

on

12/2013

THE MIDWEST ASSOCIATION OF GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENTS

COURSE

WORK LIFE BALANCE

TURF CLINIC RECAP

OPENING NEW DOORS





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MAGCS 2014 Leaders (l to r): Jim Pedersen, Kris Kvelland, Justin VanLanduit, Matt Harstad, Matt Kregel, Dave Kohley, Chuck Barber, Jeff Hoste, Dave Groelle CGCS and Ed Braunsky CGCS. How come it seems only the Past Presidents in the group are smiling?

PHOTO: Luke Cella

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Opening New Doors

Luke Cella, CGCS



Joel Purpur, CGCS and MAGCS Past President enjoys the 61st Midwest Turf Clinic and Annual Meeting. Held in mid-November, this event marks the end of another golf season and the beginning of a new year for the Midwest.

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- 02/14 Annual Assistant Winter Workshop, Lemont IL

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Who You Know



Dave Kohley
Silver Lake Country Club
MAGCS President

As I start my Presidency I have a lot to reflect about for the Association and myself. In my 22 years of being a member, our association has grown by leaps and bounds, let alone since 1925. Some years go by faster than others, but I have learned a lot about our Association since joining the board.

I take a great deal of appreciation on how strong we are and how hard the board of directors want and work to make the MAGCS stronger. We, as a board, will keep on working on getting *On Course* out in a timely fashion. We have changed printing companies and have streamlined our production process. By doing so we are able to stay on budget for another year and will be on budget for this coming year. The digital version, as you know, is up and running and will also continue for the upcoming year. One of my goals is to apply these same streamlining principles to keep things running in the most efficient way possible; from committee meetings, to board meetings to our monthly meetings.

As I stare out my office window watching it finally rain, I wonder how 22 years in this business goes by so fast. I often wonder of how I got here? I owe a great deal of thanks to my parents and also my current employer, Silver Lake Country Club. I look back and see that life is not always about what you know but just sometimes who you know. I grew up in a small farm community called Rensselaer, Indiana. Some of the elder statesman may have heard of Rensselaer because of St. Joseph College, the place where the Chicago Bears held training camps back in the 1970's. Yes, I am old enough to have watched Gale Sayers and Brian Piccolo practice. I was fortunate enough that our town had a small semi-private country club called Curtis Creek. My parents belonged to there and I played golf there all the time. I also played many outside sports but never thought I would be working at a golf course. The summer that I turned 16 that all changed. I remember my dad coming home from his Saturday morning tee time one spring. He had talked to Cary, the head groundskeeper at the club, and he said I could work on Monday. All that went through my head was "WORK? And who is this Cary fellow?" I didn't know who or what a superintendent was or what they even did. I soon found out the Superintendent was Cary Jefferies and over the next 7 summers I learned more and more each year about his craft. We had a very small crew of 6 guys and 4 of them were my classmates. I do know one thing, working at Curtis Creek were some of the best times and memories I'll never forget. I decided to go to Eastern Kentucky University to play golf and study Wildlife Management. I remember coming back year after year to work at our little ma and pa country club that I loved and Cary asked me if I had ever thought of becoming a superintendent. I didn't even know you could get a degree in this. After talking to Cary more over the summer I learned that he went to Purdue University for turf and was Certified through the GCSAA. I thought I would give the profession a try. My junior year, I went back to Eastern Kentucky and was fortunate enough to find they had a four-year turf degree. Next came graduation.

What were my plans after? Play golf? Or Work? Of course, my parents didn't think going down to Florida and trying all the mini tours was such a great idea. But at 22 years old, I did. I think they

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The Work - Life Balance

Chuck Barber, St. Charles Country Club

This article started out as a few pages about how we in the golf course management position manage the “Work/Life Balance” we hear so much about. I went so far as to write a page or two with the help of some of MAGCS members that were kind enough to help out.

Then November 22nd, 2013 came and went like all the days before it, and it changed my focus. November 22nd is an important date for many of us, especially as we pass the 50-year mark on John F. Kennedy’s assassination in Dallas, 1963. This date, November the 22nd, means so much to me that it provided me with a perspective I have carried with me each day since. This date, November 22nd, formed the way I chose to view the world from that point on, at home, at work, from each vantage that I would gaze upon the world. November 22nd. In 1993.

Where were you when: The Challenger disaster occurred in 1986, when two separate airplanes struck the World Trade Center in 2001, when JFK was assassinated? These dates are significant and immediately take those who remember them back in time, if only for an instant. I can tell you that on the evening of November 22nd, 1993 I was watching television in the basement of our family’s Western Pennsylvania home.

I was 17 years old. My sister was in the midst of her sophomore year at Harvard (yes, Harvard) University. My father, a 30 year salesperson for a steel company, was on the road selling, well, steel. My mother and I were at home. It was a school night, a Monday if Google is right, and it was early in the evening. Our home was pretty big and it had a HUGE basement so when the phone rang upstairs (cordless phones hadn’t made it in to our home yet) I had to run to get it before the machine picked up.

My friend Brian greeted me with a “Hey, what’s up?” that indicated nothing special. I thought it was odd he’d call as late in the evening as he did but responded with the typical, “nothing, what’s up with you?”

“Are you sitting down?” Brian asked. There was nowhere to sit within cord’s reach from the kitchen.

“No”. I was anticipating some difficulty with Brian as his home life was not without difficulty. His problems were nothing serious but from time to time things became tense. I guessed that he needed an ear to complain to. I was wrong.

“Jason was killed in a car accident today” That was the next, and last, thing that I heard over the phone in that conversation. I went downstairs, told my mother what happened, and then I punched a hole in the door to the laundry room with my right hand.



My close friend Jason.

