

November 2020

ONCOURSE

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE
ONTARIO GOLF SUPERINTENDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Beekeeping for Golf Courses

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

Permits to Take Water in Ontario: Regulatory Update
Burlington Renovation, Masterplan Complete
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CANADA POST PUBLICATIONS MAIL
PUBLICATIONS AGREEMENT No. 40027105
Postmaster: Please return undeliverable copies to
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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



By Tim Muys,
OGSA President.

Reflections on being Super

When people outside the industry find out what I do for a living, they think it is a super cool job. When I offer my neighbours advice about how to grow grass in problem areas, they think I have super powers. When little kids see me on a machine, they think I am a super star.

There are a lot of things that are super about being a superintendent. Though I have to say, especially after this crazy season, I am just plain super tired.

When I began my career, I was able to stay up late, get up before the sun, and work a long and productive day. This is surprising to my older self, given that I was fueling my body with caffeine, nicotine, sugary drinks and processed meat sandwiches. I was a lot younger then and my body was more forgiving. I was also single, and didn't have many responsibilities outside of my demanding job.

After years of enduring all of the pressures that come along with being responsible for the maintenance of a golf course, I have gotten much smarter about knowing how to take care of myself.

Long hours, unpredictable weather, managing staff, managing a budget, and now managing pandemic procedures - not to mention managing the expectation of flawless playing conditions. These demands cause stress, which left unchecked can strain personal relationships and lead to medical issues - not the least of which is burnout, an occupational hazard of working in this industry in a profession that is sometimes as grueling as it is rewarding.

Over the years, I have learned a few strategies that help me cope with the demands of this job.

I try to keep a staff of capable people who I can trust. I try not to control the uncontrollable (like the weather). I aim for excellence instead of perfection, which is an unattainable goal when you are dealing with Mother Nature.

I have also come to realize that living healthy is the most important variable to succeeding in my job. I make it a priority to get enough sleep, eat a healthy diet and look after my body. Two excellent books that I have read several times are: "How not to Die" by Dr. Michael Greger and "The Back Mechanic" by Dr. Stuart McGill. I keep copies of these books on hand and lend them out to members of my team.

In case you are wondering if I think I am Super Man. I am not. One thing that I am still working on is balancing life outside of my job. If you ask my wife, she will tell you that this is a skill that I have never mastered. Although I think that I have improved, truth be told, I am still working too much, missing out on family events, camping trips, cottage weekends, and most breakfasts and sometimes dinners with my family.

But while I might not be getting much better at balancing my time, I am at least getting better at recognizing the sacrifices made by my spouse and family who often bear the brunt of me being totally immersed in my job.

One other thing that has kept me grounded over the years is the contacts that I have made with my colleagues. I enjoy talking to other superintendents who have the same issues and concerns as I do. After all, there aren't many people who can relate to the kind of things that keeps me up at night (like green speeds, firmness, and irrigation performance).

Being a member of the OGSA has been integral in keeping me in touch with my fellow superintendents. I am not sure I would have scheduled the time to meet up with them, were it not for the planned events like conferences and seminars. And now, technology makes keeping in touch even easier since we can't gather in person.

This is my last President's message. It has been a highlight of my career to be at the helm of this important organization. I would like to thank my fellow board members for their assistance in directing the OGSA through this turbulent year. And I would like to thank all of you for reading my articles, and for your camaraderie.

Look after yourselves. ■

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ONCourse is published four times a year
(November / March / June / August)
by Blenheim INK for:



Ontario Golf Superintendents' Association

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Published by Blenheim INK

Administration Office:
503-5340 Lakeshore Road
Burlington, ON L7L 7A8

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Checking the hives, photo submitted by the Toronto Bee Rescue.

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OGSA is committed to serving its members, advancing their profession, and enriching the quality of golf and its environment.

EDITORIAL MESSAGE

Welcome to the last edition of ONCourse for 2020. It has been a long and emotional season. Whether you're exhausted by the impacts of self-isolation, or the extra-long days of maintaining golf's most precious asset during one of the busiest years on record, I think we can all agree that we're tired.

Tired and uncertain. Even as we stand six feet apart, we miss each other. Who knew we loved shaking hands so much, or that we needed to shake hands to share a human connection with our colleagues? We don't know what the fall and winter will bring for us, but if the murmurings are true, we can look forward to trying to make the best of more masks, distant chats, virtual connections and social restrictions.

These changes are difficult to handle, and there is a lot to worry about. Make no mistake, worry can be mentally and physically crippling. In this issue we have the pleasure of welcoming our debut writer, Chao Yuan (Tommy) Wang, a student member who writes about the importance of talking about our mental health during these unnerving times. Take a moment to read it. And if you feel unsteady, reach out to someone who can help you.

Thankfully, the golf season is coming to a close, which I hope means more time to breathe, reflect, and plan for next year. Stephen Kajan has provided us with an excellent update on permit to take water regulations, and if you're thinking about hosting honey bees, Al Schwemler, Lesley Thomas, Greg McFarlane and Peter Chorabik have collaborated to offer best practices for starting honey bee colonies on your course.

For those of you who are dreaming about working in other countries once travel restrictions lessen, now is the time to research and plan. In our Travel Abroad article, Chris Lecour did a little research on things to consider while planning your year away and connected with Jacob Martin and Sean VanBeurden who share their wisdom and experiences working abroad.

You will also find a great member profile featuring Jay Sisko, Superintendent, from Idylwyld Golf & Country Club, written by Steve Rabski. We can also put our hands together to congratulate Burlington Golf and Country Club for the completion of their master plan, written by Ryan Marangoni, and of course, no issue of

ONCourse would be complete without Sunday musings from Doug Breen.

I wish you all a quiet and restful off season, exploring this beautiful province, and spending well-deserved time with friends and family who are near. Last, I'd like to say a BIG thank you to the ONCourse committee. This year has been a challenge and yet, you all found time to produce excellent articles for our membership. It's a pleasure to work with you all. Keep well. ■



Courtney White,
Member Programs &
Services, OGSA.
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and stay safe!

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WHAT'S NEW

By Sally Ross, Executive Director, OGSA.

MEMBERSHIP DUES

Thank you so much to those members who have already paid their dues for 2020/2021, and thank you to all those who plan to do so. The association will have a challenging year ahead, because of having to cancel our January 2021 OGCMC, so member support is more important than ever. Consider signing up more members of your crew, we would be happy to welcome them!

BOARD AND ASSOCIATION UPDATE

The OGSA Board of Directors is committed to continue supporting our members through these challenging times. We managed to jump to our online meetings without a hitch, but we all miss those face to face discussions of the past; it is harder to brainstorm, voice opinions, thoughts and ideas during online discussions, but we managed to do just that. Thanks to our Directors for being so accommodating and dedicated, especially over these past few months.

Our AGM will be scheduled for early 2021, the official notice of meeting will be posted on our website and linked in Clippings, the vehicle for executing our AGM has not been decided on yet, but you will have the opportunity to participate, so once the notice goes out, please plan to attend!

EDUCATION

We are partnering with the Carolinas GCSA in their seminar series, and we hope some of you will take advantage or have taken advantage of these offerings. We would like to thank the Carolinas GCSA for including the OGSA membership in their program.

SCHOLARSHIPS

We have made changes to the scholarship amounts, some criteria and submission dates for our scholarships. The Assistant Superintendent Award (Kirkpatrick) is still due on November 1st; however, the Heritage Award and the Turfgrass Award are now due May 15. At the time of writing this, both Syngenta (Kirkpatrick) and Brett Young (Turfgrass) have pledged their support. For more detailed information, please visit ogsa.ca, scholarships and awards.

SUPERINTENDENT RECOGNITION



Brooks Young, Superintendent, Shelburne G&CC, acknowledged for hosting the Ontario Junior (U19) Girls' Championship.

As most of you know, the OGSA participated in the promotion of "Thank Your Golf Course Superintendent" campaign recently, as we have done for many years through radio ads during various events across the province, and it was nice to see a reference to "Today in Ontario" again in social media, because it so adequately displays why we thank our superintendents.

We also acknowledged the following superintendents for hosting significant GAO events this past season:

Mike Pellerin, Saugeen GC, Ontario Junior (U19) Boys' Championship

Gerry Fox, Dalewood GC, Ontario Women's Amateur & Mid-Am Champ.

Randy Booker, Otter Creek GC, Ontario Men's Amateur Championship

Brooks Young, Shelburne G&CC, Ontario Junior (U19) Girls' Championship

Blaine Miller, Cambridge GC, Ontario Bantam (U15) Boys' & Girls' Championship

Jim Burlington, Loyalist G&CC, Ontario Men's Mid-Amateur Championship

Rob Sloan, Woodington Lake GC, Ontario Disability Championship

While it was tougher than usual to get the courses ready to host these events, and indeed execute them, our Ontario supers came through with shining colours, well done!

MEMBER SERVICES

We are looking at ways to improve our member services, taking the state of the world, our country, province, and industry into consideration. While we all hope things will go back to the way they were, we must be ready that this just may not happen. When you receive our survey, please provide your feedback.

