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ABOUT THE COVER

The 7th Green at Ozaukee Country Club with Hole 2 in the background. Ozaukee Country Club hosted the WTA Golf Outing.

I would maintain that thanks are the highest form of thought, and that gratitude is happiness doubled by wonder.

By English Writer, Gilbert Keith Chesterton, 1874-1936

This quote by Chesterton should remind us of the joy of giving thanks and having gratitude for the people and things around us. Use time this offseason to appreciate the many gifts we are given.

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www.wgcsa.com

THE GRASS ROOTS

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Front Row: Colin Seaburg, Chad Harrington, Jeff Millies, Jim Van Herwynen. Back Row: Brett Grams, John Jensen, Scott Sann, John Canavan
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Thank You!

By Jeff Millies, Certified Golf Course Superintendent, Edgwood Golf Course

At the Fall Business Meeting/Election, I will have completed my 10th year of involvement on the Board of Directors. I still remember the first time Mark Kienert asked me to serve on the board. I was thinking to myself how could I do that, I don't have the time, and my kids are still young. I then made up some excuse about the timing not being right and said maybe in the future. It wasn't until I told my wife about the offer that with her encouragement I stepped out of my comfort zone and was on the board the following year.

My involvement has been very educational and rewarding. Being part of an association that continues to evolve and try new ideas to best serve its membership is inspiring. Status quo is not the normal attitude, but rather what can we do to improve and grow the association. I have learned a lot from previous board members and I am truly grateful for the opportunity to serve the WGCSA members.

The board is always looking for members who are willing to serve. It is an opportunity I would strongly recommend. It is easy to make excuses why you can't volunteer your time, but the rewards are not something you realize until you've been part of the process.


During the last 10 years the WGCSA has gone through many changes and faced many challenges. One of the best decisions the board made was four years ago to hire a Chapter Manager, Brett Grams. Brett not only handles the day to day activities associated with the chapter, but also enables the board to implement new ideas that continue to enhance your association. Thank you Brett.

I would also like to thank John Jensen from Reinder's who has served as the vendor liaison on the board for the last two years. This position on the board started back in 2006 and has developed into a key role within the association.

The WGCSA is doing well during these tough economic times and I am confident the gentlemen succeeding me will continue to grow your Association.

This of course is only possible with the continued support of our membership and vendor sponsors. Please remember to take notice of the advertisements within *The Grass Roots* and support these businesses when making your purchases.

Upcoming events include the Wisconsin Hospitality Room at the GIS in San Diego. This will take place on Wednesday, February 6th, from 6-9pm at Bootlegger located on 804 Market Street within the Gaslamp Quarter. Also, on Monday, February 25th will be the WGCSA Spring Businesses and Education Meeting in Fond du Lac.

Once again, thank you, it has been a pleasure and an honor to serve the members and participate on this Board. I wish you all a wonderful holiday season and happy new year. 

WGCSA MISSION STATEMENT

The Wisconsin Golf Course Superintendents Association is committed to serve each member by promoting the profession and enhancing the growth of the game of golf through education, communication and research.

WGCSA VISION STATEMENT

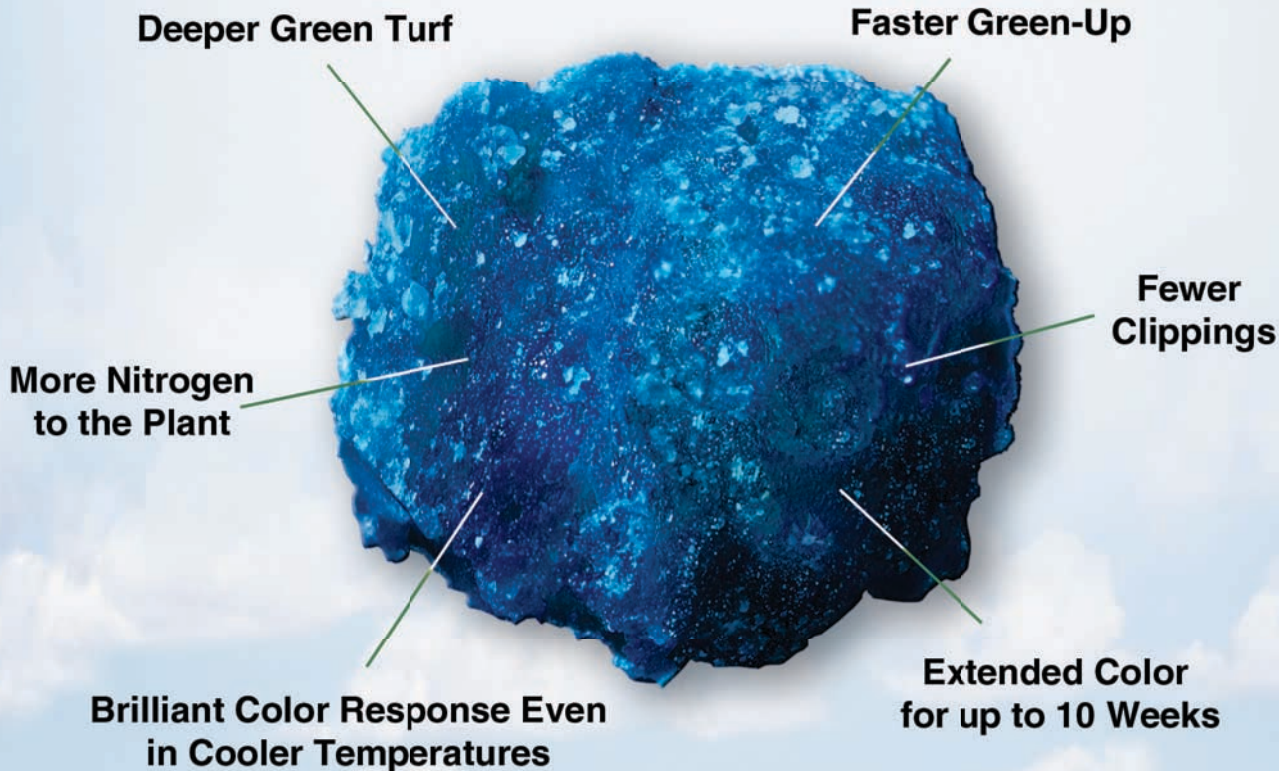
The Wisconsin Golf Course Superintendents Association is dedicated to increase the value provided to its members and to the profession by:

