

The Stories You Guys Tell

Okay, so I was strong armed into writing an article for On Course. I have been a member for just "a few" years and with every incoming President we all read the same appeal, "Be an active member and please write something for our magazine!"

As many other writers have wondered, I ponder the same. What to write about? I could pen something on soils, pathology, fertility, growth regulators, or life above the cheddar curtain. As this arm twist happened over the winter months, I took especially good notes when making course visits and the topic just sort of unraveled.

Over these many years as a Superintendent and Sales Representative there has always been one thread that never changes: the stories from the course. I would like to share a few of the good ones with you, to make sure as the summer rolls along, that you know you are not out there all alone. And, yes these events are true but the names have been changed to protect the innocent.

We all are aware, winter golf does happen in the upper Midwest, some years more often than others. This particular day followed cold weather followed by unseasonable warm days in the 50's. A superintendent, I'll call him Steve, was looking at a spring project and thought this would be a great opportunity to get a jump on the planning. Out we go to look at the course and make some much-needed plans. On the way out we passed by the range and he saw that all of the rubber tees used in the mats were missing. He had just put them out the day before. As we approached the first tee we noticed a group were using the rubber tees for their balls.

When we approached the group, Steve mentioned the great idea of the rubber tees and the response went something like this, "Well we would like to take credit for such a good idea but the group in front of us suggested it when they heard our portable drill was low on charge and we would not be able to get a tee in the ground. They said go to the range and take the rubber tees. One of our guys said that would be stealing, they said not to worry about it the pro shop has hundreds of replacement tees and this happens all the time."

Upon hearing this Steve said that they did not have any replacements and could they just share one and replace it once their round was complete. Thankfully they agreed. Steve then made it a point to tactfully correct the group in front of them.

On we went out to see the area around a par three he had plans to re-work. As we arrived, there was a group playing the hole, they had hit so we started to walk around as they walked to the hole. Upon their arrival one player found his ball ten feet out on the ice. Everyone continued to do their thing not paying attention to him any longer until we all heard the commotion as this player fell through the ice as he went to pull his ball back to the shore. Yes he had gone out on the ice to get his \$2.00 golf ball. Everyone ran to the shore and told him not to panic and crawl back to shore. This worked well except he was freezing. He then asked where his ball was and a fellow player told him that when he knocked it back to shore it hit the frozen bank and careened even further out onto the lake. Steve jumped into help mode and brought his cart over to get the guy back to the clubhouse as fast as possible. There was no room for the lowly sales rep so I was elected to pull his clubs back to the clubhouse. As I was about half way back Steve came and picked me up. At the clubhouse he said dump the clubs and let's get out of here fast. As we drive away I asked how the guy was doing? Steve said they got a few towels and arranged a chair close to the fire to warm up the golfer and he said thanks and proceeded to ask for his rain check since he had only played a few holes. Steve was afraid the pro was going to kill him and did not want to be a witness. Things only a golfer could ask for!

Spring always brings a few irrigation stories. Bill gives me a call one morning and asks if I will be in the area anytime that day to look at his fifteenth green. He was very assertive, so I was able to re-arrange my day and head there shortly thereafter. When I arrived we headed out to see the fifteenth green where he explained a head must have broken during the winter. The head was tapped to a two-inch line and broken at the swing joint and the system was fully charged. The right third of his green was a huge turf bubble raised about four to six inches. We headed back to the shop to get something to relieve the pressure. When we returned the bubble had burst and ripped a rather large hole in the

(continued on page 13)

