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THE MIDWEST ASSOCIATION OF GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENTS

February 2010



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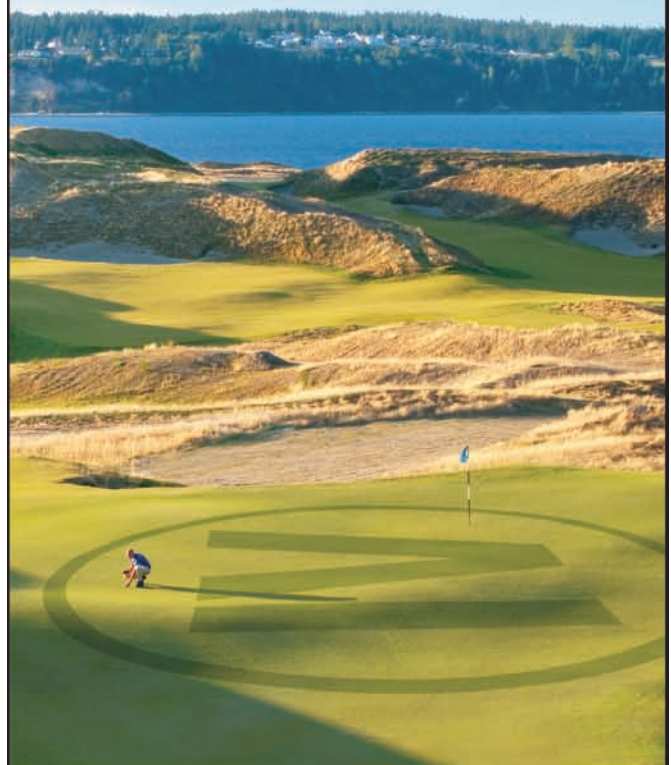
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Each step you take is one into the future. How will you prepare yourself?
Photo credit: Luke Cella

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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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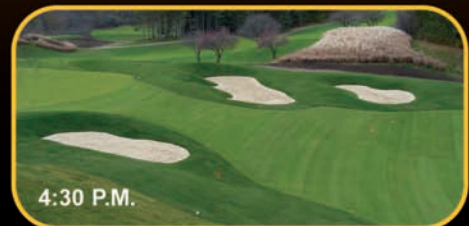
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This is YOUR Committee, Take Advantage of it!

As I type this, we are in the midst of the first big snow storm of 2010, wind chills of -50° have hit the northern areas of North Dakota and a foot or more of snow has fallen in areas of the Midwest. It is days like this when I realize why everyone asks me "... so what do you do in the winter?" For those of us fortunate enough not to have to sit in a plow truck, it is days like this when we have time to think about how we can take advantage of the off season. For the Class C Committee it means planning events for the year and thinking about the best course of action for the Annual Winter Workshop. Many of you reading this are in a position similar to mine. We have been around since 2003 and the first Class C Workshop. In the years that we have attended we have had many people speak to us about our career development. We have been told of ways to guarantee an interview, sure fire interview techniques, trends in hiring, portfolios, web sites, the weather, the number of pages on GCSAA.org, and numerous other items. Given that I have already experienced all those things, it's difficult for me to think of a new way to approach this year's Winter Workshop. Thankfully the committee is made up of a great group of professionals with new and fresh ideas.

The committee decided that staying on the career development track was the best way to go. But how do we make it different and still relevant? It has to be something different for us veteran assistants, but still helpful to the new folks as well. So this year the morning session will focus on interviewing, but with a different spin. We discovered that our own Luke Cella has taught a class on interviewing and some of the dos and don'ts that go along with that. We decided that Luke should conduct mock interviews of one or more

people who will be hand picked and videotaped ahead of time. We will watch the interview(s), have an opportunity to dissect them, and learn a few things that we may not otherwise have realized about the process. The second half of the morning will feature a panel of superintendents who have taken the step up from assistant in the past couple of years. We'll see if they can shine a light into just how you go about standing apart in a group of 10, 25, 100, even 300+ applicants to finally secure that first job and become an SM member.


(continued on next page)



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On a different slant, we are going to make the afternoon a bit more relaxed, loosen up the tie, lose the jacket and get into some small groups. Each group will be led by a member of the Class C Committee. We will have a prepared list of issues and questions to discuss. After some time has been spent in small groups, we will reassemble and discuss the results. What we are hoping to gain from this, ultimately, is a sense of what you want from your Class C Committee. Are there things that we should be doing that aren't happening? Are there things that are happening that shouldn't be? This is your Committee and your Association. Tell us what you want from it. The whole point of the afternoon is to relax, open the communication, and figure out just what the best direction is for the Class C of MAGCS in the future.

I would also like to take this opportunity to say that this is the last action that I will be taking as the Class C Committee Chairman. A few weeks ago I accepted my first Superintendent position at Kenosha Country Club. Until then, being a part of this Committee and working with the Board of Directors of MAGCS was the highlight of my short career. Working with the people on the BOD, all of whom are willing to help and offer advice, has been a true blessing. I first have to thank Past President Dave Braasch who asked me to fill the position in 2008. Next, it was Tony Kalina and, now, Scott Witte. It was my pleasure to work with all of you. I appreciate all that you have done to help me and the Class C succeed. I thank Harry Lovero and Bob Kohlstedt who have allowed the Class C to

be involved in writing for *On Course*. This is a great experience for anyone. I thank all the other Committee Chairs who have continued to ask the Assistant members to help out on their committees as well. Luke Cella has answered more emails from me in the past two years than probably anyone else in my address book and has been a great guide during this process. And finally thank you to John Nelson who for the past four years has been my boss at the Merit Club. He allowed me the time to be active in MAGCS. Many superintendents could learn from that example, and I hope that I am as willing with my own assistants in the future.

Again, thank you to all of MAGCS, for what you have allowed me and all of Class C to be a part of. We are truly fortunate. I look forward to working with all of you again in a few years if asked to become a part of the organization as a Superintendent. **-OC**

EDITOR NOTE: The MAGCS Board of Directors and Membership thank Scott for his service to the Association and offer him our sincere congratulations. We hope to see him serving in a few short years.



