



MID-ATLANTIC News Letter



Published by
Mid-Atlantic Association of Golf Course Superintendents to aid in the Advancement of the
Golf Course Superintendent through Education and Merit

VOLUME XXV

JULY 1974

NO. 7

President's Message

Those of you who missed the meeting at the Naval Academy missed not only a fine day for golf on a greatly improved course, but also one of the most interesting talks that has been presented at any of our meetings. Cdr. Jack Fellows, a prisoner of war in Viet Nam for six years, told us of his experiences there. All of us left there with a great respect for our country and those who serve our country. The pro-super tournament was also a great success. There was a great deal of talking and chatter during the reading of minutes and the presentation of the educational program by Dr. Doug Hawes at the Chartwell meeting. I hope this reminder will be sufficient to all members to respect your speakers. It would be embarrassing to have your name called out during a meeting for silence.

Paul Barefoot

Deliveries Lag in Fertilizer

Heavy fertilizer sales earlier in the current 1973-74 season have left the industry unable to fill all of the booming farm demands for expanded deliveries this spring, an industry spokesman said.

Edwin M. Wheeler, president of the Fertilizer Institute, noted in a statement that fertilizer deliveries from last July through the end of March totaled 11 percent above the same period a year earlier. But figures for the month of March alone showed deliveries seven percent below a year earlier. He said that the big early season sales had left inventories at the end of March at "rock bottom" levels, 47 percent below a year earlier.

Reprinted from *The Washington Post*.

Mid-Atlantic Survey

Last year we attempted a new form of membership survey—one which requested information beyond the scope of the superintendent benefits. The additional questions were related to your labor, maintenance, and their operational budgets. These questions derived from a comprehensive composite of different association surveys, including our national G.C.S.A.A. survey.

After much thought, preparation, and deliberation, we came up with a one-page questionnaire which would give valuable information to all our membership. An analysis of the answers would have provided each of us with useful information to substantiate future expenditures within our own club budgets. We knew for once we had a survey that was chock full of so much potential information that everybody would be very eager to see our results. Out of over a hundred surveys sent out only twenty-nine were returned! ONLY TWENTY-NINE. These twenty-nine surveys were certainly not enough information to enable the board of directors to determine any valuable information for our membership. All that work, and expense, resulted in twenty-nine paper airplanes.

This year we will try again. By starting now we can all have additional information come time for 1975 budget preparations . . . hopefully. Again we have as-

simulated a composite of questions from a wide variety of golf course superintendent surveys. This survey will contain vital information for the benefit of each and every member. If you fail to complete and return this survey you will in turn receive back unreliable data. Secondly, you could jeopardize the effectiveness of your budget presentation. The potential values of this survey are all too numerous to mention; for we can all find different applications for figures and statistics. In order for these figures to provide us with accurate information we must have one hundred percent participation from our membership.

We are conducting this survey for the benefit of our Mid-Atlantic members. Don't short change yourself on obtaining useful information. Read the questions carefully, visualize how the figure, or answer filled in the blank space could help you.

This survey will be destroyed upon completion of computations of answers. No signature of club name is requested for this survey. Please answer all questions and return survey immediately to the Newsletter mailing address below.

Mid-Atlantic Newsletter
9015 Spring Hill Lane
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McKenzies Host Two Consecutive Meetings for Mid-Atlantic

Paul and Mike McKenzie, both accomplished golf course superintendents of Southern Maryland, provided their two clubs and golf courses for our May 14 and June 11 meetings.

Mike McKenzie, Paul's son, is superintendent of the Naval Academy Golf Course in Annapolis. Mike was host for our now annual Pro-Superintendent Golf Tournament—results published in this newsletter. Mike was formerly at Goose Creek Country Club before taking over for the Naval Academy's golf operations. Prior to Goose Creek Mike served as Tom Haske's assistant at River Bend Country Club in Vienna, Virginia. Mike graduated with honors from the University of Maryland's two-year Institute of Applied Agriculture course in 1967.

