

# The Grass Roots

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*Editor and Publisher*  
Monroe S. Miller  
Blackhawk Country Club  
P.O. Box 5129  
Madison, WI 53705

*Editorial Staff and Business Affairs*  
Kris Pinkerton  
Oshkosh Country Club  
11 West Ripple Road  
Oshkosh, WI 54901

### About the Cover:

There is, in the world of golf, renewed interest in established, historic and classic golf courses. From the antique postcard collection of the editor, Jennifer Eberhardt has created cover artwork that reflects an earlier day on Wisconsin golf courses. Her work complements the article on reminiscing you'll find inside this issue.

*There are four sorts of weather.*

*Too Hot*

*Too Cold*

*Too Wet and Too Windy.*

— Jeane Willis,  
English writer

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(Left to Right): Mike Semler, Kris Pinkerton, Charlie Shaw, Dave Smith, Scott Schaller, Gary Tanko, Dave Brandenburg, Andy Kronwall, Mark Kienert.

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Charlie Shaw  
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# Chapter Affiliation

By Mark Keinert



Do the words "dual membership" mean anything to you? How about "chapter affiliation"?

If you are presently a member of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, and a member of the Wisconsin Golf Course Superintendents Association, they should. If not, then you started your winter hibernation too soon and it's time that you get back into the flow of things. There has been enough written here in the pages of our GRASS ROOTS and also in GCSAA's NEWSLINE for you to draw an opinion and reach some conclusion on the subject for yourself. How does it affect you? At present, not at all as all current members of either the state or national will fall under a "grandfathers"

clause. In the future, however, it will affect who we can accept as a member into our ranks.

My message today will serve more as a historical reference point. As you read this, we will have voted on this issue at both the national level and debated it locally here in our state chapter at our spring business meeting. By now you are aware of the fact that the GCSAA chapter affiliation agreement is a done deal. The GCSAA board voted to implement the new requirements during their fall board meeting. The Board of directors of GCSAA using the vote taken at the chapter representative meeting in Lawrence in September 1995, which from my viewpoint was an open and fair process, as a green light to pro-

ceed with the business of approving the renewal of chapter affiliation agreements. The only thing left for the chapters to do was to vote on a little house—keeping in the by-laws that needed to be attended to. Our work at the state level was complete by either endorsing the directive and jumping on the "bandwagon" or setting up a loop hole to circumvent the affiliation agreement.

Back in December of 1995, I set out for Steinbock Library on the University of Wisconsin-Madison campus under the impression that all "charter chapters" of the GCSAA would be "grandfathered" and excused from the "dual" membership requirement. If I could find proof, it might be the loophole that we would need to circumvent the dual

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membership requirement. Should that proof be found, it would keep us from having to find and develop "loopholes" in our bylaws in an effort to hide our fellow superintendent that are not able to afford membership dues for both organizations.

In the back issues of the GREEN-KEEPER REPORTER the official newsletter of the National Association of Greenskeepers of America, (NAGA), the forefather of our present day GCSAA, I sought to prove that the Wisconsin GCSA was indeed a charter chapter. What I did find was very interesting. For as you see, what was life back then, found our country in the depths of the Great Depression.

This was a time when many country clubs around the country went into bankruptcy. Architectural gems that were forever lost to the game were turned back into farm fields and future residential neighborhoods.

You should also keep in mind that this was also the time that unionization of our country's work force was in full swing in almost every industry in an effort to improve workers rights. Greenkeepers of the past were no different in the sense that they too also wanted to create this association (NAGA) for the sole purpose of improving the working lives of its membership. The NAGA was the "Greenkeepers" union.

In the depths of this depression, it was the state chapters, at the grass roots level that initiated the dual membership requirement. Dual membership was a fundamental grass roots directive initiated by the membership active in those days in what I believe was a good faith measure to insure that the NAGA did not go out of business and that the association would be around for its future generations. It was an association managed by its membership.

Now the reverse is true; management from the top down is using the same dual membership requirement in a time of unparalleled prosperity to mandate membership requirements.

I found proof that the our chapter "donated" monies to NAGA so that they could keep publishing the newsletter. This was back in 1933. Too bad this wasn't a loan, just think of what that money would be worth today. I could not document the fact that the Wisconsin Golf Course

Superintendents Association was indeed a charter member. We were represented by a district spokesperson back then but lacked definitive document to support our charter chapter standing.

