

Bunker renovation, drainage installation, on and on it continued. The ride was starting to move too fast...and there were a few days when I really did feel like heaving over the side of the golf cart!

As the summer progressed, the bulk of the projects were completed, but the beginning of August found us getting really dizzy from the ride. Caucasian employees jumping the full speed ride in order to get back to college or to football practice...and the heat and humidity really cranking up. Just about every day found us all getting dizzy and sick from this damn ride ...STOP...we all really wanted to get off!!

I guess that our collective salvation was that our course was surviving pretty well. The rumors and stories of course damage, ultraextensive fungicide use, and good superintendents in some really bad situations made us feel fortunate. It is sort of like the mentality of hearing about a tornado nearby, or some other disaster.

Pythium did strike at us during the middle of August...trying to not use a

few extra gallons of Subdue on fairways proved a mistake, but nowhere near the damage that others on tree-lined, Poa courses were sustaining. Didn't everybody blow their annual chemical budget by about August 15th? We underbudgeted in this account to begin with, so our actual expenditures look really, really high...

The last half of August seemed to go by at a slow blur...the ride was moving so slowly..."let's just get this over with," I kept saying to myself.

To top it all off, the most pleasant of our ownership group showed me his true colors again by corking off about his perception of the golf course...by Labor Day weekend I certainly had every right to buckle, strap, tie and bolt this guy permanently to the worst roller coaster ride that I could ever imagine...set the switch on 'permanent extra fast' and leave him spinning there, forever!!! What a wicked thought...

The autumn, on the other hand, has been a really enjoyable ride. This course is cruising through the fall, golf

income is way up over budget, and the course looks really good.

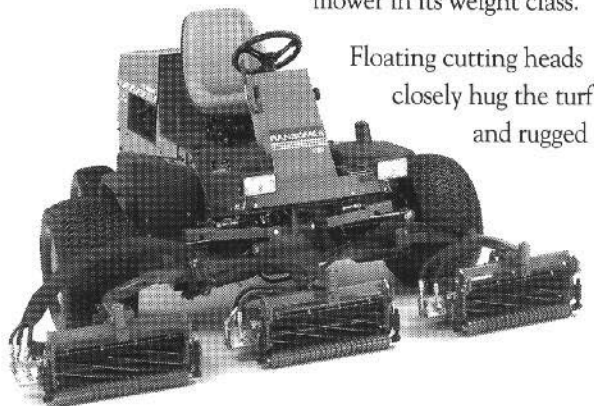
In late September we received some good recognition from Chicago-Land Golf, which is the most widely read golf publication in the area. They conducted their first annual 'Readers Choice Awards' by having their readers respond to an extensive survey of favorite courses in multiple categories. Little old Nettle Creek, way out here in corn country, nailed down the No. 10 spot in the "best conditioned golf course" category. The rankings in that category were as follows: 1 - Pine Meadow, 2 - Seven Bridges, 3 - Cog Hill No. 4, 4 - Woodbine, 5 - Prairie Landing, 6 - Kemper Lakes, 7 - Orchard Valley, 8 - Cantigny, 9 - Golf Club of Illinois, and 10 - NETTLE CREEK.

Say, what? "There are many, many high quality public courses in Chicagoland that didn't make the list...so what's happening here?" I ask myself. It really doesn't mean anything at all, except for the fact that some recognition makes riding the roller coaster worthwhile. 🍀

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## GCSAA

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September 8, 1995

Mr. Monroe S. Miller  
Editor and Publisher  
THE GRASS ROOTS  
Blackhawk Country Club  
P.O. Box 5129  
Madison, WI 53705

Dear Monroe,

Your "MYOB" editorial in the September/October GRASS ROOTS was a big disappointment to us. You have always worked as a watchdog for GCSAA, and we understand and truly appreciate that. This time, though, you are crying "Wolf".

