

The following letter was sent to the GCSAA

MAGCS Director's Column "Family"

by Phil Taylor

Sugar Creek G.C., Villa Park, IL

Dear Mr Schilling:

On February 25, 1985, you sent a memorandum to selected chapter presidents asking them for their assistance in planning the new Mid-Year Turfgrass Conference and Show to be held on September 19-24 in Indianapolis. At that same meeting, only one person out of ninety expressed an interest in attending the Mid-Year Conference and Show in Indianapolis. The superintendents in our area are very busy in September with renovation and construction projects. We could not afford to take off the 4-6 days for the conference.

In the Midwest, we have some excellent regional seminars. The NCTE, Milwaukee Turf Symposium, Midwest Turf Foundation (Purdue), Michigan Turfgrass Conference, and the Ohio Turfgrass Conference and Show. These conferences are well attended and growing each year. Excellent presentations are made on research as well as superintendents' practical experiences at all of the above mentioned conferences. Several groups also offer trade shows on a slightly smaller scale than the national show.

The major concern of our Association is the poor communication to the membership concerning the Fall Conference and Show. What research will be presented that is not covered in the magazine or at the national show? Isn't it a bit late to check with the chapters now on their feelings once you have committed? Whatever happened to our chapter relations committee? Were any of the past Presidents consulted for their views on this matter?

We are constantly told that the Staff at the Home Office is overworked and that we need more help. We hired two additional employees in 1984 in the Education Department. How many more will be required to help plan and put on the Fall Conference & Show? Members of the Education Committee were never informed of the Fall Conference and Show. Were the members of the Conference & Show Committee ever informed? It is quite obvious that a great deal of work goes into planning and production of the Spring Conference & Show. We are told that help is borrowed from various departments to get the job done. With the secretarial staff only working a 35 hour work week, it appears as though we will soon be forced to hire several more people in the conference and show department.

We appreciate your asking for our input on this matter. Don't you think it would have been advisable 6-9 months ago? We were told that the decision to hold this conference was made in January at the Board meeting. It seems hard to believe that you would have all of the dates locked in and committed. Even harder to believe were the preprinted flyers advertising the event as well as the five color displays around the show floor advertising the Fall Conference. These things take time and could not have been laid out and prepared between the January Board meeting and the D.C. Conference.

In summary, the GCSAA now produces the finest turf show in the world. We feel it is a paramount to concentrate our efforts on one show per year. Let's put our efforts into putting our national show on without a hitch before we leap into another conference and spread our talents and people too thin.

Joe Williamson, President, MAGCS

By the time this issue of the **Bull Sheet** reaches the membership, I suspect that we will be back in full swing again, doing what Golf Course Superintendents do during "the season".

I enjoyed Mike Nass' column in the March issue and could really relate to his experience. Reflecting on Mike's column and on an article, also in the March issue by Mike Matchen entitled, "A Few Things to Think About Before Starting the Season", gave me the idea for this column.

Having been a married Superintendent for the past six years (not long by many of our members standards) and a married Superintendent with a family for the past four years, I've experienced the change from being normally busy (during those winter months when everybody wants to know what we do) to being super busy and its affect on me and the members of my family. We all know that the affect of "the season" on the family is usually negative. After all, there are only twenty-four hours in a day and if we work fourteen hours, sleep six, eat three and relax on our own for an hour, how much time does that leave us for our families? Is it even important that we spend time with them during "the season"? After all, we just came off a three month vacation with them and were just trying to be good providers for them, right? I know I've rationalized the time dedicated to the course that way. But all my rationalizations don't relieve the tension and pressure that begins to build within my family as "the season" progresses. And I've come to realize more each year that it's my family that's most important and that being the best Superintendent I can be is not worth the effort it takes if my career has progressed at the expense of my family.

I would like to take this opportunity to share with you some interesting news clips taken from Focus on the Family magazine. They were enlightening to me and I hope they will be to you.
Family Forecast Predicts Need for Stronger Support

A recent study predicts that social change will continue to have a negative impact on the family structure unless the family receives increased support from society and government, according to a New York Times News Service report.

In the study, issued by Family Service America, the percentage of Americans who marry may drop from 90% to 85% by the year 2000 due to increases in cohabitation, single-parent households and the increased acceptance of homosexual couples. The traditional nuclear family — with a wage-earner husband, homemaker wife and dependent children — now comprises less than 10 percent of all households.

Studies Show Little Change in Parenting Roles

Four new studies presented recently to the National Council on Family Relations, indicate that mother-child and father-child relationships haven't changed in spite of the women's movement and the acclaimed emergence of new father roles, according to USA Today.

In the studies, mothers remain the primary parent figure regardless of whether or not they have a full-time job, and fathers are not playing an increased role in the lives of their children.

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(Family cont'd.)

One study tracked 57 families for five years and reported that on a typical weekday, fathers spent about half an hour with their five-year-olds. In the same families, mothers, regardless of their employment status, spent about two-and-a half hours with the same children.

Divorced Children Suffer from "Father Hunger"

In an article for the Wall Street Journal, family psychiatrist Dr. Alfred Messer points out that many children are suffering from what he calls "father hunger", or lack of a male parental figure.

According to Messer, the problem is even more severe for children of divorced parents. "Staying together for the children's sake has lately been described as one of the worst reasons for prolonging a marriage," wrote Messer. "But when divorce threatens to break up a small boy's emotional development, the parents might put aside their differences to provide their child with a critical need - a father."

Open Affection Makes for Healthy Home Life

In light of the increasingly publicized sexual violent crimes against children, psychologists are voicing concern that adults, fearful of being misunderstood, will refrain from showing affection to children.

In a New York Times News Service article, psychologists stressed the danger of a lack of healthy affection in the home. "You can give children all the food and proper diet they need, and clothe them properly and give them the right kind of housing, but if you don't give them physical attention they don't thrive," said Dr. Blair Justice, a psychology professor at the University of Texas.

According to Dr. Carol Tomlinson-Keason, chairman of the University of California Riverside Human Development Program, "Hugging and kissing and supporting are always appropriate. What isn't appropriate are things that begin to cross the line and become more overtly sexual," she added.

I think that these news articles are a reflection of the times and could have a great deal of meaning for all of us. My hopes for us, this coming season, are to have a successful year with our operations at our places of work; but more importantly, I hope for success within our family life's in this current year and for years to come.



"Summer's Show"

As June ushers in Summer,
The pressure of the Season grows.
Walking the high wire is the Act,
Tending the needs keeps You on Your Toes.
Keep the Spray Wagon full of ammunition,
The Irrigation System ready to go.
If you find time to feel down hearted,
Reflect on last Winter's ice and snow.
Let positive mental attitude assist You,
And Enjoy the production of Summer's Show.

Kenneth R. Zanzig



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