

THE UN-COMFORT ZONE

By ROBERT WILSON

Sometimes motivation is forced upon us. We are thrust into the Un-comfort Zone. And, whether we sink or swim depends on how we respond to the situation. How do you react during a crisis?

Here are stories of two men who faced a crisis late in life and how they dealt with it. One was a restaurant owner; the other a janitor. The former went into bankruptcy at an age when most people retire, and the latter was fired from a job he'd had for nearly 20 years.

The restaurant owner enjoyed a successful business in a small town at the edge of the Appalachian Mountains. It was a great location along busy U. S. Route 25. And, because he offered the best food and service around, his eatery was jammed from sun up to sundown. But it wasn't to last.

Over the course of 26 years, the restaurant owner was honored by the state governor for his recipes; and praised by famous restaurant critic, Duncan Hines, in his column *Adventures in Good Eating*.

Then in 1956, a new super highway bypassed the little town. It's amazing the difference just a few miles can make. Two years

later the restaurant was closed and the property auctioned off to pay creditors. At 64 years old, the restaurant owner was broke.

Unable to afford the cost of opening another restaurant closer to the highway, he reviewed his assets. All he had left was his knowledge and the recipes that made his food so popular. So, he got into his car.

Town by town, he drove, stopping at every restaurant along the way. He told the owners they would be more successful if they served his secret recipes under his brand name and paid him a royalty. Two years later, in 1960, he had 400 restaurants serving his food. By 1963 he was making a profit of \$300,000 per year. And, in 1964, Colonel Harlan Sanders sold Kentucky Fried Chicken to investors for \$2 million, plus a lifetime salary of \$75,000 per year.

The janitor started his job at St. Peter's Church in London as a teenager. Over the years he married and raised a family and enjoyed a perfectly predictable profession with solid job security. That is until the new vicar came along.

It was around the turn of the twentieth century when the new vicar, a stickler for

decorum, took over St. Peter's Church. When he learned that the janitor could not read, he gave him three months in which to learn. Quite depressed by the news, the man thought it might make him feel better if he smoked a cigarette.

As he walked home, the janitor searched for a tobacco shop. There was usually one on every block, but there were none near the church. He walked block after block without finding one. By the time he reached home he knew exactly what he was going to do.

With his meager savings, he opened a tobacco shop near the church. It was an immediate success. His profits went to open a second, then a third and before long he had thriving tobacco shops all over London.

Ten years later, he met with his banker about investing his earnings. The banker gave him some papers to sign. The man asked the banker to read the papers to him, explaining that he didn't know how. Shocked, the banker exclaimed, "You are so successful, just think where you'd be today if you could read!" Albert Edward Foreman smiled and sighed, "I'd be the janitor at St. Peter's Church."

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Count on it.



CONVERTING KENTUCKY BLUEGRASS TO LOW MAINTENANCE TURFGRASS SPECIES

By Matt Cavanaugh, Eric Watkins, Brian Horgan and Mary Meyer
Department of Horticultural Science, University of Minnesota

Introduction

The cost of maintaining a golf course is increasing. Fertilizer, pesticides, labor and fuel cost involved in maintaining golf courses continue to stress superintendents' maintenance budgets. Average prices for major fertilizer nutrients reached the highest level on record in April 2008 at 228% higher than the January 2000 level, according to the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Fuel costs have risen by 269% since 1992. Water restrictions are also increasing throughout the United States and golf courses are often scrutinized for their water use as golf is thought of as a luxury expenditure. Increased maintenance costs and water restrictions have caused superintendents to rethink the proportion of their golf course that will be heavily maintained. Transitioning heavily maintained rough areas to low maintenance turfgrasses will allow golf course superintendents to reduce fertilizer and pesticide use, water use and labor costs required for mowing and maintenance.

Materials and Methods

Two locations were selected to conduct research on converting Kentucky bluegrass (*Poa pratensis*) to low maintenance turfgrasses: the University of Minnesota Turfgrass Research, Outreach and Education (TROE) Center on the St. Paul campus and Rush Creek Golf Club in Maple Grove. Five low maintenance turfgrasses along with five different establishment methods were selected for evaluation. Each turfgrass species was paired with each conversion method to create 25 different combinations. Turfgrass species include: Chewings fescue (*Festuca rubra* var. *commutata*), hard fescue (*Festuca longifolia*), strong creeping red fescue (*Festuca rubra rubra*), sheeps fescue (*Festuca ovina*) and tufted hairgrass (*Deschampsia cespitosa*). The five establishment methods include two nonselective glyphosate treatments; the first glyphosate treatment is applied pre-seeding and the second is applied post-seeding into the conversion areas. Both areas are core aerified prior to seeding. An additional conversion method utilizes the soil fumigant Basamid in which the areas are first core aerified, the soil fumigant is applied and subsequently seeded 14 days after fumigation. The final two conversion methods consist of stripping all turfgrass from the conversion site, then tilling in the top two to three inches to disrupt the soil surface and then seeding the areas. One of these areas will be left unmowed during growing season and the other will be mowed during the first growing season. During the second growing season, both areas will be left unmowed and establishment differences will be documented.

