



COURSE

Conditions

Issue #49 - Q4 2020

Quarterly Publication of the Michigan Golf Course Superintendents Association



FEATURE SUPERINTENDENT

Jordan Caplan
Belvedere Golf Club



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Feature: My Road to Citizenship, by: Carlos Guerrero

Industry Partner: Matthew Kraemer, CGCS,
Toro Golf Irrigation at Spartan Distributors

Steven Page, MSU Turf Club President

PURE MICHIGAN

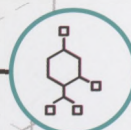


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President's PERSPECTIVE

Fellow MiGCSA Members,

I hope this letter finds you and your families healthy and safe. As Covid-19 numbers across the country are escalating I think, it is important to remember and thank your turf teams for being there for the golf course during a challenging season. I also think it will be important to check in on them periodically throughout the winter months.

This year I have two turf teams to thank. In the Spring of the year there was a lot of uncertainty about if/when/who was going to be allowed to work. The Board of Governors and GM at Saginaw Country Club stepped up providing some meals and Easter dinner for everyone on my staff even though most of them were still laid off. This gesture went a long way for the crew showing them that Saginaw C.C. genuinely cared about their wellbeing. When we were finally given approval to resume working, all but one person returned to work immediately giving up substantial unemployment benefits to be there for the golf course. The final holdout was back to work within a week after having a change of heart. The team did an amazing job following the new protocols to keep everyone safe. I know this story is not unique to Saginaw Country Club, I know turf teams across the state stepped up when called upon working with less staff trying to provide the same product everyone has become accustomed to.

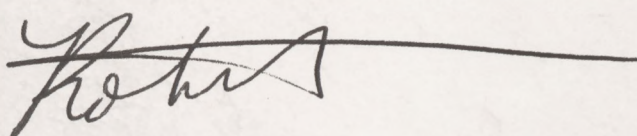
When I started at Red Run Golf Club on October 1st, I knew the team was probably already tired after what feels like the never-ending golf season of 2020. They probably were not too excited about the new guys who had a laundry list of goals to accomplish before the snow flies. I cannot thank them enough for putting their heads down and getting so much accomplished in the last two months. They were true professionals in every sense of the word. Red Run Golf Club's Board of Governors, membership and GM have also been extremely supportive of the staff doing extra things to thank them for their efforts.



The golf industry is different than any other business I have ever been a part of. There is a family feel to it, everyone truly cares about everyone else. Superintendents offer to help other Superintendents who work at clubs that compete for the same memberships. Memberships/Owners/Golfers do little things to show their appreciation for the work we all do. I think it is what makes this business so great.

As your seasons come to a close, please remember to thank the people that make us all look good (from a safe social distance of course).

Best Regards,



Rob Steger, CGCS



Erwin McKone is a Michigan native, growing up in Flint, Michigan was introduced to turf at Genesee Valley Meadows. Erwin earned a Bachelor of Science in Biology at the University of Michigan and was a Research Assistant for Bruce Branham at the University of Illinois. Erwin served as Chief Operating Officer and Director of Golf Operations at Briar Ridge Country Club prior to joining the Turf Ventures team in 2016.

Turf Ventures is a major distributor of chemicals and supplies. The company philosophy emphasizes playability as guiding principle for agronomic decisions. Turf Ventures believes in common sense agronomic principles and proven cultural practices to ensure the success of its partners.

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My Road to Citizenship

by: Carlos Guerrero, Golf Course Superintendent at Beechwood Golf Course

GERALD R FORD PRESIDENTIAL MUSEUM



My name is Carlos Guerrero and I am a citizen of the United States of America. It has been an exciting adventure for a guy born and raised in Mexico City to be able to make that statement. And I made my first official patriotic act on November 3, 2020--I proudly exercised my right as a citizen to vote in an United States presidential election.

My journey began in the Spring of 2002 when I received a H2B Visa from the Grand Hotel on Mackinac Island, Michigan, to work on their 18-hole golf course - The Jewel. It was my first time in the United States and also my first time stepping foot onto a golf course. I barely spoke English and communication with the course superintendent was very difficult





Cutting cups with Daughter

for a time. There was no other option for me but to learn the language, so I did! With the help of one of my longtime friends who was also working at The Jewel, my then-girlfriend and now wife, Cara, and lots and lots of practice, I was able to learn the English language.

Cara and I were married in 2006 at a picture-perfect wedding surrounded by family and friends in the Tea Garden at the Grand Hotel. As my Visa was going to expire in the fall, I applied for my first work permit which was good for only six months and my permanent resident card (commonly referred to as a Green Card). During those six months I could not leave the United States and my permit was good only for work and nothing else. All I could do during these months was cross my fingers that no family emergencies came up back in Mexico as leaving the United States during this time could have



Golf cart ride with family

created a multitude of setbacks to my Permanent Resident Card timeline. I had heard stories about applicants getting separated from their spouses during the process and how difficult it is. Many people give up and stop trying. Fortunately, I never got separated from my wife and while it was a little frustrating at times, Cara and I were determined not to give up.

After we were married and completed our season on Mackinac Island, we wanted to move to a big city. We packed up everything and moved to Atlanta, Georgia. I started working for Mike Crawford (now Director of Golf Course Maintenance Operations at PGA Tour) at TPC Sugarloaf as a spray technician. I owe so much to Mike and his willingness to give me a chance, challenge me, and share with me his passion for the golf course business.

During my time in Georgia, I continued the Permanent Resident Card application process which included completing biometrics fingerprinting screenings and a formal interview. A portion of the interview includes questions to ensure that Cara and I married for love, not a Green Card. In preparation for my interview, we gathered wedding photos, postcards, photos from our Upper Peninsula adventures, letters of reference from people who knew us, and anything that we could think of that would show our marriage was valid. I even memorized tiny details such as her favorite song, does she brush



At Citizenship Ceremony

in circles or up and down and her shoe size-- all the facts a married couple should know about each other. We followed the guidelines and truly loved each other, so we knew we just had to be calm and tell the truth. Everything went well for us and I received my Permanent Resident Card, valid for 10 years. Even though the card was good for 10 years, Cara regularly made sure I did not forget our anniversary!

After two years in Atlanta, we were missing Michigan and all of our friends and family, so we headed home. This time when I returned to Mackinac Island, I was offered the assistant superintendent position at The Jewel. While the promotion excited me, I knew that without any formal turfgrass education, my professional advancement would be limited. As such, I decided to enroll in online classes at Penn State University. I worked three years as an assistant at The Jewel when Cara and I decided it was time



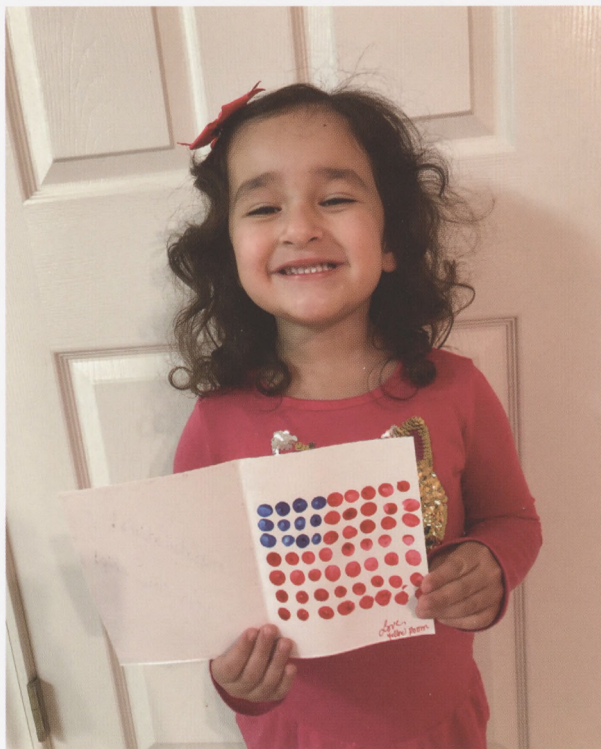
First time voting



Official citizenship handshake with the Judge

to move on. We packed up again, but this time we headed east. We moved just outside of New York City, where I continued my online classes at Penn State University and began working as an assistant superintendent for Manhattan Woods Golf Club, The Tuxedo Club and Hudson National Golf Club. While in New York, I officially earned my Turf Management Certificate and became a father to a beautiful baby girl. I am sure many fathers understand how having a child changes our priorities. For Cara and I, we wanted to raise Sofia in a safe, small town. After the golf season, we packed back up and moved to Cara's hometown of St. Joseph, Michigan, and I started my first job as a golf course superintendent.





Daughter holding American Flag made of her fingerprints

With the rise in immigration issues in the news, I knew it was time for Cara and I to discuss what our next steps would be. We needed to decide whether to continue renewing my permanent resident status or apply to become a United States citizen. A couple key factors to making that decision included (1) both my wife and daughter were United States citizens and (2) I have a great appreciation for what the United States has to offer. It encouraged me to make a firm decision. I applied to become a United States citizen.

