



**MID-
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News Letter



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PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

It all comes at once, regardless of how much winter planning I do, it still hits me all at one time - Training Seasonal Help, Mowing Program, Application of Pre-emergence & Post-emergence Herbicides, Grub Proofing, Topdressing, Spot Seeding and how about all the new wet areas that developed the past two years.

The preceding projects may help to explain the shortest president's message on record.

George B. Thompson
President
Mid-Atlantic GCSAA

APRIL MEETING - WESTWOOD COUNTRY CLUB

Our April meeting at Westwood brought out all our winter hibernating golfers. Some forty members played golf as compared to only four at last month's Springfield meeting. Bob Martino and Bernie Bornhorn walked away with best ball with Bert Yingling and Craig Spottswood winning 2nd best ball.

Dave Fairbanks, tournament chairman, has requested all participating golfers to be sure to turn their signed score cards in at each meeting. Dave will compile our scores and establish a handicap system after our fifth round this year. All handicaps will derive from our monthly meeting golf rounds and not from established handicaps from home clubs.

Walley Stedding, our host superintendent, provided us with an equipment display from three area suppliers - Jacobsen, International Harvester, and Hahn-Westpoint.

Those of you who played golf probably noticed the extensive drain work Walley recently installed. Walley, using a combination of tile and french stone drains, is nearing the completion of

his drainage program. Also evident was the complete overseeding of all fairways and tees.

Years ago Westwood was a municipal, small budget course without much sophistication. Walley and his greens chairman, Stewart Lauer, are working on a full "face lifting" on the whole grounds starting with a sound realistic budget.

Dr. A. J. Powell of V.P.I., Blacksburg, Va., presented an excellent, informative talk on the use and values of non-ionic soil surfactants and wetting agents in general. One point of interest was that some surfactants can become absorbed in the clay and become ineffective thus providing only temporary relief from compaction. Dr. Powell also stated that broad applications of uniform rates were not beneficial where soils and water tables differ. Individual areas should be tested for reaction to wetting agents. Considerable field testing of surfactants is needed and results will become available in the next few years.

One highlight of the evening was the presentation of a certification plaque to Allen MacCurrach of Chevy Chase Club. Bob Shields made the presentation.

MAY MEETING

The May meeting will be held at Crofton Country Club - Host Tom Comalli - Guest Speaker - Dr. Fred Grau.

Directions to Club: From Washington Beltway take Rt. 50 east. Turn off Md. Rt. 3 north six miles to Crofton on right. From Baltimore, Rt. 3 south - Crofton on left 21 miles from Baltimore.

INSTITUTE OF APPLIED AGRICULTURE

The Institute of Applied Agriculture at the University of Maryland has a record size freshman class enrollment for the fall of 1972. As of this early date, 23 students are presently enrolled for

the turf curriculum.

Professor Douglas Hawes, head instructor, has informed us that this year's students are all squared away for summer placement at area golf courses, either as assistants or as students in their summer golf course work program. "One main prerequisite of all our students is that they work on a golf course during the summer months", says Doug Hawes. The summer placement program provides area superintendents with enthusiastic, intelligent, and very often experienced labor. One important extra - these students must complete a rather extensive report on your course which provides the superintendent with much valuable information on all course measurements, updated equipment inventory, etc.

Professor Hawes says next year's students will come from a wide area; one from North Dakota, five from Virginia, two from Pennsylvania, and one from New Jersey. Only slightly more than half the class will be from Maryland.

Keep in touch with Doug Hawes during the year and get your bid in early for an assistant or summer student for the 1973 season.

NOTES FROM THE CINCINNATI CONFERENCE

One aspect of our conference was quite interesting - one whole day of presentation talks was devoted to the discussion of golf carts. Obviously more and more superintendents are becoming involved in the mushrooming trend of cart use on all golf courses. In our relatively early stage of involvement with golf carts, we find our basic problems still lie with cart path construction and the control of traffic on fairways - at least this was the general conception BEFORE attending some of these talks at the National this year.

Robert Balfour, Vice President of Marketing and Sales for Club Car, Inc., of Augusta, Georgia, made a presentation titled "Golf Cars and Legal Responsibilities". (Reprinted in "The Proceedings of the 43rd International Turfgrass Conference and Show" - Read it on pp. 27-31).

Mr. Balfour stated that the increasing number of golf cart accidents is causing serious concern in all parts of the country. Safety standards, both state and nationwide, are being considered. For example:

Annual golf car inspection with state stickers attached to each.

Golf car routes inspected and approved by

state engineers.

Bridges reconstructed with safety of golf carts in mind, including side rails, etc.

Present bridges modified where necessary to meet safety requirements.

Three wheel golf cars eliminated because of instability. Only the use of four wheel golf cars will be permitted.

A prediction of some 60,000 golf car accidents during the 1972 golf season certainly illustrates the critical need for adequate safety regulations.

Now down to some serious questions. Would the golf course superintendent be held responsible when a golf cart accident is related to the condition of the golf course? "The superintendent opened the course to carts today" says the injured party "but I skidded off the wet bridge and lost control of the cart".

Can the cause of such an accident be attributed to the superintendent?

Is the superintendent personally liable when the club is sued by the injured party?

Does the club have accident insurance, and if so, what does this insurance cover?

In an article in the "Wall Street Journal," April 20, 1971, it was stated, "More and more, golf cart accidents are winding up in litigation. A broken ankle recently won \$97,500 from the golf course involved in an out of court settlement. A Pittsburgh lady is suing her golf course for \$75,000. The average damage suit awarded today is \$11,473, with an average award on product liability suits of \$25,000."

Personal injury litigation is a multi-billion dollar business. A golf cart accident can stem from faulty cart path construction to just plain poor driver perception or "lack of common sense". Mechanical failures, ground under repair, hilly terrain, etc., are also common causes for accidents resulting in long drawn out expensive law suits, all of which could conceivably involve the superintendent. The idea that some people have of "sue one, sue all" is rapidly catching on since the law is changing in favor of the plaintiff.

Keep in mind how you as a superintendent are involved with the decision of whether to allow cart use after rainy weather. You have to protect the cart user from areas under construction, washed out spots, sunken drains, and irrigation lines. You must check the stability and width of cart bridges, the state of repair of cart paths, and carefully plan cart paths on steep slopes so as to eliminate long straight downhill runs. If you are also in charge of cart maintenance, point out to your mechanic the importance of day to day