

on

04/2013

THE MIDWEST ASSOCIATION OF GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENTS

# COURSE

SNOW SCULPTING

THE BRIDGES AT INDIAN HILL CLUB

WAY UP NORTH

Kirk Spieth  
Beverly  
Country Club



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# toc

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Beverly Country Club, site of the ITF/Midwest combined May Monthly Meeting will certainly be a challenge and enjoyable for all.

Photo credit: Kirk Spieth

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## DATES

### 2013 MIDWEST EVENTS

- 4/30 Midwest April Meeting, Calumet Country Club
- 5/13 Midwest / ITF May Meeting, Beverly Country Club
- 7/20 Midwest Family Night Picnic, Cougar Baseball Game
- 7/22 Midwest July Meeting, Edgewood Valley Country Club
- 8/26 Midwest August Meeting, Crystal Lake Country Club
- 11/14 61<sup>st</sup> Midwest Turf Clinic, Medinah Country Club

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Ed Braunsky, CGCS  
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## Just Check Your Pillbox

Recently I turned the “Big 50” and this has given my wife more ammo to make fun of the all the “old guy” stuff I do. Some of you know what I am talking about. It seems like you get to a certain age and the old man things just start happening:


All of a sudden you are brushing mysterious flakes off of your clothes. You make strange sounds with your mouth like a dog lapping up water. Your flatulence has increased while your ability to control it has decreased. Your dress code is more like Grandpa than GQ. You get upset when you leave your cheaters in the car and can't see the menu. Words like colonoscopy and fiber are part of your dinner conversation with friends.

My memory, from what I remember, is worse. I think. This may be one of the reasons old people listen to radio stations that repeat the news every eight minutes for hours on end. One of my wife's greatest lines of all time occurred while on a trip to Cabo San Lucas. I asked her, “What day is it?” and she quickly responded, “Let's just check our pillbox!” Yes, we have a pillbox and one day, you will too. As we age, there are more pills to take, combined with that memory thing, a pillbox is the answer. Our slow season is a great time to catch up on our own health care.

It seems each winter I spend a lot of time at the dentist. My teeth have always been an issue. As a result of an old CYO injury I get to take some of mine out at night to soak them in Efferdent. When was the last time you heard CYO? I stopped drinking about four years ago (I can hear you're happy for me). That was one of the better old guy things I have done. I didn't want to add more pills to the pillbox.

Recently, (I think it was recently) a group of Past Presidents of the Midwest met at my beloved Geneva Golf Club. This group included: Tim Anderson, Mike Bavier, Kevin DeRoo, Don Ferreri, Al Fierst, Ed Fischer, Gary Hearn, Tony Kalina, Bob Kohlstedt, Peter Leuzinger, Bob Maibusch, Joel Purpur, Dan Sterr, Luke Strojny, Dave Behrman, Scott Witte, Fred Behnke and Dave Braasch. Several members of our current board were there including: President Dave Grolle, Secretary Treasurer Chuck Barber and Director Jim Pedersen and Executive Director Luke Cella. I knew I would forget someone. I was there too.

The Board of Directors looks forward to what transpires at the Past President Council meeting each year. The Council is given the chance to hear a review of the past year's activities of the MAGCS and initiatives the board is currently working through. Well thought suggestions and comments are given to the board from the perspective of those that have a history of also caring for this fine Association. This year we discussed the editorial changes to *On Course* and the new digital version that is now offered to the membership. We talked about the relationship with GCSAA as it continues to move forward. We reviewed the finances of the Association as well as the membership lists. One change that was put to the Council (via email) was the College Championship that MAGCS runs each fall at the October meeting. The golf committee is looking to spark more interest in the event and is thinking about changing that competition to be more inclusive. Since the College Championship has been around for a while, the committee wants the feedback from the Past President's before moving forward with a different or adapted event. This is the type of issue where the current leadership respects the opinions and historic point of view offered by their elders. Change is often good, and even better when it is communicated in an open venue like the Past President's meeting.

We wrapped the day with a steak and lobster lunch, actually it was more like salad and chicken. We need to watch our cholesterol and make sure we get enough roughage throughout the day. For me, the best part was after the meeting and lunch; I saw several conversations going on between young and old superintendents. This is something else us old guys do well. 

# Growing Grass WAY up North

PHOTO CREDITS: MARTY BAUMANN

Marty Baumann, *Anchorage Golf Course*

Do you use Eskimos for caddies? Is your clubhouse made of ice like an igloo? Do you use snowshoes instead of spikes on the course? The idea of managing a golf course in Alaska inevitably elicits these sorts of amusing queries from those who have never visited the state.



*Marty Baumann can trace some of his roots to the Midwest and he still supports the Cubs.*

The realities of managing the Anchorage Golf Course, however, are as unique and challenging as this great state.

Anchorage is a modern city of approximately 320,000 people that sits on the Cook Inlet. It is 100 miles north of the Pacific Ocean at about 60 degrees latitude (for reference, Chicago is around 42 degrees latitude).

The weather is similar to Northern Wisconsin or the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. Alaska is two and a half times larger than Texas. It has state

parks larger than Rhode Island and Delaware. Alaska's national parks are even larger. Anchorage is home to four 18-hole facilities that serve the local community, the military, tourists, and Alaskans from bush communities. Between May and September 2012, an estimated 1,586,600 tourists came to Alaska, primarily to and through Anchorage. Additionally, many Alaskans who live outside of Anchorage come here for shopping, doctor's appointments, or for recreational and leisure activities. Anchorage residents who are employees of the oil and gas companies typically work in two-week, rotating shifts, leaving them lots of free time while 'off the slope.' The Anchorage Golf Course welcomes out-of-towners, slope workers, tourists, and locals.

Anchorage's golf season runs from the first week of May through the end of October. In order to open the course as early as possible, the covers are removed from the greens when soil temps rise high enough for the bent grass to actively grow. This allows for earlier play on temporary greens. Besides bent grass greens, we have a blend of Kentucky Bluegrass/Ryegrass fairways,

decks, collars and tees and primarily fescue roughs. The course was cut directly out of a boreal forest and is hilly and tight. We play at 6,005 yards at the white tees and 6,650 yards from the tips.

