



# To Be Heard, You Must First Be Seen

By Mark Kienert



Thanks, in part, to an event scheduled immediately on the heels of our Wisconsin Golf Course Superintendents election meeting (featuring Washington Post columnist and ABC TV correspondent George Will), I postponed my president's acceptance speech outlining my goals and objectives for you until they could appear here in the GRASS ROOTS. From my vantage point, the postponement was an easy choice as I could see that the majority of you had already departed for the refreshment stand, and that my audience was clearly dominated by the anxious faces of the approximately 25 or so banquet setup personnel ready to spring to action as soon as I adjourned the meeting. What I offer now is a refined and clarified version of my president's acceptance message.

It is my distinct pleasure to be your association's 33rd president. For the many new faces in our midst and for all of our long time members whose memories, like mine, are fading, I was first nominated and elected to the board of directors in November of 1984 when I was still an assistant golf course superintendent at the North Hills Country Club. While on the board, I maintained a determined focus, never losing sight of my desire to one day serve as WGCSA President.

Now that day has come. I have to publicly thank all our past presidents and board members who I served with over that span of time for all of our association's present successes. I was honored to assist in their efforts on your behalf. I now look forward to utilizing the abilities and skills of our newly elected board members for all our future continued successes.

I have chosen a simple theme for my term as your president that has more personal meaning for myself than for possibly the majority of you. My credo simply is:

## TO BE HEARD, YOU MUST FIRST BE SEEN.

This theme is an important reminder for me to break away from all old habits and to step out of my present comfort zones, to boldly accept and meet the challenges of tomorrow, today! As we all too well know, our offices are the playing fields that we maintain. They have no walls and the heavens serve as our ceilings. Only those that work in the out-of-doors can lay claim to having offices that are as large as ours. As a result, I find that it is too easy to get busy and remain out of reach for the majority members who employ me.

During my term in office, I would like to focus on three mandates. Those are image, education and research.

On image, I would like to assure all of our members that your board of directors will continue efforts to improve the image of the golf course superintendent in the eyes of all golfers, both public and private, everywhere. My present position is unique in the sense that I maintain both private and public facilities under one roof. I am constantly reminded of the differences between the two.

One of the ways that we might be able to improve our image is by soliciting the help of a retired business executive to serve as spokesperson for the

industry, someone to carry the torch on our behalf. This individual should have name recognition throughout the state and should be a person who has a passion for the game of golf, the golf course and its superintendent, and for all golfers in general. I think every club in the state has an individual just like that in its membership. The person that I would have liked very much to fill this position recently retired to Texas and is unavailable, and you know him as our great friend, Jim Latham. If you know of such an individual, please let me or someone on the board know.

I would also like to see the Wisconsin Golf Course Superintendents Association become active partners with the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Schools and for all golf course superintendents to share in the joys of shaping the young minds of our future generations. **Remember to be heard, you must first be seen.** Volunteer your efforts in church, school, youth athletic activities and in your communities. Increase your visibility in a positive sense and live up to those expectations that you have set for yourself. There are many of us who take the time to act as volunteers in many worthwhile events, yet how many times do we accept the recognition for ourselves when it is so richly deserved?

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**TORO  
3000**



**TORO  
3000**

Golf Course Hydroinjection

**Bill McMillan**

*Serving Central Wisconsin*

**800490 TURF**

2 MACHINES  
PER COURSE

DAY OR  
NIGHT

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### Now for Education:

Besides our own educational offerings, we have maintained strong ties with several allied associations, like the Wisconsin Turfgrass Association, the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, and the Metropolitan Milwaukee Sewerage District. They have provided us with additional excellent educational opportunities for our membership. We must thank all of our members who serve as volunteers in those organizations that help to organize worthwhile educational programs for us. Please continue to support those programs with your attendance.

Future educational opportunities for the golf course superintendent will be enhanced by a computer forum that will be held in the Spring of 1996 or 1997. I'm personally pushing to see that more superintendents get "On Line." I would like to see every superintendent in our state not only have , but use an "internet" address to their advantage. I would like to see that more superintendents learn how to make the computer a "time saver" instead of a "time waster," to use the PC as a means of communication instead of an alarm clock for an irrigation system or just another glorified typewriter.

For starters, I would like to establish a computer bulletin board service at the O. J. Noer Facility with Tom Schwab serving as systems operator. This bulletin board would link more of us together via a computer network very similar to the very successful "Turfbyte" managed by the Heart of America GCSA in Kansas. Superintendents who regularly log on find value in sharing real experiences with products and services throughout the industry. The rapport among users is shared by individuals coast to coast.

The benefits to us would be in the form of messages and alerts that are posted by both University professors and superintendents alike. This bulletin board could also serve as a fax network that could quickly alert other superintendents of opportunities to buy, sell or trade any unused equipment in our service center warehouses.

Overall, opportunities for education shouldn't stop there. I would like to see further development of programs to assist the other valuable members of our staffs. Programs developed for the assistant, mechanic and the other specialized technicians on our payrolls can

only help in our jobs as golf course superintendents. The better trained our employes become the more time we will have to focus our attention on the thousands of other details that always seem to demand our immediate attention. We have already hosted GCSAA's Sprayer Technician and Irrigation seminars and we will be focusing our attention on other GCSAA seminars that are offered to improve the value of our employees.

I would also like to encourage the education committee to set up a new golf course construction tour field trip. We have all seen the results of some of the unique projects in Wisconsin that have been built in the last dozen years. I think the ability to preview a construction project in the making, up close and in person, has the potential to make us better stewards of our own golf courses, especially during our construction projects.

### And for Research:

I shake my head every time I think about the revenue the Badger Chapter of the Club Managers Association of America generates in a single day when they host a Club Managers, Club President, Club Pro, and Superintendent golf outing. This past year they raised \$24,000 for scholarships tied to their side of the profession.

I have already discussed the need with Dr. Rossi and several of our members for new ideas and means of generating additional revenues for research dollars. At present, there are a number of projects that we should get off the ground at our research facility, but can't due to the lack of funding. Another golf outing, scheduled some time in the summer months has the only real potential to bring together a large group of people at one given time. Those possibilities will be explored further along with the idea of possibly co-hosting of an already established event.

These goals are by no means set in concrete. They are laid on the table to be discussed and modified as needed. They serve only to establish mileposts along the way and will be implemented should they prove useful to the organization as a whole.

As your president, I would like to paraphrase our association's creed by pledging to promote the knowledge that is gained through continued education and to promote the benefits of camaraderie to all members of this great association. My legacy to this association depends on the pride and integrity that each individual takes within themselves, to volunteer and to serve.

**REMEMBER, TO BE HEARD,  
YOU MUST FIRST BE SEEN! ♣**