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FEATURE I

Robert Fraley, Fox Bend Golf Course

Lessons Learned Along the Way



Last fall I was having difficulty repairing an irrigation leak. Everything was cut to proper length and all the various pieces were ready to be glued, but there was one irritating problem. After many attempts I couldn't quite shut off the isolation valve to the tee where I was working. There was a small steady dripping, just enough that the pipe wouldn't dry and accept the glue. Then I remembered something my old boss, Jim McNair, taught me years earlier. I headed toward the pro shop and said to the attendant, "Ken, I know this is an odd request, but would you by any chance happen to have a couple of hotdog buns?" He headed into the kitchen and returned with the item I needed to finish my project. When I arrived back at the repair site I carefully shoved the bun inside the pipe the water was coming from. This allowed the water to be absorbed while I quickly glued and connected the parts. In no time the break was repaired, the bun dissolved, and water was running to the tee complex again. Later that week I e-mailed Jim and reminded him of the trick he had taught me and how I was able to put it to use. He replied that he had shown another employee this same method, but the employee misunderstood and shoved the bun, wrapper and all, into the pipe. Oooops! Jim taught me to expect rain later in the day if there was no dew on the grass in the morning. He taught me how to look for localized dry spots, how to sharpen and adjust a reel. He showed me a strong work ethic. He introduced me to the golf course business, and he taught me how to snow ski.

I can recall Dan Sterr locating a drain line with just two metal wires. I was curious as to how it worked, and he showed me how he did it. Take two lengths of wire and bend each into an "L" shape. Insert each into an aerifying tine. Hold the tines loosely in your hand and walk back and forth over the area where you think the drain line might be. Mark with paint where the two wires cross. Many times over the years I have been able to find a pipe or a drain line in this manner. Don't ask me to try and explain the science behind it, all I know is it works! During the season I will run across knots which I like to call "double-half tangles." I smile to myself and take the time to show an employee the "clove hitch" that Dan taught me as we worked together putting out rope and stakes years ago. Dan taught me to calibrate a sprayer, how to prepare for tournaments, and how to clean up after a two-week flood. He helped to show me how important good drainage is to a golf course. Many summers we spent putting in drainage. Whenever I see Dan he still asks me, "How's number five fairway draining, Bob?"

*"Tell me and I forget,
show me and I remember,
involve me and I understand."*

-Anonymous

There are two inevitable questions whenever someone finds out I work at a golf course. The first one is, "What do you do in the winter?" After I graciously explain to them that I actually am kept pretty busy through the winter months, they hit me with their next question. "I have moles in my yard and I've tried everything: bubble gum, soda pop, garden hoses. None of it works. What can I do?" I always respond with what I like to call the "Bob Kohlstedt Tried and True Mole Relocation Method." All it requires is two shovels, a heavy foot, and lots of patience.

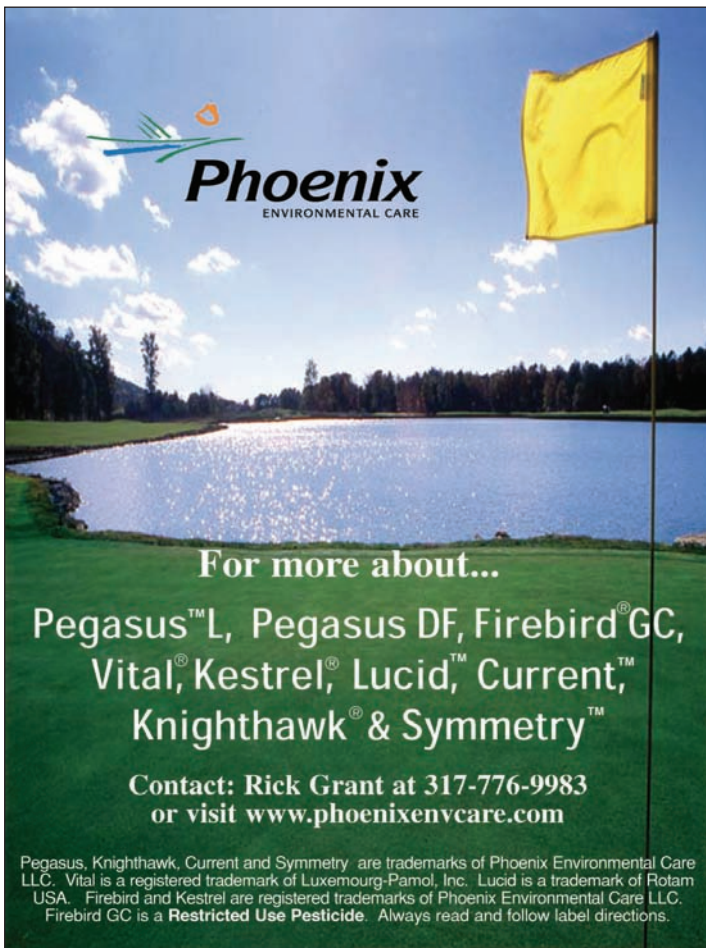
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If, while driving around the course, you notice fresh mole damage, the first thing to do is step it down. You wait patiently until you see new activity. Quickly shove the first shovel into the ground behind the mole to block the tunnel. Then, use the other shovel to pop it out. After capturing the furry fellow, it's time to "relocate" it. Now, I have to confess that, lacking the patience needed, I have never caught a mole this way. However, I have watched Bob catch many moles with this method. It is the most effective method I've seen. I wish I had kept a tally over the years. One of the most important things Bob taught me though was never to be afraid of a challenge. If something isn't working properly or you are faced with a problem, don't be afraid of trying to fix it yourself. He told me that a place where he had worked didn't have the budget to hire out, so they were encouraged to do repairs themselves. I watched and learned as Bob split a John Deere tractor in half to replace a clutch. Last winter, along with our mechanic Bill, he helped me to restore an old Toro 300 Greensmaster. I learned to mediate disputes in a quiet respectful manner by watching Bob. Since I have known Bob he has always shown support and encouragement and listened to other ideas while never looking over my shoulder. His office is always open, and his friendship is well valued.

There have been others. Art Benson showed me the value in tree selection. "Plant them small, Bob. They'll pass up the larger planted tree in a few years and be healthier for it." One fall while driving by a patch of grass which was infested with rust spores, he explained to me that it is common on newly seeded grass the first year. Harry Lovero showed me that if you respect your employees they'll respect you. I had the good fortune to work with Leon and Carole Anne McNair, Jim's brother and sister-in-law, for over twenty years. They always treated me and their other employees and co-workers as family for which I have always been appreciative.