I found out later from Mr. Don Bretthauer, Chapter Relation Manager, that it was the revised intent of the GCSAA Board to require that all chapters renew their affiliation agreement, charter chapters or not, for the sole purpose of having all chapters from this period on of record supporting the affiliation agreement.

GCSAA also tightened the requirement, later, due to the fact that they themselves do not have anything on record showing who in fact were charter members of NAGA. Proof is now required in the form of the "Original Certificate." In the case of the Wisconsin GCSA, I'm sure that this was disposed of years ago, as someone's heirs cleaned out the papers in, the estate of one of our associations past officers and did not realize what significance that little piece of paper would hold today.

For the record, during our January business meeting, the chapter affiliation agreement was discussed in length and a vote taken on the issue. I used this forum as a GCSAA caucus to gain a feeling how the membership and your board felt on the issue. Also, I tried to gain the feed back of all our membership as they telephoned me over the winter months leading me up to the GCSAA annual meeting in Orlando. Your board, after much debate, voted 5-4 to defeat the dual membership requirement and directed your chapter voting delegate to vote in the negative against the bylaws changes that GCSAA had on the ballot.

What troubles me the most is that there has been so little resistance to this measure as I write this in mid-January. I've spoken to all but four of the candidates running and have asked them point blank if the dual membership issue has changed anyone's mind. What kinds of resistance have they been hearing? I've monitored "Turf Byte," the unofficial, official bulletin board of our nation's golf course superintendents for similar kinds of feed back. Nothing.

I received E-mail from Gary Grigg telling me that the "overwhelming

majority" of members support all of the changes. And yesterday, a single fax from the only chapter in the country that can boast of 100 percent dual membership has a problem with reducing the dues for Class C membership as it would decrease GCSAA revenues by close to a quarter of a million dollars. They are in favor of dual membership and are willing to pay full price for their assistants to belong to the National.

How much did membership apathy have to play with the ease in which the chapter affiliation agreement flew through the board is not for me to answer. I know that the vast majority of superintendents have their dues paid by their employer. Did this fact hide the dual membership issue?

I would have to say it did as a landslide majority of GCSAA members did not question the issue. Or did they face similar experiences as I did as a younger associate who paid for dues out of his or her own pocket, figuring that if they could do it so could others?

I don't know; however, I can count from direct experience that for the five of the first six years that I was a GCSAA member, I paid for dues out of my own pocket, first as a government employee on a public golf course, and then for a semi-private club in which I was nothing more than a "seasonal" employee forced to stand in an unemployment line during my "off months."

I attended conventions out of my own pocket and drove to the conference back in those days. My wife, I and my daughters stayed in third rate motels. That was my vacation. I'm a lot richer for the experience as I have a lot of memories from those trips taken back then. That was my choice. In those days I paid for the sacrifice. I didn't want to be left behind. Now it is ironic that we have to decide whether we vote to leave others behind in the wake of the dual membership requirement or we as a chapter are left behind by GCSAA.

This measure has forever changed the life of the Wisconsin GCSA, its value to its membership and quite simply its very essence for serving all of its members. By now the dust will have settled and you will have a little feel for the emotion of the issue. I can only hope there is enough of our association to salvage. ♣



# WHAT WILL SPRING BRING?

By Monroe S. Miller

This is always a tense and tentative time of year for golf course superintendents in the northern parts of the country—that includes us in Wisconsin. Excepting those years when snow comes early and stays until mid-March, there are always questions about winter injury. Those questions loom really big after a winter like the one we've just lived through.

It has been ugly. The fall was wet and snow came early. Lots of golf courses had a really tough time getting fungicides applied for snowmold diseases. In our case, we never were able to put down our normal top-dressing.

Then came the warm temperatures in mid-January. In our town we reached a record high of 55 degrees F on January 18th, the predicted snow didn't arrive and the temperature dropped to 0 degrees F that night with 30 mph winds. What did that do to turf?

The first few days of February saw the record low temperatures that will be talked about for years. And, almost as if to make a nightmare come true, it warmed up into the 40s and 50s in that first week, melting most snow.

We all know by now that serious turf injury can result from wide temperatures swings and repeated freeze/thaw cycles. Whether or not that will happen this spring remains to be seen. Hope springs eternal, and I hope we have—all of us—a good start.

