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front cover

Harborside International, the site of the Midwest Golf Championship will provide the best players of the Association a solid challenge of golf. Pictured is the 13th Green on the Starboard Course.

PHOTO: Luke Cella



Where's the anchor? It's in the middle of the bunker in front of the 15th green on the Port Course at Harborside International, a 216 yard par 3, aptly named Anchor.

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DATES

2014 MIDWEST EVENTS

- 8/26 Midwest Golf Championship, Harborside International
- 10/06 Midwest October Meeting, Briarwood CC
- 11/12 Midwest Turf Clinic & Annual Meeting, Medinah CC

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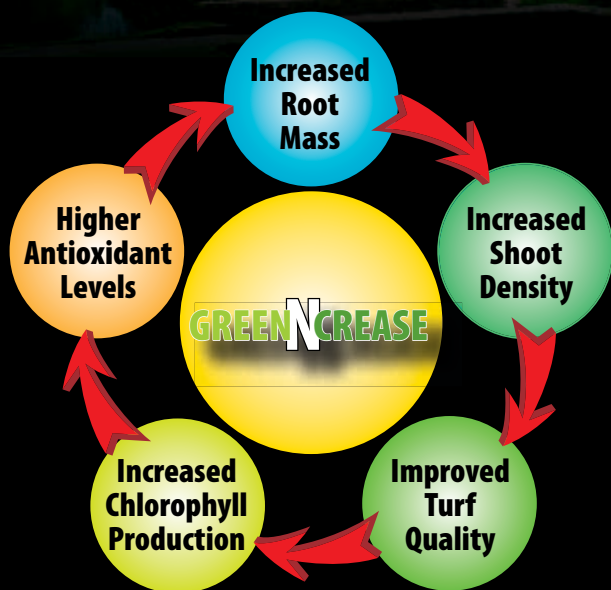
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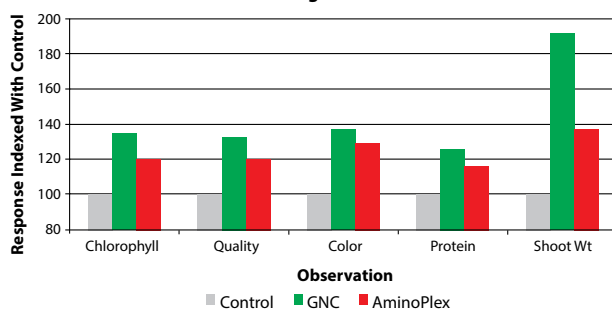


GreenNcrease rate effects on creeping bentgrass drought resistance. 2009. Ervin, E.H. and X. Zhang. Virginia Tech.

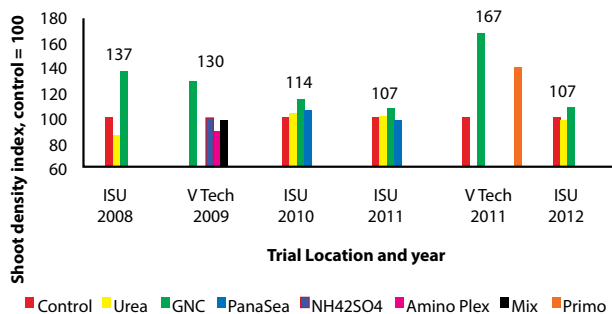


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Turf response to GreenNcrease applications averaged for 3 months. 2009. Virginia Tech.



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*Matt Kregel
The Club at Strawberry Creek*

Riding the Crazy Weather Train

What a crazy ride 2014 has been so far. One can only wonder what Mother Nature has in store for us next. The harsh winter left our friend/nemesis, Poa, in very harsh shape.

The cold air temperatures prolonged by the water in the big lake to our east presented quite a challenge for recovery this Spring. It was difficult to get soil temperatures high enough to germinate seed and encourage growth.

Fast forward a few weeks and rain became a constant. Depending where you were located it was excessive and caused flooding. High winds also caused unnecessary clean up and boy was the grass growing at excessive rates. It was hard to keep up if you couldn't get out to mow. No matter what curve ball Mother Nature has thrown us this year, we've adapted and come out swinging. Sometimes it is hard to hit it out of the park, but in the end, we get it over the fence.

Because of the changing battles we face at work each day, sometimes it is difficult to focus on life outside the course.

I hope that everyone takes time to understand that this passion that we call a job is in the end just a job. Please take time for your family and loved ones. They are the roots of your life. It is difficult to leave your work at the course when you go home for the day but remember that others require special care and attention, more so than the golf course.