That's where the similarities to what I am used to end! We have very long days in the summer. In June and July, it never really gets completely dark at night. The sun rises in the north about 3:00 a.m. and sets in the north about 12:30 a.m. And yes, there are golfers at the gate before 4:00 a.m. every day wanting to play! Now, it's great to be able to have three full shotguns in a day in the summer, but it makes mowing and irrigating very difficult.

We budget for 10,000 rounds in June and July and another 9,000 in August to get us the bulk of our 35,000 rounds a season in just three months. Needless to say, I am here every day throughout that stretch.

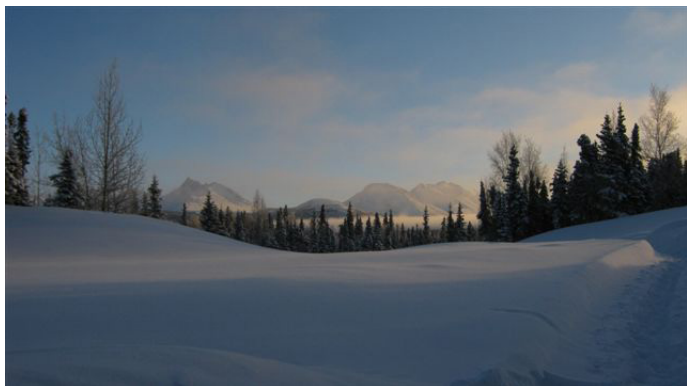
The stuff that's called soil here is a real challenge. There is no clay in our soil. Instead, we have glacial silt. It's composed of small, clay-like particles, but packs even tighter, and does not have the same properties as clay for percolation and exchange rates. The sand here is grey and black, and not available in mixes, as it is in the lower 48. Our bunkers get hard and packed down fast. We need to handle our soil nutrients and fertilization dif-



ferently to make them effective. The soil temps are lower. Below the 12-inch depth, the ground never really warms up, so organic material in the soil breaks down very slowly!

And then there is the wildlife! Moose are cool to see, but they poop everywhere,

they drag their feet across the greens and they are dangerous. How do you move an animal that stands 8 feet tall and tips the scales at 1,500 pounds if it does not want to move? I also have two black bears that live on the course. One is a sow that has cubs every year, and one is a two year old, who has made his home behind my 15th tee. Fun times!



*This is how most think of golf in Alaska*

Some things are very different in a good way. There are virtually no insects that affect grass. Sports turf grasses are not native, so there are no real insect pests. I deal with some anthracnose and dollar spot in the summer, but very little. The big issue is snow mold. Go figure that! It can wipe out the whole course every winter if I don't spray for it. And I do spray— everything but deep rough—spending over \$10,000 on fungicides just for snow mold protection!



*Nice backdrop for a driving range.*

The rest is mostly the same...we use JD walking mowers on our greens, and triplex our tees, decks, and collars. We use lightweight fairway mowers and rotary rough mowers. I have an irrigation specialist and a horticulturist as well as a full-time assistant.

Last, but not least, are my customers. We have a loyal following of Anchorage residents. A Monday, Thursday, and Friday night Men's league and a Tuesday and Thursday night Women's league are among the folks we call our regulars. We have up to 60 part and full shotguns a season. About half are for char-



*Marty begins his day 2:30 a.m., just as the sun sets.*

ity events and half are company events. The Alaska Korean Golf Association is also big here. But tourism is bigger! We get lots of visitors from the Far East—Japan, China, and Korea—who play LOTS of golf here. We have many cruise ships that come here, and lots of people want to play a round in Alaska when they drop anchor in Anchorage.

Then there are the people who want to play 100 holes in one day. With our number of rounds, it's hard to do in less than 16 hours. When you have 22 hours of sunlight in June and July, it isn't uncommon to have someone make a reservation and play through other groups to get their 100 holes in!

And everyone wants to play golf at midnight, or all night long. We don't have any days when it's light all night—you'd have to travel 430 miles north, to Fairbanks, for that. But, with a glow-in-the-dark golf ball and a fore caddy, you can play all night, because dark in late June is really only a couple of hours of dusk.

So, that's golf in Alaska. I try to bring standards from the industry in the lower 48 to a place where expectations can be different. As a result, I have seen our rounds and share of the local play grow.



*Don't veer too far off the fairways, it gets thick very quickly.*

Aside from the unique challenges of managing a golf course here, the number one reason I love it is that Alaska is BEAUTIFUL! If luck is on my side, I'm certain that this will be my last golf course, and my last home! If you're ever in the neighborhood, stop on by! ☺



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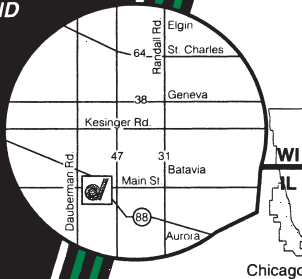
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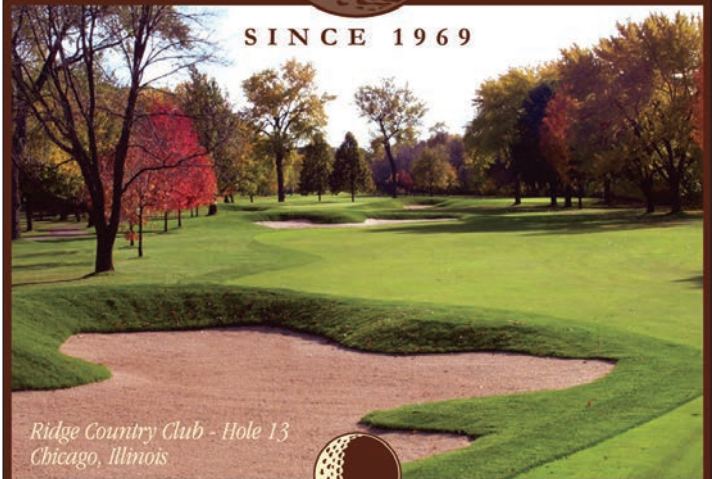
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# The Bridges of Indian Hill Club

Aaron Becker, *Indian Hill Club*

PHOTO CREDITS: DAVID SCHLAGETTER, CGCS

As we enter the fall season at Indian Hill Club in Winnetka, Illinois, we welcome the opportunity to change pace. Crew members have taken on unique and specialized jobs to improve the golf course.

