

on 03/2013

THE MIDWEST ASSOCIATION OF GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENTS

COURSE

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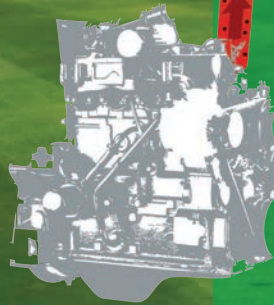
HELLO 2013

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Going
Undercover

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Photo credit: Don Cross, CGCS

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MAGCS Hospitality Reception in San Diego on the rooftop is always one of the best attended Association events each year. Thanks Golden Tee Sponsors (page 10).

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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 61st Midwest Turf Clinic, Medinah Country Club

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Midwest Association of Golf Course Superintendents (MAGCS) exists to promote professionalism and integrity, to provide networking, education and career enhancement opportunities to all members who facilitate the growth and enjoyment of golf.

On Course is published monthly with original member content. For advertising opportunities please call 630-243-7900.

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Hello 2013



Justin VanLanduit
Briarwood Country Club

Believe or not we are coming up on the heels of another golf season here in the Midwest. I hope that everyone had some time to relax and recharge the batteries, especially after the last season.

2012 was not only challenging in all aspects of golf course maintenance, it was also difficult to enjoy the game of golf. Hopefully 2013 will be more forgiving and allow us to enjoy some time-out for recreation, networking and education. The 2013 schedule is rounding into form and I'm excited about the venues that will be welcoming us. The schedule consists of our normal monthly functions, and as a committee, we are looking to introduce a new event to try and spark some more participation and excitement.

Starting things off for the season, we will give it another try at Calumet Country Club. Unfortunately, the scheduled College Championship last fall was cancelled due to weather. Superintendent **Matt Harstad** is opening the doors back up for us and hosting the annual Spring Scramble on April 30th. Let's hope that Mother Nature is cooperative and allows Matt to showcase the fruits of his and his staff's labor.

On May 13, **Kirk Spieth** will host the Midwest and ITF in our combined meeting at Beverly Country Club. It has been a while since we've visited this club on the Southside of Chicago and will be a nice chance to play this Championship course. I'm sure the ITF will set up a game to make it fun and intriguing for all.

A change that just came upon us is the June Monthly Meeting. We've pushed it to July 22 and look forward to playing one Chicagoland's hidden little gems, Edgewood Valley Country Club. Superintendent, **Ron McCarthy** will host the July meeting where we will honor the Assistant Superintendent Champion and the Dom Grotti Champion. This is a great event to reward your Assistant by welcoming them to participate, as well as getting the opportunity to spend some time together outside of work and have some fun.

Because of the meeting switch from June to July, this June the Midwest is planning to add a new 9-hole event to its lineup. The idea was favored by many who completed our recent membership survey. The understanding of the time it takes out of one's day for an 18-hole event made this a viable idea and we thought we'd give it a shot. **Chuck Barber** will be opening the doors at St. Charles Country Club for golf and then an informal BBQ at his shop following the event. Dates for these events haven't been set; keep your eyes peeled for those to be released later.

MAGCS will still host the Family Night Picnic at the Kane Country Cougars game on July 20. It is a great time to get the family out of the house and spend some time with everyone. Games are always exciting and how can you beat a night at the ballpark with family and friends?

The battle for the MAGCS Regular and Senior crowns will be on August 26th. **Steve Van Acker** and Crystal Lake Country Club will be our host for these Championships. Steve wanted to host the event a bit earlier on the calendar so it didn't compete with our fall aerification schedules and every thing else that seems to happen at that time of year. These are small adjustments worth trying out; hopefully we can see more people competing for the top spot this season.

To wrap up the season we will all get the pleasure to experience the latest golf course addition to Chicago when we are welcomed by **Michael Heustis** and Chicago Highlands Club. The golf committee is looking at a new format for this event, so stay tuned. We look forward to playing this new track and couldn't ask for a better way to round out the end of the season.

We all know it can be a challenge to get away for an event but we hope to see you this year. Participation is key in keeping these events alive and supporting our fellow members as they roll out their best to host us. Plus I ask, why shouldn't you reward yourself with a day of fun? These events can be a good way to enjoy friends and colleagues and a great way to get some answers through networking and meeting people like yourself in the industry.



Going Undercover



PHOTO CREDIT: DON CROSS, CGCS

Chuck Barber, *St. Charles Country Club*

We've all seen the perfectly square tarps covering greens from a variety of viewpoints. We observe their presence or absence from perimeter roads around area golf courses. They can be seen from a bird's eye view while we fly overhead to and from local airports.

For some, they can be seen comfortably from the relative warmth and comfort from our offices in the winter months if you are a superintendent who chooses to cover greens (all or some) over the winter.

Ben McGargill puts the greens at Wynstone Golf Club 'undercover' for the winter months. "Anything that is primarily *Poa annua* gets covered. Prior practices were to only cover greens adjacent to water because it is windier. There were still problems with ice damage on other greens. We tarp everything on the golf course now."

For 23 years Don Cross, CGCS at Skokie Country Club has been going undercover. The benefits Don realizes include protection from desiccation, wildlife damage, pedestrian traffic and winter sports enthusiasts.

PHOTO: BEN MCGARGILL



One of the many covers that go down each fall at Wynstone help to protect the *Poa annua*, especially on shaded sites.

That's just the tip of the iceberg for Cross as far as covers are concerned. Don is a strong proponent of deep-tine aeration late in the fall or early in the winter months. This practice provides some space for freeze and thaw expansion. Further, Don sees a noticeable increase in early spring root growth from this process. Finally, the greens at Skokie Country Club are in top form earlier than they would otherwise be. The soil temperatures reach optimal levels for root growth and shoot growth undercover.

McGargill also indicates that going undercover has taken away most of the winter stress on the *Poa annua* populations at Wynstone. "The only turf loss we have had in the winter has been on little lobes that do not get covered on the edges of the greens. Bentgrass is fine, *Poa* sometimes has issues."

Both McGargill and Cross agree that it is not a problem free enterprise. "The covers we use (permeable) certainly do not solve all potential winter issues," says Cross. The covers at Skokie will allow water from rain or snow melt to infiltrate which can complicate things. Further, they do not provide protection from ice accumulation, damage, or fungal pathogens like *Microdochium* or *Typhula*.

Manpower and storage are also a concern for those going undercover. "It takes a staff of six people 30 minutes per cover. The entire process takes roughly 10 hours," McGargill notes.

