



## GRATITUDE AND INNOVATION

December 12, 2025

Dear Members:

Hello Everyone from your new (and old) president of the prestigious Bois de Sioux Golf Club. I'm "new" because I was just elected to the board, and "old" because I was on the board for what seemed like decades back in the 80s and 90s, at which time I was president for a good number of years.

My last year as president during my first run was a difficult one. After many consecutive years on the board, a good share of them as president, I decided I had had enough time as a board member and did not run again. Then a few years later, there was a one vacancy on the board, and I was talked into filling out the term. That was 1996, and most of you remember what happened during the winter and spring months of 1997. My last few years on the board were filled with: hiring an architect and contractor to design and build a new clubhouse, hiring an architect (Joel Goldstand, now deceased, who had designed many golf courses in the Upper Midwest), an engineering firm and a contractor out of Minneapolis to design and build new holes and drainage to help when spring floods hit, working with Wahpeton and Breckenridge to collaborate as to the location and payment to the BDS for the new levies, negotiating two new larger loans with the SBA to pay for all the repair costs, and plenty of other turmoil. Let's hope my past experience does not carry over into my present term.

Meet our new board and committee members:

### **Greens Committee:**

Fred Strege – Chairperson, President, and Board Member

Jake Richels – Greenskeeper

Scott Albertson – Board Member

Chris Heyen – Board Member

Pete Jenson

Scott Vogelbacher

**Pro Shop/Clubhouse/Grille Room Committee:**

Don Neitzke – Chairperson/Vice President and Board Member  
Dustin Harris – Club professional and Grille Room Manager  
Sara Huhnstock – Board Member  
Abby Wermers – Board Member  
Tony Van Dyke – Board Member  
Derrick Worner – Board Member  
Kevin Shannon

**Sales/Marketing/Social Media Committee:**

Tony Van Dyke – Chairperson and Board Member  
Dustin Harris – Club Professional  
Don Neitzke – Board Member  
Tayler Blaufuss

You'll notice some members of the committees are not board members. We've decided to tap non-board talent to include on the committees as good ideas and decisions are not the exclusive province of board members.

And again, serving as Secretary is Carla Broadland and our Treasurer and Accountant is Dan Julson.

I've participated in two official meetings of our board so far, and I'm very impressed with the knowledge base, experience, and work ethic of everyone including Dustin, Jake, Carla, and Dan. I'm looking forward to some great and lively board and committee meetings.

Those of you who attended the annual meeting learned that our financials finished slightly in the black last year. Any year we can pay all our bills and have something left to carry over into the new year is a good year. Thanks to outgoing president Donnie Lingen and board member Justin Riveland for leaving the course in good shape.

Enclosed with this letter is our 2026 Membership Application. You'll see that we increased some fees by what I'd call a usual and customary annual amount plus a smidge. The golf club has been a hand to mouth operation ever since I was on the board, always operating on a shoestring. We have had very little extra money to do necessary projects. That stops this year.

In addition to the smidge of an increase you'll see on the membership application, you will also eventually notice that we've increased the Men's League Team fees from \$240 to \$300. That's

60 bucks extra for 40 teams, i.e., \$2,400. The Ladies Group has generously donated a fair chunk of change every year for necessary projects. This year they are buying us new flags. Our Board determined that the Men's League needed to do something similar. So, the extra \$2,400 will be spent on a project to be determined (see later comments in this letter).

We are also generally increasing green fees, cart fees, range fees and passes, and some other miscellaneous fees all in an attempt to balance our budget and have a decent bottom line amount to do some necessary and creative things on the course and in the clubhouse. Despite the membership and fee increases, we still charge less to play golf than most courses in the Red River Valley. The almost unanimous consensus at the annual meeting was that our fees were too low, and we needed to increase fees to bring them in line with other courses and create a long-term fiscally sound operation.

