

THE BULL SHEET, official publication of the  
MIDWEST ASSOCIATION OF GOLF COURSE  
SUPERINTENDENTS.

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Fred Opperman — President.

### *The President's Message*

This is the time of the year when job changes take place or, as some people put it, "the musical chair season". Unfortunately for some, and fortunately for others, these changes do take place. "Mother Nature" in her way has only the strongest, healthiest and wisest survive. In the wild this has proven to be the only way.

In our own world and positions this also is true. Unfortunately, what brings about one's downfall at times is that they were lacking in communication. They were not a communicator. Many problems and differences of opinion can be resolved if the parties involved would only take the time to sit down and discuss them openly. It is this discussion that can save many a job/position. In speaking of our own profession, it is our obligation to keep our membership and golfers informed of what is happening on and around the golf course. The majority of the membership or even our own Greenchairman may not be aware of how "Mother Nature" can throw us a curve with high humidity, heavy rainfall, and high temperatures. It then becomes our job to communicate with these people and inform them of what may happen, why it happens, what you are doing about it, and what the end results may be.

Being a communicator doesn't mean that you have to compose a lengthy detailed report (sometimes you may have to), it could be just a simple two minute phone call, a note to someone, a message on the chalk board or conversation over coffee. Item #1 for our "New Years" resolution: Be a Communicator!

The Board of Directors at its' last board meeting decided it was time to "Revive" the "Employment Bureau" which our By-Laws call for in Article VIII. It was decided to make the present President (Fred Opperman) chairman of the committee along with the two past Presidents. This, it was felt, would give the committee and the association continuity. The committee's job will be to find out if the position of Superintendent is open and any particulars about the job. We will do this by contacting the Greenchairman and/or the owner, what ever the case may be.

Our Midwest Association will be celebrating its' 50th Anniversary in 1976. With this in mind our membership certificates and wallet cards will be in gold. Also to upgrade our wall certificates we are offering to the membership a wood plaque similiar to the one that the national association has. Details of this plaque and cost will be coming to you with the next dues notice.

May I at this time extend a very sincere wish for health, happiness and prosperity for the coming year in 1976 to all our members and their families.

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## 1975 M.A.G.C.S. CLINIC

The annual Turf Clinic held December 3, at Medinah C.C. was great success. All topics were well covered from start to finish.

The morning session was kicked off with Dr. Al Turgeon, who's research work is always of interest to all. The next topic was E.P.A., covered from layman and manufacturer aspects, telling us that a license is a must and the cost of pesticides will keep rising as long as the E.P.A. keeps restricting the use of the chemicals that are now doing such a fine job.

The next topics covered relationships at the clubs. From this we find that superintendents should keep the clubs informed of seminars and clinics they attend to show they are always furthering their education. Also that the superintendent, pro, and manager should constantly communicate so they can speak for one another in one's absence. To do this they should become co-workers.

The afternoon session started with our theme "Motivation". The guest speaker, Mr. Williams, brought out some interesting points for us to use to stimulate our own personnel. Following Mr. Williams, we heard several of our own superintendents tell us what to expect from our assistants, benefits superintendents receive in our area, and Bob Siebert brought us his ideas on budgets and inflation, stating that budgets should be planned around revenue. We then saw several new ideas that we might use at our clubs, and what Ken Quandt experienced this past summer with his greens. Our last speakers covered maintaining turf in Wisconsin and a step down in stature, a step up in happiness. After the banquet in the evening, John Jackman showed slides of the good and bad of the 1975 U.S. Open.

Overall, our speakers did a very fine job of researching and presenting their topics, which made our clinic the success it was.

David A. Meyer  
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Don Johnson, Green Chairman, Medinah C.C.

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Dr. Al Turgeon, Prof. University of Illinois.



