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A view from the tee in spring. This picture highlights the 9th hole on the white course as seen from the adjacent teeing ground through oaks at Twin Orchard Country Club.

FRONT COVER

The 18th of the White Course at Twin Orchard Country Club, site of the 2012 ITF/MAGCS combined meeting.
Photo credit: Luke Cella

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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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How Big are Your Marbles?

A few weeks ago I went to the Hazardous Weather Spotter Training class to become a trained spotter. Actually, I took the Cella clan and headed out to NIU for the training session. My youngest is dreadfully afraid of storms and I thought this might help him quell some of his fears when the sirens go off in our neighborhood. He fell asleep toward the end of the session, so time will tell as storm season approaches.

The class was hosted by Gilbert Sebenste, Meteorologist at Northern Illinois University (check out his weather reports –he'll email them to you: <http://weather.admin.niu.edu/subscribe.html>), and conducted by Jim Allsopp of the National Weather Service NWS. Some of you may remember Jim. He spoke to our group several years ago at White Pines Golf Course and his name is all over NWS reports in our area.

As we approach the coming months, hazardous weather may hit our area. The United States is the most severe weather prone country in the world. Each year, people in this country cope with an average of 10,000 thunderstorms, 5,000 floods, 1,200 tornadoes and two landfalling hurricanes. Approximately 90% of all presidentially declared disasters are weather related, causing around 500 deaths each year and nearly \$14B in damage.

Why a Spotter?

The National Weather Service has access to data from Doppler radar, satellite, and surface weather stations, technology cannot detect every instance of hazardous weather. Spotters help fill in the gaps by reporting hail, wind damage, flooding, heavy snow, tornadoes and waterspouts. Radar is an excellent tool, but it is just that, one tool among many that the NWS uses. Spotters are needed to report how storms and other hydrometeorological phenomena are impacting a given area.

Spotter reports provide vital "ground truth" to the NWS. They act as eyes and ears in the field, confirming what is seen or depicted on the radar and help to meteorologists issue timely, accurate and detailed warnings.



What do Spotters Report?

Trained spotters are asked to report:

- **Tornadoes**, citing the damage that has occurred, how long it was on the ground, when it started, when it ended, its width and how far it traveled.
- **Flash Flooding**, including rivers, streams, and roadways reporting approximate water depth. Spotters are asked to report whether the water is moving or still, if still rising and if the area is prone to flooding.
- The presence of **Wall Clouds** and whether or not they are rotating and how long they have existed.
- **Funnel Clouds** and their organization, persistence and rotation.
- **Lightning** – oddly enough, NWS only wants to know about lightning when damage or injuries occur from it.
- **Winter Weather** not important now, but the occurrence of freezing rain, ice accumulation, snow accumulation and blizzard conditions.
- **Wind** is a factor that the NWS wants to know about, specifically wind speed and damage. Without the aid of an anemometer, wind speed estimation is difficult that is why description of moving objects or damage is useful.
- The discussion on **Hail** provided the most notable line of the presentation. "I'm not sure how big your marbles are, so when defining the size of hail, please use the following scale":
 - » BB >1/4"
 - » Pea = 1/4"
 - » Dime = 7/10"

(continued on next page)

- » Penny = 3/4"
- » Nickel = 7/8"
- » Quarter = 1"
- » Half Dollar = 1 1/4"
- » Ping Pong Ball = 1 1/2"
- » Golf Ball = 1 3/4" (actually not greater than 1.680, but I didn't correct him)
- » Lime = 2"
- » Tennis Ball = 2 1/2"
- » Baseball = 2 3/4"
- » Large Apple = 3"
- » Softball = 4"
- » Grapefruit = 4 1/2"
- **Marine Hazards** - items such as waterspouts, squall lines, heavy freezing spray, wave heights, high surf and lakeshore flooding are noted by spotters.
- **Other Environmental Hazards** can be relayed to the NWS such as dense fog, dust storms, volcanic ash accumulation and when there are injuries or death as a direct result of weather.

Allsopp did a nice job of going through thunderstorm basics, explaining their development and life cycle. He defined the different types of thunderstorms; Single Cell Storm, Pulse Storm, Multicell Cluster Storm, Multicell Line Storm, and the Supercell. The Supercell was further classified into Low Precipitation Supercell, Classic Supercell, and the High Precipitation Supercell. He explained what makes a thunderstorm severe and trained us to look for specific features as storms begin

Lightning Safety

Lightning takes nearly as many lives as tornadoes annually, but because it only hits one or two people at time, fatalities due to lightning receive less publicity. Lightning occurs with every thunderstorm. It is the most common weather hazard people on golf courses face. About 5% of all US lightning deaths occur on golf courses every year. Remember: "When Thunder Roars, Go Indoors!"

to develop. There was a lot of information that was covered in the class. A part was a good review while more than half was information that was new to me. It was a good reminder that every storm is different and no matter how well we think we know something, we don't. Maybe the education committee can work with the NWS and train our members to become Hazardous Weather Spotters. **-OC**

