



QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE MICHIGAN GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENTS ASSOCIATION | SPRING 2009

# COURSE CONDITIONS

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# ATTENTION!

**THIS WILL BE YOUR LAST ISSUE OF COURSE CONDITIONS IF YOU ARE NOT A 2009 MiGCSA MEMBER!**

## NEW FOR 2009

- New Website at [www.migcsa.org](http://www.migcsa.org)
- Access to the Member's Only resource section
- Online event sign up and registration
- Web forum for turf related discussions
- 4 Issues of Course Conditions
- Education from leaders in the turf industry and the Michigan State University turf team
- Email newsletters directed at keeping you up to date on issues that affect you and your course in the state of Michigan
- An enormous network of professionals and educators in your town, county and state



## BENEFITS OF JOINING THE

# MiGCSA!



- 1 By joining the MiGCSA, you will be able to stay current on issues facing golf courses at a local and state level.
- 2 MiGCSA has the combined resources required to raise the value of attending district activities, which include education, golf, networking and fund-raising.
- 3 As a member of the MiGCSA, you will have the opportunity to share your experience and knowledge with colleagues to strengthen your facility.
- 4 The MiGCSA staff will supply quality, streamlined communications to increase member services in all districts.
- 5 MiGCSA provides a single, powerful voice in advocacy issues, philanthropic activities and fund-raising efforts at the state and national level.
- 6 MiGCSA serves industry partners. Members will benefit from access to these partners and their resources.
- 7 MiGCSA members are recognized nationally as leaders in education, environmental advocacy and promoting the game of golf.



# 2009 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION AND DUES STATEMENT

MICHIGAN GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENTS ASSOCIATION

3225 West St. Joseph  
Lansing, MI 48917  
Phone: (517)327-9207  
Fax: (517)321-0495  
www.MiGCSA.org

## PREFERRED MAILING ADDRESS:

- ☐ Home  
☐ Work

## DISTRICT:

- ☐ Greater Detroit  
☐ Mid  
☐ Northern  
☐ Western

## MEMBER SINCE:

## PREFERRED COMMUNICATION:

- ☐ E-Mail  
☐ Fax  
☐ Postal

## WILL YOU VOLUNTEER FOR A COMMITTEE?

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

## TYPE OF OPERATION:

- ☐ Private  
☐ Public  
☐ Municipality

## NUMBER OF GOLF HOLES MAINTAINED:

NAME

CGCS: ☐ Yes ☐ No

GCSAA Member #

HOME ADDRESS

CITY

STATE

POSTAL CODE

HOME PHONE

CELL PHONE

SPOUSE

COMPANY

TITLE OF POSITION

COMPANY ADDRESS

CITY

STATE

POSTAL CODE

WORK PHONE

FAX

EMAIL

WEBSITE

## PLEASE SELECT THE APPROPRIATE MEMBER CLASS:

All membership categories will be reviewed by the Membership Committee and approved by the Board of Directors.  
If needed, check web site for the Detailed Definitions of the following Classes according to our By-Laws.

[www.migcsa.org](http://www.migcsa.org)

- |                                 |                                      |  |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Class AA  | Life Member                          | = \$0  |
| <input type="radio"/> Class A   | Golf Course Superintendent           | = \$75   |
| <input type="radio"/> Class SM  | Superintendent Member                | = \$75   |
| <input type="radio"/> Class C   | Assistant Golf Course Superintendent | = \$50   |
| <input type="radio"/> Class D   | Equipment Technician                 | = \$25   |
| <input type="radio"/> Class AFF | Affiliate                            | = \$75   |
| <input type="radio"/> Class H   | Honorary                             | = \$0  |
| <input type="radio"/> Class E   | Educator                             | = \$0  |
| <input type="radio"/> Class SA  | Student /Associate                   | = \$25 (Student or employee that doesn't fit a listed class) |
| <input type="radio"/> Class I   | Inactive                             | = Will be set by the Board per Individual Case               |
| <input type="radio"/> Class R   | Retired                              | = \$37.50  |
| <input type="radio"/> Class FM  | Facility Membership                  | = Will be set by the Board per Individual Case               |

## PAYMENT INFORMATION

CREDIT CARD PAYMENT: ☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ American Express

AMOUNT \$

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NAME ON CARD

SIGNATURE

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Traverse City Golf & Country Club



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Thornapple Point Golf Club



Dan Koops, Assistant Superintendent  
Country Club of Detroit

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## COURSE CONDITIONS

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**PRESIDENT** STEVE HAMMON-2010  
Northern-Class A  
Traverse City Golf & Country Club

**VICE PRESIDENT** RON DAHLIN, CGCS-2012  
Western-Class A  
The Meadows Golf Club at GVSU

**PAST PRESIDENT** JOHN FULLING, CGCS  
Western-Class A  
Kalamazoo Country Club

**SECRETARY/  
TREASURER** JAY ECCLETON, CGCS-2011  
Mid-Class A  
The Emerald

<b>BOARD MEMBERS</b>	GREGG MATTHEWS -2010 Detroit-Class A Lakelands Golf and Country Club	ADAM IKAMAS-2011 Northern-Class A Crystal Mountain Resort
	GREG PATTINSON-2010 Mid-Class A Captains Club	RICK HAKKEN-2012 Mid-Class A The Pines GC at Lake Isabella
	TIM DARK-2011 Detroit-Class A Barton Hills Country Club	SCOTT PULASKI-2012 Northern-Class A Treetops Resort
	JEFF HOLMES, CGCS-2011 Western-Class A Egypt Valley C.C	TAVIS HORTON-2012 Detroit - Class C Birmingham Country Club

### MiGCSA STAFF

**MiGCSA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**  
Donn Eurich

**DIRECTOR OF FINANCE**  
Donna Devereaux

**DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS  
AND NEWSLETTER**  
Rebecca Holloway

**DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION  
AND EVENTS**  
Jenny Fedewa

**DIRECTOR OF ADVOCACY AND  
FUNDRAISING**  
Vanessa Crocetto

**MEMBERSHIP COORDINATOR**  
Robin Rings

*Course Conditions* is published 4 times a year by the Michigan Golf Course Superintendents Association. Opinions expressed by guest writers do not necessarily reflect the views of the MiGCSA or Eurich Management. For more information on *Course Conditions* or the MiGCSA please write to the address below or email: [news@migca.org](mailto:news@migca.org)

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# PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE



STEVE HAMMON

It is a great honor to be elected president of the MiGCSA. I appreciate the trust and support you've given me. It will be my distinct privilege to humbly represent you for the ensuing year. For those of you whom I haven't had the pleasure of meeting yet, my name is Steve Hammon and I have been the Golf Course Superintendent at Traverse City Golf & Country Club for the last 13 years. Prior to TCG&CC, I was the Old Course Superintendent at Indianwood G&CC in Lake Orion and the Assistant Superintendent at Crystal Downs Country Club in Frankfort for seven years. I grew up in the Grand Rapids area where I started working in the pro shop at Forest Hills Golf Course (now Watermark C.C.) back in 1980. My bride of 13 years, Sue, is a 6th grade teacher in Frankfort where we reside, and we have three amazing boys ages 10, 7, and 3.

My service to the chapter began many years ago as a member on the Board of Directors for the Northern Michigan Turf Managers Association. I was privileged to serve as its President from 2003 -2005. I was also fortunate to be a part of the initial formation of the MiGCSA nearly 7 years ago, along with many other leaders from around the state. I believe there are 3 critical components in the overall success of the MiGCSA. First, the history and culture of our four very unique districts must be preserved and celebrated. Second, we employ sound administrative and financial management to ensure that we remain strong. We need to run this like a business... and we are. Third, every member gets involved in some way. Come to meetings and events, serve on a committee, volunteer for the board or just talk it up to a neighbor who may not be a member yet. It's been said a thousand times but it's so true, a chapter is only as good as its members.

Opportunities for education, fellowship, career development, information, and just plain fun are endless in the MiGCSA for 2009. Our 2009 calendar of events is loaded with great golf and education opportunities all around the state. There are committee meetings, joint meetings, international meetings, technician education, assistant workshops, championship events, fundraisers for research, spring and fall education sessions, round tables, holiday parties, and the list goes on and on.

