



THE NEWSLETTER

Golf Course Superintendents

Association OF NEW ENGLAND, INC.

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

November 1990

Supers Learn to Live With Leaves



There was a time when Orrin Ellis had horrible visions.

"That's when I was working at Lexington (Golf Club)," Ellis recalled his 15 years as golf course superintendent there. "Actually, I was playing a little game with myself, you know, like count the number of jelly beans in a jar. Only I was thinking of leaves.

"I figured that over the years I had raked, blown, plowed, and even wished about 10,000 square feet of leaves into

a pile more than 50 feet high. I have to laugh when I look back at the problem I had because now it's all together different."

Ellis is in his first year as superintendent at the Pine Meadows Country Club where he says life among the falling leaves isn't so tough after all.

"There are a lot of factors involved," he told. "Probably the most important is where the breezes blow and where the course is situated. Here I find that the leaves usually blow into the woods by themselves. So far, the leaves don't present a problem. We have them, all

right, but we get rid of them with a minimum of trouble."

A quick check around New England super country revealed that, for the most part, leaf removal doesn't make the typical list of a maintenance program's top ten headaches.



Ocean Edge's Jeff Carlson has a lot of open area at his domain and blows leaves into it. They find their way to either disappearing

or becoming part of the winter scenery. However, Jeff reports that presently leaves are the least of his worries.

"Pine needles?" he added. "That's a different story."

Carlson estimates that the distribution of trees at Ocean Edge follows a 50-50 pattern between the conventional types like oak and pine trees.

"We have a slew of pine needles," he continued. "They're of a heavier texture, so blowing them gets to be a tedious and time-consuming process. Therefore, we have to go to the rakes to get rid of them. That's a big job, but...."

But Jeff has an ace up his sleeve when it comes to taking care of the pine needle invasion.

"My members," he explained. "Some of them are crazy about pine needles and use them in a decorative manner in their yards. Don't ask me why, but they seem to prefer spreading pine needles around bare spots on their property instead of growing grass.

"Not only that, we have members who volunteer to clear the golf course

DECEMBER MEETING

December 11, 1990
Presidents Golf Club
Quincy, Massachusetts

Board Meeting	9:30 a.m.
Regular Meeting	11:00 a.m.
Lunch	12:00 noon
Education	1:00 p.m.

DIRECTIONS:

From South and West:

128 South to Route 3 North to Exit 9 (North Quincy/Milton). Follow to when it turns into a two way street and take a right onto Squantum Street. Club is 1/2 mile on left.

Boston and points North:

Take Expressway to Exit 11A. At first stop light, take a left onto W. Squantum Street. Club is 1/2 mile on left.

Host Superintendent
Jim Fitzroy, CGCS
Reservations Required
(617) 527-6968

Following a stint at Pleasant Valley in 1973 and a position with the Hart Seed Co. in 1974, Jim settled in at the President's Club where he is currently serving his 15th season as superintendent.

He graduated from the Stockbridge Turf Program in 1967 and received his BS from UMass in 1970 with a minor in Park Administration. Jim achieved the CGCS status in 1976.

Born in Pittsfield, he and his wife Pat now reside in Franklin with their three children, Tim age 17, Katy age 13, and Pete age 5.

Jim enjoys golf, photography, spectating at his children's sports events, and keeps busy over the winter as a High School Basketball Referee.

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of pine needles if they can get to keep them and haul them away for their own use. At one time I thought of making a compost of a combination of leaves and pine needles. However, I understand the needles have a high acidity count, so I never tried it."

Carlson doesn't mean to imply that the leaf and pine needle season is a complete lark in his maintenance program.

"The leaves aren't that plentiful," he said. "But they can pose a problem because of the large number of pot bunkers we have. That causes the leaves to collect in hard-to-get-at places. Therefore, the only way we can clean them out is to go into the bunkers and carry them out."

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Michael Goslin, General Manager
The Farms Country Club, Inc.
180 Cheshire Road
Wallingford, CT 06492



John Hassett, who keeps the Mt. Pleasant golfers happy with his course conditioning touch, doesn't have too much of a problem with leaves because of

logistics.

"We have a lot of parallel fairways and we're surrounded by woods," Hassett explained. "So blowing them into the woods takes care of any accumulation possibility. As for compost, I really don't have enough to bother with it.