"The Cover Shuffle" is how Don Cross characterizes the biggest challenge for Skokie Country Club going undercover. The shuffle starts when "the warm days in spring may come sporadi-

cally and are then followed by sharp temperature drops.” Cross manages the temperature fluctuations by removing and the re-installing the covers periodically as the weather dictates. “We have to manage the temperatures so as to not let too much early spring growth to occur too soon. Further, we can’t uncover them too early and cause a fallback in progress (enhanced growth, greening) made to that point. Therefore, we may pull them off for brief periods and put them back on if the temperatures dictate this”. Cross notes that 2012 was an exceptional year in as much as the covers came off March 13th and there was no need to reinstall the covers.

McGargill agrees that their biggest challenge going undercover is “putting them on and taking them off.” Storage is another obstacle as the covers take up a lot space but if dried adequately they fold readily and don’t require heated storage. The replacement interval, for McGargill, is roughly every 7 or 8 years. “They become brittle and tear easily at that point. We have been replacing our worst two tarps each year. That pace will quicken in the near future as half of our tarps were purchased in 2009.”

PHOTO: BEN MCGARGILL



McGargill in his words is not an “active advocate for covers” but he realizes the myriad of problems they mitigate each year at Wynstone as easily seen in the picture above.

Dan Marco, CGCS at Ruth Lake Country Club in Hinsdale chooses to go a different route. While not necessarily ‘burying’ greens in sand, Marco eschews covers in favor of very heavy topdressing to protect the putting surfaces at Ruth Lake from the

PHOTO: BEN MCGARGILL



As with most maintenance practices, the “cover shuffle” as Don Cross likes to call it is dictated each Spring by fluctuations in temperature. 2012 was easy, once they came off, they never went back on.

winter weather. Marco will solid, deep-tine (to the tune of 9” deep) aerify the first week of November and use approximately 60 tons of sand to backfill the holes.

“Just to put them to bed I use 3 semi loads (60 tons) over 3.7 acres of greens, collars and minor extensions.” The entire undertaking takes 2 staff members, a TyCrop brush type topdresser, a large Dakota material handler and about 3 hours of time.

According to Marco, the first mowing of the spring is not as bad as you might think with the volume of sand he applies. “We get about three mowings in prior to needing to sharpen reels. Further, we use older units to make the first few mowings and only greens are dry of morning dew.” This method has been successful for the A1 putting surfaces at Ruth Lake since they were grassed in 2005.

Whether or not superintendents choose to send greens undercover for the winter is a function of many variables: does the grass require it, does the growing environment demand it, are the covers in the budget, is there space to store them, is there adequate manpower to handle them, and much more. @

PHOTO: DAN MARCO, CGCS



Dan Marco, CGCS prescribes 60 tons of sand to cover all his putting surfaces each fall at Ruth Lake Country Club. He really likes the outcome each spring on the aggressive A1 cultivar.



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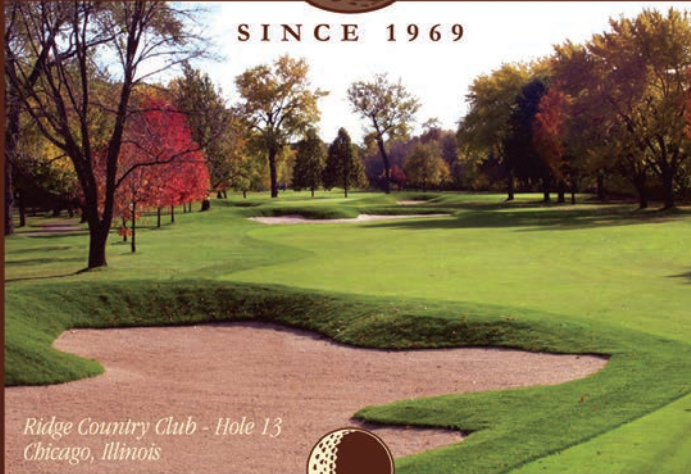
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The new board of directors for the Midwest Association of Golf Course Superintendents (MAGCS) is going to meet for a strategic planning session on November 28, 2012. Your input from this survey will be used to guide future activities of the association. Your answers are greatly appreciated and will help us set the agenda for the day. Please take a moment to complete a short survey. Answers will be kept anonymous.

We ask You Tell

Midwest Membership Class

- Superintendent
- Assistant Superintendent
- Commercial Member
- Retired

Luke Cella, MAGCS

Thanks to all those that filled out our Annual Membership Survey this past December. The board used the information gathered to plan upcoming events and to guide their decision making process.

Of the respondents, most reported they attended two Midwest meetings per year and that Turf Science is the most important type of education at this stage in their career followed up by professional development. For the first time in my history of conducting surveys of the group disease management has NOT topped the list of education topics that you would like to see offered at our meetings – granted it is still up there but soil testing and result interpretation, environmental stress on turf (winter injury/shade/heat), and plant growth regulators surpassed it.

As far as the meetings go, the majority felt that between \$75 to \$100 is fair for a full day of education including food and beverages. This cost fluctuates based upon the fee for the host club, speaker expenses and honoraria, and is set to break even for the Midwest.

As far as the meetings that have golf included in them, our members ranked the order of importance when deciding to attend as (most important to least):

- Education offered
- Day of the week
- Venue – host club
- Starting and ending time including travel distance and time
- Cost
- Golf prizes

The majority of members would like to see the outings on Tuesday (106) followed by Mondays (82) respondents with a start time between 9:30 to 11:00 a.m. Most attendees' employers pay for their meeting attendance and the meeting costs start to become an issue when over \$100 to attend. An overwhelming 174 respondents said they would be interested in attending a 9 hole event that included education.

There were a few open ended questions and it seemed that a similar vein ran throughout the answers:

If the Midwest could offer that one thing that would make you attend more events, what would it be? More time, less cost, better location (it seems everyone wants one in their neighborhood), quality education, able to take something away. Funniest answer: free beer

Respondent Breakdown by Class	
Membership Class	No / %
Superintendent	129 / 54.7%
Assistant Superintendent	36 / 15.3%
Commercial Members	48 / 20.3%
Retired	17 / 7.2%
Other	6 / 2.5%

Do you have any suggestions or comments for future meetings or education events? There were a lot of No's answered here, a few to try and keep the costs in check and schedule more meetings in the off season as opposed to during the growing season. Funniest answer: I love the shop tours (wrong association buddy).