Have you seen the brand new and greatly improved [www.migcsa.org](http://www.migcsa.org) website? Now you can sign up for any MiGCSA event and pay with a credit card or click one of the other convenient payment options. Our entire membership directory is also available. We have loads of history about our districts and links to all of our very valued industry partners. Not a member of the MiGCSA yet? Then unfortunately this will be the last edition of Course Conditions that you will receive. This outstanding quarterly publication highlights all the great things happening in Michigan - by Michigan Golf Course Superintendents. A membership application is included on page 5. Course Conditions also keeps you up to date with news from our allied partners, what's happening on the legislative front, at the MTF and with the Stewardship program. Don't forget that we continually send out updates and important news via e-mail to all of our members as it happens. You will hear it here first.

I urge you to join the MiGCSA today! We need you. Thanks to the generosity of our valued Industry Partners, the very low cost of \$50 for an assistant, \$25 for a technician and \$75 for a superintendent is a great investment for you and your facility. These are difficult times for the economy and especially in the state of Michigan. The benefits of membership are extraordinary. The networking and idea gathering opportunities alone are enough to really benefit your operation, let alone the education, advocacy, communication, career development, and the stress relief of being with your peers every once in a while just to remember that you are not alone when conditions are tough!

Please feel free to contact me with any questions, comments, or concerns about your state association. I am available anytime. My email address is [steveh@tcgcc.com](mailto:steveh@tcgcc.com) and my office number is (231) 947-0487. I hope that 2009 brings everyone increased revenues, warm sunny days, and cool nights.

*Steve Hammon*

STEVE HAMMON, MiGCSA PRESIDENT



# IF YOU KNOCK, WE WILL ANSWER!

BY DONN EURICH, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

OFTEN, THE GREATEST CHALLENGE FACING AN ORGANIZATION IS RECOGNIZING AND ACTING ON OPPORTUNITY RATHER THAN SOLVING A PROBLEM!

When we look back twenty years from now on the times we are in currently, I think historians will write that this is one of the most unusual and eclectic eras in American history. A stock market which stumbled and fell heavily, causing billions in portfolio losses. An economy which cannot get out of neutral, with declining production, increasing layoffs and a stagnant GDP. We continue to fight a war with no end in sight, which has become so normalized in our lives that news from the Middle East no longer earns front page headlines. We can proudly state we have elected our first African-American president, but then saddled him with a nearly impossible task.

How do we function effectively in such difficult times? With this nonstop gloom and doom sensory overload, what can we do to help our members not only survive but thrive in this environment? I suggest we fall back on an old fashion method of communicating and providing service. **I propose we listen to our members!!**

I know, I know... that sounds crazy during these iPod, Blackberry, text messaging times. But, it's such an outlandish idea that it just might work!

As more public and private golf clubs suffer declines in revenue, expense reduction is sure to follow. As a professional superintendent, you are likely being asked to contribute to the solution by broadening your skills and provide resources in other parts of the business. How can MiGCSA help? What kind of training, information or ideas can we provide to help you and your club? A class on reading financial statements and budgeting? Marketing ideas? Management

or supervisory training? Leadership or public speaking? Writing proposals? Tell us, we are listening!

The MiGCSA education committee has an excellent head start on planning educational sessions for 2009. However, we still want to bring guest speakers to many of our golf events, and are still planning GCSAA education in the fall as well as inviting MiGCSA members to attend the Michigan Golf Course Owners Association fall conference at member costs. We need to hear from you what topics and speakers will bring you the best value, and justify your attending these events.

Think about how the Chapter can help you and your club. Email your ideas to me directly at [DonnE@eurich.com](mailto:DonnE@eurich.com), or call me at 517-327-9207. I want to hear from you as to how we can help. Your suggestions will go to the top of the list when we plan our upcoming events.

We don't have to be paralyzed by these difficult times and challenges. Many of the problems our country faces are too large for us to solve individually. But there is no reason not to examine these problems, look for the opportunities within and focus on ways to fix and improve those things we can control. MiGCSA stands ready to help. Working together, there is no reason we can't be part of the solution.







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# LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

MiGCSA DIRECTOR OF ADVOCACY AND FUNDRAISING VANESSA CROCKETTO

## MiGCSA: MARCH TO THE CAPITOL

On Wednesday, March 4th, Golf Course Superintendents, Assistant Superintendents, MSU faculty, affiliated vendor members, and members of the Michigan Turfgrass Foundation joined the Michigan Golf Course Worker's Association for our first Golf Day at the Capitol.

The day began with MiGCSA President, Steve Hammon (Traverse City Golf and Country Club), and Craig Hoffman (The Rock) testifying before the Senate Committee on Commerce and Tourism. Both Hammon and Hoffman spoke on the important role that golf, as part of tourism, plays in the state of Michigan. Hammon also addressed the history and culture of the chapter as well as the role superintendents play as environmental stewards of golf course properties in Michigan.

Later in the day members of the MiGCSA had time to visit their legislators in their offices as well as have lunch with members of both the House and Senate. The membership also participated in group

interaction with Lansing lobbyists and well known area pundits. The day concluded with members observing their State Representatives in action during House Session, and a tour of the Capitol Building.

"The Day was a tremendous success," MiGCSA President, Steve Hammon said, "The value of the partnership between the MiGCSA and MGCOA became very clear as the day progressed. The collaboration between the two groups proved to be extremely valuable to our

industry as a whole, and it was encouraging to see the impact we truly can make."

The MiGCSA had nearly thirty attendees throughout the day and the MGCOA turned out similar numbers. With over fifty legislative offices

represented at the Golf Day luncheon, members stayed very busy discussing the concerns of their particular districts as well as discussing the importance of state funding for the MSU Extension and Agricultural Experiment Station.

Todd Griebe of Turfgrass, Inc. (Novi) had this to say about the day, "The day was very enlightening. It was interesting to see the legislative process in action. I was encouraged with the opportunity that we, as individuals and associations, are given to influence our communities and our industry. It is clear that the planning of the day was no easy task, and for such an important day to be so well organized and go so smoothly, kudos, to the staff and to both associations. Thanks to all who participated in making the day a success."

Overall, the day was an extremely important day, and is one more tool we have in making the MiGCSA a driving force and influential organization in the state of Michigan. We look forward to an even more successful day next year!

*MiGCSA and MTF members with MSU Turf staff at the Capitol*

*John Fulling and Rep. Larry DeShazor discuss the issues affecting Golf and Business in Kalamazoo*

*Several MiGCSA members speak with State Representative Marty Knollenberg about their concerns in Michigan.*



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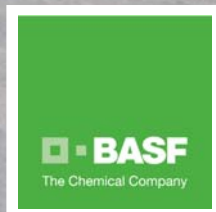




# THANK YOU

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## A FULL ROUND

# STEVE HAMMON

membership was filled with the names of prominent individuals who left their mark on the city as well as the Club. By 1928, the membership had grown and interest in the game of golf had increased, so another 9 holes were added to the course. Attending the dedication ceremonies in July of 1928 were United States Vice President Charles Dawes and financier Andrew Mellon, as well as R. Floyd Clinch, the president of the Traverse City State Bank and the Hannah & Lay Company. Today Traverse City Golf & Country Club sits on 137 acres, has 190 social members and 280 golf members. One of the club's prominent social members included the late Walter Hagen who retired to Traverse City in 1967.

Each spring edition of Course Conditions will profile the incoming president of the MiGCSA. The current president is Steve Hammon of Traverse City Golf & Country Club. This beautiful up north country club was founded in 1915; TCG&CC took shape in the form of a rustic two-story clubhouse with 9 holes of golf. The original 40 acre parcel was donated by the Hannah & Lay Company of Traverse City. Stock was sold at \$125 and dues were \$25 per year. The early

Over the decades the club has hosted many distinguished guests including; President Gerald R. Ford, Patty Berg, Horton Smith, Byron Nelson, Gene Sarazon and Arnold Palmer.

