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

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Bull Sheet printed by Ever-Redi Printing, 5100 East Ave., Countryside, IL 60525.

The **Bull Sheet** is published once a month. All articles are required by the 10th of the month to make the next issue. Advertising is sold by the column inch, by the quarter page, half page, and by the full page. All artwork to be finished and in black and white. Circulation is around 500 issues per month.



#### President's Message

I just returned from San Francisco in time to write another timely message.

This year's show was another shining example of what the G.C.S.A.A. has the ability to put together for the advancement of all its participating members. It combined an outstanding selection of talks and speakers; that again included several members of our association, a bigger and better trade show. (we not only saw the equipment — the age of videocassette now allows us to see them in action. Amazingly they all perform perfectly in front of a camera. I may start filming the crew every morning), and of course, the lure of San Francisco; cable cars, fine dining, excellent wine and a short trip to Monterey for professional golf at its finest. All in all a good time was had by all.

Now back to reality. The start of the season may be just around the corner, along with the continuation of our educational endeavors. The opportunity to test our new knowledge, adding our own personal touches to an idea that sounded interesting enough to try or venturing into unknown territories that may bring us to the speakers podium at the conferences of the future. Another aspect of this continuing education is participation in the monthly meetings. With interest at an all time high I will not dwell on this, I would just like to make comment on the record attendance at the January meeting and highlight the fine educational program the committee presented.

In reflecting on the growing interest in M.A.G.C.S. activities, class A and B members will soon be receiving a follow up survey similar to the survey conducted two years ago. Many members found the results of the last survey invaluable. More participation will give an even better indication of the economic environment in Chicago. Prompt response will make the survey committees job easier.

On another note, the Illinois Turfgrass Foundation is about to embark on a full scale membership drive. They hope to increase the current membership of approximately 300 to at least 500. It behooves all of us to support the I.T.F., after all turfgrass research and scholarship funding is the backbone of our livelihoods. Making the University of Illinois the front runner in this area should be a common goal of everyone in the golfing community throughout the state. So, please give your support and encourage others to do the same.

Finally, special congratulations to Bill Roberts of Wisconsin on his election to the G.C.S.A.A. board of directors. His election and the re-election of Jerry Faubel from Michigan gives the Midwest excellent national representation. Do not hesitate to let these two leaders know how you feel about the future of the G.C.S.A.A.

In closing, the dawn of spring brings an old adage someone once told me, "when the snow melts and the other man's grass seems greener, don't be downtrodden - it's probably poa." David R. Behrman, CGCS

#### Getting With Golf Again ... The Great Lakes Region in '85

#### by James M. Latham, Director Great Lakes Region, USGA Green Section

There's a lot of land in the Great Lakes Region of the USGA Green Section. There's also a great array of golf courses and superintendents who maintain them. And with that mix of miles, men and means I will be forever grateful that 1985 was, for the most part, a gentle season for golf turf in this area.

First of all, the golfers started off happy — with one of the earliest, driest springs I can remember. There were no weekend rainouts. Cash flow was good. The pro shop staffs looked like toothpaste salesmen at a dentist's convention. Milwaukee actually had springlike weather when the calendar said it should. This was a first for me in 25 years here.

Superintendents, of course, have difficulties experienced by no one else in golf. The beautiful weather brought June grass growth in April with a January-size crew. The lovely southwesterly breezes dried out the unfrozen soil more rapidly than ever before and many irrigation systems weren't quite ready for the midyear stresses in May. But hold on — that was here in the flatlands. Our friends in the Dakotas and Montana were having a helluva time with spring ice problems — the kind that Jim Beard wrote classics about. Crown hydration ... dead grass ... recovery or reseeding or resodding. Like always, though, perseverance paid off and their season was successful.

In the spring, stresses also gave rise to the early appearance of the Xanthomonas bacterial problems in Toronto beat. The **real** bad problem didn't surface until June or July, but what appeared to be spots from fertilizer burn early on, passed final I.D. as Decline. The range of affected greens was the range that Toronto was planted, from Indianapolis to Minneapolis in well-maintained greens on high quality golf course. The bullet biting ranged from simple interseeding, to gassing and reseeding, to full scale rebuilding and reseeding, to the whole schmear of rebuilding with a new growing medium and all new sod.

Speaking of grasses, I think that Penneagle is getting alot of undeserved bad mouthing. Its only sin is that we don't know how to handle it - yet. Some of us remember that Penncross got the same treatment, because it didn't perform the way Washington or Toronto or South German bents did under the high nitrogen, high but programs then in use. Well, maybe we need to change our thinking again. There are **some** good Penneagle greens around. It makes no more sense to hang with a one pound of N per 1,000 sq. ft. per year program now than it did to stay with a six pound program earlier. But, if you don't want to change programs, don't change turf varieties. It's just that easy. Who said that new has to be better, anyway? New is only different.