WELCOME to Our New Members

Kelly Dustin Class A
Caradoc Sands Golf Club

Kendra Adams Class C
Rocky Crest Golf Club

Retired Members

Congratulations to our Members who have recently become OGSA life members.

John Pickard Class AA

Doug Meyer Class AA

Allan Mackay Class AA

Alex Weatherson Class AA

DOG OF THE YEAR



Congratulations to Floki, and Lesley Thomas, Assistant Superintendent at Scarborough G&CC for being one of the 14 dogs selected for the 2021 Dog Days of Golf Calendar!

Plan now to vote for Floki! The winner's owner will receive a \$500 prize and \$3,000 for his or her GCSAA-affiliated chapter. A \$2,000 charitable donation will also be made to K9's for Warriors by GCSAA and LebanonTurf in honor of the winner.

Also, good to note that when the OGSA was awarded monies for Maple, who took dog of the year honours in 2013, Both Tim Muys, Maple's owner and our Board decided to donate the awards to humane societies. So, get online and vote for Floki through the process as outlined by Lebanon Turf. Voting details will be shared through twitter and clippings once finalized.

The calendar will be distributed with the November issue of GCM magazine. Good luck Floki! ■

GC HIGHLIGHT & MEMBER PROFILE

Idylwylde Golf & Country Club

400 Walford Rd.
Sudbury, ON P3E 2G9
(705) 522-8580
jsisko@idylwylde.com
www.idylwylde.com

The 17th Hole

Member since 2004

Jay Sisko

Superintendent, Idylwylde Golf & Country Club

By Steven Rabski, Assistant Golf Course Manager, Bayview Golf and Country Club.

About the Course

About the Course: Located in the heart of Sudbury, the parklands style golf course is situated on beautiful Lake Nephawin and provides a unique golf experience that only northern Ontario can offer. Founded in 1922, it was developed from the old Howey Farm on the south shore of Ramsey Lake.

Private, semi-private, public, municipal, resort? Private

Architect: Front 9 – George Cumming,
Back 9 Howard Watson

Number of holes: 18

Number rounds annually: 26,000

Practice Facility: Driving range, Short game area with 10000ft² putting green and 9000ft² chipping green with sand trap

Other staff: 2 year round staff.

Mechanic: Al Armstrong, Assistant: Jacob Rafuse

When most people think of Sudbury they think of the snowbanks, cold winters, and blackflies. What they may not realize is that Sudbury is also home to one of the best golf courses that Northern Ontario has to offer. Jay Sisko has been the golf course superintendent at Idylwylde Golf & Country Club for 12 seasons now. Since his arrival in 2009, Jay has been working hard to provide the ultimate golfing experience for members and their guests.

Jay's golf course adventures began at the Hamilton Golf & Country Club serving as a caddy. This was accompanied by a job working at Hidden Lakes Golf Club as a range ball picker. He later took a job at Tyandaga Golf Course in his hometown of Burlington, Ontario. Here, he mastered the art of night watering under the leadership of Gavin Kellogg. Once Jay finished high school, he travelled to Australia where he admittedly had way too much fun exploring a new part of the world. Jay caught the travel bug but realized that it was time to get his



Jay Sisko, Superintendent, Idylwylde Golf & Country Club.

career started. His love for the outdoors and passion for detail steered him in the direction of Turf Management.

Not yet ready to return home, Jay travelled to Surrey, British Columbia where he joined the team at Northview Golf and Country Club under the direction of Dave Fair. Northview was host to the Air Canada Championships where he ultimately got

In the Hot Seat

Q: Favourite Major?

A: The Masters

Q: Best piece of turf equipment?

A: John Deere Sprayer

Q: Ultimate foursome:

You and which three?

A: Jerry, George, and Kramer

Q: Lowest round ever and where?

A: 79 Idylwyld G&CC

Q: Favourite meal?

A: Homemade pizza

Q: Favourite movie?

A: The Dark Night

Q: Favourite golf course?

A: I haven't played it yet

Q: Favourite course designer?

A: Stanley Thompson

Q: Favourite Band?

A: Dave Matthews Band

his first taste of PGA Tour level turf maintenance. As Jay puts it, "Working on a golf course marries so many things I love about life and I figured why not turn this into a career."

He enrolled in the Horticulture Diploma Program at The University of Guelph and not long after, he fine tuned his education by completing the Winter School for Turf Managers Certificate at the University of Massachusetts.

That summer, Jay locked down his first assistant role at Muskoka Lakes Golf & Country Club where he was mentored by Jim Flett. This ended up being a pivotal moment for Jay, as this was where his admiration for northern Ontario really blossomed. Jay knew from that point on that northern Ontario was where he wanted to be.

Jay has now been the superintendent at The Idylwyld Golf & Country Club in Sudbury for the past 12 years. The property is situated smack dab in the middle of the city, nestled beside the beautiful Lake Nephawin. The golf course has a bit of everything, scenic views, elevation, plenty of water and an abundance of wildlife. Like all great golf properties, The Idylwyld does



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not come without its challenges.

One of the biggest challenges that face northern Ontario superintendents are the harsh winters. Snow mold disease and winterkill injury are common on northern Ontario golf courses every couple of years. Jay speaks confidently about his abilities to

grow grass, "I have become really good at growing grass, because I have seen so much of it die. The winters really are tough, but you just have to learn to embrace it," Jay explains. "I have probably smelled more dead grass than anyone I know."

Mr. Arnott, General Manager/COO of

What You Need to Know

Predominant grass type: Bent Poa

Predominant soil type: Clay

Types of greens: Push up

Course length: 6666 yards

Size of greens: 119,000ft²

Size of tees: 94,000ft²

Size of fairways: 18.5 acres

Major Challenges: Surviving winter without temporary greens

"When I started as General Manager in 2017, I was excited to get to know the management team. It quickly became apparent to me that Jay was amazing at what he does, and he has a genuine love for the property. As the years have passed, I have grown more thankful to have someone like Jay at the helm."

– Mr. Tom Arnott

General Manager/COO of Idylwyld Golf & Country Club



The 10th Hole.



The Sisko family.

Idylwyld Golf & Country Club, commends Jay on his abilities to continually put up with Mother Nature's relentless during the off season. "We have a challenging property and through expertise and solid record keeping, Jay has found a way to ensure we start each spring in the best possible position he can to spite our temperamental climate in the north".

Though the winters can take their toll mentally, Jay seeks productive ways to take out his frustrations on the on the golf course. In an effort to improve the drainage of his property, Jay has found that the best way to move the rock that impedes the path of new drainage installs is to blow it out of the ground. When Jay isn't reaching for his superintendent's hat, he reaches for his hard hat and a stick of dynamite. Quite literally, Jay and a fellow co-worker with a mining background can be found in the offseason watching large rock fall from the sky.

Jay leads a team of about 13 staff during the golf season. "Any success I have is because of the team that surrounds me. I

cannot say enough about the employees that I have been fortunate enough to work with."

During Jay's time at the Idylwyld, he has seen the place undergo massive transformation. Most recently, a revived practice game area complete with a new 10,000ft putting green and chipping green. Upon Jay's hiring in 2009, he also made it his personal goal to get the club Audobon Certified, a rather lengthy process that was completed during the summer of 2020.

When not on the course, Jay can be found at home on his beautiful 5-acre property spending time with his wife Lindsay, his daughter Everly and their German Shepherd Indy. It is here where Jay's love for precision crafting continues. Jay grows an abundance of diverse fruit trees that most recently, have been used in experimental spirit distilling. "Similar to the golf course, distilling is all about striking a balance with art and science, I enjoy tinkering with new recipes." Some of his most recent creations include an Asian Pear brandy and a new wine from the apple

trees grown on the property.

During the long winter months, Jay and his family enjoy travelling to the Grand Bahamas. Despite difficult times, the Sisko family is hopeful they can return to their travels in the near future. For now, he will continue to enjoy some Sunday morning pickup hockey and snowmobiling on all the beautiful trails his city has to offer. ■

"I have known Jay since he began as the Superintendent at Idylwyld. What I love about Jay is that he does not carry an ego with him, he immediately finds a common ground with you which in turn has made us really good friends. He is just an amazing guy who will always make time for you all the while providing an outstanding product for his members."

– Mr. Bruce Stanley, AllTurf



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Beekeeping for Golf Courses



*Written in collaboration by:
Lesley Thomas, Assistant Golf Course
Superintendent, Scarboro Golf & Country Club;
Greg McFarlane, Golf Course Superintendent,
The Thornhill Club; Peter Chorabik, Toronto
Bee Rescue, and Al Schwemler, OGSA
Vice-President, Superintendent.
Photos provided by Thornhill Club and
the Toronto Bee Rescue and Scarboro G&CC.*

Buzzwords (no pun intended), such as “proactive environmental stewards, sustainable, environmentally conscious”, seem to be synonymous with golf course superintendents and their operations. Numerous golf clubs participate in the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary program to promote, enhance, and protect the environment. More recently, golf courses have been focusing on improving the landscape for pollinators, especially honey bees.

