

- Real green committee chairmen walk when they play golf and they believe "golf cars don't cause the damage — golfers do!"
- The real green committee chairman knows who Old Tom Morris was.
- The real chairman knows that when he hears the real superintendent talking about Jacobsen, he isn't talking about a Madison meat market or a Danish kid on the golf course crew.
- The real green committee chairman never suggests that the real golf course superintendent should "nuke" anything with any pesticide. Like the real golf course superintendent, the real chairman hopes to see the day when pesticide use is unnecessary.
- Real green committee chairmen know the difference between "Audubon" and "Otterbine".
- The real green committee chairmen recognize their task is made most critical and special by this simple truism: golf is the only game in the world in which the field of play is as important as the game itself.
- When the real green committee chairman hears the real superintendent talking about a Ransome, he knows he is talking about machinery, not a bank robbery.
- The real green committee chairman can name the predominant golf turfgrass specie in Wisconsin. It's *Poa annua*.
- The real green committee chairman doesn't, either secretly or overtly, plan to rebuild the golf course the way he wants it. He knows his service is to the players, not himself.
- The real chairman knows it isn't the greens committee. He also knows the origin of the use of the word *green* for his committee.
- Occasionally, the real chairman's wife complains this job takes too much of his time. He takes his chairmanship seriously and is dedicated to it.
- The real chairman likes green committee meetings in the shop, not in the clubhouse. He enjoys kicking tires and seeing what is going on in this interesting building. He prefers the smell of gasoline and Milorganite in the shop to that of table flowers and air freshener in the clubhouse.
- The real chairman knows when the real superintendent is talking about Toro, he isn't talking about a course in California.
- The real green committee chairman has a sense of humor.
- The real green committee chairman knows it irritates the real golf course superintendent when he is called the greenskeeper or the greens superintendent.
- The real chairman doesn't bug the real golf course superintendent to get him freebie green fees on a couple of other golf courses each week of the season. Once in a while is okay, though.
- Real green committee chairmen know the importance of proper budgeting for a golf course. They know the relationship between funding and quality is direct, if not perfectly parallel (that is what separates the good superintendent from the best). They believe there is truth in the old saw "you cannot make a silk purse from a sow's ear."
- When the real green committee chairman hears the real golf course superintendent talk about moving more and more toward IPM, he knows this isn't a stock tip about some global growth fund.
- The ultimate paycheck for the real green committee chair is for a member of the club to pat him on the back, comment on the fine course conditions and offer "thanks". 🌿

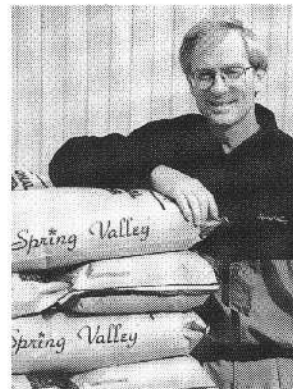
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"HIRING & FIRING" AT SPRING BUSINESS MEETING

By David Brandenburg

Sixty-three members signed up for this year's spring educational and business meeting, held Monday, March 6, in Fond du Lac. "Hiring and Firing: What You Need to Know" provided an excellent educational opportunity, and many in attendance were surprised by the complexity of dealing with employees.

The speakers for the session Mr. Edward Williams, Mr. James Macy and Mr. John Thiel from the law firm of Godfrey & Kahn S.C. in Oshkosh. They put on an excellent program.

Some of the material covered included interviewing guidelines, how to offer positions, the do's and don'ts of employee manuals, sexual harassment, and tips on disciplining and terminating employees.

A key to interviewing and hiring is to avoid any kind of discrimination (age, race, sex, etc.) by only asking questions that pertain to the applicants ability to perform the job they are applying for. It is also important to avoid any casual promises or to make statements that could reduce your ability to fire employees at will.

With employee manuals, it is important to use vague non-binding language and to avoid statements that could later be used against you. Many of us were surprised by how easily a badly worded statement could limit a company's rights.

On the subject of discipline and termination, it is necessary to treat all employees the same in similar situations, and to document all disciplinary actions.

At the afternoon session Dr. Frank Rossi gave us an update on the greens at the O.J. Noer Research Facility. The first year's research and statistics were interesting although Dr. Rossi did emphasize they were preliminary. It's good to know our research dollars are being put to good use by an excellent University of Wisconsin staff.

