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President's Message — November 1984

This is my last message to the members of MAGCS as your President. I would like to take this opportunity to point out the successes and the failures of MAGCS during my term.

The failures, thankfully, were few in number. I wanted to see the membership classification system looked at to have it streamlined and the ambiguities removed as much as possible. I hope the new board will follow through on this as I feel it is important. I wanted to have a disclosure statement drawn up for the back of the new dues statement. The Board of Directors is in agreement with this idea and I feel that one will be ready for the dues statements that will be mailed in December. These were the major things that I was not able to accomplish during my term.

I am happy to say that the successes were many. One of two main goals, as President, was to stimulate as much interest as possible in the association by as many members as possible. I feel the board accomplished that as attendance at meetings is up and we have received many encouraging words from many members. I think much of that interest came from a revised format at our golf events. Phil Taylor and the Golf Committee deserve the credit for a different and interesting year at our golf events. The other main goal was to see to conclusion the work that was begun by President Emeritus Peter Leuzinger, in getting a computer to help Secretary Dave Meyer and Executive Secretary Penny Meyer manage the affairs of the MAGCS. That computer is "on line" and hopefully will be in service 100% by January 1985. Some of the other successes were as follows: The first MAGCS survey in some time was sent out and we received an excellent response of close to 30%. There were a few ripples in the logistics of running the survey, but this valuable tool will only get better and more efficient each year it is sent out. These successes wouldn't have been possible without the fine people who serve as your Board of Directors. My thanks to them for their untiring efforts during my term of office. I tip my hat to them as well as to our **Bull Sheet** Editor, Fred Opperman and our Executive Secretary, Penny Meyer who were their usual dependable selves in 1984.

Most of all, I extend my thanks to you, the MAGCS membership, whose enthusiasm and support have made my term in office so rewarding for me. MAGCS is on a course of progressive and enthusiastic activity with new President Joe Williamson at the helm and I wish him the best. With that in mind, I'm anxious to take my place in the background and watch the sparks fly!

Roger A. Stewart
Roger Stewart, CGCS

MAGCS DIRECTORS COLUMN

Late Fall and Dormant Nitrogen Fertilization

by Jim Evans, Supt.

Turnberry Country Club, Crystal Lake, IL

The timing and rate of various nitrogen fertilizer sources is important to the health and survival of turfgrass plants. Nitrogen fertility stimulates turfgrass growth which is essential for recovery from mechanical damage caused by golfers and equipment. The growth stimulation should be slow and consistent throughout the growing season. Slow release nitrogen forms have enabled the superintendent to supply turfgrass with a "metered" amount of nutrients.

Through our past experiences we realize during summer months our rate of nitrogen fertility should be low to non-existent. High temperatures cause increases in foliar production, and higher nitrogen rates during this time will cause excessive topgrowth at the expense of root growth. The carbon budget within the plant is a function of rates of photosynthesis, respiration and growth. Golf course superintendents have a major input in the control of the carbon budget or "carbohydrate content" of turfgrass. After 100 days and nights of summer temperatures (80° to 100°F daytime and 60° to 80°F nighttime) most turfgrass is exhausted after surviving the stress. Plants with a higher carbohydrate reserve will better withstand higher temperatures and disease stress enabling them to produce more regrowth, i.e.: tillers, stolons, and rhizomes. When cooler day and night temperatures return in September (70° days and 50°F night), plants will begin to recover from summer stress. During this period, a total analysis fertilizer should be applied to help stimulate regrowth of these vegetative parts without a large increase in vertical leaf growth.

With the advent of shorter days and cooler temperatures in late October and early November cool season turfgrass has concluded most vegetative development. Vertical leaf growth has virtually ceased by November 1st with the last mowing usually during this time, but physiologically, the turfgrass plant is still very active. Photosynthesis, respiration and root growth continue until the soil temperature drops to 32°F. Late fall nitrogen fertilization should occur during this two week period when soil temperatures nears 40°F, usually between the last mowing and soil surface freeze. The nitrogen supplied should be a readily available source such as urea or ammonium nitrate. Plant uptake occurs after vertical shoot growth ceases yet early enough that nitrogen can be absorbed by roots. The rate must be in the range of 0.75 to 1.25 lbs. N/1000 sq. ft. depending on the type of turfgrass. Bentgrass and poa annua should receive the lower rate and bluegrass, ryegrass, and fescue the higher rate. Some of the advantages of late fall nitrogen fertilization are:

- allows photosynthesis to continue increasing carbohydrate levels and enhancing root growth until the soil freezes.
- provides a dark green color throughout the fall.
- increases turfgrass density in fall and spring with no substantial increase in top growth.
- provides earlier spring greenup.
- will have no effect on cool weather disease incidences.
- will not lower cold tolerance (in studies in Minnesota it was found to slightly increase cold tolerance).

