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President's Message

by **Bruce R. Williams, CGCS**
President, MAGCS

Are You Sure That Your Workers Understand Their Orders?

In the charge of the Light Brigade in the Crimean War, six hundred British troops went into the valley of death against overwhelming Russian forces because of a misunderstanding of orders by their superior officers. If well-trained, highly disciplined officers could misunderstand their orders, there is reason to suppose that almost anybody could misinterpret orders in an everyday golf course operation.

If an employee misunderstands his instructions, is it his fault? Probably not. First, the superintendent may have incorrectly evaluated the employee's ability to comprehend a certain level of instructions. Second, the instructions could have more than one interpretation — or a misleading single interpretation. Instructions or orders have to be given with due consideration of the experience and the level of comprehension of the employee who is on the receiving end.

Of course excessively detailed instructions are time consuming, but a presumption that can be frequently made is that: **If an instruction can be misinterpreted — it will be.** That premise can too often be true, whether the employee is careless or conscientious in complying with his superintendent's orders. Therefore, before issuing an instruction, consider if there are any possibilities for alternative reactions on the part of subordinates.

As we enter the final growing month of the golf season, it seems as though communication problems increase as many employees only have thoughts of returning to school or their home and families in their native Mexico. In order to maintain optimal levels of productivity it is paramount to avoid confusion and offer good instructions.

GUIDELINES FOR INSTRUCTIONS TO EMPLOYEES

1. Who is to perform.
2. What is to be done.
3. When it is to be done.
4. What are the exceptions.
5. What is to be done with the exceptions.
6. What are the alternative methods.
7. When are alternative methods to be used.
8. Who has additional know-how.
9. When should advice be sought.
10. Where are written instructions.
11. What tools are available.
12. Which equipment is to be used.
13. Which examples should be followed.
14. What follow-through is required.

(President's Message cont'd.)

15. What checking should be done.
16. How are errors to be handled.
17. When is the task considered to be completed.
18. What is to be done after the task is over.

The next three months are full of some excellent opportunities for enhancing your agronomic and management skills. To strengthen your skills and take advantage of these opportunities there are three important factors. First and foremost we need your attendance. Second we hope that you participate actively. Finally, you need to take all of the information you have gathered and put it to use with an action plan. Aside from our regular monthly offerings we have the MAGCS Clinic in November, the NCTE in Springfield in December, and the GCSAA seminar in January at Pheasant Run. I hope to see each and every member there.

**Bruce R. Williams, CGCS
MAGCS President**

Director's Column



**Ed Braunsky, Supt.
Geneva Golf Club**

Work!

What is a nine holer doing on the board of directors of the Midwest Association of Golf Course Superintendents? Well at first I had a hard time believing that I was elected. As time went on though, I realized why the horror. Someone must have known that I love to work.

Running a nine hole course is a lot of work as is any course. A strong back and a hard work drive is required to be a superintendent.

The great thing about our profession is the work ethic that most superintendent's have. Maybe the shortage of turf students is possibly caused by the lack of interest in hard work that would be required by the youth today. If being a superintendent was like playing a "Nintendo" game or being in a rock video, men and women would flock to enter our field. There are moments when you have your "down" times, but you also need to be there to jump in when needed.

Our profession goes in to the 1990's in great shape. The Chicago area is a "hot bed" of activity. While I have not seen too many video's on how to make your first million dollars as a superintendent, the rewards we receive are endless. The possibilities are there for the young up and coming turf students, but be prepared to do one thing ... WORK!

A note of thanks to those who participated in our survey this past year. The results have helped us tremendously. Any information that is incorrect in the directory needs to be brought to Penny Meyer's or my attention. Thank's a million!

The Old Men — A Tribute to the Seniors

**by Tony Rzadzki, Asst. Supt.
Cantigny Golf Club**

In July I had the pleasure of attending 'Seniors Day' at The Woodbine Country Club. Carl Hopphan was the guest speaker that evening after a soggy but enjoyable day of golf. Carl was my old boss at the Evanston Golf Club after Walter Fuchs Sr. retired. I consider myself very fortunate to have worked for these two seniors as well as a few others. After attending this meeting I felt compelled to write this anecdote; something that I have been thinking about writing for the past two or three years.