99.1% of you look forward to receiving *On Course* and most of you read it within the first day of getting it, or at least by week's end. Gurke's Bullsheets is the most favorite column, followed by our feature articles and super-n-sites. You appreciate the MAGCS in Motion (Association Updates) and like the directors/president's column as long as they don't get too preachy about life's lessons.

94% of you notice the advertising in *On Course* and appreciate the support of these companies – as publisher, thank you.

The future topics for *On Course* to look into is great and has been forwarded to the editorial and education committees. I'm not printing the topics here, you'll just have to wait and see the articles for fear of a few of our fellow writers may steal some of our thunder. Although one topic that I will share is: You lied, this survey took more than a minute to fill out. As far as going digital, we are working on it and hope to offer *On Course* in a more user friendly digital format that will be in addition to our printed version. We are also reining in our production schedule of the magazine so it appears in your mailbox on a steadier schedule each month.

The Midwest Directory was the next item that we queried all about and everyone except three of you value the directory. Some of you access the directory online, something we hope will work better in the future as we upgrade our website/interface in the coming year. We will continue to print the directory as most want this, as a reminder, please log into the website or look in the 2012 directory to make sure your information is current. We'll be pulling down the data for the new directory and want it as current as possible.

What do you value most in your membership?

<u>Asset.....</u>	<u>% ranked 1st</u>
Ability to Network	65%
Communications (email & OC)....	50%
Education and Seminars	48%
Membership Directory	22%
Being Part of a larger group	20%
Government Relations	4%

We asked a few questions about the website and will use the answers to help us through the redesign. We'll create a new online forum, start up a blog and something that I know I will use (if all of us use it) is a pictorial directory. I'm excited to work on a new website and incorporate newer technologies into my daily routine.

If you are happy with every aspect of MAGCS or share a few ideas to make things better, or feel the Association is broken, we appreciate you taking the time to fill out the survey. To us, it shows you care, and that is what matters. The board reviewed each and every answer and will continue to use the information to make sure the Association remains in your hands. @

What is the best day for a MAGCS meeting to take place.

<u>Day</u>	<u>% ranked 1st</u>
Monday	40%
Tuesday.....	50%
Wednesday	17%
Thursday	10%
Friday	3%

How often do you currently use the Midwest website?

<u>Day</u>	<u>%</u>
Once a day.....	1.5%
Once a week.....	14.6%
Every two weeks	25.9%
Once a month	53.2%
Never	4.9%

What do you look forward to using on the new website?

<u>Item</u>	<u>%</u>
Online Forum	65.2%
Midwest Blog.....	67.4%
Pictorial Directory	54.1%
Purchasing Midwest Items	43.12%

Do you value the Midwest Directory?

<u>Choice.....</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes.....	98.5%
No	1.5%

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THANK YOU

San Diego 2013



#BullSheet

John Gurke, CGCS, Associate Editor



MARCH 2013

Dates to Remember

March 6 – CAGCS Chicagoland Forum, Naperville Country Club, Steven Biehl and Tim Anderson, CGCS MG

March 11 – MAGCS Monthly Meeting at Royal Melbourne Country Club, Dave Groelle, CGCS
Dr. Karl Danneberger, Ohio State University

March 13-14 – Reinders 21st Green Industry Conference at the Waukesha Expo Center in Suburban Milwaukee, WI.

March 30 – Deadline for nominations for GCM's Most Valuable Technician (MVT) award.

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

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.

MAGCS bids a fond farewell to **Dr. Derek Settle**, who as of February 1st is the newest addition to the Bayer Environmental Science team of technical service specialists. Derek has been an invaluable friend to all of us who endeavor to grow turfgrass in the Chicago District, having served as the CDGA's Director of Turfgrass Programs since 2006. Doc was always there in a pinch, making countless diagnostic visits to area courses and providing his weekly Scouting Reports for the betterment of all of us. Our loss is Bayer's gain—thank you for everything you've done, and we will miss you Derek!



Another MAGCS guy is making a move, but not too far. **Travis Dykstra**, former assistant superintendent at St. Charles Country Club, has accepted a position with J. W. Turf as an equipment sales representative effective last month. Congratulations and the best of luck to Travis.

Remember, the end of this month marks the deadline for you to nominate your equipment technician for GCM's Most Valuable Technician (MVT) award. The program is designed to honor the best and brightest golf course equipment technicians in the industry, the men and women who play such a key role in keeping the tools of our trade up and running. The nominations will be narrowed to a field of three finalists by a team of industry judges, after which GCM readers will be able to review the resumes and qualifications of the finalists online and vote for their favorite. The MVT winner will be announced in the July issue of GCM. Go to gcsaa.org for the nomination form, and submit it by March 30th!

Another reminder that the Reinders 21st Green Industry Conference is just around the corner on the 13th and 14th at the Waukesha Expo Center outside of Milwaukee. GCSAA Education Points are available for attendees, who will receive .4 continuing education points for each day, or .8 points for the two days. A wide variety of seminars are on the agenda, and one lucky attendee will win a trip to Disney World, so get to Milwaukee and "Catch the Wave."

Better late than never—a couple MAGCS members made moves last year that I finally got wind of. **Josh Bebeau**, former assistant at Highland Park Country Club has been named the superintendent there; and **Dan Stahl**,

former assistant at Orchard Valley Golf Club is superintendent at Indian Boundary Golf Course in Chicago. Belated congrats, guys.

Happy news for **Jay Lemanski** (Waters Edge Golf Course): He and Candace welcomed their first child into the world on December 5th. Maya Winter was 7 lbs., 8 ozs. at the time of her birth, and is healthy, happy, and I'm guessing poopy. Congratulations Jay and Candace!



Candace, St. Nick, Jay and Maya Winter

'Tis the season for acquisitions and mergers in the turf industry. In the news again is Eagle One Golf of Anaheim, CA, which has acquired Fore-Par, increasing the depth and breadth of its product offerings. Nufarm, currently the third-largest plant protection supplier in the turf and ornamental market, has acquired Cleary Chemical, adding Cleary's fungicide brands to its existing line of insecticides and herbicides. And finally, BASF has merged its Professional Turf & Ornamental and pest control divisions along with Professional Vegetation Management and Market Business Development units into the BASF Specialty Products Department (SPD). The merger is intended to better understand and meet the changing needs of BASF's customers. And, while not really a merger or acquisition by definition, Hunter and LASCO have partnered to create the Hunter HSJ Swing Joint by LASCO. The new, heavy-duty swing joints are available in a multitude of inlet and outlet sizes, and when paired with Hunter rotors, the rotor warranty is extended from three to five years. You like apples? How'dya like THOSE apples?



