



SPRING NEWS

By Monroe S. Miller

Tax time is fast approaching, and the thought of it is gut wrenching and aggravating. There seems to be no end to the greed and misdirected overspending by politicians and bureaucrats. I've been madder than hell in my shop over the \$50 per person we paid for three of us to renew our pesticide applicator licenses. My anger rose another notch when we had to send in \$150 to DILHR to get a variance to put our fuel storage aboveground, something **they** want us to do. I swore when I saw the bill from the Wisconsin Emergency Response Board for \$800. I was furious and called for some explanation; all I got was a rude, overpaid and ignorant public employee. As usual, when I want to know something about government regulation, I spoke to Russ Weisensel and got the straight answer.

Jim Latham is hopping mad, too; his new invoices for the 1990 TAS includes a 5% Wisconsin use tax. The man who serves as our Club's green committee chairman is an attorney for Foley and Lardner; he offered Jim help and advice on the matter. After investigation, he found out it was to no avail. "Pay the 5%," he recommended.

I received a nice pay increase for the new season; I was quite pleased. Then I saw the first bimonthly paycheck. My federal withholding increased by \$68, state withholding went up by \$30 and the FICA increase was a bit over \$20. Double those numbers to see my increased taxes for one month. Dane County raised taxes by 20% and my real estate taxes climbed by \$300 in one year.

When will it end?

Despite millions of experiences like mine, some of the slobes who run the state were indignant when, on December 28, MONEY magazine placed Wisconsin among the nation's top 10 "tax hells" because of "skyrocketing state and local taxes." We earned a #8 ranking, a well deserved placement.

Tax hell is a very appropriate and descriptive phrase. I've about had it. Am I alone in this frustration, or is there similar feeling out there?

As if we don't have enough worries, it appears that the gypsy moth situation is looming larger and larger. Last summer, thousands of acres of trees in southern Michigan were stripped of foliage, leaving entire forests barren and looking like winter in July.

It was the gypsy moth at work. The insect's ravenous larvae have been eating leaves westward from Massachusetts, where it was introduced by accident from Europe a hundred years ago.

In early December, state entomologists announced the discovery of gypsy moths in large concentrations in Door County and Kewaunee County. Smaller but more widespread infestations were found in a belt from Milwaukee through Waukesha, Jefferson and Dane counties.

A DNR entomologist has said it isn't known yet how much trouble we're in, but added "it could be very serious."

The moths have defoliated entire forests in Vermont, New Hampshire, Maryland, New York and Pennsylvania.

The main infestation has reached only as far west as central Ohio. But a second infestation has hit Michigan. It appears the infestations in both southern and northern Wisconsin have come from Michigan. Here's the theory:

"The gypsy moth larvae, a large fluffy caterpillar, travels by eating its way to the top of trees and then floating with the wind. It had to be unusual weather — a strong easterly wind combined with a strong updraft that floated them high into the air and across Lake Michigan to our state."

Julie Nara thinks the gypsy moth should be relatively easy to control up north. The wind generally blows from the west to east, keeping the moths pinned against the lake. Trapping and spot spraying with insecticide might control the infestations. But she's more worried about the Milwaukee-to-Madison outbreak. Even though it's a slight infestation, it is widespread, making it harder to control.

When Julie makes her plea for golf course volunteers in the gypsy moth trapping program, please say yes. It is easy to do and becoming an even more important part of controlling them.

We don't need to have our golf courses defoliated in July. We're having enough trouble with *Poa annua* about then!

The city of Madison had another WGCSA member retire recently. Erv Graf locked his office door for the last time on January 2, 1990, ending more than 35 years of work on city golf courses. For the past 15 years he has been the supervisor of golf operations.

Although he's only 60 years old, Erv decided to take advantage of the state's early retirement. He joins Ted Payne and Bud Kelzenberg who did the same thing last year. Retirement will give Erv more time with his hobby of golf club restoration and more opportunities to spend time on golf

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Congratulations and best of luck to a true gentleman of golf.

There's a place in Pinehurst, North Carolina called the World Golf Hall of Fame. I think I've heard of it, but I haven't paid much attention. I'm a USGA man, and once you've visited the USGA Museum and Library at the headquarters in Far Hills, New Jersey, there seems little reason or need to travel to what are clearly secondary sites.

Couple that with the fact that the USGA's a hundred years old and this outfit was only founded in 1974. And the PGA runs it; we have no involvement. Hardly makes it a hot destination for golf course superintendents.

Some of us may want to stop now, though, thanks to some generous work by the Toro Company.

They were the founding sponsor, to the tune of \$160,000, of the new shrine gardens on the grounds at the World Golf Hall of Fame. The garden was created to honor the world's golf course superintendents for contributions and service to the game of golf.

The gardens, covering four acres, are located near the entrance to the shrine building. In addition to the beautiful landscaping, there is a plaque that

notes their dedication. The project started in April 1988, was completed in August 1989 and publicly dedicated on November 2, 1989.

Besides the thousands and thousands of seasonal plantings, there is a golf ball topiary, a putterboy topiary and a circular flower logo of the GCSAA.

Sounds great — I hope someday I'll have an opportunity to visit the place. And thanks are due Toro for their generosity.

Now if we could get them to make just a little donation, on behalf of turfgrass research, to the NOER CENTER.

The question in the minds of a lot of agriculturalists (and some others, too, I suppose) is "will the 1990s be cooler than the sizzling 1980s?"

The year 1989 was one of the hottest years of the last century, according to worldwide weather records collected by scientists in the U.S. and England. It appears from the data collected so far that 1989 will be the fifth warmest year since 1880.

This will scare you a bit: the six hottest years of the last 110 years all occurred in the 1980s.

Keep in mind that this is global information and isn't related directly to the

weather any one of us might have had on his golf course in the '80s.

Both British and American records indicate that the six warmest years of the past 110 years were 1988, 1987, 1983, 1989, and 1980, in descending order. The average annual temperature worldwide during the two warmest years — 1987 and 1988 — was about 59.6 degrees. The average annual temperature dipped a bit to about 59.3 in 1989.

But there is still debate over whether this worldwide warming trend has been caused by the greenhouse effect. Most meteorologists say it is just too early to say if it is due to natural variations or indeed to the buildup of CO₂. Some say it likely is a combination of the two.

Obviously, I don't have a clue. But I sure hope it is nothing more than normal ups and downs and not because of man's excesses. And I also hope it is over. I am tired of above normal summers AND winters.

The GCSAA started construction on their new headquarters building on January 12. As you've read (here), it will be in Lawrence, Kansas where our present structure is and will even be on an Alvamar Golf and Country Club golf course, just like our current one is. This will be a new golf course, however. The new golf course and our new headquarters will both open in 1991.

The 40,000 square foot building will include a state-of-the-art educational facility, an extensive periodical library and advanced audio/visual equipment.

The grounds surrounding our current headquarters have been ridiculed by this reporter (and many others, I might add) for being so poorly maintained. The landscaping is atrocious, which seems somewhat fitting for a lousy maintenance situation. The new building will inspire some more appropriate landscape planning, including fountains along with a wide variety of shrubs and flowers. They've budgeted \$300,000 for some professional work in this area. If they remember to budget some money to take care of it, it will be worth \$300 grand.

Given our name, location of the building and what our members do, one wouldn't think that a major task!

The artist's drawing here shows what the building will look like when it is completed. Pretty classy.

For \$4 million, it ought to be.

