

## MIDWEST BREEZES

Charles Anfield, CGCS, *Heritage Bluffs Golf Course*



### Midwest Breezes: Tropical Style

Most superintendents who work at golf courses in the northern climates close their courses for the season. In late fall, we remove the water from the irrigation system, treat for snow mold and add sand or covers to protect our greens from the harsh effects of winter. We become more concerned with snow plow operations for a few months.

This year's Golf Industry Show was held down in Orlando, Florida. As a northern golf course superintendent I couldn't help wondering, what are the challenges for our counterparts in the South? So I decided to pack my clubs, (Southwest Airlines: golf bags fly free) make a few calls, and explore some courses in the central Florida area.

After my clubs and I arrived safely, I secured my rental car and proceeded to Walkabout Golf and Country Club in Mims on the east coast by Cape Canaveral. Ed Linder is the Superintendent. Walkabout's name is derived from an Australian Aboriginal rite of passage of walking around and surviving in

the Outback. The course is a Jan Stevenson design built in 2005. The property was designed as a golf residential community. With the collapse of the real estate market, much of the property is undeveloped and still in a rustic state. Ed gave me a driving tour of the golf course. Much of the course is carved out of native wetlands. Ed uses local on site materials like sand deposits, native grasses and ancient coral outcroppings for landscaping purposes. He explained that winter temperatures have been averaging twenty degrees below normal this year. This creates a challenge to grow in the overseed. Ed says the timing of the preparation and the seeding process is crucial to getting a good "take". Walkabout overseeds greens, tees and fairways. The greens are Tifdwarf Bermuda grass, over seeded with rye and *Poa trivialis*. The fairways and tees are overseeded with perennial rye. To add to the challenges, the course has been experiencing a three year drought. Ed has done many of his improvement projects "in house". One of his specialties is

*(continued on next page)*



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building revetted bunkers. Wildlife abounds on the course and the overall look is very links like.

Jason Moore is the Superintendent at Harmony Golf Preserve, in Harmony Florida. Harmony is located about 30 minutes southeast of Orlando and opened in 2002. Jason is originally from Woodridge, Illinois and relocated to Florida in 1989. He started working on golf courses shortly thereafter and began his job as Superintendent at Harmony in 2004. Troon Golf manages the property.

The course is a Johnny Miller design and the concept is to be more than a golf residential development. It has plans of creating a "city center".

The course sits on part of the 12,000 acre site. In addition to more housing on the site, future projects include baseball and soccer fields and exercise facilities. They have a nice, new clubhouse capable of hosting banquets, corporate meetings and of course golf outings. Prior to the golf course construction, most of the property was undeveloped wetlands and cattle pastures. Jason over-seeded his Tifdwarf greens with *Poa trivialis* and tees, fairways and rough with perennial rye. I can't believe the amount of wildlife we saw as we played the course. We saw bald eagles, ospreys, egrets, terns, herons, storks, sand hill cranes, and several different species of hawks. It is just remarkable, a birders delight. We even saw a copperhead snake and an alligator warming themselves in the Florida sun.

For my last stop I visited Steve Whaley at Royal St. Cloud Golf Links. St. Cloud is very close to Harmony, FL. Steve has been at the course since the grow-in in 2001. He has experienced many changes since the course opened. Two years ago he grew-in an additional nine holes. Steve's owner, Tom Butler is from Chicago and has implemented projects and practices to improve overall course conditions. The course was originally a reclaimed water distribution field. An adjacent wastewater plant pumped effluent water out on to the native grass site via an above ground irrigation system. The water was filtered by



the soil eventually returning to the water table. The golf course was a natural fit for the site and construction created a win-win situation using the effluent water to irrigate the golf turf. The course has a Scottish theme and is designed to be low maintenance using waste areas and native grasses. Even though Steve has unlimited water to use, he is still likes to keep playing conditions firm, just like in the "old country". He over-seeds his Tifeagle Ultradwarf greens with *Poa trivialis* and tees and fairways are over-seeded with perennial ryegrass.