"Of course, leaves are one thing and pine needles another. We collect the pine needles and put them to use as a mulch. The acidity content doesn't seem to hurt. However, we do have a counter attack if it's there by adding lime and fertilizer to the collection."



The flower beds at Quaboag Country Club have never looked better.

"Thanks to our leaf program," spouted QCC superintendent

Bob Heeley. "Three years ago we started to make the leaves work for us. We seldom blow them, collecting them instead and using them and pine needles as the basis for a working compost heap.

"We add fertilizer and lime and we also get clippings into the mix. The result has been some of the most beautiful and healthiest flower beds we've ever had at Quaboag. As far as I'm concerned, leaves and needles are renewable products and worth whatever it takes to collect them."

The golf course superintendent, then, is learning to live with the leaves...sometimes even prospering by the association.

GERRY FINN

The Super Speaks Out

This month's question: *How are you handling the regulation requiring all golf course superintendents to make members and golfers aware that pesticides are being used as part of the conditioning process on certain days of the season?*

Ed Eardley, Wampatuck Country Club: "We use the bulletin board method here and it's right where every golfer can see it—at the first tee. In fact, I have a sign up all the time as a reminder, then on days pesticides are being used, I designate the specific locations on a chalkboard.

"There's no doubt in my mind that the regulation should trigger only positive reaction from both the golfer and the golf course superintendent. I think anything we can do to protect the membership and ourselves has to be good.

"I know that as a concerned parent I can see the positive effects from a

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Nov. 13** GCSANE & NEPGA
Joint Board Meeting
Colonial Hilton
Lynnfield, MA
Dinner
- Dec. 11** Regular Meeting
Presidents Club, Lunch
- Jan. 22** Annual Meeting
Blue Hill C.C.
Lunch

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Club Affiliation
Hickory Ridge G.C.

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program of making the public aware that pesticides are present in a particular region and that precautions should be taken. I'd hate to have my children pick out a strand of grass from a treated area and put it in their mouths. That's scary.

"My members have reacted to the process favorably and I think most of them make it a point to pay attention to the fact that regulations like this one and others are designed for their protection and welfare. My schedule for using pesticides varies, but over the long haul I'd say they're being applied every ten days to two weeks.

"As far as I know, none of my members or staff has reported an allergy problem connected with exposure to pesticides. However, that's one of the reasons for posting the signs. They're doing the job, too, if only to educate golfers and golf course workers on the refinements of an ever-changing course-grooming process."



Dave Barber, Blue Hill Country Club:

"I've seen nothing but positive reaction to the posting of pesticide-in-use signs. Mine is right there in a highly visible place—in the starter's area.

"The effects have been in keeping with the purpose of the regulation, to make people aware of the possible negative spinoffs from exposure to pesticides. I'm not talking just about the golfers, but the people who are applying the pesticides. They, too, have become educated about the

properties of chemicals. They're more conscious of how important it is to do the job right.

"We have an advantage at Blue Hill, an advantage shared by members, guests, workers, and myself. We close Wednesday mornings and usually no one is on the course when we spray because I try to schedule applications on Wednesday.

"And that brings up another factor or result of the sign-posting regulation. I think that down the road all golf courses will have to set aside days when they close for those periods when pesticides are being used. It's not all that bad an idea, either.

"As for personal reaction from members about the process, I have had sporadic response. Some would like to know just what chemical is being applied. That's good. They want to know what's out there and what they should do to avoid harmful contact.

"The biggest benefit from all of this is a new thrust of awareness on the part of all concerned. Now all we have to do is determine the level of responsibility the superintendent carries in case something does happen. Maybe we, as a group, should address this soon."



Bob Ruszala, Hickory Ridge Country Club:

"If anything, the regulation requiring sign-posting is a good educational tool in bringing golfers closer to the realities of golf course grooming procedures.

"My signs are in a conspicuous place—in a clubhouse area where all golfers have to see them. I post them the day pesticides are being used and specific locations are included.

"Of course, the idea of awareness is something our club has promoted all along. We have a club newsletter and in each edition there's a spot saved for me. That's where I have the most input with members as to bringing them up to date with how the golf course is groomed and what ingredients are used in the process.

