

# Food for Thought

by Tod Hopphan, Asst. Supt.  
Evanston G.C.

With the surge of environmentalism slowly taking over our everyday life, we as golf course managers must do whatever is possible to bolster our images as environmental stewards. We all seem to talk a good game, however, we don't seem to do enough to bolster this image with the public.

Some areas that have helped us improve our image include:

Starting a recycling program.

We have recycled at Evanston for the last eight years. We started off small and grew slowly. We recycle our shop, golf course, and clubhouse waste materials, wherever possible. Currently, we recycle aluminum cans, glass bottles, tin cans, plastic (#1, #2, and #4), newspaper, cardboard, office paper, scrap

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metal, batteries, used oil and filters, paints and thinners, parts washer fluid, antifreeze, golf balls, and milk crates (storage).

We have incorporated the clubhouse in our program. The kitchen staff flattens cardboard and stacks it for us by the garbage room. We pick it up every morning. Our cup changers carry two separate garbage cans to sort the garbage from the golf course. They dump the bottles and cans in an area we designated by our shop.

This recycling area is very basic. It contains about 20 garbage cans for sorting and a table we constructed with a screen bottom for allowing water to drain out easily. We have a part time employee who sorts these materials every morning during the summer. Since we do it every day, his time involvement is around a half an hour per day.

When containers of certain materials become filled, we take them in to the local drop off centers. We currently drop off at four sites in our area. Our cardboard is picked up by our garbage disposal service. We only get money for the scrap metal, aluminum, and golf balls. This money goes towards our end of the year party and is surprisingly good.

The moral of this idea is that a program can be started and with very little time, money, and effort and be successful.

## Composting

We like to look at landscape waste as a treasure and not a nuisance. Many homeowners throw out or have disposed their landscape waste. Five years ago we started a compost program by collecting leaves, sod, wood chips and other landscape materials. For the last two seasons, we have been reaping the benefits from our program. Most of the mulch is used for our flower and landscaping beds.

Also, we placed small wood chip piles on various out of the way places to collect clippings. When our guys mow, they dump and mix their clippings with the wood chips. These piles are picked up on a regular basis and dumped on our main pile by our shop. These piles reduce and/or eliminate the smell and the mixture can be more readily composted and used in beds. The clippings seem to help the decomposition process in the wood chips.

Finally, we grind most of our leaves in the fall. In areas of heavy leaf material, we sweep up the excess. We use these mulched up leaves as our fall soil amendment for our flower

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(Food for Thought continued)

beds. Though these leaves don't add the nutrient value that other manufactured amendments do, it does help break up the soil and reduce erosion.

Belong to Different Natural Organizations

Become members of local or national organizations like the Audubon Society of New York State, Chicago Botanical Garden, Morton Arboretum, Nature Conservancy, or many others. To be a member of most of these organizations, all you have to do is fill out a form and send in your dues. It shows to the community that you care. If you so choose to do more with these organizations that is even better.

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I cannot tell you the feelings I have had since joining and becoming certified through the Audubon Sanctuary Program. I appreciate our course a little more now knowing that we are providing a habitat for wildlife and sending a positive message to our members and neighbors. I feel privileged that we can witness wildlife that many others cannot in their urban surroundings.

Communications

Don't be afraid to communicate with your neighbors. I know from experience that certain things you do on your course don't always go over well with the neighbors. We try to answer their questions about what we do and not avoid their concerns. That is to a point of course. Some of our natural areas we have tried to develop have been met with fierce opposition. We have tried to educate our neighbors as much as possible and have compromised when necessary to calm their fears. Though we may have lost some of our natural areas, we feel that we have kept open communication lines and future projects may not be met with such opposition.

Hopefully in our neighbors eyes we have broken their illusions that golf courses are large toxic waste dumps that are a menace to society. With steady work and patience you can achieve many things with a good program. The important aspect is to make a plan, start out small and with something, anything, and then stick with it. These ideas I just described are just that, ideas. They might not be good for your course or situation. However, try to do something and I am sure that you will find out that the benefits will outweigh the negatives.

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## "February"

Now — for that short Month that seems so long,

Before We can hear Spring's Sweet Song.

Wishful thinking, helped by Winter Vacations,

Smooths the Pathway to Spring Invitations.

If the Groundhog and March Hare do Their part,

We'll soon Welcome Spring with Happy Heart.

**Kenneth R. Zanzig**

## Leaves, Limbs, Needles & Boughs



by Fred D. Opperman

Tree trivia question: What is the largest deciduous timber tree in eastern North America? Answer at end of article.

Are you looking for a tree that has few if any insect or disease problems, one that has beautiful cinnamon or red-brown bark that exfoliates to show these colors?

If so, you need to find some *Acer griseums* — Paperbark Maples. But you will have to look long and hard for they are hard to find in our local nurseries. This is one of those trees that the common nursery usually doesn't grow for the demand is not there and it takes so long to grow them. Paperbark Maples are a very slow growing tree. Also the difficulty for the nurseryman is the poor seed quality. Most seeds are void, being only 1 to 8% viable.

**Stem:** Fine branches, pubescent at first, rich brown, stems develop exfoliating during the second to third year. Young stems are usually a rich brown to reddish brown.



**Bark:** On older wood the beautiful cinnamon or reddish brown coloring takes place as the bark defoliates to expose these colors. As the tree ages the bark loses some of the exfoliating character, but retains the rich brown color.



**Bud:** Imbricate, brownish black, 1/16 to 1/8 inch long, sharply pointed, similar to the Sugar Maple except for the size. The bud is pubescent at the base with almost a collar of hairs around the terminals and laterals.

**Size:** This is a small tree with the height of about 25-30 feet and a spread to 1/2 or equal to the height. It is an upright to oval shape. As mentioned before this is a slow grower with only 6 to 12 inches per year.

**Leaf:** Color is flat dark to bluish green in summer changing to bronze, or russet red in the fall. This is a spectacular tree when in full color.



**Culture:** It can be transplanted B & B in the spring and is very adaptable to various soils and pH. Prefers full sun and well drained soils and does okay in clay.

**Trivia answer:** *Liriodendron tulipifera* — Tulip tree. This deciduous tree will attain a height of 198 feet and a diameter of 12 feet. Not that anyone of us will ever see one grow that large in our lifetime.

**Credit:** "Manual of Woody Landscape Plants" by Dirr & Stipes