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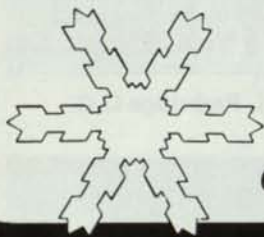
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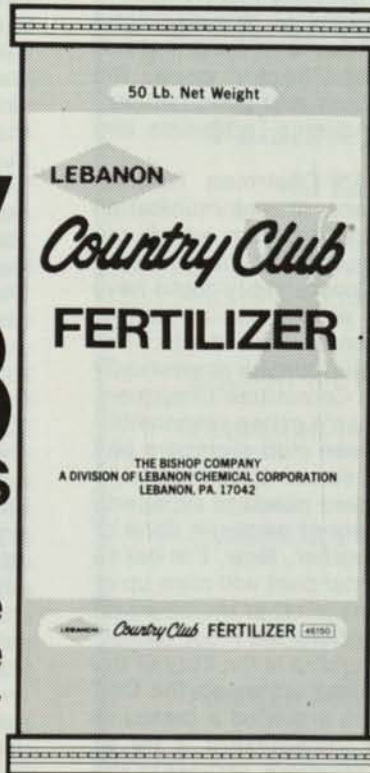
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## MIDWEST ASSOCIATION OF GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENTS

### 23rd ANNUAL TURF CLINIC

December 3, 1975

This subject matter has to do with the relationship between the Golf Course Superintendent and the Club's Green Committee Chairman. Another way of saying this is their responsibilities to each other. I suppose I was chosen to discuss this because I have been Green Committee Chairman at Medinah since 1964, and if proper relationships haven't been established in that time—it's a hopeless case!

One thing about those 12 years is that it certainly provided continuity which is so important in long range programs. There is, of course, with this long tenure, the danger of becoming complacent, a possible lack of new ideas, a sameness of emphasis, and so forth.

I hope there is no evidence of that out on our Golf Courses!

I must say, too, that there have been times when I wonder if things wouldn't go along just as well without a Green Committee. I'll bet there are quite a few of you out there cheering that little idea!

Seriously, however, overall, I do believe a Green Committee and its Chairman can perform a valuable service to a Club and be of use to the Golf Course Superintendent.

The relationship between the Golf Course Superintendent and the Green Committee Chairman is dependent on many factors, including such basic things as the Club's by-laws and organizational structure. It depends, too, on how much time the Chairman has or will devote to his committee work. In my case, I see John Jackman quite often and we talk on the phone once, twice and often three times a week. I would like it better if I could get out on the grounds more often.

The most important ingredients of a meaningful relationship, in my opinion, is to make sure there is understanding on common problems and goals, the establishment of trust in each other and good two-way communications on current conditions, problems and actions being taken.

If the Green Committee and Chairman function properly, they provide a means of communication between Superintendent and membership, which can be anywhere from 200 to 1,000 people. Without liaison, the Golf Course Superintendent conceivably could have these 200 to 1,000 individuals as bosses—a horrible thought—and a fate possibly worse than death. The Golf Course Superintendent should ideally answer only to one club member—the Green Committee Chairman. To me, this is one of the Chairman's prime responsibilities—to act as a "buffer" between club members and the Superintendent. Except as casual conversation, I see no reason why a Superintendent needs to explain to a member why certain things were or were not done or why conditions are one way or another. Now, I'm not so naive as to think that the Superintendent will clam up or not respond to the Club President or other members on occasion but those are the exceptions we must accept. Explaining to the general membership is the duty of the Green Committee and its Chairman; although the Golf Course Superintendent should be provided a means of communication directly to the membership if he so desires. This can be in the form of letters, articles in the club periodical, bulletin board notices, etc.

The Chairman and Superintendent should make every effort to inform the membership of construction plans or work that may interfere with play ahead of time. It's best to avoid surprises.

The Green Committee Chairman can be of help to the Golf Course Superintendent by being alert to the comments of members relative to golf course maintenance. He can be observant himself as he plays his course and other courses and inform the Superintendent of things he has noted or heard. These observations can then be evaluated by the Superintendent. This type of communication by the Chairman must be done in a constructive manner—not nit-picking or in the form of complaints.

