

## What Are You Going To Do?

by Mark Merrick, CGCS

You are walking around the golf course on a cold frosty morning in February, when suddenly you feel shortness of breath and a little dizzy. In a few seconds it passes away, so you continue walking. All of a sudden a pain of tremendous proportion hits you in your chest and drops you to your knees. The pain is so severe that you can't just about speak and you definitely can't get to your feet. What are you going to do next?

All of my life I have been very active and hard working. I enjoy getting into the trenches and getting dirty. Walk spreading materials has always been a job that I have enjoyed. I assumed this was great exercise. Basketball and indoor soccer have been part of my adult life. All of these things gave me the false assumption that the 43-year-old person staring back at me in the mirror, still looked and functioned as a 23-year-old. Now I find myself kneeling in pain and wondering why?

I was a fortunate heart attack victim.

My assistant was there, called 911 immediately and my crew carted me to the maintenance building. They deserve a lot of thanks for reacting quickly. (Apparently those once a year first aide talks with the crew really work). I was friends with the paramedics who came to pick me up and work on me. Those community functions that we are all told we need to get involved with, really paid off. I work five minutes from a major hospital. It was 8:30am and all of the doctors and nurses had shown up for work. No one was in the one and only heart operating room.

As images of family passed through my mind, I knew I was dying. How can this be happening to me? What is my family going to do? That job that you have devoted your life to, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week now means nothing. Oxygen, aspirin, I.V., nitroglycerin and morphine are thrown at you to keep you going. You are now being prepared for major surgery. They cut the main artery in your leg, blow a balloon up in your heart, stick a screen in the artery and the pain is gone. Then they show you how old you

really are and explain why. Time passes by all of us so quickly. The older you get, the more devoted to taking care of yourself you have to be. As most men do, I believed that I was indestructible. "Old age hits around 80, that's when someone will have to take care of me". I quickly found out that I need to take care of myself and it should have started long ago! My long list of doctors started to explain it all to me, things that are so simple, all within reach and easily done. This is why I tell this story. No matter how old you are, you could be me, on the ground and wondering what you are going to do next. Do the simple things now and avoid being put at risk.

SEE A DOCTOR AT LEAST ONCE A YEAR! This is so simple and painless. Get blood work done to check for cholesterol levels and get an EKG. If your doctor does not do this, DEMAND IT BE DONE! What are you and the insurance company for? It's your life. You and the doctor need to be more respectful of its needs. While you are there, demand that you get a sonogram of the arter-

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**Heart Healthy,** *continued from page 9*

ies in your neck. This is so simple, painless and it tells you if you are at risk for a stroke.

If you smoke cigarettes, cigars or chew, STOP! plain and simple. You are cutting off oxygen to your blood and slowly shortening your life. There are many ways and means out there to help you stop if you can't on your own. You know what they are and where to find them.

EXERCISE at least every other day for twenty to thirty minutes. Not walk spreading some fertilizer once every two weeks. Not playing an adult sport once a week. Run, fast walk, or aerobic exercise. Break a sweat and get your heart pumping for twenty to thirty minutes every other day. Look at what you are shoving into your mouth. CONCENTRATE ON LOW FAT PRODUCTS. There are so many wonderful foods out there to eat. Take the time to read the labels. You read them before spraying. Fruit, vegetables, fish, skinless chicken, rice and beans are all good for you. Frying anything is not! When you are full, stop shoveling it in your mouth. You don't need to go on some special diet plan unless you need ev-

erything written down.

STOP THE STRESS! Easily said, but not done in our jobs. There are many ways during the day to ward off the stress that produces cholesterol and high blood pressure. Walk the golf course. Chair exercises if you are in the office. Laugh it off and remember that it's only a job. When you are dead and gone, that place will still be there and only the faces will have changed.

You are walking the golf course on a cold, frosty morning in February. Suddenly you feel at ease. You smile knowing that you have control over your life and that you are doing everything that you possibly can to keep from falling on the ground and clutching your chest.

*Mark Merrick, CGCS is the Golf Course Superintendent at The Elkridge Club in Baltimore, MD.*

**Golf Notes**

MAAGCS 2000 Player of the Year, Rick Wakefield, CGCS, won 3rd Place in the Championship Flight during the GCSAA Golf Championship in San Antonio, Texas. Other MAAGCS winners were:

Ed Brown	3rd Gross - 1st Flight
Sean Remington	1st Gross - 3rd Flight
Dean Graves	1st Net - 6th Flight
Mike Evans	3rd Net - 6th Flight
Dan Pierson	2nd Gross - 7th Flight
Tom Tuttle	1st Gross - 8th Flight
Paul Masimore	2nd Gross - 9th Flight
Charles Hall	2nd Net- Super Senior

The MAAGCS Chapter Team of Dean Graves, Mike Evans, Paul Masimore, and Tim Sage placed 7th in the Net Division. One hundred and thirty three teams competed this year in San Antonio.

Two Ball Teams

Net I	Rick Wakefield, CGCS Terry Smith	7th
Net II	Matthew Masemore Matthew Fauerbach	10th
Net III	Sean Remington George Renault III, CGCS	2nd
Net IV	Mike Evans Paul Masimore, CGCS	8th

Four Ball Teams

These MAAGCS members participated on four ball teams.

Net I	John Kotoski, CGCS Richard Sweeney	2nd
Net II	Matthew Masemore Matthew Fauerbach	3rd
Net III	Sean Remington George Renault III, CGCS	6th
Net IV	Tim Sage	7th
	Mike Evans Paul Masimore, CGCS	8th

Congratulations to all the winners!!



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