

HOLENOTES

The Official Publication of the MGCSA
Vol. 57, #2 March 2022



Commemorating
Jack Mackenzie

Bee Lawns: A
Turf Alternative

The New and
Improved CGCS

On the Cover:

Jack Mackenzie peering into retirement



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HOLE*NOTES*

Hole Notes (ISSN 108-27994) is digitally published monthly except bimonthly in November/December, and January/February by the Minnesota Golf Course Superintendents' Association, PO Box 2028, Maple Grove, MN 55311. Chris Aumock Publisher. Please send any address changes, articles for submission, advertising and concerns to chris@mgcsa.org.

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Minnesota Chapter

GCSAA

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Presidential *Perspective*

Mike Sonnek, Royal Golf Club

Is it just me or does February always fly on by? At the start of the month, we are locked in the middle of a nice, steady, and thankfully average winter. By the end of February, we are coming out of our golf course superintendent hibernation and back to lying in bed at night and thinking about what we need to do on the golf course as soon as the snow and frost are gone. March also brings the onset of the “when do you think we’ll open?” questions. As I remind those posing the question, I don’t have any say in the matter. Mother Nature will let us know when she is ready for us to get back at it.

I had the good fortune of attending the GCSAA Conference and Trade Show in San Diego. Excellent education opportunities as always and the trade show was surprisingly robust considering everything we have been through the past couple of years. A highlight for my wife and I was the opening reception aboard the USS Midway. We had toured the Midway previously and highly recommend you do so if in San Diego. It was a beauti-



ful evening that was the start of a fantastic week weather wise. The attendees were witness to quite a show as a helicopter lifted off the deck of the aircraft carrier with sky divers who parachuted back to the deck, lighting up the night sky.

I also partook of the Health in Action 5k along with Eric Counselman from Superior Turf and Maggie Reiter, our Extension Specialist from the University of Minnesota. My apologies if I missed other Minnesotans. Great morning for a jog by the bay and a great reminder of the importance of taking care of ourselves. Hopefully we can keep growing our Minnesota contingent in the future. The hospitality night at The Deck was an exclamation mark for the week. A lot of enthusiasm with nearly 100 attendees and plenty of camaraderie and fun had by all. Thank you so much to our hospitality night sponsors.

These events wouldn't happen without your support. I'm hopeful that the opportunity to attend the national conference is available for more of our members in the future. There is great value in engaging educators, vendors, and fellow superintendents in person.

Now as we turn the calendar to March, I'm guessing many of you are in the same boat as I in trying to put together a staff. Each year we try to put that puzzle together and most every year the puzzle pieces keep changing on us. If I had to guess I would think that one of the strongest traits of superintendents is problem solving. That's a good thing since our problem-solving ability is put to the test even before the golf season begins. Hopefully we have a smooth transition from winter and golf courses can hit the ground running this spring.

The MGCSA has two events coming up in March. On the 15th Joe Rolstad and Fargo Country Club will host The Up North Outreach Edu-

cation and Open Turf Forum. On the 22nd The Assistant Forum and Bowling event takes place at Pinz in Woodbury. Great value opportunities to get out of the shop for some education and camaraderie. As for myself, I am getting away for a bit and heading down again this year to volunteer at TPC Sawgrass for The Players Championship. Television coverage does not do that property justice. An absolutely stunning golf course. If you ever get a chance to play Sawgrass you better be straighter than straight off the tee. Not an abundance of fairway space there.

As always, the MGCSA is here to serve you. Please reach out to us and share any feedback or ideas on the future of our association. You can email our Director Chris Aumock at chris@mgcsa.org and I can be reached at msonnek@royalclubmn.com. Staying engaged makes us a stronger association. Stay well and I'll be back next month when the 2022 season will be at our doorstep.

Keep an eye out for upcoming changes, not only to Hole Notes, but many of our communications!

Commemorating *Jack Mackenzie*:

Thank you Jack for your tireless efforts supporting the MGCSA!

Jack always says, “its not about me, its about the association.” Not today, we’ll start with a story from Jack.

“Back in the day, Sunday evening, Labor Day weekend in 1978. My Dad was out hitting some golf balls at the White Bear Yacht Club and caught me working (likely the beginning of yet another 70 plus hour week). I loved mowing with the F-10. There was an art to operating a very

heavy machine upon extremely undulating hills. Adjusting the hydraulic arms, with mower reels like outriggers on a boat, would add traction and allow the skilled individual the ability to climb almost any incline. However, the weight of the machine made for tricky mowing in wet areas or where drain tiles had failed. I talked my Dad into mowing a few hundred feet. He got a “taste”, but preferred playing the game then managing the turf.



Amazing that he had his camera with him. It is the only picture I have of me working on a green staff, although there are plenty of Kodachrome images in my mind."

Jack Mackenzie

"Jack – your dedication to the industry is unparalleled. On behalf of GCSAA we thank you for collaborating with our members, advocating on behalf of golf course superintendents, and professionally guiding the Minnesota GCSA as the executive director. We wish you all the best during retirement. Enjoy your time. It's well deserved!"

Steve Randall, Director – GCSAA Chapter Outreach

Jack and I worked together at the Lost Spur the winter of 1983-84. The Spur was maybe a 1/2-mile walk across Highway 13 along the south side of 694. We walked that stretch a few times that winter and went ice fishing on Gun Club Lake. Good times! Caught plenty of Northerns and Jack got one big Crappy. Jack left the Spur in the spring of 1984 to take the Supts. job at Dellwood Hills. Next stop, North Oaks and finally to a



job that was made for him, "Director." Enjoy retirement Jack, expect to see you on the Forest Lake City Council someday.

Walt Braunig

Couple comments about Jack is that he has been passionate about doing what needs to be done for the benefit of the MCGSA membership! He has also kept me in line and helped me out with our advertising and I could not have accomplished what we have done without him!