One of the great things about life is the people you meet along the way. The individuals I have mentioned all helped me through the years by what they taught me—not so much by what they said, but by their example. An education provides you with knowledge, but it is the people that are the real gift.

-OC



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As a Superintendent, What is Your Next Career Step?

At a time when disposable income is on a downward slide, most of us have experienced the negative impact in our workplaces. In the public sector, the middle class golfer is watching the amount he spends on leisure. Perhaps he opts to save those dollars or use them to spend more time with family. Park districts and municipalities are looking to golf courses to cut expenses because of lower tax revenues. Private clubs are experiencing membership loss from individual and corporate members alike.

With all that being said, is it enough for you to simply be the Golf Course Superintendent? Should you be looking to help out with the management of the club as a whole? Or, if the opportunity arises, will your director or general manager come to you and ask you to step up? Many clubs are already operating successfully without a traditional general manager. Others are restructuring to eliminate upper level positions or merging departments in the interest of saving money. If that happens at your club, are you the one they're going to turn to? Is that a more viable career move than trying to move to a higher level club? I spoke with three superintendents who have taken on a larger role at their clubs.

Dave Radaj, CGCS, Green Acres Country Club

Like many superintendents who move up in the club's management structure, Dave had been at Green Acres for a number of years. The club was in the midst of putting in a new pool and in the planning phases of a clubhouse and golf course renovation. It was at this time, in meetings with engineers, that the club realized Dave's skills weren't limited to the course. While working out the landscaping, Dave noticed that the arrangement of the new pool didn't allow for it. As a result the club, Dave, and the engineers changed the plans, so they allowed members to walk around the pool and still include landscaping.

Shortly after the pool project was finished, the club was scheduled to undergo clubhouse and course renovations that would close the entire club for a year. It was then that Dave was asked to take over as GM and run both projects until they reopened. They would then hire a new GM. The projects were a great success, and the club was very pleased with the work that was done, enough so that they offered Dave the permanent position of General Manager. Some Superintendents may think of this as a dream offer. After all, the GM has a great job, right?

They make more money. Because they are the boss, they can come and go as they please. They get to sit in a big cushy chair in an air conditioned office – perfect.

Dave truly enjoyed many aspects of the "temporary" position, working with the clubhouse staff and the business side of club management, and seeing a new side of the club were things that Dave liked about the GM role. With all the new challenges and positive aspects of the position, there were a few negatives as well, and those were deal breakers. First was the Food and Beverage side. Green Acres is a high-end private club, and fine dining is an absolute necessity. That means knowing wine and food pairings, along with a plethora of other information that isn't part of a Superintendent's education. The other issue, which was of greater importance, was the time away from family. A club wants the GM to be around during dinner service, holidays, evenings on weekends, etc., and for Dave nothing was worth that sacrifice. As a result he thankfully declined the offer to remain as General Manager. The club was happy to have him as the Superintendent and hired a new GM with a strong Food and Beverage background, which worked out well for all involved.

Even though this wasn't an overall great experience, Dave says there were lessons to be learned:

- Be a team player. Just because the club bought a new oven instead of a fairway mower, don't take it personally. It's a full service club, and all areas need to fire at full efficiency in order to serve the members.
- Don't jump to criticism about how others operate their area of the club. They have to provide a service just as you do.
- Keep a working relationship with other managers, and don't be afraid to mention issues to them that may need attention.

(continued on next page)

Ron Fox, CGCS/GM, Point O'Woods Golf and Country Club

Just around the lake in Benton Harbor, Michigan, Ron Fox has been Superintendent at Point O'Woods since January of 1999. In that time he has raised the level of conditioning to one of the best designs in the Midwest. Whereas at one time the course would shine for the Western Amateur, Ron made it his goal to provide those tournament conditions for the paying membership throughout the season, and has done so with great success. Even though Point O'Woods is a wonderful club, like many others, it's not immune to a poor economy. With a membership split of about 50% local and 50% Chicagoans, the club relies equally on resident and non-resident members. Unfortunately, the economy in Michigan has resulted in the loss of 55 members. This has caused a large void in annual dues. Like many other clubs, they have resorted to drastic measures to cut costs and still provide a high quality experience. This meant operating without a stand-alone general manager – enter Ron.

Being the senior member of management staff, as well as having earned the trust of the club, Ron was asked to become GM, as well as Superintendent, in February of 2008. Feeling a responsibility not only to himself and his assistants, but to the club as a whole, Ron took on the challenge after conferring with other crossover superintendents at the 2008 GIS. Besides being the senior member of the management team, Ron also credits his tight budget management for his success at the club. He only went over budget once, when catastrophic weather hit the course and dropped 250 trees.

When looking at the club as a whole, Ron believes that Superintendents are the most qualified candidates to take on a leadership role, because they are accountable for any and all mistakes on the golf course. He says that we are, across the board, the best run department of the club. The management of a larger part of the club probably comes more naturally to us. Ron feels that as superintendents we have a better understanding of what is most important to the club in critical financial times. As great as all the restaurants and grills are at private clubs people don't say, "I'm going to join Point'O Woods because the dining room is so great." It's about the golf course. Making sure it remains in peak condition will be a key to getting the club back on firm footing for the future.

At this point in his career, dual roles are just fine for Ron, but he is quick to say that he will not be striving to become a General Manager at another club. His love is the golf course. He is also hesitant to get too involved in the Club Managers Association. He is reluctant to forsake education or trade shows directed at Golf Course Superintendents. That's because we are such a science based industry, with new products and services continually becoming available.

Rob Foster, Director of Golf and Park Maintenance, Lake Bluff Park District

Rob Foster recently took a higher level position in the Lake Bluff Park District. He was promoted from Golf Course Superintendent to Director of Golf and Park Maintenance during a recent merging of the two departments. While he doesn't



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have to worry about the food and beverage or clubhouse operations as someone at a private club would, he says the stress level has certainly increased. His need to delegate has increased as well. For this he relies on the two managers who work under him, one of whom is his old Assistant (Noah Mach), who was promoted to Golf Greens Manager.