I have made this application to greens, tees and fairways the past 6 years and obtained good results in every case. The

nitrogen is normally applied the first week in November and watered in before draining the irrigation system.

Dormant applications of nitrogen have also been tried in recent years. This application is made after the turfgrass has ceased all growth usually in late November or early December when the soil is frozen. A slow release form of nitrogen is recommended, i.e.: I.B.D.U. or S.C.U. so that the nitrogen is not lost through leaching or volatilization. Nutrients will remain in the soil or thatch layer until the plant breaks dormancy the following spring. The nitrogen must be in a water soluble form that is slowly available for plant absorption directly after the soil thaws out in March. Enhancement of color, density and root growth will occur throughout the spring without the problem of entering the golf course with heavy spreading equipment. Nitrogen sources such as urea formaldehyde, methylene urea, milorganite, etc. don't usually provide a desirable dormant feeding because of their dependence on warmer soil temperatures and subsequent microbial breakdown of the nutrient.

The application rate of dormant nitrogen is dependent on turf type and desired results. The past two winters I have experimented with coarse I.B.D.U. (31-0-0) at 1.5 lbs. N/1000 sq. ft. on bluegrass fairways applied December 15. The following spring the fairways were at least two and possibly three weeks ahead of the non-dormant fertilized fairways in respect to color, density and quality.

The past winter of 83-84 I applied approximately 1 lb. of S.C.U./1000 sq. ft. and again achieved excellent results. The turfgrass was green and dense at the time of soil thawing and remained green through May. There was very little top growth during this period, and our spring nitrogen application was not made until early June. We observed no increase in snow molds, or Helminthosporium leaf spot, no winter kill, burning, or desiccation with any of the fall or winter nitrogen applications.

* * * * *

Dear Fred:

How I enjoyed the September 1984 issue! Each contributor furnished solid "meat" for intellectual and professional nourishment.

The President's Message was like a drink of cold spring water on a hot day. A roving turfgrass specialist is needed by every research worker. My thoughts drifted back 50 years when several Philadelphia "greenkeepers" convinced Penn State's administration that Bert Musser research and the golf clubs, needed a roving specialist. That launched the research/extension team of Musser/Grau, the first of its kind in the U.S.

How rewarding to see this happening in Illinois where previous efforts floundered. With a powerful force like the CDGA behind the move it will succeed!

Warren Bidwell must use the word "retirement" with tongue in cheek. He was one of the founders of the Musser Foundation and has been a Director ever since 1968. He is today one of the most respected roving ambassadors of good will for the turfgrass industry. Every word in his "Retirement" piece was fascinating. What a traveler! and a writer!

Thank you for sending **The Bull Sheet** to me. All the best to all in your association.

Fred V. Grau

Not Even a Gold Watch

Current evidence indicates that there is a wide spread lack of pension plans for superintendents. Many superintendents, upon retirement, are finding themselves with nothing to show for their years of loyal service.

By Fred V. Grau

Having concentrated on helping people grow turf for so many years, I must confess that I have not given adequate attention to the very important consideration of pensions and retirement benefits for golf course superintendents. Only recently have I become painfully aware of serious deficiencies in the "system". I now ask the rhetorical question, "Is there a problem?" just for openers.

In developing a background for an honest answer to the question, I have contacted leaders in Pennsylvania and across the nation by letter, by telephone and in face-to-face conversations. My real contact with golf course superintendents started in 1935 when I began my 10-year travels in Pennsylvania helping the "greenkeepers" to understand the basics of producing better turf. I've made a lot of friends, many of whom now are about to retire or have retired. Some, of course, have preceded us into eternity with little or no recognition. Those whom I first knew have now been in the business for 40 years or longer.

Most of us recall a man who was a loyal employee of a railroad or some industrial firm. At retirement time, he was given a testimonial dinner, an engraved gold watch and many admonitions to "stay healthy". At that point he was considered unemployable and, in many cases, when forced into unaccustomed idleness, he just "dried up and blew away". I knew one who died the day before his "retirement party". As I receive reports from friends in turf, I gain the distinct impression that many long-time superintendents have been summarily retired or released, often without the customary dinner, watch and admonitions. What a pity!