The Green Committee has the great responsibility of serving fellow members, by seeing to it that the type of golf course and grounds the members want, is maintained. This is often difficult to ascertain. The big pitfall here is that too many Green Chairmen try to rebuild the course the way they want it. As a member I would hardly appreciate the idea of some 18 handicapper using my dues to change a 40 year old golf course to suit his game. The ideas of a 2 handicapper might be just as bad. I believe this is an area where the Superintendents can and should help the club membership by stopping members and committeemen from doing anything silly, which could spoil a good golf course.

Golf Course alterations should be planned and done by experts, with the best interests of the total membership in mind. The Golf Committee, Green Committee, Golf Course Superintendent, Golf Professional and, most important, a competent Golf Course Architect should be involved when a course design change is being considered. The Golf Course Superintendent should welcome this help and support since he can always have a shot at altering the plan to accommodate maintenance or changes based on his local knowledge of conditions. One thing I can guarantee—no alteration is accepted by 100% of the membership!

Another pertinent duty of the Chairman in establishing a proper relationship, is to see to it that the Golf Course Superintendent and only the Superintendent, runs the grass-growing operation and everything related to it. This must be done in both a business-like way and a friendly, firm fashion. However, the Green Committee Chairman has the right to be informed so that he can again effectively act as liaison between the Superintendent and the membership.

Here at Medinah, John Jackman attends all our monthly Green Committee meetings, and is invited to participate occasionally at Financial Committee and Building Committee meetings as well as at Board of Directors meetings. His input is valued highly and is an example of good communications.

The Golf Course Superintendent must be supported fully by the Green Committee Chairman and his committee. The Green Committee Chairman should see to it that the Superintendent has the support of all officers and directors of the club. This support is needed, for example, when it is necessary, in the judgment of the Superintendent, to close the course, establish temporary greens or tees, restrict the use of golf cars, or any other action that affects normal play. To place this authority in hands other than the man directly responsible destroys the proper line of authority and may cause costly damage. This does not mean that the Superintendent does not consult the Golf Professional and Club Manager or committee members, but the final decision must be his.

In still another area, the Green Committee Chairman must thoroughly understand the equipment and supply needs of the Superintendent. Normally, the only way a Superintendent can get the things he needs to properly do his job is through the Green Committee Chairman. This includes the securing of money, ideally through establishment of sound and reasonable budgets.

It must be the responsibility of the Golf Course Superintendent to develop and propose the course maintenance and capital budget.

Budgeting must be a mutual effort, with equal consideration given to the Superintendent's problems and desires of the membership. I suppose a Superintendent can produce almost any grade of golf course quality dependent on the amount of money available. We'll have to allow some leeway for weather conditions.

Working closely with the Green Committee Chairman a logical reason or argument must be formulated for each expenditure or cost center. This is necessary to defend the proposed budget to the finance committee, the Board of Directors and finally to the membership. Here is where you determine the quality golf course the membership is going to get. Here, too, is one of the real tests a Golf Course Superintendent must undergo. To me, budget preparation, and then the big task of living within that budget, is the name of the game.

The Green Committee Chairman must recognize the Golf Course Superintendent as a real professional. Not only is he a turf-grower, but an agronomist, mechanical engineer, chemist, supervisor and business manager. We must do all we can to increase his skills in each of these areas.

The Chairman must insist that the Superintendent be allowed and encouraged to attend, at club expense, seminars and meetings of various associations to which Golf Course Superintendents and country clubs belong. The Superintendent should take advantage of the U.S.G.A. services and the beneficial programs of universities and demonstrations by suppliers.

The Green Committee should be alert to golf course news found in golf magazines, trade journals and publications. Contact with instructive and informative agencies is an essential adjunct to successful planning.

The Green Committee Chairman has other responsibilities in maintaining a good relationship with his Golf Course Superintendent. For instance: the Chairman, in my opinion, should not ask other Golf Course Superintendents opinions or advice on correcting problems at the Chairman's golf course. This obviously creates an awkward situation for everyone and probably should be met with stony silence!

