

# HAVE YOU SEEN US?



**BROWN PATCH**

AKA: *Rhizoctonia solani*

Description: Yellow to light brown patches up to five feet in diameter

Caution:

Spreads rapidly

Last seen on our competitors' fairways



**DOLLAR SPOT**

AKA: *Sclerotinia homoeocarpa*

Description: Straw to tan colored sunken spots, one to two inches in diameter

Caution: Foliar and stem attacking fungus

Last seen being sprayed with fungicide



**GOLF COURSES THAT INTERSEED WITH A BLEND OF BROWN PATCH-RESISTANT PENNEAGLE II AND DOLLAR SPOT-RESISTANT PENNLINKS II SEE LESS AND LESS OF THESE DISEASES, AND THEIR FAIRWAYS SEE LESS FUNGICIDE.**

2003 mean brown patch and dollar spot ratings for entries in a bentgrass turf trial seeded fall of 2002 near Rolesville, NC and maintained at 0.5"

Entry	Dollar Spot	Brown Patch
PennLinks II	5.0 <sup>1</sup>	7.2 <sup>1</sup>
Penn A-1	7.0	5.8
PennLinks	6.0	5.0
<b>Penneagle II</b>	<b>7.7</b>	<b>4.7</b>
L-93	5.3	4.5
Penneagle	6.0	3.7
Penncross	4.7	3.7
Penn A-4	7.3	3.5
SR 1119	8.0	2.5
<b>LSD (0.05)</b>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>1.4</b>

<sup>1</sup>9 = no disease

2004 mean brown patch and dollar spot ratings for entries in a bentgrass turf trial seeded fall of 2003 near Rolesville, NC and maintained at 0.5"

Entry	Dollar Spot	Brown Patch
<b>PennEagle II</b>	<b>5.7<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>8.2<sup>1</sup></b>
Seaside II	6.3	8.0
Independence	4.0	7.9
L-93	6.3	7.8
Bengal	5.0	7.6
<b>PennLinks II</b>	<b>7.3</b>	<b>6.9</b>
Penncross	5.3	6.1
Seaside	6.0	5.9
<b>LSD (0.05)</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>1.5</b>

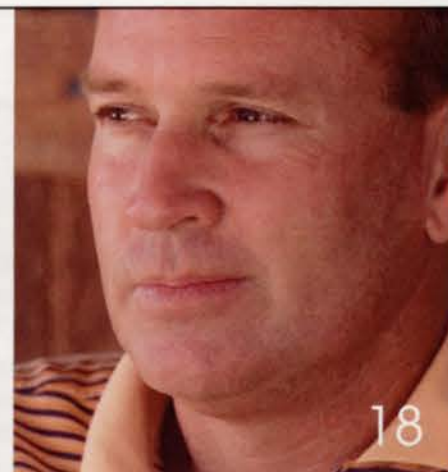
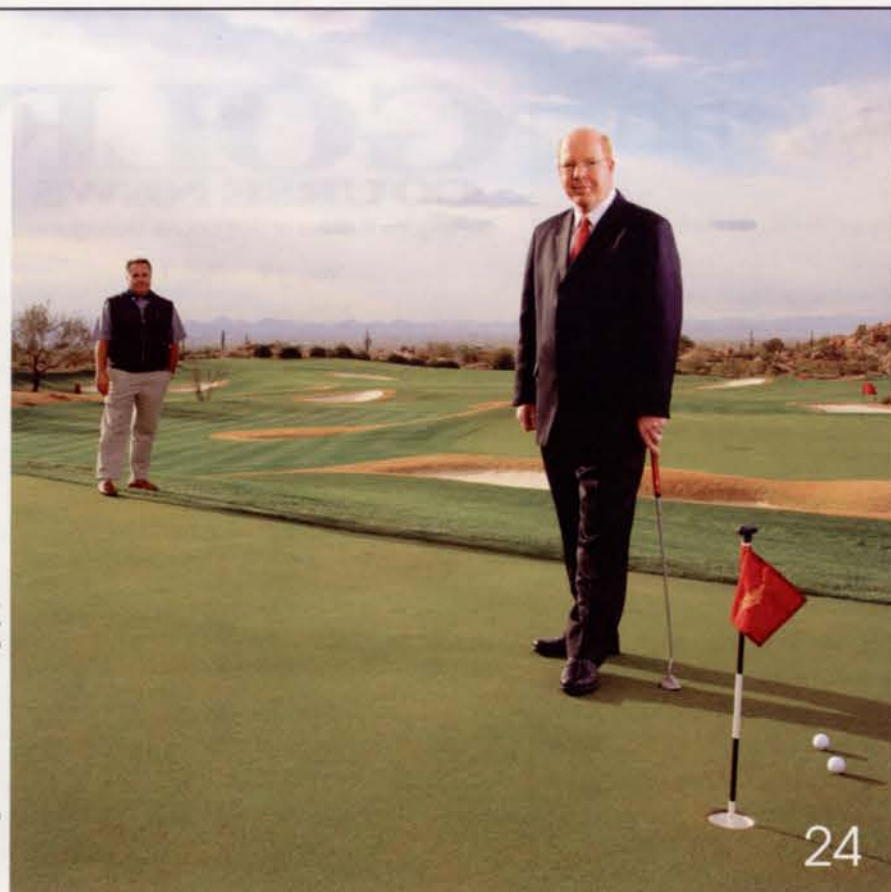
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**EDITORIAL MISSION STATEMENT:**

