



CHICAGOLAND ASSOCIATION OF GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENTS

Verdure Newsletter

November 2006

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Jon Jennings, CGCS
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President
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Treasurer
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Upcoming Events

Chicagoland Meetings:

December 6, - Christmas Party with the Wives – Shoreacres Golf Club,
December 7, – Bob O' Link Golf Club, (Budget Meeting)
January, Date TBA – Shop Tour
February – No planned meeting
March – Annual Meeting

Tim Davis,
Rick Bowden

22nd Annual Forum

Dan Dinelli did a terrific job preparing the 22nd Annual CAGCS Forum at Naperville Country Club. An all star line up of speakers covering a variety of topics kept the group riveted throughout the session. Dan arranged with GCSAA to award .6 Education Points at the conclusion of the day.

We had a great turnout given the mild weather. President Bowden welcomed everyone and made the official presentation of the Founders Cup trophy to our 2006 Champion, Chuck Anfield. Following the presentation and some brief announcements, the education got underway.



Bill McMahon of the McMahon Group was our first speaker of the day. Bill offered his insight on identifying deficiencies at your facility and how to sell projects with success. *“Be sure to utilize pictures and video to illustrate the need for projects. Clubs that step up to a renovation are very often a catalyst for other clubs to get work underway or at the very least, review their own facilities.”* Bill also stated that there are a number of relatively painless ways to finance projects at clubs ranging from one time assessments to financing over a longer period of time The McMahon Group says that private clubs need major clubhouse renovations / addition every 7 to 10 years. Golf courses seem to need major upgrades every 20 years. If these areas wear out or decline, usage declines resulting in lower revenue streams. He stressed the importance of maintaining a balance in these areas for a club to be successful.

Kris Bachtel of the Morton Arboretum was the second speaker of the day. Kris spoke at our August meeting focusing on the Emerald Ash Bore and as always, it was a pleasure listening to him give updated information regarding this pest. Superintendents need to plan now for replacement trees from damage from the Emerald Ash Bore. The potential for broad area cutting in Illinois more than likely would not take place as was previously believed due to lack of funding. That means there will be no mandated cutting. At this point in time, there has been a loss of 15-20 million ash trees in Michigan as a result of the Emerald Ash Bore.

Studies have shown positive results from a heavy drench application of Merit in the spring prior to the emergence of leaves. This is about 95% effective in trials. You should assess key trees that are to be protected and treat trees that will create detrimental voids if they were to perish. There is a possibility a natural predator may come in and act as a deterrent for the ash bore. As mentioned earlier, Kris stated that State and Federal authorities are not planning to step in; however, local municipalities may make mandates based upon the level of infection.

Be sure and evaluate your golf course to make sure that it is not over planted with any one variety of tree. Diversity is the key to assure you won't have any problems in the future. A good rule of thumb is not to have more than 10% of a single species, 20% of a single genus and no more than 30% of a single plant family. Trees should be planted at a minimum of 50 feet from each other or 40 foot spacing if planted in groves to maintain adequate turf and for the health of the tree. Be sure to look for girdling roots when planting. Girdling roots will strangle a tree over a period of time.



Doug Myslinski of Jacobson Golf Course Design gave a presentation entitled “*Plan to Improve the Playability of Your Golf Course*”. Doug had some of the best examples of computer generated pictures depicting the changes that can be performed on a course. By offering visual images of projects, members have a much better idea of what a project will look like before the first shovel is lifted. A common vision is created and understood. This way, any changes can take place ahead of time eliminating costly in field changes. Doug figured that 15% was a safe number to build into a project for contingencies. The computer generated pictures allowed the viewer to see the transition from existing to completed project in a matter of seconds.

Colleen Schueneman and Richard Borek offered advice for personal financial success. Saving now is essential for a comfortable retirement. The earlier you start; the better off you will be in the future. However, it is never too late to start saving. An important factor to remember is the power of compound interest. If you save \$250 / month while earning 8% annually until age 65, you will have \$878,570 from age 25, \$375,073 from age 35 and \$148,236 from age 45. Again, the point here is to start saving early. A great way to figure out what today’s earnings will yield in the future is to utilize a compound interest calculator. The following web address will offer insight on where you are today and where you will be down the road.

www.moneychimp.com/calculator/compound_interest_calculator.htm

Another good tool is the Social Security Calculator. You may enter the information and view the benefit in either today’s dollars or inflated future dollars. <http://www.ssa.gov/OACT/quickcalc/index.html>

An interesting observation is in approximately 25 years from now is that you will need almost double the amount of money from today’s dollars.

