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August 2011

Bowes Creek Country Club


Brad Legnaioli, CGCS

INSIDE

Let's Talk about the Weather

Repurposing Equipment

Super-n-Site, Breezes,
Bull Sheet and more



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The clubhouse at Bowes Creek Country Club looking back from the first fairway offers a many different teeing options for its players.

FRONT COVER

It is hard to believe that Bowes Creek Country Club is located in Elgin with many of the views the course offers. Highlighted on the cover are the bunkers with Fine Fescue faces that create a striking backdrop on each hole. 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.

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DIRECTOR'S COLUMN
Luke Cella, *Publisher*



Let's Talk About the Weather

We are just hitting the dog days of 2011 and already this year has left a few bite marks. A cold wet spring, a cycle of rainy weekends followed by heat and then heat and humidity, roll a few epic storms into the pot and that's 2011 to date. Only a few weeks to go until that magic date in August that most have imbedded into their brains when the days are noticeably shorter, the days are not quite as hot, the air seems to dry out and the stresses of summer turn into aerification schedules and project timetables.

The one good piece of news in all of this, is that people are beginning to play golf again. After such a slow start this spring, many wondered if people would even take their clubs out of winter storage and maybe skip the whole 2011 season altogether. In talking with a few members, it seems rounds are up lately, even outings are making a comeback.

The weather is an easy item to talk about – it is something we all have in common immediately. If you are alive today (and don't live in a plastic bubble or a space station) you most likely experienced the weather to some degree. How we relate to the weather is very personal and depends upon our interaction with it. I have to be honest, some days, my only interaction with the weather is walking from my office to my car. Sometimes, I might even roll down the window of my car and hang an arm out to really get the full effect of what it is doing outside before I create my own artificial environment.

As golf course superintendents, the weather is it. Just about every process that you go through each day is driven by the weather, so when you hit a stretch like this July – the days can meld together into one long sweaty, sticky mess.

One superintendent summed up a few of his long days this summer when he explained, "you know when you go into the garage from the house in the morning...you know there is trouble ahead when you open the big garage door expecting to feel a rush of cool air from outside and there isn't one." Or... "when I'm laying in bed at night catching the 9 o'clock news report and the little scroll on the TV still reads 92 °F, I know it's going to be a short night."

Another superintendent told me he was glad he wasn't 27 again going through this, now past the 50 mark. He explained to me, it is one of those years, no matter what you do, turf is going to die. Too few roots, too much heat, too much humidity, too much rain...you name it, some *Poa* is checking out and taking the rest of the summer off.

The weather is not going to go away, it will only offer you new challenges, that in the end, you will find a way to overcome.

Still another can tell it is going to be a long day when the sun just looks hot at 5:30 in the morning. It has that glow about it...that you know, is only going to intensify as it climbs into the sky.

I've visited a couple of courses in the past weeks, a few, I've been fortunate enough to play. I saw a few trouble spots here and there, always associated with poor drainage and/or restricted air movement. I noticed these spots but didn't really see them. You see, I was playing our great game, and they just became part of it. One group that I played with are not in our business and never even noticed any turf trouble being too wrapped up in their game, the bet or enjoying the afternoon on the links. You've got the trained eye. Because you see a little thin turf, you think everyone else sees it... but I know now, you are the only one on the property that even takes notice of it. – That's your job, that's your profession and no matter how hard you try you can't ignore it. In time you will fix it, and make it better because you care.

The weather makes life interesting. Interesting might be the wrong word after this recent stretch that all of you have been going through. At the very least you all have that in common and it will definitely be something to talk about at the next MAGCS meeting on August 22 at Bowes Creek in Elgin – Brad Legnaioli, CGCS host. **-OC**

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FEATURE

Chuck Barber, *Indian Lakes Resort*

Repurpose

According to The Free Dictionary, the definition of "repurposing" is: "To use or convert for use in another format or product"

In essence it means to take a thing that was meant to do something specific and then to turn it into something else entirely. It could be argued that one of the most immediate, specific challenges golf course superintendents face is maintaining a new equipment rotation. Each golf facility has its own challenges economically. Finding the dollars to purchase new equipment in order to meet member and customer expectations can be difficult.

