



In Bounds

by Jack MacKenzie, CGCS

Even though I wasn't living in the community of Mahtomedi in 1984, I worked in the community as Superintendent at Dellwood Hills Golf Club, and could justify joining the Mahtomedi Lion's Club. A plebe, I was tasked with all the grunt work that the senior 'poobah's' felt was beyond them.

Selling raffle chances for sides of beef, pimping dinner tickets to the Wild Game Feed and clearing tables at the seemingly too often pancake breakfasts. I was covered with so much residual maple syrup it is a surprise that "sugar-bushing" is a hobby of mine!

All the while the Grand Poobah and his high-ranking initiates socialized, consumed adult beverages (although I snuck my fair share) and dolled out the sausages. The new lion cubs and I did all the heavy lifting and the S.O.B.'s, sweet old boys, did the kibitzing...or so I thought.

It wasn't until much later that I learned how important the old cats were to the fundraising process. In an all-volunteer organization it is expected that the youth "pay their debt to the cause" through sweat equity. On the other hand those who had been in the group for quite some time were in the enviable position of being able to contribute with direct financial support while having a relaxed social event.

That shiny new ambulance didn't materialize from my ball-busting-plate-bussing exuberance, but rather the monthly contributions at the Lion's Club meetings, excessive number of member purchased raffle tickets and the 'passing of the hat' contributions when not enough cakes were flipped for the general public.

Fundraising in the eyes of the veteran Lion's wasn't about the pounds in the side of beef, whether the rocky mountain oysters would be satisfying or if the orange juice had pulp or not. Nope, they only cared about generating funds for whatever the current cause was and if they had fun doing it, either through a few pops or down to earth fraternization, then all the better! The community and individuals at large benefited from the new rescue truck or park pavilion.

The Lions give to their community, for they know in their hearts that the community will reward their efforts by being a better place to live, and although they never want to use the service, a dedicated fleet of emergency vehicles is pretty darn nice to have around. The greater good of the community is perpetuated through individual generosity and typically no direct return on investment.

The MGCSA holds two fundraisers each year, The Scramble, which is dedicated to turf research and scholarships, and The Wee One, committed to helping “one of our own” in times of medical crisis. These events, while typically held at an awesome high-end destination complete with both chance and purse prizes, aren’t just social avenues to drive down. The end game is all about the serious business of generating financial support for good causes, some pleasant and some nobody wishes to have to pursue, related to our “turfgrass” community.

Since 1987 over 120 individuals have received scholarships for continuing education, be it directly related to turf or just general courses; individuals who grew to be leaders in the golf course industry or are productive contributors to the population. Without help from the MGCSA and its membership, the expenses of a college education would have been much greater. Isn’t it great that working together and supporting a fundraiser our industry contributed to the education of so many?

For as long as I can remember we have held a research event, once called The Stodola Scramble and now just The Scramble, to support the agronomic team at the University of Minnesota and other research destinations. Isn’t it great that working together and supporting a fundraiser our industry has been able to enhance a turfgrass research program that is gaining worldwide acclaim?

Three years ago North Oaks Golf Club hosted the MGCSA Wee One Event. Sadly, the funds raised since then have been requested and distributed. Yet isn’t it a great thing that working together and supporting a fundraiser event our industry helped our peers in a grave time of need?

In our organization, we don’t have prospects to flip griddlecakes and wipe down tables. However there are opportunities to participate in the promotion and financial enhancement of *our* philanthropic goals. Please play and support one or both fundraising events. It wouldn’t be the same without you.