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## Norby Elected Associate Member of the ASGCA

Chaska-based golf course architect Kevin Norby has been elected an Associate member of the American Society of Golf Course Architects. According to ASGCA Membership Director Aileen Smith, he becomes one of only 175 ASGCA members worldwide. Norby is now the only member of the ASGCA located in Minnesota. In fact, according to Smith, there are no other members headquartered in North or South Dakota, Iowa, Montana, Wyoming or Nebraska.

The recognition comes following a rigorous application process that includes review of four completed courses by current ASGCA members, discussions

with project owners and a personal interview. It typically takes two years for an applicant to complete the process.

“It’s a great honor to be recognized by other golf architects and accepted into the Society,” Norby said.

Norby started his career as a land planner and landscape architect in 1976, but he didn’t discover golf course architecture until 1990, when he met Don Herfort, a Minnesota based golf architect and ASGCA Fellow. Don Herfort had suffered a heart attack while designing improvements at Superior National Golf Course in Lutsen, Minn. and Norby was asked to help finish the project.

(Continued on page 28)

# On Board: Q & A with a member of your BOD

*How are the increases in fuel costs effecting your operations?*  
**Jake Schmitz, Superintendent at Olympic Hills Golf Club**



We currently utilize Yocum Oil for our gasoline and diesel needs. In 2010, Yocum rolled out contract pricing on both gas and diesel, where they allowed us to lock in at a set price for the quantity we desired. In 2012, contract pricing was not available for gasoline due to high volatility in the markets; however, this service was offered for diesel, and we locked in at a set price for the quantity we will consume. This has worked well from a budgetary standpoint. In 2010, this strategy was very beneficial financially. In 2011, this same strategy cost us a few dollars - the price of fuel was lower than the contract price. This is the risk of purchasing contract fuel.

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# On Board: continued.

Jake Schmitz continues...

Battery operated machinery, along with natural gas powered vehicles, will more than likely be a reality in the not too distant future. It will be very interesting to view the impact that national drilling has on the price of oil. National production with less reliance on foreign oil is definitely a positive, yet it does not address the issue of oil being a non-renewable resource. Fuel costs definitely make one callous to how much is truly being spent to power vehicles. In 1997, when I was filling my Honda Accord

at \$0.94 / gallon, I would have never entertained the idea of paying close to \$4.00 / gallon. I guess we make due and become accustomed to the changes. Will we ever see \$3.00 gas again? I highly doubt it. While greed plays a prominent role in fuel pricing, Americans will continue to pay for the benefits of having their own set of wheels. Likewise, golfers will continue to expect grass that is mowed and a golf course that is tidy. The rest comes down to smoke and mirrors... where can we shave costs without sacrificing quality.



*How are the increases in fuel costs effecting your operations?* **Bill Gullicks Superintendent Bellwood Oaks Golf Club.**

Over the last couple of years fuel prices have definitely affected

our operations and budgets. With superintendents already being asked to cut budgets, this is another hurdle for them to overcome. Every superintendent looks at it in a different way and each develops a

game plan on how they can address the issue to keep their facility operating to the clubs standards.

A few years ago when fuel prices were on the rise we researched locking in fuel prices for the season. It seemed to be the thing everyone was doing at the time. We found pricing we were comfortable with and decided to lock in. It ended up being a good move for us as we saved a considerable amount of money. The following year we did the same



and thought we had locked at a good price, but ended up getting burned. It's a difficult position to be in when you're rolling the dice with the clubs money. The last two years we have been purchasing fuel at the current price levels, as there have not been the extreme ups and downs in fuel pricing.

Due to fuel prices we have also looked into labor as it relates to equipment operations. Labor directly relates in a lot of ways to fuel use. We have looked closely at our mowing schedules, patterns and routing. One example of this would be our fairway mowing. From three years ago until now we have cut our mowing time

by 18%, which means 18% less: fuel, hours spent on equipment and labor. This was achieved by changing mowing patterns and routing which mower mows certain holes.

I feel the days of \$2 something gas is in our rear view mirror. It's not very often something goes up in price and then returns to the original price. We need to accept our fate and look for ways to become more efficient in our use of fuel. Whether it is in the way we maintain our golf courses or the choices we make when purchasing new equipment. As with any other part of our budgets it all goes back to watching the bottom line.

