

4. What is your vision of the role of the president of the WGCSA?

With all of the different personalities involved in our association, I believe it is necessary for the president to make sure that we set policies which are for the good of the entire association today, as well as provide policy direction for the remainder of the 1990's.

5. Talk a little bit about the relationship between the WGCSA and the WSGA.

The WGCSA should always maintain a solid relationship with the WSGA. The WSGA, being an umbrella for many of golfing organizations of Wisconsin, is one good way in which the WGCSA can promote our organization and it's goals, and at the same time promote the golf course superintendent as one of the most important people in golf. Also, we utilize the WSGA offices and staff to make our association run more smoothly. Without them we would be lost.

Between the WGCSA and the WTA?

This is probably one of the most important relationships we have. Both organizations are working toward the common goal of supporting research and education for turfgrass management. There is no other organization in the state which can come close to matching our relationship with the WTA.

Between the WGCSA, the PGA and the CMAA?

If ever there was a need for a closer relationship, this is one of them. Here we have three groups, all of whom should be concerned about the future of golf and golf courses, and it

appears that the common goal cannot be achieved because of individual goals or because of a lack of understanding among the three groups of that common goal. We should put aside any of the past pretenses and attitudes, and come together, working side by side for the advancement of golf.

Between the WGCSA and the GCSAA?

I believe many WGCSA members have become disenchanted with the GCSAA and its policies. Whether this is because of some ridiculous proposals that have come forward lately or because of a feeling that the GCSAA is not acting and doing what the members would like, I don't know. Now I hear they are floating the idea of charging each affiliated chapter "dues". What do they plan on doing with this money? If Chapter organizations are trying to tighten belts, how are we to come up with the extra money? I think the chapters need an explanation on their reasoning for these dues.

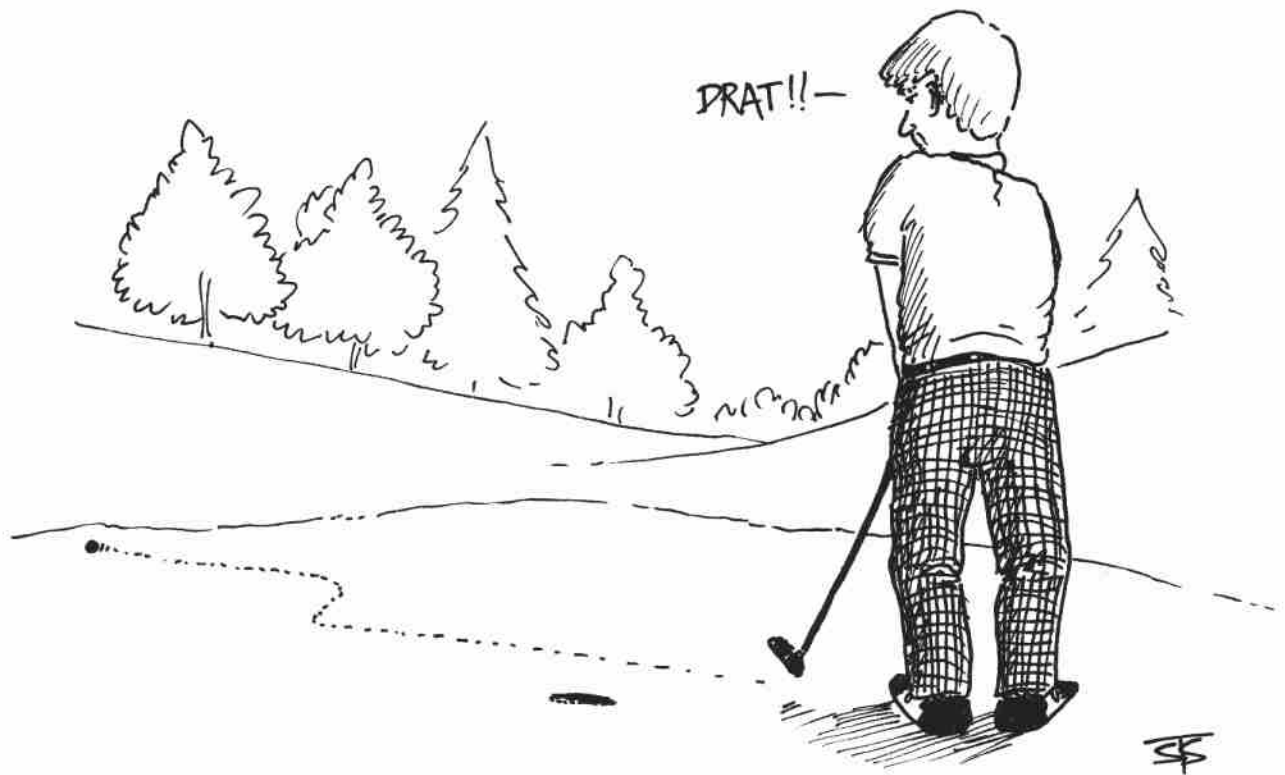
6. How do you view the Golf Foundation of Wisconsin?

