

Director's Column

by Ray Schmitz, CGCS
Flossmoor Country Club



March 20, 1986

Fred D. Opperman, CGCS
Editor
Midwest Association GCSA
1022 Shady Lane
Glen Ellyn, IL 60137

Dear Mr. Opperman:

Re: THE BULL SHEET

Congratulations! I am pleased to inform you that your organization has been awarded an Honorable Mention in the 1985 Harry C. Eckhoff Award for excellence in golf journalism.

The Eckhoff Award committee received more than 130 entries from the U.S. and Australia for the 1985 competition. The committee was very impressed with the level of participation in the competition, and the calibre of golf journalism in all entries.

The National Golf Foundation is preparing your certificate at this time, and will forward it to you in the near future. The Foundation will also submit a news announcement detailing all of the 1985 Harry C. Eckhoff Award winners to all national and regional golfing publications.

The NGF is honored by your participation in this competition, and wish you great success with your efforts in the coming year. We look forward to your entry for the 1986 Harry C. Eckhoff Award competition.

With kind regards,

Bill Jasso
Director of Communications

BJ:sh
Encl

Golfers today are much more mobile and they play several courses. They see what other green superintendents are doing and they come back to their "home" club and make comparisons and ask questions. We must be aware of trends and maintenance procedures in the turfgrass industry in order to answer questions and discuss these comparisons.

I would like to see more superintendents play golf. You will be surprised what you might learn about your course from a golfers viewpoint and the additional respect you will gain once the players realize you understand and play the game.

After I was appointed to the educational committee I began to see some of the work that goes into providing continuing education for our membership. I think we should take advantage of these opportunities.

It wasn't too many years ago that a superintendent deciding to purchase a fairway mower had two choices, orange or red. Today the decision is much more complex and a superintendent must have the knowledge to make the right decision because he is dealing with a lot of money and he will probably have to "sell" his mowing concept to the owner or membership of his club.

We have other decisions to make. One example is the use of sand topdressing. From what I understand the application of sand topdressing is irreversible so one needs all the facts before he enters into a project such as this. He must be aware of all of the advantages and disadvantages in order to defend his choice of 100% sand, versus a sand, soil, organic blend that has been used on golf courses since golf evolved from Scotland.

I have mentioned two areas where education is necessary to support major decisions a superintendent has to make. There are countless situations that must be analyzed and decisions to be made. Limited space does not allow me to delve further.

Where do we find education? Educational opportunities surround us. There are trade magazines that are sent monthly, usually at no charge. The GCSAA provides seminars and the annual trade show. The MAGCS holds monthly meetings and the NCTE gives a turf clinic in the fall. The MRTV conference is held every spring at Purdue University. The ITF, which supports the University of Illinois in scholarship and research. The CDGA, believe it or not, provides a doctor who will make house calls to your golf course. If one has trouble figuring out what the initials for the various organizations stand for it should tell you something. You have not been involved with people in our area that are informed and willing to help. A little knowledge is necessary to survive; a lot of knowledge is necessary to succeed.

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"Surprise"

Imagine my surprise! There before my eyes,
Were many Friends I saw so many times before.
They came to wish me well in Friendship measure,
A Royal treat my heart will always treasure.
And though upon my tongue I stood in awe,
I will never forget the sight I saw.

Kenneth R. Zanzig

Prune Lilacs to Promote Flowering

by James A. Fizzell, Sr. Ext. Adviser
Horticulture, U. of I.

You'll get more and better lilac blooms next year if you prune this year's flowers promptly to prevent seed development. Shoots that will produce next year's flowers begin to develop about the time the old blossoms begin to fade.

Since developing seed competes with the growth of new shoots, prompt removal of flowers helps the plant produce more vigorous growth and consequently more flowers next year.

French and Persian lilacs become overcrowded and overgrown unless you prune out old stems each year. This also helps control scale and borer problems which usually are more severe on older stems. Concentrate on the larger stems that are 4 to 5 years old. Remove about 1/4 of them, cutting them off at ground level. It's also a good idea to thin out the younger stems so that each has plenty of growing room and sunlight.

Thumb-sized stems can be just as productive as the large stems if you give them room to grow. Cut back overly long branches to a reasonable height. A few minutes of pruning each year can produce an attractive plant around six feet high.

Other spring flowering shrubs such as forsythia, honeysuckle, privet, etc. should also be pruned soon after flowering by removing all dead, broken, and old stems. Cut off about 1/3 of the oldest stems near the ground line — leaving no more than a one-inch stump above ground.

Old overgrown hedges of privet or honeysuckle that have become unsightly can be renewed by cutting them all the way to the ground. They will grow back in a year or so, and will be full and green all the way to the ground.