I was inspired to write about repurposing when I thought about using our 1999 Hyster Fork lift as a second equipment lift for golf cart and utility vehicle maintenance. Although I don't have a picture of it (sadly), our equipment technician here at Indian Lakes, Bryan Stephen, fabricated a sulky for our walk-behind John Deere lawn mower out of an old Yamaha golf cart axle with a banquet chair bolted to the frame. It wasn't pretty, but it worked. I am willing to bet that many of you can think of your own examples of repurposing the tools around you to be more efficient, to save on the cost of buying new equipment, or to realize a benefit from underutilized inventory.

John Gurke, CGCS of Aurora Country Club, turned an out-of-service utility vehicle into a creative flower display for the bathroom in the turf care facility. He turned one thing that had a specific purpose into something else altogether. He "repurposed" the heck out of it.



Mr. Gurke, whose creativity knows no bounds, didn't necessarily repurpose a Buffalo Turbine Blower, here, but he did modify it to address a challenge. John is blessed to have a terrific equipment technician, Nemanja Pavlovich, who is able to make his visions a reality.



At Indian Lakes Resort we were in desperate need of a trailer for our sod cutter. We found it was too heavy for standard utility trailers, and it was more difficult to get on to the trailer than it should have been. I didn't see the need to incur the expense of a new trailer. We already had our turbine blower on a 'skid' mount in a utility vehicle. The trailer was just sitting there. Dale Webb has been at Indian Lakes since before I was born (which I don't let him forget), and he is a pretty good fabricator. He pieced the sod cutter trailer together with parts and metal we already had in inventory. Now, getting our Ryan Jr. sod cutter around the property is WICKED easy.



(continued on next page)

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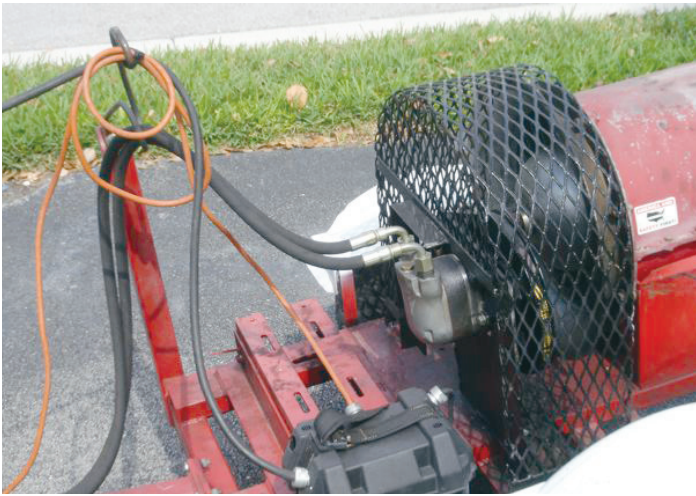
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Terry Buchen, traveling agronomist, put this out in July, 2007, in his "Travels with Terry" column. The superintendent of Admiral's Cove Golf Club in Jupiter, Florida, saw a need to blow clippings and debris early in the morning, but without making too much noise. Apparently, people living on a golf course means you can't make noise in maintaining the course. Who knew? At any rate, equipment technician Jim Matis fabricated a hydraulic motor to power the turbine. The hydraulic drive is very near silent and just as powerful as its gasoline incarnation. I really like this one.

Mike Sauls of Butler National Golf Club is no stranger to repurposing either. Mike saw a need to get sod onto a trailer and into the field quickly, while having as light a footprint as possible. Mike, assistant Corey Kuhl, and equipment technician extraordinaire, Salvador Cerritos, fashioned a flat-bed truckster from an out-of-service Smitcho 300 gallon spray rig. Now the sod can go from the truck to the field quickly and without tracking too badly.

