

MAGCS sends its condolences to the family of **Bruce Schweiger** on the passing of Bruce's mother last month. Please keep the Schweiger family in your prayers.

Does your equipment technician deserve a day in the sun, a tip-of-the-cap for all he does to ensure your success? If so, then nominate him for GCM's Most Valuable Technician (MVT) award, presented in partnership with Foley United. Nomination forms are available at gcsaa.org, and are due by March 30th.

It's that time again—the much-anticipated Golf Digest "America's Greatest Golf Courses" rankings are out for 2013-2014. Of the top 100 courses listed, seven are maintained by MAGCS members, and here is how they ranked: #4—Shinnecock Hills Golf Club, **Jon Jennings, CGCS**; #18—Chicago Golf Club, **Scott Bordner**; #20—Oakland Hills Country Club South Course, **Steve Cook, CGCS, MG**; #31—Medinah Country Club No. 3, **Curtis Tyrrell, CGCS, MG**; #50—Butler National Golf Club, **Mike Sauls**; #62—Olympia Fields Country Club North Course, **Sam MacKenzie, CGCS**; and #73—Rich Harvest Golf Links, **Jeff VerCautren**. The magazine also came out with its Top 100 Public Courses for 2013-2014, and on that list, The Wilderness at Fortune Bay in Tower, MN (**Vince Dodge, CGCS**) was #59; while Cog Hill No. 4 (**Scott Pavalko**)—the Dubsdread course—came in at #64. I really thought this was going to be Aurora's year, too.

Pitching and peddling—another mysterious case of MAGCS member hidden identity has come to our attention. Jim Palmer, when he wasn't pitching fastballs for the Orioles was usually peddling underwear for Jockey. **John Turner**, when he isn't pitching a spiel to a vendor is usually peddling Bayer products to end users. Is there a chance they are one and the same?



MIDWEST Doppelgänger



The Brian Winkels

What are the odds of this happening?? On a recent visit to the Old Memorial Country Club in Tampa, FL, **Brian Winkel** of Syngenta was randomly assigned a caddy from the caddy pool to tote his bag around the course (and I'm pretty sure he saw every square inch of it, too). His caddy's name? Brian Winkel. Wink thought he'd met his double until he learned that Brian Winkel the caddy was a scratch golfer (and probably a righty), ending any doubts he may have had.

Chalk up another legal victory for us duffers. A judge in Montana ruled that a couple who bought a house along a golf course should have known that their yard might be littered with golf balls. The couple sued the course alleging trespass, nuisance and breach of duty after nearly 1,300 golf balls landed in their yard during the course of a season. The judge said that should not have come as a surprise to the couple, both former golfers. "The couple failed to fulfill their independent duty to see what was plainly apparent before purchasing the piece of real estate," quoted the judge. A truly rare instance where common sense was applied to the law—hope that catches on.

Building on the success of its nearly 20-year presence in the golf turf industry, TurfNet has launched a companion service for sports turf managers called TurfNetSports.com. Much like our TurfNet, the public and members-only content areas include news, discussion forums, educational webinars, blogs, used equipment classifieds, job listings, resumes and videos. Take a look if that's your thing.

Q: If Batman moves his operation to **John Burke** and **Dale Nissen's** course, where would he live?

A: Old Wayne Manor.

On the 8th and 9th of last month, the inaugural Turf Conference—the Illinois Turfgrass Foundation's all-education 2-day event—was held at Hamburger University on the McDonald's corporate campus in Oak Brook, IL. Judging from feedback from attendees, presenters, and commercial people alike, the event was a rousing success. Intensive 30-minute education sessions covering the gamut of all things turf in Illinois, including golf, sports turf and lawn care were conducted in a facility seemingly built for the event. A very strong list of educators from around the Midwest certainly didn't disappoint the 235 attendees, and the reception at the closing of day one was one for the books. Much hard work went into the creation of Turf Conference, and the ITF board members and advisors who toiled for months to bring it all together are to be commended—you know who you are (and I know who I'm not). Thanks to

everyone who participated, and especially to the sponsors of the event, who were: Driver: **Syngenta**; Iron: **JW Turf, Inc.**, and **Reinders, Inc.**; Wedge: **The Andersons, Arthur Clesen, Inc., BASF, Burris Equipment Company, Chicagoland Turf, CS Turf, Lebanon Turf, Pearl Valley Organix, Pro Gro Solutions, Tyler Enterprises, Water Well Solutions**, and **Waupaca Sand**; Putter: **Bayer Environmental Sciences, Commercial Turf & Tractor, Dow Agrosiences, FMC, Harrell's, Knox Fertilizer, Lohmann Companies, Martenson Turf Products, Inc., Shoreline Sand Solutions**, and **XGD Systems**.

Check out GCSAA TV at gcsaa.org—a new segment features **Justin VanLanduit, CGCS** of Briarwood CC describing “What’s In Your Cart?” for the millions and millions of viewers. And what did those millions and millions of viewers learn about Justin? Besides the fact that he has most of the same stuff we all do in our carts, the dude has a MAJOR caffeine addiction. Or he has a sweet deal with the Mountain Dew people.



The Venue's new name, if John Turner had his way



Ray Kroc's office was a neat bit of trivia just inside the entrance



The facility—very comfortable

GCSAA^{actv}

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Maybe Justin's video was responsible for this stat—in less than four years of its existence, GCSAA TV videos have been viewed more than 400,000 times! Additionally, over 550 videos on the website have reached viewers in 151 countries. Keep on watching—the lucky viewer of the 500,000th video will win a free iPad.

