



# National Golf Graphics



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## WGCSA 25 and 50 Year Members

### **Pat Zurawski- 25 Year member**

Pat grew up in the Racine area working on a produce farm where developed his love of working outside. After high school Pat attended UW-Madison starting with a major in Pre Veterinary Science.

He worked his second summer at college for Monroe Miller at Blackhawk CC. He left school for awhile to work at Racine CC and returned to UW-Madison to finish school and worked with Monroe as an assistant for four years.

The first year as assistant was the first year in the WGCSA and the year he married his lobster, Jackie. They have two children, Katie and Sam. Pat got his first Golf Course Superintendent Job at Reedsburg CC, and served the club for 11 years.

Wanting a change, he found "clicked" with Lee Merkel and moved to The Golf Club at Camelot in February 2002 and has been there since.

### **Tom Merkel - 25 Year Member**

Tom started working for his father, Lee Merkel, in 1982 at Lakeside GC in Pewaukee, WI during the summertime. His father purchased Willow Run GC in 1987 and Tom started working full-time there with his uncle, Don Shaffer, until 1994.

Unfortunately, his uncle Don passed away a year ago and sadly would have received his 25 year service award this year also.

In 1994, Tom became the Golf Course Superintendent/owner at West Bend Lakes GC. West Bend Lakes GC was a 9 hole course when first purchased but construction commenced in 1999 to expand the course to 18 holes and the course opened at 18 holes in 2000.

Tom currently resides in Fillmore, WI with his wife Deb and son Zachariah.

### **DuWayne Laak CGCS - 50 Year Member**

Dewey grew up in the Waukesha as a child. At 13 years of age he delivered papers and got his first golf club job at Moore Downs GC setting sprinklers. He rode his bike at night pulling hoses and enjoyed himself thoroughly.

Back then fungicides were mixed in a wash tub and applied with a sprinkling can. When he was a senior in high school was given the opportunity to be the golf course superintendent. Dewey chose to attend UW-Madison and pursue a Landscape Architecture degree. He attended two years and changed to the 2 year Turf Management Program at Penn State, finishing in 1963 with a GCSAA scholarship award.

He bought some farm land with his father in 1967 and started Kettle Moraine GC. Dewey used his education and became the man of many hats. He was designer, builder, and superintendent at Kettle Moraine GC. He opened 6 holes his first year, but in 1970 he opened the first 9 holes.

He started the back 9 and completed 5 holes. This allowed golfers to play the front 9, and then the back 9 twice. "One hole free" was his selling slogan back in the mid 70's. By 1978 the entire course was open.

Dewey did shaping work at Deer Track GC in Oconomowoc and partnered with Lee Merkel at Willow Run GC and helped with the drainage work. Dewey helped start the Wisconsin Golf Course Owners Association and was the President for 5 years.

He also served on the board of the WTA in the late 80's which he helped raised money for the OJ Noer building. If that was not enough, he was a board member of the Wisconsin State Golf Association.

Through all of this he still found time to attend WGCSA meetings and staying in touch with superintendents which he loved dearly. Dewey sold his investments in Willow Run and Kettle Moraine in the early 90's. He then retired and walked away from golf for awhile.

The industry "pulled" him back in the mid/late 90's where he helped do remodeling at West Bend Lakes and The Golf Club at Camelot. He was asked to help oversee the building of Minocqua CC. Dewey and his wife Jan reside in Minocqua in the summers and he serves on MCC's greens committee. Dewey winters in Fort Meyers Fl where he tries his best to just golf.

Sons Brian and Doug grew up at Kettle Moraine GC, and continued in the golf business for a number of years. Brian gravitated toward the hospitality side, and Doug became a golf course superintendent.

Doug served at Chippewa Valley GC, West Bend Lakes Golf Club, and The Golf Club At Camelot. Experience with every brand of irrigation system, led him to sales with Hunter Irrigation and then John Deere. He is currently working for a large Landscape maintenance in the Milwaukee area.