Golf Course News reports on and analyzes the business of maintaining golf courses, as well as the broader business of golf course management. This includes three main areas: agronomy, business management and career development as it relates to golf course superintendents and those managers responsible for maintaining a golf course as an important asset. Golf Course News shows superintendents what's possible, helps them understand why it's important and tells them how to take the next step.

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Experts at the Ohio Turfgrass Foundation's conference shared money-saving turf-tending tips.



John Walsh  
Editor

## Knowing your worth

It's as simple as this: Golf course conditions affect revenue, and superintendents are responsible for course conditions, therefore, superintendents are extremely valuable to a golf facility. For most of you, I'm preaching to the choir, but how many owners, managers and club members aren't in this choir? Superintendents compete daily to prove their value, and sometimes they need to proclaim their worth, especially during difficult financial times.

Getting owners and members to clearly understand your value starts with developing positive professional relationships with your employers and employees. Generally, building solid relationships will help you resolve conflict and guide you through difficult times.

But you can't talk about value with out talking about success; and success means different things to different people, so you need to know what your employers want and how to give it to them. It's a matter of being No. 1 in their eyes.

As you're well aware, members/golfers view success differently, and it's difficult to make all of them happy because they all want different things. Member/golfer expectations continue to rise, but budgets don't rise along with them. Because of those factors, your career can be built and judged on the narrowest of margins. Never forget it takes many years to build a reputation and a few minutes to ruin it.

Golf is the main revenue generator for a golf club, and you're responsible for that main revenue generator, yet club managers often receive annual bonuses at clubs that are successful. Are you receiving the credit you deserve for that overall success?

Well, you can influence the bottom line and how your employers view your contribution and value to the facility. It's important to know your facility's financials and use them to your advantage. Take ownership of the revenues to which you contribute.

So what are you doing beyond the norm to remain valuable other than attending seminars and networking with peers? One general example is focusing on the business management aspect of your job. During a seminar at the Carolinas GCSA Conference and Show in November, Tommy Witt, CGCS, director of golf course operations at Northmoor

Country Club in Highland Park, Ill., presented many ways for superintendents to maintain and enhance their value. Some include:

1. Use photography to your advantage because it's a powerful and valuable tool. "Carrying a camera was the best thing I've ever done," Witt says. Photos sell your value to employers in so many ways. Even the most difficult people can't argue with photos.