The weird weather we have experienced brought out the usual suspects to explain them. Various we read about everything from el nino to global warming. Global warming was used as blame for all the snow the East Coast received this winter. It is also the reason given for the hot humid summer of 1995, the oddball rainfall patterns of recent years, and even the brutal cold we had the past few months.

When it is so cold that people aren't snowmobiling or cross country skiing or even ice fishing, global warming is a tough sell.

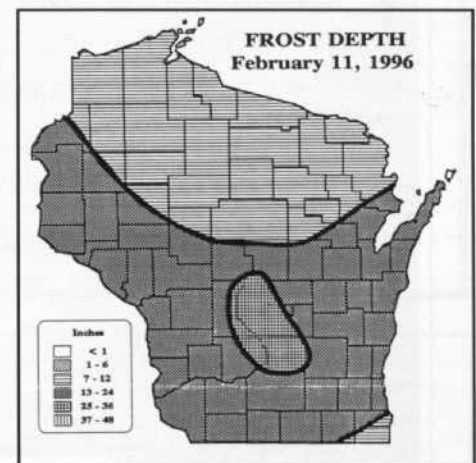
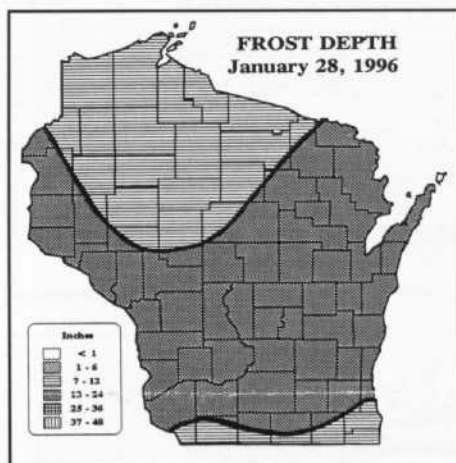
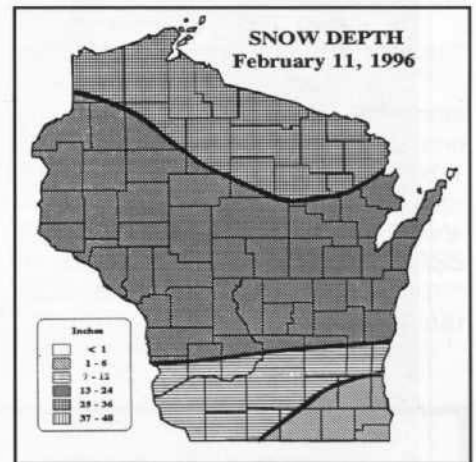
I don't buy it. My prediction is that all of these unusual weather phenomena signal a return to the Ice Age!

The graphics of snow and frost depths in Wisconsin are from the Wisconsin Agricultural Statistics Service.

its 101-year history.

Judy Bell, a member of the executive committee since 1987, said her presidency won't be a women's golf crusade. "The number of women who are learning the game is incredible," she said. "I'm supportive of everyone having a chance to play regardless of race, gender or income."

Bell said the chief role of the USGA is to set rules, protect the game from



The USGA and the PGA preceded the GCSAA to Orlando for annual, national meetings. The USGA annual meeting was held on January 27th and elected its first female president in

technology, oversee the handicap system and define amateur status. "It's important the history and traditions of the game hang together," she said.

Bell was also the first woman to be named to the Executive Committee in 1987.

(Continued on page 7)



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(Continued from page 5)

Everyone who loves trees, and that would include most golf course superintendents, has to be worried about the gypsy moth movement into Wisconsin.

A program to kill the caterpillars will be expanded this spring to include 35,000 acres at 38 sites in 16 counties. The Wisconsin DATCP will manage the spraying.

That is about 6,000 more acres than were treated last spring. The 35,000 acres isn't the most acres treated since the program started in 1990 but it represents the most sites. It will cost \$550,000, with the feds picking up half the tab.

The eradication program centers on aerial spraying of designated areas with a bacterial insecticide. It usually starts about May 20th and is completed by June 10th. The number of male gypsy moths trapped last fall was **10 TIMES** greater than in 1994. The whole thing is a bad moon on the rise.

The gypsy moth is such a serious pest because it feeds on the leaves of more than 300 different trees and shrubs. An infestation of them could have a disastrous impact on a golf course.

