

Harry Drafke of Acacia Country Club has an employee named Elmer Murphy, "Pat" to his friends, who has achieved a goal in life that each one of us would love to win. Pat will celebrate his 100th birthday July 31st, 1956.

Pat has been employed at Acacia since 1942 and works seven days a week on the grounds of the club. He is thin, wiry, and is one of Harry's most reliable employees. He changes the towels and tee markers and ball washers every day, is the first one to open the shop in the morning, still drives the same yellow Toro tractor around the grounds that he has driven since 1942 on his daily rounds of the tees and greens. He keeps the parking place free of paper, keeps the tees neat, clips all the hedges with an electric clipper and never misses a day. Pat worked hard all the third week in July because he was going to be away to a family reunion in Galesburg but Pat didn't know that he was being spirited away to another reunion in Colorado. He will be back for his own celebration the last of the month and back at work the next week.

Pat has had quite a career, he was born near Galesburg on a farm some 20 miles south of town in 1856. Parts of the old home are still standing and the barn is still intact. He attended school thru the 5th grade, was a store keeper, a postmaster for 15 years, traveled the entire West by motorcycle, married to Vita Chipperfield who became a renowned cancer expert and who died in 1912. In 1917 he married Edith Blaisdell who was Art Director at the LaGrange Township High School. In 1920 and for 12 years he was Greenkeeper at the golf course in Newark, Ohio. In 1892 he filed a claim on the Vida mine in Yavapai County, Arizona.

Harry Drafke tells many stories about Pat. Last summer Pat and Joe were working in a sand trap and a young shapely Miss in very brief shorts came by. Joe nudged Pat and said "Pat, look there". "I'm a looking", says Pat, puffing furiously on his pipe, "the only trouble with us is we were born 60 years too soon."



PAT MURPHY

## PRICES GOING UP AGAIN

by C. O. Borgmeier

After a period of price stability the stage is set again for price increases in machinery and equipment. It seems like a vicious cycle that somehow will probably come to an end sometime in a way that will affect a lot of people adversely. The firms making golf course equipment are not giants by any means and say they cannot absorb steel price increases. It looks like a minimum increase of 5% on all machinery and equipment in the very near future.

The prices of grass seed during the past year were relatively low compared with several years preceding. The Kentucky Blue Grass crop has been a failure this summer. Excessive drought in the main producing areas cut the yield more than 50%. Other seed prices will increase in sympathy because Kentucky Blue Grass is the bellwether.

Chemicals and fertilizer are in plentiful supply and prices are stable. New chemicals, insecticides and fungicides are being constantly developed. Once in a while some of the boys have disappointing results with new materials. This can be serious when it involves loss of turf on greens or fairways during the height of the season. Perhaps this stems from improper use or lack of experience with them. A good attitude would seem to be to rely on products which have, by your own experience, proven effective in the past and assign a minor role to new products until you are satisfied they are better or more economical.

## SPREADING IT THIN

The oak trees are still showing damage from the invasion of the 17 year locust. In some parts of the area trees are brown with dried leaves but in most areas they have fallen and have been picked up. That is that until 1973.

Al Rausch of Bonnie Dundee reports that the Clubhouse has been completely remodeled and that the place is awfully nice. It has been a long time since we visited Bonnie Dundee.

Herman Woehrle of the Kankakee Valley Golf Course reports that the club has lost 11 additional trees to the Dutch Elm Disease. So far Herman has done no spraying but is using sanitary control measures, removing and destroying the trees as fast as the disease shows up. There are about 1500 American Elm trees on the course about 14 inches in diameter. Herman has also started a nursery of 1000 small trees to use as replanting stock. He is growing ash, sycamore, cypress, maples and black locust in this nursery.

Ray Runfeldt of the Winnetka Park District promised to bring his boat to the Picnic. Ray and his family now spend all their spare time with the boat on Lake Michigan and the kids are getting to be good surf boarders.

Walter Kilmer and his son Richard of Ravisloe C. C. attended the meeting. Richard attended the Thornton Township High school and plans to attend Bradley University at Peoria this fall.

Marv Gruening of Midwest C. C. plans to keep busy for the next several years. Marv is building new greens and tees and putting them into play as fast as they can be built without interfering with normal play. The new greens and tees are built according to a master plan prepared by Bob Harris. Marv and his family are snugly fitted into their new apartment at Midwest and are very happy in the new quarters.

Ray Davis of North Shore C. C. was happy to report that everything is good at North Shore, greens, fairways and tees, that the family is well and that the goose hangs high.

The Mole.