

NEWSLETTER

January 1983



Golf Course Superintendents Association
OF NEW ENGLAND, INC.

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Dick Zepp — a change for the better

What's a graduate chemist doing in a place like this?

"I'm where I want to be," remarked Dick Zepp from his office at the Whitinsville Golf Club. "I realize it's a strange departure from what I had planned in life. But I made the choice and I've never regretted it. As you can see, money finishes second to happiness every time."

Zepp is the seven-year superintendent at Whitinsville, somewhat of a storied nine-hole golf course with the backdrop of Donald Ross design which remains unaltered in its 60-year existence.

"We've changed a few tees, things like that," Zepp explained. "But the layout is almost the same as Donald left it. That's probably why the place is so popular."

That and the course-conditioning feats of Zepp who is a man far removed from his original vocational goals.

Zepp, who serves as secretary of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of New England, received his degree in chemistry from Worcester Polytechnic Institute in 1973. The following year he accepted a graduate position at the University of Massachusetts and was headed into his chosen field when he up and walked across campus to its agricultural outlet.

"I just went over to Dr. (Joseph) Troll and told him I wanted to enroll in the turf school," Zepp recalled. "He tried to talk me out of it, but I was determined to become a golf course superintendent. Why? I just couldn't see myself cooped up inside the rest of my life. I love the outdoors which is an attractive part of the superintendent's profession."

Dick admits he had to make a financial adjustment. "I'd probably be making twice as much money working as a

chemist or maybe teaching it," he admitted. "But I don't consider that a loss. I'm enjoying this work and I'm at a club where the rapport with members couldn't be better."

That association brings a beam from the 31-year-old Boylston native who interned under Dick Blake at Mt. Pleasant before moving on to the head post at Whitinsville.

"I get 100 percent cooperation from my members and committees," Dick revealed. "Of course, Whitinsville has a moderately-incomed membership. But the people here are aware of what it takes to produce a good course. There is seldom a budget battle and I have complete run of the show. Sure, the money could be better but I'm getting along and my family is all the happier and content because of it."

Whitinsville carries five maintenance people during the height of the season, including Zepp who says he tries to approach his job under the guidelines of operating in the capacity of a supervisor. Yet, he's not afraid to roll up his sleeves and pitch in on the physical labor when it's necessary.

"I'm blessed," he said. "The course is built on a piece of land with drainage that's almost unbelievable. I've had to close the course only once in seven years and I think we were hit with a hurricane that time. We once had five inches of rain and one hour later we had the carts running all over the place."

Zepp, who was an all-around athlete at Boylston's Tahan Regional High School and a track performer at WPI, lives with his wife, Gigi, and three children in Northbridge. He is interested in music and serves as treasurer of the Worcester Area Folk Society. A musician, himself, he once played guitar in a group that worked the immediate Northbridge surroundings.

Dick also has fallen back on that degree in chemistry.

"The biggest thing I got out of going to WPI was the procedures in problem-solving," he disclosed. "I find that I fall back on them almost every day. Besides, the superintendent's profession has turned into a science of its own and my educational background is a big help to me. I'd do it all over again, too. I loved chemistry but I love what I'm doing even more."

The articulate Zepp sees the GCSANE making great strides in recognition and visibility to the rest of the professional world.

"We're getting more participation all the time," he told. "We still have a long way to go, especially in promoting our educational programs. That's where I wish we'd direct more of our attention. The learning process never ends, no matter how long you've been in this or any other business."

So, Dick Zepp is a man dripping in degrees and thoroughly satisfied that he made the right choice in channelling his talents to the golf course superintendent's field. Needless to say, the profession is all the stronger because of that monumental decision.

Gerry Finn

Next Meeting

Annual Meeting

January 17, 1983

Franklin Country Club

Franklin, Ma.

Host: Gary Luccini

10 AM Directors Meeting

11 AM Membership Meeting

Lunch

Educational Program after lunch

Guest Speaker: Ian S. Oppenheim,
Lawyer

Discussion of pesticide uses and regulations.

Directions: from 495 take King St. Exit. Follow to Rt 140, take right, club will be on right.

President's Message

As my first year as President of the GCSA of New England comes to a close, I would like to take this opportunity to mention a few occasions that were especially meaningful to me.

