

# NEWSLETTER

JANUARY, 1977



*Golf Course Superintendents Association*  
OF NEW ENGLAND, INC.

Sponsors and administrators of the Lawrence S. Dickinson Scholarship Fund — Awarded yearly to deserving Turf Management Students.

## Chalk Up A Double-Plus

Don Hearn tries to play it down. But he can't get away with it. Our hard-working association treasurer and Newsletter business manager has taken a giant step for himself and golf course superintendents everywhere in his appointment as Operations Manager for the Weston Golf Club.

"So far, so good," Don cautioned between trips to the budget message at last month's annual meeting. "I've had this new position for six weeks and it's working, really working. But I have an option should I find that the job is not my cup of tea. The people at Weston have told me I can return to the old position if I find that I don't want it to be my future."

The setup at Weston is unique in that the club doesn't wish to be associated with the general manager concept. Hearn serves as manager of all operational phases at the club with the exception of the professional services. That leaves people like the golf pro, tennis pro and pool director on their own. They hire their own staffs and perform their duties under direction of the golf and house chairmen.

"Actually, my main task is budgetary control," Don revealed. "I am in the business of delegating authority in those parts of the club where it involves income and outlay. I have set up four department heads. They are the assistant superintendent, the chef, assistant club manager and office manager. They and what they do are my responsibilities. And up to now, the changeover has been very smooth."

Hearn attributes the flawless transition to a good rapport with other people employed by the club. "I've made it my responsibility to get along with everyone at Weston," he said. "I think that's the key to this thing becoming successful. There has to be good feeling and good communication among all of us. I concentrate on this."

That delegation of authority also is a key to the still water ride Hearn is trying to effect. "There are things I never have to worry about because they're in good hands," he explained. "One good example is our function manager. She's doing an excellent job. With her around, I can direct my time and effort to administration."

His method of operating the club has benefited his outlay of personal time to the job, Hearn disclosed. "So far I haven't leaped into one of those 100-hour week situations," he said. "And I think it's because of the four-department arrangement. Everyone knows what he has to do and what time zone in which he does it. I don't have to run from one department to another with department heads like the ones I have."

The irony of the development at Weston is the fact that Hearn never had such a position in mind when he went there to succeed the venerable Phil Cassidy. "I had spent all my earlier life working on the golf course and preparing myself to become a superintendent," Hearn remarked. "No one trained for this new position and it was never advertised. They just came to me and presented the particulars."

Don can't explain why he has a penchant for balancing the old budget books, since he never had any formal training in that direction, other than what he picked up in high school. He graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture in 1968 and plunged feverishly into the golf course business. . . making stops



Don Hearn

at Woburn, Thompson, Bellview and Lexington before he pulled into Weston.

"I guess I haven't grasped the importance of such a move to my present job because I've been busy working out this period of adjustment," Don told. "It has to be good for the profession, the other superintendents who are capable of operating a country club because of their experience and knowledge relating to budgetary problems. I think I'm going to like this arrangement. But I don't want to be cast in a club manager mold. No, I never anticipated this would happen. All I wanted to do was be pleasant and give the members a good golf course."

Whatever such advancements and show of managerial talents could mean something for the future of the golf course superintendent. This is good for Don Hearn. . . a plus for him and a plus for the profession. Some nice, quiet applause. . . please.

Gerry Finn

### NEXT MEETING

Jan. 4, 1977

Dedham Inn, Dedham, Mass. (Rte. 128 and Rte. 1)

Directors Meeting 10:00 a.m.

Lunch on your own

Regular Meeting 1:00 p.m.

Educational Program 2:00 p.m.

Speaker. . . Lewis Wells, Pesticide Co-ordinator, State of Massachusetts

### NOTICE

If you have a change in your President or Green Chairman at your club, please send their name and address so they will receive a copy of the Newsletter. Also please make a note of out going president and green chairman so they can be taken off the Newsletter mailing list. Send information to Newsletter Chairman, address at bottom of Newsletter.

Thank You.

