



The Surrounds

By Wayne G. Horman



On a recent visit to a golf course here in Wisconsin, I was touting the virtues of our bulk application truck for fertilizer application. The superintendent sat there and listened attentively as I stood on my soap box and went through why other superintendents have used it.

As I finished my little dissertation, a smile began to appear on his face. His smile led to a reminiscence of an earlier time he used bulk application. The impression that came to my mind was a big agricultural truck running around his former golf course, and if that was the case, I was all prepared to defend our new system.

Well, his bulk application system was quite a bit different. An airplane picked up the fertilizer at an adjacent field and spread the fertilizer on fairways and roughs. The golf course was Yahara Hills in Madison, and the superintendent I was visiting with was Erv Graf, retired director of golf for the city of Madison.

Graf is now taking care of Vitense Golfland, a par 3 golf course (ten acres of fairways) and driving range in Madison.

A number of the superintendent positions have been filled this past spring. Roger Bell took over the scenic Peninsula State Park Golf Course in Door County. The golf course is now out of the hands of the state, and it is being managed by a group called Peninsula Golf Association.

At Geneva National in Lake Geneva, Chris Wardell was hired as the new superintendent. Wardell was formerly the superintendent at Doves Canyon Golf Club in California.

Mike Yanz became the superintendent at Decatur Lakes Golf

Course in Brodhead. Yanz was the assistant for Joe Wollner at Foxboro Golf Course in Oregon for the last two years.

At Willow Run Golf Course in Pewaukee, not only is there a new superintendent, but a whole new ownership. KSL Fairways, a national golf management company out of Virginia, purchased the golf course in January.

Charles "Stoney" Stone is the new superintendent at WRGC. Stoney was the superintendent at one of the KSL golf courses in Pennsylvania, Monroe Valley.

A couple of changes have also occurred with assistant positions in Wisconsin. At Rolling Meadows Golf Course in Fond du Lac, David Brandenburg was recently hired as the new assistant. Brandenburg won't have that title long since the current superintendent, John Zahn, is retiring later this year. Brandenburg was previously the superintendent at Camelot Country Club in Lomira.

Scott Thompson has hired Scott Sann as his assistant at Greenwood Hills CC in Wausau. Sann worked last year at Oshkosh CC for Kris Pinkerton.

Tom Herrick has taken the assistant position at Lake Windsor Golf Course for Jerry Panella. Herrick previously worked with Panella in Ohio, but most recently worked in Vermont.

Grant Mortimer has taken over as the "Man in Charge" at Horst Distributing in Chilton. John Mortimer is stepping aside to let his son take over. However, John will likely be involved on a consulting basis.

There are some other new family additions to report since the last GRASS ROOTS issue.

Marc Davison (Green Bay CC) and his wife, Laurie, are once again proud parents. Luke Philip arrived on February 26th and is the fifth child for the Davisons.

My wife, Susie Apps Horman, gave birth to Benjamin Wyatt on March 11th. Ben is our second child.

This from the "I cannot believe it is really true" department of announcements: Joe Wollner is a grandfather! At the ripe old age of 43, Wollner, our former Wilbur Ellis rep turned superintendent at Foxboro GC, became a grandpa on March 5th when his daughter Aimee gave birth to Mikaela Elizabeth.

The Wisconsin turfgrass industry lost a very good associate in late February. Catherine Smejkal passed away after a short battle with cancer. Catherine was involved with much of the turfgrass disease studies that took place throughout Wisconsin. Most important for superintendents in Wisconsin were the snowmold studies we reviewed each year. Catherine made those all possible.

At the end of our lives, very few of us can say we gave more to life than we received. Catherine Smejkal wasn't on earth long enough, but she most certainly gave more to people around her than we have given back.

If you would like to contribute to the Catherine Smejkal Memorial garden that is going to be built at the O.J. Noer Facility, you can send money to the Noer Facility or purchase plantings needed to make it possible. A list of material is available by calling the Noer Facility.

