



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.

December 1993

January Meeting

Monday, January 18, 1994
Gannon Municipal G.C.

Host Superintendent
Steve Murphy

9:00 a.m.	Board Meeting
2:00 p.m.	Lunch
1:00 p.m.	Regular Meeting
	Education To Follow
	Lunch - \$12.00

Reservations Required
Call by January 14, 1994
(617) 328-9479

You must pay by check - No Cash!
Checks payable to GCSANE

Steve Murphy has been a superintendent for seventeen years at Gannon Municipal Golf Course. He received his degree from Stockbridge in 1971. He has also served as golf chairman for the Board of Directors. Steve lives in Swampscot with wife Carolyn. He enjoys golf, skiing and sailing.

Directions to Gannon Municipal Golf Course:
128 North to Exit 44B (Route 129 Lynn). Follow 129 East for approximately 2 miles. Turn right onto Great Woods Road. Straight through pillars, make left up hill to Gannon Municipal Golf Course.

Steve Murphy spreads his expertise around

Steve Murphy has been making important decisions, ones that have turned out to be forks down the road of his future, ever since he was 10 years old. That one, nevertheless, was a big decision. It changed his focus from baseball to golf. "Right," he explained. "It's when I gave up playing Little League for caddying at the Framingham Country Club. Then, a few years later when I started working on club grounds, I knew I'd be in golf for the rest of my life."

Into it, but good. Today Steve, in partnership with golf professional Mike Foster, heads a golf course management company that directs the fortunes of four clubs - Hillview in North Reading, Pine Meadows in Lexington, Kelly Greens in Nahant and Mt. Hood in Melrose.

That's a large order, a chunk of responsibility. But wait. The main thrust of his turf management expertise zeroes in on Lynn's Larry Gannon Municipal Golf Course where Murphy has served as golf course superintendent with distinction it should be added, for the last 17 years. How does he do it?

"At the height of the season don't even bother to look for me," he offered. My time schedule is a given. My work day begins at 6 a.m. and often runs beyond seven in the evening. And there's no such thing as a weekend for me in the summer. In fact, that's when I work the hardest."

Steve is so much wrapped up in his work that he often forgets that he's part of another endeavor, Green Leaf, an irrigation outfit specializing in home owners' sprinkler

systems. The other part of the business is handled by his brother, Jack, who also happens to be top super at Hillview.

Murphy attributes his heavy involvement in the executive world to a combination of the adventure in his soul and the visionary powers in his head. He saw the need for golf course management companies back in the early 1980's and took the plunge as one of the pioneers in that business.

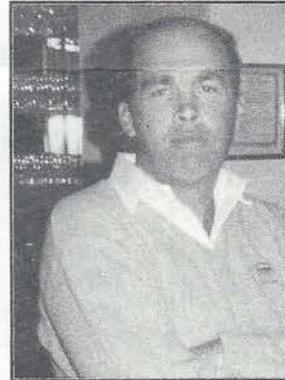
Before he started expanding his horizons, Steve took the usual route to the golf course superintendent's profession. While attending Marion High School in Ashland, he got a job on the grounds crew at Framingham. From there he hit the turf books at Stockbridge, graduating in 1971.

His first supervisory experience came during a four-year hitch at the Pinecrest layout in Holliston. From there he went to Wollaston where he sharpened his skills under Jim Fitzroy. The call from Larry Gannon came a year later (1976) and Murphy was on his way to an interesting and rewarding career in what has evolved into a fascinating work of life.

"I came into Larry Gannon with limited expertise," Steve told. "And the challenge there was built-in. When I got there AstroTurf tees were being used and turning off golfers by the hundreds. The didn't like them, so they stayed away from the course in droves."

So, Steve's first assignment was sort of a twist in technological advancement. He had to turn phony into natural and he did,

continued on next page



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continued from page 1

effecting a layer of grass on all the tees in the first step to recapturing public links golfers. Other refinements followed and Larry Gannon became one of the hotbeds among municipal courses. It remains in that class, too, because of what Steve refers to, "a city employee (himself) who never gets tired of giving the best service to his job."