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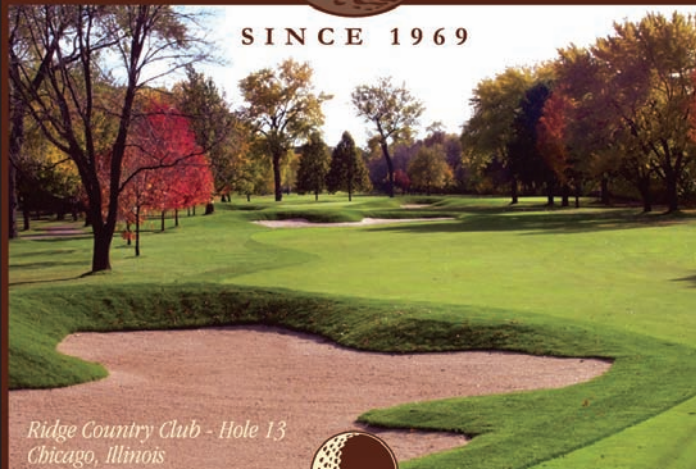
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green. This should be the end of story, but no, I had told Bill to just let it dry out and as soon as you can walk on the area, relay the sod, roll and topdress it back to normal. The next day he calls me and says it is still not dry, so he waited until the next day to attempt to repair the area. The next day came and the area was still wet. At this point he discovered his irrigation tech had not turned the valve completely closed. The fun continues! It dried out and everything was fine.

I was on a very special trip with John to take a few soil samples. As we were walking off the eighteenth green we heard a tone and he said your phone is ringing. I informed him that I had left my phone in the truck. We listened and agreed it was coming from the toolbox in the back of his cart. When John opened the toolbox the ringing became much louder and the frantic search for the origin continued. We finally found the culprit tucked neatly away in his glove. At this point it became hilarious, John pulled out the ringing object shook it, said a few select words, hit it with his hand (it did not stop), threw it down hard on the cart path, many times (it did not stop), stomped on it (it did not stop), finally he beat it with handle of the soil probe several times and it finally died. Imagine the sight of John pummeling this object with me laughing out loud and the entire episode right in front of the clubhouse, it was a sight to see. When I quit laughing I had to ask what had just happened? He explained that yesterday he had taken the day off to be a good dad to take care of his sick son and the crew had found a few security devices from some retail clothing store along the road, that had been cut off from stolen clothes. When the crew brought them into the shop they discovered that periodically the alarms would go off. You guessed it. The crew then proceeded to hide them in his office, in his closet, in the club truck and finally on the toolbox of his cart. Oh, to be loved by your crew.

The last, Phil and I were heading out on the course, when we walked out of the shop to get in the cart, there was a mouse sitting right in front of us. We watched the mouse for a moment and you could see his ears moving and we thought it would scamper away. Phil slowly approached the mouse and hit it with a broom, the mechanic immediately started to laugh, it soon became apparent that the mouse had been dead all the time. It was placed there as a joke on us. The mechanic knew I was coming and had tested the prank and found there was just enough breeze to make the mouse appear alive.

I think I have taken up too much of your time. I am sure as you were reading this you had thoughts of the funny things that you have had happen to you. Next time you are with your peers, share, laugh, don't hold back, and enjoy the foibles of your life. By the way, these stories are very fresh in my mind because these are just a few from 2012. Have a great season and laugh a little and share your stories, who knows when I will have to write another article. -OC



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THE BULL SHEET

John Gurke, CGCS, Associate Editor



JULY 2012

Welcome to our newest member:
Justin Olmstead, SM, Glen Flora Country Club

I am writing this as I look at the forecast for the next week to exceed 90 degrees every day, with a bonus 101 degrees on its way in just two days. Oh, and still no rain, and this on top of the already-in-the-books 13 days of 90+ degree days. I'd tell you my hose has road rash from dragging it around the course all day every day, but that might be getting a little personal. Here's to hoping our courses, and more importantly, ourSELVES have survived intact thus far. This tree took a more defiant approach, seemingly sticking its tongue out at Mother Nature and saying, "Bring it on, b@#%&ch!" It will pay. Oh yes—it will pay.



(continued on next page)

DATES TO REMEMBER

July 10 – The 12th Annual John Buck Memorial Golf Outing and Scholarship Fundraiser at Bartlett Hills Golf Course in Bartlett, IL, **Kevin DeRoo** host.

July 12-15 – John Deere Classic at TPC Deere Run in Sylvan, IL.

July 13 – Deadline to register products for disposal through the IDOA's Pesticide Clean Sweep Collection program. Go back to last month's issue for details on what you've likely missed as you are reading this after the deadline.