Tom Lively, CGCS of Medinah Country Club and Jon Jennings, CGCS from Chicago Golf Club picked up the presentations following a terrific lunch. Tom started with a recount of the preparation for the 2006 PGA Championship. Tom walked us through the planning, set up and restoration involved with the event. Tom stated emphatically that he thought all of the greens should have been re-built to eliminate the discrepancies between the native soil and USGA greens during periods of inclement weather.

Jon offered a review of the 2005 Walker Cup Matches held at Chicago Golf Club. The event was not anywhere near the magnitude of the PGA Championship, however a great deal of planning went into it nonetheless. Both gentlemen discussed the weather and how it affected play when the courses became wet. Overall, it was nice to hear about the experiences of Championships held in our area.

Dr. Derek Settle of the Chicago District Golf Association gave an update of continuing research in the Chicagoland area, specifically, dollar spot. The periods of combined heat and humidity this season made for some relentless dollar spot, especially on fairways. Derek stated that dollar spot in the late fall over-winters in the thatch and rears its ugly head the following spring. The fungicide, Emerald has shown to offer very long systemic activity at the low rate of .13 oz/m. Dollar spot has a tendency to hit poa annua first. At the low rate of Emerald, you can delay dollar spot. Derek suggested applying a DMI fungicide on both ends of the season and contact fungicides during the main part of the season. The more water you can get out per acre the better. Derek suggested to try and spray around 2 gallons/m.



Fairy ring was quite active this season as well. Bayleton will prevent fairy ring if it is applied for dollar spot. You do not need to water it in. Applied at the 1 oz. /m rate on June 1, July 1 and August 1, fairy ring occurrence was non-existent. Applying it with or without a wetting agent made no difference in the effectiveness.

Paul Vermeulen of the United States Golf Association was the closer for the day. Paul offered insight on the importance of proper construction and doing the right thing in terms of renovation without compromise. Paul said that it is essential to review an area prior to renovation and remove any factors that may be a detriment to the project's rate of success. *"Identify key elements of the site whether it be limited light or poor drainage. Be sure to educate the audience of the factors ranging from good to bad and discuss the entire spectrum of the project ahead of time so everyone is aware of what will occur and what to expect."*

Minimum Wage Hike Given the Green Light

The Democratic-led House approved a dollar an hour increase last week in the states minimum wage. This would lead the way to an increase from the present \$6.50 an hour to \$7.50 an hour effective in July 2007 with subsequent increases bringing it to \$8.25 an hour by 2010. The legislation would make Illinois' minimum wage the highest in the nation. What does this mean for us?

As employers of many hourly workers, we are faced with hiring new employees at \$1.00 an hour more than this year. But there is more to the story. Rising tides raise all ships. The \$1.00 an hour increase will potentially raise the wage of other employees that are making more than the minimum wage. Why do you ask? Because the margin becomes closer between skilled and unskilled workers if you do not raise other wages. Think about the wage earner that has been employed under your direction for a few years. If for example they were hired at minimum wage 3 years ago and had pay increases of 3% a year, they are now earning \$7.10 an hour. If you do nothing other than match them with the minimum wage increase, they are making the same \$7.50 an hour as someone with lesser experience.

Now some will be saying we don't start people at minimum wage; the impact will be less on our operation. True, to some degree. However, the gap narrows with the \$10.00 an our person the same way. Hard work and experience is rewarded with pay increases from the period an employee starts working for a company. That employee is aware of the starting wage associated with a new hire. Their reward for hard work is diminished when the pay gap closes in from the bottom.

How About the Change in Weather?

