

of expanding income is never ending for the WTA Board. There is a plan, and it is only a plan at this stage, to figure out a way to "tax" the end user and final benefactor of the kind of research we all know that is needed. The dairy industry has a checkoff plan for each hundredweight of milk sold. The corn growers might tax each bushel of corn taken to market. The same goes for pork producers, cranberry growers, truck farmers, etc. The problem with the turfgrass industry is that our final product isn't always a commodity. We would, however, like to see a one cent charge on each round of golf played in Wisconsin funnelled to the WTA. We would like to make arrangements to receive a similar amount donated for each square yard of sod sold in the state. Similarly, each home lawn treated by the lawn care industry could be taxed an insignificant sum, but the total for the year, statewide, would be substantial. The point is, in each case, the final user supports the research. Keep in mind that these ideas are still in the formative stage, but that is always the first step.

(c.) The two sources of income that you mention here, the GCSAA and the Noer Foundation, are certainly sources of research monies for the UW staff, once they have developed an applied program and have the facilities to carry out longer term and more basic research. They are **not** sources of income for the WTA. We are all, in fact, in existence for the same purposes — horses of a different color, if you will.

6. There are no definite answers to the questions you ask about the research facility. What the WTA Board knows for certain is the obvious — we need one. That need is amplified by the fact that we are among the very few that do not have such a facility, despite the size of the turfgrass industry in Wisconsin (see the WTA "Green-space Report" authored principally by WGCSA member Ed Devinger). We are also aware of the fact that by virtue of being among the last to have a turfgrass research facility we have the opportunity to have the best. We are able to eliminate problems and mistakes encountered by other

land grant colleges and at the same time incorporate the best of what they have. Determination of what kind of facility to plan for was the responsibility given to a WTA subcommittee of Jim Huggett, Monroe Miller and Tom Harrison. The subcommittee worked with their own resources but received the bulk of the planning input from Dr. Kussow, Dr. Worf and Dr. Newman. These men, through their contacts with colleagues at other land grant institutions, laid out some general requirements in terms of a building and of the property need for a turf research farm. Timing seems to be working in our favor since the Chancellor of the UW—Madison has given the green light for construction of a University golf course. Although the subcommittee has some ideas about items you mention — costs, timetable, initial and long-term funding — we feel there is wisdom in waiting on public discussion until we have shared those thoughts

with the Madison campus chancellor. A meeting with Dr. Shain may even have taken place by the time you read this. Rest assured that as soon as there is something to report or to discuss, you will read about it in the GRASSROOTS.

Finally, questions have arisen about the "O.J. Noer Center." The subcommittee felt there could be no better way to honor a man who was a graduate of the University of Wisconsin and quite possibly the premier turf agronomist of all time than to name a turf research station at his alma mater after him. Thus, the name was born.

The WGCSA will be hearing more and more from the WTA. A formal report by one of the WTA Board members will be given at each WGCSA Board meeting in 1986. That same report will be presented to our members.

Monroe

An Open Letter to all WGCSA Members

from Tom Harrison

The Board of Directors of the Wisconsin Turfgrass Association would like to take this opportunity to thank the membership and Board of Directors of the Wisconsin Golf Course Superintendents Association for their financial support over the years and particularly for the grant of \$5,000 for 1986. The WGCSA is in a leadership position in Wisconsin in their commitment to turfgrass research. All the members of the WGCSA should be proud of this role and the WTA is indeed very thankful for this tremendous support. The superintendents of Wisconsin have a great deal to gain from this continued commitment to the WTA.

The WTA is struggling very hard to bring the University of Wisconsin's research efforts up to the level of our neighboring states. All the efforts put forth to date — the yearly grants to Dr. Worf, Dr. Mahr, Dr. Kussow and Dr. Newman, the research truck purchased in 1984,

publishing of research studies, e.g. — are a tiny part of what the WTA is struggling towards. These past efforts, whereas they are meaningful in regards to showing the U.W. administration that we are a dedicated and serious group, merely scratch the surface of what Wisconsin really needs in terms of research.