This past fall's mild weather and ground conditions provided the opportunity to take on two bridge reconstructions. These are bridges that provide access not only for carts on the course, but also for equipment we use throughout the golf season. In years past, during off season, we have replaced other bridges like these. In addition to providing a more stable and secure structure, we've also been able to use the same building materials and design, creating a uniform series of bridges throughout the golf course.

This past fall we replaced two bridges made of older, aged wood that was losing its integrity and stability. Both cross Indian Hill's main drainage ditch, which runs along or crosses seven different holes on the course. The new bridges were constructed of rough-edged white stones for the sidewalls. A galvanized steel pipe, six-feet in diameter, allows water to flow through. The galvanized steel pipe was ordered in lengths of 10 and 12 feet. The other materials included rough edged white stones (8-10" in width, varying lengths, and 3-4" in height), white masonry cement, concrete, and 2x6" lumber for the forms. We rented a mini excavator to dig the footers and for assistance with pipe placement



*The plywood in the forefront was used to temporarily damn the water. As the water rose, pumps were used to transfer water to the low side of the ditch.*



*IHC rented a mini excavator to dig footers and properly place the pipes within the ditch.*

First, we had to temporarily slow and reduce the flow of water in the ditch. Thankfully, this year, the water level in the ditch didn't present a huge problem. We used sheets of plywood and steel stakes to dam any water that was present. The water that backed up against the dam was frequently pumped to the other side of the second dam to create a dry workspace. Our second step was to properly locate the bridge within the ditch. The first bridge was designed to be 10 feet wide. On each side of the ditch, we marked the width and set up string lines to ensure proper placement. Once we had the location painted, we also measured out three feet beyond the 10-foot mark on all four sides and marked that area. Our goal was to widen the bridge footers on the outside and inside of the stone sidewall to allow for a better working space. The only measurements left were to set up a level string-line across the ditch from the ground on each

side. We used this to determine how deep to excavate the ditch base to allow proper placement of the six-foot diameter pipe.

At this point, we were ready to begin digging. First, we excavated the ditch base. With the aid of a laser level, we removed enough soil along the ten-foot width where the pipe would sit. Once we had the pipe's location complete, we began digging each footer. Each footer was about five feet wide, which al-



*After the pipe was set in the ditch and footers were poured, skilled staff members at Indian Hill Club began the stonework.*

lowed enough room for workers to lay the stones into place. The bottom of each footer was excavated to the same level, which was established with the laser. This was the end of the major excavating. The next step was to place the pipe. The key here was to locate the pipe as accurately as possible on the side of the ditch. Once the pipe was set down, we measured off the ends to make sure we had our footers dug properly. The extra three feet dug beyond the ten foot length was also verified. Three workers pushed the pipe down the bank of the ditch into its final resting spot. Then, we set our string line up once again to make sure the pipe was at the correct depth in relation to both sides of the ditch. We also checked the pipe to ensure it was sitting level in the ditch.

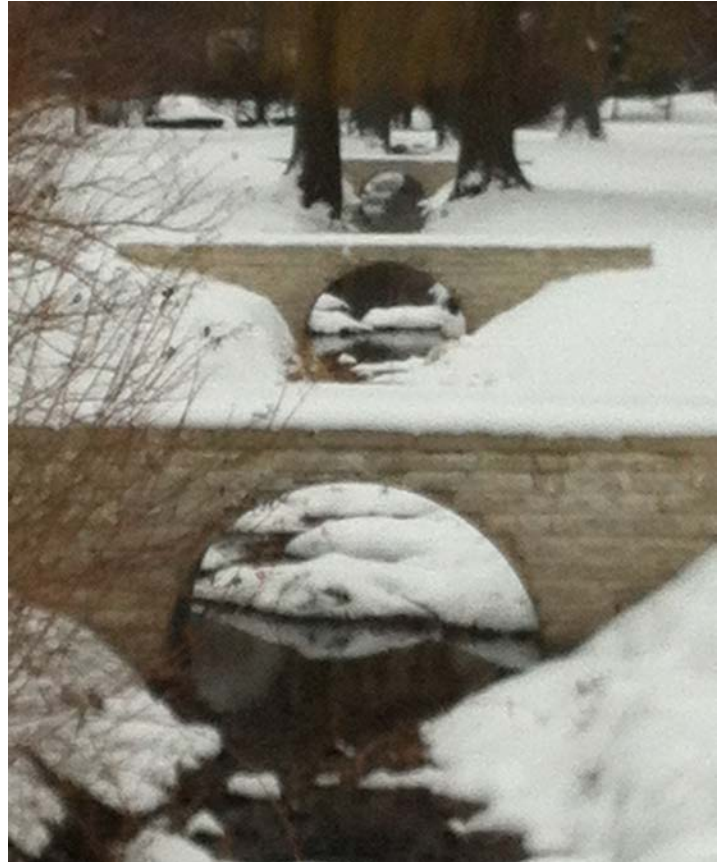
Next, we concentrated on each of the four footer regions. The fact that we were working below the grade of the ditch made for a messy workspace. To help create a solid and stable base, we added crushed gravel to the footers. Again, using the laser, we made sure all four footers were level, and we graded the gravel evenly. We were at the point where we could con-




*After each bridge complete and backfilled, staff finished off the grade with crushed red stone to match the existing path work at IHC.*

struct our forms from 2x6s. Concrete was poured into the forms to provide a base for the white stone.

We allowed the concrete to dry overnight. We then removed the wood forms and began masonry work. At Indian Hill, we're fortunate to have several crew members who have brick-laying and stonework skills. Random-length white stones were put into place on one side of the bridge with two workers in each footer. At ground level, two additional men were preparing masonry cement and handing stones down. They worked efficiently, and the bridge took shape very quickly. Once the stones reached the correct level, the crew repeated the process and constructed the opposite side of the bridge.



With both sides of the stone bridge completed, the excavation was backfilled –both inside and outside the bridge walls. The soil was graded and compacted to match the ditch bank slope on the outside of the walls. The inside of the bridge was filled in around the pipe and graded to provide a subtle rise in the middle of the bridge, allowing proper runoff from rainfall. Crushed gravel was laid on top of the soil to establish near-finish grade. Once thoroughly compacted, we added crushed red rock material to finish and match our other bridge/cart path surfaces.

The bridge construction process at Indian Hill Club gives a uniform and attractive look to all of our crossings. The planning and labor are enjoyable components of our off-season. The feedback tells us that when course duties and weather slow down, taking on a task such as a stone bridge is quite rewarding. We're proud to share our story and our successes with in-house-managed off-season projects. 

