

# Minnesota Green Expo-

(Continued from Page 10)

insecticide issues in his first session and nuisance insect pests on golf courses in his second session. In the afternoon, MTGF president Mark Stennes made a presentation on Dutch Elm Disease, Bob Mugaas addressed integrated weed management in low input turf programs, Dr. Tredway hosted a session on the diagnosis and management of turfgrass root diseases and Dr. Vera Krishchik gave an update on insect issues and insecticides. There were additional offerings throughout the day, such as diseases of trees, shrubs and perennials, chemical and cultural control of insects and mites, principles of hardscapes design, the use of ornamental grasses, digital photography, greenroof technologies, electrical troubleshooting and futuristic plants, among others.

All in all, the 2007 Minnesota Green Expo was a huge, successful event offering something for virtually every professional in the green industry. Plans are already well underway for the 2008 Expo which will be held on January 9, 10 and 11 in the Minneapolis Convention Center. Your education committee is busy assembling a list of topics and speakers that is sure to make the '08 event even more attractive. If you have a suggestion for your committee, please contact them soon so that every possible effort can be made to accommodate your request. Although it may seem a long way off in the future, your busy season will be here before you know it and the opportunity could be lost.

By participating in the Minnesota Green Expo, whether as an attendee or an exhibitor, you are assuring the future flow of time-



Larry Thornton, center, Superior Turf Services, Inc., with new STS representative Matt Schmid and Wayzata Country Club Assistant Superintendent Jesse Trcka during the Trade Show at the 2007 Minnesota Green Expo in Minneapolis.

ly and useful information for the turf industry in this area. Please plan to attend the 2008 event. If you haven't attended in recent years, you will probably be amazed at what you have missed.



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# Peer To Peer, Better Turf Through Networking

## Question: How do you communicate to your membership?

(Editor's Note: Superintendents were asked how they communicate with membership.)

\* \* \* \*

At **Como Golf Course** we have a running projects newsletter that I send up to the pro shop and office, to post, that states what we will be doing and what we have finished in the next or last 2 to 3 weeks. It is very simple and easy to change and keep up with because as each project gets done the next is started and added to the bottom of the form. I give date of start and approximate time of finish. No commentary; just a way to contact me if they have questions. I also add any safety issues and slip in a few golfing etiquette statements now and then. I have pretty much answered the "what are they doing out there question."

- Stephen R. Dinger  
Como Golf Course

At **North Oaks Golf Club** I write a column each month, send out e-blasts over the internet when necessary and post special Attention Notices throughout the clubhouse when something has to be broadcast quickly. My first stop is always the Pro Shop so they are never out of the loop. And my aerification dates are posted on the annual calendar. When examples are available on the course, such as the mis-application of bug spray, I will post a proxy sign on the spot to inform my patrons of their damaging actions.

- Jack MacKenzie  
North Oaks Golf Club

At **Windsong Farm** the golf shop is the most important to keep in the loop. I also try to make myself available to play with the members at least once per week. I try to make it an experience where they will feel comfortable asking questions.

- Scottie Hines  
Windsong Farm Golf Club

**Forest Hills Golf Club** has a website with "open forum" site for everyone to use. I do write-ups there. Last season the club went with a new vendor for on-line tee times called "fore-tees." This site has an area for "current course conditions"

(that they can't miss when making a tee time!) that I do postings on almost daily. This has been quite effective.

- Marlow Hanson  
Forest Hills Golf Club

Here at **Marshall Golf Club** we implement and distribute to the membership a quarterly paper called the "Mulligan." This helps in relaying messages to our members about up-coming events and cultural practices we will be performing on certain days. We also have a web-site that we use for this same avenue that the members use to check menus, league schedules and up-coming events that we want them to be aware of. Remember, communication is the key.