Jason was a very close friend. We were the type of friends you have for the rest of your life. We both had a lot of acquaintances. He and I were friends. As it turns out the only thing I could do for him instead of stand up in his wedding someday was to help lower his casket in to his grave

There are 5 stages of grief and loss. I will not bore you with the list but just please believe me when I say I experienced them all. I grew up in a loving home where I wanted for nothing. I had no

mechanism to deal with this type of loss. I was devastated, I remember being inconsolable.

In time, I was able to talk my way through my feelings with my parents, my friends and Jason’s family. The final stage of grief and loss is acceptance. This is a gift not afforded everyone but I remember very clearly accepting that Jason was never coming back. From that point on I had a new appreciation for living. I

have viewed each day since then from that prism.

Someone recently told me that life is a lot like a roll of toilet paper: The closer you are to the end, the faster it goes. All potty humor aside, there's a lot of truth in that. There are only so many seasons we get out on the course. We are only allowed so many sales calls, site visits, construction projects and committee meetings.

At this point in my career I don't look forward to the season being over. I can look back and see what worked, what didn't, where we hit a home run and where we struck out. Life must be lived forward but learned in reverse. As 2013 comes to a close I find myself lamenting one less summer, one less chance to 'figure it out', one less opportunity to have fun doing a job that I love. Yes, there's much to do in the winter months but it's not quite the same when the game of golf is front and center every day.

I seem to be reminded more frequently than I would like that perhaps in another 20 years or so I might not be so enthusiastic about going to work every day. I hope that's not the case but I can't focus too much on the distant future. Therefore, I choose to enjoy today. I tell young people in high school and college that whatever it is you decide to do, you had better enjoy it. We all have the rest of our lives to work so it would be counterproductive to go to work and be miserable.



The Barber family at STCCC

I think of Jason still. My memories of him strike at odd times and when I least expect it. The pain of his loss has subsided. The sadness in his passing is still fresh even all these years later. It's hard to imagine that it's been 20 years since his passing. I suppose the only way I could ever hope to honor Jason's memory is to get the most out of the days I've been afforded. Both at work and at home. And I guess that's the balance I'm trying to find. @

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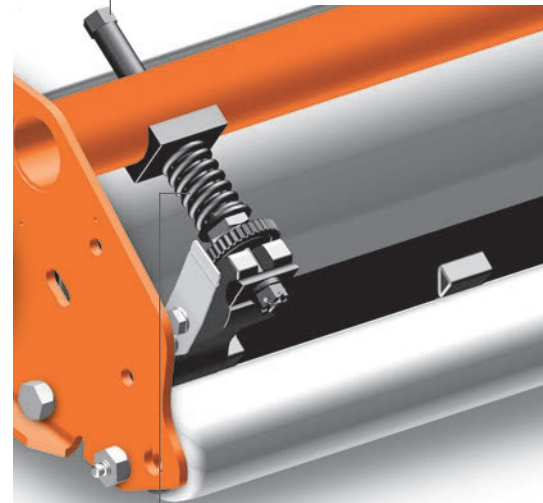
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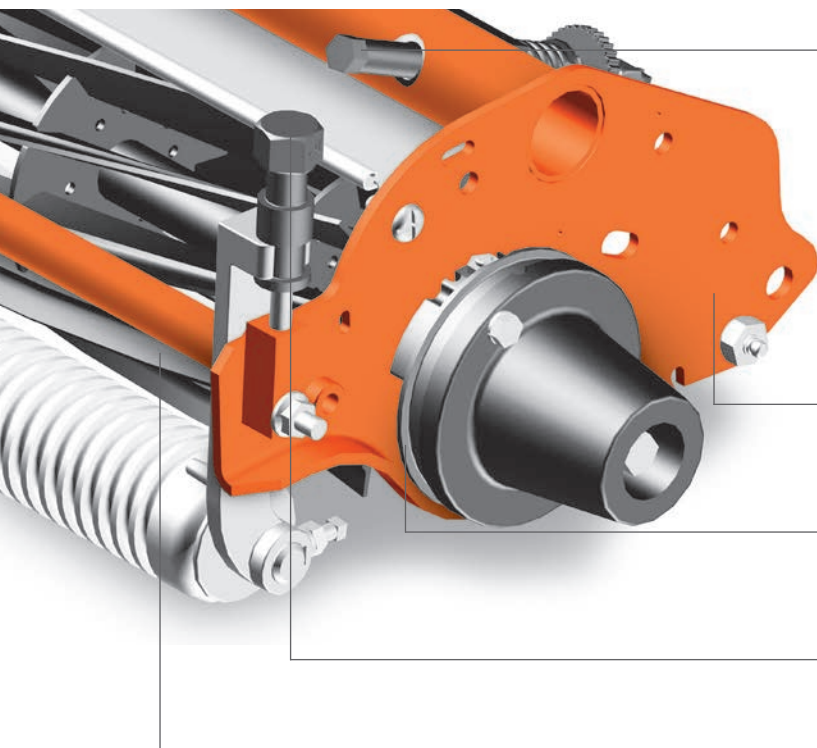
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Opening New Doors

Luke Cella, MAGCS

PHOTOS: LUKE CELLA

Chasing the prestige of being the superintendent at a private club and commandeering a large salary may not have been their top priority, but little did they know at the time, the benefits and the security of the job would lead them to a fruitful career in the golf industry.

I caught up with Fred Behnke, CGCS, Greg Thalmann, Gary Hearn and Steve Partyka over the past few months to shed some insight on how they successfully retired as golf course superintendents.



Every month is Movember for Greg Thalmann, captured here sharing a laugh with friends.

Greg Thalmann started working for Kenny Goodman at Mount Prospect Golf Club in 1978 and then followed him to Green Acres Country Club as his Assistant Superintendent.