The history of the gypsy moth in the U.S. goes back to 1869 when a scientist transported some eggs from France to Massachusetts, near Boston. Some of the eggs blew out of a window and weren't retrieved. So now we have infestations in 16 states.

Most of the sites to be sprayed in Wisconsin are along the Green Bay and the Lake Michigan shoreline where moths settle after riding winds across the lake in the summer. Counties in the spray program are Brown, Dane, Door, Eau Claire, Kenosha, Kewaunee, Manitowoc, Marathon, Marinette, Oconto, Outagamie, Portage, Racine, Sheboygan and Waukesha.

Worries about this pest are amplified by rumors that the Extension Entomologist position Dr. Chuck Koval held won't be filled by CALS administration. Brilliant.

Research in the turfgrass sciences is fundamental to our future prosperity, and to that end I thought you might be interested in an addition to the UW-Madison Biotron.

Built in the mid-1960s (I remember it well!), the Biotron building serves as a forum for any type of scientific experiments where the manipulation of temperature, daylight, oxygen, carbon dioxide levels and humidity are needed.

It is so critical to UW-Madison researchers that a \$1.8 million addition was just completed. The new addition houses one of the few sites in the US able to construct research environments comparable to African deserts and South American rainforests.

Dr. Ted Tibits, a colleague of Frank Rossi's in the CALS Department of Horticulture, says the Biotron is one of the most famous buildings on campus. "The UW-Madison Biotron is well known as having better capabilities than any other of its kind in the country." Tibits is well known himself for his activity with the NASA space program and experiments launched aboard the space shuttles.

The Biotron can study cold temperature effects on turfgrass, cancer cures and AIDS research. Researchers use the light control at the facility to expose lab rats to unnatural amounts of daylight in a jet lag study, as well as to study the hibernation patterns of animals.

Deep sea conditions can be simulated in the Biotron to study water

pressure effects on divers. Another study creates hot humid conditions to study a wild grass native to the south-east.

The new addition adds 25 sealed research spaces to the Biotron mix, allowing work to be done previously unavailable anywhere in the Midwest.

Congratulations to WGCSA members Dick Nugent and Marc Davison, designer and superintendent of Green Bay Country Club. The course made it into the Golf Digest best new golf courses for 1995 (private) list. It was judged sixth best.

I came across a comment and evaluation remark summary, but cannot print it here because of copyright laws. But you can trust me—the opinions of the panelists were positive and powerful, and you'll have a chance to see for yourself on May 29th if you play in the SUPER/PRO event!

As a final thought, please take note of our new advertisers and welcome them into the Wisconsin golf turf business. Along with our long term supporters, they help make our golf courses possible and give you THE GRASS ROOTS six times a year.

Here's wishing us the best year ever in 1996! 🍷

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# THE SUPERINTENDENT

By Joel D. Jackson

*Editor's Note: The feature you are about to enjoy was written by a fellow chapter publications editor, Joel Jackson. He is also a fellow golf course superintendent in the Disney system. Many of you know him, many more remember his visit to Wisconsin a few years ago when he was a speaker at the Wisconsin Golf Turf Symposium, and those lucky enough to attend the GCSAA conference in Orlando this year visited with him at the host chapter booth. Joel is an articulate person who writes many of the features in the journal he edits—THE FLORIDA GREEN. He also has a column in each issue—Green Side Up - that resonates with the day to day emotions and issues of people who manage a golf course for a living. If you cannot tell, let me say that I respect him greatly and appreciate his upbeat and positive approach to everything he does. This excellent piece appears here with his permission. It was originally featured in the Winter 1996 issue of THE FLORIDA GREEN. Since we were just in Florida, this seemed a perfect time to share some of Joel's fine writing with you. Enjoy.*

I can recall the memory of thousands of sunrises and far too many sunsets.

I track the morning dew with herds of white tailed deer and flocks of wild turkeys.

I play hide and seek with the Barred owl and the Red-tailed hawk.

I watch in fascination the diving osprey and the soaring eagle.

I surprise sunning alligators and turtles as they splash into lakes.

I remove any number of serpents from harm's way or from creating harm.

I yield the pathways to the grey squirrel and brown rabbit making a dash for cover.

I feel frustration and contempt for those misguided souls who still call me "polluter."

