

# The 1954 Bull Sheets

by Pete Vandercook

While doing some research on the year of 1954 as part of a project commemorating Illinois Lawn's fortieth year in business, I read the 12 issues of the **Bull Sheet** published in 1954 that were in Fred Opperman's files.

I discovered that they were not only interesting, but were rich in the history of the Midwest Golf Course Superintendents Association and Chicago area golf in general. In 1954 MAGCS officers were George Roloff of Roselle Country Club (now Schaumburg Golf Club), President; Frank Dinelli of Northmoor, First Vice President; Walter Kilmer of Ravisloe Country Club, Second Vice President; Al Johnson of the Indian Hill Club, Secretary/Treasurer; and Directors were Ray Davis of Medinah Country Club, Bill Stuppel of Exmoor and Bill Kraft of Southmoor (Palos C.C.). 1954 GCSAA officers included Norm Johnson (formally at LaGrange Country Club but relocated to San Jose Country Club in Jacksonville, Florida as President). Bob Williams and Detroit-area superintendent Andy Bertoni (well known in Chicago from his W.A. Cleary days) were Directors.

Bill Stuppel was Editor of the **Bull Sheet**. Associate editors were Bert Rost, Al Johnson and Bob Williams. Art Director was Paul Burditt, Paul was a real workhorse for the **Bull Sheet**. He was the official photographer, submitted a monthly column, "Spreading It Thin," under the pseudonym "The Mole". This was a gossip-type column with a wealth of interesting golf course studies and goings on. Most 1954 superintendents did not know that Paul Burditt was "The Mole". In addition, Paul was the "ghost writer" of many other **Bull Sheet** articles. Another hard working midwest member was Bob Williams who was a member of the Midwest's Educational Committee, Chairman of the GCSA Educational Committee and a member of the U.S.G.A. Green Section Educational Committee.

Frank Dinelli, who was credited in the 1954 **Bull Sheets** for solving several differences of opinion, was often referred to by Dr. Bill Daniel and many of his peers as "Dean of the Greenskeepers."

All of the 1954 **Bull Sheet** issues had eight pages. The last two pages were advertising with the biggest ad, being a quarter page in size.

## Meeting Highlights:

The May meeting was held at Glen Eagles Country Club, Walter Fuchs - Host. Advance information; a statement from club manager, George Cox. He said, "No friend of Walter's will go away hungry." One task Walter faced was the uprighting and resetting of a 100-foot pontoon bridge that had blown over during the winter. Fred Grau, who was with West Point Products Co. at that time, demonstrated an early version aerifier and verticut machine at the meeting.

The September meeting was the joint meeting with the Wisconsin Greenskeepers Association. It was held at North Hills Country Club, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Host Superintendent was Charley Shiley. Midwest members were urged to attend as Charley was a former assistant to Ray Didier at Tam-O-Shanter.

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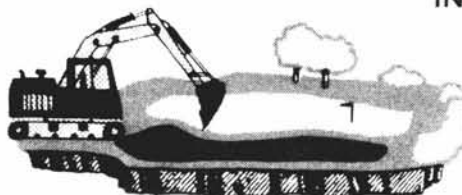
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(“1954 Bull Sheets” continued)

The October meeting (which was the annual fall tournament) was held at Evanston Golf Club. Mel Warneke, Host Superintendent. Golf winners included Amos Lapp, Emil Cassier, Ray Gerber, Bill Saielli, Emil Mashie, Al Bertucci, Bob Breen, Bert Rost, Mel Warnake, Norm Kramer, Dave Mastroleo, Ed Stewart, Jerry Dearie, John Coghill, Don Strand, Bob Williams, Chuck Daugherty, Frank Dinelli and Don Gerber to name a few. Dom Grotti was out of action with a bad back; so Dom, who had been a consistent winner throughout 1954 (and other years before and after) did not participate in the tournament. Golf Committee Chairman, Bill Kraft, must have been so busy passing out prizes that he did not win one. It should be pointed out that rain was a factor in all three of these meetings and was a hinderance to the golf events.

Under the heading “some things never change” the Fall Dinner Dance was held in November at River Forest Country Club, Ed Stewart, Host.