Greg relates, “Kenny was a very hard person to work for and I learned quickly to do things the right way, Kenny’s way. Kenny led by example.” Greg learned from his parents as well, they owned their own landscaping business, and provided for their family through their hard work and dedication.

As a golf course superintendent, Greg stressed the importance of leading people. He explained to me, “you can’t wait for other people, you need to be a problem solver and lead your staff to create solutions.” As caretaker of Fox Run Golf

Links, Greg did what was best for the course and not always what was best for the individual golfer. The course is the largest asset at the facility and that is what he was hired to do, to take care of it, something he did since 1983. Looking forward, Greg knows he will miss the early morning tours and the sun greeting him each day, however he won’t miss the stress and worry that comes with the job. His accomplishments at the course are nothing compared to being married to his wonderful wife Trudi for 40 years and raising three great kids Sarah, Nathan, and Abby together.

Greg served the MAGCS as a director for several years and was Chairman of the first Scholarship Committee. Each summer, children and grandchildren of MAGCS members submit applications to the committee and a few are sent off to school with some aid to help in their studies – a process that all began with Greg at the helm.

When Gary Hearn returned from his tour of service in 1980 he needed to supplement his GI Bill to help pay for his computer science classes at Kankakee Community College. He liked the golf industry (his father worked at Kappa Golf Course near Bloomington) and decided to look there for work. He was hired by Bill Bonnett at Kankakee Elks and worked with Bob Miller, Bill’s assistant. It took a couple of seasons before Gary switched colleges and majors – he headed to University of Illinois and entered their turf program in Horticulture, where he finished his B.S. in 1985 while working part time for Frank Stynchula at Lincolnshire Fields CC in Champaign.

Upon graduation Gary worked for Rick Wilson at Oak Brook Golf Course, where he eventually became the Superintendent for a couple of seasons and ended up hosting part of the Western Open when Butler National flooded in 1987. The back nine of Oak Brook Golf Course became the first nine in the tournament. Imagine getting that phone call with a day's notice.

Gary continued his work in the public sector spending the majority of his years at Salt Creek Golf Course, a journey he calls worthwhile. He credits, his dad, Bill Bonnet, Oscar Miles and Al Fierst instilling in him a simple value to love what you do, do it the best you can, and enjoy everyday.



The two Steves, Partyka and Stewart. Partyka knows he'll miss the many friends that he has made over the years when he moves up to Wisconsin.

Gary knows he'll miss some of his colleagues but was ready to retire when the restrictions on his budget, man-power and worn out equipment started to take their toll. He has no regrets and feels a terrific sense of accomplishment. Gary looks forward to the future, and is not certain what he'll do – he just remarried and his new wife, a native of the Philippines,



Gary Hearn always enjoys a good laugh as he gets caught next to a sign that embodies his golf game.

has only been in the US for five years. He'd like to travel the States with her visiting friends and relatives in between trips to her homeland.

Steve Partyka, his name is easy to spell if you start with Party

and just add a ka, gave me updates on his retirement countdown clock each time I saw him in 2013. Steve has been at

the helm of White Pine Golf Course in Bensenville since 1994 and retires this month at the age of 55 with 39 years and 10 months of service with the Bensenville Park District. He credits his father, Ed who preceded him at the course for him being in the business and encouraging him to stay with it. In fact, his dad used to pull him out of high school so he could come and mow greens at the course. Steve graduated from the College of DuPage with his Associates in Horticulture after a stint at Elmhurst College where he studied Political Science.

He appreciated all the time that the late Lee Overpeck, a Scott's salesman spent with him on the golf course. Steve, like most, put many hours in at the course but always had the goal of retiring early in life to enjoy the time he has now. He credits his success to not putting things off and taking care of items as they arise. A project that he's particularly proud of is the installation of a 1500' deep well at the course and managing the high levels of sodium found in the soils. He also took part in starting a nursery on the property that has been the source of over 5000 trees planted within the Village of Bensenville.

Upon retirement Steve is moving to Door County, Wisconsin with his wife and daughter. He'll be closer to his mom and looks forward to fishing, riding his bike, and working at Lambeau Field during football season. Steve knows he'll miss his crew and the people at the park district when he makes the move, but looks forward to not working everyday of the week, waking at the crack of dawn, and worrying about the weather. Steve expressed a special thanks to all the sales representatives and other superintendents in the industry that made his work enjoyable.

Fred Behnke got his start in the golf business while he was driving a city bus. Well, at least he explained that he used to drive past a course on his route and, "it looked like a better place than where I was so I made some calls trying to find out about the business." Funny enough, he ended up speaking to Ray Gerber and Ray passed him off to Bob Williams who ended up hiring Fred at Bob'O'Link Country Club.



After finding out Fred was a Political Science major things really came together as I remember Fred in many meetings.

Fred graduated from Carthage College in Kenosha with a BA in Political Science and eventually completed a certificate at Harper College in Parks and Grounds Management.

When asked about his industry mentors, Fred credits

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DECEMBER 2013

Dates to Remember

December 9-12 – Syngenta Business Institute in Winston-Salem, NC.

December 10 – CAGCS Holiday lunch at Pinstripes in Oak Brook, IL. (Note the new location—7 Oak Brook Center)

December 10-11 – Wisconsin Turfgrass Symposium at the American Club in Kohler, WI.

December 18 – Deadline for applications for the Bayer Plant Health Academy.

January 7-8 – ITF's Turf Conference 2014 at the Hyatt Lodge in Oak Brook, IL.

January 22 – 5th Annual MAGCS/Wee One January Fundraiser at Seven Bridges Golf Club, Don Ferreri and Dave Gelino hosts.

January 28-30 – Iowa Turfgrass Conference and Trade Show at the Downtown Des Moines Marriott. Visit www.iowagcsa.org for information.