- Kurt Hovaldt.  
Marshall Golf Club

*"If there would be an issue on the golf course I post a memo right away. I feel the lack of communication will only hurt me than help me."*

- Jeff Vinkemeier, Glencoe Golf Club

At **Glencoe Country Club** I post a newsletter each month on our web site, and also a hard copy in our clubhouse. I always feel I need to keep our membership up to date, on everything that I do for their course. So if there would be an issue on the golf course I post a memo right away. I feel the lack of communication will only hurt me than help me. And the membership has told me how they appreciate the news I give them.

- Jeff Vinkemeier  
Glencoe Country Club

I e-mail my green committee at **Somerset Country Club** at least once a month. If an issue comes up, like TAP, they will get an extra email explaining the situation. The pro shop is a part of the green committee so they are informed. Our aerification is on the calendar as well. We also have information notes at the pro shop in case people have questions. We also post things in the grill and locker rooms. We do quarterly newsletters at

SCC.

Communication as you well know is extremely important. When Hartman was coming I wrote a note on when they would be disturbing ground on certain holes. Today I e-mailed the tree chair in regard to the Emerald Ash Borer and copied it to the green chair and President. We also communicate during the annual spring and winter meetings.

- James Bade  
Somerset Country Club

In addition to the monthly newsletter at **Midland Hills Country Club**, I send out e-mails to the membership when I think it's important... construction progress, weather conditions, etc. I've heard a lot of positives when the emails go out; they like knowing what's going on with their course. I make regular stops at the Golf shop each day and swing through the dining room a few times each week during the lunch hour to answer any questions and get feedback. I also post a few things in the locker rooms. My aerifying dates are on the annual touring calendar- usually the same weeks each year.

- Ben Just  
Midland Hills Country Club

It's always a good idea to inform your Green Chair of your plans, in detail, so he/she can answer questions or respond to comments that invariably come up. Green fees are a large part of our business so communicating with them is more difficult. We give the pro shop as much information as we can and, when applicable, let the starter know if there are any maintenance procedures the golfer should be aware of. Last summer I completed a 'Standard of Maintenance' manual that answers most of the whys and whens of our maintenance procedures. Pro shop employees and interested golfers have it available. I encourage all employees to talk with golfers about course maintenance. As you know, the goal is to get the information out and hope to reach most golfers but it is impossible to get 100%.

- Tom Johnson  
New Richmond Golf Club



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Tom Proshok  
*Brackett's Crossing CC*