THE THORNHILL CLUB

The Thornhill Club started their beekeeping operation in 2015, with four hives supplied and managed by local beekeeper Fred Davies. Over the years, golf course superintendent Greg McFarlane and his staff took over the care of the hives, looking after anywhere from 4-11 hives. When asked what motivated the club to commence beekeeping, Greg stated, “It

was something I’ve thought of doing for a while. I think for a golf course it is a good fit given the natural surroundings we have. The honey is good PR for members and the general public. Given the public perception of golf courses, it makes a good story.”

Thornhill currently has six hives that are split into two yards, one next to the maintenance shop and another next to their nursery. The honey is extracted at the club and bottled in the clubhouse. Honey harvests have ranged from 115 to 230 kilograms per season and the product is advertised as Thornhill Club Honey and sold to the members.

Greg mentioned that the biggest challenge is finding/making the time to maintain healthy hives. Other challenges include managing and treating for varroa mites. These parasites feed on the body fluids of honey bees, cause physical damage,

weaken bees, transmit pathogens/viruses, and may result in the death of entire colonies. Managing the hives to survive a harsh winter is another challenge - eight hives were lost one winter.

Greg shared a couple unique success stories since the club began beekeeping. “One interesting event was when we found a bee hive in an old dead cedar log. We managed to cut the section of log with the hive in it and covered it for the winter. In the spring, we moved it to the bee yard, carefully split the log, and moved the hive into a proper hive box. Another summer, I managed to capture seven swarms and shared them with Fred Davies.”

Greg offered a few words of wisdom, “I’ve learned that bees are a fascinating pollinator, and you are constantly learning. It is a very enjoyable and tasty hobby.”

Greg McFarlane offered the following advice for someone wishing to startup bee keeping as a hobby:

- **Have an experienced beekeeper help start up your operation (Thornhill still calls on Fred to help every now and then.)**
- **Watch lots of YouTube videos.**
- **Start with just one or two hives.**
- **Purchase the proper protective gear and tools.**



TORONTO BEE RESCUE

The Toronto Bee Rescue is a family run business that specializes in the humane removal and relocation of established bee colonies, swarm collection, and honey bee apiary hive management. Peter Chorabik started his beekeeping operation in 2011 with two hives, following in the footsteps of three generations of hobby beekeepers in his family. Today he is a full time beekeeper and manages 500 colonies throughout the GTA and surrounding rural areas, harvesting approximately 15,000 kilograms of honey.

In 2014, Peter began approaching golf courses to see if there was an appetite to host hives. He felt that golf courses would be ideal habitats to successfully host honey bee colonies due to the availability of abundant flowering plants in gardens, woodland, and meadows and the close proximity to a water source. Toronto Bee Rescue currently manages honey bee colonies at St. George's G&CC, Weston G&CC, Markland Wood Golf Club, Hockley Valley Resort, Ladies Golf Club of Toronto, TPC Toronto at Osprey Valley, and The Toronto Golf Club. He also hosts hives at ski clubs, spas, and hotel properties.

Golf course hives are typically located

For those wishing to delve into beekeeping, Peter offered the following guidance:

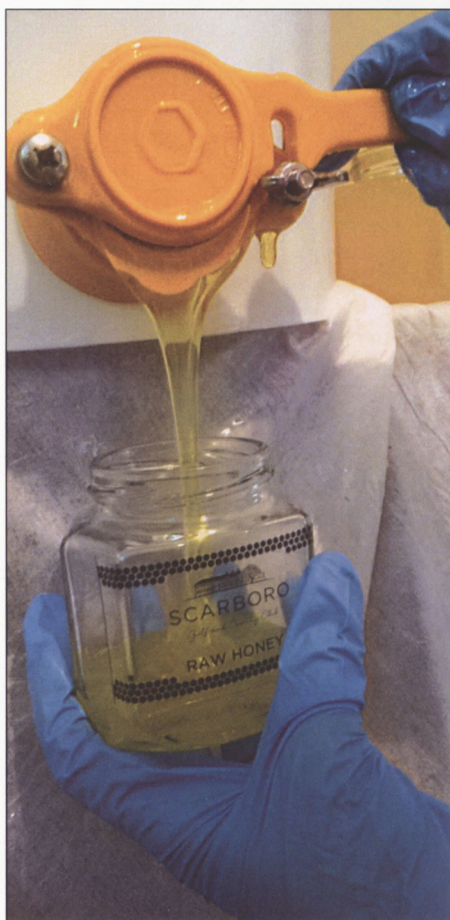
- **"Beekeeping is a lot of work. There are no tricks. You need to work hard, support your hives, ensure they are healthy, and have more than you need to replenish over-wintering loses.**
- **Find a mentor and work with them for a season. There is a lot to learn and you don't know what you need to learn until you realize you didn't know what to do in a situation.**
- **Beekeeping is a hobby that can take over your life. Once you know how to manage one colony, you can manage 10 or 50, and then grow beyond that. If you start beekeeping, have a good understanding of your goals, so that you can focus yourself on that."**

in non-play areas adjacent to fairways and woodlots. Hives should receive morning sun to get the bees active and foraging and be well protected from direct winds. Peter and his team provide the bees/hives, manage the colonies, and treat for mites. Each club's honey is harvested, processed, and bottled separately. Other products available include honey vinegar, honey comb, creamed honey, beeswax, and mead (honey wine).

SCARBORO GOLF AND COUNTRY CLUB

How are the bees doing? How's honey production? Where can I buy the honey? Aren't you afraid of being stung? These are the questions Lesley now gets asked since Scarborough Golf & Country Club started doing their part to protect and enhance the environment for honey bees, who's numbers are declining.

The University of Toronto reached



out to Scarboro in 2015 to ask them to become a part of their new Bee Boulevard Program. Lesley was interested, and the idea was well received by the club's COO, as he had just come from a club out west that hosts hives on their property. During the first meeting with those involved in the program, the group walked the property discussing the best location for the three hives the club would purchase and have U of T Beekeepers maintain. Lesley felt quite fortunate to oversee the program and got to suit up when they came in.

This new initiative also had the full support of the membership. The club was already reducing heavily manicured areas to more naturalized sites and planting more wildflowers for pollinators and such, as Lesley had started the Audubon Certification process the year before, so this was right in line with the direction the club was moving in.

Lesley recalls, "The first year we were told not to expect a harvest as the honey bees work on building their community. We were pleasantly surprised to harvest 32 kilograms of honey, leaving plenty for the overwintering bees, to sell to the membership, which quickly sold out!"



In 2017, Scarboro moved the hives to a more visible location beside the 6th tee deck - the reason is twofold. "We wanted the membership to feel a part of the whole process. From this location they can see the bees flying in and out of the hives, and see maintenance being performed. Secondly, from this location the hives receive much more sunlight for warmth, they are protected from the wind, have better air flow, and have access to water from the Highland Creek which runs right behind the hives."

In 2017, Scarboro expanded to 4 hives, and what a year for honey production!! The hot dry weather that year is just what honey bees prefer to go about their work. A record 363 kilograms of honey was harvested in 2017. Lesley expanded to six hives in 2020, and reports that all are healthy and thriving. "Right now, we are in the middle of our fall harvest, 45 kilograms so far."

If your club is looking to get into beekeeping, Lesley highly recommends it! "I would seek information through the Ontario Beekeepers' Association to put you in contact with a local beekeeper in your area. Some people do start up their own hives which can be successful, but keep in mind you are dealing with nature and even the most experienced Apiarist has lost a hive or two along the way, (just like turf) with no explanation." She also suggests to superintendents starting out to reach out to others with hives if you have questions. The honey bee community is as helpful and passionate about their craft as superintendents are in turf.



SUMMARY

Beekeeping can be a very successful endeavor on golf courses. The habitat on golf courses lends itself to enhancing pollinators and thriving colonies. Seeking the knowledge of an experienced beekeeper seems paramount during the initial stages of the operation. Golf clubs will not only benefit from the environmental stewardship and positive public perception; they will also reap the rewards of harvesting the delectable honey! ■

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The Impacts of Mental Health On Our Industry



By Chao Yuan (Tommy) Wang, second-year Diploma of Turf Management student, University of Guelph.

Mental health. It impacts us all in one way or another. Whether you're dealing with it directly, or you know someone who is suffering, it seems to find its way into both our personal and professional lives. In many cases the hardest part of dealing with mental health is fessing up and admitting you are suffering from it in the first place. Considering how 2020 has unfolded, I believe that there has been a growing number of victims experiencing the sobering reality that they too are susceptible to some degree of emotional weakness, instability and/or sensitivity when it comes to keeping your head screwed on straight. I can confidently admit that even as a student, I have found this year to be a challenging one with regard to staying organized, focused and optimistic about the way things are going.

In a way I think the COVID-19 pandemic may bring society towards an increased level of compassion, recognition, and empathy for those who deal with temporary or permanent mental illnesses or afflictions. I wanted to write this article to highlight these challenges and display support for those turfies who

may require additional help. I want to emphasize that when things do return to a sense of normality, we will need to focus on keeping our own sense of balance, as well as potentially spotting others who need help.