Paul McKenzie, Mike's father, provided Chartwell Country Club for our June 11 meeting. A beautiful day of golf was followed by a lavish dinner with shrimp and wine and an educational presentation on "Zoyzia Grass on the Golf Course" by Dr. Douglas Hawes from the University of Maryland.

"Golf runs in the family" for the McKenzies. Paul has another son who is a golf professional and even Paul served as a pro-superintendent for several years before coming to Chartwell. Possibly this explains why Mike walked off with first low net at the Chartwell meeting!

We will all look forward to a return visit in the years to come.

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Results

Pro-Superintendent Tournament Annapolis Golf Course

Members and Guests

				Gift Certificate
Low Net:	1st	Bert Yingling	84-10-74	\$30.00
	2nd	T. Harris	102-24-78	15.00
Low Gross:	1st	D. Forbes	80	\$30.00
	2nd	J. C. Thompson	86	15.00

Superintendents

Low Net:	1st	M. Burkholder	87-15-72	\$35.00
	2nd	A. Watson	94-18-76	20.00
	3rd	G. Shapiro	93-17-76	10.00
Low Gross:	1st	R. Miller	82	\$35.00
	2nd	K. Braun	88	20.00
	3rd	L. Rudinski	90	10.00

Best Ball Team:

1st	D. Cammarota & Hank Majewski	67	\$35.00
2nd	B. Stagg & Chaz. Houts	68	25.00
3rd	R. Hall & Paul Haviland	68	15.00

Pros

			Cash
1st	Bruce Lehnhard	73	\$100.00
	Jim Hiskey	73	100.00
2nd	Ward Burgess	74	80.00
	Chuck Walker	75	60.00
4th	Willis Johnson	76	23.50
	Hank Majewski	76	23.50
	Bob Murphy	76	23.50

Closest to Hole:

- # 4 F. Hepler – 5 feet
- # 7 F. Travato – 14 inches
- #17 P. Haviland – 30 inches

Longest Drive:

- # 9 B. Templin – Country Mile

All received a quart of Canadian Club.

We had a total of 31 teams and 31 guests playing under ideal weather conditions on a well-manicured golf course. Our thanks go to Mike McKenzie and his staff for all their efforts and work that resulted in a successful tournament.

Ron Hall
Golf Committee Chairman

MID-ATLANTIC PICNIC

JULY 9TH - EASTERN SHORE

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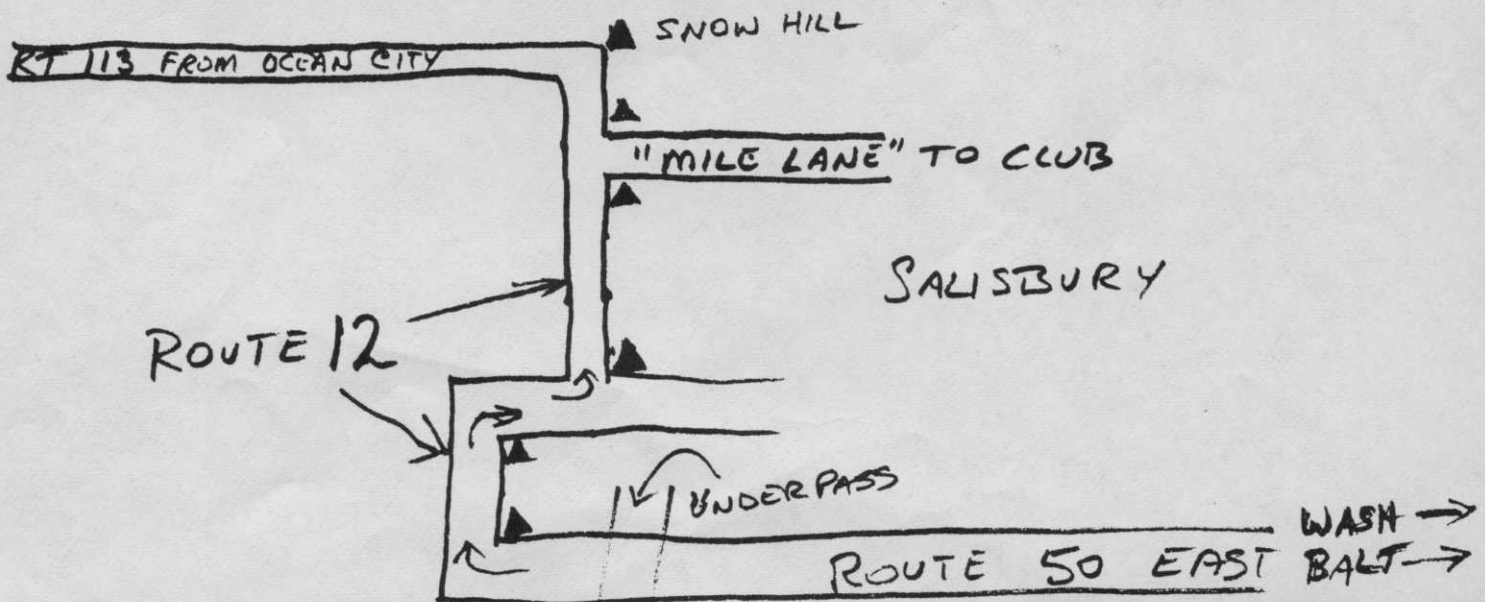
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Overgrooming is Overspending

