

OPTIMISM

Having been a member of our association for a number of years, I really enjoy participating in the camaraderie at the various M.A.G.C.S. events, such as the turf clinic held at Medinah. We as professionals are helping each other out through the sharing of our problems. We hope that our experiences will aid others, as well as ourselves, in solving the various complications that arise as we achieve our goal of optimal turfgrass conditioning.

There are many times I have wondered if these headaches we superintendents get due to our job demands, are worth the effort. This complimented by the sometimes lack of appreciation for our efforts when the problems are solved. Think of the many good men who have left our line of work, either voluntarily or through "forced resignation". I would hope that some day in the near future we as a professional association could do something to give more security to our peers when placed in this vulnerable position.

As precarious as our positions may seem at times, we do have a pleasant line of work and should turn our thoughts towards the optimistic aspects of our jobs. If a job or profession were easy, then anyone could perform the given task. Those stress situations in our line of work give us the opportunity to prove to ourselves and our superiors, that we are worth the title of professional through problem solving by using our expertise.

I would like to make more money. Who wouldn't? But the median salary given a superintendent in our area would enable him to purchase a home and raise a family without sacrificing the essentials in life. It really amazes me when I read in the paper how a family is sacrificing some things on an annual income of \$40,000. No matter how much one is making he would always want more.

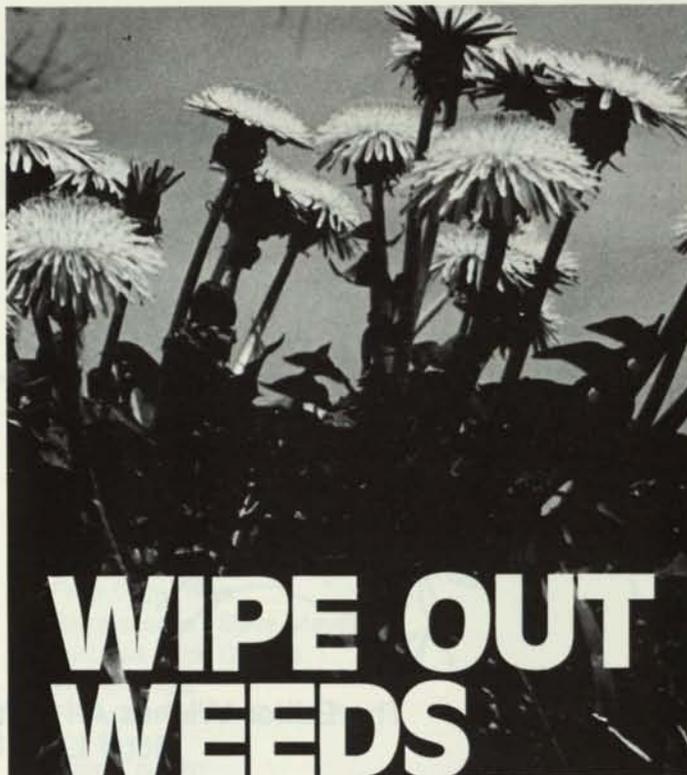
An integral part of our jobs is working outside. I wouldn't care to have a job working within four walls, five days a week. Even if one of the walls does have a window. The fresh air is certainly an attractive aspect of our jobs.

Figuratively speaking we have a boss, the green chairman. But it is we who control the technical aspects of the turfgrass growing program. The golfers only see the result and comment upon that. It is we who know what and how it got that way. A good superintendent is his own best critic. If we please ourselves then it is likely our "superiors" will appreciate our efforts. If conditions are such that the turf will perform short of optimum, then it is our responsibility to communicate that to our golfers. This ultimate responsibility of the turfgrass is a true test of expression of our talents. The technical know-how stands with us alone.

When one is dealing with Nature day in and day out, he can appreciate, or feel lack of appreciation, the changeability our jobs expose us to. To see a glowing sunrise or a drenching rain would lead us to appreciate the power of Mother Nature. We are dealing directly with a living organism and those elements which creates an environment for it. We are not dealing with man made directives, such as a lawyer who deals with a man made judicial system or accountants who police corporate finances and deal in governmental taxes. To deal directly with Nature is rewarding in itself.

Let's be optimistic and enjoy our work. Think of the alternatives. What else would you be doing now? If you want to get rich, then don't become a golf course superintendent. Live a decent lifestyle, enjoy the out of doors, appreciate Nature, express your talents, and do your best.

**Thomas Vieweg, Supt.
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