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MGCSA EVENTS

MAY 17
Vendor Appreciation Day
Olympic Hills Golf Club
Host Superintendent: Jake Schmitz

MAY 24
MGCSA Spring Assistants' Mixer
New Prague GC
Host Superintendent: Jeff Pint

JUNE 13
MGCSA Scholarship Scramble
Victory Links GC
Host Superintendent: Curtiss Conkright

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www.mgcsa.org

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Victory Links Golf Course, an extension of Blaine's National Sports Center, will be the site of the popular MGCSA Scholarship Scramble on June 13. Curtiss Conkright will be the host Superintendent.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Mother Nature Throws a Hard Right

By Paul Diegnau, CGCS

Wow! What a spring. April was pretty much a bust. I sure hope someone turns the thermostat up for the month of May, especially for those of us looking for some recovery assistance! If your golf course was unaffected by this past winter, count your blessings. From what I have heard and observed, many golf courses in the Metro area sustained significant damage to their playing surfaces while, apparently, most outstate areas were spared. As I write this, I am confident Dr. Horgan and Bob Vavrek will have answered some of our questions pertaining to this latest round of turfgrass loss at the MGA Turfgrass Forum at the end of April. Word on the street is the Excelsior Mat was an effective cover – this year. Was there a difference in damage levels between sand-based USGA greens and pushup soil-based greens? Does L-93 bentgrass cut at green height show a greater susceptibility to ice damage than other bentgrass varieties? Did the amount of snow cover on a turfgrass surface affect its survivability following the rain event in late November? Why, in large areas of dead grass, did grass plants survive in the previous year's core holes? Was sand top-dressing effective in preventing the damage associated with this past winter? As you can see, I have many questions. I am sure that you do too. Live and learn and good luck in your recovery.

You can find a new feature for our affiliate members in this month's edition of the *Hole Notes*. Affiliate members who advertise in our publication have an opportunity to submit an educational article promoting their company, products and services. Only one vendor per issue will be spotlighted while we remain in hard copy format. Once we convert to digital, there is a possibility of multiple vendors participating per issue due to the unlimited space options in the digital format. We hope our affiliate members consider this an added benefit for advertising in our monthly publication. Members, please think long and hard about doing business with our affiliate members. Their continued support keeps us viable as a professional association. Try to return the favor whenever possible.

On another Affiliate member note, the 2011 Vendor Appreciation Day will be held at Olympic Hills in Eden Prairie on May 17. Golf, lunch, and a business meeting are planned for the day. If interested in attending, please contact Scott Turtinen at the MGCSA office.

Any promotion of the upcoming Turfgrass Research Benefit you can do with your membership or regular players will be greatly appreciated by the Research Committee. At the very least, please post the flier you received via email at your facility. The 2010 event was very successful. We anticipate even more golfer participation this year. Without the donated tee times this event would not be possible. Thank you to all of the participating clubs that generously donated tee times.

The MGCSA Spring Mixer is set for May 24 at New Prague Golf Course. Jeff Pint is the host Superintendent. This event has been established as a venue for Assistant Superintendents to gather for education, golf and camaraderie but any member is welcome to attend. I hope to see you there.

Finally, this spring and summer will be full of challenges for many of us in the industry. I think it is important to keep things in perspective as we go about our jobs. As a good doctor friend of mine always says, "If it's not arms or legs don't worry about it." Good words to live by.

- Until Next Month,
Paul Diegnau, CGCS

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.

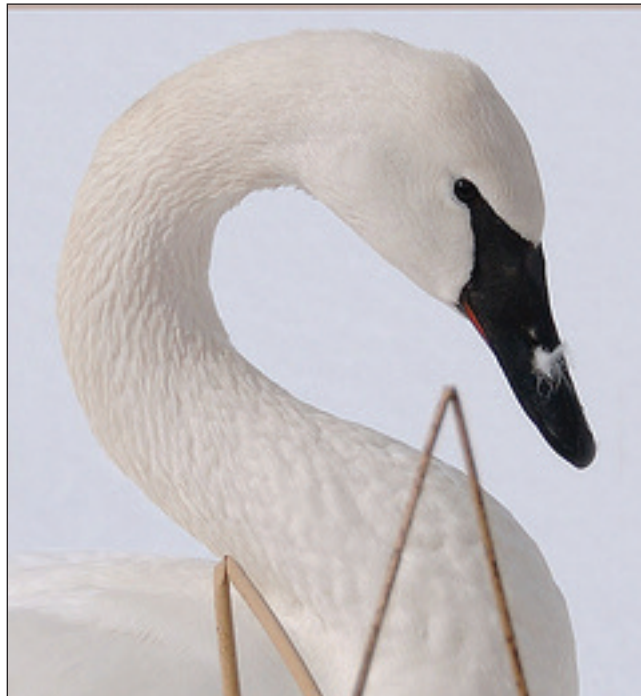
"Swan Lady of Monticello"

On Saturday, April 2, Minnesota lost one of its great wildlife conservationists - Sheila Lawrence. She was the legendary "Swan Lady of Monticello."