On March 29, 1982 Guy Tedesco was honored by over 1200 of his friends in golf at a banquet held at the Chateau de Ville in Randolph. It was a nostalgic evening as Guy was "Roasted" by celebrities including MGA President, Ted Carangelo, friends Harry Sindén, Bruins General-Manager, Bob Cousey, former Boston Celtic great, Andy Bertoni, Monsignor McCarthy, Bishop Maguire, Claudette LaBonte, and yours truly to mention a few. A fitting tribute to a great individual that will long be remembered. On a sad note, we all felt the loss when Guy passed away on Sept. 12, leaving a great void in the profession he practiced with pride and ability for so many years.

On October 14th, the Massachusetts Golf Association held its annual meeting at the Oakley C.C. At that time, the MGA extended an official invitation for the President of the GCSA of New England to serve on its Executive Committee. This is a meaningful step and I hope to be able to make a significant contribution to furthering an already strong relationship between the MGA and the professions in our Association.

This year our annual Christmas Party was held on Dec. 3rd, at Blue Hills C.C. A big Thank you to Dave Barber and the clubhouse staff at Blue Hills for an entertaining evening. The dinner was delicious and much of the liquid libation was provided by several commercial friends of the association. Again, our many thanks.

As the date for the National Convention, to be held in Atlanta, (Feb. 19-25) rapidly approaches, I would like to request that as many Supts' as possible plan to attend. Donnie Hearn of Weston C.C. has been nominated to serve on the Board of Directors of the GCSAA. This is a great honor for a fellow supt. from the New England area and Don deserves our whole hearted support.

In closing, let's not forget the Annual Meeting in January at the Franklin C.C. Good attendance is always appreciated!!

I wish to extend a HAPPY and PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR to you all!

Brian M. Cowan, CGCS
President, GCSA of NE



Host Gary Luccini of Franklin C.C. welcomes Pete Coste, Ken Mooridian, Don Hearn and Dave Barber to the December meeting.

New member

Welcome and congratulations to Jim O'Kelly of Brae Burn.

How about perfect attendance?

For some, it is a reunion of sorts — the annual meeting of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of New England — the re-introduction of the Ma and Pa Kettles who become "family" again for that one time in the year when it is considered fashionable or "in" to count themselves among active members of the group from which all pertinent communication flows.

This time around the site is Franklin and GCSANE president Brian Cowan is hopeful of an overflow response. Cowan, in case you don't read the fine print of The Newsletter, is up for re-election. However, his cause is not a personal one. It is fraternal and factual. He would like to see one and all attend, especially those whose infrequent attendance endangers the credibility of an organization whose purpose more than justifies all that goes into keeping it alive, well and indestructible.

The association was not intended as a forum for the select few or those in command who make the decisions and propose changes in its administrative process for the good of the profession. Its life can be strongest only at its weakest point of involvement or those members who turn their backs on the regular monthly meetings for reasons known only to themselves.

All right, okay, you win — you shirkers who believe the handwriting is on the wall as concerns the annual election and that your presence represents nothing more than a display of rubber stamp approval. A strong slate of officers for the coming year has been proposed and, unless there appears nothing less than wholesale insurgence, it will be elected.

However, under the protection of the democratic process, there is room for nominations from the floor. Despite convictions to the contrary, this is not a Russian election. If there be a conflict of opinion on the relative merits of a candidate or two, it will be recognized and dealt with accordingly. Nothing is automatic here. It shouldn't be.

More important, though, is a chance for the attendance-laggards to see what's been going on in the association over the past 11 months.

You will be surprised, perhaps relieved, to learn that nothing has changed in its goals other than the faces leading the way to realize them. The NEGCSA remains dedicated to furthering the needs, recognition and acceptance of its members along with escalating its contribution to the promotion and perpetuity of the game of golf.

The annual meeting, too, is something else again.

Because it usually attracts numbers in excess of the normal turnout for monthly gatherings, it brings together the most extreme cross-section of the association. And, in keeping with the philosophy of allowing members to voice their opinions, it offers all the opportunity to develop open-air discussion of important issues.

"We're here to hear positive and negative reaction to the manner in which the GCSANE is run," Cowan emphasized his call for a full scale turnout. "If someone thinks we're doing something wrong, this is an opportunity to express his displeasure. Of course, we also welcome comment on the things members think we're doing right. Life is a two-way street and so are our meetings."

If you are an association member, then, the place to be this month is Franklin and the site of the annual meeting. Invariably, the type of this once-a-year show of involvement depends on the number of people willing to attend it. And, certainly, this year's session promises to provide the

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Top Dog



That's "Hector" taking a hard look out of the cab of the golf course supervisor's truck at the Turnberry Hotel in Scotland. James Haight of Pasadena, Calif., snapped this photograph during a golfing vacation in Scotland and Ireland, and thought it "might bring a grin to your face." It did.