Upon approval of my application, I received my interview date at the Department of Homeland Security in Detroit along with a booklet which included a study guide for a naturalization test. I began to study the 100 questions and answers right away. Since I did not grow up in the United States,



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Carlos, his wife Cara and daughter Sofia

I did not know much about civics. I learned facts like who was the first President of the United States, what was one of the causes of the Civil War, and why Election Day is always on a Tuesday. I had to be prepared to be asked 10 questions at random out of the 100 and get six correct. I aced it by answering my first six questions correctly! The second part of the test was reading and writing, which I knew I was going to do well. The rest of the time was spent with an immigration official interviewing me about my life and history. My entire future was riding on this interview and was in the hands of the officer. At the end of my interview I remember my officer telling me "Carlos, congratulations you have passed your test!" All I could do was take a deep breath of relief and smile from ear to ear.

Shortly after that day, I received a notification for my naturalization ceremony. It was March 20, 2019, at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum in Grand Rapids. I will never forget the excitement that I felt. All the years of hard work, learning a new language, going to school, and becoming a superintendent were finally paying off. I had worked hard and followed all the rules. All of these things ran through my mind as I thought that after this moment, I

would be an American. I will live the American Dream. That moment was about to happen. The judge asked me to raise my hand and I swore under oath. I was officially an American citizen with all the rights and freedoms that came along with it.

I am a firm believer that if you do the right thing, good things will come into your life. I have made sacrifices by leaving my country, my Mom, my Brother, and all of my family in Mexico, but I am thankful for their support and to know they are proud of me. I will always be thankful for those who supported me, those who believed in me, and those who were kind enough to give me their hand to help me become who I am today. This country has shown me it is full of such people since the day I arrived, and for that I am proud to say I am a citizen of the United States of America.

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John R. Fulling Jr. Leadership Scholarship

On September 28th at the 2020 Western Golf Day Fundraiser at Kalamazoo Country Club a new scholarship was announced that will be available for MiGCSA Members starting in 2021.

The MiGCSA Scholarship Committee has proposed, and the board has approved the new John R. Fulling Jr. Leadership Scholarship. This scholarship will help individuals improve and hone their leadership skills both personally and professionally. This scholarship will be offered in perpetuity to MiGCSA Members and awarded through review of the scholarship committee on a yearly basis.

John is the current President of the GCSAA, the first President of the MiGCSA and a past MTF President. He worked tirelessly to help bring the four Michigan Chapters together for many years that culminated in a vote in 2008.

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Golf Architecture: Success due to the Superintendent

BY BRUCE A. HEPNER, HEPNER GOLF DESIGN LLC

I've been fortunate in my over 30-year career to work all over the world building and consulting at some of the highest ranked and finest golf courses. Working from New Zealand to Australia, to Mexico, to Scotland, and in 25 different states has allowed me to work in varying climates, cultures, and lands. The one constant is that the most important role in any project's success, is the superintendent. Their willingness to take on the challenge of full filling the owner's and architects' vision and figure it out from scratch never ceases to amaze me. Tom Doak, who I worked for 17 years, always said that after building what we thought was a great golf course, "all we can do is hand over the keys, its success is up to them." That statement is so true, and it has proven over the years that the most successful projects are caretaken by great superintendents. I've been very fortunate to work what I think are the best and most innovative superintendents in the business. Each one has taught me something new and made me a better Architect in the long run.

Every day, we Architects, have what we think are the greatest ideas in golf design and if implemented they'll be made into the

greatest golf courses ever. Then practicality sets in and once in the field, many of those "great" ideas are really unmaintainable and the superintendent's job is to be the cold dose of reality. So, we have to learn from them what is doable. Having an honest relationship with the superintendent is the important key to any success and the trust that develops can allow us push each other to the limits of practicality. The majority of the superintendents I've have worked with have made me a better architect by this push – pull relationship. Ken Nice, the now Director of Grounds at the Bandon Dunes Resort, was a budding Assistant Superintendent of the Bandon Dunes Golf Course when we began the Pacific Dunes project. Ken was pushed over to us to oversee the construction and grown in. Pacific Dunes was a pretty radical piece of seaside dunes land and we wanted to really push the fairway contours but we didn't know the limits of



Ballyneal Golf Club





Pacific Dunes



Streamsong Blue



Tara Iti

maintainability for turf grass. We'd ask Ken daily if a certain contour was too much and he'd reply "it's your job to create and my job is to figure out how to maintain it." Ken gave us the freedom, but we respected it so much that we internally made sure we didn't take advantage of it and built within the limits of practicality. Pacific Dunes turned out pretty darn good, it has much to do with Ken.

Dave Hensley, now the General Manager, at Ballyneal Golf Club in Colorado inherited the Superintendents position by attrition. The owner at the time was chewing up Superintendents and they were quitting right and left. Dave was a second assistant and overseeing the irrigation installation, when I rolled up to him and said "Well I guess you're in charge." We were specifying a blend of Fine Fescue as the turfgrass to create a links type playing surface and Dave was coming from a back ground of Bluegrass fairways in the Rocky Mountains. He gulped and asked "What kind of grass are you using?" in a you got to be kidding tone of voice. Dave ended up, through trial and error, being one of the foremost experts of Fine Fescue turfgrass playing conditions in the world. Dave along with now superintendent Jared Kalina have some of the finest playing conditions in golf. They have taken the design to a whole different level and Ballyneal is one of the coolest places to play golf because of them.

Brian Slawnik, now Senior Design Associate for Tom Doak and Renaissance Golf Design, was fresh out of Architecture School at the University of Virginia and working summers on the crew at Oakland Hills. Dr. Mike Hurdzan guided Brian to the MSU Turf program as the next step into a possible career in Golf Architecture. Brian enrolled and the "great" Dr. Trey Rogers called me and said we have this student who wants to do his internship on a construction project. Brian joined us for the summer at Beechtree Golf Club in Maryland. By the end of the summer Brian

was well on his way in a great career in Golf Course Architecture, mainly because of his work ethic and extremely talented eye. Brian turned his turf background into becoming one of the best finish work talents in the business, and now one of the best shapers/architects that I know of. Brian, along with Tom Doak, is one of the master minds behind The Loop and was in charge of arguably one of the greatest courses in the world, Tara Iti in New Zealand. Brian pushed me in my career by paying attention to the details in both design and maintainable turf.

Kyle Harris, now Superintendent of the Red and Blue at Streamsong Resort, was one of our interns that Tom Doak plucked off of Golf Club Atlas.com. Kyle showed up for the project with a Rutgers turf degree and we didn't know what to think of this "smart guy." He wasn't a typical Ivy League intern who wanted my job, so we just put him in with the finish guys. Kyle excelled but we figured there was more to him. Rusty Mercer, the great Head of Agronomy who was handpicked by Bill Coore and us to run the project, had no assistants yet and we were ready to start grassing. We put Kyle in charge of sprigging the golf course and by trial and error, he figured out the best way to grass the site was by hand springing all 36 holes. Kyle and his 18-man crew spread Bermuda sprigs by hand. It was quite a sight watching the operation that we all learned from. Once construction was completed, we needed a man on site to make sure the details were taken care of. Kyle, under the wings of Rusty, became our on-site design associate/grow in superintendent and worked with me to really set the tone of the spectacular landscape that evolved to the resort it is today. Kyle is now the Head Superintendent of two of the Top 100 courses in the country. From intern to Head Superintendent in two years is a great success story.



Essex County Club



Birmingham CC

I could go on and on about the men I've learned so much from in my career and most were Superintendents. It's the common passion and work ethic that set the "Greenkeeper's" apart in my mind. Passionately working 90 plus hour weeks as young budding superintendents set the foundation for the rest of their careers. Most of my best friends in the business are Superintendents and are our common love of golf courses and that trusting relationship have produced some great results. I don't know how many times that either Eric Richardson (Essex County Club, Mass.) or Dan Dingman (Birmingham CC), both MSU grads, have lectured me "your job is to just make it cool and my job is to figure out how to maintain it." You can't imagine how much fun it is to hear that when you come to work every day. I'm very fortunate.

The Tuck Tate, Wee One and Northern Fundraiser at Forest Dunes Fundraiser



*Our amazing host Superintendents
John Wessels and Rob Falconer*

In early spring of 2020, the MiGCSA Board of Directors made the very tough decision to cancel the traditional Northern Fundraiser at Arcadia Bluffs. This was not an easy decision or one that was made lightly, but it ensured the safety of our members at a time when so much was unknown about COVID-19. This decision, like many others this year, was used to make something new that otherwise would not have happened. With the Tuck Tate already scheduled for September at Forest Dunes the idea was hatched to try to catch up on some events we had missed. The Wee One was also cancelled in the spring so we decided to do all three in two days. Day one would be on the Loop Black and we would have the Tuck Tate Championship and the Wee One Fundraiser that afternoon with dinner. That would be followed by tee times the next morning on Forest Dunes for the Northern fundraiser with an optional round playing the Loop the other way that afternoon. Our host members Rob Falconer, Loop Superintendent, John Wessels, Forest Dunes Superintendent, Kyle Frost & Jeff Campbell, Assistant Superintendents & Equipment Manager Greg Rau were incredibly helpful in planning this event with many moving

parts mixed with COVID restrictions. Also special thanks to PGA Professionals Don Helinski, Director of Operations, Elliott Oscar, Head Golf Professional & Josh Schlump, Assistant Golf Professional. Also thank you to Sandy Micolo, Lodging & Reservations Manager, Dan A. Darling, F&B Manager Operations, Dru Lyle, F&B Manager Culinary, Tyler Watters, Controller, Leslie Sitko, Guest Experience Manager, Tyler Tabor, Guest Experience Manager, Lacy Tate, Reservationist & Mark A. Lutz, Vice President. Forest Dunes hit a home run and the event was fantastic. We will look to continue this event again in late summer 2021, keep you calendar open for Wednesday September 1st and Thursday September 2nd 2021.