For nearly 25 years, Minnesotans have been privileged to watch the amazing recovery of the trumpeter swan across the state. From a population of only a few pairs in the 1980s, the number of trumpeter swans in Minnesota has increased to approximately 5,500 birds. One reason for this dramatic success story is a remarkable woman who lived on the banks of the Mississippi River at Monticello-Sheila Lawrence. Sheila and her husband Jim had a few pairs of trumpeter swans winter offshore from their home in the shallow waters of the Mississippi River for the first time in the winter of 1988-1989. Warm water discharges from the power plant at Monticello kept the water open all winter. Only 18 adults and 2 young swans called cygnets came that first year. Sheila was captivated by the beauty of the wild swans and took it upon herself to feed shelled corn to the swans and capture any injured swans so they could get the veterinary care that they needed so they could be returned to the wild.

The wintering swans showed up each fall in late November to early December and stayed in the shallow waters offshore from the Lawrence home until late March of each succeeding year. Within ten years, the number of wintering swans had increased to 360 birds, of which almost a third were cygnets. As Minnesota's swan population expanded across northern Minnesota, they still returned mainly to the Mississippi River near Monticello each winter where they would benefit from Sheila's watchful eye and daily feedings.

Carrol Henderson, Nongame Wildlife Program supervisor, has many fond memories of visiting Sheila and Jim each winter to watch the swans flying up and down the river and land gracefully prior to coming into the shallow water to eat at the feeders that Sheila had placed for them. Because of the high quality of the corn diet, Henderson believes that the swans would come through the winter in



such good condition that they probably returned to their northern nesting areas to lay larger clutches of eggs than they might have if they had survived on more sparse diets. "I think that Sheila single-handedly speeded up the recovery of this threatened species in Minnesota."

Sheila knew many of the swans individually because they were banded. In the winter of 2010, her favorite was "Number 9." This female was the offspring of one of the first pairs released by the Minnesota DNR near Detroit Lakes in the late 1980s. It was now 19 years old and was accompanied by a cygnet that it had raised the previous summer! She was a "supermom" that had been raising young for over 15 years. And Sheila could even tell you how many cygnets that Number 9 had raised in her lifetime.

By the late 1990s the trumpeter swan population seems to have reached "critical mass" in terms of spreading to new nesting areas and in successfully raising large broods of cygnets. It took a while to reach this phase of the recovery because trumpeter swans typically don't start nesting until they are four years old.

By the spring of 2010, Sheila had completed what was to be her last year of personally greeting the swans every morning throughout the winter. She had tallied a

total of 1348 adult swans and 310 cygnets coming to the river that year. What had begun as a hobby of putting a few bushels of corn in pails at the river each morning had grown to a mechanized operation that involved a grain wagon in the driveway and a long grain auger that moved the shelled corn all the way down to the river so the pails could more easily be filled and placed for the swans. Sheila and Jim were feeding from 1500 to 2000 pounds of corn per day! This not only took lots of dedication and backbreaking work to carry the pails of corn-it became expensive too.

Fortunately Sheila had lots of friends who made donations to help cover the cost of feeding the swans. Sheila was one brave and gutsy lady. Whenever a trumpeter swan showed up that was sick, carrying a fishing lure

hooked on its bill, or entangled in fishing line, she would walk right out into the river in her waders, jump on the swan, and then carry the struggling bird to shore so she could get it to a veterinarian for medical care.

The daily gathering of swans attracted so much attention that the City of Monticello purchased a lot adjacent to the Lawrence's home to create a small viewing park where swan lovers and photographers from throughout North America could gather even on winter's coldest days to marvel at the sight of more than 1500 swans gathering on the river each morning as Sheila walked among the swans to feed them on the rocky shores of the Mississippi.

