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Official Publication
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From Your President's Desk



Rick Fredericksen, CGCS
MGCSA President

Jim Nicol, CGCS, Selected As MGCSA's Distinguished Service Recipient for 2002

At our September meeting the Board of Directors unanimously selected Jim Nicol as our Distinguished Service recipient for 2002. Jim was chosen for his outstanding contributions to the advancement of the golf course superintendents' profession. He has been an active member in our association since 1982 by serving on various committees. In 1998 he was appointed President. Jim has also participated on several committees at the national level. He has been a member of the GCSAA since 1979.

What led our Board to select Jim was how well he represented the superintendents' profession leading up to and during the PGA Championship. It was a busy time for Jim and his staff getting ready for the event, but he still had time to help out his colleagues. In early July, Chaska Town Course maintenance facility was destroyed by fire. Jim was one of the first to call and provide equipment to keep the operation going. He also found time to assemble a group of purveyors to sponsor a hospitality tent in the corporate village at the Championship. This tent provided a place to relax, enjoy a meal and visit with Jim's staff and other superintendents. I remember sitting in the tent, enjoying a cup of coffee on the first day during a rain delay. Overhearing Jim being introduced to a superintendent's wife, I heard him comment as he shook her hand that she had warm hands, so she must have a warm heart.

Jim was set apart from the other nominees because of how well he represented our profession to the media, and in effect, to the readers and viewers who learned about what goes into preparing for a big local event. He did a great service to our industry by communicating to golfers and non-golfers in a language they could understand. Everywhere, and in all forms of the media, Jim shared his experiences in an articulate and humble fashion. He was and continues to be an exemplary and consummate representative of our industry. Thank you Jim. I look forward to December 3rd when your peers will formally recognize you.

Other honorary guests include Dr. Don White and Dr. James Watson. In celebration of the MGCSA 75th Anniversary, these two individuals will be receiving the President's Lifetime Achievement Award for their contributions to the golf course industry throughout their careers. Well deserved for a pair who have dedicated their lives to the betterment of our profession!

And last but not least Andrew Carlson will be receiving his MGCSA Turf Scholarship Award. Andrew will be recognized for his accomplishments both academically and vocationally.

Come join me on Tuesday, December 3 at the Golden Valley Country Club for the 75th Anniversary Gala. Celebrate the end of a season and the beginning of another quarter century of brotherhood in turf management. And recognize those who have served so well and who will serve in the future.

-- Rick Fredericksen
r_fredericksen@msn.com

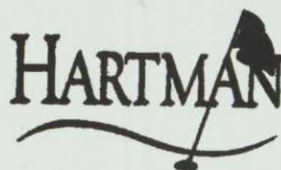
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Inside This Issue of Hole Notes

- 5 **How Are You Coping?** By Larry Aylward
- 9 **Member Profile: Jerry Murphy** By Rick Traver
- 11 **Member Profile: Marlin Murphy** By Rick Traver
- 12 **Minnesota Green Expo Set Jan. 8-10**
- 13 **Charly Erickson – Our First President**
- 14 **Chronology of Courses in Minnesota**
- 15 **Evolution of Golf Courses in Minnesota**
- 16 **Remembering Emil Picha** By Jack Kolb
- 17 **Jack Kolb Uncovers Interesting History**
- 18 **Evolution of Hole Notes** By Larry Vetter
- 25 **The Super's Future in Golf** By Jack Kolb
- 28 **Bob Feser Offers Historical Data**
- 33 **Excerpts From Emil Picha's Autobiography**
- 34 **Remembering Leo Feser** By Jack Kolb
- 38 **Harold Stodola Played Monumental Role**
- 40 **Photo's From the 70s and 80s**

Departments

- 3 **From Your President's Desk** - Rick Fredericksen, CGCS
- 24 **Membership Report** - Dan Swenson
- 24 **On Board** - Jack MacKenzie, CGCS
- 34 **"Drive for the U" Program** - Paul Eckholm, CGCS
- 42 **Editor's Report** - Richard Traver, Jr., CGCS



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Hartman Excavating, Inc.....	4
Herfort-Norby.....	32
Hydrologic.....	IBC
John Deere	39
Leitner Company.....	29
Minnesota Golf Cars	21
MTI Distributing Co.....	18
MTI Distributing Co.....	19
North Star Turf.....	6
North Star Turf.....	10
Par Aide Products Co.....	34
Plaisted Companies Inc.....	35
Precision Turf & Chemical.....	36
Premier Irrigation.....	41
Prinsco.....	17
Reinders.....	42
Superior Turf Services	15
Syngenta.....	28
Turf Supply Company.....	30