Every organization needs a good watchdog; someone who always studies important information carefully every time, someone who gets the facts straight. We are stunned to think that, during the past two years these issues have been under discussion, this could be the first time you have given more than 30 seconds to the topic before "trashing it." We know how committed you are to GCSAA, to your chapter and to your profession, so we would have expected you to have followed this closely.

This has been a bottoms-up discussion from the beginning. At the first Chapter Delegates Meeting two years ago, the nature of the relationship between GCSAA and affiliated chapters was clearly the heart of the discussions. Then-President Randy Nichols appointed a resource committee to start sorting out the issues.

Neither that group, last year's committee, nor this year's committee has been composed of "schemers." Not counting the four board members, they are 11 individuals from large and small chapters, from border to border, from coast to coast. All are conscientious and principled men. We believe we are setting a direction and pace and an ultimate goal that will make GCSAA, all affiliated chapters, and the entire profession stronger. We also are listening carefully to the issues raised at the delegates meetings and at chapter meetings we attend.

More than 70 chapter representatives participated in very frank discussions about these issues at last year's meeting in Lawrence. Since then, the committee has had two meetings, whose fruit will be on the table for representatives of 95 chapters this weekend. There are no surprises or hidden agendas here. Everything has been—and will be—openly discussed.

The entire area of chapter relations has been at the forefront of everything for years now, and it has nothing whatsoever to do with the PGA of America or any other organization. This is part of what GCSAA is. We were born of chapters. We cannot just "forget it."

*GCSAA is dedicated to serving its members, advancing their profession and enriching the quality of golf and its environment.*

GCSAA-chapter relations is an issue of at least as great magnitude as image and the environment. That is why the board made "serving members through chapters" one of our three mandates. We are just one the developmental up-ramp for many new exciting programs that will benefit chapters. We strongly believe that the relationship between GCSAA and chapters is a two-way street. We are not where we want to be, but we are making progress. For example, our new Government Relations Counsel is putting together programs to help chapters deal with state and local issues. Just today, the GCSAA Research Committee is reviewing a very large proposal to support research at the University of Wisconsin.

The board set the chapter mandate in response to bottoms-up discussion. So far the board's only involvement in the proposed affiliation agreement has been that four board members (all GCSAA members for 20+ years) serve on the Chapter Relations Committee. The full board does receive progress reports at each board meeting. However, we will not debate the issue until we have the majority recommendations from this weekend's meeting.

We must clearly state, though, that the GCSAA Board of Directors has a fiduciary responsibility to ensure that litigation against a chapter cannot fall back on GCSAA Affiliation, after all, is a legal relationship. Whatever else happens with the proposal, we do know that we must require our legal affiliates to maintain adequate insurance and practice fiscal responsibility. We cannot jeopardize the association for one or all of the 114 organizations with which we are legal affiliated. If an organization is tied to GCSAA by legal affiliation, these matters are GCSAA business. If an organization is no affiliated, these matters are not of GCSAA's business and of no interest to us whatsoever.

As a chapter historian, you are certainly aware that Wisconsin GCSA is one of the 13 "Charter Chapters" specified in Article IV, Section 1 of GCSAA's bylaws. As such, Wisconsin has been protected by bylaws from the terms of the current affiliation agreement. That protection would continue under any proposed affiliation agreement, too, unless and until the bylaws were amended. That possibility has never been a subject of discussion at any resource group, committee or delegates meeting yet. Of course, if the Wisconsin GCSA were to choose to secede from its union with GCSAA, that would be its own choice.

As for GCSAA's other 101 affiliated chapters, the proposed affiliation agreement's reporting requirements are largely like the current affiliation agreement's - only the current agreement has never been enforced.

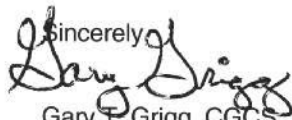
As to your point that all GCSAA members should also be chapter members, we personally (and everyone on the Chapter Relations Committee) agree whole-heartedly that this should be a two-way street. However, the current GCSAA bylaws do not allow that kind of imposition of a qualification. That is one bylaws change that has been under our committee's discussion. However, we would not be able to pursue that until we get our GCSAA-chapter relationships more solid and unified.