Results

During the first growing season, data collection has been based on how the different grasses are establishing in the different establishment methods. Data collected included turfgrass seedling counts, broadleaf weed counts, Kentucky bluegrass counts, biomass collections throughout the growing season, stand quality ratings, turfgrass vigor ratings and percent cover of the desired turfgrass species. The study will be replicated again during the fall of 2008, with the second round of data collection occurring during the summer of 2009.

Summary

The majority of golf course rough in Minnesota is planted with Kentucky bluegrass. The objective of this study is to evaluate methods of converting Kentucky bluegrass to low maintenance turfgrass species. Ideally, golf course superintendents with Kentucky bluegrass rough will use this information to make more informed decisions on converting to low maintenance turfgrass areas.

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MGCSA's and U of M Form New Scholarship Partnership

By Eric Watkins
University of Minnesota

The Department of Horticultural Science at the University of Minnesota is excited to partner with the MGCSA for the awarding of MGCSA scholarships. This new scholarship program will have two goals: (1) Provide current students interested in becoming golf course superin-

considering studying turfgrass science. Utilizing MGCSA scholarships to recruit high quality students into turfgrass science will be of great benefit to the future of the MGCSA.

Two students have been awarded with MGCSA Scholarships for 2009:



Scholarship recipients Nicholas Klinkhammer, left, with Joseph LeVoir.

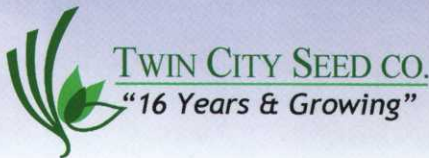
"There is a need to offer scholarships to high school seniors who are considering studying turfgrass science."

tendents with merit-based scholarships to help cover educational costs, and (2) Attract high-quality students to the turfgrass science program at the University of Minnesota. As costs associated with attending the University continue to increase, financial support for students studying turfgrass science is critical. Additionally, there is a need to offer scholarships to high school seniors who are

Joseph LeVoir is a senior in our program. He is currently the president of the Turf Club and has been responsible for the club actively participating in several events including the 2008 U. S. Women's Open, Minnesota Green Expo, University of Minnesota Welcome Week, and the CFANS Alumni Golf Scramble. Recently, Joe has interned at Lost Spur Golf Course in Eagan and Braemar Golf Course in

Edina. Joe is originally from Eagan.

Nicholas Klinkhammer is a junior in the turfgrass program who recently transferred to the University of Minnesota from St. Cloud State University. In the short time he has been at the University, Nick has already become very active in Turf Club and volunteered at the 2009 Minnesota Green Expo. During the past two summers, he has worked at Wapicada Golf Club in Sauk Rapids. Nick is originally from Sartell.



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MUSING THE MINUTES

MONTICELLO COUNTRY CLUB

APRIL 21, 2009

The MGCSA Board of Directors held a Board Meeting at Monticello Country Club on April 21.

Treasurer Paul Eckholm, CGCS, reported that dues and *Hole Notes* advertising are down from last year's pace.

President Rick Traver, CGCS, discussed a recent MTGF meeting and passed around the numbers from the Green Expo.

Arrangements Chair Tom Proshok presented the 2009/2010 monthly meeting site report. Tom is checking with Golden Valley on hosting a meeting in 2010. Winter event is a possibility. The Fall Mixer is planned for the Horse & Hunt Club. A limit to 50 people can shoot.

Keith Scott, CGCS and Oak Ridge Country Club are set to host the Awards & Recognition Banquet in December.

Turf Research Benefit Week advertisements were placed in the *Star Tribune* and *St. Paul Pioneer Press* in April (and May).

117 members have completed the Phosphorus requirement.

The Board discussed a proposed new bylaw to add Class SM and Class C to Article II, Section 3.

Diegnau presented a tentative schedule and classes for the 2010 Northern Green Expo.

The 2010 MGCSA Hospitality Night in San Diego will be held at Dick's Last Resort.

