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August 2010

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A photo looking from the clubhouse down the 18th at White Eagle Golf Club shows how a water can become a key feature of a golf hole design.

FRONT COVER

The best water is the water we can control through our delivery systems. Every course I visit has some water feature that is an integral part of the design or the irrigation supply system. 2010 has been a year of uncontrollable water for many area courses.
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.

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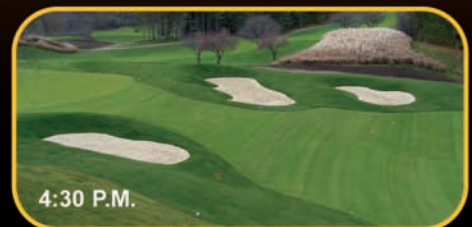
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ON COURSE WITH THE PRESIDENT

Scott Witte, CGCS, Cantigny Golf Course



Speak Up

There is a lot of talk about "Green Golf" now days, and I'm sure there are differing opinions on the matter. Personally, I think that GREEN is GOOD for golf, and it is up to all of us to get the message out!

If you're like me, you've probably stumbled into an awkward conversation with a patron who was convinced that golf courses cannot be maintained in an enviro-friendly fashion. Many questions continue to circulate about golf's overall impact on the ecosystem. However, we are fortunate that the members of the MAGCS are extremely well educated and trained in modern green keeping. This should spur us to get the message out about golf's positive impact on the environment. Whenever the opportunity presents itself, we need to educate the skeptics and win them over one at a time.

A quick review of golf's environmental positives will provide you with plenty of talking points.

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- Educate golfers and the general public about the "NATURE" of the game, and promote environmentally-sound management programs.

I am a firm believer in these core principles, laid out by Audubon International, and I think it is important for the golf industry to take ownership of them. We should be prepared to talk about these principles at our facilities and stress the importance of sound environmental programs. The most important aspect of any successful promotional campaign involves great communication. We can't afford to sit back on our heels and expect the world to just magically become aware of golf's environmental opportunities. We need to speak up! Any time you have a chance to get the message out, seize it. The MAGCS membership should be a collaborative group of ambassadors for golf, and our message is a good one. Let's keep telling our story. Golf can be great for wildlife and the environment. Golf is great for the economy, and golf is great for the physical and mental well being of all those who enjoy the game. Let's help get the word out. Join me in talking up your facility's finest attributes. Be an ambassador for golf at your facility and be a part of the educational process. You have a great story to tell, you just have to Speak Up! **-OC**

Scott teaching Geneva High School science class about sustainable golf.





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FEATURE I

Kevin Dahm, *Environmental Aquatic Management LLC*



THE NPDES Permit System: What Does It Mean to Our Industry?

The National Pollution Discharge Elimination System will very shortly be part of our aquatic weed and algae control industry. Water pollution degrades surface waters making them unsafe for drinking, fishing, swimming, and other activities. As authorized by the Clean Water Act, the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit program controls water pollution by regulating point sources that discharge pollutants into waters of the United States. Point sources are discrete conveyances such as pipes or man-made ditches. Individual homes that are connected to a municipal system, use a septic system, or do not have a surface discharge do not need an NPDES permit; however, industrial, municipal, and other facilities must obtain permits if their discharges go directly to surface waters. In most cases, the NPDES permit program is administered by authorized states. Since its introduction in 1972, the NPDES permit program is responsible for significant improvements to our Nation's water quality

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is under a court mandate to implement a nationwide NPDES permit system for the discharge from the application of pesticides, known as the Pesticide General Permit (PGP).

This permit system will cover all waters of the United States—both public and private. The EPA must have a final NPDES permit completed by the end of the 2010 calendar year. The states are required to complete and enact a state NPDES permit system of their own by April of 2011.

The NPDES permit system may have a dramatic effect to the aquatic plant management industry by significantly increasing costs to both sides of the industry (land owners and operators). This NPDES permit will track approximately 5.6 million applications made by 365,000 applicators using over 400 different pesticides in over 3500 product labels. These numbers estimate the use patterns of aquatic weed and algae control, mosquito and other

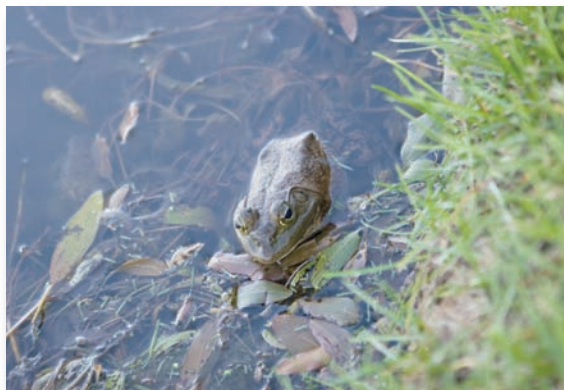
flying insect control, aquatic nuisance animal control and forestry canopy pest control – all use patterns that fall under the draft permit.

The current draft permit will require all aquatic weed and

algae control operators to comply with the “Pesticide General Permit” (PGP). The land owners that reach the annual treatment threshold will also be required to apply for a Notice of Intent (NOI) NPDES permit. The annual treatment threshold for aquatic weed and algae control is 20 treated acres annually. For example, applying pesticides twice a year to a ten-acre site will be counted as twenty acres of treatment area.

