

HOLE NOTES



2025 Distinguished Service Award
James Bade

Grant Program: Minnewaska GC
Brady Scott

Major Dirt Work
Jacob Ocholik

Roll it Forward:
Zach Wignall



Get to Know Em:
Avery Brandt

UMN: Intensive Irrigation
Michael Barnes

december

HOLE NOTES

The Official Publication of the MGCSA
V. 60, #6 December 2025

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Cover: DSA Recipient James Bade and wife Stephanie
Above: Affiliate Appreciation Social at the MEGA.

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MGCSA
PO Box 2028
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Event Calendar:

Benson Outreach	1/7
Shop Tours	1/14
Northern Green Social	1/20
Rochester Outreach	1/27
The National - Orlando	2/4
Brainerd Outreach	2/12

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PRESIDENTIAL PERSPECTIVE

John Cameron
North Oaks Golf Club

Happy Holidays! First and foremost, I'd like to thank all 647 current members of the Minnesota Golf Course Superintendent Association for the opportunity to serve as your next President. It's an honor to represent you all and I look forward to volunteering my time to help further our industry and profession with our Executive Director, Board of Directors, and your input as a member. 2026 will be the MGCSA's 99th year! This makes us one of the oldest associations in the country and only

one year younger than our national organization, GCSAA.

I first joined the MGCSA in 2015 as a Class C Member in conjunction with becoming an Assistant Superintendent at North Oaks Golf Club (NOGC), my first year-round position after receiving my Bachelor of Science Degree. My diploma-like welcome letter to the MGCSA was written and sent by the Executive Director, Jack Mackenzie, who coincidentally spent 20+

years as Superintendent at NOGC. Further coincidence, the Lead Assistant at NOGC when I joined was Chris Aumock, who I'm assuming all of you know is our current Executive Director. There must be something in the water at North Oaks. Jack served 10 exceptional years as Executive Director and accomplished an incredible amount for our association and industry both locally and nationally. Chris will be entering his 4th year as our Executive Director and looks to continue momentum off

his strong start. I'll be serving as President until our next Annual meeting in December of 2026, when our current Vice-President, Jason Scharfencamp will take over for our Association's centennial year.

The first editions of our publication 'Hole Notes' that I was receiving had "Presidential Perspectives" from Jake Schmitz, and "Within the Leather" by Dave Kazmierczak. Maybe an incoming member will be reading this in their first 'Hole Notes' and will be inspired to serve on the Board 10 years from now such as myself. I remember avidly reading them each time they were released and still do when I have time along with other industry related magazines. I've always greatly appreciated all of those who have contributed material throughout the years and have kept it fascinating. I'm definitely a hypocrite when I ask you all to please contribute and share

content with your peers, as I've only contributed a few articles over the last 10 years. You'll no doubt get more than enough from me and be tired of reading my drawn-out rants by year's end. Sorry in advance for that.

I believe Mike Sonnek has just completed the longest Ex-Officio Term within our Association's 98-year history. Mike truly went the extra mile in this role, repeatedly stepping up to fill vacancies and providing invaluable continuity and support. His commitment to the MGCSA is exemplary. Thanks for your service on the Board of Directors, Mike. I hope you enjoy your next term as ex-officio. That term truly never expires.

Our next Ex-Officio will be outgoing President, Nikk Dickerson. I'd like to thank Nikk not only for his time as President, but his entire time serving on the Board of Directors, and overall contribution

to the industry throughout his entire career. Nikk deserves a lot of credit for hosting the very first First Green event in 2021 at Owatanna Country Club. Hearing him speak about what it took to host it; I commend him for his persistence and the ability to get it done. He provided a good foundation and set Minnesota up for success, as we have since hosted over 10 First Green events. Also, his involvement and representation of the MGCSA at a national level, including Washington DC for National Day on the Hill, in Lawrence Kansas at GCSAA headquarters, and serving as Grassroots Ambassador for MN. Nikk truly carried out the MGCSA's mission statement, "advancing the art and science of golf course management," and kept this at the forefront of conversations and decisions. Thank you for your service, Nikk! P.S. He also coached me through serving as Chairman of the Education Committee in

2024, which is no easy role and leads me to my next person of thanks.

Hats off to incoming Vice President, Jason Scharfencamp, for serving as the Chairman for the Education Committee this year. Jason and the Committee prepared and organized a well-rounded MEGA seminar that was recently hosted at St. Croix National. The newly formed Equipment Manager track was well received. I'm happy to see that contingent prosper within the Association and look forward to seeing its continued growth. Jason and the Education Committee also arranged education for the upcoming Northern Green Expo. Something that I learned during my time on the Education Committee is that the MGCSA doesn't fund the speakers for the Northern Green. The entire event is funded by the MNLA, however, it allows the MGCSA to assemble the Golf Course education within budgetary

means. For me, the Minneapolis Convention Center is still synonymous with the Northern Green Expo, however, if you have not attended it at the St. Paul River Center, I highly recommend it, and personally believe the venue is a better fit for this event. Thanks for your dedication toward putting these educational lineups together, Jason. You'll be relieved to pass the torch next year.

To the rest of this year's Board of Directors - James Westendorf, Kyle Stirn, Wade Huseman, Adam Lesmeister, and Jay Yonak. Your participation and time spent on your respective committees to ultimately help guide the Association through another valuable year was incredibly helpful. Some initiatives that they've focused on include promoting Rounds For Research, Supporting University Research, Equipment Manager Committee, Stewardship Grant Program, Professional Development

Grant, Educational Scholarships, MN Day on the Hill, New MN Golf Coalition Handbook, etc.

As we close the book on 2025, the Association should be excited for 2026. The coming year will build on our current momentum of developing our relationships with allied associations, creating new initiatives, continuing previous successful initiatives, offering enhanced educational opportunities, deeper advocacy efforts, and new ways to connect and share knowledge.

I consider serving all 647 of our current members as President of the MGCSA during its 99th year to be a privilege and I greatly look forward to it!

Happy Holidays to you and your families, and Cheers to a New Year!!

Sincerely,
John Cameron

MGCSA NEW MEMBERS - Nov/Dec 2025

Eric Boser	Lafayette Club	Class C
Theodore Jacobsen	MTI	EM
Tyler Meyers	Links at Northfork	EM
Shannon Bullock	TPC Twin Cities	EM
Mike Busse	Van Wall	EM
Tyler Eckert	Burl Oaks GC	EM
Joe Organ	Three Rivers Park District	EM
Dave Wensmann	Indian Hills Country Club	EM
Aiden Mueller	Hazeltine National Golf Club	Class C
Adam Hassanstab	Indian Hills Country Club	Student
Lucas Monson	Loggers Trail Golf Course	Class D



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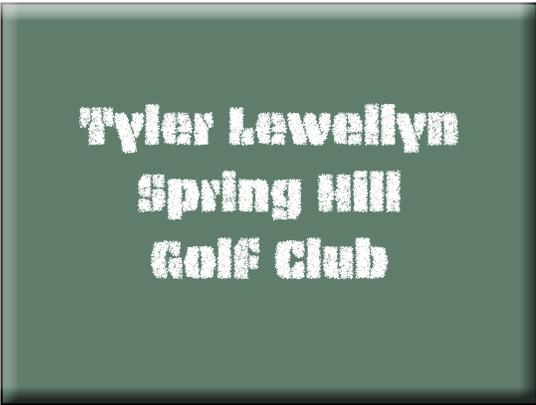


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Winter Preventative Maintenance/Rebuild

With winter here now, my tech tip is about preventative maintenance over the winter or as I call it Winter Rebuild. Here at the shop, we compile individual sheets for each piece of equipment. We go quite in depth checking items on equipment that we have seen fail. Some parts will fail like clock work. The goal is to do all major fluid changes and check over the equipment with a fine tooth comb to limit any down time once the season starts. We all know the season gets quite busy and it gets easy to fall behind on maintenance.