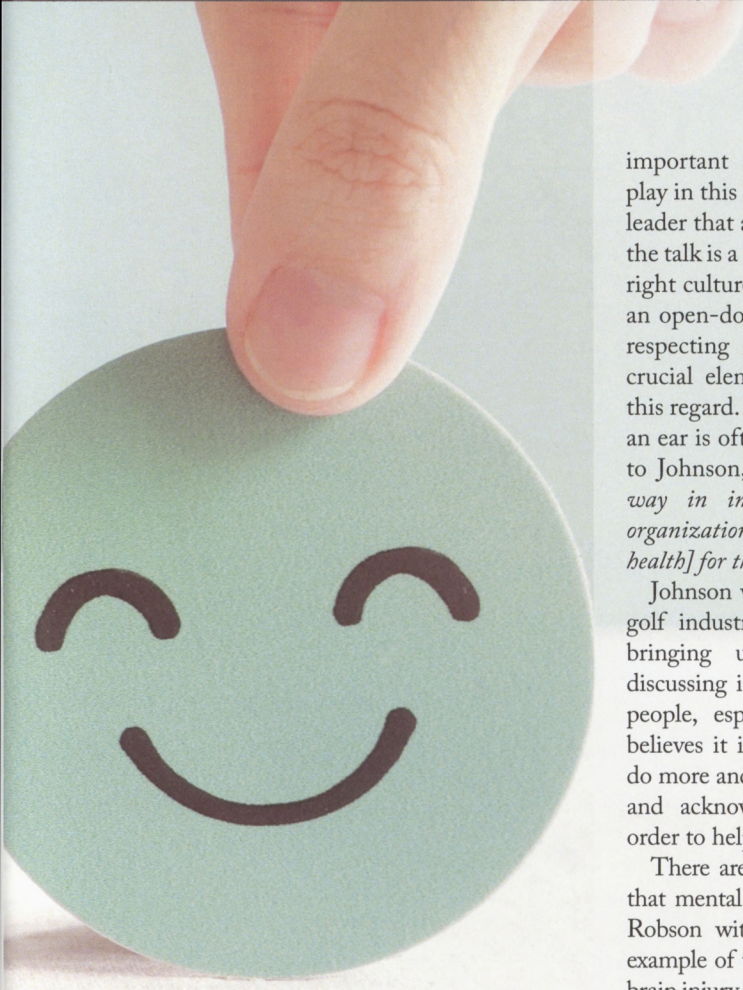
Being able to recognize if someone is suffering from a mental illness can be difficult as people, especially men, tend to stay silent.

No matter how you approach it, there isn't one specific way to stay on top of your mental health or one specific way to help others with their mental illness.

Meaghan Brady, a communications specialist at the Canadian Mental Health Association states, *"There are some signs and behaviours that you can look for which could suggest that you or someone else is dealing with a mental illness. Excessive worrying, problems concentrating at work, feeling excessively sad ... avoiding social activities can all be signs that someone*

is dealing with a mental illness." Brady notes that being able to recognize the signs and being proactive of your and others mental health is important. What you want to do is avoid waiting until you get to the crisis point. There are several things you can do to stay on top of your mental health. Building a positive support network, being well rested and fed, exercising, volunteering, and learning how to cope with difficult situations can be extremely beneficial towards reducing susceptibility and maintaining a good cognitive balance.

Although we have seen an increase of rounds being played at golf courses, we can't forget about what kind of an effect it's having on the turf and maintenance crew. Jason Haines, the Superintendent of the Sunshine Coast Golf and Country Club in BC is one of the many Superintendents who is working with reduced staff this year. "It has resulted in our team size being reduced for health and safety reasons as well as financial reasons. Last year we had 10 full time staff in the summer and this year we are doing it with four including myself. Emotionally the remaining staff seem to be doing pretty good but the staff who haven't returned yet this season are having a hard time with the new reality. This has been the hardest part for me to manage."



One of his main focuses is to stay on top of his and his employees' emotional needs as well as maintaining a strategy to avoid burnout. "The work on the course is unlimited. I could keep 20 or more people more than busy maintaining the course, but we only have four. Therefore, it doesn't make any sense to work overtime at all to try and get caught up because there simply aren't enough hours in the day to get us even close to caught up. After 8 hours I expect all staff to go home no matter what."

In our industry, there is also a broad range of people with different backgrounds, upbringings, experiences, and personal challenges. Being that we are also a male dominated industry we may be more susceptible to mental health issues than many of us are willing to admit. For these reasons, it is important that mental health awareness be considered as part of any employee training or orientation program. In an interview with Judy Johnson, Principal at Light of Day Coaching, there were some encouraging words of wisdom shared on this very subject. Johnson believes integrating mental health awareness training into the existing health and safety program is key to helping increase awareness while decreasing the stigma. Johnson went on to share the

important role managers and supervisors play in this puzzle. And shares that having a leader that actually walks the walk and talks the talk is a keystone element to building the right culture around this issue. Maintaining an open-door policy at all times, as well as respecting privacy and anonymity are all crucial elements of the leadership role in this regard. Being approachable and lending an ear is often all that is needed. According to Johnson, *"Creating that trust goes a long way in implementing and changing the organizational culture [surrounding mental health] for the better."*

Johnson who had worked in the turf and golf industry for nearly 30 years believes bringing up mental health, let alone discussing it is still uncomfortable for most people, especially at the workplace. She believes it is getting better, but we need to do more and be more open in sharing stories and acknowledging our vulnerabilities in order to help decrease the stigma.

There are ways to overcome the obstacles that mental health throws at you and Kevin Robson with Tapped in Golf is a perfect example of that. Robson suffered a traumatic brain injury back in 2015 and is still recovering from it. He notes his mental health was dwindling and it got to a point where he left his family, was living from hotel to hotel and felt an overwhelming sense of hopelessness. According to Robson, it was someone else who had the bravery to recognize his suffering and took the initiative to reach out to him and offer support. A simple gesture that Robson

believes saved his life.

Now he is helping others with Tapped in Golf. "I have started a non-profit golf project around mental health that promotes golf for therapeutic relief. We get those with PTSD, traumatic brain injuries, grievers, sufferers of isolation, depression, and anxiety outside to play some golf. It is a community approach. Through nature, camaraderie and sport and exercise the program breaks the shackles of personal suffering in an open and safe environment filled with compassionate people.

No matter how you approach it, there isn't one specific way to stay on top of your mental health or one specific way to help others with their mental illness. But one thing is always certain with mental illnesses, remaining silent, being alienated, and feeling alone lead to more problems. This is why mental health is referred to as the silent killer. We all experience highs and lows. Staying together and being there for each other can make us all stronger and healthier.

It is reassuring to see the topic of mental health becoming more prevalent in our industry. The recent summits and conference sessions on mindfulness have helped bring this issue to light and made all of us more aware of the importance of practicing it on a regular basis.

I am only just beginning my career in the turf industry, but I believe that actions taken today will help to cultivate a more open, sensitive, and understanding culture for future generations to thrive in. ■

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Burlington Renovation Master Plan: Complete



After



Before

*By Ryan Marangoni, Assistant Course Superintendent,
Burlington G & CC. Photos provided by Burlington G&CC.*

Have you ever had an idea? I would imagine, the answer is YES! As greenskeepers, we have had lots of ideas. Most are centered around improvement; identifying or realizing a deficiency and brainstorming avenues which will transform the deficiencies into efficiencies. Some come to fruition while others do not. Some are quick fixes and some commonly get forgotten about, ignored or given up on if they take longer to complete. It takes patience, perseverance and determination to think of an idea, create a plan and see it to completion.

The team at Burlington Golf and Country Club (BGCC) knows all about seeing an idea come to fruition. In the early 2000's, there was an idea (well, many ideas), to improve upon an old, tiny Stanley Thompson designed golf course that gets played ALOT by its membership. The idea was presented to the board and

they agreed to take on the challenge, led by golf course architect Doug Carrick.

Understanding the Club is rich in history and some clubs have difficulty accepting change, Carrick knew he had to retain the spirit of Stanley Thompson, in his plan. Carrick created a master plan for BGCC in 2006 in hopes to diversify the teeing grounds, redesign bunkers, improve cart part infill structure, upgrade the irrigation system, incorporate a tree management program and increase the size of some greens to help distribute the wear and tear of a very busy golf course.

Being a vintage 1922 Thompson course, it had his stereotypical teeing areas which often included only one or two tee decks per hole, that were narrow and very long. These tee decks had to facilitate a number of tee blocks which ultimately played too long for some and too short for others. As golf equipment evolves from hickory shafts and feather-filled golf balls to graphite shafts and coated synthetic balls, so must the course, to adapt to the added length a golfer can hit the ball now, compared to way back then.