- Enhancing the professionalism of its members by strengthening our role as a leading golf organization in the state.
- Growing and recognizing the benefits of a diverse membership throughout Wisconsin.
- Educating and promoting our members as leaders in environmental stewardship.
- Offering affordable, high value educational programs at the forefront of technology and service.
- Being key to enjoyment and the economic success of the game of golf.

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Year End Highlights

By Brett Grams, Chapter Manager, Wisconsin Golf Course Superintendents Association

Hello to all members! I am sure the majority of you are looking forward to the end of the 2012 golf season. For most of us it was truly challenging year weather wise. Many WI course experienced drought conditions that have not been seen in decades. I know that almost everyone I talked to in June thru September was hoping for rain. October and November were cooler and wetter than normal so I hope that helped your recovery plans.

The WGCSA leaders have been busy planning the upcoming events. We are planning on having another successful Golf Turf Symposium. We hope that more members can attend now that the event has been moved into early December. Please make the time to come learn and network with your peers in one of the nicest meeting venues in the Midwest! The Symposium Committee along with the staff of Milorganite at MMSD has put a lot of thought and effort into hosting our premier educational offer-

ing of the year. The title of "What is your Tank?" should allow for all attendees to come home with new information to improve your operations!

My busy time has now begun. I am completing the final versions of the 2013 budget, finalizing the last meeting dates for next year, mailing out all membership renewals, mailing out all Industry Partnership information and contracts, and will soon begin planning the 2013 PAR4Research Auction. The current WGCSA Board of Directors has addressed some efficiency issues for next year (please see article from Chad Harrington on page 34 for more information).

I am very excited to begin the New Year as we have a lot great meeting locations and events being planned. The WI Hospitality Room in San Diego will be at The Bootlegger which is a casual restaurant/bar located at 804 Market Street which is within walking distance of the Convention Center. Listening to input

of our members we have extended the time of the event to three hours. Please join us from 6 to 9 pm for some Wisconsinizing in CA. The event is open to all WGCSA members who are attending the GIS.

We also have a great line up of meeting locations. Thanks to all of the members who have agreed to host an event in 2013! In addition, be on the lookout for more changes and information to our October 5th, 2013 Couples Event. I am glad to be working with a group of "wives" who are helping me to offer a new format that will be FUN and flexible to families, couples, and more of our members than ever before! Tell your spouse/significant other to save October 5th date NOW; you will not want to miss this!

As this is a season to be thankful and look back on our successful 2012, I need to thank Jeff Millies, CGCS who is our outgoing President. Jeff has been the third great chapter leader that I have been able to work with as Chapter Manager. Jeff always made time to take my many phone calls and questions. His wife Nicole has also been very involved with our couple's events and the planning of the WI Room at the GIS in the past two years. If you get the chance please join me in thanking him for his time and service to make the WGCSA better and stronger than ever!