The industrialists who get the blame for the international arms race are at it again except now they are working on golf courses. They put the con on clubs to begin using triplex mowers to get that 'Augusta-look' striping on fairways. This sells new mowers all around. But it's not the whole story.

The real goal of these propagandists is to get financing to develop new types of dethatching equipment and/or methods. Just think of the potential in all those acres of fairways! Then, when you get the bugs out, consider the gold in them that lawns. Golfers love THE LOOK, but when the flying iron shots start showing up these plotters know that the superintendent will pay anything for a one-shot, one-day cure-all, whether it be animal, vegetable or mineral. We didn't reach this condition in 1985, but lightweight mowing must be counter-balanced by thatch reduction and the sooner the better.

There is one other potential problem which accelerated in 1985 - the choice of topdressing materials for greens Just as good suppliers of high quality sands are becoming known and their products and pricing somewhat stabilized, new variables are literally muddying the water. The variable is **any** untested additive to a topdressing sand. You can have the best sand in the world and mess it up royally with a poor grade of peat. How does **your** 80/20 (or whatever mix) stack up? And who said 80/20 was good anyhow. How much silt or clay or very fine sand is in the peat? The non-capillary pores (internal drainage ways) in a Medium Sand are pretty small, so it doesn't take much mud to block them. So why pay a premium for sand if you trash it up with **any**, repeat **any**, unknown additive? This, to me, is **THE** primary problem observed in the 1985 season.

Now here are the questions you need to answer:

- 1. If I can't judge sand quality off hand, how can I judge peat quality?
- 2. Who can judge peat quality?
- 3. What is good peat quality?
- 4. What do I expect peat to do for me?
- 5. Why buy more trouble?

The fall of '85 was the season that balanced the Midwestern year. Rotten! It was not a time for construction. Late fall and early winter brought ice formation to some areas and prompted a major mailing from my office. December is too early for 3-inch deep ice sheets — but they are still here in mid-January, but the thaw just arrived. I hope the sprayer and fungicides are ready if this thaw cycle continues.

From my angle, I'm grateful for a pleasant 1985. There were enough problems with great variations to keep anyone busy. It was not, however, a season devoted to putting out a lot of fires so there was time to look a little deeper into basic management techniques to get a handle on the direction that Midwestern golf turf quality is heading. From where I sit this snowy January morning, the direction is true and correct if we keep our minds on the basics for program development and our eyes on the cosmetics for people-pleasing maintenance operations. The two are indeed compatible.

These are the things that make up the lure of the Green Section today. Twenty-five years ago the work was mostly reacting to day-to-day happen-stances and the swings of nature. There is much less need for this today because golf course folks are much better educated and have more sophisticated tools with which to work. Note that I did not say smarter or better equipped. Today, golfers get what some people believe are better playing conditions. They certainly tax the skill of superintendents more than ever before.

My thrill in getting back to total golf work is that with better education and much more beneficial research involvement than in the pat, golf course superintendents not only recognize the real problems — soil conditions, water quality, the plants' survival capabilities and more - they are able to do something about them. The next decade should end band-aid maintenance of golf courses. I hope to be there, right in the middle of it and, hopefully, helping it happen.

### **Director's Column**

Sean M. Daley Ridge C.C.

With the great courses Al Fierst is lining up for this year, the golf committee is working extra hard to make sure we have some great events. The thing that makes them the best though, is your participation.

At the most recent board of directors meeting, it was felt that a better form of handicap control was needed. After lengthy discussion, to ensure we were being fair, it was decided that each person must have a certified handicap. By certified, I mean a CDGA or a service approved by the USGA.

What if you don't have one now and can't get one? You contact me. As a courtesy to us, the CDGA will compute your handicap through our own golf committee. So you see, you have no excuse. With that in mind, the board has also decided that if you don't have a handicap, you will have to play at scratch. Scratch as in a O handicap. We felt it was not fair to those that have an established handicap to play against someone just picking one out of the air.

So, there you have it. I would personally like to see everyone out there for our meetings this year. Here's to great golf in '86!

For those of you who were unable to attend one of the G.C.S.A.A. seminars to Pheasant Run, you missed more than just a fine seminar. Thanks to GCSAA and Peter Leuzinger, everyone attending had a chance to enjoy some free entertainment. The entertainment was in the form of Miss Nancy Hays, a local



country-western singer. Not only was her performance very enjoyable, but she also solicited some help from a few of our own Midwest members. Wally Fuchs and Dave Ward each did a rousing rendition of "Oh Lord, It's Hard to Be Humble" and John Stephenson pitched in with an Elvis impersonation. GCSAA is hoping to be able to bring us some entertainment again at next year's seminars. Anyone that has a particular seminar they would like to see locally feel free to contact Peter Leuzinger.

**From the Editor:** I would like to apologize to Chicago Turf and Irrigation, Illinois Lawn, and Interstate Battery, and to our readers for this month's newsletter. It seems that Uncle Sam lost our original paste up copy that I sent to the printer. In it were original ad stats that couldn't be replaced in time for the printing deadline.