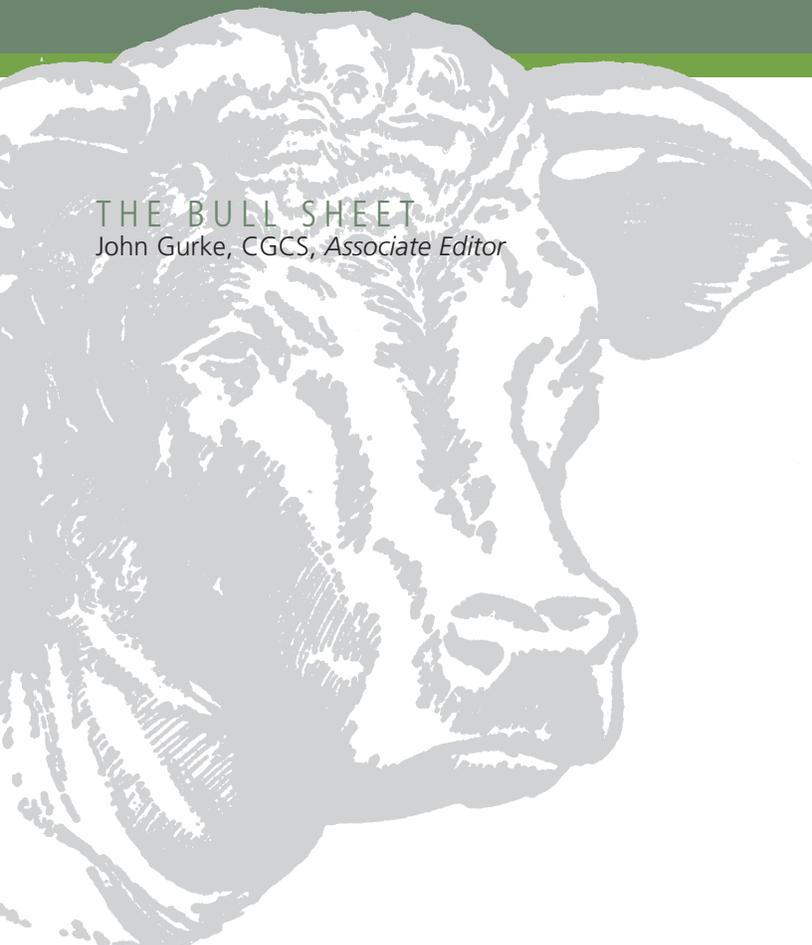
The course was very busy on the day I visited.

Most of the play for these golf courses is in the winter. However, the courses are still open in the summer. There are no course closures or shut downs with the exception of during the over seeding process. During the winter, the "snowbirds" from our climate flock to the warm tropical

temperatures of central Florida. They do have expectations of a "green" course to play on. If the overseed is bad then they take their green dollars to the greener course. Some believe in the future there will be less over-seeding because of the cost. To over-seed the average course of 40 acres of playing surfaces, (greens, tees and fairways) the cost ranges between \$60-70,000. One can see why some courses do, and some don't. Currently overseeding is market driven by player demand. There are other costs involved including the cost of maintenance. One real challenge of the overseed process is the timing and grow-in. If it is too cold, the grow-in is slowed down, color is stunted and can be lost altogether. And after the winter ends the Bermuda grass will transition back to being the dominant turf type.

For us "snowbirds", golf in Florida in February is hard to beat. The sun is warm, birds are chirping, the grass is green (overseeded) and you can play golf. Not too shabby. -OC