Lastly, but certainly not least, please take the time to review the Affiliate Companies that took part in our 2012 Industry Partnership Program. Simply put the WGCSA could not function without the support these companies provide our Association. I challenge all members to consider purchasing products and doing business with these companies as you can! Many of these companies have supported the WGCSA for many, many, years. Dedication to our members and our industry is probably more important than ever before. I look forward to working with these great suppliers and people in 2013 as well. ✓



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Thank You Dr. Kerns

By **Dr. Paul Koch**, Turfgrass Diagnostic Lab Manager, O.J. Noer Turfgrass Research and Education Facility &

The first time Dr. Kerns and I spent any significant time together was during his first week as Wisconsin's Turfgrass Pathologist back in the summer of 2008. I had met him during the interview, and had seen him present at academic meetings, but our interactions had been brief.

I knew that he enjoyed golf, and to begin the process of getting to know him I asked Tom Harrison to set up a round of golf for us at Maple Bluff CC. Anyone that knows Jim knows he is a tremendous golfer, anyone that knows me knows that I am not. We arrive at the first tee, and Jim promptly slices his tee shot well onto the adjacent fairway. After explaining how I'm not very good, I proceed to effortlessly hit my tee shot long and straight down the middle of the fairway. "There's my good one for the day" I proclaim with great humor, and we stride off down the first fairway. While he's off looking for his ball in nearby Waukesha County, I hit a little wedge up to the green that bounces once, bounces a second time, trickles for a foot or two and falls into the cup for the first eagle of my entire life. Rather than whooping and running around riding my pitching wedge like a pony though, I felt rather sheepish. I had just spent the past hour explaining to him how I'm not very good, and I chip in for



Dr. Kerns and myself at my Ph.D. graduation in May of 2012. I will forever be grateful to his guidance throughout my Ph.D. pursuit.

eagle on the first hole we play together.

After knocking his ball up near the green, he walks up, surveys the area and asks "Where did you go?" "Um, I think it went in" was my confident reply. "What? What do you mean you think it went in?" replies Dr. Kerns. To which I replied, "well I guess I haven't really looked yet, but I know it's in there, I don't want you to think I'm hustling you." So began a 5 year relationship that saw the development of Dr. Kerns

as one of the foremost turf pathologists in the country, the growth of myself as a scientist and an extension specialist, and together as a team the expansion of the turf pathology program at Wisconsin to one of the most respected in the nation.

I am personally grateful to Jim on many levels. First, he allowed me to stay on as Turfgrass Diagnostic Lab manager AND simultaneously pursue my Ph.D. This is exceedingly rare, and was a significant risk for his young program back in 2008. If I had failed miserably, not only would the most public face of his program (the TDL) fail, but so would his first Ph.D. student. Those would both look bad for him, and I made sure not to point out this fact when discussing the potential Ph.D. pursuit. The successful completion of my Ph.D. though this past summer allowed me to pursue my own research ambitions while still maintaining my close connections with the industry, something that will prove valuable as I scan the horizon near and far for potential employment.

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In addition, Jim has been a valuable mentor on far ranging issues from writing to fundamentals about plant pathology. His guidance on public speaking, however, may be among the most valuable guidance he has provided over the years. Jim is one of the most prolific speakers available on the 'turf circuit' today, and with his help I have improved significantly and will work to continue to improve moving forward. An ability to speak effectively in public is essential as an extension specialist, and any success I have in the future in this area will be largely thanks to Jim.

In addition to my own gratitude, I know all segments of the industry are just as grateful for the services he provided over the last 5 years. Jim has been quick to respond to calls and emails from turf managers of all stripes, and has even found time to make numerous site visits to golf courses, athletic fields, sod farms, and home lawns. One elderly woman in north central Wisconsin even paid him in cookies for driving 3 hours to look at her lawn, something I'm sure the industry in North Carolina would like to know. Jim has initiated numerous research projects that have benefited the state industries; including research into the basic ecology and pathogenicity of the dollar spot and anthracnose pathogens, novel fungicide strategies for reducing overall inputs, and a new characterization of rust pathogens that will greatly aid the sod industry. In addition, with the tireless promotional abilities of Dr. Kerns on the speaking circuit the TDL is quickly becoming known around the country as a fast, accurate, and unbiased source of diagnostic information for turfgrass managers.

Jim arrived at Wisconsin's small turfgrass pathology program in 2008. In just 5 short years, and with the help of numerous students and staff, he managed to transform it into one of the largest and most active turfgrass pathology programs in country. While I am sad to see him leave on December 15th, I am excited for the opportunities



Above: Dr. Kerns grooming future graduate students at a 'Grandparents University' event in 2010.

Below: : Dr. Kerns' speaking abilities has greatly increased the visibility of the UW turf program.



that await him at one of the traditional turfgrass powers at North Carolina State University. I think it's safe to say we will watch his progress closely, and take pride in the fact that one of the most well-known turf pathologists got his start working with the great turf-

grass industry right here in Wisconsin.

Oh and that first golf outing? I double-bogeyed the second hole, he had the lead by the third hole, and I'm not sure I've ever been in front of him since. At least he knew I wasn't hustling him. 