Dewey's most memorable superintendents meeting was at Autumn Ridge GC in April of 2002 when he had a heart attack following the golf round and taken by ambulance to Manitowoc. A stent was placed, and 10 years later still feeling great. Dewey is very thankful for all the friends in the golf industry who assisted him through out his career, and is looking forward to seeing a few of them at a meeting or two this summer.

*Editors Note: This piece on our 25 and 50 year members was provided by Scott Sann, Membership Chair for WGCSA and Golf Course Superintendent at Greenwood Hills CC.*

25 Year Members Pat Zurowski (left) and Tom Merkel (right) were on hand to receive their plaques.

Dewey Laak, CGCS Retired reached 50 years of membership was not able to attend and will be awarded his plaque at a summer meeting.



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## You Are at Risk

By Tom Schwab, Manager, O.J. Noer Turfgrass Research and Education Facility, University of Wisconsin-Madison

I stopped by a skin cancer-screening booth at the GCSAA National Convention a few years ago. I did this because, as my co-workers remind me daily, I am getting older. I'm noticing little spots on my skin and was curious if some of these may be early signs of skin cancer. I've worked outdoors for my whole career and have rarely, until recently, worn sunscreen. This, I would venture to say, is a typical story for many of you. Even now I don't wear it enough because it weakens during the day or I get too busy to reapply when it washes off. There are as many excuses as there are sunscreens on the shelf.

I'm writing this article to ask you to please wear more sunscreen, make it available to your employees, get your kids in the habit of wearing it, and consider wearing more long sleeved shirts and long pants. People do seem to be more aware of skin cancer of late because I notice many more full brimmed hats and sunglasses than I used to see.

Yes --- sunglasses are important too, because skin cancer can even start in your eyes. That is why doctors recommend wearing sunglasses that block out at least 99% of both Ultra Violet A and UV B rays.

All the facts stated in this article are directly from three booklets that I picked up at that cancer-screening booth. The booklets are "What You Need To Know About Melanoma," from the National

Cancer Institute, "Skin Cancer, The Bare Facts" by W.R. Spence, MD, and "For Every Child Under The Sun," from the Skin Cancer Foundation.

Another fact from the booklets is that the sun is the cause of at least 90% of all skin cancers. Thus skin cancer is preventable by taking several precautionary obvious steps of using sunscreen and covering up more. Another fact is that the average person receives about 75% of their lifetime sun exposure after age 18, for example guess who - those of us in the green industry that make a livelihood in the sun. That still leaves 25% that get most of their sun exposure before age 18. That is why it's important to teach kids good sun-protection practices. It's just as important as wearing seat belts or not playing with fire. Although it's not as obvious since effects from the sun may not be apparent for 20 to 30 years.

Damage to the skin from sunburns or tanning accumulates over years. Did you know tanned skin is a sign of skin damage? Tanning is the skin's protective response from getting further damage. However, permanent damage has already been done by the time the tan develops. Skin can repair some of the superficial changes, which is why a sunburn lasts only a few days, and a tan fades. But the



**Monroe Miller, Retired Superintendent and Executive Director of the Wisconsin Turfgrass Association spoke at the recent spring business meeting. While he had the podium he described the treatments he had been undergoing to treat skin cancer on his face. The treatment had caused short term red splotches on his face.**

**Monroe warned the rest of us of the dangers of sun exposure over time.**

underlying damage remains. The injury accumulates over the years with each successive exposure to the sun. One of the booklets poked fun at the term "healthy tan" as being a contradiction in terms.

Hundreds of thousands of Americans are diagnosed each year with skin cancer. The good news is that it is one of the most curable and also preventable forms of cancer. Two kinds of skin cancer are most common: basal cell carcinoma and squamous cell carcinoma. Those cancers usually occur on skin that is exposed to the sun, and, if caught early, they are easily treated.



