



## President's Message

### A LUCKY MAN

I am in one of those moods we all get into once in awhile — something more than just a good mood. It is a mind set that is very reflective and expansive and frequently one that is difficult to describe. Such moods usually occur at very specific times, as I think about it. Usually I find these feelings sweep over me when I am, for a brief moment, enjoying the sight of the golf course and of Lake Mendota and of the whole of west Madison from high on top of the hill where the clubhouse is located. It is, easily, one of the most beautiful views in North America, and I am fortunate to be able to enjoy it just about whenever I want. I usually do not stop and look and enjoy this spot — my favorite spot — often enough. It isn't that I take it for granted, but I am honestly most normally too busy, hustling from one place to another tending to golf course business. I find that I am in one of these moods, most of the time, in early autumn. There are lots of reasons to explain why this happens now and not, for example, in April or July. I think that this is the time because it is when the pace has slowed a bit, the color of the trees is just beginning to appear and mellow days are ahead.

What I was thinking about is this — managing a golf course is probably the most continuously interesting occupation I know or that I can imagine. It seems funny that I would think about this during the season when there is so much work to do — usually too much work. But the list of ac-

complishments for the season is long and a feeling of satisfaction begins to reign. And the variety of jobs and work done this season and many others past is so diverse and so different that it becomes easier to understand why overseeing and managing a golf course is the interesting work it is. Doing forty or fifty different kinds of work in any given month has to, at the very least, add to the interest. Nearly everything that most people call someone else in to do we do for ourselves. We have to, or the Club probably wouldn't be in business. It is the old "jack of all trades" story.

I feel I am qualified to make a good judgement on what is interesting work because I had the good luck to be raised within the environment of the **second** most interesting profession—farming. I have mentioned before that this rural and agrarian background probably sparked my interest in golf courses in the first place. And I would have to footnote this with the thought that it would have to be farming as it was in the fifties and sixties — the days when Oliver 77's, Farmall H's, Ford 8N's and John Deere 60's provided the power, and when the milk truck came everyday to pick up 25 full milk cans, and when the herd of milk cows had to be gathered from a pasture several miles away. That was interesting. I don't think it is as much so today with farmers plowing fields of hundreds of acres in the enclosed air-conditioned cab of a 150 horsepower tractor (with stereo!); bringing the herd in from the dry lot next to the barn to milk them in the milking parlor where the milk goes from the cow's udder directly into the pipeline and on into the 1000 gallon milk tank. Good grief — how do you tell the good animals from the poor ones when you don't even lift the milking machine to see if it is full of milk! No wonder golf course management finishes ahead of farming these days.

Bill Bengeyfield, National Director of the USGA Green Section, has feelings on this subject that are similar to mine. He and I have exchanged some correspondence the past couple of years, and in one of the letters I received from him last year he said this: "Golf Course Superintendents and those of us in the Green Section surely

have many things in common, but there is one overriding bond between us — we love the challenge of growing grass for golf! We are close to nature and plants and the outdoors. We see the results (and sometimes the failures) of our labors. We are farmers, but not as lonely as the farmer." I've wondered many times if Bill also has a rural background. Even if he doesn't, he recognizes this same parallel to farming I have noted for years.

And I had another thought at this same time, on this same day and at the same spot. It may not be profound, but it was a notion that hadn't occurred to me before and that makes it at least unusual. Our work is rewarding not just because we are able to follow the seasons, and not just because we accomplish so many trades, and not just because we work for some of the finest and most successful people in all endeavors of life, and certainly not because it is a way to make a lot of money. It was the thought that we spend our whole working life producing a single work of art — the golf course itself. I was admiring how absolutely perfectly the sand traps we built ourselves in 1977 for our tenth hole complemented the beautiful setting. My mind then thought of all the chasing around I've done over the years to find native trees to plant on the golf course, even removing small hickory whips from the woods and carefully transplanting them into rough areas. Those whips are now twenty feet tall and have beautiful spring flowers and gorgeous yellow fall color and have served their real purpose of influencing the play of the ninth hole. The very functional maxi-tie and rock walls built over the years for the betterment of golf at our Club seem to get more beautiful every year. Same for the rods and rods of split rail fence. The mowing patterns of the different playing areas are a beautiful site to behold, seemingly created by an artist. So on and so on and so on, for all of us on our golf courses.