A fledgling organization with some very exciting ideas for golf in Wisconsin, but little to show for it yet.

7. What areas of our profession might receive special emphasis during your term as president of the WGCSA?

Number one will be increasing our association's support for golf turf research. With the facility we have in the O.J. Noer

(Continued on page 23)



THE REAL REASON PAUL HARVEY NEVER SEES BIRDIES ON THE GOLF COURSE.



TURF'S UP.

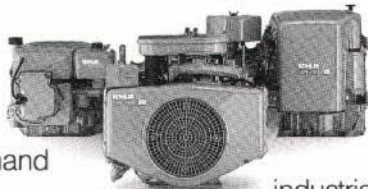
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(Continued from page 21)

Turfgrass Research Center, our goal should be to provide as much financial support for research as possible. We should also be trying to get outside support from those who directly benefit this research and not just from turfgrass managers and their respective organizations.

8. What is the most important job of the president of the WGCSA?

My job should take into consideration all of the concerns of the members and then try to provide a common sense goal for this organization. Many times that is difficult because my goals may not be exactly the same as other members of the organization.

However, this is what I believe can make the WGCSA so great. This ability to communicate multiple numbers of views and goals and turn them into a common sense policy serving the membership.

9. How do you see the WGCSA's relationship with the UW - Madison turfgrass management program?

Knowing that I am a graduate of that program the first thing everyone will say is that I am only supporting it for that reason. That is completely wrong! Since we are in the state of Wisconsin, we should keep our support for that State's program. It is no different than if I was in Michigan, I would be in favor of the Michigan Golf Course Superintendents supporting Michigan State's turfgrass management program. It is very simple.

10. Any comments about the Noer Facility?

What a credit to the State of Wisconsin. Through some individual efforts in making this facility a reality, we all will be rewarded with some of the finest research through some of the finest researchers.

11. Thoughts on: the USGA Green Section.

One of the Golf Course Superintendents greatest assets. The breadth of knowledge, the number of golf courses they tour, the research they conduct and the support they can give to Superintendents makes them an invaluable resource.

F/RoW/T Coalition.

Our friend and ally which has represented us in State government, fought our legal battles, and generally represents us in a very professional and favorable manner. We would be lost without them, and we should never waiver from our support of them.

Fast Greens.

The demise of golf. In our quest to promote U.S. Open type conditions on a daily basis, we have forgotten one of the golden rules—Mother Nature Always Wins!! We should be promoting sound management techniques (not gimmicks like rolling greens) on our golf courses to promote healthy golf turf.

Pesticide Issues.

We won one battle with the pre-emption issue, but it is not going to go away. Preemption of Federal laws will make our lives miserable, among other things, and will provide nothing more than one more way to spend local tax dollars on something completely over the head of local government.

Distributors and the WGCSA.

If the Golf Course Superintendent is the heart of golf course management, then the Distributor is the backbone. They support our organizations, our golf courses and the game of golf, and they do it ever so quietly. We should give more credit than they are currently receiving for their role in golf course management.

Student Support.

If the Golf Foundation of Wisconsin believes the future of golf lies within Junior golf, then they are only partially correct. Once again they are only recognizing half the equation. The future of golf also lies within the students who are currently in the turfgrass management programs. Our support of summer internships, scholarships, summer jobs, etc. must also never waiver because those students involved should be recognized as part of the future of golf.