These are just a few examples. If any of you out there in the field have a good repurposing example, by all means, send it on. **-OC**



Ron McCarthy, golf course superintendent of Edgewood Valley Country Club in LaGrange, uses lots of water soluble products in his fertilizer program. He and his assistants, Brian Stout and Tyler Dykstra, fashioned a couple of mix tanks out of old sprayer tanks, hoses, filters, and pumps. I couldn't hope to explain how it all works, but I'm sure Ron could. This system allows the Edgewood Valley crew to load up a tank of fertilizer in about five minutes. Building both tanks this way saved roughly 50% of the cost of one new tank.

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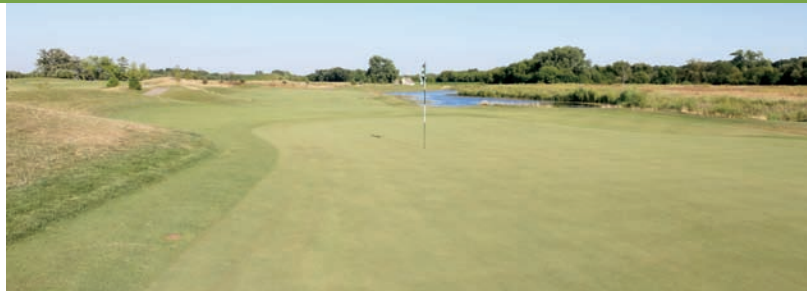
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SUPER -N- SITE

Shane Conroy, *Park Ridge Country Club*



Brad Legnaioli -N- Bowes Creek Country Club

Most of us know that maintaining an 18-hole golf course is a full-time job in itself. Maintaining two 18-hole golf courses and a 9-hole golf course can take on an entire life of its own. For Brad Legnaioli, CGCS the superintendent of the City of Elgin's three golf courses, Wing Park, The Highlands and this month's host of the MAGCS Golf Championship, Bowes Creek Country Club, it's just another day at the office.

Bowes Creek Country Club, set in an expansive residential development in Elgin, gives you a wow factor as soon as you step onto the first tee. With its rolling fairways, native tall fescue areas, and its signature "eyebrow'd" lipped bunker faces, you see the best the land has to offer. You can't help but take it the scenery while you are out on the course playing your round or visiting the property. Fast forward to the 18th, a fantastic finishing hole, and even if you didn't score the way you wanted to that day, you will still appreciate the view this tee box has to offer. All this is a testament to Brad and his staff and the work they put in to keep Bowes Creek ranked in the top 10 of *Golfweek's* Best "Courses You Can Play in Illinois" list of 2011.

Bowes Creek was designed by another MAGCS member, Rick Jacobson, and opened for play in September 2009. Brad was there to oversee the grow-in of the course and that brought some challenges. Due to the steep slopes found on the property, some areas were prone to washouts during the seeding stage. However, with the help of some favorable weather and Brad's experience they were able to produce a healthy stand of turf. The summer of 2010 was especially rough on some of the young turfgrass plants. Brad and his crew nonetheless came out in good shape. Since then Brad and his staff have made some improvements on the course. He has expanded a few tee boxes, re-constructed a couple of pond banks and added native grasses and plants along other pond banks on the property. He has also added fans on two of the greens due to stagnant air caused by the many numerous trees that surround the greens.