At this point, I will answer my own question unequivocally and without hesitation or fear of contradiction. *Yes, there is a problem.* The problem is not just in Pennsylvania or in Kansas or in California. It is very nearly universal. Details are not a part of this editorial. They will be documented in a later article for GOLFDOM. In the meantime, it is my hope that club officials will have read this piece and will make a meaningful start toward establishing an adequate pension retirement program for the golf course superintendent. It is later than you think! **WHAT? NO PENSION?**

A good friend of long standing, a retired golf course superintendent now living in Florida, wrote to me recently. After 26 years of devoted service to his club (and he had many good years of service left) he was 'retired', actually dismissed, without a pension of any kind. I know the man and I know the club. He introduced innovations in equipment, fertilizers, ground covers and many other things. What I don't understand is how the businessmen for whom he worked could so callously turn him out to pasture without the thank you and the courtesy of some sort of pension or endowment. It is a bit like unharnessing the horse, opening the pasture gate and giving him a slap on the rump.

This friend is understandably bitter, soft-spoken as he is. It is too late to turn back the clock for him, but his experience,

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(Not Even a Gold Watch cont'd.)

which is shared by many, should guide present and future negotiations between club and superintendent. Surely there must be some guidelines that can help the new or old superintendent achieve a just and honorable contract, which will help to sustain him when he retires. Club officials should bow their heads in shame if they do not insist upon some such stipulation in the contract. One may safely assume that nine out of 10 businessmen in the club have made sure that they will have a retirement income. Shouldn't they also do the same for one of their most devoted employees?

I have just talked with another good friend who has been at his club since it was built in about 1952. He has tried to negotiate a retirement benefit for several years, but each time he is told that he is being selfish in wanting something just for himself. These short-sighted officials one day will wonder, "Why can't we attract good men?" The horse is not likely to be drawn to an empty feedbag.

You can help Dr. Grau by writing him directly at Drawer AA, College Park, MD 20740. Tell him what kind of pension plan you have, or if you presently have no plan, let him hear about it. Individual letters will be kept in the strictest confidence.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Well done, Fred. This is only part of the problem. Another relates simply to 'job security'. Due to the Committee structure and frequent turnover within most clubs, apathy and neglect on the part of these Committees may be the fundamental problem.

Credit: Northwest Turfgrass Topics 9/84

Dear Fred,

The GCS Prayer Breakfast committee has been hard at work making preparations for the Washington D.C. conferences. We are happy to report that we have procured an exciting speaker this year, Mr. Cal Thomas.

Enclosed is a copy of his picture (hope it will reproduce) (it didn't) and his resume. Could you please give this announcement a prominent place in the coming issues of **The Bull Sheet**?

We will also have what we think will be some good music under the leadership of Mr. Frank Cochran and friends from Manassas, Virginia.

Please remember the Conference schedule is changed this year. The Prayer Breakfast will be held Saturday, February 9, 1985. Coffee and rolls at 6:30 a.m. Programs starts at 7:00 a.m. Location, the Sheraton Washington Hotel in the Maryland suite.

Everyone is welcome and we encourage all GCSAA members to come and start out the conference week on this uplifting note.

John C. Ebel

Cal Thomas

Cal Thomas is a native of Washington, D.C. and a veteran of 21 years in the field of broadcast journalism.

Starting out at the age of 16, while still in high school, he moved to NBC News in Washington as a copy boy in the network news department. He quickly advanced to greater responsibilities in production, editing, and writing. Later, as a reporter for the NBC-owned radio and television station in Washington,

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WRC, he frequently found himself handling network assignments ranging from White House coverage to stories involving civil rights and anti-war demonstrations, the space program, elections, earthquakes, Watergate, and numerous other general assignment tasks. For this, he has won a number of awards and has been cited for excellence in reporting by the Associated Press, United Press International, Headliners, and the George Foster Peabody Awards committees.

At NBC, Thomas appeared on an average of ten network radio newscasts a week as anchorman, and many others as a contributing reporter of spot news. He also was involved in numerous specials and documentaries. His television credits include the old Huntley-Brinkley Report, NBC Nightly News, and many other such programs. He was frequently seen on The Today Show as well.

Thomas also worked in Houston, Texas, as a television anchorman and investigative reporter for NBC affiliate KPRC-TV where he was the senior correspondent in terms of experience and coverage on the scene of breaking stories with the portable "live" camera.