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The MGCSA wishes to thank Reinders, Inc for their cosponsoring with the Minnesota Golf Association the program Turfgrass Heat Stress: Problems and Solutions seminar held April 25 at Midland Hills Country Club and hosted by Superintendent Mike Manthey. Three industry specialists, Dr. Brian Horgan, USGA Regional Specialist Bob Vavrck and Dr. Jim Kerns from UW Madison shared their research and insights in the turf industry. Over 100 individuals were in attendance from General Managers to Club Presidents to Pros.





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(continued from page 22)

For the next 10 years, Norby worked with Herfort, and was responsible for more than 80 projects throughout the central United States, Canada and the Caribbean. Herfort passed away in 2011. Today Herfort Norby is located in Chaska, Minnesota and specializes exclusively in the design of golf courses and long-range master planning for golf courses.

For his application to the society, Norby included:

- The Preserve, recognized in 2009 by Golf Inc. as the Best New Course of the Year and by Golf Digest, Golf magazine and Links magazine as top 10 best new course of the year;
- The Refuge Golf Club, recognized as one of the top public courses in Minnesota, and commended by the

Department of Natural Resources for the design's environmental sensitivity;

- Greystone Golf Club, Sauk Centre, Minn., completed in collaboration with PGA Tour professional Tom Lehman;
- Boulder Pointe Golf Club, Elko, Minn.

Herfort Norby Golf course Architects currently has projects underway in North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota, Wyoming and Colorado. A new 9-hole course at Rush Creek Golf Club in Minnesota is scheduled to open in May of 2012 and a new driving range and short-game practice facility was recently completed at the Minikahda Club in Minneapolis.

**Bobby Jones, The Minikahda Club, 1927**

**Midland Hills (Roseville), 1919**

**Jack Nicklaus, Woodhill (Wayzata), 1959**

**1933: Patty Berg, 14, at Edina Country Club**

**1940: Rochester's A.W. Tillinghast-designed course's first tee area.**

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# Within the Leather

by David Kazmierczak CGCS

I had the privilege of attending the MGCSA affiliate

appreciation day recently, and was able to address the group concerning this magazine. I would qualify the encounter as a success, with more than a few members talking to me afterward expressing the desire to submit articles for Hole Notes. I had never been to the affiliates meeting before, so the thought of that many “salesman” in the room with me, one of the few superintendents, initially sent a slight shudder down my spine.

OK, I’m kidding. I truly am at ease talking to anybody about anything. However what did cross my mind as I drove the hour or so from Waconia back to Woodbury was could I ever envision myself stepping into those shoes- the shoes of supplier to the turf industry.

The truth is that if you polled the affiliate members a majority of them would tell you they did just that. They started out working on the golf course in some capacity and for whatever reason decided to take the supplier path as a means to earn a living. I have always had a sense that some in the industry look down upon that, and it is a concept I never really understood. Suppliers are here essentially for two reasons- earn a living, and help us. The more they help us get our jobs done, the better they are able to realize their own business. Seems pretty cut and dry, and who would be better

served to help you in a time of need than somebody who might have gone through similar experiences in the past.

I started my journey home, and quickly came to the conclusion that I could handle the job of being a sales representative just fine, as I slowed to avoid a tractor, just before turning onto Highway 212. Heck, I have the gift of gab and everybody loves me. I’m well organized, resolve conflict well, and am well rounded. My turf knowledge is immense. I have all the answers when our members or neighbors ask me stupid questions. Yes, I would be a natural.

But as I cursed the Audi that cut me off in Eden Prairie, I started thinking about some of the suppliers I know and what it really took for them to be successful.

First of all, I guess I would have to get used to the word no. As in: “No I don’t have time for you,” and “No I don’t need any right now,” and “No, I already ordered it from Joe Blow an hour ago.” Considering my love for the word in the form of “No I’m not going to stay on the cart path,” “No, you can’t topdress it’s ladies’ day,” and “No, I can’t make it in this weekend,” I guess I would put that in the “Something I have to work on,” category.

And as I came to a screeching halt in Bloomington in the middle of a highway designed to move vehicles at 70 miles per hour, not five, there would be the issue of travel. Lots and lots of travel. I suppose I would have a nifty company vehicle to drive around in, but not to get too comfortable with. Seems I would be trading it in every couple years because it will be worn out. Kind of like the guy who is driving it.

As traffic picked up I started thinking those two hurdles would be tougher than I first