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# THE BullSheet

John Gurke, CGCS, Associate Editor



APRIL 2013

## Dates to Remember

**April 15** – Deadline for applications for the inaugural Stanley Zontek Memorial Scholarship. Details to follow.

**April 15** – Deadline for applications for GCSAA's Legacy Awards scholarships. Details to follow.

**April 16** – CAGCS monthly meeting at Makray Memorial Golf Club in Barrington, IL, **Tim Christians** host.

**April 30** – MAGCS monthly meeting at Calumet Country Club in Homewood, IL (second time's a charm), **Matt Harstad** host.

**May 5** – J.W. Turf's Annual Equipment Auction at their Hampshire location beginning at 8:00 AM. Contact **Danna Curtis** for information at [danna@foxvalley.net](mailto:danna@foxvalley.net).

**May 13** – MAGCS/ITF combined event at Beverly Country Club in Chicago, **Kirk Spieth** host.

**May 18** – Sunshine Through Golf Foundation's 100-Hole Golf Marathon at the Zigfield Troy Golf Course in Woodridge, IL, **Dennis Troy** host.

**June 1** – Deadline for MAGCS Scholarship Applications. Applications can be found on our website.

**June 1** – Deadline for applications for GCSAA Scholars Competition. Details to follow.

**June 15** – 13th Annual John Buck Memorial Golf Outing at Randall Oaks Golf Club, **Mike Sprouse** host.

**June 17-23** – Champions Tour's Encompass Championship at North Shore Country Club, **Dan Dinelli, CGCS** and **J.D. Dinelli** hosts.

Congratulations to Jen and **Elliott Dowling** (Cress Creek Country Club) on the birth of their baby boy Elliott Lane on February 3rd. The confirmed Red Wings fan came into the world ironically in the midst of the Blackhawks unprecedented streak at 8 lbs., 0 ozs., and 20" long.

Big congrats to **Jeff Hoste** on being named the golf course superintendent at the Village Greens of Woodridge. Jeff started in his new role on March 18th.

Best wishes to **David Schingel** on his new position as Director of Maintenance at Canyata Golf Club in Marshall, IL.

Also on the move recently were **Andrew Decker**, formerly at Oakland Hills Country Club who is now assistant superintendent at Lake Shore Country Club; and **Christopher Gray**, formerly at Elkhorn Golf Club who is the superintendent at Villa Olivia Country Club in Bartlett. Congratulations and best wishes to you.

Speaking of Chris Gray, can you guess the most famous musical performer to play the lounge at his course? Villa Olivia Newton-John.

And even more good news: The golf industry may be heading in the right direction, based on this year's Chicago Golf Show attendance. The 30th Annual event presented by the BMW Championship and held on February 22-24 shattered its previous attendance record by 15%, with 19,200 attendees versus 16,700 last year. Hopefully that translates to more revenue for all of our courses. And more play. And more divots. And more ball marks. Oh just forget I mentioned it.



*The Dowlings*

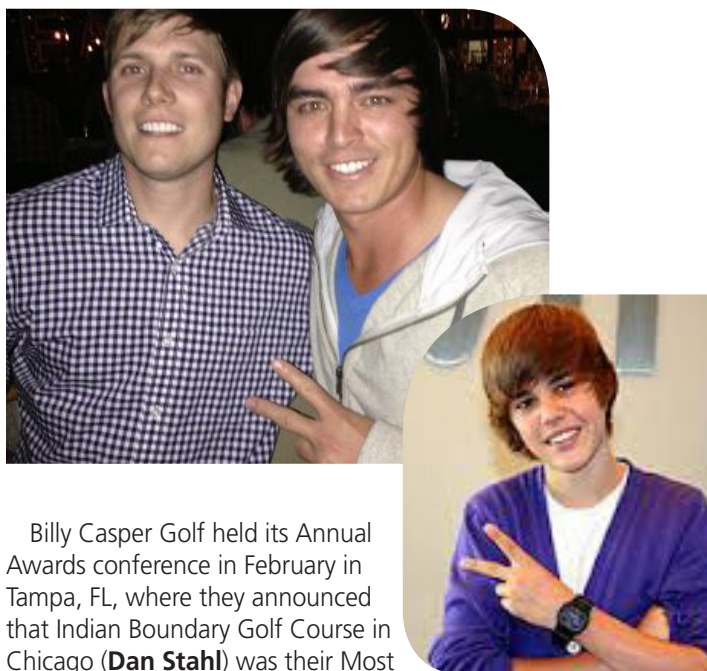


*Jeff Hoste, new Superintendent at Village Greens of Woodridge*

This is better news: The drought that overwhelmed much of the central United States the past two summers might be making an encore. This news came on Valentine's Day from a panel of experts

speaking to the U.S. Senate committee on agriculture, nutrition and forestry. "The continuing conditions really look like they're setting up for a very similar level of drought in the Midwest and West," Roger Pulwarty of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration told the committee. Time to restock the hose repair kit.

Okay, I'm fairly certain the guy on the left is **Craig Shepherd** below. He claims the other guy is Ricky Fowler (and that Ricky's a really nice dude). I have a sneaky suspicion Sheppy just didn't want us to know he was at a Justin Bieber concert and had just met his ultimate heart throb.



Billy Casper Golf held its Annual Awards conference in February in Tampa, FL, where they announced that Indian Boundary Golf Course in Chicago (**Dan Stahl**) was their Most Improved Facility of the Year for 2012. Congrats Dan on a great job last year!

It was a sad winter for several MAGCS families whose loved ones passed away. Zachary Zeinert, the son of Naomi and **Phil Zeinert** (Elgin CC) lost his long battle with cancer at the age of 28 in February. In March, Bill Nadler, the father of **Dave Nadler** and grandfather of **Eric Nadler** and **Matt Baumgartner** passed away. Also last month, Joyce Jacobson, mother of **Rick Jacobson** passed; Dennis Augdahl, the father of **Dan Augdahl** left us and David Lapp, the son of Carol and **John Lapp** lost his struggle with an extended illness. Our heartfelt sympathies are with you all.