THE BULL SHEET  
John Gurke, CGCS, Associate Editor

# March 2011

## DATES TO REMEMBER

- March 9 – CAGCS Annual Chicagoland Forum at Naperville Country Club, **Tim Anderson, CGCS, MG, GM** host.  
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- March 9-10 – Reinders 20th Annual Turf & Irrigation Conference at the Waukesha Expo Center in suburban Milwaukee, WI.  
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- March 10-11 – Michigan GCSA's Ski and Learn Turfgrass Talk Show at Crystal Mountain Resort & Spa in Thompsonville, MI.  
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- March 23-25 – The 2011 IGCEMA (International Golf Course Equipment Managers Association) Virtual Trade Show. Information can be found at [www.virtualgolfshow.com](http://www.virtualgolfshow.com).  
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- March 28-29 – PGA/USGA Rules of Golf Workshop at Midwest Golf House in Lemont, IL.  
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- April 27 – MAGCS monthly meeting at Naperville Country Club, Tim Anderson, CGCS, MG and **Steven Biehl** hosts.  
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Big news out of East Dubuque and Hampshire, as it was announced last month that **Holly Gilmour** and **John Leibold** have partnered in J.W. Turf to become a one-of-a-kind John Deere Golf distributor. With this move, Troy Tietjens has moved into a sales support role for J.W. Turf, and **Paul Bastron, CGCS** former superintendent/GM of Glen Flora Country Club has joined the team as a sales representative. Mike Skopik has moved into the Service Manager's position at Leibold Irrigation. Mike will be supported by Troy and Mike Woolcock in his new role. Also joining the Leibold Irrigation team is **Jason Kahlstorf**, former superintendent at Old Oak Country Club. Congratulations to all of you, and best of luck in this new venture.

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There have been some additional changes of address in the MAGCS ranks recently as well. First, Aurora Country Club welcomed new assistant superintendent **Aaron Reinhart**, formerly assistant at Willow Crest Golf Club to the fold in March.

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**Pete Kiraly**, formerly of Rabine Paving is the new superintendent at Canyata Golf Club in Marshall, IL.

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Old Oak Country Club has welcomed back **Chad Walk** as its new superintendent. Good luck to all of you in your new positions.

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As was reported in November's Bull Sheet, Poplar Creek Country Club (**Dustin Hugen** superintendent) was undergoing a multi-million dollar capital improvement program which included a **Bob Lohmann** golf course renovation along with enhancements to the clubhouse and banquet facilities. The work is done, and 9 holes will open for play on March 26th, with the other nine set to open in early June. Along with all the changes comes a new name for the Hoffman Estates Park District-owned and operated facility, which is now the Bridges of Poplar Creek Country Club, tying in with the addition of eight wooden bridges along the 6,500-yard course. (Ed note: How come they didn't want to call it 8 Bridges?)

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Another area club has a new name to usher in the 2011 season. Hillcrest Country Club (**George Ott, CGCS** superintendent) is now and forevermore The Royal Country Club of Long Grove.

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The PGA and USGA are combining forces to offer a 2-day rules education workshop at Golf House on the 28th and 29th. The workshop will focus on using the Rules of Golf book, definitions and on relief procedures. For those of you

(continued on page 16)

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who really want to be confused (and drop \$150 for that privilege), this is your huckleberry. If you just want to brush up on the basics, CDGA is offering three Basic Rules of Golf workshops at member clubs throughout the district this month. These are free to CDGA members, and include an updated copy of the Rules of Golf along with the associated handouts and diagrams. All sessions are from 7 to 9 PM, with The Glen Club hosting on the 15th, Golf House on the 23rd, and Cantigny Golf Club on the 31st. Go to [www.cdga.org](http://www.cdga.org) for info.

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 Congratulations to **Sean Creed** of Oak Brook Golf Club on being nominated for TurfNet's Superintendent of the Year 2010 Award presented by Syngenta.



Sean was nominated for the manner in which he and his crew handled the massive flooding of the golf course last July when 7" of rain fell on the course, sending the Salt Creek over its banks and covering the front nine with seven feet of water in places.



Sean and his crew defied all odds by seeding in the midst of the crazy heat and humidity that defined last season, having the course back in play in just 4-1/2 weeks. He received over a dozen nominations from golfers who were obviously appreciative of his and his crew's tireless efforts.

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 They say we wear a lotta hats in this business. Boy howdy.



This of course begs the question: Is Louttit's hat safe from Shepherd and Ekstrom? Mice DO like their cheese, you know...

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Congrats to **Burris Equipment Company** who was recently appointed as the Jacobsen dealer for Central and Southeastern Illinois.

