

DECEMBER, 1965
VOL. 19, NO. 6



The Bull Sheet

Official Bulletin

Midwest Association of Golf Course Superintendents



**JANUARY MEETING
TUESDAY, JANUARY 4, 1965
CRESS CREEK COUNTRY CLUB**

**MERRY CHRISTMAS
and
HAPPY NEW YEAR**

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

DOUG JABAAY, Editor
P. O. Box 305
Naperville, Ill. 60540

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Superintendent Reuben Thomas and part of his crew are pictured here on the night of the meeting.

The President's Message

December being the closing of the fiscal year of the Midwest Association of Golf Course Superintendents, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all members for their fine support this past year. It has been an honor to serve as your president, enlightening and with some disappointments.

My sincere thanks to host superintendents, their managers and clubs that hosted our monthly meetings this past year.

The office of President would not function without the fine support that I have had from officers, directors, committee chairmen and their committees.

Our annual turf clinic in November again was a gratifying success with the support of many of our friends from Universities, businesses and superintendents from other associations. We owe a debt of gratitude to the Medinah Country Club, host superintendent, Gerald Dearie, Manager, Mr. Tebel and his fine staff for their hospitality at our turf clinic.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank our editors of the Bull Sheet, Ted Woehrl who was editor for the past few years and so capably handled the publication, and our new editor Doug Jabaay the last few months, who is doing a fine bit of work in such a short time.

My sincere thanks to the members for their support in 1965, and my only wish for the future is a closer relationship between members of this association. To one and all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Al Johnson, President

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NOVEMBER MEETING

Exmoor Country Club was our gracious host for the November meeting of the Midwest Association. Superintendent Reuben Thomas and his grounds crew are doing a great job on this exquisite course. Quite a few of the members took advantage of the mild weather and played golf on Tommy's immaculate layout. Other found out what curling consisted of. To most of us, this is a game that we know little about. From all the comments that were heard, it takes quite a bit of skill to maneuver the stone in the right place.

Mr. Shaw is to be given a vote of confidence for the outstanding meal that was prepared so generously for us. We thank the board and the members of Exmoor Country Club for the pleasure of spending a day at such a fine club.

Appetizers were by the courtesy of Geo. Wellek, Everspray Co. and Kahn Bros.

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The members of the Midwest Association wish to extend our deepest sympathy to our fellow member Bob Breen, in the hour of bereavement for his daughter Frances.

"Having become perfect in a short while, she reached the fullness of a long career; for her soul was pleasing to the Lord, therefore he sped her out of the midst of wickedness. For in death, life is not taken away, but changed; an earthy home given up for an eternal dwelling."

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MIDWEST ASSOCIATION ADVISORY REPORT

The following suggestions from the Midwest Association will be given the National Advisory Committee at Kansas City.

1. The National Conference be held in January instead of February. The Midwest Association Superintendents unanimously agree this is the most popular month for them to get away.

2. The last couple of years, accommodations have been below par, some quite bad. We suggest that the committee in charge of room facilities check more thoroughly our hotel accommodations. The hotel reservations should also be improved by mailing the reservations out to the superintendents at an earlier date.

3. Opening day conference celebrity speakers have failed to appear for their scheduled talks. It is important that this first day is a success. When the speakers don't show up, and substitutes are sent, everyone is let down. Our suggestion is: Don't get a speaker, unless you are completely assured he will show up.

4. Rotate the meeting place for the conference. Hold it in the southern climate every three years. Many superintendents combine their vacations with the annual meeting. With bigger and bigger hotels going up all the time in Southern States, we think that this can now be possible. In case of southern conferences, superintendents don't mind being placed a little farther away from the main hotel.

5. The 35mm slide library started in the past few years should be accelerated and more publicized, by the national.

6. Our Get Acquainted Hour is a big disappointment at the conference. Everyone gets primed for it, and puts on their best, all for a couple of drinks, and a walk-around. Our suggestion is: Is it possible, for just a little more cost, to employ a combo in one corner of the ballroom, and let the couples enjoy themselves dancing a little. Other organizations who have annual conventions do this.

Paul N. Voykin, delegate

Tom Burrows, alternate delegate

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(Editor's Note: Our members are invited to contribute letters for this column. Here is your chance to sound off on any subject pertinent to turf management — including the Bull Sheet. Please specify if you prefer that your letter appear without your name and address. Selection of the letters for publication will be at the discretion of your editor.)