A few things that make building a rebuild sheet easy are:

Jacobsen SLF1880 **Winter 2024**

	#4	#7	#8	#9
Hours at Time of Service				
Change Engine Oil - ALL 3.5QTS Oil #4 NAPA 1344 #7,#8,#9 NAPA 1064				
Change Fuel Filter Kubota 1T021-43560				
Inspect/Blow/Replace Air Filter NAPA 6438				
Check Alternator Belt, Check Tension				
Check Coolant Level				
Check Battery Terminals/ Cabel Ends for Corrosion				
Blow Out Radiator & Hydraulic Cooler				
Check Rear Wheel Bearings				
Check Steering Components for Play				
Check Parking Brake				
Change Hydraulic Oil & Filter - Biodegradable 68 Oil (9.5Gal?) #4 5002892 #7,#8,#9 5002892, 2811255				
Check Lights				
Check Tire Pressure. 18 PSI Front, 24 PSI Rear				
Torque Lug Nuts/Bolts to 90ft/lbs				
Repaint Tire Pressure & Lug Nut Torque On Rims IF NEEDED				
Grease Unit (40 Zerks on Traction Unit)				
Look Over Machine for Other Potential Problems				
#4				
#7				
#8				
#9				
Other Work Done				
#4				
#7				
#8				
#9				

- Repair records
- Yearly useage hours of the piece of equipment
- Preventative maintainance records
- Your own personal knowledge of equipment

The best way to start is to open the operator manual and see what the manufacturer reccomends for service. Once you review the recomendations, take a look at your repair records from the season. When disecting your repair records, you want to be looking for things that break or wear out regularly. Also the last time fluids and filters were changed. The idea is to catch bearings, pulleys, belts and other wear items before they fail. Always consider how much the piece is used in season as well. For example, if the book states a 500 hour hydraulic fluid change, and the equipment gets used 400 hours a season. Instead of waiting for the rest of the 100 hours to occur and change the oil in the season, change it early so you don't change it when the equipment needs to be used regularly. In my mind that would equal a yearly winter time hydraulic fluid change on that piece of equipment.

Your knowledge of equipment

Jacobsen SLF1880 Winter 2024					
HOC-.300*	4-1	4-2	4-3	4-4	4-5
Grind Reel					
Grind/Replace Bedknife					
Reel Bearings					
Front Roller Bearings					
Rear Roller Bearings					
Lube Adjusters					
Rear Brush Bearings					
Left					
Right					
Brush Belt					
Grease (6 Per Head)					
Other work Done					
HOC-.300*	7-1	7-2	7-3	7-4	7-5
Grind Reel					
Grind/Replace Bedknife					
Reel Bearings					
Front Roller Bearings					
Rear Roller Bearings					
Lube Adjusters					
Rear Brush Bearings					
Left					
Right					
Brush Belt					
Grease (6 Per Head)					
Other work Done					
HOC-.300*	8-1	8-2	8-3	8-4	8-5
Grind Reel					
Grind/Replace Bedknife					
Reel Bearings					
Front Roller Bearings					
Rear Roller Bearings					
Lube Adjusters					
Rear Brush Bearings					
Left					
Right					
Brush Belt					
Grease (6 Per Head)					
Other work Done					
HOC-.300*	9-1	9-2	9-3	9-4	9-5
Grind Reel					
Grind/Replace Bedknife					
Reel Bearings					
Front Roller Bearings					
Rear Roller Bearings					
Lube Adjusters					
Rear Brush Bearings					
Left					
Right					
Brush Belt					
Grease (6 Per Head)					
Other work Done					
HOC-.300*	Spare 1	Spare 2	Spare 3	Spare 4	Spare 5
Grind Reel					
Grind/Replace Bedknife					
Reel Bearings					
Front Roller Bearings					
Rear Roller Bearings					
Lube Adjusters					

can be quite valuable when creating a rebuild sheet as well. A walk around the equipment and giving it an in-depth inspection of components can add some great things to the rebuild sheet. A lot of equipment share similar components and with the same components you can expect the same maintenance. For example, the Toro Sidewinder 3500 has a belt tensioner pulley that may only last 400 hours or so. That exact pulley

configuration is used on the fairway units and the Toro Procore 648's. By knowing that, you can accurately gauge when you should replace the pulley, so it doesn't fail and cause the equipment to be dead on the course.

It may take a few winters of modifying the rebuild sheet to make it perfect for your facility. With a good well rounded rebuild sheet, it can significantly limit

the down time of equipment in season. Allowing you to primarily focus on preventative maintenance and the all-important cut quality our industry is known for. It's important to remember no sheet will completely eliminate breaks and failure. It is an overall great tool to add to any toolbox.

2024 Winter Rebuild									
E-Z-GO Utility Carts									
E-Z-GO #15	Hours _____								
Engine Oil Change 38 oz? 1394	Change Fuel Filter 3011	New Spark Plug NGK BPR2ES Gap .030"	Engine Air Filter 6449	Change Rear Axle Fluid 55oz? 30W Oil	Check Valve Clearance Between Valve Stem & Rocker Arm .004"-.006"	Check Front Wheel Bearings	Steering Components	Check Rear Brakes & Check and Adjust Parking Brake	Lights
Check Generator Belt	Check Drive Belt	Tire Pressure 30PSI? Front _____ Rear _____	Grease Front Tie Rods	Check for Rear Hitch	Check Battery For Corrosion on Terminals		Sea Foam	Check Charging Voltage	Other Work Done
E-Z-GO #16	Hours _____								
Engine Oil Change 38 oz? 1394	Change Fuel Filter 3011	New Spark Plug NGK BPR2ES Gap .030"	Engine Air Filter 6449	Change Rear Axle Fluid 55oz? 30W Oil	Check Valve Clearance Between Valve Stem & Rocker Arm .004"-.006"	Check Front Wheel Bearings	Steering Components	Check Rear Brakes & Check and Adjust Parking Brake	Lights
Check Generator Belt	Check Drive Belt	Tire Pressure 30PSI? Front _____ Rear _____	Grease Front Tie Rods	Check for Rear Hitch	Check Battery For Corrosion on Terminals		Sea Foam	Check Charging Voltage	Other Work Done
E-Z-GO #17	Hours _____								
Engine Oil Change 38 oz? 1394	Change Fuel Filter 3011	New Spark Plug NGK BPR2ES Gap .030"	Engine Air Filter 6449	Change Rear Axle Fluid 55oz? 30W Oil	Check Valve Clearance Between Valve Stem & Rocker Arm .004"-.006"	Check Front Wheel Bearings	Steering Components	Check Rear Brakes & Check and Adjust Parking Brake	Lights
Check Generator Belt	Check Drive Belt	Tire Pressure 30PSI? Front _____ Rear _____	Grease Front Tie Rods	Check for Rear Hitch	Check Battery For Corrosion on Terminals		Sea Foam	Check Charging Voltage	Other Work Done
E-Z-GO #18	Hours _____								
Engine Oil Change 38 oz? 1394	Change Fuel Filter 3011	New Spark Plug NGK BPR2ES Gap .030"	Engine Air Filter 6449	Change Rear Axle Fluid 55oz? 30W Oil	Check Valve Clearance Between Valve Stem & Rocker Arm .004"-.006"	Check Front Wheel Bearings	Steering Components	Check Rear Brakes & Check and Adjust Parking Brake	Lights
Check Generator Belt	Check Drive Belt	Tire Pressure 30PSI? Front _____ Rear _____	Grease Front Tie Rods	Check for Rear Hitch	Check Battery For Corrosion on Terminals		Sea Foam	Check Charging Voltage	Other Work Done



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2025 EM WORKSHOP

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MGCSA DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD



Improving the Environment One Green
at a Time: Honoring James Bade with the
MGCSA Distinguished Service Award

By: Nikk Dickerson with James Bade



James Bade, James Gardner, Tom Proshok, Dale Parske

The first time I met James Bade, I was still in college, hanging on the coattails of my first mentor in the industry, John Granholt. Right after the first MGCSA Annual Meeting I ever attended, John walked me up to James, the President of the MGCSA and introduced me to a guy I'd never forget.

It only seems fitting that, as I find myself on the way out of the president's seat, we recognize someone who has meant as much to this Association.

This year, the Minnesota Golf Course Superintendents Association proudly honors James Bade, longtime Superintendent at Somerset Country Club, with the Distinguished Service Award. A past MGCSA President, mentor, champion of education and environmental steward, James's influence continues to shape our profession nearly two decades after he left the presidential chair.

James's path to turfgrass management



James Gardner, Dale Parske, Tom Proshok, James Bade.

wasn't predetermined. In fact, it almost didn't happen. "I was undecided in college," he said. "A counselor at the U of M showed me the turfgrass program, and honestly, I fought going into it because of all the chemistry and biology. But after a weed ID class and a tree ID course, I was hooked."

Long before that, he was a kid at Hazeltine wanting nothing more than to play golf at the course that served as his High School's home track. "I started working at Hazeltine in 1977 because I just wanted to play golf there," James recalled with a grin.