MIDWEST Doppelgänger



Bonus MAGCS celebrity look-alike feature: While patrolling the vendors area at last month's Turf Conference, Chuck Barber had an epiphany when he saw the Reinders folks all decked out in their best blue Hawaiians. Do we have another case of MAGCS member moonlighting in Hollywood?

Welcome and congratulations to MAGCS newest member **Brian Palmer**, former Senior Assitant at Merion Golf Club, and the new golf course superintendent at Shoreacres.

Among the many honors and awards given out at the Education Conference this month, the Col. John Morley Distinguished Service Award is one of the biggest, and this year four men were recognized by GCSAA. Frank Lamphier, Ken Mangum, CGCS, Dennis Lyon, CGCS and Roch Gaussoin, Ph.D. were all recipients of the 2013 award, which was presented on Feb. 6th in San Diego. Congratulations to all four of these deserving men.

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The Question continued.....from 3

complete. Tree maintenance as we all know is a constant battle, especially on courses with hundreds of trees on the property. The frozen, snow-covered ground creates a great opportunity for getting equipment on the course and getting some tree work done. Whether it is corrective pruning or a master tree plan, winter is the ideal time to get this type of work completed. Many of us are also in charge of winter activities for members or for the general public. Ice rinks or cross-country ski courses are very popular at golf courses in the winter. These activities also require extensive labor hours and planning. They are just another 'thing' we do in the winter. Snow removal is another task that requires our full attention (not including last season), since most of the time the grounds department is responsible for clearing the parking lots and sidewalks.

This is only the tip of the iceberg, when it comes to what we do in the off season. Each facility has its own agenda and its own techniques. Each piece of property is different and has its own unique winter challenges and projects. This says nothing about the various construction/improvement projects, both on and off the course, that many of us will oversee throughout the winter months. There are also green committee presentations to prepare, board meetings to attend, budgets to create, and agronomic plans to prepare for the upcoming season.

Winter is just another season in the year of our shared passion—maintaining a golf course. We know what can be accomplished in the winter months, and we plan accordingly. Contrary to popular belief we still show up and get things done each day. So the next time someone asks what you do in the winter, answer as you see fit, but we all know the real answer.

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Charles Anfield, CGCS, *Heritage Bluffs Golf Course*

Turf Conference

The last issue of OC Covered the 60th meeting of the Midwest Turf Clinic. This issue we take a look at the 1st Turf Conference.

In 2013, the Illinois Turfgrass Foundation re-invented its offering for the winter education meetings. This year they came up with sort of a “blast from the past” with the introduction of Turf Conference. In some ways it reminded me of the events they used to hold at Pheasant Run Resort (minus the trade show). The 2013 Turf Conference featured education for golf, sports turf, lawn care and general turf. Each education track was designed by committees from thorough feedback from the profession they represent. They featured some of the best speakers available on those topics.

The event was held at the Hyatt Lodge in Oak Brook, also known as Hamburger University. The educational offerings were designed to be the “epicenter” for All Things Turf for ITF members. The ITF’s goal of the Turf Conference was to keep it simple, straightforward, provide high quality current education and to facilitate the expansion of networks by promoting/building relationships. Vendors had small displays, set up on high top tables in a very cozy space. With the close location of food and drink it was a good set up for networking. It appeared unanimous in the conversations I had with vendors and attendees: Everyone seemed to like the new format and new location.

Each morning began at 8:00 with a coffee and roll mixer. Attendees “woke up” with some delicious McDonalds coffee and conversation. Education started at 9:00 for each of the tracks in the very nice theatre settings.

The topics that were covered went into great detail. Speakers left plenty of time for thorough question and answer sessions.

Some highlights included:

- Dr. Derek Settle of the CDGA presented a very interesting and in depth analysis of the “2012 Year in Review.” He’s had some time for the dust to settle (giggle) to review the data and provide some insight as to what happened where, when, why and how. One clear take away message is that after the hot dry June and July, if we didn’t get that cool down period



Dr. Trey Rogers, Michigan State University lists the benefits of topdressing fairways: Increased infiltration, dilute thatch accumulation, reduced disease incidence, less earthworm castings, fewer traffic restrictions, improved playability.

in August, the death toll would have been much higher as most of the *Poa* was already “out of gas.”

- Dr. Trey Rodgers of Michigan State University led a presentation on “All Things Putting Green Drainage.” He went into the details of the physics of drainage principals and outlined various drainage options. Scott Pavalko shared his experience with the Sub-Air systems in use at Cog Hill Country Club. Brian Thompson from Biltmore Country Club explained his experience with installing XGD drainage “in-house.” Kyle Jacobsen from Twin Orchard Country Club made an informative presentation on their work to install XGD drainage and aggressively modify the soil profile their greens. Dave Behrman, CGCS discussed his use of the PC drainage system at Midlothian Country Club.
- Dr. Rogers came back after lunch to present on “Sand Topdressing Fairways – State of the Art for the Midwest.” If you like firm and fast, this was good stuff.
- Dr. Kevin Frank also from Michigan State University went into great detail on “The Effects of Granular, Foliar and Combination Fertilizer Programs on Turf Performance.”
- Our own Dr. Tom Voigt from the University of Illinois shared his research on “Fescue Management for Golf Courses.”

There was so much information I missed. I wish I could have attended some of the other education tracks. For a turf geek, this was it. There was a lot of great information to take back and begin to formulate an agronomic plan, or in layman’s terms “just what the heck are we going to do to manage our turf and keep it alive in 2013.”

There are no easy or inexpensive answers to managing turf in the mid-west. But local education events like the ITF Turf Conference, where you can share common experiences with your peers, gather new information about new products, learn new tactics and techniques, and can only make your job and your operation better. Mission accomplished **ITF**.



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