Brad was also in charge of the grow-in at The Highlands of Elgin Golf Course during the grow-in of Bowes Creek. Both grow-ins took place during the 2008-09 seasons. The grow-in at The Highlands took place on the new quarry nine

holes which opened over the July 4th weekend in 2010. The course offers golfers a links style golfing experience. The biggest challenge there, he says, was the fact that the nine holes were built on an old quarry where there was very little usable soil. To compensate for this, 130,000 cubic yards of topsoil were brought in to help make the soil more suitable for turf. The Highlands (stop me if I sound like a broken record) is also in the *Golfweek's* "Top 10 Places to Play in Illinois" list of 2011, coming in fourth. The Highlands is the busiest course of the three, taking in almost 30,000 rounds a year. Brad is happy with the high rankings and credits his foremen and staff as the true reason the courses made the list. He knows the city of Elgin takes pride in having the two courses in their own backyard. Brad explained the grow-ins were a great experience and enjoyed working with the architects and planning commissions during the process. Conducting and completing two grow-ins simultaneously has filled his desire to go through another anytime soon.

The third course Brad oversees is Wing Park Golf Course. Wing Park is the oldest municipal course in Illinois, dating back to 1908. Brad only has two full-time employees on hand at Wing Park, and one part-timer.

The part-time employee comes in and mows greens, while full-timers are responsible for mowing fairways, collars and rough. Occasionally if there is need to bring on more staff to Wing Park, Brad "borrows" one or two from his other courses to fill the void.

When not on the 45 holes he maintains, Brad enjoys spending time with his wife Lisa, his daughter Brooke and his son Nick. He is also involved in both Nick and Brooke's sporting commitments. He coaches his son Nick's football team and his daughter Brooke's basketball team. He didn't however reveal their records. **-OC**



Brad with son Nick and daughter Brooke this past year in Florida.



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Brandon Burns, Weed Man-Arlington Heights

Brandon Burns, former GCS Twin Orchards CC, IL
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MIDWEST BREEZES

