

Director's Column

Leadership

by Mike Nass, CGCS
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The dictionary defines leadership as the ability to "guide, conduct, escort, direct or influence." Some desired qualities of good leadership are:

- Using established channels within a group
- Listening to members of a group
- Responding to the needs of a group
- Helping members of a group

As a member of the board of directors for the past two years I have spent a reasonable amount of time listening to the desires and opinions of my fellow members. I always try to listen with an open mind and communicate the desires back to the board for proper consideration. I am confident that the other members of the board have also done likewise.

Good communication within the board and between the board and the membership is critical for an organization to function efficiently and effectively. A strong organization must have not only strong leadership but also strong membership participation.

My concern is, can an organization that consistently allows 15% of its eligible voters to make all its major decisions be truly effective? This is what happens year after year with the Midwest Association of Golf Course Superintendents. At this year's annual meeting 41 voters had the responsibility of electing officers, voting on a proposed by-law and change and the possibility existed where they might have had to decide on a dues increase that would have effected the entire membership of four hundred and seventy.

I know I'm probably beating a dead horse but I feel its a point worth repeating. Maybe the time will come when we'll see as many as fifty members at a meeting!

The Ohio State University Golf Course Management Short Course

The first annual OSU Golf Course Management Short course will be conducted from January 12 thru 16, 1987, at the Fawcett Center for Tomorrow in Columbus, Ohio. This short course will provide general and basic information on golf-turfgrass management. Emphasis will be placed on principles of agronomy, entomology and plant pathology. The short course is designed for all golf course personnel including golf course employees, foremen, assistant superintendents and superintendents seeking a more formalized training in the basics of golf-turfgrass management. The registration fee is \$200.00 and is tax-deductible. The deadline to register is December 19, 1986, or until 50 applications are received. Lodging facilities are available near the OSU Fawcett Center for Tomorrow. For more information, please contact Susan White or John Street at 614-292-2601 for course content or Doug Thompson at 614-422-4230 for course registration.

Drainage: Lessons Learned in 1986

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One of the unique properties of water is its capacity to exist as a solid, as a liquid and as a gas at temperatures within the normal range of biological activity. We know that, but perhaps have not appreciated the implications of this property until a year like 1986 rolls around. Seldom has any key element in turfgrass management become so downright vile and contemptible for such an extended period over such a wide expanse of territory and in such a democratic manner. The unfortunate thing about this is that few turfed areas other than golf course suffered damage. In fact, I can't think of any at the moment, but surely golf was not the only condemned classification.

By now all the alibis have been used, blames placed, remedies prescribed and work completed to get things green again. But have the necessary steps been taken to prevent recurrences even if the problems seem unsurmountable? Let's see.

In the epicenters of damage — Southeastern Wisconsin and Northeastern Illinois — the problems began last November with saturating rainfall and a surface icing by early December. Normal weather followed until a thaw in late January. The kicker was an extremely quick, deep freeze to about 20 degrees below zero. Later in the winter/spring came a series of freeze/thaw cycles. This combination led to damage from crown hydration, caused by ice crystals forming within and between water saturated plant cells in bunch grasses like **Poa annua** and ryegrasses. The faster the freeze, the larger the ice crystals, hence the most potential damage. Mike Vogt, Superintendent at Illini Country Club, wrote a very good descriptive article on this for this members.

Spring greenup brought good-news and bad-news, depending on how or where things were not green.

1. The folks trying for ryegrass fairways were badly hurt wherever snowcover was lost in January.

2. The folks trying for **Poa annua** control should have been pleased, because bentgrass and bluegrass survived. Damage was minimal where drainage was good. The degree of severity was varied, but depressions in the surface, flat spots and slow-to-drain swales were most heavily damaged.

If that didn't get the water-watchers on the ball, the fireworks after the fourth of July did. Again, water was blamed for a multitude of sins of omission. Steady rains which saturated the soil and thatch preceded a period of high day and night temperature. The water at the soil surface became a solar heat collector. The roots were deprived of an oxygen supply so that those which did not die were not very effective. Plant tissue was again saturated, just like in the spring. It bruised easily ... even squeegee pressure hurt it, not to mention those feet and mowers. Plant functions almost ceased, to the point that systemic fungicides were ineffective.

The occasional bug got into the act again this summer. Cutworms, of course, made three or four bombing runs and at least one set of sod webworms settled in on Detroit greens. Grubs are spreading over larger and larger territories so that 'rollemup' sod is becoming rather common in the Indiana/Illinois area.

Now came our very best time of the year for the Region. The glorious fall! But where did it go this year? The greens

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