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MGCSA President Rick Traver, CGCS, with his daughter Maggie and wife Barb. (See story on Page 5)

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Young Guns at the Fall Mixer



GREAT SHOOTING AT THE MGCSA FALL MIXER

The MGCSA enjoyed a different type of Fall Mixer this year at the Minnesota Horse and Hunt Club in Prior Lake. Members teamed up and made their way around a shooting course. Pictured above are, from the left, Mike Hoffman, Dwan Golf Club; Chris Carpenter, Frontier Ag & Turf; Jason Raabe, Dwan Golf Club; Matt Mears, Red Wing Country Club, and Jim Rienka, Dwan Golf Club. A full re-cap of the event will be published in the November/December 2009 issue of Hole Notes.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Keep Communication Lines Open at Your Course

By Richard B. (Rick) Traver, CGCS

I am very blessed at the Monticello Country Club to be able to feel a part of the club and enjoy the camaraderie of the membership. Every year at this time Monticello Country Club holds what we call the Monti Cup. We let as many members or league members sign up as want to play and we have a two-team tournament. Our golf pro (Kristi) captains one team and I the other. We usually get over 70 people to participate, and on the Wednesday prior to the event we line the players up on a sheet by handicap and have a draft. We play two person teams against one another in a scramble format for 9-holes and an alternate shot for 9-holes. Kristi and I also play partnering up with members of a close handicap. It is one of the most enjoyable events we have at our club. It is amazing to see the determination of all the members and the pride they take in who wins every year. Some brag because they have been on the winning team for several years while others are quiet because they have been on the losing team for several years, despite in both cases being on completely different teams each year. What is amazing is the fact that each year we have done this event the separation between the winner and loser is always less than two points. This event builds so much unity among the members and gives everyone the opportunity to play with people with whom they would normally never golf. We also make a point of separating husbands and wives so they are on opposite teams - it makes for some great side bets. We are able to do this because we are a smaller club but it is one of the reasons I love working at the Monticello Country Club. I personally feel it is important to stay in contact with the members so the lines of communication stay open. By the way, we held it on the 26th of September and my team won.

* * * * *

Thank you so much to Chris Tritabaugh and his staff for allowing us to golf at Northland Country Club for our Championship. It was amazing weather for Duluth. I don't know that in all my visits to Duluth in the summer that I have ever felt that warm. I have also always heard about the greens up there and the difficulty people have putting them because of the breaks toward the lake. It was a fun and unique experience to see how a putt can speed up while appearing to go uphill or on a different green not break on what seems like a huge break. Anyway, the course was fast as can be and while I didn't figure out how to hit a pitch and run until late in the round many were able to score pretty well. I was blessed to play with some great guys, including Chris and it was a very enjoyable afternoon even though my score skyrocketed.

* * * * *

The U of M Field Day was held on September 10. As I understand it they hit another attendance record. The weather was very nice for this year's event. I want to thank Eric Watkins, Brian Horgan and their assistants, all who put on a great demonstration. There were two tracts you could take, I took the turf track and was able to see all the new research and test plots associated with low input turf. It is amazing to see some of the new grass varieties and how they handle almost no irrigation over the entire summer. Low input turf is going to be the wave of the future, especially with the proposed increase in regulations on irrigation and landscape areas. If you didn't make it this year, please make the effort to schedule it for 2010. It is a great experience.

* * * * *

If you're considering running for the MGCSA Board of Directors, please contact James Bade. He can give you more information on time commitments (which are minimal) and responsibilities. It has been a great experience for me and I am sure you will benefit as well.

-Respectfully, Rick Traver

HOLE NOTES

Official publication
of the MGCSA

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HOLE NOTES (ISSN 108-27994) is published monthly except bi-monthly November/December, January / February for \$2 an issue or \$20 per year by the MGCSA, 217 Minnetonka Av. S., Ste. D, Wayzata, MN 55391. Scott Turtinen, publisher. Periodicals postage paid at Wayzata, MN. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to HOLE NOTES, P. O. BOX 617, WAYZATA, MN 55391.

MGCSA President Rick Traver is Not a Hat Guy Yet Has a Collection of "Figurative" Hats

By JACK MACKENZIE, CGCS
North Oaks Golf Club

"I'm not a hat guy," Rick Traver, CGCS and General Manager at Monticello Country Club stated quite clearly one late summer day from behind his desk at the MCC Turf Management Center. Indeed no fedoras, pith helmets nor berets, yet Rick does have a collection of figurative hats that he dons as he performs his duties as spouse, golf course manager, volunteer and President of the Minnesota Golf Course Superintendents' Association.

