

PROSPECT FOR 1953

by

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The year 1952 has been a good year in a business way for the golf courses. The recent election results tend to create a bullish attitude among business and professional people generally. This should help to keep the golf boom going. There is some feeling that by the end of 1953 or in 1954 there will be some recession. Right now there are no drastically lower prices in sight, but competition will practically eliminate any more price increases.

In taking stock of the situation for next year as regards your budget and income, we must first accept as a fact that the dollar will buy roughly only 50% as much as the 1939-41 dollar. If your salary isn't twice what it was in 1940 you are actually earning less now than you did then. If your maintenance expense is less than twice as much you are indeed doing a bang-up job of economy. If you haven't already done so, get these relationships adjusted now. Keep your courses fully equipped to offset, if possible, high labor costs. You will not get cheap labor for some time.

Machinery prices will be about the same in 1953 as in 1952. You will be able to buy what you need and get deliveries when you want it. Seed prices continue high, some items are quite scarce. With heavy residential construction continuing there is hardly enough to go around. Fertilizers are in great demand. Nitrogen continues scarce and will continue so during the spring of 1953. Chemicals, insecticides and fungicides are plentiful and might come down somewhat we hope.

It will be sensible to plan ahead conservatively and keep your supplies on hand or in view. There is little chance of price declines for six months. We hope we don't have to eat this advice.

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ANNUAL FALL PARTY GREAT SUCCESS

The party at Roselle on November 22, was greatly enjoyed by those who attended. Good music, good food and good company, all for a buck and a half. Those who missed the party also missed a wonderful time. We were sorry to hear that Ernie Kruse of the Wheeling Nurseries, who is a regular attender at these parties was unable to attend on account of the illness of Mrs. Kruse. Ernie always donates a dozen rose bushes as a door prize at these parties and he did at this one. We hope to see Mr. and Mrs. Kruse at our Spring party.

Door prize winners were as follows:

1— Mrs. Bob Chamberlin. 2— Adolph Bertucci. 3— Ray Gerber. 4— Bert Rost. 5— Dom Grotti. 6— Mrs. Paul Burdett. 7— E. Buhrke. 8— Bill Smith. 9— Mrs. Geo. Roloff. 10— Mrs. Bolte. 11— Mrs. Adolph Bertucci. 12— Shirley Lynn. 13— Bob Chamberlin. 14— Mrs. Retz. 15— Bill Rueck. 16— Mrs. Buhrke. 17— Mrs. Jensen. 18— Bill Stupple. 19— John Jensen. 20— Gabe Rosset. 21— Mrs. Paul Popp. 22— Mrs. Dorban. 23— Al Scheaffer.

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Believers in the weather prognostications of the woolly bear caterpillar may be cheered by a report from Robert Mann, conservation superintendent for the Forest Preserve.

The red-brown band of fur on the caterpillars seen by Mann have been very wide compared to the black bands on each side of it. This, according to an old superstition, foretokens a mild winter.

PRACTICAL MAINTENANCE HINTS

Greenkeepers have, for many years, observed that turf that was cut and lifted and laid down again, immediately showed astonishing vigor and produced large numbers of white roots in a short time. Several of the men in the Chicago area have wondered how it would be if the turf on greens was cut but not lifted. In other words, just loosened from its original bed. Don Strand has tried the idea on several of his greens at Westmoreland and reports have been that he has done a wonderful job. Although done late in the season, the turf has produced a prolific number of white roots. It will be interesting to observe frost action on the cut greens this winter.

A number of Superintendents practice and swear by discing of turf in the fall. This is especially true of fairways which have a prevalence of creeping bent. The theory is that it is aeration and more important in the minds of some, discing opens up the turf much better than any other method to permit the penetration of water. Fairway bent tends to form quite a mat and with the undecomposed stems and runners at the surface of the soil, forms an almost impervious layer. If this layer is cut it not only allows the penetration of water but aids in the elimination of the layer. It has been observed that the cut thru the layer lasts for years and that it is not necessary to cut deeper than two inches. Regular discing also tends to reduce the grain in bent turf and the first time it is done, some bent will die back a bit from the edge of the cut to the runners being cut, but after a few years of fall discing, these runners are greatly eliminated and very little damage is observed. Several types of discs can be used, but the best in the mind of this writer is a Kentucky Drill type seeder weighted to permit the discs to cut a little deeper than ordinarily intended. The disks are three inches apart and turn the turf slightly.

Superintendents have, this fall, found their power sprayers to be invaluable for fire fighting. With the high pressure and fine spray it takes very little water to control fire.

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A CLUE TO THE SPREAD OF OAK WILT DISEASE

A few months ago, Dr. Tehon of the Illinois Natural History survey, Urbana, reported finding a clue that may help eventually to explain the long distance spread of oak wilt disease. Two botanists, George Stessel and Bert Zuckerman, discovered very minute, sticky, white droplets on an oak wilt tree near Peoria. The droplets were found to be composed of the rare "ascospores" of oak wilt fungus. Altho known in the laboratory, they never had been seen growing naturally on a diseased tree. Study of these droplets still is going on, but Dr. Tehon points out they appear well adapted for spread by insects, birds, or animals to which they might adhere readily.

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NEW MAPLE TREE

A new strain of maple tree developed in western Europe is expected to be available at many nurseries this season, the Davey Tree Expert company announced. It is Crimson King, a highly colored Norway maple that displays an attractive hue when foliage opens in spring, changing to purple which remainst throughout the summer.