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Only a man would —

- enjoy wearing an old hat
- use profanity to show how tickled he is to meet an old friend
- believe that he is irresistible to the opposite sex
- 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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Thermometer location: official temperature reading five feet above ground in shade.

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Dates to Remember

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| July 9 | Family picnic—Eastern Shore |
| 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
Host: Bill Emerson
Annual election meeting |
| December 10
Sept 18-19 | V.P.I. Field Days
Turf Research Center
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