Bull Sheet, Naperville, Illinois.
Attention Editor:

Dear Sir:

This evening at the Midwest Golf Course Superintendents Association meeting I found that it has been said that I recommend the use of motorized snow sleds and sleds of this nature on golf courses.

Evidently someone has misunderstood my thoughts on these sleds as I have slides that I will present at the January Midwest Golf Course Superintendents Association meeting, which shows what damage Oak Park Country Club suffered from the use of these sleds last winter. I could not possibly have recommended these sleds when I have proof of the damage they can do to our golf courses.

If anyone is interested in seeing my slides before the January meeting, please contact me at my office.

Sincerely,
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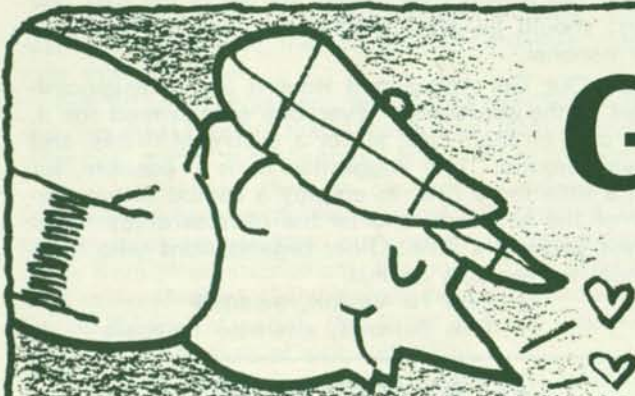
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NITROGEN

W. D. Haven

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Have you ever wondered about the colorless, gaseous, tasteless, and odorless element that makes up four-fifths of the atmosphere by volume and is a constituent of all living tissue. Whether we use the element to stimulate grass growth, or manufacture compounds of it, or produce machinery, or materials related to turf maintenance, all are dependent upon it in a large measure.

Nitrogen is essential to all living things — plant and animal. It forms a vital part of tissues that grow and reproduce and is needed in greater quantities than any other element.

Eternal Supply

If so much is needed, where does it come from? Regardless of the pros and cons of organic nitrogen versus inorganic nitrogen, or whether it occurs as plant or animal protein, or any other nitrogen compound, every atom of nitrogen originally came from the atmosphere. Approximately 75% of the air by weight and about 79% by volume is elemental nitrogen. Above every acre on earth is approximately 150,000 tons.

Plants and animals are literally bathed in nitrogen constantly but may be dying for lack of it. It is somewhat comparable to a man swimming at sea and dying of thirst. Elemental nitrogen cannot be used by plants or animals.

Among the other elements it is somewhat a loner. It is not very soluble in water and does not combine easily with other elements. Great amounts of energy are required to trap it in compounds. For example, during lightning flashes and thunderstorms, small quantities of nitrogen oxides are formed which are then brought down in rain. From this source, each acre of the earth's surface receives 2 to 8 lbs. of N each year.

Certain soil-inhabiting bacteria are able to fix nitrogen from the air. Other bacteria which form nodules on legume roots are able also to convert this element into a form useable by themselves and their host plant. Once captured, it might not be held for long, since each time nitrogen is converted from one form to another, it struggles to escape.

The Nitrogen Cycle

As nitrogen is captured, used and released by plants and animals, part of it is constantly returning to the atmosphere from where it originated. This process from start to finish is commonly called the nitrogen cycle.

From the beginning of time, men have always seemed to know that the addition of certain things to the soil made their plants grow better. However, until modern times, they didn't know why. As the sciences of biology and chemistry advanced, the importance of nitrogen in plant nutrition became well established. It then became obvious that the natural cycle of nitrogen was not sufficient to supply the ever increasing demands for plant production.

Ammonium Sulfate Era

Long before turf grass management had grown to the sizeable industry as we know it, the use of commercial fertilizer for farming had become big business. During the "Roaring 20's" ammonium sul-

fate was the big thing in turf fertilizer. Research in England and in the eastern part of the United States had determined that ammonium sulfate was excellent for controlling weeds in turf as well as feeding the grass and it was applied to putting greens in great quantities. As the soil acidity increased with repeated applications of ammonium sulfate, the grass was less able to withstand stresses, particularly drought. A lot of grass was lost in 1928 and when the great depression started in 1929, the ammonium sulfate era was over.