Membership Chair Jeff Ische reported that 132 members participated in the recent MGCSA Survey (*See Page 8*) and went over highlights. Notably that members like the longer format of education and the afternoon Business meeting is all right. Members would also like to see the Mini-Seminar expanded to two days since GCSAA will no longer hold regional seminars.

Diegnau talked about the GCSAA Seminars this past February. Super Tuesday could help fill the void.

Legislative Chair Eckholm watched over 100 bills and reported that no current

bills seem to interfere with our industry.

Student members must get confirmation from their school and an instructor's signature when applying for MGCSA membership.

The Board discussed a possible \$5 charge to attend the Northern Green Expo to help support a lobbyist.

MGCSA sent Eric Watkins \$3,500 earmarked for turf scholarships at the University of Minnesota. Next year's donation is undecided. There was discussion on Scholarship dollars and what should be done in the future.

The Board passed a motion by Eric Counselman to add a Class C position to the board. This will be a 2-year position similar to an Affiliates position on the Board. Class C members will vote for their own representative. This will be a position in addition to the current Board.

The next Board Meeting will be held on June 9 at Keller Golf Course.



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SUPERINTENDENT INSIGHT

Charlie Miller

Goodrich Golf Course
Maplewood, Minnesota

Goodrich is an 18-hole public golf course that is owned and operated by Ramsey County Parks and Recreation and is located in Maplewood. Originally built in 1964 as a 12-hole course, it was expanded to 18 holes shortly after more land was acquired. We are currently in the middle of construction of a new three-quarter irrigation pond to increase the GPM from 600 to 1,200 and allow a much more efficient watering schedule.

In 1987, while working as a stock broker, I needed a change of profession after the Crash of the market. Professor Don White reluctantly took me in at the U of M. I graduated from the University of Minnesota School of Agriculture in 1992 with a Bachelor of Science after 14 years of study. Along the way I played tennis for the University of Southern Florida and Hamline University. I have been involved in the golf industry in some capacity since then, working as a custom applicator of fertilizer in Chicago, soft goods delivery driver, assistant superintendent, spray technician in Tampa, Florida and on and on.

Who is your professional mentor? My mentor continues to be Bob McKinney who is the Superintendent of Mendakota Country Club in Mendota Heights. He taught me not only the job skills that were needed to perform the various tasks on a golf course but also the passion for making everything the best that it could be. His work ethic, his dedication to basic agronomic principles and commitment to the golf course success have guided my management of my own course.

Getting my job as superintendent of a golf course is by far the best thing that has happened in my professional career. It takes a combination of hard work, persistence and luck to be in the right place at the right time. I am grateful to enjoy each day I come to work and accept the challenges that position brings me.

Lowest point? While working for Scotts Company in Chicago I received a call that I had a meeting at O'Hare the next day. If you ever have a meeting scheduled at an airport it can't be good news! We were all fired in 15-minute intervals.

Challenges? My first and foremost challenge is agronomic. The soils on my course vary from bad to worse and the greens are push up, 60/40, 70/30 and 80/20. By implanting basic agronomic principles over the last two years we have seen the greens make tremendous progress and with a new pump station we hope to continue moving forward. The other challenge I faced when coming here was getting the staff to sign on to my way of doing things. Coming from the private sector into government work it was sometimes difficult to motivate staff. Only a few staff members are left from when I started and I now have a great group of people who are committed to the day-to-day standards that I feel are needed to compete in today's market.

The most difficult battle I have had at the course so far is not a turf disease but a Japanese beetle infestation that I inherited from the previous superintendent. It has been a two year battle to reduce the population to tolerable levels by using the insecticide Arena but I think this summer we will be at acceptable levels. We will be removing vines that were planted along the fence lines

because they are the food of choice for the insect.

Is it hard to find good help in your area of the state? No, between the numbers of retired friends I have at the cigar club I belong to and the number of relatives and friends that have children in high school and college I have a great staff. I have know my assistant since he was about 10 years old and he is both qualified and motivated to providing the best golf experience possible.

Where will our industry be in ten years? I see the industry moving towards more environmental pressure from both good and bad sources. The good sources will provide us with better equipment, better fungicides, and more efficient water use. The global warming cult along with the chemical/fertilizer bad group will continue to attack our industry with false claims and junk science.

Where would you like to be in ten years? Ramsey County with five years left before I retire to Ft. Myers, FL.

What is your perspective of our state association and what would you change? I think our association does a great job supplying the membership with educational opportunities along with events that allow us to share ideas, laughs and bad golf. I wish more people would come to the events and enjoy the opportunity to be with friends.

Name your foursome, who would you play with and why. My father who recently passed away because I miss him so much. My fiancé because I love being with her and she makes my game look good and Jack Nicklaus because he is Jack.