The 100-percent requirement for chapter superintendents to be GCSAA members would be a goal set over a 15-year period. The committee is looking to head back to that original charter. The board, of course, has not met or voted on any of this yet, but will certainly respect the majority of the 95 chapters' delegates at this weekend's meeting.

Our belief, which we both have heard many members around the country echo, is that the chapter members who are not joining GCSAA are riding on our coattails. They receive much as much benefit from our image and environmental campaigns, for example, as every dues-paying GCSAA member. We hear a lot of grumbling in our travels about the people who are willing to take, but not to contribute.

We are glad you have always been one to contribute, Monroe. GCSAA needs you "tough love." We are glad that you want solidarity and unity. That is exactly what the last few years of discussion have been aiming at. We hope you will care enough to study the issues more. As always, you may just pick up the phone and call either one of us.

As the GCSAA Board of Directors, we cannot "forget it."

Sincerely,  
  
Gary T. Grigg, CGCS  
President

  
Bruce R. Williams, CGCS  
Vice President  
Chapter Relations Committee Chairman

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cc: GCSAA Board of Directors  
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# South Hills Golf and Country Club

by Dave Brandenburg

On September 18 over 100 WGCSA members met at South Hills Golf And Country Club in Fond Du Lac for our annual tournament meeting. It was a beautiful fall day with temperatures in the 70's and plenty of sunshine. Superintendent Scott Schaller and his staff had the course in excellent shape and groomed to perfection. One had to look hard to see any remaining damage from the over 17 inches of rain the course received in August. For those who couldn't make it, the course is challenging with plenty of trees, elevation changes and natural areas all of which gave trouble to this golfer. After an excellent ribeye dinner Mr. Bob Vavrek from the USGA gave his always popular "Year In Review". It was somewhat comforting to know infected or dead *Poa annua* wasn't only found in Wisconsin.

Forty members participated in our annual tournament with Jim Shaw shooting a 79 to win overall gross champion. Net winners were:

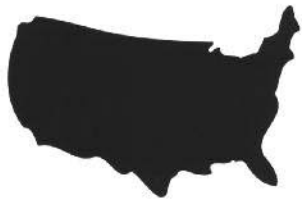
Championship Flight: 1st Gordy Waddington 72  
2nd Glen Gerth 74

A Flight: 1st Charlie Shaw 67  
2nd Mike Lyons 70  
B Flight: 1st Dave Smith 71  
2nd Andy Kronwall 73  
Those not playing in the tournament played a Peroria event with winners as follows:

1st Mike Shulluve 59  
2nd Andy Zehren 59  
3rd Derek Knedler 62  
4th Conrad Stynchula 67  
5th Dennis Robinson 68  
Flag event winners are:

Short Drive #1 - Dave Smith  
Long Drive #3 - Mike Lyons  
Closest to Pin #4- Roy Beach  
Most Putts #5 - Vince Johnson  
Closest to Pin #6 - Joe Check  
Closest in Two #8 - Kris Pinkerton  
Closest in Three #9 - Charlie Shaw  
Closest to Pin #10 - Charlie Ocepek  
Long Putt #14 - Brad Colglazier  
Long Drive #15 - Chuck Wollner  
Long Putt #15 - Conrad Stynchula  
Closest to Oak Tree #16 -  
Ed Kirchenwitz 🏆





## Weather Plays Major Part in Turf Loss

By Professors J.M. Vargas Jr. and P.E. Rieke  
Michigan State University

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** This article appeared in the September 1995 (Vol. 24, No. 9) issue of *TURF TIMES*, the newsletter of the Northern Michigan Turf Managers Association. Editor Mike Morris gave me permission to share it with you.