by Paul Voykin

During the last few recession years, North American golf courses, especially the private country clubs, have been in a serious financial situation because of skyrocketing operation costs. The overall economic picture is critical. Though I have always stated that a clubhouse without a golf course is nothing more than a roadside inn, with other gourmet restaurants in the area as good or better, the officials of our country clubs are also looking in our direction with a frugal eye. Though we have always tried to be conservative and have held tight reins on our expenditures for many years, we too have been caught up in this inflation and have had to increase our budgets annually in order to keep up with higher wages and accelerating maintenance costs. But all the time, without any letup in sight, the demand for agronomic perfection and achievement keeps hammering at us. And in spite of all these drawbacks, we have nobly succeeded with fantastic results. Our golf courses are meticulously groomed and maintained. The best among you are to blame for the situation we are in. The problem as I see it is overgrooming of our golf courses. We do too damn much of it. My contention is that if we did less grooming, the country clubs could save money and have a more challenging golf course with fewer headaches. Please also understand that I am not in any way talking about reducing the upkeep and management of our greens and fairways. I am talking only about reducing the cost of grooming in other areas that we so diligently maintain now. In my opinion we can let some of the areas grow a little shaggy, a little hippy so to speak, and still have a too damned expensive to maintain 160 acres like our own backyards. The machines are going constantly from morning to night. And now I want to correct, once and for all, the chronic complaint, by us superintendents, that the membership is playing too much golf and are interfering with our work. Not so! It's the other way around. We are the ones who are interfering with their play. We have spoiled the golfer rotten with expensive round-the-clock maintenance and grooming. Now we have the high cost monster looking over our shoulder with hungry fangs, and I say that we can't afford him for a pet any longer.

Reprinted from April Ontario Newsletter.



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Some Publications Available ...

Listed below are some National Publications available to you. There are others. If you want, you can keep up. What a contrast from not so many years ago.

1. *Golfdom*, P.O. Box 7591, Philadelphia, Pa. 19101.
2. *Grounds Maintenance*, P.O. Box 2514, Clinton, Iowa 52732.
3. *Irrigation Journal*, P.O. Box 1910, Clinton, Iowa 52732.
4. *Landscape Industry*, 850 Elm Grove Road, Elm Grove, Wisc. 53122.
5. *Nursery Business*, 850 Elm Grove Road, Elm Grove, Wisc. 53122.
6. *Southern Golf Course Operations*, P.O. Box 5082, Lake City, Fla. 32005.
7. *The Golf Superintendent*, 1617 St. Andrews Drive, Laurence, Kan. 66040.
8. *Turfgrass Times*, P.O. Box 5082, Lake City, Fla. 32005.
9. *Weeds Today*, Rt. 3, Box 147, Arcola, Ill. 61910.
10. *Weeds, Trees and Turf*, P.O. Box 6049, Duluth, Minn. 55801.