I am very fortunate to work at a club that welcomes my family with all privileges. My children enjoy visiting dad at work and lounging at the pool or taking a ride with Dad around the course. Who am I kidding? My kids are old enough now that they want their own cart to drive, something I've decided that needs a purpose, so I've put them to work. One is never too young to fill divots in fairways.

I am still having difficulties grasping how my oldest will be a freshman in high school this fall. Time passes quickly, make sure you spend some of yours outside of work with family this summer.

Enjoy the rest of 2014. May temperatures be in the mid 70's with a quarter inch of rain every four to five days. (ED note: Matt forgot to ask for nighttime temps to dip into the 50s). @



The divot crew at Strawberry Creek, Hannah (11), Tyler (8) and Isabel (13) Kregel.

Fireworks Extravaganza - a Case Study

Tim Anderson, CGCS MG

Most clubs make use of a robust social calendar to supplement their golf/swim/tennis offerings. Social events typically cater to social members and the families of golfing members. Naperville Country Club hosts 70-75 member events per year like Martinis and Manicures to Fight Night (amateur boxing matches).

Collectively, these events represent an important revenue stream for the Club. They generate about \$260K/year in participation fees beyond regular monthly dues. In addition, they generate associated beverage sales. These social events account for 6.5% of the Club's total annual operating budget.

The Club has 250 social members, which represents 41% of the Clubs' total active members. Social members account for:

- 22% of member beverage sales
- 26% of member food sales
- 35% of member sponsored banquet sales
- 26% of total member driven food and beverage sales
- 14% of member driven golf guest fees (social members have limited golf privileges)
- 4.5% of member cart revenue
- 10% of total member driven golf revenue (guest fees + cart fees)
- 21% of total non-dues related member spending (guest fees + cart rentals + food sales + beverage sales)

Since Naperville Country Club does not offer pool or tennis, many of the social members join specifically for access to the Club's social events including: Easter Brunch, Mother's Day Brunch, Christmas with Santa Claus, Build a Gingerbread Workshop, and the Halloween Party. The largest event of the year is our annual Fireworks Extravaganza.

Fireworks Extravaganza - A Naperville Tradition

The Fireworks Extravaganza has evolved into one of the Club's signature events. The event started in 2005. Approximately 100 members gathered on the patio to watch the Club's first fireworks display, as debris and smoldering embers rained down on the patio from the shells exploding overhead. Since 2005,

the Fireworks Extravaganza has grown exponentially and has transformed into a tradition for many NCC families. Over time, participation for this event has ballooned from 100 participants to over 1,000 participants. As the event has grown, so has the planning and execution required to facilitate the Fireworks Extravaganza.



Every year, there are a handful of Club events that require us to transform the Club into something different and unique. These events are very labor intensive, but they also produce some of the most memorable events that the Club has to offer. The Fireworks Extravaganza is one of these events, as the driving range is transformed into an outdoor summer festival for family and friends. The transformation includes constructing an outdoor kitchen complete with a refrigeration truck and hot boxes, an outdoor beer garden with a portable cocktail bar, outdoor dining venue, tented food stations with three buffet lines, a first-aid/lost and found station, and registration booth with "Will-Call" window. Preparations for the event actually start a year in advance as "blackout dates" are incorporated into our event calendar to account for the effort required to stage the Fireworks Extravaganza.

The coordination for the Fireworks Extravaganza involves all the managers and all the resources that the Club has at its disposal. All departments are asked to contribute in order to properly execute the event. Can you say TEAM WORK? It's great to see what 80 people can accomplish when they are all pulling together in pursuit of a common goal. The Pro Shop manages traffic control in the parking lot. The Grounds Department handles all heavy lifting and utilizes the skid steer to position equipment and pre-sorted pallets of supplies to locations throughout the driving range. The Grounds Department also coordinates all roping, and waste removal. The administrative staff and Membership Director man the registration booth and "Will-Call" window. Our Banquet Coordinator and Hostess run the raffle. The Executive Chef coordinates the temporary outside kitchen as well as the inside kitchen, and the kitchen stewards that shuttle food between the two locations. Our Food and Beverage Manager coordinates the food runners that stock the buffet stations. Our Bar Manager supervises the beer garden and cocktail bar. The wait staff monitors the kids' rides and inflatables.