Carrick could only do so much to increase the length of the course because BGCC sits on a very small piece of land just over 100 acres. Eight of the holes had length added to them with the 14th and 5th being the most significant at a 50-yard increase to each from the back tees. Carrick, recognizing the wide variety of skill levels, introduced many more forward tees to help grow the game. Every hole has had at least one, or multiple forward tee decks added to it over the years.

Most of the earlier work was smaller scaled, like tees, cart paths and bunkers which allowed for less disruption, lower financial burden and the ability for membership to continue to play their golf course though construction. Most recently, the construction that started in the fall of 2019 was a very big undertaking and the largest piece of the master plan. The final project involved redesigning two par 4's and a par 3, moving the irrigation pond and installing a brand-new irrigation system. Meanwhile, in the clubhouse, the kitchen, the men's and ladies lounges, the restaurant and outdoor patio all got renovated at the same time. Albeit, the

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Green #5 replacement.



Hole #5 gained 50 yards by turning a straight-away short par 4 into an up-hill dogleg.

clubhouse work was not part of the master plan, but it contributed greatly to the financial load and disruption to the membership.

Arguably, the main focal point of this project is the par 4 -17th hole, that sits entirely along the shore of Lake Ontario. In the 80's, this hole was redesigned by an architect named Robert Moote, who actually worked with Stanley Thompson when he started his career as a young architect. The 17th hole stands out not because of the spectacular views to the lake and Skyway Bridge but some would because it did not match the designed features and flow of the rest of the golf course. It was a blind shot off the tee, rolling into a very narrow approach towards a three-tiered green that sat behind the irrigation pond. After Carrick's redesign, golfers can now see the green while standing on the tee and all the way up the wide, firm fairway. The challenging approach shot is into a very large and elevated green. This style of golf hole is a common trait Stanley Thompson included on many of his older courses, including other holes at BGCC.

"Master plans get adopted or scrapped. Some clubs have been at them for 20 - 30 years and they don't always finish. It takes a huge amount of commitment to complete." Carrick stated, when asked about master plans at private golf clubs.

In order to complete a plan, regardless of the size or scale of work; consistency, determination and a great deal of commitment will be required. Generally, committees and board of directors within

It is now time for them to
enjoy their golf course with
no disruptions.

private golf clubs change frequently and that can be challenging when everyone has their own opinions, especially when they are passionate about their golf course. The consistency comes from the club leaders (COO, Superintendent, Club Professional etc.) to be the reminding voice about the master plan and staying on track. That said, plans get tweaked and new ideas arise as different phases are finished. Prioritizing resources and breaking the big picture master plan down into smaller, more manageable projects to accomplish every couple of years, is how the team at BGCC successfully completed their long-range master plan in 2020.

Over the past decade and a half, which is the time it has taken to travel this masterful journey, the members at BGCC have developed "construction fatigue". It is now time for them to enjoy their golf course with no disruptions. They will watch as these three new holes grow-in just in time for 2022, Burlington Golf and Country Club's Centennial Anniversary year.

Despite the construction fatigue, the generous members and the ambitious management team at BGCC are already pondering the next long-range strategy for once the Centennial celebrations have come and gone. Invariably considering new ideas. The team is never satisfied with "good enough", constantly attempting to conceive new efficiencies while eliminating the deficiencies, always in pursuit of excellence. ■



17th approach shot to a massive, elevated green, right on the edge of the Bay.

Par-3, 6th hole. Teeing space went from 4000ft² to 12000ft². The green went from 3500ft² to 6000ft².

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Permits to Take Water in Ontario: Regulatory Update

By Stephen Kajan, P.Eng, Manager, Golf Services, Water Resources Engineer, R.J. Burnside & Associates Limited.

We are blessed in Ontario with the riches of freshwater. The Great Lakes Basin is home to 21% of the world's surface fresh water and 84% of North America's freshwater. Worthy of protecting. As I am sure many of you are aware, our provincial government has taken steps to help manage that bounty of freshwater riches. In Ontario, any water taking of 50,000 L/day (combined for all sources on any day in a given year) requires a Permit to Take Water (PTTW), under the Ontario Water Resources Act (OWRA) and Ontario Regulation 387/04. The OWRA and its regulations are managed and enforced by the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP).

History of the PTTW regulations dates all the way back to 1956. Initially formed as the Ontario Water Resources Commission Act, its primary purpose was to finance, build and manage water treatment facilities, with a secondary focus on managing the province's water

resources (through PTTWs). At the time population growth and industrial development combined with inadequate sewage treatment/disposal was impacting the water quality of the Great Lakes. Wastewater had traditionally been directed to surface water as a means of disposal. As towns and cities grew, increased discharge of wastewater led to bacterial pollution. Things got so bad that the phrase "Lake Erie is dead" became common parlance. Lake Erie was most susceptible due to the heavy presence of industrial processes and population density along its shores.

By the 1970s the provincial government had financed, built and managed over 450 water supply and treatment facilities. Bacteria levels in the Great Lakes had decreased, and water quality began to improve. Who doesn't love a good government legislation success story?

In the mid-1970s, with the infrastructure now in place, Ontario shifted the costs of operation and management to the various municipalities and became focused more on policy and enforcement. The OWRA as we know it today began to take shape. Changes in the 1990s strengthened the regulations and added mechanisms to



Photo provided by Stephen Kajan.

protect drinking water, which included a description of the OWRA's primary purpose:

"The purpose of this Act is to provide for the conservation, protection and management of Ontario's waters and for their efficient and sustainable use, in order to promote Ontario's long-term environmental, social and economic well-being."

Through the years the province has enacted numerous changes and amendments to strengthen the policies within the OWRA. In total the OWRA has been amended 38 times and contains 15 regulations including water taking, well construction, licencing, charges for water use, etc. The most significant amendment occurred in 2004 which included annual water taking reporting, circulation of PTTW applications to municipalities and conservation authorities, and stronger policies on water taking regulations. That's right. Your favourite annual task of submitting daily water taking records to the MECP's Water Taking and Reporting System (WTRS) by March 31 of each year started way back in 2004.

The latest changes to the OWRA in 2019 addressed the growing pressures of a digital age, allowing for online permit submissions and requiring online only submission of annual water taking records to the WTRS. To date, the MECP now only accepts digital submissions to the WTRS. At the start of 2020, the MECP launched a digital submission platform for PTTW applications through "Public Secure" (formerly ONE-key). I am sure many of you are familiar with this service as the pesticide licenses are run through the same platform. Online submissions through the ONE-key portal can be challenging

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Photo provided by Al Schwemler.

for those not familiar with navigating the system. Recognizing this, as well as understanding the impacts from COVID-19, the MECP now accepts digital submissions (in pdf form) through the email enviropemissions@ontario.ca. The MECP also still accepts hard copies sent to:

Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks
Attention: Permit to Take Water, Director
Client Services and Permissions Branch
135 St. Clair Avenue West, 1st Floor
Toronto ON. M4V 1P5

Important Note: do not include any sensitive payment information (ie credit card) on digital submissions, for obvious reasons.

What is this "MECP" business about? If you've been around for a few years, you may find it hard lately to keep up with the modern vernacular of the Ministry of the Environment. As the political winds shift, so seems the title and agenda of many government agencies. When the current provincial administration took office in 2018, it brought about sweeping changes. An era of accountability begets consolidation and cutbacks. The formerly known Ministry of Environment and Climate Change dropped "climate change" from its moniker and adopted a new title, Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) signifying a unification of services. At the time it was uncertain as to how consolidation of these three agencies would impact the various regulatory approvals processes. Two years later and the changes to the Ministry of Environment, Conservation Authorities, and Ontario Parks have yet to be clearly defined.

One such change recently took place and is aimed at streamlining the PTTW review process. As of Jan 1, 2020, issuance of permits in Ontario is now happening at a central office under the Environmental Permissions Branch located in Toronto. Previous to this, Regional Offices would complete a technical review and issue permits to applicants. Under the new framework, Regional Offices provide a technical review with recommendations to the Environmental

Permits to Take Water in Ontario Tips:

As we approach the winter months, renewals of PTTWs and submission of water records becomes more in focus for many golf course managers. Here are a few tips from what we are seeing with PTTW submissions recently:

- 1. The MECP is requiring current permit holders to submit renewal applications 90 days prior to the expiry date.**
- 2. Application processors at the MECP are requiring proof of property ownership documents and proof that those who sign applications are directors or officers of the company. This was always the case but is being vigorously enforced as of late.**
- 3. Submissions of daily water taking volumes are now only submitted through the MECP's WTRS.**
- 4. Review times on PTTW applications remain unimpacted by COVID-19 despite MECP staff transitioning to working remotely.**
- 5. Exclude credit card information from any digital PTTW submission. Call in with a credit card number or mail a hard copy of the submission.**

Permissions Branch who issues the permit.