February 1-6 – 2014 Golf Industry Show in Orlando, FL

February 5 Midwest Hospitality Reception Miller's Alehouse, Orlando, FL

Seasons Greetings to all, and a special holiday welcome to the following new MAGCS members:

Adam Hanson, Antioch Golf Course, Class SM
Cory Von Tungeln, Midlothian Country Club, Class SM
Kyle Schwieter, Sunset Ridge Country Club, Class C
John Thackery, Olympia Fields Country Club, Class C
Stewart Naugler, Midlothian Country Club, Class C
Rick Johnson, The Urban Agricultural Alliance, Inc. Class E

Congratulations to Charlotte and **James Canning**, White Eagle GC on the birth of their daughter Cora Elizabeth (pictured below) on October 28th. Cora was a healthy 6 lb. 9 oz. and 19.5" bundle of joy.

Also congratulations to **Justin VanLanduit** Briarwood CC and **Josh Therrien** of Black Sheep GC on their recent editorial achievements. At last month's 61st Annual Midwest Turf Clinic at Medinah CC on the 14th, Justin was presented the Ray Gerber Editorial Award for his article "Seasons of Change", and Josh received the Fred Opperman Editorial Award for his article "Teaming Up With Outside Contractors". Both pieces ran in the pages of this magazine, and were among the many outstanding articles contributed by our very own MAGCS members. Thank you to all who have made the effort to enhance *On Course* magazine! (below: Josh, Justin and Editorial Chair Matt Harstad)



of



While on the subject of the Clinic, along with the great education program and a really fun time with keynote speaker Pat Foley, some actual business got accomplished. The MAGCS Annual Meeting took place, which not only included a riveting review of last year by outgoing president **Dave Groelle, CGCS** (who was the man responsible for getting Pat Foley), but the election of our next president, **Dave Kohley** of Silver Lake Country Club. Groelle/Foley/Kohley—they kinda rhyme. Our new president will be seeking another vote from you in the near future—that for his dog Bosco in the 11th Annual Dog of the Year contest at the GIS come February. Bosco, Dave's 11-year-old Lab, was one of the dogs chosen for the GCSAA/LebanonTurf 2014 Dog Days of Golf calendar (she's the December, 2013 playmate), and is now eligible to win the coveted Dog of the Year award, which comes with a \$3,000 donation to our chapter, \$500 to Dave's local Humane Society, and \$500 for dog biscuits. Make sure to vote on the trade show floor when you're in Orlando in February. Good luck, Dave and Bosco!



Other Clinic notes, news, and nonsense: The education program was truly high-quality, with much information to be gleaned. GCSAA Government Relations Director Chava (pronounced Hava) McKeel presented her SWMAE (Speech With the Most Acronyms Ever), touching on the association's efforts in Washington D.C. in regard to BMP's, EPA, FCC, ADA,



Pat Foley winding up and giving his "he shoots, he scores" call – after he told us his story about developing it. BTW – Pat refused to accept an honorarium, so the Midwest made a donation to Toys for Tots in his name, thanks Pat!

FIFRA, BMOC and a host of others. Oh, and don't be looking for Methyl Bromide as an option for your next regrassing project—Chava was pretty certain it's a goner. Turf Doctors **Ed Nangle** and **Zac Reicher** covered everything from our year in review and the future of the CDGA Turf Program to the latest in *Poa annua* control. Capping the day was an excellent panel discussion moderated by **Chuck Barber** and featuring **Scott Bordner** (Chicago Golf Club), **Dave Radaj, CGCS** (Green Acres Country Club), **Justin VanLanduit** (Briarwood Country Club),

Dr. Ed Nangle of CDGA and Dr. Zac Reicher from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Topics covered included turf pigments and Turf Screen, *Poa annua* management, and new technologies. More about the Clinic can be found in Chuck Anfield's Education Recap.

Here's an interesting (or perhaps not) little factoid about our industry: The National Hole in One Association, which provides insurance coverage for outings and contests, used data from over 300,000 charity tournaments and outings to establish the likelihood of a payoff on a par three. For the average amateur golfer, the odds are 12,500-to-1. It drops significantly for professionals, who have a one in 2,500 chance for an ace. Now, that all being said, last month at the Annual Men's Closing Day tournament at Kiawah Island (S.C.), SIX holes-in-one were recorded in the same day! The event pairs three club members with one staff member, and on November 6th, five aces were carded on the 118-yard fifth hole with one other happening on the 148-yard 16th hole. How very ODD...

(Note to self: Have the crew finish the day BEFORE the Beer and Arracheras Bash.)



Time is running out for you if you want to be one of 12 superintendents to be chosen for the 2014 Bayer Plant Health Academy to be held at GCSAA headquarters in Lawrence, KS on March 3-5 and September 24-26. The objective of the Healthy Turf, Healthy Tomorrow Plant Health Academy is to provide golf course superintendents with opportunities to learn more innovative plant health research and practices for the benefit of their facilities, individual careers, and the industry. Twelve superintendents will be chosen on the basis of merit (no Bayer pun intended). The deadline to apply is December 18th—go to www.backedbybayer.com or www.gcsaa.org and find the application form.

Here is a New Year resolution for all of you that play golf and don't keep a Handicap Index. The CDGA provides all Midwest members a free membership each year – all you have to do is let Luke know (luke@magcs.org) and he'll sign you up. You enter your scores online – done. No need to worry about any other resolutions for 2014- you can tell everyone you're done.

Q: What happens when **Scott Witte, CGCS** acts rashly and doesn't think things through?

A: He's liable to make a Cantigny-jerk reaction.

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MIDWEST Doppelgänger



Dan Marco, Jeff Brinnegar. No words necessary.

