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On a related note, three Midwest members get to keep their CGCS's after their names, having successfully completed the recertification requirements through GCSAA. Congratulations to **Eddie Braunsky**, **Ricky Wilson**, and **me** for remembering to record all those service and education points.

**Kerry Anderson** is known to us all for many things, but NOT for his skills at coaching or commentating on basketball games. Or so I thought...



*Brian Thomson's shop won "owning the largest toolbox on the planet award"*

## MIDWEST Doppelgänger



*Could he and P.J. Carlesimo possibly be one and the same?*



*Ted Soenksen (l to r), Rich Becker and Jeff VerCautren look over one of Wynstone's topdressers.*

In its State of the Industry Report for 2013, Golf Course Industry had several promising trends to point out that are hopefully a sign of things to come...kinda. First, golf course budgets are trending up...sorta. In 2013, 37% of courses reported increased budgets versus 30% in 2012, while 29% remained unchanged and 34% were decreased—the latter two numbers being very similar to 2012 data. There has also been a consistent rise in profitability over the last three years. In 2011 32% of facilities reported turning a profit, while in 2012 it was 38% and 2013 showed 42% of golf courses being in the black. This does lead one to question whether our industry is truly getting healthier, or are other factors at work? Could this higher percentage of profitability and spending possibly be related to this statistic—in 2013 fourteen golf courses opened, while 157.5 (I'm guessing the .5 means an 18-holer closed 9 of its holes) shut their doors. That's a net loss of 143.5 golf courses last year. Ouch.

If your equipment technician is your most valuable employee, why not nominate him for Golf Course Magazine's Most Valuable Technician (MVT) awards program presented in partnership with Foley United? You can find the form at [www.gcsaa.org](http://www.gcsaa.org)—the deadline to submit is March 30th, and the winner will be announced in the July edition of GCM.

Thanks to the three hosts of last month's CAGCS Shop Tour held on the 14th. **Brian Thomson**, CGCS and Biltmore Country Club were the breakfast stop, followed by **Scott Hillyard** and Hawthorn Woods Country Club and finishing up with lunch at Wynstone Golf Club with host **Ben McGargill**.

WE ARE GOLF—a coalition of the game's leading associations and industry partners focused on communicating the game's economic, charitable, environmental and fitness benefits to members of Congress—has launched a redesigned website with increased functionality, social media interactivity and streamlined navigation. Check them out at [www.wearegolf.org](http://www.wearegolf.org).

Did you hear? The EPA has extended the deadline for sale and distribution of Methyl Bromide for golf courses from April 30th to November 30th of this year.

GCSAA has announced a new dues rate for the Associate membership class. For 2014, the rate will drop from \$185 to \$90 in an effort to engage more individuals in the employment "gap" between student and assistant superintendent.

MAGCS members in the media last month included **Chuck Barber** of St. Charles Country Club on TurfNet TV showing off his dedicated course set-up cart and all the goodies it carries; while GCI magazine featured Bob Lohmann's article "Divide and Conquer," suggesting adapting master plans into a dozen or so smaller projects that can be handled individually and with available funding.

On the 22nd of last month, Seven Bridges Golf Club and hosts **Don Ferreri** and **Dave Gelino** welcomed the MAGCS membership to the MAGCS monthly education meeting and 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Wee One fundraiser. A large turnout came out on a blustery morning for two fine education presentations from

*Bull Sheet continued on page 17*

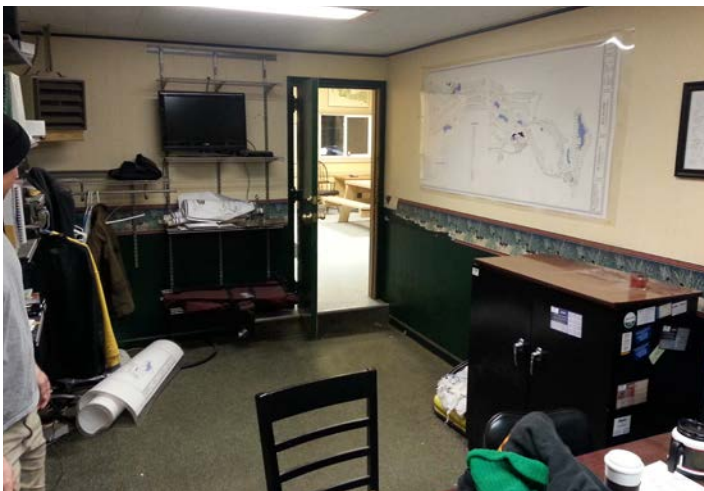
# From the Inside OUT

Chuck Barber, St. Charles Country Club

PHOTOS: CHUCK BARBER

*"It is the neglect of timely repair that makes rebuilding necessary."* – Richard Whately

Richard Whately was a British theologian and thinker who served as the Archbishop of Dublin for the Church of Ireland. I'm not sure what it was he was rebuilding all the time.



