

FAIRWAYS WITH MOWERS: TWO OPINIONS

By Monroe S. Miller

Golf Course Manager
Blackhawk Country Club

One of the recommendations Stan Zontek made during his last USGA Green Section Visit to my golf course in July of 1984 was to aerify my fairways with Ryan Greensaires. When he made that suggestion during our conversation my jaw hit my chest and my remark was something like, "You cannot be serious!" I knew some Golf Course Managers were involved in this program, but I assumed it was merely a brief trend that would pass quickly. Stan doubted that and was firm in his conviction that our Club should seriously consider it. He spoke from the experience of many visits on golf courses that had realized excellent results.

There was (and is) no doubt we needed to do more aerifying than we had been, in spite of the use of lightweight mowers. In fact, these machines were leading to a "puffiness" that we'd never experienced with gang mowers, and it was giving me a fair amount of concern. They seemed more matted and I suspected some increase in the amount of thatch. Soil compaction relief wasn't a major consideration in deciding to go ahead with this program. The twice a year aerification with the Ryan Renovaire wasn't doing the job in firming up the fairway turf and controlling thatch.

If there was a reasonable method and appropriate implements available, I would have opted for topdressing alone, since the principal concern wasn't soil compaction. But neither exists, at least at a sensible cost. The thought of preparing hundreds and hundreds of cubic yards of topdressing wasn't a pleasant one, either. The need to biologically decompose some of the accumulated mat caused me to pause and at least give some consideration to what I envisioned as a slow, laborious and time-consuming job.



At times the Renovaire does a fairly good job of aerifying, although the number of cores and volume of soil are small.

A couple of other factors influenced me to decide to plan on the Greensaire procedure. The Renovaire we've been using for years is unpredictable in its results. Some aerifications were excellent and others were not. Results seemed dependent on a

soil moisture content that I couldn't define, predict or expect. We've gotten excellent penetration with a double set of 3/4" tines and poor results with a single set of the same tines, pulling only a 3" core. The best that could be said of the machine is that it is fast. Another consideration was the leveling effect of the volume of soil brought up by the Greensaires. Our golf course was built over sixty years ago and the grading on the fairways is less than desirable. As Roger Thomas pointed out in an article he wrote for a past issue of the GRASSROOTS, the lower heights of cut on golf course fairways are exposing some of these poorer grading jobs — unevenness that was disguised in the 3/4" to 7/8" range of the recent past. Finally, I gave serious consideration to Stan's recommendation simply because he never once gave me bad advice, and few people travel more widely and are more on top of turf management problems and practices than he is.

Once my decision was made, I proposed it to the Green Committee. They concurred. One of the Board members in particular applauded because of the improvement he'd noticed over time as a result of our aerification of the approaches or decks in front of putting greens with the Greensaires and 5/8" tines.

We started this past spring. Our intention was to do about half of the fairways with Greensaires and the remainder with either the Renovaire or the Terra 200. We purchased one new machine and one used machine to give us a total of four to work with on this project.



Four Greensaires bring up a tremendous amount of soil in a relatively short period of time.

We started aerifying our first fairway on April 15. I guess the main reaction any of us on the staff had was that it went so quickly. It was a fairway of about an acre and a half and we had it cored in about 2 hours, using the four machines. I should add that 2 of the machines were the newer Greensaire II models, and they are noticeably faster than the 2 older models. We consistently cored more than 3/4 acres per hour, which included fueling time.

One of Zontek's recommendations was to combine the coring with verticutting. The previously mentioned unevenness of our fairways precluded the use of our Aeroblade (too wide), so we used a Mataway. With the thatching reel running in reverse, it does a beautiful job of verticutting and of

(Continued on page 23)

different times per year with a large fairway aerifier going over the area only once each time. Well, for one thing that makes three or four times I have to inconvenience the golfers. But even more important than that, you miss doing the complete job the first time, and the total benefit of the practice is delayed beyond prime time. Its like a doctor saying to his heart patient, you have four bad arteries going into your heart, and I'm going to fix one this month and than do the other three, one each month for the next three months. And if your lucky, you won't die before I get to those other three. I like doing the complete job all at once, it saves more grass plant lives per square foot the first time around.

