



THE NEWSLETTER

Golf Course Superintendents Association OF NEW ENGLAND, INC.

January, 1987

Dates to Remember

Jan. 26 – Feb. 2

GCSAA Conference
and Show

Phoenix, Arizona



February 23

GCSANE Regular
Meeting

Franklin C.C.
Franklin, MA



March 2 – 5

U. Massachusetts
Turf Conference

Springfield, MA



March 7, 1987

MGA Spring
Conference

Leon St. Pierre -- Our Firmer Foundation

He's that one, special breed who would buck convention. Leon St. Pierre could live on his laurels and still finish ahead of 90 percent of the field.

Obviously, life's not like that for the Longmeadow Country Club golf course superintendent. At a just-turned 62 but actually "going on 35", Leon remains the original man in motion. Rest and he are a strange and unsightly mix.

"I'm still as enthusiastic as ever about my job, about the profession," the three-time president of the New England Golf Course Superintendents Association tells. "The high-tech direction grooming the golf course is taking excites me. I want to be a part of it."

St. Pierre, in fact, has been a visible and viable part of the superintendent's scene from day one or that moment back in his hometown of Worcester when he turned his back on the undertaking business for a place in the sun.

"I had just gotten out of the service (10th Mountain Division) and was fiddling with my future," Leon recalls. "First, I wanted to be a forester. Then, I worked for the undertaker. Frankly, I couldn't take that exposure to constant grief and the calls at the morgue."

So, what Leon did was take a hike over to the Tatnuck Country Club where he had caddied as a youth with such as Kenny O'Donnell, JFK's old sidekick.

"I got a job mowing greens, sometimes with an 18-inch push-job," Leon laughs. From there, I went up to Lawrence Dickinson's class at the old Mass Aggie complex. I had always had a special place in my heart for the outdoors. There, I learned the golf course would fill that need."

St. Pierre caught on to the refinements of the profession quickly and landed a position as head superintendent at the Oxford Country Club in Chicopee. Six years later, Longmeadow was looking for someone to put some spit and polish on its nationally-recognized layout and never looked beyond Leon.

That was 1956, the year Leon was starting to get involved in the workings of the NEGCSA. Last month, he was winding down his 31st season at Longmeadow and making plans to improve on its reputation as one of the section's best-conditioned courses.

If St. Pierre were electricity on the golf course, he was a dynamo away from it -- in the organizational halls where the golf course superintendent's local and national arms were trying to shake their second-class image.

Leon was a vibrant leader, an innovative lion when he took charge of the command post at the NEGCSA in the early 1960's.

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Some of his proposals were met with curious, sometimes furious response from members.

"All I was trying to do was make the superintendent look the part of a professional," he explains his insistence on a dress code at association meetings. "At that time, we were fighting an identity battle. A lot of people looked at us as unskilled workers with spray cans and rakes in our hands.

"Actually, we didn't have any identity. Then, one day I called up someone on the MGA (Massachusetts Golf Association), asked him if we could buy him lunch and that was our first meeting with that group. It was a bull-rush to recognition from there."

St. Pierre, then, was the firm foundation upon which the NEGCSA -- as we now know it -- was built. Those years (1965 - 66 - 67) were the pick-me-up period of the association. And, in the years following them, Leon led the march to recognition within the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America.

In that scheme of things, Leon again showed his leadership qualities when, in 1971, he engineered the election of NEGCSA official Dick Blake to the profession's highest office -- national president.

"From the floor," Leon quips. "The first time that was done. We just didn't like the nominated slate, Dick said 'why not me?' and we decided to go for it. Wow. We got manufacturers to pick up the tab for cocktail parties, models, the whole works. And we won."

Won. Winner. Champion. They all go with St. Pierre -- whether it's whipping a strain of turf disease or taking on the national in a floor fight. Even now that never-rest brain is churning.

"Of all my thoughts about the superintendent, is one I think the world should know," Leon says. "That the golf course superintendent is a true environmentalist because he lives it -- more so than some housewife who gets herself elected to some local committee. I think we, as superintendents, should be proud of this. And that's fact."

Leon St. Pierre. Next time you think of the golf course superintendent's progress, think of that name. In that vein, it's legend and you'd better believe it.

Gerry Finn



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The Super Speaks Out

Welcome to the Super Speaks Out – a monthly feature which offers the golf course superintendent a forum to express his views on topics and issues relating to his profession.

This month's question: With the obvious situation where concentration of your effort comes in the summer months, how do you handle what could be a delicate problem of scheduling vacations for your full-time help?

Charles Gardner, Oyster Harbor Golf Club: "This could be a little ticklish but only if certain conditions of employment aren't laid out when you first hire someone.

"Frankly, I take a firm stand as far as summer vacations are concerned. No way!

"I know this sounds harsh, unbending and all that. However, I've made it the rule here and it's worked without a hitch. It's just understood around here that summer is the time when we get the heaviest play and the time when we have to be at the top of our games. That is, working hardest to keep the course in top shape.

"I've heard that some of the other supers manage to give their full-timers time off in the summer. And, I'm not against it, if it works for them.