For more information, please visit:

weather.gov/chicago

nws.noaa.gov/os/brochures/SGJune6-11.pdf



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FEATURE I

Dan Dinelli, CGCS, North Shore Country Club



We Are Golf

April 18th, National Golf Day 2012 occurred in Washington D.C. Yes there is a "day" for golf, and GCSAA along with several allied groups took full advantage to share the positive impacts golf has on communities around the country. This was the fifth such meeting in Washington D.C. with an agenda that grows each year. Collectively, 80 meetings were organized to share golf's story with various Senators and Representatives. The message was clear, "Golf is much more than a game." At 76 billion dollars, golf is bigger than the motion picture industry with a total economic impact on the United States economy of 195 billion dollars, as it provides nearly two million jobs. In Illinois, where 683 golf facilities call home, 50,466 jobs were directly related to golf, with an economic output of \$4.8 billion in 2007. In today's economy and the concern with unemployment, tax revenue and economic health, clearly the business of golf has a powerful statement.

Golf gives back to the people.

Golf is a life-long activity that offers countless benefits to overall wellness. In addition to the social benefits, golf offers an outdoor activity that burns up to 2,000 calories, equivalent to walking five miles during a typical 18 hole round.

Golf also gives back to people in ways beyond the golfer themselves. In 2005 golf gave \$3.5 billion to many national charitable causes. Approximately 16,000 golf facilities throughout the country hosted fundraising events for various charities and causes.

Golf Gives back to the planet.

The importance of open green space is becoming more and more critical. Golf courses around the country represent 2,020,060 acres. These are acres that: provide habitat for wildlife, release oxygen and utilize CO₂, prevent soil erosion, filter and store storm water and cool the atmosphere.

Sustainability – the three "P's."

People, planet, profit... golf carries a strong position in all three areas. In life we feel pleased when a "win-win" situation can be obtained. With golf, a win-win-win situation exists within the sustainability model government and communities thrive for in their existence. And the real

(continued on next page)



The 2012 GCSAA Government Relations Committee convened in Washington and met with legislators in the We Are Golf campaign.

bonus is the win-win holds true for golfers and non-golfers in communities where golf facilities exist. The economic (profit), environmental (planet) and social (people) contributions golf gives reach far beyond the golfer themselves. Wow! How many businesses can claim that? Clearly golf has a lot to be proud of and a powerful story to share... and that's what We Are Golf is all about.

The Coalition.

The GCSAA along with the PGA of America, World Golf Foundation, Club Managers Association, and National Golf Course Owners Association participated in We Are Golf as founding members. Many other companies and organizations also support the coalition such as the USGA, National Golf Foundation, Golf Channel, American Society of Golf Course Architects, Golf Course Builders Association and many suppliers who service the golf community. Collectively, events were organized by the Podesta Group to tell golf's story on sustainability within communities and draw attention to a few specific pieces of legislation in Acts within Congress.

We Are Golf supports HR 2718 and S 1456, the Disaster Tax Relief Act, an important inclusion for situations when

businesses get "relief" in areas declared as Federal Disaster Zones. Severe weather patterns seem more and more common around the country leaving devastation in its path. At present time, golf course facilities are excluded from disaster relief funds. It is critical that golf courses have access to these funds so they can rebuild from disasters in the same manner as other business within their communities.

We Are Golf supports HR 9, the small business Tax Cut Act of 2012. An incentive for small businesses (fewer than 500 employees) to help grow the economy by offering tax deductions up to twenty percent of the profits and up to fifty percent of their W-2 wages.

We Are Golf supports HR 1964, the Conservation Easement Incentive Act. Again, golf was excluded from this legislation. We believe golf courses should be allowed to take advantage of this tax relief as an incentive to secure important green space into long-term conservation easements.

At the end of the day We Are Golf did not ask for any "special treatment or exceptions." The only true "ask" was to be considered like any other business that contributes to sustainable communities.

*Kevin Breen, CGCS, Peter McDonough, CGCS. Dan Dinelli, CGCS,
US Congressman Robert Dold representing Illinois and Greg Lyman, GCSAA Director of Environmental Programs*





Budget cuts around the capital are apparent in their turf quality or lack thereof. It could be time to donate some time and materials to grow some quality turf around the place.