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# HENRY FRENZER

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#### Editor's note: The following letter was sent to Dave Meyer and is interesting reading.

Aloha Dave!

I'm happy to report that I have landed on my feet here in Hawaii. I am working at the Navy Marine Golf Course, the flag ship golf course of Pearl Harbor.

In May I started as a night waterman and today, I find myself in the role of Superintendent at long last. I still have a long way to go here, Navy Marine has never had a professional superintendent and many things we take as basic seem very far out to my workers, many of whom have worked here better than 15 years. It's easy for me though because Ray and I completed more projects in a month than they have ever considered in twenty years. The mood of the management is to make changes and to make them as I deem right. It's fun!

Anyway the reason for the letter is that I would like to remain a member of the Midwest. There is no local assocation here in Hawaii, and my wife and I have not yet decided if she and I will return to Chicago area in three years when she gets out of the Navy. I value my membership in the Midwest and would love to keep it. If there is any problem with this just void my check and you can fill me in at San Francisco.

Look forward to seeing you soon,

Sean Hoolehan

## English-Spanish Landscape Management Clinic

The University of Illinois Cooperative Extension Service and the Illinois Landscape Contractor's Association will sponsor a landscape clinic in English and Spanish for employees and managers of landscape companies.

The program will be held Tuesday, March 11, 1986, at the Elmhurst Country Club, Wood Dale, Illinois.

A.M.	Session	THE	PROGRAM

8:30 A.M.	Registration	
9:00 A.M.	Cost Factors - What Does It Cost to Do	
	Business? George Koziarz, Business Manage- ment Consultant	
10:00 A.M.	Break	
10:30 A.M.	Weeds — Robert Schmerbauch, University of Illinois, Grayslake	
	Diseases — James A. Fizzell, University of Illinois, Rolling Meadows	
	Insects — Dr. Philip Nixon, University of Illinois, Oakbrook	
Noon	Lunch	
P.M. Session		
1:15 P.M.	Pruning Shrubs & Small Trees — Floyd Giles, University of Illinois, Urbana	
2:00 P.M.	What Are Pesticides (Weed & Feed, etc., and	

the necessity of licensing) — Dr. Philip Nixon 2:45 P.M. Planting Trees, Shrubs, Sod — Robert Schmerbauch

The interpreter will be Mr. Miguel Sanchez, Farm Foreman, University of Illinois Experiment Station, St. Charles.

Registration is \$15.00 per person, Make checks payable to Cook County Horticulture Association and mail to 4200 W. Euclid, Rolling Meadows, IL 60008.



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### Start Planning Next Year's Garden Now

Winter is here! For most of us gardeners this is a time to reflect on the past season and plan for next year. (We gardeners are certainly incurable optimists, aren't we.)

According to James A. Fizzell, University of Illinois Horticulturist in Cook County there is no better time to look over the many vegetable seed catalogs we have at our fingertips. A good companion publication to have is the University of Illinois list of recommended varieties. Drop a self-addressed, stamped envelope to our office at 4200 West Euclid, Rolling Meadows, IL 60008 and request a copy. If you don't receive any seed catalogs, ask us for a copy of fact sheet entitled "Sources of Vegetable Seeds" for a list of reputable seed companies.

Many of us tend to get carried away when we look at seed catalogs and want to try all the new varieties listed, especially those that show pictures of large luscious vegetables that are, "sure to grow the best in your area."

Here is where the disappointment comes in. Not all vegetable varieties do well in Illinois. Gardeners that select vegetables on the basis of size and color or by a "hit or miss" approach might find that the vegetable variety will not perform as it was advertised due to our tough climate.

In order to "play it safe", it's best to refer to the recommended vegetable varieties fact sheet when looking through the seed catalogs. The varieties listed in this publication have been tested extensively by University of Illinois researchers and many have some disease resistance or tolerance incorporated in them. These varieties have proven themselves for several years under Illinois growing conditions before they are added to the list. It's a shame to put in your time and money in vegetable gardening, only to find that your efforts have been wasted by varieties that did not live up to your expectations.

On the other hand, do not be afraid to try new varieties on a limited basis too. Several new vegetable varieties have just been released that you might wish to try on a experimental basis. Don't rely on them for your total production in case they don't perform.

The All America Selections are probably the least risky because they have been tested throughout the U.S. and found to be good in all areas. This doesn't mean they are the best in every location, however.

There are three All American Selections, for 1986. Cosmos 'Summer Red' has improved dwarf habit and prolific blooms all season. Good for cutting.

Okra 'Blondy' produces an abundance of spineless pods on a compact plant.

Sweet corn, "How Sweet It Is", is white and has elevated sugars for outstanding gourmet flavor.

If you have room, plan to give these a try along with your favorites.

James A. Fizzell, Sr. Ext. Adviser Horticulture