But Hazeltine quickly became more

than a place to play, it became where James learned what leadership and professionalism looked like. He cites four early influencers who shaped the superintendent and leader he would become:

- Nick Dunn, Hazeltine's Superintendent, who showed patience and taught simple lessons to a young crew.

- Chris Hague, Hazeltine's Superintendent, whose approach to tournament preparation elevated James's appreciation for detail.

- Dr. Don White, University of Minnesota professor, who taught him

that being a superintendent wasn't just about growing grass — it was about leading people and serving a community.

- Jerry Murphy CGCS, his predecessor at Somerset, who mentored him through humility. “He taught a kid who thought he knew it all,” James said.

These early experiences built the foundation for a career defined by curiosity, care, and a quiet, steady form of leadership. James didn't set out to serve on the MGCSA board. “It wasn't even on my radar,” he said. It only took a single question at the Golf Industry Show in Orlando 1999, when Jim Nicol asked if he'd consider joining the board, to set everything in motion.

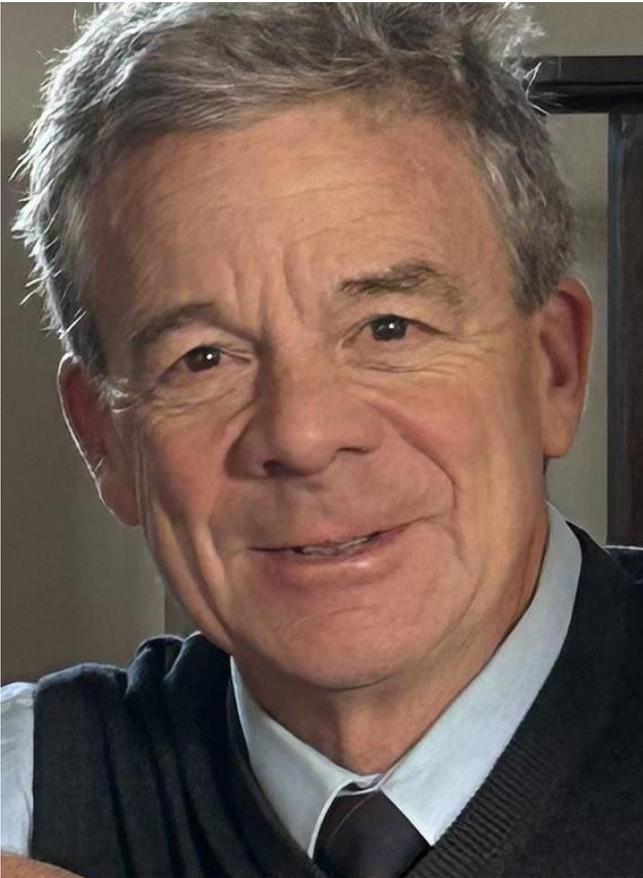
Soon after at one of James' first board meetings, then President Paul Eckholm tapped him to chair the Education Committee, one of the most demanding roles on the board. “It took me a year or two to figure it out,” James admits, “but then I was off and running.”

When the presidency came calling, it wasn't ambition that drove him, it was simply recognizing a need. “I stepped up and pressed on,” he said.

As President in 2006, James approached leadership with humility and gratitude. His Hole Notes columns from that time read like a roadmap of good leadership: steady, collaborative, focused on service rather than spotlight. “For something to be successful, it has to be a collective

James' Family: His son Sam, wife Stephanie, and daughter Lily.





One of the most memorable themes from James’s writing and my interview with him, is his belief that superintendents are environmental stewards. He credits the phrase “improving the environment one green at a time” to Dr. Frank Rossi, then at UW–Madison. But James made it his own, articulating that role on golf courses long before sustainability became an industry buzzword. “In the metro especially, green space is disappearing. Golf courses are tremendous environmental assets. They filter water. They support wildlife, birds, bugs, turtles, bald eagles, waterfowl. They’re habitats.” He speaks about this with both conviction and reverence. It’s clear stewardship isn’t a concept for James, it’s a calling.

effort,” he reminded readers in one of his articles.

Among the priorities during his tenure were:

- Supporting the TROE Center
- Advancing phosphorus training and water protection workshops
- Strengthening ties to the University of Minnesota turf program

Though James is too humble to point to one accomplishment as “his,” the long-term impact of that work is still felt today.

Even when discussing technology, his view is pragmatic: “Technology is helping and hurting at the same time. There’s so much data now to inform decisions, but I worry pricing isn’t sustainable at the rate we’re going.” His perspective reminds us that innovation is only useful when it advances responsibility, affordability, and thoughtful care for the land. His leadership has always been rooted in gratitude: for colleagues, for students, for researchers, for his Somerset team, and for the land itself.

One of my favorite parts about going

through this process of nominating James and writing this article for James was re-reading all of his Presidential Perspective articles. James's articles reveal a leader that values people above all else. In his final presidential column in 2007, James wrote: "I've learned one thing: my work within the Association is just beginning." Nearly 20 years later, those words ring true. His influence continues through:

- The superintendents he has mentored
- The educational programs he supported
- His advocacy for research at his Alma Mater
- His vision for environmental stewardship
- His steady, humble example

For me, revisiting the Articles that James wrote as President, my first year in the Association feels less like reflecting on history and more like receiving guidance from a trusted friend. His blend of humor, humility, and faith reminds us

that we're part of something bigger, a profession rooted in stewardship, service, community, and care for the land.

In honoring James Bade with the Distinguished Service Award, we celebrate not just his career, but the way he has lived it:

With purpose;
With gratitude;
With optimism;
With humility;
With a deep love of the natural world;

And with a commitment to Improving the Environment, One Green at a Time!



Last day cutting cups with Jose Rocha after 33 years together.

FROM THE
ARCHIVES
MAY 2007

MGCSA President James Bade, A Dedicated Man of Integrity

By JERRY MURPHY, CGCS
Retired MGCSA Member

James Bade, a man of integrity, hardworking, dedicated, very knowledgeable, honest, sincere, a wonderful family man, a caring person who always considers others and to top it all off, a great friend to all.

These are the things I heard over and over again when I was looking for an assistant in the spring of 1988. Like everyone else, I called all the people I knew for recommendations on who would be a good assistant. James' name kept coming to the top of the list and by the time I completed polling the industry, his name was the only one left on the list.

I first met James when he came to Somerset Country Club with Dr. White's University of Minnesota turf class. He seemed sincerely interested in discussions and was quite observant of all we were looking at. He was very quiet but the questions he asks were well thought out. About a week after the class visit I received a thank you note in the mail from James, a classy gesture. As a matter of fact, during my 40 years at the club it was the first and only thank you note from any class members I received.

I called James to set up an interview with him. When we met I asked him if he went by the name Jim, his reply was a quick "I prefer James." I then pronounced his last name the way it is



The Bade Family

James, his wife Stephanie and their children Lily and Sam.

spelled, Bade. He again corrected me by telling me the correct pronunciation was "Body" and I could remember it by thinking of "Jesse the Body." I have never forgotten that lesson nor the smile he brings.

James had an interesting career long before he became my associate at Somerset. Born and raised in Chaska, Minn., on a hobby/truck farm where sod and vegetables were grown, he started life close to nature. His love for baseball changed to golf in seventh grade, which naturally led him into working on a golf course. He learned to play the game at Dahlgren Golf Club but sharpened both his golf skills and desire for turf work at

(Continued on Page 8)

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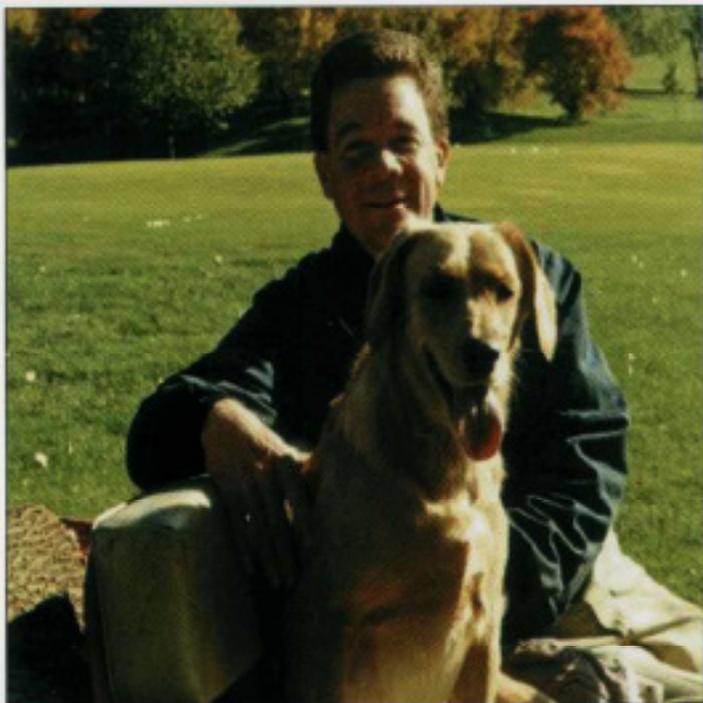
(Continued from Page 6)

Hazeltine National Golf Club where Superintendent Nick Dunn took him under his wing when he was just 16. He later worked with Hazeltine's Superintendent, Chris Hague, who further mentored him in the skills needed to run a golf course and helped create a more firm interest in turf management. Of course, Dr. Don White, who was his turf professor and advisor, developed his skills and interests even more.