The MECP is also consulting with stakeholders on proposed amendments to the OWRA and the water taking regulations. The bottled water industry has recently come under public scrutiny over the selling off of our water resources beyond the limits of our watershed. As recently as 2017, bottled water production had been lumped in with commercial and industrial users and had been charged a nominal consumptive fee for using water. This fee was \$3.71 per million litres used. Amendments to the regulations imposed a stiff increase of \$500 per million litres specific to bottled water production. In September 2020, the MECP enacted a regulation to extend the moratorium on any new water taking for the purpose of bottled water. Once the moratorium ends, the MECP will enact regulations to resume issuance of permits for bottled water production but will require support from local municipalities. Although the charges for bottled water production do not yet extend to the commercial use of golf irrigation, it is something that has been previously discussed within the MECP. All indications from discussions with MECP staff suggest that charging golf courses for water is not something that will be implemented soon.

There are currently 3 proposals posted to the Environmental Registry for public comment regarding changes to the OWRA. You can view these changes at <https://ero.ontario.ca/>. The proposed changes are not expected to impact irrigation water taking by golf courses for commercial use.

You can access the MECP's website for up to date PTTW information including links to Public Secure, online PTTW mapping tools, and an online database of all PTTWs in Ontario. Visit <https://www.ontario.ca/page/permits-take-water> for more information. ■



Photo provided by Al Schwemler.

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Expanding Research Capacity at the New GTI



The turf type tall fescue NTEP trial now in its second season at the new GTI Data will be released when the trial is complete.

Written by and photos provided by Cam Shaw, GTI Communications and Outreach Coordinator.

One of the primary goals of the GTI is to inspire and host turfgrass research that is pertinent, valuable, and most importantly, usable by Ontario and Canadian turfgrass managers. As we prepare to say good-bye to the 30-year history of research innovation, education and services at the historic GTI property on Victoria Rd in Guelph, we are also waving hello and welcome from our new location on College Ave. As many of you have already seen, this new location boasts a more efficient and practical GM Frost Centre along with an improved capacity for modern day research in turfgrass science. One of the key strategies behind the development of our new location was to expand our research capacity, which is a measurement of our ability to host a broad range and variety of projects and research at a single location. Beyond just pure academic research, which can take many years to execute and tremendous funding to start up, we want to attract additional interests in short-term trial work with various partner groups. Trial work, or service research, is the type of research that collects data for new product registration, developing improved product strategies, rate/interval comparisons, efficacy ratings, and other important end-user information.

With regard to trial work, one of our goals at the new GTI is to bring back the National Turfgrass Evaluation Program (NTEP). This quality rating and performance data is absolutely essential for Ontario golf superintendents to make informed choices on turf species and cultivars based on their performance in the Ontario environment. When searching the NTEP website, most Ontario turf managers are forced to look at trial locations that are similar to Ontario such as cities in Michigan, Illinois, New York, Indiana

or New Jersey. Having the GTI become a regular trial site for the NTEP program would be an invaluable resource to all turf managers in Ontario. As some of you already know, we were able to install our first NTEP trial last season with turf type tall fescue (TTTF). TTTF is a grass species of growing interest for the turf industry. New advancements in breeding programs have created a much finer and preferred leaf texture conducive for sport, play and aesthetics while continuing to employ much of the same rugged stress tolerances tall fescues have come to be known for. These grasses have grown to be increasingly sought after for bunker faces suffering from excessive sand splash and drought/heat stress. They are also being used increasingly in seed mixes for roughs on golf courses.

Some of you may be more interested in the bentgrass NTEP trials. Unfortunately, the timeline of the new building, research plot construction, and of course COVID created some challenges and hurdles in terms of hosting the most recent bentgrass NTEP trials. That being said, we are looking forward to becoming a recognized host site for the next round and will work diligently to ensure we are on the list.

Revisiting the point on expanding the GTI's research capacity, last fall we allocated some donation money and funds generated through the Ontario Turfgrass Symposium and the Turfgrass Manager's Short Course to invest in a new rain out device. This piece of research infrastructure is designed as a temporary installation that rests over top of various research plots (it is movable) in order to keep the grass plots below dry. The rain out device creates a new opportunity for our researchers to investigate things like drought stress, hardiness, recovery potential, localized dry spot, and introduce improved opportunities for wetting agent efficacy and comparison trials. All of which have become increasingly important to golf course



Grad students Corey Flude and Jaber Husiny seen here raising the scaffolding-like rain-out device over the TWCA Kentucky bluegrass trial plots.



The finished rain out device seen here with the plastic covering installed to inhibit precipitation and maximize light penetration.

superintendents as of late. One association who has taken advantage of this new capacity for research is the Turfgrass Water Conservation Alliance (TWCA). Operating as a non-profit organization, the TWCA's primary objective is to identify, rate and certify grasses (through third party research) that can withstand and recover from severe drought stress. In other words, grasses that produce quality turf while reducing the need for water. The TWCA funds drought trial work all over the US and we are happy to be working with them now in Canada at the GTI. TWCA certified grasses can help golf course superintendents identify seed that may help to reduce their overall water budget or perform better than traditional grasses in an already lean irrigation program.

The move to our new location is a great chance to reinvigorate the Canadian turfgrass research program. As the turf industry continues to evolve and change, the GTI's capacity for research will allow us to pivot our focus to remain aligned with the needs of Ontario golf superintendents. When the era of social distancing finally comes to an end, we look forward to hosting more industry events, meetings, seminars and networking opportunities within our walls – not only

to encourage more activity and use of our site, but also to hear more each of your unique challenges and ideas. Some of the best research is inspired from anecdotal observations by turf managers like you! ■

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Twenty Years Ago Today

The 2000 OGSA Board of Directors



The Board of Directors in 2000 were as follows: (Back row) Rob Ackermann, Markland Wood GC; Mark Piccolo, Galt CC; Dave Cours, Erie Shores G&CC; Robert Burrows (editor), Rosedale GC; (Front row) Dorothy Hills (office admin); John Gravett (vice.), Granite GC; Keith Bartlett (pres.), Thornhill GC; Ian Bowen (past pres.), Oshawa GC; Jim Flett, Muskoka Lakes G&CC; (Unavailable for photo) Dean Baker, Glen Abbey GC; Jeff Burgess, Weston G & CC; Robert Heron, Beacon Hall GC; and Paul Scenna, Donalda Club.

ON THE MOVE

John Taylor went from Twenty Valley G&CC to Hunters Point GC. Mark Sevsek, assistant at Nobleton Lakes GC moved to Rio Vista. Chris Davies, who worked at Glen Abbey and before that Deer Creek GC, made a career change and started working for Vandenbusshe Irrigation.

MILESTONES

Alan Beeney retired from the Halton Hills CC after thirty six years.

NATIONAL UPDATES

The CGSA Conference and Trade Show was held in Ottawa. Jim Wyllie was awarded the John B. Steel Distinguished Service Award. Paul Dermott was the winner of

the 2000 Environmental Achievement Award which is co-sponsored by the CGSA and The Toro Company.

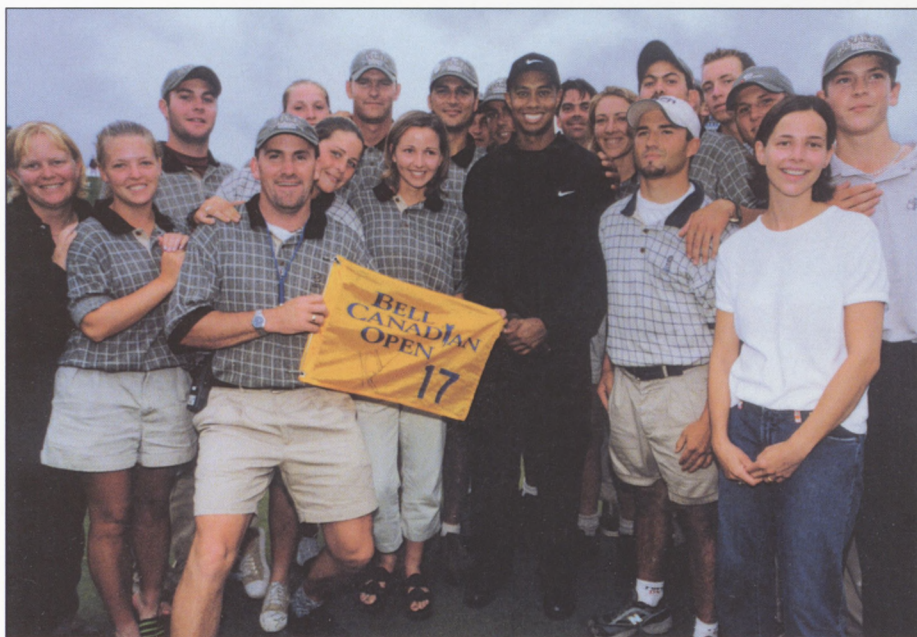
At the GCSAA Convention held in New Orleans, **Green Is Beautiful** tied with Iowa's The Reporter for the Most Improved Publication at this year's Newsletter Editor Session. Congratulation to editor **Robert Burrows**, Rosedale GC.

EVENTS

Major rainfall events plagued the Toronto area golf courses from April to June. Extensive damage reported from **Robert Cowan**, Royal Woodbine GC, **Don Crymble**, Markham Green GC and **Rob Ackermann**, Markland Wood GC.