The association's business meeting went quickly with officer and director reports. Some highlights included the recognition of 25-year members Paul Delfosse, Tom Schaller and Jack Soderberg, along with the approval of the scholarship and research disbursements as follows:

Agri Business Dues — \$200
F/RoW/T — \$800
J.R.Love Scholarship — \$500
O.J. Noer Foundation — \$500
Robert Trent Jones Endowment (GCSAA) — \$1000
USGA Foundation — \$500
WTA Research Fund — \$10,000

1995 WGCSA Meeting Schedule

DATE	LOCATION	SPEAKER
April 24 (Monday)	Lake Arrowhead GC Nekoosa, WI Brian Wilhelm - GC Superintendent	Dr. Chuck Koval Controls Of The Future
May 22 (Monday)	Hartford CC Hartford, WI Joe Kuta - GC Superintendent	(Speaker TBA)
June 19 (Monday)	Drugan Mounds GC - Holmen, WI Mike Drugan - GC Superintendent	
July 10 (Monday)	Lake Wisconsin CC - Prairie du Sac, WI Kendall Marquardt - GC Superintendent	
August 7 (Monday)	CC of Wisconsin - Grafton, WI Gordy Waddington - GC Superintendent	
Sept. 18 (Monday)	South Hill G & CC Fond du Lac, WI	Bob Vavrek Year in Review
Oct. 2	Hawthorn Hill GC Saukville, WI Bill Knight- Park Commissioner	Michelle Cody Investing in Your Retirement

OTHER MEETING DATES

March 9	USGA Regional Conference, Maple Bluff CC
March 27	NGLGCSA Symposium, Rhinelander
May 31	SUPER PRO University Ridge G.C.
August 15	WTA Field Day, Madison, WI
October 7	WGCSA Dinner Dance, Chula Vista Resort, Wisconsin Dells
Nov. 8, 9	Wisconsin Turf Symposium, Milwaukee, WI
Dec. 11, 12	WGCSA/GCSAA Regional Seminar

1996

Jan. 9-11	Wisconsin Turfgrass and Green Industry Expo - Madison, WI
Jan. 22	WGCSA/GCSAA Technical Seminar - Irrigation Specialist
March 4	WGCSA Spring Business/Educational Meeting

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Communicating With Your Members About Environmental Issues

By Dr. Frank S. Rossi
 Extension Turfgrass Specialist
 University of Wisconsin - Madison

EDITOR'S NOTE: This advice from Dr. Rossi appeared in Volume 4, No. 1, 1995 issue of THE 19th HOLE, publication of AgrEvo USA Company. B.J. Bilas, AgrEvo manager of communications, gave permission to share it with GRASS ROOTS' readers, as did Dr. Rossi.

The recent political campaign provided an interesting insight into the current state of environmental advocacy in the United States. Few, if any, regional or national campaigns embraced any particular environmental issue, as was common in the late 1980s or early 1990s. Does this suggest that support for environmental advocacy is waning? Not likely.

The golf turf industry is an easy target of environmental interest groups for economic and sociological reasons. Economically, an estimated \$2.5 billion per year is spent on golf turf maintenance. Sociologically, golf courses are located largely where most of the people are — in urban areas. In addition, golf course management is a service industry, providing a quality golf course for people. As a result, people in the turf industry are a direct link between agriculture, the environment and the urban populations. People look to you for answers!

Studies show that public perception of environmental issues is significantly influenced by global environmental catastrophes, such as the nuclear accident at Chernobyl or the Valdez oil spill in Alaska. Interestingly, in September, 1994 an oil spill 8 to 10 times that of the Valdez occurred in Siberia, yet very little attention was given this event. Most Americans believe they have little power to influence issues on a global scale, so they act locally. The turf industry is not only in their backyard — they maintain it!

The public directly impacts the decision-making process for regulatory issues. Considering the primary information the public uses, the instability of this system becomes apparent, as

indicated by the inverted triangle in Figure 1. Therefore, golf course superintendents have a responsibility to care for the environment and to effectively communicate their management to an emotional public.