"I've found that the only real danger in the use of chemicals is when they're mixed into tanks and whatever. Now workers are equipped with gloves, masks, special application suits, goggles—a whole array of protective clothing. What I like to emphasize is that chemicals are safe when properly mixed and applied.

"Overall, though, the regulation is another example of the superintendent's ongoing attempt to convince his members and all golfers that golf course maintenance isn't so simple anymore. The more they learn about it, the better for all of us and the game itself."

GERRY FINN

Results of GCSANE Superintendent and Three Club Officials Tournament

Rhode Island C.C. Oct. 1, 1990

Low Gross - Dedham Polo & C.C. 146

Low Net - Belmont C.C. 120

2nd Net - Whitinsville C.C. 124

3rd Net - Blue Hill C.C. 124

4th Net - Walpole C.C. 125

5th Net - Foxboro C.C. 127

Long Drive Supt. - Charlie Passios

Long Drive Guest - John Drew

Closest to Pin Supt. - Ron Kirkman

Closest to Pin Guest - Joe Socha

POSITION OPEN

Assistant Superintendent
Worcester Country Club
Contact:

Michael Nagle, CGCS
(508) 853-6574

Cut-off for Newsletter material is the **1st of each month**. If there are any topic suggestions for "Super Speaks Out" or the front cover feature articles, please call Kip Tyler at (508) 532-2236. I would also like to print material written by superintendents or anyone else who would care to contribute.

President's Message



On September 14 the GCSANE ran its Second Annual Research Tournament at Nashawtuc Country Club. All who attended had a great time. We were able to raise almost \$13,000 due to the help of many people. A special thanks to Dick Zepp who chaired the Tournament Committee and did an outstanding job.

If research is to be conducted at local universities in these times of financial woes, contributions will be necessary. Even though our Research Tournament was a large success, the donations from our clubs have been lacking. The Superintendent at each club should have the desire to approach his club for any kind of contribution (most have been \$200 or more) that they can afford. With turf grass research the beneficiary, I find it hard to believe anyone would say no. We will be entertaining any suggestions you may have this winter at our open forum meeting on how we can improve the fund raising drive.

We are in the process of putting together our winter meeting schedule as well as our golf schedule for 1991. Anyone interested in hosting either please contact Kevin Osgood or Bob DiRico. Please keep in mind our dress code (winter meeting sport jacket preferred) and continue calling in your meeting reservations.

Literally a One-Man Operation

by Gary Larrabee

Wayne LaCroix's job as golf course superintendent at Ipswich (Mass.) Country Club is unique. Little did he know just how unique until a few weeks ago.

On October 15, to be exact. That's the day he became a one-man operation. The day the owners/developers of Ipswich Country Club's residential/country club project closed the complex down because of major financial problems. No more golf. No more use of the country club facilities.

That was the day LaCroix was told by his bosses that he would have to let go, indefinitely, his 27-person grounds crew, leaving only the 30-year-old native of Marblehead, Mass. to take care of the golf course and grounds of the 375-acre complex.

"It meant getting back to basics," says LaCroix, who as of press time was one of only three employees on the premises, the others being controller Jim Boyle and the construction supervisor for the roadways, Frank Scalli.

"I've tried to maintain the critical areas. The greens first, then the tee areas, then the fairways. I've tried cutting the greens twice a week (during what has been an exceptionally warm fall growing season), the tees once or twice a week, and the fairways once a week. Forget about the rough.

"Plus, I've got snow mold preventative to put down and I've got to blow the irrigation systems out. That's only on the golf course, too.

"I've also got to try and maintain the grounds/landscaping around the clubhouse and the swimming/tennis complex, as well as blow out their irrigations before the cold comes."

That's only the beginning, however, to what LaCroix is attempting to do solo, remember, with nary a soul to assist.

"We're also responsible for maintaining the grounds around 30-odd homes which are occupied, the roadways, all flowers and shrubbery, and once winter really hits, I'm supposed to take care of snow removal and any other problems homeowners might encounter during the cold," LaCroix, who lives in Eliot, Maine with his bride of nine months, Julie (DiPrisco) of Swampscott, Mass., adds.

"I'm also supposed to assist the operation of our own sewerage treatment plant for waste water on the entire property. We have an outside contractor to run it."