Here are the results from the events.

2020 Tuck Tate Champion – Eric Davey who shot 73 on the Loop Black

2020 Tuck Tate Net Champion – John Gray who shot a net 68 on the Loop Black

1st place in the 2 of 4 net team game was Chad Kuzawa from Bronze Partner Earthworks, Jeff Wanner and John Gray who won the scorecard playoff at 117 over second place team Chris Burnett, Mike Still, Nick Shaw and Shawn Osborne. In 3rd place with a 124 was Al Bathum, Andy Gianino, Drew Paxton and Josh Teitsma.

The proximity prizes were won by Don Underwood, Greg Lovell, Shaun Osborne and Matt Pauli from Silver Partner Standard Golf.

The Northern Fundraiser was a scramble format with the team of Lee Collins from Platinum Partner Site One Golf, Matt Pauli, Steve Rebhan and John Fulling shooting 64 and winning the scorecard playoff over the team of Ross Miller, Scott Rettmann, Eric Davey and Jared Milner. Third place was the team of Luke Cella, Shane Conroy, Adam Ikamas and Rob Steger with a score of 68.

The proximity prizes were won by Phil Gutowski, Clayton Novak, Bryan Klebba, Jared Milner, Jeff Campbell, and Jesse Shaver. There was one skin winner with an eagle three on hole #7 from the team of Brian Racette, Greg Lovell and Greg Sinner.

Special thanks to Dr. Thom Nikolai who came up to run the 50/50 raffle on hole #19 as a thank you from the MSU Turf Team for the support these events generate. The winner of the 50/50 was decided by uploading the names of those who entered and their number of entries into a random name picker online and out of the 925 entries Doug Johanningsmeier was the winner!



2020 Low Net Tuck Tate Champion John Grey and 2020 Tuck Tate Champion Eric Davey



2020 Northern Fundraiser Champions Lee Collins, Matt Pauli, Steve Rebhan and John Fulling



Grandpa Nikolai, Ph.D. (left) and professional drummer and GCSAA President John Fulling pose on the 19th tee at Forest Dunes Golf Club on September 2, 2020.





JORDAN Caplan

Jordan Caplan

Are you married, if so how long and what is your spouse's name?

Married for 7 years,
spouse Andrea Caplan

Do you have any children? What are their names and ages?

Two girls, Ayla 4 and
Amelia 2

Where do you live?

Charlevoix, MI

Where did you receive your education?

Michigan State University

Age?
34

1 HOW DID YOU BECOME INVOLVED IN THE GOLF BUSINESS? I worked on the grounds crew at Plum Hollow Country Club the summer following my freshman year at MSU.

2 WHEN DID YOU DECIDE YOU WANTED GOLF TO BE YOUR CAREER? Shortly after my first season at PHCC I realized I enjoyed the work and wanted to pursue a degree from MSU. Joe Singles, Adam Garr, and John Sabat at Plum let me experience a few more things my second season at Plum.

3 WHAT ARE SOME OF THE COURSES YOU HAVE WORKED AT? HOW LONG? Plum Hollow Country Club – 2 years
Eagle Eye Golf Club – 3 years
Myopia Hunt Club – Internship
The Philadelphia Cricket Club – 7 years
Belvedere Golf Club – 1 year

4 WHAT PART OF YOUR EDUCATION DID YOU USE THE MOST? I use math or “turfgrass math” every day. Numbers are everywhere in golf course maintenance.

5 HOW HAS YOUR JOB AT YOUR CURRENT COURSE PROGRESSED? In my first year at Belvedere I have enjoyed working with the staff to maintain and make improvements to the course. It's such a cool property with a rich history. I'm happy to be part of it and looking forward to future seasons.

6 WHAT ARE YOUR EXPECTATIONS OF THE MICHIGAN GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENTS ASSOCIATION? I expect them to continue to be a solid resource for those in the industry. I appreciate their ability to bring folks together





for education, golf, and comradery.

7 WHAT IS YOUR EXPERIENCE WITH THE MICHIGAN TURFGRASS FOUNDATION?

One of my favorite foundations. The foundation does good work and brings good folks together.

8 DO YOU FEEL LIKE YOU HAVE GIVEN BACK TO GOLF? I love providing playing conditions for everyone to enjoy the game. I also have two up and coming players: I am excited to play with my daughters. I hope this would be considered giving back. Additionally, I usually “give back” a golf ball or two every time I play!

9 DO YOU HAVE HOBBIES OR SPECIAL INTERESTS AWAY FROM THE GAME? I enjoy spending time with my family. There are plenty of things to

do and explore year-round in Northern Michigan.

10 WHAT IS THE MOST CHALLENGING PART OF YOUR JOB? We unfortunately have no control over the weather.

11 WHAT IS THE MOST SATISFYING PART OF YOUR JOB? When a golfer finishes a round with a smile on their face.

12 WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST ISSUES FACING GOLF? I think changes in climate will challenge golf globally. Water limitations and increase in weather extremes all threaten the maintenance of the course. I foresee warm season grasses reaching farther north eventually. The issue would be survival over the winter. Meyer Zoysia was an incredible grass to gain experience managing in Philadelphia, great in summer

and always broke through dormancy following winter.

13 IS THERE RESEARCH YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE ACOMPLISHED IN TURFGRASS MANAGEMENT? I would just say keep it coming and keep up the good work. Winter Kill research is always valuable to us up north.

14 WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN 10 YEARS? I’m only the fourth Belvedere Superintendent since 1925, so I hope to stick with the tradition and serve as long or longer as my predecessors. Speaking of, retired Superintendent Rick Grunch was extremely helpful in the transition period upon my arrival.



5 THINGS PEOPLE MAY NOT KNOW ABOUT ME

1. I was born in Toronto, Canada.
2. I got married in Charlevoix 7 years ago and now work and live here.
3. My only career hole in one was made 2 days before our wedding in Charlevoix at Dunmaglas Golf Course.
4. My favorite band is Umphrey’s McGee. I have seen them live 17 times.
5. Don’t let the red hair fool you, I’m not Irish. I’m Swedish and German.



15 HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE REMEMBERED 100 YEARS FROM NOW? I would rather just be known in the present as someone who is hardworking and dedicated to both the golf course and my family.

16 WHO HAS INFLUENCED YOU THE MOST IN YOUR TURFGRASS CAREER? Dan Meersman, Director of Grounds at the Philadelphia Cricket Club. To be a part of the team and program he has in place was rewarding. It was a privilege to work with my former PCC colleagues, most of whom are now superintendents throughout the country, and we keep in touch. My first assistant job was at Eagle Eye in East Lansing where Steve Fiorillo and Dave Elliot were great mentors. Lastly, the faculty at MSU was a huge influence while in school and continues to be.

17 WHO HAS INFLUENCED YOU THE MOST IN YOUR PERSONAL LIFE?
My Family

18 WHAT IS THE MOST VALUABLE THING YOU'VE LEARNED THAT YOU USE ALL THE TIME?
Patience, whether it be training a staff member, troubleshooting an irrigation issue, or anything in between having patience allows you to see the big picture and plan accordingly. It becomes even more important when raising kids!

19 HOW DO YOU RATE THE IMPORTANCE OF A SUPERINTENDENT IN A GOLF OPERATION? Very important, however it takes a strong team including grounds staff, Golf Pro, GM and many more folks to run a successful operation.

20 WHAT PERCENTAGE OF TIME DO YOU DEVOTE TO NON-AGRONOMIC GOLF COURSE MANAGEMENT?
Hard to say, it depends on time of year. Maybe 30 to 40%. There is a misconception that all a superintendent does is grow grass. 100% of the time I enjoy the task at hand.

21 WHAT IS YOUR OPINION OF THE ROLE OF AN ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT? A vital member of the team. I have learned from many and grown professionally serving as an assistant superintendent. I respect the position as an



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avenue to eventually advance but also think it is a great position to make a career out of.

22 WHAT IS YOUR OPINION OF THE ROLE OF THE GOLF COURSE MECHANIC OR TECHNICIAN?

Incredibly important, quality of cut is everything and inevitably something always needs to be serviced or fixed. We are lucky to have a good mechanic at Belvedere.

23 WHAT IS YOUR OPINION OF GOLFERS WALKING VERSUS RIDING IN A CART TO PLAY?

I support whatever the facility offers or requires and whatever the golfer decides is right for them to enjoy a round.

24 WHAT IS YOUR BIGGEST PET PEEVE IN GOLF COURSE ETIQUETTE?

Sunflower seeds spit out on putting green!

