

Badger State Turf Clippings

By Tom Wentz and the Reinders Team

As you would expect for this time of year, there are not many superintendent moves around the state. In fact, I have none to report. At least no one has reported any since the last issue, but if there has been, please email or call me at the address/phone number listed at the end of the article. I don't want to leave any news unreported!!

Hole in One!!

Mike Schmieden, superintendent at Evergreen GC in Elkhorn, got his first hole-in-one!! He was playing in a tournament at Evergreen GC where most of the past tournaments on this particular 187-yard, par 3 hole would have a car as the hole-in-one prize. Wouldn't you know it, this tournament they only awarded a \$25 gift certificate to the Pro Shop for his once in a lifetime achievement!! Oh well.. better fortune next time Mike!! Congratulations, though, on making it!!

A Hobby and a Passion

The lyrics of a famous Johnny Cash song, "I hear the train a comin', it's rollin' round the bend..." generates excitement and thrill for **Jim VanHerwynen**. Jim is the superintendent at South Hills Golf and CC in Fond du Lac. Jim is also on the board of directors for the WGCSA. Jim has had an interest in trains since he was 10 years old playing in his parents basement with the help of his father who operated an old Lionel train set from the 1950's. Jim's HO scale layout since then has made a few moves and as he collects it continues to become larger in size. In fact, his layout now encompasses a room 18' x 32' in his basement. He can operate four trains at the same time with electronic switches, crossovers, bridges etc... He hopes he will still be building and expanding his layout for the rest of his life. While many of us know people who have an interest in model trains, not many know about "Railfanning" as a hobby!!

Railfanning would be defined as a hobby of people who have an interest in watching as well as taking videos and photographs of real trains at crossings, yards and along the rails where good photo opportunities lend themselves. Jim's fascination of trains was renewed several years ago when he came to Fond du Lac. Fond du Lac has a medium sized freight yard to switch and classify cars, an active roundhouse and locomotive turntable and sees approximately 35 through freights a day. Railfanning coincides with his model as he gets real world ideas to use in this imaginary world of modeling.

Railfanning, Jim says, is similar to fishing. One never knows what you are going to find coming down the rails, through a town or train station-size of trains, number of cars, motive power etc., which gives excitement to the

sport!! He says he spends approximately 12 days a year traveling to various cities and or states (mostly in the winter) that have different railroads, land features, and towns that have a railroad theme. Many towns now have railroad parks for railfans along the tracks where you can meet people with similar interests as you watch the action. He incorporates it into family vacations with his understanding wife and his kids becoming less patient about his passion as they get older. When he went to Anaheim, CA for the GCSAA show, he persuaded Scott Bartosh, superintendent at Meadowbrook CC in Racine to join him on a railfanning expedition up to Cajon Pass, Mojave and the Tehachapi Loop where trains climb 120 feet as they circle themselves climbing the mountain. He has told me that there are a few superintendents he has spoken with who have some interest in trains and are thinking about taking the Amtrak to New Orleans for the GIS show in a couple of years.

Jim is a member of the Fostoria Rail Preservation Society, which is diligent in preserving railroad history and building a railroad park in Fostoria, Ohio, one of the biggest and busiest junctions in the country. He says it's a great way to keep an active mind, especially in the winter months when things are not so demanding. He hopes his children will show an interest, but understands if they do not. He also told me if anyone is interested in model railroads Milwaukee hosts one of the biggest model railroad shows in the world the first weekend in November at the State Fair Park Pavillion.

I would invite you to let me know if you have any interesting stories, hobbies, adventures or accomplishments that I could share with all in this section. Please pass along any news in the turf business to your Reinders rep, or email me at twentz@reinders.com or call me at 608-220-6592. 🌱



Sod Grown on Irrigated Sand

Growers and Installers of Fine Turf

Low Mow Bluegrass, Kentucky Bluegrass, Bentgrass & Fine Fescue

Central Wisconsin Sod

Coloma, WI • Robert Heath, owner

Phone: 715-228-4106 • Email: heath@uniontel.net