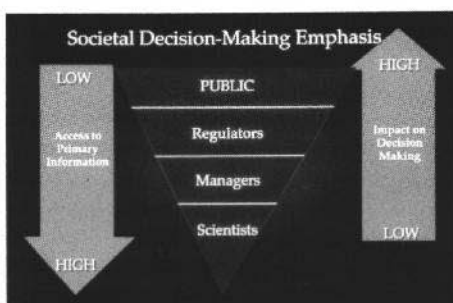


FIGURE 1. The general public has a high impact on the regulatory process, yet has low access to primary information.

Understanding Public Concern

Perception is defined as “a mental image”. Understanding public environmental concern requires understanding how turf management is perceived. Recently, radio commentator Paul Harvey has decided that being on a golf course or being a golf course superintendent is risky. He has stated that golf courses no longer have birds because of pesticide use. Mr. Harvey is expressing his perception of risk.

Risk could be defined as the potential for injury to occur. Risk is minimized by recognizing the hazard (the component that could cause injury, such as a pesticide) and taking safeguards (protective clothing, mixing/ loading facilities) to reduce the potential for injury to occur. The primary components when considering risk are assessment, perception and communication.

Risk assessment involves the determination of actual amount of injury that occurs related to the hazard. For example, when assessing the risk of pesticides to cause disease it is common to use biochemistry to evaluate the effect on living organisms, pathology to determine what disease

may be caused by the hazard, toxicology to determine the actual dose needed to control the disease (LD50), and epidemiology to study the spread of a particular disease. Assessment is a scientific and unemotional process — strictly the facts.

Earlier I introduced the concept of risk perception as a primary factor to consider when understanding environmental advocacy. Golf course superintendents must consider risk perception when communicating with their members.

The final component of risk incorporates an understanding of the facts and the perception to effectively communicate the risk — communication. The goal of risk communication is to provide information that moves the environmental discussion towards a better understanding of golf turf management.

The Real Concerns

During the confirmation hearings of EPA Administrator Carol Browner, she said, “In a period when people view all sorts of activities as health hazards, a more realistic assessment of pesticide risks could go a long way toward easing public paranoia.” Simply, the public is afraid and when people are afraid (or overly emotional) they do not act in a predictable and rational way.

Sociologists say that people are very emotional about pesticides because detection levels are so low (parts per quintillion). People believe that if a chemical is harmful at any level, it is harmful at every level. New technology like pesticides are generally considered unfamiliar. But the most important reason people are emotional about this debate is that they are urged to do so many things to take care of themselves (seatbelts, exercise diets) that when something they perceive as risky is imposed on them without their consent they become outraged. Don't try to ignore someone's honest concern!

Effective Communication

When dealing with people who are uncertain about a risk, like pesticide use, it is vital to first acknowledge their concern. Second, it is always best to discuss your values and concerns. More likely than not they are similar to the person with whom you may be speaking (no one wants to contaminate the environment). Finally, as much as is reasonably possible, give the people the power to choose.

Remember the golf turf industry is a service industry. Ask the people about their goals for the golf course. Do they want 100% weed-free turf, fast greens, or a "natural" setting? Next provide them with a management plan to reach their goals, recognizing that under high intensity golf course maintenance, pesticides are required. Finally, based on the primary information you provide, give them some

power to decide and become part of the process. This could easily extend into the community at large with some proper planning and public relations.

Always remember when communicating that it is more than what you say. Appearance, body language, inflection of your voice and other non-verbal issues also determine the effectiveness of your communication. Be innovative to enhance your credibility. For example, you could:

Use newsletters: Communicate your maintenance practices with your members, particularly if you are using a new technique or material on the course.

Institute a management hot-line: People call a certain number to find out about golf turf management and express their concerns.

Be accessible: Don't avoid talking to golfers and the public about your management program.

Have Maintenance Shop Days: Use these opportunities to open up the shop for the members and public to visit.

Use your imagination! Think of other ways to communicate with your members about maintaining their golf course.