Professors Rieke and Vargas speak to the problems the difficult summer of 1995 made for golf courses in Michigan. There is probably more truth to the old saw "misery likes company" than I'd like to admit. This well written article is evidence that the tough summer weather went beyond our borders.

Mike Morris is the golf course superintendent at Crystal Downs near Frankfort, Michigan. Tuck Tate is a member at Crystal Downs (green committee member, too), and the course is a treasure that was designed by Allister Mackenzie. Frankfort is the summer home of former USGA Green Section National Director Bill Bengeyfield; he owns the Frankfort Golf Club. And Cheryl Lehmann Miller spent her childhood in that small town, across the lake from Door county.

So read what went on in Michigan last summer. If you enjoy the article, tell that to Paul Rieke when you see him at the Symposium!

Having visited many courses where turf loss occurred, we decided to write this informational letter to try and put this summer into perspective.

Weather has been a major contributing factor to turf loss this year. The spring was cool and cloudy. Because of the lack of sunlight, the grass did not build up carbohydrates during this period and it was not very hardy as we moved into the dry, hot weather of early June. Golf courses in Michigan are fortunate that in most summers, we are blessed with cool night time temperatures, which allow the turfgrass plants to recover from the heat of the day. However, every so often we experience summers with

warm night time temperatures like this past summer and the one that occurred in 1988. Turfgrass plants have little chance to recover when night time temperatures stay above 70 degrees F. Turfgrasses surviving under such conditions have very poor root systems and are susceptible to many stresses.

Plants cool themselves through a process known as transpiration. During this process, the plants cool themselves through the release of moisture. The process works best under conditions of low humidity and good air movement. In the drought year of 1988, even though the temperatures may have been higher than this summer, the humidity was lower which allowed the plants to cool themselves more efficiently through transpiration. This was not the case this year. In addition to the humidity, the warm temperatures caused soil temperatures to reach 96 - 99 degrees F at a 2" depth. Cool season grasses don't tolerate high temperatures in the root zone. Turf was lost due to the combination of high temperatures and humidity causing the turf to overheat and die.

The turf lost from conditions of high humidity and temperature are most evident in areas of limited air movement, usually greens, tees or fairways surrounded by trees. Trees, unfortunately, become sacred cows on many

golf courses. Removing them is often impossible because of the way members have come to love them. That should be kept in mind when the question of tree removal arises. What is the primary purpose for having the golf course? Is it to play golf on healthy turf or for hiking among the trees or picnics, etc.? If the primary purpose of a golf course is for playing golf on healthy turf, then tree removal should be an easy decision. Installing fans will help compensate for lack of

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air movement, but they will not alleviate the shade factor or the tree's roots competing with the turf for nutrients or water.

We see very few problems with Pythium blight or brown patch diseases in Michigan most summers. This season both diseases in Michigan were a problem from the beginning of July through mid-August. Since most golf courses don't normally budget for such diseases, I would assume most golf courses have exceeded their chemical budgets.

As bad a year as we were having, most golf courses held their turf through the heat during the early summer when the weather was dry and relative humidity was relatively low. Then the heavy rains occurred which pushed the oxygen out of the root zone. The combination of low oxygen and high soil temperatures caused death of turf roots. Without roots the turf cannot long survive. Poor drainage was a major factor in much of the turf loss. Because of poor drainage, turf roots sat in the hot

soil without oxygen, speeding up root loss. Poorly drained areas are very evident and point out where improvement in drainage is needed. Poorly designed irrigation systems may also have contributed to the excess water problems.

As a result of the unrelenting high temperatures and humidity, the grass not only had few roots, but it was very succulent. It was very susceptible to traffic injury, ball marks and spike injury. This also made the grass susceptible to wilting when the weather turned dry in late August. Being so succulent, it did not adjust well to the high sunlight intensity and warm, dry winds.

