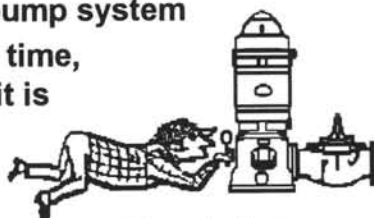


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(Ornamental Grasses continued)

GRASSES FOR USE NEAR WATER

On a golf course, ornamental grasses near a water hazard, pond or stream can add an exotic or naturalized look, depending on which species you select. **Miscanthus** gives the exotic look of Asia, with its large, silvery white plumes in September, while **Spartina** is a less conspicuous grass with long sword-like leaves that is native to the wet soils of the tallgrass prairie.

Listed in Table 1 are grasses that can be planted along the edge of water. **Spartina** will tolerate some standing water; all tolerate wet and poorly drained soil. An attractive grouping near water would be giant miscanthus in the background with red flame miscanthus in the center and Feeseys form ribbongrass in the foreground.



Table 1. Grasses for use near water.

Botanical Name	Common Name	Height	Origin
<i>Miscanthus floridulus</i>	giant miscanthus	8-10'	Asia
<i>Miscanthus 'Purpurascens'</i>	red flame miscanthus	4-5'	East Asia
<i>Miscanthus sacchariflorus</i>	Chinese silvergrass	6-8'	Asia
<i>Panicum virgatum</i>	switchgrass	3-8'	North America
<i>Phalaris arundinacea 'Picta'</i>	ribbongrass	2-4'	Europe
<i>Phalaris arundinacea luteo-picta</i>	yellow ribbongrass	2-4'	Europe
" " 'Feeseys Form'	Feeseys form ribbongrass	2-4'	
<i>Spartina pectinata</i>	cordgrass	6-7'	North America
" 'Aureo-Marginata'	variegated cordgrass	6-7'	North America

NATIVE ORNAMENTAL GRASSES

Several attractive grasses are native to the tallgrass prairie that once covered western Minnesota. Shorter grasses usually prefer dry sandy soils, while the taller species favor wet sites, Table 2. After establishment they need only an annual mowing (or burning, with a permit from your local municipality) for maintenance. these may be appropriate for out of bounds areas beyond the rough, at the edge of a woods or natural area. All prefer full sun and can be planted with other native wildflowers to create a replica of the original prairie. Little bluestem can be grown with two shorter natives such as mosquito grass and side oats grama on dry, sunny sites and will only require an annual mowing after establishment. Little bluestem has attractive white flowers in September, followed by orange fall color, both of which last until early spring.

(continued page 24)

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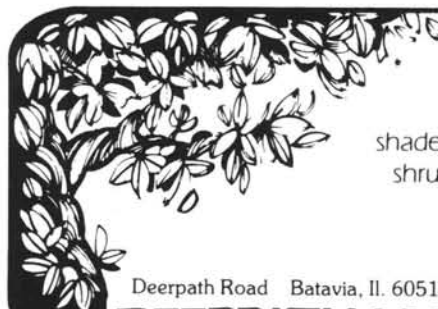
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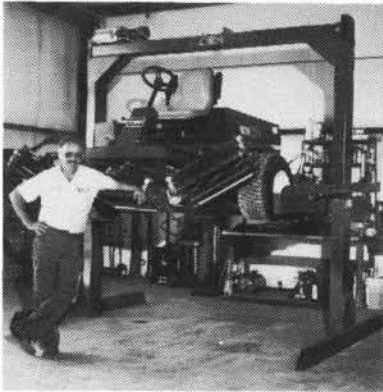


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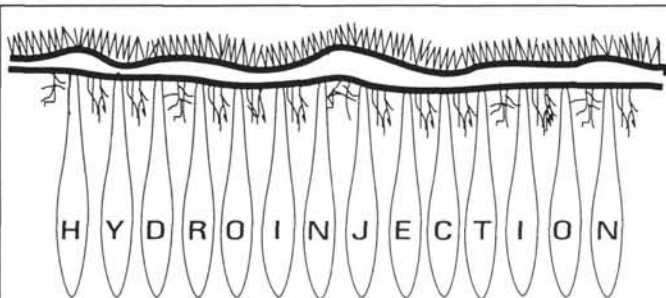
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Table 2. Native ornamental grasses for use in naturalized or prairie areas.