Steve has been at the club for 13 years and is a 1989 graduate of the Michigan State Turfgrass Program. He has served on various volunteer committees and boards throughout the Michigan turfgrass industry, some of these groups include; USGA, GAM, NMTMA, Golfdom, Rainbird and MTESP. "I couldn't spend some of my time away from the club serving the industry if it wasn't for the support of my family, my general manager, green committee members as well as the hard work and dedication of my equipment technician Dave Ertl and my assistant superintendent Kevin Breuker" Steve said.

"I have been given an enormous amount of opportunities to help me succeed in this industry from a country club in Iowa at the age of 7, to the French Riviera, Pebble Beach Golf Links and beyond. I have been fortunate to have worked for and network with some really talented people that invested their time in me and my career and to all of them I say thank you."

"It will be an honor and an absolute privilege to represent all of the hard working men and women in this state that help create great golf course conditions for everyone to enjoy."





1. **HOW DID YOU BECOME INVOLVED IN THE GOLF BUSINESS?** Bob Johnson and his brother Mike (Forest Hills Golf Course now Watermark CC) were the ones that introduced me to the Turf Management Program at Michigan State University, and Jim Johnson (Great Lakes Turf) is their other brother, he worked for Lesco HQ at the time.
2. **WHERE DID YOU RECEIVE YOUR EDUCATION?** I was fortunate to get into the MSU program as a 19 year old. I had one year with Dr. Ken Payne and then spent my second year during Dr. Rogers' first year at MSU.
3. **WHAT RESEARCH WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE ACCOMPLISHED FOR TURFGRASS MANAGEMENT?** I think some of the best research that has come out of MSU in the past 35 years would be; greens rolling, moss control, growth regulation control, winter damage repair techniques and summer stress. I am looking forward to refined research from these on going projects and Ron Calhoun's research with more growing degree day models.
4. **WHAT IS THE MOST DIFFICULT PART OF YOUR JOB?** The most difficult part of my job is balancing my time with daily course conditions, green committee and board responsibilities, managing my staff and controlling costs.
5. **WHAT DO YOU DO IN YOUR SPARE TIME?** In the summer I enjoy trying to keep up with my families non-stop daily activities like, going to beach, bike rides and hikes, Crystal Mountain water park visits, bon fires on the beach, junior golf at the club and family parties. In the winter I really enjoy taking my kids to school every morning, sledding, school ski nights at Crystal Mountain, attending high school basketball games and movie night by the fireplace.
6. **WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE FOOD OR RESTAURANT?** The next time you are in Traverse City, check out Stella's in the old state hospital buildings.
7. **WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE NON-GOLF SPORT?** College basketball. **GO GREEN**
8. **HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE REMEMBERED 100 YEARS FROM NOW?** I would like to be remembered as a person who was passionate about training assistants and interns to succeed in this business.
9. **WHAT IS THE EASIEST PART OF YOUR JOB?** The easiest part of my job is going to work, I love what I do.
10. **WHAT IS THE BIGGEST ISSUE FACING SUPERINTENDENTS TODAY?** The biggest issue today is cutting expenses. Our departments are historically all about spending and with the economy in Michigan, GM's and committees are looking at the golf and grounds department to cut, cut, cut.
11. **WHAT PIECE OF EQUIPMENT WOULD YOU LIKE TO ADD TO YOUR ARSENAL FOR GOLF COURSE MANAGEMENT?** A new John Deere tractor with a bucket.
12. **WHAT IS THE OLDEST PIECE OF EQUIPMENT THAT IS STILL BEING UTILIZED IN YOUR FLEET?** We have a 1972 Jacobsen sweeper; this thing will pick up a bushel full of dimes out of the grass.
13. **WHAT IS THE MOST VALUABLE THING YOU HAVE LEARNED IN THE GOLF COURSE MANAGEMENT PROFESSION?** Never to burn bridges and to give back to your industry in any way that you can.
14. **WHAT IS YOUR BIGGEST PET PEEVE CONCERNING GOLF COURSE ETIQUETTE?** My biggest pet peeve is that many golfers think you can just turn a dial to make the green speeds faster.
15. **DO YOU PLAY GOLF? WHAT IS YOUR HANDICAP?** I have been playing golf since I was about six, I am a seven handicap. I enjoy golf but love playing golf with club members around the country.
16. **WHAT IS THE TOUGHEST GOLF COURSE YOU HAVE PLAYED?** It's actually a tie and these two courses are so different from each other Deepdale on Long Island and Prairie Dunes in Hutchinson, Kansas.
17. **IF YOU HAD A MULLIGAN IN A TOTALLY DIFFERENT CAREER CHOICE, WHAT WOULD IT BE?** I would own some type of corporate marketing firm or own a wine bar.
18. **NAME ANY THREE PEOPLE WHO WOULD MAKE UP YOUR "DREAM SCRAMBLE TEAM?"** I would be the team captain for, Tom Brokaw, Harrison Ford, Matt Lauer and Jim Nantz.





# WELCOME NEW 2009 MiGCSA MEMBERS

NAME	COMPANY	CLASSIFICATION
Robert Birdsall	Las Lomas Club deGolf	Class A
Mike Brown	Fox Run Country Club	Class A
Michael Greenberg	Park Shore Golf Club	Class A
Bruce Hanna	Indian Trails Golf Course	Class A
Jacob Huizenga	Sparta Moose Lodge #50	Class A
William Kolenda	Golden Sands Golf Course	Class A
Ryan Osborn	Wuskowhan Players Club	Class A
Gary Ray	Treetops Resort	Class A
Collin Romanick	Blythefield Country Club	Class A
Mark Santori	Green Valley Golf Course	Class A
Thomas Schemmel	Naval Academy	Class A
Alexander Piotrowski	Livonia Golf Division	Class SM
Alan Bidwell	Walnut Creek Country Club	Class C
Arnold Burkhart	Birchwood Farms Golf & Country Club	Class C
Brent Kovacs	National Golf Links of America	Class C
Joel Larsen	Point O Woods Golf & C.C.	Class C
Michael Moore		Class C
Corey Risedorph	Rouge Park Golf Course	Class C
Douglas Trietch	Kingsley Club, LLC	Class C
Steve Williams	Harbor Shores Golf Club	Class C
Chris Boyce	Wuskowhan Players Club	Class D
Jeffrey Carter	Currie Golf Course	Class D
Brent Davis	Gull Lake Country Club	Class D
Dean Baker	Morgan Composting	Class AFF
Gerald Ellis	Ellis Sales, Inc./E-Z-GO VEHICLES	Class AFF
Mark Frever	Dryject of Michigan	Class AFF
Joel Hoving	Commerce Corporation	Class AFF
Albert LeFere	Dryject of Michigan	Class AFF
Rick Olsen	Automatic Supply Michigan	Class AFF
John Page	Commerce Corporation	Class AFF
Tyler Manly	Pine View Golf Course	Class SA
Craig Ruhl		Class SA
Benjamin Yocic	Polo Fields Golf & C.C.	Class SA
Douglas Boyle		Class I

## MiGCSA MEMBERSHIP REPORT

### SUMMARY OF CLASSES 2/17/09

	2009 CURRENT	2008 COMPARISON	TOTAL 2008 MEMBERSHIP	PERCENTAGE RETAINED
Class AA	20	8	20	100%
Class A	237	221	267	88%
Class SM	51	26	58	87%
Class C	67	65	80	83%
Class D	14	8	24	58%
Class E	20	21	20	100%
Class AFF	108	92	134	80%
Class H	10	10	12	83%
Class SA	6	1	3	200%
Class R	6	4	5	120%
Class I	4	4	4	100%
Class FM	0	0	0	0%
TOTAL	543	460	627	86%



## LLOYD SEESE

### EQUIPMENT TECHNICIAN AND ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT, THORNAPPLE POINT GOLF CLUB

*Lloyd Seese has been with Thornapple Point since 2000 when he was hired into a combination role as Equipment Technician and Assistant Superintendent. He enjoys filling a combination role because it allows him to get outside of the shop more and he likes the change of pace on a daily basis. When asked how much of his time is spent in the shop vs. in the field, he indicated that he couldn't be sure because it changes throughout the season.*

*Lloyd grew up farming in West/Central Michigan, where he worked in the field, fixing equipment and building barns. After that Lloyd went to work for US Golf Cars in Caledonia where he learned about of the opportunity to work with Jack Thomasma at Thornapple Point. Jack professes that he trusts Lloyd if he is not available for "anything that comes down the pipe" and says that Lloyd is "top notch".*

*He is married to his wife, Ann and has a daughter; Pam. Lloyd is also a proud grandfather. On occasions his dog, Louie visits the golf course to give Lloyd a hand.*

#### HOW DID YOU BECOME INVOLVED IN THE GOLF BUSINESS?

I felt with my farming background that the golf business was a good fit for me. The golf industry was the closest profession to farming I could find.