ABOUT THE COVER

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Unknown, Mat Bourmes, Ben Johnson,
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THIRD ROW

Gil Foster, Emil Anderson, unknown, Cliff
 Anderson, Dick Rishing, Joe Rush, Carl Erickson,
 unknown, unknown

SECOND ROW

Emil Picha, Carl Anderson, Unknown, Harold
 Stodola, unknown, Ludwig Nelson

FRONT ROW

Leo Feser, unknown, unknown

MGCSA EVENTS

Tuesday, December 3
**MGCSA 75TH ANNIVERSARY
 BANQUET**

Host: Mike Olson, CGCS
 Golden Valley Country Club

January 8-10

GREEN EXPO

Minneapolis Convention Center
 Minneapolis, Minnesota

January 28, 2003

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 Seminar Instructor: John Miller, CGCS

January 29, 2003

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 Seminar Instructor: Max Schlossberg

How Are You Coping?

Stress is a Major Cause of Substance Abuse, and Superintendents Face More Job-Related Pressures Than Ever Before.

By LARRY AYLWARD

Golfdom

Joe Moris rarely ate breakfast during his heavy drinking days, unless you count scanty daily meals of Roloids and breath mints. The long-time superintendent of the 3M Club of St. Paul in Lake Elmo, Minn., popped Roloids to relieve the piercing heartburn and sour stomach he experienced the

morning after a night of boozing. Moris munched on breath mints to hide the stale smell of beer on his breath.

"I ate a donut here and there, but I didn't eat a good breakfast on a weekday for about 10 years," he says.

Moris began work at 5:30 a.m. and often arrived with a hangover and functioned in a haze. When the workday ended at 2:30 p.m., Moris and other employees would gather and drink beer for an hour or longer.

Moris would then head to the local pub and drink for several more hours. Sometimes he would go to the bar's bathroom and force himself to throw up to clear his stomach so he could drink more beer.

Moris would stumble to his car and drive home. He would eat a TV dinner and be in bed by 10 p.m. He would rise at 4:30 a.m. and start over again.



JOE MORIS

About Substance Abuse

One time Moris was called to work in the middle of the night because the course was flooded by heavy rain. He was still buzzing on beer from drinking earlier, but Moris manned a bulldozer to help control the flood. He ended up rolling the dozer down a 12-foot bank. Moris was frightened, but not hurt. He drank a few beers to calm his nerves before hopping back on the dozer.

"The incident didn't make me realize I had a drinking problem," Moris says. "My mind wasn't clear enough to think that."

Moris' life focused on drinking. "I couldn't imagine want-

ing to do anything without drinking," he says.

It's a cool spring day in early June and Moris, dressed comfortably in jeans and a long-sleeved buttoned-down shirt, sits behind his tidy desk in his modest office at the 3M Club, where he has been superintendent since 1975. Family photos adorn his desk and office walls.

It has been more than 21 years since Moris has had a drink, but he still remembers the uncouth things he said and did during his drinking days in the 1970s and early 1980s. Moris' shame for his actions and statements has diminished, but he has not forgotten those dark times.

Moris, 59, appears bright-eyed and confident-looking, but he grimaces when he talks about his drinking. He talks about his alcoholism candidly, though, because he doesn't want to see other superintendents crawl inside whiskey bottles and never come out.

Minnesota superintendent Joe Moris quit drinking more than 21 years ago. In 1989, he formed a group within the Minnesota GCSA to help other superintendents with substance abuse problems.

Moris is not insinuating that the golf course maintenance industry has a substance abuse problem. He shares his story because he wants to send a simple message to other superintendents: This is what can happen to you if you abuse alcohol and/or drugs.