Kerry Glader, Plaised Companies

Jack,
You probably are not the only superintendent, but the only one I know, who did a daily walk on, eyes on, inspection of your greens (not a Cushman check). And, you did it 7 days/week... yes, 7. Your expertise and professionalism has continued being the Executive Director of the MGCSA. You will be missed by all and I wish you every happiness.

Joe Moris, Tartan Park

My name is Greg Fink currently a student at Anoka Technical College studying Golf Course and Grounds Management. Roughly two years ago I received a letter in the mail from a place named the MGCSA not exactly knowing what it was yet at the time and being new to the industry I opened the letter to find out



what it was all about. Later that week after sending in an application to become a member of the MGCSA on a student level green card membership I was greeted with a second package a week or so later. In that package was a handwritten letter from this guy named Jack Mackenzie who wrote a very welcoming letter along with a cool hat! Lat-



er on that year I was able to meet and talk with the man behind the welcome card Mr. Jack Mackenzie, shortly followed by a photo. Although I haven't known Jack for a long time, this was something I will never forget and truly shows how great a leader he is. Thanks again Jack!

Gregory Fink



Jack was a great promoter of our industry and profession. He brought an electric enthusiasm to every event and person he came in contact with making you feel very welcomed. His contributions to this market will be felt for years.

Arik Hemquist, Reinders

Thank you for all of your dedication you gave our industry. I know I haven't always been present within the association, but I really did appreciate all of the work you put into your position, especially all of that work we would never see. Best of luck to you in your future.

Sally Jones

I joined the MGCSA about a year before Jack was introduced as the new Executive Director. I attribute much of the success of our business to the relationship that Jack facilitated between affiliates and the association. Most memorable were the hours of windshield time that we shared traveling to outstate outreach meetings. Jack and I live close by, and ride sharing was easy and enjoyable. On the drives, we talked about everything from current events, issues faced by the association and business challenges, to personal and family highs and lows. Termed

by Jack as the 'idea bus', we always finished the trip with an idea to solve a problem or improve something. If we had a third rider on the idea bus, we would make sure to solve their problems too.

As all know, Jack is a very social guy. It is ironic that he endured a decade where face to face social interaction was largely replaced by social media. Jack also fought a lot of battles for us as members that most of us don't even know about. We all owe Jack a debt of gratitude, but I personally owe more.

Ken Rost, Frost Inc.

I am proud to call Jack Mackenzie a good friend of mine. Jack has been dedicated to the MGCSA for his whole career. As the Executive director of the asso-

Jacks Retirement hobbies when not out wandering the northwoods.





Photo courtesy of The Minikahda Club

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ciation for the past 10 years he has dealt with many important issues. His extensive knowledge of turfgrass science, water issues and the environment has help guide us through many years. Thank you, Jack, for everything you have done. Your expertise will be missed by me and I am sure by many others. Have a great Retirement. Sincerely,
John Steiner CGCS

Hi Jack, looks like your moving on to the next chapter so just a quick note saying thank you for your involvement in the turf industry and best wishes going forward. I always enjoyed our interactions, although that was pretty limited after I headed South. Always enjoyed your writing ability and thanks for your overall contributions to the industry. Take care my friend,
Michael Nelson, CGCS

Jack's incomparable passion for the turf industry will never be duplicated. His dedication to the MGCSA has driven our association to be financially stable, improved the research program and provided countless hours of education to our members.

Congratulations on a wonderful career. Giddy Up!
Joe Berggren

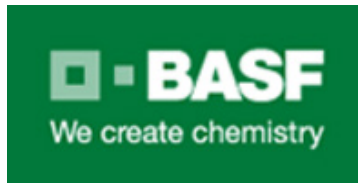
I first met Jack in 2010 at an MGCSA event and immediately felt welcome. We live in a world that finds it easier to tear people down and it is rare to find someone that will build your confidence. Jack has been a confidence builder for me. Jack has a way of providing encouraging words as well as providing praise for a job well done. I want to thank Jack for being a supportive influence on me. Fist bump, Jack."
Matt Cavanuagh

I am so proud that I was part of the MGCSA Board that changed our association's direction and hired Jack Mackenzie as our executive director. I knew he would do an incredible job and he did not disappoint. In ten years of service, using his drive, passion and unlimited energy, he has elevated MGCSA to the ranks of "leadership status" within the industry. At the state level, he brought the MGCSA to the table with various state agencies and government and advocated on behalf of the golf course superintendent. I can't thank him enough for the job he has done. Enjoy your retirement, my friend!
Paul Diegnau, CGCS

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Jack, thanks for all that you have done for our wonderful association through the years, the articles, the advocacy, the countless hours you have spent carrying our torch. Some of my fondest memories will be our conversations about the boundary waters and maple syrup, both of which I assume you will dive deeper into during retirement, so enjoy, you've earned it. I'm not sure if I ever told you this but you were the one that gave me the idea of doing Maple Syrup on the course. The very first roundtable I attended during your time at North Oaks, I showed up extremely early because I left

Owatonna so early in the morning being worried about traffic and I didn't hit any. You were at the shop and I popped in to chat and you were tapping trees around the shop and you just seemed so excited to be showing someone else what it was all about, I didn't have the heart to tell you I knew all about it from my childhood. From that day, I always wanted to do at my facility and look at me now. If you are ever curious how the sap is running in southern Minnesota, don't hesitate to call. Thank you again for everything and best wishes to you in retirement!

Nikk Dickerson



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When I moved from IA to MN back in 2006, becoming a Superintendent up here, I knew nothing of Jack Mac. I would occasionally read his articles in Hole Notes. I would attend as many MGCSA events as I could, mostly golf and education, seeing Jack from a distance; "Who is this crazy guy?" After joining some committees on the MGCSA board I got to really "meet" Jack and how passionate he was for the Turf business, in all facets. Jack got the ED job for the MGCSA just after, and what a pleasure that 10 year tenure was. I got to serve on the Board alongside Jack's guidance for most of

that tenure, with a two year presidency term that I couldn't have done without him. How fitting it was to be ending my board term with heading up the hiring process of his replacement. Thank you Jack for everything you did for the Turf Business and the MGCSA as a Superintendent and ED of this great Association. Good luck with your retirement I know you will enjoy every minute of it!