This is over the annual threshold

(20 acres for aquatic weeds and algae) and will require a permit. The NOI will be available online and will require some specialized knowledge and time to complete. The NOI form provides EPA with the information necessary to determine an operator's eligibility to discharge under this permit, and enables EPA to



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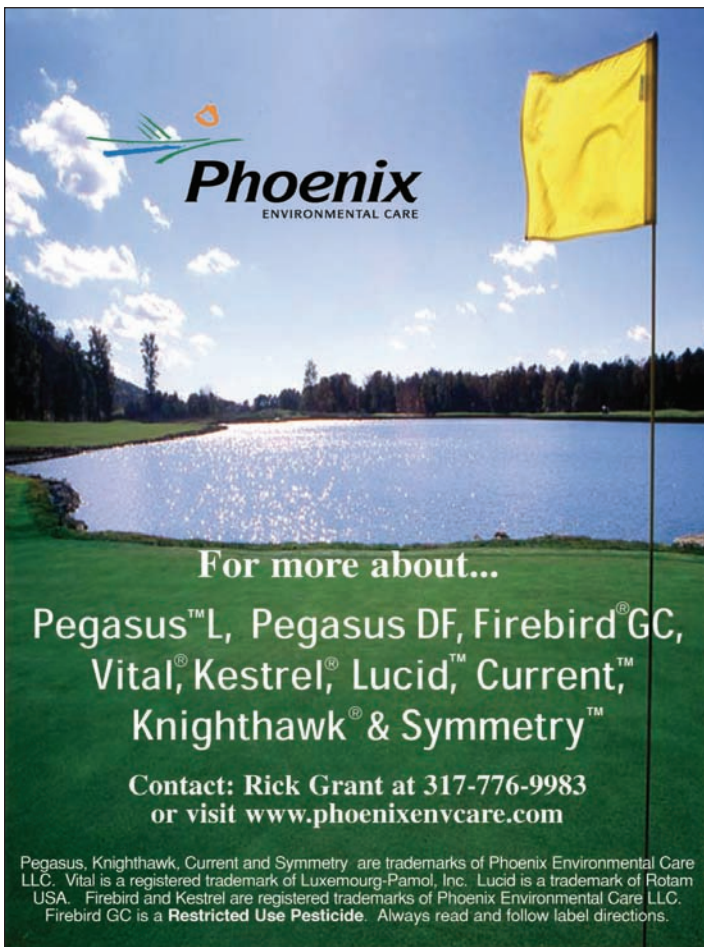
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better match up permittees with other reporting requirements and to prioritize oversight activities.

The NPDES Permit is mandated by law and will be in effect in April 2011. As aquatic weeds and algae continue to grow, applications will need to be made to control these plants. There will be another step involved in order to comply with the permit process. It will be a fact of doing business in aquatics and impact the golf course industry. Aquatic plant and especially algae outbreaks will be more difficult to control because NOI permits will have to be in place ten (10) days prior to treatment where thresholds are exceeded. The economic impact is going to increase as the permitting process will take manpower resources not currently used by our industry. Some of these costs will be passed onto the landowner causing an increase in treatment fees.

Operators know the increased regulatory and permitting requirements will take a large portion of permittees time. All activities are regulated under the authority of the EPA and are subject to penalties of \$37,500/day or more. The public comment period has ended and the EPA intends to issue a final general permit by December of this year. When planning for treatments in 2011, know there may be some changes coming from up river.

Please take a look over the draft permit, (epa.gov/npdes/agriculture) and familiarize yourself with what will most likely become law in 2011. **-OC**





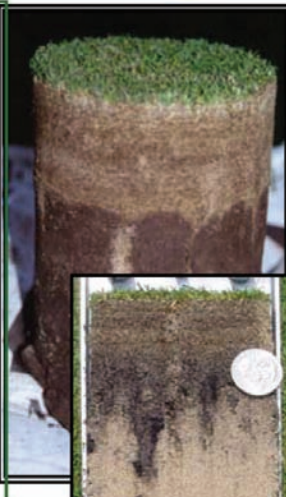
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Water on the WEB

To any golf course superintendent the role of water is well defined and critical to almost every daily task. Sometimes it is easy to forget that water is just as important to everyone else, and the same sources we use to get the water required to maintain golf courses is the same that citizens use for drinking water, bathing, and to water their lawns.

The Chicago area has the great advantage of being situated in close proximity to the fifth largest lake in the world. Lake Michigan has 1,180 cubic miles of water within its basin, by volume it is the second largest lake in the world (All together, the great lakes combined contain 21% of the world's fresh water supply). The proximity of this massive body of water has always given the city of Chicago an understandably cavalier attitude about water. In fact, some 65% of the Chicago homes do not even have water meters installed—they pay a flat fee and use as much water as they like. But things are starting to change. The amount of water that Chicago can take from Lake Michigan is now set by treaty and agreement at 3,200 cubic feet of water per second. Large diversions have to be approved by a long list of shareholders, and communities surrounding Chicago no longer consider their water supplies sufficient forever. This shift in how water is perceived in this region will eventually lead to increased regulation of all water users—including the golf community.



There are volumes of information available on the World Wide Web regarding water use. From water quality monitoring, to water use data, to future consumption plans and conservation efforts, there are reams of information available on the web. The purpose of this article is to give a high level overview of the sources of information available, with emphasis on water use and regulation. The hope is to get you to the trailhead and then let you explore from there. A future article will highlight some of this data and discuss the manner in which the golf industry is portrayed in terms of water use. In reality the golf industry is a low level water user, but unlike some other user groups, the golf industry has a very high percentage of groundwater use. Since the availability of lake water is now limited, groundwater

supplies are under increasing pressure in the area. Some residents view golf as “luxury” use of valuable water. One superintendent I spoke with explained that it is a local city regulation that dictates when and where he waters. Just like politics it seems that water regulation can best be described as a local issue, and many times these regulations consist of nothing more than an “understanding” with local officials. Having a good handle on local water regulation efforts is perhaps the best way to assure that the interests of the golf industry are served.

