

New Challenges

By Jake Schneider, LMD Production Manager, The Bruce Company

Hello again, golf world. It's been a while since I picked up my keyboard to put something on paper for Mr. Brandenburg, and although it doesn't take days to type my little one-page article, life has been busier this winter than many of those previously. While prior winters weren't filled with coffee and card playing as some envision occurring in golf course maintenance facilities in the offseason, this one has been busier than most. Between educational conferences and taking vacation time that couldn't be used from the months of April and November, it wasn't unusual for me to only work 25 days between January and February, combined, while working at Blackhawk. This year, both Christmas morning and New Year's Eve involved snowplowing, which was something that we luckily didn't have to do at the golf course.

However, I can't complain too loudly because there are many dedicated people in the company who spent far more sleepless nights than did I thanks to the one-inch snowfalls that seemed to fall every two days.

One major thing that golf has going for it is (brace yourself): golf.

Quite frankly, I'm not sure how some can (year in and year out) deal with both the long, odd hours and the knuckleheads that are hired for snow removal. Going into this position, I knew that having longer, more stressful winters was part of the trade-off to not have to worry about irrigation pumps failing in 90 degree heat and ice damage in the colder months.

Aside from the new challenge of snowplowing, there are others that I didn't necessarily think would be as significant as they have been, and workforce issues have come to the forefront.

I'm not saying that it's necessarily easy to find quality golf course employees, especially depending on where you're located, but after essentially recruiting for several months for a handful of full-time positions, I'm starting to think that it's darn near impossible in landscaping, even in a highly-populated area. One major thing that golf has going for it is (brace yourself): golf. For those who really enjoy the game, getting free or discounted golf is a big deal and a great incentive, and even though I knew I that this bonus existed when hiring for golf, I didn't fully realize its value until the last six months.

Sand.

It's so simple, that you're tempted to take it for granted.

It's so complex, that you can't.

ONLY use sands that are specifically manufactured, tested, and guaranteed to perform on your golf course.



Waupaca Sand & Solutions

715-258-8566 - www.WaupacaSand.com



MADTOWN MUZINGS

Speaking of employees, it sure is a lot more difficult to keep tabs on 60 employees spread over 200 plus square miles than it was for 20 workers on 100 acres. At this point, you're probably muttering something to the tune of, "Well, that seems obvious, ya genius."

It does, but it isn't something that I thought about too much prior to accepting the new gig. Although everyone aims to hire conscientious, self-driven employees, it's absolutely imperative with so much unsupervised time.


Finally, a personal challenge that is utterly and completely unrelated to my other points—I miss you guys.

All together now: awwww, what a softie. Maybe it will develop over time, but for-profit landscaping doesn't have



nearly the level of camaraderie that superintendents share. My early impressions are that it's much more cutthroat and competitive than I could've imagined.

While I'm hoping to make it to more events in the coming year and desperately need an excuse to make it to San Antonio, it was tough missing out the on the Wee One outing, Symposium, and the GIS. The group that I normally attend GIS with were probably getting sick of my constant text messages while they were in Orlando, but I was trying to live vicariously through their attendance and occasional shenanigans.

Alright, enough of my griping; I have a summer vacation to plan for the first time in 10 years. 

Daconil Action™ Fungicide, A New Era in Turfgrass Management

The power of the active ingredient contained in Daconil® fungicide combined with a revolutionary Turf Protein Booster results in longer, more efficient, and broader spectrum turfgrass disease control.

- Boosts turfgrass natural defense proteins (PR proteins)
- Enhances overall plant health
- Increases tolerance to environmental stresses, like drought
- Suppresses activity of fungi, bacteria, viruses, and abiotic diseases

To learn more about Daconil Action, visit DaconilAction.com or contact:

Phil Spitz
Cell: 414-429-2015
phillip.spitz@syngenta.com



 **Daconil Action™**
Fungicide

syngenta.

©2011 Syngenta. Important: Always read and follow label instructions before buying or using these products. The instructions contain important conditions of sale, including limitations of warranty and remedy. Daconil Action is not currently registered for sale or use in all states. Please check with your state or local extension service before buying or using this product. Daconil®, Daconil Action™, the Purpose icon and the Syngenta logo are trademarks of a Syngenta Group Company. Syngenta Customer Center: 1-800-SYNGENT(A) (796-4368).

TM