

Mid-Atlantic Association of Golf Course Superintendents NEWSLETTER

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Lee Dieter, C.G.C.S.
Editor

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FRINGE BENEFITS

by Jack McClenahan

Some stories need to be told. Some are difficult to tell; but, I want you to remember Artie, not this writer's poor attempt in the telling.

This summer I was standing near a golf course shop marking time until someone from the crew came by. An old battered station wagon pulled in and stopped. The driver's door opened slowly, and a cane preceded a gimped-up leg out the door. A weary voice came next. It said to me, "Hey, Mac, how's it going?" The face cracked a grin, but because of a stroke, it smiled only from the right. It was Artie. Artie, a long time crew member, retired, looking tired and looking old.

Lately I've run into a lot of "Arties". I'll bet you know them, too. They're the guys who worked on golf course crews. They were the stayers; faceless to the members, even though a lot of them worked at the same course all their working lives. Sometimes they stayed on the same job; doing the job well, and, well, mostly just staying. Over the years I often wondered why they stayed in the low paying, dead-end jobs.

After Artie gets out of the car, we start sharing remember whens. I wonder why he stayed as we talk. He talks of the days when he cut straight lines on dew covered greens, of early morning light and of the sun breaking through. He talks of the sun making rainbows through irrigation mist before it is folded into night.

Sometimes the Arties talk about the cycle of the day, sometimes about the cycle of the year; the overcoming of yesterday's winter night by sun-stirred crocus. They always talk about the spring and the smell of new mown grass. They

President's Message

Many thanks to Mitch Williams and Manor Country Club for hosting the November meeting; it was a job well done. This article will be the wrap up to my term as President. Thanks to all of you for this privilege. It's been an honor to follow many of my colleagues whom I have grown up to respect and admire over these past 18 years in the business. We set out to accomplish many tasks this year on behalf of the Mid-Atlantic. I believe the ball is rolling to make our organization better and stronger than ever. Of course, it is the members of the Board of Directors who unselfishly give their time towards achieving these tasks. They, as well as those with whom it has been my pleasure to serve, have been tremendous. I am also proud to consider them friends. With this thought I am happy to turn over the reins to Bill Neus who will ably lead this organization through next year.

Please join me on December 12th at Hunt Valley with our host Bob Orazi. This is our election meeting and it is important to vote for those candidates who will lead us in years to come.



Walter Montross, President

talk about how this year's battle will be won. They talk of summer droughts — summer heat — sometimes summer defeats. They talk of summer twilight and fall and falling leaves, and crickets or some such thing. One more winter, one more spring. The cycle of the day — the cycle of the year are different than the cycle of life. Artie's life is in late December. He has little hope for another spring.

Artie tells me, "You know Mac, I really do miss the golf course. It's tough now, but I loved it." (He grins again and again he grins only from the right.)

We finish our fond remembering whens. I say to Artie, "It's so great to have seen you again. How's life really treating you?" His grin is gone. He is quiet. He looks at me; I look at the ground and make a feeble effort to fill his emptiness with more remember whens, cliches, and a touch of Irish wit.

Artie rescues me at last from my monologue. He says, "Mac, would you give me a hand?" We walk over to his wagon and start taking empty gallon milk jugs from the back. We take them over to the water spigot and fill them, and load them back into his spent station wagon. He opens his door, gets in the car, pulls in his cane, rolls down the driver's window and says to me, "It's been real tough, Mac. I can't afford even to get my pump at home fixed. It's been down for weeks. You know, though, I still miss the golf course." He looks at me, I look back to the ground. Again he rescues me; with a wave he pulls off and drives down the road.

I think I know why they stay at the job until the winter of their lives. They are bonded to the land. Bonded to cutting straight lines on dew covered greens in the early morning light.

I wonder if members here remember Artie. I wonder if Artie remembers them while reading their post cards from sunny climes; while digging through club trash for empty milk jugs and other small favors. I wonder if they remember Artie was the one who cut straight lines on dew covered greens and could see rainbows in irrigation mist at twilight. I would tell them he drags a leg and smiles only from the right. And he drinks water from their empty milk jugs at night.

PENN STATE PROUD

(Continued from page 1)

what we need as Superintendents. The subjects are all too often too basic to interest us as golf turf professionals or so broad that we are lost in the search for a subject that will appeal to the full range of the audience. It was so refreshing to attend a meeting where I had to listen attentively for fear that I might miss something that was presented. I think the other programs can benefit from these innovations. The golf course sessions of our regional and national conferences must give us more to take home to our courses. We shouldn't have to attend seminars to feel we've picked up the kind of information we need to grow in our jobs and in our careers.

A true golf course turf research facility, one of the few of its kind in the country, the Joseph Valentine Center for Golf Turf Research, is where the research our industry needs the most is being accomplished. The scope of the work being done there is broad and fundamental to our abilities to grow golf turf in the 90's. We can be proud of the staff at Penn State and the work they are doing for our profession and our industry, Penn State Proud.