Sheila contracted cancer last fall and became unable to feed the swans, so Jim took over the daily swan feeding duties on Sheila's behalf. He fed the birds throughout the winter. It is perhaps symbolic that Sheila survived until the swans returned north in spring from their winter haven at Monticello. Sheila will be missed. Over the past 23 years, you might say that Sheila-the Swan Lady of Monticello - earned her wings caring for, protecting, and helping restore one of Minnesota's most remarkable and beautiful birds -the Trumpeter Swan. - *Carrol Henderson*

Popular MGCSA Scholarship Scramble Set June 13 at Victory Links GC

Victory Links Golf Course and Superintendent Curtiss ConKright will host the MGCSA Scholarship Scramble on June 13. The golf will begin at 9:00 a.m.

Located in Blaine, the course was built in 2003 and opened in 2004. The par 71 course measures 7,092 yards. PGA Tour is credited for the design.

ConKright notes that "we were the first facility in Minnesota to be in The First Tee program and have held many junior qualifying events for the U.S. Amateur. We also hold a qualifying event for the 3M Championship."

The golf staff averages between eight and nine thousand hours of instruction mostly for kids. Golf pro Scott Roth has been recognized as a Top 50 teacher for youth golfers. Victory Links is a great place to bring your kids to golf as they pay their age to play a round.

Victory Links has six tee boxes on each hole. This allows beginners to play the course from 2,800 yards. Depending on your skill level you can play close to 7,100 yards. Outside of the clubhouse is an 18-hole, bent grass mini golf course. The putting course is a tool that our golf pro uses to teach short game techniques. Most importantly, it is a fun place to have a putting competition with your friends.



(Continued on Page 7)

Victory Links Golf Course is the host site for the 2011 MGCSA Scholarship Scramble on June 13. Go to www.mgcsa.org for more info.



WHAT IS AQUEDUCT? Aqueduct is a curative surfactant formulation designed specifically to provide rapid recovery from existing water management problems such as localized dry spot. Aqueduct can also be used as a pre-treatment tool to correct problem areas before starting a regular preventative program. It moves water deeply into problem areas, reducing water repellency and restoring the root zone's ability to regain optimum moisture levels. Aqueduct quickly reduces turf wilt and promotes recovery of stressed turf.

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Victory Links-

(Continued from Page 6)

Challenges

Victory Links is located on the campus of the National Sports Center. The turf department also oversees 50 athletic fields. The fields are a challenge because they need to be playable every day. If a project is started on a field, it needs to be finished before play starts later in the day. In addition to soccer we also set fields up for rugby, lacrosse, ultimate frisbee and football. The stadium field is home to the NSC Minnesota Stars, a minor league soccer team.

The putting course at Victory Links is also a challenge to maintain. Trees are located within five feet of the greens so when we spray we have to be careful not to hit one.

Superintendent Curtiss ConKright

Curtiss' first job was on the grounds crew at Nemadji Golf Course in Superior, WI. He worked at Nemadji for five seasons during high school and the beginning of college. This will be his eighth season at Victory Links, fifth as Superintendent. During his free time he likes to spend time with family and friends. Curtiss also likes to golf and be involved in most sports.

Assistant Superintendent Ben Wallin

Ben is starting his first season with us as the Assistant Superintendent at Victory Links. He grew up in the Nisswa area, near Brainerd and started working at The Preserve at Grand View Lodge. He spent eight great years there. Then he moved to Majestic Oaks for four years. Ben enjoys his time with his wife Stephanie and son Ethan, soon to be four. Ben also likes to hunt, fish, and golf as well as being an active in sports.

CLASSIFIED ADS

April 27
FOR SALE

Toro 5200 with 2800 hours. Sharpened and ready to mow. \$5400.00
3 almost new 11 blade reels, John Deere part #AMT2885. Will fit most pre-2008 mowers. \$300.00 for all three.
Contact: Scott Hoffmann
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April 21
WANTED

Used deck for 325/327/328 Groundsmaster. Mechanically sound, cosmetically challenged would be ideal.
Contact: Brad Zimmerman
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April 20
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\$1300/offer
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April 15
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Large amount of 730 and 750 Toro Sprinkler heads removed during renovation project.
13 Toro Osmac Controllers including

people finder unit and antenna.
15 Hp Baldor 3 phase
235-480V compressor.
5 Water Bottle cooler stations,
contact for more details.
Contact: Brandon Schindele
Edina Country Club
952-922-9012

April 11
FOR SALE

Ryan Greensaire 24, 1998.
Good Shape, needs a drive chain.
\$600 or bo. Smithco Windstar,
3 point hitch, 2002. About 100 hrs
excellent shape. \$1,400 or bo.
Contact: Daniel Baert
Pierz Golf Course
320-630-5084

April 6
WANTED

Used set of verticut reels
for Jacobsen Greensking V or VI.
Contact: John Koury
Southview Country Club
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April 4
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EZGO Workhorse, 5111 Jac
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One Superintendent's Perspective

By **JAKE SCHMITZ**
Olympic Hills Golf Club

Olympic Hills Golf Club is located in Eden Prairie. The course opened in 1970 as a 'men only' club. Five or six years later, the doors were opened to everyone regardless of gender. The course is a Charles Maddox design that features large, undulated greens.