25 WHAT OPINION DO YOU HAVE OF GREEN SPEEDS IN TODAY'S GAME?

I think green speed should be appropriate for the undulations of the green. Therefore, I think it is unique to each facility. Having said that, it is nice to have the ability to speed them up for a tournament. I think the smoothness of the surface is just as or more important than the speed of the green.

26 WHO WOULD BE IN YOUR DREAM FOURSOME?

My Dad, my late Great Uncle Jerry, and Rickie Fowler (with the mustache). For that matter, we would all have mustaches.

27 DO YOU HAVE A HUMOROUS OR INTERESTING STORY YOU CAN SHARE FROM YOUR CAREER?

Would be hard to pick just one, I would say our job is worth all the effort if you can also appreciate the humor in it.

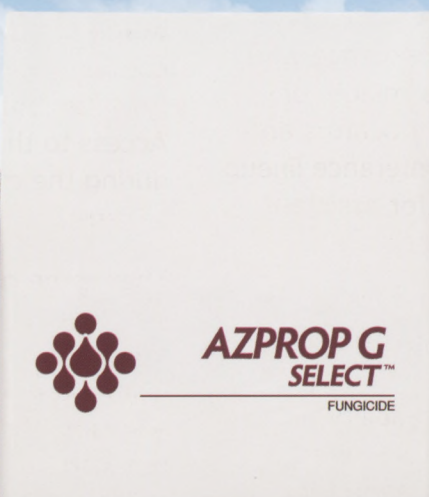
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BY SHANE CONROY AND GCSAA STAFF

Registration for the 2021 Golf Industry Show, which will be presented in an interactive, virtual format February 2-4 is now open for GCSAA members and non-members.

Along with the presenting partners the American Society of Golf Course Architects (ASGCA) and the Golf Course Builders Association of America (GCBA), GCSAA will allow attendees to connect with peers, industry experts and exhibitors during the three-day show. Aside from world class networking, the virtual format will also allow attendees to partake in unparalleled educational opportunities and access golf facility solutions.

Along with the nearly 19,000 GCSAA members, the interactive GIS is also tailored to meet the needs of golf course owners, operators and managers, and others in the golf industry.

Deviating from the traditional GIS education format, this year's education lineup will still offer world class sessions. The 2021 GCSAA Education Conference will offer 88 sessions taught in 15-minute, 30-minute or one-hour formats. Live interaction with educators and other attendees will be available. The conference lineup will also feature focused learning tracks for **assistant superintendents, equipment managers and crew members.**

Providing access for an entire golf course management team at one price, GIS facility packages are being offered for the first time. The All-Access Facility Package features all 88 education sessions — which can be viewed during the event or on demand for 30 days — the virtual trade show, networking events and more for \$850 for an unlimited number of team members at your facility, which can also be extended to course operators, owners, general managers and green committee members. Each GCSAA member at the facility will receive 3.0 continuing education points

(CEUs). The Individual All-Access Package is available to GCSAA members for \$600 (\$750 for non-members). Additional packages are also available.

"We truly have the ability to connect more industry professionals from all over the world than ever before with the virtual format," says GCSAA CEO Rhett Evans. "And with the savings on travel costs, it is a tremendous value for every member of the team while still offering the high-quality education and innovations the GIS is known for."

Alongside the world class education, more than 450 exhibitors are expected to be a part of the virtual trade show. Attendees will be able to watch live demonstrations, communicate with company representatives, and take information from exhibitors with them in virtual show bags. Access to the trade show will be available during the event and through March 6 for all registrants.

The theme of the 2021 GIS — "Your space. Your pace. All in one place." — not only reflects the ability of participants to attend the show from the safety of their homes or offices and consume the content on their own schedules, but also speaks to the convergence of industry experts that will be a part of the high-caliber education lineup in keeping with past GIS events.

A preview of the virtual platform and more information about the show is now available on golfindustryshow.com.





The 2020 MiGCSA MATCH PLAY

2020 Match Play Champions Ryan Moore & Brett Roberts

The third year of the season long MiGCSA Match Play Championship concluded on September 16th at Lansing Country Club hosted by Superintendent Drew Peddie. This year the championship match came down to the team of MiGCSA Secretary/Treasurer Ryan Moore and his partner Brett Roberts who advanced from the Detroit/Mid bracket beating the team of Jeff Smith and Matt Suzio in the final four from the Western bracket versus the team of Jim Bluck and Dan Lucas from the Northern bracket who defeated Aaron McMaster and Terry Poley out of the other Detroit/Mid bracket. The match was closely contested with the team of Moore/Roberts one up on #17 tee following a win on #16 from a birdie by Jim Bluck. The team of Moore and Roberts won #17 with a par to win 2&1.

The consolation bracket came down to a match between MiGCSA Board Member

Doug Hoeh and Mike Nielsen from the Northern bracket versus Michael Brown and Tyler Cooper out of the Detroit/Mid bracket. Hoeh and Nielsen won their final four match against MiGCSA Vice President Doug Ware and his partner Skip Connolly from the Detroit/Mid bracket. Michael Brown and Tyler Cooper defeated MiGCSA Past President Jay Eccleton, CGCS and Marc McCoy from the Detroit/Mid bracket in their final four match. This was another closely contested match played at Bucks Run Golf Club in Mt. Pleasant hosted by Craig McKinley and MiGCSA Past President Jeff Sweet, CGCS. Hoeh and Nielsen won 3&2. Complete bracket results are available at migcsa.org.

This third year of the Match Play Championship was again a success. The goal of this event is to promote new contacts and networking among the Members of the MiGCSA and to go

experience new golf courses. In addition to that the spirit of competition was alive and well.

Special thanks to our 2020 Industry Partners who made this event possible. Also to our many members who made accommodations for matches at their facilities this year and all 64 members who participated. The 2021 Match Play Championship registration will open in March of 2021.

For the 2021 matches all participants must have an active USGA approved handicap to participate.



Consolation champions Doug Hoeh and Mike Nielsen with Tyler Cooper and Michael Brown

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The 2020 BIG EVENT FUNDRAISER



Our host Dave Makulski



GCSAA President John Fulling, CGCS with his new little John bobblehead courtesy of Ron Dahlin, CGCS



WELCOME

Michigan Golf Course
Superintendents
Association

The 2020 Big Event was hosted by MiGCSA Members Dave Makulski and T.C. Decker at Indianwood Golf & Country Club on Monday October 12th. This event is the last of the three fundraisers the MiGCSA has every year. All of the proceeds from these events go to fund the future of our industry by the way of scholarships, philanthropic causes related to turf and funding research at Michigan State via donation to the Michigan Turfgrass Foundation (MTF).

A very special thank you to our 2020 Premier Fundraiser Sponsors BASF, Bayer, Matt LaFontaine Automotive, Site One Golf, Spartan Distributors and Syngenta. Thank you to our hole sponsors Baker Vehicle, Rhino Seed, Standard Golf, Golf Cars Plus, Trimax, Target Specialty Products, Porous Pave, Harrell's, Nufarm, Earthworks and J.W. Turf. Complimentary beverage station thanks to Earthworks along with Herman & Associates. There were 6 proximity prizes thanks to the Premier Sponsors. Special thanks to Sue Shockey, Matt Weber and Shane Conroy for hosting the Texas Hold Em' poker game contest. Mike Sullivan and Kyle Bogey from the Metro Detroit Golfers group were in attendance and spoke to the group about the new relationship with the MiGCSA, also as the winners of the poker

game they donated their winning back to the event, thanks fellas! If you do not follow the Metro Detroit Golfers group on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and metrodetritgolfers.com please go check it out. We are excited to partner with them on many future endeavors.

Thank you to PGA Professional Dave Zink, Clubhouse Manager Samantha Strozynski, Executive Chef Johan Vanblerk and the Aldrige Family.

Here are the results:

Closest to the pins, Jamie Wilson, Mike LaCroix, Gary Thommes and Joe Reilly.
Long drive Bob Badovinac
and longest putt Black team.

Winning Scramble Teams:

1st place - Terry Poley, Maggie Gdula, Jeff Davis & Andy Gilroy

2nd place - Ryan Broth, Archy Hovsepain, Matt Siemiantkowski & Michael Leach

3rd place - Ted Davis, Mike LaCroix, Douglas Ware & Ryan Yoder

All skins were tied, thank you all for your donation!



Mike Sullivan and Kyle Bogey from the Metro Detroit Golfers group were in attendance



2020 Big Event Champions Terry Poley, Maggie Gdula, Andy Gilroy & Jeff Davis

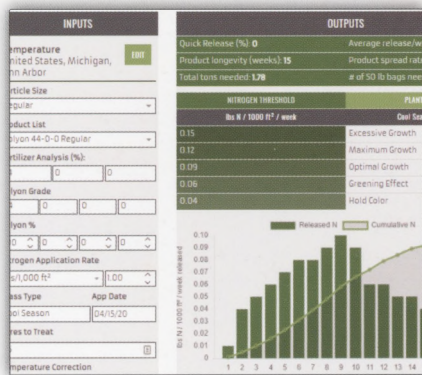
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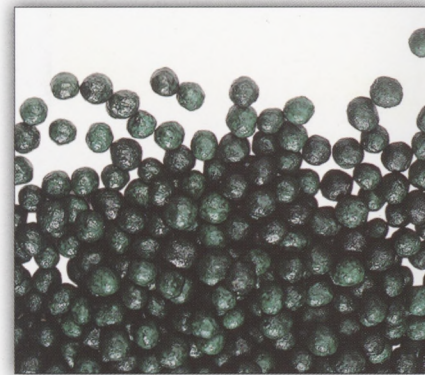
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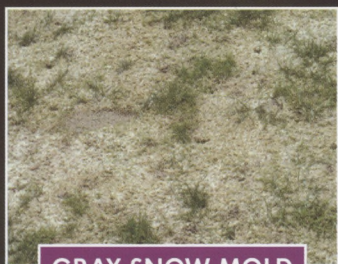
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MATTHEW Kraemer,

Matthew Kraemer

How long have you been working in your current position?