July 14 – MAGCS Family Night Picnic and Kane County Cougars game at Fifth Third Ball Park in Geneva, IL.

July 17 – NWIGCSA/ITF Golf Day at Timber Pointe Golf Course in Poplar Grove, IL, Tyler Reiches host.

July 20 – Deadline for nominations for GCSAA's 2012 Col. John Morley Distinguished Service Award.

July 28 – Forest Preserve District of DuPage County's annual public auction at the Fleet Services Complex at Churchill Woods Forest Preserve in Lombard, IL. More to follow.

July 30 – Deadline for photograph submissions for the Superintendent's Best Friend 2013 Calendar presented by TurfNet and sponsored by BASF. Send submissions to lsalinas@turfnet.com.

July 31 – Wisconsin GCSA Summer Field Day at the O.J. Noer Center in Verona, WI.

August 1 – Deadline for photograph submissions for the Lebanon Turf 2013 Dog Days of Golf Calendar. Call 800-532-0090, ext. 253 to learn how to shoot your dog.

August 1 – Deadline for the Daconil Action Tough Turf Video Contest. May's Bull Sheet has all the info if you're still thinking of entering. Or if you've already disposed of your May issue, you can go to www.ToughTurfVideoContest.com.

August 20 – The Annual CAGCS founders Cup golf event at Lake Shore Country Club, **Jeff Frentz, CGCS** host.

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Oh, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) came out with this happy news: The U.S. continues to shatter previous, long-standing heat records, according to a report released last month. In its "State of the Climate" report, NOAA found that the first five months of 2012 were the warmest January-May period on record for the U.S. Yippee.

And here's more fun stuff to mull over during a drought—the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) recently published a remarkable image helping us appreciate the true preciousness of water. We've all heard the oft-quoted statistic stating that 70% of the Earth's surface is water-covered (most in the form of oceans). Though it sounds like a lot, if all that water were gathered up, it wouldn't take up as much space as you'd think. And if you're more concerned with fresh water—as we all are—then the story gets even scarier. This image gives you an idea. Sorry, but if I were here to make you laugh, I'd tell stupid jokes.



Q: What do you call **Andy Weadge** and **Andy Dauksas** when they're playing **Dave Braasch's** course?

A: Glen Erin Andrews. Oops—I think I just told a stupid joke...

On the 28th of this month, the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County will hold its annual public auction in Lombard. Approximately 300 items will be auctioned, including police confiscated items, vehicles, surplus equipment, and retired golf course equipment. Viewing of all items will take place from 7 to 8:00 a.m., with registration beginning at 7:30. The auction begins at 8:30 with the small stuff, followed at 11:00 by the larger items. For a list of items and all the rules, go to www.dupageforestauction.com.

Happy 50th Anniversary to Precision Laboratories of Waukegan, IL. The company, founded in 1962 by Jim Wohlner, has been manufacturing spray pattern indicators, adjuvants, and surfactants for golf courses as well as the agriculture industry for the same number of years that I have existed, which makes it very special.

The American Society of Golf Course Architects held its 66th Annual Meeting in Chattanooga, TN in May. If you can mentally picture an entire hotel filled with walking, talking red plaid couches, you have correctly imagined what that meeting looked like. They did do some business as well, electing Bob Cupp as their next President. Also, five members advanced to Regular member status, including MAGCS member **Doug Myslinski** of Jacobson Golf Course Design, Inc. Congrats, Doug!

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There has been some recent career movement in the MAGCS ranks. Among them, **Michael Kudrna**, former assistant at Eagle Brook Country Club is the new superintendent at Tanna Farms. **John Ekstrom** has returned to his roots, accepting the assistant's position at Jackson Park GC and leading the staff at the South Shore courses in Chicago (under the management of Billy Casper Golf). Also, Adam Crissey, former superintendent at Broken Arrow GC is the new assistant at Bryn Mawr Country Club, replacing **Brendan Dolan** who left to join his family's business in Chicago. Furthermore, **Tim Valicka** has left McHenry Country Club for the assistant's position at Stonewall Orchard Golf Club. Finally, **Frank Heery**, former superintendent at Westmoreland Country Club has left the area to take on the Director of Golf Course Operations at Mediterra Country Club in Naples, FL. The best of luck to you all.