# Golf Course Superintendents Association

## Zoppo Re-elected President At Annual Meeting

Wayne Zoppo, superintendent at Agawam Hunt Golf Club in E. Providence, R.I. was re-elected President of GCSA of New England at the annual meeting held Dec. 6, 1976 at the Dedham Inn, Dedham, Mass. Also elected were Dean Robertson, Chestnut Hill Country Club, First Vice President; Ron Kirkman CGCS, Needham Golf Club, Second Vice President; Dave Barber, Wayland Country Club, Secretary; Donald Hearn, Weston Golf Club, Treasurer; Max Mierzwa, Chicopee Country Club, Trustee; Al Auger, Folly Hill Country Club, Finance Chairman; Brian Cowan, Eastward Ho Country Club, Golf Chairman; Pete Coste CGCS, The Country Club, Educational Chairman; and Larry Bunn, Blue Hill Country Club, Newsletter Chairman. Also returning to the board are Tom Curran, Eastman Golf Club, Past President; Paul Johnson Ferncroft Country Club, Trustee; and Art Washburn, CGCS, Cohasset Golf Club, Trustee.

After the elections President Zoppo gave recognition to the members of the board for the work they did the previous year. Further recognition was given to Gerry Finn for the articles he has written the past year in the Newsletter. Leon St. Pieere CGCS, of Longmeadow Country Club for the work he has done for the Newsletter the past year and Dr. Joseph Troll, U. of Mass. for the work he has done for the association the past year.

In closing, President Zoppo said he was looking forward to the coming year and felt it could be one of the best years for the association. In order for this to happen, he encouraged all members to cooperate and participate in as many functions and meetings as possible.

Larry Bunn



Wayne Zoppo



Gerry Finn

## Certification... A Re-examination

It seems that a few feathers have been ruffled as a result of a justified criticism of the GCSAA's certification program which appeared on these pages a couple of months ago.

The question was raised as to the feasibility of the GCSAA requiring certified golf course superintendents to meet a renewal obligation every five years or face the severe consequence of having their original certified status dropped. As was stated in the critique, the intent of promoting a continuous educational process for the super was worthwhile. However, it placed into this cycle of incessant study and examination an astonishingly low percentile of the GCSAA membership - 13 percent, to be precise.

A rebuttal from Clifford Wagoner offered the opinion that the overall program was designed to encourage superintendents to continue to grow by attending seminars, conferences and to read. And this is all well and good. But what we have in the renewal obligation and penalty for ignoring same is a minority persecution situation.

Mr. Wagoner goes on to write. . . "It seems to me that certified status means more if all superintendents are not certified. The certification committee recognized that many qualified superintendents would not have the desire to participate and many others who are working as superintendents do not share a genuine interest in the profession. . ."

If this be the case, there is an overwhelming majority of GCSAA members who do not share that so-called "genuine interest in the profession." Thirteen from 100 leaves 87 - 87% of all GCSAA members who have decided that certification is not in their best interest or the best interest of their means to a livelihood.

The certification program recently entered its sixty year of operation and apparently the majority of those eligible to try and attain such status would rather not. Why?

Certainly, the average superintendent did not foresee his future crowded by escalating demands on his time and mental properties when he decided to enter the profession. Although the certification and recertification requirements cannot be placed on the same plane as a pursuit of extended formal education, they do place a burden on the superintendent - one apart from those he accepted in being responsible for the condition of the golf course.

With the institution of the certification program, the GCSAA must have thought acceptance and response would certainly exceed the 13 percent participation it has experienced. From the looks of the numbers with certification status, it appears the program has taken a definite pattern of individual rather than general acceptance by the organization's membership. In other words, a personal motivation has been involved in the small amount of certified supers counted and a self-satisfaction of sorts has been among the "benefits."

Obviously those "benefits" do not carry the clout necessary to get the other 87 percent of the membership into the program. And, just for the sake of preventing further rebuttal in this area, the percentages noted here were obtained in the middle of the program's fifth year.

Continued on page 3



Left to right. Dr. Joseph Troll, Wayne Wallace, Dennis Ingram, Dean Robertson, Chairman Lawrence S. Dickinson Trust Fund.

## Lawrence S. Dickinson Scholarship Award Winners

Dennis R. Ingram and Wayne G. Wallace were presented scholarships at the Annual Meeting of the GCSA of New England. They are recipients of the Professor Lawrence S. Dickinson Memorial Trust Fund. This fund was established to honor Professor Dickinson, a pioneer in the field of turf. The fund was established and is administered by the GCSA of New England. Friends of the Association who have contributed to the fund have an asterick by their name on the last page of the Newsletter.

Dennis is a senior at Stockbridge with an average of 3.4. He has worked at Pinehurst Country Club for three years under the late Richard Silvar, a former member of our association. Dennis did his placement with George Thompson at Columbia Country Club. Dennis is from Pinehurst, N.C.

Wayne is also a senior at Stockbridge with an average of 3.2. He did his placement at Brae Burn Country Club under Bob Grant CGCS. Wayne is from Cranston, R.I.