I have been with Spartan Distributors since August of 2019.

Are you married, if so how long and what is your spouse's name?

13 years to Rebecca

Do you have any children? What are their names and ages?

Julia, 10

Where did you receive your education?

Bachelor of Science from Michigan State University

Age?

48

- 1 **HOW DID YOU GET INVOLVED IN THE GOLF BUSINESS?** My godfather was the Director of Parks for the City of Rochester Hills. They were working with a private group developing Pine Trace Golf Club. He asked me if I wanted to work on a golf course. I started out there push mowing the sod around the green and tee complexes during grow in. I was 15. I really liked the outdoor work, working with the tools and equipment. I worked after school, weekends, every chance I could.
- 2 **WHO WAS YOUR GREATEST INFLUENCE IN PERSONAL LIFE?** Growing up it was my mom and dad. From my mom it was patience and from my dad, my work ethic. Now it is my wife and daughter, they make me want to be a great husband and father.
- 3 **WHO WAS YOUR GREATEST INFLUENCE IN YOUR PROFESSIONAL LIFE?** I have had many influences in my career from all the people that I've worked with to my peers and salespeople. I believe that I have learned something from everyone I have encountered over the years, which is what makes this industry so great. And now with the career change I am learning alot from the entire staff at Spartan Distributors.
- 4 **CAN YOU SHARE A FUNNY STORY FROM YOUR CAREER?** Shortly after I started at Pine Trace, we had a large pot belly pig loose on the golf course. Imagine getting that call over the radio. My mechanic at the time chased it through the woods and watched it while we waited for animal control to come. The animal control officer had to use a noose to get the pig back to the truck. My assistant said he has never heard an animal scream that loud. We never heard if it was a pet that got away or someone just let it go because it got so big.
- 5 **WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE ARE THE BIGGEST ISSUES FACING SUPERINTENDENTS TODAY?** A common theme in most shops is labor. Lack of it and poor quality.
- 6 **WHAT ARE YOUR EXPECTATIONS WHEN WORKING WITH THE MICHIGAN GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENTS ASSOCIATION?** I have always expected the association to provide us with current educational opportunities, which they have done a great job with. I also enjoy the social events that they provide, its always good to step away and interact with your peers.



7 WHAT IS YOUR BEST ADVICE TO DECISION MAKERS WHEN DOING BUSINESS? I learned a long time ago to not buy just based on price. Take a look at the value of the transaction. Service and support go a long way.

8 WHAT IS THE MOST REWARDING PART OF BEING IN AN INDUSTRY SUPPORT ROLE? Having been a superintendent prior to my current position, I think that I really understand the sense of urgency that a superintendent has. I know how important that irrigation system is to them. I like that I can solve an issue for them and take one thing off of their to-do list.

9 WHAT IS YOUR BEST SUCCESS STORY? The spring of 2015. We just had our second bad winter in a row and lost a lot of grass on the greens. In 2014 we seeded all of the dead areas and the recovery took pretty much all season. It wasn't good for business. In 2015 we were able to purchase greens from the recently closed Normandy Oaks Golf Club to sod all of our dead areas. I would send a crew out to remove 1000-1500 sq. ft. of dead material in the morning and I would

take a small crew with me to go and harvest the sod from the greens at Normandy Oaks. By the time we got back the crew had the areas prepped and ready to go. We would lay all that sod and roll it the same day. This went on for 2.5 weeks. We then rolled, aerated, and topdressed that sod for 2 more weeks and had it playable for the rest of the season. I had a great crew that year and they really bought in and embraced the process. I was proud of them for what we accomplished.

10 WHAT DO YOU ENJOY THE MOST ABOUT YOUR POSITION? I like that I can still get out on the golf course and to be able to go around and see people that I only got to see once a year at MTF.

11 DO YOU HAVE SOME TRAVEL TIPS? Don't drink a lot of water during the day. You never know how long the next ride will be.

12 HOW MANY DAYS OF THE YEAR ARE YOU ON THE ROAD? I would say somewhere between 200-220. With the sales and service role I am always on the go.

13 WHO HAS THE NICEST SHOP YOU CALL ON AND WHY? There are a lot of nice shops out there.

14 WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER THE BEST PRODUCT YOU OFFER AND WHY? Has to be the Lynx software. It's simple and efficient to use. Whether you are setting up watering, making changes, or adding programs it's really easy to do. I did not have a central control at my course and I am picking up Lynx quickly because it is so simple. Add to that the Lynx Apps and the user can water from their phone, making them more efficient.

15 WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE ITEM TO SELL/ DEMONSTRATE? Again it has to be the Lynx software. When you show it to a Sitepro



user or someone without central control, they can't believe how easy it is to use.

16 WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE GOLF COURSE TO PLAY? I don't play much so I don't have a favorite. When I do play, it's more about spending time and enjoying the company I am playing with.

17 IF YOU HAD A DIFFERENT PROFESSION, WHAT WOULD IT BE? I really enjoy working with my hands and tools, something mechanical or building.

18 WHAT ARE YOUR HOBBIES OR ACTIVITIES AWAY FROM GOLF? I enjoy waterfowl and upland bird hunting, woodworking and tinkering in the garage.

19 WHAT DO YOU ENJOY DOING OUTSIDE OF WORK? Bike riding with my daughter, watching her play soccer, skiing, family time.



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20 WHO HAS THE BEST MAINTENANCE DEPARTMENT DOG? They are all great. I used to take mine to work everyday. We used to say that if we could come back as anything it would be as a golf course dog. What a great life.

21 HOW MANY CONFERENCES AND EDUCATIONAL EVENTS DO YOU ATTEND PER YEAR? 4-6

22 WHICH ONE IS THE BEST TURF CARE PROFESSIONALS CAN ATTEND? If budget allows obviously the GIS, but the MTF Conference continues to impress me. They have done an outstanding job with the education at that conference.

23 HOW MANY ROUNDS OF GOLF DO YOU PLAY IN A YEAR? 3-4

24 HOW DO YOU THINK THE INDUSTRY WILL BE DIFFERENT IN 10 YEARS? Technology is moving so fast right now. I believe that autonomous equipment will play a larger role especially with the way labor is going. I also think that we will begin seeing subsurface irrigation covering larger areas to decrease water usage.

5 THINGS PEOPLE MAY NOT KNOW ABOUT ME

1. I was a 4-time City of Clawson Fourth of July Big Wheel Champion.
- 2 I have never had a broken bone.
- 3 I have never had a cavity.
- 4 I have visited 37 states and 14 National Parks.
- 5 I backpacked to the bottom of the Grand Canyon at 7 years old.





Strength in Partnership

As we reflect on the past year, we express gratitude for our partnerships with MiGCSA members and staff. Your commitment to the industry is valued and appreciated, and your contributions have made a significant difference despite adversity. We look forward to continually strengthening our partnership and to health and prosperity in the new year.

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2020 WESTERN GOLF DAY FUNDRAISER



GCSAA CEO Rhett Evans presents President John Fulling, CGCS with his presidential plaque

More than 100 MiGCSA Members and friends took part in the 2020 Western Golf Day Fundraiser at Kalamazoo Country Club on Monday September 28th. This event is the second of the three fundraisers the MiGCSA has every year. All of the proceeds from these events go to fund the future of our industry by the way of scholarships, philanthropic causes related to turf and funding research at Michigan State by way of donation to the Michigan Turfgrass Foundation (MTF).

A very special thank you to our 2020 Premier Fundraiser Sponsors BASF, Bayer, Matt LaFontaine Automotive, Site One Golf, Spartan Distributors and Syngenta. Thank you to our hole sponsors Baker Vehicle, Rhino Seed, Standard Golf, Golf Cars Plus, Trimax, Target Specialty Products, Porous Pave, Harrell's, Nufarm, Earthworks and J.W. Turf. Complimentary beverage station thanks to Earthworks and Herman & Associates.

Thank you to our host John Fulling, CGCS, Assistant Superintendent Blaine Burch and Equipment Manager Heath Bronkema. Also special thanks to Susan Fulling, Director of Catering and Banquets, Andrew Tkach, General Manager, Kyle Horton, PGA, Golf Professional and Micahel Mangano Executive Chef.

This year we had some very special guests join us, the GCSAA Board of Directors and senior staff including Rhett Evans, GCSAA CEO. With all of the COVID restrictions this year, this event was the first opportunity for the board to meet in person. They participated in the event and held a joint meeting with the MiGCSA board of directors followed by a dinner where John Fulling was presented with his appreciation plaque, he would normally have received at the Golf Industry Show. It was a great opportunity to interact with the national board and thank John for his work on our behalf during this very challenging year.