Scott Thayer

Thank you for all your thoughts and comments commemorating Jack Mackenzie!

Go With *the Flow*

By: Liza Chmielewski, Gertens

Growing up in central Wisconsin you learn a different language. There are slang words and phrases that you don't hear in other parts of the country. Here's a "couple-two-three" examples for "youse guys". A "bubbler" is another name for a water fountain. To "un-thaw" something is to defrost or thaw it. "Stop and go lights" are the same as a stop light. And "cripes" or "cripes sakes" is a phrase substituted for a swear word.

My parents would use some of these phrases on occasion, along with a few others. My dad says "you betcha" or "you bet" regularly. Last week my daughter was giving my mom an update on how her basketball tournament went. My daughter said she played well but the team got beat bad by one team. My mom's response was "Just play your own game." As soon as I heard this I was taken back to my high school days of playing golf. I'd get frustrated with my golf

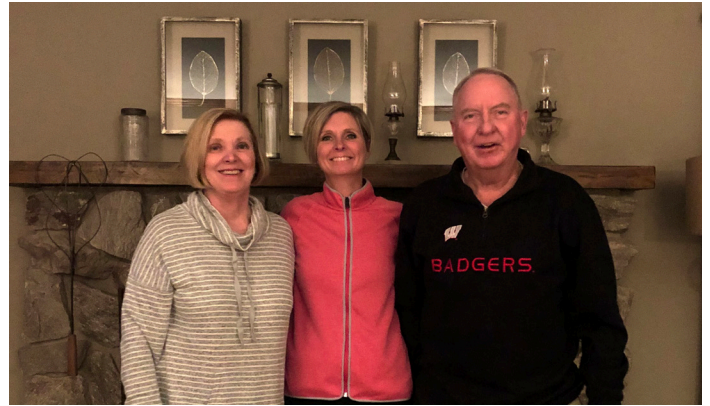


matches and my mom would say this same phrase, "Just play your own game." It took a while to learn this mindset but as I've grown this phrase along with another she used regularly have helped shape me into the person I am today. My mom's most used phrase is "go with the flow". This isn't a midwestern or Wisconsin phrase, but she says it so often my sisters and I make faces at each other every time we hear her say it.

As golf course managers and turf professionals there are no 2 days alike; and even when there is a plan you can always count on a shift in it. Machines break down, crew doesn't show up, the golf shop or Mother Nature have other plans; it's a game of planning and re-planning. We adapt and go with

the flow. Some may call it Plan A and Plan B or even Plan B-minus. My parents aren't in the turf business, both are retired teachers. They could both plan their days and teaching lessons, and growing up they both adjusted their schedules. My sisters and I played sports and participated in many clubs and after school activities. If we invited a friend over for dinner or practice ran late they just went with the flow and adjusted.

Even now that we have grown up, got married and had kids of our own, they are still willing to change plans and help us. The grand-kids will definitely spill something, dinner sometimes isn't done on time, or something breaks, anything is possible when we all get together and I think my mom's way of coping with a full house is to say, "just go with the flow". I asked my sisters if there were any other phrases that our parents said a lot so I could include them in the article. My youngest sister replied with something I thought was very insightful. She said, "I can't really think of any, which seems odd, but maybe that's also a good sign that they always adjusted their responses to us to actually fit the situation, showing actual listening vs. relying on a cliché phrase?"



As a busy working mom I find myself thinking "go with the flow" more often. With two kids (ages 16 and 12), each with their own busy schedules, we are constantly revising our calendars, dinner plans and weekend excursions. I want to give my kids some individuality and responsibility to make plans and figure out how to make them work. This usually results in being asked to drop off/pickup, borrow the car, or the dinner menu being adjusted to accommodate everyone.

Growing up in central Wisconsin was a great childhood and I'm very lucky to raise my own kids here. They are living in the land of supper clubs, Friday fish frys, old fashioned and the Packers, they're learning the language too, "ya know". I'm hopeful the kids will learn the art of adaptability. I'm more than happy to go with the flow for family and work. "Believe you me" they keep me on my toes!

Bee Lawns: *A Turf Alternative for Low-traffic Areas at Golf Courses*

By: James Wolfin and Hannah Ramer

Issue

The population status and health of pollinators is a hot-button issue in the United States that is causing land managers across the country to reconsider how they plant their landscapes.

One form of landcover that is currently being explored is turfgrass, which accounts for greater than 2% of the continental United States by area.

Turf is most prevalent in urban and suburban communities, where they are commonplace in home lawns, store fronts, parks, and of course, golf courses.

In many cases, turf lawns in golf courses are the largest green space in a community. While these turf areas already provide a number of ecosystem services

like carbon sequestration and the conversion of carbon dioxide into oxygen, it is still important to recognize that there are some disadvantages to having large areas of high-

ly manicured lawns, like

those seen on golf courses. Many golf course managers have already started to tackle these issues by incorporating low-input fescues into the out-of-play



Osmia leafcutter bee on self-heal. Photo courtesy of University of Minnesota Bee Lab

areas and other low-traffic sites on golf course to reduce the amount of irrigation, fertilizer, and mowing needed on site.

Scientists at the University of Minnesota have identified a planting type that allows one to maintain the function associated with these low-traffic areas while further reducing inputs, and most importantly, providing high-quality forage to our at-risk pollinators – Bee Lawns. Bee lawns simply integrate low-growing flowers into fine fescue turfgrass to create a beautiful



Bombus impatiens on self-heal. Photo courtesy of University of Minnesota Bee Lab

flowering lawn that has been shown to support more than 65 species of insect pollinators.