Botanical Name	Common Name	Height	Soil Preference
<i>Andropogon gerardii</i>	big bluestem	3-8'	mesic-wet
<i>Bouteloua curtipendula</i>	side oats grama	12-30"	dry
<i>Bouteloua gracilis</i>	mosquito grass	8-20"	dry
<i>Koeleria cristata</i>	June grass	1-2'	dry
<i>Panicum virgatum</i>	switchgrass	3-8'	mesic-wet
<i>Schizachyrium scoparium</i> (<i>Andropogon scoparius</i>)	little bluestem	2-4'	mesic-dry
<i>Spartina pectinata</i>	cordgrass	6-7'	wet
<i>Sporobolus heterolepis</i>	prairie dropseed	3-3½'	mesic
<i>Sorghastrum nutans</i>	Indian grass	4-6'	mesic

GRASSES FOR PERENNIAL PLANTINGS OR AS SPECIMENS

The most common use of ornamental grasses is in conjunction with other flowering annuals and perennials. Just as you would use peonies or iris, ornamental grasses when planted in beds or borders add beautiful flowering plumes, colorful foliage or attractive fall color. Several good selections for our area are listed in Table 3, with their noted features. Remember that much of the overall beauty of grasses is seen in the fall and winter; planting them where they are visible from the clubhouse dining room can add interest to the golf course year round.

There are many combinations of grasses that look good; feather reedgrass behind blueoat grass is attractive. Blueoat grass is often highlighted with pink and white begonias or petunias. Miscanthus can be grown in the background of a planting with silver spikegrass and chrysanthemums in the mid and foreground, respectively. All of these look especially good in the fall.



(continued page 26)

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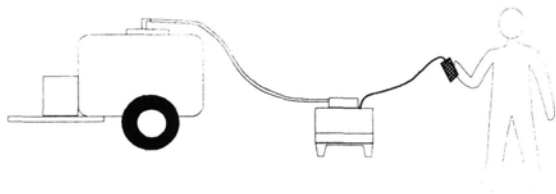
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(Ornamental Grasses continued)

Table 3. Grasses for perennial borders, flower beds or as specimen plants.

Botanical Name Common Name	Height	Features
<i>Calamagrostis x acutiflora</i> 'Karl Foerster'	4 1/2'	Stiff, upright form; pink flowers in July, turning beige by August. Wheat-like appearance.
<i>Calamagrostis x acutiflora</i> 'Stricta') feather reedgrass		
<i>Calamagrostis brachytricha</i> fall blooming feather reedgrass	4'	Pink-purple flowers in Sept
<i>Carex flava</i> yellow sedge	24"	Beautiful yellow and green striped foliage; requires shade.
<i>Deschampsia caespitosa</i> hairgrass	3 1/2-4'	Large beige flowers make a soft mound of "hair" above almost evergreen foliage. Prefers moist and shady sites; can be difficult to establish in sun.
<i>Helictotrichon sempervirens</i> blue oatgrass	2-3'	Forms a blue mound of foliage larger than dwarf blue fescue; more tolerant of heavy soil, but still prefers sun and good drainage.
<i>Miscanthus floridulus</i> miscanthus	full	
<i>Miscanthus 'Purpurascens'</i> red flame miscanthus	8-10'	Huge bamboo-stems with long coarse giant leaves; rarely flowers, slightly spreading clump.
	4-5'	An excellent grass for MN; forms clumps; orange fall color.

CULTURE AND MAINTENANCE

In Minnesota, ornamental grasses are best planted in spring. Fall planting may be successful with container plants; however, winter protection may be necessary. Local nurseries and garden centers sell the most popular grasses; many mail order nurseries handle a large number.

