

# HILLCREST NEWSLETTER



*Dan Megard, President*

## Dining & Lounge Hours

Tuesday-Friday 11am-Close  
Saturday 5pm-Close

### From the President.....

2018 has come to a close and we welcome a new year. The past year has been a good one for Hillcrest. We continue to lower our debt and spend money wisely. Our staff is efficient and hard working. Mother Nature gave us a late Spring with three April snowfalls and an early Fall. In between, we had the wettest year on record. None of these Mother Nature curveballs are great for the business of golf, yet we survived and remain in very good shape.

2019 will bring change. We will have new officers and board members. We will both gain and lose members. We will continue to see Waren decrease our Ash tree population in anticipation of the Emerald Ash Borer. We will see a couple of new bunkers on the course. We will begin our transition to bent grass in August. We will see different curveballs from Mother Nature in 2019 than in 2018. As a club, we will survive all of these changes and be better at the end of 2019 than we are now.

It appears we will also have stability in 2019. All indicators indicate that all of our key employees will be back in 2019. Their hard work and dedication is key to our success. Please thank Waren, Scott, Adessa and Kasey for all that they do for our club. None of their jobs are easy! Sometimes we as members are not always reasonable or easy to deal with. Working together we make Hillcrest a great place to be a part of.

The annual meeting will be February 28, 2019 at 7:00PM at Hillcrest. If you want to know more about the business side of our club, this is the place to find that out. We will elect two new board members. If you have a legitimate concern about the club, this is the time to bring it up. If you have only a complaint that does not need to have the body of members hearing it, please contact me and we will try to work it out in private. Thank you for being a part of our great club. Have a wonderful 2019!





Warren Muller, CGCS  
[hillcrestturf@hillcrestyankton.com](mailto:hillcrestturf@hillcrestyankton.com)  
605.660.4025

## From the Golf Course.....

Last month I talked about some of the initial steps and decisions Hillcrest needed to make after the approval of “Operation T1 Alpha” and this month I will discuss what kind of input reductions the club should enjoy when the project is complete besides the obvious improvements to the playing surface on the fairways, flat, correctly sized tees, and a more flexible course for more skill levels.

Deciding between the new varieties of bluegrass’s that tolerate low heights of cuts and bentgrass was a difficult decision and one of the deciding factors was inputs required during establishment and after establishment. Bentgrass will establish faster with less inputs than bluegrass and once established I think bentgrass is going to require less inputs compared to bluegrass over the course of many years.

Currently Hillcrest applies around 130 pounds of actual nitrogen per acre to fairways per growing season and once established I project the total nitrogen applied to be reduced to 152 pounds per 2 growing seasons. Bluegrass fertilizer requirements would likely be the same as our current program, but much greater during establishment.

Water applied through underground irrigation varies from year to year and season to season but your old bluegrass, rye, and poa fairways receive around 1.5 inches of water per seven days. Once the bentgrass is established I think water consumption on fairways will be reduced to about 1 inch per week, or 1/3 less.

Chemical inputs will change for the better too. After establishment the program will include four treatments with less expensive and more effective products. The main reason for this change is we should be monitoring just one disease instead of the four or more we fight now. Bluegrass would be on a similar fungicide program as bentgrass but bluegrass would require multiple applications of a herbicide to control poa encroachment at a price I estimated at around \$5,000 per year and in contrast bentgrass requires growth regulator applications to control poa at less than half the cost and is included in fungicide applications reducing the amount of total spray applications made to the fairways per year. Some of the savings will be allocated to address worm casting problems but I think even that problem will be reduced once the bentgrass is established, but I don’t think it will be eliminated especially in areas of heavy shade because of temperature and shoot density.

After all this positive information about bentgrass compared to bluegrass why are more courses converting to bluegrass compared to bentgrass? I am not sure but most commonly I hear it is harder to maintain and I think they are just considering the aerification requirement compared to bluegrass, but the fact is bluegrass and even our current fairways, benefit from core aerification, and regardless of a fairway conversion to bentgrass, bluegrass, or interseeding options Hillcrest was going to start aggressively aerifying fairways. The other reason courses don’t transition to bentgrass is they are opting for interseeding options versus kill and seed options. The interseeding option is just an inefficient and expensive way to marginally improve fairway condition.

Project completion is still years away but this winter we are working on calibrating seeding equipment and spray equipment, and soon we will be able to review tee renovation plans.

## Upcoming Events

January 19<sup>th</sup>  
Fireman's Dinner

January 26<sup>th</sup>  
Yankton Medical Clinic  
Party

January 29<sup>th</sup>  
Thrivent Financial  
Meetings

February 22<sup>nd</sup>  
Sertoma Stagette

*Thank you to everyone  
who joined us for New  
Year's Eve!!!*

Happy New Year Hillcrest! I'm very thankful for being your chef and am looking forward to next year and improving the dining experience here at Hillcrest.



Kasey Koliner, Executive Chef  
chef@hillcrestyankton.com

In 2019, Hillcrest will be offering free Level 1 Social Memberships (pool is not included) to new members. These memberships are free for one year, monthly minimums and capital fees still apply and members that recruit a new social membership will get \$100 credit on their account.

I think with more activity and a larger audience our dining and lounge will be able to thrive. With additional memberships and increased activity we can further improve our dining offerings and special event participation and prepare your club for future capital improvements.

Early in 2019 we are going to be bringing back one or two Member Mixers to hopefully help introduce new Social 1 members to Hillcrest.