Although this list is far from comprehensive, hopefully the information herein can give some information and context on local, regional and national water regulation as you confront these issues.

ONLINE WATER RESOURCES Federal and International

USGS (<http://water.usgs.gov>)

The United States Geological Survey is “.....dedicated to the timely, relevant, and impartial study of the landscape, our natural resources, and the natural hazards that threaten us.” The USGS maintains a web-page called “USGS Water Data Discovery” that is an excellent place to begin any water search. It can be found at <http://water.usgs.gov/data/>. Within the USGS are 48 Water Science Centers (WSC) whose mission is to “collect, analyze, and disseminate the impartial hydrologic data and information needed to wisely manage water resources for people of the United States and the State of Illinois.” Each state has its own website wherein their respective WSC posts data related to water quantity and quality (<http://water.usgs.gov/watuse/>).

United States EPA (www.epa.gov) The United States Environmental Protection Agency is primarily responsible for pollution of surface waters. Under the clean water act the EPA

(continued on page 11)

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is charged with "...restoring and maintaining the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the nations waters so that they can support the protection and propagation of fish, shellfish, and wildlife and recreation in and on the water." (www.epa.gov/watertrain/cwa/cwa1.htm) The EPA's primary concern is pollutants entering waterways, and the quality of water within the United States.

Great Lakes/St. Lawrence River Water Resources Regional Body (www.glsregionalbody.org) The Regional Body is a coalition of groups that surround the Great Lakes, and was created by the Great Lakes Governors and Premiers. An agreement called the Great Lakes—St. Lawrence River Basin Sustainable Water Resources Agreement was made and has since been signed into law by all of the governors/premiers surrounding the lake. Each state/province is tasked with implementing the terms of the agreement. A copy of the Illinois report can be found here (www.glsregionalbody.org/Docs/2009ProgramReports/IL/%20Water%20Conservation%20and%20Efficiency%20Program%20Report.pdf). Provisions of the Illinois report include limits on large scale diversion of Lake Michigan water (2.1 billion gal/day) as well as more directed water efficiency efforts such as reduced lawn irrigation, high efficiency plumbing in new construction, and etc.

Great Lakes Commission (www.glc.org) The Great Lakes Commission (GLC) is a group composed of the same members of the Regional Body. The GLC is the older of these two groups, being formed in 1955. The GLC is the repository for the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Water Use Database which creates an annual report of water use from the Great Lakes Basin. This report for 2006 can be found at (<http://glc.org/wateruse/database/pdf/2006%20Water%20Use%20Report.pdf>).

Council of Great Lakes Governors (www.cglg.org) The Council of Great Lakes Governors is a group of governors of Great Lakes states that was created in 1983 to serve as a "...non-partisan forum to develop regional agreements on issues of common concern." This group is involved in economic development as well as water management, and the protection and restoration of the Great Lakes.

State

Illinois Water Supply Planning (www.isws.illinois.edu/wsp/) The Illinois Water Supply Planning website was created in 2006 as part of the effort by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources to "...lead state and regional water supply planning activities." As a part of that directive Illinois selected two areas for priority planning—northeastern and east central Illinois. This website includes excellent resources on the water cycle as well as plans for water use through 2050.

Illinois DNR (<http://dnr.state.il.us>) The Illinois Department of Natural Resources has a broad area of responsibility. The stated responsibility of the Illinois DNR is to "...manage, conserve and protect Illinois' natural, recreational and cultural resources, further the public's understanding and appreciation of those

resources, and promote the education, science and public safety of Illinois' natural resources for present and future generations." One of these areas of oversight is the allocation of water withdrawals from Lake Michigan. There is little on this website in terms of water data.

Illinois State Water Survey (www.isws.illinois.edu) The Water Survey was founded in 1895 as a tool to combat water-borne disease. Its mission has changed over the years, and now is part of the Institute of Natural Resource Sustainability at the University of Illinois using research to "...better understand natural and anthropogenic processes and to provide information to government, businesses, city and county planners, and Illinois citizens." The data tab at the home page has a lot of great data about climate and water in the state.

This website is also home to the center for groundwater science, which includes a special page for northeastern Illinois. (www.isws.illinois.edu/gws/neillinois.asp).

Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (formerly Northern Illinois Planning Commission) (www.cmap.illinois.gov) CMAP is the official regional planning arm for the northeastern counties of Illinois. This organization has been put in charge of developing a comprehensive plan that will guide the region through the year 2040. A large part of that effort is the GO TO 2040 (www.nipc.org/environment/waterplan/spwrmformat9-3-02.pdf) which is a water use efficiency plan for the region. This plan is used as a template for some of the county plans shown below.

Illinois EPA (www.epa.state.il.us/water/) The Illinois EPA, much like the United States EPA is chiefly responsible for the protection of surface and subsurface waters from pollutants. This includes the protection of drinking water sources.

This body provides oversight to reclaimed water irrigators.

Groundwater Advisory Council (<http://www.epa.state.il.us/water/groundwater/groundwater-advisory-council.html>) The Groundwater Advisory Council (GAC) is a group of 9 stakeholders appointed by the Governor of Illinois to review, evaluate and make recommendations regarding laws, research, and the implementation of regulations to the state.

