

Hole Notes

The Official Publication of the MGCSA

Vol. 56, #5 July 2021



Featured in this issue:

What is Not Killing My Trees



**UMN Member Driven Research:
Are Fescues an Option for
Low-input Putting Greens?
Pages 44 - 51**

**On the cover and pages 6 - 11:
A beautiful and unusual display of a cut
burl. Although not detrimental to tree
health, burls can be used in woodworking
for their unique characteristics.**

Image by Lindsay Williams, Treehut.com

Don White Match Play Tournament Standings

Pages 24 - 25



CLESENS

***Minnesota Board of
Water and Soil Resources
FactSheet:
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COM



Presidential Perspective

by Scott Thayer, Legends Club

Drought 2021?
Is it a drought? I
am starting to feel
that this is the
statement of the

year. Last year was Covid-19, and this year is drought. Yet, no matter what is thrown at turf professionals in this business, we adapt and make the best of the challenges. That's what I love about this business the most!

My owner said to me before we got any rain in June, "You know Scott, the best part of having a drought is that the golf course is packed everyday all day". Absolutely, I agree that another year of busy golf courses and nonstop tee times is great for the business side of golf. Yet, as you are aware, it creates even more work for us trying to keep the golf course green... well, this year just the grass alive! While I definitely don't mind having a busy golf course as it is best for all sides, it does make our jobs just

that much more difficult at times. Just like I said before, we adapt and make it all the best we can which make us even more valuable to our golf courses.

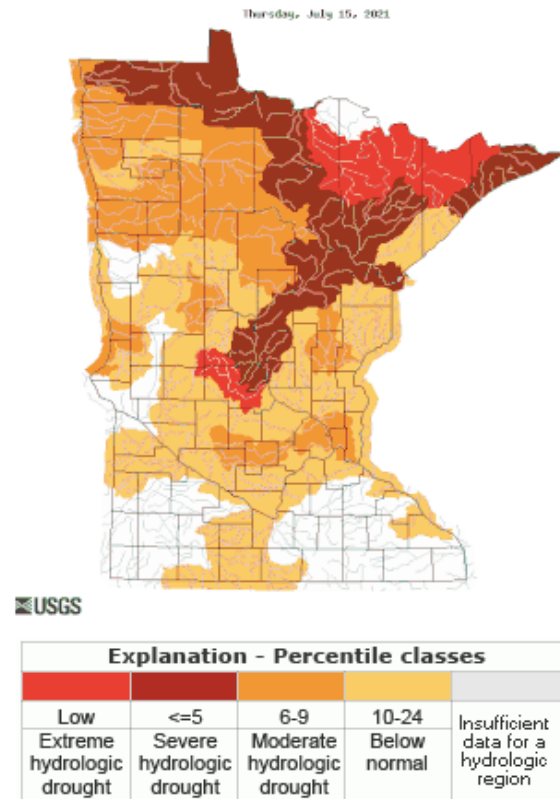
I have seen a few things during the drought that I have never observed during my tenure in Minnesota: a well pond feed running continuously, an irrigation system running the hardest it's ever run and MGCSA events moved or canceled because we were all working our tails off to keep the golf courses alive. The drought has tapered off since mid-June; we have gotten some rain, not a lot, but just enough to give us some relief.

One of my retired guys that mows fairways for Legends was telling me about a storm in 1987. Lake Minnetonka area got 10" of rain on July 23rd in just 6 hours and just 2 days before that event they got 4" of rain. Then after that event occurred no rain, a major drought began and lasted for the next year and

a half or so. That is one crazy way to start a drought. I can deal with hand watering and extra watering, but 14" of rain would destroy my golf course! It is fun to hear stories from my older employees. This storm happened 34 years ago, and it made such an impact on him that he remembers how it affected the Twin Cities it to this day. If you are ever bored I recommend looking it up, a very impressive storm. Some events for the MGCSA are coming up in August that I am excited about: the walkabout at the

TPC Twin Cities on August 3rd and the Championship at New Prague. I hope everyone can find time to get away for one or all of these events; it would be great to see you. The Don White Match Play is still going on for some of you, too. It was definitely tough for many to get away to play matches during the drought, but it was nice to get away from the home course once you made the commitment. I hope everyone had a fun, safe and enjoyable Fourth of July, the weather was perfect.

Right: Map of below normal 7-day average stream flow compared to historical stream flow for the day of year as reported July 15, 2021 from the US Drought Monitor.



What IS NOT Killing My Trees?

By Michelle Grabowski, Extension educator and Rebecca Koetter
University of Minnesota Extension
Originally published at extension.umn.edu/trees

Quick facts

- Some very noticeable growths and conditions on trees are not harmful to the tree and some can add interest to your landscape.
- The unusual swirling grain pattern found in burls makes them prized by woodworkers.
- Lichens in your yard are a sign that the air surrounding the tree or shrub must be clean, since lichens will not grow in polluted areas.
- The fungi that cause smooth patch do not invade the living portion of the tree and are not harmful to the health of the tree.
- The presence of sooty mold can indicate insect activity that has the potential for causing damage.
- Avoid wetwood by protecting trees from wounds by lawn mowers, weed whips and other equipment and use proper pruning techniques.

Burls

Burls are round to irregular bumps or bulges that develop on tree trunks. Their exact cause is something of a mystery. Some suggest that burls form in response to insect damage, a pathogen, or at a wound but there has been no proven cause. Some burls seem to develop from a proliferation of bud tissue that keeps multiplying instead of developing shoots.

Burls continue to grow as the tree grows. While burls do not kill trees directly they can reduce a tree's health and lifespan.



The unusual swirling grain pattern found in burls makes them prized by woodworkers. Entire burls can be carved into bowls or art objects, and thin veneers of highly patterned burlwood are used on musical instruments such as guitars.

Lichens

Lichens are a combination of a fungus with an algae or bacterium. They can be found on any non-moving substrate like rocks or woody plants.

- Lichens are commonly found on the bark of trees and shrubs in Minnesota.
- In some cases trunks and branches may be completely covered by lichens.
- This colorful coating does no harm to the plants.
- Lichens are completely self supporting organisms.

- The algae component provides sugars through photosynthesis.
- The fungus component gets water and minerals from the air, water or surrounding environment.
- Neither organism is parasitic to the tree.

Colors of lichens vary widely and include white, gray, red, green, yellow and black. The same wide variation is seen in shapes and sizes. Some lichens adhere to bark or rocks in a roughly circular flat crust, while others form raised lobes or branches.

Lichens reproduce when small pieces containing both organisms breaks off. These fragments can be carried by wind or water to a new location.

No management is necessary or should be done to reduce the presence of lichens on a tree or shrub. In fact, finding lichens on a tree or shrub in your yard is a sign that the air surrounding the tree or shrub must be clean, since lichens will not grow in areas with a smoky or polluted environment.





Smooth Patch

Smooth patch is a condition in which the rough outer layer of bark is decomposed or sloughs off in response to colonization by a fungus.

- Trees with smooth patch have areas of smooth, light colored bark that are sunken in compared to surrounding bark.
- Patches may form clear oval to circular depressions in the bark or may grow together resulting in larger irregular areas of smooth bark along the trunk and branches.
- In Minnesota, smooth patch is commonly found on white oak trees, but maple, ash, willow, linden and other trees may be affected as well.
- The fungi *Aleurodiscus* spp. and *Dendrothele* spp. cause smooth patch.
- These fungi do not invade the living portion of the tree and therefore are not harmful to the health of the tree.
- Fruiting bodies of *Aleurodiscus oaksii*, the common fungus causing smooth patch on white oaks, are small (1/8 to 1/4 inch) cream-colored discs that are noticeable in wet weather but may shrivel up in dry weather.

