

# Golf Course News expands editorial staff

This column will be the last for awhile so that Editor Hal Phillips can have an opportunity to offer his thoughts on the industry to you each month.

Hal joined our editorial department recently. You have become familiar with Managing Editor Mark Leslie and Associate Editor Peter Blais, and they will continue to inform you with news of the industry.

The continued growth of *Golf Course News* has required our adding to the editorial staff. A good advertising client responded to this news with, "You can't add to your

staff. This is the '90s." With all the cutbacks, we're quite fortunate to be in a position to add staff. The beneficiary will be our

readers as we will strive to report more news and go that extra mile to get accurate information on industry trends.

Hal's baptism by fire was spending



Charles von Brecht  
publisher

the weekend in New Orleans at the recent GCSAA show. He had an opportunity to hear the positive comments from readers and advertising clients, further assuring him that he made the right decision.

Hal's background includes writing and editing for various daily newspapers. His golf background includes collegiate golf, with a year on the University of London team, which played a few rounds on world-famous British and Scottish courses. He will be a valuable asset to the growing *Golf Course News* team.

I recently had the opportunity to

walk the totally reconstructed Stouffer Vinor Resort course (formerly Sunset Country Club) with architect Ron Garl. Although not yet planted, the course has the potential to be among the top resort courses in Florida. Opening day is planned in August.

Again, I want to thank all our readers who have read and responded to this column over the past three years. I may, from time to time, get in my nickel's worth. In the meantime, enjoy reading *Golf Course News* and look for Hal Phillips' column here next month.

## EDITOR'S COMMENTARY

# Believe it or not, one is often more than enough

*"I am only one, but still I am one. I cannot do everything, but still I can do something. And because I cannot do everything, I will not refuse to do the something that I can do."*

— Edward Everett Hale

By Mark Leslie

There are several billion humans on Earth and people tend to look at the numbers in their country, their state, or even their town and feel that whatever they do is without effect. Useless. A waste of time and effort. Forget even trying!

Don't be deceived. It just isn't so. There are countless instances where one vote made an extraordinary difference — even turned the tide of history.

In 1645 one vote gave Oliver Cromwell control of England.

In 1649 one vote caused Charles I of England to be executed.

In 1776 one vote gave America the English language instead of German.

In 1836 one vote elected Marcus Morton governor of Massachusetts.

In 1845 one vote brought Texas into the Union.

In 1868 one vote saved President

Andrew Johnson from impeachment.

In 1875 one vote changed France from a monarchy to a republic.

In 1876 one vote gave Rutherford B. Hayes the presidency.

In 1923 one vote gave Adolf Hitler control of the Nazi Party.

In 1941 one vote saved the Selective Service System just 12 weeks before Pearl Harbor.

Behind each of those "one votes" was one person. What if that person had decided to stay home on the day of decision because "what's-one-lously-vote-anyhow?"

Besides votes, what about actions? What if Leonardo da Vinci had decided at a young age that his presence in the world was insignificant? In the world of art who can measure the significance of a de Vinci, a Michelangelo, a Disney? In the world of the military who can measure the importance of a Lee, a



Mark Leslie  
managing editor

Grant MacArthur, an Eisenhower? And what about the world of golf?

Just looking back on the very recent past proves that researchers, teachers, course architects, even media types have made a lasting difference in the golf industry.

After hearing that Eliot Roberts is retiring from The Lawn Institute, it occurred to me how important that one person can be. Roberts led major university agronomy programs in the country before taking over The Lawn Institute 10 years ago to pull together research and development that is being done worldwide. What if he had decided that was too big a chore?

Other examples? Check the recently "retired" ranks Roberts is joining. From universities there are Joseph Troll from the University of Massachusetts, Richard Skogley of the University of Rhode Island, Joe Duich and Don Waddington from Penn State, Henry Indyk from Rutgers, Bob Kneebone from the University of Arizona, Roy Goss from Washington State University, Ken Payne from Michigan State University, Arden Baltensberger

and Glen Burton from New Mexico State.

Then, there is Jack Murray, who has helped in major advances in sod production and sports turf research during his former days at the USDA in Beltsville, Md., and today continues his research. And in the business world, Jim Watson at Toro and Dr. Bob Miller of ChemLawn.

Sherwood Moore, Jim Brandt and other recently retired superintendents have had a profound impact on golf.

Where would the golf industry be without these people — individually or collectively?

So, I say to the younger generation: Do not count yourself short. Do not undersell the contributions you can make to the industry, or society in general.

You are the only biological mother or father your children will ever have. You are a deacon of that church, a contributor to that charity, a member of the staff of that organization.

Ours is a history of ones. And we are in a small enough industry that apathy could absolutely kill it.

## GUEST COMMENTARY

# Add one more acronym to list — for the gophers

By Bob Spiwak

Amidst the alphabet soup of golf organizations, societies, tours, writers and governing bodies, there is one of whose existence you are probably unaware. It's the American society of golf course gophers. a.s.g.c.g. If you are wondering about the lower case, the gophers feel it distinguishes them from humans and their arrogance.

We were able to obtain an exclusive interview with Media Rep gopher at the society's headquarters in a deep hole under a box elder tree at the Cold Sore Country Club in Cut Bank, Montana. (Headquarters were once at Far Hills, N.J., but the Garden State atmosphere drove the society to cleaner air.) Mr. Gopher allowed us to break the story because at our own

golf course we live in peaceful co-existence with the furry creatures; our philosophy being that anyone stupid

enough to pay good money to aggravate him or herself playing golf deserves an occasional mound or hole on the putting surface.

According to greg, gophers were once, as were the greenskeepers, rather independent agents, each keeping to his own turf and out of touch with his counterparts elsewhere. With the advent of GCSAA, the gophers decided that they, also,



Bob Spiwak

needed to share information.

What kind of information? Gopher ticked off a list on his paws: seminars on better soil penetration, efficient root-pruning, dealing with pesticides, trap avoidance, subterranean stimp metering (of water runoff) and, surprisingly, perpetuation and proliferation of poa annua.

I asked what poa had to do with gophers, aside from a possible meal. Greg smiled. "Hell, we wouldn't eat that stuff. By keeping the supers busy fighting it, we lessen their efforts combatting us." He tilted his whiskers in an attitude of smug satisfaction. "Divide and conquer, you know?" he smirked.

Since the gophers have organized, he continued, they were able to effect mass purchasing practices

and get the poa at wholesale in large quantities.

Asked how the creatures were so adept at springing traps, he said that it was not always thus. Again, through organization, members were educated in the techniques of trap-tripping. The latest method was borrowed, he said, from the Teen Aged Mutant Ninja Turtles. "A little armor here, a sword for trigger tripping, and voila!, no problema. Well, we do get our share of lacerations and amputations, but each golf course has an infirmary, and we have trained E.M.T. personnel. While he acknowledged that the infirmaries were usually at the same site on every golf course, he would not divulge the location.

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