One could say Traver has been into golf since he "started to walk." One of his pastimes while growing up in Glencoe, Minn. was playing the game at Glencoe Country Club. As a youth, Rick alongside his six siblings, volunteered many hours working on the course. Then in the mid 1970s his father became the Superintendent and General Manager at GCC. Now Rick had a 'paid' position while he went to the University of Minnesota in pursuit of a Business Degree.

Not unlike many in our industry once bit by the golf course management bug, Rick decided that there may be a career for him on the links. Enter Steve Young, then Superintendent at Medina Golf Course, now called Baker National, who gave Traver a bigger taste of the business. For two years Rick experienced many of the nuances he would come to love, including working outside, managing people and, when time allowed, improving his golf game.

But it was over an arranged lunch with Dale Caldwell, CGCS, at Minneapolis Golf Club and Bill Larsen, CGCS currently at Town and Country Club, who was Dale's assistant at the time, that Rick received a pivotal piece of advice. If he wanted to compete and be successful in the industry he would need to earn a degree in turf management to complement his honors in Business from the U of M. Off to Penn State he went and in two years Rick obtained his second degree, this one in the green side of the industry.

The rapidly growing world of golf course management in the late 1980s opened its arms to Rick as he quickly completed his internship at Minneapolis Golf Club and moved onto a short term stint under the guidance of Pete Mogren, Superintendent at Oak Glen in Stillwater, Minn. He was not to be there for long, however, as the pursuit for the Superintendent's position at Monticello Country Club became his quest.

For the last 20 years Rick has worn the 'Superintendent's hat' at MCC. However, apparently the brim was too small in the beginning of his long term commitment, and soon he was also wearing the General Manager hat as well. Thus Rick truly followed wearing his father's hats as the Superintendent/General Manager of MCC for 18 of those 20 years! Rick thinks of himself as an empowering leader at MCC as he allows the departments with whom he works to manage their sectors independently and with limited guidance. This style has enabled Traver to pursue his true passion, turf grass management.

Monticello Country Club was not to be his only long term relationship. In the early 1990s Rick was introduced to his wife Barb, a first grade teacher, on a blind date. Thirteen years and one 12-year-old daughter named Maggie later, Rick sums his

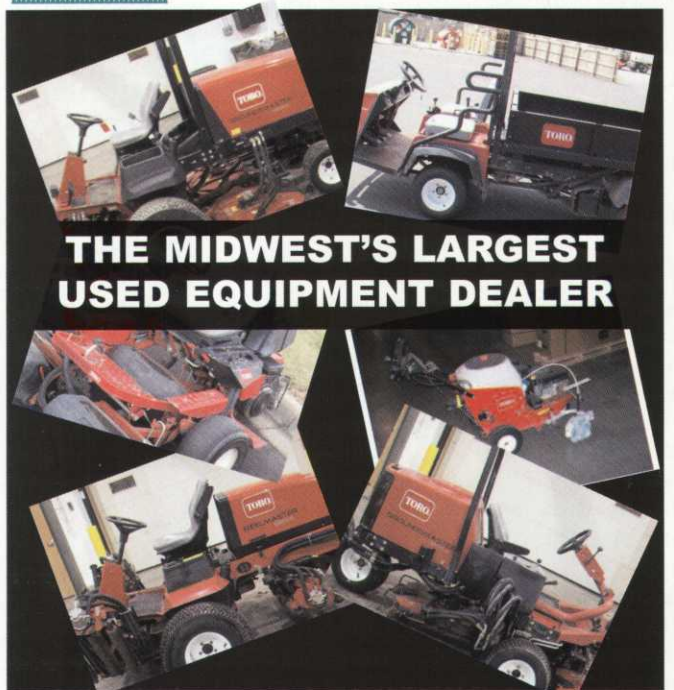
(Continued on Page 6)



Rick and Libby



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Rick Traver -

(Continued from Page 5)

marriage quite simply: "My marriage has been great. Sure there are challenges with the typical superintendent/teacher schedule differences, but family life is great. My family is my hobby."

Rick's dedication to his home life includes the usual renovation projects, inside and out, and daily tasks. He is also very busy following Maggie's extracurricular activities and growing his relationship with his wife Barb. Traver is also active at his home town church, Resurrection Lutheran, where among other volunteer actions he has been responsible as the Grounds Manager for quite some time. He just can't get away from wearing a different hat.

Yet, he has and does expand his personal horizons through a dedicated commitment to the MGCSA and the national GCSAA. A member of the state association since 1982, Rick was approached by Jim Nicol, CGCS and Superintendent at Hazeltine National Golf Club, in 1999 to participate on the MGCSA Board of Directors. Always willing to help, Traver accepted the challenge and has worked his way through the many committee chair and officer positions necessary as prerequisites to the Presidential position that he has held since 2008. "It has been a pleasure to serve with Rick on the MGCSA Board. He is dedicated, confident, and strong in integrity and character. The MGCSA leadership hat has fit him nicely," said Paul Diegnau CGCS at Keller Golf Course and Vice President of the state association.