**WHAT IS THE MOST DIFFICULT PART OF YOUR JOB?** Trying to stay one step ahead of a breakdown or finding a hydraulic hose that is about to burst.

**WHAT IS THE EASIEST PART OF YOUR JOB?** Coming to work every day, if only to be able to witness another sunrise!

**WHO IS YOUR FAVORITE TOURING PROFESSIONAL?** I would have to say, Phil Mickelson, because we are both lefty's.

#### WHAT IS THE OLDEST PIECE OF EQUIPMENT IN YOUR FLEET?

The oldest piece of equipment would be our 1996 Smithco Spray star dating back to construction of the golf course.

#### WHO INFLUENCED YOU THE MOST ABOUT EQUIPMENT

**MANAGEMENT?** My Father, having grown up on a dairy farm taught me the importance of equipment maintenance, care and cost. Equipment management is key to running a successful business.

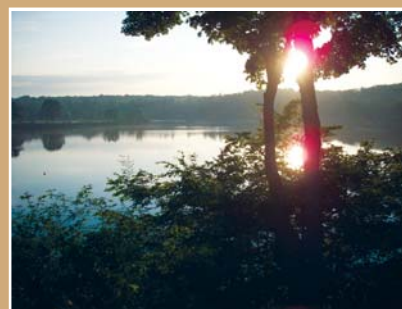
#### WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST ISSUE FACING EQUIPMENT

**MANAGERS TODAY?** The biggest issue that I face would be the price of parts to fix the equipment and keeping up on the maintenance.

**WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE THE BIGGEST ISSUE WILL BE IN THE FUTURE?** Learning to trouble shoot electrical problems. The industry is changing from hydraulic and fuels to parts that are all electric.

**WHAT IS THE MOST VALUABLE THING THAT YOU HAVE LEARNED IN THE GOLF COURSE EQUIPMENT MANAGEMENT PROFESSION?** To pay attention to detail! This is very important to the job in hand.

## UNDER THE HOOD





# THE FIRST STEPS TOWARD SUSTAINABLE GOLF

BY TOM MEAD

*After spending the last few years in wetland consulting, one of the industries leading golf course consultants, Tom Mead of Traverse City, is returning home to concentrate on the sustainability aspects of the golf industry in Michigan and around the country. As a leading golf course consultant, he brings more than 35 years of experience in all aspects of golf course development, construction, agronomy, and operations.*

Like many industries, golf is in a time of major change. Economic uncertainty, climate change and growing concerns about water resources and pesticide use are dictating a new business model. The upsurge in "green" sentiment worldwide is creating much discussion about environmental issues that are important elements of the broader subject of sustainability.

The fundamentals of sustainable golf are simple. The spirit of the game, the financial aspects of the golf business and the environmental practices necessary for a sustainable golf course are all compatible. We have the knowledge, technology and budgets to design, construct and maintain sustainable golf facilities right now. All we have to do is shift our values, then reflect them in a new business model that emphasizes the true spirit of the game and environmentally sound standards and practices.

We can make this shift enthusiastically—now—putting golf on the leading edge of the forthcoming tidal wave of sustainable business models. Or as an industry, we can be overpowered by the tidal wave, dragged into sustainability, kicking and screaming. Either way, a transition to sustainable designs, standards and practices is inevitable.

During the past forty years, the golf business has evolved from an insignificant industry to a \$76 billion per year business. While the boom has generated increased golfing interest and expanded the industry, current standards and practices are not justifiable if we are interested in preserving or improving our environment. The trend for the past forty years of building bigger and more expensive courses and continually increasing maintenance intensity and budgets might be financially feasible for facilities that cater to the most affluent golfers who are willing to pay anything to play the game. But for everyone else, the reality of this trend has become financially unsustainable. Furthermore, it is not in harmony with the spirit of golf, with its connection to the natural world.

"SUSTAINABILITY IS AN ECONOMIC STATE WHERE THE DEMANDS PLACED ON THE ENVIRONMENT BY PEOPLE AND COMMERCE CAN BE MET WITHOUT REDUCING THE CAPACITY TO PROVIDE FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS."

THE R&A, ST. ANDREWS

Everyone in the golf industry needs to think about what is good for the game of golf in a pure sense. We need to understand and respect the real intent and spirit of the game, and emphasize these aspects in our business plans. We need to think about what is good for our children and grandchildren and the fun they can have playing golf in the future. We can be wise and proactively shift our business model to preserve our resources and dramatically reduce the use of pesticides on our courses, or we can continue to spend energy



competing for dwindling resources and defending the use of restricted materials. We must prescribe a new sustainable business model that is first and foremost, good for the environment. A transition to sustainable standards and practices will prove to be good for the game, the golf business and the planet.

A sustainability action plan will vary from facility to facility, but there are basic requirements to transition to a financially viable, sustainable business plan. There needs to be a clear understanding of where a facility has been and where it is at present, and a realistic vision of what the possibilities are. Pragmatic, whole-system thinking about what a particular site offers leads to designs and practices that are environmentally and economically sound.

A transition to a sustainable model is a multi-year, complicated undertaking; however, there are two initial steps that will provide the foundation for the sustainable business model to evolve.

To begin, there must be a desire by the decision makers at each individual golf operation to shift to a sustainable business model. Owners, management companies, club boards and committee members must look in the mirror and decide to do the right thing for the game - which means doing the right thing for the environment.

At the same time, the leadership of each golf course must commit to educating the paying golfer. The American golfer must be reconnected with the true spirit of the game and its interrelationship with nature. Golfers must clearly understand the environmental impact of the facility they are financially supporting. Communication and public awareness are of utmost importance for a smooth transition to a sustainable model.

This requires redefining what makes a great golf course.

The course "rankings" published by the major golf magazines are highly influential in shaping industry standards and driving business priorities. Golf Digest, Golf Magazine and Golfweek have taken leadership roles in identifying the very best courses architecturally. Their leadership is now needed to encourage transition to sustainable practices and standards.

In the near term, the magazines could launch a separate course rating explicitly focused on environmental practices and standards—an "America's 100 Greenest Courses"-type ranking. At the same time, to achieve the ultimate goal of making environmental practices an integral element of what constitutes a great golf course, the magazines could introduce new "green" measures into its rankings of "America's 100 Greatest Courses"—gradually adding weight to these measures over a five-year period, so that courses have sufficient time to adopt the environmental practices necessary to be competitive in the rankings.

The second step toward a sustainable golf course that provides the most significant environmental benefits is grassing golf courses (new and existing) with varieties of species that are most sustainable in terms of playability, cost and environmental impact. The irrigation, fertilizer, pesticide and mowing requirements for different species adapted to certain regions of the country vary greatly, and the turfgrass species and varieties within the species selected for tees, greens, roughs and especially fairways directly impacts the other environmental elements and potential to achieve a sustainable facility.

In the northern region of the U.S. where cool season grasses thrive, the fine fescues must be considered the ultimate choice in terms of sustainability for most fairway and rough applications and in fewer instances green and tee applications. It is important to recognize that fairways typically represent approximately 80 % to 85 % of the highly maintained turf area on an average golf course that require considerable water, chemical and energy inputs. Fescues established for green, tee and fairway applications typically require 60 % less irrigation, 50 % less fertilization, 80 % less pesticides and a 50 % reduction in mowing frequency when compared to creeping bentgrass, the standard playing surface currently found on most northern courses.