Sooty mold

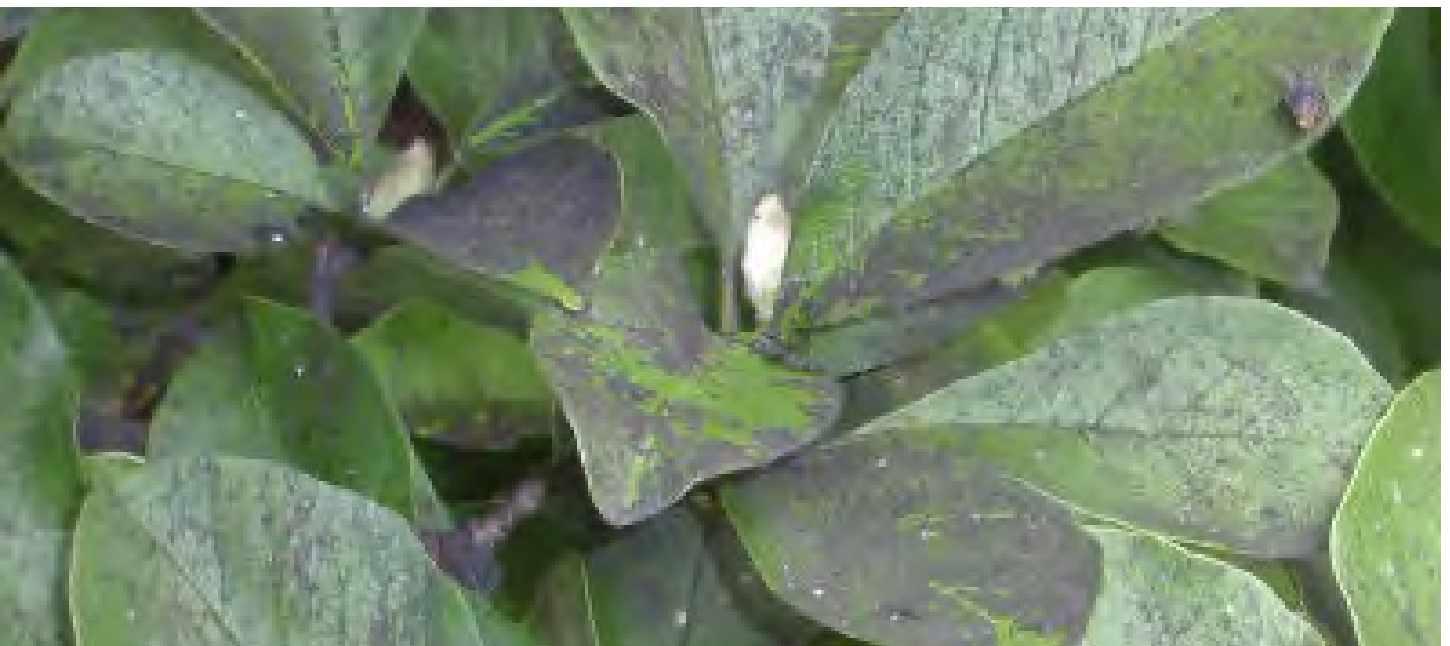
Frequently, tree limbs and leaves are covered by an unsightly, black, sooty growth called sooty mold. It may occur on any tree, shrub, or leafy plant.

Sooty mold is often found on or below plants infested with certain types of sap sucking insects, especially aphids and soft scales, which produce a sugary secretion called honeydew. This honeydew drips down onto leaves and branches providing a food base on which the sooty mold fungi can grow.

- Sooty mold is caused by saprophytic fungi.
- It is not a disease and does not infect living plant tissue.
- Heavy growth by the fungus can reduce photosynthesis but does not harm the plant in any other way.
- Sooty mold may also grow on sap or resin associated with wounds.

We do not recommend control of the mold itself. However, the presence of sooty mold is often an indication of insect activity that has the potential for causing damage. Proper identification of the insect is necessary to determine if management is warranted.

Light coverings of the mold will gradually disappear during dry weather when its nutrient source is eliminated. Sooty mold can be physically washed off small plants if desired.





Wetwood

- Wetwood causes discoloration of bark, sapwood and heart wood of many different tree species.
- Wetwood occurs when the wood of a live tree becomes water soaked and colonized by bacteria.
- In warm summer months, pressure builds in the affected wood and a foul smelling liquid, known as slime flux, is pushed out of the tree through cracks or wounds.
- As this liquid flows down the trunk, bark becomes initially stained dark black but eventually fades to a bleached tan or gray.
- Grass below the tree may be killed by the salts, alcohols and acids present in the liquid.

In Minnesota, wetwood can be seen frequently on elm and poplar and also on fir, maple, mulberry, oak, willow and hemlock. Even though the symptoms of this condition may seem unpleasant, the health of the tree is typically not affected.

Bacteria initially enter the tree through wounds on roots, trunks or branches. Protect trees from wounds by lawn mowers, weed whips and other equipment and use proper pruning techniques. Once a tree is affected by wetwood, there is no way to eliminate it.

The MGCSA is excited to present the third in a series of social/educational programming:

***Talk-about Turf Tours at
TPC Twin Cities Golf Club***

August 3rd, 2021* Rain or shine!

8:30 until 11:00 am * meet up in parking lot by shop

Host Superintendent Mark Michalski

Mark has had a few exciting years since becoming the Superintendent at TPC Twin Cities. The 3M Championship changed to the nationally televised 3M Open and his course was modified to accommodate the bigger hitters. Join Mark on a “talk-about” walking tour of the course and learn from him the ins and outs of the rebuild project and 3M Open. ***Members are encouraged to bring the “rising stars” on their green staff to encourage them into the industry.***

This is a free event but the association needs an accurate count for coffee. Please register at mgcsa.org

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What is Your “Why” Question?

part II

By Brian Brown, Superintendent at Chisago Lakes Golf Club



Every day, on my way to work at Chisago Lakes Golf Club, I drive past the national headquarters and treatment center of Hazelden Betty Ford. This campus is also the location of the Graduate School of Addiction Studies. Two years ago, I began my journey to obtain my master's degree to become a Professional Licensed Counselor and Drug and Alcohol Counselor.

Only God knows how I will utilize this degree because I truly do enjoy my job as a golf course superintendent. My thought is to be an on-call counselor in the wintertime at Hazelden Betty Ford or possibly counsel on a Pro bono basis through a Christian organization. Yet, from a fiscally responsible perspective, accumulating \$60,000 of student debt at 50-years

of age is not necessarily the best financial planning recommendation. Additionally, as a part-time student for the past two years, my family has had to make sacrifices as I spend my spare time studying. I have two more years to go. Every class I learn more about compulsive behaviors and I thought I would share some of what I am experiencing at my “other job”, that of a student.

A little about substance use, my journey with alcohol, and golf cart governors.

Why do people drink alcohol and use drugs? There are three primary reasons. For some it is to get “high”, or, the euphoria. It makes them feel great, have a lot of energy, and feel that they can do anything. For others it is the reduction of pain physically or mentally. They may start from a prescribed pain medicine for a physical ailment and move to non-prescribed substances when their prescriptions run out. They may ‘use’ to help numb a trauma experience that they went through or, for the first

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time, they may feel balanced and comfortable in their own skin. For me it was the third reason which is called human attachment.

My personality is focused, serious, and I experience social anxiety in large group settings. I blame my older sister for my first times of drinking alcohol. She was a bit of a partier and I believe the thought of getting little brother drunk was entertaining. What stuck for me was not the feeling of getting intoxicated because I did not care for it, but with alcohol, I could joke around in a crowd, have fun, and stop worrying what people thought about me. My early 20's was a tumultuous time. I could potentially write a book about this time in my life but I will summarize: mom is hospitalized again with mental health issues, parents get divorced, I break up with high school sweetheart, join the United States Army Reserve, parents remarry each other, I get called up for Desert Storm, my parents get divorced again, I get married, I move to Florida to go to golf pro school, I fall away from God and the church, I get divorced, I move in with a couple of guys, I drink a lot of alcohol, and finally I make a decision to move back to Minnesota for recovery.

Recovery for me was not through a treatment center but as an introspective recovery and by running away from alcohol through spirituality. My coping strategy was to turn my addiction from alcohol to behavioral addictions like so many others do. The new drugs of choice- religion and career.

Why do we have additions to alcohol, drugs, or behaviors? Biologically, when someone uses for the first time, there is a release of the chemical called dopamine. This occurs in the middle portion of the brain which is called the limbic system. This system controls the automatic responses in the brain that focus on survival in humans and animals: air, water, food, shelter, sleep, reproduction, personal security, health, love, and belonging. Dopamine release occurs naturally in the brain, but the intensity of that release is exponentially greater with the use of addictive sub-