A local golf facility celebrated quite the milestone late this summer. Tam O'Shanter (Tam) Golf Course (**Jimmy Stoneberg** superintendent) in Niles celebrated the 60th anniversary of its hosting the first-ever national telecast of a golf tournament---The World Championship of Golf aired on ABC in 1953. Very cool piece of history right in our back yard.

The USGA and R&A have announced that effective January 1, 2014, 87 changes to the Decisions on the Rules of Golf will go into effect. Among these changes for 2014-2015 that are noteworthy:

New Decision 14-3/18 confirms that players can access reports on weather conditions on a smartphone during a round without breaching the Rules.

New Decision 18/4 (also known as the "Tiger Rule") provides that, where enhanced technological evidence like HDTV shows that a ball has left its position and come to rest in another location, the ball will not be deemed to have moved if that movement was not reasonably discernible to the naked eye at the time.

Revised Decision 27-2a/1.5 allows a player to go forward up to approximately 50 yards without forfeiting his or her right to go back and play a provisional ball.

You can read all 87 of these fascinating golfy things in "Decisions on the Rules of Golf, 2014-2015" available from the USGA. Knock yourself out.

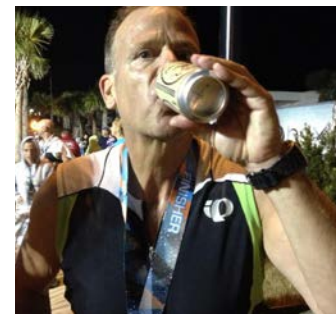
For the second straight year, the John Deere Classic golf tournament, held at TPC Deere Run in Moline, IL raised over \$6 million for 464 local and regional Quad Cities charities. This makes the event the No. 1 on Tour in the amount of charitable contributions raised per capita based on the population of 375,000.

Next month on the 7th and 8th ITF will hold its TURF Conference at the Hyatt Lodge in Oak Brook. If you haven't signed up, DO! Go to www.iturf.org to register.

Rick Wilson, CGCS will be busy next summer. A \$4.2 million project at his Glenview Park District Golf Course is slated to begin next July that will aim to slow stormwater runoff and improve

play. The finished product will allow the course to hold about 7.1 million gallons of water, more than three times the land's current capacity, while also restricting flow of water to nearby homes by 70%. Sounds like a fun project.

Congratulations go out to MAGCS newest Iron Man **Tom Prichard** of Ivanhoe Club. Prichard competed in the grueling race (2.4 mile swim, 112 mile bike and 26.2 mile run) in Florida on November 2 and finished it in just over 15 hours. Way to go Tom, not drinking a can of Gatorade at the finish line.



It was another busy month for MAGCS members finding their way into other media outlets. On GCSAA.tv, **Tim Christians** of Makray Memorial Golf Club showed the golf world "What's In Your Cart?" (which had a remarkably large amount of stuff), as well as another segment about his dog Daisy, whose diabetes necessitates Tim administering insulin injections every 12 hours to keep her healthy and happy. On TurfNet TV, **Chuck Barber** of St. Charles Country Club was featured showing off his sump pump solution for wet fairway areas in a "Tips 'n' Tricks" segment. TurfNet's Blog Aggregator had usual suspects **Steve Cook, CGCS, MG** of Oakland Hills Country Club discussing deep-tine aeration on greens and Park Ridge Country Club's **Shane Conroy** chiming in on the sodding of south-facing bunker faces with Black Beauty turf-type tall fescue. Last but not least, **Dan Dinelli, CGCS** of North Shore Country Club was mentioned in The Golf Wire for his recycling efforts in building three vermin composters (yes—vermin composters) utilizing red wigglers (earthworms) to help degrade food waste from the kitchen to reduce waste, save energy, and produce a rich organic material that improves soil and plant health. Another note to self: spread kitchen food waste directly on fairways where all those red wigglers will produce a rich organic topdressing for improved soil and plant health.