**Awards & Recognition Banquet**

Scottie Hines, CGCS  
*Windsong Farm Golf Club*

**By-Laws/Historical**

Thomas Meier  
*Le Sueur Country Club*

**Conference & Education**

Paul Diegnau, CGCS  
*Keller Golf Course*

**Editorial**

Jack MacKenzie, CGCS  
*North Oaks GC*

**Environmental**

Jeff Vinkemeier  
*Glencoe Country Club*

**Fundraising**

Dan Brown  
*Par Aide Products Co.*

**Human Resources**

Thomas Meier  
*Le Sueur Country Club*

**Industrial Relations**

Dan Brown and Jeff Hartman  
*Par Aide Products Co. & Hartman Companies*

**Legislative**

E. Paul Eckholm, CGCS  
*Heritage Links GC*

**Membership**

Michael J. Knodel  
*Oakdale Golf Club*

**MGA Liaison**

James Bade  
*Somerset CC*

**MTGF Representatives**

Jack MacKenzie, CGCS & Paul Diegnau, CGCS  
*North Oaks GC & Keller GC*

**Public Relations**

Jack MacKenzie, CGCS  
*North Oaks GC*

**Research**

Richard Traver, Jr., CGCS  
*Monticello CC*

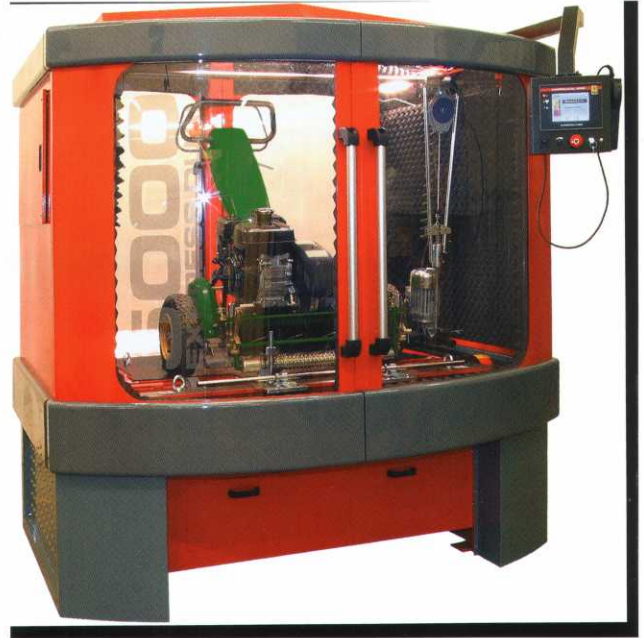
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*Windsong Farm Golf Club*

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### MGCSA Booth Challenge Winners at the Minnesota Green Expo in Minneapolis

These MGCSA members who visited all participating MGCSA Affiliate members' booths on the trade show floor during the Minnesota Green Expo won gift certificates at Best Buy in a drawing of all participants that took place at the Annual Business Meeting. Pictured from the left are, Craig Vigen, Fargo CC; Gary Rossi, Riverwood National; Jim Nicol, CGCS, Hazeltine National GC; Greg Hubbard, CGCS, Manitou Ridge GC; Scott Nelson, CGCS, Austin CC; Jeff Ische, Golden Valley G&CC; Erik McManus, Medina G&CC; Brian Boll, Interlachen CC, and Mike Ligday, Manitou Ridge GC. **The MGCSA sincerely thanks the following 19 MGCSA affiliate companies participating in the 2007 Booth Challenge:** BASF Corporation, Glenn Rehbein Companies, Green Image, Hartman Companies, Herfort Norby Golf Course Architects, Hydrologic, Lesco, PBI Gordon, Plaisted Companies, ProSource One, Pudenz Irrigation, Sports Turf Specialties, Superior Tech Products, Superior Turf Services, Sustane Natural Fertilizer, Tee Shot Marketing, Turfwerks, Twin City Seed Company, and Versatile Vehicles, Inc.

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## It's in the Hole .....

### GCSAA Approves \$19.4 million Budget

At GCSAA's December 1 meeting, the Board of Directors approved a nearly \$19.4-million budget (GCSAA-GCSAA Communications Inc. combined) designed to achieve important strategic indicators during 2007. The meeting was held on the heels of the Industry Executive Roundtable, which brought together GCSAA leaders and top executives of several golf industry companies to discuss the golf economy and opportunities for growth.

Highlighting the 2007 plan and budget is a \$1.15-million positioning campaign to reach employers and avid/influential golfers and create marketplace awareness, understanding and demand for GCSAA Class A members and the association. Funding for the commitment includes \$695,000 in funding from GCSAA's strategic reserves and \$455,000 in the annual operating budget.

#### Messages

Messages directed to employers will position GCSAA Class A members and GCSAA as representing qualified professionals who are:

- Key to the customer's golf experience
- Crucial to the facility's revenue generation
- Effective business managers
- Responsible for mitigating both expenses and risk

Messages to avid/influential golfers will position GCSAA and its members as delivering:

- Enjoyment of the game
- Quality playing conditions
- The golfer's "third place" - the main place to spend time besides home and work.

The integrated marketing plan will also illustrate to member and non-member superintendents the value that GCSAA provides, increasing demand for involvement with the association.

#### Golf Channel

Included in the 2007 positioning campaign is an \$800,000 media buy with The Golf Channel, including a first-time presence in TGC's online properties. The Golf Channel website's home page will feature a GCSAA area with links to course setup information for the week's events. The network's weekly e-newsletter will incorporate GCSAA-provided course setup information, including a link to a specially designed area of the GCSAA.org website.