The economic environment of the early 1980's opened up a new world to Steve when the town of North Reading took over the Hillview Country Club through eminent domain. The only hitch was that North Reading didn't know diddly about golf course operations and decided to put it out to bid.

"We put in a bid and I have to tell you that it wasn't the lowest one," Steve disclosed. "But the town like our presentation and we got the job. Funny thing, too. It's *bee* that way ever since. I know of no bidding try we've made where we came in with the lowest figure. It means that we've built a solid reputation."

Some of the competition in the golf course management venture is pretty solid, itself. Companies represented by architect Bill Flynn, food and beverage expert Burt Page and Golf Course Superintendents Association of New England heavyweight, Doug Johnson, compete and sometimes work in consort with Murphy. Page, for example, operates the restaurant at Hillview.

"The setup varies from course to course," Steve explained. "For the most part my input concentrates on conditioning the golf course with Mike (Foster) handling golf operations. However, we run a snack bar at Pine Meadows and we're into a risk situation at both Kelly Greens and Mt. Hood where we are responsible for running the bar and restaurant."

Steve is heads-up in the delegation department. Among his strong right hands in the management field are his brother, Jack, as head super at Hillview and Orin Ellis who has that title at Pine Meadows. Also on the is hiring a qualified superintendent for Mt. Hood.

Golf course management is a growing enterprise and Steve hopes other superintendents follow his lead into the business. "In the early days I saw my self holding up the end of the end of the superintendent against the pro and club managers in becoming overseer of all operations," he said. "Nowadays I consider myself a cheerleader for the superintendents' profession. We have the background and overall expertise to do the best management job. All we need is the confidence to take that first, big step."

Obviously, Steve has that asset working for him in abundance. He's spreading his expertise around while touching all bases of the golf operations diamond. He's another example of the most successful emerging from the melting pot of increased responsibility enroute to distinguished executive accomplishment.

GERRY FINN

Calendar

- Jan. 13-14, 1994 **New Hampshire Turf Conf.**
Manchester, NH
Contact: Univ. of NH
Dept. of Plant Biology, UNH
131 Main Street
Durham, NH 03824
(603) 862-3200
- Jan. 27-29, 1994 **New England Grows**
Hynes Auditorium, Boston, MA
Contact: Virginia Wood
(617) 431-1625
- Jan. 31-Feb. 7, 1994 **GCSAA International Golf Conference Show**
Dallas Convention Center
Dallas, TX
For further information:
GCSAA Public Relations
(913) 832-4470
- February 3, 1994 **Seminar for Lawn Care Operations**
Holy Cross College
Worcester, MA
Co-sponsored by UMass
Cooperative Extension and the
Mass. Assoc. of Lawn Care
Professionals
Contacts: Karen Connolly
(508) 287-0127
Mary Owen
(508) 892-0382
- Feb. 16-17, 1994 **Turf & Grounds Expo. II**
Holiday Inn, Suffern, NY
Two day program features a
GCSAA Seminar, Stress Management of Turf on Feb. 16.
Split sessions will be held the
afternoon of Feb. 16 & Feb. 17.
Further information:
NYSTA (800) 873-TURF
Tel. (518) 783-1229
Fax (518) 783-1258
- Feb. 28,
March 1&2, 1994 **Mass. Turf Conference**
Springfield, MA
Contact:
Mass. Turf and Lawngress
Association
(413) 549-5295
- March 14&15, 1994 **Maine Turf Conference**
at the Somerset
Rockland, ME
Contact: Pat Lewis
(207) 781-5881
- April 15, 1994 **USGA Regional Seminar**
Holiday Inn, Taunton, MA

The Super Speaks Out:

This month's question: *With the Christmas season in full swing and everything out there just for the asking, what is your wish for your golf course-caring needs?*

Greg Misodoulakis, Bellevue Golf Club:

"My top priority in the wish department may sound slightly offbeat but everyday I wish that our profession had a better and easier method of diagnosing turf disease. Therefore, research in that area is more important than we think. Another wish is directed at weather patterns. I just wish someone would come up with a computer, chip, anything to develop a more dependable weather forecast. Right now, looking out the window is just about as good as it gets."