The 15th of this month is the due date for applications for two scholarship opportunities. The Stanley Zontek Memorial Scholarship presented by Golf Course Industry magazine honors Stan's legacy and his passion for turf and the game of golf. The \$2,500 grant is available to any current student, and details and an application form can be found at [www.golfcourseindustry.com](http://www.golfcourseindustry.com). The GCSAA Legacy Awards, funded by Syngenta and sponsored by the Environmental Institute for Golf, are \$1,500 awards for children or grandchildren of GCSAA members who have been active Class A, Superintendent Members, Class C, Class A-Retired, Class SM-Retired or Class AA members for five or more consecutive years. Applicants must be enrolled full time

at an accredited institution of higher learning or be a high school senior who has been accepted at such an institution for the next academic year. Application forms are available at [www.gcsaa.org](http://www.gcsaa.org) by clicking on the Education tab and then the Scholarships tab.

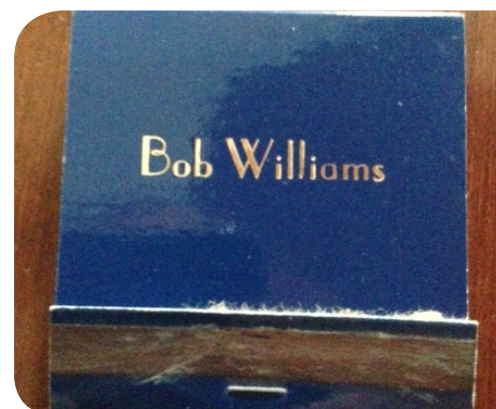
June 1st marks another deadline for students to get some cash. The GCSAA Scholars Competition is available to members who are enrolled in a recognized undergraduate program in a major field related to turf management with at least 24 credit hours or the equivalent of one year of full-time study. Selection criteria include academic excellence, work experience, extracurricular activities and potential to become a leading professional in the golf course management industry. The scholarships range from \$500 to \$6,000, and applications can be found at [www.gcsaa.org](http://www.gcsaa.org) at the same place as the previously mentioned one.

Q: How does **Tommy Robinson** feel if his neighbor **Mike Bavier Jr.** at Deerfield gets a new irrigation system?

A: He is Ravinia Green with envy.

KemperSports has had a busy winter in our neck of the woods. In February, it was announced that they had been selected by the Illinois International Port District to manage its Harborside International Golf Center in Chicago, and it will also partner with Rockford Country Club to provide turnkey management of the private, member-owned club. In March, the company held its Annual Leadership Awards Conference in Glenview, IL, where it was announced that the Glen Club (**Scott Goniwiecha**) was named the 2012 Facility of the Year.

Remember these things? We used to use them to start fires before there were Bics. **Bruce Williams** found these among his dad's belongings—back in the day if you bought fertilizer, you got your name on a matchbook. Nowadays you get a trip to Pinehurst. I prefer nowadays.

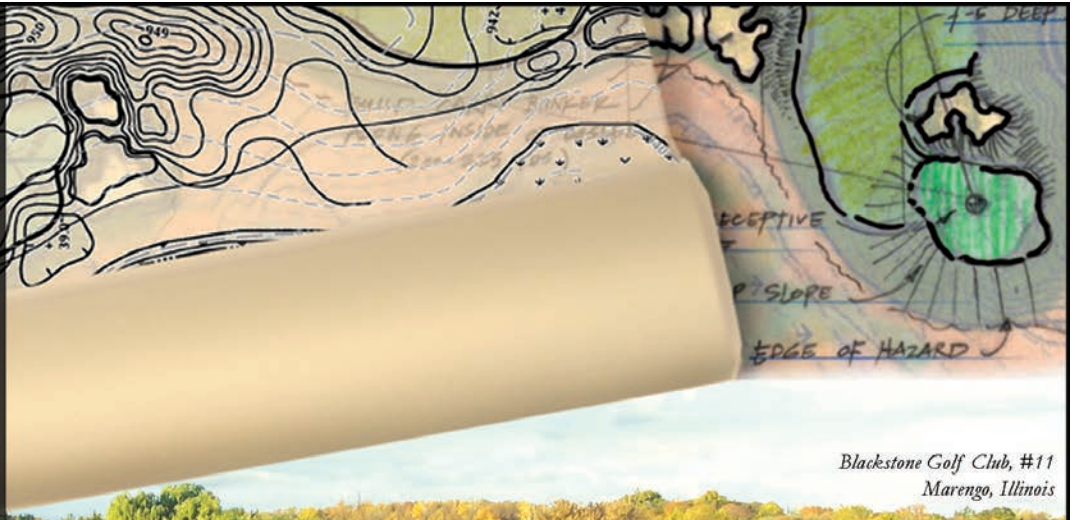


If you are a user of WeedAlert.com—PBI Gordon's online weed identification and control resource since 1998—you've probably noticed its new look. New to the site are color photographs of 109 weeds, allowing turf professionals to search and identify weeds by name, appearance or region. Have a gander if you haven't checked it out—it's a really nice resource.

Nice retirement, Ron! Last month we reported that Ron Dodson, the founder and president of Audubon International had retired after 25 years at the helm. If you blinked, you missed it, because he is now the chairman of the International Sustainability Council and Audubon Lifestyles (ISC-Audubon). "For over 25 years I have dedicated my professional life to advocating properly designed and managed golf courses. For the remainder of my

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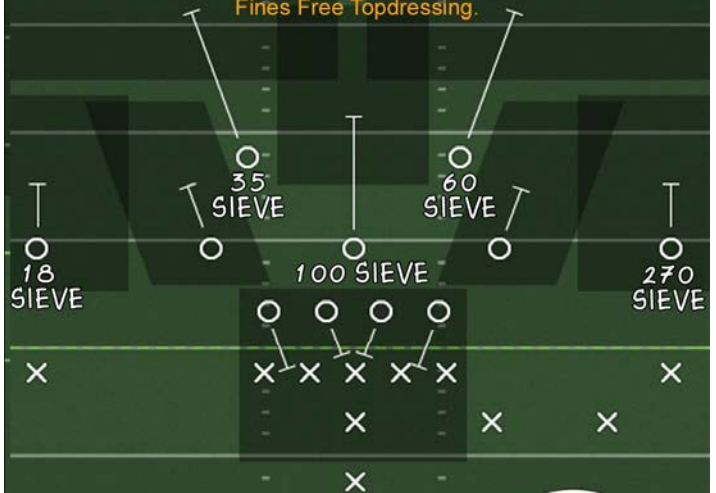
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Continued from page 12

professional life I intend to focus my attention on getting people more connected with nature and sustainable living and lifestyles. I am starting this effort by focusing on the golfing public," said Dodson.