Action

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other comparable planting types. The three flowering species included in the seed mix are Dutch white clover (*Trifolium repens*), self-heal (*Prunella vulgaris*), and creeping thyme (*Thymus serpyllum*). Bee lawns can be installed as either an overseeding, where lawn flowers are spread over the top of the pre-existing turf stand, or as part of a turf renovation project, where unwanted turfgrass is removed, and replaced with a “bee lawn mix” containing fine fescue turfgrass and three species of forbs. Seeding a bee lawn is generally best suited for the Spring, Summer-Fall transition window, or the late fall as a dormant seeding. If installing a bee lawn as an overseeding, it is recommended that a groundskeeper or land manager aerates the area, mows the turf as low as possible, and picks up the clippings. This helps to decompact the soil and ensure ideal seed-to-soil contact upon seeding. During germination bee lawns need to be watered according to a “light and frequent” irrigation schedule in order to establish. Mature bee lawns are low-input, exhibiting exceptional stress tolerance. Land managers

should be able to greatly reduce inputs of water, fertilizer, and mowing to these areas. We recommend refraining from using herbicides in these areas, as herbicides will kill the flowers included in the bee lawn mix. Bee lawn flowers were selected specifically for their ability to bloom at low heights, so any planted areas that are allowed to grow past 2.5” should observe vibrant blooms with a rich diversity of pollinators.

Public Perceptions of Bee Lawns
Our interdisciplinary research team recognized that is important

Sweat bee on self-heal. Photo courtesy of University of Minnesota Bee Lab



to pay attention to the ecological and the social and cultural importance of lawns. So, in addition to measuring bee diversity in the experimentally enhanced bee lawns, we also surveyed 502 park visitors at four parks in Minneapolis to explore their perceptions of flowering bee lawns. For most survey participants, 'flowering lawn' was an entirely new concept, so we designed the survey to include photos and information about bee diversity, the difference between bees and wasps, and how flowering lawns

Creeping thyme blooms within bee lawn. Photo courtesy of University of Minnesota Bee Lab



were designed to provide nectar and pollen for bees. In addition to sharing educational information, this design allowed us to ask the same question twice, once before we shared the information and then again afterwards to see if the participant's answer changed. Here's what we found:

Aesthetics

Traditionally, the image of an ideal lawn is lush and uniformly green, but by incorporating multiple species of colorful flowers, flowering bee lawns go against this cultural norm. Would this lead the public to view bee lawns negatively? Our survey results suggest just the opposite. When asked an open-ended question about what benefit flowering lawns could provide, aesthetics emerged as the most common theme. Participants said that flowering lawns 'are beautiful!', 'aesthetically pleasing', and 'make [our] neighborhood look nice'. Similarly, when asked how much they agreed or disagreed with the statement "I like the way flowering lawns look", 60% of participants strongly agreed and an additional 37% somewhat agreed.

Bees

Even before survey participants were informed that flowering lawns are intended to support bees, nearly a quarter of respondents mentioned bees as a benefit of flowering lawns and 12% mentioned pollinators more broadly. Interestingly, bees were also mentioned as a potential concern, though more than twice as many participants listed bees as a benefit than as a concern. Even after participants were told that flowering lawns were designed to provide bee forage, 66% said there would be no change in their level of concern about insect stings in a park with a flowering lawn, and an additional 7% said they

would be less concerned. Despite some concerns about bee stings, survey participants had positive attitudes towards bees: 66% said they like bees and 31% said they tolerate bees.

Overall support

Flowering bee lawns were incredibly popular among our survey participants. When we first asked, 97.2% of respondents strongly or moderately supported creating flowering lawns in Minneapolis parks. Then, after we shared information that flowering lawns were designed to provide pollen and nectar for bees, the proportion of strong

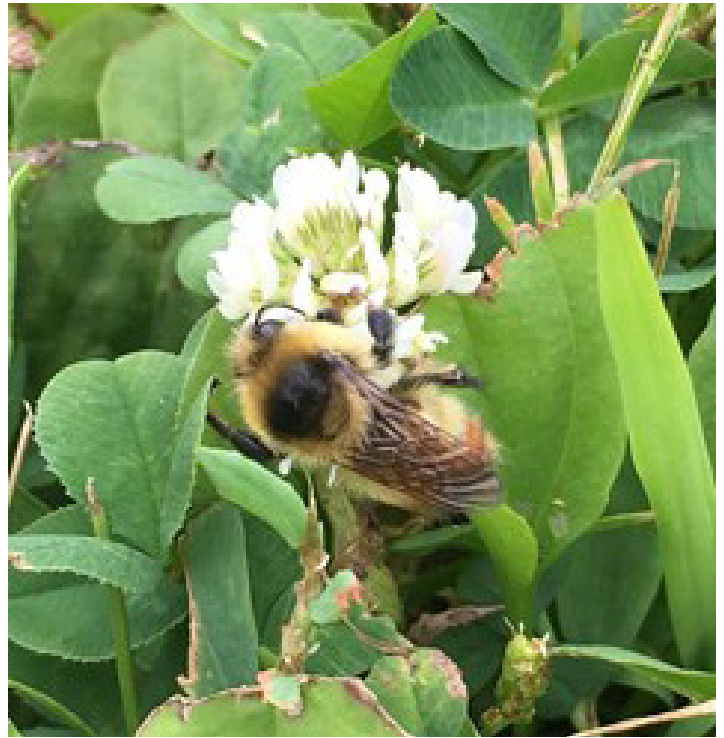
Mature Bee Lawn. Photo courtesy of Minnehaha Falls Landscaping





Self-heal flower within bee lawn. Photo courtesy of University of Minnesota Bee Lab.

Agapostemon sweat bee on Dutch white clover. Photo courtesy of University of Minnesota Bee Lab



Bumble bee on Dutch white clover. Photo courtesy of University of Minnesota Bee Lab

Mature bee lawn. Photo courtesy of Minnehaha Falls Landscaping





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support increased, though so did moderate and strong opposition. Overall, 95.4% moderately or strongly supported creating flowering bee lawns in parks. So, while learning that flowering lawns were intended to support bees lead to a small decline in support, flowering lawns were still extremely popular!