In the southern portion of the country where warm season grasses flourish, varieties of seashore paspalum are the best choice in terms of sustainability on most courses. Paspalum, as an environmental alternative to the standard bermudagrass varieties found on southern greens, tees, fairways and roughs typically requires 30 % to 50 % less fertilizer and tolerates irrigation with brackish or effluent water.

Growing conditions in the transition zone, an area located between the warm and cool regions, can be very difficult and vary greatly. Both warm season grasses and cool season grasses are utilized in this designated area and no one grass species offers noticeable environmental benefits that generally apply to the entire region.

The fescues and seashore paspalums are proven grasses that can provide excellent playing surfaces, with greatly reduced inputs and expense that offer the best possibility for long term financial sustainability for a significant number of courses located throughout the US. At the same time, it is important to realize that these are not perfect grasses or necessarily the best choice for every course. There is ongoing breeding work to improve varieties for all grass species and in the future there may be appropriate new choices for certain locations, but the fescues and paspalums are available now and their adaptability is wide spread.

Based on a 2005 survey, the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America estimated that golf courses consume approximately 762 billion gallons of water per year. Again, it is important to understand that the fescues and seashore paspalums are not the perfect options for every course, but if just 50 % of the approximately 16,000 golf courses in the country were to convert to these proven low input grasses hundreds of billions of gallons of fresh, potential potable water would be saved annually.

The conversion to the most sustainable grasses at any given facility will not be painless nor revenue-neutral - in the short term. However, the payback comes in typically three to seven years depending on starting point operating budgets and revenues, and the annual long-term savings are significant.

The change of the heart needed to shift to a new sustainable business model doesn't cost anything—and the major golf course rating systems have the potential to facilitate it with some revamped measurements that emphasize sustainable standards and practices.

With these two steps accomplished, any facility has the foundation to pursue the other interconnected water resource, plant management, nature conservation, site design, waste and energy issues that can be adapted to bring about a sustainable business model.



## THE BETTER HALF

# DAN KOOPS

*Dan Koops is the Assistant Superintendent at the Country Club of Detroit. After graduating from the 2 year golf turf program at Michigan State University in 2006 he became the assistant at Battle Creek Country Club where he worked until the end of the 2007 season.*

*Currently serving under Superintendent Bob McCurdy, Dan is entering his second season as Assistant Superintendent at the Club. When Dan is not hard at work on the course he enjoys spending time with his young family.*



- 1. HOW DID YOU BECOME INVOLVED IN THE GOLF BUSINESS?** I was in the landscaping business for 4 years and ended up taking a class in turf management taught by Thom Nikolai. He opened my eyes to the world of golf turf management. After talking to a few people about the industry, I was introduced to Kevin Dushane at Wuskowhan Players Club. Kevin brought me in and gave me a tremendous start in the industry. After one year on the crew at Wuskowhan, I was hooked and haven't looked back since.
- 2. WHO GREET'S YOU AFTER A LONG DAY ON THE COURSE?** My wife, Pam and our 3 little boys, Jason, Ryan and Lee. The boys are all under 3 years old. We had three boys in three consecutive years, in three different cities.
- 3. WHAT DO YOU DO IN YOUR SPARE TIME?** I like to spend evenings at home playing with the kids or going for walks with my wife.
- 4. WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE NON-GOLF SPORT?** NASCAR, for some reason watching cars make left turns for three hours interests me.
- 5. WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE GOLF COURSE THAT YOU HAVE PLAYED?** I really enjoy Wuskowhan Players Club in West De , Michigan. This is where I started in the golf business and the course has some spectacular views.
- 6. WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE GOLF HOLE YOU HAVE PLAYED?** The 11th hole of the North Course at Wilmington Country Club in Delaware. The course has great views of the surrounding countryside.
- 7. WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PIECE OF EQUIPMENT YOU HAVE IN YOUR ARSENAL FOR GOLF COURSE MANAGEMENT?** The irrigation system, more specifically the computer. I have heard stories about the past and I don't want to go there. Being able to press a button then let an automated system do the work itself for 10 hours at night is a wonderful thing.
- 8. WHO INFLUENCED YOU THE MOST ABOUT TURFGRASS MANAGEMENT?** I have been fortunate to work for 4 very talented superintendents. Each one has their own style and I was able to learn from all of them. I wouldn't be where I am today if it wasn't for them.
- 9. WHAT IS THE MOST DIFFICULT PART OF YOUR JOB?** Water management, trying to make sure that every square foot of the property is neither too wet nor too dry.
- 10. WHAT IS THE EASIEST PART OF YOUR JOB?** Showing up. I enjoy what I do and rarely wish that I was somewhere else.





**11. WHAT DO YOU SEE FOR THE NEXT GENERATION OF ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENTS?**

I see assistants getting more responsibility. As demands increase on the golf course, more will be placed on the superintendent and consequently the assistant. I think that the top tier of assistants will be paid very well, more than they are now.

**12. WHAT IS YOUR OPINION OF THE ROLE OF THE MECHANIC IN RELATIONSHIP TO THE ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT?**

I think that the assistant and the mechanic have equally important roles. One keeps the crew running and the other keeps the equipment running. With out one or the other, the operation will fail.

**13. WHAT RESEARCH WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE ACCOMPLISHED FOR TURFGRASS MANAGEMENT?**

I would like to know how long grass can go under drought conditions and still come out O.K. With water restrictions coming in the future and players wanting firmer conditions, I want to know how little I can water a fairway and still be able to bring it back when needed.

**14. WHAT ARE YOUR EXPECTATIONS FROM THE MICHIGAN GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENTS ASSOCIATION?**

Provide an opportunity for members of the association to get continuing education in all aspects of our industry. Offer times when members can network with each other. Also to be our voice in Lansing when legislation comes up that affects our industry.

**15. IF YOU COULD CHANGE ANYTHING ABOUT GOLF COURSE MANAGEMENT, WHAT WOULD IT BE?**

I would change the golfer's perception that large numbers of trees are beautiful on the golf course. Unless the golf course winds through woods, tree planting should be limited with no memorials. Trees in small numbers, strategically planted are great. Anything more than that is unnecessary and costly.

**16. IF YOU HAD A MULLIGAN IN A TOTALLY DIFFERENT CAREER CHOICE, WHAT WOULD IT BE?**

I think it would be a thrill to be a NASCAR driver and the money is good. If only I could have persuaded my parents to buy me that go-kart I wanted as a kid.

**17. IF YOU COULD CHANGE ANY GOLF HOLE ON YOUR GOLF COURSE WITHOUT REPERCUSSION, WHICH ONE WOULD BE THE FIRST?**

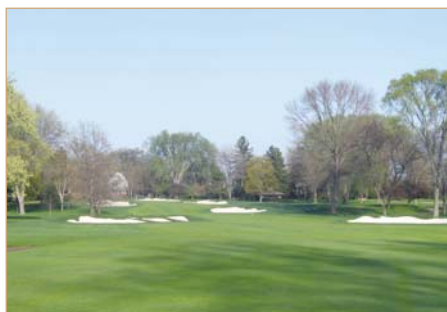
I would change #9. If our bunker crew ever gets caught by golfers, it will be on #9 because of all the bunkers on the hole. I would get rid of some of the bunkers or make them smaller. It would take some stress out of my life.

**18. WHO ARE THE THREE PEOPLE THAT WOULD MAKE UP YOUR "DREAM SCRAMBLE TEAM"?**

I doubt that they ever swung a club, but I would really like to strike up a conversation with George Washington, Thomas Jefferson and Abraham Lincoln. These men are true leaders and some great minds.