Courses were closed and major damage was reported from many other courses during three separate storms.

At the Ontario Turf Symposium, **Gary Gravett**, on behalf of the Georgian Bay Golf Superintendents Association, presented **Rob Witherspoon**, director of Guelph Turfgrass Institute, with a \$1,500 cheque to be put towards GTI research. The OTRF tournament was held at Wooden Sticks GC on August 14th hosted by **Brian Haus**. Over \$40,000 was raised for turfgrass research. The GTI Summer Research Field Day was held at the Guelph Turfgrass Institute. After lunch, **Jack Eggens**, **Pam Charbonneau** and **Ken Carey** led the hands-on workshop.



Dean Baker and his grounds crew pose with Tiger Woods at the 2000 Canadian Open at Glen Abbey.

TOURNAMENTS

The President/ Greens Chairman/ Superintendent Event was held at the Donalda Club hosted by Paul Scenna. This year's team champion, with a low score of 117, went to **John Taylor** from Hunter's Point GC, second place went to **Phil Brown** from Summit GC (123) and third place went to **Aldo Bortolon** from Lookout Point CC (127).

The Pro/Super tournament was held at King Valley GC hosted by **Jason Honeyball**. The top team was led by **Ray Richards**, Mad River GC, second led by **Tom Murphy**, Lambton G&CC and third led by **Richard Butler**, St. Andrews East GC. Low scoring superintendent was **Jason Ireland** from Conestoga GC.

Al Beeney, The Club at North Halton, hosted the Alex McClumpha Memorial Tournament and **Keith Bartlett** presented him with a watch inscribed with "Congratulations from your colleagues for your years of involvement in the association". First low gross was **Bruce Burger**, 73 and first low net was **Kenneth Patterson**, 64. The George Darou Trophy went to **Tom Murphy** for the best low gross for superintendents over 50 years old.

TRIVIA

Bob Hutcheson, owner of Hutcheson Sand and Gravel, supplied the sand for the 2000 Summer Olympics in Sydney

Australia to be used as the sand for the Beach Volleyball competition.

"Tiger Mania" came to the 2000 Canadian Open at Glen Abbey. It was the first time that tickets were sold out for the Canadian Open. The success of the tournament was evident by the records set:

- Ticket sales on property \$100,000 (\$17,000 in 1999)
- Sunday crowds estimated at 60,000 (30,000 in 1999)
- 10,000 hats sold (4,000 in 1999)
- 180 Prime Rib Roasts (80 in 1999)
- 62 kegs = 7000 glasses of beer (30 kegs in 1999)
- 8400 bottles of beer (3600 in 1999)

These figures were taken from an article written by Dean Baker who was the superintendent for many of those Canadian Opens held at Glen Abbey. ■



(L-R) OGSA president Keith Bartlett recognizes Al Beene for hosting the Alex McClumpha Memorial Tournament.



The President-Greens-Chairman-Superintendent Event Champions from Hunter's Point Golf Club.



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Dubrovnik, Croatia, photo provided by Sean Van Beauden.



Royal Melbourne photo provided by Jacob Martin.

Human beings are fairly social creatures. Many yearn to explore and travel, interact with others, socialize and make new friends while exploring new and wonderful places. It's who we are and it's how over the course of thousands of years humans have extended their reach over virtually every square mile of our planet, in many instances for better or worse. The corona virus has put a collective full-stop on those adventures in 2020. The very things humans have done quite freely since man first walked upright, socializing, travelling, exploring, are exactly what we should avoid to curtail the spread of Covid-19. It's disheartening and has changed our way of life, but it will not last forever. It may look different than it did pre-pandemic and it's unclear, like a lot of things these days how long that may take. However one day things will return to at the very least, a new normal.

The chance to work, travel, and network is an attractive option for turf professionals no matter where they are from. The experience may be as simple as volunteering at a professional golf event or even a major. Perhaps the opportunity comes as an internship to a storied private club in the U.S. or overseas. For the truly adventurous, a working holiday in a foreign country is the ultimate work-travel experience. Most of us are aware of the challenges in hiring solid, dependable workers and this problem is not unique to Canada. Canadians with turf grass experience are an attractive hiring option for courses all over the world.

The R&A estimates there are almost 39,000 golf courses located in 209 countries. Right after the U.S. and Canada, the top golfing countries include Japan, England, Australia, Sweden, Scotland, Spain, Ireland, the Netherlands and Thailand. Almost all of those countries would make the bucket list for most globetrotters.

Many governments around the world have made it relatively easy for foreigners to enter their borders for working holidays. In fact, the website Global Goose lists at least 30 countries that provide working holiday visa's for Canadians and the conditions necessary to obtain a working holiday permit. These conditions typically include an age range (the minimum age is 18 and the age limit to participate often maxes out at 35) and "sufficient funds" in your bank account (which prove that you will be able to support yourself in the event you are unable to find employment for an extended period of time). Most countries issue travel permits for up to 12 months. Some, like Australia, do allow an extension of an additional 12 months if certain conditions can be met. And the Czech Republic requires a minimum of \$2500 in your bank account to enter the country and an additional \$1500 to cover the cost of a plane ticket home. There are usually

limits on the type of work you are allowed to perform and a maximum amount of money you can earn when working in a foreign country.

Deer Ridge GC's Jacob Martin had three compelling reasons to take an extended leave from his club and begin a year long journey in Australia. The main reason was to represent Canada at the Australian Football International Cup initially scheduled for the summer of 2020. But when the chance to work at Royal Melbourne Golf Club as it prepared for the 2019 Presidents Cup came up, along with the opportunity to travel in Australia for several months prior to the football championships, that became the trifecta that was just too good to pass up.

Martin applied for the working holiday visa but actually had the job offer from Royal Melbourne before his permit was approved. Royal Melbourne was especially helpful as he navigated the process to be able to legally work in Australia. Since the country attracts so many travelers seeking work opportunities to supplement their travel activities, assisting a potential Canadian employee was not exactly foreign to the club. The country sees well over 100,000 foreigners apply for working travel visa's every year. For the six month period before, during and immediately after the President's Cup there were seven other internationals working at Royal Melbourne. Martin estimates the cost of the visa was approximately \$700 plus the cost to obtain health insurance during his time in the country, a requirement Australia demands of all applicants.

Since he was working at one of the most famous clubs in the world during one of the most prestigious international golf events, the caliber of greenkeepers Royal Melbourne was able to attract was very high. Martin said the experience was like working with 40 interns, all highly skilled, all very eager to learn and prove themselves. That scenario pushed each of them to be their very best. The minimum wage in Australia is over \$19 per hour and Martin believes the cost of living is very similar to that of Canada, comparing living in Melbourne to living in Toronto in terms of expenses. He hopes to return one day soon to complete the travel portion of his adventure. He was compelled to return to Canada in March as travel restrictions came into effect and the government of Canada urged its citizens to return home. The football championships have also been tentatively rescheduled for next year.

Martin credits another fellow world traveler, Sean Van Beurden with providing some helpful advice as he began the process of obtaining the visa. Van Beurden wrote a piece for OnCourse in the June 2020 issue about his year working at The International in Amsterdam.



Royal Melbourne, hole 6 photo provided by Jacob Martin.

The Assistant Superintendent at The National GC spent 12 months working in Amsterdam and travelling throughout Europe, finally returning home in March of this year, just before restrictions began to come into place following the Covid-19 outbreak.

Van Beurden's wife has dual citizenship but that didn't make the process any easier for Sean who still required a working holiday visa to enter the country. But proving that the turf world is a small one, he received advice from another Superintendent, Stu Sheridan at Capilano GC, who knew a colleague who worked in Amsterdam. While following this lead, the opening for an Assistant Superintendent at The International came up. Van Beurden was able to secure the position and the visa and the couple set out for Amsterdam.

Working holiday visa rules vary from country to country but in the Netherlands once an applicant has been approved their 12 month visa begins, whether they are in the country or not. The couple actually stayed longer than 12 months but near the end of the first year Van Beurden applied for a spousal visa and as long as they were waiting for its approval, he could continue working and living in the country.

Once they arrived in Amsterdam, they secured an address with the help of a relative in the country. That allowed them to set up a bank account and register with the city, all necessary steps required to legally work in Amsterdam. After living in a long term hotel for approximately three weeks they moved into their new rental home, located along one of the city's many canals. They bought bikes and used them as their primary mode of transportation, riding to work each day as many Amsterdammers do.

Like Martin, Van Beurden also noted that living in Amsterdam is comparable to living in Toronto in terms of its cost of living. Amsterdam is considered a very expensive European city to reside in. Like many other European countries, the Netherlands is very progressive in promoting a work-life balance for its citizens. When he started at The International, Van Beurden began with 25 vacation days. Overtime is automatically paid for working Saturdays and Sunday and the club was preparing to host the KLM Open, a European Tour event. Between the 5 weeks of initial vacation time and many hours banked in preparation for the KLM event, Van Beurden wound up with up to 10 weeks of holiday time, which came in handy as the couple took full advantage of exploring Europe during their year away.