Upon graduation from the U of M, James, who has always held family and church life as a strong part of his way of life, felt compelled to attend a seminary in eastern Pennsylvania for a year. But even then he couldn't get far from golf, so while attending seminary he worked at the well-known Saucon Valley Country Club, a 54-hole complex built by Bethlehem Steel.

It was at this point that James and I hooked up again and he started his career at Somerset Country Club where I had the privilege of working with him for 15 years. I watched him develop his skills and hone his abilities into a top-notch Superintendent and leader in the industry. I was also privileged to be there when he married his lovely wife Stephanie Plahmer, who was from Wisconsin. James and Stephanie have been married for 12 years now and have two wonderful children, Sam, who is six years old and Lily who is four.

James has done a wonderful job of mixing his family life with his golf course responsibilities and with his dedication and involvement in the industry. When Hazeltine CGCS Jim Nicol asked him if he would run for the Board of Directors, he was quick to say yes. And after a number of years on the Board



and chair of many committees, his peers recognized him and his talent by electing him President last year for a two-year term.

"I am proud to have been a small part of his life and am very proud of all his accomplishments both in and out of the golf industry." - Jerry Murphy CGCS

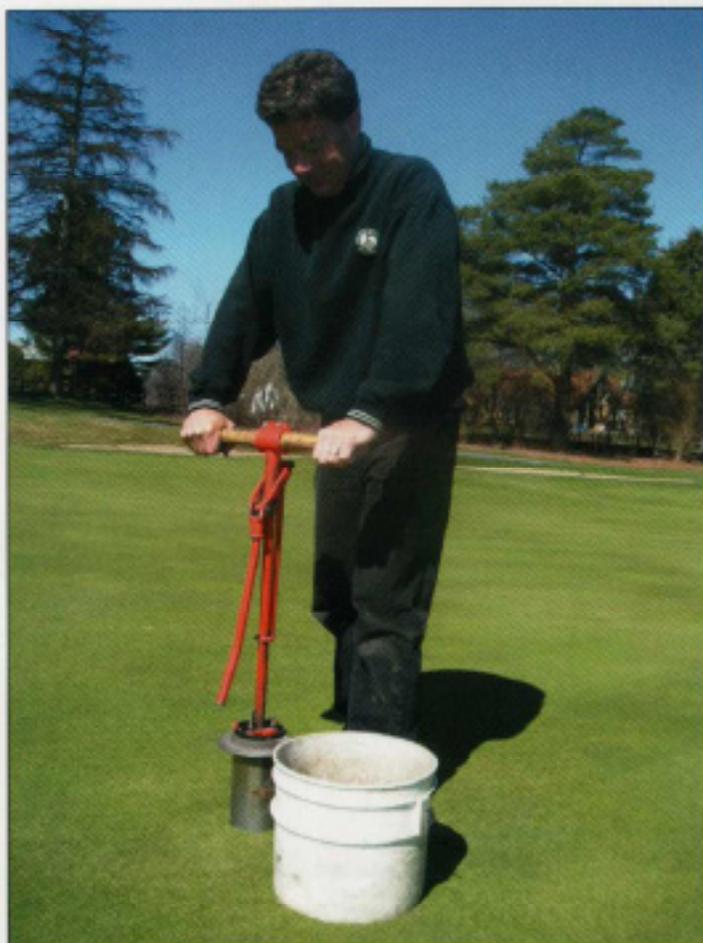
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2024 MGCSA Stewardship Grant

Recipient:

MINNEWASKA GOLF CLUB

By: Brady Scott



“Make do with what you have.” These were wise words that I was told as a younger person. It was not meant to be dismissive, nor to embed a sense of passiveness or complacency. Rather the opposite in my mind. The message to me was to take a good look at what I had, appreciate it and make the

most of it. Fast forward a few decades, I was not as young, the Superintendent at Minnewaska Golf Club and doing my best to make do with what I had, particularly in the irrigation department.

The irrigation system at Minnewaska Golf Club is aging. When installed

over 30 years prior, a thin walled PVC pipe was used. After years of the friction from water flow and the freeze-thaw cycle that Minnesota is famous for, the pipe became thinner and brittle. Tees, bell-ends, big and small were all breaking, without bias. The true solution to this would be to install a new

irrigation system; the fiscally responsible solution would be to determine a low cost solution that could reduce leaks, while allowing the time necessary to plan and implement the installation of a new irrigation system. So, we took a look around at what we had, appreciated it, and then researched a low-cost solution to make the most of it.

The low cost solution that we decided to try was installing pressure relief valves in strategic locations in an attempt to reduce stress on the aging pipes. There were a few methods of logic: while using the irrigation system during normal irrigation cycles, these valves could potentially reduce pressure spikes that accompany cycle starts, additional pumps starting, elevation changes, pressure fluctuations; while re-pressurizing the system following an irrigation fix, the air will be released through the valves, rather than turning on sprinklers

(which is a difficult task during busy golf afternoons); while small leaks are “pissing”, and pressure slowly drops, and the pumps start in order repressurize to full operating pressure, these valves could potentially buffer a localized pressure spike. Hopeful thinking, but it was worth a try. And, low-cost, indeed. After the numerous times hearing from MGCSA that “you’re crazy not to apply for this grant,” we applied and were awarded the Project Grant.

So, the plan was formed: pressure relief valves would be installed in six locations that were highly susceptible to leaks. The valves would be installed on the high side of a lateral irrigation loop (the most likely areas for air to get trapped, or settle, during system pressurization). We have a great working relationship with Steve Ray from Sunrise Sprinkler (Osakis, MN), and decided to utilize him as a resource. He supplied

the valves and fittings, along with his expertise and labor. The valve we decided to use was a Bermad brand C30 Combination Air Valve (2”DN50). We waited until November (2024), following irrigation blow-out, when the pipes were dry. We exposed the irrigation pipe, installed a knock-on tee (see image), drilled out the hole, twisted on the valve, installed a mesh fabric (to protect from becoming a critter cabin), installed a valve box, and backfilled and sodded. The process went very smoothly and was completed in approximately 6 hours by two people.

I’m sure at this point you are anxiously awaiting an update to know whether this project decreased/eliminated our irrigation leak issues. Full disclosure, the winter following this project, I made a personal change to work at a different facility in the area, and cannot give a full and accurate report on the results. But, I did assist in

pressurizing the irrigation the Spring following the project (2025) and also assisted in blowing out the irrigation the Fall following the project (2025). During both of those processes, those valves worked to bleed air from the lines; I could hear air hissing from the valves. Regardless, the fact remains, no matter the situation, the concept of making do with what you have is a mindset (for me anyway) to mentally return a situation to its simplest form. Take away the bells and whistles, roll up your sleeves, and figure out a solution to transform something into the best version of itself. I think we tippy toed in that positive direction during this project. I want to thank MGCSA



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for this grant program and for the funds to give this experiment a try.

Also, thank you to Steve Ray, for your help.

Expenses:

Valves: \$335 each (x6) = \$2,010

Valve Boxes: \$100 each (x6) = \$600

Other Miscellaneous parts and labor (tees, mesh, etc) = \$390

Total Expenses = \$3,000

A parting note: as an out-state Superintendent, I just want to point out the important concept of utilizing the resources around you. At these facilities,

very rarely are we able to employ all of the essential positions that comprise a “full staffed” maintenance department: assistant superintendent(s), irrigation technician(s), spray technician(s), mechanic(s). This does not need to be a scary proposition. The key is to understand your own personal strengths and emphasize those in your everyday routine. Then, understand your weaknesses, and surround yourself with staff and relationships that fill in the voids, until you have the time and opportunity to learn and build your own personal skills. All

this for the same purpose: provide the best playing conditions for your patrons and members. Call the local welder. Contact a person that can complete your chemical applications. Find a great local mechanic. Lean on your vendors. Reach out to the MGCSA or another Superintendent. Utilize a local irrigation specialist. Your main purpose at your facility is to consistently captain your ship in the right direction, and if you are honest, work hard and care, everyone around you will want you to succeed, and will pick up the phone if you call.