"I'd also like my present green chairman to be there forever. He's just a good guy with a good golf head on his shoulders. That makes my job so much easier. Of course, there's always the desire to upgrade equipment so that we can make more improvements to the course. Which leads to my budget. Which is a good one. The message in this area is clear. As long as I can live with it, so can my members. So far that approach is working just fine."



Mike Nagle, Worcester Country Club: "I'll get the big wishful thinking kind of wish out of the way right off the bat. How about a golf season with 200 days of 70-degree weather, when it rains only at night and at

just the right intervals and when it's cloudy only on weekends?"

"Weather, then, is of particular concern to me, mostly because of this past season and the drought. The drought made it an awfully tough year here in my attempt to give members the best possible playing conditions. As for a wish, I wish we never have a summer of 1993 again. Along those lines, I'd like a leaping, big helping of understanding and patience from my members when we run into weather conditions that are detrimental to the cause of good grooming. Understanding and

patience are virtues I hope are still around just in case we have another impossible weather pattern like the one we were cursed with this year."

"Naturally, there are the built-in wishes, like an improvement in the economy that might lighten up the overall atmosphere on the course and in the clubhouse. Finally, I'd like to take a step backward in time or at least be able to get out on the golf course practicing my expertise. That's a big order, though. Our profession has become, uh, over-professionalized in one sense. At times I feel myself being drowned in paperwork. I realize that part of the job has turned into a necessary evil. But, if there's a Santa (Claus) out there, he'll find a way for me to spend more time on the golf course than in my office."

Bruce Packard, Stockbridge Golf Club:

"This is where the spring waters overwhelm everyone and everything within reach. So, my biggest wish is for a mild winter, not like the one we had a year ago. It's always been an automatic at Stockbridge, to wit, the more snow we get in the winter the more floods we get in the spring. It seems the old Housatonic River is just waiting with overflowing arms every March and April."

"Budget approval also comes to mind when thinking about wishes that need to come true. And concerning that aspect of my job, perhaps mine is a case of a wish happening before it's time to declare one."

"Well, make that a half-wish. Just approved is a capital improvement in the form of constructing an irrigation system over a five-year period. I know, here I am complaining about all the water that overruns in the spring, then harp on an irrigation system."

"Unfortunately, water became a Catch 22 item for me in the 1993 golf season. The floods of spring were eventually replaced by the acute dryness of summer. Frankly, we were parched. Silt from the Housatonic became one more thing to be managed and

somehow we survived by growing grass on top of the silt. That's the kind of turf and overall grounds situation here."

"Wrapping up my wishes for Christmas, I'd like someone to make for a perfect wish-come-true. Please convince Mother Nature to be kind to me and speed up that irrigation timetable. The club's 100th anniversary falls in 1995. It sure would be nice to have everything in place by then, say about a late-opening date in June!"

Dick Drew, Salem Municipal Golf Course:

"There are lots of wishes I can think of. My mind's full of them."

"For one thing, I could do with a golf pro and, oh yes, a manger of some sort. Presently, I do it all. Which means I don't miss too many days here."

"We're always thinking 'second nine' at Salem. However, that probably falls into the category of wishful thinking. Me? I'd settle for a new clubhouse . . . and someone to run it."

"One wish goes out to another group or our park commissioners who are strapped as far as power goes. They have been very, very good to me and their intentions are top shelf. But the (political) system won't allow them to loosen the purse strings. I mean, when we turn back \$200,000 to the general fund, that's not the way it should be."

"I guess in the long run that being able to improve my budget is the one wish I'd really pray for to happen. A raise? Why not? But, above all, a little more time to do my main job (conditioning) and maybe some time away from running the golf operations would be my Christmas dream come true."