The new position comes with new responsibilities, including snow removal, a public beach, seven baseball diamonds, and other activities such as party set-up/clean-up. It also comes with two budgets that must be maintained independently of each other, because the parks are tax payer funded and the golf course isn't. Thus far, Rob has been able to squeeze the additional responsibility into a normal work week, with the exception of a few meetings in the evenings.

When I asked Rob why he thought he was asked to take over the position he had a few different ideas. Rob already had a good working relationship with the Executive Director. He thinks he was seen as a leader who wasn't afraid to propose new solutions for today's challenges. He also thinks the promotion came from a combination of hard work, good timing, and a positive vision for the park district.

At this point Rob is looking forward to the new challenges. To prepare himself, he's going to attend classes to learn more about baseball fields and park maintenance. He isn't too concerned about the transition, because there are so many similarities between parks maintenance and golf maintenance. He is glad that the opportunity came along and has some opinions on why we, as (Assistant) Superintendents, are

becoming the go-to-guys for positions like this. He thinks that we tend to be better problem solvers and tend to have a straight forward attitude toward management. He also feels that his diverse work experiences have helped him move up the ladder. Rob has worked for private clubs, public clubs, municipalities, and management corporations. His eight years working for management companies has given him a business approach that the park district appreciates and fits the current economic times to a tee.

Is becoming a manager or director at your club going to be your dream job? There's only one way to find out. But how you make yourself the guy that gets asked is the key. For Dave the GM role wasn't the right fit. He feels he is more valuable on the course. The club views him as even more valuable because of the time he spent as GM. Ron took the position because he is part of the fabric of the club. They trusted him because of his previous record; he has a desire to be integral to the club's recovery from the recession. For Rob (who I feel got the best promotion because he doesn't have all of the clubhouse responsibilities), this is an opportunity to learn some new things, which will help get him away from the everyday grind on the golf course. All three of these gentlemen were more to their company than just the guy who grows grass, and they have been rewarded for it. In today's economy, proving your worth is going to become more and more important. If you can help with more than the golf course, then your employer will take notice. **-OC**

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2010 Chicagoland Shop Tour

Indian Hill Club

Over 80 individuals participated in the Shop Tour January 12. The 2010 CAGCS Shop Tour began with a visit to the Indian Hill Club with our host, **Dave Schlagetter, CGCS**. Dave works out of a well thought-out building that allows good flow for equipment and separation from the work area offices. A number of effective updates were made in the last five years in order to bring the facility up to compliance with safety. Set back away from the golf course, the maintenance facility had plenty of room to work around outside as well.



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Bob O' Link Golf Club

From Indian Hill, we traveled to Highland Park for our next shop visit at Bob O' Link Golf Club. **Rick Bowden** hosted us in his facility. Bob O' Link also featured a comfortable older building. As every superintendent has a tendency to wish for, Rick stated he would like more room to store equipment. There is a lot of history at Bob O' Link and it shows in the maintenance facility. Legends of the Industry like Bob and Bruce Williams manned the helm prior to Rick. The craftsmanship of wood-working is amazing. If you have ever seen the tee benches, you know what I speak of with the thick coating of sparr varnish on each board. The lunch table in their shop is equally as impressive and massive.



Bob O' Link host Rick Bowden shows off his new "skunk skin" cap.



Part of Rick's one of kind collection of broken golf club shafts courtesy of "Da Coach". There were at least three dozen shafts on display bearing Coach Ditka's name.

Lake Shore Country Club

Our final stop of the day was Lake Shore County Club with our host and lunch provider, **Jeff Frentz, CGCS**. The Lake Shore facility was large, well lit and heated throughout. There is plenty of room to work as well as ample storage space. Lunch at the end of the tour consisted of mostaccioli, fried, chicken, cole slaw and pizza. There was plenty of food and no one went away hungry. Thank you to our three gracious hosts for cleaning their shops for us, and to everyone in attendance.



Lake Shore's well lit shop only took one day to clean up before the guests arrived. (above and below)



-OC



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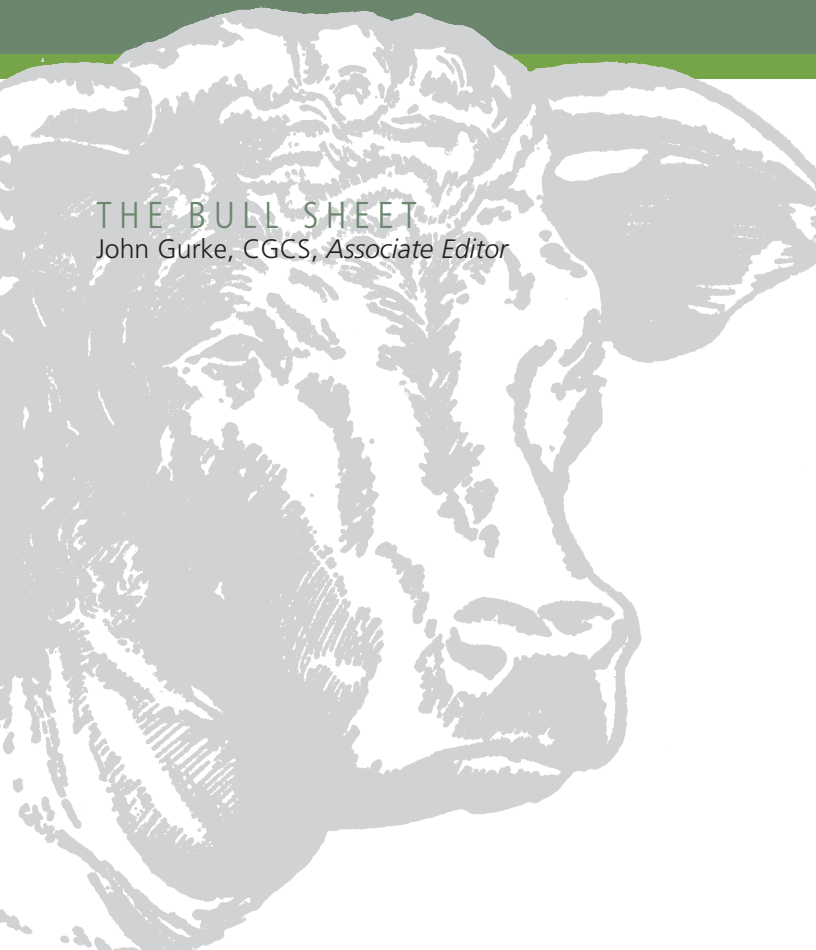
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THE BULL SHEET
John Gurke, CGCS, Associate Editor