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## NOTES FROM THE NOER

A third kind of skin cancer, malignant melanoma, is much less common but far more deadly. It is fast-spreading and can kill within months of its first appearance. Melanoma can be cured if it is diagnosed and treated when the tumor is thin and has not deeply invaded the skin. However, if melanoma is not removed at its early stages, cancer cells may grow downward, invading healthy tissue. When a melanoma becomes thick and deep, the disease often spreads to other parts of the body and is difficult to control. Even though melanoma is a very dangerous form of cancer, a 5-minute monthly self-exam can reveal cancerous changes enough to increase recovery chances considerably.

The self-exam described in the booklets said to look for a change in the size, shape, color or feel of an existing mole. Moles are clusters of the pigment forming cells of the skin with surrounding tissue that cause benign (noncancerous) growths. They are round or oval and smaller than a pencil eraser.

Most people have between 10 – 40 of

these flesh-colored, pink, tan, or brown areas on their skin. Moles can be flat or raised. They can be present at birth or occur later on --- but usually before age 40. Moles generally grow or change only slightly over a long period of time. The booklets said that moles generally fade away in older people.

The things to look for during your monthly 5-minute self-exam are moles that change, newly appear, or become ugly. Look for changes in the borders, variations in color, and/or variations in texture. Don't overlook your scalp either. It is important to see a doctor if you find changes or if you are at all suspicious.

And be more careful out there. Although anyone can develop skin cancer, you are more at risk if you have light skin and/or freckles, have light hair or eye color, or have a tendency to burn easily. You should be more careful if you have a family history of skin cancer also, even though greater than 90% of the cause is from the sun. So people who spend long hours in the sun or periods during the

intense sunny part of the day are most at risk. That includes most of us reading this newsletter.

Skin cancer is greatly preventable even for people who work in the sun. Most dermatologists recommend that you use a sunscreen with an SPF (sun protection factor) of at least 30. Additionally they recommend you wear protective clothing and hats, protect eyes with sunglasses, wear lip balm with sunscreen, and remember there are dangers of UV radiation on cloudy days or even in the winter.

We, in the green industry, have to be more careful than the average person because of where we work for a living and the cumulative amount of sun exposure we encounter over a lifetime. Much more information is available on skin cancer prevention, diagnosis, and treatment by visiting the National Cancer Society website <http://www.cancer.org/Cancer/SkinCancer-Melanoma/index>.



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## 2012 Northern Great Lakes Educational Conference

By David Brandenburg, Golf Course Manager, Rolling Meadows Golf Course

I am not able to attend every year but I can say every year I have attended I have found the Northern Great Lakes annual educational conference to be well worth the investment of time, money and travel. The event is held in Wausau each spring and the group does a great job in bringing in great speakers and timely topics.

The day started with election results from the business meeting the day before. President Swonger announced the desire to conduct a member survey and they would be calling on members to serve on that committee.

It did not take long to get down to business as Dr. Richard Latin started his talk on Bacterial Wilt. Dr. Latin discussed how he has been the long time member at a club in Indiana and understands and appreciates the superintendents difficult job as they deal with golfer gripes.

Unfortunately not much is known regarding bacterial wilt and turfgrass. It is near impossible to recreate in research plots so most of the information is anecdotal and gives no real solution. The

turf undergoes a random pattern of rapid growth of young leaves with no color to them.

The bacterial disease started on annual bluegrass but is primarily just been a problem on intensively managed creeping bentgrass greens during wet summer periods. The question remains is bacterial wilt a disease or just the consequence of something else?

Bacterial diseases are a big problem on fruits and vegetables and bacterium numbers in the soil can be in excess of 100,000,000 in one gram of soil.

Bacteria need a wound or natural opening in the plant while fungus can bore into the leaves and stems. Without that opening the bacterium can live on the plant without infecting it or causing any problems.

Due to the challenge of recreating the problem there is no proven cure thus far. Products that work in agriculture do not work on turf and often cause phytotoxic problems. North Carolina State is recommending superintendents change their agro-

nomic practices to reduce bacterial wilt.