Here are the results:

Closest to the pins:

Don Underwood, Jared Butler, Matt Chappell and Ryan Osborne

Winning Scramble Teams:

1st place (59) - Lee Collins, Ryan Osborne, Steve Rebhan and Josh Teitsma

2nd place (60) - Scott O'Neil, Greg Norris, Pete Adkins and Jeff Hopkins

3rd place - Eric Davey, Joe Enciso, Collin Romanick and Marc McCoy

Skins:

Eagle 2 on hole #7 - John Fulling, Rhett Evans, Rob Steger and Adam Ikamas

Eagle 3 on hole #18 - Jeff Bodziak, Ron Dahlin, Colin Yonkers and Don Underwood



The joint MiGCSA and GCSAA Board Meeting after the announcement of a scholarship in his name



GCSAA President John Fulling, CGCS addressing the attendees after the announcement of a scholarship in his name

GCSAA CEO Rhett Evans addresses the attendees



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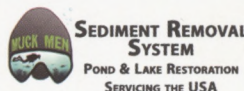
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Steven Page of Canton, a senior at Michigan State University with a career in turfgrass ahead of him, has been working at Pheasant Run Golf Club in Canton since his senior year in high school. He is 21 and will graduate in May with a degree in plant and soil sciences with an emphasis on turfgrass. He has already accepted an offer to be an assistant superintendent at famed Shinnecock Hills Golf Club in Southampton, N.Y., starting in the spring.

STEVEN Page

1 HOW DID YOU DECIDE ON A CAREER IN THE GOLF BUSINESS?

I started at Grand Valley (State University) studying physical therapy and even volunteered shadowing a therapist. I lived in an apartment right across from the golf course at Grand Valley (Meadows) and found myself wishing I was working on the golf course instead of doing physical therapy. I had worked on the crew at Pheasant Run (Golf Club in Canton), but I really didn't know it could be a career until I looked it up online and started asking questions. Tom Leh (superintendent) at Pheasant Run told me he went to Michigan State. I contacted Dr. Trey Rogers to talk about the program and then transferred to Michigan State.

2 WHAT WAS THE KEY THING YOU LEARNED FROM YOUR FIRST GOLF JOB? I started working at Pheasant Run my senior year of high school and worked there for

a year and a half before realizing it was what I wanted to do. I remember thinking if there is a career in this I would love to do it. I did it all, all the jobs and still do a little bit of everything there. I've kind of become an intern the last two years because Tom (Leh) has taught me a lot and given me some lessons on the managerial side of things, too.

3 WHAT WAS YOUR FAVORITE PART OF THAT FIRST JOB? The crew at Pheasant Run is a bunch of retired guys and they are the coolest most down-to-earth guys you will ever meet. They are great to work with and be around.

4 DID YOU DO AN INTERNSHIP? I kind of did a double internship this last summer on Long Island (N.Y.). I worked full-time at Sebonack Golf Club and then part-time at Shinnecock. John (Jennings), the super there is one of the smartest guys I think I've





ever met. I learned a lot this summer – worked a lot and learned a lot. It was fantastic summer.

5 WHAT PIECE OF EQUIPMENT WOULD YOU LIKE TO HAVE IN YOUR ARESENAL FOR GOLF COURSE MANAGEMENT? I think having a reliable sprayer to use and calibrate is huge. Chemical applications and keeping those right are vital in making sure turf stays healthy.

6 WHO ON THE CREW AT PHEASANT RUN MADE YOU LAUGH THE MOST? Bob Moore is the guy. He's 74, and an Army vet and he used to drive a semi. He is one of the funniest guys I've ever met. He tells great stories from life, has a great sense of humor. His sayings, really everything that comes out of his mouth makes me chuckle.

7 IF YOU HAD A MULLIGAN ON A DIFFERENT CAREER CHOICE, WHAT WOULD IT BE? No clue.

This is my mulligan. I guess it would be something in the sports world. I've always been a big sports guy. The truth is I love golf and turfgrass management. I can't picture my career going any other way.

8 WHAT IS THE CULTURAL MANAGEMENT PRACTICE GOLF COURSE COULD NOT DO WITHOUT? Aerification and sand top-dressing the greens. Making sure that sand fills the holes each fall is critical so the grass gets time to heal.

9 DO YOU PLAN TO GIVE BACK TO YOUR PROFESSION? I've had so much help, so yes, I would love to help any student or person in the turf industry. This is a unique industry in that there is always someone to call who will help you with a

problem or advice. I would love to be one of those people once I have the base knowledge to do it.

10 WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST ISSUES FACING ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENTS TODAY? At this point for me, it is being able to get organized and try and learn as much as I can from John at Shinnecock while also learning how to manage the crew and the workload.

11 WHAT DO YOU THINK WILL BE THE BEST PART OF YOUR NEW JOB? I think having a little more say in what goes on and having a little more control of the decisions that get made. When you are on a crew you are pretty much being told what to do. I look forward to being part of decisions.

12 WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN 10 YEARS? Hopefully I will be back in Michigan by then with a family and a job as lead or head superintendent. I see myself wanting to get back to Michigan.



5

THINGS PEOPLE MAY NOT KNOW ABOUT ME

1. I am a triplet
2. Before turfgrass management i was a physical therapy major
3. Dream car is a Ford Raptor
4. Lowest golf handicap was a 6.4
5. Love country music



13 WHO HAS INFLUENCED YOU THE MOST ABOUT TURFGRASS MANAGEMENT? Dr. Rogers at Michigan State 100 percent. The way he runs the program and how willing he is to help, and how much he wants you to learn is amazing. He is like no other professor or advisor I have ever worked with.

14 WHAT IS THE MOST VALUABLE THING YOU HAVE LEARNED FROM HIM? I think the biggest thing he has taught me is that when it comes to making a decision about my career it has to be my decision, not that of anybody else. He tells us the world is an open book. You get out of it what you put into it. He tells us to work hard and to work smart.

15 HOW DO YOU RATE THE IMPORTANCE OF AN ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT'S ROLE? I think assistants are vital. It gives someone the superintendent can give tasks to and he doesn't have to worry about. If he has to drop out for

a meeting, he knows the course is in good hands with a good assistant. It gives the super a chance to do some things he couldn't do if he didn't have someone else to help manage a crew or make sure tasks get completed.

16 WHAT IS YOUR OPINION OF THE MECHANIC? Mechanics are absolutely crucial. I don't think a golf course operation can function without a mechanic. Accidents happen, machines go down almost daily. Without a mechanic it would be tough to keep the operation going.

17 WHAT IS YOUR BIGGEST PET PEEVE CONCERNING GOLF COURSE ETIQUETTE? It has to be people not fixing ball marks on the greens.

18 WHAT ARE YOUR OPINIONS OF GREEN SPEEDS AND THE GAME OF GOLF TODAY? I think green speeds have to be relative to the golf course you are at. If the greens have a lot of undulation you can't have them running at 14 or 15. It wouldn't be fair. Green speed is not really an indication of good greens. Uniformity where one green is the same speed as all the other greens, that is what you want.

19 IF YOU COULD CHANGE ANYTHING ABOUT GOLF COURSE MANAGEMENT, WHAT WOULD IT BE? I think it is letting people know the opportunities in the industry for careers. Nobody knows about it. I didn't know of the career options until I looked it up. We have to do a better job of getting the word out that it is a great career and get more kids into the industry.

20 AWAY FROM GOLF, WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE SPORT? I love watching football, the NFL and college football. I also played soccer my whole life so I love watching that, too. I didn't play golf until my senior year in high school when I was done with soccer. Now, I play as much golf as I can and that's quite a bit. Working at a course helps, and my dad is big golfer.

21 WHAT TYPE OF HOBBIES DO YOU HAVE AWAY FROM GOLF? I like being outside and being active, shooting hoops with friends, leisure stuff. I just like being outside.

22 DO YOU HAVE A FAVORITE GOLF COURSE? Shinnecock. That course is unlike any other I've ever played.

23 DO YOU HAVE A BUCKET LIST COURSE? Aside from Augusta (National), the Pinehurst courses and the courses at Bandon Dunes.

24 WHAT IS THE FAVORITE CLUB IN YOUR BAG? If my driver is on it is definitely my favorite club in the bag. I hit it pretty good if I get it good. Of course, if I'm ever in a doubtful situation the 60-degree wedge never lets me down.

25 WHO IS THE GREATEST INFLUENCE IN YOUR PERSONAL LIFE? Both of my parents (Fred and Jeanne). They taught me how to be a good person and how to work hard.

26 DO YOU HAVE A FAVORITE FOOD OR RESTAURANT? I am a big food guy. I love eating. My go-to is sushi. There's a great place in Novi called Shiro. That's where I like to go.

27 WHAT VEHICLE WOULD YOU DRIVE IF YOU HAD A MONEY TREE GROWING IN YOUR YARD? I would drive a Ford Raptor. I like trucks and that is a big cool-looking truck. It looks mean. Besides I'm too big for sports cars.