Illinois Water Use Report-USGS Estimated (http://il.water.usgs.gov/pubs/ofr99_97.pdf)

County/Regional

There is little information on water use strategy or regulation at the county level in most cases. Most of the counties have extensive information on the drinking water they provide their constituents and little else. In contrast, the following counties have extensive plans for water use well into the future.

Lake County (www.lakecountyil.gov) There are many water information sources on the Lake County website including a document entitled "The State of Lake County's Water Supply". It describes the history of water law in this area of Michigan both for groundwater and surface water sources. The report is

(continued on next page)



an excellent starting point for anyone looking at northeastern Illinois water law. Lake County's plan for future water use is particularly good.

McHenry County (www.co.mchenry.il.us) McHenry County has a master plan for the future called the "2030 Plan." This is another excellent document that covers very well both water usage and water quality plans for the next 20 years.

Kane County (<http://www.isws.illinois.edu/gws/kaneco/kaneco.asp>) this is a site set up by the USGS that has the publications regarding water use planning for Kane County.

Other

Ground Water Protection Council (www.gwpc.org) The Ground Water Protection Council (GWPC) is a national group composed of state agencies and other stakeholders in groundwater protection. Its expressed goal is to "...promote the protection and conservation of groundwater resources for all beneficial uses." Within the site there is a groundwater fact sheet that provides good basic information on the groundwater situation within that state.

Chicago Environmental Network (www.chicagoenvironment.org) This is a group of environmental organizations that covers many aspects of environmental advocacy in the Chicago region. It includes an excellent alphabetized member list. Many of these organizations include some water advocacy within their platforms. Several of them are organized around regions, discrete watersheds, or conservation areas.

The Groundwater Foundation (www.groundwater.org) The Groundwater Foundation is an organization that "educates

people and inspires action to ensure sustainable, clean groundwater for future generations." Interestingly, the Groundwater Foundation has a groundwater stewardship program that specifically targets highly maintained areas, such as golf courses. After participation in this program, golf courses and other highly maintained landscapes can be recognized as "Groundwater Guardians." Many of the requirements are things superintendents already do each day. Information can be found at www.groundwater.org/gg/greensites.html.

The Upper Des Plaines River Ecosystem Partnership (www.upperdesplainesriver.org) The Upper Des Plaines River Ecosystem Partnership is a non-profit organization similar to other environmental organizations in the area. The site is notable for the extensive list of area organizations that are dedicated to environmental conservation as well as its advocacy of the Des Plaines watershed that services parts of at least 74 local communities. The list of these organizations can be found at (www.upperdesplainesriver.org/links.htm).

In a future article the data contained within some of these websites will be discussed; however, the real take home message found within these websites is this: The amount of water Illinois can take from the lake is limited by law and treaty, the sustainable amount of deep groundwater is limited, and the population of the region and subsequent water demand is forecasted to continue to rise. Some future demand may be met by further diverting surface flows, but even the amount available from those sources is limited. Sooner or later the amount of water available for irrigation will be limited and the more prepared this industry is for that day the better off it will be. **-OC**

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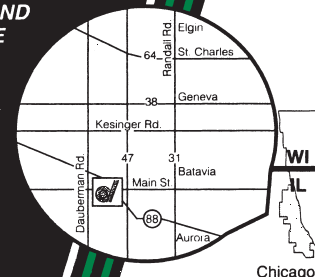
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Charles Anfield, CGCS, *Heritage Bluffs Golf Course*



Welcome to the Jungle

Let's face it, the last couple of growing seasons have been "easy". Cooler temperatures, moderate rain events, the poa is happy and "boom" you must be a great grass grower. No turf problems—just manage your budget, fertilize, cut grass and keep costs down. This season is a little different. The rookie Superintendents are getting their feet "wet" this year. Welcome to the Jungle.

By now we've all read the Turf Reports, measured the rain totals, been monitoring the humidity, dew points, soil temperatures and other weather data. That's all good stuff and helps quantify information but growing turf (especially poa annua and poa trivialis) on a golf course is much more than a simple 1+1=2 kind of scenario. A mature golf course is a living system that has thousands of turf bio types all slightly genetically different. Each course has design nuances with specific micro climates and soil types. Each course has miles of underground drainage pipe (we hope is working) and miles of electric wire and PVC irrigation pipe to help us flow water to turf being cut at very low mowing heights that it needs on a daily basis in just the right amounts to stay alive. The turf has to be monitored, measured, watched, roped off, inspected and above all protected. Oh yeah, **and** if that's not enough, people are going to walk on it, stomp on it, scuff it, dig into it, drive over it with cars and pretty much punish it for the sake of chasing the "little white pill" all in the name of golf. Good luck.

For the guys on the North Shore, their year started them behind the "8 ball" with the winter ice damage to turf and subsequent slow grow in. Sometimes the guys up north on the lake can have it tough, particularly in the winter. Down south of Route 80 we encounter some much warmer weather during the summer which presents its own challenges.

On June 30, Dennis Buck at Dwight Country Club had two F-3 tornados in tandem, touchdown and take a swipe through his golf course. The path of the tornados was about 600 feet wide. People who were playing that day took shelter in the clubhouse basement. A couple pulled off the hi-way seeking a deep, dark hole to hide from the twisters. He lost 35 mature oak trees

that were 150 years old. The wind just tore the tops branches right off most of them and uprooted a few. A new maintenance shop under construction got totaled. The cart storage barn lost its roof. There were no injuries at the course but the twisters kept moving toward downtown Dwight and there were fatalities. "The Members really chipped in and helped with the tree removal. We're going to come out of it O.K." Buck also lost some of his low lying fairway turf areas that flooded which are adjacent to the creek that runs through the course.