By mowing higher, rolling more, lightly topdressing and syringing before the plants are under stress the incidence of bacterial problems are reduced.

Next up was John Miller CGCS of the GCSAA Field Staff to update the group on the national association. Miller gave a history and update on the field staff program. The field staff is allowing for greater communication and a direct voice for chapter needs to be heard at the national level. It also helps to develop programs to help chapters while expanding the golf course superintendents role as a leader at the golf community.

Miller spoke on the many ways GCSAA helps chapters and individual members through its advocacy on government relations and public policy as well as industry wide initiatives to expand the game to new and returning players.

John finished with a update on the ever changing rules regarding NPDES and applications of products near and in water.



Newly elected Chapter President Randy Swonger, Trout Lake Golf Course began the conference with association news.



Dr. Richard Latin, Purdue University spoke on Bacterial Wilt and Fungicide Efficacy.

## ACROSS THE COUNTRY

The new regulations are still being developed and are different from state to state. Overall the program is national but they are regulated locally by the Wisconsin EPA and DNR. Miller suggested Wisconsin Superintendents could call Jeff Brauer from the DNR at 608-267-7643 for more information.

John finished with a update of the coming conference and show in Las Vegas where over 100 different sessions and 129 speakers will be available for attendees.

Miller handed the microphone back over to Dr. Latin for a engaging discussion on Factors Affecting Fungicide Efficacy and Performance. Dr. Latin discussed why fungicides work sometimes and why they do not under the same scenario at other times. The main factors are:

- How the product is applied. (rate, equipment, nozzles, timing and water volume).
- Depletion or degradation from weather, temperature and sunshine.
- How much disease pressure is present.
- Is the disease resistant?

Latin explained coverage is very important as fungicides can only attack the fungi at the tip or growing point. Fungi can grow longer but not wider and over time the fungi wall becomes too thick for the fungicide to enter. This lead to a discussion on timing and why preventative products can give better control than curative products that are applied after the fungus has expanded.

Fungi are always present and fungicides do not kill the majority of individual fungi. When the fungi recognize the fungicide is attacking it starts shutting down sacrificing the outer cells in order to live another day when environmental conditions are right.

Next Dr. Latin discussed degradation and how the active ingredient of a 28 day fungicide is broken down by microbial activity. By day 14 most of the active ingredient is gone and by day 21 it is all gone. By that time the turf is at the mercy of environmental conditions. Under normal conditions it should be fine but in high disease pressure the symptoms of infection will soon be noticed. This rapid depletion of a product explains the premium put on product application and timing.

The discussion then switched to fungicide resistance. In Dr. Latin's work he has never found a dollar spot fungi resistant to chlorothalonil and suspected cases had other factors that led to the application failure. He as other pathologists have seen that if a fungi is resistant to one class of fungicide using DMI as an example they are resistant to all DMI's regardless of the active ingredient. Overall Dr. Latin gave the group a lot to consider as they plan their 2012 fungicide program.

Next up was Dr. Derek Settle discussing Waitea Patch. Dr. Settle works for the Chicago District Golf Association at the Midwest Golf House in Lemont, IL. The CDGA has over 400 member clubs and 80,000 members. Settle does his research at the golf houses 3 hole "Sunshine Course" and off site at local golf courses.



Above: John Miller, Field Agent GCSAA

Below: Dr. Derek Settle, Director of Turfgrass Programs, Chicago District Golf Association



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**The panel consisting of Bill Stein, Minocqua Country Club, Steve Spears, St Germain Golf Course and Ken Smith, Eagle River Golf Course take questions from the audience.**

Waitea patch is also known as brown ring patch or warm temperature brown patch and is caused by *Waitea circinata* var. *circinata*. The symptoms are very close to yellow patch only the yellow ring is more crescent in shape. The plant initially turn yellow then brown and reddish as the disease progresses.