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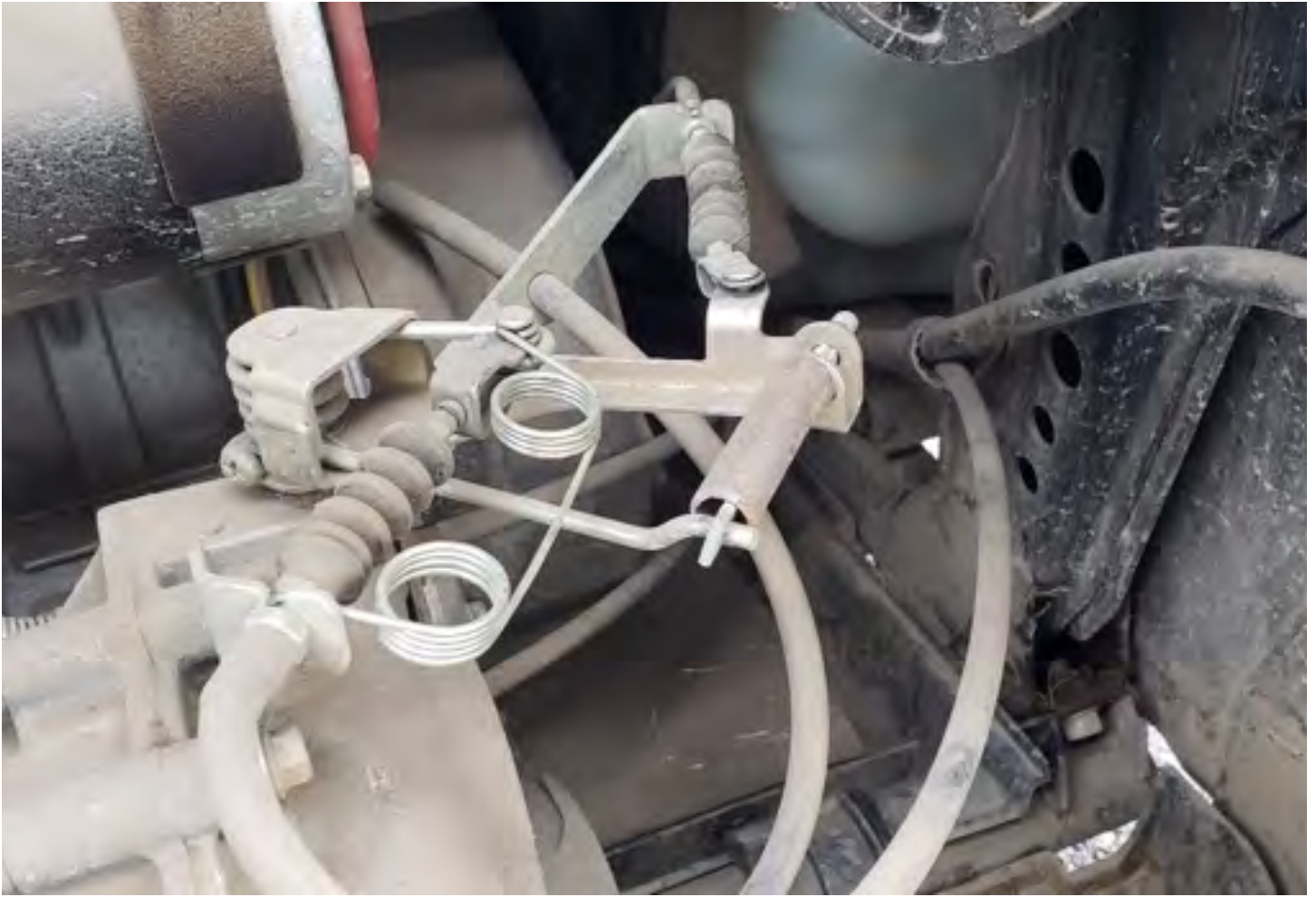
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stances. When a person wakes in the morning their “natural” dopamine level will be around 50 units. After eating that level rises to 60-70, having a nice meal with a significant-other raise it to 90 units. Having sex after the meal will rise dopamine levels to 150. In context, using heroin those dopamine levels will increase to 800. Methamphetamines skyrockets it to 1200. The stronger and faster that the substance effects the brain, the greater the risk of addiction.

While the limbic system is flooded with all that dopamine, the other portion of the brain, called the pre-frontal cortex (front outside part, observes those responses. This part of the brain is the logical center that focuses on personal identity, goals and dreams, relationships, self-esteem, and self-actualization. When it sees that the limbic system is making decisions that are harmful to the person it sends a signal to stop using. These two systems are designed to communicate and work together for the betterment of the person. When someone has substance use disorder there is a biological breakdown in the communication channel between the limbic and cortex functions.

An analogy I like to use is that of a golf cart. The engine powers the golf cart, but the governor mechanism limits the maximum speed to 14 mph at which the cart will safely operate. The engine uses full power to get to operating speed and then the governor kicks in so that the occupants do not operate the cart in an unsafe manner. A brain operating in an altered state is like a cart without a governor.

At the golf course, we provided customers with complimentary plastic ball markers about the size of a quarter. Unfortunately, some of our younger customers that were looking for fun and excitement found a way to wedge the ball marker into the governor to override it. With the ball marker inserted into the governor the cart would operate at full engine speed and travel up to 25 mph. This is dangerous for the occupants and hard on the carts long-term. At this operating speed there was more



turf damage along with carts being run into each other, trees, and even ponds. When someone has a substance use disorder, they basically have a biological ball marker wedged into their governor. The person's limbic system does not get the message from the prefrontal cortex that it needs to slow down.

As with the golf carts, going fast, drinking alcohol, or using drugs can be fun for a while, but eventually it will wear off and withdrawal symptoms occur as the body metabolizes the substance from the body. The limbic system gets so preoccupied with the need for more dopamine that it cannot focus on anything else. The limbic overrides and induces the prefrontal cortex to focus on how to get more “chemistry”, rather than cut back to safe levels of operation. This is called the hijacked brain. The reasoning part of the brain becomes controlled by the non-thinking part of the brain. This creates the vicious cycle of cravings, intoxication from use, followed by withdrawal. The body starts to get used to this cy-



cle and finds ways to tolerate it. Our bodies are so effectively made, they know this level is not correct and they will start to find a way to correct it, leading to tolerance. With tolerance, it takes more of the substance or, a stronger strength substance, to experience the same level of dopamine activity. Biologically the brain begins to physically change to reduce the amount of dopamine it can use. Some individuals get to the point that they are unable to get “high” at all.

At this point, the person needs to use in order just to get to some resemblance of normalcy. When the person does not use, the withdrawal becomes so great that their original reason of use does not matter. Withdrawal symptoms are so horrendous that people will continue to use so that they do not go through the withdrawal process. They may have started to use for one reason, but they will do whatever it takes to not feel

how they do when they are in withdrawal.

The goal of treatment and counseling is multi-faceted. First, it is to educate the patient on what I just described and what their body is doing. Counselors and facilities work to detox clients to stop the intoxication, withdrawal, and craving cycle. Those with substance use disorder, biologically have a “ball marker” stuck in their “governor brain”. If equipped with an anti-tampering device, the “governor brain” can function properly. Through counseling, the therapists work helping the client install anti-tampering devices to the governors, like we did at the course to help reduce future tampering using one half inch metal tubing installed over the governor rod. The return to normal operation reestablishes the intended purpose and brings hope for a long life with great opportunities. The two-part system of the limbic system and prefrontal cortex start to perform correctly.



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MGCSA Championship August 23

A little update about my sister I mentioned that was a partier and thought it would be fun to get her little brother drunk. I am so proud of her, after I started my schooling at Hazelden Betty Ford Addiction Studies she decided to seek counseling for her alcoholism and has now been sober for over one year. I was so happy when she sent me a text with her accomplishment with the attached picture of her one-year sobriety coin.



How does my substance and behavior use fit into my “Why” of “To finish the race well?” When I put that ball marker into my governor, I make poor decisions and I will not finish the race well. These first two articles focused on my health and overcoming my addictions. Knowing the negative aspects of my addictive personality is essential to finish my race well yet knowing what motivates me positively I find is more important. In the next article of this series I will explore my motivations and strengths.

If you feel like you have a ball marker stuck in your governor, I highly recommend that you seek help at any of the great treatment facilities or counselors in our area.

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2021 Don White Match Play S

Round One
Play by May 31

Round Two
Play by July 16

Round Three
Play by August 16

Round Four
Play by September 16

Round Five
Play by October 16



Spons



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Season Long Event Standings

Round Five
Play by October 16

Round Four
Play by September 16

Round Three
Play by August 16

Round Two
Play by July 16

Round One
Play by May 31



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Bur Oak Blight



Bur oak blight is a fungal leaf disease found throughout Minnesota. It results in leaf browning and leaf loss in late summer and early fall. A native fungal pathogen called *Tubakia iowensis* causes the disease. Above-average rainfall for the past 30 years likely boosted the occurrence of this pathogen, leading to bur oak blight.

Although bur oak blight gained attention in the mid-to-late 2000s, Minnesota DNR forest health staff noticed its symptoms a decade earlier, before scientists identified the cause. Since bur oak blight is a relatively new phenomenon, we don't yet know its long-term impact on Minnesota.

While the disease can cause severe symptoms on individual trees, it does not affect all bur oaks. Bur oaks can lose about 50 percent of their canopies every year and still remain relatively healthy. However, when a bur oak loses more than half of its leaves for several years in a row, it may become stressed and susceptible to other problems such as twolined chestnut borer and Armillaria root disease.



Wedge-shaped lesions and leaf vein browning are telltale symptoms of bur oak blight.

Identification

Bur oak blight's early symptoms appear in midsummer, but the most obvious expression happens in late summer. Leaf symptoms include dark veins on the undersides of leaves and brown, wedge-shaped segments between leaf veins. The disease starts in the lower canopy and progresses up the tree. In severe cases, all but the outermost leaves around the canopy will die. Bur oak blight might cause

minor dieback (death of branches starting at the tip), but it will not kill major limbs. (Armillaria root disease, twolined chestnut borer, and oak wilt *will* kill large branches.)

Management

Yard tree management

Just because a bur oak has bur oak blight does not mean you should cut it down. In most cases, the tree will leaf out just fine the following year. In fact, we are aware of bur oaks that have sustained severe bur oak blight every year for well over a decade without apparent harm.

The best time to evaluate bur oak health is in June. If the tree does not have branch dieback or epicormic sprouts (small, young branches growing out of the trunk and big limbs), it is probably not stressed. If your bur oak has significant problems and you choose to cut it down, do not do so in April, May, June, or July. These are prime months for spreading oak wilt infection.

