS monthly meeting at Elgin Country Club, **Phil Zeinert, CGCS** host.

June 29 – 10th Annual John Buck Memorial Golf Outing at Crystal Woods Golf Club in Woodstock, IL.

July 5-11 – The 2010 John Deere Classic at TPC Deere Run in Silvis, IL,

July 17 – Annual MAGCS Kane County Cougars Game and Family Picnic at Elfstrom Field in Geneva, IL.

July 22-24 – Illinois Women's Open State Championship of Golf at Mistwood Golf Club in Romeoville, IL, **Ben Kelnhofer** host.

July 30 – Deadline for submissions for TurfNet's 2011 "Superintendent's Best Friend Calendar" presented by BASF, the original golf course dog calendar. If your best friend is not a dog, disregard.

August 2-7 – 108th Western Amateur Championship at Skokie Country Club in Glencoe, IL, **Don Cross, CGCS** host.

August 21, 2010 – ITF's World's Largest Closest to the Flagstick Contest, visit [bigpar3.com](http://bigpar3.com)

August 31 – Deadline for the call for presentations at the 2011 GCSAA Education Conference in conjunction with the Golf Industry Show in Orlando, FL.

The MAGCS has 3 \$2,000 scholarships available to the children or grandchildren of MAGCS members who are outstanding students and have demonstrated strong potential for future success. You can download an application at [magcs.org](http://magcs.org), but hurry—deadline for applications is May 28th at 5:00 p.m.

Congratulations to Nazira and **Larry Collins** on the birth of their beautiful baby daughter Teagan Martha last month.



*Teagan Martha Collins*

Also congratulations to **Jeff VerCautren** and Rich Harvest Farms on their recent designation as a "Certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary" through the Audubon Cooperative

*(continued on page 21)*



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