Although not political in nature, Rick has been a consistent player and leader in the mix of MGCSA relationships for over a decade. On a national level, Rick attained his certification status through the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America in 1999. Traver cites three reasons for pursuing this accreditation; enlightenment, expansion of personal achievements and for fun.

However downplayed, Rick does indeed wear many hats, professionally, personally and voluntarily. Whether on the job, working at church, representing our association at state and national functions, managing Monticello Country Club or, and most importantly according to Rick, sharing time with his family, he is prepared to do it all with gusto. Just give him a moment to change his head gear and he will be ready to go.

(Continued on Page 9)

Dad's Hats

By Maggie and Barb Traver

When Rick comes home, he puts on his "husband hat." Besides manning the remote from his Lazy-boy, this involves many jobs around the house including managing the money, cleaning the gutters, taking out the trash, etc. One hat he never wears at home is that of chef. When it is Rick's night to cook we can count on eating out or pizza delivery. Another hat Rick never wears at home is that of "Lawn Care professional." Very early in our marriage he negotiated a deal with me that if I mowed the lawn all summer he would shovel the snow all winter. That has been a sweet deal for me as I am a teacher and I love to be outdoors as much as I can in the summer. I only question why every time Rick attends the GCSAA convention without me there is a huge snowstorm in the Midwest. Rick does get into turf mode to help out at our church where he faithfully manages the weeds, oversees the irrigation system and even mows on occasion. This summer, Rick put on his "landscaper hat" and built us a beautiful paver patio and path which we really enjoy.

When Rick puts on his "dad hat" he acts tough but he really is a marshmallow. Dad is sometimes Maggie's fashion critic. This is met with a teenage huff as she quickly lets him know what is the latest trend now and not in the 70s and 80s when he was a kid. He puts on his "teacher hat" to help with homework, especially algebra and while his method for solving the problem may not involve the "new math." He usually comes up with the correct answer. He is also an awesome story teller and both Maggie and I enjoy a good bedtime story when he reads to our family at night. While he would like to think he wears the wii crown, he has been knocked down a peg or two by Maggie in wii tennis and by me in wii bowling. He is very supportive of Maggie's activities and tries to attend her events whether that be a piano recital, band concert, choir concert, dance competition, church play, or cross country meet (he hasn't volunteered to run with her however). You would have all enjoyed seeing him put on his dancing hat or should I say shoes, when he participated in the Father-daughter dance last spring. He even gave the audience something to look at with a little butt wiggle as the group waited for the music to start.



Rick in his office at Monticello Country Club.



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Questions and Answers With Rick Traver, CGCS



positions of Secretary, Vice-president and now President.

Detail three industry issues you have watched develop and suggest how the MGCSA has addressed them or should tackle them in the future.

1) The economic yoyo we have been on since 9/11:

Whether we like it, or not, the golf boom in the 80s and 90s created too many courses and

some will need to close for the rest to be strong. How that is determined will be supply and demand on the golfer's part, and management on the golf industries part. For the MGCSA, we need to be there to support the guys/gals whose jobs are casualties of that change, and since there will be less opportunities for people to move up, we need to keep the assistants and support staff engaged in the association.

2) The green movement: This is going to be hard because many that are involved in this see us as the enemy and don't look at the facts. We need to find a way to educate them on how we are the people they want on their side and how valuable the golf industry is in recycling carbon dioxide and cooling the planet. I do believe we have done a great job of getting our message out to the golfers, but the non-golfers in many cases are not hearing our story.

3) Legislative controls: Since I have been in the industry the control and regulations on many aspects of our industry have tightened dramatically. We have seen pesticides disappear as well as tighter controls on fertilizers, but the worst is going to be if the government starts to get aggressive about controlling our use of water. Again, like the green movement, it appears that things are done for political reasons and often times the change or regulations make things worse instead of better. All we can do from an MGCSA perspective is continue to try and educate, and to make connections with our political leaders, and get more involved.

You are a husband, father, association President, General Manager, community volunteer and Golf Course Superintendent. Do you have any

time for your own relaxation and if so, what do you do?

I used to play a lot of golf. It was my hobby and my primary form of relaxation, along with watching sports or playing them. However, now that has changed an awful lot. I have to make myself play in a golf league so my game doesn't totally deteriorate. Now relaxation comes with, camping with my wife, daughter and dog, walks with the family (we are blessed in that we have a lot of county and state parks nearby), watching my daughter's sporting events, and working around the house.

Place yourself 10 years into the future. Where do you hope to be in your life timeline? Where do you hope the MGCSA will be?