February 2010

DATES TO REMEMBER

- February 5-7 – GCSAA National Championship and Golf Classic in Palm Springs, CA.
.....
- February 8-12 – 2010 GCSAA Education Conference in conjunction with the Golf Industry Show in San Diego, CA.
.....
- February 10 – MAGCS Hospitality Reception at the Hotel Solamar in San Diego, CA.
.....
- February 16-17 – Gateway Green Industry Conference & Trade Show at the Gateway Center in Collinsville, IL.
.....
- February 19 – Deadline to nominate your equipment technician for TurfNet's Technician of the Year Award.
.....
- February 24 – 2010 MAGCS Class C Winter Workshop at Midwest Golf House in Lemont, IL.
.....
- March 6-14 – Chicago Flower & Garden Show at Navy Pier in Chicago, IL.
.....
- March 16 – MAGCS monthly meeting at Midwest Golf House in Lemont, IL.
.....
- March 18-20 – International Golf Course Equipment Manufacturers Association's Virtual Trade Show at your favorite internet-connected computer.
.....
- April 27 – MAGCS monthly meeting at Joliet Country Club, **Mark Kowaliczko** host.
.....

Haven't had to do this for a couple years, but as a reminder, PLEASE TURN YOUR CELL PHONE TO VIBRATE (or better yet, shut it off) during MAGCS education sessions. It's tough enough to get up in front of a room full of people and deliver a message without the constant sound of all those clever ringtones. Like Frank Dobie—a man who has been in the golf business for 49 years—says, common courtesy and proper etiquette in one's treatment of others are just as important, if not more, than one's grass-growing ability. Dobie, the general manager and superintendent of the Sharon Golf Club in Ohio said this during a recent address he made at the Ohio Turfgrass Foundation's annual conference, citing advice **Bob Williams** gave him in 1959. Williams, a past president of both MAGCS and GCSAA told young Frank that "Ninety percent of what we need to know to be successful in this business is not about growing grass." So again, please be courteous and mindful of our speakers.

.....

Congratulations and best wishes to **Scott Verdun**, former Class C Representative and assistant superintendent at Merit Club who on January 18th took over as golf course superintendent at Kenosha Country Club in southeastern Wisconsin. With this move, Scott has resigned his position on the MAGCS board as Class C Advisor—a resignation he has probably looked forward to for some time!

.....

Along with Scott Verdun's departure from the board comes word that **Sharon Riesenbeck** and **Harry Lovero** have resigned from the MAGCS board also. Due to her increased

responsibilities at Waupaca, Sharon has opted to resign her post as Class E Commercial Advisor after 5 years of invaluable service. Sharon's most recent contribution—a thankless and tireless one—was arranging yet another stellar Hospitality Reception at the GCSAA Education Conference this month. Harry's resignation as Secretary/Treasurer comes after the Fox Valley Park District, under whose jurisdiction the Orchard Valley Golf Course falls, signed on with Billy Casper Golf to manage the facility as of January 1, 2010, who then opted not to retain him as golf course superintendent, as well as several other key employees. We wish nothing but the best to both Sharon and Harry in their futures.

.....

(continued on page 14)



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Congratulations to **Matt Senatra**, former superintendent at Sydney Marovitz and Robert A. Black Golf Courses who is now the golf course superintendent at Orchard Valley Golf Course.

Also congratulations to **Reinders, Inc.** of Milwaukee, WI on receiving the Toro Company's award for outstanding customer service and performance in the commercial equipment market for 2009. Jerry Kienast, Service Director at Reinders accepted the Equipment Service Achievement Award for his accomplishments. The award, which is given to a service manager who has exhibited exemplary progress in completion of Toro's "Distributor Partners in Excellence" program which entails the distributor utilizing best business practices that produce positive results relating to customer satisfaction and service profitability.



L to R: *Christiaan Engstrom of Toro, Jerry Kienast of Reinders, and Jack Hensley of Toro*

MAGCS has lost one of its legends with the passing of **John Stephenson, CGCS** on January 14th. John was a 35+ year member of this association who continued as a Life Member up to the day he died in his hometown of Quincy, Illinois. John's caregiver had this statement: "He fought a long, hard battle, but in the end his lungs just couldn't keep up. As you all know, he was a great man and will be sadly missed by all of us. We all lost a very good friend, but as we know, he is in a much better place (probably on hole 19, celebrating this great golf game called LIFE)." **Eddie Braunsky** shared his memories of John, recalling his penchant for wearing his breakfast (and possibly lunch and dinner) on his shirt now and again, while also pointing out how much John loved attending MAGCS meetings and gathering with friends. John wasn't quite as fond of the education portions of those meetings, as evidenced by the occasional snore heard when the lights dimmed and the overhead projector fired up (and also by the cigarette burns in his pants from nodding off while enjoying a smoky treat). Our thoughts and prayers go out to the family and friends of John Stephenson.



John Stephenson

Boy, the worst part of this job is reporting the loss of a friend. I write this having just attended the funeral of **Gary Galecki**, the longtime superintendent at Ridge Country Club who had fought a bout with lung cancer. I've known Gary since our days working together at Butler National some 30 years ago, and above all else, he was just too damned young to be taken. Gary leaves behind his wife Grace and his children Josh and Jenna—both of whom spoke to the large congregation, Josh to share some fond and poignant memories of his dad, and Jenna to recite the General Intercessions with poise and grace—along with his extended family and countless friends. Our heartfelt sympathies go out to them.



Gary Galecki

Family and friends...

Many words may be used in many formats to describe Gary... Always and ever we shall think of these: friend, colleague, solid, quality, compassionate, caring, generous, thoughtful, erudite, positive, bright, strong and a complete example of a fine man. A guy's kind of a guy. He would ever give willingly of himself to his golf course and his friends... always though, there was much much more for his treasured family... Our heartfelt condolences are extended to you all... condolences for the finest "keeper of the green". Deep Peace Friend.... God Bless You.