Hopefully, we will not have another summer like this one for many years. The only good news out of the summer is that it has allowed many golf courses to identify their problem areas, including the need for improved drainage or irrigation systems. These areas can be corrected so that if a season like this occurs again, turf loss can be minimized. ♣

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# FIELD DAY '95 - A DAY TO REMEMBER

By Monroe S. Miller

The Wisconsin Turfgrass Association staff who picked August 15th for this year's WTA Field Day must be clairvoyant. Although the selection was made close to a year ago, they seemed to know the 15th was a day of relief every turfgrass manager in Wisconsin would need.

For one day, the heat abated, the humidity dropped a bit, and it was entirely pleasant to be outside, among friends and colleagues. The Noer Turfgrass Research Facility was a great spot to spend that day.

As I drove over, my spirits grew by the mile. The Badgers were in the middle of their many practice sessions at the Holy Name Seminary, only a couple of miles from the Noer farm. The golden rod was in bloom, adding color to the rural roadside and fence rows. The ears on the unusually tall corn stalks were big and heavy, and already the angle between the ears and stalks was opened halfway. You couldn't miss the fact that lots of plants had three ears instead of the normal two. You knew fall wasn't too far away and that thought added to the anticipation of Field Day.

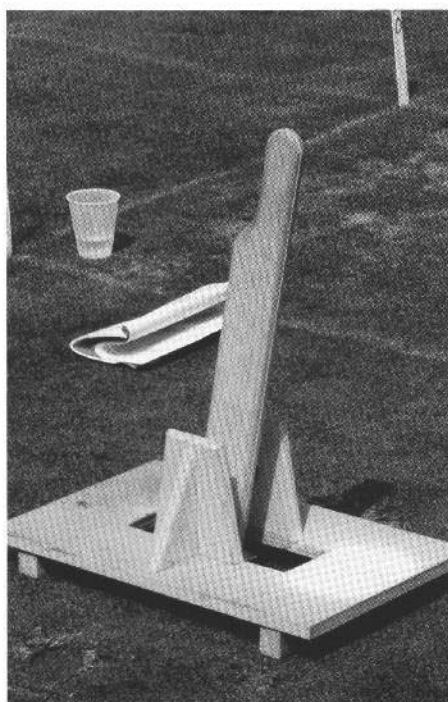
I wasn't the only one excited to be there. Attendance set a record, pushing on the 700 mark. People gathered around the booths and visited with vendor personnel. They sat at the tables under the blue and white bigtop canvas tent to drink coffee and catch up on the news. Some nosed around the research areas even though formal tours weren't held until after lunch.

The refinement of details over the years has led to a hassle-free experience for attendees. Parking has smoothed out and is quick, thanks to Maple Bluff CC assistant superintendent Gary Richards. Registration is easy and efficient. The bigtop is now at the north end of the farm and exhibitors are in the southeast corner. The arrangement seems perfect.

The tours were hosted by Wayne Kussow, Tom Schwab, Frank Rossi, Steve Millett, Emily Buelow and Chris Kerkman. Root zone mixes, NTEP



Wisconsin manufacturers were present in full force — 1. John Deere of Horicon, 2. Jacobsen of Racine, 3. Ransomes of Johnson Creek, and 4. Toro of Tomah.



Implement used to create consistent divots so recovery factors can be studied.

	Quality Putts 8-15-95	% Algae Coverage	Localized dry spots
Iowa peat	8.375 / 7.775	6 / 69	No
Reed sedge	8.50 / 7.50	6 / 50	No
Wisconsin peat	8.275 / 7.25	7 / 47	No
Mich sphagnum	8.225 / 7.55	18 / 64	No
Janesville sand	8.125 / 7.40	10 / 69	No
Bottom ash	8.075 / 7.65	11 / 98	No
Canadian sphagnum	8.075 / 7.475	3 / 66	Yes
Rice hulls	7.775 / 7.35	8 / 65	Yes
Insul-ite	7.975 / 7.10	32 / 96	Yes
No amendment	7.90 / 7.375	7 / 61	Yes

Interesting data from Dr. Kussow's green mix amendment study. Everyone was dealing with localized dry spots.



bentgrass putting green plots, and the putting green management study areas were particularly popular among Wisconsin golf course superintendents.