I am currently in my 11th year in the business as a full-time employee, along with five seasons during high school and college. I have been the superintendent at Olympic Hills for the past four years. Prior to that, I was an assistant at The Minikahda Club in Minneapolis and also spent time as an assistant at a private club outside of Philadelphia, PA.

Course maintenance got in my blood in high school. I enjoyed the fast pace of the job and the improvement aspect of the course that I worked on. Following graduation from college, I started out selling insurance and financial products, and realized that was not my calling. My brother, Matt, was the interim superintendent at Milwaukee Country Club at that time, and he asked me to move back to Milwaukee to work with him. Shortly thereafter, a formal turf education at Penn State followed, and it has been a great ride for me ever since.

I still stay in close contact with my first boss, Scott Schaller, who is an exceptional Superintendent at North Shore Golf Club in Menasha, WI. Scott is extremely talented at all aspects of golf course maintenance, and I fed off of his passion and drive for

making golf courses better.

Pat Sisk at Milwaukee Country Club, and Jim Loke at Bent Creek Country Club in Pennsylvania were also excellent teachers. They allowed for sound decision making as long as I communicated with them properly.

Locally, Superintendent Jeff Johnson was instrumental in guiding me to my current position. Jeff allowed me to network with a number of people at The Minikahda Club, which really helped my communication skills and prepared me for working with a new membership.

What has been the highest point in your career?

Getting my first superintendent's job at Olympic Hills.

What has been your lowest point?

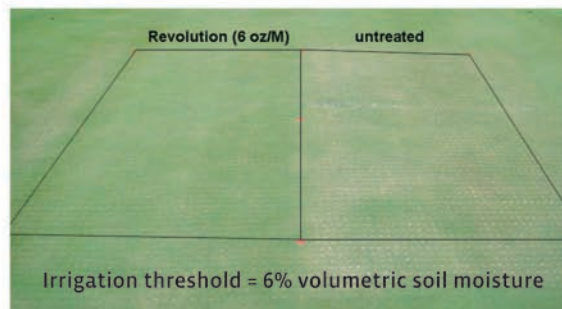
Suffering through a lot of winter damage in 2009. This was my first bout with winter kill as a superintendent, and it hit me pretty hard. There is a huge difference dealing with it as the team

(Continued on Page 9)



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Superintendent Insight -

(Continued from Page 8)

leader as compared to dealing with winter kill in a supporting role.

Are your greatest challenges political, agronomic or managerial?

It seems we are always trying to keep our neighbors happy as we maintain the golf course. Special requests are numerous, and we do our best to stay honest with them and let them know that we are their neighbor as well. At any of the other courses I have ever worked on, I never had to deal with homes that sat right on the property, so this can be a challenge. I have met some very nice people along the way as well.

What is the most difficult disease to manage on your course and how do you?

We have been very fortunate in that disease pressure has not been overbearing for us over the course of the last couple of years. Changes to our maintenance practices seem to be playing a role. Limited nitrogen and ferrous sulphate applications seem to have had an impact. We also have switched all our mowing equipment from wiley rollers to smoothies, and the turf has responded very well.

Is it hard to find good help in your area of the state?

I have a tremendous staff. Some of my lead guys have brought friends and relatives with them, and it has made for a very good team. I am very fortunate to be working with these individuals.

Do you have a dog on your crew?

Mattie, the pheasant dog and now goose chaser. Mattie is a female English Setter that I got from Erin McManus at Medina CC. What a great dog!

Where will the industry be in 10 years?

Course maintenance will continue to improve, but the tools that we use right now in terms of plant protectants, herbicides and insecticides will be highly regulated. Water use will be drastically reduced as well. However, course conditioning will stay consistent because superintendents are an extremely resilient and talented group of individuals, and we will figure out how to adapt.

Where would you like to be in 10 years?

Personally, I will be following my kids' activities and enjoying the outdoors in Minnesota. Professionally, advancement is always a good thing. Hopefully, I will still be advancing the golfing experience at Olympic Hills.

What is your perspective of our state association and what would you change?