Versatile Minerals

As we gained experience with nitrogen bearing materials for turf fertilization, three classes of compounds evolved. These were determined by the rate of availability of the nitrogen in the material.

First were the inorganic chemical compounds such as ammonium sulfate and ammonium nitrate and synthetics like urea and cyanimid. These materials are highly water soluble and the nitrogen in them is rapidly converted into ammonia and nitrates which are quickly absorbed by the grass roots. The nitrogen in the synthetic solubles — urea and others — require some conversion in the soil and are therefore not as rapidly available as that in the ammonium compounds.

Because they are highly water soluble, they pass through the soil rapidly during periods of excess moisture. They are also more likely to cause problems such as burning if improperly handled. However, they are highly concentrated sources of nitrogen.

Second are the natural organics such as processed sewage sludges, tankages, seed meals, and leather waste. The nitrogen content of these materials is lower than the first group. Most of the nitrogen released from the organics is dependent upon microbial action in the soil and therefore is affected somewhat by moisture, temperature, and soil characteristics. Ease of handling, less chance of problems, and slower availability tend to offset the lower nitrogen content of the materials.

The third class can be called the synthetic organics or plastic type materials. The most common one in this category is urea-formaldehyde. U-F has some of the characteristics of the first class and some of the second class. From 20% to 30% of the nitrogen in U-F is soluble and therefore rapidly available. The rest is insoluble and the nitrogen becomes available at about the same rate as that in the natural organics. Polymerization, a molecular change within a compound, sometimes alters the nitrogen efficiency of U-F compounds.

Other urea-aldehyde combinations offer promise of becoming additional controlled nitrogen bearing compounds for turf feeding in the future.

Organic versus Inorganic

For many years there has been a controversy between the users of organic and inorganic (chemical) fertilizer. Claims have been made by the organic supporters that plant food elements coming in from man-made chemicals are not as good for plants and people as those coming from natural sources. A difficulty arises in defining organic and inorganic. Any product that has carbon atoms in it is considered organic by a chemist. This includes urea, which was originally discovered in urine. The urea extracted from urine cannot be distinguished from that which

(Continued on back page)

MIDWEST GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENTS ASSOCIATION

13th ANNUAL TURF CLINIC

Held November 16 & 17, 1965

At Medinah Country Club



Notes

Glad to see Frank Dinelli back in circulation again. Gab Rosset is out of the hospital and doing well. After almost a month, Roy Nelson is home now and continuing to rest and recoup from his heart attack. Pat Ryan was admitted for surgery the first part of the month.

News from the National is that the Golf Course Reporter will have a new name, "Golf Superintendent," to go along with the new format. Time is running short, get those hotel reservations in before it is too late. Mail to:

GCSA Housing Bureau
c/o Kansas City Convention & Visitors Bureau
1030 Baltimore
Kansas City, Mo. 64105

After Kansas City the conference will be held in Washington, D.C. and then the city with the golden gate bridge, San Francisco.

The 13th annual turf clinic held at Medinah Country Club was a magnificent success. Dudley Smith and his committee put together a great program. All will agree that the 131 in attendance came home with something worthwhile. There is no doubt that it will be a job to top, both the program and the attendance record set. One of the things that was outstanding was the exhibit of all the old time equipment and magazines set up by Tom Burrows. The meals again were the best and we thank Manager Art Tebell and his staff for a job well done. Again we say thanks to Medinah Club for being host to our association.

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13th ANNUAL TURF CLINIC

Held November 16 & 17, 1965

At Medinah Country Club



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NITROGEN

(continued)

is produced synthetically. Those favoring organic materials will accept urine but not urea.

Plant foods or nutrients, regardless of their origin, are continually undergoing changes in the soil. Nitrogen enters the plant as the ammonium ion (NH₄) or the nitrate ion (NO₃) and the root hairs have no way of knowing whether those ions came from organic or inorganic materials and could care less.

Nitrogen Management

There is no one type of nitrogen material that has all the desirable features or all of the undesirable features. A knowledge of all types and how to integrate their good features will in the long run tend to produce the most desirable results. Turf of good color that starts early, grows moderately and steadily, strong and durable, throughout the entire season, is a worthy goal.

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