Forest and savanna management

Because bur oak blight is a native disease made worse by wet springs and summers, it is not possible to control levels of the pathogen. Since many bur oaks tolerate some degree of the disease, we recommend leaving trees that are not susceptible so that they pass on potential resistance to the next generation. In years with above-average rainfall,



Bur oak blight can have a severe impact on individual bur oaks (oak on the right), but not all bur oaks are affected by it (oak on the left).



Bur oaks showing extreme symptoms of bur oak blight

you can identify tolerant bur oaks from mid-August through September.

During regular harvests, we suggest removing bur oaks with dieback as well as those that have a lot of epicormic sprouts or are regularly defoliated by bur oak blight. These stressed oaks not only are more susceptible to various pests and diseases, they also tend to have more bur oak blight. Bur oak is an excellent species for Minnesota’s future and we continue to promote its planting. We also encourage tree species diversity to make forests resilient to weather, diseases, and insects.

Fungicide treatment

Unstressed bur oaks that get bur oak blight may be able to survive without any treatments. However, for particularly valuable yard trees, you may choose to do preventative injections of the fungicide propiconazole. This fungicide, when injected at half the maximum label rate in late spring (as soon as leaves have formed), can reduce bur oak blight in some healthy bur oaks for at least three years. Propiconazole can burn bur oak leaves, but healthy trees can overcome this temporary stress.

Only treat trees that:

- Do not have any dieback or epicormic sprouts.
- Have had two consecutive years with more than 40 percent leaf loss.

After treatment, don’t treat again until the tree has lost roughly 40 percent of its leaves to bur oak blight for two years in a row.



The same bur oak photographed above in 2015 and below in June 2017.

This information is available in alternative formats to individuals with disabilities by calling (651) 296-6157 (Metro Area) or 1-888-MINNDNR.

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Six Keys to Retaining Great Employees

By Dr. Bob Milligan, The Learning Edge

As I drive around, I see two signs everywhere: “We are Hiring” and “For Lease.” The “For Lease” signs are mostly for office space given that much work will remain virtual.

The “We are Hiring” signs are of great concern for us as I also hear from my farm clients that hiring is almost impossible. That means employee retention becomes crucial, perhaps the most important key to success in the coming months as we exit the pandemic. Below are my six keys to employee retention.

***Learn leadership and supervision
“best practices”***

Think about the reasons for your success: precisely formulated rations, accurate fertilization, targeted use of pesticides, great logistics, etc. You have created this success by continual study and the use of industry “best practices.”

Now think about what happens to those who do not keep up with the latest research and “best practices.” The answer is that their productivity and profitability suffer.

Now let’s turn our attention to your employees – to people. Just as there is research and “best practices” for animals, crops, and ma-



chinery; there is research and “best practices” for leading and supervising your workforce. The “best practices” for animals and crops lead to the greatest productivity and profitability. Similarly, the “best practices” for leadership and supervision provide the greatest chance to retain great employees.

We will touch on several leadership and supervision “best practices” below; here we address the three differences between managing ani-

mals, crops, and equipment and leading and supervising employees. People have three unique crucial attributes: they can think, they can speak, and they can feel – they have emotions. As a result leading and supervising “best practices” must be built around developing a strong interpersonal relationship between the leader/supervisor and the employee. This relationship must be based on mutual trust and a shared passion for the mission of the farm or agribusiness.



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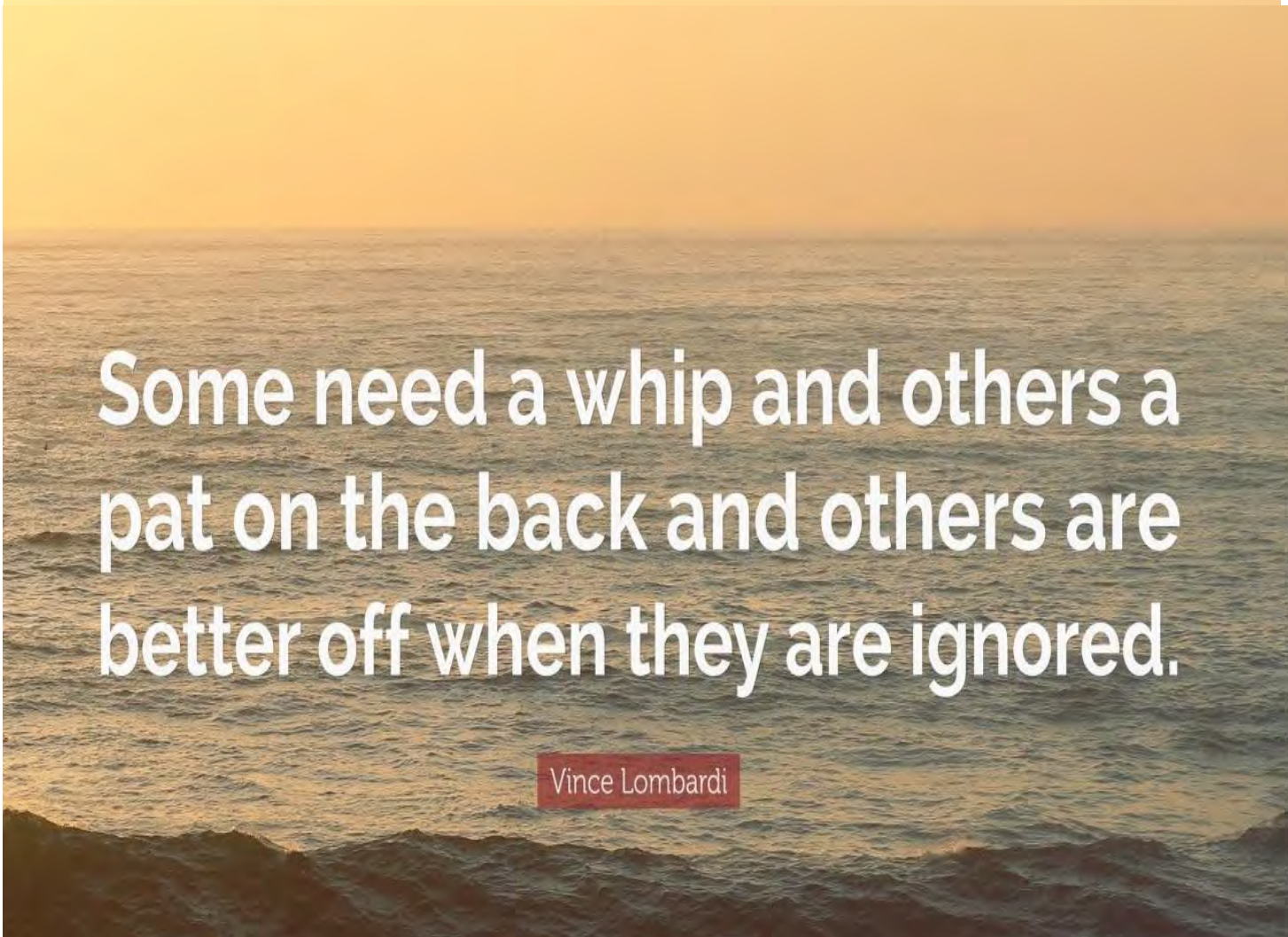
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Understand what motivates employees

Money/compensation has a complex, often misunderstood, and not completely known connection to motivation. Perhaps this relationship is best summarized in the conclusion to 12: The Elements of Great Managing: “The Power of Money is limited in itself. It works only in combination with the non-financial drivers of employee engagement.”

Herzberg’s Two Factor Theory of Motivation can help further understand this relationship. Herzberg’s theory argues that his first set of factors, the maintenance or dissatisfiers, lead to employee dissatisfaction when the employee believes he or she has an insufficient quantity of these factors. In other words, he or she is being treated unfairly. The second set of factors, the motivators, have a greater potential for increasing the motivation of the employee, especially over the long haul – retention!

A photograph of a sunset over the ocean. The sky is a gradient of orange and yellow, transitioning into a darker blue over the water. The waves are visible in the foreground, creating a textured surface. The quote is centered in white text.

Some need a whip and others a pat on the back and others are better off when they are ignored.

Vince Lombardi

The maintenance or dissatisfiers include compensation, working conditions and status. Many managers believe these are the key to motivated employees. They are important; however, without the motivational factors, retaining great employees will be problematic.

Herzberg includes the following as motivators: challenging work, feelings of personal accomplishment, recognition for achievement, increased responsibility, involvement in decision making. A focus on some or all of these will assist you in retaining key employees. Provide clarity

Think about why so many of us are so involved in sports – as participants, as spectators, and with our children. I believe one of the important reason sports are so popular is the rules are known, the rules are (usually) enforced, and we know who is winning. There is clarity.

Now think about employees – yourself, those in your business, those in other businesses. I believe that very few employees have clarity. I call it “a chalked field” about what is ex-

pected of them and how they are performing.

An expectation – behaviors or performance – does not have complete clarity unless:

1. Every detail is clearly explained.
2. An explanation of WHY the expectation is important and/or needed is included.
3. There are opportunities to ask questions and, where appropriate, provide input (engagement).
4. The detailed description can be accessed by the employee (employee manual, job description, policy manual, etc.).