Environmentalists

If I have one nice thing to say about them it is that they have made Golf Course Superintendents more aware of their responsibility in managing their courses. After that, if their only purpose in life is to arouse concern through scare tactics, through misinformation and through silly stunts, then they have no purpose. When they want to talk about issues and facts, then we should start a dialogue with them.

Women in Turf Management

Traditional views that working on a golf course is a "man's job", have never been so wrong. Our profession is slowly opening up to women, but needs to be opened more. Let the best person get the job!

The Symposium

This is more important to me, from an educational standpoint, than any other meeting in the state. It is truly wonderful to meet for two days, and extensively discuss one topic pertaining to golf. The end of the season timing puts all attendees in a very relieved state of mind.

13. It is fairly well known that you are plowing new ground with your arrangement to represent the Bruce Company in managing the new Bishops Bay Country Club. Are you excited or apprehensive? Is this a "new wave" in Wisconsin? Tell us how it will work?

Starting January 1, 1994, Bishops Bay Country Club has contracted with The Bruce Company to manage their golf course. As such, on that day I will become a Bruce Company employee as Golf Course Superintendent of Bishops Bay. There is a certain nervous excitement in this adventure because it is not a traditional means of golf course management. The Bruce Co. will be paid a sum of money to manage this golf course, and for this we will provide the staff, equipment and all the necessities to keep the golf course in excellent playing condition. We think there may be more opportunities for this type of "out of house management" in Wisconsin.

14. Will you encourage your young son to pursue a career like yours if he expresses interest in it?

If my son expresses an interest in golf course management, I will certainly let him know what it is all about. However, he will be encouraged to pursue any career he likes. ♣



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Wisconsin Owes Milorganite More Support

By Monroe S. Miller

Anyone who has been a program participant in the Wisconsin Golf Turf Symposium has at least some idea of all the work and planning and money the Milorganite Division of MMSD puts into this sterling educational program. My opinion is that without their tremendous effort, the Symposium would be a shadow of what it now is, if it existed at all.

The Symposium was, after all, created as a tribute to O.J. Noer, the man who the world respected as its greatest turfgrass scientist. O.J. spent a career with Milorganite and his name was synonymous with it.

Decades ago, you could find Milorganite at nearly every golf course facility here in Wisconsin, and in many, many outside our borders.

When I was a student at the UW working at the Nakoma Golf Club, we would get our year supply of Milorganite from a train car at the West Washington Avenue railroad depot. We shared a freight car load with other courses in town.

Milorganite was then and still is today a superb product. It is an easy to use, free flowing, ecologically sound product that may have even more relevance today than it did almost 30 years ago when I was introduced to it.

O.J. was near the end of his career then, but I was well aware of the great resource Milorganite had in Charlie Wilson, Jim Latham and Bob Welch. In their time, these names were also synonymous with this excellent Wisconsin product.

But something has happened in the last 10 years or so. Somewhere along the line loyalties to the product and the organization faded.

Ask some current turf students at the UW-Madison (or anywhere else, for that matter) about Milorganite and all you get is a blank look. They simply aren't aware of Milorganite or its history or its value as a source of turfgrass nutrition.

There are many reasons that explain how we arrived where we are

today. Aggressive and capable sales representatives from other plant nutrient suppliers have overtaken Wisconsin's golf course market.

Since the retirement of Welch and Wilson, and Latham's move to the USGA, there have been many personnel changes at MMSD. Those critical relationships and associations were lost and haven't yet been completely re-established.

Another problem is the fact that no one is travelling from golf course shop to golf course shop talking about Milorganite. Some golf course superintendents don't even know who to call to place an order for Milorganite.

All these things notwithstanding, it seems to me a fitting time for payback. I'd argue we have a near obligation to support an organization that has done so very much for us. I'd even like to see a minimum of five tons of Milorganite in

every golf course shop in the state.

It should be easy for courses in Milwaukee County. And it should be really easy for all municipalities to help another one.

It makes sense for low budget courses to use Milorganite—it's extremely affordable.

It makes sense for high budget courses to use Milorganite—it's a premium product.

The product makes environmental sense, nutritional sense and common sense.

Don't you think it is time to show our thanks to an organization that has done so much for us? Helping them will ultimately come back and help you, through the Symposium and through research supported by the O.J. Noer Research Foundation.