~ A.T. Fierst, The Oak Park Country Club, Illinois

Don't forget this month's rendition of the Annual Class C Winter Workshop, which will be held on the 24th at Midwest Golf House in Lemont. The topics covered will be "Interviewing Do's and Don'ts" with **Luke Cella** heading up this interactive session, followed by "Landing the Position" featuring a panel discussion with four of MAGCS' newest superintendents—**Jim Canning** (White Eagle Golf Club), **Michael Heustis** (Chicago Highlands Club), **Kyle Jacobsen** (Twin Orchard Country Club), and **Scott Vincent** (Onwentsia Club). This educational opportunity is open to all MAGCS members, so head on over to Lemont for a full day of enlightenment, and at the bargain price of \$25.

Huge thanks go out to the generous **Golden Tee Sponsors** (as of printing) of this year's Hospitality Reception, held on February 10th at the Hotel Solamar in San Diego. The Ryder Cup Club includes: **Arthur Clesen Inc., BASF, Bayer Environmental Science, Nels J. Johnson Tree Experts, Inc., and Syngenta Turf & Ornamental.** Hole In One Club members are: **J.W. Turf, Inc., and Lohmann Companies.**

Eagle Club: **Murphy's Lemont Paving Co.**
 Birdie Club: **Palatine Oil Co., Inc.,** and **Waupaca Sand and Solutions.**
 Par Club: **BTSI, Great Lakes Turf, LLC, Growing Solutions, Harris Golf Cars, Hollembek Construction, Pendleton Turf Supply, Phoenix Environmental Care, Prime Turf,** and **XGD Systems.**

Thank you again for your tremendous support of this great event!

.....
 While we're at it, thanks for volunteering your time and expertise to these gentlemen who are serving on GCSAA committees this year: **Fred Behnke, CGCS, John Ekstrom, Don Ferreri, Matt Hurley, Erwin McKone, Tim Scott,** and **Steve VanAcker, CGCS.**

On December 15th and 16th Midwest Golf House was the scene of the inaugural ITF Winter Workshops, which was a two-day education event featuring topics from all areas of turfgrass maintenance. Tuesday's session brought Dr. Frank Rossi from Cornell University to town, and his presentation on turfgrass disease—once it finally got started after an overdue arrival (Frank claimed that **Dan Dinelli** made him late) and some technical difficulties with the A/V equipment—was a big hit with the crowd. Frank spoke in depth on the "Bethpage Project" as well as other research subjects, and scattered in a fair number of his witty remarks to keep things lively. On his work with the new Yankee Stadium: "This is obscene—1.5 BILLION dollars and the thing leaks like a sieve." On his "research trip" to Scotland: "Huge scam—all golf." On his comments in *GCM* magazine that golf course superintendents are applying potash at ridiculously high levels, and that there is no research to support this level of use: "I'm sorry to all the potash salespeople out there whose Christmas may have been shorted by my comments." On describing a certain vendor in New York State: "You know, the typical salesman—he could talk a dog off a meat wagon." Good stuff as always from the good doctor from out east. The afternoon session featured **Greg Martin's** presentation on golf course architecture and construction trends, including his thoughts on the trend toward longer and more difficult courses which "make it painstakingly slow so they'll (golfers) have plenty of time to realize how bad they are." Greg also opined that we need more "cradle to grave" facilities where people can learn the game and then continue playing it throughout their lives, as well as more "hybrid courses" like one he's developing in India, where "they really don't know what golf is, they just know they want it." Following up on that topic, **Mike Sprouse,** superintendent at Randall Oaks Golf Course and Todd Quitno of Lohmann Golf Design discussed their recent project at Randall Oaks involving the construction of the first-ever Links Across America short course and practice area. These projects are designed to provide "feeder" courses—3, 6, and 9-holers—throughout the country which are affordable and accessible to everyone, and that will serve to both develop new golfers as well as help existing golfers improve their games. Wednesday's sessions included **Len Conley** of The Sanctuary speaking on what he knows best—the benefits of organic fertilizers; followed by **Dr. Tom Voigt**

of the University of Illinois reviewing weed identification; and wrapped up with a discussion on the reality behind artificial turf presented by Tim VanLoo of Northwestern University, Jonathon Huard of Field Turf, Mike Schiller of Community School District 95, and **Rusty Stachlewitz** of ProGro Solutions.. Great job by all the presenters on providing a memorable two days of topical (and GCSAA-points-approved) education.



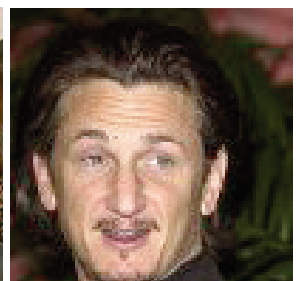
Dr. Rossi was a little shy at first. . . .



. . . but he eventually was coaxed into taking the podium.



*Dr. Settle (Rt.) with
 A) Patrick Dempsey, B) Sean Penn, or C) Frank Rossi?*



(continued on page 16)



Greg Martin



Todd Quitno (L.) and Mike Sprouse.

So how's our buddy **Tom Lively, CGCS** doing? Not bad, not bad at all. You'll recall Tom left Medinah Country Club to head to Texas to assume the duties of golf course superintendent at the TPC San Antonio in March of 2008, a new 36-hole facility on 2,800 acres. Word has it that prior to its grand opening this month, Tom has been promoted to Director of Golf Course Maintenance for both courses, and has hired Brandon Reese as superintendent of the AT&T Oaks Course and Alex Stuedemann (formerly of TPC Deere Run) as superintendent of the AT&T Canyons Course. Congratulations, Tom!



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The other Lively made the news as well. Not only did his course win *Golf* magazine's Renovation of the Year for 2009, it turns out **Bob Lively**, superintendent at Flossmoor Country Club has been nominated for TurfNet's 2009 Superintendent of the Year Award presented by Syngenta. By the time you read this the winner will have been named (at 2 p.m. on February 11th at the Syngenta booth at the Golf Industry Show in San Diego), so we say to Bob either A) Congratulations!, or B) You were robbed! The finalists were chosen from a field of 44 nominees based on each one's ability to excel in a variety of golf course management areas. Last year's winner was another South side guy and one of Bob's old friends—**Sam MacKenzie, CGCS** of Olympia Fields Country Club.