The December meeting was held at Big Oaks Country Club. Barney Wendt, Host. O.J. Noer was there and presented his annual report. Ham, beef and chicken were served family style, all you can eat. The cost of dinner was \$3.00 each. Big Oaks was on Gunnison Street in Chicago and was subdivided sometime during the decade of the 50’s.

The “Mole” reported that Mr. and Mrs. Ed Stewart were the proud parents of a daughter, Susan Jean, born the preceding October. This young lady is now known as Susan Jean Reed, wife of C.T.I.’s Jim Reed.

Other excerpts from **Spreading It Thin** by “The Mole” include: Fishing in Florida after the Miami convention. Bob Williams landed a 30 pound Kingfish, Frank Dinelli, a 30 pound Dolphin.

Adolph Bertucci of Lake Shore Country Club reports that the club plans to operate as a 9-hole course. Due to an unfortunate chain of events, the club lost the lease on the land that eleven holes of the course are on. There is enough land area with the remaining seven holes to build two more holes. (May issue).

Adolph Bertucci has a big smile on his face now. Lake Shore Country Club and the owners of the land on which 11 holes of their golf course were located have ironed out their differences and the club now has a new lease. (June issue).

Midwest Golf Club is constructing a new house on the golf course for Superintendent, Marv Gruening.

The accoustics of the rooms in which we hold our meetings are sometimes not good, but the guys in the back of the room feel that they would be beter able to hear and understand what the President is saying if he would remove his cigar when talking and give them at least a chance to read his lips. One guy commented, “I don’t mind him speaking so low, but that cigar sure interferes with my lip reading.” Which reminds us of the time years ago when we had a Secretary who had the same habit. One day some unkind soul substituted a loaded cigar for the one he had laid out ready to light as soon as the meeting started. The resulting explosion was very embarrassing to say the least to the Secretary, coming during the reading of the minutes. Needless to say, there was much merriment over the incident. We can’t remember if it cured him of the habit or not, though.

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Frank Mastroleo is planning on having the Senior's Championship played at Geneva Country Club, which is Frank's stamping ground. When the subject of the dinner was brought up, Frank allowed as how he was the best spaghetti cook in that part of the state and that he would be glad to put on a spaghetti dinner with all the trimmings. Frank says it will probably be sometime in August.

President Roloff kept the cigars in his pocket all evening and in spite of the heavy overtone of conversation no one reported trouble in hearing him and the meeting was handled with dispatch. After the meeting he got out, not a cigar, but his trusty old pipe, but by that time was in a Hearts game and bothered no one.

Bill Daniel sat in a hearts game for a few hands and did right well for himself.

Midwest member Ted Woehrle is now 2nd Lt. Ted Woehrle, 1st Officer Student Battery, Fort Sill, Oklahoma.

Bill Saielli recently made a deuce on a par five 470-yard hole. Bill says he used a number 1 wood and a number 4 wood to accomplish the feat.

These excerpts are just a few chosen from many stories regarding fishing, hunting, and golfing feats. Also reported were job changes, new cars, new television sets, new babies and babies' first teeth.

The "Mole's" contributions represented a warm-hearted picture of the people and the events of the MAGCS in 1954.

I would like to acknowledge the assistance given me in this endeavor by Bob Johnson, Joe Dinelli, Adolph Bertucci, and Jim Burdett. I would also like to encourage anyone who might (while cleaning out an old desk, file cabinet or closet) find any old issues of **The Bull Sheet** to call Fred Opperman to see if he wants them before discarding them. The **Bull Sheet** has done a great job over the years of reporting and documenting the advances and the growth of the turf industry and outside of the official MGCSA minutes, is the only recorded report of the happenings and individual and collective efforts responsible for the growth of the industry.

#### 1954 Omissions & Corrections by Pete Vandercook

In the article on 1954 I left out the following:

Among superintendents in 1954 I should have said, "Marv Gruening was at Midwest Golf Club."

Then, among father/son superintendents 1954-1994, I should have listed the name, Gruening.

I should have said that, "If Marv Gruening had waited another 30 to 60 days to retire, he would have been the only active 1954-1994 superintendent in the Greater Chicago Area (to the best of my knowledge)." Sorry Marv and Mike.

I also stated that Dom Grotti was at Sunset Valley in 1954 when I should have said Sunset Ridge. (That one was a slip of the pen.)

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