4. If I want to oversee, the machine must bring the most soil to the surface for good soil seed contact, and provide the most holes per square foot for sheltered niches for maturing grass seedlings.

To my knowledge, the machine today that can accomplish the aforementioned practices is the Ryan Greensaire. Which, this past season was my choice at Westmoor for core cultivation of fairways.

We aerified our 27 acres of fairways this past Spring with two Ryan Greensaires. We started April 29, and it took us 11 working days to complete the task. We began each day at 6:00 am and ran the aerifiers continuously until 4:30 pm. Once a fairway was aerified we broke up the cores with a harrow by going slowly up and down the fairway, and then in a circle pattern. We watered lightly that night to wash the soil down into the turf, and the next afternoon we mowed with a triplex mower with no buckets, again trying to separate the soil from the tufts of grass. Immediately after the mowing we swept the fairway with Parker lightweight sweepers pulled by Cushmans, and adjusted so they only picked up the tufts and not the soil.

The maintenance of the aerifiers was the responsibility of our Service Technician, Mr. Robert Kenngott. Bob had the aerifiers lubricated every hour while they were in operation, and at the end of each day he changed the engine oil, cleaned the precleaner on the air filter, checked the cam case oil, changed the tines, checked chain tensions, checked the machine's timing, and checked all nuts, bolts, and set screws for tightness. And every third day he changed the air cleaner.

After the fairway coring was one, Bob estimated the rebuilding of the machines to be between \$2,000 and \$2,500 each. With the major replacements being; pushrods, bushings, bearings, seals, chains, drive clutch, and master clutch.

The 1985 season at Westmoor until September, saw dry warm temperatures with little humidity, and low dew points. In other words, ideal drying out conditions. I definitely feel that the early season coring task helped us maintain ideal fairway playing conditions throughout that droughty period, besides helping to keep thatch under control.

The close proximity and depth of the holes, along with the vast amount of soil brought to the surface, and the minimum playing surface damage, have sold me on the use of Ryan Greensaires as the best tool to perform a one time annual fairway core cultivation, that delivers maximum agronomic benefits.



Neil Richter presents WGCSA President Bill Roberts a \$500 S&R donation from Hanley Implement.

HANLEY IMPLEMENT ADDS TO WGCSA SCHOLARSHIP AND RESEARCH FUND

Neil Richter, General Manager of Hanley Implement in Sun Prairie, presented newly elected WGCSA President Bill Roberts a check for \$500 to be added to the Association's S&R Fund. It was the third consecutive year that Hanley's, Wisconsin's Ransomes distributor, has given that amount. It is presented with the understanding that the membership determines where it will be best used. Thanks to Neil, Dean Lund and Ray Woznik for their generous support of the most worthy of causes!



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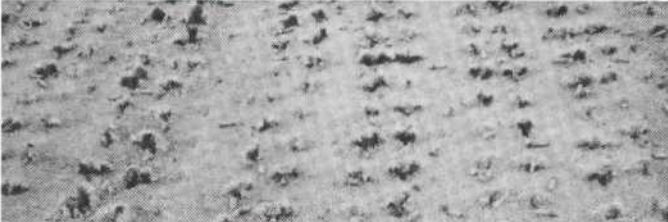
separating the soil from the thatch of the core. Also, it worked well in thinning out the grass plants to give an opportunity for some juvenile growth. But it is just too slow and took much longer than the actual aerification. We did not use Mataways this fall and instead broke the cores up using a 12' Fuerst rolling harrow. It does a good job if the cores are not allowed to dry too much and it is exponentially faster. The verticutting, although beneficial, was sacrificed.

As planned, we did about half the fairways this spring with the Greensaires and the remainder with either the Renovaire or the Terra 200. This fall we reversed the process so that all of the fairway turf was cored with a Greensaire in 1985.

We did not notice as much wear on the machines as we had expected. Part of it may be that four of them were used, but we also used those same machines to aerify greens and tees in 1985, so they did have a lot of individual hours. We changed engine oil about every ten hours and greased the machines after approximately five hours of operation. The engine oil level was checked with each fuel fill.



