

**Mid-Atlantic Association of
Golf Course Superintendents
NEWSLETTER**

Published by this Association to aid the advancement of the Golf Course Superintendent through education and merit.

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From the Golf World

For those MAAGCS members who missed the Falls Road meeting, the dinner speaker was GCSAA national director Stephen Cadenelli, who had some interesting things to say as well as some tough questions to handle. He made the key point that the national's two main methods of reaching the world outside the superintendent's profession were the annual national conference and show and GOLF COURSE MANAGEMENT magazine. The show generates a great deal of publicity for the association in addition to providing a direct link to the suppliers to the industry, while the magazine not only reaches all members but also all club and course managers plus the green and golf committee chairmen that country club superintendents must deal with. For obvious reasons, the GCSAA officers and directors view both channels as extremely important and are devoting more and more time and effort toward improving and expanding both.

The main thrust of the question directed to Steve Cadenelli, a certified superintendent who is now involved in building a golf course in Lakewood, N.J., concerned the need for better public relations efforts that will improve the image of the average superintendent while getting across the professionalism that more and more characterizes the superintendent's position. Quite a few of our members felt that golfers should be the target of GCSAA public relations efforts, noting the job that the PGA has been doing in educating the public on

"Perfection is Only Marginally Acceptable"

by Virgil Robinson
Superintendent, Burning Tree Club

I do not know the source for the phrase that is the title of this article, but many years ago, even before becoming a superintendent, I consciously or subconsciously accepted it as my creed. What a heavy burden it has been to bear; what a labor of love it has been to start shedding!

If one thinks seriously about the phrase, it sounds innocent enough, maybe even a little bit macho. In reality it put me inside the "gerbil ladder" — the little exercise wheel where no matter how fast the gerbil runs he never reaches a goal, he just keeps going faster!

For me, this perfectionist mentality has affected three areas of my life — my personal relationships, my vocation, and my theology. I could have said each of these areas were affected in a negative way, and the tenor of this article might suggest that I choose to believe, however, that all things in life, the good, the bad, and the ugly ultimately work together for good.

My personal relationships, this perfectionistic attitude manifested itself in several ways: (1) Always being overly critical of others where they did not quite "measure up" to my standards, my values, or my ideals. This critical approach may not have been verbalized, in fact, it almost never was, but it was there, and it was felt and real. (2) Never feeling as if I quite measured up in interpersonal relationships, always running inside the "gerbil ladder," trying to prove myself and yet never quite being able to do it — at least, to myself. Often, I would try to impress others, or worse, put someone down to raise myself up. (3) And, because of the first two manifestations, sometimes trying to control or manipulate others to help them attain this "marginally acceptable and quite illusive" perfection.

Perfectionism is a cruel taskmaster. In my vocation, this mentality surfaced in my never having the golf course primed or primed or aesthetically prepared to please myself.

Never mind that those who are privileged to play are "oohing" and "ahhing," it could still be better, couldn't it? Never mind the ninety and nine sincere and deserving comments; worry about the one "off the cuff" critical remark that was probably forgotten before leaving the lips of the speaker.

Never did I accept a genuine compliment on the condition of the course with a simple "thank you." I could always proffer a course deficiency, even if it had to be manufactured. A dear member in the above situation, who intended only to be complimentary, hit the nail right on the head many times when he used to say, "Yes, but you're a perfectionist." To me, at that time, it was a wonderful comment, but not any more!

In my theology, also, until only recently, perfectionism ruled in the way I related to my Lord and Savior. If I could only do this or that or not do this or that; if I would try harder. If I would, etc., ad infinitum, I could reach Him and be accepted by Him. Poppycock, fiddle-faddle, hogwash and mustard greens!!!! The "Good News" of the Gospel is simply that we are accepted just the way we are and exactly where we are!

Why do I bother "shooting from the hip" and probably "shooting myself in the lip"? Maybe it's because I have seen many beautiful golf courses around the country and I have talked to many of my friends and peers at these courses. I have seen what the pressure can do to personalities, can do to marriages, can do to individuals, and I

the broad responsibilities of the club pro. The details Steve provided on video ads and their astronomic cost to run were revealing, to say the least, and his answers demonstrated his understanding of the problem.

The first-ever Golf Summit will be

held October 8-10 at Westchester Country Club in Rye, N.Y. Sponsored by the National Golf Foundation, the Summit will bring together key decision-makers within the golf industry to focus on the issues that will face the game of golf through the 1990's.

Meeting Schedule 1986

November 11 — Diamond Ridge G.C.,
Howard Gaskill, host
December 9 — Green Spring Valley
Hunt Club, Grant Pensinger, host

WANTED — SUPERINTENDENT

Lakewood Country Club
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Send Resume to Ralph Pecca,
General Manager