2025 MEGA SEMINAR



ANNUAL MEETING



MAJOR DIRT WORK AT WAYZATA COUNTRY CLUB

Jacob Ocholik
Assistant Superintendent
Wayzata Country Club



Wayzata Country Club winds through quiet hills near Lake Minnetonka in Minnesota. Founded in 1956, the club's championship 18-hole course, originally designed by architect Robert Bruce Harris, has hosted storied events such as the 1984 U.S. Junior Amateur Championship. Yet, after decades of play and earlier tweaks—including a 2008 renovation by John Fought—the course was ready for a more modern flow. In 2023, the membership approved an ambitious \$15 million renovation, a

full-scale transformation designed to elevate the course strategically while preserving the best of its original routing.

Leading the project are architects Tim Jackson and David Kahn from Jackson Kahn Design, a firm renowned for blending artistry with functionality. Their master plan reimagines holes within existing corridors preserving the course's natural undulations that Harris so masterfully exploited. Key upgrades include regrassing with 007XL bentgrass, a cold-

hardy strain engineered for Minnesota's brutal winters, ensuring vibrant playability year after year. Greens will be reshaped for greater contour and challenge, demanding precision from scratch golfers while forgiving mid-handicappers. Tee boxes get a full refresh, with forward options added to every hole. The renovation will also feature 5 completely new holes as the original course routing will be slightly changed. Joining them on the project, Wayzata Country Club hired Wadsworth Golf Construction as



the primary contractor. Alongside Wadsworth, Midwest Irrigation was hired to install a brand-new, state-of-the-art, multi-pump HDPE irrigation system. Expert golf course shaper Joe Vivo was brought on site as the main shaper to make Jackson Kahn's vision come to life, contributing his decades of knowledge and experience in golf course construction. He has shaped multiple projects on golf courses such as Scottsdale National and Monterey Peninsula Dunes Course. Lastly, Jesse Trcka, Wayzata's

Golf Superintendent, and his grounds department staff also played a key role, contributing to the project wherever their involvement was most valuable.

After an enormous amount of planning and preparation in the prior year, the initial phase of the renovation began in the early fall of 2024, with the rest of the phases following as weather permitted into the early winter. The entire 18-hole course remained closed for the 2025 golf season. The project is expected to be completed and the course

to reopen in the summer of 2026.

The renovation offered me many new opportunities to gain experience. I've worked at a handful of different golf courses over my career, and each offered new experiences, opportunities, and challenges. However, none of them involved any kind of dirt work that completely reshaped the property and the golf experience. As the project started back up in the spring, the major earthmoving began across the site. The property



was buzzing with 5 mid-size bulldozers, multiple excavators, and more dump trucks than one could keep track of—all working toward the common goal of shaping the foundation of the new vision for Wayzata Country Club’s golf course. We, as a grounds department, spent weeks moving thousands of cubic yards of dirt with dump trucks to help control costs and keep the project on pace. The grounds department rented four six-cubic-yard dump trucks which we personally operated to help

Wadsworth and the other shapers move massive piles of excess topsoil and construction soil to make way for the new layout. Wadsworth spent months moving dirt themselves, utilizing AUSA front-dump trucks. With all the shaping taking place, a massive bank of sandy loam was uncovered in the soil profile. That area was already planned to be scraped lower, which made it convenient for us to remove the thousands of yards of the sandy loam soil. We decided to utilize this sandy loam to sand cap

specific areas on the course that suffered from having a soil that had a high peat content, improving the playing surface while also avoiding removal costs for the excess soil.

As the project continued, the architect’s plans changed, and the amount of dirt that needed to be moved, grew immensely. This led to the renting of additional bulldozers and required some of the assistant superintendents, me included, to help push dirt. With some instruction and a quick lesson from

the master shaper himself, Joe had me operating a Komatsu D61PX bulldozer in no time. I, along with two other assistants from the grounds department spent multiple days in the bulldozers during the project. We all helped Joe by stripping topsoil and making the long pushes of material that gave him a blank canvas to shape the new design. I spent weeks in one of the bulldozers, and my skills and dirt-moving efficiency increased significantly as I gained

experience. Altogether, as a grounds department, we logged well over a thousand hours of bulldozing by the time the major dirt work ended.

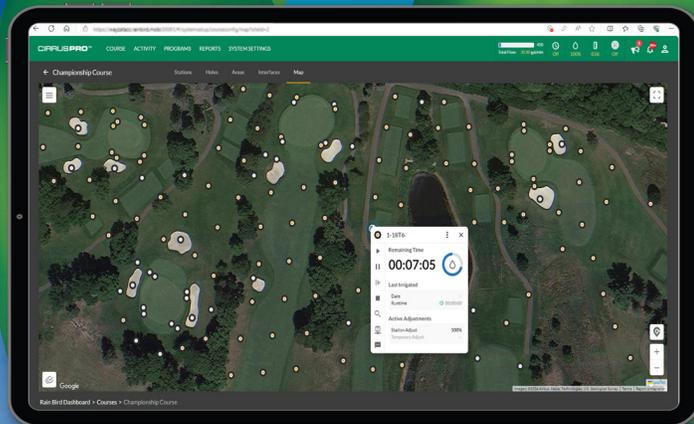
Having us step in as bulldozer operators saved the project thousands in costs because we did not have to hire additional personnel. It also helped keep the project on schedule, even though far more dirt was moved than originally planned. Operating a bulldozer to

help shape a new golf course has been the most unique and amazing experience I've had while working in golf – especially being coached by Joe, a guy who has spent his career perfecting the craft of a golf course constructor. After months of dirt work, the heavy machinery came to a halt and, one by one, disappeared from the property, leaving behind the foundation of the new course at Wayzata Country Club.

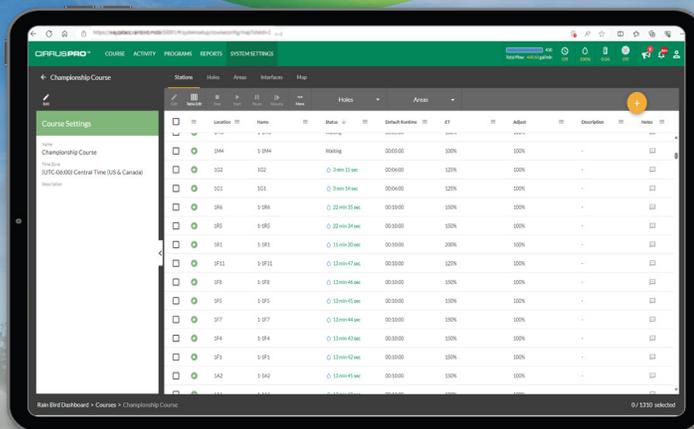


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ROLL IT FORWARD

Zach Wignall
Legends Club





First and foremost, I would like to thank Scott Thayer for nominating me for the Roll It Forward series, and the Minnesota Golf Course Superintendents Association for the continued support of our profession. Scott and I go way back to my time on the East Coast. When I was looking to move back to Minnesota to be closer to family, he was one of the first people I reached out to regarding opportunities

at Legends. He has been a tremendous mentor over the years and, more importantly, a truly great friend.

I am currently the Golf Course Superintendent at Legends Club in Prior Lake, which has a fantastic golf course, management team, agronomy staff, and an outstanding ownership group to work for. I was born in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, but my family relocated

to Waldorf, Maryland, just outside of Washington, D.C., when I was five years old. My father worked for Beretta, while my mother stayed home raising myself and my younger brother and sister. My father and grandfather were both avid golfers, and that's where I was first introduced to the game—riding along with them during their rounds.

While golf was always part of my life, soccer became



my main passion. I began playing at age five and continued through college, competing on multiple recreation, travel, and select teams throughout Maryland and Virginia. My senior year of high school, our team captured the state championship and finished ranked 15th in the nation. As a captain, I found that I truly loved the leadership, mentoring, and coaching side of competition—an experience that earned me a college soccer scholarship before I eventually hung up my boots for good.