So LaCroix, who got his schooling at the Stockbridge School at the University of Massachusetts and assisted Paul Miller at Tedesco (Paul's now running the course operation at Nashawtuc) for seven years before coming on board at Ipswich in 1987, is taking it one day at a time, dealing with what would safely be called a massive undertaking.

"I'm going 10 and 12 hour days, seven days a week," LaCroix said. "But I can't let the situation overwhelm me. I go one job at a time, an hour at a time and do the best I can.

"One of the sadder aspects of this is that it's been a great fall overall for golf courses and ours, like most others at least on the North Shore, is in fabulous shape as we speak (the final few days of October). The place is spotless, actually. The grass is still growing—too fast for my situation—and, unfortunately, not a single golfer is out here on some of the most beautiful fall days in New England you will ever have.

POSITION OPEN

A private 18-hole Golf Course in Cohasset, MA is seeking applicants for Course Superintendent to replace our current Superintendent who retires December 31, 1990. The course has an

automatic watering system, modern equipment, and a permanent year around staff. Competitive salary. Please send resume to: D. Ralff, c/o Cohasset Golf Club, P.O. Box 247, Cohasset, MA 02025

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"And anybody who has played Ipswich can imagine how beautiful it becomes in October, those huge white pines and the foliage. On the other hand, of course, if the place was open and I was the only person maintaining the course, I wouldn't be able to keep the layout anywhere near the standards we had all season."

Physically, the job has been incredibly demanding all season, let alone what LaCroix has had to go through since October 15. But LaCroix has paid an equally heavy emotional price.

"I've literally been here since day one, since the earth was being moved and seed planted back in 1987," he recalls. "The amount of work going on around here, with the course, the clubhouse, swimming pool and tennis courts, and home construction, was chaotic. It was hard keeping stress management under control. But it was extremely exciting, too, watching this magnificent project develop. It was a privilege to be working alongside Robert Trent Jones (the course designer and co-developer of the project who is no longer associated with the development) and Roger Rulewich, his top assistant. I had the chance to learn from the bottom floor up how a course is truly developed.

"The kind of education I received was priceless. I've been with the place this long, I'll be damned if I'll give it up

now. I feel a part of it. I want to stay with it."

He's grateful, too, of course, that he is still being paid, whereas many other members of the staff have been discharged.

"I had a great staff that took three years to develop," LaCroix notes. "I'm hoping most of them, if not all, will be back by spring. Those who aren't rehired, I hope to help them get settled."

"After all I've gone through this year, physically and mentally, I sit back and almost begin to laugh," he

mused. "I wish I could write a book. The number of things I've gone through up here is amazing—and comical sometimes. The country club membership and homeowners have been supportive, thankfully. They've helped keep me from becoming a nervous wreck.

"I'm just going to keep going day by day and hope for the best. It's a remarkable piece of property we have here. I want to see it get back on its feet financially and help make it the showcase golf course development in New England."

A Different Approach

by Kevin J. Ross, CGCS
Falmouth Country Club,
Portland, Maine

Over the past few years, I have become familiar with a different seeding method: dormant seeding. It can be defined as planting when soil temperatures have declined to the level where no seed germination occurs. The theory of dormant seeding is for the seed to remain in the soil and germinate when conditions become favorable in the spring.

The potential for a successful establishment from dormant seeding can be very good if favorable conditions occur. Primarily, the soil temperature should be below the point that germination would take place in the fall. Other factors that may contribute to a positive outcome include: dormant fertilization; minimizing erosion of newly seeded areas by mulching or using a turf cover or erosion blanket; and the use of turf covers immediately in the spring.

So why should dormant seeding be considered? We first used this method at Falmouth Country Club to seed the last few holes during construction. The results were very dramatic. In the spring, the dormant seeded holes germinated very quickly and turned out to be a fine stand of turf. In fact,

these holes were soon in better shape than the holes seeded early enough for fall germination. Much of the seed that germinated in the fall did not survive the winter in such a juvenile state.