In total, 80 employees work to support the event. We log about 700 labor hours the day of the event (exclusive of salaried employees). In the months prior to the event, we utilize a web-based program called Basecamp to create electronic to-do-lists and to share information and digital files between managers. Managers are assigned different tasks in preparation for the event. They receive reminder e-mails on specific dates as the event draws closer, and check off tasks as they are completed. As tasks are completed, the program circulates the completed to-do list showing a check mark next to the tasks that have been completed. Basecamp is updated yearly as part of our post-event debriefing, allowing us to capture information that will assist us the following year.

"A Portfolio of Events"

We manage the Club's social events utilizing a "portfolio approach". Each event is monitored individually, but our overall goal is to manage a portfolio of 75 events to achieve our revenue goal of \$260K with a corresponding profit margin of 13-15%. While our target margins may be different, we use this same portfolio concept on our book of business related to member dining, golf outings, weddings, and banquets. Some events overperform while other underperform. The goal is to identify how to enhance the overperformers and bring about positive change to the underperformers. Monitoring event P&L's allows us to make informed decisions on how to improve events. When events do not perform properly, P&L's also give us the information necessary to make educated, fact-based decisions on when it is time to remove an event from the social calendar.

When we use the term portfolio, most think of finances. There is one big difference between a financial portfolio and a social calendar at a county club. A financial portfolio does not have much in the way of emotion attached to it. If one of your stocks decreased in value for 5 years straight, you would sell what you have left and invest in something different, with little to no emotional reaction other than lamenting your loss. Applying the

Team #	Team Leader	Responsibility	Cart Assignment	Radio	Team members
1	Tim	Outside Contractors	Tim's Cart	•	Steven, Matt, Dave
2	Steven	Lift Crew	Cushman with green trailer, Steve's cart, skid steer,	•	Torres, Emilio, Ramon, Antonio, Adolfo, Samuel
3	Matt	Rope Crew	Cushman with brown trailer, Matt's cart	•	Porfirio, Gustavo, Ruperto, Inocente
4	Sarah	Registration	N/A		Jody, Katie, Judy
5	Chef Mike	Outside Kitchen	Carry all	•	Marcos, Eli, Juan Temp #1, Temp #2
6	Pedro	Inside Kitchen	N/A	•	Luis, Temp #3
7	Alex	Kitchen Runner	Carry all with green trailer	•	Alex
8	Pete /Matt	Food Runners	Carry all	•	Jose, Andrew, CJ, Nick, Temp #4, Temp #5, Temp #6
9	Shorty	Central Supply	Carry all	•	Nick
10	Bill	Bar and Beverage	Carry all	•	Pam, Jessica, Brian, Brian, Laurel
11	Brennen	Ice	Carry all	•	
12	Joe	Parking lot	4x Pro Shop carts	•	Mike and 4x bag room staff
13	Argelia	Safety/First Aid	N/A		
14	Dana	Ball Drop	Four person cart	•	Clair
15	Rachel	Rides/Inflatable	N/A		Stephanie, Lisa, Ann, Merriam, Temp #7, Temp #8
16	Colleen / Ema	Snow Cones	N/A		
17	George	Bussers	Carry all	•	Temp #9, Temp #10
18	TBD	Floater	Carry all	•	
19	Conny / Conrado	Waste Removal	Cushman		Marcial
20	Porfirio	Dishwasher	N/A		Gustavo
21	Brain Brown	Clubhouse / Security	Pro Shop Cart	•	Tony
22	Wendy	Bathrooms	N/A		Facundo
23	Dave	Site Supervisor / floater	Pro shop cart	•	Tim, Steven, Matt, Brian
24	Tony	Photographer	Pro Shop Cart		
25	Nicole	Beverage Tickets			

Labor tracking and team assignments keep our events running smooth. Basecamp is a program used to help digitally manage people, responsibilities, and tasks.

same logic to an event on a club's social calendar is not always as simple. Club events have the potential to carry a significant amount of emotional baggage. Our Fireworks Extravaganza is one of those emotionally charged events.