After college, I began working for UPS as a summer job, starting as a package handler. Within a few months, management approached me about moving into a supervisor role. I worked several years in operations and management at the St. Paul and Baltimore hubs, gaining invaluable leadership and logistical experience. However, I quickly realized that being indoors long-term wasn't for me—and that realization changed my career path.

That turning point led me to reach out to Pete Nolan at The Meadows at Mystic Lake, along with Andy Keyes and Geoff Jordan, regarding opportunities during the grow-in and construction phase. From my first days on a golf course, I was hooked. The outdoors, the projects, the constant problem-solving—all of it felt right. With their guidance, I committed fully to the profession and enrolled in the Rutgers Turf Program, which brought me back to the East Coast where I accepted my first Assistant



Superintendent position at Beechtree Golf Club in Aberdeen, Maryland.

On my first day, my boss Bryan Schilling told me, “If you can grow grass here in the transition zone, you can grow it anywhere.” That quote has stayed with me ever since. Growing turf in the transition zone is challenging, and that experience laid an important foundation for my career.

After Beechtree was sold for development, I accepted another assistant

position at a private club then known as Old South Country Club—now The Cannon Club—under Marlon Ewing. It was there that I picked up my first “Dog of Turf,” Tyson, a black lab from a pig farm on Maryland’s Eastern Shore. He was easy to spot—the one covered in pig slop. I told the farmer I’d be back in eight weeks, and from then on, Tyson spent nearly every day at the golf course with me.

Eventually, I returned to The Meadows at Mystic Lake to work again with

Pete before heading back East for a unique opportunity at Potomac Shores in Northern Virginia under David McGregor. The course was finished but not yet open, offering an inside look at pre-opening maintenance and development operations. Uncertainty surrounding management and real estate later led me to Herndon Centennial in Herndon, Virginia, under Mike Mueller, who was also serving as association president at the time. Through Mike, I was introduced to countless

superintendents, assistants, and vendors across Northern Virginia and all along the East coast—relationships that remain valuable today.

As life progressed, so did family priorities. When my twin boys, Camden and Gavin, were born, the need to be closer to family became even stronger. That led me back to Minnesota, where I once again reached out to Scott Thayer at Legends. Soon after, an opportunity opened at Willingers Golf Club, Legends' sister course, where I made the jump from Assistant to Superintendent. My very first year came with the challenges of winterkill and COVID, but I made the most of the opportunity and, after a few seasons, transitioned into the Superintendent role at Legends Club, where I am today.

Rolling It Forward



My message to the next generation—whether you're a general crew member, spray tech, AIT, assistant, or superintendent—is this: take chances. Find multiple mentors. Network. Ask questions. Introduce yourself. Get uncomfortable. Reinvent yourself after each season—you can be a hero and a zero very quickly in this profession. Ask yourself what you can do next season to “wow” your staff, members, and patrons. Communicate those goals and be an advocate for yourself, your

staff, ownership, members, and guests. This is not a cookie-cutter job, and no two seasons are ever the same. Every year brings new challenges, projects, and opportunities to grow.

I also strongly encourage young professionals to gain experience in all types of golf operations—public, private, municipal, resort, construction, and grow-ins. Those diverse experiences separate you from the crowd on a résumé and build real-world confidence.



One great example of stepping outside my comfort zone happened while I was at Old South. A few miles down the road, Anne Arundell Manor was being built—an ultra-exclusive private club under Tom Walker, formerly of Inverness. This facility spared no expense: heated and cooled greens, sand-capped fairways, drain lines every 15 yards, and one of the most advanced irrigation systems of its time. I stopped in one day just to introduce myself. That introduction led to countless drive-arounds,

turf discussions, and learning experiences. I was eventually offered a position there but turned it down because the timing didn't align with my long-term goals. Still, the lesson stuck: get uncomfortable, introduce yourself, and ask questions—it always pays off.

Turf Twitter & Dogs of Turf

Another resource I regularly use—and strongly encourage others to explore—is Turf Twitter (X). There is a tremendous

amount of information available if you seek it out: superintendents, assistants, researchers, and vendors sharing real-time results from new equipment, chemical trials, research, failures, and successes. It's also fun, engaging, humorous, and incredibly rewarding. I've connected with many professionals through Turf Twitter to exchange ideas and learn from one another. You can find me at [@zwnall523](https://twitter.com/zwnall523).

I also run a fun account called [@dogsofturf](https://twitter.com/dogsofturf), which highlights turf dogs from

around the world—golf, sports turf, goose dogs, and anything turf-and-dog related. I started it years ago with Tyson and later added my second Dog of Turf, Izze, a brown Newfoundland who just happened to be the runt of the litter. The account grew quickly and brought me a lot of joy—especially seeing everyone else’s turf companions from around the world. Since both have passed, I haven’t yet been able to pull the trigger on another with how busy golf and family life is—but be on the lookout this winter for Dog of Turf

hats and stickers.

Family First

While my career path has been a blessing, none of it would be possible without my family. My wife, Brittney, has been a constant source of support, patience, and encouragement. The demands of this profession—especially during the golf season—require understanding and sacrifice, and I couldn’t do it without her. Together we are raising four incredible children: Camden and Gavin, our 12-year-old twin

boys, along with Blakely (3) and MK – Mary Katherine (1). It’s a busy household filled with sports, gymnastics, and everyday chaos—but it brings unmatched joy, perspective, and balance to everything I do.

Rolling It Forward – Final Thoughts

Looking back, I’ve been fortunate to work alongside incredible people at every stop along the way. I’ve learned that success in this profession comes from relationships, curiosity, humility, hard work, and





the willingness to take risks. If my journey can inspire even one young turf professional to step outside their comfort zone, ask questions, and chase opportunity, then I'm proud to be part of the Roll It Forward story.

Roll It Forward Nomination

As part of the Roll It

Forward series, I would like to nominate Andy Keyes, who is now with MTI Distributing. I had the privilege of working for Andy at Mystic Lake, and he provided more real-world, on-the-job training than I could have ever imagined. His leadership, knowledge, and approach to developing people played a major role in shaping my career. Andy

also has a great story to tell—about family, life, and a successful transition outside of traditional turf maintenance into a new career path, something many in our profession are navigating today. I believe his journey would strongly resonate with readers and continue the spirit of Roll It Forward. Thank you for reading.

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GET TO KNOW 'EM

AVERY BRANDT
Assistant Superintendent
TPC - Twin Cities



Twin Cities

PUBLIC/PRIVATE/#HOLES Private, 18 holes

FT EMPLOYEES: 5

SEASONALS: 27 (50+ volunteers for 3M)

YEARS IN THE POSITION: 2

YEARS IN TURF INDUSTRY: 8

CAREER/JOB: Sunnyside Country Club, Whistling Straights,
TPC Scottsdale

TURF SCHOOL: Hawkeye Community College

GREENS ACREAGE: 5.5

TEE ACREAGE: 6

FWY ACREAGE: 27

TYPES OF GRASS: L93 Bentgrass

MASTER PLAN WANT: I would say we're getting close to that 25 years for an irrigation system. Not seeing major breaks yet, but knowing that we are at that stage where things start to fail. Also, we have lost quite a bit of shoreline on #14. Would be nice to do a retaining rock wall around that green to preserve it.

EQUIPMENT WANT: A backhoe would be nice. We have a skid loader but a backhoe would be nice to help with trenches. Our mini ex is great for smaller project, but instead of having to rent, it would be nice to have a backhoe. One more



thing for fun, would be to have an industrial chipper. We have been renting one, and we did several recently, and our tractor attachment chipper can't handle the work we were doing.

**ANYTHING DIFFERENT OR
UNIQUE YOU DO THAT COULD
BENEFIT OTHERS?**

We are able to mow and roll every day. Something others maybe can't do every day due to staff or equipment. I am also lucky to have experience with overseeding in the south, so I can help the guys when we need to do any seeding. Also, in Arizona we had some autonomous mowers to mow the pond edges, that actually helped keep the birds off the course. It was pretty genius and worked well.



WHAT IS A CLASSIC MOVIE YOU RECOMMEND TO OTHERS?

Robert Downey Jr's. Sherlock Holmes movies are big time favorites between me and my buddy Sam. We can quote it from start to finish as we watched it a ton in college. We want a 3rd one after the 2nds cliffhanger.

FAVORITE VACATION SPOT?

Its now Scottsdale. I like to go for the Phoenix Open each year. But somewhere I haven't lived, would be Miami, Florida.

