



WGCSA Loses A Good Friend

By Tom Schwab, O.J. Noer Turfgrass Research and Education Facility, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Richard Beutel lost a battle to Melanoma of the liver and lungs on November 2, 2001. That was almost two months to the day of when he was diagnosed with a reoccurrence of the disease that he thought he had beaten eight years earlier, when it affected one of his eyes. I suspect that he may have felt something earlier but being someone that never complained, he didn't get concerned about the pains. And since it was such a fast moving cancer it may not have stopped the progression. Dick is survived by his lovely wife Linda, children Brian and Marci, and children from an earlier marriage Julie, Joel, and Jeff.

Dick was the superintendent of

Edelweiss Chalet Country Club since 1992. Before that Dick started his golf course management career as my assistant at Monroe Country Club. He had farmed his whole life previous to that and decided to get out of the business when farming couldn't make ends meet. Two big impressions I remember about him at Monroe were how the crew liked him and how organized he always kept the shop. I knew he would go places in the golf business when he decided to go back to night school and get a technical diploma in Landscape and Turf Services from Blackhawk Technical College in Janesville. He arrived at work pretty tired some days from doing night school, commuting to Janesville,

and working full time, but still never complained. Soon after getting his diploma he applied at Edelweiss, and they were very fortunate to hire him.



Edelweiss hosted many Wisconsin State Golf Association and high school tournaments under Dick's tenure and I always heard great reports about the conditions, as I did whenever I talked to friends or members that golfed there. He also hosted a WGCSA meeting that likewise received praise. In fact that is where most of you probably know Dick. He was very active in association activities. Even though he was from a smaller budget operation, he was a very regular attendee at monthly meetings. He rarely missed the Symposium, WTA EXPO, Summer Field Day, and industry gatherings. Continuing education and dedication to the job were very important to Dick.

Dedication to his family was even greater. He stopped by the Noer Facility to visit often and would always have a twinkle in his eye

when he'd talk about his children. Jim Krieger from a neighboring golf course told me how Dick brought his kids over to play golf once in awhile and always was so proud of them. He was a good person that thought about others before he'd think of himself.

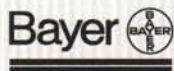
Many people in our business would call me, because they knew we had worked together, to see if I knew how Dick was doing after they heard he was sick. They would tell me what positive impressions they had of him. Kind, gentle, caring, concerned, smart, dedicated, and hard working were some of the adjectives I heard them mention. But since he went so fast, I don't know if Dick got the message about what people thought of him. He certainly touched a lot of people.

In one of the last conversations I had with Dick, he mentioned how

he wanted to get the message out to other people in our business about protecting themselves from the sun. He was pretty sure that his cancer first started in his eyes from being a farmer, spending untold hours in the sun, and not wearing sunglasses. In his earlier days he also rarely wore sunscreen like so many of the rest of us. He remained positive about his illness, believing to the end that he could survive it. He wanted so badly to write an article for the Grass Roots about wearing sunglasses, sunscreen or long sleeved shirts, and protective caps so that the rest of us could lessen our chances of going through the treatments he was going through. He would still want that message to get out. Dick; thanks for touching our lives. ♻️



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