It's here! The new USGA Stimpmeter is now available to stick in your cart and never use. Besides being blue instead of the traditional '69 Ford Mustang metallic green, the new double-sided version features not only the traditional ball-release notch at the top of it, but a notch on the other side that is halfway down to produce half the normal ball roll. This comes in handy for today's modern greens where large, level surfaces are not available to use the old version practically. So if you have "potato

chip" greens with many undulations and not much flat area, test drive the new Stimpmeter at a dealership near you soon! You can purchase the New Stimpmeter for \$110 plus S&H and tax by calling 1-800-336-4446. Or if you have a used Stimpmeter, you can return it and purchase the new version for \$75 plus S&H and tax. You can use the USGA Stimpmeter Rebate Form at www.usga.org to take advantage of this discount. Lastly, you can view videos of the proper use (where they teach the subtle "extra-little-push-for-an-extra-foot-of-roll" technique) of the Stimpmeter on the same USGA website.

Q: What do you call the overly-affectionate members of **Les Rutan's** club?

A: Crystal Tree huggers.

This news is really hard to believe considering the winter we've been having. A federal committee has published a draft of the country's third climate assessment report, a comprehensive analysis of the latest and best peer-reviewed science on the extent and impacts of global warming on the United States. Although none of the findings are entirely new, the report suggests that evidence is now stronger and clearer than ever that the climate is rapidly changing—primarily as a result of human activities, including the copious burning of fossil fuels. Basically, what we've been experiencing lately will continue and worsen. "Summers are longer and hotter, and periods of extreme heat last longer than any living American has ever experienced. Winters are generally shorter and warmer. Rain comes in heavier downpours, though in many regions there are longer dry spells in between." Lovely.

If you're a "glass-half-full" kinda person, you'll take some solace in these tidbits from Bull Sheets past: 60 years ago this month, the hot topic was "The winter of 1952-53 will probably go down in the records as one of the mildest winters in recent years in the Chicago district. Grass has been green practically all winter and there has been very little frost in the ground. There has been very little snow, and what there was disappeared in a hurry." Furthermore, in the March, 1983 issue—30 years ago this month—it was documented that "Much of the Midwest has been blessed with an unusually mild winter so far. Very little snow has fallen to interfere with driving and the mild temperatures are in direct contrast to those of last year." See? This isn't so abnormal after all.

In other MAGCS history from the archives, 50 years ago this month our forward-thinking association took the leap into modern technology by buying a TAPE RECORDER! 40 years ago this month, then-editor Ray Gerber opined that "With all the automatic irrigation systems that have been installed in the Chicago area and all those that are in the planning stages, there will be very few night watering men left for the mosquitoes to get a midnight snack." And finally, 30 years ago this month, the TUCO Agricultural Chemicals Division of Upjohn introduced Banol fungicide, a systemic control for Pythium blight in turf and ornamentals; while Cleary's introduced the first-ever flowable systemic fungicide with its unveiling of 3336-F. OK, history lesson is over now.



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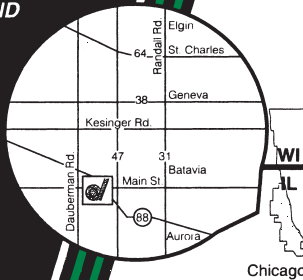
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We found him! For those of you—and I'm sure there are many—wondering whatever happened to Al Borland, that whacky sidekick and straight man to Tim "The Tool Man" Taylor, wonder no further. Al is alive and well and working on the south side at Calumet Country Club! Al, aka **Matt Harstad**, will be hosting our monthly meeting come this April 30th, so bring your umbrella...



MIDWEST Doppelgänger

Thank God for golf! Golf 20/20, a collaboration of leading organizations representing all segments of the US golf industry, reports golf's economic impact of \$68.8 billion in 2011. Highlights of the findings include: 1.98 million jobs; \$55.6 billion wage income; 25.7 million golf participants; and 15,751 traditional golf facilities. And let's not forget the other important things golf courses do for our world, like filter runoff, prevent soil erosion, provide habitat for countless species of wildlife, and perhaps most-importantly, provide landing facilities for all the world's disabled aircraft. Most recently, an ultralight plane made an emergency landing January 1st on the sixth hole of the Viera East Golf Course in Rockledge, Florida, ending up in a bunker. No injuries resulted, other than the soreness in the arms of the guy who had to rake up after the plane was removed.



Oops—add one more benefit that golf courses provide: Serving as a playground for all winter sports enthusiasts, from cross country skiing and sledding all the way to snowcross competitions. Heck, those guys don't even need snow!

Dan Dinelli, CGCS took this photo of Levi Lavallee giving him the thumbs-up in Lake Geneva during a snowcross event for which snow was manufactured. If those things were supposed to fly they should have wings...



Congratulations to **Mike Werth**, formerly with Pendleton Turf Supply, on his new position as sales representative for ProGro Solutions, servicing the Northwest Illinois and Southwest Wisconsin territory.

Thanks to **Todd Fyffe** of Westmoreland CC, **Henry Michna, CGCS** of Winnetka GC, and **Dan Dinelli, CGCS** of North Shore CC for hosting the Chicagoland Shop Tour on January 22nd. The annual event is always well-attended, and is a great way for superintendents to get their winter staff out of the shop for a day (so they can go hang in someone else's shops). Always a great event, and this year was no exception.

Ronald G. Dodson is retiring from Audubon International after serving as the organization's founder and president of the board for more than 25 years. Ron made the announcement after playing a central role in Al's intensive search for a new executive director, which culminated in the hiring of Ryan Aylesworth (formerly of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service) in June of last year. Among Ron's many contributions to AI, he worked closely with the USGA to grow the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program, which has enrolled over 3,000 properties including golf courses, cemeteries, ski areas, housing developments, hotels, and many others. We wish Mr. Dodson all the best.

The BMW Championship is going to be contested for the first-ever time at Conway Farms Golf Club in Lake Forest, with **Chad Ball, CGCS** serving as host superintendent. The reason I mention this so early is that the Western Golf Association has recently announced that it has invited golf fans to sign up for opportunities to serve as volunteers for the event, which takes place from September 9th through the 15th. Anyone interested in volunteering—aside from those helping out Chad and his staff—can go to www.BMWChampionshipUSA.com and click on the Volunteers tab. Chad Ball and **Connor Healy** will be looking for some help as well. If interested in volunteering for the event (either a whole day or the entire week), please contact Connor Healy at 847-295-0285 or healyconnor@gmail.com with your availability and contact info.