I remember back in May of 1978 the first 'senior' that really shaped my career, Bill Dobbe. Bill was the head mechanic at a cemetery that I had worked at. 'Old Carp Lips' (that's what the crew called him) was an ornery, cantankerous gent from the outside, but inside was a tender, generous person that was willing to help a spirited eager beaver like myself.

After about a year of pushing a shovel and warming up to Bill, he slowly broke me into his work place and began showing me the ropes. Bill needed me as much as I needed him. His 'senior years' had granted him 5 weeks vacation a year, so someone had to mind the shop in his absence. Shoveling dirt, digging holes, and tending funerals had become quite tiresome to me, so wrenching equipment was a welcome change and an experience that has carried me a long way. Thanks Bill.

In October of 1980 the second 'senior' that appeared in my life was Walt Fuchs Sr. I think all of us throughout our lives encounter someone that really leaves a striking impact upon us. This was Walter. After working one week with Walter I finally had a goal to my life. I knew that the golf business was what I really wanted to do and that the benefits, though they may be long in coming, are well worth every effort used to achieve them.

So my trial began. After a long winter of learning how to 'finger grind' reel mowers and prepping the equipment for the next season, I would hurry up and finish my daily chores then go out in the field and learn something. This golf course work was all new to me; aerification, chemicals, reel mowers, irrigation systems, poa annua, disease, welding, drainage, sand traps, construction ... but I savored every moment. It sure beat the hell out of planting concrete boxes in the ground.

I had a great teacher to foster me through these first few years. He laid a great foundation for me to build on. What a great senior. What a great man. Thanks Wally.

In 1984 Wally retired and Carl Hopphan grabbed the reigns at Evanston. My raw talents were evident to Carl, but some refinement was needed. Carl saw this and he knew that twisting bolts was not in my future. The following year he hired an assistant mechanic. This allowed me more time to gain field experience.

A few of the things that I learned from Carl mostly dealt with 'people management'. From club members to mexicans, salesmen to the golf pro. Carl was a marvel to watch. Someone once told me that public relations takes up about 60% of a superintendent's time. This may or may not be true, but Carl has a grand eloquence, a charisma that the members truly enjoy. Shmoozing and rubbing elbows with the big boys may come as a hard chore to some people, but it is a duty that needs to be done and I was able to experience a master at work.

(cont'd. page 4)

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(The Old Men cont'd.)

Carl often gets teased about being long-winded at times. I have partaken in a few of his narratives. Deep inside Carl desires to share knowledge, just as he did at the 'Seniors Day' outing. Right after Carl spoke Russ Fink introduced us to the computer network that he is trying to develop between local superintendents. Sharing knowledge is the backbone of the Midwest Association. Carl's process may be a slower one nowadays, but still very effective.

Carl once said that if you attend a meeting and come back with only one new thought, concept, or bit of information, you've learned something and it was money well spent. He was all for the fledgling mechanics association. Look at what a growing organization that has become.

In January of 1986 the greatest senior that ever lived passed away. Carl wrote these words:

"Always remember that your father will be the greatest man in your entire life. This will become a very strong feeling in your heart as you grow older. My thoughts will be with you and your family at this time ... Now it is your time to carry your father's memory in your heart and let that make you an equally great father for your own family. This I am sure would make him very proud." Thanks Carl.

My father used to say, "always remember good old J.C. (Jesus Christ)." He also used to tell me that whatever you strive for in your life always try your hardest to do the best of your abilities. These two thoughts I remember best as the most important things that anyone has ever taught me.

Nothing in my life ever hurt me as bad as that January day. I still think about my father every day.

Years have passed
The sadness lingers.
Evermore I will remember
The deeds this man has done.
I long for those days once more
To walk the fields again
And learn the lessons of youth.
Not so long ago,
Yet still fresh in my memory
Laughter and joy that once abounded
Is now tenfold sorrow.

What I am trying to relate in this article is mostly aimed at the younger crowd. The turf students, budding rookie assistants, the 'rising stars', and anyone striving to get ahead in their field.