One thing is for sure, environmental sensitivity will continue to rise. But with open communication, it will become more balanced as the public becomes increasingly more scientifically literate. As a turfgrass scientist and educator, I ask: Will we change our behavior through education and research or will regulations and laws be the motivation to change behavior? It's up to our industry to answer the question. I urge you to get the facts, understand them, recognize public perception and communicate effectively about the real concerns. ♣

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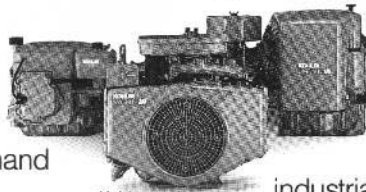
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THE TOUR

By Monroe S. Miller

He'd thought about this for years, going back to the point in time when he realized it was a possibility he would celebrate a silver anniversary at one club. In this day and age, long terms of service at a single golf course are less likely than they were a generation or two ago. It is rare anymore for anyone to even stay in the same profession for as long as he had. It seemed to him a notable mark in a career, and it mattered little to him that few others might view it that way. The celebration was going to be for him and no one else.

The plan wasn't going to be a jaunt down memory lane as much as it was a fulfillment of a lot of unkept promises he had made over the years. He was going to visit the golf courses in Wisconsin that were being managed by former employees. Somewhere in time he had promised everyone of them he would stop by for a visit and a tour, but unless they were close by or had hosted a WGCSA meeting, he hadn't been able to follow through. There simply had not been enough time. And although all those former staff members understood, it still bothered him that the promises were unfulfilled.

It would have taken a lot of time. There were over 30 golf courses in the state managed by kids who, while attending the UW, had worked for him. He loved every single one of them. So it occurred to him the only way to keep all those promises was to take enough vacation time to hit the road and go see those he hadn't visited. It would give him the chance to keep his word, even if it came years late for some. More importantly, it had the potential of becoming one of his great life adventures and highlights.

There was no sense in doing it when the courses were closed and snow covered. To make it meaningful, he would have to find the opportunity during the season. He got permission to take some vacation days - a week and the weekends on each side if necessary — right after Memorial Day.

Both the green committee chairman and the club president were very supportive.

Clearly he had to make the most of the time he had. He mapped out a route, approximately clockwise, around the state. There necessarily was some backtracking and zig-zagging, but not too much. He knew he would need to design a schedule, make appointments and keep on time. In a vacation heaven like Wisconsin, lodging reservations were an absolute must. All the guys knew ahead of time he could not go home with them for meals or an overnight or he would never finish the tour. No golf was allowed, either.

It took a fair amount of careful planning to schedule the visits and travel so it all came out right. A lot of miles were involved and the distance between some consecutive stops was significant. There would be discipline required so he didn't get going on one of his famous talking jags.

Simple arithmetic proved he would need to visit, alternately, three courses one day and two the next. He had thirteen golf courses to visit, ones he had heard lots about, but had never laid eyes upon.

He really wanted to see where the young men (and one gal) who were assistant course superintendents were working, too. But that was impossible to the point of being a ridiculous thought. But he held to the notion that if this tour went well, maybe next year...

He packed for comfort, taking golf clothes and boat mocs along with blue jeans and Redwings. Rain gear was a must. He was really excited, and buoyed by the confidence he was feeling in the staff at his own course, the one he was leaving for an entire week in the summertime. He chuckled when his assistant said "with you gone we will be done by noon everyday!" It was now or never, and now seemed about perfect.

It was dark when he pulled out of town. He had hardly slept all that night.

It was a curiosity that his first stop was at the course managed by the youngest and most recent graduate, Les Peterson. He had spent a year after graduation at Mt. Hope Golf and Country Club, working for Scottie Fennimore. Les interviewed successfully at a new golf course in the southwest corner of Wisconsin, near where he had grown up. Investors in the Surveyor's Point Golf Club planned on tapping the enormous tourist industry around Galena, the northwest corner of Illinois and the southwest part of Wisconsin. The club was named for the historic "point of beginning" at the very edge of the property. In 1831 Lucius Lyon, U.S. Commissioner on the survey of the Wisconsin/Illinois border, build a mound of soil 6' X 6' X 6' to make the exact spot of the intersection of the 4th principal meridian and the border between the two states. From that marker, destroyed long ago, all land surveys in Wisconsin began.