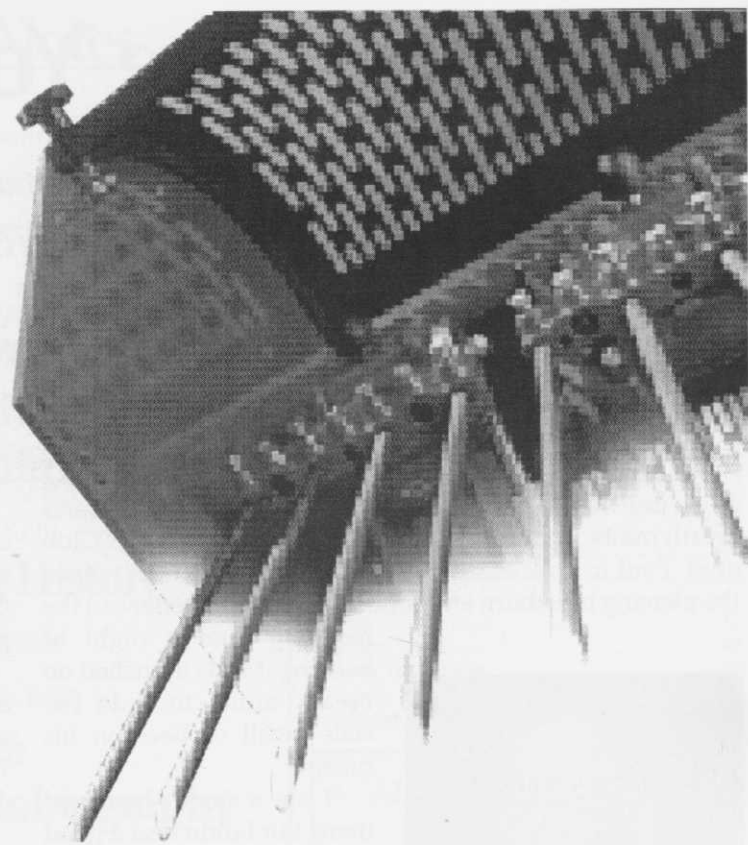
There are no statistics that say one profession is more apt to substance abuse than another, says Steven Ey, medical director for the Betty Ford Center, the renowned treatment center located in Rancho Mirage, Calif. "Substance abusers come in all shapes and sizes, and from all career paths," Ey says.

But Ey points out that stress is a major risk factor for substance abuse and addiction. "Stress can contribute to problems with substance abuse and addiction," he says firmly.

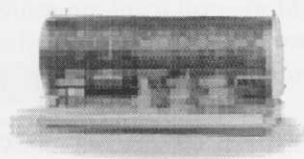
Working as a superintendent may not be as stressful as working as an air-traffic controller, a corporate CEO or a police officer, jobs cited by Jobs Rated Almanac as three of the nation's most stressful occupations. But golf course maintenance has become an increasingly pressure-packed profession, especially at clubs where green committees and general managers expect nothing less than perfect conditions.

(Continued on Page 7)

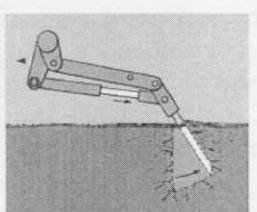
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How Are You Coping –

(Continued from Page 5)

Of course, superintendents react differently to coping with increased pressure. One might thrive on it and perform his job even better. Another might go to the gym after work and burn off any angst caused by job stress. Another might head to the bar after work and drink six beers and a couple shots to relieve the tension.

What's important is how superintendents cope with stress over an extended period of time. If they're using drugs or their drinking is out of control and is causing problems at work or at home, then they're substance abusers, Ey says. They're putting themselves on a destructive path that can only get worse and lead to problems with their jobs, their families and their health.

The Pressure Factor

There were days when he was superintendent at Lake Region Yacht & CC in Winter Haven, Fla., when Alan Puckett says he was so flustered with his job that he wanted to go to a bar after work and drink hard.

Dealing with A Drinking Problem

"I was on egg shells all the time - it was very stressful there," says the 42-year-old Puckett, who left Lake Region about 2.5 years ago to become superintendent of The Club at EagleBrooke in Lakeland, Fla. "There were days I left the course angry, and I wanted to go and forget the world. Fortunately, those days were far and few between."

Mike Sosik, the owner, superintendent and general manager of Harrisville GC in Woodstock, Conn., has never had a drink or taken drugs. But Sosik, while he doesn't condone it, understands why some superintendents might choose alcohol and drugs to deal with stress.

"I've been in the profession for nine years, and it's getting more stressful because the demand for conditioning is going up," the 36-year-old Sosik says. "I can understand why superintendents turn to alcohol or drugs as an outlet because there's so much pressure on them."

It's difficult to measure how much more pressure superintendents are under than they were 20 years ago. But consider that many superintendents are playing Russian roulette with their greens. Because they're under pressure to increase green speed, they're lowering the height of cut on mowers to near-ridiculous levels and risking the greens' overall health.

They're also being pushed to maintain fairways and bunkers better. Today, some superintendents are required to mow fairways short to appease golfers, who demand tight and fast-playing courses. Superintendents are also instructed to present finely manicured bunkers with sand that's somewhere between firm and soft to provide the perfect lie.