The finished product of the Renovaire can be quite good, or . . .



It can be terrible, as shown here. We stopped with this fairway.

An operational report of lessons learned would include the following key points:

1. Results are much better in the spring than in the fall. Rooting of the turf is better, the turf is tighter and the coring is much cleaner.

2. During the 1985 season, myself and staff were able to clearly identify those fairways which were aerified with the smaller machines. Better uniformity, less visible stress in areas normally weak due to uneven water distribution from our manual center row irrigation system, and substantially less need for handwatering. Remember, this is a comparison of fairways in the same reason — healthier turf with less water.

3. We didn't see the need for as extensive machine lubrication as has been reported elsewhere by others.

4. The procedure offers a great opportunity for corrective applications of phosphorus, potassium, sulfur, gypsum, etc.

5. It's an excellent preparation for the overseeding of bentgrass into *Poa annua*.

6. Cross-sectional cuts of the turf reveals excellent incorporation of soil into the thatch, my prin-

cipal goal in the first place.

7. I offer this as only a curious observation — we used substantially less nitrogen fertilizer in 1985 than in any other previous season. A lot of theories could be advanced to explain this, but I'll resist doing that and instead see if it continues to the upcoming seasons.

A couple of other observations are worthy of comment. We asked Bill Milward for a demonstration of the Terra 200 this spring and took a careful look at it and the job it did. Obviously, it falls somewhere between the Renovaire and the Greensaire in terms of soil brought to the surface, speed and surface disruption. I think it has a place on our golf course and hope to purchase one for use in 1986 for fall aerification.

Although soil compaction relief was not the reason I initiated this program, it most certainly is a tangible and important result of it. Anyone who knows or even pretends to know anything about golf course turf knows the value of aerification in correcting and improving problems of soil compaction and surface crusting. Use of the Greensaires does more than any other implements to improve the oxygen-carbon dioxide relationship in the soil. It increases the rate at which oxygen will move into the soil and carbon dioxide from root respiration will move out of the soil. Poorly drained and compacted soils restrict this exchange and there is a reduced ability of plants to take up water and nutrients important for healthy turf. The result is weak and thin turf that is more disease susceptible and, for *Poa annua*, more wilt prone. Evidence of the value of aerification can be dramatic as we have all seen in the form of dense root growth in aerifier holes and more vigorous top growth above them. The top growth is especially evident in the spring when the green tufts stand out from the surrounding turf. The value of aerification has been proven experimentally in the laboratory and in the field. Differences in turf quality have been quantified and correlated with aeration. And most important of all, it has been noted in the field of play.

Measuring the cost/benefit ratio of aerification has made the decision to continue using Greensaires on our fairways next year an easy one. We will continue the program with the knowledge that the result is better turf for the players. Noting that I've never seen a turf that has been over-aerified, I'm convinced that the substantial number of holes and the volume of soil removed make these machines and this process an important management improvement at our Club.



The Terra 200 is between the Renovaire and Greensaire in quality and quantity of cores.



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PREPARING A RESUME — THE PERSONAL ADVANCE CAMPAIGNER

How many resumes — unsolicited, requested or otherwise — cross your desk in a year? More than a few, I'd guess. And how many have you prepared as you've advanced your career — one, two or ten? A friend of mine who recently changed golf courses told me that the resume which earned him his first interview (but no job) barely resembled the one submitted to the club that eventually hired him. Fortunately, he was able to refine his resume after each job interview and the job he landed was the best of those he interviewed for. But how unfortunate it would have been if he hadn't even gained an interview with his eventual employer, because of his weak resume.

A resume is the obvious way for anyone to put their best foot forward when looking for a job. It seems incredible that so many of the resumes I see are so poorly prepared. A document that begs attention from a prospective employer, in hopes for a job interview, should be prepared with more care and thought. Too many seem to be written as if no one is going to read them! It is a crucial mistake in the job seeking process.