Spacing is determined by the desired landscape effect and the plant's setting. A 'rule of thumb' to space plants equal to their mature height, (thus plants 4' tall are spaced 4' apart) can be followed, but is usually adjusted according to the end result desired. Grasses used as a hedge or screen are usually planted closer together, while a group of three or four specimens should be spaced farther apart.

Propagation is usually by division, especially for cultivars. Large, mature grasses may benefit from spring division, especially if the center of the plant is dead. This can be a major job requiring a sharp axe and a strong back.

Ornamental grasses should be cut back to the ground to remove the previous year's growth each year in early spring, about the first week in April in Minnesota. If this is done in the fall, winter injury may result, and the winter beauty of the plant is lost. If ornamental grasses are not cut back,

<i>Miscanthus sacchariflorus</i> Chinese silvergrass northern pampas grass	6-8'	Invasive rhizomes, hardy in northern Minnesota; naturalized in ditches and places.
<i>Miscanthus sinensis</i> 'Siberfiedher' silver feather miscanthus	6-8'	Clump-forming, large silvery-white flowers in Sept.
<i>Miscanthus oligostachyus</i> Japanese silvergrass	4 1/2'	Short, bamboo-like leaves; flowers in July; forms a dense clump.
<i>Molinia caerulea</i> ssp. arundinacea 'Windspiel' Windplay tall moorgrass	6-8'	Tall, open-spreading form; pencil thin stems atop basal foliage gives this grass a unique look; Beautiful yellow fall color.
<i>Spodiopogon sibiricus</i> silver spikegrass	4-4 1/2'	Thick clump of bamboo-like foliage; bronze fall color.
<i>Sporobolus heterolepis</i> prairie dropseed	3-3 1/2'	Mound of fine foliage with airy, cloud-like flowers; reddish fall color. texture with airy cloud-like flowers.

Table 4. GRASSES WITH INVASIVE RHIZOMES

Botanical Name	Common Name
<i>Leymus racemosus</i> (synonym <i>Elymus giganteus</i>)	giant blue rye
<i>Leymus arenarius</i> (synonym <i>Elymus arenarius</i>)	blue lynegrass
<i>Miscanthus sacchariflorus</i>	Chinese silvergrass
<i>Phalaris arundinacea</i> 'Picta'	yellow ribbongrass
<i>Phalaris arundinacea</i> luteo-picta	yellow ribbongrass
" " 'Feeseys' Form'	Feeseys form ribbongrass
<i>Spartina pectinata</i>	prairie cordgrass
" " 'Aureo-Marginata'	variegated cordgrass

(continued page 28)



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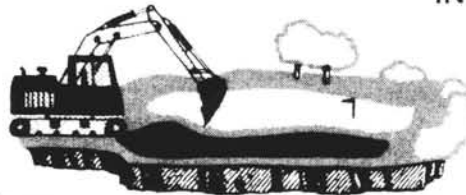
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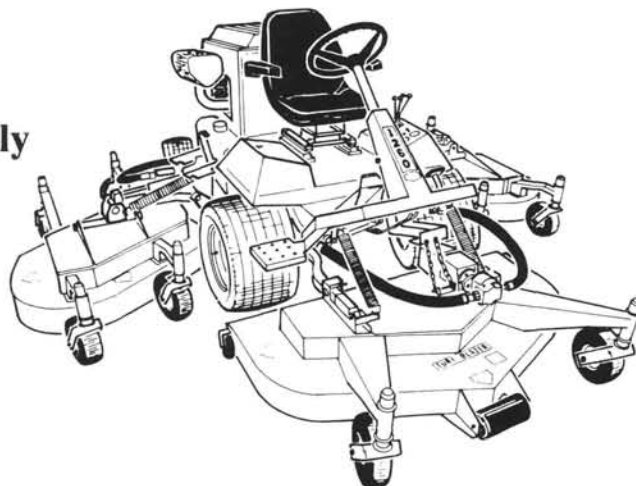
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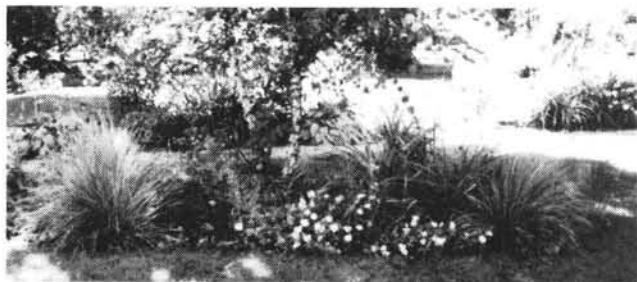


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spring growth is delayed and the plants are unattractive late into the growing season. Manual trimming with a string or electric hedge trimmer works well for a few plants. Large areas can be burned, if burning is permitted and closely supervised.