At Heritage Bluffs we got 2.5" of rain on the same night as the tornado in Dwight which added to the already high precipitation totals for June. We got 4.10" in the last week of June/early July. Add that mix of water with the temperatures in the 90's plus high humidity and it's not pretty. Most of the turf we lost was in low lying fairways areas where the water had nowhere to go. The turf just sat there and cooked in its own juice. A primordial stew if you will. Other areas that suffered turf loss were predisposed to stress being in high traffic areas such as cart cross over points and mower stress areas. Almost all of the turf we lost was either poa annua or poa trivialis. The lower traffic areas in the approaches and the fairways we restrict golf cart traffic to survived the best. Coincidentally these areas have the most bentgrass.

Clint McLaughlin at Wedgewood Golf Course in Joliet lost a lot of his fairways areas in the heavy rains associated with the storm that created the tornado. "One day we were green and the next day a lot of turf went brown". Clint had to get off the phone with me as he had an incoming call from Chris Plumb with Absolute Service. Chris was there to service one of his pumps. A good running irrigation system will be vital this year to keep what we have left alive.

Andy Wedge at Morris Country Club suffered a similar fate in his fairways. "We've got some wet areas that just hold water. We probably lost about 5 acres of fairway turf. When it gets cooking there's nothing you can do about it. We're getting a little beat up around our collars. I'm just amazed at how fast it

(continued on next page)

can turn". To add insult to injury, Andy's 12 year old German shepherd dog, Blackjack, passed away last week. I met him, he was a "cool dude" that commanded respect when he walked into a room. Andy has since re-seeded some of his damaged areas. "This year is a tough one; we've already been punched in the nose. Everybody needs to lace up their boots".

I called Pat Norton who oversees Nettle Creek Golf Club in Morris and Ravisloe Country Club in Homewood. "In Morris, we got water soaked, then the heat and we got pythium. We fertilized it and are running regular irrigation, so a lot of it has bounced back. I think most people understand the situation. We just need to get through it".

I spoke with Dr. Derek Settle of the CDGA. "The turf was not conditioned for this heat. We were breaking records for precipitation in June. You could say this is an atypical season. Most superintendents are behind in normal activities. Add to this a tremendous amount of disease pressure. Right now if you took a square meter of turf you could find active pythium, brown patch, dollar spot, fairy ring and isolated dry spots. We've seen more brown patch than I've ever seen since I started in 1997. Brown patch requires a **minimum** of ten hours of leaf wetness. This is the worst heat stress we've seen in the last three summers, maybe longer". Derek has been very busy making visits to courses and writing reports to help support CDGA Member courses.

A lot of Superintendents and their Staff are doing all they can, putting in long hours, just trying to keep the poa alive through the summer. It is a tough task, often times out of our control. This season will test communication skills. It's always best to be transparent with information and tactics. That being said, many laymen just don't get the science of turfgrass, it's a tough "sell". The perception is often times that someone did something wrong. They see the course down the street with no problems and they wonder why their course is having such a hard time. It's a real challenge to not get defensive and feel like you did something wrong. Educate and communicate.

The fact is all golf courses are different. They have different volumes of play, different turf types, different construction techniques, different budgets, different microclimates and different expectations. Unfortunately one thing all golf courses in Chicago do have in common is that we are all trying to grow cool season turf in a very hot summer. It's "just a *fish out of water*". Now we know how the Superintendents down in Kansas City and the transition zone who try to grow bentgrass feel during the summer.

Bottom line: golf is played on an outdoor living surface and we can't control Mother Nature. This will be a season where good previous year's agronomics will pay dividends and communication skills will be tested. **-OC**

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Alan Hill, Ruth Lake Country Club

Simple Solutions at Ruth Lake Country Club



I'm sure that by now everybody is fully aware of the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. As I write this, it is day seventy-five. The long term affects of the spill will not be seen for many years, and who knows what this will entail. Pictures of birds and other marine life covered in thick crude oil, and all of the wetlands and habitats that are going to be ruined or severely damaged just reinforce our understanding of how important our environment is.

All of this is happening at a time when our society is striving to become greener. It seems as if I hear the term "going green" everyday in the media. Every industry, not just ours, is feeling the push to become "more green." As environmental stewards, we are always looking for new ways to cut back on the amount and types of fertilizer and pesticides that we use on our golf courses. This is one way that we are becoming "more green." Another is establishing native areas. These require less input at the same time that they create habitat for birds and other wildlife. Another way that we are going "more green" is in recycling – both of consumer products and of plant material generated at our facilities.

Golf courses generate a lot of garbage or recyclables, as I like to call them, every year. Think about everything that you order: it comes in a box. All of the beverages that are consumed: they come in a can or bottle. It's easier to throw these in the garbage, but this adds to the overused landfills. Recycling reduces the amount of material that goes into landfills, at the same time that it conserves natural resources, preserving habitats for wildlife. At Ruth Lake we do our best to recycle consumer products. We have five recycling dumpsters and just two for regular garbage for the entire club. We need all five recycling dumpsters, as they are full by the time pick-up day comes. It's a good feeling to see the recycling dumpsters full, because this material is not going to the landfill and will be turned into something else. It takes just a little more time to get the recyclables to the correct bins but it's worth it, knowing that we our doing our part in having a greener facility.