Continued on page 16

On January 24th, the MAGCS monthly meeting and Annual Wee One Fundraiser was held at Seven Bridges Golf Club, with **Don Ferreri** and **Dave Gelino** hosting. The education program for the morning was very good, with John Miller, CGCS—GCSAA's Field Staff Representative for our Great Lakes Region—kicking things off with his update on GCSAA's most recent activities, as well as an explanation of his role as our representative.

Following John, GCI's Pat Jones, who is NEVER at a loss for words, gave his version of "What Would Wayne (Otto) Think?" Always armed with insider information and behind-the-scenes stories and anecdotes, Pat didn't disappoint. I couldn't help closing my eyes and listening to Pat speak—he sounded just like The Dude from "The Big Lebowski."

Following a nice lunch, it was time do get to the business of making some money for the Wee One Foundation. An entire room full of great products, services, and sporting event tickets was available to the highest bidders, and those bidders were very generous—a total of \$25,705 was raised for the cause! In the end it was a great day with a great education program and a great cause—The Wee One Foundation—was the ultimate winner. Thank you to Don and Dave and everyone at Seven Bridges for the terrific service and venue, and to the REAL important folks—the day's sponsors, who were: **Burris Equipment Company, Nels J. Johnson Tree Experts, Inc., Reinders, Inc., and Syngenta Professional Products.**



Danny Quast, CGCS President of Wee One Foundation practices his tug on the ear bid move for the live auction.



Dustin Huguen looks over the silent auction items not having to go far to find many useful and valuable items for his golf course operations.



Sword fighting with the pen for the silent auction, Dave Radaj and Steve VanAcker trade blows and laughs.



Scott Speiden (r) talking about something that is apparently really small. Charlie Brugler (m) seems to have heard this story before and Eric Reed (l) seems a little embarrassed by the whole thing.

Q: If Tom Abbott went to the University of Iowa, what would he be called?

A: A Thunder Hawkeye.

News from the GCSAA....

The second in a series of GCSAA-exclusive surveys looking at operational data of golf course facilities and superintendents is now available online for A, SM, ISM, and C members. The Capital Budget & Labor Survey results can be accessed by going to www.gcsaa.org.

If you have the urge to speak or teach at next year's Education Conference, the Request for Proposals form is now available online as well.

The GCSAA Education Conference is in the books, having been held last month from the 4th through the 8th in San Diego. By most all accounts it was a great show at an even greater venue. San Diego is truly a fantastic town in which to get away for a few days, with tons to do besides walking the show floor. Teeing off the week was the National Championship and Golf Classic, where MAGCS members acquitted themselves admirably. In the Championship itself, **Tommy Robinson** was our highest finisher,

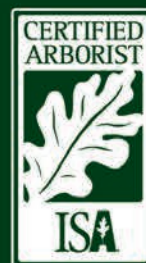
Continued on page 18



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grabbing 16th place, followed closely by **Al Pondel** in 17th. In the Chapter Team events, the team of **Bob Kronn, Al Pondel, Tommy Robinson** and **Justin VanLanduit** took 4th in the Gross division, while in the Net division, **Don Cross, Al Fierst, Bob Maibusch, Tommy Witt** and **Scott Witte** were the winners, with the team of **Tim Davis, Ed Fischer, Brian Mores, Paul Schaefer**, and **Steve VanAcker** taking 3rd.

After golf wrapped up, it was on to the conference, where the usual plethora of education sessions was offered—this year sponsored by Precision Labs—and all the other trappings with which we’ve become familiar were on tap. The Opening Night Celebration held on Tuesday the 5th featured Major Dan Rooney, author of the book “A Patriot’s Calling,” and Wednesday’s Opening Session and Thursday’s General Session—both sponsored by Syngenta—featured Old Tom Morris Award winner Michael Hurdzan, Ph.D., Brandel Chamblee, and Tim Rosaforte to name but a few of the dignitaries that were on hand. At the Annual Meeting, your new Board was elected, and consists of President Pat Finlen, Vice President Keith Ihms, and Secretary/Treasurer John O’Keefe. Directors Peter Grass (fitting name) and Darren Davis were re-elected, and newly-elected to the board was MAGCS member **John Fulling, CGCS** of Kalamazoo Country Club—congrats to John!

Equipment Company, Nels J. Johnson Tree Experts, Inc., Reinders, Inc., and Syngenta. HOLE IN ONE: Arthur Clesen, Inc., and Bayer Environmental Science. EAGLE: Chicagoland Turf, BASF, J.W. Turf, Inc., and Hollembeak Construction, Inc. BIRDIE: CS Turf, Harris Yamaha Golf Cars, Layne Christensen, Lemont Paving Company, Nadler Golf, Pearl Valley Organix, ProGro of Illinois, LLC, Pendleton Turf Supply, Tyler Enterprises/Masterblend International, and Water Well Solutions. PAR: The Andersons, Arysta Lifescience, Aquatrols, Dow AgroSciences, DryJect Chicagoland, Great Lakes Turf, Growing Solutions, Inc., Lohmann Companies, Prime Turf, Inc., Rain Bird Services, and XGD Systems. Thanks to all of you!

And thanks to everyone that bought a raffle ticket at the Hospitality Reception. We raised \$2,300 for the Scholarship Fund. In case you didn’t hear, the winners were:

- iPad - **Brian Racette**
- iPod - **Justin VanLanduit**
- \$100 gift card - **Glen Bereiter**
- \$50 gift card - **Chris Frank**
- Overnight at Solamar was **Mike Matchen**



Brian Racette takes over the Witte win streak, held for a short while by VanAcker during the interim.