Concluding remarks

In recent years, golf course managers and superintendents have made great strides to improving the impact that golf courses have on our ecosystem. Golf courses in Minnesota and throughout the country are incorporating more low-input grasses and upgraded irrigation systems to reduce the resources that are expended on golf course maintenance. While this is a great start to revolutionizing how golf courses interact with the environment, bee lawns represent an opportunity to further support local ecosystems with an emphasis on our at-risk pollinators. Ultimately, we hope that bee lawns can serve as a land management tool that both our bees and your clientele will appreciate, while causing minimal disturbance

to the on-course experience.

If you have questions about bee lawns, or wish to purchase the bee lawn seed mix, please contact James Wolfin at jwolfin@twincityseed.com.



Author: James Wolfin

Author: Hannah Ramer



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Roll It *Forward*

By: Jake Kocak

Roll it forward will be an on-going series in Hole Notes that in theory, should be self-sustaining, and ideally engage all sectors of the memberships. The nature of it will be to explain why you joined this industry, what you enjoy most about working in it, and what keeps you motivated about working in this industry.

Then, follow that by nominating someone you worked with, worked for, a mentor, any friend in the Minnesota turf industry, and tell a story about them. In the subsequent issue, they will follow by talking about themselves and nominating

someone else and telling a story about that person ... and so on. The idea is that all answers would be positive in nature; I think we can all come up with things that drive us crazy about this industry, and those stories tend to be the lead in most casual conversations with peers ... so I'd



like to change that. I also believe one of the great things about our industry is how tight knit it is, and I think this "Roll it Forward" will demonstrate that.

**Name: Jake Kocak,
Superintendent Somerby Golf Club**

I got into this industry like a lot of other people, I loved golf growing up, and I loved working outside ... it was a natural fit. If you ask me what I currently enjoy about my job, I'd still answer with that same sentiment, but on top of that I really enjoy the challenges that this profession can offer. Everyday, every month, every year is different An unsolvable puzzle with an ever-changing solution, and that continues to

keep me intrigued.

As I have gotten older and started a family, the other thing I really love about this job, is bringing my kids to work with me. Having them play on a mountain of sand at the shop, or watch a movie on our projection screen job board, or ride around in the cart with me; to see their joy has really given me a different kind of energy about my job. I'll put it this way ... I'd be fired as a dad by them if I ever left the golf course industry.

**Roll it Forward: James
Bezanson, Superintendent
Highland National Golf Course**

When I graduated college my first full-time job was at Prestwick



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- * Natural & Artificial Turf grooming equipment.















Golf Club working for Dave Kazmeirczak, and had Braun was the Equipment Manager, and Jamie was the Assistant Superintendent. It's not lost on me how fortunate I was to be working for 3 highly respected individuals who are all successful and active members of our association; all 3 of them were instrumental in my progression through the industry.

As I worked more closely with Jamie on a daily basis, I really learned a lot of practical, hands-on knowledge. And, as Jamie and I have similar temperaments, I really learned a lot by watching his interactions with staff and how people responded to him, it really helped shape me in my younger years.

Beyond all of the stuff I learned from him and all of the funny

stories he told about growing up in the backwoods of Nova Scotia, Jamie, and his young family at the time, took time to make me feel apart of their family. As someone who had just graduated and re-located, I didn't have a tight circle of family or friends in the metro at the time to rely on for moving, getting a ride when the car



breaks down, socializing, etc. But, Jamie and his family always included me in everything and it was reassuring to know there was someone who I could turn to in a pinch. Jamie is still one of my closest friends and its always

fun to get together with him and catch up and reminisce. It's not surprising to me to see the success he has had in his career, and he's someone I still try to emulate in my career.



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Get to Know 'em: *Chad Blank*

By: Joe Berggren, Hole Notes Editor

FACILITY INFO

Golf Course: Hazeltine National Golf Club

Public or Private: Private

Number of Holes: 18 Holes

Fulltime employees: 12

Seasonal employees (not including full time): 35

Number of employees of entire facility at peak season: 150-175

Types of grass:

Shortgrass: Bentgrass (A-4 on greens)

Rough: Bluegrass, Turf Type Tall Fescue

Total course acreage: 330 Acres

Greens acreage: 3 Acres

Tee acreage: 3 Acres

Fairway acreage: 29 Acres

Rough acreage: 70 (or so) Acres

Driving range acreage: 17 Acres

Range tee acreage: 2 Acres



Personal Turf Facts:

How many years have you been in your current position?

Since April of 2021 (1 Year)

How many years have you been in the turf industry?

Debatably since birth, but the age of six or seven may be more accurate. My parents are both in the industry as small business owners so I've been their helper since the time my foot could reach the pedal of a golf cart.

Where else have you worked?

My internships during school were completed at Hazeltine, The Maidstone Club (NY) and the USGA Green Section in San Francisco. I then spent a season as an AIT at Edina Country Club before coming back to Hazeltine. Additionally, I continue to help out the club my parents own and operate just north of Alexandria – Lake Milona Golf Club.



Turf School Attended (if any)?

I graduated from North Dakota State University with minors in Economics and Honors Studies.

Industry thoughts

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

Bunkering. HNGC currently has steep and constructed bunkers that require a lot of resources to maintain. Subtle, ‘natural’ looking bunkers would – in my opinion – highlight the course in a better contemporary light.

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

Sustainability of increasing expectations. As time passes we will see more regulation of our inputs and I believe it will become difficult for playing conditions to continue to improve at the rate we have become accustomed to.

What is needed to bring more young professionals into the industry?

Compensation. Many of our young 'professionals' are not compensated (financially and beyond) as though they are one; this is especially paramount among those in assistant and technician roles. The current reality is that "waiting 10 years for a superintendent opening" won't work out for everyone in the long

run; instead of blaming young people for realizing the presence of that risk we ought to improve the starting potential in our industry.

What piece of equipment do you want? Not a need, a want.

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

We're blessed at Hazeltine with a plethora of resources. GreenSight technology, however, is something I would like to have in our toolbox. As far as costs go, they will always be rising, but used equipment seems to have an even higher price tag on it when compared to even a year ago.



FUN FACTS

Have you ever met a celebrity?
Who?

I've never been asked or thought
of this... I don't believe so!