Those people who spend a lifetime doing strictly paperwork have to envy us for our artwork. Some of these people express themselves by putting all of their energies into making the lot around their home a piece of art —

they are too limited. Some focus on their home itself, adding outside trim and cute additions and filling the inside with furniture and pictures and other niceties that are expensive and worthless at the same time. They have no scope. I've got a couple of neighbors in these two categories. Some just plain miss the emotion completely — how depressing to have such bad luck. Everything each of us does on our golf course in some way adds to its artistic value and

to its beauty. And it is an influence that will be felt for generations. That tree you planted this past spring will be leafing out and bringing joy to people a hundred years from now. And how many people go back to their place of work after dinner, in the summer, like we do? Not always because there is something that needs to be done, but maybe to enjoy what we accomplished and created in the past days and weeks; to enjoy, in effect, our work of art.

We are lucky people, those of us in this profession. We can be proud of the impact we have on our neighborhoods and communities and on the game of golf itself, because of our creations. And we can feel fortunate to be among those who can afford to judge aesthetics and natural beauty with salary and be proud to claim that our profession is indeed a way of life for us.

Back to work.

Monroe S. Miller

## An Architect's Opinion

# LANDSCAPING THE DETAILS

By Bob Lohmann



Landscape design for the golf course has two distinct phases. The first is the tree planting plan, which has an impact on how the golfer plays his game. Large tree plantings are positioned throughout the golf course for definition of target areas, strategy, depth perception, and safety. These trees should be deep rooted, high and open branching, and relatively litter free.

The second phase of landscaping the golf course is the detail planning, which provides the most visual and functional value to the golfer. These plans should include use of smaller structured plant materials including ground covers and flowering shrubs. Also included are retaining walls, planters, paths, mounds, and all other unique design features. These items should have a visual impact on the golfer without affecting the way he plays the game.

Color, texture, form, and scale are the characteristics of detail landscaping that provide a pleasant atmosphere for the golfer during the golf round. If he fails to notice the beauty of these design features, his golf game will not be affected.



Interesting tee landscaping.



Curbed cart path.

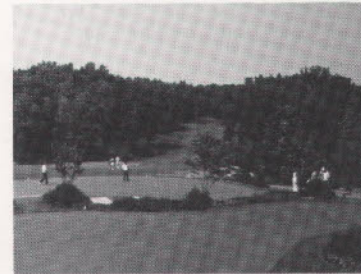
adjacent to greens, fairways, or areas that are in-play for the golfer. These colorful plantings may be aesthetically pleasing, but they hinder the game by causing slow play and forcing local rulings.

The functional impact of detail landscaping is evident through the use of materials that direct circulation patterns. A curbed cart path, a heavily planted mound, or a raised flower bed can direct traffic to eliminate wear areas or unsafe conditions. The use of mulch beneath flowers, shrubs, or tree plantings eliminates grass cutting and reduces maintenance. Stone or timbers placed on creek or lake banks eliminate erosion problems and minimize the maintenance of cutting grass or removing weeds.

Similar to tree plantings, the detail landscaping plan must include all the proper techniques. Neglecting any of the design elements can result in a golf course that is merely decorated with plants. Detail landscaping designed and implemented in balance will accent the golf course design and create a completely shaped exterior space.



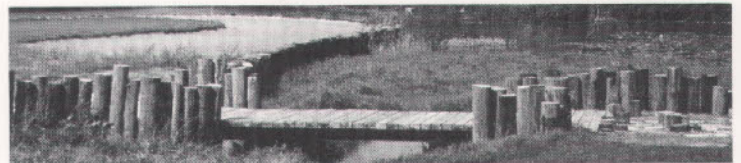
Timber and rock lake treatment.



Landscaping around putting green.



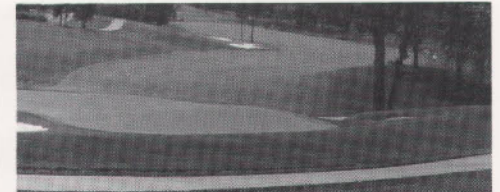
A fine example of an open branched tree.



Unique cart path crossing.



Cart path through woods adjacent to fairway.



Good use of cart path curbing and open branched trees around a green.