After observing this method of seeding through construction, I thought it could be very helpful in some other areas. In the fall of 1988 we experimented with aerifying and dormant seeding some of our weaker fairways. We also dormant seeded divots on tees and a new target green on the driving range. Again, the results the following spring were dramatic. While some fellow superintendents were reseeding winter damaged greens with bentgrass and getting poor germination results, I was noticing excellent germination in our experimental areas. These results were noticed from early to mid-April, with soil temperatures of only 40-45 degrees.

Due to our success with dormant seeding, in the fall of 1989 we expanded our dormant seeding program. In addition to seeding some fairway areas and divots on tees, we groove seeded one of our practice range tees in two directions. The following spring, both germination and soil temperature were monitored. Again, we had great results with bentgrass germination in soil

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GCSANE Research Tournament Nashawtuc Country Club

The International	Low Gross
Ed Hopke	
Brian Lynch	67
Bob Sanderson	
Ron Milenski, Supt.	

Kittansett Club	Low Net
Lenny Blodgett, Supt.	

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temperatures ranging from 38-43 degrees. The dormant seeded areas were mowable before I had germination from spring seeding on some winter damaged greens.

Starting this fall, we will be dormant seeding all greens and selected areas in fairways and tees as an insurance policy against winter damage. Some individuals may say that this is a waste of seed, but when your growing season is short, this method can be very valuable in some years.

Another possible area where dormant seeding can be used is in a bentgrass conversion program. There are two possible ways to accomplish this conversion: 1) For many years, superintendents have been aerifying and over-seeding *Poa annua* populated greens, tees, and fairways with bentgrass in late summer in hopes of achieving greater bentgrass population. Rather than compete against *Poa* at its strongest stage, it may be advantageous to dormant seed. Bentgrass germination in early spring would then be competing against *Poa* at its weakest stage. 2) Another possibility is using Round-Up prior to turfgrass dormancy, followed by dormant seeding. This can result in a significant bentgrass population.

The proper timing for dormant seeding will vary depending upon your region. In Portland, Maine we have had the best results seeding between November 8-12. I would suggest trying various dates and monitoring the germination in the spring. There seems to be a certain date that will yield the fastest results come spring. We had tried seeding in late November and noticed that our spring results were much later than areas we seeded between November 8-12.

Why are dormant seeded areas so far ahead of spring seeded areas? I have a couple of possible explanations. The first step in the seed germination process is when water is absorbed by the seed. The second step is when the seed undergoes a swelling which initiates several biochemical and morphological events. They ultimately result in the development of a seedling

turfgrass plant. My theory is that when you dormant seed, the seed undergoes the aforementioned initial stages of germination during late fall and early winter. After these conditions occur, the seed goes into a frozen state throughout the winter. In this period, the enzyme and carbohydrate processes that occur during the actual germination become dormant. Because the seed is partially germinated or primed in the fall, it is three to five weeks ahead of a spring planted seed.

The success of a dormant seeding will hinge on many factors including good quality seed, weakened or dead *Poa*, proper groove seeding techniques, and extreme care in the spring. I hope dormant seeding may be as beneficial to you as it has been to me and our club.

Divot Drift

The 1990 GCSANE Second Annual Research Tournament was a fine success. Dick Zepp and Chip Brearley are to be congratulated on spending many long hours in organizing this event.



GCSANE Board of Governors held a special meeting October 23rd at Nashawtuc C.C. Much general business was discussed. One vote that was taken was to not have a Christmas party for 1990 due to the extreme lack of participation in past years.



Charlie Gardner, CGCS, is celebrating his 25th year at Oyster Harbor G.C. this year.



Nick Bruni, past superintendent at Rockport Golf Course, Rockport, Massachusetts, recently won five million dollars in the Massachusetts Lottery!

NEPGA SHANAHAN MEMORIAL TEAM GROSS

Al Vallante and Chris Holland	75
Jack Gale and Steve Chiavaroli	76
John Frizzell and Ted Ellis	76
Dave McBride and Searfin Costa	77
Mike Egan and Mike Hermanson	77
Bill May and Kevin Ross	77
Bob Day and Andy Langlois	77
Led Reynolds and Ted Price	78
Reggie Colomb and John Ottaviano	78
Ted O'Rourke and Bob St. Thomas	78