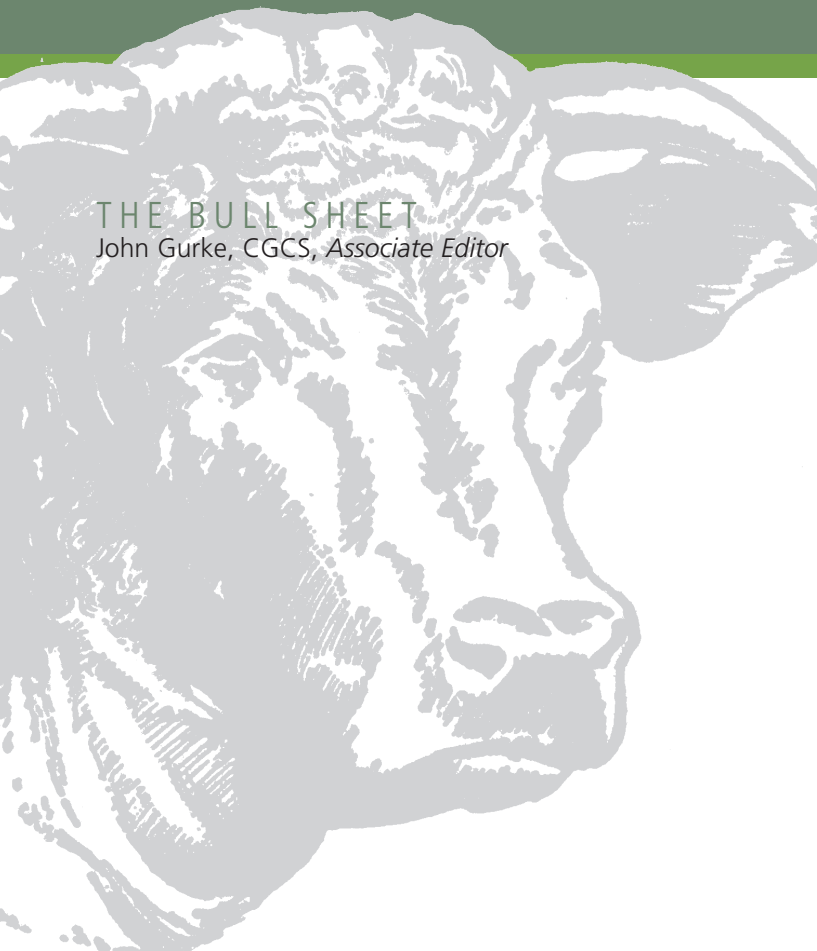


Golf courses also generate a tremendous amount of plant debris. What do you do with all of the grass clippings, sod, aerifier plugs, branches, and the list goes on and on? Like so many other facilities in our area, we do not have the space to store everything. We don't have very much land to start with, and we have neighbors in close proximity. They don't want to see piles of plant debris. You can build only so many mounds with left-over soil and plugs. Branches pile up in a hurry, especially in years like this one, when storms are common. It can be quite expensive to have all of this debris hauled away.

Over the last several years, Ruth Lake has invested in a couple of pieces of equipment that help us minimize the space required to store this debris. It also gives us the capability to recycle some of it. The first piece is a brush chipper. We chip up limbs and sticks to reduce their size, allowing us to store them in the space that we have.

We then recycle these chips as mulch. Sometimes we use them ourselves; sometimes we find companies that will take them for free, or at a minimal charge, to process into mulch and resell. The second piece of equipment is a soil grinder that hooks up to the front of a bobcat. This allows us to grind up old sod, plugs, and any soil that is generated over the course of a year and recycle it into soil that we can reuse for various projects on the golf course. The best time to do this is in the summer, when it's dry and we can get the right mixture of sand, soil, and clay. We store the finished product in a couple of our storage bins for use at a later date. Since buying this implement, we haven't had to purchase any topsoil, and we're recycling material which is hard to store and haul away.

(continued on page 23)



THE BULL SHEET
John Gurke, CGCS, Associate Editor

August 2010

DATES TO REMEMBER

August 2-7 – 108th Western Amateur Championship at Skokie Country Club in Glencoe, IL, **Don Cross, CGCS, Steve Jump** and **Chuck Totten** hosts.

August 9-15 – PGA Championship at Whistling Straits in Kohler, WI.

August 11 – Ohio State University Turfgrass Research Field Day in Columbus, OH. Go to www.ohioturfgrass.org for details.

August 15 – Deadline for nominations for the Illinois Turfgrass Foundation's Distinguished Service Award.

August 21 – The BigPar3 contest. Hope you're one of the hosts.

August 31 – Deadline for the call for presentations at the 2011 GCSAA Education Conference in conjunction with the Golf Industry Show in Orlando, FL.

September 1 – CAGCS Founder's Cup Invitational at Rich Harvest Farms in Sugar Grove, IL, **Jeff VerCautren, Brian Christopher, Aaron Harvey,** and **Scott Resetich** hosts.

September 6-12 – The BMW Championship at Cog Hill golf & Country Club in Lemont, IL, **Ken Lapp, Frank Jemsek,** and **Frank Latzko** hosts.

September 8 – Midwest Regional Turf Foundation Golf Day at Brickyard Crossing in Indianapolis, IN. Go to www.mrtf.org for info.

September 16 – MAGCS monthly meeting at Naperville Country Club, **Tim Anderson, CGCS, MG** and **Steven Biehl** hosts.

