



He's Made A Difference

By Monroe S. Miller

When Jim Love retired, his former students hosted a party in his honor at the Nakoma Golf Club. Among those we invited to participate in the formal program was a member of Nakoma—Professor Leo Walsh.

Dr. Walsh was a colleague of Jim Love; both were members of the faculty in the Department of Soil Science. They started their careers as faculty members at about the same time. Walsh later became department chairman. When Jim retired, Leo was the dean of the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences.

Lots of nice things were said about Jim Love that night. For me, the most memorable was a simple question posed by Dr. Walsh about Jim Love: "During his career at the university, did this man make a difference?"

Of course, Walsh and everyone there on that wonderful evening answered with a resounding "yes."

The answer is an easy and obvious I pose the same question: "During Leo Walsh's time as dean of the college, did he make a difference to us?"

The answer is an easy and obvious: YES. The man made a big difference to all of us.

I recall how, early in his administration of CALS, he and Gayle Worf hosted a meeting of the newly formed Wisconsin Turfgrass Association in the second floor conference room in the Russell Labs building. He used the forum to offer encouragement to the organization and to detail how the WTA and the college could best merge their interests.

I recall how he travelled to Las Vegas in 1984 to attend the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America conference and show. He also met with the CALS alumni in attendance. We were all quite flattered and honored by his interest. That meeting comes up in conversation occasionally yet these days.

I recall how, again in 1984, he accepted an invitation to speak at the

Wisconsin Golf Turf Symposium in Milwaukee. He was the lead speaker of that meeting.

So it's gone through the nearly dozen years Dr. Walsh has guided the college. He has been available, accessible and very supportive.

The University of Wisconsin Foundation Dean's Club meeting and luncheon this spring was held at our club, as a tribute to our turfgrass industry in Wisconsin and the success we have had with the NOER CENTER project. Dean Walsh was, of course, our host.

It continued right through this fall. There he was at the WTA Field Day, visiting with everybody, kicking tires on the equipment, examining the research plots and having lunch with the group.

And when we really needed him—to move the NOER project through a maze of rules and regulations in late September—he was there for us, shepherding it in the right direction.

In fact, the Sunday before he announced his resignation from the

dean's position, Leo had driven out to the NOER CENTER to check on the progress of the building construction with his own eyes.

It's been a good time for us under Walsh's leadership; they've been our salad days, in a way. This has been a time of easy access to the highest office in the college, an access we have used to our advantage.

Walsh is equally comfortable around U.S. senators or golf course staff. That trait of humility that he has extended to us, that feeling of being sincerely glad to help, has made him a real favorite among those in our business who have known him.

I personally cannot help but feel a little sadness that this wonderful era is over. No matter who the chancellor selects to fill the dean's office, it seems unlikely that person will be able to fill Walsh's shoes. He's simply done too much for us.

The man has made a real difference.

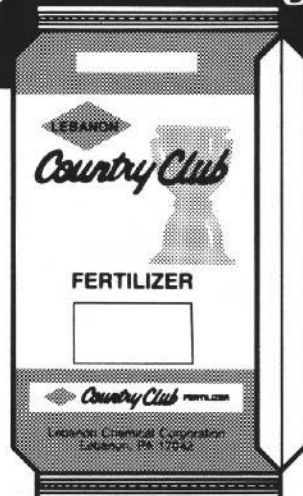
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