

KNOW YOUR HOST SUPERINTENDENT ... by Lee Huang

Your host superintendent will be the author of this monthly information sheet, and so it is with pleasure that I can now tell you all a bunch of fat lies about myself. So here goes--for purpose of writing, I will refer to myself as if I am writing my regular feature about another superintendent.

Lee has something in common with some of the superintendents which we find on the West Coast. Like so many of his colleagues, he is not a native of the State. And like some of them, he came a long ways to get here. He was born in Indonesia, which at that time was still a colony of the Netherlands, known as the Dutch East Indies. His father was a merchant, and there were two brothers beside Lee to round off his family. He was the middle or number two son. As was customary then, those students who could afford to go to the University usually were sent to Holland to complete their studies. However, when Lee was in the second grade of high school, the Second World War was in progress, and the Japanese Army invaded the Islands. And so, until the end of the war, there wasn't even any school to go to. After the war ended an accelerated school was started, and 4 years work was completed in 2 years. By that time, Lee's father decided for him and his older brother to go to the US for advanced studies since the universities in Holland were still suffering severely from the aftermath of the war. In 1947 Lee and his brother Bill migrated to the US to complete their studies. Since the colleges were crowded with returning GI's, Lee ended up back in high school. This gave him a chance to increase his technical vocabulary in English, and gave him a better chance of entering college. High school meant a prep school in Cheshire, Connecticut near Yale University. But after one winter in the New England States, and a bout with the grip (flue), Lee migrated to California. His tropical blood found this much more to his liking. University in California was Davis, where he obtained a degree in Agronomy. The original plan was to return to Indonesia to work in the sugar industry, but Indonesia was rapidly deteriorating, especially for those of Chinese extraction, and so Lee decided to stay here. He went to Hawaii to learn more about sugar, and found himself at the University of Hawaii taking courses in Tropical Soils towards a M.S. which he obtained in due time. He also gained a wife, Helen, who was a native-born Hawaiian. A son was born in 1955, and at that time Lee accepted a job with a firm in Brazil as a technical consultant in the development of a farm. The enterprise proved to be a disaster, and Lee came back to California, this time as an immigrant. A series of jobs followed, mostly in the research field as a laboratory technician. Not finding a future in that field, he branched out into automobile selling, then landscape selling, then owner and operator of a retail nursery store, and finally as a landscape contractor. He finally was hired by the retirement community of Rossmor in Walnut Creek.

as assistant superintendent of maintenance for the model area, and then moved to the East Bay Regional Park District as the superintendent of the Tilden Golf Course. This was his initiation into golf course management. After 3½ years with them, he obtained the position of Superintendent of the Walnut Creek Golf Course, which is his present Status.

As mentioned before, his wife's name is Helen, and they now have two more daughters beside their son Glenn. Glenn is 16, Hillary is 14, and the youngest, Cheryl is 12. They reside in Walnut Creek.

W A L N U T C R E E K G O L F C O U R S E - The Walnut Creek Course is new. Most of you had the opportunity to play it last March. It is a regulation 18 hole, playing 6,500 yds. from the regulation tees. It can be stretched to 7,200 yds. The course was constructed in 1968. Bob Graves was the architect, and it is still in the process of being groomed to completion. As in all new courses, there are often a lot of things which can be improved upon, and our target date for completion of all construction is the end of 1973.

In spite of the lack of finish which marks a complete course, the course has proven to be very popular. Last fiscal year it played 65,000 rounds of golf. The projection is for an increase as our plans call for a continuous car path throughout the course.

The course is unique in the Diablo Valley on account of its soil type, which makes this course the only one not built on adobe. It is quick drying, which makes it suitable for winter play. We mow even in winter when most other units on other courses are put away or overhauled. We often have to water as early as mid-February, since the soil is such a drying type. Much of the popularity of the course is also due to the beautiful location, overlooking the Valley, and the magnificent clubhouse which is rather unusual for a municipal course. It contains the Boundary Oaks Restaurant, a first-class restaurant, catering to the golfer and non-golfer alike. All in all, the course has a great future, and will prove to be one of the most popular courses in the area. Your host hopes you will enjoy the program and the course. Be sure to reserve your starting time with the Pro Shop.