September 22 – Second Annual iTurf Expo at Midwest Golf House and Sunshine Course in Lemont, IL. All the important info can be found at www.iturfexpo.com

September 29-October 1 – Green Start Academy 2010 presented by John Deere Golf and Bayer Environmental Science in Clayton and Fuquay-Varna, NC.

October 4 – MAGCS monthly meeting at Cantigny Golf Club, with **Scott Witte, CGCS, Jeremy Duncan, Mark Kosbab, Steve Kuretsky, John Maksymiu, Tom Weigand,** and **Mike Nass** hosts.

"We have all lost a good friend." **Dennis Wilson**, longtime superintendent at Sunset Ridge Country Club, lost his battle with cancer on July 22nd. His wife Pat was gracious enough to provide us with periodic updates on Dennis' condition, and had this to say: "We were all with him at the time. His passing was very peaceful as compared to how this illness was. He is now at peace—God blessed us." I consider it a blessing to have known the man, and I'll miss him.

The big story locally (and practically worldwide) at the time this is being written is the extreme weather we have been experiencing. The crazy rains of June gave way to crazy heat and humidity in July, culminating in a calamitous and crazy cascade of biblical proportions, with many in the area getting over 6 inches of rain causing some crazy things to happen to turf. That being said, I hope everyone is surviving as best as they can, and I would be remiss if I didn't send out our thanks to the good doctor **Derek Settle** and the boys at Golf House for keeping superintendents, the people they answer to, their golfers, and their product suppliers informed of what is happening through the weekly scouting reports they all receive. And let's not forget **Ty McClellan**, our USGA agronomist who has also published informative articles on the Regional Updates section of usga.org. These guys tend to be forgotten in summers like 2008 and 2009, but when the defecation contacts the rotary oscillator as it has this summer, their assistance and expertise are invaluable in keeping our industry and its customers abreast of the situation. Thanks, guys!

(continued on page 19)

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Good segue here—turf issues. Have you ever seen so much ridiculous press about goofy-looking turf as you did in the aftermath of the U. S. Open at Pebble Beach? There was even a survey—“Pebble’s Greens: Awesome or Awful?”—on one of our industry publication’s web site. In case you were wondering, Awful was the winner. A poll of superintendents showed that 38% thought they were awful, 35.5% felt they looked great, and 26.5% were indifferent, saying the look of the *Poa annua* greens at Pebble Beach during the U. S. Open didn’t bother them. Silly. The whole thing just seems silly.

Another survey—and one which actually was useful—was conducted by the USGA, asking golf course professionals in light of the present economy where they would (or already have) reduce(d) spending first. Ten typical budget areas were listed, and superintendents rated them in order from most likely to cut funding to least. The ten areas were: Tree care, Tees, Fairways, Roughs, Approaches, Turf areas surrounding the green (excluding approaches), Club grounds, Ornamentals, Bunkers, and Greens. Survey SAID: Obviously, greens were the LAST place where cuts were planned or made, and ornamentals and tree care were the big losers. The results were expected, with in-play GOLF areas not being cut and out-of-play areas, ornamentals, and trees getting whacked first. If nothing else, the survey served to reinforce the decision already made by many of us at our own courses.



Did I mention the Hawks won the Stanley Cup? They did, and it was all because of the great ice at the UC.

Congratulations to **Dan Dinelli, CGCS** who recently achieved recertification through GCSAA. Another little something Dan has been keeping busy with—as if the guy needs more to keep him busy—is assisting with the Environmental Institute for Golf’s new IPM Planning Guide now available to all in the industry at www.eifg.org/ipmguide. Dan and Chicago Golf Club’s **Jon Jennings, CGCS** were two of five superintendents to serve on the panel which included many top industry scientists that developed this resource. The idea behind the IPM Planning Guide is to provide golf facilities with a template to guide them toward the development and implementation of IPM plans that meet their environmental, agronomic, and budgetary goals. Superintendents are encouraged to print off the instructions, forms, and references and then maintain a notebook where adjustments and updates can be added to their facilities’ personal IPM Planning Guide documents. All you need to do to start using this valuable tool is to go to the above address and begin by completing the signup

information to access the Guide. Great work Dan, Jon and all others who made this a reality.

Illinois Turfgrass Foundation has two big events on the horizon, and your participation in both would be a true benefit to turfgrass research in Illinois. First, the BigPar3—a closest-to-the-flag contest to be held simultaneously on courses across Chicagoland—takes place this month on the 21st, with alternate dates on the weekend before (the 14th) or after (the 28th). Created to inspire camaraderie amongst courses/clubs, create a fun and challenging competition, and raise money to help support the Illinois Turfgrass Foundation, the event asks nothing more than a \$10 donation from all golfers wishing to participate during their normal round on the designated date. Host course responsibilities are very minor—collect donation money, record participant information, and measure and record the distance from where the ball lands to the hole. It’s a great opportunity for superintendents and assistants to spend a portion of their Saturday with their golfers, spreading the good word about the ITF and the value of the turfgrass research it conducts. Next on the agenda, the 2nd Annual iTurf Expo will take place at a Midwest Golf House and the Sunshine Course in Lemont. This year will be a one-day event with vendors and distributors on hand to answer questions and demonstrate their latest and greatest products, access to the most recent research being conducted at Golf House, and a few new twists to make it a day well worth attending. Check out www.iturfexpo.com for information and registration.

Our industry lost a true friend and legend last month when George Ware, the ultimate tree guru and 40-year Morton Arboretum expert passed away at 86 years of age. Mr. Ware was a champion in selecting and developing trees with superior hardiness and other positive characteristics for our area. His most important contributions revolved around the development of resistant elm trees to replace the American elms lost to Dutch Elm Disease, such as the Accolade, the Triumph, and the Commendation elms. Rest in peace.