Our association is the envy of our neighbors to the east and west, and I think very highly of the individuals who continue to guide our association. An association is only as strong as its membership, so involvement and participation is key to strengthening and growing the MGCSA.

Name your dream foursome. Who would you like to spend time with golfing?

I would actually play a five-some with my Mom and Dad, and my brother and sister. They all understand what it takes to manage a golf course and rarely does a complaint ever arise!

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Deep Thinking and Deep Irrigation Driving *Poa* Out at Northland CC

By CHRIS TRITABAUGH
Northland Country Club


One of the most positive traits we all have as golf course superintendents is that of vision. We constantly visualize what it is we need to achieve on our golf courses and we project that vision out much farther than any of our members/patrons could ever imagine. Without this vision, we would be trying to put together a 10,000 piece puzzle without knowing what the final product would look like. Visualizing the final product allows us to try different pieces until we find the right fit. My four years at Northland Country Club have seen us make drastic changes to the nature of our turf which all started with a vision. The vision was there for what the course would eventually become and allowed us to continually work towards the ultimate goal. If a practice is not moving us towards the ultimate goal, we do not spend valuable time continuing the practice.

One of the most important pieces to our puzzle has been the implementation of a deep infrequent irrigation program. Our long term goal is to manage the *Poa annua* out of our playing surfaces. When we irrigate, our goal is to completely wet our 4-5 inch sand rootzone with irrigation. We then allow the rootzone to dry down to the point when the bentgrass begins to show moisture stress before the next irrigation cycle is run. We have found that as the rootzone dries, it dries from the top down. During the summer months, within just two to three days the rootzone has dried past the point of the *Poa annua* roots while the bentgrass roots still have access to plenty of moisture. Managing our irrigation in this manner gives bentgrass a tremendous advantage over *Poa*. We have found 60 minutes per head to generally be the runtime we need to achieve our desired wetting of the profile. The wetting


of the profile is helped by venting the surfaces every two weeks with .220" tines, as well as breaking up the 60 minutes into 3-20 minute cycles. We manage our putting surfaces in this manner without the use of a wetting agent.





While using a deep infrequent irrigation program has worked very well for us, we continue to use our long-term vision to analyze the program and make adjustments. We analyze the results, measure those results against current practices and find ways to tweak said practices with the goal of achieving better results. This summer as we analyzed our management practices on greens and measured the results being achieved when it came to bentgrass, we noticed our driest greens were also the greens with the highest percentage of bentgrass. While all of our management practices are aimed at

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Superior Turf Services, Inc.



WINTER REPAIR TOOL BOX				
<div style="background-color: #e91e63; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> Country Club </div> <div style="background-color: #e91e63; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin-top: 5px;"> 10-18-18 Greens Grade 13-25-12 Mineral </div> <div style="background-color: #e91e63; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin-top: 5px;"> Superior Organic </div> <table style="width: 100%; font-size: small; margin-top: 5px;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; padding: 2px;"> 8-2-10 Plus Greens & Tees BEST PERFORMANCE </td> <td style="width: 50%; padding: 2px;"> 14-0-7 Greens, Tees & Fairways FAST RECOVERY </td> </tr> </table>	8-2-10 Plus Greens & Tees BEST PERFORMANCE	14-0-7 Greens, Tees & Fairways FAST RECOVERY	<div style="background-color: #e91e63; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> SPRING SEED RESEARCH 2011 </div> <div style="background-color: #e91e63; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin-top: 5px;">  FAST ESTABLISHMENT TOP QUALITY </div> <div style="background-color: #e91e63; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin-top: 5px;">  TRANSITION Dark Turf Colorant for Seasonal Growth Transitions </div> <div style="background-color: #e91e63; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin-top: 5px;"> VigaROOT Fast Establishment and Recovery </div>	<div style="background-color: #e91e63; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">  </div> <div style="background-color: #e91e63; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin-top: 5px;"> Multi-Purpose Plus Speeds Recovery and Germination </div> <div style="background-color: #e91e63; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin-top: 5px;">  </div> <div style="background-color: #e91e63; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin-top: 5px;"> Improved Establishment </div>
8-2-10 Plus Greens & Tees BEST PERFORMANCE	14-0-7 Greens, Tees & Fairways FAST RECOVERY			
GENETICALLY SUPERIOR BENTGRASSES FROM THE WORLD'S MOST COMPLETE BENTGRASS PROGRAM				
For Superior Turf Services, Call:				
LARRY THORNTON 612-804-1692	MATT SCHMID 612-366-4128 Fax: 952-949-3889	DOUG ZOBEL 952-201-9499		