I learned this lesson a long time ago. Latch on to that 'old man' (god I hate that word), grab him and hold him. Devour his experiences and make them yours. Bill Dobbe, Carl, Wally and my father are (or were) not over educated individuals. Look at their brilliant careers. These men breathe common sense. It's in their veins. Brush up and work side by side with a senior and something will rub off. Make your life happen with theirs and gorge yourself of their knowledge while you can, because someday they will be gone.

My cousin once asked my uncle, "how come dad, that the older I get the smarter you get?" My cousin at the age of 42 is still learning lessons from his father. These lessons are life. Respect your elders and learn from them. With luck you'll be as fortunate as I have been to work with such great senior statesmen.

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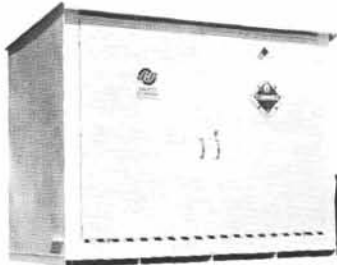
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Jerry Cooper and Ravisloe Country Club Team Win John Deere Tourney!!

by Craig Hoefflin — J.W. Turf, Inc.

On a damp day, August 20th, White Eagle Golf Club and J. W. Turf (the John Deere Turf Equipment Distributor for the Chicagoland area) played host to 36 teams in Chicago's 3rd annual John Deere Team Championship.

The teams were comprised of the golf course superintendent, club professional, club president, and club manager in a scramble best-ball event. The superintendent, president, and clubhouse manager playing a scramble, and the pro plays his ball throughout. The team score is derived from the best ball of the scramble teams net score per hole and pros actual score.

Local knowledge of the beautiful White Eagle layout was not a factor as almost every team was playing the Naperville layout for their very first time.

Golf course superintendent Jerry Cooper and team members Tony Makarek (pro), Robert Joseph (V.P.), and Paul Geallis (Mgr.) of Ravisloe Country Club led the field of Bob Kronn and his LaGrange Country Club team (1988 Champions) and Bruce Williams and his Bob O'Link team (1989 Defending Champions) along with 34 other teams with a score of 54 over the 6658 yard White Eagle course. As the winning team, the four-some earned the option of competing in the John Deere "National Team Championship" to be held in November in LaQuinta, California.

The second place team was the entry from Glenview Park District headed by Rick Wilson with a score of 55.

The official order of finish was as follows:

- 1st Place — Ravisloe
- 2nd Place — Glenview Park District
- 3rd Place — Foss Park
- 4th Place — Hilldale Golf Course
- 5th Place — Itasca Country Club
- 6th Place — Bob O'Link Country Club
- 7th Place — Midland Country Club
- 8th Place — Pontiac Elks Country Club
- 9th Place — Deerpath Golf Course
- 10th Place — LaGrange Country Club
- 11th Place — Poplar Creek

In individual pro competition, Dave Prange of Glenview Park District walked off with top pro honors and a check for \$250.00. Gary Grok of Bob O'Link And Bill Johnstone of La Grange Country Club won 2nd and 3rd low pro honor respectively,

J. W. Turf is very proud to have hosted this tournament at White Eagle Golf Club. Everyone who participated was equally impressed with the beautiful clubhouse and challenging course at White Eagle.

Gil Velazquez (supt), Kent Sirois (pro) and Jim Nicholson (mgr) of White Eagle Golf Course and their respective staffs afforded everyone a most enjoyable day despite the wet conditions — our sincere "thanks" to everyone at White Eagle.

This tournament is growing every year and is sure to become a big part of Chicagoland golf.

J. W. Turf will present the Midwest Golf Course Superintendents Association a check for \$1,800.00 to be donated to I.T.F. in the names of all tournament participants to be designated for ongoing turf research.



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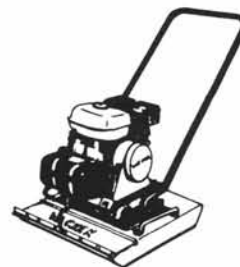
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Photos of the U of I Field Day

by Scott Armstrong



Dr. Roscoe Randell



Jim Murphy from MSU explaining soil and turf responses to the Hydrojet aerator by Toro.



Jean Haley explaining pre-emergence tests



Russ Fink explaining his Bulletin Board program "Turf Talk", on his computer. Looks like Russ understands what is going on.