Feedback

Excellent performance of cows, crops, and machinery occurs in the absence of problems – “no defects” in quality jargon. Thus our training and our focus is on preventing and detecting problems. We are trained to look for failures to meet expectations.

One of the additional attributes of people is feeling. We learned from Herzberg, that positive feedback is a motivator. A crucial “best prac-

tice” for leaders and supervisors is, therefore, identifying specific successes and providing positive feedback to the employee.

We typically believe there are two forms of feedback – positive and negative - with negative feedback typically thought of as a reprimand. Please DELETE the idea that there are only two forms of feedback from your mind.

Three forms of feedback are required because there are two reasons for employee performance failing to meet expectations:

1. The failure to meet expectations was caused by the situation or the context of the performance – lack of training, ineffective supervision, unpredictable circumstances, unreasonable expectations.
2. The situation cannot explain the failure; the failure to meet expectations can only be explained by the employee’s personal characteristics -- motivation, effort, commitment.

The second reason may call for negative feedback. Negative

feedback, however, is completely inappropriate for the first reason as it would be UNFAIR. Here we need to use redirection feedback to redirect the employee to success.

To successfully provide quality feedback, three forms of feedback are required – positive, redirection, and negative. Excellent use of especially positive and redirection feedback will dramatically enhance retention and reduce the need for negative feedback.



Career oriented compensation

Compensation on most farms and agribusinesses is formulated to serve young employees who are unlikely to make a career working for the farm/business. To retain key employees, compensation packages need to be redesigned to encourage

career oriented employees to stay with the business. Each package will be different, but potential components include health insurance, retirement plans, long term disability, and financial support, partial or full, for professional development programs potentially including degree programs.



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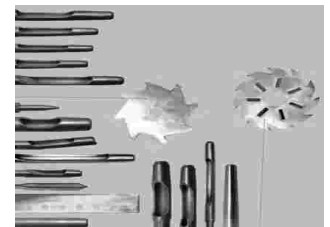
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Hire the right people

The sixth and final point is that retaining great people requires that we hire them. Developing more professional and structured recruitment and selection process will increase the likelihood of hiring great employees that we will then wish to retain as career employees.

Coaching Tip: Improved Communication

Let's make improved communication our seventh key to retaining employees as it undergirds the other six.

Here are four reminders for improved communication:

1. Listen actively focusing on what is being said, not how you will respond. Ask more, tell less.
2. Use "tell me more" and probing questions to be clear on both the message and the feelings behind the message.
3. Use the short pause before responding and your knowledge of conflict styles to provide thoughtful rather than instinctive responses.
4. Explain WHY when explaining decisions and assignments.



The membership of the MGCSA express their thanks of appreciation for the insightful message provided by Dr. Bob Milligan. He can be reached at: 651 647-0495 or rmilligan@trsmith.com images from web



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Get to Know 'em

UMN TROE Center Facility Manager:

Gary Deters

by Hole Notes Editor, Joe Berggren



FACILITY INFO

University of Minnesota Turfgrass Research

Public or Private: Public :)

Number of Holes: 0

Full time employees: 12

Seasonal employees (not including full time): 6

Types of grass: Bentgrass, fine fescue, tall fescue, hard fescue, Poa annua, Kentucky bluegrass, perennial ryegrass

Total acreage: Approximately 13 acres

Greens acreage: Approximately 0.80 – 35,000ft²

Fairway acreage: Approximately 0.18 - 7,800ft²

Rough acreage: 3.2 Acres

Research plot acreage: 9.6 Acres



PERSONAL TURF FACTS:

How many years have you been in your current position?

1 year, 3 months

How many years have you been in the turf industry?

25 years

Where else have you worked?

Albany Golf Club - grounds crew, Town and Country Club - Intern, Oak Ridge Country Club - 2nd Assistant, St. Cloud Country Club - Assistant and Superintendent

Turf School Attended (if any)?

University of Minnesota

Industry thoughts

What is one “master plan” thing you would like to change at your facility?

To have all of the turf plots, equipment, and buildings in one location.

Most of the turf plots are at the Turf Research, Outreach, and Education center (TROE), but a lot of our equipment and storage are closer to campus.

What concerns do you have about the turf business and the future of golf?

It seems like the future of golf is pretty good right now. Clubs are very busy and the tee sheets are full. So, let’s hope that continues for years to come. I am concerned about the availability of people who want to work in the industry. Not just the people who want to make it their career, but also the entry level staff who contribute to daily maintenance and course set up. Hopefully budgets will increase to support salary needs and the labor budget.



What is needed to bring more young professionals into the industry? I believe it begins with a great work environment. People need to enjoy going to work if there is going to be any thought of making it a career. Once that is established and someone considers entering the industry, it is up to that person to pursue their goals.

What piece of equipment do you want?
Not a need, a want. An updated central irrigation control system.

In terms of industry costs (equipment, pesticides, labor, etc.) are they too low, too high or just right?

I used to feel that industry costs were on the high side, but I also was working on a tight budget every year, so it was kind of relative to my personal situation. Everything seemed expensive, ha! Now that I am on the research side of the industry, I see there is a high cost to research and innovation. I now lean towards “just right”, but I also feel that it is not the same for everyone.

FUN FACTS

Have you ever met a celebrity? Who?

Yes, Actor Joel Gretsch – He played Bobby Jones in The Legend of Bagger Vance and has minor roles in a lot of television shows and movies. He is from my hometown of Albany.

What is your favorite vacation spot?

Hard to pick from all the places I have been, but it's either Hawaii or Italy. I had high expectations for authentic Italian food, but it was better than expected!

What is your favorite memory of starting your turf career?

All of the great times working together with Chris Tritabaugh at Albany Golf Club. We had a fun group working on the grounds crew led by Superintendent Tom Kasner. It never really felt like work.





What is your favorite job on the golf course?

I loved to drag the dew off of the fairways.

What is your least favorite job on the golf course?

I was never a fan of repairing washed out bunkers, but on the positive side, it was a pretty good workout.

Have you played any famous golf courses? Which ones?

Hazeltine National GC, Interlachen CC, WBYC

Who is your dream foursome?

Tiger Woods, Charles Barkley, Larry David

2020- What a year! Would you like to comment on it?

It was a weird time to start a new job. My first day was March 16th, right when things were really shutting down. My “normal” is most likely a little different than the rest of the U of MN turfgrass research team.

CHEMICALS



JOE MORIS
Golf Course Superintendent
Tartan Park Golf Course

There are many chemicals that have become very common to golf course superintendents. I am going to talk only about one of them.

Today is January 6, 1986 and I have just read the HOLE NOTES with Randall Nelson's insert. I have planned on writing this article for some time, so thanks for getting me going, Randy.

Today is the meeting at Izaty's and that sure reminds me of the chemical I am going to write about..alcohol! It is now 12:05 p.m. but in 1985 I never did believe i. waiting until noon to start drinking so I would already be half in the bag.

By the time I would get to the lodge, I would be drunk but wanting more; eat an excellent meal (I have been told), a few for the road, and off for home. Fortunately, I never had to drive home so I could sleep..I preplanned that.

This type of drinking got to be a way of life for me. The article is chemicals; yes, I am a chemically dependent golf course superintendent. Thanks to God and AA, today I am a recovering alcoholic. It sure is a beautiful new life.

I would be happy to discuss my past, or present, life with anyone interested.



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In Bounds

By JACK MACKENZIE, CGCS
North Oaks Golf Club

My family has a history of Alzheimer's disease. Aunt Ellie, my maternal great Aunt, became a victim of the syndrome in her 80s, as did my maternal grandmother also in her 80s. And my mother may have been showing signs of either Alzheimer's or dementia shortly before her passing at the age of 76. No one will ever know for sure.

But one thing that is for certain, the process of watching a loved one lose his or her sanity is heart breaking for everyone involved. The symptoms can range from simple personality changes to hallucinations, arguments, striking out and other violent behavior. Losing interest in previously enjoyed pastimes and losing awareness of who you are can also manifest. What could be worse you ask?

How about witnessing this transformation within yourself as I did for so many years while I wrestled with my alcoholic tendencies. Yes, many of you have read my story before, but some may not remember it or perhaps need to reread and reflect upon the detrimental effects of a compulsive behavior.

Just what is an example of a compulsive problem? How about drinking a pint of vodka on the drive home followed by a six-pack of beer consumed casually to "cover up" the smell of booze upon your breath. Or perhaps saying morning prayers to have the hangover go away only to begin drinking mid afternoon. Maybe you have the inability to pass up the pull-tab box in a bar or the consistent weekend trips to the casinos. How often do you call your bookie? Are you plagued by a desire for illegal drugs such as cocaine or even marijuana? Or are you running up credit when your bank account is empty?

The consumption of alcohol was my compulsion of choice. And with that repeated desire came the break-up of my family, the exploitation of my hard-earned dollars, the paranoia of being "found out" and the loss of my sanity. For 20 years my desire, and choice, to drink caused me to do things many would consider just plain nuts.