Wisconsin needs a commitment from the U.W. administration that urban agriculture is a significant and sizeable industry in Wisconsin. The green industry needs to be recognized such that it is not last on the priority list for research support. Once this fact is recognized then the question becomes, how do they as a state land grant college better serve this industry. The answer to that is an urban research facility. The WTA, in its efforts gets the University moving, had to first make basic support efforts such as we have done for the last four years. As these efforts took place we have been busy

behind the scenes putting together a report detailing the size of our industry and what our industry really needs 10, 20 and 30 years down the road. We compiled the "Wisconsin Greenspace Industry Report" to establish the size and scope of our industry in relation to other state research supported crops. We also put together a proposal for an urban research facility, the "O.J. Noer Center," to study turfgrass. The culmination of this three year effort came on Wednesday, April 2, 1986 when we made our proposal to the U.W. chancellors office through Harry Peterson, the chancellor's assistant. The same morning we also visited with the

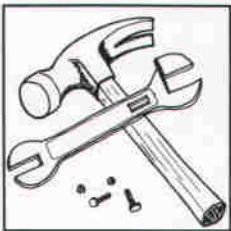
Dean of the College of Agriculture, Leo Walsh. Jim Huggett, Monroe Miller and Tom Harrison made the proposals and were warmly and enthusiastically received. The gracious reception by school officials and the fact that the WTA is determined to put Wisconsin's research efforts on a higher plane will ultimately bring success to this project. My point with all this dialogue is that over the years as interested turf groups such as the WGCSA have supported the WTA people may at times have wondered where is all this heading, or are we really getting the most for our dollar contributed. The answer is positively that the

maximum value is derived from every dollar contributed, but that a great deal of time and some dollars have been put into the long range projects mentioned earlier. Wisconsin will have a great urban research facility someday and we are committed towards this goal with your continued support.

Again on behalf of the WTA Board we thank you for your past support and we look forward to this same cooperative support in years to come. Thank You.

Respectively,
Thomas R. Harrison, President
Wisconsin Turfgrass Association

Shop Talk



REFLECTIONS ON THE WINTER MAINTENANCE SEASON JUST COMPLETED

By Pat Norton

Another (very early) golf season is now upon us. The winter maintenance season is just completed. Everybody's all fired up and ready to go, right? But before the outdoor season gets too hectic, let's reflect back on those endless winter months and ask ourselves a few questions about wintertime in a golf course maintenance shop.

In answering these questions let's take into account the fact that many of these remarks will relate more to the younger superintendent—the guy like myself who is still building up and organizing his operation. More established superintendents can probably identify with these questions and situations by remembering back to their earlier days.

Q) How productive was I over the winter? Was I productive enough?

A) Usually I feel like I'm not productive enough during the winter. Why do I feel this way? I don't really know. Maybe because my day is usually only eight hours (much of that either at the desk or on the phone or both, it seems) instead of ten or twelve hours as

in the summer. I probably feel guilty about working less, although I certainly shouldn't.

Q) How productive were my staff people over the winter? Were they productive enough?

A) Thinking on it objectively and given all the winter responsibilities other than shop work that my staff has—YES, they were pretty darn productive. Especially when I think about all that was accomplished since mid-November.

Q) Did we accomplish everything that we set out to back in November?

A) No, certainly not everything that we had hoped to take care of was finished by April 1. But, almost all of it was. Probably 90-95% of my equipment is set to go. But it always seems like it's the little extras that have to be let go—the traffic signs, the informational signs, the miscellaneous small equipment. It can be really frustrating.

Q) What should I do differently next winter?

A) Quite simply two things come to mind here. One is to

get a good, early jump on the winter maintenance and two is to hire an extra person if you have a real need and budget affords it.

Q) Do I have enough in my budget for winter overhaul and maintenance?

A) If I feel that I don't have enough funds budgeted, the first thing I'll look at is adjusting monthly budget figures to balance things a bit. If the problem is truly insufficient funds, then trace the problem to its source. If you're equipment is older it'll naturally require more dollars to maintain it. Making a green committee understand this is the easy part. Making them support you in your quest for newer, more modern equipment is more difficult.

Q) What, if any, decision making is involved in winter maintenance and repair?

A) The decision-making which follows is pretty simple. Which piece of equipment is it, where and how much will it be used, cost of repair, what could happen if it breaks down are but a few of the things to think about. It's in this decision-making process that a good mechanic will be crucial—one who thinks like the superintendent, one who can give valuable input and suggestions, and one who is just as cost conscious as the superintendent.