The first symptoms start to show in mid to late May when soil temperatures hit 55-60 degrees.

Research has shown DMI and QOL fungicides often worked well while chlorothalonil did little. Work done by Dr. Frank Wong in California has shown a 1 pound application of nitrogen often negates wait-ae symptoms.

It is possible one of the reasons the disease is now showing itself is because of lower overall nitrogen applications on putting greens. There has been no correlation found between Waitea Patch incidence and growth regulators. Allowing turf to reach water stress levels can increase symptoms so proper watering is encouraged.

The panel topic was "Dealing With Winter Damage" after the tough winter and spring in 2011. Bill Stein, Golf Course Superintendent at Minocqua Country Club started the talk off with his presentation on

the challenges at Minocqua Country Club where on many holes the green surrounds drain onto the greens covering them with ice each winter. In 2011 as many years the staff staked the low areas in the greens and when water became a problem used ice augers to drill down to non-frozen soil to allow the water to drain.

With early ice they often snowblow the greens off and use black sand or sunflower seeds to help melt the ice.

After the damage Bill decided to sod some of the areas but that came with its own problems as lots of topdressing, special mowers were needed to eliminate scalping and often the new sod would die in August.

For 2012 Minocqua is trying impermeable covers on 7 greens to keep the water off the greens. The challenge is putting them on after the turf has hardened off but before winter has started. The covers can weigh up to 600 pounds and take 5 guys to move and put in place.

Ken Smith Golf Course Superintendent at Eagle River Golf Course presented how in 2011 12 of his newest greens built to modified USGA specifications in 1986 had damage while the 6 pushup greens did not. 6 of the greens had 60-70% damage so it was no small task to prepare for

recovery.

Ken over-seeded with a Ryan slit seeder in 4 directions and choose to cover the 7 worst greens. This led to some local complaints but we needed to produce the temperatures needed to promote germination and recovery. If he had to do it over Smith would aerify with quad tines and keep the covers on longer.

The covered greens recovered well by July but by August with traffic and heat the young turf began to decline and algae moved in. 2 of the north facing greens with shade and air movement problems caused by trees declined the most.


Ken said it was a surprising experience as even long time golfing friends ignored him and went out of their way not to talk to him during the recovery time.

This year Ken is using 6 green jacket covers and 2 evergreen covers. Under the evergreens the turf is froze but under the green jackets the turf is not frozen so the staff uses blowers to vent the turf every 10 to 15 days.

The final speaker was Steve Spears, Golf Course Superintendent at St Germain Golf Course. Steve was quick to point out the spring of 2011 was the worst of his career as the course received unexpected substantial damage to every green. The greens at St. Germain had settled over time leaving pockets for water to sit in and freeze. In this case Steve blames the turf loss not on ice cover but on the crown hydration in late December as turf saturated from rain and slush quickly froze.

Spears and his small staff inter-seeded new grasses in while raising the height of cut and pushing the turf with higher N rates. Unfortunately the cold spring and early summer slowed recovery and without covers the greens suffered.

The greens were 50% recovered by the 4th of July and 90% at the end of the year. The damage caused a 40% reduction in revenue for the year to the benefit of surrounding courses.

The panel and speakers provided great information and I would recommend the spring conference to anyone. Head up on Sunday and ski Rib Mountain and relax at the hospitality night while talking grass. 





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## News and Notes From WGCSA Members

By Matt Kinnard and the DHD Team

Vegas! Vegas! Vegas! I think most of us that visited Las Vegas for the GIS this year had an enjoyable time. How could you not? Despite the GIS being held in Vegas and all its distractions we all did our job to become better educated, network with others and learn about new products. Probably the most valuable return on investment for most superintendents at the GIS is the education. The classes are excellent; but for many superintendents that cannot attend, our local seminars are really just as beneficial. One thing that I always try to get out of any seminar whether it is at the National, in Kohler or in a webinar is not how we are supposed to do things because we already know that, but why.

