



CHARTER

Mid-Atlantic Newsletter



Published by:

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

Volume XXXII

December 1979

Number 9

ChemLawn and Dr. Darrah

Greetings from the midwest! Greg Bayor called a while back and asked if I could write an article on what I'm doing at my new job. First, let me say that I have been keeping my ears open to what's been happening in Maryland. From what I hear, the summer was not as difficult as in years past. It certainly makes life easier when Mother Nature cooperates. I hear the Maryland Turfgrass Boosters Tournament which many MAAGCS members promoted, programmed and participated in, had a successful first year and I wish you even more success in this worthwhile endeavor in the coming years.

I have spoken with Dr. Tom Turner on several occasions and it appears that he is fitting well into his new job as Extension Turf Specialist. Speaking from experience, it takes some time to get to know everyone involved in the turf industry in Maryland. I found that one of the best ways to get to know a superintendent was to visit his course and discuss his maintenance programs, course improvements, future plans, problems and etc. These visits were one of the most enjoyable parts of my job in Maryland, so don't just extend an invitation, set up a date for Tom to come for a visit.

I have found my new job with ChemLawn very challenging. Administratively I direct the activities at our Columbus Research & Development Center at Milford Center, Ohio. This facility has about 35 acres of plot land, 15 of which have underground irrigation. Large blocks of improved Kentucky bluegrass blends, common Kentucky bluegrass, improved fine fescue blends, common fine fescue and tall fescue are grown for fertility, weed control and insect control research. Cooperating disease control work with Ohio State University and contract work with several chemical companies on growth regulators and other turf related compounds are also conducted here. There are three research technicians, a research center manager, a secretary and 3 to 5 part-time employees housed at the center which is equipped with a laboratory, growth chambers, greenhouse, offices and conference room. I am also in charge of the research section of ChemLawn Laboratories (CLC) in Columbus. It's quite a job keeping tabs on all this!

My research responsibilities are in the area of turf fertility research. Although nitrogen sources, rates, timing, etc. are the major part of my research program, phosphorus,

potassium, lime and several micronutrients are also being investigated. My fertility work is being conducted at our Columbus research center and at our Atlanta research center on common and improved bermudagrass, Meyer and Matrella zoysiagrasses and on tall fescue. ChemLawn recently acquired a research center near Palm Beach, Florida and I have been down there to put out work with N, P, K, iron and manganese on St. Augustine, bahiagrass and bermudagrass.

Although ChemLawn is best known as a liquid lawn care company, dry fertilizers are frequently used in some branches, at the discretion of the ChemLawn Regional Agronomist. For example, ammonium sulfate and sulfur coated urea (SCU) are applied dry in most of our Texas branches. Therefore, our research work is not limited to only liquid applied fertilizers. On the other hand, I am currently involved with several liquid nitrogen sources which show significant advantages over the solubilized urea used extensively in the lawn care industry. I am also involved with some new liquid nitrogen sources which have water insoluble nitrogen (WIN). These materials represent a significant breakthrough in fertilizer technology. I never imagined the fertilizer industry was so dynamic, but I guess when you use 15,000 tons of actual N (ChemLawn's 1980 projected usage) there is a lot to choose from.

Before I close, I'd like to include some personal notes, if I may. My broken leg is *still* mending. I hope to be out of the Hoffman device which I'm now in and then a cast by Christmas. I was married in Silver Spring, Maryland on September 29th. My wife and I moved into our new home on November 1st after our honeymoon in Bermuda. Our home is in Dublin, Ohio, not more than a mile from Brookside C.C. where Merrill Frank used to be the superintendent. I'll be on the conference circuit this winter with speaking engagements at the Ohio and Virginia Turfgrass Conferences and the Penn. State Landscape Conference. I hope to make it in for Maryland Turfgrass 80, so I'm sure our paths will cross this winter.

With Best Regards,

Chuck