So you have a goose problem but don't want to commit to owning a dog? **Kevin Carlson** of Naperbrook and Springbrook Golf Courses in Naperville has twenty goose dogs that can stay on the course 24/7, don't need feeding, grooming, shots, or even water, never roll their necks in smelly stuff, and can be made from a few simple Home Depot purchases. According to the *Trib Local*, Kevin employs plywood silhouettes of dogs to scare off nuisance geese that his staff fashioned out of ¾" plywood, some paint, and a hunk of conduit to anchor them to the ground. Kevin places the dogs throughout the course where geese are most prevalent—mainly in the ruff. Get it?

Rick Jacobson (Jacobson Golf Course Design, Inc.) has opened his first 18-hole course in China this past November, when the Moon Course at Lion Lake Resort located northwest of Guangzhou (aka Canton) held the inaugural Ambassador's Cup Invitational, bringing representatives from more than 30 nations together for the international competition. While this is Rick's first course opening in China, he is working on several other projects in that very large and growing market.

The economy is obviously the big news for this coming golf season, as we all look for ways to do the same with less, whether it be at work or at home. Along these lines, Superintendent magazine recently ran an article called "Sink Your Dollars Into High-Priority Areas," and featured MAGCS members **Erwin McKone's** and **Don Ferreri's** take on the subject. The two mentioned such cost-cutting methods as reducing labor, extending equipment life (I'm sure that makes our iron reps real happy), naturalizing more out-of-play areas, applying more growth regulators, and even "carpooling" people from the course to the shop for breaks, leaving more equipment on the course to conserve fuel. Nice job, fellows.

The MAGCS January meeting and Wee One fundraiser was held at Seven Bridges Golf Club (**Don Ferreri** host), and a very special day it was. The morning's education presentations were very interesting, with Jim Yale, a safety and risk assessor for Westfield Insurance and Mark Jordan, CGCS, the superintendent of the company's 36-hole golf facility in Ohio providing a wealth of knowledge on Safety and Risk Management. Some items of interest were that there were 51,000 golf-related injuries reported in 2009, as well as 34 lightning deaths on golf courses, both of which can be reduced in 2010 with a more concentrated effort toward safety.



Jim Yale of Westfield Insurance makes everyone feel like there is more to do to make this safer.

Following these gentlemen was GCSAA Vice President Robert Randquist, CGCS and his views on the Future of GCSAA. Bob presented some thought-provoking numbers which are truly a sign of our times, stating that the revenue from the Golf Industry Show in San Diego is expected to be about half that of previous shows (\$2.1 to \$2.4 million v. \$3.5 to \$4 million previously), and that GCSAA's overall 2010 revenue is projected at \$16 million v. \$20 million in 2009. Mr. Randquist also opined on the question of ethics specifically in regard to certain management companies' procedures when soliciting business from clubs with current GCSAA member superintendents. His opinion, and that shared by GCSAA (and more importantly its legal department) is that while something may be unethical as set forth in GCSAA's code, it is not illegal, and therefore is not enforceable or punishable. He did say that he would take this discussion back to Lawrence, and recommend that a position paper be drafted on this very touchy subject.



Bob Randquist, CGCS addresses the Midwest Members in a sincere and frank manner.

(continued on page 18)



Seven Bridges was the site of the January meeting where over 90 members attended.



Southern Wine and Spirits (thanks Mike Riesenbeck) helped to remove any bidding apprehensions by serving up Bloody Mary's, Lemon Drops and some delectable scotch. Photo Credit: Aerial Images Photography



Pete Kiraly enjoys a froofy drink that made him stand funny.

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St. Charles Assistant Superintendent, Josh Therrein was a huge help before, during and after the fund raiser. Thanks Josh.



(l) Host for the day, Don Ferreri throws a nice party and (r) Trent Bradford is still mad at me for taking his picture(s).



(l) Tim Anderson contemplates outbidding one of his friends in the silent auction. (r) Brian Winkel can't remember what else he bid on during the day.



Howie Shuck, Ed Braunsky, Mrs. Shuck and Mr. Shuck and Angela Hess couldn't have been more thankful for the efforts and generosity of all involved.



Midwest newest board member (l) Dave Groelle and Dan Howard enjoy the afternoon.



(l) Jim Keith (if your parents just named you Keith Keith, no one would ever get your first and last names mixed up) accepts two checks from Jim McNair (one from the Wadsworth Foundation and one from the extended McNair Family's Foundation) to benefit Howie.

(continued on next page)

Had the day ended with the morning's education session and the great lunch that was served, everyone would have been satisfied. But the fun was just beginning, as the Wee One fundraiser kicked into gear just after lunch. The event was held in order to raise funds for **Howie Shuck**, who suffered an aortic aneurism which resulted in the amputation of both of his legs last year. Among the events was a silent auction chock-full of items donated from MAGCS commercial and superintendent members, raffles, a live auction for other donated items, and a Texas Hold 'Em tournament, along with an open bar and Hors d'ouvres throughout. Oh, and I forgot to mention the specialty drink table that featured lemon drops, some crazy good scotch, and a couple of cordials poured into chocolate shot glasses, thanks to Mike and **Sharon Riesenbeck**. Can't remember if I tried those or not... As testament to MAGCS members' spirit of helping out a colleague, the bids were generous beyond anything that could have been expected. I met Howie's dad on my way out, and he was moved to tears with the outpouring of generosity and caring he had witnessed throughout the whole day. Well done, MAGCS, and thank you to everyone who made it one of the most memorable meetings ever!

Special thanks to our sponsors for the day, who were: **John Deere Golf & J.W. Turf, Nadler Golf Car Sales, Inc./Authorized Club Car Distributor, Nels J. Johnson Tree Experts, Inc., and Quali-Pro.**



The lemon drops were popular.



More men with froofy drinks.



Mike Bavier, Mike Murphy and Mike Kalina.



Bob Randquist with Ed Fischer and Paul Bastron.



Colin White and Dan Sterr hold up the bar.



Keith Krause and Paul Carlson yuk it up.



Happy man with purse.



John Ekstrom, Aaron Hearn, and Joe Schneider.



(l) Auctioneer Luke Cella apologized for offending anyone before he began and (r) skill for the day - Jimmy Keith



Don't bid against Brian Winkel at the next one, he'll be packing some heat.