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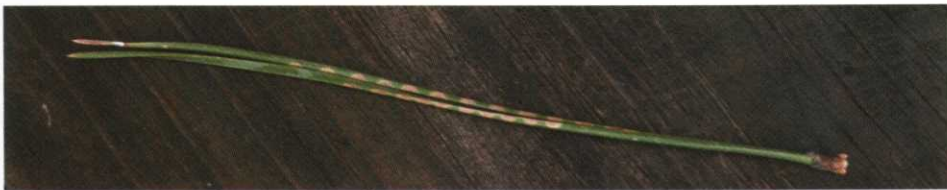
One of our early season "most wanted" for insect and disease control is the European pine sawfly usually found on mugo, Scots, red and various other pines. An infestation of these glutinous, greedy little larvae starts as a few stray larvae feeding on an inconspicuous shoot, and grows into massive numbers that strip an entire plant of its needles. Although these bugs can cause irreversible damage in a short period of time, with knowledge of the insect's lifecycle control can be easy.

Understanding this insect starts by unraveling its somewhat confusing name. When the time comes to control "sawflies," they're not flies at all. Sawflies cause real

their eggs. The pine sawfly's ovipositor is a hollow saw that cuts into the needle depositing eggs inside the plant. In the fall

"Sawflies are named for how they lay their eggs."

a mature sawfly lays eggs inside the needle, and in the spring the next generation of microscopic larvae begins to grow by eating their way out of the needle. If you look closely at a damaged plant you can



Indication of sawfly eggs on pine.

plant damage in their larval stage. They start as tiny larva, no bigger than the tip of a pen, and as they feed off the pine

"It is only after they have fed off the plant in their larval stage that they are ready to become actual flies, and at this point the damage has already been done, and it is too late for control."

needles, they grow to the size of a small earthworm. It is only after they have fed off the plant in their larval stage that they are ready to become actual flies, and at this point the damage has already been done, and it is too late for control.

Sawflies are named for how they lay



Last year's growth mostly consumed, now feeding on new growth.



Larvae feeding on previous year's growth.

see the oviposition injury and mines of eggs in the needles.

Once the larvae have emerged from the needle, options for control include: picking them off by hand, blasting them off with a hose (watch for their likely return), or broadcasting an insecticide over the host plant. Whatever the method, timing is crucial. Sawflies begin to damage plants before they are even noticeable. And to make matters even worse the most readily visible sign of sawfly infestation is plant damage. Often by the time you notice your tree riddled with half-eaten needles and sometimes completely defoliated limbs, it is time to make control plans for next year's control because the damage is done for this year. As with most insect and disease problems, the key to controlling sawfly damage is a watchful eye and a site specific pest management program.

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Life Lessons Learned While Working on the 15th Hole at York Golf Club

By MIKE HEALY
Turfgrass Pathologist

From age 11 through 22, I worked at York Golf Club. York is no more, built over by the Butler National Golf Club in the early 1960s. The hours were long, the pay low by present standards, but sufficient enough so when I entered the University of Michigan as an out-of-state student I already had enough in-the-bank savings to pay my entire way through that institution and later the University of Illinois.

When I was 15 the course offered me my first self-employment, in addition to working at the first tee and in maintenance. I became the official ball hawk for the course, having exclusive rights to find and sell all my "catch" back to the course for either \$0.09 or \$ 0.08 per ball, depending upon quality. The course had five water holes; two were monsters in terms of balls ending up in the drink. I remember mak-

ing the astronomical amount of \$45.00 in a half-hour time when I hit the "mother lode" of balls in one pocket along Salt

"A day or two later the golf course received a telephone call from an unknown person suggesting that the thief's equipment should be returned to where it was found or the golf course might end up having gasoline spread and ignited on several of its greens."

Creek.

No. 15 was a short par 4, with the main branch of Salt Creek running just in front of the long tee, and from there a spur ran to the side and in front of the shorter tee, then along the right side of the fairway, back around to the front of the ele-

vated green, and then a final loop to pass behind the green on its way back to the main part of Salt Creek. To work the Salt

Creek spur properly, you needed waders, which allowed you to kneel in 18 inches of muck while working your hands back and forth in about a foot of water. If you wanted to "feel" those submerged balls, wearing gloves was not an option. The occasional snapping turtle, broken glass bottle, and numerous leeches aside, the golf ball pickings were fantastic!

I can still smell the smoke from the 16- gauge shotgun as I fired both barrels in the general direction of the perpetrator. I had just done the dumbest thing in my

(Continued on Page 21)



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