Les was in the shop when he arrived, waiting for him. Despite his
(Continued on page 29)

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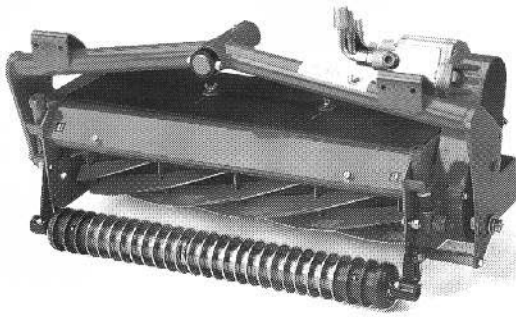
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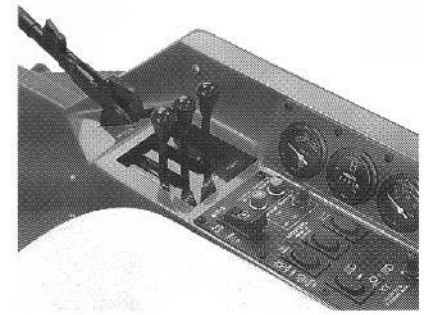
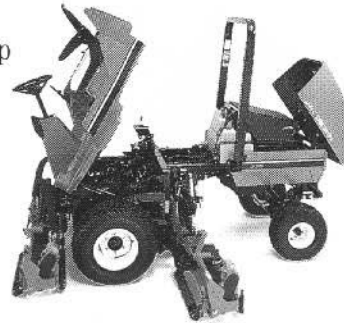
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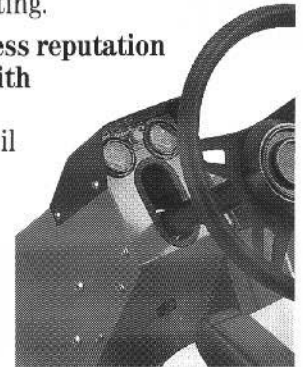


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(Continued from page 27)

youth and substantial responsibilities, Les was loose this day and smiling broadly. He apologized for the rather poor shop facilities — a new building was planned — and quickly got in a golf car and drove them out to the golf course.

Surveyor's Point was scheduled for a July 1st opening and it was pretty obvious they would be in good shape for that event. Most of the time, a daily fee course like this one would have been opened already. It was a gorgeous property and the golf course had been fit to the land, minimizing massive grading and unnatural features that haunt too many new golf courses. The kid had the operation in hand, was popular with the crew and destined to have a successful career.

He was off to a good start, on time for the next stop. It was a long drive, but a beautiful one. He followed the Mississippi River along the Great River Road. The day was pleasantly warm, just about what you would expect. The corn crop and grain fields looked as prosperous as the golf courses. Riding through the countryside was constant reminder of why this was an easy state to love.

Bluff Siding CC was located on a promontory with a fabulous view of the river. The clubhouse and several of the golf holes took maximum advantage of the geography. It almost seemed the view would be a distraction to a serious round of golf.

Mike Cartwright had been at Bluff Siding for a dozen years and had grown with the club. When he took the job and for a couple of years afterward, he often had doubts about the wisdom of such a move. But as the years went by, the club grew, the course was improved and he became happier. Last year the State Open was held at Bluff Siding — an impossible thought a decade ago — and players left with great respect for this "best kept secret" as the winner noted. He was happy to get his victory with par golf.

Mike took him home for a quick lunch — over his objections. He wanted him to see Becky and their three kids. They had purchased an old farmstead and twenty acres of rolling, almost rough ground. All of their spare time was spent repairing and renovating the house, the barn, the other buildings and the line fences. It was a cozy place, much like a picture you would see on the June calendar from the Farmer's Co-op.

The real treat came when Mike pushed open the door of the machine shed, revealing a like-new Oliver Super 88 and a freshly painted Ford Golden Jubilee! The boss was speechless.

He waved farewell to this great young family, thinking of the times he and Mike had spent together on the golf course, focused on problems, working late and keeping one another's spirits up at tough times. They had always been close, probably because of their common farm upbringing in

small Wisconsin communities. Mike was a happy and fully satisfied man, and that made him more than happy.

"Why haven't I made it up here before?" he thought to himself. "Always too busy" seemed like such a weak answer. He promised it wouldn't be another dozen years before he returned to Bluff Siding.