(continued on next page)



A disturbing trend—happy men with purses and woman without purse.

-OC

CLASSIFIEDS

Equipment For Sale: Another way to ease your budgets is to take a look at these fabulous offerings from your fellow superintendents:

Park Ridge Country Club has the following items on the block: 1 Jacobsen LF 3400 Fairway Mower, year 2000, 3916 hours, asking \$4,900 OBO; 1 Ryan GA-60 Aerifier, year 2000, 261 hours, asking \$2,500 OBO; 1 Ford 250C Diesel Tractor with torque converter transmission, 1650 hours, asking \$8,000 OBO; 1 Ford 231 Tractor, 7137 hours, asking \$3,500 OBO. Call **Nick Marfise** at 708-224-8829 for details.

Lincolnshire Country Club is selling a Tycrop MH400 Material Handler with only 20 hours of use, in excellent condition, with conveyer belt attachment included. Call **Brian Racette** or Harry a call at 708-672-5709 for information.

And last but not least, a first-time-ever for this magazine. White Pines Golf Course has a Package Sewage Treatment Plant for sale. This is a membrane bioreactor package treatment plant with ultraviolet disinfection system and a 10,000-gallon per day capacity. It is a compact alternative to septic systems and aeration/settlement ponds. Equipment is housed in a modular concrete building with a 30'x8' footprint, and is manufactured by Enviroquip of Austin, Texas. It was originally installed in the fall of 2005 at a cost of \$300,000. The asking price is \$150,000. Contact **Steve Partyka** at 630-768-0906 or email him at partykasteve@yahoo.com.








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EDUCATION RECAP

Charles Anfield, CGCS, *Heritage Bluffs Public Golf Club*



ITF Winter Workshop

Dr. Frank Rossi from Cornell University was the lead-off hitter for the day. First he showed slides from the new Yankee Stadium turf consulting work and gloated over his Yankees winning the World Series. Then he got down to "brass tacks" and made a very informative presentation on The Bethpage Project.

Legislation was pending in 2000 to ban the use of all chemical pesticides on public golf courses on Long Island. Researchers at Cornell University developed a long-term management project on the Green Course putting surfaces that was designed to develop non-chemical and reduced chemical strategies. Ten years later they have an extensive array of products and programs that effectively reduce the environmental risk associated with pesticides by 96%. His presentation addressed the philosophical and practical aspects of reducing the use of chemicals and fertilizers on the entire golf course. Through modern IPM, the use of bio-rational products, and a variety of progressive cultural practices this was accomplished on an 80-year-old bentgrass/annual bluegrass golf course.

Initially, the non pesticide program failed to provide greens of suitable quality. Rounds declined by 30% and policy makers had to rethink their legislation.

Cornell's "Progressive IPM" program has a few guidelines.

- Develop written historical records.
- Manage plant health populations to promote bentgrass.
- Regularly check predictive models.
- Disease control on greens does not use thresholds, treat preventatively.
- Use EIQ (Environmental Impact Quotient) which reduces risk by providing a numerical value for risk.
- Focus on tee and fairway playability, not 100% control.
- Seek large scale reductions of pesticide applications.

This alternative culture reduced costs by over 40%. Golfers were satisfied with greens with reduced maintenance and rarely perceived a quality difference in playing surface. Surveys indicated that golfers are OK with judicious pesticide use.

There was a large quality difference between no chemical use and a few chemicals used. A Progressive IPM and Best practices program could be maintained with a 30-65% reduction in the application of pesticides.

One of the goals of the project was to demonstrate and provide resource efficient golf turf.

- Recognize transition phase.
- Communicate in, out and up.
- Use N only on soil base systems.
- Reduce weed control.
- Mow less area, green to rough.
- Seek reduced risk products to reduce "environmental cost".
- Use research based information and not anecdotes based on science. Good stuff.



Len Conley gave a great talk on creating a successful organic fertilizer program.

After lunch Greg Martin, of Martin Design led off the afternoon session entitled, "Construction Trends (the New Normal)."

Greg is very passionate about the sustainability of the game of golf. Sustainability: a practice that ensures the continued viability of a product, practice, industry or system well into the future or the capacity to endure. The current state of the game indicates growth is flat and discretionary spending is down.

He cited challenges with the time/cost/difficulty formula of the game. The future of the game will depend on golf course designs that offer solutions to environmental challenges. Golf courses need to serve as storm-water management, water quality buffer zones, providing for biodiversity, wetland mitigation, and degraded brown-field landscapes.

(continued on next page)

Greg says we need to re-think our expectations of the game.

- Perfection, fairness, and shooting par should be eliminated from our vocabulary.
- We need to help adjust golfer's expectations of conditioning.
- Reduce construction costs by building smaller, more compact courses.
- Improve pace of play with easier set ups.
- Reduce impact of medal play; promote match play.
- Foster new players by providing playability for a wide range of player's skill and accessibility.
- Be willing to develop new golfer programs.
- The "new normal" of design should have a smaller footprint: par 3 courses and hybrids.
- Shorter, wider courses will be more fun to play, less expensive to maintain.
- We need to grow the game with a less tedious, better-paced experience.

The last presentation of the day featured Mike Sprouse of Randall Oaks Golf Club and Todd Quitno of Lohmann Golf Designs.

Randall Oaks Golf Club underwent a re-design of the West Range Learning Center in a "Grow the Game" initiative. Lohmann Golf Designs offered numerous routing options and renovation of existing course features.

The location along Randall Road provided a great marketing opportunity for junior golf. The Acorn course was already a huge success for Junior Programs and alternative golf programming. Randall Oaks wanted to improve their course and promote golf as a way to enhance lives, benefit the community, assist disabled people, and teach young people lessons of life.

Day two of the seminars started with a very informative session by Len Conley of The Sanctuary. Len focused on building an organic fertilizer program for your turf. Dr. Tom Voigt talked weeds and products and the afternoon was wrapped up with a discussion about artificial turf. The ITF did a really nice job of providing turf education that we can all use. **-OC**

Jonathan Huard of Field Turf talked about the plastic side of turf— an eye opening talk.



Carla Wagner of Wild Goose Chase broke up the afternoon with her dog and one of the new services they offer – finding bed bugs for hotels. Carla explained the dogs can be trained to pick out many different scents. What's next, pythium?



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