Here is what our West Coast friend Bruce Williams, CGCS has to say about the benefits of living in California, *"I love the changing of the seasons.....but it is better to watch it on TV. I can drive two hours and ski, play golf 365, and swim in the ocean about 9 months of the year.....all that with only 4 days in the 90's usually and about 4 days of frost! Yes, it is crowded here but the weather is unbeatable"*.

Following very uncharacteristic weather for the end of November, our staff has been scrambling at Chicago Golf Club to finalize our preparations for winter. Laying sod a week ago has now turned into disassembling golf supplies and cleaning equipment. We try to accommodate play on the course as long as possible even though the majority of players are not utilizing the facility. We had 12 cars here on Thanksgiving morning as players got in a few holes before going home for dinner.

Word on the street is this will be the final year for PCNB. Given that bit of information, we applied our potentially last spray of PCNB in two split applications of 5 oz./m each. Split applications are made so we are assured there will not be any skips on the fairways and tees. We sprayed Instrada on greens this year for the first time. Instrada's chemistry is nothing new. In fact it is a combination of Chlorothalonil – 29.9%, Propiconazole – 4.7% and Fludioxonil – 1.2%.

We applied the product at the full label rate of 11 oz./m prior to snowfall. We also mixed Transfilm anti-desiccant at a rate of 7.3 oz./m with the spray to be sure that it was stuck to the leaf as well as protect the turf from the onslaught of wind once the snow cover recedes. I am glad we made applications of the higher rates of product given the weather of last week. We received 2.6 inches of rain Wednesday November 29 before it cooled off and began to snow. On top of the saturated unfrozen ground now sits 8 inches of snow cover. The low angle of the sun and reflective nature of snow prevents any appreciable melting in the immanent future. This is perfect for snow mold to occur. Time will tell what happens, but in the mean time, we will hope for the best.



Paul Vermeulen Leaves USGA

Our Mid Continent Director for the United States Golf Association and friend Paul Vermeulen is leaving us for greener and warmer pastures. Paul began a new chapter in his life December 1 with the PGA Tour as the Director of Agronomy. Paul will be relocating to Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida where he undoubtedly will no longer have a use for his snow shovel, unless he lends it to Fred Klauk at TPC Sawgrass to push aerification plugs. His travels will take him to courses that host PGA Tour events throughout the year. Paul will be missed in our area for his honest opinions and unbiased candor during visits. Thank you Paul for all you have done for us during your tenure in Chicago.

Host a CAGCS Meeting

Planning for the 2007 season has begun and we are looking for venues to host monthly meetings. We have been fortunate to have been provided with some fantastic venues to hold our meetings the last couple of years. It does not take a lot of effort to host a meeting and is very rewarding. Please consider hosting a monthly meeting at your facility. The meetings consist of cocktails, dinner and valuable roundtable discussions. If you are interested in hosting a meeting or would like to obtain further information, please contact Dan Marco, CGCS either by telephone, (630)986-4476 or via email ruthlakecc@aol.com .

Web Site

The Chicagoland Association of Golf Course Superintendents has a new web site. Launched March 14, 2006, the web site is in its preliminary stage of introduction and growth. You will be able to check upcoming monthly meeting venues and see all the new information for the Association. Please visit www.cagcs.org . If you would like to add something to the web site or have a suggestion, please email Jon Jennings chicagogolfclub@aol.com . The web site was created to assist members obtain useful information.

e-Verdure

If you would like to contribute to the Verdure or have some information you feel others would gain benefit, please contact Jon Jennings, chicagogolfclub@aol.com .The Verdure is another great way to disseminate information to our membership. By sending it electronically, the information is very current. The deadline for submitting information for the upcoming issue is the second Monday of each month.

Chicagoland Association of Golf Course Superintendents Shirts

The 2006 edition CAGCS golf shirts are in. Be sure to pick up one of these handsome short sleeved shirts pictured below. The CAGCS logo is embroidered on the left chest. The price of these good looking shirts is \$45.00. You have the option of being billed for the shirt(s) or paying upon receipt. They are available in red, black, blue, yellow and white. You may obtain one at a monthly meeting or contact Dan Charlton. These high quality shirts by Peter Miller as pictured below are available in all sizes and an array of colors. Stock up for your winter golf trip!!