Prior to the recession, it was commonplace for clubs to run social events at a loss. During that same timeframe it was also common for clubs to have year-end operating assessments. The recession brought about a renewed focus on fiscal responsibility and the evaluation of individual club events. The Fireworks Extravaganza has always come under fire (pun intended) by die hard golfers that argue that the event takes the practice facility away from the golfing members for an event that predominantly caters to the social members. And, since the event operates at a loss, the golfing members end up subsidizing the event in the form of a year-end operating assessments (social members do not participate in operating assessments at the Club). This argument was partially valid because the event did operate at a loss, and collectively any year end operating deficits were funded by an

operating assessment. The objection that the event catered to the social members was easy to dispel. Part of our event analysis includes a participation census. We have been able to document year after year that participation at the event is split almost 50/50 between golfing members and social members. We find that several golfing members are actually attending with their adult children and their grandchildren. With this hurdle out of the way, the remaining challenge became how to manipulate the event so that it performed at break-even (or better), or risk losing an event that had grown into one of the Club's signature events, which drew social members to the Club.

The process of pulling on different levers in an attempt to get the event to perform the way that we wanted it to turned into a 5 year project. Each year we would learn a new piece of information about the event and incorporate that into the financial model for the following year. At the same time, we had to fight the effects of inflation and the growing popularity of the event. As the event grew, the need for additional supplies and rentals also grew. From the first event P&L that we compiled back in 2009, we knew that there was a "critical mass" that was needed in order for the event to operate at break-even. Knowing the fixed costs associated with the pyrotechnics and the ancillary rentals, we were able to estimate that it would take an attendance of approximately 1,000 participants to generate the revenue necessary to support the event. Over time, this projection proved to be accurate.

So why keep working on the event so many years? For me the answer was simple. The Fireworks Extravaganza had evolved into one of the Club's signature events and had become a tradition for many NCC families. What started back in 2005 with 100 participants had evolved into the single largest event in the Club's history. In 2013, Fireworks had 1,050 participants, more than double the size of any other golf or social event on the Club's calendar. When the event started back in 2005, it was fairly simple. Members sat on the back patio, ordered ala-carte dinner service off the standard dining room menu, purchased cocktails and waited for dusk to watch the show. The original event fee was \$25. Since the cost of the show was \$9,500 (in 2005), the Club absorbed the \$7,000 deficit. As the event grew in popularity, it quickly outgrew the patio and moved to the driving range. This also resulted in a format change from ala-carte dinner service to an outdoor food festival similar to the Taste of Chicago. Members purchased "NCC Dollars" that could be redeemed at various food stations for: hot dogs, funnel cakes, gyros, hamburgers or cotton candy. As the event moved to the driving range, it expanded to include more entertainment in the form of giant inflatables, a DJ, and various activities for the kids. As the event increased in size and scope, the loss associated with the event increased as well.




By 2012, popularity of the event had sparked an increase in the sale of social memberships. The social program was full for the first time in several years. In response, the Club decided to raise the cap on social memberships from 225 to 250. The social program quickly reached the 250 cap and the event grew to 1,050 participants in 2013. By 2013 the event had evolved into an all-inclusive event where admission included: entertainment, food, beer, house wine, soda pop, Gatorade, bottled water, DJ, inflatables, and glow necklaces with the fireworks display at dusk. This was the first year that our pre-event pro-forma forecast the event to break even. With over 1,000 participants, we had finally reached the "critical mass" that we knew we needed. The evening of June 23rd 2013, an unexpected band of severe thunderstorms moved through the Naperville area causing a series of severe thunderstorm warnings and tripping the course lightening detection system. As a result, the event was canceled. Canceling the event meant that the Club was out \$20K in rental fees and Fireworks was once again under the microscope and on the chopping block.

I will be honest. Since first becoming involved with the F&B operation back in 2009, the Fireworks Extravaganza has been my nemesis. We had been successful in restructuring the profitability of all the events on the Club's social calendar, with the exception of the Fireworks Extravaganza. While the event has always been extremely well received by the members, we have struggled to find the right combination of levers required to trigger

additional event revenue, improved efficiencies, and reduced expenses. All were needed in order to produce an event with a more profitable stance. The fact is that we probably should have dropped the Fireworks Extravaganza from our portfolio, but the emotional attachment to the event was too strong and it was widely recognized as one of our signature events. It was an event that was integral to the social membership program. In 2013 we thought that we finally had it figured out. Having reached our "critical mass" of 1,000 participants, we felt sure we could reach our goal. As is often the case, Mother Nature had different plans. We were forced to learn from the experience and adjust accordingly.