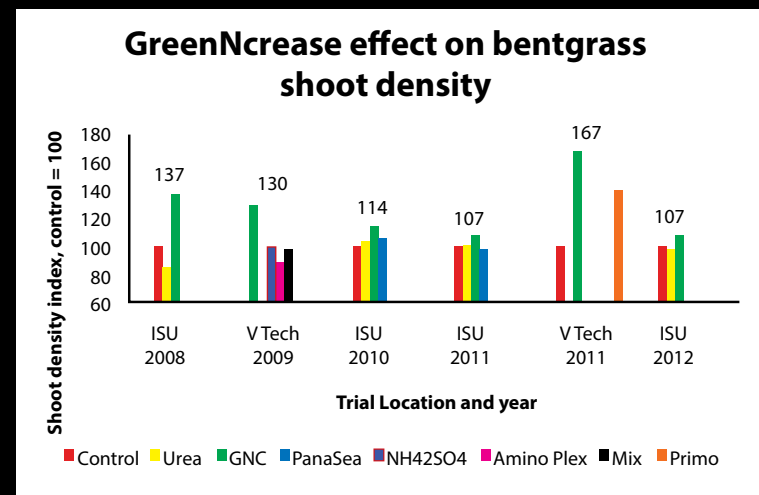
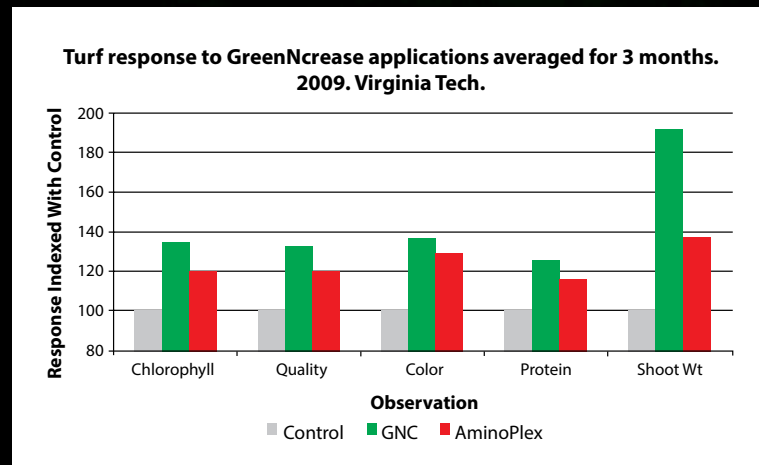
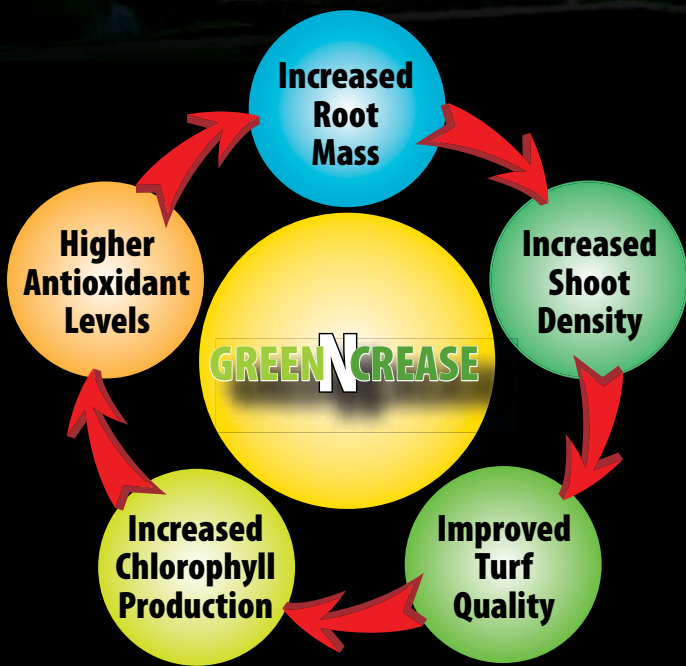


GCSAA reminds you that your membership includes term life insurance and AD&D (accidental death and dismemberment) coverage as a member benefit. If you haven't done so recently, update your beneficiary information and review the Notice of Privacy Policy and Practices at gcsaa.org in the Member Services area.

GCSAA and the Environmental Institute for Golf (EIFG) have become Silver Partners in a collaborative effort between the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the National Turfgrass

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Continued from page 14

Federation at the U.S. National Arboretum in Washington, D.C. Dubbed "Grass Roots," the initiative is committed to helping citizens, including national decision-makers, understand new and emerging science underlying our nation's beautiful lawns, athletic fields, and gardens. The multi-year project will feature exhibits, symposia, workshops and demonstrations—directed to audiences ranging from children to policymakers—to showcase the value of turf to the environment and the importance of research to continue to leverage that value. Dr. Nangle went to the groundbreaking ceremony in November and explains what is all about in "News from Allied Groups" on page 18.

GCSAA announced last month a series of important structural changes within the organization, including the naming of new chief operating officer Matt Shatto, who most recently served as city administrator for the city of North Kansas City, MO. Also, a new key executive position was introduced called the chief business development officer, which will be filled by J.D. Dockstader, who most recently served as director of commercial facilities of the city of Mesa, AZ. As part of the changes, Jeff Bollig, senior director of communications and Greg Lyman, director of environmental programs will be moving on to greener pastures. @

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Mr. Timothy Eavenson, Attorney at Law
Mr. Eavenson is a legal counsel for employers and will speak on how to protect yourself once you get hired and steps you can take if you lose it!

Stay after lunch for the Auction to benefit the
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(complimentary beverages & laughs)

If you'd like to donate an item for the auction, you can do that online as well. If you have any questions, please contact Luke Cella:

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The 61st Midwest Turf Clinic and Annual Meeting

Thanks again to Curtis Tyrrell, CGCS MG and Medinah for hosting each year. We also thank our sponsors for the event:

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Laying down roots in Washington

Dr. Ed Nangle, CDGA

In gaining an invite to the ground breaking of the national GrassRoots exhibit recently, I was left in a quandary as to whether or not I could fit the trip into a week where many annual meetings were taking place.

I did manage to take a look at the guest list however and my mind was quickly made up for me – this was an invite I couldn't turn down. Thanks to the MAGCS as they offered to support the initiative and teamed with the CDGA to put the wheels in motion on my visit. So with trepidation and interest at the machinations of Washington I set off to see how the politics of promoting turf is working for us on the ground.

In a short background – the turfgrass industry is somewhat fighting a long term battle to retain its place as a premier surface for recreation in the country and deal with the perception that the industry is environmentally unfriendly. As professionals and scientists we all know that the benefits of turf far outweigh the inputs when managed properly. Research reports have shown that turf sequesters carbon, filters water and stabilizes soil erosion¹²³ – the issue is that the information has NEVER been supported at a Federal Level. Recent research has also shown that there were no chronic health risks to

pesticide vapors for golfers on the course either⁴. Thus when the USDA agreed to allow a space for education and research on site under the prodding and pushing of Scott Aker at the National Arboretum along with Kevin Morris of the National Turfgrass Federation for a four year period, many people rejoiced at the thought of having an exhibit seen by 500,000 people annually educating them about grasses.

The event was focused on the ground breaking and promotion of the exhibit which includes one main location focused on science at the National Arboretum and two other sites. The two other sites are at the National Mall and Arlington National Cemetery with focus on stewardship and service respectively. The overarching goal is to link the three sites to create a National Greenscape Corridor which runs right through the center of Washington. Thus the excitement about the project was evident with the range of attendees making up a very impressive list.