Too many job seekers compose a resume that is cumbersome and wordy. Brevity should be the guide since the basic purpose of a resume is to offer a custom made advertisement — clarifying goals, explaining accomplishments and hopefully moving an employer toward an interview. It is important to give the hiring authority a clear view of what you are trying to say.

This point is simplified by studies that show most employers only spend an average of 17 seconds on a resume before deciding its fate — more consideration or the wastebasket. These studies show that the official will read the first few inches below the name with some care, but merely skim the rest of the page. This should be a clue on

placement of what you want a prospective employer to read.

An interesting situation in our profession (and others too, most likely) occasionally crops up — there may be part(s) of your work record you'd rather not explain or draw attention to. These might be periods of underemployment or unemployment, or a period of frequent job changes. Inclusion of aberrations like these may result in a resume that is counterproductive; it becomes an enemy rather than a friend. The key to avoiding this situation is your attitude toward a resume. It is **not** a biography of your ups and downs in the marketplace; rather, it is a summary of your qualifications for a certain position. A properly written and well prepared resume will show how you have prepared for the future and **not** how you may have muddled through the past.

There are many resume styles, but two formats seem to be used most frequently. The **functional** format is one that places emphasis on skills and experience. The **chronological** format tracks your career from most recent employment, back into time. Most corporate executives use the chronological format simply because they are most familiar with it and because they are convinced it does the best job of showing one's individual qualifications, achievements, promotion record and career direction. This resume style can show a steady, progressive and responsible work history.

The functional resume is best suited to those people that have a spotty work record or for those who are making a drastic career change. It stresses your base of experience and professional growth, but sacrifices details of how, where and when you earned it. These may be the very details you want to avoid. The obvious catches to the functional format is employer awareness of this style and the suspicion aroused in him. Many consultants recommend using the functional **only** when a chronological resume would likely kill any chance for an interview.

Careful construction of a chronological resume, even in the face of a career setback, can lead to a job interview. For example, if employment in several short periods of time is viewed negatively, it can be overcome to a large ex-

tent by **not** stressing dates of employment. Don't put the dates of employment out in the left margin where they stick out like a sore thumb. If you want to overcome an impression of job hopping, place these dates in an inconspicuous place at the end of a paragraph.

Another key feature of a good resume is describing how each job move prepared you for increasing responsibility and how it was a move up from the previous position. If you fear you've been on a downward spiral with recent moves, pinpoint the experience in each position that best qualifies you for the new position you want. A perfect example would be a Golf Course Superintendent who, although at a lower budget golf course, has provided superb quality putting greens. Emphasize this key point and don't worry that the fairways may have been unwatered Kentucky Bluegrass. The prospective employer may be looking for that one person with abilities to upgrade and improve the club's putting surfaces, and emphasis on your success in this culture may net you the interview. Give only brief treatment to a job that you feel might have been somewhat of a reversal in your career, and give extended coverage to those more important positions you've held.

A major concern for some individuals, regardless of their profession, is deciding how to handle a disastrous job experience. There are many ways to deal with it, depending on how long ago it happened, how important or pertinent it is to your present goal and how big a gap it would leave if you de-emphasized it. A couple of more logical ways are reducing it to a single line; e.g., "Further experience in golf course management — 1980," or omitting it entirely unless it is your current position.

Every resume has numerous other dilemmas to face up to. Some of them are:

THE OBJECTIVE: Some personnel managers believe that spelling out your objective reveals the applicant's goals or sense of direction. They feel it should be broad enough to include closely related positions but not so vague as to give the impression you'll take anything. A possibility is to tailor the objective to each job you seek. Other executives feel it is wasted

space; they skip it and move right down the page. There seems no clear-cut consensus on this one.

PERSONAL DATA: This feature of resumes also seems a toss-up. On the one hand you might be fortunate enough to hit a responsive chord with the person(s) reviewing the resumes for a job and precipitate a conclusion that you are a well-rounded individual. Likewise, your activities or marital status could provoke a prejudicial response that will, fairly or unfairly, put you at a disadvantage to others who simply left the information off their resumes. Can you imagine a die-hard animal lover reading from your resume that you are a die-hard hunter?!

PHOTO: Very little debate here. The overwhelming opinion is leave it out. Pictures can create bias and employers will insist they never hire on the basis of appearance anyway.