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It was with great sadness that we learned of Larry Keck's wife's passing. Apparently she had been seriously ill for some time, and the end was not unexpected. However, it is always sad to lose someone who has been close to you for that long. We all wish to express our sympathy to Larry in his loss. The Board of Directors of the Association has voted to set a small token gift of \$15.00, which Larry asked to be donated to the Diabetes Foundation in his wife's memory.

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Dr. John Madison of U.C. Davis announced that he has some fine young students who are interested in working on a golf course for the

summer to gain practical experience. If any superintendent is interested in hiring these students, please contact Dr. Madison at Davis.

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There will be an opening at the Ancil Hoffman course in Carmichael, Sacramento County, to replace Lee Meservy, who recently retired. Information will be available through the Civil Service in Sacramento or Chuck Weaherton, who will be receiving information from Sacramento County.

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Larry Keck, superintendent of Lake Wildwood Golf Course, announced that the Northern California PGA Open Golf Tournament will be held on this course on September 21, 22, 23. He invites all cardholding members to be his guest and watch the play. There will be no charge.

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The Board of Directors appointed a nominating committee to make up a slate of candidates for office for the coming year. The April meeting will be the business meeting at which time new officers will be elected. The offices open will be for the President, Vice President, Secretary-Treasurer, and 2 Directors. The committee will consist of Howard Fisher - North Bay area, Chuck Weaherton - Bay Area, Larry Feliciano - Valley area, Merle Russill - Monterey Peninsula area, Ken Vorderbruggen - Lake Tahoe, Nevada, and all points not covered. If you have candidates, see one of the above committee members.

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Those of you who have been in the golf course business for a long time in the Bay Area especially, probably remember Paul Jones formerly of California Toro. I have been informed that Mr. Jones passed away just recently. For those who do not know him, Mr. Jones was the founder of the California Toro Company in San Francisco, back in 1940. It stayed California Toro, until in 1963 Western Toro took over the Toro dealership, and California Toro changed names and became California Turf Equipment Distributing Company, under which name they continued to operate until 1966. Then Western Toro bought them out, and the company ceased to exist. Russ Jones, who a lot of you know, is the son of Paul Jones, and he presently is working with the Western-Turf Equipment Co. Our condolences go to him for the loss of his father.

Lee Huang, Superintendent
Walnut Creek Golf Course

CLIFF WAGONER IS ELECTED VICE PRESIDENT--Clifford A. Wagoner, golf course superintendent at the Del Rio Country Club in Modesto, has been elected vice president of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America.

Wagoner's election came during the GCSAA's 43rd International Turfgrass Conference and Show, held February 13-18 in Cincinnati, Ohio. More than 4,000 golf course superintendents from across the nation

and many foreign countries attended the annual event.

Wagoner has previously served as GCSAA secretary-treasurer.

Golf Course Superintendents are the men responsible for the everyday maintenance of thousands of golf courses in the United States and other countries. Their job has been called "the most sophisticated form of agriculture."

The following letter has been sent to Mr. C. W. Weatherton in regards to the UNITED STATES OPEN 1972 - June 12-18, Pebble Beach, California

"During the week of the 1972 U.S. Open Championship, we will be happy to extend the courtesy of the grounds and clubhouse facilities to the members of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of Northern California.

Would you please be kind enough to notify your members that, on presentation of their current cards, at the "WILL CALL" booth, located just inside the Carmel Hill Gate (off Route#1), they will be given daily clubhouse tickets?

We regret that, in view of the huge crowds which we are anticipating, we will be unable to extend this privilege to their wives.

Nancy Jupp, Tournament Manager

It's time again to start correlating programs for the turf maintenance season. Budget, fertilization, weed control programs must all be brought into focus, because it won't be long before we see the Sun again and the work will start in earnest. I am sure that all of the turf managers in the Central Valley are anxious for the chilling fogs to leave so that we may begin to prepare our courses for the long hot Summer. "OH", to see green grass again. With the heavy Spring schedule just ahead, Superintendents face the problem of getting their work done satisfying Club members, keeping happy employees, and holding their budgets in line. Your labor force is probably your most valuable asset or deficit depending on the situation. It seems to be getting more difficult to find good people from the work force. I found last year by working with a smaller crew, but compensating these people when ever I could, I ended with my most successful season. When the work showed signs of falling behind, I worked these people overtime. They were averaging many overtime hours each week which meant fatter pay checks and smiling faces. Of course you must have a nucleus of good employees who are versatile. Having ended 1971 well under budget with a happy membership, I am hoping that I can follow the same guidelines for a successful 1972.