What is your favorite vacation
spot?

I tend not to return to the same
spot, so I'll say anywhere with
good food, culture and history.

What is your favorite memory of
starting your turf career?

Cutting cups with my father
when I was about 10 years old.
We could do 9 holes in 35 min-
utes!

What is your favorite job on the
golf course?

Planning, scheduling or training.

What is your least favorite job on
the golf course?

Anything that involves sand.

Have you played any famous golf
courses? Which ones?

The Maidstone Club would be my
most notable loop; over 20 times
I should add!

Who is your dream foursome?

My grandfather, father and broth-
er – thankful this has occurred on
a few occasions!

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

It was more than a tough time
to graduate college through. I
sympathize heavily for those still
in school and how the pandem-
ic has affected crucial points of
growth in their life. Next year's
seniors will have been freshman
when this all started, unfortu-
nately.

***If you would like to participate in a future
Get to Know 'Em, please reach out to Editor
Joe Berggren at jberggren@golfthewilds.com***



The New and Improved **CGCS**

Randy Robinson, GCSAA Central Plains Field Staff

The famous philosopher, Heraclitus once said, “The only thing that is constant is change”. With that said, change brings new opportunities, and new opportunities bring growth. The GCSAA Certification Committee felt the same way as they took a close look at our existing certification program. Like most successful programs, as they grow, they need to evolve to meet the changing times. This was the approach as they decided to make some changes to modernize the program. The intent was to keep the high standards

of the certification process while reducing the amount of time necessary to complete it.

There is no denying it, the GCSAA Certification Program is not for the faint of heart. It has been regarded as one of the most robust certification programs in our industry and those who have passed it have truly stood up to the rigors of the program. Stephanie Confer, GCSAA’s Certification Manager told me, “I don’t have the exact percentage on this, but looking back

it looks like only 25-30% of individuals who purchased the portfolio completed the certification process.” With the new changes to the program, now may be the right time to get started.

To review what has changed, let’s look at the old criteria first. **FIRST**, to be eligible for the program, the applicant must have met the eligibility requirements of specific levels of education and experience. In other words, meet the Class A requirements. In addition, the applicant must have possessed a current pesticide license or have passed the GCSAA IPM exam.

SECOND, the applicant must have completed the online GCSAA Self-Assessment. **THIRD**, the applicant must have completed a portfolio. **LASTLY**, the applicant must have completed the proctored, paper-based exam and attesting of the golf course. Renewal requirement followed. The new program is similar in several aspects. The applicant still must meet Class A criteria and possess a pesticide license or pass the IPM exam to apply. There continues to be an attesting component and an exam. And, the renewal criteria remain the same.



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What is different is this:

The self-assessment requirement has been eliminated. Candidates and CGCSs alike cited the completion of the self-assessment as an obstacle to the program. The tool was not being used by members outside of those completing it for CGCS either. Since it has no bearing on demonstrating knowledge, it was removed as a requirement of CGCS.

The portfolio has been removed in its current form as it was also cited by members as an obstacle of application to the program. In addition, Psychometrician Dr. Kim Thayn expressed that in the distant past, a portfolio was sometimes required in certification programs, but they are an outdated instrument today.

In the portfolio's replacement, the competencies previously tested in the portfolio are now evaluated through either the written exam or attesting process. Through a scientific process, the exam has been reviewed and updated to align with today's superintendent competencies. A new Leadership & Communication requirement has been added. Individuals who have complet-

ed the Assistant Superintendent Certificate Series (ASCS) Principles of Leadership & Communications certificate have already met the leadership & communications requirements of CGCS. If a CGCS candidate hasn't completed the certificate, they must complete the criteria that follow...

The new Leadership & Communication component of the program gives you options in which to complete. You will be required to provide proof of 3 out of the 4 following activities:

1. Write and publish an article for a chapter newsletter or Golf Course Management Magazine.

2. Volunteer service. Select one of the following:

- Serve on a GCSAA Chapter or golf organization task group or committee
- Serve on a chapter board of directors
- Participate in hosting a First Green field trip
- Serve as a GCSAA Grassroots Ambassador
- Attend National Golf Day

3. Give a presentation and document your experience

4. Complete or update your facility BMP template or create and implement a BMP manual

The attesting process is to be enhanced, with a scoring rubric incorporated for consistency in grading. The 2021 Certification Committee is currently working through this process with Dr. Thayn. Attesting content will be reviewed and structured in a way that lends itself to providing better direction to the attesters for grading. This process will be completed and ready for the next growing season for most.

There are a few additional enhancements to the program to make you aware of: The CGCS process has become more flexible, with the exam and attesting being conducted in any order to accommodate your busy schedule. With the online exam, proctoring can be conducted remotely, if they have a webcam. Candidates may now apply and pay online. Candidates may now take the exam ONLINE and get results immediately! (NOTE: The pa-

per version is still available). There are Sample Questions candidates can take to get an idea of what the exam will entail – This is coming soon.

I am by no means an expert on this program since I am not a certified superintendent, but I can certainly attest that the work that has gone into making this a more time-efficient yet accountable program. We can all be grateful to the staff at GCSAA and those who have served on the Certification Committee over the years for adapting and changing our certification process to meet the needs of today's superintendent.

Our program remains the standard in which all others are measured.

Please feel free to reach out to Stephanie Confer anytime for CGCS related questions. She is happy to help! sconfer@gcsaa.org

Randy Robinson
GCSAA Central Plains Field Staff

Thank You MGCSA!

Eric Watkins, University of Minnesota

The growth of the turfgrass research program at the University of Minnesota is a testament to the tremendous financial support we have received from the Minnesota Golf Course Superintendents Association. Year in and year out, Minnesota superintendents have stepped up providing a consistent funding source that we use to help solve current and future golf turf management challenges. The foundational support we receive from MGCSA and other local organizations is critical to maintain our research center. The moving of Northern Green to an online format in January 2021 meant very little income was generated from the show--these funds are partly used by the Minnesota Turf and Ground Foundation to fund turfgrass research. With MTGF unable to contribute, we were left in a difficult position--fortunately, MGCSA stepped up in a big way by not only making their annual \$50,000 contribution, but also donating an additional \$75,000 to help stabilize our funding, allowing us to continue pursuing our many current research projects. I would like to express my sincere gratitude for MGCSA stepping up during this challenging time.

