

## News and Notes From WGCSA Members

By John Jensen and The Reinders Team

As I begin to write this we have just entered the month of September and the hint of fall is in the air. It marks not only the beginning of my favorite season but also the month that I was born. For many people their birthday is something that they look forward to as they celebrate it with family and friends. For others it is a day that hauntingly reminds them they are another year older and the less hype the better.

Once I hit my twenties it would be a date that reminds me each and every year how much older I am. Unfortunately, over the past decade it has been so much more. As the date nears I find myself being reminded by the media and the documentaries that 9/11 is just around the corner. Although my date of birth falls the day after this significant date in our country's history it has somehow made the 12th a different day for me. Sometimes it is more of a reflection of how lucky I am to have made it to another age and sometimes it is a date that reminds me of how I was feeling the day after that terrible tragedy. Either way, it is probably never going to feel the same as it was before 2001.

This year 9/11 marks the tenth anniversary since those horrific and unthinkable attacks took place on American soil. It is also a day that marks the last time I really felt comfortable. It changed how I felt about my family's safety, our economy, our finances, our jobs, my sales and so much more. I can picture the moment like it was yesterday. I was just exiting my work truck to make a sales call on Racine County DPW when my cell phone rang. It was Gail calling to ask if I was listening to the radio. My response was a quick no and she then told me a plane had hit a building in New York. I remember my comment back was more of a reflection of my humor, "How bad of a pilot do you have to be to not see a building in front of you?" Then she told me, "This is serious as it's one of the twin towers." I had no clue what the Twin Towers even were so she informed me that it's a pair of the tallest buildings in the world and that there is a good chance that thousands of people would be in that building at one time. I told her to keep me posted and hung up to go about my morning.

As I sat with my customer in his office a knock on the

door interrupted our conversation. It was the shop foreman who peaked in and with an unsettling voice said "Ben, another plane has hit the second of the twin towers in New York". Silence overcame the two of us as we took in what we had just heard and the realization that this was more than pilot error. "We are being attacked "I said to Ben," they best get every plane on the ground and now". Little did I still understand the true significance of what was happening as I sat there in a daze.

I said good bye to Ben and jumped in my truck and turned the radio on. It was clear that no one in the media had an understanding of what was taking place. As I made my way north to pick up a machine from The Squires Golf Course I continued to listen to the confusion on the radio and still did not understand the significance of what was happening. I pulled into the driveway at the course and entered the club house to make a quick restroom break before looking for Mark or Bruce. I strolled through the clubhouse dining room past a television to see my first visual of the damage that had taken place earlier in the day. I paused and stared in amazement. Then my heart dropped as I watched the first tower collapse. I sat down in amazement as it crumbled to the ground, how could this happen? After awhile I forgot where I was or why I was there. It was then I started to realize the significance of this event. Numb is all the rest of the day would be for me and the millions of others that can re account where they were when it first hit them. Today, I am still angry at myself for continuing to work and not immediately take in what was happening. How was it that in one part of the country a guy like me could be driving to a beautiful golf course to pick up a mower while thousands fought for their lives?

This date changed so many things about our way of life. I personally believe it was the beginning of many changes in our industry as well. Budgets and buying timelines all seemed to go out the window and we had to learn a new way of going to market. Hopefully the next decade will mark the rebirth of the comfort ability and stability that we are all looking for.

## BADGER STATE TURF CLIPPINGS

### **Births:**

Mike Bremmer, Superintendent of The Wisconsin Club and his wife Emily welcomed the first child to the world on August 24th. James Michael Bremmer weighed in at 6 lbs 15 oz and dad confirms that mom and son are both very happy and healthy. They feel very lucky to have such an easy boy to take care of. Congratulations Mike and Emily.

Brian Bonlender, second assistant at West Bend Country Club and his wife had a baby boy on Monday June 27. They now have two boys and a girl, so his boss is guessing that Brian will probably ask for a raise really soon.

### **Golf Course Manager Retires:**

On September 1st Jerry Kershasky retired from Westmoor Country Club after a wonderful career that spanned 37 years. It is hard to find an individual in this line of work that one time or another has not crossed paths with Jerry or been inspired by his cutting age thinking. In the two decades I have known Jerry; I can attest that his passion for the job and willingness to share his knowledge with others has never wavered. As a newer generation superinten-

dent said to me a few weeks back "Jerry is one of those guys that you could call at any time and ask for his advice and he is always willing to lend a helping hand". Regardless of which hat he is wearing at the time. Superintendent, course manager, scientist, agronomist, ecologist, speaker, teacher, student he is always a class act. As Jerry said to his membership upon announcing his retirement, "The future is in front of me, possibly at a slower pace". Enjoy your future Jerry, you have earned it. Congratulations!

### **In Closing:**

The surreal ending to my 9/11 story for me is that my wife Gail was scheduled to go to New York for a research meeting. This meeting was canceled at the last minute and she remained in Wisconsin. Her meeting was to be the morning of September 11th in the first tower that was hit. It did not dawn on either of us until later that evening as to the significance of this event. Now that I think about it, it is certainly the best birthday present I will ever receive and from now on I should look at it as a celebration of another birthday I get to spend with her. Maybe the 12th isn't so bad after all?



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