Courtesy of Turf News of Texas.

Becoming Equipment Dependent

Dr. A. J. Powell
Extension Specialist, Turf—V.P.I.&S.U.

Ten to fifteen years ago, our golf courses were maintained with only the essential pieces of equipment. This was not unlike other agriculture. But turf maintenance on golf courses has progressed rapidly. Labor has been the problem. Clubs have insisted that the superintendent better manicure the golf course with the same amount of labor. This has influenced the golf course superintendent to purchase this equipment. Because of the small sales potential, this equipment has been expensive. But because of the labor problem, it has been well worth the money. Just how far can we go?

Because of the large equipment inventory at every club, qualified mechanics play musical chairs more than the superintendents. A mechanic that fits within the price structure of a golf course is a highly important individual and a rare commodity. It may be that we are presently seeing that the capabilities and quality of the mechanic influences to a large degree the success of the superintendent. It is not uncommon to see a good superintendent on a course that shows a lack of care resulting from equipment problems.

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Because of labor expense it is becoming easier to justify equipment. Fortunately the specialty turf equipment companies are highly competitive and any one golf course can at least be supplied by three separate companies. Many feel that this isn't competitive enough—more can be done. Almost every day you can hear the complaint, "I can get the equipment, but I cannot get the parts. I cannot get the maintenance. Somebody's at fault. I'm going to switch companies." This is not uncommon because it happens in many other industries, including all types of agricultural supplies. But let's not always point the finger at the other person. Look at yourself and your operation for a moment. Do you have a qualified mechanic? Do you properly maintain your equipment? Can the mechanic or yourself properly identify component parts in the machine? When you call the equipment company or make an official order, do you always record the part numbers correctly? Do you always complete the list of parts you need? How can you be haphazard in your ordering procedure and yet be so critical of the haphazardness of the supply? You should always insist that you have an up-to-date parts list and every order should be made from that parts list by number and quantity rather than trying to identify the appearance of the piece over the telephone to the salesman.

Also, be truthful with the salesman. He has enough problems identifying faults in the machine rather than having to identify negligence on your part. Cooperate with him. Your club will often get special cost-saving deals. He certainly shouldn't have to furnish you with a new pencil and pen set or new brief case or a dozen golf balls everytime he visits you. If you are not going to buy

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his equipment, tell him so. If you tell him you are interested in his equipment, give him a chance rather than going behind his back and purchasing from another company. Many people can easily be pinned a sucker. Become friends with all salesmen but do not become obligated to any. Don't always accept the lowest price. Buy the equipment you have confidence in.

Another problem is time. Why wait until the last second to make equipment purchases and part orders. You know well in advance that your aerifier needs tines and that the carburetor is falling off your sod cutter. Again, a good mechanic is essential. However, you must work for the future as well as the present. Keep as much of your own parts inventory as you can. A suggested parts inventory list is supplied when you purchase major pieces of equipment. Develop a system of paperwork in which you can keep a list of parts needed and parts expected to be needed shortly. As parts orders arrive, you can easily check these from the list.

You are the manager of a very expensive operation. Even with a good mechanic, you must make periodic equipment inspections and plan ahead. New and improved equipment reaches our market yearly and the industry is dependent upon that equipment. Proper equipment maintenance is a *must* for proper turf maintenance.



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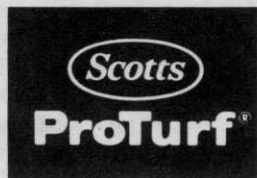
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- turn first to the sports page of a newspaper
- walk into a store and buy the first thing he is shown
- enjoy cleaning a gun
- buy a suit so nearly like his old one
- forget his wedding anniversary
- brag while the barber cuts away undirected
- enjoy watching his automobile being repaired
- come back from an important dinner and not be able to know or name anything on the menu.

Plan An Effective Public Relations Program

What are you personally doing to improve your professional image and stature at your course?