Charles Anfield, CGCS, *Heritage Bluffs Golf Course*



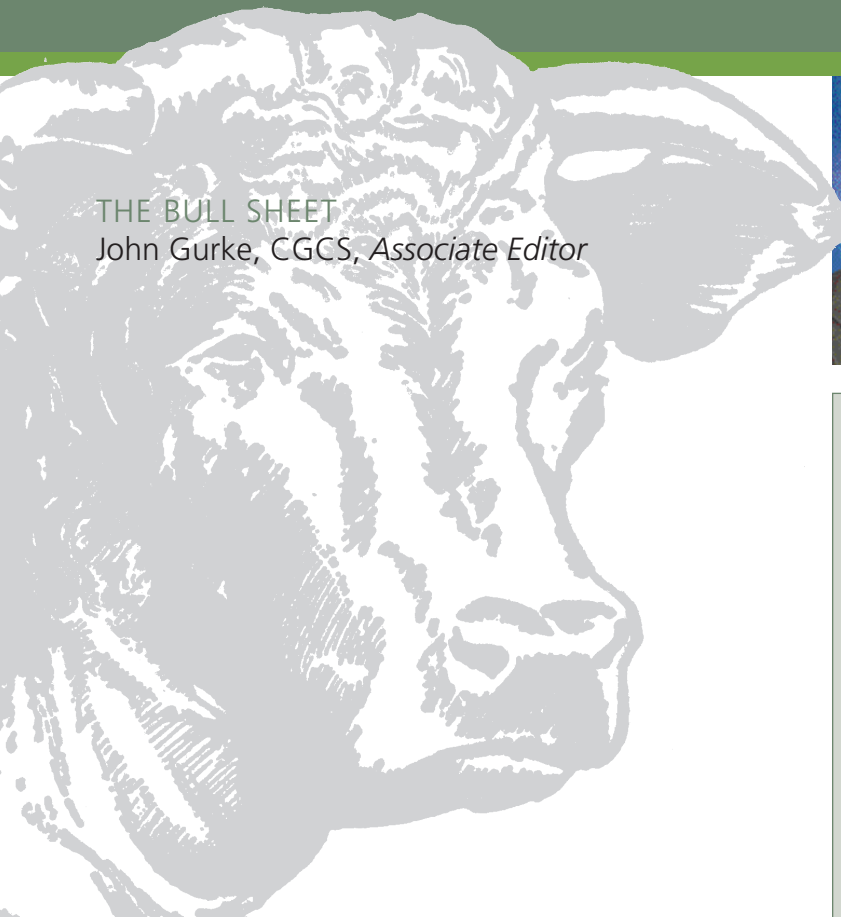
GENTLEMEN, START YOUR HOSES

This year's summer has been a little different than last year. It's been a tale of two seasons. 2010 was hot and wet and 2011 has been hot and dry (until recent record rainfalls). Irrigation systems have already been put to the test. Any gaps in sprinkler coverage have been identified. Frequent sightings of brown turf areas have indicated poor irrigation coverage. Daily checks for clogged nozzles and non-turning sprinkler heads have become routine. Worn nozzles have needed to be replaced. Wetting agents have been applied preventatively and curatively in chronic hydrophobic areas. This has been the year to see how efficient your irrigation system has been. Irrigation water quality can become a factor. Maybe it's time for an irrigation audit. Even the newest irrigation systems with state of the art control require the hand held hose to fill in the gaps. Bottom line given the choice, most Superintendents would prefer to be able to control the amount of water going down on the turf and the hand held hose gives the Superintendent the ultimate control.

On the surface, hand watering with a hose seems like an easy task. Just plug in quick coupler and fire away, right? Not so, hand watering is actually more difficult than it may seem. If we're talking about precise control then just the right amount of water is very important. If not enough water is applied in the morning then by mid-afternoon the desired area can become "baked out". If too much water is regularly applied, then the area can become overly soft and possibly infested with algae or prone to disease or mower injury. It takes a "trained eye" and years of experience to learn and see specific stress areas and be able to identify other potential areas before they become problematic. Different soils such

as sand based greens or tees require different amounts of water than clay or loam based turf. Soils can vary from hole to hole. Irrigation coverage is only so effective and at that point the hose becomes the deciding factor to fill in the gaps.

I spoke with a few Superintendents who we'll refer to as "Hosers" or "Men of Rubber". They use these hoses daily and have become attached to them to the point where they are on a first name basis and have personalized quirky names for them. One Superintendent named his hoses, Hose A and Hose B. Another named his Yorick, after the Shakespearean character. Another interesting name for a hose was Curious George and then another was even called #@*^%&!! These hoses go out in the morning and then again in the afternoon as needed. Some hoses have special trailers with reels that have electric driven retrieval and others are manually hand cranked. Some are even just unceremoniously "hucked" into the back of work cart. A fully charged, 100 foot, 1" hose at 80 P.S.I. is very heavy to handle is not for the weak. You have to lean into it and use your full body to keep steady. I once let my young son Daniel help me out hand watering and he went for a "ride". A charged hose on the loose can be quite dangerous, kind of like an out of control cobra. By the end of the watering shift you can feel it in your arms and you know you did some work. The seemingly, thankless hose becomes the final piece of the irrigation puzzle defense against wilt and drought. A big "shout out" goes to the Crewman who assists in this process. It can mean the difference between life and death of the turf. Thank you Hosers. **-OC**



THE BULL SHEET

John Gurke, CGCS, Associate Editor



August 2011

.....
Congratulations to **Kurt Sams, CGCS** of Idlewild Country Club, and **Tom Tully, CGCS** of Eagle Ridge Resort & Spa on recently achieving re-certification through GCSAA.
.....

Great news from the **John Ekstrom** family—it got bigger last month. On July 18th, baby Emma joined the crew, arriving at a healthy 7 lbs., 12 ozs., and 18.5" long (or is it tall?). Congratulations Ekstroms!
.....



.....
This headline was recently seen in print. "Hunter Adds Rotor for Synthetic Turf Use." Anybody else besides me confused?
.....

(continued on next page)

DATES TO REMEMBER

August 1-6 – 109th Western Amateur at North Shore Country Club in Glenview, IL, **Dan Dinelli, CGCS, Jerry Dinelli** hosts.
.....