#### Advertising

Additional media buys include year-round advertising in:

- Golf Business magazine (target: golf course owners)
- Club Management (club managers, owners and directors)
- Golf Inc. (golf course owners, developers)
- Club and Resort Business (club and resort owners and management - primarily golf)
- Boardroom (private club directors)

#### State/Regional Publications

The 2007 plan also calls for purchasing advertising in and providing editorial copy for the state/regional golf publications in three or four targeted markets. This pilot program is intended to support stronger relationships between local chapters and golf associations, and would be evaluated by both GCSAA staff and leadership of the chapters involved.

### The Legends Golf Club Named NGCOA Course of the Year

The Legends Golf Club in Prior Lake, Minn., was named the 2006 Course of the Year. The Course of the Year award goes to a National Golf Club of America (NGCOA) member facility with exceptional quality and superior management. The course's contributions to the game and support of its community are also determining factors. Legends qualified for the award after being named the NGCOA's "Midwest Chapter Course of the Year."



Have you tried Xango? Country Club Turf representatives enlightened attendees at the Minnesota Green Expo trade show of the benefits of Xango.



## Membership Report

January 2007

### New Members

**Brad Schulz**  
Class A - GCSAA  
Riverwood Golf Course  
Bismarck, ND  
701-222-6463

**Jeffrey Meredith**  
Class C  
White Bear Yacht Club  
Dellwood, MN  
651-429-1897

**Matthew R. S. Marzinske**  
Class D  
Mankato Golf Club  
Mankato, MN  
507-388-2546

**Jason T. Morgan**  
Class D - GCSAA  
Somby Golf Club  
Byron, MN  
507-438-3446

**Jacob Kocak**  
Student - GCSAA  
Iowa State University  
Ames, IA  
507-840-0509

**Douglas Soldat**  
Class E - GCSAA (pending)  
University of Wisconsin  
Madison, WI  
608-263-3631

### Reclassifications

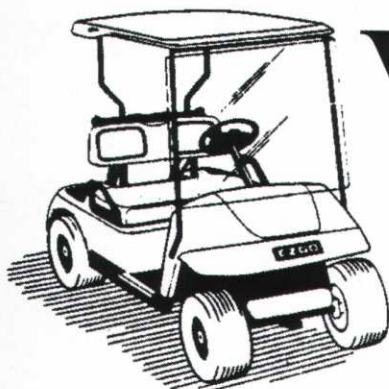
**Clifton Cline**  
Class C to SM  
Long Prairie Country Club  
Long Prairie, MN 56347

- Jeff Vinkemeier  
Membership Chair



*John Glattly, second from right, along with representative from the Twin City Seed Company representatives enjoyed exhibiting during the Minnesota Green Expo at the Minneapolis Convention Center.*

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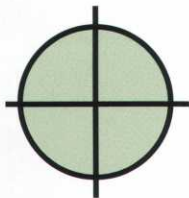
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## Minnesota in the Crosshairs **Fertilizer Prices, New Chemistries and Polar Bears, Oh My!**

By Paul Diegnau, CGCS  
Keller Golf Course



And you thought fertilizer pricing might actually stabilize or, God forbid, decline with falling crude prices? Dream on! A regional fertilizer blending company recently released this bit of dark news – urea prices have skyrocketed 45% in the last few months AND all other nitrogen products are following as well. This trend is contrary to industry predictions for this winter and spring. In the past, natural gas prices and natural disasters (Katrina being the most recent) were the strongest factors affecting nitrogen pricing. It now appears that three new players have joined the fray. They are increased foreign demand, increased domestic demand and greed.

**As our global market expands in this new millennium**, the U.S. market demand for urea is competing with other countries for the same product. Chinese urea consumption, as of late, has risen dramatically, forcing China to increase the export tax on its domestically produced urea from 15% to 30%. Consequently, U.S. import levels dropped over one million tons during the last half of 2006. India has also recently become a big player in the urea market, requiring substantially more product for its needs.

**On the home front, corn is the driving force** behind increased domestic urea consumption. Corn prices are rising due to demand from ethanol plants. Numerous new production plants are currently under construction, or will be shortly, throughout the Midwest. Estimates project an additional 7-8 million acres planted to corn in 2007, requiring an increase of 15% to 25% in nitrogen application. Corn produces more bushels per acre than soybeans so the profit potential is more attractive to the farmer. Winter wheat production in the U.S. is also affecting nitrogen supplies. Total winter wheat acreage has increased 9% this year. Increased demand is driving prices higher.