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1993 Wisconsin Golf Turf Symposium

"Getting Right With God"

By Monroe S. Miller

The 1993 Wisconsin Golf Turf Symposium attacked a subject that was of particular interest around the state in 1993—winter injury of golf turf.

The same subject was covered in 1966, the first year of the Symposium. MMSD produced a bulletin as a result of that meeting that has become a classic in turf literature.

Anyone who attended that meeting or who has read the resulting bulletin could only conclude one thing after the 1993 meeting—we haven't come that far in either knowledge or research on this complex subject.

The Symposium was a good review of what is known about winter injury. Those who were waiting for the magic formula or a silver bullet to use against the worst of all turf dilemmas went away frustrated.

There still aren't any concrete answers.

Dr. Frank Rossi continued a tradition of really excellent keynote speakers. He spoke in broad strokes, laying a foundation that the other speakers would build on with their lectures. Interestingly, Frank was only four years old when the topic was first approached in 1966! Throughout his presentation, which was accompanied by an excellent selection of slides, were really good pieces of advice.

Dr. Peter Landschoot came to Milwaukee from Penn State where is a faculty member in the turfgrass program. Pete reviewed the literature, which is also scant, relating to winter injury and fertility practices. He found much work had been done on other crops and he also uncovered discrepancies between accepted practices and research results.

Dr. Drew Smith has been positioned to deal with what are likely the most severe winter conditions for turf in North America. His experience in Canada with injury, especially gray snowmold, served as a good reference point for those of us in a southern climate like Wisconsin!

Jim Brooks, director of The Lawn Institute, returned to Milwaukee to address the Symposium for the second time, both as the luncheon speaker. No one in our business can place too much emphasis on communication, and Brooks'

message included a plea to speak plain English and to speak your client's language.

The man who has been "in the news" of late on the subject of winter injury to turf was a speaker at this year's Symposium. Dr. John Roberts from the University of New Hampshire has put emphasis on winter injury like no other investigator since Dr. Jim Beard's work while he was working at Michigan State. Roberts spoke to the issue of injury causes, detailed various practices now used to reduce injury incidence, and shared some of the research he is now doing.

Few can match the experience of a Green Section Agronomist, and an experienced Green Section Agronomist is a real pleasure to listen to. Bob Vavrek qualifies as that, and his lecture on winter injury was filled with practical advice and observations. He focused on green covers and how they have worked in the Great Lakes Region.

Dr. Randy Kane made an excellent presentation of cool season turfgrass diseases and the patch diseases. His field experience was gained from Chicago area golf courses. As usual, he did a great job in covering the material in an easy to understand way.

There is some fear among some golf course superintendents that snowmold will be even more of a problem once the mercury compounds are no longer available for use. Tom Charnock, a golf course superintendent from the Buffalo, New York area, has many years of experience in controlling snowmold without mercurial compounds. His advice was reassuring.

As has been done for many years, Jim Latham, our Green Section Director, wrapped up the Symposium with a summary of the subject material presented. This savvy GODFATHER OF THE SYMPOSIUM, in an attempt to put it in one line, wrote the title of these notes!

Thanks to the Symposium Committee, the MMSD staff and the Session Chairmen for planning and executing the largest such event in 28 years. 🌿



Head table guests Johnson, Vavrek, Ward and Nees.



Questions and answers: (Left to Right) Kuta, Rossi, Smith, Roberts, Landschoot, Kane.



New WGCSA Distinguished Service Award winner Rod Johnson.



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Brooks and Latham at lunch.

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Illegal Hole Placements?

By Jeff Hall

Editor's Note: This article appeared in the Vol. XLVI, No. 8 of *GOLF JOURNAL*, the official publication of the USGA. It appears here with permission. I've always told my employees that day in and day out, setting the cups properly for play just might be the most important job we do. Author Jeff Hall, who is the Manager of the Rules of Golf for the USGA, presents a good look at this important task.

"Several times this year, the youngster working at our golf course has cut holes a scant 14 to 20 inches from the fringe, or on the edge of a tier on a green. Is there such a thing as an 'illegal' hole placement?"