In addition to the fee increases, we are also implementing a wish/donation list. I'm calling it the "NNS Fund," short for Needed, Necessary Stuff Fund. You'll see a NNS Fund Wish List posted on our bulletin board for certain materials and equipment we need and some projects we'd like to complete. We can't do everything we want to do without help from our members. We've already received the following commitments: Paul Folden (Corner Drug) and I have committed \$1,085 to buy new, longer, and sturdier bunker rakes; and the Smith & Strege Law Office and Ryan Smith (Edward Jones) have also each committed \$500 toward various projects and needs to be selected. Some of those needs/projects are: new flagsticks, some additional range markers, new, sturdy, putting green flags, ball washers, additional sand for the bunkers, kitchen equipment, scorecards, tee box work, more roping, a camera and signage on the 10 tee box to prevent jumping in on the back side, and many more projects, all each costing in the general neighborhood of \$500 to \$2,000. Please include a donation on the membership blank for these projects or answer the call sometime during the year when you are asked for some needed dollars.

As an additional revenue source, Tony is spearheading an advertising campaign involving cart windshield ads, hole sponsorships, recognition at certain events, banners, and website inclusion. We'll have more details to share in the coming weeks and months.

This year we are also expanding a trial run program we've tried the last couple of years. That is, we will provide a limited amount of seasonal cart memberships at a price of \$650 per membership. Buying that membership gets you a cart whenever you need it for the season (but there will be times when cart rentals will be busy, and we ask you not to get upset if there isn't a cart available). Our trial project involved four members. Those members will be offered a membership first. We are only offering 10 of these memberships. So, assuming the past four members remain interested, if more than six additional members are interested in this benefit, we will draw names out of a hat and the first six names can participate in the program. All payments

must be made not later than January 15, 2026. Please contact any board member, Dustin, Jake, Carla, or Dan to express your interest in this program.

Finally, I have created a new gmail account with an address of: bds golfideas@gmail.com. I will have access to that account and personally review and answer all emails received. The purpose of the new email address is to allow members to email me at all hours of the night to let me know your complaints, compliments, and suggestions. I will try to review and answer all emails on a daily basis.

Finally, you've all seen Jake and his crew digging in the mud on almost a weekly basis to make irrigation system repairs. Lines and heads break causing disruption to service and significant headaches to our greens crew, not to mention the dollar cost and lost labor time to make the repairs. Our board is looking into completely replacing our very old and failing system. We have solicited cost estimates from two businesses who provide the material/equipment, and we will also be contacting a contractor in Minneapolis who installs the equipment. We estimate the cost of a new system will be just shy of \$1,000,000. We don't have \$1M in the bank of course so we are also working on funding. If we can obtain funding through grants, loans, and donations, we hope to install and start using the system not later than the 2027 season. If we can't obtain the funding, we limp along and hope our present system holds up.

You undoubtedly noticed the caption in the beginning of this letter – GRATITUDE AND INNOVATION. We hope to do some new things this year and obtain needed equipment and materials in a way that does not tap our operating budget. That's the INNOVATION part. As to GRATITUDE, we hope to innovate using dollars and efforts from our members. As I stated earlier in the letter, we have asked and will be asking for donations throughout the year to pay for these innovations for which our board and staff will be eternally grateful.

Our board is very enthusiastic about what we have in mind this year. You've heard of St. Andrews, Augusta National, and Pebble Beach, three courses routinely listed in the top golf course lists in all the golf magazines? The Bois de Sioux is going sneak up that list and someday soon be mentioned in the same breath as these great courses.

Sincerely,

Fred Strege  
President

PS As to the Membership Application:

- Please try to pay by check to avoid the 3% credit card fee and if you do pay by credit card, don't forget to add 3% on the proper line.
- We appreciate those who pay early and take advantage of the early pay discount.
- Please sign and pay attention to the reverse side of the Membership Application, particularly the release language and the cart usage rules. This year we are going to pay extra attention to cart rental and usage on the course.

And Merry Christmas everyone – only 3 to 6 months before we golf again!



Photo of Dean, my cat, when he played St. Andrews last summer.