REFERENCES: Believe it or not, there is a split of opinion here. A surprising number of personnel managers and executives feel you don't need to list your references and even recommend leaving out the line, "References available on request." It is assumed by these people that any applicant can supply references, so why waste the space. If there is an exception it would be the resume sent with an application for a job in the public (government) sector.

RESUME LENGTH: Again, no clear-cut consensus on this one. Most opinions, however, say not more than two pages. If you've been in the golf course business for a long time you might want to drop your earliest experiences from your resume or at least condense them into a few lines or a short paragraph. Some personnel people strongly favor the one-page resume for almost every situation, saying that the second page is seldom read anyway.

ATTENTION GETTERS: A common question for those preparing a resume is, "How far should I go to make it stand out from the rest?" The answer depends on how well you know the club or company and the probable reaction to any of your "creativity." One consultant feels resumes should not try to be modern art, and others expand that thought with the recommendation that resumes be professional and sophisticated. There are major dif-

ferences between an ad firm or PR company and a business in the turfgrass industry. What may be viewed as original or creative to an advertising professional may be viewed as silly and irritating to a club president. Another common suggestion to give your resume a subtle difference is to print it on heavier paper — it can give a unique and crisp appearance.

Many experts agree that the cover letter is important and needs careful consideration. It is too often not given enough attention and this chance for a resume to stand out among the rest has been missed. I personally give the cover letter of the resumes I receive nearly as much time as the resume itself. It gives a good idea of the applicant's communication skill and shows the applicant has given careful thought to a specific position, in contrast to the individual who has sent out hundreds of the same resume.

Always proof read your resume carefully — typographical errors, sloppy looks and mistakes in grammar can be disastrous. Right or wrong, those kinds of oversights can be more costly than any lack of experience. It's probably a wise idea to let someone who isn't at all familiar with your resume read it — such people can lend constructive objectivity.

It can be helpful to include accomplishments that go beyond basic golf course maintenance responsibilities — the construction of nine new golf holes, the execution of a master plan, renovation of fairways, successful conversion to bentgrass greens, to cite a few specific examples. Many employers are also interested in your activities outside the job. Things like involvement in community government, achievements in professional organizations and activity in charitable groups all give an indication of the total person they are considering.

For those who view the task of resume preparation as overwhelming, there is outside help available. Most mid-sized communities have resume writing and consulting companies that can give help and expert opinion in composing cover letters, resumes and printing. Depending on the amount of service you'll require, including personal interviews, the costs will range from \$30 to \$100.

As one person involved in resume review pointed out, the hope and the curse of them is there is no one way guaranteed to create a sure-fire winner. You must do what you feel comfortable with and what is appropriate for your prospective employer.

Monroe S. Miller

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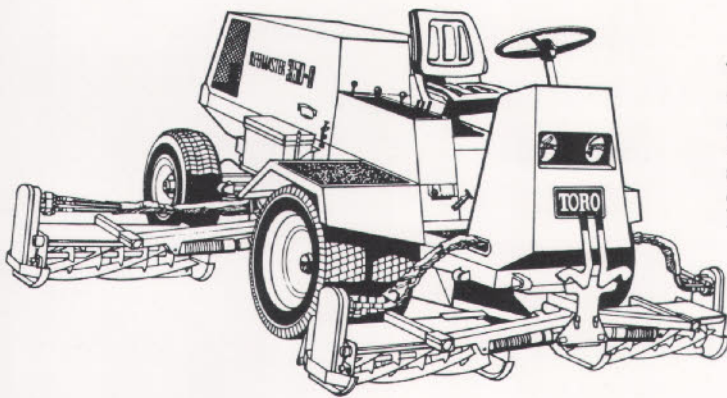
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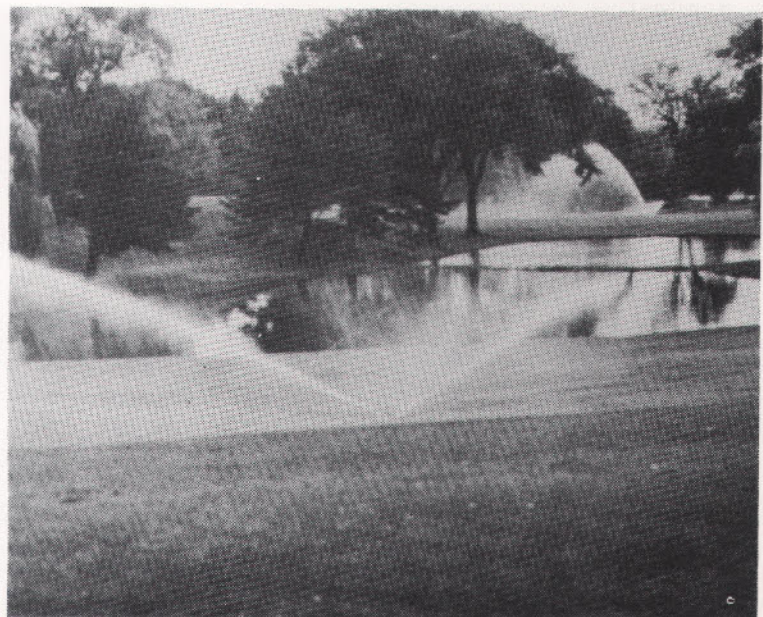