2. Create the right business image. How do you make yourself memorable without compromising your integrity? Have principles, and live by them. Make it a point to be accountable.

3. Develop a public relations program and tell your story – internally and externally. Nobody will know it if you don't tell it. Invite action to gain visibility and recognition. Influence what people think of you.

4. Improve your communication skills. There are different audiences (young, old, male, female, ethnic) who prefer different modes of communication, so you might have to communicate differently with each. "The top three superintendent jobs in the Chicago area changed because of communication or a lack thereof," Witt says.

5. Be visible and approachable on the golf course.

6. Create a "play golf with the superintendent" sign-up sheet. This can encourage members to get to know you more and provides you the opportunity to find out what members think about the course.

The list goes on. This space doesn't. You've heard it many times before, but as I travel to various conferences throughout the country, I hear many top-notch superintendents continue to repeat it: You need to further develop your business acumen and people skills in addition to your agronomy knowledge. In this day and age, superintendents need multiple skills to succeed and be valued, just like any other businessman.

You play an important role in generating revenue at golf facilities, and you have a huge financial impact on the bottom line. Make sure the powers that be realize that, too. GCN

*John Walsh*

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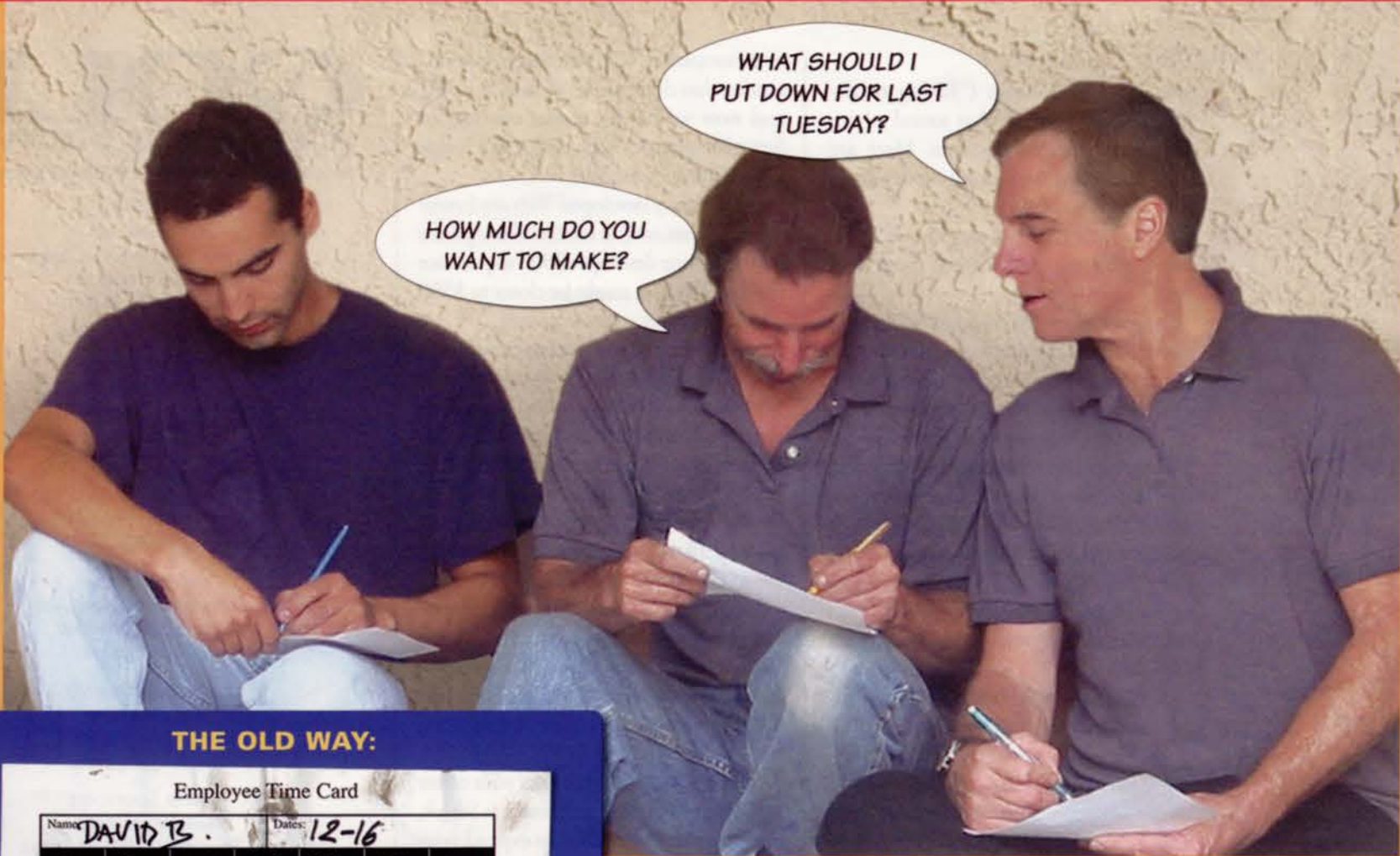
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We would like to hear from you. Please post any comments you have about this column on our message board, which is at [www.golfcoursenews.com/messageboard](http://www.golfcoursenews.com/messageboard).



