

Memorial Tree Planting Programs

by Thomas L. Green, PhD. & Kris R. Bachtell

Memorial tree planting programs are an effective method for golf clubs to generate extra money for new tree and replacement tree planting. Many golf clubs in the Chicago-area currently have or are considering implementing such a program. As consultants to several local golf clubs, we have observed that these tree planting programs need to be well organized and carefully managed to avoid a few common problems. Issues that often result in problems and our suggestions how to avoid these problems are highlighted below.

LOCATION OF NEW TREES

The superintendent, or the superintendent along with the golf club's greens committee or men's golf committee should determine the location for all new trees. If the new tree is to become an asset to the golf course rather than a liability, it needs to be properly cited. Ask these important questions regarding the placement for each new tree. Will the canopy block a vista or important view for the clubhouse? Will the normal growth of a mature specimen interfere with the normal play of the game?

No tree should be positioned so that it interferes with a good shot. Yet, at many golf courses we have observed memorial trees routinely planted too close to the fairway or adjacent to the clubhouse. When mature, many of these trees will become too large for their allotted space. To avoid potential disputes with the club membership it is important for them to understand who is responsible for positioning the new trees and why.

SELECTING THE PROPER KINDS OF TREES

Selecting the kinds of trees to use should be determined by the same individual(s) responsible for locating the new trees. Donors should be given a list of appropriate kinds of trees and allowed to make their selection from it. Selecting plants this way guarantees the use of trees that are well-adapted to the soil conditions and climate of the golf course, thus avoiding the use of inferior species. This will help reduce the number of replacements necessary each year and also reduce the golf clubs' obligation to replant inferior tree species.

When developing the selection list of trees, be sure to include species that are native to the course or native to the Chicago region. These plants have evolved to be tolerant of the soils and climate of this region. As a rule, these kinds of plants are less often affected by harmful insects and diseases as compared, non-native kinds of plants.

Many golf clubs in the Chicago-area have been developed in areas once dominated by an oak-hickory woods. The native trees on most of these courses are mature and over-mature, and are between the ages of 70 to 150 years old. The maintenance of the turf in these wooded area has not allowed the growth of young, seedling trees. To maintain the natural ambience at these courses, the planting of native oak and hickory trees needs to be initiated. Planting a few trees every year, over a 15 to 20 year period, will help develop a diverse age group of trees.

Attached is a suggested list of trees for golf course planting in the Chicago-area. This list includes both native and non-native kinds of trees that perform well when properly sited.

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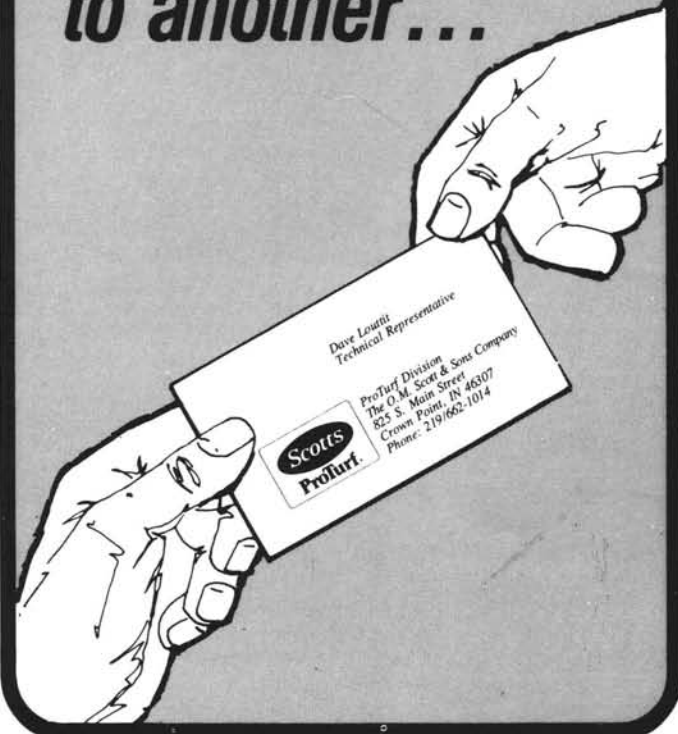
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(Memorial Trees cont'd.)

PLACEMENT AND LOCATION OF MEMORIAL PLAQUES

Metal plaques are often used to denote those whom the newly planted tree is memorializing. These plaques are usually attached to the trunk of the tree with nails. This method of labelling requires continued maintenance. Each plaque needs to be checked every year or two to avoid injury to the trunk. As the trunk of the tree increases in diameter the plaque needs to be pulled away from the bark. After being repeatedly moved, the nails often become loose, requiring placement on another area of the tree and results in another wound to the tree.

In-ground memorial plaques, although initially more expensive, require less maintenance than those that are attached to the trunk. Plaques of this type are imbedded into concrete which are placed at or slightly below grade so a lawn mower can pass over them without difficulty. Naperville Cemetery, Naperville, IL is successfully using in-ground plaques to denote memorial trees. These plaques are made of bronze and are slightly more than one square foot in size. They are set in a 15" x 15" block of concrete which is long enough to be set below the frost line to avoid heaving. Information about plaques can be obtained from B. Gunther & Company, 4745 Main Street, Suite 107, Lisle, IL 60532. The cost of each memorial plaque imbedded in concrete is approximately \$100. It is recommended to set a minimum fee for each memorial tree, so that the fee pays for the plaque and the newly planted tree.

INITIATE YOUR MEMORIAL TREE PLANTING PROGRAM

In the fall of 1988, Carl Hopphan, Superintendent at the Evanston Golf Club, Skokie, IL reintroduced tree planting program to the members of his course. To promote the program, Carl held an evening meeting and explained it's organization to the members. Slides of each kind of tree were shown and the members were encouraged to ask questions. The members were given a list of trees from which to make their selection(s). This list included the approximate size of the tree and the price, which included the cost of the labelled plaque. The response of the membership has been beyond his expectations, and new trees have already been planted on the course.

Every golf club should offer a memorial tree planting program. It is an excellent method to generate additional money for new tree and replacement planting. Planting well-adapted kinds of trees in appropriate locations will help guarantee the continued presence of beautiful trees on your golf course.

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developers and lending institution officers to encourage them to consider the many benefits of developing golf courses within their communities." said Dr. Beditz.

"Secondly, we will be following up this initial contact by distributing a new publication which will offer an overview of the items to consider when developing a public golf facility."

The new publication will be available later this year.

"We feel that this two-part approach will not only stimulate thinking about public golf course development," Dr. Beditz said, "but will also help stimulate action on the part of these key decision-makers. Ultimately, this is the goal of the program ... to have more and more cities, townships and counties develop golf courses for their citizens."

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Swamp White Oak	Quercus bicolor
Bur Oak	Quercus macrocarpa
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INTERMEDIATE AND FLOWERING TREES

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