The Grass Roots Initiative: A Science-Based Focus on Turfgrass

Turfgrass has a major impact on our quality of life. The U.S. National Arboretum's [Grass Roots Initiative](#) is a four-year, in-depth look at the science behind this familiar, but often misunderstood, landscape plant.

The event was seated and introductions made by Scott Aker who served as MC for the event. Kevin Morris described the project from its infancy and how the National Turfgrass Federation had been directly involved. (Picture 1) Dr. Colien Heffernan then talked about the aims of the project and the reasoning from her perspective as director of the national arboretum as to why grass is valuable. Dr. Heffernan also mentioned Scott Warnke who is the USDA turfgrass breeder and his focus on more sustainable type grasses. In the list of grasses in the exhibit there is certainly some new species which may offer potential with names such as *Festuca gautieri* 'Pie Carlit' bear skin fescue, *Sesleria autumnalis* Autumn moor grass, *Muhlenbergia capillaris* 'White Cloud' White cloud muhlygrass being uncommon names that really are offering potential for low input turfgrasses. Geoffrey Rinehart the project coordinator then gave an outline of his involvement with all interested entities and how he has been able to channel donations of time, money and work to the right places.



The Goals of Grass Roots

Increase awareness of the importance of turfgrass and lawns to society and the environment

- Demonstrate new technologies within the turfgrass industry that improve maintenance practices and efficiencies
- Review and update national research priorities for turfgrass
- Bring together policymakers and others interested in regulatory issues that impact the turfgrass industry

Following this, Dr. Frank Rossi from Cornell University spoke on the sustainability of turf. Dr. Rossi did not shy away from controversy surrounding turf and the perception that implicates turf negatively with the environment. He then proffered a belief that turf was indeed sustainable as well as badly needed in the landscape due to the scientifically proven benefits. There was one caveat however as he indicated that we may need to change the requirement of green all over the golf course to reduce inputs. Water use and what needs to be done to reduce its use was also brought up and the fact that more education of homeowners may prove to be a bigger priority over looking at golf courses. He also touched on the project and the fact its based in science as all information that will be used has gone through peer review at the Crop Science Societies prior to dissemination. Questions from the public followed with Dr. Rossi ably answering them and ensuring that all sides were agreed on the answer he gave as being factual and correct.


The ground breaking and pictures followed with the USDA, National Arboretum, National Mall, National Turfgrass Federation, Sod Producers all being pictured. Dr. Mike Kenna, USGA Greens Section Director then got in on the act along with Greg Lyman, Environmental Programs Director at the GCSAA and many others who have already supported the project. The project is currently over 60% funded and there are many opportunities to get involved at different levels – if you want to find out more information visit the website.

<http://www.turfresearch.org/>

There is also a facebook page: NTFGrassRootsInitiative and Twitter: @Grass_Roots_NTF

Finally, MAGCS were very strong supporters of the visit and I would like to thank the board for being so flexible and supportive of the idea.

Reference:

1. Steinke, K. Kussow, W.R. and Stier, J.C.(2013). Potential Contributions of Mature Prairie and Turfgrass to Phosphorus in Urban Runoff. *Journal of Env. Quality* 42: 1176–1184.
2. Zhang, Y., Y. Qian, D.J. Bremer, and J.P. Kaye. (2013) Simulation of Nitrous Oxide Emissions and Estimation of Global Warming Potential in Turfgrass Systems Using the DAYCENT Model *Journal of Env. Quality* 42: 1100–1108.
3. Zirkle G., R. Lal and B. Augustin. (2011). Modeling carbon sequestration in home lawns. *HortScience* 46: 808-814. 
4. Wong, H. and D.A. Haith. (2013). Volatilization of Pesticides from Golf Courses in the United States: Mass Fluxes and Inhalation Health Risks. *Journal of Env. Quality* 42: 1615–1622



Charles Anfield, CGCS, *Heritage Bluffs Golf Course*

Turf Clinic - Wrap Up

(Part 1) - Legislative Update



Chava McKeel address the Turf Clinic audience.

The MAGCS Members met at the venerated Medinah Country Club for the 61st Midwest Turf Clinic and Annual Meeting. Curtis Tyrrell, CGCS MG and Staff were the hosts for the day.

Chava McKeel, GCSAA's Director of Government Relations made the first presentation of the day. Her topic was GCSAA Government Relations Update: What You Need to Know Now; Be An Advocate For The Profession. She has been with the GCSAA since 1997. As part of her responsibilities, Chava directs all activities of the Information and Public Policy Department of the GCSAA. She helps advance the overall image of the golf course management industry through advocacy-related programs and government relations activities. She provides regulatory compliance information to GCSAA Members to establish themselves as experts on managing risk at the facility. She serves as a liaison with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and collaborates regularly with Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment, Essential Worker Immigration Coalition, United States Department of Agriculture, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, National Alliance for Accessible Golf and many other organizations to advance golf's interests.

The GCSAA's Fundamental Principal in government relations is advocacy.

- Advocacy supports the GCSAA's mission and vision
- Grassroots support is the key to driving GCSAA advocacy efforts
- GCSAA is leading the way in making sure golfs voice is heard

GCSAA's Government Relations focuses on

- State, Federal and Local government activities
- Work guided by priority issues agenda
- Offers compliance support with one-on-one counseling, on-line tools, ombudsman
- Advocacy through grass-roots lobbying, direct lobbying,

educating law makers, regulators and coalitions

Chava went into detail to explain the GCSAA's current main priority issues.

The Americans and Disability Act (ADA Compliance)

- March 15, 2012, the U.S. Department of Justice adapted accessibility standards for golf courses.
- Accessible cars will be under a separate rule making
- Includes new construction and renovations
- Accessible routing on tees, greens, weather shelters is required

Chava indicated there is a tool kit available from the GCSAA to help explain more of the details of this issue.