# HOW MUCH IS THIS CONVERSATION COSTING YOU?



## THE OLD WAY:

Employee Time Card

Name: DAVID B. Dates: 12-16

Day	Start	Lunch	End	Jobsite	Activity	Hours
Monday	7	1/2	3:30	Brentwood	Gen	8
Tuesday	7	1/2	3:30	'	'	8
Wednesday	7	1/2	4	'	'	8 1/2
Thursday	7	1/2	4	Brentwood	'	8 1/2
Friday	7	1/2	4	'	'	8 1/2

Employee Signature: *David B.* Total Hours: 41 1/2

*Get in control of your manpower.*

## THE JOBCLOCK WAY:

Employee Report

Burns, David Date Range: 2/12/2007 through 2/16/2007

Day	Date	Jobsite	Start	Stop	Cost Code	Hours	Total
Mon	2/12	Brentwood 1	7:08 AM	12:05 PM	Placing The Pin	4:57	
			12:41 PM	3:22 PM	Bunker	2:41	7:38 hours
Tue	2/13	Brentwood 1	7:12 AM	12:07 PM	Placing The Pin	4:55	
			12:43 PM	3:23 PM	Mowing	2:40	7:35 hours
Wed	2/14	Brentwood 1	7:12 AM	12:02 PM	Placing The Pin	4:50	
			12:46 PM	3:49 PM	Bunker	3:03	7:53 hours
Thu	2/15	Brentwood 2	7:17 AM	12:19 PM	Placing The Pin	5:02	
			12:50 PM	3:46 PM	Bunker	2:56	7:58 hours
Fri	2/16	Brentwood 2	7:13 AM	12:07 PM	Placing The Pin	4:54	
			12:44 PM	3:39 PM	Mowing	2:55	7:49 hours
						<b>Total</b>	<b>38:53 hours</b>

Signature: *David B.* Burns, David



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**Rising to the top**

John Walsh's column ("Rising to the top, October, page 6) has sound advice for future superintendents. Here are four important factors superintendents should think about:

1. Knowledge. No one knows it all, but respect those who know more than you.

2. Leadership. Management skills are a must. Who will work with you and gain your respect if you don't have a sense of direction or a plan of objectives? To gain respect, one needs to show respect. Leadership and management practices take time. Some have management skills, others don't. They require personal and professional skills. Management is a big factor nowadays. Management companies lease or run many golf courses, and communicating with them is difficult sometimes.

3. Mechanical knowledge. Every superintendent has to have some.

4. Common sense. This, as well as paying attention to detail, goes a long way with daily operations. You'd be surprised about how many members or public players notice trash cans, foot scrubbers, divot containers, tee markers, etc. The list goes on.