USGA Member Bob LaPrade, of Cicero, New York, recently wrote us a letter asking this question; the answer may surprise you. First, a question. How can the Rules-making body not have a Rule to address something as important as the location of the hole on the putting green? After all, the Rules book contains 34 Rules with various subsections. Why does it not address something that every golfer confronts during play of every hole?

Well, let's suppose for a moment that there was a Rule that required the hole to be placed no nearer than 15 feet from any edge of a putting green. During the stroke-play championship at XYZ Country Club, a competitor in the final group notices that the hole on the 17th green is 13 feet from the edge, in violation of our mythical Rule. What could we do? Do we penalize the Committee two strokes? Typically, if you have a Rule, a penalty is usually associated with its breach.

Although there is not a Rule that governs the location of the hole on the putting green, the USGA provides guidelines with respect to selection of hole locations. The USGA believes there are many factors that affect the selection of hole locations, but none is more important than common sense. The desired goal in determining hole locations is fair results. A Committee

should test the skills of the players in a competition; tricky hole locations do little to test a player's abilities.

Here's a summary of the USGA's guidelines on the selection of hole locations for daily or competitive play:

1. Consider the design of the hole as the architect intended it to be played. Be aware of the probable weather conditions for the day, i.e., wind direction, weather forecast (remember, finding higher ground for a round to be played in the rain may make the difference between finishing a round or suspending play), and the holding quality of a green. Having a handle on these items requires doing a bit of homework in advance, but the information can prove invaluable.

2. There should be enough putting green surface between the hole and the front and sides of the green to accommodate the type of shot required at a given hole. Thus, on a hole that requires a long-iron shot, the hole should be located deeper into the green and farther from its sides than a hole that is to be played with a pitching wedge. As a rule of thumb, it is generally accepted that the hole be located at least five paces from the edge of the green. The contour of the ground and the severity of hazards around the green should also factor into the proximity of the hole to the green's edge. Remember, a player who hits a reasonably good shot but misses the putting surface should have a fair opportunity for recovery.

3. An area of two to three feet in radius around the hole should be as nearly level as possible and of uniform grade. Placing holes in tricky locations, i.e., on a sharp slope where a ball can gather speed, is undesirable. A player should be able to stop the ball at the hole regardless of the direction from which he plays.

4. Be careful to avoid areas of poor turf and damaged areas on the green, such as an old hole plug that has not been completely healed.

5. Holes should be cut as nearly vertical as possible, not plumb with the

contour of the green.

6. A balanced selection of hole locations (left, right, front, and back) for the entire course helps to insure fair results without placing a premium on "working" the ball in only one direction. Additionally, a balanced selection of hole locations provides for a golf course that plays a consistent length on a daily basis. For most golfers, this means a more accurate handicap since the course will play more closely to its predetermined course and Slope ratings regardless of when they choose to play.

7. The greenkeeper responsible for the actual cutting of the holes must be aware that the Rules of Golf call for a hole with a diameter of exactly 4 1/4 inches. When a hole-liner is used, its outer diameter cannot exceed 4 1/4 inches, and it must be sunk at least one inch below the putting green surface.

Hole locations should be balanced for the duration of the competition. Remember, in a stroke-play competition, the first hole of the first round is just as important as the final hole of the final round. The USGA does not subscribe to the theory that the course should be progressively more difficult each day of the competition. Other considerations when determining hole locations for a competition include practice rounds and the traffic patterns of the players as they exit the putting green.

Determining hole locations is not an exact science; it requires doing some homework and relying on common sense. Don't lose sight of the objective—fair results that should be determined by a player's skill. What is the reward for a job well done? Well, you probably won't be showered with accolades from each of the players saying how well the course was set up. But make even one mistake over the course of a 72-hole stroke-play competition, and you will hear complaining from all but two of the 156 players in the field. The eventual champion—and the guy who pitched in from 50 yards out. 🏌️



This Texan Transplant Loves to Travel

by Lori Ward Bocher

You can take the man out of Texas, but can you take Texas out of the man? Not if your name is Jim Latham, director of the Great Lakes Region USGA Green Section. After 40 years away from his native Texas, his Texan accent still lingers; his energy and enthusiasm are as big as the state itself; and his language still is peppered with a few good-ol' Texan "hells".