TEAM NET

Mark L'Heureux and Tom Rowell	70
Kirk Hanefeld and Kip Tyler	71
Chris Doyle and Barrie Robertson	72
Bob Lenzion and Mark Fuller	72
John Wells and Tom Brodeur	73
Ron Hallett and Jeff Carlson	73
Art Harris and Jim Beane	73
Bryan Abbott and Ken Fliser	73
Paul Ballard and Loren Mann	73
Dana Quigley and Tom Petratis	73

Friends of the Association

SAWTELLE BROTHERS INC.
(Excerpt April 1933 Newsletter)
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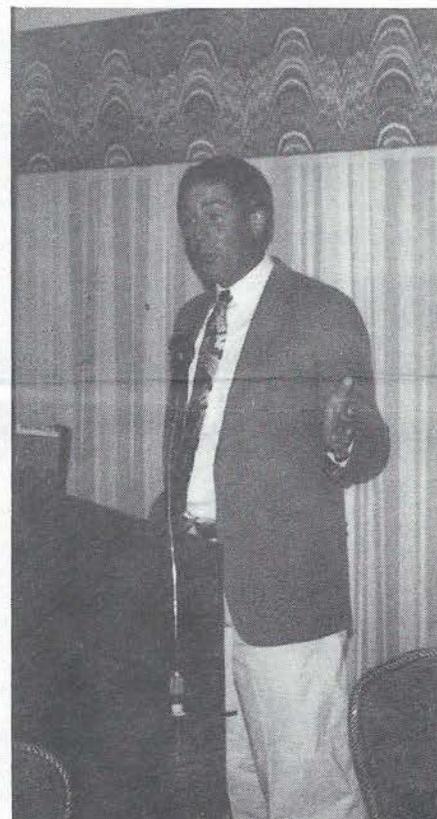
"Fourteen years ago, Golf in this country began to increase in popularity, and each year since that time a greater number of people have taken up the game...new golf courses were constructed, and old courses remodeled. Golfers began to demand better playing conditions, and large sums of money were spent annually in maintaining these golf courses in satisfactory condition. With the additional amount of money at their disposal, greenskeepers introduced finer playing conditions than had ever been obtained before. We all have noticed this upward trend, the golfers have been educated through this period to a high standard of maintenance...there is little comparison between the conditions of the golf courses of today and those of fifteen years ago."

Sound familiar? This article written in the 1930s stands to remind us that the more things seem to change, the more they remain the same. The plight of golf course superintendents back in 1933, dealing with increased play and golfers demanding better "playing conditions", is not unlike their plight today. It is also interesting to note that despite the depression, golf was becoming more popular, course construction was on the rise, as was remodeling, and there was a demand for better playing conditions; similarly despite the recession today, golf rounds per year continue to increase, course construction and remodeling is on the rise, and golfers want better "playing conditions".

Sawtelle Brothers is proud to have played a key role in helping New England Golf Course Superintendents provide better playing conditions by supplying quality golf course equipment since 1932. Our many thanks to the Golf Course Superintendents of New England for over 57 years of support and helping to make Sawtelle Brothers, Inc. the oldest operating golf course distributor in the country.

Editor's Note: Chet Sawtelle, founder of Sawtelle Brothers, Inc. in 1932, and self-appointed golf historian for New England, has, over the years, accumulated a plethora of memorabilia pertinent to New England Golf, including newsletters (as quoted above) from as early as 1930. Copies are available upon request.

Our second Friend for this month did not respond.



Bob Lobel donates his time as guest speaker at the Research Tournament dinner at Nashawtuc C.C.

Letter to the Editor

The following is a letter from Robert G. Helgesen, Dean of the University of Massachusetts at Amherst to Paul Miller, CGCS.

"On behalf of the College of Food and Natural Resources I would like to extend my sincerest appreciation to the Golf Course Superintendents Association for the recent gift of a new pesticide storage facility for the College's Turfgrass Research Program. We are quite proud of this program and feel that resources are the only limitations to continued growth and accomplishments of the Turfgrass

Research Program. Your contribution has helped reduce those limitations.

As you know, Massachusetts, like most states in New England, has significantly curtailed their appropriations to higher education, including our College. Your gift, at this time, is particularly appreciated. I look forward to working with you and Professor Cooper in continuing to develop building opportunities for the Turfgrass Research Program; opportunities that will help us help you and the members of the Association.

Again, many thanks for your support.

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