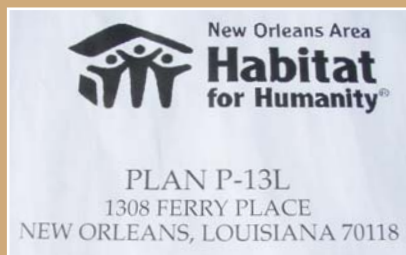
## QUICK NINE

1. GOLFDOM MAGAZINE, GOLF COURSE INDUSTRY MAGAZINE OR USGA GREEN SECTION RECORD?  
Golf Course Industry Magazine
2. THE MASTERS, U.S. OPEN OR BRITISH OPEN? The Masters - summer is coming
3. WEEKEND IRRIGATION BREAK, BUDGET MEETING OR ICE CREAM HEADACHE?  
Ice cream headache
4. E-MAIL, SNAIL MAIL OR FACE TO FACE?  
Face to face
5. MORNING SUNRISE, SUNNY DAY OR BEAUTIFUL SUNSET? Morning sunrise
6. DECIDUOUS TREE NEXT TO GREEN, EVERGREEN TREE NEXT TO GREEN OR NO TREE NEXT TO GREEN? No trees
7. TITLEIST, NIK OR MAXFLI? Whatever I find in the rough
8. DOLLAR SPOT, SNOWMOLD OR PYTHIUM?  
Dollar spot
9. DIRTY DIAPER CHANGER, TEENAGE TAXI DRIVER OR GRANDPARENTS? I own stock in pampers





## IN THE ROUGH



## HABITAT PROJECT AT THE 2009 GIS

On Tuesday and Wednesday of GIS week over 200 people volunteered their time and talents to help those directly affected by the devastation brought by Hurricane Katrina.

Five volunteers from Michigan were in the group on Tuesday and included MiGCSA board member Tavis Horton of Birmingham Country Club, Jerry McVetty of Oakhurst Golf and Country Club, Dave Kechnie of the Lochmoor Club, Scott Trobovich of Syngenta and myself. Despite the fact that the day started early for all the volunteers no one was grumbling about having to be at the New Orleans Morial Convention Center before all the other attendees, as a matter of fact most were able to sleep longer than they normally did on a work day. As we waited for the buses and got to meet others volunteers the staff of the GCSAA gave us the essential materials needed for the day including a large water bottle, "emergency" pouch filled with sunscreen and bandages along with a shirt that commemorated our efforts. As Sheri Light and Kyla Dotson of the GCSAA staff got us on the bus they informed us that our first stop would be the mandatory safety meeting to be held at the Central City Neighborhood Habitat site. The trip took us from the fully recovered warehouse district near the convention center to areas of the city that were still wrapped in the devastation of the category 3 hurricane that swept thru New Orleans 4 1/2 years ago.

We were greeted by Terry, better known as T-Ray, playing Amazing Grace with his Scottish Bag Pipes, it was brilliant! He explained that the Habitat organization of New Orleans is operating in 5 different sites and had over 55,000 volunteers in 2008. An amazing fact when you consider that all other Habitat sites in the United States had a combined total of 40,000 in the same period. About 12% of all the building permits in the New Orleans area are currently taken out by the Habitat organization. This project is primarily funded by Mr. David Letterman (\$1/4 million/year) while the Musicians Village in the 9th Ward is funded in part by the Dave Matthews Band (\$1.5 million) while still others are funded by churches or other philanthropic organizations. The general premise was explained and those who are to live in these houses must buy them for \$75,000 (interest free) and must also invest 250 hours of sweat equity to qualify for the program.

These homes are not constructed in a normal fashion. These are designed to withstand sustained winds of up to 130 mph and the first floor is 16" above the high water mark set by Katrina. A member in the group asked how they knew what the water level was. It was explained by T-Ray that during the height of the flooding the authorities placed a "bottle cap" on all of the telephone poles at the water level and now those building a home or business along with all of the parish authorities in charge of construction permits know to walk to the nearest pole and look for the high water mark. To reach these heights (6' off the ground at this site) the builders put everything on pillars but this is not where the building starts. Pylons are driven 50' into the ground at all load bearing points of the house, these are then attached to the footings of the home by a series of metal straps, the foundation pillars are added atop until the desired level above the high water mark is achieved and these pillars are attached to the foundation with metal straps as well. The metal straps continue up thru the floor system, the wall system and the rafter systems until they end at the top of the house. Essentially making the building connected from 50' underground to the very top of the structure, and secure enough to withstand the winds of category 3 hurricanes.

Our crew was split as some were needed at Central City to finish siding and stairs along with fencing and sod work and 30 were needed to start a flooring system at Ferry Place,

a site that sits next to the Mississippi River Levee not far away. The crew from Michigan decided that they had the skills to lay sod but really wanted to experience something different so we boarded the bus for the ride to the mighty Mississippi River. We were greeted by Kate, who represented the Presbyterian Church, which is the primary financier of the site. Accompanying Kate was Adam from North Carolina, who is the primary site foreman and Jeremy, his second in command. Kate explained that this Habitat site is named in honor of the first firefighter to lose his life in the line of duty during the hurricane, Mr. John Ferry. At the height of the flooding 8% of New Orleans was underwater and while this area was only a driver 9 iron away from the Mississippi River, it was not under as much water as the Central City site. Never the less the house's foundation was 4 feet off the ground. Adam explained that the goal was to get one of the floor systems finished and ready for a wall raising ceremony scheduled in 4 days. With that said the group split up and started to go to work.

A small pod of men attached the bunk of lumber and crowned, measured, marked and separated it into the appropriate piles. Another pod started installing the metal flashing to the top of the pillars which is needed to protect against termites entering the home, while yet another started to haul the 6'x 6" beams needed to build the initial wooden support for the flooring system. Before you could shake a tape measure, the saw dust was flying and the hammers were pounding. Kyla Dotson was so impressed; she just had to stand back and start taking pictures or maybe she was a little worried that she might accidentally be hit by lumber that was being toted around the building site! Before the lunch bell rang, one home had the beams set and the floor joist bands done while the other was already getting the initial floor joists set. I felt a little bad for Adam and Jeremy as they had little time to help but rather spent most of their time solving little hitches along the way and planning the next steps for the crew that had come from around the country.

Our day started late and ended early by golf course employee standards and the closing bell rang at 3 pm. The job site was cleaned and all tools and equipment were stored back in the portable shipping vaults used for secure storage. We were then allowed to tour a home that was recently completed but not yet occupied. It is a very comfortable and livable new home with the kitchen facing the street and the living room occupying the center of the home. The master bedroom is on the first floor along with a bathroom and laundry room while the upstairs has 2 bedrooms and another bathroom. The crew gathered for a final photo and

some very encouraging words from the site foreman. Adam informed us that it was his goal when the day started to have the floor joists started on one home. He went on to say that to have one floor system basically finished and the other 2/3rds complete was so far beyond what they had hoped. He welcomed any of us to come back at anytime and help.



*GIS volunteers for Habitat for Humanity in New Orleans.*

Wednesday dawned and those that helped woke with renewed hope and a lot of very sore muscles to show for their efforts. And you know what? Scott Trobovich accepted Adam's offer to return and went back on Wednesday for a second helping. Scott said it was just as great as the day before and walls were built and erected by the end of the day. Looks like the Habitat dignitaries will have to change their plans from a wall standing to a roof raising ceremony at the end of the week.

Sincerely,  
RON DAHLIN, CGCS  
VICE PRESIDENT MIGCSA



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## ASSISTANT UPDATE BY TAVIS HORTON, ASSISTANT BOARD LIAISON

The first Assistant Superintendent Symposium was held at the Great Lakes Trade Exposition in January 2009. I would like to thank the 2008 Assistant Superintendent Committee and the guest speakers on a job well done.

The inaugural Assistant Superintendent Symposium was well attended and filled with assistants as well as superintendents from across the state. Everybody enjoyed a great panel of guest speakers that included Dan Dingman and Bob McCurdy who recently became superintendents. Each of them shared their interview experiences and strategies that got them to where they are today. We also heard from two assistant superintendents, myself and Kevin Breuker who spoke on building a presentation package and the Toro tournament training program, respectively, while Steve Randall, GCSAA Staff Liaison discussed the professional development tools available to assistants through the GCSAA.

After the guest speakers spoke many of us remained, including the guest speakers, to further discuss career opportunities and challenges for assistants today. We also used this opportunity to evaluate the symposium and other assistant events from 2008. Great feedback was received and new ideas for '09 were discussed as well as plans for the next Assistant Superintendent Symposium in 2010.