"I have what amounts to four and one-half full-time associates, and they stagger their vacations after the end of "our" (Cape Cod) fall. That comes sometimes in November, although even then we're still mowing greens.

"I just happen to have a crew that's happy with the arrangement. It's not like I'm saying, 'hey, you have to take it in the dead of winter.' Somehow, we get vacation time out of the way without complications. It may be a wonder to some people but not to us."

Kip Tyler, Salem Country Club: "I pretty much keep to the rule that all vacations, including the time I take, should be restricted to the period between Thanksgiving and March 15.

"But, really, I'm blessed. I have four full-time people and they are capable of running the whole show. That means they're responsible and aware of the give and take of our business.

"When I hire someone, I lay it all out before we come to an agreement. We know just what the important time of the work year is and expect to observe it as such. But this is not saying there wouldn't be an exception.

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"There are times when I say okay to one day off in the summer. In fact, some of us do it that way. Instead of taking vacation time in one sweep, we peck away at it.

"Whatever, there hasn't been any serious problems with scheduling vacations since I've been here. And, so far, it's been a smooth ride."

Dean Robertson, Kernwood Country Club: "What an interesting question. That's only because before I got here, there weren't any questions. You took your vacation between December and March -- and that was it.

"But you know how it is when you adopt a good-guy policy. That's what I did. But, what do you know, it's working and everybody's happy.

"Let me explain. First, I do allow summer vacations on a limited basis. I have four full-time workers and when they'd like to have a little time off in summer, I make an effort to accomodate them.

"How? Well, summer I have a full crew aboard. Also, any vacation time then must be taken Monday through Friday. We have a 45-hour work week here. So, with the staggering of people, plus the addition of summer help, it goes along without a hitch.

"We have another plus going for us, too. Everyone, including myself, gets one week off at Christmas. That's a steadfast rule whether anyone likes it or not.

"The club has laid the whole thing in my lap. It's up to me as to how much vacation time my people get and when they're allowed to take it. So, it's my problem if I want to make it one.

"Funny thing, though. The club just hired a new manager and from what I've heard, he was told he'd have to take his vacation time between January 15 and March 15. I haven't heard anything as to my policy. So, I guess the club's also happy with the way my vacation schedule is run. That's nice, huh?"

GERRY FINN



A certain preacher was chagrined by the fact that one of his friends and golfing companions invariably beat him. His companion, an older man, said, "Don't take it too hard. You win in the end. You'll probably be burying me one of these days."

"I know," said the preacher, "but even then it will be your hole."

GCSAA NEWS

Superintendents Association Hosts Major National Golf Meeting

Leading representatives of the major organized groups in the national golf community traveled to Lawrence, Kan., December 7-8, for the 1986 meeting of the Allied Associations in Golf. The annual meeting was hosted this year for the first time by the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA), a 7,000-member-strong international professional organization headquartered in Lawrence.

Special events and activities planned in conjunction with the meeting included an open house at GCSAA's newly expanded and remodeled headquarters building, a reception and dinner at Alvarado Country Club, and a special presentation by GCSAA on its current program activities.

Other associations and groups represented at the meeting included the following:

- The United States Golf Association
- The Ladies' Professional Golf Association
- The American Junior Golf Association
- The National Golf Foundation
- The American Society of Golf Course Architects
- The Golf Course Builders Association
- The Golf Course Association
- The International Association of Golf Administrators
- The National Club Association
- The Club Managers Association of America.

Major Event Coming to Phoenix

An estimated 13,000 golf course superintendents and others from around the globe will converge on Phoenix for the 58th International Golf Course Conference and Show sponsored by the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) January 26 - February 2, 1987.

Bart Starr, former professional player and coach of the Green Bay Packers football team, will deliver the keynote address during the Opening Session at 5:15 p.m. Thursday, January 29.

In another highlight of the eight-day conference, millions of dollars worth of the latest equipment, products and services used in the management of golf courses and grounds will be displayed by over 300 exhibitors at the Conference's big Trade Show covering more than 200,000 square feet. The Show will open for 21 hours Saturday through Monday, January 31 - February 2.

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Throughout the Conference, nearly 150 leading golf course superintendents, educators, researchers and representatives of the industry will lead more than 350 hours of seminars and other educational sessions covering every facet of turfgrass management and many related topics such as communication, the public golf course, personnel management, computer applications in golf course operations, landscaping, golf course design and many other topics of interest to golf course and turfgrass managers.

Robert Trent Jones to Receive Rare Tribute

Renowned golf course architect Robert Trent Jones will receive golf's prestigious Old Tom Morris Award from the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America at the 58th International Golf Course Conference and Show this winter in Phoenix.

The Old Tom Morris Award is presented to an individual who, through a continuing, selfless commitment to the game of golf, has helped to further the game with the same dedication and inspiration demonstrated by Old Tom Morris.

Arnold Palmer, Bob Hope, the Honorable Gerald R. Ford and Patty Berg are previous recipients of the Old Tom Morris Award.

An international golf audience including representatives of every major golf association will be on hand for the 1987 banquet ceremonies.