With haste every evening I drove to one of six different liquor stores for that bottle and six-pack. Evening phone conversations were often repeated and too often not remembered. Hobbies once enjoyed became secondary unless they allowed me to drink at the same time. Mood swings made me difficult to live with. Gosh, at times I found it difficult to live with myself! My addiction to alcohol was driving me crazy. And here is the kicker, I knew it was happening the whole time and watched myself spin in a slow motion spiral as I searched for spiders in my empty bottle of vodka.

Eventually, and thank God for it, my fear of insanity drove me to a psychologist, forced me to admit that I had a problem and then caused me to search for help.

On March 5th, 1995 I took my last drink. The following day I began the rest of my life, sober and appreciating the gift I have been given. The first month was a challenge, but I was empowered with the tools necessary to limit my compulsion to desire without acting upon the obsession. Of primary help was the code of the recovering alcoholic, the 12 Steps.

If you are like me and carry a compulsive behavior, be it gambling, drug addiction, obsessive spending or any sanity-stripping

fixation, then the Steps may be able to help you overcome your challenge. That is of course, only if you want to regain your sanity. And that is a key to success.

A person has to want to find the "cure" more than continue the compulsion. Nobody can do it for you. It boils down to choice. Indeed when first in treatment I was told that I had a disease. And believe me that alone helped my stick with the program. But after witnessing the actual disease of Alzheimer's I question if the desire for alcohol is an illness or a compulsive choice. Upon thoughtful reflection, I had and still have a strong compulsive tendency. But within my personal program is the freedom of choice.

As I came to find out more and more about my sad state of mind I learned that I had the internal support system to stop drinking, my own "greater power" is there with me at all times.

The 12 Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous

- 1 We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable.
- 2 Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
- 3 Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.
- 4 Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
- 5 Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
- 6 Were entirely ready to have God remove all of these defects of character.
- 7 Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
- 8 Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
- 9 Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
- 10 Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
- 11 Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry it out.
- 12 Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all of our affairs.

This very second, with the help of my "greater power" I choose not to drink. And in five minutes or five hours I will choose not to place myself in a situation where I have to pin my insanity to the mat in an effort to maintain my sobriety.

The beauty of my program goes well beyond a conscious effort not to drink. Controlling my sanity is dependent upon my understanding that there are many things in my life I have no control over. However, there are things in my life that I need the courage to control. Hence the often heard and seen prayer:

God. Please grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things that I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.

Understand I am not trying to pontificate a religious perspective. But rather provide each of you, my friends, the opportunity and tools to conquer your own demons if you have the desire to. For those of you suffering with a compulsive behavior, get help. It could save you coin, it could save your relationships and it could save your health. But most importantly it will save you from going insane.

Are Fine Fescues an Option for Low-input Golf Greens in Minnesota?

By Dominic Petrella, Ph.D.; Sam Bauer; Brian Horgan, Ph.D. and Eric Watkins, Ph.D.

One way to reduce inputs on the golf course is to use improved turfgrass species and/or cultivars that require fewer inputs and are more pest resistant. In Minnesota, creeping bentgrass (*Agrostis stolonifera* L.) and annual bluegrass (*Poa annua* L.) are the predominant turfgrasses on putting greens. A drawback these grasses share is the need for greater inputs to maintain a high-quality putting green, especially for annual bluegrass when it is maintained as a desired species. Turfgrass breeders have made strides in improving resistance to dollar spot (*Clarireedia* species) in new creeping bentgrass cultivars (4), but superintendents still rely on fungicides to control other diseases like snow molds (*Microdochium* and *Typhula* species). One way to potentially reduce inputs is to use alternative turfgrass species that function well under minimal management.

Fine fescues (*Festuca* spp.), a group of lower-input turfgrasses (1), have been shown to provide acceptable performance over more traditional turfgrasses in golf course fairways (5), and out-of-play golf course roughs (2). The fine fescue species that could be used on areas of golf courses include strong creeping red fescue (*Festuca rubra* L. subspecies *rubra* Gaudin), slender creeping red fescue (*Festuca rubra* L. subspecies *littoralis* [G. Mey.] Auquier), Chewings fescue (*Festuca rubra* L. subspecies *commutata* Gaudin), hard fescue (*Festuca brevipila* Tracey), and sheep fescue (*Festuca ovina* L.). These grasses have been used extensively on putting greens in parts of Europe for centuries and are known for greater disease resistance as well as improved tolerance to drought and lower

needs for fertilizer. We currently have very little information on basic management practices for fine fescues on putting greens in Minnesota and the Upper Midwest. The objective of this research was to compare fine fescues and bentgrasses maintained as low-input putting greens managed with either low, moderate, or high amounts of annually applied nitrogen.

Methods

In 2014, we seeded plots of 'Penncross' creeping bentgrass, 'Green-time' colonial bentgrass (*Agrostis capillaris* L.), 'SR 5130' Chewings fescue, 'Shoreline' slender creeping red fescue, 'Chantilly' strong creeping red fescue, and 'MNHD-14' hard fescue at the Turfgrass Research, Outreach, and Education Center at the University of Minnesota St. Paul campus on a sand-capped rootzone. In 2015 and 2016, plots were maintained with a single application of 1 pound nitrogen/1,000 square feet (48.82 kilograms/hectare) in spring and were mowed at 0.200 inch (5.08 mil-



limeters) three days per week with a walk-behind reel mower. Research in Minnesota had previously shown that when the fine fescues are maintained at a higher-than-normal putting green height, they still maintain similar ball speed and performance to creeping bentgrass maintained at 0.125 inches (3). This is more than likely due to the more upright growth habit of the fine fescue species.

Beginning in 2017, plots of the different turfgrass species either received a total of 0, 1, 2, or 4 pounds nitrogen/1,000 square feet (0, 48.82, 97.64, or 195.29 kilograms/hectare) annually (25% granular urea, 75% granular methylene urea), in which the total amount of nitrogen was split equally across four dates beginning near the end of May. Plots were only irrigated under excessive drought. Nitrogen treatments were repeated in 2018. For this study, we took digital pictures to evaluate turfgrass density (turfgrass cover), rated turfgrass quality, and monitored for disease.

Results and discussion

Turfgrass density

In 2017, more nitrogen did not significantly change the density of creeping bentgrass, even when compared with unfertilized creeping bentgrass. However, for Chewings, slender, and strong creeping red fescue, all nitrogen treatments increased density compared with unfertilized plots. For hard fescue, only the high-nitrogen treatment of 4 pounds of nitrogen/1,000 square feet increased density compared with unfertilized plots. At 1 pound of nitrogen/1,000 square feet, slender creeping red fescue was significantly denser than creeping bentgrass, and at 2 and 4 pounds of nitrogen/1,000 square feet, both Chewings and slender creeping red fescue were significantly denser than creeping bentgrass. Results in 2018 for turfgrass density were similar to those in 2017, but, in 2018, slender creeping red fescue had significantly greater density than hard and strong creeping red fescue (Figure 1).