Established ornamental grasses rarely need fertilization or irrigation, except in cases of extreme drought or very sandy soil. Most grasses prefer full sun.

Because two of the most widely grown ornamental grasses (ribbongrass and Chinese silvergrass) have invasive rhizomes, a **false assumption** is that all grasses have rhizomes. The few grasses that have creeping rhizomes are listed in Table 4, all others form dense clumps and do not become troublesome. Invasive rhizomes can be a desirable asset for areas where ground covers are desired or to control erosion on slopes and along lakeshores.

Credit: Hole Notes, 7/94

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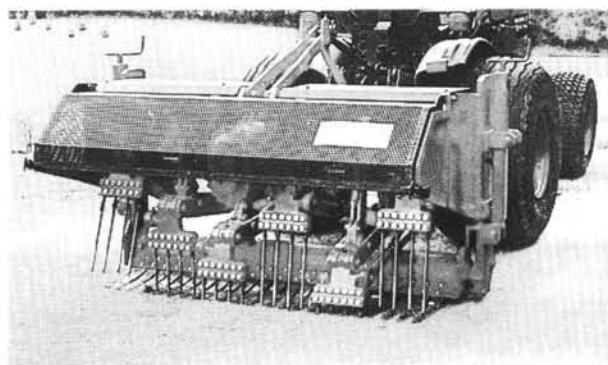


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5 + 5 + ILME = MOMS?

by Jerry Mach
Lake Bluff Golf Club

If you work for a governmental golf course and are not aware of the numbers or letters at the top of the page, please read on.

5 + 5 is a part of an accelerated retirement program that failed to pass the legislature, probably due to lack of support.

The ILME is the Illinois League of Municipal Employers or watchdog group for the Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund. For a membership fee of \$5.00 annually, they lobby for us in Springfield for improvements to our pensions and make sure that our funds stay where they belong. If you're a member of the IMRF, this is probably the best five bucks a year you can spend. If you're not in the IMRF program, but some other governmental pension the ILME could serve as a template for your future goals. Just in the time that I have been in the system they have managed to reduce the penalty for early retirement (under age 60) from one half percent per month to one quarter percent. Presently, they are trying to reduce it again to one eighth of a percent, but like any other organization they need your support. Personally, this is better than the 5 + 5 program because it would not require the \$15,000 to \$20,000 out of pocket buy out, but that is too long a story to go into here!

Another thing that has surprised me about this system is the lack of consistencies even between municipal systems.

Some have dental insurance, deferred annuities, Key-Man life insurance and mutual fund options and some have no idea what the other guy's talking about!

I realize that the Midwest and Chicagoland Associations have helped us all professionally but they are not in a position to enhance our portfolios or fight out pension battles. We will have to do that ourselves.

The ILME newsletter is printed four times a year and the winter edition has the most recent resolutions proposed. It also explains how to write your legislator and who you can contact to join. This is a non-profit organization that is protecting your pension and winning battles for you that you are not even aware are being fought.

Maybe the problem is that we have no Municipal Organization of Midwest Superintendents (MOMS) to help us understand what is available in the system. So I will donate 100 copies of the ILME's most recent newsletter and if you want to get a copy or be on a mailing list of nothing but Governmental Supers send one dollar to:

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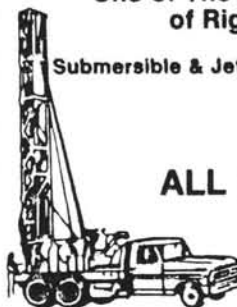
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