Tuesday would be a big day, one spent in northern Wisconsin. He pushed hard, leaving the Great River Road for Eau Claire on the way to the

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lake country between Chetek and Hayward. He had called Cale Spencer weeks ago when he was laying out his plans and told him he wouldn't be stopping at Stockholm CC despite the fact he would be driving almost by the golf course. Cale had been active in the WGCSA and insisted, over the years, that a couple of board meetings convene at his place. SCC was another absolutely breathtaking golf course, situated in the driftless part of Wisconsin that had been missed by the glacier. Good thing.

He was glad to reach the motel — two visits and over 400 miles for this day. He was ready for serious sleep.

Northern Wisconsin had never done much for him. He always preferred the beauty of the rolling farmland in the south to the sandy soils and desolate look up north. As soon as he pulled into the magnificent Piney Woods Resort, he started to reconsider. This was going to be an interesting day.

Piney Woods covered nearly two thousand acres and featured four superb golf courses — The Pine Needles Course, Pine Cones Golf Course, Cathedral Pines Golf and The Big Pines Club. Roy Winston was the golf course and property manager. The two of them went back to the time when he was new in the profession. Roy had been one of his first students and over the years one of the most loyal to the Wisconsin program. Each of the four golf course superintendents had worked for him, too, just like Roy had. Bill Reeves was at Pine Needles, Jack Brainerd was managing Pine Cones, Tom Spencer was at Cathedral Pines and Jim Bower ran Big Pines.

The resort had been carefully thought out. There was a large central shop that housed the mechanics, Roy's office and the equipment that the four golf courses shared - aerifiers, fertilizer spreaders, dump trucks, frontend loaders and backhoes, sprayers, and the like. Each course had a smaller satellite shop where the staff for each course worked and each course superintendent had his office. The machinery used most often was kept in each satellite shop. The four buildings were identical, yet each one of the guys gave him a shop tour!

They had lunch at the resort lodge, an enormous, rambling building with hundreds of rooms, tennis and swimming and dining. It was a very busy place, as it had to be. Piney Woods had about six months in a good year to

make its money, leaving little room for slow times during the summer. Everything he had heard about it was true. It was a first class facility, running smoothly due in no small part to successful golf courses.

Wednesday was mainly a driving day. He charted a route across the state he had never travelled, hoping to gain more appreciation for country lots of people really like. It wasn't interstate driving, but traffic was light and the miles passed quickly. He pulled into Fiddlesticks Country Club right after lunch. He was in the heart of north central Wisconsin.

This was going to be a fun stop. Vic Jorstad was a second generation for him. His dad Vince spent three summers at his golf course, graduated and moved to The Four Seasons Club in northeast Wisconsin. When it was time for Vic to go to college, he went to Madison and spent for seasons with his dad's old boss. Two years as an assistant at Emerald View led to his job at Fiddlesticks.

This stop needed more time than the others. He and his wife had sort of been parents away from home for Vic and had known him all his life. Despite the generational differences, he and Vic were really close.

They drove the course, hole by hole, greeting players and looking at greens and visiting the whole time. He hated to leave; it was time to go to Door county.

The Links at Moonlight Bay. The name sounded so good and so inviting he was sure the course couldn't live up to anybody's expectations. He was wrong. Located on the Lake Michigan side of Door county, the golf course hugged the soft and gentle coastline. You could almost convince yourself that you were on the coast at Cape Cod. Pete Collins was having a love affair with this golf course, and he could see why.


He couldn't see why, however, he hadn't visited before this time. The site was created for the golf course that had so carefully been crafted here. Pete was the only superintendent Moonlight Bay ever had. He was there for the long stay and it was no wonder. The course was more beautiful than his words could describe. It was fit into the natural landscape much like its neighbor across the lake, Crystal Downs. He and Pete had a great time touring the place. He wished he could take some of Pete's enthusiasm home with him.

Inland and southwest of The Links at Moonlight Bay was Emerald View Country Club, another Door county premier resort golf course. Chip Chandler had been Pete's assistant after graduation and was a natural to fill the Emerald View job when it opened. Some thought he and Pete would be in competition, but they were closer than brothers. Visitors to the Door rarely chose between these two golf courses; rather, they would play them both. The three of them had a nice lunch at Ducky's Cafe in Bailey's Harbor and afterwards he was down the road for one more stop.

Scheduling was going well. After today only four courses would remain. The distances between were diminishing, saving considerable time.

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