



## In Play

By Jack MacKenzie, Jr., CGCS  
North Oaks Golf Club

Typically, I don't read the obituaries. However, when I do, the age of the deceased usually catches my eye. Anyone achieving 90 or more years gets a smile and nod; those around or under the age of 50 receive a frown and further investigation. As my digits increase, it seems that I reflect more upon the preciousness of life.

**While reviewing the latest issue of Golf Course Management** I happen to peruse the In Memoriam column and this caught my eye: Jeffery P. Hayden, 52, died December 6, 2002. What followed was a list of accomplishments achieved in his short life. There also was an essay titled "Final Words of Wisdom and Advice From Jeffery Haden". He shared this brief with his friends and coworkers in the industry and I thought I would share it with you.

*"If I could live my life over, I would abandon the philosophy of not seeking medical guidance. I was probably aware of symptoms and problems, but chose to ignore them. I would now urge all my brothers in the turfgrass industry to realize that they are not invincible and to seek preventative medical advice. Not every visit to a doctor results in catastrophic problems; in today's world most of the problems are treatable and prolong your life with your family and friends. As we are well aware, the turfgrass industry is a high stress industry and, unfortunately, extreme stress can cause problems to our bodies. These are treatable and can prevent what I caused. Remember me fondly and know that you can still call on me at any time... I'll be watching and thinking of you all."*

Wow, some pretty heavy words. Upon investigation into Mr. Hayden's life I found perhaps a typical situation. Not having a physical for over 25 years caused him to be unaware of the toll his life style was taking upon him. He smoked, enjoyed his beverages (though I'm told not too excess), didn't have a formal exercise program and lived a rather sedentary life style. And now after 52 years he is no longer with us.

**When my turf is ailing**, I take full advantage of my resources. If the challenge is beyond my professional scope,

I call in specialists. The USGA Turf Advisory Service can be enlisted or an irrigation specialist or even on site visits from fellow superintendents who maintain a different perspective. Testing can be done. Both soil and water evaluations will often lead to better appreciation of the problem at hand. Technology resources such as the computer, pH meter, automated weather stations and the microscope can aid in the prevention and diagnosis of turf damaging issues. But what about when I am ailing?

**Sure I do the easy stuff**, two visits to the dentist each year, an adjustment from my chiropractor on occasion and a trip to the clinic to have a displaced piece of skin reattached. Each of these procedures is simple in that I can predict the results fairly accurately. How about the scary stuff?

**At the age of 43, I really need an in depth physical.** But then again, I said that three years ago. The little finger on my right hand will sometimes just lock up. I can "un lock" it with a twist and pull, but is there a bigger problem? Upon my hands and face I have discolorations that should have been looked at a couple of years past. And how about that "other" test? The probe. The internal inspection. The violation of a very personal part of my body.

**Eight years ago I challenged the demon of alcoholism and I won.** And I am proud to say that as recently as this second, I continue to wage war and conquer that battle. However, that issue was different in that I realized choosing not to drink was my decision. The contraction of cancer or any other life-threatening malady will not be a choice. Thus to preserve my love for life I must really make an appointment or two and address the effects that age and my life style has had upon my body.

**I am human, and I have fears.** Fears of what others might find wrong with me.

**I need to see a skin specialist** to enjoy summer afternoons on the boat with my children. And a visit to the proctologist is in order to assure me my internal passageways are healthy. In fact, a total health inventory is important today so I will be ready to enjoy the challenges of many more tomorrows.

## BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY

**Due to health reasons, Great Greens  
would like to sell its  
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**Anyone interested should contact:**

**HAROLD INGALLS  
605-874-2134**

**OR**

**[gtrgrns@itctel.com](mailto:gtrgrns@itctel.com)**