The unfortunate reality is that all outdoor events come with weather related risks. Many of the "High Volume Days" at the Club (i.e. Fireworks, Member/Guest Invitational, golf outings) rely on favorable weather. After the 2013 rainout, we went back to the drawing board and re-evaluated the event P&L again, looking at ways to further manipulate the event. We knew that if we couldn't come up with a solution, the event would most likely be canceled. We investigated the purchase of a Show Stoppers insurance policy. The policy would reimburse the Club for any expenses, including the cost of in-house labor, in the event of cancelation due to weather. We added specific language to the



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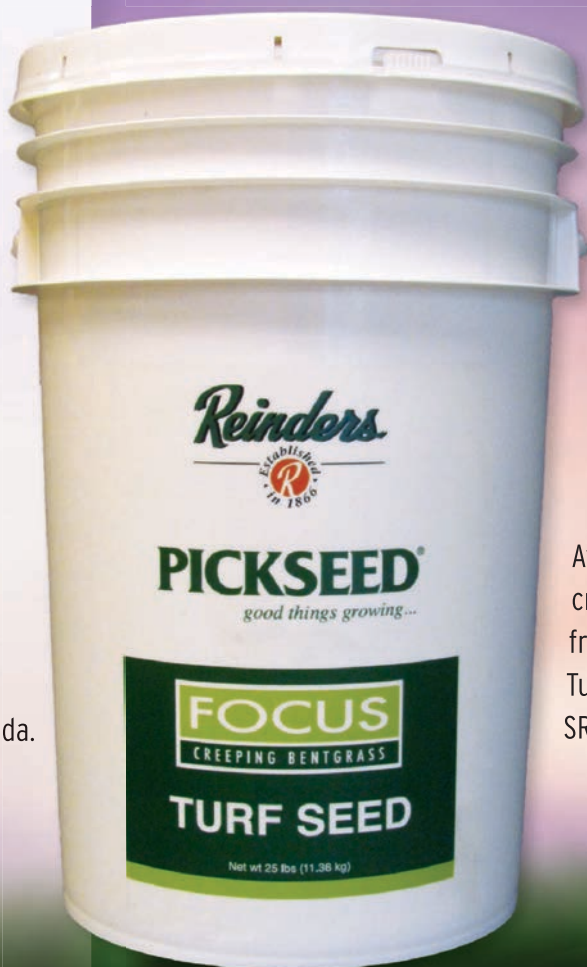
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August 2014

Dates to Remember

August 11 – Billy Casper Golf's 4th Annual World's Largest Golf Outing benefitting the Wounded Warrior Project.

August 11 – Central Illinois GCSA August Field Day at the University of Illinois Lincolnshire Fields. Go to www.ci-gcsa.com for details.

August 13 – Michigan State University Turfgrass Field Day at the Hancock Turfgrass Research Center in East Lansing, MI. Check www.michiganturfgrass.org for details.

August 15 – Northwest Illinois GCSA Wee One Golf Outing and Fundraiser at Prairie View Golf Course in Byron, IL.

August 19 – 8th Annual Sunshine Through Golf Foundation White Sox Fundraiser at U.S. Cellular Field in Chicago, IL.

August 25 – Turf Science Live at Merit Club in Libertyville, IL, John Nelson host. More info follows.

August 26 – MAGCS monthly meeting and Annual Golf Championship at Harborside International, Ryan Tully host.

September 11 – CDGA Turf Field Day, Sunshine Course, Lemont, IL.

September 15 – 11th Annual Wee One Pine Hills Golf Outing and Fundraiser in Sheboygan, WI, Rod Johnson host.

September 22, 2014 - Michigan Wee One Golf Outing, Orchard Lake Country Club, Orchard Lake MI

A hearty welcome to all of our newest MAGCS members, who are:
Dennis Hamilton, Class E, Tyler Enterprises
Jeffrey Orr, Class C, Royal Melbourne Country Club
John Carman, Night Light, Inc.

Dare I start by saying, "BEST. JULY. EVER!"? I can't help but think that all this crazy good weather we've been experiencing will somehow turn around and bite us in the rear, but for now I can't complain. It's 9:00 and it hasn't hit 65 yet!

This month, on the 11th, Billy Casper Golf is holding its 4th Annual World's Largest Golf Outing at over 120 of its golf facilities in 26 states. The event benefits the Wounded Warrior Project, and has raised over \$1.1 million for the cause thus far. In our area, these Casper courses will be participating: Chick Evans, George W. Dunne, Highland Woods, Indian Boundary, Orchard Valley, River Oaks, Waters Edge and Whisper Creek.