Fertilizers

- Chesapeake Bay Watershed has become a fertilizer management model for rest of country
- EPA and States are "cracking down" on fertilizer use
- GCSAA is keeping an eye on Gulf of Mexico Hypoxic Zone

GCSAA messages to lawmakers:

- Golf turf is professionally managed
- Golf courses are valuable as green space in the watershed

Several states have been making headway with legislators when it comes to fertilizer use and regulation.

Virginia: Governor signs bill that all golf facilities are required to implement certified nutrient management plans by 2017.

Pennsylvania: Golf courses get credit in watershed modules for using BMP's.

Maryland: Golf is voluntarily complying early with regulations to demonstrate environmental stewardship. A state bill creates a training, licensing and certification program.

Florida: There are more local ordinances being formed to propose restrictions as opposed to statewide ordinances. At this time there are bans on certain fertilizer applications in over 40 counties. This has been confusing. Superintendents are advocating on golf's behalf.

Labor and Immigration

- Support for H-2B Visa Program
- This is a federal government program for businesses to get temporary visas for immigrant workers
- This has not been used very much in Illinois

Pesticides

The main concerns are:

- Safe and responsible use of pesticides
- Continued use and availability of effective products
- Methyl-bromide and chlorothalonil are products on the "radar" to eliminate usage



Value of Golf

- Activists have been "busy" with Endangered Species Act Litigation
- Example: Sharps Park Golf Club in California

GCSAA has taken part in an advocacy message program:

- WEAREGOLF
- Golf has a profound economic and charitable impact
- We are on the leading edge of environmental sustainability and stewardship
- Americans enjoy health and wellness participating in golf
- Golf provides a leading role in efforts to support our troops
- We want the golf industry to be treated "fairly and equitably" as a business

Water Management

- In Illinois we have the NPDES Pesticide General permit
- This is a permit required for any pesticide application made to "waters of the state"

Chava wrapped up her presentation with what the GCSAA Government Relations Program was going to be moving forward in 2014 and beyond. The key statements are:

1. Develop a "key contacts" program. This is an actual job that they are looking to fill. The goal is to create relationships with our members and all members of congress.
2. Create a government relations web portal on the GCSAA web site.
3. Create a government relations e-newsletter.

In conclusion Chava presented a list of upcoming "hot topics in government relations.

- FCC regulations - This pertains to mobile radio systems that will limit frequencies from a wide band to a narrow band

- Affordable Health Care Act - This is also known as Obama Care and will affect businesses that will be required to provide health care coverage to workers working over 30 hours per week.
- Globally Harmonized System of Pesticide Label - Creates changes to pesticide labels, MSDS (SDS) sheets & Written hazardous communications programs

Chava was very informative and provided a lot of information. She has been working on our behalf in government relations as a Staff Member of the GCSAA for quite a while. Government relations are all about networking and contacts. Although her physical stature does not cut an imposing presence, just to give you an insight on who we have working for us, her nickname on the "hill" is "the velvet sledgehammer." We all should feel pretty good that we have someone representing us that "has our back." Thanks Chava. @

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Bob Williams and Mike Bavier, Sr. "Bob made me go back to school and take it seriously. Mike let me take flowers from his greenhouse to woo the girl who became my bride. I'm alive today because of her." Fred worked for Mike Bavier, Sr. at Inverness prior to working at Mt. Prospect Golf Club for the past thirty years.

Fred has realized knowing how to grow grass is the least important part about being a golf course superintendent. Maybe knowing his audience, he told me, "there are a lot of people out there smarter than you – listen and learn and don't be afraid to ask for help." He went on to explain, "imagine what your job would be like without your staff on your side, be proactive, let them know what you want."


Fred worked a variety of jobs before getting into golf; working on a road crew, factory shifts, and the bus thing – he did sell women's shoes (like Al Bundy) and all this has formed him in some way. Looking back his life at Mt. Prospect Golf Club, "I am grateful for the opportunity to see some of the best golf course operations in the world through my professional associations and to have had the opportunity to try my hand at putting together a semi-reasonable facsimile of one."

Those who know Fred, I think will agree, he's a kind and gentle soul and when asked what the best thing he's learned on his own, he responded, " Be kind, everyone you meet is going through some hardship."

Fred won't miss being the boss, of that he is certain. He does miss the dawn and getting the day started at the course. It is peculiar, three of the four mentioned to me they'd miss the early mornings on the course. I'm not sure that will ever go away, but I can tell you from experience, you can still wake up early and go outside. You just have to open the door.

Congratulations Fred, Greg, Gary and Steve. @

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were tired of funding my endeavors and wanted to take me off their payroll. To make them happy, I went on some job interviews but nothing really panned out or piqued my interest. Then along came another gentleman, Dave Wollenberg. At the time, Dave was a salesman for Canon Turf Supply out of Indianapolis and called on Cary at Curtis Creek. Prior to working for Canon Turf, Dave was the assistant at Silver Lake Country Club under Dudley Smith (past president 1967). Dave told me that Dudley was looking for an Assistant. This lead that Dave gave me led me to where I am today. I'll be starting my 23rd season at Silver Lake Country Club. If you were wondering, my golf career was put on hold. Sometimes it's not about what you know, it's who you know.

As we enter the holiday season and winter months take time from work and spend more time with your family and friends. 22 years goes really fast and the next 22 will be even faster.

Happy Holidays and New Year. @



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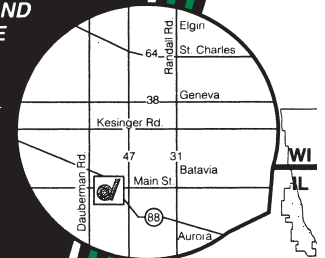
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1LGG2044-P1 09/12