**We are all aware of the extensive corporate consolidation** that has occurred over the past 10 to 15 years. In the U.S. there are only three major fertilizer producers; POTASH Corp, Agrium, and Mosaic. Agrium now owns NuGro, Pursell Technologies, Polyon, PCSCU, Nitroform, and Nutralene. These three companies "influence" the market by changing their production levels and import levels of raw materials. They have learned over the past few years that they can sell their product at a higher price and the market will allow it. Of course, they make record profits. Capitalism - Greed...or both? You decide as you try to stretch every last penny from that ever-shrinking operations budget.

**Update:** This just in from various sources...fertilizer pricing will increase this spring anywhere from 1% - 8%. Increases should not affect early-order product. Kudos to those who placed orders in 2006.

The latest industry rags show reason for optimism when it comes to new chemistries, formulations and products for the golf maintenance industry. Here are some highlights:

**Bayer Environmental has recently obtained registration on a new broad-spectrum**, pyrethroid insecticide called Tempo Ultra. This product provides quick knockdown of many insect pests including EAB. Bayer is also waiting on registration for Lynx fungicide. Lynx is a sterol inhibitor that differs from others in this chemical class due to its reported activity on dollar spot, anthracnose and brown patch.

**Syngenta is also waiting on registration for its insecticide called Meridian.** The active ingredient, thiamethoxam, allows for a broad application window and is reported to be effective on many common turf insects including ants and grubs.

**The Andersons, together with Syngenta, are introducing a new formulation of Governor.** It is a granular Primo growth regulator and fertilizer combination product.

**Dow AgroSciences is introducing a sprayable version of Dimension herbicide.** The water-based 2EW formulation offers both pre-emergence and early post-emergence control of crabgrass and can be sprayed over landscape beds.

**BASF is rumored to be introducing a new active ingredient** at the 2007 GIS but company officials will not comment.

**Cleary Chemical claims to have several new chemistries in the works**, both fungicides and insecticides, but it will be one to three years before they hit the market.

### **WARNING! WARNING!**

*The following may contain comments or facts that may be construed as political comment*

It appears the United States Fish and Wildlife Service is examining the possible addition of the polar bear to the Endangered Species List (ESL). One would think that with such action, things look rather bleak for this beautiful creature. Maybe global climate change is taking its toll? After all, isn't Arctic ice, the hunting grounds of this animal, melting at an unprecedented rate?

Let's take a look at the contents of a 12-page report submitted in 2006 to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service by Dr. Mitch Taylor, a polar bear biologist in Nunavut territory, northern Canada. According to Dr. Taylor, polar bears evolved from grizzly bears some 250,000 years ago and developed into their own distinct species around 125,000 years ago. In his report he emphasized the adaptability of this bear over time through numerous climate fluctuations. According to Taylor, "Of the 13 populations of polar bears in Canada, 11 are stable or are increasing in number. They are not going extinct, or even appear to be affected at present." Polar bear numbers have never been higher. In the 1950s and 1960s polar bear numbers were estimated at 5,000-10,000 due to sport hunting which has since been restricted. The USFWS estimates population numbers between 20,000 and 25,000.

Dr. Taylor goes on to explain that one declining polar bear population, located in western Hudson Bay, is being used to fuel the push for a place on the ESL. But, as it turns out, hunting by locals is allowed in this region. Polar bear numbers have dropped by 259 in the last 17 years, yet 234 bears were killed in just the last five years according to the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources. Ironically, the Canadian government is currently considering raising the quota of bears harvested from Western Hudson Bay population!

"At present, the polar bear is one of the best-managed of the large Arctic mammals," Taylor said. "If all the Arctic nations continue to abide by the terms and intent of the Polar Bear Agreement, the future of polar bears is secure." Is there reason for concern over the fate of the polar bear? You be the judge.