August 6 – MAGCS Family Night Picnic and Kane Country Cougars game at Elfstrom Field in Geneva, IL.
.....

August 7 – Deadline for nominations for GCSAA's John Morley Distinguished Service Award.
.....

August 17 – Deadline for applications to attend the 3rd annual Syngenta Business Institute being held December 5-8 at Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, NC.
.....

August 22 – MAGCS monthly meeting and Annual Golf Championship at Bowes Creek Country Club, **Brad Legnaioli, CGCS** host.
.....

September 12 – CAGCS Annual Founders Cup at Onwentsia Club in Lake Forest, IL, **Scott Vincent** host.
.....

September 19 – Annual Wee One Foundation Golf Outing at Pine Hills Country Club in Sheboygan, WI.
.....

September 22 – iTurfExpo 2011 at Midwest Golf House in Lemont, IL.
.....

October 3 – MAGCS monthly meeting and Annual College Championship at Merit Club in Libertyville, IL, **John Nelson** and **Arne Nordenson** hosts.
.....

October 4-December 16 – Fall session of Rutgers Professional Golf Turf Management School at the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station on the campus of Rutgers University in New Brunswick, NJ.
.....

October 21 – Illinois Golf Hall of Fame Induction Ceremonies at The Glen Club in Glencoe, IL. MAGCS' own **Paul Voykin** will be the 5th-ever golf course superintendent to receive the honor of induction at this event.
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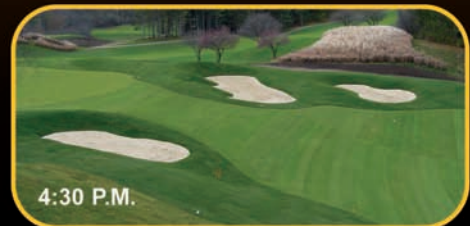
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The Four Sandbaggers of the Apocalypse—the most successful team to represent MAGCS at the GCSAA Championship and Golf Classic over the past MANY (shall I go so far as to say countless?) years was caught on spy camera at a recent CAGCS meeting. Team 4, featuring **Al Fierst, Don Cross, Bob Maibusch,** and **Tommy Witt** have really raked in the pewter plates, and REALLY wanted to flash the “Vee for Victory” sign to gloat about it, but arthritis is such a cruel mistress.



.....
 Congratulations to **Steve Schendel**, who is the new Vice President/Agronomist in the Midwest for Golf Maintenance Solutions, who oversees the maintenance of over 120 golf courses throughout the country. Steve will be based locally, but will also assist in other regions as needed. Good luck to you, Steve.

GCSAA is looking for help. The position of Managing Director of Marketing & Business Development has been created to grow and develop revenue opportunities while enhancing and improving the positioning and image of the GCSAA brand, and is open for qualified candidates to apply. More information about the position and qualifications can be had by contacting Katey Tryon or Mary Heideman at (816)822-1976, and resumes can be sent in confidence to gcsaa@tryonheideman.com.

It seems more and more golf facilities are hosting July 4th fireworks shows, doesn't it? And really, what more perfect setting could you ask for? Guests can plop their blankets down on finely-manicured turf, watch the spectacle from a much closer vantage point than the typical city or municipality show, and IF there is a mishap at the launch site, high-pressure water from a 1-inch hose is always close at hand. Those are the nights we pray for the wind to blow in the direction that will carry the shrapnel off property, for the no-vandalism gods to smile upon us, for our crew's alarm clocks to work the following morning, and for the dang parents of all those dang kids to tell them that those are NOT beaches!



But even with all the work and cleanup required, it's still worth it isn't it?



.....
 Have you heard about the \$500 million golf course that's going to be built? Dutch Docklands, a player in the world of floating technologies has announced plans to build a golf course on the ocean in the Maldives, an island group in the Indian Ocean. There are lots of courses on the ocean, right? So why is this one so expensive? I'll tell you why—the concept is a series of manmade islands each with one or more holes on it, linked by transparent underwater tunnels through which golfers walk or ride to the next island. If you've been to the Aquarium of the Americas in New Orleans you get the picture. The course is expected to open in 2015, and Troon Golf has already been signed on to manage it. By my estimates, it will become profitable in the year 3214.