*Interior decorating is not my thing, actually any kind of decorating is not my thing, thankfully I have a staff with combined talents that took care of it for me this winter.*

I imagine having more than one church under your care left a lot of ongoing maintenance to do. That being said, the point I'm trying to make is that I neglected my office. A lot. It fell in to disrepair when I came to St. Charles Country Club in 2011. One day in December of 2013 I decided to change that. Here's how Jason Kahlstorf, our assistant superintendent, and long-time staffer Dan Clark rebuilt what I had neglected.

As you can see in the before pictures there are a lot of exposed wires, there isn't much in the way of storage for our jackets, rain pants, shirts, gloves, hats, and the irrigation computer was in kind of a tight spot. Further, no offense to Pete Leuzinger and Jim Keith but I just wasn't a fan of the chair rail

'lake loons' wall paper. I'm not much of a sportsman which is why I took it off and saved it for Dave Kohley. Finally, the irrigation map was on one side of the room and the computer was on the other. We wanted to have everything all in one spot for clarity's sake. Our goals were set: Update the office, relocate the irrigation computer and find a home for our personal junk.

It turned out to be not as simple as I'd hoped. Nothing in life is ever as easy as I think it should be. The original plan was to remove the carpet, the lake loons, repaint the wall board and the concrete floor. Removing the loons was not going to work so I made the decision to take down the wall board and the old drywall. I'm sure everyone was





*Removing wall paper is easiest when you take out the wall board that it is glued to.*

THRILLED about that.

Now that the room was back to the studs Jason went in to the attic to move the irrigation system wires, run new internet cables, phone lines, cable, grounding wire and a bunch of other junk. I can't tell you how many times he had to crawl around in the attic. Further, I wanted to raise all of the electrical outlets off the floor and put them at desk height so he did that with the walls off. Finally, there was some insulation that had water damage so they replaced a few strips of the insulation, otherwise it was intact. Now that the carpet had been removed, the loons were gone, the old drywall had been stripped and the insulation replaced the rebuilding could begin.

The new ½" drywall went in next. Thankfully Dan Clark had a lot of experience installing drywall. He and Jason completed it all in a little more than a day. Thanks to one of the many 'dustings' of snow we had in December it took longer than anticipated. No big whoop. After the drywall went up Jason put drywall joint compound on all the seams and fasteners and let it dry overnight. The following morning the compound was sanded smooth. New outlets were installed all around the room to accommodate all the devices we use every day.



*The new dryewall took a day to hang.*

The next step was to repaint the ceiling. I didn't know this but apparently there is special 'ceiling' paint and paint brushes. Go figure. We bought white ceiling paint that went on pink but dried a brilliant white. I got some on the floor but the next step would take care of that.

Rental Max in St. Charles was kind enough to provide a floor grinder so we can scrape off the old adhesive and stuck carpet off of the concrete floor. It wasn't easy. It was dusty. I mean really, really dusty. We put water down in small amounts to help with the dust. If you choose to do something like this remember to check your furnace filter frequently if it's nearby. Ours would get clogged quickly.

After the floor grinder went back to Rental Max two coats of primer were added to the dry wall. Jason then etched the concrete floor with a dilution of muriatic acid and water. It's important to have good ventilation during this process. This is a lesson I learned the hard way. After the floor was etched it was time to paint the drywall.

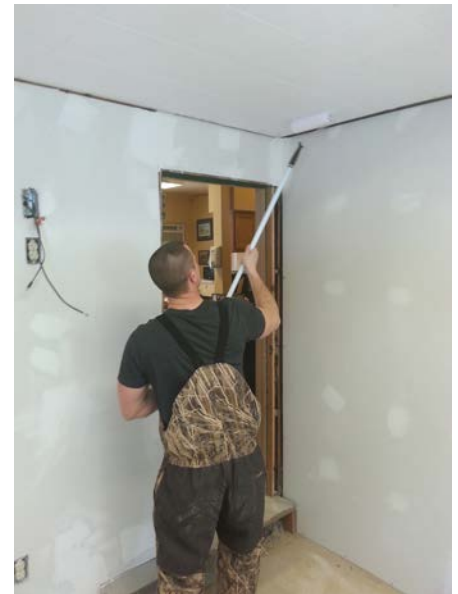


*Etching the bare concrete floor ensures that it is clean and good adhesion for paint.*

This is Dan's best side. We chose colors that looked good with our break room colors, which is right outside my office. Further, Dan finished painting the new windows that were installed a few years ago.

Dan did the crown moulding himself as well. It was his idea to add decorative inside corner pieces to the room. It makes cutting com-

*Continued on page 22*



*We made sure we put electrical outlets where we needed them. We painted the ceiling before the walls.*



*Dan Clark did a great job of bringing the whole project together with colors, moulding and trim work.*

plicated angles at the corners unnecessary and speeds up the finishing process.

Dan is a handy guy to have around because he was able to scale back the size of the cabinet housing or irrigation system components. Jason reinstalled the Rain Bird Maxi Interface Module (MIM), grounding, radio transmitter and all



*Jason re-installed the irrigation controls into a custom built housing that will neatly hide all the wiring.*

the electrical connections. If you have the chance to hire a former Leibold Irrigation service technician like Jason, I recommend it.