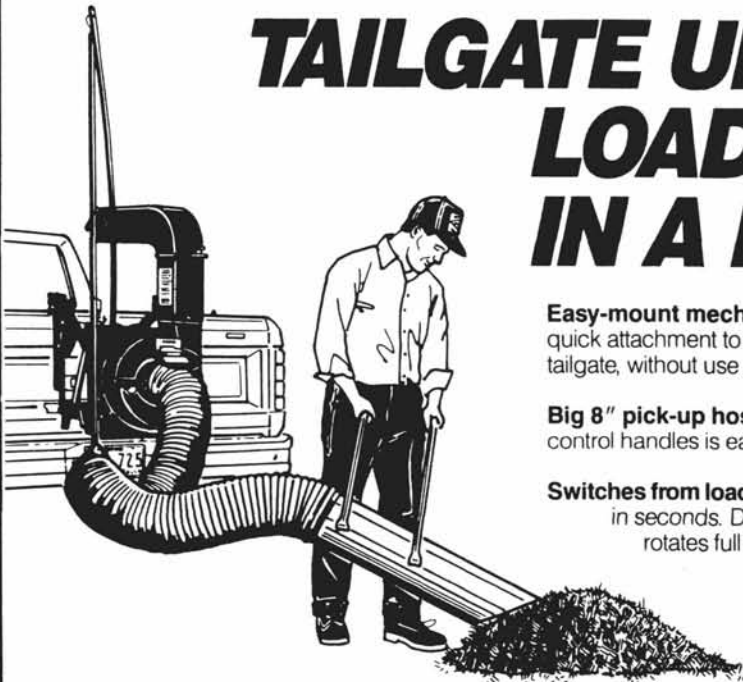


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Leaves, Limbs, Needles and Boughs

by Fred D. Opperman

Gymnocladus dioicus (jim-nok'la-dus di-o-i'kus) now that is a mouthful! Kentucky Coffeetree is one of those trees that is overlooked when one is planting trees on the golf course. It is a tree with sturdy branching and it really doesn't have a form to it, being more free form when the leaves are off it. It is a tree with few pests or problems. The seeds were used by the early settlers in Kentucky to make coffee, hence its name.

Leaves: Alternate, bipinnately compound, to 36" long and 24" wide, with 3 to 17 pairs of pinnae, the lower usually reduced to simple leaflets, the upper with 6 to 14 leaflets. Leaflets ovate or elliptic ovate, 2 to 3" long.



Buds: Terminal — absent, laterals — small bronze, pubescent, partially sunken, scarcely projecting beyond surface of twig.

Stem: Very stout, more or less contorted; brown or slightly greenish, glabrous or often velvety downy; pith — wide, salmon - pink to brown.

Bark: Dark brown, roughened with their tortuous, recurved, scale like ridges.

Size: 60 to 75' in height by 40 to 50' in spread.

Rate: Slow to medium, growing 12 to 14' over a 10 year period.

Fruit: Reddish brown, leathery pod, 50 to 100" long, 1 1/2" to 2" wide, containing a few large blackish brown, hard-shelled seeds. Ripens in October, but hangs on the tree through the winter.

This tree is not to be placed near greens or tees due to the pods that drop, but placed deeper in the roughs or along the edges of the course. Gymnocladus dioicus — it kinds of rolls off the tongue once you get the hang of it.

Credit: "Manual of Woody Landscape Plants"
by Michael A. Dirr

Jack Frost

October and Jack Frost — They seem to go together. But there really is more to frost than meets the eye. Radiation frost occurs on clear, calm nights with no cloud cover to absorb the thermal energy from the earth. A large-scale air mass moving across an area may not alter the daytime temperature drastically, but will cause a "hard-freeze" that may be visible until mid morning. Advection frost can occur on a clear or cloudy night, but with a wind blowing. More noticeable temperature changes cause widespread freezing that is difficult to guard against. White frost, commonly called hoarfrost, occurs when ice crystals rather than dew, form on plant surfaces because the dewpoint, the temperature at which air reaches the saturation point, is below freezing. The opposite, black frost, occurs when there is not enough air moisture to form white frost, but the temperature drops low enough to actually freeze vegetation.

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