

## OUR FEBRUARY MEETING

Our meeting at Sambo's on February 14 was enjoyed by some 50 members. It was a very nice meeting with the social gathering in the afternoon after which we partook of Sambo's famous steaks and a very good meeting in the evening. President Roloff was unable to attend and the gavel was taken over by Vice President Frank Dinelli, who did his usual fine job of presiding over the meeting. After the business meeting a Question Box panel consisting of Matt Bezek, Henry Lange, Ray Davis and Amos Lapp with Peter Bild as moderator was appointed and the Question Box followed.

## THE QUESTION BOX

Q.—What is the advantage or disadvantage to mixing large seeds such as fescue and rye grass separately and sowing separately so as to avoid settling out in grass seed mixtures.

A.—In some cases it might be advantageous to sow seeds separately, but it is the opinion of some that it would be a waste of time and that if seed is well mixed before using that settling out of seeds is of minor importance.

Q.—Explain the use of detergents such as Dreet in golf course maintenance.

A.—Detergents are used in sprays as wetting agent. It has been reported that Brown Patch can be better controlled when detergent is so used.

Q.—How much Arsenate of Lead is needed to control grubs, etc. on fairways.

A.—About 200 pounds per acre every three years.

Q.—How many pounds of grass clippings are removed each year from a 5,000 square foot green.

A.—This depends a good deal on condition of turf. Dr. O. J. Noer made quite a study of this several years ago at Brynwood in Milwaukee.

Q.—When is the best time to apply lime.

A.—The best time is in the fall for agricultural limestone so that it can get down into the soil by the following spring. Hydrated lime can be applied during the summer in small amounts.

Q.—What is the best time of year to trim trees.

A.—During the dormant season of fall and winter. It has been found that some disease problems are caused by trimming trees during the growing season. There is a better callous formation at the wound if done in the dormant period. Careless use of paint will sometimes kill back bark at wound.

Q.—Is there any general movement toward an increase in wages or hourly rates for labor.

A.—There is no general movement reported but there is some variation in wages according to work done.

Q.—What can I do to help water circulation in muck and peat soils.

A.—Open soil by mechanical means. Do not let soil dry out.

Two of our respected members from the far South Side are engaged in a knock down drag out fight that threatens to rock the town of Matteson. John Boettger and Eddie Wohlenberg both have filed for a vacancy on the Park Board for Matteson. Eddie is running on a platform of freer use of the ball diamond and lights to be turned on and the Field House open during the Ice Skating season. The Mole has not yet been able to contact John to report what his platform will be but has been reliably informed that it is equally earth shaking. The Bull Sheet will keep you informed of the battle as the blows are traded. Election comes in April.

## GRASS ROOTS VERSUS GRASS BLADES

A weak turf usually has a weak root system. Why is it necessary to have grass roots to have turf? What makes a shallow root system? Why do roots become shorter as the season and the greenkeepers face becomes longer?

It is common knowledge that the bulk of the so-called plant food and water is absorbed by the roots. We say "so-called" plant food because we do not feed plants but merely supply the raw materials and the plant manufactures its own food.

However, this doesn't explain why Bent grass roots get shorter as the season progresses. The fact is that roots are not only a means of taking in raw materials, but they are vast storage rooms for plant food or sugars that the plant has manufactured. The plant needs these sugars along with nitrogen for growth. If we force the plant to grow by applying nitrogen, a certain amount of these sugars is used up. If the consumption of sugars is greater than the production, the plant must draw on its reserves which are in the roots. Whenever this happens roots become shortened.

When is the consumption greater than the production? The cool season grasses produce very little sugar at temperatures above 85 to 90 degrees. To make matters worse the consumption of sugar is increased at high temperatures. This could account for the shortening of the Bent grass roots in our greens as we go into the hot weather. Likewise if we apply excessive rates of nitrogen and force the grass to grow, consumption of sugar may be greater than production. That may be why the experts advise us to cut our application rates in half in the hot weather.

We can then control, to a certain extent, the consumption of grass roots or the material they largely consist of by regulating the applications of nitrogen. It looks like a slow even release of nitrogen would be desirable. Keeping the rates very low in late Spring and Summer and saving the heavier applications for Fall.

—The Green Breeze

## INSECT SUSPECTED AS CARRIER OF OAK WILT

A tiny black and brown beetle, less than ¼ inch in length, may be responsible for the overland spread of the oak wilt disease. This information was released simultaneously by plant scientists at Iowa State College and the University of West Virginia, two of the research agencies where studies of the disease have been in progress for several years. In the experiments that proved these insects, which are members of the family Nitidulidae, capable of carrying the oak wilt disease, beetles were collected as they fed on infected oaks and transferred to cages enclosing wounds made in isolated healthy oak trees. In some cases typical wilt symptoms developed within three weeks. It was found that as few as two of the beetles thus taken could carry enough of the fungus inoculum on their bodies to infect a healthy tree through freshly made wounds.

Scientists point out, however, that this is a mechanical method of transmission made under rather strictly controlled conditions; that while the results of the experiments place insects generally, and the nitidulid beetles particularly, under mounting suspicion, it still remains to be proved whether or not this is the manner in which the disease "jumps" considerable distances in nature. It is known of course, that the disease can spread from infected to adjacent oaks thru natural root grafts.

—SHADE TREE DIGEST