Reinders, Inc. and Spring Valley recently announced that Reinders is the exclusive master distributor of Spring Valley branded fertilizer and ice melt products for Wisconsin as of June 25, 2012. Additionally, Reinders is now an authorized Spring Valley distributor in Illinois, Minnesota, Iowa, Michigan, N. Dakota, S. Dakota, Kansas and Missouri.



**Bill Vogel, CEO of Spring Valley L. and
Craig Reinders, President of Reinders, Inc.**

Our sincerest condolences go out to **Harry Lovero** and his family on the passing of his father Harry Lovero Sr. on June 4th.

Remember last month when I wrote about Prairie Bluff GC's Kevin Bauer, who was a finalist for TurfNet's Technician of the Year Award? Guess what? Kevin isn't a finalist anymore—he's the WINNER! Kevin has been maintaining the equipment at Prairie Bluff, as well as at the Lockport Township Park District, including its fleet of police vehicles since 2006,

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working alongside MAGCS members **Luke Strojny** and **Kenny Shepherd**. Reinders' Whitey Anderson presented the award on behalf of Toro, and Kevin's father Don was a surprise attendee for the great day. As the winner, Kevin receives the Golden Wrench Award as well as a weeklong training session at Toro's Service Training center at the company's headquarters in Bloomington, MN. Congratulations Kevin!



Photo credit: Pam Hutton.

Luke Strojny, Kevin Bauer, and Kenny Shepherd bask in the glory.

Q: Where do **Mike Moran**, **Steven Kellerman** and **Ryan Tully** have breakfast after setting their courses up on a Sunday morning?

A: Harborside International House of Pancakes.

I know—you've laughed yourself silly already, right? I do that. **Keith Krause** does it more, though. Go right now to www.iturf.org and click on the video he did to promote the 2013 Turf Conference. Whatever your reasons turn out to be, you'll laugh. And then you'll want to call Keith and ask if everything's ok with him. That's all I have to say about that.

Indian Hill Club has inspired some of the golf industry's most memorably hysterical moments. Caddy Shack, which was based on events that took place on those very grounds featured the likes of Ted Knight, Chevy Chase, Bill Murray, and arguably the greatest stand-up comic ever in Rodney Dangerfield. Hysterical movie, right? Has the club's current superintendent kept this legacy alive? Does **Dave Schlagetter** have a secret life? Is he actually moonlighting as the latest, greatest stand-up comic? You decide...



Louis CK



Dave Schlagetter

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The person whose shoes I'm still trying to fill—former long time Bull Sheet editor **Fred Opperman**—recently checked in with news of the goings-on in Bozeman, Montana where he now lives. Fred is rewriting the definition of the word “retirement,” as he keeps busy doing volunteer work for Habitat for Humanity, as well as designing and installing the landscaping at his church, along with serving on several committees while also doing wood projects in the winter for family and friends. And when Fred has some free time, he can be found on the mountain trails hiking, or in a kayak paddling, or in his waders fly fishing, or any other form of outdoor recreation. I've said it before, I'll say it again—THAT's retirement with an attitude! Thanks for checking in, Fred, and keep enjoying all that down time.

The last month was quite the opportunity for MAGCS members to get their names and efforts in print in the industry publications. *Golf Course Industry* magazine featured **Bob Lohmann's** article “Think Big” about how golf courses can be a solution to their communities' water mitigation problems as well as **Bruce Williams** taking the opposite and unfamiliar seat as interviewer when he spoke with Olympic Club's Pat Finlen on “Hosting the U.S. Open.” *GCI* also gave U of I's **Dr. Bruce Branham** some ink in its article “The Dirt on Soil and Bio-nutrition.” *TurfNet* found MAGCS members prominently featured in its many venues, including **Dave Schlagetter** and **Chuck Barber** going back and forth on the TurfNet.com Forum about wetting agents, **Joel Purpur's** and **Steve Cook's** blogs on their Blog Aggregator feature, and **Bryan Stromme** and the seven Chicago Park District courses under his and Billy Casper Golf's direction in John Reitman's article “Family Ties.” *Golfdom* editor Seth Jones wrote of a memorable moment he shared with **Mike Bavier**, recounting when Mike approached him at the GIS earlier this year with a gift—a copy of the May, 1967 issue of *Golfdom* he'd found on his bookshelf. **Dan Dinelli** and **Tom Lively** were interviewed in *Golfdom's* June issue in an article by Beth Geraci called “Plant Progress,” which documents the huge improvements to plant health that have taken place in the past 30 years. Way to get the word out, guys.