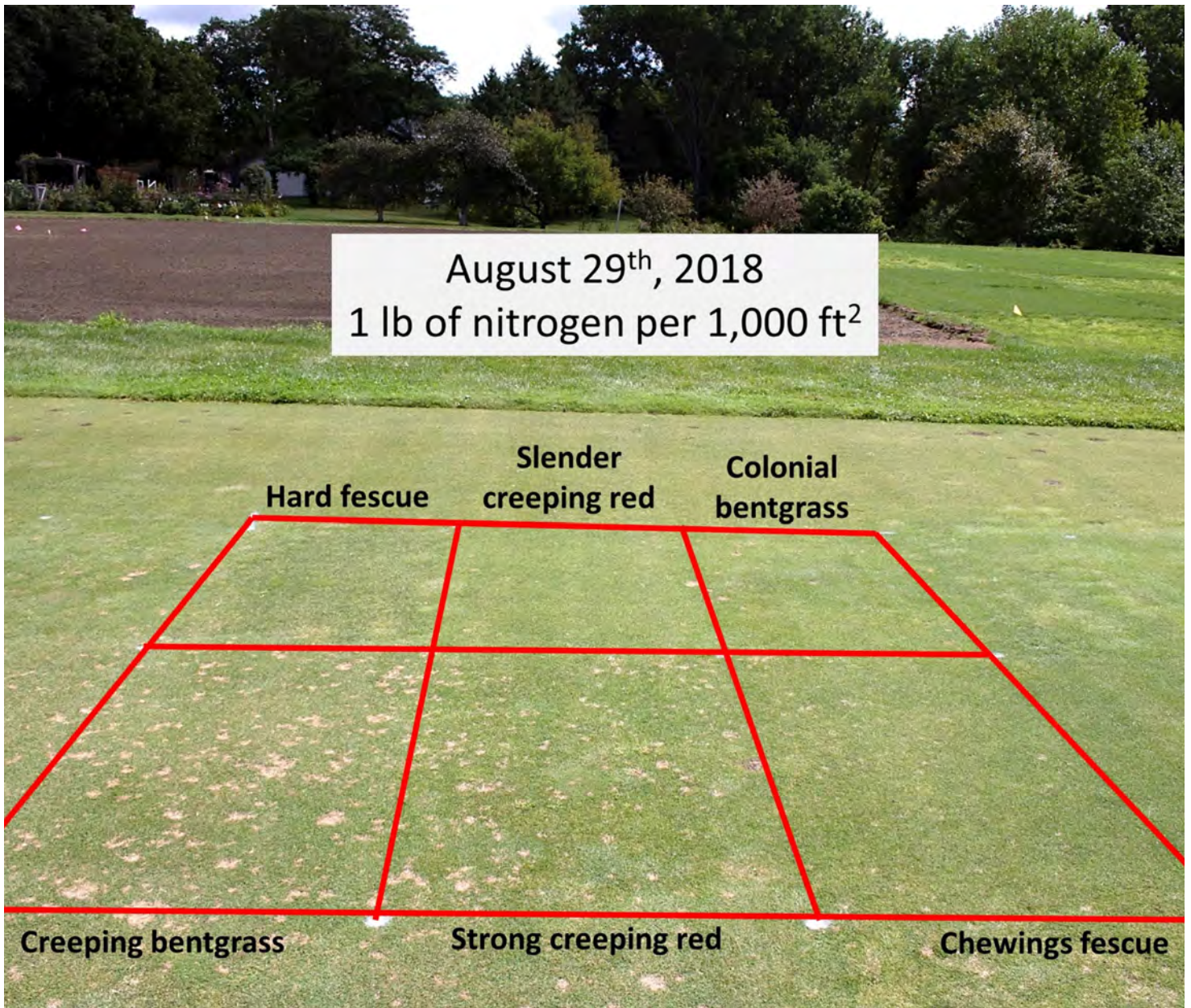


Figure 1. Plots of creeping bentgrass, colonial bentgrass, Chewings fescue, hard fescue, slender creeping red fescue and strong creeping red fescue on Aug. 29, 2018. Plots seen here were treated with 1 pound of nitrogen/1,000 square feet annually. Photo courtesy of Dominic Petrella
Turfgrass quality

In 2017, 4 pounds of nitrogen/1,000 square feet increased quality for creeping bentgrass compared to both 1 and 2 pounds, but even at 4 pounds, creeping bentgrass quality was still lower than what is considered acceptable (Figure 2). For Chewings fescue in 2017, there was no significant difference between turf treated with 2 and 4 pounds of nitrogen/1,000 square feet, both of which significantly improved turfgrass

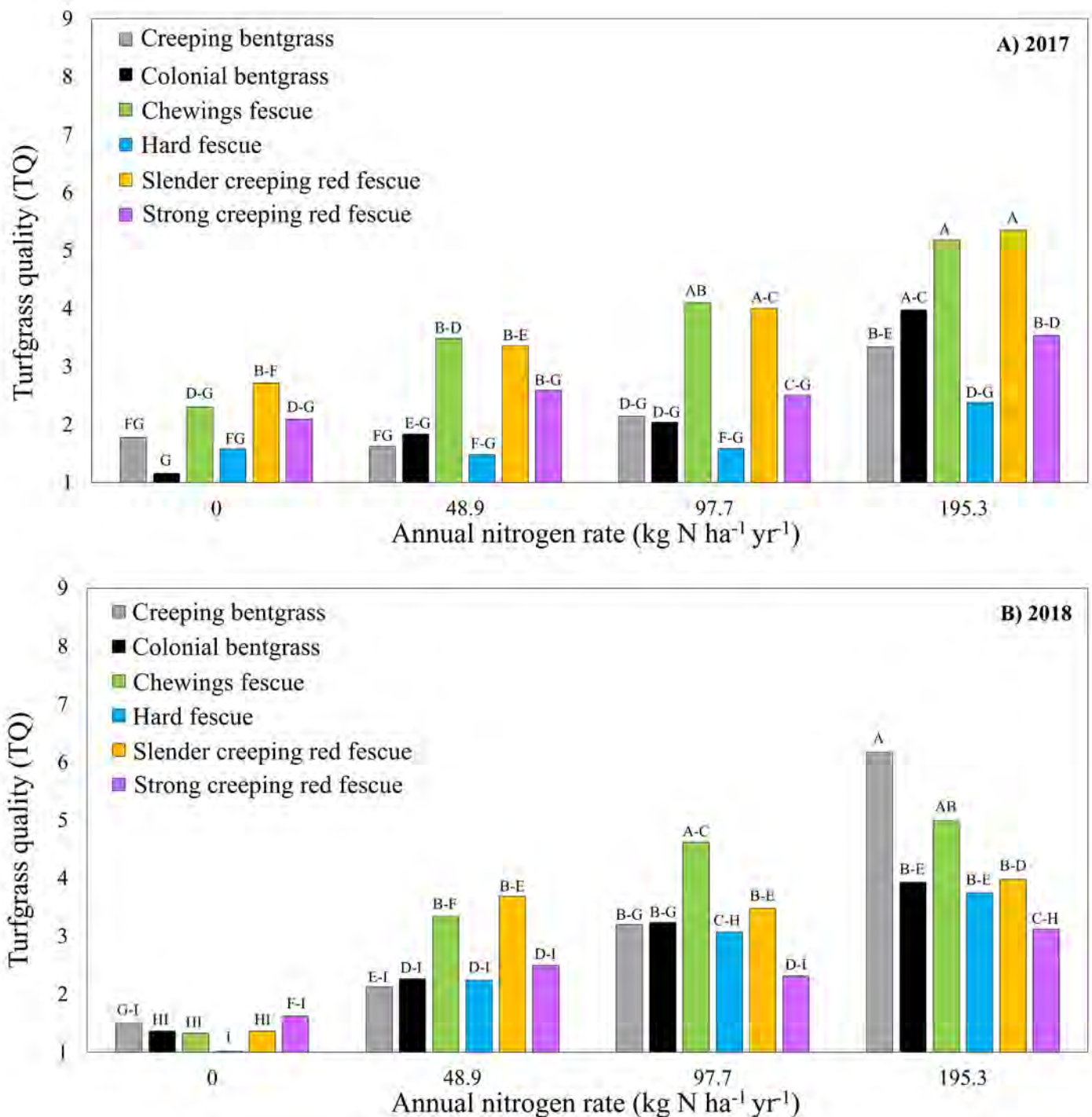


Figure 2. Turfgrass quality for creeping bentgrass, colonial bentgrass, Chewings fescue, hard fescue, slender creeping red fescue and strong creeping red fescue treated with 0, 1, 2 or 4 pounds of nitrogen/1,000 square feet annually in 2017 and 2018. Means followed by the same letter(s) are not significantly different.

quality compared with unfertilized plots and plots treated with 1 pound of nitrogen/1,000 square feet. Slender creeping red fescue plots were similar to those of Chewings fescue, but slender creeping red fescue treated with 4 pounds of nitrogen/1,000 square feet was the best overall in 2017. For both hard and strong creeping red fescue, there were no significant differences in turfgrass quality, regardless of nitrogen treatment. Again, both Chewings and slender creeping red fescue outperformed creeping bentgrass, regardless of the amount of nitrogen, and both hard and strong creeping red fescue had significantly lower turfgrass quality than Chewings and slender creeping red fescue.

In contrast to the 2017 results, treating creeping bentgrass plots with 4 pounds of nitrogen/1,000 square feet in 2018 resulted in better turf quality than the other nitrogen treatments, and these plots also had the best overall turfgrass quality in 2018. For hard, Chewings, and slender creeping red fescue, all nitrogen treatments improved turfgrass quality compared with unfertilized plots, and treating with either 1, 2 or 4 pounds of nitrogen/1,000 square feet resulted in no significant difference in turfgrass quality for these species. Strong creeping red fescue was the only fine fescue that did not show improved quality with any of the nitrogen treatments. While Chewings and slender creeping red fescue performed better than creeping bentgrass overall in this study, turfgrass quality for these species was still below what many superintendents would consider acceptable; however, reduced expectations for aesthetics are needed for grasses like these, especially if they are being managed with little input.

Disease incidence

The major reason creeping bentgrass density and quality were reduced in 2017 was because of greater dollar spot incidence across all nitrogen treatments compared with the other turfgrasses we evaluated. Of the fine fescues, strong creeping red fescue had the most dollar spot in 2017, while the other fine fescue species had very little dollar spot. Dollar

spot was more prevalent in 2018, and even the high rate of 4 pounds of nitrogen/1,000 square feet only reduced dollar spot for strong creeping red fescue. As in 2017, at the lower rates of nitrogen we tested, Chewings, hard, and slender creeping red fescue had significantly less dollar spot than creeping bentgrass in 2018 (Figure 1).

One disease that had a greater impact on the fine fescues in 2018 was summer patch. All fine fescues were affected by summer patch in 2018, regardless of the amount of nitrogen applied, and slender creeping red fescue plots had more summer patch — although not significantly more — than the other fine fescues. Because the area in this study had been creeping bentgrass, some creeping bentgrass came back into the fine fescue plots. Hard fescue and strong creeping red fescue plots had the most creeping bentgrass contamination at the end of the experiment, regardless of nitrogen treatment. Controlling creeping bentgrass as a weed would be important if a bentgrass green were converted to fine fescues.