**Greg Martin** has another couple of feathers for his VERY feathery cap. In its spring 2013 edition, By Design magazine, the quarterly publication of the American Society of Golf Course Architects (those guys who wear the plaid jackets), ran an article listing ASGCA's first-ever Design Excellence Recognition Program award winners, and Greg was among them for his work on Phillips Park Golf Course in Aurora. On top of that, Greg was nominated to serve on ASGCA's Executive Committee through 2017, assuming its Secretary role for this year. Congratulations, Greg!



## MIDWEST Doppelgänger



Has anyone ever seen **John Anderson** after 10:00 PM? I think he's pulling double duty on late-night TV (above).

While kinda on the subject of Audubon International, it was recently announced that Katie Hopkins has been hired as the new External Communications Coordinator, AND that they have moved into their new headquarters in the Rensselaer Technology Park in Troy, NY.

One of MAGCS very own has a new employer. **Tom Fermanian** has joined the team of turf scientists at Lebanon-Seaboard to lead the development of its product lineup. Tom's specific area of expertise will be research review, as well as to evaluate and refine the biological and biostimulant offerings of the company's products. Tom joins Drs. Mike Kernan and Clark Throssel to form the team. Best of luck to you, Tom!



*Drs. Fermanian, Throssel and Kernan*

What's going on with these sinkholes? First we hear about a poor guy in Florida disappearing into one while he slept, never to be found; and then in our own state, a golfer at Annbriar Golf Course in the St. Louis area fell through the 14th fairway into a 15-foot deep sinkhole just last month. Luckily for him, he was extricated with only minor injuries. Another reason not to play golf in March.

MAGCS Milestones: The following gentlemen—all of them industry icons—have passed a major professional milestone. Congratulations to **Oscar Miles, Dick Trevarthan, Harold Fredrickson, Tom DiGuido, Carl Hoppfan, Joe Dinelli, and Paul Voykin** on being GCSAA members for over 50 years!

In gearing up for the season that thankfully took its sweet time arriving, the final frenzy of winter workshops and educational events is officially over. On February 19th, the Class C Winter Workshop was held at Midwest Golf House in Lemont, with

*Continued on page 16*



round table discussions on making the leap to superintendent (below: **Justin VanLanduit, Chuck Barber, Justin Kirtland, and Elliott Dowling**) and exploring other career options featuring Dave Blomquist, Keith Krause and Brett Ziegler highlighting the event.



On March 11th, president Dave Groelle hosted the MAGCS March meeting, with Dr. Karl Danneberger of the Ohio State University speaking on Managing on the Edge.



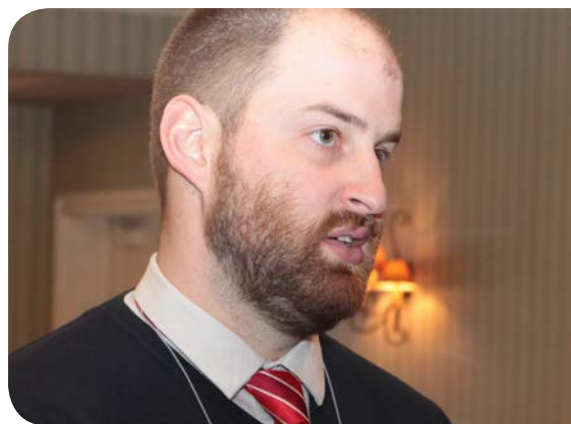
*MAGCS Commercial Representative Jake Vollbeer helps at the registration table greeting members with his smile.*

On March 6th, the Chicagoland Association of Golf Course Superintendents held its 29th Annual Forum at Naperville



Country Club, with Tim Anderson and Steven Biehl hosting. The theme was "New Tools and Technology," and a highlight of the day was the presentation of a plaque to Dr. Derek Settle pictured with **Dave Ward** in

recognition of and appreciation for all the fine work he has done for Chicagoland superintendents.



*Bill Meyer of Park Ridge Country Club readies himself for a day of education*

On March 13th and 14th Reinders held its 21st Green Industry Conference outside of Milwaukee, with "Catch the Wave" being the theme. The conference featured more than 80 leading suppliers on the trade show floor, and more than 35 educational seminars.



*Members Matt Kregel, Mike Murphy and Dave Radaj enjoy the Reinders show.*



*Eric Radkowsky and Scot Spier share a conversation during one of the morning break.*



GCSAA would like you to know that PowerPoint presentations delivered at the 2013 Education Conference in San Diego are now available online at [www.gcsaa.org](http://www.gcsaa.org) in case you missed one. Or several. @



PHOTO CREDITS: KIRK SPIETH

## Kirk Spieth and Beverly Country Club

William Meyer, *Park Ridge Country Club*

All of us in the golf business tend to end up in this industry in the same way. We get a summer job at a course and love it so much; we decide to make a career of it. Kirk Spieth's story falls right in that line. Kirk grew up in Ohio and naturally he attended The Ohio State University. While at school, he worked at Wedgewood Golf and Country Club in the summer for a little spending money.

This is where the story takes a quick and unexpected turn; Kirk graduated OSU with a degree in broadcast journalism. After graduating, Kirk looked back and thought about those summers on the golf course and made a decision that puts his story back on track. He then proceeded to work toward his two-year turf degree from Rutgers University. After Rutgers, Kirk went back to Wedgewood and was hired on as an Assistant Superintendent. After five years in this position, Kirk got the opportunity to move to this neck of the woods. He secured a position at Olympia Fields as an Assistant Superintendent, eventually working his way up to the North Course Superintendent. After another five years, Kirk got the opportunity to move on, where two seasons ago Kirk took over responsibilities as golf course superintendent at Beverly Country Club.



*Kirk and his wife Katie*



Beverly Country Club and the property itself are quite intriguing and unique. The club was founded in 1908; ten years after opening Donald Ross was contracted to make a master plan and renovate the course. Ross' thumb print has stood the test of time, although it has had a little bit of help. In 2002 a master plan and renovation was put into action that refreshed many of the still existing Ross trademarks and incorporated others that were part of Ross' original plans. Most recently, a bunker renovation project was finished in the fall of 2011. This renovation focused on replacing the existing sand with better sand and addressing drainage within bunkers.