Good luck to both gentlemen.

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## Newsletter Notes -

Would like to welcome Anthony DeBettencourt of Vesper Country Club to our association. He was voted an assistant member and we hope he will be an active member in the association.

Many thanks to Pete Coste for the work he did in preparing for the annual Christmas Party. The party was a great success and everyone who attended had an enjoyable evening. Also thanks to host Bob McGuire and the members of Mt. Pleasant Country Club for making their club available to our association.

President Wayne Zoppo passed out praise to the members of the board of directors, Gerry Finn, Leon St. Pierce and Dr. Joseph Troll for the work they have done for the association over the past year. On behalf of the members of the association, I would like to thank Wayne for all the work he has done as president. He has spent a lot of extra hours working for the association and has added a lot of unnoticed ideas to the operation of our association.

The following "Friends of the Association" have contributed to the Lawrence S. Dickinson Memorial Trust Fund. Geoffrey S. Cornish & William G. Robinson; Larchmont Irrigation; The Charles C. Hart Seed Co.; Richey & Clapper, Inc.; and Sawtelle Brothers. The association would like to thank you for your support of this very worthwhile fund. Any company who would like to donate to the fund, please send your donation along to Don Hearn.

## Certification... Continued from page 2

In addition to having limited appeal to the majority of those in the GCSAA ranks, it just might be that the added requirement of renewing certification every five years is scaring away a goodly number of potential candidates.

It would be ludicrous to assume that the average superintendent revels in the possibility that his future life will be filled with one examination or seminar after another. And for that reason, he cannot be very enthused over the prospects of having to worry about meeting a spiral of requirements as he wades through his profession.

Isn't it allowed that we question the re-certification obligation? Maybe once is enough and maybe if once WERE enough, more supers would become certification candidates. After all, the GCSAA is not a wing of the Harvard Business School!

Gerry Finn

Dr. Troll reported that the plans for the turf conference are coming along well. As you know, there will be booths this year and so far he has sold 95 booths. The event will be held in the Civic Center in Springfield. The booths will be open about 10 hours at times when lectures are not being held.

At the annual meeting last month, the membership voted to increase the dues from \$30 to \$40. This is the first increase since 1971.

Over the past year there has been several rules that have been violated. One rule is that members may bring one prospective member to one meeting. That prospective member may partake in all activities of that meeting, except the right to vote. One other rule is that those who play golf will also pay for lunch. If a member does not play golf, he only pays for lunch. The last violation is not a rule, but does fall under our constitution and bylaws. Under Article II, Objects of the Association, number 4, the following is stated: To encourage the highest standards of dignity, integrity and skill in our profession. It seems to me, that the way we conduct ourselves at meetings and our personal appearance would fall under Objects of the Association. Please keep this in mind for future meetings.

News from the GCSAA. For the first time the membership has gone over 4,300. This was accomplished in spite of the dues increase of last year. Official GCSAA Blazers are now available to members \$3 lower than before. The Kelly green blazers, 100% texturized polyester, can be ordered from GCSAA for \$40. Don't forget to make your reservation for the 48th International Turfgrass Conference and Show to be held Feb. 6-11 in Portland, Oregon. More than 5,000 people are expected. There are more than 54 hours of educational opportunities from over 70 speakers available during the week. Also there are 4 pre-conference seminars and 100,800 square feet of exhibits of the latest equipment and turf maintenance products. All clubs should make every effort to send their superintendent to the finest show of its kind that is available anywhere. Your club will benefit.

Subscriptions of the Newsletter are available to the public. The rate is \$6 per year and send your request to the Newsletter Chairman.

The Association recently was saddened by the death of Mrs. Fred Grau. We would like to express our sympathy to Dr. Grau and his family.

Larry Bunn

Newsletter Chairman

## Christmas Party 1976



Burt Fredericks



L-R, Elaine Sandstrom, Pete Coste, Mr. and Mrs. Bob McGuire



Frank Higgins



Mr. and Mrs. Tony Caranci



Steve Butler



Julie Aksten and Norman Mucciarone

The following donated to the Annual Christmas Dinner Dance. . . TOM IRWIN CO., SAWTELLE BROTHERS, ALFO, INC., OLD FOX CHEMICAL CO., THE CLAPPER CO., O.M. SCOTT & SONS, LARCHMONT IRRIGATION CO. Many thanks for your contribution.

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\* Contributors to the Lawrence S. Dickinson Scholarship Fund

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