James G. Prusa, GCSAA Associate Executive Director and Director of Education, has announced his intention to dedicate his full time to a new independent business venture beginning in 1987.

Prusa formalized his intention to depart with a letter of resignation on November 5, 1986. He is remaining on the GCSAA headquarters staff through the completion of the Phoenix Conference and Show, and plans his departure for early February 1987. The position of GCSAA Director of Education is open for application, and interested parties should direct inquiries to GCSAA Executive Director John M. Schilling prior to January 9, 1987.

Editors of eight outstanding newsletters will be recognized during the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America's (GCSAA's) 58th Annual International Golf Course Conference and Show in Phoenix, January 26 - February 2, 1987.

The 1986 winners of the annual GCSAA Chapter Newsletter Editors Contest were selected by a panel of four highly qualified judges. The winners were chosen from newsletters published by 48 eligible, affiliated chapters.

Within each of three chapter size categories, one newsletter was selected as the best overall. Newsletters were evaluated on overall excellence, appropriate design, editorial judgment and content, scope and quality of writing, and presentation. The size categories: A - fewer than 30 members, B - 30 to 70 members, and C - more than 70 members.

In addition to the three overall awards, judges selected five newsletters for special recognition awards regardless of chapter size. The special categories: best flag design, best cover, best original editorial content, best format and readability, and most improved.

The 1986 winners are:

Category A:	Category B:
Turf Talk New Hampshire GCSA Editor, Barrie Robertson	Turf Talk Wy-Mont GCSA Editor, Jane R. Barry
Category C:	Best Cover:
The Grass Roots Wisconsin GCSA Editor, Monroe S. Miller	The Florida Green Florida GCSA Editor, Dan Jones, CGCS
Best Flag:	Best Editorial Content:
Northern Ohio Turf Northern Ohio GCSA Editor, Alan F. Clark, CGCS	Hole Notes Minnesota GCSA Warren J. Rebholz
Best Format:	Most Improved:
The Ballmark Central Illinois GCSA Michael Vogt	The Supervisory Link Vermont GCSA Editor, Michael O'Connor, CGCS



"If society is paralyzed today, it is not for lack of means, but for lack of purpose".

Lewis Mumford

DIVOT DRIFT

The December meeting at Franklin C.C. featured Dr. Pat Vittum as our guest speaker. Dr. Vittum spoke on Integrated Pest Management – the cultural, biological and chemical control for turfgrass. Pat also commented on Nematodes in our area. They seem to be more active with a closer green cut where the roots are shortened and become stressful. Late May and early June, with winds blowing about 20 m.p.h. appears to be the first time you may see damage. A healthy question and answer session followed. Come this July, Dr. Vittum will in all probability be in New Zealand studying *Hyperodes* for a year.

Congratulations to Mr. & Mrs. Dennis Friel on the birth of their new daughter Kimberly.

A special thank you to Tom Irwin Co., Larchmont Eng., Lesco, R.F. Morse, Nardone Sand & Gravel Co., Sawtelle Brothers, Scotts, Turf Products Corp. and Turf Speciality for their generosity in sponsoring the Christmas Party. In this column we often use nicknames. Those of us who know these people can usually get the drift of the stories. Those who don't know the individuals often have no idea what we are talking about. At the party we introduced some. All of them took a bow and explained how they acquired these names. The one harassed the most was Doug Johnson, The Eighth Wonder of the World. Pinebrooks finest – D.J. being a class guy took it all in stride. However, I'm sure he will seek revenge somewhere, somehow. We discovered a new Fred Astaire among us – "DANCING" Don Lavangie. How about our own Bernie Golonka, isn't he a ringer for Bill Murray from Caddie Shack? I'll wager Bernie would have caught that elusive gopher. We'll know where Bernie will be come National Groundhog Day in February. GOOD LUCK!

See you in Phoenix and don't forget to visit the NEGCSA Suite at the Hyatt Regency. Special thanks to Nardone Sand & Gravel, International Golf Const. Co. LTD., Tony Paganis – owner, Cape Code Turf Managers Association and New Hampshire GCSA in helping to sponsor the Suite.

Congratulations to Barrie Robertson, Editor Turf Talk, New Hampshire GCSA winner of the annual GCSAA Chapter Newsletter Editor's contest. Barrie is also a member of our Association. Congratulations are also in order for our neighbor, Michael O'Connor, Editor The Supervisory Link, Vermont GCSA for most improved Newsletter.

Beginning mid to late January there will be a 30 second promotional announcement for sports on WCVB, Channel 5, Boston. This will be shown two or three times a day. In a time span of four seconds you will see a golfer sinking a putt

on a green. Your job is to guess the name of the golfer, golf course, length of putt, attempts made to sink putt, how sound was acquired of putter striking ball and of ball dropping in cup, obstacles TV crew had to overcome, number of personnel involved in filming, time, date and how long it took to film.

Tie breakers – stimp reading of green. Send all answers to the Grand Imperial Wizard, Dave Barber. First prize – Newsletter Editor, 15 years. Second prize – Secretary, 10 years. Third prize – Treasurer, 5 years. Answer to appear in February or March Newsletter. Maybe!



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Those who are planning to play golf in
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