

2005 WGCSA SPRING EDUCATIONAL AND BUSINESS MEETING



By **Randy DuPont**, Golf Course Superintendent, North Hills Country Club

The annual Spring Education and Business Meeting was held on March 7 at the Ramada Inn in Fond du Lac. This meeting signals the end of the winter season and the beginning of a new golf season. The weather outside, however, told a different story.

Mixed precipitation and temperatures in the 20's made it feel like the beginning of January, not the beginning of March. Much of the talk during breaks and over lunch focused on the "roller coaster" winter weather, and the effect it may have on the turfgrass, particularly on greens. Thunderstorms in January and wild temperature fluctuations have made this "off" season interesting, to say the least.

The featured speaker of the education program was Mr. Mike Woolcock, Service Manager for Leibold Irrigation. Mike's talk was entitled "Common Questions in Irrigation Projects and Maintenance."

Part one of Mike's presentation dealt with the timeline, and challenges that need to be met for a successful irrigation project. As with any successful project, planning is key and lead time a must. He referred to the project triangle as a blueprint for success. It consists of a consultant, contractor and distributor. All three must be on the same page and work together or there could be unsatisfactory results, mainly time delays in the project.

Mike talked about how important the mobilization phase of an irrigation project can be. At this time equipment is brought in along with supplies. Wires and tiles are located, mainlines and satellites are laid out and any bridge crossings or borings are completed. This phase can take from three to four weeks, but if done successfully can lead to a smooth transition to the actual pipe laying and sprinkler installation.

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In conclusion: Mike's key to a successful irrigation project can be summed up by the acronym C.O.R.E.: Communication, Organization, Reliability, and Education.

The second part of Mike's presentation dealt with field troubleshooting. He took us through some common electrical problems that occur on golf course irrigation systems and walked us through the diagnostic process.

While not all of these problems can be eliminated, many can be minimized with proper grounding and surge protection. Often overlooked, we should have grounds tested and surge protection installed as insurance against electrical storms.

If anyone has questions on field troubleshooting, Mike will gladly send you that part of his presentation. He can be reached at mwoolcock@yousq.net

Next on the agenda was the business meeting. President Marc Davison presented the meeting agenda and all areas were addressed.

Marc reported that Dave Van Auken had resigned his board of director position and that Randy DuPont has been appointed as his replacement and is chairman of golf and arrangements. Marc then recognized Monroe Miller on winning, for the 21st consecutive year, the best editor category II for *The Grass Roots* in the GCSAA chapter publications contest. Monroe has also been busy working with David Brandenburg and Gene Haas in the production of a 75th year anniversary book on our association. Our hope is that this book will be available late this year to the membership at no cost. Thanks guys for all your efforts. It was also noted that the board of directors will be creating a Class E member board position which will be non-voting and advisory in nature.

After the committee chairpersons presented their reports, Eric Jasin had the honor of presenting 25-year plaques to the eligible. Those present to receive their awards were: Marc Davison, Joe Fryman, Rod Johnson, Joe Kuta, Charlie Shaw, and Karl Wehausen. Those not present were Charlie Kisow, Victor Peterson, Randy Staubli, and Jack Storm. Not only are this year's award winners incredibly knowledgeable in our field, they are also great guys who are willing to share their knowledge with others. Is it no wonder that they have stayed in this business for 25 years. These men are a true asset to our association.

Following the presentations to the class of '80, Dr. Jason Kruse was introduced to the association. Jason is the new UW Extension Agent for Winnebago County.

Dr. Kruse is presently sitting on a committee formed to help develop a nutrient management plan for those who manage turf areas larger than five acres. The goal of the committee will be to set standards for optimum turf and flexibility. This standard, which we know as NR

151, is scheduled to go into effect in 2008. Presently soil tests will be required every four years with labs for the tests to be recommended from the UW.

Dr. Kruse can be reached at jason.kruse.unex.edu for more information.

The meeting concluded with Dr. John Stier's thoughts on this year's possible winterkill. Dr. Stier cautioned us that ice damage and crown hydration could be a real concern come this spring.

Earlier I mentioned that the "buzz" during the meeting was the unusual winter weather. Superintendents were comparing notes. How long has the ice been on? How thick is the ice? Have you removed the snow cover? What have you put on the ice to break it up? Have you pulled any plugs yet, and if so, how do they look? They are all great questions with the myriad of responses.

A WGCSA meeting has more to offer than what's on the agenda. In addition to speaker presentations, shared information between superintendents is often valuable information. I hope all of you consider attending one or more monthly meetings this summer. You never know what you'll learn! ♣



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