



President's Message

"GET WITH IT"



By Bill Roberts

It is far too easy, and yet somehow, I suppose, understandable, to view our golf course operations in terms of "I". How many times in the course of simple conversation on the telephone or at a WGCSA meeting or in the hall outside of an auditorium at a regional seminar do we hear statements such as "I aerified my fairways last fall" or "I am mowing fairways at 5/8" or "I applied x material to my greens at x rate and I got great results."

The Golf Course Superintendent is accountable, there is little doubt about that. The position is entrusted with responsibility for the management of some very valuable property. We oversee the allocation of thousands of dollars in order to insure the appropriate utilization of such property. We initiate action. We plan, direct, follow-up and evaluate. We get results. We get things done. We. . . .

We actually have staff to implement our direction. Employees carry out the assignments for which we are responsible. People, who with the proper amount of training and motivation, receive instruction, go out onto the golf course and accomplish and who take a great deal of pride in the finished product. We may initiate but how many of us really "aerified those fairways" or "set the mowers at 5/8," "adjusted the reels, transported to and mowed those fairways" or "filled the sprayer, calibrated the equipment, applied the material and cleaned up and stored the equipment?" How many of us do all of those things all by ourselves? Not many of us, at least not all the time.

It is a fundamental assumption with me anymore that my success, my ability to accomplish, depends upon the people who work for, no,

better yet, the people who work with me. When the goal of "the best golf course possible" becomes a mutual pursuit of both management **and** staff, the goal becomes attainable and the process of attaining that goal becomes enjoyable and rewarding. It is in our very best interest to have staff pointing toward "our" goals.

I would support, at this point, that one way to aid that success, one way to enhance pride in that finished product, one way to consolidate the goal is to encourage participation in the Wisconsin Golf Course Superintendents Association for key staff members.

The immediate and tangible benefits to the individual are many and have been listed in this space many times before. For \$50.00 a year, one can gain access to an increasing number of technical-educational opportunities through speakers at monthly meetings. The information disseminated through our award-winning newsletter is invaluable for new insights and for reference material. The opportunity to view other golf course operations and their programs and procedures while enjoying WGCSA monthly golf outings can stimulate interest in, encourage questions about and enhance support for your own operation.

But aside from these obvious benefits, by supporting staff membership in WGCSA, we, as managers, can accomplish a couple of other things as we remove exclusively from our objectives and move toward a mutual trend.

First of all, we are telling our staff, that we are willing to invest some time and money in their role as a contributor to the "finished product." We are recognizing that

their support is crucial to a clean, efficient and professional operation. And we are "putting our money where our mouth is."

Secondly, we are giving them an opportunity to arrive at a vested interest in our profession. Staff members can become a "part of the business" and not just "the crew putting in their time." Participation allows for identification with the goals of good golf course management at all levels. A sense of camaraderie begins to evolve or is enhanced. A flow of information begins on an informal basis and interest is stimulated. Interest will always stimulate increased productivity and increased productivity means better overall results for your operation.

A third point, although not directly related to enhanced staff performance, is the Golf Course Superintendents obligation to support his profession. The Wisconsin Golf Course Superintendents Association cannot operate in a vacuum and we (all of us) are dependent on new sources of information, new personalities and new perspectives if we are to continue to gain professionally. What better focal point at which to assemble these new sources of growth than the Wisconsin GCSA. If we are to mature individually, we must grow collectively.

If you are currently supporting your employees professional development by sponsoring membership in our association, congratulations. If you have yet to make such a commitment, I would suggest, as they say, you "get with it." It's important to your staff, to your association, to your golf course and, ultimately, it is important for you.

Our best to the
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bountiful 1986!



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