The property itself is an interesting 120 acres. It is split in two by 87th Street, with the front nine and maintenance facility on the north side and the back nine and clubhouse on the south. The front nine is in the city of Chicago, however just across the street the clubhouse and back nine are in unincorporated Cook County. One prominent feature on the property is a ridge that runs across some of the front nine; it is the prehistoric shoreline of Lake Chicago. This prehistoric past makes for interesting contours on the property that can be unexpected so close to downtown.

When talking to Kirk about this upcoming season he couldn't help but express his excitement "This is the first season that we are starting with a crew that has been trained in the way that the management team wants." This season, Kirk's main goal is going to be dialing in the Poa greens and Declaration/Poa tees and fairways in preparation for next year's Western Amateur. This will

not be Beverly's first large tournament; it is a rather storied past when it comes to tournaments with champions such as Francis Ouimet, Arnold Palmer, and Jack Nicklaus. Beverly has hosted a dozen notable tournaments over the last 112 years, these events range from a U.S. Amateur to Western Opens.

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## Ross' thumb print has stood the test of time, although it has had a little bit of help.

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In his down time Kirk enjoys spending time relaxing with his wife Katie at their home in Flossmoor. Kirk describes himself as a large sports fan, especially when it comes to college football and his alma mater The Ohio State Buckeyes. He is also a golfer and, like everyone else, feels like he doesn't seem to play enough with everything that happens in life. @





### **History of Beverly Championships**

- 1910 – Western Open (Chick Evans, Jr.)
- 1930 – Western Amateur (Jack Westland)
- 1931 – Nat'l Amateur Championship (Francis Ouimet)
- 1943 – Chicago Victory Nat'l Open (Sam Byrd)
- 1963 – Western Open (Arnold Palmer)
- 1967 – Western Open (Jack Nicklaus)
- 1970 – Western Open (Hugh Royer)
- 1998-2000 Chicago Open
- 2009 – US Senior Amateur Championship

Course Record: 64, 1967 Tom Weiskopf



Charles Anfield, CGCS, *Heritage Bluffs Golf Course*

## Dr. Danneberger's Turf Diatribe

The Midwest March meeting was held up near the northern border of Illinois, at the frozen turf of The Royal Melbourne Country Club in Long Grove.

MAGCS President Dave Groelle, CGCS was the host. The weather this year was quite a change from last year's meeting. You may recall it was near 80 degrees! Dr. Karl Danneberger, Professor of Turfgrass Science in the Department of Horticulture and Crop Science at Ohio State University was the featured speaker. His focus is turfgrass ecology and physiology.

An old extension professional, Dr. Danneberger described himself as a "self-professed rambler". He spent some time sharing philosophies, car stories, analogies and just doing a great job educating and generally entertaining the MAGCS members with his golf course maintenance observations and results from some of his research. He did a great job covering many topics throughout the morning, some, I've gathered here.

Golf course superintendents seem to share the same philosophy and attempt to manage their turf "on the edge of failure." This comes as we try to provide turf that is fast, firm



Dave Groelle, CGCS (l) welcomes Jeff Leuzinger as he checks in for the March Meeting at Royal Melbourne.



Dr. Karl Danneberger, a self-professed rambler and Illinois native, offered keen insight and shared his experiences and turf travels with the Midwest.

and green as the most optimum of playing conditions. The difference between excellent conditions and poor conditions can be a very fine line; and this line can change very quickly because we don't always know when to back off. We tend to manage our turf to extremes. Some examples of these extremes are:

- environmental fluctuations (high and low temperatures, high and low humidity)
- low mowing heights
- moisture management

We manage turf with high demands and high expectations from our players. Higher inputs always require higher costs and come with higher risk to plant health.

One study, Dr. Danneberger explained showed that injury on putting surfaced increased as green speeds became greater.

- 60% injury observed to turf managed at speeds over 10.5 feet
- 100% injury observed to turf managed at speeds over 12 feet

Dr. Danneberger dispelled rumors of higher stimpmeter speeds using special golf balls by conducting a research project with many different golf balls. He found no quantifiable difference using different balls to measure stimpmeter green speeds. Sorry Topflite.

Green firmness is never static. It is always in a state of fluctuation, greens are either building or losing firmness. It is a combination of organic matter and soil moisture, both items that fluctuate as time passes.

Most green agronomic problems can be related to low light situations. Dr. Danneberger went into scientific detail on the specifics of photo quality and photo quantity. Cool season grass can only "take so much light."

Pigments are one of the “hot” new products out there for use on turf. They can be used as a spray indicator, mask *Poa annua* and colorize dormant turf. They function by absorbing, transmitting and reflecting specific light wave lengths. They can be used as an anti-transparent to reduce water use. The darker color of the pigment can also increase the temperature and raise the canopy temperature. Zinc oxide in the pigments can act as a “sunscreen” and protect the plant from excessive ultra violet rays from the sun. Past research has shown benefits from pigments in specific products and current research hopes to explain more of the things we are seeing in practice.

The difference between dyes and pigments is that dyes are water-soluble. An easy way to tell if you are using a pigment is that it must remain agitated to stay in suspension in the spray tank.

Pigments are mostly copper based. Copper does not readily break down in the soil. Does a copper build up in the soil hurt the plants? Does the pigment reduce the active ingredient in the spray formulation? Does it decrease the photosynthetic ability of the plant? We don’t know. It is not always clear what pigments are doing to the plant. Dr. Danneberger will be conducting research this summer to further answer some of the pertinent questions regarding pigment use. Stay tuned.

#### Notes from the Shade Talk

Shade influences the overall look, agronomics and playability of golf course. Shade can potentially create a 90% drop in light quality. Not good for grass. Bentgrass needs at least six hours of sunlight per day to sustain quality. Shade alters light quality which can influence and modify plant growth.

Plants with adequate sunlight = short, prostrate, thick, wide leaves, deep roots. Plants with shade issues = tall, elongated, thin leaves, more succulent, less tillering, fewer roots. This can lead to scalping problems when too much foliage is removed from cutting greens in the shade.

Green management in a shady location requires a different plan than for a green in the sun.