Every event has highlights, and this one did, too. Professors emeritus Gayle Worf and Robert Newman spent the day with us, as did just-retired Professor Chuck Koval. And John Osborn sang the national anthem as well as most had heard it.

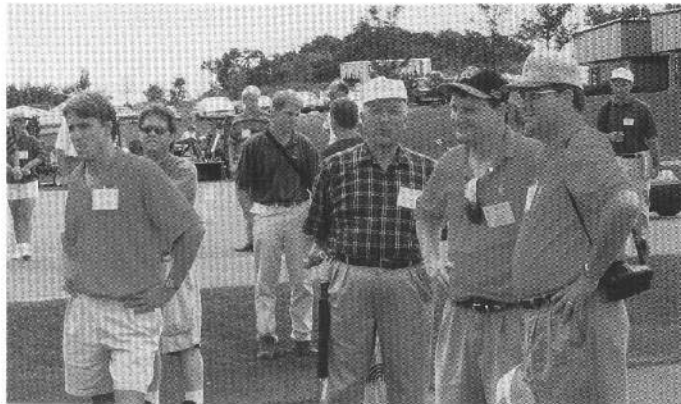
There were extra activities that added to the fun and the fund raising. Bob Erdahl ran a putting contest, the live auction was held as it has been for a number of years, and a silent auction was offered.

The entire issue of THE GRASS ROOTS couldn't record all that was presented at the 1995 Field Day. You had to be there. If you weren't, make sure you don't miss in 1996. My guess is it will be even bigger and better!

#### 1995 FIELD DAY EXHIBITORS

The following organizations made it possible for the 1995 Field Day to be so successful. Our thanks to them:

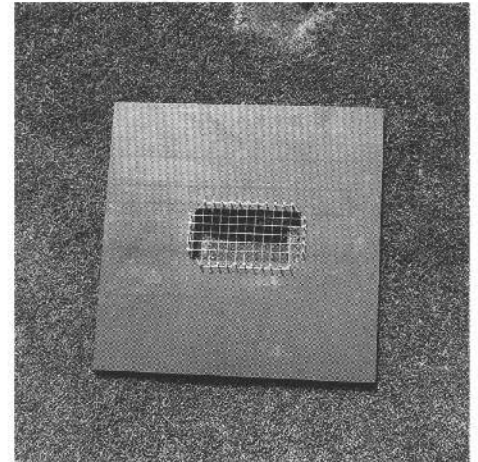
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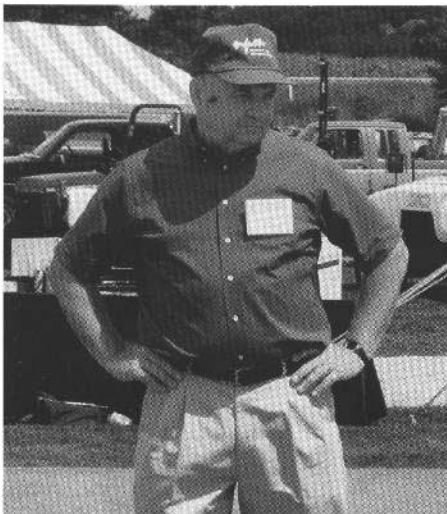
Chris Kerkamn, grad student of Dr. Wayne Kussow, joins Marsh Finner, Steve Millett and Dr. Doug Maxwell.



Noer Facility Manager Tom Schwab in one of his roles at the UW — educator!



Gauge used to measure divot recovery.



A great advocate of the turfgrass industry in Wisconsin. Dr. Larry Binning, chairman of the Horticulture Department.

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Frank Rossi stood in the middle of auction donations to give instructions for the Tour.