BIG superintendents should have BIG trucks. **Andy Weadge** satisfies both criteria.



.....
 (continued on page 18)

The July 13th edition of USGA's Regional Updates featured Mid-Centiment Region Agronomist **Ty McClellan**'s observations on practice tee abuse and how we can avoid the typical lack of turf in mid-summer that is so typical in our area. Ty cited the practice facility at the Village Links of Glen Ellen and the data that superintendent **Chris Pekarek** has come up with. On their 1.25-acre tee, Chris estimates that 2 million practice shots are taken annually, with 1.5 million resulting in turf removal. The average size of a divot is 3" wide by 6.5" long, or 19.5 square inches. Therefore, 30 shots—a small bucket of balls—removes 4.1 square feet of the turf, so over an entire season, 205,000 square feet, or 4.6 ACRES of turf are removed from a 1.5-acre tee! It's no wonder we have trouble keeping turf on our practice tees, huh? Ty's article focuses on ways to mitigate the damage and one way he mentions is encouraging golfers to use the "linear method," by which each shot taken is from the spot directly behind the last divot, leaving a "line" of removed turf. By his calculations, this method removes only 2.1 square feet per 30 shots—around half the "scatter" or "leave a big hole" methods (I've taken the liberty to name these methods myself by the way). Not only does this method reduce the amount of turf removed, it also allows for quicker recovery by letting the surrounding turf creep into the void while the seed germinates (or tries to). As the guy who reseeds and resets his practice tee every day, I found this to be some very useful information—thanks Ty and Chris for putting it out there.

.....

This month's MAGCS member/celebrity look-alike features two guys with four first names. **Greg Martin** Luke Donald is all that's needed to be said. See it?



For the 2012 GCSAA Education Conference to be held February 27 through March 2 in Las Vegas, fifteen new seminars have been added to the lineup. Among the topics are some interesting titles such as "Environomics—Blending Environmental and Financial Stewardship for the Modern Superintendent," "Cool Season Putting Green Improvement—Changing Species or Cultivars, Interseeding, or Regrassing," "So You Want to be a General Manager?" and "Turning Your Greens Green Using Turf Colorants." It's in Vegas, so there'll be other stuff to do, too.

.....



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Last month on the 12th, the 11th Annual John Buck Memorial Golf Outing and Scholarship Fundraiser was held at Marengo Ridge Golf & Country Club in Marengo, IL. The day was perfect weather-wise, and the course, thanks to host superintendent Luke Roth was magnificent. One of the funnest events of our season, the "Buck" features a scramble format in the most relaxed atmosphere you can imagine. And there's a nice steak dinner after golf that tops the day off in high style. Special thanks to the folks at J.W. Turf for the awesome job they do every year with this great event, to the ladies who manned the tee games, and to Marengo Ridge for being such a gracious host.



(continued on page 21)

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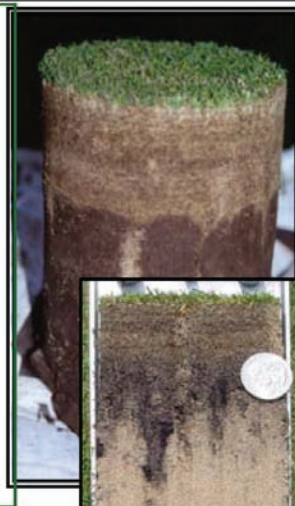


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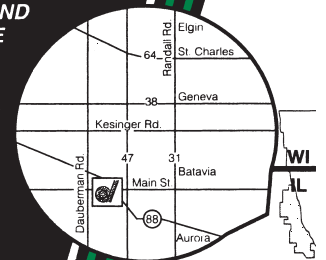
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