- - - Larry Fellciano, Director GCSANC - -

The following was written by Gerry Finn in the November 1971 issue of the GCSA of New England, Inc. NEWSLETTER

PROFESSIONAL ALL THE WAY

GCSAA Certification. Sounds very official, doesn't it?

At first, the suggestion that golf course superintendents apply themselves to an educational program brought a lot of giggles and eyes coated with suspicion from the fraternity. This, it was said, was just another way for the national organization to gouge its membership for additional income. This, alas, is not true. Certification is not a flouting of the profession's original purpose. It is an avenue to an end . . . the realization that the superintendent is more than a hired hand, that he is a product of a planned program to reassure club owners and members he can perform his chores in a professional manner.

Right now it's appropriate that we take hats off, bow down gently and give three cheers to the architects of the certification program. It must be said that they brought a scholarly approach to the testing grounds and their examination setup is just short of deciding a Rhodes Scholar. They were thorough, to be sure. That's the way it should be.

Certification is an offshoot of the old governmental objective of checks and balances. It has twofold returns. First, it gives the superintendent a sense of security in his profession and a certain amount of ammunition in his incessant effort to make his employer realize that his job is one requiring more than a hand to sow the seed.

And it also gives the club owner or corporation the benefit of knowing the certified superintendent is a man who is versed in every phase of the profession. A certified super doesn't have to rush to the textbook when a problem arises. He is fortified beforehand. Otherwise he doesn't become certified.

The arrangement for establishing the title of certified golf course superintendent has to be lauded even before it is put into operation. The national organization has really outdone itself in the preparation of a manual that serves as an examination guide for those who wish to gain this new and obviously well-planned status.

The certification program must reap dividends once the first of its graduates hit the open fields to announce to the golfing world that the golf course superintendent is not a member of the working force of a club by mistake . . . but by design.

The entire setup leading to certification is a genuine relative to a college degree. Applicants will not be babied or coddled as they seek to become certified. They will be required to take an examination on the sweeping topics of the golf course and finish said exam under the allotted six hours. And believe this typewriter, the test is not one of those true or false chance things.

One of the pleasant, if not sensible aspects of the program, is

the idea of having a candidate prepare for his certification test as long as he pleases. After the man's application has been processed he will receive study material to aid him in the examination. But he also will be allowed to take as much time as he wishes to bone up for the test.

The certification program of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America is not a fly-by-night venture. And it is not one where automatic passing is the order of the day. Thanks to a well-meaning and hard-working number of program planners, the certification attempt looks to come across as a big winner. It is the product of men dedicated to perfection and men willing to stake their reputations on the idea of lifting the golf course superintendent to legitimate professional status. It is the call to prestige, the urge to make superintendents realize they must have some sort of guideline to retain their dignity and establish their knowhow as an integral part of the golfing community. It is for real and for sure. And its groundwork is solid a la mode.

---Gerry Finn

Forty-four men received their CERTIFIED GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENTS plaques and cards at the 43rd Golf Course Superintendents Association of America Conference and Show in Cincinnati.

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YOUR DIRECTORY IS ENCLOSED WITH THIS NEWSLETTER. REMEMBER DUES ARE DELINQUENT MARCH 31, 1972. CLASS A & B MEMBERS TO VOTE AT APRIL MEETING MUST HAVE 1972 MEMBERSHIP CARD. MEMBERS WHOSE DUES HAVE NOT BEEN RECEIVED WILL BE SO NOTIFIED AND DROPPED FROM THE MAILING LIST

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Attend the NORTHERN CALIFORNIA TURFGRASS EXPOSITION in Sacramento March 15, 16, 1972.

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HELP HELP NEEDED

- Articles about your golf course
- Bits of information
- Items for sale, etc.

Please send to Lee Huang, 1646 Camino Verde, Walnut Creek, CA 94596

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