

APRIL MEETING

The April meeting of the Mid-Atlantic will be held April 10, 1973, at the Shannon Green Golf Course, at the Sheraton Motor Inn, Fredericksburg, Virginia. This will be a joint meeting with the Central Virginia and the Tidewater GCSA. Golf may be played anytime, social hour will be at 5:30 p.m. and dinner at 6:30. Our host will be Fritz Zeller.

Fritz has been superintendent of Shannon Green Golf Course since construction of the 7150 yard championship layout began in 1969, opening for play in May of 1971. Fritz started his career as a professional horticulturist in 1940 working for his father, a landscape architect and owner of a florist, nursery, and landscape contracting firm in Peoria, Illinois. He graduated from the University of Illinois with a degree in ornamental horticulture and received certificates in floriculture, landscape design and turf management. Fritz was in the Connecticut area for nine years serving at Bruce Golf Course, Greenwich, Connecticut; Oak Hill Golf Course, in Norwalk, Connecticut; and Fairview Golf Course, Greenwich, Connecticut. Before his move from the Midwest, he held positions as General Manager of Bryant's Nursery in Princeton, Illinois; Chief Horticulturist for the 2000 acre Park District of Peoria, Illinois, and consultant for the park's four golf courses. Fritz and his wife, Dena, have three children and reside in Fredericksburg, Virginia.

Directions to the meeting – From the Virginia side of the Beltway take I 95 south and exit at Rt#3 to Culpepper. The Sheraton Motor Inn is on the right.

A Wet Year was 1972

The dark and gray skies of 1972 brought us over 52 inches of rainfall; too bad it wasn't distributed evenly throughout the year at one inch per week!

There are one hundred certified (CGCS) superintendents as of the Boston conference.

They're All Engaged In a Dirty Business

CHICAGO – The latest figures show that nearly 1,000 growers in the United States are producing about 225,000 acres of cultivated sod annually and more than 12 percent of these growers have farms of 500 acres or larger.

Landscapers buy about half the sod crop; 25 percent goes directly to homeowners and 10 percent to garden centers for resale. The rest is bought by schools, parks, golf courses, industry, etc.

The preceding article was reprinted from the *Washington Star*, February 20, 1973.

Agricultural Research

Is Agricultural research no longer important to the United States? It would certainly seem so with the President's proposed land grant college research budget which is to be reduced by 20% while the national budget increases by 8%. The fiscal year of 1974 begins July 1, 1973, and of all the research budgets proposed for 1974, 11 of 14 budgets are increased while three are to be decreased. The 20% proposed decrease in the agricultural budget is more than double the decrease proposed for the Department of Interior and 8 times greater than the proposed decrease in all other research budgets for fiscal 1974. Why?

Why is a question we cannot easily answer; and for us to only ask why will not change the catastrophic results of a budget cut of 20% in 1974.

An appeal has been made to members of our association to communicate with our congressmen from the states of Maryland and Virginia. It is strongly urged that we all take a few moments time to write a letter to our state senators and representatives from our congressional districts.

If Federal funds are not available to the Agricultural Research Stations, Land Grant Universities, and Extension Centers, we will no longer benefit from the data made available to us on the research of chemicals, fertilizers and new grass species.

Do we want to rely on regional door to door chemical salesmen for this information? Do we want to take a transient salesman's pitch as the absolute truth and endanger the health of our greens – and our jobs for that matter, because we no longer have an impartial research center to test and evaluate turf chemicals?

The Superintendents in the Washington – Maryland – Virginia areas have for years reaped the benefits of three nearby agricultural colleges, several extension centers, and the USDA Center in Beltsville, Md., to assist us with our day to day needs for information. We have always taken pride in the fact these sources for information are at our back door and that tests of chemicals, new grass species, fertilizers, etc., are readily available for us to evaluate for our own needs.

Keep in mind if you will, that turf grass is a "luxury branch" of the total agricultural research areas and that the 20% total cut in the agricultural research funds will be again broken down within the agricultural research priorities. Turf research monies will be depleted very quickly if a decision is to be made on what agricultural research projects are of the least necessity to the economy of our country.

We exist in a transitional zone of grasses; much dependent on research to help us thru our summers. We must continue to provide funds to this research and continue to improve the strands of disease and drought resistant grass varieties.

Craig Spottswood