

Danny Quast Receives Distinguished Service Award

By Monroe Miller, WGCSA Chapter Historian

Editor's Note: What follows is the narrative of Monroe Miller's introduction of Danny Quast as he was to receive the WGCSA Distinguished Service Award. Miller is the WGCSA Chapter Historian and a 50 year college and friend of Danny's

Welcome to the 48th consecutive Wisconsin Golf Turf Symposium. In all its history the symposium has distinguished itself as the only real "Golf Turf Symposium" in the county. It has been an excellent way to honor the memory of O.J. Noer, maybe the best known personality ever to emerge from Wisconsin onto the international golf turf scene.

And today it seems the perfect venue to recognize, honor and thank a man whose contributions to golf turf in Wisconsin and across the county have been singular. No one I know has such a broad base of success managing golf courses and related accomplishments. His accomplishments have been in the finest tradition of altruism.

That man is Danny Quast.

Danny was born 70 years ago in Dayton, Ohio, the son of a tool and die maker. His career in golf began when he was 12 and working as a caddy. By the age of 14 he was working on a golf course crew. That interest took him to the University of Massachusetts for a college education in turf. He was a student of Dr. Joseph Troll, attended lectures given by the well known pioneer Lawrence Dickenson, learned from Dr. Don Waddington and came to know Geoffrey Cornish.

With is degree in hand he accepted a superintendent's position at the W.A. Cleary Golf Course in New Jersey. He stayed two years and then moved on to the Troy Country Club, close to his home in Dayton. TCC was a three year stint for Danny before he accepted the superintendent position at the Springfield Country Club, also not far from his hometown of Dayton. At this course he developed a successful poa annua con-



Danny Quast receives the Distinguished Service Award from WGCSA President Chad Harrington

trol program using Tricalcium Arsenate, something that wasn't easy to do or done very successfully. Those five years at SCC prepared him for the superintendents position at what was at the time the best known course and club in Wisconsin – Milwaukee Country Club. The year was 1973.

He cut a wide swath at Milwaukee Country Club, and established many friendships all across the state that continue today. He came to know and employ Robert Trent Jones, and trained several assistants for careers of their own.

His success at Milwaukee led to a big

league position at the Medinah Country Club in 1989. His stay at the 54-Hole facility lasted 12 years and he left in 2001 to move back to Wisconsin. But before he returned he successfully managed to host the 1990 US Open and the 1999 PGA Championship.

While Danny was in Wisconsin at Milwaukee Country Club he and two friends established a company – DHD. When he returned to Wisconsin after 12 years in Illinois he took over sole ownership of DHD Products and developed it into a well known and reliable turf distributor in southern Wisconsin.



Danny Quast Through The Years

Top: 1982 with Steve Blendel during irrigation installation at Milwaukee Country Club

Middle: 1986 Presenting a donation from the Symposium Profits to O.J. Noer Foundation Director Tony Grasso

Below: 1990 Presenting to the WGCSA at Cedar Creek Country Club.

Below Right: 1992 Discussing turfgrass at the Golf Turf Symposium with Jerry Kershasky.



He moved to Fox Lake, headquartered his company in Juneau and continues there even now (Except when he and Beverly are at their winter home in Fort Meyers).

Throughout his career, Dan has acquitted himself with the highest form of professionalism, set a prime example for the rest of us to follow, and always had the welfare of his profession and his colleagues in mind. I hope each of you will take the time in the next day and a half to personally thank him.

Before I give up the podium, I want to mention a few of the many high points of Dan's activities in his Career.

1. Do you ever read The Grass Roots? I suspect the answer is yes. And do you know The Grass Roots was started by Danny, with the help from Wayne Otto and a few other Northside Milwaukee superintendents? If he hadn't had the gumption, ambition and vision, we may well not have read this or any other state publication as we have over the past 30-35 years. Please take time to thank Dan for that today or tomorrow.

2. Have you ever made use of the Turfgrass Information File at Michigan State University? That program was under pressure of extinction because of underutilization. Who joined a handful of people to save it from extinction? Yes – you guessed it – Dan Quast. Will you thank him for that sometime today or tomorrow?

3. Danny Quast is a big hearted person who has consistently cared about his fellow superintendents. When a small group of WGCSA members, looking for a way to keep Wayne Otto in our collective memory, decided to form the Wee One Foundation, Danny was at the table. Barely a month ago, Dan personally delivered some financial relief to Dan Barrett's widow Sherri. He has the kindness and sensitivity to be the perfect person for these difficult tasks. We cannot thank you enough for this Dan. You deserve a lot of credit for the success of the Wee One.

4. Have you ever used the book Golf Course Turfgrass Management: Tools and Techniques as a reference or textbook? One of the authors is....Danny Quast. Along with Coauthor Wayne Otto, who better could have written such a useful addition to our golf course literature. Please give Dan thanks for sharing his knowledge.

5. In addition to the symposium, O.J. Noer is remembered through the activities of the O.J. Noer Turfgrass Research Foundation. For over a quarter of a century the board of directors has included Danny Quast. Members show their dedication by traveling to the meetings at their own expense, and meet to award grants from the earnings of the foundations corpus. Thanks, DQ.



Where do I stop? He opened our eyes to the importance of arboriculture on our golf courses. He mentored a couple dozen men who left his tutorship to become fine superintendents on their own.

He has mixed and moved among us so easily – he is as common and familiar as an old shoe. I remember in 1990, right after – literally a few days after – The US Open he came up to our monthly meeting in Onalaska at Cedar Creek. We gathered around at dinner for talk and stories of the open; it was a lot of fun I still remember all these years later.

For all these things and those I have left out, Thank You Danny! The GCSAA recognized Dan in 2004 by presenting him with the Colonel John Morley Award. And today he is presented our highest honor.

Dan has had some highly visible jobs, accomplished some great things, yet when he is with us all of that potential gloss and glitter disappears, leaving his character for all to see. And what we see in Danny Quast is a truly great man. Danny, Thank you for being yourself. And I believe that O.J. Noer would be pleased for you to receive this award on a day dedicated to him.



Danny Quast Through The Years

Top: 2001 with Bob Maibusch, Mike Handrich and Bob Vavrek while presenting at the Jacobsen Future Turf Managers Seminar.

Middle: 2004 accepting the Distinguished Service Award from GCSAA

Bottom Left: 2004 with Wayne Otto and Tom Schwab at the PGA Championship

Bottom Right: 2014 with Beverly in Fort Meyers Florida