I can't emphasize enough how the funds that MGCSA sent to the turfgrass research program are critical for obtaining even greater financial

support from other organizations. The new Winter-Turf project is a great example of this. In summer of 2019, I met with the MGCSA Research Committee and proposed that the forthcoming annual MGCSA donation be targeted to fund the development and deployment of specialized environmental sensor nodes to better capture winter microclimate conditions on golf greens. I had been meeting with colleagues at the University of Minnesota and elsewhere for several months--we had an idea that we thought could help tackle the problem of turfgrass winter damage. To get the project off and running, we needed to start testing the idea of recording detailed environmental conditions on golf greens in cold climates. The Research Committee gave approval to this use of funds, and by the winter of 2019-2020, sensor nodes were built and collecting data on several courses in the state. This initial push led to funding from the United States Golf Association of over \$90,000 to further expand sensor coverage in Minnesota and beyond. Eventually, we received \$8 million from the United States Department of Agriculture to support research on winter stresses of turfgrass in the northern U.S. Support from MGCSA led to millions of dollars in new funding for turfgrass research that will help golf course superintendents in Minnesota and across the country--what an impact!

All of us involved in turfgrass research at UMN are excited to provide turfgrass managers with research that provides value today and well into the future. Thank you for your longstanding and consistent support.

***Follow the UMN Turf Blog
for project updates!***

UMN Turfgrass Researchers to Lead New \$8 Million Research Project on Winter Stresses of Turf

*Eric Watkins, Professor, Horticultural Science
University of Minnesota*



Golf course superintendents deal with innumerable turfgrass management challenges: pests, compacted soils, weeds, diseases, insect pests, floods, drought, the list goes on. For many of these, turfgrass researchers have been able to provide solutions, some of which might work better than others. At the very least a turf manager can try something that is backed up by research. In Minnesota and other cold climates around the world, golf course turf is often at the mercy of winter weather conditions--snow, sleet, rain, ice (Figure 1)--all of these stresses can lead to significant turf damage, oftentimes with revenue implications for the course. Unfortunately, the tools that the turfgrass research community provides turf managers for dealing with these winter stresses are few in number.

The *WinterTurf* project, which I detailed in a May 2020 [Hole Notes article](#), aims to better understand turfgrass winter stress injury to provide turfgrass managers with better solutions for prevention, mitigation, and recovery from winter stress injury. I am thrilled to report that this project has been funded through the USDA Specialty Crop Research Initiative. An infusion of \$8 million dollars to spur new research in turfgrass winter injury will have a major impact on golf course superintendents in Minnesota and cold climates.

Our project has six primary objectives. In Objective 1, we will assess golf greens in cold climates to gain knowledge about the processes that lead to winter-kill; this is being accomplished using environmental sensors, satellite imagery, drones, and with the

MGCSA NEW MEMBERS - *March 2022*

James Wolfin	Affiliate	Twin City Seed
Jennifer Abrahamson	Associate	Pinewood Golf Club
Chad Akerson	B	Eagle Creek Golf Club
Steve Dauner	A	Hawley Golf Course
Chris Skronski	C	Hazeltine National Golf Club
Nate Studer	Associate	The Greener Blade
Jake Heater	Associate	Pheasant Hills GC
Weston Lehner	EM	Wayzata CC
Tony Zerwas	C	St. Cloud CC
Andrew Mueller	Student	Austin CC
Matthew Stonestrom	C	Legends Club
Dennis Perrault	Affiliate	Greenimage Golfscapes
Sully Bucheit	C	Wayzata CC



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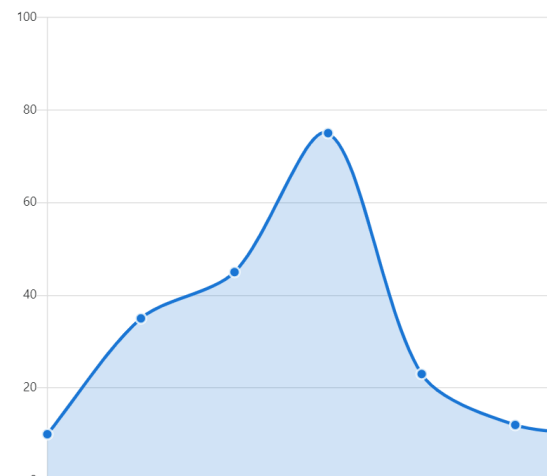
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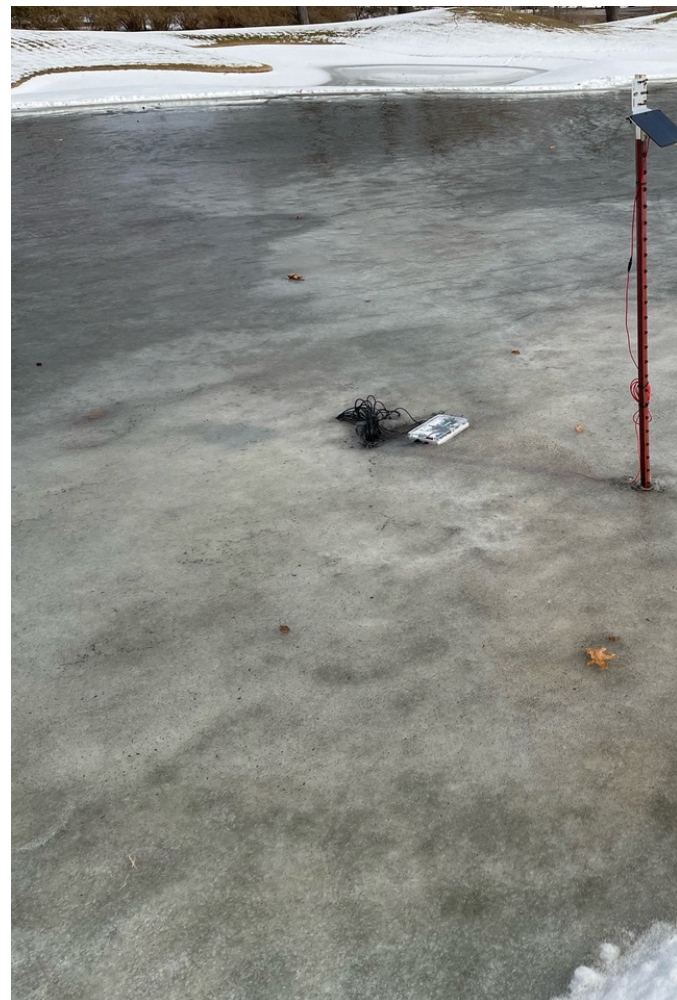
help of superintendents collecting weekly observations on their course. We will use all of this information to define and prioritize main types of environments (called 'envirotypes') that lead to winter stress damage of turf and create a winter stress injury prediction model that can help golf course superintendents and other turfgrass managers make data-driven decisions before, during, and after winter stress.