More superintendents believe they're more prone to being fired today because of the increased scrutiny they're under to keep their courses in near-immaculate conditions. Many are also working more hours and on weekends because they're afraid not to be at their courses.

Jim Nicol, certified superintendent of Hazeltine National GC in Chaska, Minn., believes a superintendent might turn to alcohol or drugs to escape family problems attributed to working too many hours and not being at home with family members.

"Not taking off work and leading somewhat of a normal life can create problems within the family," Nicol says. "Then it just snowballs."

In his nine years as CEO of the GCSAA, Steve Mona says he's noticed that pressure on superintendents has gradually increased because golfers' expectations for improved turf conditions has surged. "I'm concerned about the rising expectations and the impact they're having on our members," he says.

In some cases, superintendents are putting pressure on themselves, Mona says. "Many superintendents admit they're constantly trying to raise the bar [on golf course maintenance], which reduces their margins for error and raises their stress levels."

That's detrimental, Mona adds.

"While superintendents are well-educated and dedicated, the fact is they don't have ultimate control over the golf course - Mother Nature and the man upstairs do," he says. "They cannot logically achieve perfection."

Dealing With It

You don't need alcohol or drugs to cope with stress from your job. Several superintendents suggest a variety of healthy activities to help deal with added pressure.

Tom Athy, certified superintendent of the Omaha (Neb.) CC, and Mona say exercise is a great stress reliever.

"I try to run on the treadmill on the days I experience the most stress," Athy says. "[The workout] helps eliminate some of the stress and helps me sleep better."

Running on the treadmill has also helped Athy lose about 25 pounds since January. "When you get older, you become more health-conscious," he says.

Mona runs daily and starts each morning with a short routine of sit-ups and pushups. "You can feel [the stress] melt away," he says of exercising's impact on tension.

Sosik says his family, including his wife and three young children, help him deal with stress after a long day. "As soon as I get home, I see my wife and kids, and I forget about what happened at work," he says.

Sosik talks to his wife, Christine, about problems at work. He says she's a great listener. "As soon as I walk in the door, Christine knows if I've got something on my mind."

(Continued on Page 8)

How Are You Coping—

(Continued from Page 7)

Puckett, 42, doesn't have a family to go home to, but he does have a mountain bike, a fishing pole and his golf clubs. Those activities help him relieve stress. Puckett says his involvement in organizations associated with the profession, including his local Florida association and a local First Tee program, help him cope with tension. He also says working in his yard is a great stress reliever, even after a long day on the course.

"You just can't go home and have a drink and think about work," Puckett advises. "That will eat you up."

Mona says the GCSAA addresses the issue of substance abuse by conducting seminars on stress management. "We teach more productive ways to deal with inherent stress rather than abusing alcohol or drugs," he says.

Ey's advice for a stressed-out superintendent who can't stop drinking is to check into a treatment center.

Blowing Off Steam?

At the GCSAA's annual conference and show, superintendents are seen drinking in bars and restaurants and having a good time. They are also apt to down a few beers during local and regional chapter meetings. So what's wrong with them blowing off steam? Nothing, answers Ey, as long as superintendents are not overdoing it and endangering others, such as by driving drunk.

There's a fine line between blowing off steam by drinking with friends in a bar and substance abuse, Ey says. The fine line is about occurrence. A superintendent is not blowing off steam if he's drinking six beers and smoking a joint every night. He's abusing alcohol and drugs and is at risk for addiction, Ey says.

Puckett says he enjoys partaking in the 19th hole after a round of golf at a chapter meeting. It's therapeutic to get away from the course and talk shop with his peers.

"We have a beer or two and talk about the common problems we have at our golf courses," Puckett says. "It's not a sit-down drunkfest."

Even though Mona says superintendents are under more stress than they were when he began as CEO in 1993, he hasn't noticed that they're drinking more at GCSAA functions.

"I don't leave our national conference saying we have a hard-partying group," Mona says. "I've noticed no increase in alcohol use."

Athy says he's known superintendents who liked their beer too much, but they later realized that drinking heavily wasn't healthy.

"They discovered that there's not much future in burning the candle at both ends."

While alcohol still plays a role in industry social settings, it isn't as prevalent as it once was, Moris says. "In the '60s, alcohol was far more accepted in our profession."

Moris is not insinuating that the golf course maintenance industry has a substance abuse problem. He shares his story because he wants to send a simple message to other superintendents: This is what can happen to you if you abuse alcohol and/or drugs.

Road to Ruin

Moris says he began drinking as a teenager to mask his low self-esteem, something that hindered him well into his adult life. Moris drank when he attended monthly superintendent meetings because he says he felt inferior in front of his more career-oriented peers.