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Dale Parkse, Ed Witkowski and Jack Soderberg were 1st place winners for the day.



Broadcaster Jim Irwin kindly served as the meeting's guest speaker.

BROADCASTER JIM IRWIN UPDATES WISCONSIN SPORTS AT SEPTEMBER MEETING AT BRYNWOOD

Cold weather, brisk winds and sporadic rain showers marked the 1985 WGCSA tournament meeting at Brynwood Country Club on September 23. Steve Blendell, Golf Course Superintendent at Brynwood, had his golf course in excellent condition for his colleagues and it proved a real test of golf. The cold weather made the warmth and comfort of the clubhouse even more welcome and WGCSA members were treated to an excellent meal.

Mr. Jim Irwin provided a perfect ending to the day when he offered remarks on the state of sports in Wisconsin. Irwin, who moved to Green Bay in 1964 and has since become the voice of the Packers, the Milwaukee Bucks and the Wisconsin Badgers, spent over half an hour reflecting on his career in Wisconsin broadcasting and relating many interesting stories. He gave his audience the opportunity to ask any questions they had regarding his experiences over the past twenty-plus years. An avid golfer and member of North Hills Country Club, he also played golf and took some money from Rod Johnson, Bill Roberts and Mark Kienert! It was a rare treat to have the chance to visit with a true sports celebrity and an outstanding gentleman.

Also noteworthy was the presence of Les Verhaalen, longtime member and past president (1942-1945) of the WGCSA and retired Golf Course Superintendent at Brynwood.

It was a rough day on the golf course — cold, wet and blustery weather confronted the players in the tournament. The winners of our annual tournament meeting were as follows:

Place	Championship	CLASS	
		A	B
1st	Bruce Schweiger	Dale Parske	Jack Soderberg
2nd	Steve Schmidt	Ray Mertens	Chuck Frazier
3rd	Irv Johnson	Wayne Otto	Jim Irwin
4th	Steve Blendell	Bill Sell	Greg Sell
5th	Joe Fryman	G. Waddington	Paul Delfosse
6th	Tony Watson	Skip Willms	Tom Schaller

Salesman Class

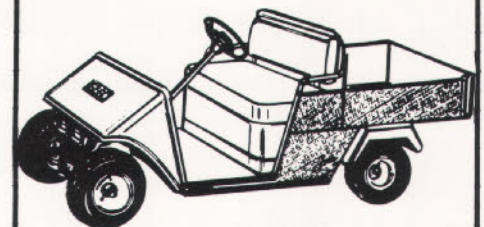
1st	Ed Witkowski	Wayne Otto
2nd	Gary Monfre	Mike Van Sistine
3rd	Ed Devinger	Dick Evenson
Long Putt on No. 6		Ed Witkowski
Closest to the Pin on No. 8		
Closest to the Pin on No. 11		
Closest to the Pin on No. 16		

The low net trophy was won on a card playoff by Bruce Schweiger over Dale Parske and Tony Watson.