Myself, I will be retired from the industry. The worst part about being the general manager is that you have to bite your tongue quite a bit, and just fight the important fights. That can really wear you down, and draw out the enthusiasm you have for your job. I will still be working, but look for me to be at Home Depot or a garden center some place. I will also be planning trips with my wife. By then my daughter should be finishing up college and we plan on seeing some of the U. S. and beyond.

As for the MGCSA, I can't see it going anywhere but up. We are a strong association with members that impress me all the time. The knowledge, diversity and creativity of the people that become superintendents are amazing. I believe that because of these qualities, no matter what obstacle is thrown in our path we will adjust and flourish.

Name one author, one politician and one personal friend whom you would enjoy touring the links of Scotland with. What would you discuss?

The author would be Pat Jones, (*I really think he says it like it is*), the politician would be Michelle Bachman, (*if she golfs but whether you agree with her or not you have to admire that she sticks to her principles*) and the personal friend would be my brother Vince, (*We have always been close and shared many golfing experiences*).

How and why did you become involved in the leadership activities of the MGCSA?

I have always believed that you should participate in your community, and while I believe that, I wasn't actively pursuing a position on the Board of Directors with the MGCSA. However, when Jim Nicol, CGCS called me 10 years ago, I felt it would be a great opportunity for me to meet more members and put in a couple years of service for our association. Little did I know my tenure would last 10 plus years - although it has been a great 10 years so far!

What MGCSA changes have you been a part of during your time on the Board of Directors?

While on the board we have seen a number of changes. We gained and lost a pathologist at the U of M. We contributed to the building of the TROE Center at the U of M. We have had some potentially great opportunities that would have had us managing some smaller courses in an effort to aid turf research with funds and an area to do the research. We have also joined forces, through the MTGF, with the MNLA to combine the turf conference, making it a bigger conference with a great opportunity for education. During my tenure as President things have been a little quieter. We have been focused on maintaining the membership as well as creating new and more opportunities to get together.

Describe your Committee participation through the years.

I have served on the Bylaws & Historical, Editorial, Membership and Research committees. I have also held the



TWO-LINED CHESTNUT BORER

By Jeffrey D. Hahn
Assistant Extension Entomologist
University of Minnesota

Damage to oaks is noticeable this time of year. People's first concern is often whether the problem is oak wilt, but two-lined chestnut borer damage is also apparent now. In Minnesota, these borers equally attack most oaks, including red, white and bur oaks, as well as ironwood trees. However not all oaks are equally susceptible to oak wilt. Red oaks are most susceptible to oak wilt while white and bur oaks are less susceptible.

Adult beetles emerge from wood in late May through July, causing characteristic D-shaped holes. They are slender, dark-colored beetles with two yellowish stripes, running from head to tail. These beetles are secondary borers, i.e. they attack unhealthy, stressed trees and do not survive in vigorously growing ones. Females lay eggs on the bark which hatch into worm-like larvae. These legless larvae



Two-lined Chestnut Borer

bore through the bark into the phloem tissue.

Their meandering tunnels girdle the branches, cutting off the flow of nutrients and water, resulting in dieback just above the infestation. Attacks generally start in the upper crown. Leaves dry quickly and turn brown. These symptoms are first apparent in late summer. If the bark is removed from dead limbs, larval tunnels can be seen. The D-shaped exit holes may also be noticed from previous infestations. These dieback symptoms may be confused with oak wilt. The only sure way to correctly distinguish oak wilt is to have it tested at a diagnostic lab. Tree infested by two-lined chestnut borers are likely to be reattacked in successive years. Trees are usually killed after several years of such infestations.



Damage to Oak Trees created by the Two-Lined Chestnut Borer.

the soil grade or water drainage pattern, damaging the bark, allowing significant amounts of defoliation by insects or anything else that may stress the tree; anything that weakens tree health encourages borers.

Insecticides are of marginal value in

"Their meandering tunnels girdle the branches, cutting off the flow of nutrients and water, resulting in dieback just above the infestation. Attacks generally start in the upper crown. Leaves dry quickly and turn brown. These symptoms are first apparent in late summer. If the bark is removed from dead limbs, larval tunnels can be seen."

protecting trees from borers. Properly timed applications in the spring can help prevent adults from laying eggs. However, coverage needs to be thorough, especially

"The best management against two-lined chestnut borers is prevention; keeping trees healthy and vigorous will naturally allow woody plants to fight off invading borers on their own."

The best management against two-lined chestnut borers is prevention; keeping trees healthy and vigorous will naturally allow woody plants to fight off invading borers on their own. Do this through proper watering and fertilizing. Also avoid compacting the soil, changing

in the upper crown or it won't be effective. Also keep in mind that insecticides do not replace good health. If a tree continues to be stressed and unhealthy, insecticides will not save it from two-lined chestnut borers.