FAVORITE TASKS:

My favorite is mowing fairways.

LEAST FAVORITE TASK:

Hand watering gets monotonous at times, but there is solace in it. So I don't want to say hand watering, so digging irrigation holes. Not irrigation repairs themselves, just digging the holes.



HAVE YOU PLAYED ANY FAMOUS GOLF COURSES?

Chambers Bay, Quintero, The Bull, Whistling, Black Wolf Run. I would love to play Sand Valley someday, kind of a bucket list course.

WHO IS IN YOUR FOURSOME?

Tiger, I'll take any version of Tiger just to talk and chat with him. One of my best friends, Sam, who I've played more golf with than anyone. Ken Griffey Jr., my favorite athlete growing up along with Tiger.

WHAT IS FAVORITE MEMORY OR FUNNY STORY OF STARTING IN TURF?

My very first day at Whistling, I probably worked the hardest I ever have. I started out walk mowing greenside rough. Not a lot of mowers could handle the slopes at Whistling, so they threw me into the fire with one other guy and we mowed all 18



greenside roughs with push mowers. We still had to come back with the string trimmer to touch up. It was tough, but so rewarding when we were done.

WHATS ONE PIECE OF ADVICE YOU'VE RECEIVED IN YOUR CAREER THAT STILL RESONATES WITH YOU?

Take as many risks as possible. My first boss Matt knew that I wasn't going to stay there forever, and he encouraged me to take any risk that I can. It taught me to engage with the spanish crews, so I could learn more and be able to communicate effectively with them. If I didn't do that, I would have been behind. Especially with overseeding, as I had to communicate so diligently with the crew during the process.

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INTENSIVE IRRIGATION: EXPLORING CO2 EMISSIONS FROM TURFGRASS MAINTENANCE IN THE CITY OF ANGELS

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We're all aware of the sometimes intensive management involved and the subsequent CO2 emissions from keeping our turfgrass surfaces up to par, not only on the course but off it in our parks, home lawns, and multiple other landscapes where turfgrass exists. Despite how widespread turfgrass is across our urban and suburban landscapes, golf courses have drawn more criticism and scrutiny compared to other turfgrass dominated greens-

paces. Previous work has looked at individual maintenance practices (e.g. mowing) and extrapolated from there to assess and understand the estimated emissions from such practices. Additional work has taken these estimations and then applied them to either single types of turf landscapes (e.g. a park) or aggregated all turfgrass areas together to assess total emissions. While such studies are helpful in contextualizing emissions broadly, they lack both

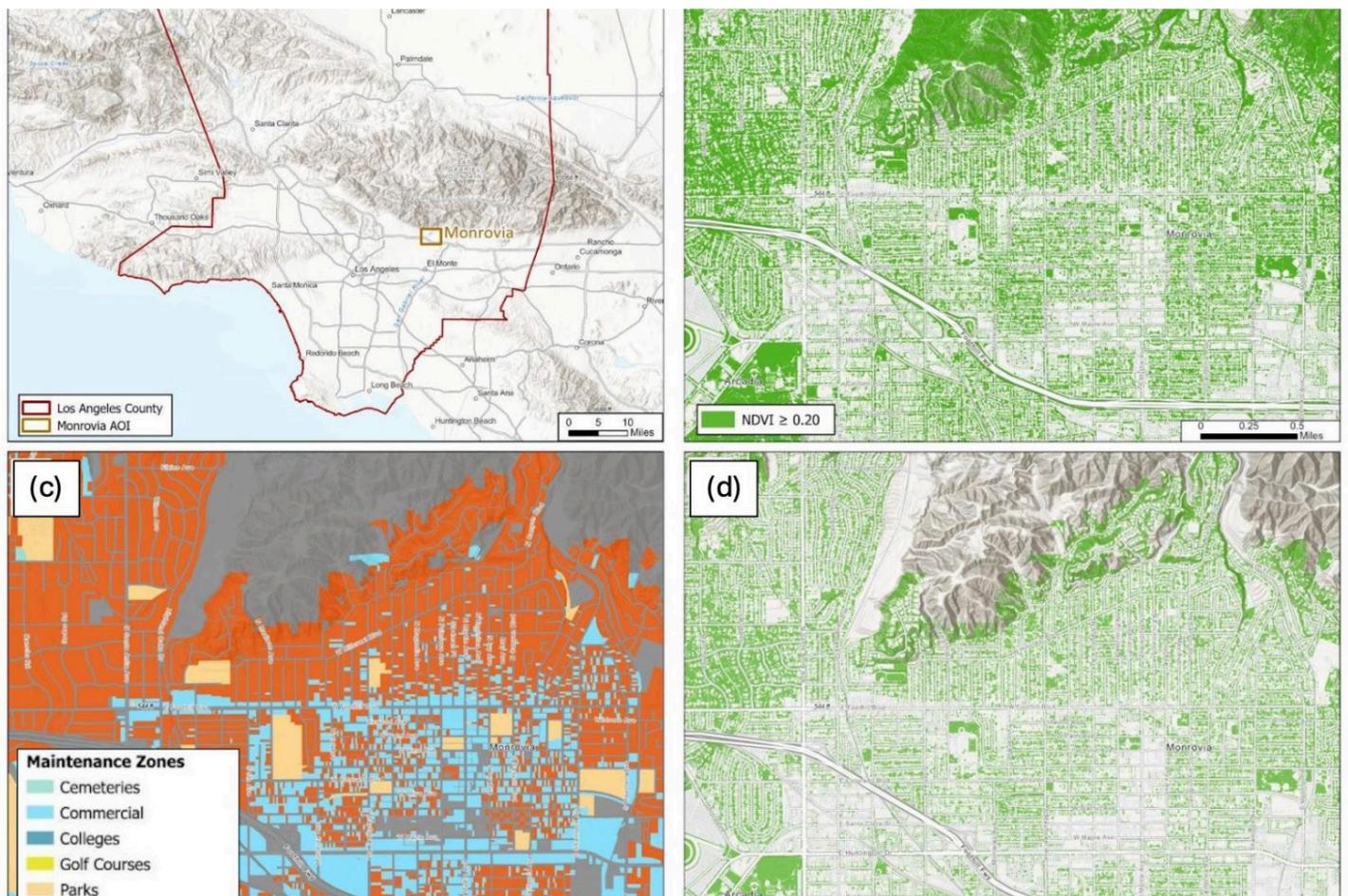
scale and specificity. Specifically, what's missing is to understand the different management regimes and then the spatial composition of different types of turfgrass landscapes within a broader community.

To start to address these gaps in existing work, colleagues from the University of Redlands in California and I crafted a study that would tie together these different elements to better encapsulate and understand emissions from turfgrass

maintenance. We started with creating a boundary for our work, Los Angeles County (LAC), one of the largest and most populous counties in the country, covering over 4,000 square miles and being home to around 10 million resi-

dents. We then used zoning data combined with Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI) satellite data to break down the thousands of acres of turfgrass within LAC into 6 distinct zones: cemeteries, college cam-

puses, commercial, golf courses, public parks & schools, and residential (Figure 1). From there, we gathered numerous published articles that addressed the three key inputs for turfgrass maintenance: fertilizing, irri-



Caption: Figure 1. Area and zones of maintained turfgrass in the city of Monrovia as an example of the spatial analysis. (a) Location of Monrovia within the study area (Los Angeles County) (b) complete coverage of NDVI cells meeting the 0.20 threshold for turf (c) results of the maintenance zone classification (d) results of the overlay of turf cells within maintained zones