28 WHAT IS YOUR DREAM SCRAMBLE TEAM? Me, Tiger Woods, Rory McIlroy and John Daly just because he is fun.

AS THE SUN SETS ON 2020

We want to take a moment to extend our thanks to superintendents for pulling through this tumultuous year in order to keep golf alive.

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Interactive Course Renovation

BY COLLIN ROMANICK, SUPERINTENDENT, BLYTHEFIELD C.C.

In mid-September Blythefield CC and the MIGCSA hosted an interactive course renovation tour. The idea came about after the renovation tours at Oakland Hills CC filled up quickly due to limited capacity in light of covid. While the renovation work at Blythefield was not as extensive as OHCC it still provided an opportunity for fellow industry professionals to see what is involved and discuss the processes. We had a great group of attendees and spent a couple of hours on a nice afternoon touring the course hole by hole.

The renovation work at Blythefield started with a master plan developed by golf course architect Chris Wilczynski. The club adopted this plan and the project was sent to contractors for bidding. Blythefield had a limited time frame for construction and narrowed down the contractors to only those with large enough crews to complete the work quickly. MacCurrach Golf Construction was selected based on the quality of their past projects and ability to commit to the construction time frame.



Tour

The scope of work consisted of complete tee reconstruction, rebuilding, moving, and reshaping of all bunkers using the Better Billy Bunker method and Pro Angel sand, fairway realignment and shaping, green expansions, irrigation, greens drainage by Golf Preservations, extensive course wide drainage, and nearly 500 tree removals. During the tour we stopped and discussed examples of each of these items and were able to view completed areas as well as works in progress. Some attendees were interested in just seeing the results while others have renovation plans in the near future at their facilities.

We hosted the tour in the hoping that it may help those looking to do work on their course. We hope that being able to openly discuss what went right as well as the challenges faced was beneficial to all who attended.

We would like to thank the MIGCSA and Adam Ikamas for organizing this event as well as all those who attended. Thank you also to our industry partners for your sponsorships which allow us to have vents like this and to Marc McCoy from Harrell's for providing beverages during the tour.





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change the
direction of
the wind, but I
can adjust my
sails to always
reach my
destination."**

— Jimmy Dean

A Message From

BY CAREY MITCHELSON, MTF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Well, hopefully, we are almost there. At this writing, vaccines seem imminent, MSU basketball has its usual expectations, and the Holidays- although different- are a welcoming chance to reflect, expect and spend time with those... who during difficult chapters... ease our minds. Everyone has a story to tell and there will be some looking back years from now and forget how wearisome it has been. Most of us will not. There are common threads we all share and keeping work, family, and friends all in the correct order can improve each of us. To all of you, we wish the best for next year and let these past few months be a lesson in how to never take anything for granted. Remember...just when you think things couldn't get any worse...

MSU Virtual Turf School

With so many items canceled, postponed or replaced the Foundation was pleased our MSU Turf Team and Michigan State University combined their efforts to provide a Virtual Turf School to our membership and others. Dr. Kevin Frank coordinated the Turf Team with MSU to provide education and credits to many needing both. Thanks to all involved and thank you for filling a void that the MTF could not provide this year. The vast array of virtual seminars, conferences, schools, and educational sessions provided by many organizations is extensive and our decision not to be among the list of those providing another opportunity was not easy. We thank the many advocates and supporters who understood the difficult times that MSU and the Turf Team are operating under and thank them for their support. The MTF thanks all supporters to this years Turf School: A. John Harvey Golf Course Design, Advanced Turf Solutions, AMVAC Environmental Products, Bayer, C.W. Golf Architecture, D&B Landscaping, EarthWorks Carbon Based Fertility, Green Point Consulting, Harrell's Inc, Helena Agriculture, Herman and Associates, Hills-Forrest-Smith Golf Architecture, Knox Fertilizer Products, Lawn Tech, Michigan Turf Equipment, MiGCSA, MISTMA, MTESP, Nufarm, Pratt Turf Products, Prime Source, SiteOne Landscape Supply, Spartan Distributors, Stine Turf & Snow, Syngenta, Target-Specialty Products,

It is not the strongest or the most intelligent who will survive but those who can best manage change.

Charles Darwin



Annual Meeting – Election of Board of Directors – Bylaw changes

Despite not having our normal gathering of our Membership at the Annual Conference there are items that will still require attention for proper maintenance of the Michigan Turfgrass Foundation business.

Annual Meeting

The **MTF Annual Meeting** is typically held during the MTF Conference each winter. This year due to restrictions a virtual Annual Meeting will be held in **January**. We are currently working out details on when and how it will be presented. Notice of this meeting will be mailed to all members in good standing as required in the by-laws. Like many functions that have changed due to Covid-19 some variations can provide progress in unexpected ways and the MTF is researching some of the positive alterations that have been helpful. If you have questions regarding your membership status we can be reached by email: miturfgrass@gmail.com or by calling 517-392-5003.

Election of Board Members

Sometimes good things fall apart so better things can fall together.

Marilyn Monroe

An important portion of the Annual meeting is the election of Directors to the Board. It is an important process in the operation of the MTF and will be fulfilled and completed in a new format. Details will be outlined in the same mailing to be sent regarding the Annual meeting.

For the 2021 election there are 4 incumbent Board of Directors will be seeking reelection to their positions. We are fortunate to have a great mix of candidates that represent the entire state in a regional manner.



Mr. Craig Moore - Marquette Golf Club, representing: At Large (seeking second term)



Mr. Dan Lucas - Kingsley Club, representing: Northern Michigan District, (seeking 3rd & final term)



Mr. Jeff Holmes - Egypt Valley Country Club, representing: At Large (seeking second term)



Mr. Scott Rettmann - Walnut Creek Country Club, representing: At Large (seeking second term)

As of this writing these candidates are running unopposed. Active Members who are interested in becoming a candidate for the Board of Directors and fulfil the representative description can contact us at miturfgrass@gmail.com or by phone at 517-392-5003.

By-Law – Changes

Thanks to the due diligence of the founders of the MTF and the efforts of the Boards that followed, By-Laws of the Foundation have required very few changes. Current conditions limiting in person gatherings and meetings due to Covid 19 made apparent the need to update language related to communication methods and other items. By law amendments require a vote by membership and information on the process will also be provided in same mailing regarding the Annual meeting to our members.

Other items

LaFontaine Golf Outing

Our normal June date for the LaFontaine Golf Outing was moved to September and we were grateful for all those who were able to attend and those that helped support the event as well. Proceeds from this event are directed to the Graduate Student Assistantship Fund that is now in its 3rd year. This years proceeds were over \$7,000 and will be invested for future Grad Students. All funding in this account is invested and provides annual income that combines with the Rieke Graduate Student Assistantship (now held at MSU). The combination of these two sources enables Graduate Assistantships for our Turf Team on an annual basis. Graduate Student funding is a key component of any University program and the MTF is proud to be a part of this process.

Founders Society

The Founders Society Endowment was established to provide equipment to help with Turf Research being conducted by MSU and at the Hancock Turf Research Center. At the November MTF Board meeting, Founders Society Chairperson Brad Lazroff presented two proposals both of which were approved by the board.

- Replacement tractor for the Hancock Turf Research Center
- Soil Temperature Sensors

The upgrade of the tractor will facilitate use on equipment being used for research

A package of sensors were installed at 6 golf courses in Michigan this fall to monitor environmental conditions during winter. The sensors will monitor soil moisture and temperature at three depths, and soil oxygen and carbon dioxide at 1 inch depth. Dr. Frank is working with researchers at the University of Minnesota on this project

to determine whether or not environmental data collected could be used to create a winterkill risk model.

Professors update

Despite setbacks, the Hancock Center has operated with faculty since June and projects approved are strictly essential research projects. The MTF thanks the professors for their continued efforts despite limitations. We anticipate a new season will be a breath of fresh air.

Membership

Membership renewals for the MTF have typically coincided with our fiscal year October 1 to September 30 each year. Under our new membership renewal process, members can select a date for renewal and that anniversary date will be used going forward. This allows for budgeting and updating on a schedule that is best suits individuals. Those who chose to keep their usual Oct 1 date for renewal can do so by renewing at any time when a reminder is sent.

Golf Course and GAM Club Donations

Engaging individual clubs and courses to support the MSU Turf program was a priority for the 2020 season. The GAM was prepared to help promote and advance the initiative at the GAM Annual meeting held in May. Like so many others, the meeting was canceled and items that seemed significant at the time became inconsequential. As we all begin to get our feet underneath us and try to return to normalcy, the MTF will again begin the process to encourage Individual clubs and courses to support the Turf Program at MSU. Golf is one of the few industries that can look back and thank its stars that even though it had its hardships, it was a welcome place for many



to visit and relax and in many cases golf thrived. Michigan has been a golf leader at many levels. Course conditions is certainly mentioned when golfers express their experiences at our various golf venues. We hope that clubs may consider a single donation to the MSU Turf Program to continue the work that has been accomplished. More information will be provided in the upcoming months.

Leaderships

Leaders think and talk about the solutions. Followers think and talk about the problems.