Rick Douglas  
Golf course superintendent  
Harmon Golf Club  
Lebanon, Ohio

**A personal Web site**

*Editor's note: GCN columnist Jim McLoughlin responds to inquiries about personal Web sites:*

Some of you have contacted me asking for Web site development assistance and/

or a completed Web site that a superintendent has done well. I've been waiting, and now we have a model courtesy of Steve Renzetti, CGCS, at Quaker Ridge Golf Club in Scarsdale, N.Y.

Steve's newly developed Web site ([www.stevenrenzetti.com](http://www.stevenrenzetti.com)) is terrific. Steve paid a local Web-site developer \$900 to produce the site. The cost might be closer to \$500 outside a major metro city area.

No matter. Your job isn't to copy Steve's Web site but to reach for and match the quality of it. When you find your Web site developer, ask him to note the quality of Steve's and then be creative in mixing your format. Your links basically will be the same, but your use of photos and your career path will differ sufficiently to allow for a customized site.

Note Steve used photos well, but he didn't overuse them, which many superintendents have a tendency to do. Steve's advice to every superintendent is to take digital pictures all the time and then use the best. Steve certainly has.

Finally, because the scope of your career might not be as deep and broad as Steve's, don't pressure yourselves to expand your credentials artificially so you can put a lot into each link. Work with the credentials you have for the place you are now, and as your career expands, grow your site to match it. You'll note Steve has said his site is in constant motion. This means he knows he'll be constantly updating it.

Good luck and do well.  
JMCL

**Outstanding content**

This is a brief note to let you know I find your magazine content outstanding. I receive at least six industry magazines every month. I typically flip through them quickly, looking for items I need to know and to increase my knowledge. Your magazine is less cluttered, and the articles are often pertinent and helpful. I read the October 2006 issue. Great stuff. Thank you.

Bob Peterson  
General manager  
DarkHorse Golf Club  
Auburn, Calif.

**Correction**

In a letter to the editor written by Bob Mitchell in the October issue (page 8), the Franklin County Country Club mentioned is in West Frankfort, Ill., and the Southmoor Golf Course mentioned is in South St. Louis County, Mo. The locations stated were incorrect. GCN

**Readers with comments are invited to write to:**

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## Education drives national show

by John Walsh

Visit the Golf Course News Web site, [www.golfcoursenews.com](http://www.golfcoursenews.com), for daily news updates about golf course developments and renovations, people, suppliers, associations and industry events.



The Golf Industry Show is nearing, and golf course superintendents are excited to partake in the big event. While most superintendents aren't necessarily there to make purchasing decisions, education and networking are the main factors for their attendance.

When Tom Ackley, CGCS, at Juniper Hill Golf Course in Northborough Mass., goes to the national show, he attends seminars for two days to maintain his certification and to keep up with new ideas about diseases, weeds, management and irrigation.

"I once tried taking four seminars one year, and it was very draining – now I take two," he says.

Ackley has been going to the national show since 1991 and looks forward to it yearly.

"The GCSAA is always trying to add new education seminars," he says. "As long as I've been certified, it's hard to

find worthwhile courses to take. I'm looking forward to a couple of seminars that haven't been offered before, and the USGA always has an informative session."

Mark Storby, golf course superintendent at Oneida Golf and Country Club in Green Bay, Wis., has been going to the show since 1996. Storby attends two one-day classes and spends two days at the trade show. He takes a mix of agronomy and business management seminars depending on what issues arise during the year. This year he's taking financial and risk management classes, the latter to learn about liability issues to protect the club.

Terry Boehm, CGCS, at Avon Oaks Country Club in Avon, Ohio, has been going to the national show since 1994 and hasn't missed a year. Boehm's first four years attending the show were as an assistant, but he says he doesn't have it in the budget to send his assistant this year.

Boehm takes one or two days of seminars to earn continuing education points, as well as other sessions.

"There's every seminar you can think of," he says. "The most important aspect of the national is the education."