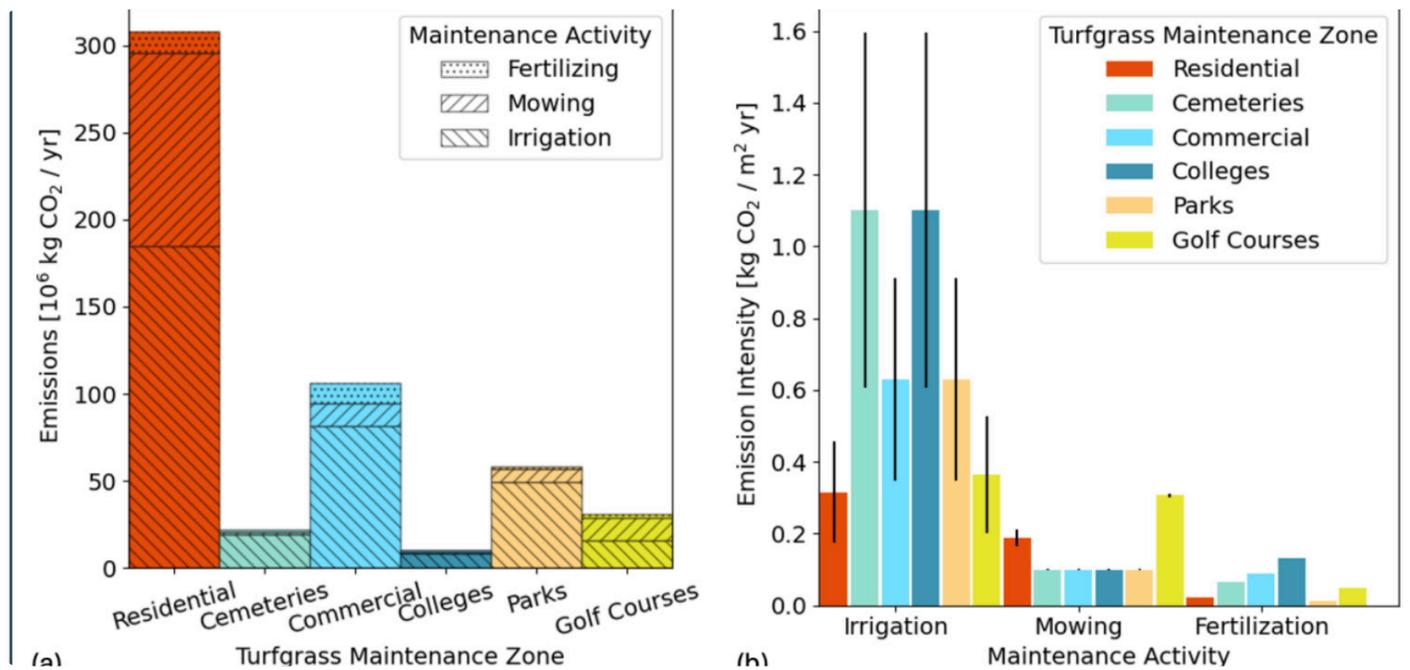


Figure 2. (a) Total CO₂e emissions produced from fertilizing, mowing, and irrigating turfgrass in each of the six zones; (b) Emission intensity (in kgCO₂/m²/yr) for each maintenance activity in each of the six turfgrass zones.

gation, and mowing. The articles helped us establish baselines for the types of equipment, frequency of behavior, and application rates. These values were further refined based on interviews with managers and staff from various municipalities, schools, colleges, golf courses, and others to obtain more accurate values across our 6 turfgrass zones. Our final step was combining all of this data together to create an emissions model for LAC for each maintenance activity and across each zone. So, what did we

find?

Overall, the environmental impact of golf courses within LAC, when measured against the total area of maintained turfgrass, is relatively small. Golf courses represent only a modest portion of the total area and that residential lawns overwhelmingly dominate the landscape and as such, are responsible for the largest share of total CO₂ emissions (Figure 2). It's also important to look at emission intensity (EI), which assesses CO₂ emissions in relation to the total acre-

age. Golf courses did have a higher EI (10.8) than residential zones (5.2), but lower overall EI compared to that of colleges/universities (13.3) and cemeteries (12.7). All of this highlights that while maintaining high-quality playing conditions requires more intensive inputs, the overall regional impact is driven by widespread, lower-intensity residential activity.

Another interesting finding that resulted from this work concerns the source of emissions across the zones. For al-

most all turfgrass zones in water-stressed LAC, including residential and commercial areas, irrigation was identified as the most significant source of CO₂ emissions. This runs counter to past studies where mowing has been the largest source of emissions. However, for golf courses mowing was indeed the leading source of CO₂ emissions. This finding is key because it means that the environmental priority for courses differs fundamentally from the regional priority. Furthermore, this focus on mowing actually aligns the emissions profile of LAC golf courses with previous work conducted in non-water-stressed areas, such as studies focused in the northern US. The fact that mowing is the leading source of golf course emissions, rather than irrigation (which dominates the rest of the coun-

ty), allows superintendents to focus mitigation efforts on high-impact strategies that directly address mowing frequency. We see significant opportunities to reduce the course's carbon footprint by adopting management strategies that decrease maintenance intensity. Since mowing frequency is the critical factor, reducing the number of cutting events is highly effective. This can be achieved by selecting slow-growing turfgrass species and cultivars. Increasing the height of cut on areas like fairways and roughs can also extend the time between mowing events without sacrificing playability. There is also an opportunity to remove non-functional turfgrass areas and convert them to areas that require less mowing such as pollinator gardens.

Overall then, we can see that while golf cours-

es are often at the center of input use discussions, they are not the highest nor most intensive sources of CO₂ emissions within LAC. Low-intensity but extensive residential lawn maintenance made up the majority of emissions in our study. Emissions profiles differ across turfgrass maintenance zones, with irrigation being the leading source for most zones while mowing was the most important for golf courses. Key strategies for lowering course emissions will be to reduce mowing frequency, select slower growing species, and convert non-functional areas, which should help minimize emissions without compromising playability and golfer experience and enjoyment. If you'd like to dig into study more please visit <https://z.umn.edu/LACemissions>.

UMN TURF BLOG

FROM THE HIGH GRASS



If you joined us on day 2 of the recent MEGA Seminar, you heard Jackie and Three Carpenter talk about workers these days and what they want and how they need to be treated. The idea that many people need to be more coddled is not inaccurate, as today's workforce requires different approaches from only a few years ago. Their talk hit closer to home after I received a letter recently through the MGCSA mail.

Last month I was at the PO Box to get our mail, but one letter stuck out. It was a birthday card sized envelope, with what I could tell was a mismatched size paper inside. I was intrigued, and had to open this letter before I got

back to my desk, so I read it in the parking lot. After completing the letter, I was left gob smacked, confused by whatever this message was supposed to be.

First, the envelope did not include a return address, and the letter inside was not labeled or signed by anyone. I had no identifying information to determine who this was and could not determine who the author was from the text.

To sum up the letter, this person was angry at a local superintendent and their golf course. They perceived this leader as an arrogant, overrated industry leader. They criticized their leadership style, and attitude, while

also somehow digressing to one of the other staff members' sexual orientation. To be honest, I threw the letter out after a few days, not knowing what to do with it, but I did so before I decided to write this article about it.

I thought about many things afterwards, but overall, I was disappointed. If this is one of our members, or someone in the turf industry, it was an extremely poor example of professionalism. I don't have to even consider the truth or realities of this supposed poor leader, as the credibility of the author was lost throughout the statement.

We all have moments or jobs where we are frustrated by the leadership team or their decisions, but a true professional does not respond by crafting an anonymous letter to anyone, let alone the local professional association. Again, this may not be a member of the MGCSA, and I hope it isn't as this would very likely break our Code of Ethics policy.

This type of response gives no credibility to their point. If you can't put your name to your comments, the professional world shouldn't give you another thought. (I understand that I am giving this too much time by writing about it, but I thought it could be a good lesson to learn from).

Another lesson perhaps; if you're going to write a letter like this, make sure the formatting is consistent. There were different fonts, different spacing, and a mention that someone else may have written it for them, even make sure the letter is in the correct envelope size.

These were all poor choices when trying to make a solid and substantial point.

Again, there are lessons to be learned here, especially for the younger people in our industry. Professionalism matters. I like to preach awareness to my kids all the time, and professionally you should always be aware of how your intentions are portrayed. This person angrily crafted this letter, yet every sentence, point, and formatting error made me aware that this was not something that required further action.

Yes, other professionals besides me would also notice that the paper wasn't the same size as the letter! As you prepare materials for job interviews, or green committee meetings, or member reports, ensure that you do cross all the T's and dot all the i's. People are still watching for that quality, a sign that you made the effort to show your true professionalism. (One pet peeve of mine; your voicemail is still

important even if you only text! Make sure your voicemail message is set up, at least with your name, so the caller knows they've reached the right person.)

Perhaps this author's message is true, and this was an example of poor or arrogant leadership, something we could all take a moment to reflect on and envision how our staff or people at the facility regard us. Remembering how we treat people matters and may reflect in their poor decision making like this.

As Jackie and Three were talking, it all rang truer as I thought about this letter. We won't know who this was, how old they were, or even if they worked on the grounds crew or clubhouse at this course. But we can take away a lesson, that in our (or any) industry, your words and actions mean something, and if you can't take responsibility for your own thoughts, most in this industry will likely not stand for and/or support you as a professional.