OK, deadline is long gone, and I really like doing the celebrity look-alike stuff, and I'm all writer's blocked, so here goes... Rex Ryan (New York jets coach) likes feet—that is well-documented. Feet like grass. They like to walk in nice, lush, thick grass. **Paul Carlson** grows grass. Nice, lush, thick grass. Grass that they plant at Soldier Field as a matter of fact. Coincidence? I challenge you once again—YOU be the judge.



Rex Ryan



Paul Carlson

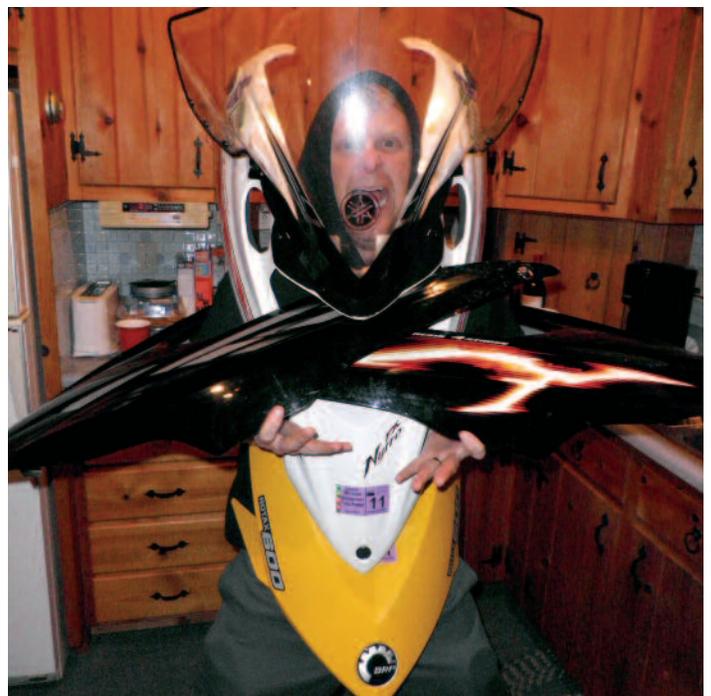
This just in: GCSAA announced on January 25th that its new CEO is the same guy that's been serving as its interim CEO since June. Rhett Evans, whose prior employer was the City of Mesa, AZ where he was director of parks, recreation, and commercial facilities is the man. Rhett came to GCSAA in July of 2009 as its Chief Operating Officer, and takes the helm after the sudden and vague departure of Mark Woodward early last year.

GCSAA has also announced that it is lending its support to the PGA Merchandise Show – China and the PGA Merchandise Show—Asia, both of which are presented under a new partnership of the PGA World Alliance, China Golf Association, and PGA Worldwide Golf Exhibitions. The exact type of support that GCSAA will lend is yet to be determined—let's just hope that whatever support is offered doesn't come at the expense of research or education or any other important services that have been slashed and downsized in recent years.

It's winter, and what do we do in winter? Some of us have fun and get away and do stuff like crashing snowmobiles into things, leaving us with the ages-old quandary of what to do with all that pretty broken plastic and fiberglass. If you've found yourself asking that very question (and really, who hasn't?), ask no further—here are your winning submissions. First runner-up goes to some guy in the UP of Michigan who puts them to use as the ultimate in Yooper-chic window dressings



And the winner goes to legendary snowmobile crasher **Keith Krause** for his body armor suit which has been scientifically proven to reduce the potential for injury in the event of an Irish Car Bomb attack.



(continued on next page)

Congratulations to the following MAGCS members who have recently reached the milestone of 25 years as Certified Golf Course Superintendents: **Dave Behrman, Don Cross, Dan Murray, and Bruce Williams** were recognized at last month's Golf Industry Show's Celebrating Certification celebration in Orlando, FL. You guys are REALLY OLD!

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 Last month on the 23rd, the annual Class C Winter Workshop was held at Golf House (by the way, how cool is it to have a place like Golf House for all these different functions?). But I digress. The full-day's lineup of education included a recap of Disease Pressure in 2010 and Expectations for 2011, How to Run a Successful Business Meeting that was very successful. Congratulations to the Class C Committee on a great job of putting together another fine event.