And of course, no trip to “The Show” would be complete without the fun stuff our members take advantage of when in a beautiful and warm place like San Diego. Whether you went hiking in La Jolla, or just lollygagging around the Gas Lamp District, fun was found in many different ways. In particular (and because I was there so I have pictures), there was the University of Illinois Alumni gathering at the Tilted Kilt Pub outside of Petco Park, along with the Hickory Stick Invitational, where some MAGCS members donned the knickers and hacked their way around the Coronado Municipal Golf Course using actual hickory-shafted clubs called niblicks and mashies from days of yore. Another



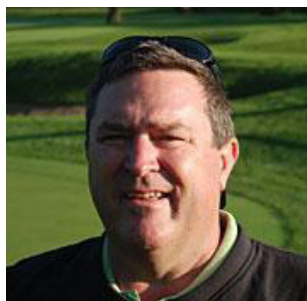
Chris Frank, one of MAGCS new members wins at the Reception.

group even tried their hand at surfing in 50-something-degree water with some pretty nasty rip currents. Whatever your thing is, it was able to be done in SoCal. Another great memory, and nice to come home and NOT have to mow grass. @



Matt Kregel

More local flavor was infused in the list of candidates for TurfNet’s Superintendent of the Year Award presented by Syngenta, with MAGCS members **Matt Kregel** from the Club at Strawberry Creek and **Curtis Tyrrell, CGCS, MG**, of Medinah Country Club and



Andy Morris

downstate neighbor **Andy Morris** of the Country Club of Peoria all having been nominated. Alas, the award went to Dan Meersman from the Philadelphia Cricket Club, but congratulations to all of the deserving nominees.



Curtis Tyrrell, CGCS MG

The crowning event took place on Wednesday the 6th, when MAGCS hosted its Hospitality Reception on the beautiful rooftop of the Hotel Solamar. It was a splendiferous evening enjoyed by a huge group of partygoers, and we have many people to thank, including Luke Cella for arranging things (the three separate trips to San Diego to scout

locations may have been a tad excessive, but who’s counting?), the folks who volunteered their time to check guests in, and of course the night’s sponsors, who I will list here just to let them know how much they are appreciated: RYDER CUP: Burris



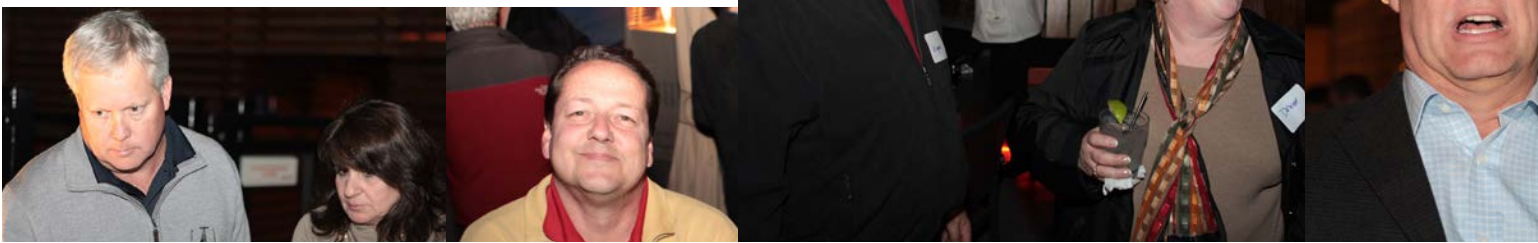
John Nelson showing the GCSAA Golf Championship contestants how to knock so close that it holds up all day on a closest to the pin.



Tony Kalina and Scott Bordner wait anxiously to get their autographed copy of "Turfgrass Insects of the U.S. and Canada," by Pat Vittum (in forefont with pens). Note Randy Lusher in background (he actually waited in line for Tony and Scott while we all chatted).



MAGCS first couple, Brooke and Dave Groelle at the Hospitality Reception.





Charles Anfield, CGCS, *Heritage Bluffs Golf Course*

Pat Jones Revisited

The MAGCS January Meeting/Wee One Fundraiser was held at Seven Bridges Golf Club, Don Ferreri and Dave Gelino hosted.

John Miller, CGCS Field Staff Representative of the GCSAA for the Great Lakes Region, started the day out with a presentation on "What is Happening Now."

John started out stating that the GCSAA is "mission focused, we are dedicated to serving our members, advancing the profession and promoting the growth of the game." This will be accomplished in several ways as John continued to explain.

Field Staff

At the request of the membership, the GCSAA began to implement a Regional Field Staff program. The purpose of the GCSAA Regional Field Staff is to assist affiliated GCSAA chapters helping them become more effective and to help them fully comprehend services provided by the GCSAA. It was designed to create a direct voice for the chapters and to relay needs back to GCSAA. Ultimately it would like to develop new programs for the GCSAA and chapters. One major focus is to expand the superintendents' role in the golf community. All field staff is supposed to visit member and non-member facilities alike.



John Miller, CGCS Field Staff, offered help to all our members for any GCSAA related issues.



Pat Jones' business is keeping close tabs on the golf industry. Not everyone may agree with his viewpoints, but we can all agree it is nice to have him in town to support the Midwest and Wee One.

Programs

John then listed and explained some of the programs that GCSAA offers:

1. Research, not conducted in house.
2. Leadership Academy
3. Education
4. BMP's: Best Management Practices
5. Access to Michigan State University's Turfgrass Information File (All MAGCS members have, not just Class A and SM members as with GCSAA)
6. Nutrient Management Template
7. Salary Surveys
8. Environmental Institute of Golf

Advocacy

The GCSAA has reached out to create electronic bulletins. Last year the main topic was how the extreme heat and drought was affecting turf. They have been active in Government relations and public policy. Some actions they have been involved with include: chemical products and use, nationwide permit regulations, American Disability Act and how it will affect golf course use and operations, Chesapeake Bay Clean up Program and involvement with Health care reform. Recently they led a trip to Washington D.C. on which some of our MAGCS Members attended to promote the environmental benefits of the game.

EIFG: Environmental Institute of Golf

This program has been promoting the sustainability of the game through research, awareness, education, programs and scholarships for the benefit of golf course management professionals, golf facilities and the game. This includes the Rounds for Research program where local Chapters are encouraged to solicit rounds to forward to the GCSAA or local chapter to contribute to the program.

John concluded with an update on the 2013 GCSAA Conference in San Diego.

Pat Jones, Publisher/Editorial Director of the magazine "Golf Course Industry" took the podium to present on "What Would Wayne Think?" This is in reference to Wayne Otto, CGCS of whom the Wee One Foundation is named for. "I think Wayne would be delighted in the Wee One cause," Pat began.

Pat launched into his interpretation of the State of the Industry. It was not a pretty picture. He explained: "I think this recession is the lynch pin. Today's golf market has 15,850 total facilities. 4,200 of those are private, 1,800 are run by management companies. Revenues are up 10% in 2012. This is closely tied to the favorable weather most of the country was having. Our industry has a \$76 billion impact on the economy. Golf Maintenance spends about \$9 billion. There was a net loss of 450 courses from 2006-2012. This is a players market. People have the ability to negotiate a green fee."