I am a constant student of my craft, learning from my peers and from turf specialists at national conferences, regional seminars and local chapter meetings.

I am a manager of resources. A leader. A planner. A team player.

I am a jack of all trades. From agronomist to zoologist.

I am counselor and disciplinarian to the unmotivated.

I am friend and mentor to those who earn my respect.

I am the receiver of the proverbial buck. It always stops here!

I try to balance demands and expectations with budgets and reality.

I am challenged to please all golfers from scratch to 36 handicaps on the same day.

I am the expert problem solver unless my practical experience and

classroom knowledge differs from the opinion of the purse holders or the nay sayers.

I often have as much job security as the next difference of opinion.

I court Mother Nature and often win her favor.

I have seen her wrath and seemingly capricious destruction beyond comprehension.

I am ironically held accountable for torrential rains and unrelenting drought.

I am expected to somehow turn muck and clay into sandy loam.

I bear red scaly cancerous patches on my skin from an on-going love/hate relationship with the sun. The dirt under my finger nails and the callouses on my hands have been earned in honest toil.

I dodge more lightning bolts and taste more raindrops than I should admit.

I still thrill to the grandeur of the changing seasons from spring buds to fall frost.

I meet some of the finest and most interesting people on earth in my work.

I seem to be driven by myself or others to deliver perfection in an imperfect world. No one seems to understand this paradox except those who walk in my shoes.

I am The Superintendent. 🍷



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# REMINISCENCE

By Monroe S. Miller

Usually, I barely have two sentences out of my mouth before they start to roll their eyes, as if to say, "oh, boy, here we go again—another trip down Memory Lane." I eat lunch nearly everyday all year with our golf course staff and it is inevitable that some conversations end up with some serious reminiscing by me and the guys who are either my age (or older) or who have a term of service similar to mine. I think remembering past experiences is human nature. Some of the kids who work for me think it is all kind of boring!

Granted, most of these musings are sentimental, even Platonic. Someone once noted that reminiscence is "remembering the pleasure of sitting in front of a big fireplace without remembering you had to cut the wood for it." There is truth in that. When I think back to my incredibly happy childhood on a Wisconsin dairy farm I tend not to recall 100 degree F. days spent in the top of the hay mow or the -20 degree F. days hauling manure. I think, mostly, of the good things. That is human nature, too.

Some researchers look at reminiscing as an enhancement to spiritual growth, relaxation, communication, psychological well-being and self-concept. I don't know what their studies show or what the empirical evidence

is, but I can say it is all of those things for me. When my family—parents, brother and sisters—get together, we talk endlessly of our common pasts and those who have gone before us in our family. One thing is for sure—reminiscing has great value to us in adding deeper meaning to our experiences.

No doubt—reminiscences among our family members about what has happened among us is the reason *All Saints Sunday* is about my favorite church service (excepting Easter and Christmas). It is comforting to sit through that service, page through our personal history of human relationships and recall the memories of loved ones who have passed on. The service reminds me that even the little moments count, that what we do with life and relationships every day matters. We sing the hymn that has the lines,

*"I will remember the days of old,  
And worship the Lord of Creation.  
I will always remember the stories  
told*

*By those of the past generations.  
I'll sing with all the saints who've  
gone before*

*And sing with all the saints of earth.  
And I'll always remember the  
stories told*

*By those of the past generations."*

It becomes clearer, knowing the above, as to why I love to travel in the East (rich in American history), why I love to study genealogy (family history) and why I serve as WGCSA chapter historian (career history).

Last fall I bought a couple of great golf books, both used and both autobiographies—*The Walter Hagen Story* (by The Haig himself!) and *This Life I've Led* (by Babe Didrikson Zaharias). Neither is great literature, but both were really great reading—pure pleasure, really. They are life stories told in a natural and informal style.

It is pretty easy to make the case that a self-written story of your life is reminiscing. In each of these books, two of the greatest players golf has known have stories to tell about Wisconsin. I enjoyed them and bet you will enjoy the reminiscing about Wisconsin these two great golfers did, too.

Babe Didrikson was the daughter of Norwegian immigrant parents who settled in Beaumont, Texas. She was one of the premier women athletes in the country from the early 1930s on into the 1950s, and she was probably the best known, too. Between 1930 and 1932 she held American, Olympic or world records in five different track and field events. During the AAU national meet of 1932, she entered as



Steven Soule