

## President Millies

By David Brandenburg, Golf Course Manager, Rolling Meadows Golf Course

Jeff Millies began his term as the 41 President of WGCSA a year early than anticipated when Past President Brian Zimmerman took a position in Cleveland. However it is a position he has been training for his entire life. In a way you can say Jeff was born into the golf industry. His great grandfather Louis Boeger farmed in Hillside, IL and in 1906 he bought a neighboring farm for \$10 a acre. His brother William Boeger was a lawyer, and one of the other lawyers in firm (Sears) kept telling them how great that piece of land would be for a golf course.

A land contract was drawn up and Sears began building a golf course in 1924 and in 1927 Hillside Golf Course opened for business. Unfortunately the depression soon followed and when Sears fell behind in payments Louis took control of the golf course. When Jeff's grandparents Louise Boeger and Fred Millies married, Fred was working as a caretaker of a cemetery and eventually became the Greenskeeper on the golf course.

Around 1959 the city of Hillside wanted part of the land the golf course was on to build a new high school (Proviso West). The course operated for a few more years as a 9 hole course before the land was sold for light commercial use and housing. The family purchased land in Big Bend WI and construction began on Edgewood Golf Course in 1966 with 9's opening in 1969, 1971, 1989 and 1999.

So really Jeff was born into the industry but Millies also

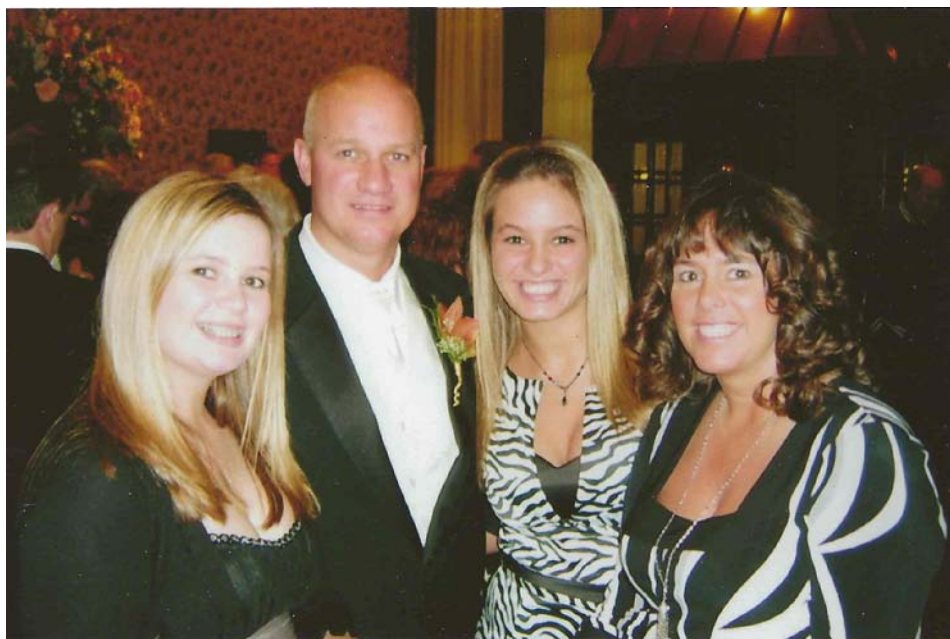
has experience outside the family run operation. A graduate of Iowa State University with a BS in Horticulture Jeff interned at Ames Golf and Country Club while attending Iowa State. He also worked at Medina Country Club in 1986 while the course was preparing for the 1990 US Open.

Jeff was the assistant Superintendent at Terradyne Country Club in Andover, KS working for Jack Tripp for a short time before returning home to help start building the third 9 holes at Edgewood. Never one to quite learning Jeff became a Certified Member of the GCSAA in 1996 and received his MBA from University of Phoenix in 2003.

Jeff is lucky to share his golf course time with his Dad Fred who is a 29 year member of the WGCSA and his brother Dan who is the clubhouse manager. Millies sister Kim and brother in law John Freeman the golf professional work in the golf shop and provide lessons.

He lives on the golf course with his wife Nicole and daughters Morgan and McKenna. Nicole is a real-estate broker for Shorewest and helps as needed with bartending, beer carting, mowing and helping with aerating in the fall.

Morgan is a sophomore at UW Madison, majoring in Biology and Spanish and bartends and drives the beverage carts in summer. McKenna is a sophomore in high school and is on the golf team and shows horses but still finds time to help in the golf shop. The family has 4 horses that live next to the course and pasture near one of the putting greens.



The Millies Family  
McKenna, Jeff, Morgan and Nicole

Jeff feels he is taking over at a critical time in the industry with economic challenges affecting all courses. He hopes courses can “hold their own” through this time to survive for the future. Although he feels the golf industry has hit near bottom there are many challenges to overcome and it will take time to see a measurable recovery. Gas prices, interest rates, inflation and the housing market are key question marks that will affect consumer discretionary spending on golf.

Edgewood which operates as a semi private club with 135 members has made adjustments as the economy has changed. Reductions to mowing frequency, bunker work and other maintenance jobs have worked for the course while operating with a smaller maintenance staff.

As President Jeff is pleased with the strong shape of the WGCSA and the continued success we have had with a strong membership using the benefits the association provides. The relationship with Chapter Manager Brett Grams has been a huge benefit not only for the board but for every member. Millies stated before we had a chapter manager the board had good ideas but not the method to implement them but now those ideas can be implemented.

Brett provides the knowledge and drive to get things done for the success of the chapter. The administration of the Chapter can be a daunting task especially from Dec 15 to April when renewals for memberships and advertising peak along with the administration of activities and meetings.

With the PAR4RESEARCH program the association can increase its funding to the valuable projects the UW Madison Professors are working on at the Noer Center. Millies is thankful we have a full staff of turf professors and world class facility for them to do their work.

Jeff has been involved with GCSAA as a voting delegate and chapter officer and states our relationship with the national organization is “nothing but positive”. The staff in Lawrence is a valuable source of help, advice and knowledge not only for the chapter but individual members as well. Millies urges members to use the resources the national association provides.

Jeff Millies is only four months into his term but he has been training for this a long time as a student, turf manager and his many years in serving on the WGCSA Board. Good luck Jeff, and thank you for serving the chapter!



**President Millies speaking at the Golf Course Owners Meeting about the PAR4RESEARCH program**

## **Member 9 With Jeff**

- 1. First Vehicle? “1973 Cutless 442”**
- 2. Favorite Piece of Golf Course Equipment? “Any one that is working properly”**
- 3. 18 Hole Handicap? “14 give or take”**
- 4. Current Vehicle? “Work truck 2005 Dodge Ram 1500, with a wife and two daughters driving, there’s never any other vehicle left.”**
- 5. Favorite TV Show? “It was Two & A Half Men, but with Charley Sheen’s recent idiotic behavior, I need to find some other comedy.”**
- 6. Favorite pro sports team? “Packers”**
- 7. Favorite Main Course Meal? “Steak”**
- 8. Pets? “4 horses, 2 barn cats, 1 house cat, and 1 dog named Reese, Australian Shepherd/Border Collie who loves chasing geese and the horses.**
- 9. Favorite thing about working in the golf industry? - “Every day is different and what could be better than being outside all day on a golf course.**