The same goes for calling in consultants. This must only be done with the approval of the Superintendent, or better yet, at the Superintendent's recommendation.

Oddly enough, many club members are impressed with the use of consultants or experts in various fields.

It might be a political gambit, but maybe Golf Course Superintendents should consider using such services more often. I wonder how many club members know that Golf Course Superintendents get together and discuss common problems! They should be told this. They should know about this very Clinic here today.

Another policy the Green Committee Chairman must observe is to deal only with the Golf Course Superintendent. He must avoid the pitfall of ordering anyone in the grounds crew to do anything. This is an organizational no-no, since it dilutes the authority of the Superintendent and lowers morale.

Finally, the Chairman should make every possible effort to see to it that the Superintendent is fairly compensated and recognized for his work.

I've talked quite a bit about the Green Committee Chairman's responsibilities to the Superintendent. Let's go the other way a bit.

Aside from the normal turf growing function, a good relationship should foster a condition where the Superintendent readily accepts the responsibility for attaining certain goals. I'm referring to such things as constant cost reduction through mechanization, better

equipment, use of his own turf and tree nurseries, his own small scale experimentation on turf, chemicals, seeds, fertilizers, etc. I'd expect him to surround himself with competent workmen with high morale and capable of withstanding unionization.

The individual crew member should be trained to do several jobs so that there is back-up available at all times. The Superintendent and the Green Committee Chairman must be concerned about the safety and general well-being of the crew including such items as lodging, wash-up facilities, food, hours of work, rates of pay, vacations, and every other working condition and fringe benefit.

Later today, you're going to hear John Jackman give an interesting talk on his experiences relative to Medinah's hosting of the U. S. Open so I will say very little about that event.

From my point of view, however, the holding of this tournament strengthens the case for everything I've said about our relationship. It was a very busy and interesting period, what with two years of preparation and tending to hundreds of little details and several large projects. I wouldn't trade that experience for the world.

At the beginning I mentioned that good relationships mean a sense of responsibility to each other, trust in each other, an understanding of common goals and problems and good communication. In closing I'd just like to add one more and that is—that both parties use good old-fashioned horse-sense.

D. F. Johnson

ED. NOTE - Donald Johnson has been Green Chairman at Medinah C.C. for the past twelve years. Really a remarkable record.

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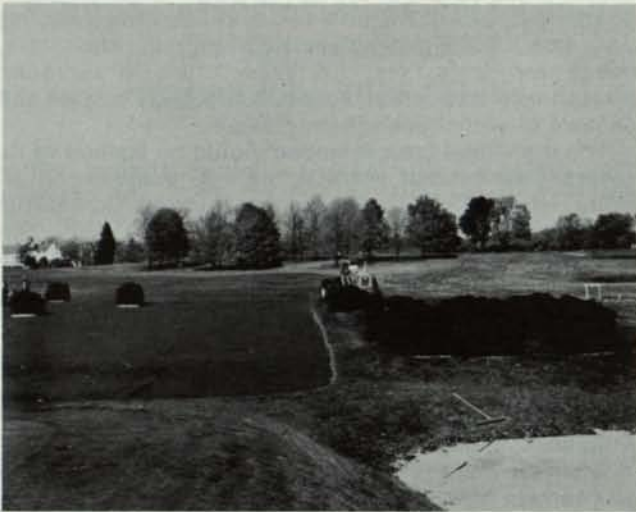
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The Editor is now ready for the cold weather.

### MIDWEST BREEZES

**Roger Jury**, Superintendent at Forest Hills C.C., Rockford, Ill., will be busy this coming year. **Roger** reports his club will be in the process of building nine new greens, five new tees, several new sand traps, two lakes and a new swimming pool - plus planting new trees and shrubs. Maddocks Golf Course builders will be the contractor.

**Al Hinz**, retired Supt. from White Pines G.C., is at this date, 12-8-75, in the hospital. We all wish Al a speedy recovery.

