

News and Notes From WGCSA Members

By Matt Kinnard and the DHD Team

Vegas! Vegas! Vegas! I think most of us that visited Las Vegas for the GIS this year had an enjoyable time. How could you not? Despite the GIS being held in Vegas and all its distractions we all did our job to become better educated, network with others and learn about new products. Probably the most valuable return on investment for most superintendents at the GIS is the education. The classes are excellent; but for many superintendents that cannot attend, our local seminars are really just as beneficial. One thing that I always try to get out of any seminar whether it is at the National, in Kohler or in a webinar is not how we are supposed to do things because we already know that, but why.

While I was waiting for my flight back from Las Vegas, I stopped in an airport bookstore looking for something to read and picked up a book called *The Social Animal*. Written by David Brooks, it explains why we do things as individuals, most of which we are unaware of because so much of it is done in an unconscious frame of mind.

The book's background story is fictional; following two characters from infancy to old age, while Brooks simultaneously intertwines nearly 600 sources of research and data to help explain everyday life, career, achievements, and relationships better. If you're like me and like to understand why anything happens and why it could be beneficial to know, this book might be for you. And I promise this will be my one and only book report.

Career Moves

Ben Pease recently finished his Masters Degree at The University of Wisconsin in December 2011, and will be an Assistant Superintendent on the Straits Course at Whistling Straits. It wasn't until Ben was a sophomore undergrad student that he realized turfgrass management was a profession. He soon enrolled in the Soil

Science program graduating in 2005. Ben interned and was an irrigation tech at Wayzata Country Club in Minnesota from 2004-05 and then moved to Madison in 2006 to become the Assistant Superintendent at Bishops Bay Country Club. Ben is looking forward to the upcoming tournaments at the Straits Course including the 2015 PGA Championship as well as having a chance to work with architect, Pete Dye. Congratulations Ben!

Josh LePine and his wife Sonja have moved back to the Madison area with their three kids Joey, Naomi and Matthew after Josh accepted the position of Golf Course Superintendent at Maple Bluff Country Club. Josh dedicated 14 years at The Legends at Bristlecone Pines in Hartland after spending time as the Assistant at Stoughton Country Club in Stoughton, WI and Winged Foot Country Club in Mamaroneck, New York. While Josh was a student attending The University of Wisconsin, he had an opportunity to tour Maple Bluff and was blown away by its beauty and history. From that point on he made it his goal to someday be the superintendent at a club like Maple Bluff. Congratulations Josh on accomplishing that goal!

Four years after leaving his position as Assistant Superintendent at The Legends at Bristlecone Pines, Ben Labarre is returning as the new Golf Course Superintendent replacing Josh LePine. Ben got his start in golf at Decatur Lake Golf Course in Brodhead, WI where he worked for five years while attending The University of Wisconsin. Before graduating from UW in 2005, Ben did back to back internships at Baltusrol Golf Club in Springfield Township, NJ where he was part of the crew that hosted the 2005 PGA Championship. Ben, his wife, Jen, and their 2 year old son will be moving from the Kohler area where he has been

the Assistant Superintendent on the River Course at Blackwolf Run for the last three years. Congratulations Ben on the new position!

Retirement

After a remarkable 44 years at Maple Bluff Country Club, Tom Harrison has decided to retire. Tom began his career at Nakoma Country Club in Madison in the early 1960's as Peter Miller's Assistant Superintendent. Peter Miller would later move onto Firestone Country Club, in Ohio and Tom, himself, would also take on a different path as he entered the Navy during the Vietnam Era. A dream of his since first watching the John Wayne film *The Fighting Seabees*, Tom completed his six year commitment as a Seabee before returning to Madison to become Bill Eckert's Assistant Superintendent at Maple Bluff Country Club. Not long after that, Tom was tapped to become the Superintendent at Maple Bluff.

In his retirement, Tom is looking forward to spending more time with his six children and ten grandchildren, in addition to diving deeper into his favorite hobbies of building models and expanding his HO model train display. Tom has a lot of great memories from his career as a golf course superintendent and still remembers the advice he took away from his mentors in the industry early in his career. One piece of advice he would give to superintendents is to have patience; 'it translates to life in general and in career.' Congratulations Tom on your enduring and successful career!

Please pass along any significant news or happenings around the state to Danny, Mike or me. We want to spread the good news. You can also email me at m.kinnard@sbcglobal.net or call at 920-210-9059. 