Making sense of it all

It is in situations like We Are Golf at National Golf Day in Washington DC that drives home the importance of it all. What I mean by “all” is *all* the efforts of so many on so many fronts that work at improving our profession and keeping golf healthy. The efforts of the GCSAA staff, past and present GCSAA Boards, Committees and work groups, collectively show critical value. The question often asked at the meetings in DC was “do you have data, standards or best management practices, case studies or examples you can share to help us better understand the outcomes and nature of your business?” When the response was... “you bet”, their heads and ears perked up and they listened. Specifically efforts in:

- Conducting surveys within the Golf Course Environmental Profile that generated data in Property Profiles and Environmental Stewardship; Water Use and Conservation Practices; Nutrient Use and Management; Energy Use and Management and Pest Management
- The IPM Template to help the superintendent through the thought process in developing a written IPM Plan
- The many case studies (and other resources) in the Environmental Resources area on GCSAA's newly designed web site supported by the Environmental Institute for Golf
- The support from the USGA, Environmental Institute for Golf and local Chapters and Turf Foundations, who contribute ten's of thousands of dollars towards scientific research to further our understanding in improving soil, plant and environmental health. Much of this information leads to best management practices and continuing education on how to effectively and efficiently utilize inputs and cultural practices safely.
- Best Management Grants, supported by the Environmental Institute for Golf, to help chapters fund efforts to further local needs towards sustainability.

These plus many other programs and services help superintendents be better stewards of the land, help manage costs with increased expectations and tell a story with a goal to lessen the burden of the increasing regulatory pressure. In many ways We Are Golf is just the beginning. It is clear that more and more people will be interested in what we are doing as stewards of the land. In some ways that is good for it demonstrates the importance of the environment that makes up golf courses. However, burdensome, ineffective regulation is costly and needs to be avoided. National Golf Day reached out to policy makers on a National level. The reality is, most concerning policy and regulations start at the local level. Local Governments have the freedom to restrict, regulate and control policy that can cause the most concern for those within the community. For example, Highland Park a northern suburb of Chicago, responded to public pressure by banning pesticide use on public parks with a desire to include local golf courses. What is happening in Highland Park can happen anywhere. But the point is reaching out, getting involved and education is important. A proactive approach is typically more productive and efficient then a reactive approach. There is more to do, but there is a lot to be proud of...we just need to stay active and tell the story. **-OC**

Dinelli stopped his taxi on the way to his hotel to capture this shot of the space shuttle Discovery on its way to DC to its final resting place the Smithsonian.



SUPER -N- SITE

Shane Conroy, *Park Ridge Country Club*

Kyle Jacobsen -N- Twin Orchard Country Club



Twin Orchard Country Club (TOCC) and its Manager of Grounds & Greens, Kyle Jacobsen, are hosting this year's ITF/MAGCS Spring Golf Day. Twin Orchard features two 18-hole courses, the Red Course and the White Course. The two courses are spread over 242 acres, featuring 11.5 acres of ponds and 11 acres of native areas. After a recent trip to TOCC, it's easy to see why Kyle is proud to show it off.

This is not your grandfather's TOCC. If we go back just four years, you would think you were on an entirely different golf course. In 2008, Kyle's first season at Twin, the country club underwent a massive green and fairway regrassing project, drainage renovation, berm enhancement, tee addition, and pond enlargement. They also established native areas and redesigned several holes. I think it is safe to say that Kyle and his assistants, Carl McPherson, Ryan Morrison and Todd Carroll, have been busy over the past few years.

What started as a standard 'gas and grass' project on fairways and greens of the Red Course snowballed. The members realized they needed to address other issues at the same time. Since the course was going to be closed during the regrassing, the members decided to address flooding and drainage on the course as well.

There was a drainage issue across the entire property, after even a light rain. To correct it they installed 6.1 miles of drain tile (4-24"). Since the completion of the original project, TOCC has added over another mile in house. Also for flood relief new ponds were added, and the size of existing ponds was increased. The water level of the ponds can be quickly raised, or in the case of a period of heavy rain, quickly lowered. Another great feature of the ponds is the 'spill over' areas. These are located in the rough, adjacent to the ponds. If the ponds ever flood, the water will first move into the rough and not the fairways. The ponds are all interlinked by



The Jacobsen clan, Kyle and wife Stephanie, Adam (4) and Erin (21 months).

the seven miles of drain tile that were installed. All ponds drain to the two lowest points on the property, where it just so happens that the two pump stations for irrigation are located.

Also assisting in flood prevention are the new retention basins. These areas were dug out during the renovation and equipped with a 12-inch overflow pipe, which connects them with the course's existing drainage tile system, which runs to the main pond. The 12-inch pipe is equipped with a six-inch restrictor plate on the inlet. In high flow times, this restricts flow, holding the water back at higher elevations before it reaches the floodplain in the low-lying areas. The retention basins are aesthetically

appealing and built in areas that will not impede play when they do hold water.

All the soil removed in pond renovation and retention basin construction also plays a part in reducing flood problems. All 73,000 cubic yards of soil dug during the renovation stayed on site. It was used to construct a berm along the property line that runs along IL-83. It raises the overall elevation of fairways that were located in the floodplain and helps to distinguish between holes. The berm along IL-83 is where the majority of the soil went. The second hole, which runs adjacent to the berm, was completely redesigned, along with others, by MAGCS member Dave Esler. The new hole is a night and day difference from what was there before. In my opinion it's one of the nicest areas of the course.

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