Conclusions

When maintained at low or moderate rates of nitrogen, the top-performing species were slender creeping red fescue and Chewings fescue. Although the fine fescues — except for strong creeping red fescue — had greater tolerance to dollar spot, management of summer patch disease would be necessary for a fine fescue putting green, particularly if slender creeping red fescue were the predominant species on the green. Overall, Chewings and slender creeping red fescue maintained with low-input management outperformed creeping bentgrass — primarily because they had less disease — potentially leading to reduction in the reliance on fungicides. These results, combined with other work from our group, indicates that Chewings and slender creeping red fescue could be used as turfgrasses for low-input putting greens in Minnesota.

Acknowledgments

This work was funded by the Minnesota Golf Course Superintendents Association and Minnesota Agricultural Experiment Station project No. MIN-21-051. This research was originally published in *Crop Science* in 2020; “Exploring fine fescues as an option for low-input golf greens in the north central U.S. (Petrella et al., 2020)” and later in *Golf Course Management* in June 2021; “Fine fescues for golf course putting greens”.

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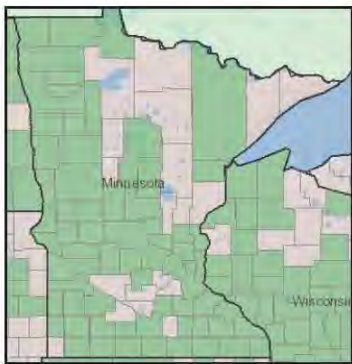
Little bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*)

Family: Grass (*Poaceae*)

DESCRIPTION: A clump-forming perennial found throughout the U.S. and Canada, little bluestem thrives in short and tallgrass prairies but also grows in savannas, woodland openings and at woods' edges. The species prefers well-drained soil and full to partial sun, but adapts to everything from sand to clay. A warm-season grass, it grows up to 3 feet tall in midsummer. Pairs of flower clusters bloom on spikes starting in July; fluffy white seed heads follow. Frost turns plants from blue-green to copper-red. Five-foot-deep fibrous roots withstand drought, stabilize soils, filter and infiltrate rainwater, store carbon and improve soil health. Folded, smooth-to-hairy leaf blades near the base of the plant grow up to 10 inches long. Purplish, hairless nodes appear along the stems.

REFERENCES:

- [Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center](#)
- [USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service](#)
- [Minnesota Wildflowers](#)



Range Map Credit: NRCS Plants Database



Photo Credit: BWSR

SIMILAR SPECIES: Big bluestem (*Andropogon gerardii*), grows 7 feet tall, has oval leaf bases, and turns gold-to-pink after frost. Indian grass (*Sorghastrum nutans*) grows 7 feet tall, turns gold, and produces dense seed clusters.

Planting Recommendations & Uses

Little bluestem spreads by seed and short rhizomes. It can be started from seed, transplanted, or purchased in containers. Seed can be planted in spring or fall with a seed drill or by broadcasting; it requires no pretreatment to break dormancy. Because germination is most successful with good seed-to-soil contact, if seed is broadcast it's helpful to rake it into the soil an eighth-inch to a quarter-inch deep. Depending upon the size of the planting, it can be helpful to pack areas with a garden or agricultural roller. For smaller plantings, clumps can be separated and transplanted. Transplanting and installing containerized plants is often most effective in spring or late fall when plants are less actively

growing. To prevent roots from drying out over winter, it's important to sufficiently water fall plantings. Great companion plants are prairie dropseed grass, sky-blue aster, black-eyed Susan, wild bergamot, rough blazing star, butterfly milkweed and prairie smoke. Little bluestem is grazed, used for nesting material and wildlife cover. Its upright clumps provide habitat for several species of butterfly larvae. It's important nesting cover for bumblebees and ground-nesting birds. It is frequently used in prairie restorations, residential plantings and as an ornamental grass. Historically, it was crushed, dried and used to insulate moccasins.

Developed by Asiya Hussein

A recent University of Minnesota Twin Cities graduate, Hussein majored in environmental sciences, policy and management, following the conservation and resource management track. She minored in sustainability studies. An avid writer and lover of the outdoors, she plans to begin graduate studies in marine and environmental affairs at the University of Washington.



STATEWIDE WETLAND INDICATOR STATUS: GP, MW, NCNE: FACU

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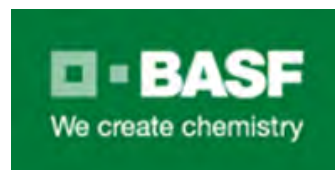
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Reinders



In Bounds

by Jack MacKenzie, CGCS

Recently I completed a very enjoyable group-solo/solo canoeing adventure in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness. Following several years of strictly solo adventuring, heading out into the “wild” on my own, alone and self-supporting, I organized a few group tandem trips, with everyone contributing to the cause, two people per canoe. The mandates created by the Pandemic of 2020 allowed me to re-think the dynamics of camping and create for me what I term as group-soloing.

What? Group-soloing is canoe camping with more than one solo boat and solo canoeist. Everyone is responsible for their own gear, objectives, and outcomes. As a group, and moving together, the participants experience the same weather challenges, share a campfire, tell tall fishing tales and support one another in a very limited way, basically “morale”.

There may or may not be exchanges of equipment, but there most certainly will be introspections and suggestions of better and best gear ideas, the strongest fishing knot and most efficient stove.

Solo-tripping places all responsibility upon the individual adventurer. From food to fishing gear, clothing to paddle selection and routing de-



cisions to contingency planning. As a soloist, there isn't anyone there to back you up.

The expedition I pursued a few weeks ago highlighted the best of both, group-solo/solo, where I spent time with a friend from New York the first few days of an 88-mile trek. After a week of group-solo company, we split ways, Clark going west and I heading east, and carried on as solo canoeists, something I really enjoy, through the rest of the trip.

On a 253-rod portage, lugging seventy-five pounds of gear and with plenty of time to think, it occurred to me that solo camping is like being a superintendent of a golf course. And for those new in the industry, you might find it interesting that I was a superintendent for just shy of 30 years. I can recall what it was like to drive to work each morning playing the "what if" game just to keep my bases covered in the case of challenges upon arriving to work. A superintendent



makes many decisions every day that need to be weighed for their positive or negative impacts. And those choices are primarily made alone; the superintendent is an autonomous manager.

Not unlike the solo canoeist, who must plan for diverse weather situations, animal incursions, equipment failure and unanticipated challenges like lack of camp sites, the superintendent must also be on their toes creating contingency plans. You know, "just in case" the golf shop makes the first and tenth tee time event a shotgun, or when six key employees make the high school football team or if the mundane

hydraulic leak isn't discovered until the piece of equipment can no longer move on its own.

I guess that is why I like to canoe as a soloist. I am in charge. I like making big plans. I am not fearful of challenges. I am personally rewarded when my carefully considered intentions come together, with or without unexpected demands.

Yet on the other hand, during my recent trek I really thrilled at sharing with my solo partner a suddenly "hot" smallmouth bass fishing spot at a remote location deep in the wilderness, catching and releasing over 100 fish in a short three-hour spurt of time. Arguably the best smally fishing I have ever had, some stretching over 20 inches long and many over 16, the moment was even better to share with a fellow adventurer. And then there were the delicious cups of coffee enjoyed watching amazing conch-shell pink sunrises, enhanced from hazy smoke caused by Canadian wildfires. And one cannot fail to mention the dual pain associated with

a very challenging portage, made extremely difficult by the low water levels. The slog was tough. The muck deep, up to Clark's chest, an unintentional accident. And length made infinitely longer over a cobble of skull sized boulders exposed by the receded lake level. Times too good **not** to share!

Who is in your "group" of solo professions? During my time at Dellwood Hills Golf Club and North Oaks Golf Club, my group-solo superintendent partner was John Steiner, CGCS, superintendent at the White Bear Yacht Club. With a flip of my phone, I could count on John to loan equipment, discuss chemistries, chat about employment inequities, player issues and of course the F*&^%#g weather. Each topic paraphrased with a flair synonymous with my mentor.

Although managing alone as a solo superintendent, I had my group partner to discuss the catastrophic winter of 2005, growth regulators, greens rollers, staff management styles, dew points and that "slip-



perly bitch pythium”. As much as I thrived on my solo superintendent adventure, it was sure nice and often very fun, to have a partner down the street and just a flip-phone or radio call away.

Then, as a superintendent, and now as a canoeing enthusiast, I revel in being autonomous, making self-impacting decisions and living the consequences. Part of it is confidence that I have anticipated most all the necessary contingency plans and will be able to implement them. A portion of it is the thrill of making all the calls. And I enjoy creating and following my plans, maintaining flexibility, studying options, rewriting, and projecting what I feel will provide the very best outcome for

my expedition, or a decade ago, my golf course.

On the flip side, it sure is nice to share and make memories with another like minded individual. One who appreciates the challenges of work and play, unexpected difficulties, and the rewards of a well thought out and completed mission.

Are you a soloist too? Or perhaps you rather enjoy the support of a pack of professionals. Maybe you enjoy both options, creating your own destiny yet appreciating some issues are easier to conquer and humorous moments merrier when shared in your own group-solo situation.