Brian Tracy

Volunteering time to become involved with any organization is not for everyone. It requires a commitment that can at times be burdensome ...and the rewards often spaced far apart. However, Michigan is blessed to have many individuals willingly take time to separate themselves and make a positive impact on our industry and those who enjoy the game of golf. Three unique individuals should be noted in this difficult year.

John Fulling - CGSA — The current GCSAA President and a Past President of the MTF and MiGCSA. His other involvements are too vast to list here. At each stage of his efforts, John has left each institution in a better place than when he arrived. A remarkable leader with relentless energy, John has gained respect nationwide. Taking the helm of the GCSAA is a remarkable achievement and he has made Michigan proud and we thank him for all he has accomplished. The unfortunate circumstances of 2020 altered many activities for everyone and along

the way created disappointments. John continued to be upbeat and provided inspiration to all those in the GCSAAA and we all admire his leadership role when needed most. Thank you John for all you have done.

Gary Thommes - CGSA — Superintendent at Red Run Golf Club for 39 years and an active advocate of the MTF. Gary understood the value of the golf course and its importance to the overall financial success to the club. Red Run consistently kept playing conditions uniquely paramount for its members and Gary constantly met their expectations. His longevity at a single club is rare occurrence and he was offered thanks by Red Run membership and golf industry fellows at functions this fall. Congrats to Gary and all his service to the golf industry.

Doug Johanningmeier — President MTF Serving as a board member on the MTF is a voluntary position that requires a great deal of time and energy if one desires to. Board Members serve a 3-year term and can be re-elected for 2 additional terms if they choose. After 9 years of participation and hard work seldom does an individual have the ability to commit to take on the many responsibilities required of a board member a second time. Doug Johanningmeier is that certain individual who devoted more time and energy for the improvement of the Foundation for a second time. He was originally elected to the board and served from 1994 to 2003. His second tour of the MTF provided him with his leadership role of the presidency of the MTF ...a position his father Eugene Johanningmeier held in 1963 & 1964. Doug has served as one of the most knowledgeable members of the board for two full terms and of his final term will have served on the MTF Board of Directors for 18 years. His guidance has been exemplary, and he will be missed. Congratulations to Doug on your efforts with the Foundation it has been remarkable.



2020 GOLF ASSOCIATION OF MICHIGAN SUPERINTENDENT AWARD OF MERIT WINNER

Steve Hammon, the golf course superintendent at Traverse City Golf & Country Club has been selected as the 2020 Golf Association of Michigan Superintendent Award of Merit winner.

The Superintendent Award of Merit is among a handful of awards normally announced during the GAM Annual Meeting, but that meeting is being held this year in a different format due to the current public health concerns and restrictions. More GAM awards will be announced in the coming days at GAM.org.



The membership of Traverse City Country Club held an evening of recognition for Steve to honor him and this award.

as a volunteer in our industry," John Fulling, CGCS the superintendent of Kalamazoo Country Club and current GCSAA President said as one of the superintendents who nominated Hammon.

"In 2019-2020 he helped the club achieve a highly successful renovation in all areas including, golf course, clubhouse and pool operations. Volunteer efforts for the industry have been and continue to be a top priority for Steve. He is a leader and has logged untold hours on the road serving and giving back to the industry."

Hammon started with Traverse City G&C in 1997 following career stops that included being the superintendent for The Old Course at Indianwood Golf & Country Club in Lake Orion, an assistant at Crystal Downs Country Club in Frankfort and various grounds staff roles at Pebble Beach Golf Links, Cypress Point Club and Riviera Country Club in California and Coral Ridge Country Club in Florida. He did his internship work at PGA West Stadium Course and The Springs Club in California.

Hammon, his wife Sue and three sons, Evan, Luke and Elliott, reside in Frankfort.

Hammon is a Michigan Golf Course Superintendents Association (MiGCSA) Class A member and past president of the association (2009). He has been the superintendent at Traverse City G&C for 23 years.

He joins past recipients of the award; Ted Woehrle, Clem Wolfrom, Fritz McMullen, John Fulling, Jay Eccleton, Steve Cook, Jeff Holmes, Phil Owen and Paul Galligan.

Hammon, a Grand Rapids native and graduate of Grand Rapids Community College and Michigan State University's Turfgrass Management Program, regularly lends his expertise to statewide associations, groups and programs in the industry and is a frequent speaker at regional and national conferences.

"Steve has performed well above the call of duty for his entire tenure at TCGCC at both the club and

Michigan Assistant Superintendent Championship


BY KYLE SCHIERLINGER, ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT,
FOREST LAKE C.C.



*Our 2020 Assistant Superintendent
Champion Christian Maher*

As of September 21st, 2020, the Michigan Assistant Superintendent Championship is officially an annual event! This year, Forest Lake Country Club (Bloomfield Hills, MI), had the pleasure of hosting Assistant Superintendents from all over the state of Michigan. Following the success of the inaugural 2019 championship at Prestwick Village Golf Club (Highland, MI), we assistants once again gathered to enjoy playing the game that we toil all season to provide to our members and golfers.

Even in a year that has been more... complicated... than others, we still saw an increase in attendance, including both Metro-Detroit locals and some way out of towners. Once again, we drew a great weather day for golf and hope to keep that as a tradition. Not only was this event a welcome escape from everything that is 2020, but it was also truly awesome to be a part of something that felt more like "normal." The entire event was outdoors and included all the social distancing and masks that are now commonplace, but the conversations and company were more familiar than much of our new day-to-day lives. The format was net best 2 of 4 man teams, a few long drives and closest to the pins, and with prizes and dinner served a-la-grille afterwards. While I had



apparently forgotten how to swing a club that day, everyone else seemed to have some great rounds on some challenging greens with a few tricky pins.

It is always good getting to see, firsthand, the value of what we provide when meticulously preparing our golf courses for play every day. I believe that this year has exposed just how important what we do is. Giving our time and effort so that others can socialize safely in the great outdoors, even in the most uncertain times, is an awesome privilege and means a lot to many people and their mental health. Our days can be long and full of never-ending to-do lists but taking time to step back and enjoy the game as a player is an important perspective to take with you into your work. I always seem to take something away each time I host someone at my course and getting feedback from others in the industry was especially great.

We are looking forward to next year's championship and there are hopes to expand the opportunities for assistants to network with one another in the coming seasons;

whether it is on the golf course for skins or match play, golf or ski trips, catching a sports games, or just grabbing drinks after work. In an age of cancelled conferences and events, alternate opportunities like these are increasingly important ways to grow each of our peer networks. These networks will serve us well as we continue to grow in our careers, helping each of us get to where we want to go. Thank you to all the attendee's for making it this year and cheers to many more events like this in the future.

Also, a special thank you to my fellow Forest Lake Assistant and grill master-for-the-day, Shannon Storey; Ryan Moore (Forest Lake Country Club Superintendent) and the Forest Lake membership for hosting us; as well as the MiGCSA for providing us with opportunities like this one.



It is Time to Support Your Industry

As we roll into our off season here in Michigan, we normally have our holiday parties after Thanksgiving leading to the Christmas break followed quickly by the Michigan Turfgrass Conference. In years past we have had the curling fundraiser in mid-January then start looking to the annual Golf Industry Show with the Michigan gathering on Wednesday of that week wrapping up the winter with the Spring Meeting, the best 24 hours in turf that was slated for a trip to Northern Michigan in late February/early March 2021. However, like many things both personally and professionally COVID-19 has put a temporary end to these long-time traditions and opportunities.

Not only is this disappointing for all of our members to not have these opportunities to learn and network with their fellow members it will have a significant financial impact on many of the groups who rely on the revenue from these events. The GIS is a 3-million-dollar bottom line revenue stream for the GCSAA. The MTF usually raises close to \$60,000 from the Michigan Turfgrass Conference. Thankfully the MiGCSA does not rely on events or conferences for revenue and have the lowest dues of any GCSAA Chapter with more than 200 members because of the stalwart support from our Industry Partners, as always I encourage you to take some time this winter to thank your sales rep for their support, like many things with your association it only matters if it matters to you.

To try to recoup some of these losses and provide their world class education the GCSAA has launched the virtual GIS. I know many of us are suffering virtual fatigue, we have all had a lifetime worth zoom meetings

and facetime interactions this year. Because of this it can be easy to dismiss these virtual options and not register for them. However, I would implore you to take the bigger picture into consideration. The usual budget for a GIS trip is around \$3,000 give or take, usually only a small percentage of that benefits your national association from the registration fees. This year the entire facility access for GCSAA Members is \$850 or roughly 30% of the usual budget for the Golf Industry Show. For the Michigan Turfgrass Conference the budget is usually closer to the \$1,000 range. The MTF uses the proceeds from the conference, again only about 30% or so of the budget gets to them, to support the research that goes on at MSU.

I am asking you to consider these groups as more than the service they provide and for consideration on how they use the proceeds from these events to help us all by servicing our industry. When you look at your budget for this winter and the educational opportunities take the entire picture into consideration. Be it is a registration to the virtual GIS or a donation to the MTF it is time for us as a community to support our industry and ensure continuity in research and member services. I also bet you will get more out of it than you think.

Be well this winter and we look forward to a return to our regularly scheduled programming as soon as possible.

Adam Ikamas, CGCS
MiGCSA Executive Director

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