While I was waiting for my flight back from Las Vegas, I stopped in an airport bookstore looking for something to read and picked up a book called *The Social Animal*. Written by David Brooks, it explains why we do things as individuals, most of which we are unaware of because so much of it is done in an unconscious frame of mind.

The book's background story is fictional; following two characters from infancy to old age, while Brooks simultaneously intertwines nearly 600 sources of research and data to help explain everyday life, career, achievements, and relationships better. If you're like me and like to understand why anything happens and why it could be beneficial to know, this book might be for you. And I promise this will be my one and only book report.

### Career Moves

Ben Pease recently finished his Masters Degree at The University of Wisconsin in December 2011, and will be an Assistant Superintendent on the Straits Course at Whistling Straits. It wasn't until Ben was a sophomore undergrad student that he realized turfgrass management was a profession. He soon enrolled in the Soil

Science program graduating in 2005. Ben interned and was an irrigation tech at Wayzata Country Club in Minnesota from 2004-05 and then moved to Madison in 2006 to become the Assistant Superintendent at Bishops Bay Country Club. Ben is looking forward to the upcoming tournaments at the Straits Course including the 2015 PGA Championship as well as having a chance to work with architect, Pete Dye. Congratulations Ben!

Josh LePine and his wife Sonja have moved back to the Madison area with their three kids Joey, Naomi and Matthew after Josh accepted the position of Golf Course Superintendent at Maple Bluff Country Club. Josh dedicated 14 years at The Legends at Bristlecone Pines in Hartland after spending time as the Assistant at Stoughton Country Club in Stoughton, WI and Winged Foot Country Club in Mamaroneck, New York. While Josh was a student attending The University of Wisconsin, he had an opportunity to tour Maple Bluff and was blown away by its beauty and history. From that point on he made it his goal to someday be the superintendent at a club like Maple Bluff. Congratulations Josh on accomplishing that goal!

Four years after leaving his position as Assistant Superintendent at The Legends at Bristlecone Pines, Ben Labarre is returning as the new Golf Course Superintendent replacing Josh LePine. Ben got his start in golf at Decatur Lake Golf Course in Brodhead, WI where he worked for five years while attending The University of Wisconsin. Before graduating from UW in 2005, Ben did back to back internships at Baltusrol Golf Club in Springfield Township, NJ where he was part of the crew that hosted the 2005 PGA Championship. Ben, his wife, Jen, and their 2 year old son will be moving from the Kohler area where he has been

the Assistant Superintendent on the River Course at Blackwolf Run for the last three years. Congratulations Ben on the new position!

### Retirement

After a remarkable 44 years at Maple Bluff Country Club, Tom Harrison has decided to retire. Tom began his career at Nakoma Country Club in Madison in the early 1960's as Peter Miller's Assistant Superintendent. Peter Miller would later move onto Firestone Country Club, in Ohio and Tom, himself, would also take on a different path as he entered the Navy during the Vietnam Era. A dream of his since first watching the John Wayne film *The Fighting Seabees*, Tom completed his six year commitment as a Seabee before returning to Madison to become Bill Eckert's Assistant Superintendent at Maple Bluff Country Club. Not long after that, Tom was tapped to become the Superintendent at Maple Bluff.

In his retirement, Tom is looking forward to spending more time with his six children and ten grandchildren, in addition to diving deeper into his favorite hobbies of building models and expanding his HO model train display. Tom has a lot of great memories from his career as a golf course superintendent and still remembers the advice he took away from his mentors in the industry early in his career. One piece of advice he would give to superintendents is to have patience; 'it translates to life in general and in career.' Congratulations Tom on your enduring and successful career!

Please pass along any significant news or happenings around the state to Danny, Mike or me. We want to spread the good news. You can also email me at [m.kinnard@sbcglobal.net](mailto:m.kinnard@sbcglobal.net) or call at 920-210-9059. 