How did we get here?

"We are paying for a 20-year boom which started in 1987 and went through 2007," he stated. "5200 golf courses (+42%) were built during this era." Pat referred to some of the architecture of the designs as "ego courses or design delirium." Some of these new courses were "maintenance madness" requiring extensive hand labor to maintain design features that required unlimited inputs with bloated budgets for the sake of a course design. During this time there was also growth in professionalism, a boom in construction, technological changes and TV driven higher expectations. "Was it overkill?" he asked.

What's changed recently?

"The fake bubble has burst that was built on false assumptions. 1/3 of facilities lose money, 1/3 break even and 1/3 make money. The supply has exceeded the demand in every way. There are too many facilities, too many suppliers and too many distributors."

"Professional values are evolving. There is a change in the traditional path to a Superintendent Job. These are desperate times and this trumps ethics when it comes to finding a job. New social /business networks have changed the dynamics of communication and professional development. There is a bigger separation between the haves and the have-not. Economics are starting to drive new views about playing conditions and maintenance priorities."

"GCSAA is at a cross roads. Right now, the Annual Conference is the major revenue producer for the Association. Trade shows have changed. Is there going to be a new business model? "

"The game is also under scrutiny by regulators about environmental concerns. Water use and discharge is clearly the biggest issue. The game is played on grass, no water = no grass. Water is going to become much more expensive in the future."

So what does the future hold?

"There will be a gradual supply/demand resolution. Operations will become smarter and leaner. I believe there will be a cleaner segmentation between facilities. A successful facility will define and fulfill a market niche. There will be more emphasis on fun, family, fitness and friends."

Pat broke down the new specialization/segmentation of the

Superintendent role.

1. **Top Gun** These are the "gurus" working at the high end private clubs. They have the resources to attempt to provide "perfect playing conditions." There are not a lot of these.
2. **Traditional Mid-Scale Private Club Superintendent** This group is becoming fewer and fewer as Clubs struggle to fill Membership spots.
3. **Department Head/Manager** This group includes the up-scale daily fee courses.
4. **Business Leader** These are the Superintendents that have become the de-facto General Managers.
5. **Link in Corporate Golf Chain** These are the Management Company Superintendents. They may oversee more than one course. This will become a growing segment.
6. **Blue Collar Superintendents** This group works at a traditional "mom and pop" course that will be supported by consultants and suppliers for resources, supplies and services.

Pat concluded with a few closing comments that were not very optimistic. "I think the golf market is never coming back. We are just stealing customers from each other."

So we got that going for us. Which is not so nice. @

Ed Note: I just watched the video of Pat and it helps when editing the write up. I didn't think he ended on such a somber tone, for as Pat says – "the fact that you are all here, learning and you are taking this stuff seriously, means you're more likely to survive. If you just hunker down and pretend that nothing is going on, that you don't need to change, and you're going to resist every iota of change that is coming your way, you're going to lose. You have to get out, you have to educate yourself, you have to be a better businessperson, and if you do, you are going to win. It is very likely that you will come out of this thing better off, you're going to move up the chain in the new paradigm of golf, because you'll understand how the business of golf works, no longer will you just be spending money, you will be driving revenue – keep coming to events, keep educating yourself, that is the way."



If you'd like a copy of the talk, either PowerPoint or video – shoot me an email and I'll get it to you: luke@magcs.org

Golf Industry Show



Luke Cella
MAGCS

Each year at the Golf Industry Show I attend the Chapter Executives Session and this year I thought I'd share with the membership the items we discuss and talk about.

GCSAA has made it two years in a row; they finally realized it makes sense to have the CEO and some of the board members present at this meeting of Chapter Leaders and Executives.

In fact, Rhett Evans, GCSAA CEO, led off the session and making a parallel between what Nick Saban has been preaching about his success at Alabama. There "is no continuum for success, the program has to rebuild itself each year," Evans paraphrased and then followed with what the Association has to do the same to keep it a value for its membership. Evans stated it isn't good when members begin to question paying their dues each renewal period.

Evans then went on to give examples of the value of membership within GCSAA:

- A superintendent in Durango, CO was faced with total bans on all pesticides and GCSAA was able to provide him sound, scientific and reviewed data that put golf in a positive light not only economically, and recreationally but environmentally as well and helped to reverse the legislative action.
- The 2013 GCSAA budget has included another full-time equivalent (FTE) for more Government Relations to help with local laws and ordinances.

Evans then asked the group the question "why do we have associations?" There were a myriad of answers and as I listened to the group respond, I thought about how well the Midwest's mission statement covered the question. Evans expounded further by explaining that Associations allow individuals to "ban together" and this is especially important when trying to influence public policy – something the GCSAA is deeply rooted and committed to for the industry. He then used the term "holistic" when describing the approach GCSAA is taking when strategically representing the collective strength of the golf superintendent industry. He challenged us to collaborate with the GCSAA to work together on a national level.

Evans switched gears and touched on the importance of the EIFG and reported that between \$3-4 million was awarded in the past few years to fund over 150 scholarships, research and government relations activities. Through the newly secured Melrose (ex Toro CEO) gift, 17 superintendents were able to attend the GIS Education and Conference in San Diego.

Evans stated it isn't good when members begin to question paying their dues each renewal period.

Evans then went on to explain that hopefully golf's slide (and the rest of our economies) has steadied. Golf has seen a decrease over the past years from \$76 to \$69 billion industry per year, 30 to 25.3 million golfers, and there have been 141 golf course closing in the last year. In closing Rhett asked if there were any questions of the group and the affiliation agreement was brought up. This was something that was extended by GCSAA the last week of December 2013, without much explanation, if any at all. GCSAA is reviewing the document and should have a new draft sometime this summer. I hope we see it before the chapter delegates meeting this fall so members will have time to review and comment.

Mark Woodhead, GCSAA Senior Director of Membership talked a little bit about how the GCSAA and local chapters will be using Google Docs to share databases, or at least for local chapters to upload our membership data. Though the ultimate goal of sharing data, (we send our membership

roster every year as part of the affiliation agreement) has never been made clear, it seems GCSAA will be looking for superintendent members of local chapters that are not members of GCSAA. GCSAA is trying to recapture its membership, which has been on a slide since a high of 22,400 six years ago and a slow decrease to over 17,000 (representing a decline of 4-4.5% each year).