He co-founded the only daily broadcast news service (International Media Service) for Christian radio stations. Operating from the National Press Building in Washington, D.C., the news service is currently heard on more than 100 stations in 39 states.

Cal Thomas is a graduate of American University in Washington, D.C., where he majored in English Literature and minored in French and International Relations of Western Europe. In his senior year, he won a competitive journalism

scholarship for one year of study over 450 other applicants. The award was made through the Sigma Delta Chi professional journalism fraternity.

He is the author of four books: **Target Group Evangelism** (Broadman Press), **A Freedom Dream** (Word Books), **Public Persons and Private Lives** (Word Books), and the best-seller, **Book Burning** (Crossway Books).

Cal and his wife, Ray, a professional singer and recording artist, are frequent speaker and singer before groups of all types around the country. They have four children.

"Fall"

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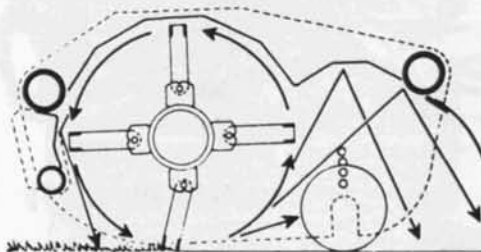


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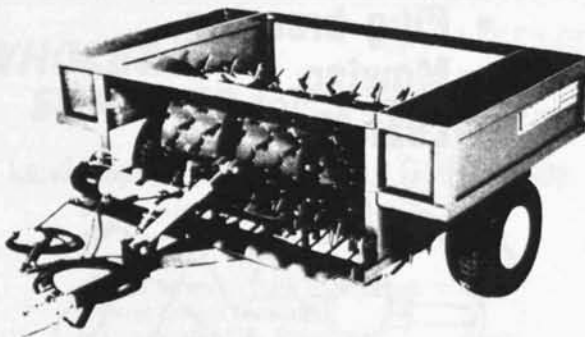


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Your Season is Over, But the Greenkeeper's Job is Never Done

by Charles Bartlett
Golf Editor, Chicago Tribune

(Editor's note: I found this article in the "Chicagoland Golf", November 1952 and thought it would be interesting for us today)

So you are a member of a golf club, eh?

Did it ever occur to you that there is a hard working lodge of men who already have started thinking about the condition of the courses you will play over in the 1953's spring and summer and early autumn?

Sure, you are leaving Chicagoland golf, most of you, for vacations in Florida, Arizona, and Southern California, sooner or later. But what about the northern lots that must be kept up thru the rigorous winters that strike them, the places you play on in the good weathers?

A tonic visit by this reporter to Chicago's Glen Oak Country Club is your answer. There you find Ray Gerber, past president of the National Greenkeeping Superintendent's Association. He and his crew are already up and going about the problems that face him and such of his colleagues as Bill Stuppel of Exmoor; Ray Didier of Tam O'Shanter, Bob Williams of Beverly; Dave Cairns of Elmhurst; Frank Dinelli of Northmoor and Bert Ross of Park Ridge.

If the above has new lines in their faces, charge those furrows up to one of the roughest summers ever to strike a golf course since 1949. That last summer was a bad one, in many cases calling for erection of temporary greens, and reports to committees suggesting installation of new equipment and purchase of chemicals that will nurture greens thru the grief that might come with a tough winter.

What does a greenkeeping superintendent do when only the diehards will come out to test a course?

We'll take Gerber's prescription, one that has gone into effect in its early stages. Yes, early, because there's a lot of work to do around a golf course that earns no blue ribbons once the so-called season is over.

We selected Gerber as a true practitioner of this autumnal laboratory, not because he survived and helped many of his brothers in the greenkeeping fraternity survive this whacky summer of 1952, worst in these parts since 1949, but because he has the background, the experience, and the overall savvy that comes from treating greens and fairways in sick beds everywhere.

Ray didn't brag about the well-tailored and healthy condition of his own Glen Oak as recently as the Chicago District Golf association's interleague matches in late September. He just figured that the fine health of the course was due to the job he and his crew are paid to do.

What's more, Gerber thinks his job is only half done. Sure, there'll be a company of diehards out playing golf in these nice days, and a few of the rough ones, too. But the majority of regulars will have hung up their sticks for the year. Many of these, sad to say, are the sort who will come out next spring and holler about the shape of the course. Mind you, we are not quoting Gerber. We're talking from our own experience with the gripes of members, and yes, daily fee and park players, who

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