Emily Buelow explained details of the divot study. She is Frank Rossi's graduate student.

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# CHRISTMAS AT STINKY'S

By Monroe S. Miller

All the guys in our town start thinking about our annual Christmas party right about the time we get together for the Symposium. More than a few times we've asked ourselves why we have to go clear to Milwaukee to visit about our Christmas celebration.

The answer is obvious. For whatever reason—coincidence or otherwise—we don't get together much in our town. All the golf course superintendents still pretty much are hands-on, leaving little time for socializing. Oh, we go to monthly meetings with pretty good regularity. But it takes Field Day or the Symposium to get us all in the same place at the same time.

And Field Day, in mid-August, is no time to plan for Christmas. Good grief—at that time we are still praying to hang on through Labor Day. Better days are ahead after that, days better suited for thinking about our favorite holiday.

I don't know how long an event has to go on for it to become a tradition. But this is a tradition, by anybody's definition. It started out simply enough. When Professor Love retired, he invited the superintendents in town who were his former students for lunch at Stinky's Bar & Grill. It was at Christmas time and even though he didn't intend it to be a holiday party, it sort of was. That was probably a dozen years ago, and have we ever had a lot of fun in those years.

Stinky's seems an unlikely place for a Christmas party, but it is close for everybody and easy to get to. None of us are known for hanging out in taverns, but we are a pretty happy group and need to gather at a, well, less sophisticated venue than one of the clubs. You never know when one of the guys might misbehave! Last year one of them suggested Hooters for a change, but he was shot down like a low flying goose. We aren't that dumb!

Besides, we all like Stinky's. It is friendly, roomy and has decent food (if

you're careful about what you choose from the menu). Plus, we all like Stinky O'Malley a lot. He is an Irishman who likes good cigars and golf. He is always bugging one of us for a freebie round. And we always try to comply at least once each season.

I never heard how he got his nickname, but I wouldn't be surprised if it came from the odd array of food he serves. Big one-gallon jars of pickled boiled eggs are on the bar. I couldn't gag one of those smelly things down if my life depended on it. "You're not much of a man" Stinky says when I tell him he should run them all down the garbage disposal because they aren't fit to eat. Hors d'oeuvres at Stinky's means platters of herring, sardines in mustard sauce and anchovies; they all require a strong stomach. He slathers everything with kraut and onions, and baked beans are about the only side dish he offers. I accused him once of using smelly food to cover up for his lousy cooking. "Why do you keep coming back then?" he asked me. With my usual wit, I said nothing, knowing I'd been had.

The most popular order at Stinky's is his State Fair Sandwich. You cannot get it anywhere else in town. He takes two slices of dark rye bread, lays in a thick slab of Limburger cheese, adds a slice of raw onion and several slices of raw apple. The onion and apple are to cover up the bad smell of the Limburger.

"Why do you serve such an awful sandwich, Stinky?"

"It's my trademark. I put three kids through college on the famous Stinky State Fair Sandwich," he said. Then he smiled his wide Irish grin.

A big orange cat roams the bar, checking everybody over. "Keeps the rodent population down to a minimum," was Stinky's only comment.

There is the main bar room at Stinky's and several eating rooms off to the side of it. One was sort of a

game room—pool table, darts, fireplace—and another was the RUSH room, nearly a reverent place these days. And really popular. Most of Stinky's customers like big government as much as Mr. Limbaugh does. They feel a kinship with the big guy.

Phoebe O'Malley, Stinky's wife, is there as much as Stinky is. She is an earthy gal who, despite her popularity with the patrons, takes no grief from anyone, including her husband.

The normal anticipation we always feel was amplified this year because we were initiating a new member into our group. Chuck Koval retired from the UW-Madison and became eligible to join us. Everyone was either a former student of one of the profs or an emeritus professor. For myself, it was sad in a way. All the faculty who once so greatly influenced so many Wisconsin golf course superintendents were now retired. Where has the time, where have the years gone? I wondered if

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