



# In Bounds

by Jack MacKenzie, CGCS

A friend of mine in the industry, one whom I have helped

from time to time with ideas and thoughtful considerations, will often ask of me following a friendly salutation, "...this is all well and good, but more importantly, what have you done for me lately?"

Obviously this jest is made with humorous intent and is suggested to enhance our friendship as a jovial spar, but behind the thrust is a great question, what had I done for him recently? For that matter, what have I done for YOU recently?

Too be simple and to the point, I've been very busy on your behalf. Two and a half years ago I was hired from the ranks of golf course superintendents to manage your professional association to the best of my abilities utilizing the inherent

needs I had accumulated after many seasons as a turf manager. At the time, I saw the career change as an opportunity to implement what I perceived as "industry demands" beyond communication and event management.

Together, let's face the truth of your industry. As much as you would like to volunteer, and as much as you want to be heard, you just don't have the time to work 50, 60 or even 70 hours a week from April through October and also give extra time to support the industry. And we must not forget the obligations you attempt to maintain on the home front. You have a real juggling act to successfully manage without external hands pulling you from your priorities.

From my point of view, I saw this administrative position as one of true representation of the well intended, yet over-worked,

professional golf course manager. From your viewpoint, I attempt to prioritize and follow through on a wide variety of topics and issues including educational material, legislative action, membership promotion, institutional support and public relations.

There is a lot going on in the industry and having a full time representative has proven quite effective in the enhancement of your profession. Through me, “we” are represented upon the USGA Green Section Committee, the MDA Pesticide Management Committee, the PMC Education and Promotion Team, the DNR Groundwater Management Planning Committee, the MDA Pollinator Strategic Planning Committee and of great importance, the MPCA, DNR, MDA and the Bureau of Water and Soil Resources Golf Course Environmental Stewardship Committee. “We” communicate regularly with the MGA, MN Section PGA, Midwest Golf

Course Owners Association, Club Managers Association, the UMN, MNLA and the MTGF. “We” are always available for insight into the industry.

As your liaison with the GCSAA, “we” last year pursued and received a grant to enhance membership promotion. This lead to, and emphasized, our summer exposure and winter outreach, both of which are open to both member and non-member professionals. In 2014 “we” have applied for a \$10,000 grant from the GCSAA to support the financial requirements necessary to further the Minnesota Golf Course BMP and Environmental Stewardship Program. As “we” continue to promote the program with our state agencies we have found some agency challenges will require funding to overcome. For example, funding necessary for the creation, implementation and tabulation of golf courses assessments, a requirement put forward by the

MDA.

“We,” however, are not all about advocacy. Member networking is also important. Annually, the MGCSA plans and participates in over two dozen social and educational opportunities. From the Beer and Pretzel Bash at the NGE to the Assistant’s Professional Forum in late November and the ten outstate Outreach/Exposure events; there are many chances for you to get a flavor of the social advantages associated with the MGCSA. That is roughly two events each month touching every membership level from Equipment Managers to our Affiliates.

Oh yes, “we” mustn’t forget about communication...if you are not ‘touched’ by the MGCSA through electronic media, Twitter, The Stimpmeter, The Hole Notes, Facebook and e-blasts, at least twice per week, you must have ‘accidentally’ added MGCSA to your “junk” mail! Indeed, I do pester you

a bit through electronic networking, but that is because I had, as a superintendent, perceived the need for more current communication.

All this talk of autonomy doesn’t mean I wouldn’t like a call or two, an email or note of suggestion. In truth, I savor those too few comments as they keep me in touch with you, the professional turf manager base of the golf industry. Never do I want to take you for granted and I will always maintain an open mind and appreciation of your time-bound desires to be an active member.

What have I done for you recently I ask? Well, I’d like to think that this question doesn’t cross your mind at all as I attempt to project myself into your shoes and anticipate and implement your demands. Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your professional administrator.