Boehm also has been playing in the golf championship before the big event since 1998.

"It's a great networking opportunity," he says. "The seminars don't stop at the door. The [superintendent's] job is all about how to do more with less. And what's the best way to do that? I get that by talking to superintendents and attending seminars. I also use the show to recharge my batteries for the coming year and develop a plan of attack."

Ackley says the show provides good networking opportunities as well.

"The nice thing is that you meet people from all over the country and other countries," he says. "We help



each other out.”

Another benefit of the event is the trade show, Ackley says.

“The floor show is enormous,” he says. “I go through the list of vendors and pick out who I want to see. You could spend two days going through the entire show. I look for new products – grass seed, equipment or chemicals; or if I had issues with a piece of equipment, I look to get answers from technical guys.”

Ackley doesn't purchase anything at the show. Instead, he makes recommendations to his owner each winter and then the inventory is assessed. He says he rotates triplex mowers every five years and is looking at leasing for the first time.

“I haven't seen too much from equipment manufacturers in advertising, so it will be interesting to see what they have,” he says. “We're always interested in new equipment.”

Storby doesn't do much purchasing at the show either. About 2 percent of his total purchasing is done there, mostly small supplies and accessories.

He purchases larger equipment through local vendors.

Boehm isn't looking to buy anything at the show but uses it as an opportunity to talk to technical representatives.

“There's always a better mouse trap to tweak your operations,” he says.

Like many superintendents, Storby's wife usually comes with him.

“We socialize in the evenings, but we don't turn it into a vacation,” he says.

“I'm not into the political part of it,” he adds. “Other than seeing my comrades from school, I see the national as an educational opportunity. I've never found a need to network with other superintendents throughout the country. I do that locally.”

Having owners and clubs managers present at the show hasn't made a difference to Ackley. His relationship with Juniper's owner hasn't changed since the National Golf Course Owners Association has been a part of the show.

“My owner goes as a member of the NGCOA,” he says. “I meet up with him

and have dinner. It's nice on the business side for owners to understand more about what we do as superintendents. It's helping them out in a positive way. They know more about what to spend on chemicals and seed.”

Storby says he goes out of his way to show Oneida's ownership the benefits of attending the show. The Oneida ownership doesn't attend the show, but the general manager usually attends every other year.

Each year, Storby says he gets more out of the event, especially on the show floor because of the solutions centers.

“The expectation grows every year because the show gets more detailed every year,” he says.

Boehm says he doesn't expect the show to be that much different than it has been in the past.

“I'm happy for what's it's been,” he says. “It's a great show. I don't think there's anything missing at the show. No matter what you're going for, you get a chance to meet those goals.” GCN

## Golf Industry Show

**Web site:** [www.golfindustryshow.com](http://www.golfindustryshow.com)

**Location:** Anaheim Convention Center in California

**Presenting organizations:** Golf Course Superintendent Association of America, National Golf Course Owners Association, Club Managers Association of America

**Supporting organizations:** National Golf Foundation, American Society of Golf Course Architects, Golf Course Builders Association of America

**GCSAA Education Conference:** Feb. 19-24

**NGCOA Annual Conference:** Feb. 20-23

**CMAA World Conference on Club Management:** Feb. 23-27

**Trade show:** Feb. 22-24

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# Becoming more involved



John Ekstrom is the assistant golf course superintendent at Hinsdale Golf Club in Clarendon Hills, Ill. Ekstrom also is the head of the Class C Advisory Committee for the Midwest Association of Golf Course Superintendents. He can be reached at snapp79@aol.com or 815-922-0587.

It's 4:30 in the morning, and I'm the only car on the highway. Minutes later, it's 4:45 in the morning, and my footsteps are the only noise I hear in the shop. As I walk in, I wake up Jazz, our goose dog.

Spending my early mornings and late afternoons checking the course have been some of the most tranquil times of my life. However, early in my career, I would check the course and feel very isolated – not because I was working alone at the course, but because I didn't know where my career path was heading. Fortunately, the past few years have highlighted the value of communication, collaboration, networking and a team effort.