Divot Drift ... I hope everyone had a Happy Holiday season. The Christmas Party at Blue Hill was great ... Seems like "give me a six" McKoan took an excursion to Florida to practice up his golf game for 1983. Rumor has it he had to borrow money for air fare home after losing 57 golf balls at TPC and Sawgrass ... Thus far the search for a name of our newsletter has been disappointing. Only one person has sent in a suggestion. All you creative minds send something in. Remember dinner for two to the winner ... Good luck to Don Hearn of Weston Golf Club in the upcoming GCSAA election in Atlanta.

Nominated Slate Of Officers For 1983

- President - Brian Cowan, CGCS
- 1st V.P. - Donald Hearn, CGCS
- 2nd V.P. - David Barber, CGCS
- Secretary - Richard C. Zepp
- Treasurer - Pierre Coste, CGCS
- Trustee - Thomas Schofield, CGCS
- Trustee - Paul Miller
- Trustee - Stephen A. Chiavoroli Jr.
- Finance Chairman - Robert Johnston, CGCS
- Golf Chairman - Stephen M. Murphy
- Educational Chairman - Antone DeBettencourt
- Newsletter Chairman - Douglas W. Johnson, CGCS

Submitted by nominating committee:

- Max Mierzwa
- Paul Miller
- Bert Frederick
- Jim Bean
- Donald Hearn, Chairman

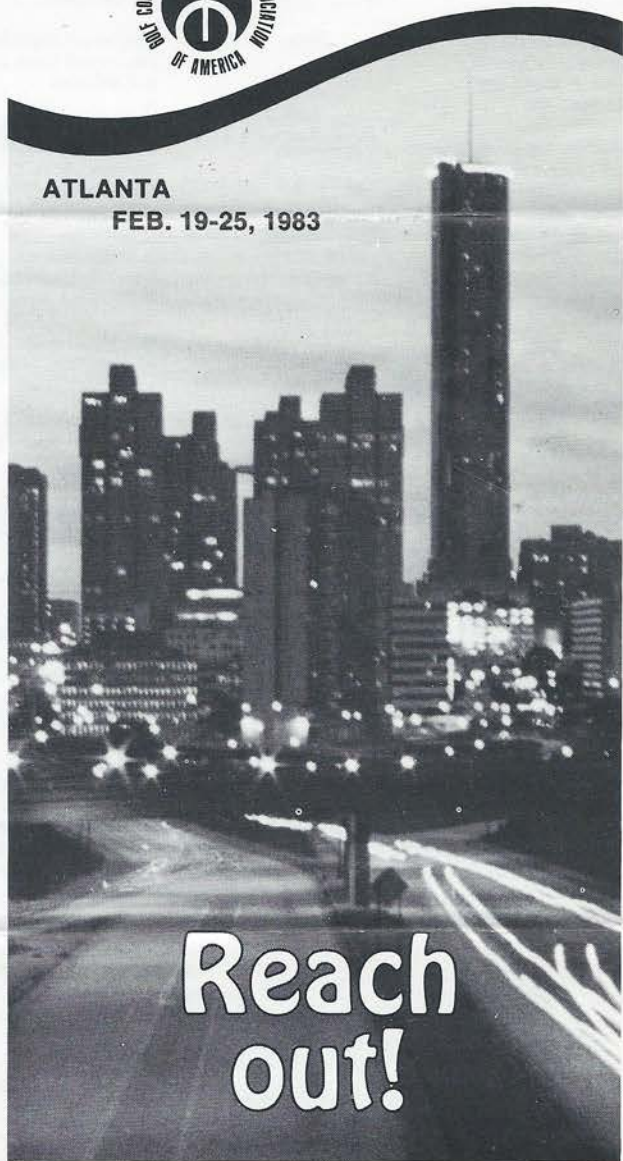
kind of action afternoon all professional organizations anticipate.

Therefore, it is in the best interests of individual members, as well as the full body of members, that everyone make the scene this time around. There's the election to look forward to, plus the lively go-round of discussion - pro and con - to make a trip from anywhere well worth the

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effort.

It's annual meeting time and the time is ripe for a record turnout by those people, gradually being recognized as the most important in the golf course's administrative structure. Every superintendent owes it to himself and his profession to be counted among the present.

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