In January 2009 I became the first assistant superintendent to be elected to the board of directors with the MiGCSA for a three-year term. Things are evolving well in Michigan and with the GCSAA. I would encourage you to get involved too. Assistants are being given


a great opportunity to network with our peers in the industry. For example, Kevin Breuker and I both did presentations at the Golf Industry Show in New Orleans. We found that assistants are looking for information and want to hear from other assistants as we all progress through our career challenges.


One of the goals for 2009 that the committee has committed to is to improve communication to assistants via regular e-news updates and an Assistant Update column in Course Conditions. We feel this is a great way to communicate to assistants across the state and to those who are not able to participate in all the events within their chapter or the state. A second goal is to improve the education provided at local events by focusing on personal development topics like leadership and motivation.

If you think of something you would like to see implemented by the Assistant Committee, please pass it along. If you think it's a great idea, more than likely others do as well. Please share your thoughts and suggestions with us by contacting your local assistant committee member. The 2009 Assistant Committee information can be found on the MiGCSA website at [www.migcsa.org](http://www.migcsa.org). If you are interested in joining the committee, a volunteer form will be emailed to the membership by the MiGCSA shortly.


Please mark your calendars to join us on October 19, 2009 for the 2nd Assistant Golf event to be held at The Emerald in St. Johns. This is a great opportunity to network with fellow assistants and learn more about our industry.

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## FROM NATIONAL



STEVE RANDALL

# GOLFONOMICS

BY STEVE RANDALL- GCSAA SENIOR MANAGER, CHAPTER OUTREACH

As I was walking the show floor at the Golf Industry Show in New Orleans, I wanted to stop by and touch base with some folks working the many booths. Funny, the topic of the economy came up. As I spoke to many on the show floor,

I heard that, while traffic was moderate, the number of folks looking to purchase goods and services was solid.

Thursday, during the preview at the show, I had the opportunity to help out the folks working for Riksha. For those of you who aren't aware, Riksha makes two and three wheel pull carts. They have a new three-wheel pull cart on the market, and I had assisted them when getting their item on the New Product Showcase.

I started thinking, three-wheel pullcarts? For golf facilities? So folks could easily rent one of these accessories when playing a round of golf? Yikes...!

The Riksha is unique. The two wheels on the side are very large. The third wheel, a small wheel in the back of the cart is smaller and designed to maximize ease of use. The cart also features a holster for sand/seed mix and a basket to store things you might use regularly during the round.

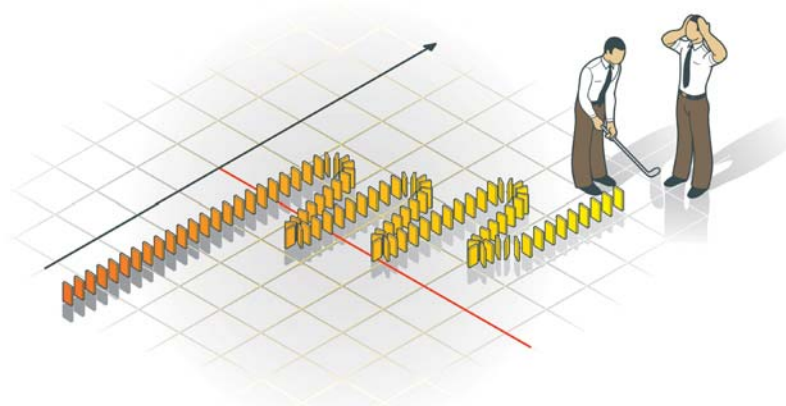
Thursday is also the day of the chapter executives session. After I finished my morning duties on the floor, I headed up to our meeting room. Upon conclusion of the executive session, I started thinking... how are those folks at Riksha doing? It was now 4 p.m. Time to head down and ask the question.

Admittedly, I wasn't sure I wanted to hear the answer... I've only read doom and gloom for the past six months. So, as I built up the urge I... asked and...? Low and behold...! They noted that traffic and purchases were at or better than the levels in Orlando in 2008. Interesting... wait, did I hear that correctly? After all, it's been a while since I've heard or seen a story like this.

I'll pause. It's nice to know good stories are out there.

## GROWING THE GAME, STRENGTHENING YOUR STATUS

Going GCSAA President David Downing gave a consistent message during the GIS. "It's time to get back to the game," he said. Current GCSAA President Mark Kuhns expanded that statement, noting that while times are tough, it's time to turn to your peers and your professional organizations to help.



For you, as a golf course superintendent, it's more essential than ever to place yourself in a position of strength. Education, professional development and improving areas within business, communications and leadership are important. Follow the leader may not be good enough!

Help grow the game. It's a benefit to you and your profession. So how, you may ask? Become involved with the Get Golf Ready initiative. How about making more of your presence felt with your own Junior Golf Program? Maybe you can help adults and youth realize your impact on the game provides the excellent playing conditions many take for granted.

The Get Golf Ready program is targeted to millions of adults who have never played golf, or have a minimal connection to the game. The GCSAA has joined Golf 20/20 in this effort. So how can you as a golf course superintendent take action? Contact Golf 20/20 representatives and tell them you want to be a part of the solution. Everyone in the golf industry is here to help. Your story and your impact on the game are vital to its success.

Look at existing opportunities. Maybe it's making a presence within your junior or adult golf programs at your facility. Maybe it's being at the first tee, listening and learning from your members or customers on Saturdays and Sundays.

Seek out your professional organizations. The MiGCSA and the GCSAA are here to help. You will find virtually every resource possible to enhance the profession and expand the growth and vitality of the game.

We are here for you. Take advantage of your membership. Let us be of assistance and have a great 2009 season!



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AND SO MUCH MORE!

Weingartz was founded as a feed and farm supply store in Utica, Michigan in 1945 by Raymond Weingartz Sr. The store had a simple philosophy - to be fair and honest and provide exceptional service. Sixty-four years later the farm supplies are gone and have been replaced with one of the broadest selections of power equipment anywhere. There are now four locations in Michigan (the original in Utica, Farmington Hills, Waterford and Cedar Springs). The founder has passed away and now the company is owned and operated by the third generation of Weingartz ownership. Despite all of these changes, the commitment to be fair and honest and to provide exceptional service has never wavered.

meet the needs of individual customers. This involves working with John Deere Credit to tailor operating leases for the shorter northern seasons; offering parts consignment to minimize downtime and cash outlay; full maintenance service programs to reduce operating costs and keep equipment at peak performance; high quality, assured used equipment - essentially anything that helps a golf course efficiently meet their maintenance needs.

The after-sale support at Weingartz is similarly world-class. They are exceptionally proud of the professionalism and efficiency of their staff and are proud to have many employees that have been with them for over 20 years! The technicians at Weingartz have over 350 years of combined industry-technical experience and they stock over \$2.5 million in repair parts. Every company claims to have exceptional service, Weingartz believes that you have to put your money where your mouth is.

After talking to Ron Weingartz, the President of Weingartz, it is apparent that he is very excited about some of the new products introduced at the Golf Industry Show in New Orleans. John Deere introduced a full-line of hybrid mowers and, according to Ron, "... the most impressive reels that I've ever seen. Adjusting the height-of-cut and the reel-to-bedknife are so quick and easy that you're going to have to see them to believe it." Ron adds that you call them if you'd like to see it!



Ron Weingartz, President

The selection of golf course maintenance products offered by Weingartz is as extensive as you will find anywhere. Brands like John Deere, Lastec, Dakota, Salsco, AgriMetal, Allen, Lely, Bernhard-Express Dual, Greensgroomer, Exmark, Stihl, RedMax and TurfEx headline their offering. In addition, they are the exclusive distributor of John Deere Golf Irrigation Systems featuring the most advanced control system in the industry. While their product lineup is impressive, Weingartz has earned their share of the market by providing custom, creative solutions to meet customer's needs. They understand that no two golf courses are identical and tailor programs to

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Weingartz is proud to be a Platinum Partner of the MiGCSA. They fully believe in supporting the industry that supports them.