On August 25th, **John Nelson** and Merit Club will host a new event called Turf Science Live, presented by Syngenta, Jacobsen, Smithco, and Turfco. It is an exciting, hands-on event showcasing the latest research and technological innovations in turf agronomy that will offer attendees the opportunity to interact with leading specialists in many aspects of turfgrass management. As a bonus, attendees are invited to play the course after the education event. Sounds like a gotta-be-there event.

Reinders, Inc. has had a busy month (which includes the 100th anniversary of the Toro Company). First, they announced the hirings of **Brian Placzowski** as a territory manager for its commercial equipment division (which we reported last month), and the re-hiring of Jerry Kershasky as territory manager in the soft goods business group serving the south side and Northwest Indiana. Then, at the Toro Company's 100th anniversary celebration in Bloomington, MN, Reinders took home a couple prestigious awards. Mark Robel, SCPS received the 2013 Green Blazer award which recognizes his accomplishments in customer-focused sales and service programs in the turf equipment market) And to add to their haul, the company was named 2013



L-R Boyd Montgomery of Toro, Mark Robel, and Jim Heinze of Toro



Rick Olsen of Toro, Mary Reinders, Executive Vice President, Craig Reinders, President, and Blake Grams of Toro

Partner in Excellence for Best in Parts. Congratulations Reinders!

More news from the Toro Company: the Irrigation Association board of directors has named Toro to a platinum membership—the highest level of IA membership. Congrats to Big Red.

Congratulations to **John Patrick Maksymiu**, formerly superintendent of the Woodside/Lakeside nines at Cantigny Golf on his big move to green pastures of a different kind. Pat has accepted a position with Northwestern Mutual, one of the country's largest life insurance and financial service companies as of August 1st. Best of luck and good fortune to Patrick!



Our deepest sympathies go out to everyone at Cog Hill Golf & Country Club and the family of **Frank J. Latzko**, superintendent of the #1 and 3 courses on his sudden passing last month.

Nice work MAGCS! Your participation in the June Rounds 4 Research auction helped raise \$115,500 toward turf research, with over 600 rounds being donated to the cause (which is a 7% increase over last year).

Hank Hill would be proud. The Propane Education & Research Council (PERC) is making headlines in our industry by first announcing in late July that it will be partnering with Audubon International, AND that it has now approved a major investment to get more propane-fueled mowers on golf courses around the nation. The council has allocated \$929,976 (where they came up with that number is a mystery not worth solving) for a "Propane Powered Golf and Turf Equipment Demonstration Program," with R&R Products as the principal contractor, and Audubon International, Marriott Golf and Billy Casper Golf as project partners. Locally, the project will place four pieces of propane-fueled mowing equipment on George W. Dunne National Golf Course in Oak Forest, IL (Jeremy Turton superintendent). This could be the start of something big.

It was with heavy heart that we learned of the passing of **Pat McDonagh** on June 12th. In his memory, an education fund for his children has been set up at BMO Harris Bank. To contribute, you can go to any BMO branch and simply specify

that you are donating to the McDonagh family.

It was also learned that one of our longtime members passed away last month. On July 23, Edward M. Smith, the superintendent at Deerpath Golf Course in Lake Forest from 1964 to 1982 left us. Condolences to his friends and family.

You still want to hang out near those trees during a thunderstorm? Might want to rethink that—**Todd Schmitz** (Phillips Park Golf Course) sent this photo of a tree that had been hit by lightning more than 12 hours prior to his snapping the shot. PLUS it poured rain all night, and yet the tree still burned through the night. Todd took advantage of the event by grabbing a bag of marshmallows and some graham crackers and Hershey bars and had a little S'mores feast for breakfast.



Q: What are **Kurt Sams** and his assistant called when they don the sans-a-belts and rayon shirts and cruise chicks in the singles bars?

A: Two Idlewild and crazy guys.

Another feather in the cap of Mistwood Golf Club (**Ben Kelnhofer** superintendent) was added when Golf Inc. magazine announced that the course ranked third in the world among public course renovations over \$1 million. The two-year Ray Hearn renovation was completed last year, and it was most definitely more than a million bucks.

On September 11, 2014 **Ed Nangle**, **Ron Townsend** and **Chris Painter** will host a Turf Field Day at the Sunshine Course in the morning. Registration and more information can be found at cdgaturf.org

You know that actor that you see all the time in movies but don't know his name? That guy with the beard and the smooth voice that plays the accountant? We've found where he works when he's not acting, and it's at Joliet Country Club.

MIDWEST Doppelgänger



Mark Kowaliczko or Ricky Jay?