I'm very proud to be the third Class C committee adviser of the Midwest Association of Golf Course Superintendents. I've been on the committee since its inception in 2003 as a committee member. The Class C adviser leads the committee, which is comprised solely of assistant golf course superintendents. Being a nonvoting member of the Midwest board of directors, I'm fortunate to represent the 130 assistants of the Midwest Association. The president of the association appoints the adviser for a two-year term, and I'm currently serving the second year of my term. The committee's purpose is to provide opportunities in the careers of assistants to help them become golf course superintendents. These opportunities include:

- The annual assistant winter workshop;
- Assistant shoptalks;
- Contributing to MAGCS' magazine, *On Course*; and
- Numerous opportunities to network with other assistants and superintendents.

The annual assistant winter workshop, which began three years ago, is the main event of the year for the Class C committee. We've had several different speakers talk about various topics, including consultant Pat Jones of Flagstick LLC and meteorologist Phil Schwarz from ABC 7-Chicago. On Feb. 8, consultant Jim McLoughlin of TMG Golf will present his strategic career planning seminar to our assistants and superintendents. We

look forward to McLoughlin's seminar. Our committee is always thinking and looking for new topics and speakers for future workshops.

Another critical event our committee sponsors are assistant shoptalks, which are opportunities for assistants to get together at a specified club's maintenance shop and discuss the industry, club projects and equipment. We usually hold four or five shoptalks throughout the year. Besides, it's always fun to see other maintenance facilities.

As a Class C committee, one of the things we focus on is contributing to our association's award-winning monthly publication, *On Course*. No matter how big or small the input, giving back to your association is always important. Contributing to the magazine is one of the easiest ways to become recognizable within the association. After all, not all members attend monthly meetings or trade shows, but all of them receive the publication.

## Learn from experience

I know I'm preaching to the choir when telling superintendents and the veterans of this industry that networking is one of the most valuable assets of belonging to a professional organization. However, during my young career, I've met peers who don't completely realize the importance of learning from others in the industry to gain knowledge and experience.

A couple months ago, I gave a talk to turf students at a community college in the Chicago area. Most of them didn't have a clue about the realities of the job market, either for assistants or superintendents. My goal wasn't to scare them but rather to make them aware of market conditions. Unfortunately, some students have the illusion that once they graduate from college, jobs will fall at their feet. Truthfully, I thought this at one time as well.

It's true only time can bring experience. Hard work and dedication are just a few prerequisites for a great career. Neverthe-

less, some people with the best resumes still have difficult times. As with most instances in life, you must be aggressive and go after what you want. This is the message I deliver to the students I speak to. I'm honored people respect my opinion, and when speaking, especially to students, I take it very seriously.

I'm starting my 10th year in the business, the sixth as an assistant. I know there are many assistants in the industry with much longer tenures as assistants, and I appreciate their dedication to our industry. How many years will it

take me to get to my goal of becoming a golf course superintendent? I don't know, but I believe I'm on the right track. Being a member on the Class C committee

of the MAGCS has enabled me to meet people and form friendships that I never would have imagined. I look forward to many more opportunities to meet fellow professionals and learn from them.

## Communication is key

During my last semester at Illinois State University in 2001, I remember thinking this will be the last time I'll have to give a speech or write another essay. Now, five years later, I've learned that verbal and written communication is, and will always be, the distributor of progress. They're as necessary for our profession as sprayers, chemicals and other machinery or equipment.

Verbal and written communication is the cornerstone on which the Class C assistant committee is built. Our committee is dedicated to communicating information about the industry and our profession with assistants and superintendents. We're constantly communicating in a variety of ways via workshops, shoptalks, written publications and networking opportunities to provide information that will help support assistants on their journey to becoming golf course superintendents.

No matter how isolated you might feel in your career, never forget your chapter organization is always seeking new ideas to help promote each other and our great industry. GCN

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