Mr. Dennis P. Malley, member of Naperville Country Club and President of Position 2 Process, tag-teamed "Running a Successful Meeting" with Tim Anderson, CGCS



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**Rick Jacobson** and Jacobson Golf Course Design have made the news once again. In its most recent issue, *Golf Inc.* magazine named Jacobson's Lion Lake Country Club in China a top-three international golf course development for 2010, and his Bowes Creek Country Club in Elgin finished among its top-six developments worldwide for 2010. Additionally, Bowes Creek earned a Merit Award from the American Society of Landscape Architects (Illinois) for projects that "demonstrate merit in design and/or environmental responsibility." Congratulations to Rick. (The Midwest will be playing Bowe's Creek this August thanks to **Brad Legnaioli** for agreeing to host).  
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The National Golf Foundation has released its 2010 Openings/Closures Summary, and the numbers show that golf has held its ground reasonably well given the severity of the recession, although it continues its market correction. The net loss of 61 courses in the U.S. represents a less than one half of one percent loss of total supply. Some other tidbits: There were openings in 29 states; of the 46 openings, more than 60% were daily fee; there are currently more than 80 golf course projects underway in the U.S. (excluding renovations); states with the most openings in 2010 were Pennsylvania, **Illinois**, Florida, North Carolina, and Texas; and the total facility count at the end of 2010 stood at 15,890, 167 less than the all-time high of 16,057 in 2004. You decide if your glass is half empty or half full.  
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Last month brought the world of golf course maintenance to Florida for the Golf Industry Show and GCSAA Education Conference in Orlando. The week prior, the 61st GCSAA National Championship and Golf Classic presented in partnership with The Toro Company was held in Palm Beach, with MAGCS members making another strong showing. Perennial threats **Tommy Robinson** and **Tim Scott** tied for 11th, while **Justin VanLanduit** placed 15th in the Championship. In the Chapter Team competition, the MAGCS team of Robinson, Scott, VanLanduit, and **Dave Kohley** finished 2nd in the Gross event; while **Al Fierst, Don Cross, Tommy Witt,** and **Bob Maibusch** took 2nd Net and **Tim Davis, Ed Fischer, Paul Schaefer,** and **Steve VanAcker** took 3rd Net. Other notable Top Ten finishers in the event were **Brian Winkel** taking 8th and 9th places in the Classic Affiliate Net and Gross respectively; Steve VanAcker's 3rd place and Paul Schaefer's 4th place finishes in the Classic IV Gross division and Steve's 8th place in the Net; **Rick Wilson** grabbing 8th place in the Classic Senior I Gross and Bob Maibusch eclipsing all comers with a 1st place finish in the Net; Tim Davis with a 2nd, **Brian Chalifoux** a 6th, and Tommy Witt an 8th place in the Classic Senior II Gross; Al Fierst with a sweet 2nd place and Brian Chalifoux a 7th in the Net; Eddie Fischer with a scorching 1st and 3rd place finish in the Classic Super Senior Gross and Net divisions.



*The Florida weather allowed for some recreation time for those dumb enough to test the waters.*



*Wanted: Mature lady to satisfy my Cocoon fetish. Reply to Erwin McKone.*

*(continued on next page)*



*There's a story here, but I'm not tellin' it.  
No sir, no how. Been down that road.*

After the gala closing ceremonies (do they do that?), it was time to put Palm Beach in the taillights and head north to Orlando. The usual pomp and circumstance associated with the Golf Industry Show and GCSAA Education Conference were there in spades—celebrity speakers spoke and deserving award recipients received their awards. Annual meetings were held, boards empowered, and decisions made (such as the one to raise dues \$20 annually for Class A members and \$10 for Class C's). The trade show debuted its new lo-cal version, where one could see both ends of the floor from all vantage points and successfully navigate the entire floor in one day if one so chose.



*For whatever reason, after a visit to the John Deere booth  
I craved a gin and tonic.*



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