A Rounds for Research update was given, a program the Midwest has signed up to participate in for the next two years. This is a program where golf courses are able to donate rounds to GCSAA and ultimately MAGCS – the rounds are auctioned off and after costs are deducted (20%) the funds are sent to us. MAGCS then is able to use the monies to fund local research.

Chava McKeel and our lobbyist Robert Helland (great name for a lobbyist...Bob give 'em Hell and...) stressed the importance of our lobbyist activities – that is being proactive. The firm he works for, Reed Smith and Associates, keeps a close eye on things that impact our industry. The key is getting and keeping our message in front of those who are proposing legislation. It is amazing what a little education and information can do when applied properly. Bob did give a little insight as to what he think will happen in the coming years of the current administration citing some type of immigration reform will happen, the EPA will continue its review of chemicals used in our industry, and that labor reforms will also occur. Bob feels confident in our strategy of staying involved

by seeing staffers and congress members often throughout the legislative calendar.

These presentations took a little longer than expected and our time for networking with other chapter executives was cut short. Most of us were still able to have a few conversations through lunch and I plan to continue my conversations this month while attending the Chapter Leaders Symposium with Dave Groelle, CGCS at headquarters in Kansas. By the way, the Chapter Leaders Conference is funded by the Williams Leadership Fund (our Williams, Bob and Bruce). Upon our return, Dave and I will have more to report. @




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TEACHING AN OLD DOG

Dogs and golf courses go together like greens and cup cutters. When I started to build White Deer Run Golf Course in 1997 I was thinking of purchasing a dog.

As it is my nature to research everything before making the leap, I called around and asked about border collies since they were being used a lot at the time. I have always had big dogs—mostly Labrador retrievers—and did not really like border collies. Knowing that we were going to have problems with geese I said, “Okay, let’s try this border collie thing.” The dog I decided on and trained and worked with passed on about a year ago. Without a doubt it was the best dog I ever had. A great working dog and an even better family dog and companion.

So here I am driving around, seeing superintendents and their dogs on a daily basis while peddling my wares. I missed having a dog, but how would one fit in now? Ah, what the heck, the search was on again. I wanted another border collie, but one with different markings. I found a breeder and found an all-white dog with a black patch over one eye. This one was different alright. I kinda forgot about the training and the “puppy time”. It was a little harder this time without a course to run my new youngster on, but thanks to my many superintendent friends we always have a place to exercise and run anytime we want to. This dog was different. Every dog we see or are around has its job, whether on a course, to hunt, to protect, just to name a few. But what about us? What was Ginger’s job going to be? I started thinking again and researching. I tried agility training with my other dog—HUGE failure—he never liked it. I thought let’s give this a try, I have to have something for this little one to do or it will drive me and my wife crazy. Well after 7 months we just passed our first qualifier for agility.

If you are not familiar with agility, it is where the dog and handler have to move through a number of obstacles, usually around 20 total without penalties. The dog with the fastest time is the winner. Champion dogs will do a course in just over 30 seconds—that’s right, 30 seconds. The obstacles consist of jumps, tunnels, an A frame, a “dog walk” and others. The old dog being taught new tricks here is me. This has been quite an

experience as all my friends will tell you, as they listen to me talk about this ad infinitum. A lot of running and exercise for this old dog (falling down too), the young dog is seen many times ahead of the old one, barking at him and asking, “Where do I go next old man?” This sport is for any dog and its handler no matter what breed or age. Don’t ever think that the agility trials you see on TV are as easy as they look. Again anything that looks easy takes a lot of time and work. The experience has been a total win-win. I get to spend quality time with my dog, she gets the exercise and sense of purpose she needs, and she isn’t bouncing off the walls driving me and my family nuts. If you are willing to work with your dog, the rewards are tenfold. If you are interested just contact me and I will put you in touch with some agility clubs in the area. The one we belong to is www.agilityjunkies.com in the Northwest area. Wish us luck, we will need it. I am sure all my friends can’t wait to hear more about me and my dog, and our current adventures! @

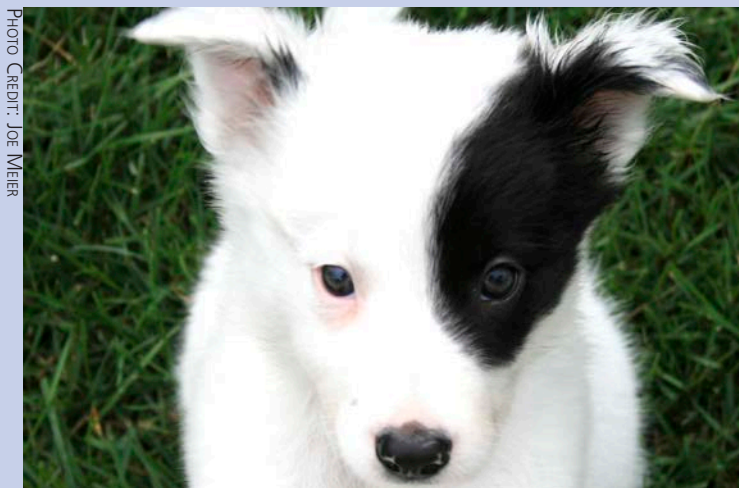


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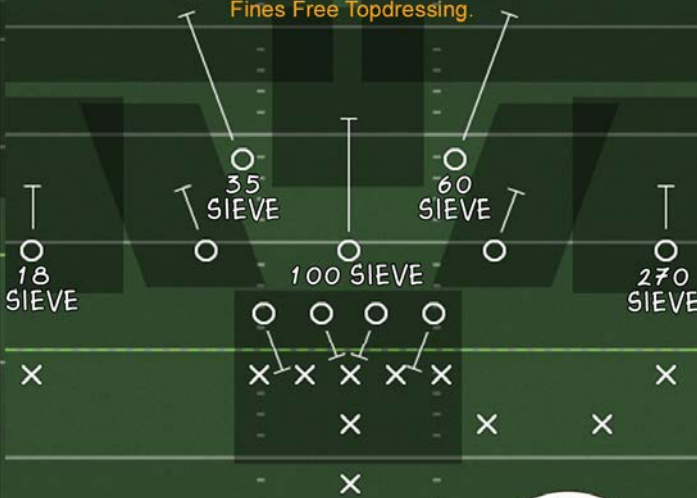
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