Our M.A.G.C.S. 23rd Annual Turf Clinic is past history. We thank the members of Medinah C.C., Greenchairman, **Don Johnson** and Supt., **John Jackman** for making it possible to hold this event at their fine club. The facilities are outstanding. The food and service was beyond expectation. Our first clinic was held at Medinah 23 years ago, a record to be proud of. Again, the M.A.G.C.S. says thank you, **Medinah**. All of the speakers did a wonderful job in presenting their topics.

The photographer is very sorry that circumstances did not permit him to take a picture of all the speakers.

**Paul Voykin** will be attending the U.S.G.A. Greensection Meeting the middle of Jan. 1976 in New York. Paul will be on the educational programs. He will deliver his topic, "Over Grooming is Over Spending" - a worthy message and one that should not be overlooked.

**Mike Bavier**, Superintendent at Inverness C.C. and also a candidate for Director in the G.C.S.A.A. has appeared on the Illinois Turfgrass Conference Program. Mike will also appear on the Penn. State Turfgrass Foundation Program Jan. 19-22, 1976. His topics "Good Grooming is Good Spending."

The Editor thanks every one that contributed to the success of **The Bull Sheet** during 1975, and a special thanks to the advertisers for their very important part.

The members of the M.A.G.C.S. sends their Holiday Greetings to all and wishing you a prosperous New Year.

**January 14 Meeting of the M.A.G.C.S.** will be held at Pheasant Run. **Peters Mirkes**, Supt., will be our host. Pheasant Run is located on North Ave., Rt. 64 near DuPage Airport east of St. Charles, Ill.

This will be a P.M. meeting following lunch at 1 P.M.

On Dec. 5th several golf course supts. and their wives were guests at **Turf Products Christmas Party**. It was a little damp outdoors, but after one got under the roof and met many long-time friends the smiles began to appear.

The evening was not too enjoyable for Mr. and Mrs. **Julius Albaugh**. Julius is Supt. at Westmoreland C.C. A short distance from the party the Albaughs were involved in a rear-end auto accident. The good Lord was with them and they were not seriously injured. Their picture shows it takes more than a wrecked car to keep them from smiling. They just count their blessings.

Mr. and Mrs. **Amos Lapps** were also present at the party. Amos has experienced fifty-one years in the golf course maintenance work, most of these years as a golf course supt. He has been for the past thirty-one years with Joe Jemsek, the tycoon in golf.



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Unfortunately, early season damage to golf turf is not easily or inexpensively remedied and the same golfers who cannot wait to tread the then vulnerable turf are the most critical of mid-season dead spots in the fairways and indentations in the putting surfaces. Repairs to such damage are not only costly but often result in making important areas of the golf course unplayable to the membership when traffic is heavy.

Contrary to the belief of many golfers, one of the most unpleasant responsibilities of the professional golf course superintendent is to recommend—or to order—the closing of the golf course to play when conditions are such that severe damage to the turf will result if play is not discontinued.

The truly professional superintendent will recognize this responsibility and act upon it, realizing that, otherwise even greater unpleasantness will accrue to him, when mid-season grumbling about course conditions begins. The permissive superintendent, taking the attitude "it's their golf course, let them kill it if they want to," is not only ducking his basic responsibility to protect the course—even from the membership, if necessary—but will soon be looking for another job.

The club that does not charge its golf course superintendent with the responsibility—and the authority—to close the golf course to play when such action is warranted is short-changing the membership by not allowing the superintendent to do his job. At such clubs the hapless superintendent usually winds up the fall guy for irresponsible decisions by a submissive board of directors.

However, the ultimate responsibility for the protection of the golf course lies with you, the golfing member. An efficient superintendent and a conscientious board of directors can only set rules. You must abide by them if the club is to benefit. Even more, it's not enough for you as an individual to toe the mark, you must back up your board and your superintendent by insisting that your fellow members observe the rules.

If your course is closed to play anytime this spring, fight the urge to sneak out for an early round of golf that will probably cost you more than a few makeable putts in May or June. You'll be glad you did! (Why not use the practice range?) — **Country Club Golfer**

By Don Rossi, Executive Director, NGF

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