Congratulations are due to MAGCS’ own **Tommy Robinson** of Ravinia Green Country Club who qualified for his second U.S. Senior Open Championship when he sank a birdie putt to win a sudden death playoff for third place in a sectional qualifier held at Inverness Golf Club on June 28th. Tommy played in the Open in 2008 as well, and was headed to Sahalee Country Club in Sammamish, Washington for the July 29-August 1 championship. Enjoy the wild west, Tommy!



This year’s version of Tommy Robinson. Sahalee is out west. Cowboys are from out west. Get it?

(continued on next page)



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A big friend of the Chicagoland golf scene is retiring. *Chicago Sun Times* writer Len Ziehm is calling it a career after 40 years on the daily beat. Although he is leaving the *Sun Times*, Len can still be found in the pages of Chicago Area Golf magazine, contributing his unique insights into the world of golf in Chicago.



.....
Anyone else have a mechanic with imagination?

.....
 An old acquaintance of MAGCS is being honored this month in Milwaukee. Rick Elyea, the one-time Scott's representative who currently works for JacklinGolf will receive the Perry Dye Service Award from the Golf Course Builders Association of America (GCBAA) on the 12th at its summer meeting and annual awards dinner. Elyea has served as vice president and secretary on the board of directors for GCBAA and secretary/treasurer of the GCBAA Foundation, as well as serving on numerous committees for the board over the past 20 years. Congratulations to Rick.

.....
 GCSAA is asking for your help in a new undertaking that was launched in the July issue of *GCM*, their monthly publication. "The Final Shot," which is found fittingly on the final page of each issue, will serve as a showplace for the photographic talents of GCSAA superintendents. Based on the fact that every superintendent's cart has a digital camera tucked away somewhere, this new feature hopes to discover our brethren's hidden artistic sides through their cameras. What kind of photos are they looking for? That's up to you, but they do ask that you don't submit one of the kid's birthday party or the winter trip to Vail. Ideally, they are looking for shots that depict the day-to-day work of the superintendent in the most artistic manner possible, blending the beauty of the game with the dedication of the profession. Vague, but you get the idea. Send low-resolution pics to thefinalshot@gcsaa.org or to Editor Scott Hollister at shollister@gcsaa.org.

.....
 Some local boys got famous in TurfNet recently, and mugged for the camera.



.....
Allen Parkes and crew from The Traditions at Chevy Chase in Wheeling were featured in last month's "Where's TurfNet?"

Another MAGCS member that made the "papers" was **Valerie Lawrence**, the superintendent of Columbus Park, Marquette Park, and Douglas Park Golf Courses for Billy Casper Golf and the Chicago Park District. Valerie's story—which made mention of her uniqueness in our industry as a female superintendent, estimated to be less than one percent of superintendents nationwide—was told in the July edition of *Chicago District Golfer*, in an article titled "Golf in the City" by Amy Parker.



.....
Valerie Lawrence

.....
 Congratulations to **Brian Kimbrough** of River Forest Country Club on being part of the second place team at the John Deere Pro-Am at TPC Deere Run last month. Brian and 2 other superintendents teamed with John Deere's Rob Wasser and PGA Tour pro Ted Purdy to card a net 57. Nice.



.....
Brian Kimbrough

.....
 This is what NASCAR does to otherwise normal people. OK, I use the word "normal" liberally (and certainly NOT literally).



.....
Yup. Nascar. Ya git all kinds.

(continued on next page)



Casting call for the part of Warren in "There's Something About Mary". Neither got the gig.



VERY good hula hoop work.



The circle of hula hooping friends.

The 10th Annual John Buck Memorial Golf Outing—already 10!—was held at Crystal Woods Golf Club in Woodstock on the 29th of June. The outing is all about two things—having fun and raising money for scholarships. Beneficiaries of the day's fun and games, besides the participants, are the Kane County Farm Bureau Foundation, the Northwest Illinois GCSA Scholarship Fund and the MAGCS Scholarship Fund. This year's rendition featured everything we've become accustomed to—a great venue, some great people, great food, and great times for everyone. Thank you to everyone involved in making the day grand!



The lovely roving photographers Amanda (Angela) Keaty, her younger sister Julianna (Steffanie) Keaty, and the original Celina Gomez—Kayce DeRoo.





-OC



Simple Solutions at Ruth Lake Country Club
(continued from page 15)

Grass clippings, autumn leaves, and other small plant debris also piles up over the course of the year. We try to minimize the clippings and leaves that we collect by using mulching decks on all of our mowers. We also throw as many clippings as we can into our rough areas. However, they still pile up because we don't have enough out-of-the-way areas. We have to get this sort of debris hauled away periodically. It would be great to be able to store small plant debris in a compost pile, but we just don't have the room and our neighbors probably wouldn't appreciate the sight or smell of it. So we try to find companies that will take this material and recycle it into compost instead of sending it to the landfill. Because this small plant debris is the only type of material we have hauled away, it lowers our overall cost for hauling. We are recycling and reusing the materials that we can.

Recycling is just one of the ways we are striving to become a greener facility. We still have a lot of work to do in becoming "more green," but that's what keeps pushing us to come up with new ideas and to refine the practices that we've started. Recycling is not always an easy thing to do. It takes a little more time and in some cases a little more money. It is worth it in the long run. It's worth knowing that we are doing what is right for our environment and keeping up with the demands of society.

-OC



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