In the second objective, members of our project team will design and execute experiments to improve our understanding of the physiological factors associated with turfgrass injury and tolerance due to stressors such as ice cover and freeze-thaw events.

In Objective 3, we will monitor the environmental conditions that lead to snow mold disease development and learn more about the basic biology of snow mold pathogens and their level of fungicide resistance, which will allow us to develop more integrated snow mold management strategies, including new resistant cultivars.

In Objective 4, breeding and genetics efforts will focus on germplasm improvement for minimizing winter stresses in creeping bentgrass (snow mold resistance, cold temperature germination) and perennial ryegrass (survival under ice cover, low temperature tolerance).

In Objective 5, we will develop strategies for management of, and recovery from, winter stress damage and study the economics of turfgrass winter stresses; examples of projects include



comparisons of different cover types and strategies to improve creeping bentgrass establishment during a spring recovery period.

Finally, in Objective 6 we will develop and implement an extensive outreach program disseminate recommendations resulting from our research in a timely manner, so that superintendents and other turfgrass managers can apply new approaches to winter stress injury prevention.

Our project team includes re-

searchers from several departments at the University of Minnesota: Horticultural Science, Agronomy and Plant Genetics, Soil Water and Climate, Bioproducts and Biosystems Engineering, Computer Science and Engineering, USpatial, and GEMS. Collaborating institutions include the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Michigan State University, University of Massachusetts, Iowa State University, Oregon State University, Rutgers University, USDA Agricultural Research Service, and the Norwegian Institute of Bioeconomy Research.

We are very excited that this project has been funded and are looking forward to bringing research-based recommendations to golf course superintendents who face this challenge. If you are interested in getting regular, monthly updates on the *WinterTurf* project, please sign up for our email newsletter: z.umn.edu/winterturf



Figure 1: A WinterTurf environmental sensing covered by ice on a green in Michigan. Sensing nodes are collecting data on air and soil temperature, light, relative humidity, carbon dioxide, and oxygen. Photo credit: Dr. Kevin Frank, Michigan State University.

From the *High Grass*

By: Chris Aumock

We can all picture Jack sometime soon, maybe now, effortlessly paddling around a smooth northern lake, enjoying the peaceful tranquility of the boundary waters. A fitting reward for a career that has stretched five decades. As another outdoor enthusiast (in saying only, mostly daydreams), I can't say I'm not a little jealous. At the same time though, I'm incredibly encouraged about our future.

This association has been in good hands for several years, and we go into this transition as a strong, well supported organization. We must work together to continue the momentum that Jack has created for us. Back in my school days, the first golf course our class visited was North Oaks. Jack and I crossed paths way back then, unknowingly of course. I only told Jack a few weeks ago. My career path has been inexplicably linked with Jack



at just the right times. First, that course tour. Now, replacing Jack as your new Executive Director.

The last few months have been spent learning the daily tasks and roles for this new job. It is not surprising the quantity of work but reaffirms the importance of this role (obviously I would say that now!). While I was preparing to interview for this position, I spoke with some other chapter executives. They always commented on Jack's seemingly endless task list, "He was always up to something new." Through these conversations, it became clear that Jack is well respected amongst his peers, something I can only hope to cultivate for myself.

I'm excited for my next, or first, conversation with all of you. I look forward to listening to your perspectives. I'll be listening for those opportunities that can carry our association and industry forward. Like the other Executive Directors told me about Jack, I also want to be up to something new all the time.

As Jack paddles off into the sunset, he leaves behind a substantial legacy of nearly 50 years in this wonderfully frustrating, yet immensely rewarding profession. I hope I speak for most of us in saying, Jack, we are immensely grateful for the effort, passion, and dedication you have shown to our association over the years.

I have a difficult challenge of replacing you. At Northern Green, people would say, "I have big shoes to fill." That is true, but the truth is I'm not here to fill Jack's shoes. I'm here to carry this association into the future in my shoes, setting new tracks. I am not Jack, whether you think that's good or bad, I do share some of those same characteristics that have made him successful over

his career. I have been fortunate to work with Jack over the last few months working through the transition process. There are so many levels to the ED role, and I now have even greater appreciation for Jack's efforts. So finally, as I strive to continue our forward progress, it is essential that we all look back and appreciate Jack's time with the MGCSA. Jack, thank you for all your years of service, they have not gone unappreciated. When it's time for me to retire, I hope I have the same enthusiasm you show towards your impending time away.

On behalf of the MGCSA, we wish you all the best in your new endeavors as you build wooden boats, fish north of the Arctic Circle, and expedition canoe. Enjoy this time traveling with your wife Kim, and spending more quality time with your grandchildren. The excitement you have shown over the last few months for this moment, tells me that there will be no regrets, and the life you are about to live will be, deservedly so, immensely rewarding.

-Farewell Jack!