When asked if they had any advice to share with others who wish to undertake a similar adventure whenever the world begins to open



Venice, Italy, photo provided by Sean Van Beurden.

up again, Martin suggested keeping an open mind and beginning the application process for a visa well in advance of needing one. Van Beurden seconded this recommendation and also advised others to take full advantage of the opportunities available to them while abroad. A year away from home may seem like an eternity during the first month but by the end of the trip you'll wonder where all the time has gone, so take advantage of every minute.

Handy Resources:

Global Goose - Work and Travel Anywhere. <https://global-goose.com>
International Experience Canada. ■



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When I was the Horticulturist at Muskoka Lakes Golf and Country Club my target date to have the gardens look their best was July-August. Thanks to the cottage season, this was the highest foot traffic period for the club, and the members expected English style gardens, meaning lots of layered perennial flowering. So, I pretty much packed the spaces in the beds with plant material that would be in bloom or have its best aesthetic appearance at the club's busiest time.

However, the shoulder seasons were certainly not forgotten and regardless of my summer targets, there was a need to ensure that some blooming occurred during the spring and fall. The trick was to find plants that didn't take up a lot of space or look withered during the big show.

With Covid-19 restrictions in full swing, I imagine that golf courses all over Ontario are experiencing the increased usage into the fall, and members expect the gardens to keep producing blooms until the snow flies. Keep in mind, that it's a near impossible task to maintain the majesty of the summer gardens into the shoulder season, considering a garden has only so much soil space for plant roots, however you can try to meet your member's expectations by selecting a few recommended plants.

Since we are now in the middle of fall, I will start with plant material that will take you into the flurries. While most plants have started their dormancy process *Cimicifuga* (Snake Root) will be throwing tall bottlebrush type white flower spikes 5' in the air. There are a few varieties, one in particular is called Hillside Black Beauty,

and it has very dark purplish foliage. This plant is to be grown in a woodland setting so it can tolerate shade, and it prefers moist soil. It is one of the very last bloomers before the snow flies and has extremely aromatic flowers that attract bees and other pollinators. It's attractive foliage colour can be used for contrasting other plants

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the spring and fall.

providing interest all season.

Stone Crop Sedum (*Autumn Joy*) is commonly used for fall interest, it starts late and blooms for a long time heading through October. Grown in full sun, drought tolerant, 12-18" in height, the plant has a neat and tidy form, and the foliage has a blue hue.

Japanese Anemone likes part shade and has a spectacular show of flowers coming in pinks and whites and a few different heights and tidiness depending on the variety. The larger varieties do need lots of room and there's nothing overly attractive about the

foliage but if it's tucked in behind a few other things it can be hidden until it flowers and sends its blooms 4' in the air; it stays relatively low until that point. It starts blooming in mid September and will go until the end of October.

For May-June blooming *Allium*'s are a nice touch. They are a perennial bulb in the onion family, they produce large globular flowers ranging in heights and their colour ranges from purples to blues. Once they are done flowering their foliage starts to yellow but it can be cut back. When planted behind something else, you never notice the gap and their foliage regrows green and almost Daylily like.

A favourite of mine for early June blooming are Lupins. This full sun beauty can come in a multitude of colours and put on a spectacular show for a couple weeks. When they are done blooming, cut the plants off at the base, they will rejuvenate and produce new foliage. They can also tolerate dry clay type soils.

I have come to be a big fan of two type of Phlox's, the Woodland Phlox and Moss Phlox. Great for early blooming, the Moss Phlox has a mossy green foliage appearance that is used for draping over rockery or on garden edges. It is really low growing (4" height), and when in flower it creates a carpet of blooms in a wide range of colours, blues, pinks, reds and whites. When they finish blooming shear the plant and it will continue to be neat, tidy and green. They require full sun for best performance. The Woodland Phlox is slightly later blooming, is great for a shaded woodland setting, and comes in blue, pink and white. It's a slow spreader that can be used as a mounding ground cover and when in bloom it throws its flowers to 12-18" into the air. Once blooming is done shear off the old flowers and your left with a short green mound for the remainder of the growing season amongst later blooming plants.

I hope these suggestions help when you are looking at areas and thinking if only I had just a little more colour. ■



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Fall 2020

It's Customary in Golf Not To.... Sunday Musings from the Patio of a Public Golf Course

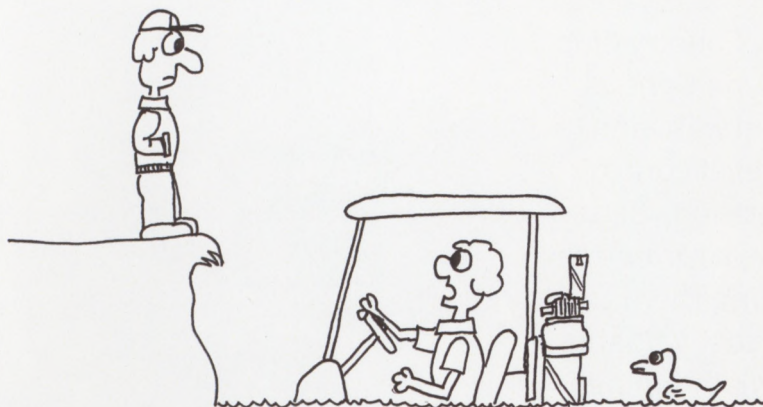
By Doug Breen,
Superintendent,
Golf North Properties.

I was sitting on a patio one day, watching a group of four people (in four carts) head over to the first tee. There were also four carts in the middle of the first fairway, and four more carts beside the first green (too close to it, actually). There were four more carts by the 18th green (again, too close to it for my liking), four on the fairway, and four on the tee. That's 24 carts on two holes. The ninth and tenth holes looked about the same. Forty-eight carts within my sight and at least ten of them were in places they shouldn't have been. I said to myself, *that's 192 tires worth of wear and tear on the turf*. I turned my chair around, so it faced the wall - and I shuddered a little bit.

A younger, angrier Doug would have been emphatically waving his arms around, chastising golfers about staying on cart paths. At one time, I had quite a reputation for taking cart keys away and making golfers carry their clubs for the rest of the round. I'm mellowing with age, but the combination of heavy cart traffic and new golfers has been hard for me to watch.

It's been very, very busy. There are landing areas on fairways and par three tees that look like someone top dressed the surface of the moon. There have been many, many first-time golfers. I've seen sets of clubs that look like an unabridged history of golf equipment. Sets that look like they were purchased at 14 separate garage sales. I'm told that you simply can't buy a set of left-handed clubs in Ontario. Public golf is seeing a resurgence which the golf industry only dared to dream of.

The music is loud. So are the golfers. There are divots in greens.



"This is YOUR FAULT - and as soon as I figure out how this is your fault, the Club will be receiving a strongly worded email!"

The first tee times of the day are literally as early as we can have the course ready to play, and the last tee time is far closer to dark than I'd be willing to pay money for, to try to get in a handful of holes. Never mind greens mowers - I saw a mechanic mounting lights on an aerator yesterday. Nearly every single time slot in between dark and dark is sold, and they keep coming.

Young people are taking up the game - both male and female. They're practicing, taking lessons, and buying equipment. I see twenty somethings on golf dates. There's an online dating service for people who play golf. Golf is fashionable. Golf is booming. But is it sustainable?

That's the million dollar question. COVID-19 has certainly narrowed people's social and athletic options, and as a result, they're giving golf a try - but will they keep coming when things return to normal? Whether that happens in five months or five years, will they keep coming? And if they do, how are we going to have to adapt to keep our courses in acceptable condition?

Ontario golf courses heaved an audible sigh of relief when the Provincial Government approved cart dividers. Cutting the number of carts driving around the course in half made a huge difference

overnight. But 300 golfers per day walking across the greens, taking 30,000 strokes, and God only knows how many practice swings - is taking its toll. We know that many of our tees (driving ranges included) simply aren't big enough for the current traffic. We're creating instructional videos to educate new golfers, and to remind old golfers about things like fixing ball marks. Oh, the ball marks...

Obviously, a full tee sheet is the best thing that can happen financially. We, as an industry, have been

talking about the need to grow the game for decades, but if this is going to be the norm going forward, we're going to need more instructional videos. The course Marshalls are going to have to do a lot of instruction as well. The most common phrase this summer has been, "It's customary in golf, not to.....*fill in the blank*." I timed it one day, and the proshop on a 27-hole course needs to check in a golfer every 52.5 seconds, to avoid a backup. The software takes about 90 seconds per transaction. That'll cause some angst.

Hey, don't get me wrong - I'm glad that golf is popular, and I understand that busy makes everything better. Back in March, Krista and I were more than a little concerned, that having all of our household income dependant upon things people do with their disposable income (horses and golf), was shockingly poor planning on our part. No one is more surprised than us, that they both ended up being part of a handful of activities which people were willing and able to take part in.

So busy is best, but there's no question that if this pace of play continues, we're going to have to change how we've been doing some things. That, and mount a lot more headlights on equipment. ■

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