With the crown moulding up and the irrigation cabinet installed it was time to stain the floor. Dutch Boy products makes solid color stains. I was looking for a more marble look but the

concrete we had wouldn't accommodate it. I chose the color green. Get it? Green?

With everything done we moved back in again. This was a welcome change because all of the office furniture had been stored in our pump house and break room. It was nice to have a clean path to walk around the shop again. We added a few dry erase boards and calendars so we could better keep track of the golf calendar and our chemical and fertilizer applications. At the time of this writing the irrigation map is

at the framers.

One of our crew members was upgrading his home entertainment and conveniently had a very cheap 55" HD Samsung for sale at a reasonable price. That is the cherry on top right there. I have all of our Grounds and Greens Committee meetings on Powerpoint in our break room and it has been on a 32" TV. It was hard to see some-



*Dan added a coat of concrete semi-gloss to the floor to keep it shiny and easy to clean.*

times and the VGA cable to connect to the computer was cumbersome. I invested \$35 in a Google Chromecast and can now wirelessly cast my computer screen to the TV. This with the added screen space will greatly improve our monthly meetings.

I would like to thank Jason Kahlstorf, Dan Clark and Fidel Gomez for their work. They put it all together and made it work. Our office is now more functional with compartmentalized irrigation computer systems, wireless printing, improved storage space, and less chair rail lake loons. @



*The cleanest my office will ever be.....until the next remodel.*

Michigan State's Dr. Thom Nikolai and labor attorney Timothy Eavenson, Esq. Mr. Eavenson raised some very valuable points about employment contracts and related issues, while Doc Thom was his usual focused self ("oh look—a squirrel!") in discussing the many variables in maintaining modern putting greens. It was nice to see Bruce Williams make an appearance (he's really let himself slide, hasn't he?) (you had to be there to get the joke). Following education and lunch, the Wee One fundraising auction was on tap, with a whole slew of donated items up for bid via both silent and live auctions. Thanks to the generosity of those who donated goods and services, the auction made just over \$31,000 for the worthy cause. Thank you also to Seven Bridges for a great venue and service, and to all bidders who supported the event. (pictures on page 22) @

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Charles Anfield, CGCS, *Heritage Bluffs Golf Course*

## Putting Green Management

Dr. Thom Nikolai



*Dr. Thom Nikolai enjoyed presenting to the group as much as the group enjoyed his presentation.*

The January MAGCS Meeting was held at Seven Bridges Golf Club. Don Ferreri and Dave Gelino were the hosts for the day. Dr. Thomas A. Nickolai from Michigan State University made the first presentation of the day titled "Putting Green Management Update."

This presentation was a plethora of information Dr. Nickolai has accumulated over years of his research work at MSU.

**Golf Cleat/Sole Study:** There have been some recent complaints by golfers and superintendents of excessive damage with some of the new spikeless golf shoe designs. Some golf clubs have even banned certain shoes from their courses. MSU has been doing spikeless shoe wear studies for a while. There are a few companies that send shoes to be tested at the University prior to putting the shoes into production. Some conclusions: Wet conditions are worse for spikeless golf shoe turf wear. Dry conditions seem to be easier on the turf with spikeless golf shoes. Some shoes are less invasive than others.

**Top 10 Management Changes** in the Last 25 Years that Improved Facilities:

1. Plant breeding and new cultivars
2. Instant communications with smart phones and the internet
3. Increased use of wetting agents
4. Increased technology of green mowers
5. Green speed management techniques
6. Top dressing tools and techniques
7. Aerification tool improvements
8. Lightweight green rolling
9. Increased knowledge and use of PGR's
10. Irrigation technology and tool use

**Green Speed:** According the recent GCSAA surveys, green speed is the most important factor for golf course customer satisfaction. Customer satisfaction and service is critical to a golf

courses overall success. Dr. Nickolai recommends you always try to exceed customer expectations and don't expect players to lower their expectations. He had a great analogy for this. "If you are serving steaks at your restaurant, you really don't want your customers to leave the restaurant saying the steak was just O.K. You want them saying it was a great steak."

**Green Speed Perception Studies:** In this study, 50% of the testers said they could tell the difference between a ball roll difference of 6 Inches. Which according to Dr. Nicholai, statistically they could not tell the difference. Think coin flip. At a green speed difference of 12", 80% of the people could tell the difference.

**Crystal Downs Green Speed Study:** After extensive in-house testing and surveys, the Crystal Downs staff determined that a green speed of 9.5 to 10.5 was the optimum green speed for most players. Staff targeted green speeds of 11 feet in the morning to accommodate growth and a subsequent slow-down for afternoon players.

**Nitrogen Carrier and Green Speed Studies:** There was no discernable difference in green speed data using different nitrogen sources. Color and quality were rated. Analysis was conducted with different soil types. It was also concluded that plots using exclusive organic fertilizers had the most *Poa annua* invasion.

**Mowing Height and Water Conservation Study:** Research results indicate shorter mowing heights do not require more water. Shorter mowing heights do require more frequent