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## GREEN SIDE UP

# THE MICHIGAN CLUB MANAGERS ASSOCIATION



JEFFREY D. ANDERSON, CCM

The Michigan Club Managers Association (MCMA) was formed in 1957 as an official chapter of the Club Managers Association of America (CMAA), the professional Association for managers of membership clubs. CMAA encompasses close to 7,000 members across all classifications, and our manager members run more than 3,000 country, golf, city, athletic, faculty, yacht, town and military clubs. The objectives of the Association are to promote and advance friendly relations among persons connected with the management of clubs and other associations of similar character; to encourage the education and advancement of its members; and to assist club officers and members, through their managers, to secure the utmost in efficient and successful operations.

Our local CMAA chapter, with the help of the Club Managers Association of America, provides our members with the expert resources to deliver exceptional club experiences that fulfill the unexpressed needs and desires of our clubs' membership and their guests that are consistent with their lifestyles. The MCMA enhances our members' success by offering professional leadership development, ethical standards and responsive services.

This mission is accomplished through the following strategic priorities set forth by the Club Managers Association of America:

- Providing state-of-the-art educational programs
- Fostering appropriate relations with allied associations that will contribute to the objectives of the club industry and CMAA's members
- Providing unique information and resources that increase member performance and career potential
- Providing executive career services for members' career development and assisting clubs in securing management personnel
- Interpreting changing social, governmental and economic conditions affecting club management
- Conducting research and analyzing information/data related to club management and the club industry.

80% of CMAA members' clubs are golf and country clubs. With the challenges of today's economy it is vital that our management teams unite to provide our club members with exceptional service and amenities that affirm the value of their memberships. Our boards rely on our professional expertise to guide them as we ride out this economic storm, which in turn offers us the opportunity to showcase our skills. The Michigan Golf Course Superintendents Association is a key ally to club managers in the state. Their expertise in turf management, course conditions, environmental issues, and long-range planning enhances our most prominent amenity and asset - our golf courses. MiGCSA members are experts in their field and their affiliation with CMAA is vital to providing resources and initiatives to help us through our challenges.

The cooperation and camaraderie of the various sectors of the golf industry is a true bright spot in the game of golf and the profession of club management - such fellowship is not always fostered in other industries. I am thankful for the expertise my superintendent and his assistant provide to our club and for the contributions they make to our members' experience on a daily basis. In spite of Michigan's devastating economy, I know that my colleagues across the state will continue to rely on the members of the MiGCSA for their proficiency in turf management in an environmentally and fiscally responsible manner.

Thank you, MiGCSA, for all you do and best wishes for 2009.

**JEFFREY D. ANDERSON, CCM**  
**GENERAL MANAGER, TRAVERSE CITY GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB**  
**PRESIDENT, MICHIGAN CLUB MANAGERS ASSOCIATION**

## THE MiGCSA LAUNCHES A NEW WEBSITE

The MiGCSA has launched their new website. If you have not yet had a chance to visit the association's website, you may do so by visiting [www.migcsa.org](http://www.migcsa.org). Our new website is equipped with a member's only area. This means you can now log in to the members only side of the MiGCSA website if you are a current member in good standing. The member's only area will enable you to post jobs, items for sale, even add events and update your membership information.

Not a member yet? Well why not? You can also find information on membership and register for upcoming events online. You no longer need to worry about faxing because you can simply join and register online.

The MiGCSA tries hard to keep our membership informed. Please try and find time to check your information online so we are able to reach you if need be. You can also change your method of delivery from traditional mail to email only. This is a great option to reduce the amount of mail we all get and save paper, postage and staff time. Also, please verify your other information from address to phone numbers. Please be confident that none of this information will be used for any other purpose than communicating important MiGCSA information to you in a timely manner.

## GCSAA ELECTS NEW OFFICERS FOR 2009

During the 2009 business meeting held at the Morial Convention center in New Orleans the membership of the GCSAA elected new officers. Those called on to guide the ship in 2009 include President Mark Kuhns, CGCS of Baltusrol Golf Club in Springfield New Jersey, James Fitzroy, CGCS of Presidents Golf Course in North Quincy Massachusetts and Robert Randquist, CGCS of Boca Rio Golf Club in Boca Raton, Florida. Peter J. Grass, CGCS was elected to his first two year term as a director and Keith A. Ihms, CGCS, and John J. O'Keefe, CGCS were elected directors for their second two year term. Patrick R. Finlen, CGCS, and Sanford G. Queen, CGCS remain on the board for the last year of their two-year terms. David S. Downing, CGCS will serve an additional year as immediate past president.

## 2008 MiGCSA TURF STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP

The MiGCSA would like to thank all applicants to the 2008 MiGCSA Turf Student Scholarship. Congratulations to the MiGCSA scholarship winners Craig Ruhl and Brandon Drzewicki and to all MSU student scholarship winners.



Michigan Golf Course Superintendents Association Winners Craig Ruhl and Brandon Drzewicki with MiGCSA board members Scott Pulaski and Adam Ikamas.



### MSU SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

Front row left to right : Robert Capecelatro, Brandon Drzewicki, Anthony Puzzuoli, Scott Wilkinson, Ryan Gage, Andrew Bird, Joshua Fuhrman, Alec Kowalewski, Marc Chappell

Second row left to right: Michael Wallace, Craig Ruhl, Rusty Willard, Eric Blake, Kevin Kretz, Eric Bryan, Kevin Peck, Michael Krcmarik, Brian McDougal





# 2009 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Monday, April 20, 2009	MiGCSA Spring Opener (Country Club of Lansing)
Monday, May 4, 2009	Can-Am Tournament (The Essex G&CC)
Monday, June 1, 2009	MiGCSA Golf Event (The Ravines Golf Club)
Monday, June 22, 2009	MTF Fundraiser (The Bar)
Monday, July 13, 2009	MiGCSA Golf Event (Forest Lake CC)
Tuesday, August 4, 2009	MiGCSA State Championship (Eagle Eye GC)
Wednesday, August 19, 2009	MTF Field Day (MSU Hancock Center)
Monday, September 14, 2009	MTF Fundraiser (Egypt Valley CC)
Monday, September 21, 2009	Tuck Tate Championship (Robert Trent Jones Masterpiece, TreeTops Resort)
Monday, October 5, 2009	The Big Event (Barton Hills CC)
Monday, October 19, 2009	Assistant's Golf Outing (The Emerald)
Tuesday, October 20, 2009	Equipment Tech. Meeting (Crystal Mountain Resort)
November 2-3, 2009	MiGCSA Education (TBD)
Tuesday, December 1, 2009	North Christmas Party (TBD)
Monday, December 7, 2009	MiGCSA Roundtable meeting (Birmingham Country Club)
Friday, December 11, 2009	West Christmas Party (Cascade Sports Bar, Grand Rapids)
Saturday, December 12, 2009	East Christmas Party (Motor City Casino, Detroit)
Thursday, December 17, 2009	Mid Christmas Party (TBD)

Visit  
www.MiGCSA.org  
for more  
details!

## A CALL FROM CAMPUS

### TURF TEAM TIDBITS

BY RON CALHOUN

The Michigan Turfgrass Environmental Stewardship Program is a dynamic, proactive program intended to organize efforts of the turfgrass industry, state agencies, Michigan State University, and environmental advocacy groups to advance the environmental stewardship of the turfgrass industry and to recognize environmental achievements.

Participation has included more than 240 golf courses in the first 10 years of the program's existence. There are some exciting changes to announce as the MTESP enters its second decade. That makes this the perfect time to jump in the game.

**FREE IS GOOD:** There is no longer an annual membership fee to participate in the program. Starting in 2009, courses will be considered members of MTESP if they maintain certified status or if they have an up-to-date environmental action plan. This will allow more courses to informally participate in the program while maintaining a distinction for properties that are actively pursuing or maintaining certification.

Program modules are now available FREE. Visit [www.turf.msu.edu/gamepiece](http://www.turf.msu.edu/gamepiece) to request your free virtual copy of the MTESP workbook (\$50 value). Submit the completed form today and you will receive a pre-loaded USB thumb drive that includes all the materials, forms, and references to get started.

Contact Debbie Swartz with any inquiries, questions or comments at 517.241.1987 or [swartzd@michigan.gov](mailto:swartzd@michigan.gov).

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