

Snowflakes Usher in May

By **Monroe S. Miller**, Golf Course Superintendent, Blackhawk Country Club

We had enough snow on Sunday, May 2nd to close the course for a little while to allow it to melt. Our town had somewhere in the one to two inches range of snow, enough for kids to build snowmen and guys like me to stand in wonder and awe as the green grass and pink crabapple blossoms and the yellow daffodil blooms were covered in white. The snowflakes were as big as silver dollars.

The two days following that warmed up, but the spring has come along the way I like it to - slowly and deliberately. It has been a pleasure. We have been able to keep our course very playable with a small spring crew.

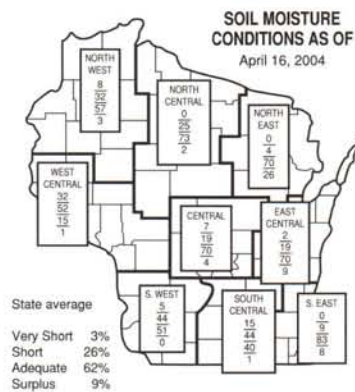
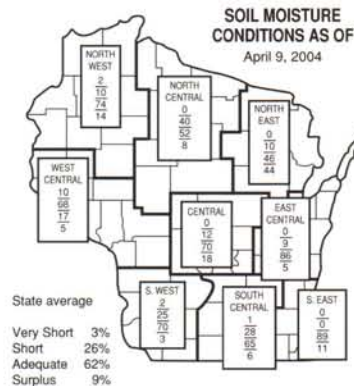
The college kids will be here soon and in a matter of weeks we will be on our porches and patios enjoying the warm and calm June evenings, watching the lightning bugs as dusk turns into darkness and thinking to ourselves, "isn't the earth a wonderful place."

Updates in soil moisture status around Wisconsin are here from the Wisconsin Agricultural Statistics Service for you to consider.

Memorial Day weekend is one of the biggest golf weekends of the year for Wisconsin golf course superintendents. Sometimes we forget to make note of the real reasons for the holiday.

My wife and I always attend the ceremonies at the State Capitol building downtown and notice the crowd seems smaller each year. I wonder if the war in Iraq will inspire greater attendance this year.

Decoration Day, as it was called when Americans actually knew what it was they were supposed to be honoring, was celebrated May



30th every year, regardless of the day of the week. The upstate New York town of Waterloo started the Decoration Day tradition in 1866, and two years later May 30th was designated "for the purpose of

strewing with flowers or otherwise decorating the graves of comrades who died in defense of their country during the late rebellion." The day was renamed Memorial Day after WW I.

Many towns, maybe even most towns, have a Memorial Day event of some description. In a year when we are again worried about young Americans in conflict overseas, this might be a time to attend one of those Memorial Day events as a way to honor them.

I heard from Steve Millett in March. He and Debbie are settled into their home in St. Louis. Debbie is a major personality in a major media market - 50,000 watt KMOX in St. Louis. KMOX is the home station of Bob Costas. The Milletts have found an old German Catholic Church they love and a neighborhood that fits them perfectly.

At the time of his letter, Steve was preparing to interview for a faculty job at Southern Illinois University in the botany department. I hope he lands it.

If you would like to know Steve's address, call me and I will give it to you.

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From the desk of Mike Lee comes the following advice, author unknown. Run it through your word processor and give a copy to your staff or post it in a prominent place. Work is an essential element to successfully managing a golf course.

If you are poor... work.
 If you are rich... continue to work.
 If you are burdened with seemingly unfair responsibilities... work.

If you are happy... keep right on working.
 Idleness gives room for doubts and fear.

If disappointments come... work.
 If sorrow overwhelms you, and loved ones are not true... work

When faith falters and reason fails... just work.

When dreams are shattered and hope seems dead... work.
 Work as if your life were in peril, it really is...

No matter what ails you... work
 Work faithfully... work with faith.
 Work is the greatest remedy available.
 Work will cure both mental and physical afflictions.

Thank God every morning when you get up that you have something to do which must be done whether you like it or not. Being forced to work, and forced to do your best will breed in you temperance, self-control, diligence, strength of will, content, and a hundred other virtues which the idle will never know.

Have you read about Fond du Lac's Jeff Krapfl? Jeff, by year's end, will have played 350 of Wisconsin's public golf courses and wants to play them all by his 50th birthday. He'll make that easy enough since he is only 43.

He might leave home at 3 a.m. and drive 2 1/2 hours for a 5:30 a.m. tee time! Needless to say, he often is playing alone.

Next on his list of goals - play at least one golf course in each of the 50 states!

June is Dairy Month in Wisconsin, a time never forgotten by those of us who grew up in the heyday of dairying in Wisconsin. So in honor of that, I hoist a cold glass of nature's goodness and toast you all. There is a long way to go before this season ends, but so far, so good. Try to have a little fun along the way this summer! 🌿



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