"I've still got an awful lot of Texan in me," Jim admits. "I've been making the pilgrimage to Mecca annually or more. So I've not lost touch with my roots.

"But when you live in a place (Milwaukee) for 33 years you've got to let some of it grow on you. Sort of like moss," he jokes. "Hell, I'm even glad to see the University of Wisconsin football team do well. I've had so much fun ragging Wisconsin alumni about their losing games. When I went to Texas A&M we lost so many games I forgot what it looked like to win. I guess misery loves company."

It was that "other" Wisconsin football team that helped the Lathams bond to Wisconsin when they first moved here in 1960. "We came up here when the Packers were just coming into their own," Jim explains. "That makes a Wisconsinite out of you real fast. I still don't understand cheese heads, but I figure, to each his own. I guess it beats those hog noses."

If he hasn't been able to metamorphose to a cheese head during his 33 years in Wisconsin, it might be because he really wasn't in Wisconsin much of the time; he was on the road visiting golf courses. And even after nearly 40 years of business trips across the U.S., he still hasn't satisfied his Texas-sized thirst for travel—a thirst that has done much to shape his career.

Jim Latham was born in Hillsboro, Texas, a small town 60 miles south of Dallas. After graduating from high school in 1945 he attended a local junior college for one year; spent 20 months in the Marine Corps; returned to the junior college; and then trans-



ferred to Texas A&M where he received a BS in soils in 1951 and an MS in agronomy in 1954.

His first exposure to turf was while a student at Texas A&M. "A neighbor and I grew a little nursery of bermudagrass on a vacant lot owned by a professor of agronomy at A&M," he remembers. "We sold enough sod off that vacant lot to pay for my move to Georgia."

At Georgia, he was a turf specialist for the Coastal Plain Experiment Station in Tifton. In the summer of 1956 he also worked for the USGA. And he spent one semester as a graduate student at Rutgers University. "But I decided not to continue on the PhD route," he recalls. "I wasn't going to do research and I wasn't going to teach. So there wasn't any point in going any further."

In 1957 he went full time with the USGA as an agronomist in the Southeastern Region Green Section. His office wasn't even in the region—it was in Maryland where he could rub elbows with the more experienced Mid-Atlantic Region agronomist. "I drove across the District of Columbia and Virginia to go to work because my region didn't start until North Carolina," he points out. "It was a hell of a com-

mute. And I worked seven states, from North Carolina to Miami to Memphis."

But that seven-state region wasn't enough for Jim. In 1960, he accepted a job as an agronomist with the Milorganite Division of the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District (MMSD). "It let me travel throughout North America, not just in seven states," he explains. "And it gave me a more varied exposure to turf, a better foundation, a broader perspective."

Jim was hired at the time O.J. Noer retired and Charlie Wilson moved into Noer's position. But Jim did work with Noer on a limited basis. "He was a wonderful guy," Jim believes. "He and Charlie set up the fellowship for me to go to Rutgers. So when I decided to drop that fellowship, I told Lois, 'Well, the last place you'll ever live is Wisconsin.' But it just worked out that way."

At the MMSD, Jim started as an agronomist. Later he was promoted to chief field agronomist, "even though there was but one," he laughs. When Wilson retired, he became marketing manager.

During his 25 years with the MMSD, about 70 percent of Jim's work was visiting golf course superintendents with the company's 75 distributors in North America. "I would go to their area and we would visit golf courses and talk agronomy, make recommendations," he recalls. "It was a back scratching thing. We're in town, they'd like to see someone from the plant. Customer service."

Jim never grew tired of the travel. "It was fun. Especially back in the days when trains were a good source of transportation," he points out. "We could leave here on Sunday afternoon or evening, have a nice dinner in Chicago, catch the late sleeper train and get into a number of cities in time to go to work on Monday morning."

In the 1980s, some changes at MMSD were frustrating to Jim. "Our Milorganite Division became an also-ran," he says. "So I told a couple of people at the USGA that if anything ever came up, give me a call." That happened in 1984 when Stan Zontek left the Great Lakes Region to return to his home state of Pennsylvania. In 1985 Jim took over as director, and the office was moved from Crystal Lake, Ill., to Milwaukee so that the Lathams could stay in their Milwaukee home.