- Walk mow instead of ride
- Roll instead of mow
- Use Signature or like product
- Growth regulators can mitigate Etiolation
- Use .10 lb./N per week during growing season
- Avoid large nitrogen applications
- Increase height of cut. Fractional changes can make a big difference
- 0.141” to .156” creates a 12% increase in photosynthetic potential.
- 0.125” to .156” creates a 25% increase in photosynthetic potential.

Airflow is a very important component of shade sites. With no transpiration, shaded site stays wet because water applied goes nowhere. Low sun exposure + Low air movement = bad ending.

To reduce potential for problems:

- Trim trees and remove underbrush
- Don’t over water

- Increase H.O.C.
- Decrease nitrogen applications by 50% versus a sunny site
- Fertilize when trees do not have leaves (early spring or late fall)
- Start early with disease prevention/control.
- Fans can be very helpful to increase transpiration. Install as close to green as possible. Grow lights have a minimal impact

Thanks to the MAGCS Education Committee and our hosts at Royal Melbourne for providing a great day of education. 



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## Tweaking the Turf

Winter is a great time to look back and reflect on the previous growing season successes and failures of our turf maintenance practices. We are always trying to figure out how to “tweak” agronomic programs and “dial in” the tactics to try to get a little more high performance out of our golf course turf.

Superintendents like to attend some of the outstanding local and national education offerings for updated research and the introduction of new products that may be presented. We like to reach out into our networks and rub elbows with our peers and share information about what we learned from the previous season.

It’s all about “how are we going to get better.”

So I asked some of the superintendents who I bumped into during my winter travels, “What are you going to do different this year to improve the performance of your golf course turf?”

**Bob Kohlstedt**, Fox Bend Golf Course: “I’m excited. We are purchasing some new mowing equipment. We are getting Toro 3300 Riding Flex Mowers for the greens. 2 new Jacobsen fairway mowers and a Procore 648. We have also removed (20) 40 year-old willow trees from the course.”

**Scott Witte** CGCS, Cantigny Golf Club: “We had good success with the use of pigments on our greens last year. I plan on expanding the use of the pigments onto our fairways. We will use the moisture sensor more and establish thresholds to tighten up our water use on greens and tees. We will also be looking to get better organic management with the use of sugars on our greens.”

**Andy Dauksas**, Glen Oak Country Club: “I’m looking at using some of the new product chemistry for use on our greens.”

**Justin VanLanduit**, Briarwood Country Club: We have new greens so we will eliminate core removal to minimize Poa annua encroachment. I plan on using dry-ject applications as needed.”

**John Gurke**, CGCS Aurora Country Club: “I will be going to all contact fungicide applications for our fairways, all season long.”

**Steve Van Aker**, CGCS Crystal Lake Country Club: “We’re going to make an effort to cut back on water use. We are also going to try to reduce the number of plant protectant

applications.”


**Brian Bossert**, CGCS, Bryn Mawr Country Club: “We are planning to increase the use of Turfscreen for our greens. I liked the results we had in 2012. We will also increase our fertility in the rough.”

**Charles Anfield**, CGCS, Heritage Bluffs Public Golf Club: “We have our biggest problem with thatch on our approaches. I believe this is because we restrict cart traffic there and we are mowing with light weight units. I plan on mowing these areas with fairway units and allowing more cart access. We’re also going back to core aerifying our greens twice a year.”

**Tim Scott**, Stony Creek Golf Course: “We are going to increase our cultural inputs to our greens. We will increase vertical mowing frequency and incorporate a monthly solid tine venting treatment. We are also drilling a new well to try to reduce our water bill.”

**Dan Tully**, Kemper Lakes Golf Club: “We are going to monitor our water use more by utilizing soil moisture sensors. We will be switching back to using Embark for seed head suppression. We have seen great success with water infiltration on our greens with our spring core aerification using one inch tines and we will continue with that process.”

**Steven Biehl**, Naperville Country Club: “We are going to try some different fertilizer products on our greens. We plan on doing more vertical mowing on fairways to manage thatch accumulations and we are adding in a spring core aerification.”

What are you going to do? Have an idea for a Breeze?  
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Grant Runblade  
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## A MELTING ART FORM

As a sales representative you're probably expecting me to tell you about the low river levels and the way the drought is affecting urea prices, and how you should all buy up as much fertilizer as you can to avoid the huge price increases this year!

Well I won't be doom and gloom in this article. I would however like to talk about how the mild winters have had an impact on something I enjoy in the winter months.

Most of us enjoy taking some time in the winter to hit the slopes or jump on a sled to take our minds off the stressful summer we've just gone through. I myself enjoy sculpting snow! Did I just say sculpting snow? Yes, sculpting snow. I'm not talking about building a snow man in my front yard, but something more. For the past 13 years I've sculpted snow professionally in Illinois on both the State and National levels. I've also done a few exhibition pieces along the way. However, the mild winters have hurt the competitions and events that draw tourists from all over the state and bring thousands of dollars to the local businesses. The State of Illinois competition held at Sinnissippi Park in Rockford. It is one of the few events that rely on natural snowfall in order to build these snow blocks that sculptors use for their craft. This event has been cancelled twice and postponed 3 times in the past 10 years!

How Does it Work?

Most competitions start from an 8'x 8' x 10' block that is filled and packed with either manmade

or natural snow that is wrapped in a tarp to protect it from the sun. From there our team of three (The Kilted Snow Weasels) have a certain amount of time to sculpt. In a regular competition we will start on a Wednesday morning and sculpt until ten o'clock on Saturday to create our masterpiece. We can only use hand tools; this includes shovels, buck saws, chisels, and many other homemade tools for our craft. The first three days are used to get the block down to the general shape for our predetermined sculpture. On Friday evening we will start really sculpting and work all through the night until judging begins adding detail and finishing touches. A typical sculpture takes around 50 man-hours and many shots of 5 Hour Energy!

If you have not been out to see a snow sculpting competition, I encourage you to do so. It is a great family activity to get out and enjoy the outdoors in winter. So next time your kids think they have the best snowman in town, bring them out and show them a true work of art made of snow! For more information visit: [www.ilsnowsculpting.com](http://www.ilsnowsculpting.com), [www.navy pier.com/snowdays](http://www.navy pier.com/snowdays), [www.usnationals.org](http://www.usnationals.org), [www.kiltedsnowweasels.com](http://www.kiltedsnowweasels.com) @



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