Even though he was out drinking the night before, Moris would always be the first one to work the next morning. He also says he never missed work because of his drinking. Getting to work early and not calling off was Moris' way of convincing himself he didn't have a substance abuse problem. That was vital because he didn't want to even think about quitting drinking.

"That's the last thing I wanted to do," Moris says. "Drinking was my life."

Moris only drank beer in the early '70s, but later in the decade he began drinking more wine, vodka and martinis. He wonders if he would have "graduated" on to drugs such as cocaine if he hadn't stopped drinking.

It took a six-week rehabilitation program to convince Moris he had a problem. His advice to others who wonder whether they have substance abuse problems is simple. "If alcohol and drugs are causing a problem, then they probably are a problem," Moris says.

Moris says he was "ornery as hell" after he quit drinking on March 4, 1981. He realized he had no friends because his old friends were his were drinking partners. But after about a year of sobriety, he began gaining more confidence in himself and his self-esteem improved. Moris could look in the mirror and smile at himself, something he never did before.

In 1989, Moris formed a group within the Minnesota GCSA to help other superintendents with substance abuse problems. Moris wanted members of the association to know they could come forward anonymously to receive help.

Looking back on his drinking days, Moris realizes that alcohol nearly led him down a road to ruin.

"All the problems I had and drank to escape were always there the next day - and worse," Moris says. "Alcohol and drugs aren't going to hide your problems. They will only make them worse."

MEMBER PROFILE

SOMERSET'S JERRY MURPHY

A Classic Superintendent

By RICK TRAVER

When the editorial committee decided to start working on Member profiles for the Hole Notes one thing that we wanted to ensure was that the profile was only one page long. This was to ensure that people would read it and that highlighted superintendents wouldn't have cause to blush. To write a one page description of the following individual however, is almost a disservice, but here is my modest attempt.

Jerry Murphy, CGCS has been a golf course superintendent for over 47 years, with 40 of those years in service to the Somerset Country Club. He is a past president of the MGCSA and served on the GCSAA Board of Directors where he represented the golf industry in the development of the ANSI B71 performance standards for maintenance equipment. In 1971, he was also one of the first seven people in the United States and Canada to become a Certified Golf Course Superintendent, and he is currently the only active Certified Golf Course Superintendent who has been certified for 30 years.



MARYLIN AND JERRY MURPHY

He attended Penn State a few years later and graduated in 1961. Early in 1963 he was asked if he would be interested in a club in St. Paul, MN, and at that time he had just completed two years of a five year agreement at Aberdeen C.C., in SD., but thought it would be worth a look. Jerry said, "I was coming to the cities to play a newly opened course called Hazeltine so it wouldn't have to be a special trip, (my handicap was 3 at the time)." Shortly thereafter, he moved his family to a home located on the club grounds and has been there since.

Jerry has been married to the same wonderful lady for 44 years (Marilyn). He has two children Marlin, the superintendent of Stillwater C.C. and Tammy of Knap, Wisconsin. From those two children, brings six grandchildren - 2 boys and 4 girls, whom he loves to take snowmobiling.

When questioned about the future of our industry Jerry feels that "the stress level of people in this industry is going up." He also feels that "we may have become our own worst enemy by providing better and better turf conditions to the point where there is little else that can be done to improve conditions." He feels that, "Unrealistic day-in, day-out conditions are now expected. With more disease becoming resistant, more chemicals being pulled from the market and more legislative controls in place, perfect conditioning will become harder to accomplish."

Jerry's hobbies include hunting, fishing and playing golf. He also loves to hike in the more wild areas, like the Grand Canyon and Wild Canyon areas. He also has served for 33 years as a part-time police officer in the city of Mendota Heights, as well as being a first responder health care provider and having given many CPR and basic first aid classes.

Jerry Murphy, CGCS is the epitome of what a classic Golf Course Superintendent should be. He has gone about his life, serving his family, community and golf course, and done it for many years. We should all feel lucky we have had a man like Jerry Murphy, CGCS as a member of our local association.

"The stress level of people in this industry is going up. We may have become our own worst enemy by providing better and better turf conditions to the point where there is little else that can be done to improve conditions."

Jerry got his start in the late 1950's at the ripe age of 13 as a caddy. He rapidly moved up the corporate ladder to caddy master, maintenance crew and after two years was the "greens keeper". "I didn't know what I was doing but I worked hard and conditioning of the course back then was simple. Cut the greens at 3/16th of an inch, try to keep grass on the tees and mow the fairways a 1 fi inch." he said.

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