Stay tuned for the rollout of Environmental Institute For Golf's (EIFG) new national campaign aimed at generating resources to address the shortage of funding for turfgrass research. Expanding on the Carolinas GCSA's Rounds 4 Research program, the program will generate funds through securing donated rounds of golf (defined as a foursome) by facilities and then making them available to the public through an online auction. Since 2009, the Carolinas program has generated nearly \$350,000, and this national drive is expected to expand significantly on that. Might be a good idea to start promoting the idea at your facility now—research in

our industry has been drastically cut, yet is essential to our livelihoods and to the facilities we care for. Donating a foursome can only help.

In related news, **Dan Dinelli, CGCS** reports that his visit with representatives of the We Are Golf coalition to Washington D.C. this past spring bore fruit. Through the group's efforts, Congressman Robert Dold is now cosponsoring HR2718—the Disaster Tax Relief Act, which provides funds to businesses affected by weather disasters. This act would include golf courses as eligible businesses for relief (which were previously not included). That is important news for us, and shows what hard work and perseverance can accomplish. Great work!

The MAGCS June meeting was held on a warm Tuesday the 19th at Blackstone Golf Club in Marengo, IL with **Andy Perry** hosting. The education for the day was provided by University of Wisconsin-Madison Assistant Professor and UW Extension Specialist Doug Soldat, who spoke on Foliar Fertilization Fundamentals and Wetting Agents (a synopsis of which you can read in this issue). The golf course was in fabulous condition, thanks to Andy and his staff, and the competitors who braved the heat were rewarded with a great time on a great golf course. Winners of the 2012 Dom Grotti Championship were **John Nelson** and **Arne Nordenson**, edging out **Don** “too heavy of a” **Cross** to carry for Jacob Miskiewicz who were runners up. **Jacob Miskiewicz** did retain the Class C Championship. Non-competitors walked away with some

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fine MAGCS merchandise as a scorecard raffle ensued after the official hardware was handed out. **Lohmann Companies** (Blackstone was designed by Bob) donated a Kindle Fire and a Taylor Made R11 Driver and **Todd Quitno** sold raffle tickets during the event, netting over \$900 for the MAGCS Scholarship Fund. If you haven't played Blackstone yet, put it on your list for when things slow down – a good solid, challenging course, designed for all – and bring a putter stroke too. Thanks to our sponsors: **Arthur Clesen, Inc., Aerial Images Photography, BASF, Burris Equipment Company, Chicagoland Turf, Layne-Western, Nels J Johnson Tree Experts, Reinders, Inc** and **Syngenta Professional Products**.

MULLIGAN:

In the June 2012 issue we mistakenly published a feature article that needs to be corrected: The article pertained to the use of mercury seals in submersible well pump motors and the banning of such seals in new motors beginning July 1, 2012. The article stated that "owners will no longer be allowed to purchase, repair, or reinstall the type "H" motor with a mercury seal". After verifying these facts with the IEPA, the authorized Flowserve/Byron Jackson dealer in northern Illinois has informed MAGCS that the part of the author's statement above is untrue...Any existing Byron Jackson Type H submersible motors CAN be reinstalled, as long as the mercury seal is not repaired or replaced.

If you have any questions or concerns, or would like clarification from the motor manufacturer's dealer representative, please call Tom Healy at Layne Christensen – Aurora, IL (630.897.6941).

[ed note: Thanks Tom for bringing that to our attention. To his knowledge, there are only 11 or so of these motors in use in our area. If you are unsure if you have one, give Tom a call and he will be able to help you find out.]

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