As a member of professional organizations, you attend local, regional and national turfgrass meetings and conferences, but do the course members see you striving for greater knowledge and efficiency, or do they see you flying half-way across the country to have a good time? Are they aware of the content, results and value of these meetings?

What are you personally doing to overcome these public relations problem areas? What does the average golfer know about your duties and responsibilities on the course? What are you doing to educate your golfers?

Experts in the field of public relations report that their biggest problem is a client who asks for assistance only when he is in serious trouble. A strong public relations program should be an on-going facet of your operations.

Studies show that the best time to have a strong program in operation is when everything is going smoothly, and then when things do go sour, and they eventually do to some extent, the necessary preparations have been completed. Just as you would not consider seeding a green without first preparing the area, you should not expect favorable results from a PR effort that is hurriedly organized.

Plan your program to meet the circumstances in which you find yourself. Here is a short list of points to consider:

Know your "Mr. Authority" — Be familiar with the person who has the "yes" and "no" authority. Make sure that he knows you, in more than just a passing way, and then keep him informed. Let him know what you are doing and why. If you overcame a problem, avoided one, or are working on one, let him know. There is no need to blow your own horn, just make your information factual and to the point. "Mr. Authority" will probably appreciate knowing more than the average member and whenever he looks good, you will look even better.

Improve your visibility — Most of your work requires that you remain behind the scenes, so you must make a special effort to meet more of the golfers. In a personal and friendly way, let them know who you are and what you are doing to improve their playing conditions.

Keep in mind that although some of your duties may require work clothes, your personal appearance can be very important. You can improve the interpersonal relationship with members and others, simply by your appearance alone. Looking neat and clean is important, particularly when the average golfer dresses for a fashion show.

Improve your communications — A major key to the success of a public relations program is communications. Some Chapters are encouraging their members to take extra copies of their newsletters and distribute

them to strategic points around the clubhouse. In other situations, the superintendent is writing a green committee newsletter or a column in the club newsletter. Although the average member may not understand the contents of a turfgrass conference program, they can certainly appreciate the technical nature of the material and the depth with which the subjects are covered. Discussing significant conference topics with members, or making the "Proceedings" available to them can go a long way.

Answer Questions — Golf turf is usually held up as an example of what a fine lawn should be. Why not capitalize on your expertise and provide answers to your members? Hold evening classes for the club members, or volunteer to speak at an early Spring meeting. Give the members tips on how to prepare for the growing season and what they could do to improve their own lawn. During the growing season, put a list of suggestions on the clubhouse bulletin board each month.

Another suggestion is to tell the membership what you will be doing to improve their course during the coming year. They will probably be more understanding of play interruptions if they know ahead of time, and appreciate that the course will be improved.

Are you using the local mass media? Are there local radio, television or newspaper lawn and gardening programs or sections? Why not contact the host or editor and volunteer to appear or assist them by discussing the topic of turf, with which you are so familiar?

Keep in mind that the image you possess is not gained overnight, but that it takes considerable time and effort. Be positive and constructive in your actions, and above all look, speak and act the professional you are. Having a sound public relations program will help you to establish friendships, your expertise and the members' faith in you. When you do confront a problem, be ready.

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| August 8 | Turfgrass research and equipment field day, University of Maryland Plant Research Farm |
| August 13 | Beaver Creek Country Club
Host: Bert Yingling |
| September 10 | Joint Philadelphia meeting
Aronamick Country Club
Host: Ed Collins |
| September 18-19
Oct 8 | Suburban Country Club
Host: Robert Miller |
| October 8
Nov 12 | Laural Pines Country Club
Host: Gilbert Shapiro |
| November 12
Dec 10 | Eagles Nest Country Club
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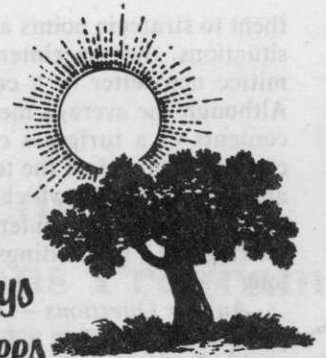
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MID-ATLANTIC News Letter

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