Brynwood PGA Pro Carl Unis presents Bruce Schweiger with the 1985 tournament trophy.

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HAPPY THANKSGIVING!

It seems impossible, but Thanksgiving is just around the corner. It finishes a close second to Christmas as my favorite holiday, and I look forward to the four or five relaxing days spent with family and friends as we celebrate all that we have to be thankful for in our lives in this wonderful country. But that anticipation and excitement are dampened just a bit by the fact that Thanksgiving also signals, at least unofficially, the end of the best of all seasons. I don't like to think that this autumn is soon to be over. And it also marks the end of another golf season and, surprisingly, that tugs at my heartstrings too. But the days and months and time itself march on and just as we've all caught our breath we will be thinking of next year's opening day of golf at our golf courses.

Harriet Beecher Stowe, known best for her book "Uncle Tom's Cabin," wrote a book titled "Oldtown Folks" that captured the whole spirit and body of New England. In that book she wrote of Thanksgiving at Oldtown:

"There were, however, some few national fetes: — Election day, when the Governor took his seat with pomp and rejoicing. The Fourth of July took high rank, after the Declaration of Independence; but the king and high priest of all festivals was the autumn

Thanksgiving.

When the apples were all gathered and the cider was all made, and the yellow pumpkins were rolled in from many a hill in billows of gold, and the corn was husked, and the labors of the season were done, and the warm, late days of Indian Summer came in, dreamy and calm and still, with warm trances of benignant, sunny hours at noon, there came over the community a sort of genial repose of spirit, — a sense of something accomplished, and of a new golden mark made in advance on the calendar of life, — and the deacon began to say to the minister, of a Sunday, "I suppose it's about time for the Thanksgiving proclamation."

Thanksgiving Day Proclamations were a tradition in New England. Mrs. Stowe continues:

"Those labors that ushered in the great Thanksgiving festival were always entered into with enthusiasm. There were signs of richness all around us, — stoning of raisins, cutting of citron, slicing of candied orange-peel. Yet all these were only drawings and intimations of what was coming during the week of preparation, after the Governor's proclamation had been read.

The glories of that proclamation! We knew beforehand the Sunday it was to be read, and walked to church with alacrity, filled with gorgeous and vague expectations.

The cheering anticipation sustained us through what seemed to us the long waste of the sermon

and prayers; and when at last the auspicious moment approached, — when the last quaver of the last hymn had died out, — the whole house rippled with a general movement of complacency, and a satisfied smile of pleased expectation might be seen gleaming on the faces of all the young people, like a ray of sunshine through a garden of flowers.

Thanksgiving was now dawning! We children poked one another, and fairly giggled with unreprieved delight as we listened to the crackle of the slowly unfolding document. That great sheet of paper impressed us as something supernatural, by reason of its mighty size, and by the broad seal of the State affixed thereto; and when the minister read therefrom, "By his Excellency, the Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, a Proclamation," our mirth was with difficulty repressed by admonitory glances from our sympathetic elders. Then, after a solemn enumeration of the benefits which the Commonwealth had that year received at the hands of Divine Providence, came at last the naming of the eventful day, and, at the end of all, the imposing heraldic words, "God save the Commonwealth of Massachusetts." And then, as the congregation broke up and dispersed, all went their several ways with schemes of mirth and feasting in their heads.

Most proclamations are necessary and traditional formalities, filled with trite phrases and collections of "whereas" and theretofores." They are all about the same, with minor changes to suite the different occasions they declare. Below is a notable exception, prose filled with the warmth of the day proclaimed and creating a groundswell and filling one's imagination with thoughts of autumn, of family and a meal of turkey and pumpkin pie. It was written by Wilbur L. Cross, a scholar and long-time editor of "The Yale Review" and governor of Connecticut in the mid-1930's. Governor Cross penned this proclamation for Thanksgiving Day of 1936 and I offer it to you and your families with the thought and hope that Thanksgiving 1985 will be your happiest.

MSM