GERRY FINN

President's Message

With the Christmas season upon us, I'll pause for a moment to again say Thanks to our golf meeting host superintendents for 1993: Charlie Dickow, Wayne LaCroix, Gary Luccini, Dave Kahrman, Dick Duggan, Joe Rybka, Don Marrone, Rich Caughey, Bob St. Thomas, Paul Johnson, and Ron Kirkman. For those who did play some, or all of these fine golf courses, it was truly a privilege to do so. Our Association's members are fortunate to be able to play at these facilities, on a continuing basis. Thanks to all of the clubs, their members, and their management staffs for the hospitality shown to our Association and its members.

I am happy to announce that our Association's Second Annual Memorial Tournament will be conducted in early August, 1994. The event will again be hosted by GCSANE member, Don Marrone, of the Wachusett Country Club in West Boylston. As was the case in 1993, all proceeds from this event will be used to build upon the balance of the Benevolent/Scholarship Fund. Over \$6,000 is ear-marked for deposit into this Fund from the proceeds generated at Wachusett in 1993, as soon as our members officially vote on and approve the formation of the Fund.

The Benevolent/Scholarship Committee, chaired by trusted Jack Hassett, has brought its proposals to your Board of Directors during the months of November/December 1993 for approval. I would optimistically state that all plans should be finalized by early in January, hopefully being presented to you for approval at our Annual Meeting. This Fund will directly benefit our members and their families. Your support is needed to approve our proposal as presented to you.

Thank you and Happy Holidays.

Stephen Chiavaroli, CGCS
President





MAKING IT THROUGH THE WINTER

Dr. John M. Roberts
University of New Hampshire



Fall is recovery time for turfgrasses. Favorable temperatures and ample rainfall usually make ideal conditions for turfgrasses to produce new growth and rebound from the demanding summer months. The extremely dry summer of 1993 was no exception. Many home lawns, athletic fields and other non-irrigated sites suffered severe thinning. Full recovery is possible in many cases with successful overseeding and fall fertilization programs.

The ideal time for seeding is generally considered to be from mid-August through mid-September. Thanks again to the warm soil temperatures and adequate rainfall (not to mention the lack of competition from crabgrass) this period is preferred to early spring seedings. Often the germination and establishment rates of seedings made in early fall are two to three times faster than those made in early spring.

Depending upon location, seedings made from mid-October into early November are often risky. The young seedlings without having an established root system are quite vulnerable to winter injury, especially desiccation. Seedings made in late fall (dormant seedings) are viable alternatives to early spring seedings. They often produce good results and help reduce the busy work-load in the spring. On sloping land dormant seedings need to be covered with straw or protective comers to reduce erosion.

Probably the most critical period in the fall occurs thirty to forty days before dormancy, known as the "hardening period". During this time turfgrasses undergo a number of internal changes which help prepare them for the winter months ahead. Examples include increased carbohydrate levels and decreases in the water content of the protoplasm. The net result is a turf which can achieve its maximum degree of low temperature hardiness.

Cultural practices that stimulate growth during this hardening period will reduce the winter hardiness levels. Preferably the turf will enter the dormant period gradually. Most of the fall nitrogen should have already been applied prior to the hardening period. High nitrogen applications without adequate potassium levels during the hardening period produce new, succulent growth which is vulnerable to winter injury.

Potassium has long been recognized as being an important nutrient for winter hardiness. My trials involving winter injury over the past couple of years have supported this concept. Preferably the nitrogen:potassium ratio entering the winter should be in the 1:1 or even the 1:2 range. It's common to find many soils which are deficient in potassium. Unless these are supplemented by fertilization they will produce turfgrasses which are more susceptible to damage from traffic, diseases and drought.

Aerification is another fall practice that often helps promote healthier turfgrasses. The benefits of aerification are numerous. Besides breaking-up compacted soil surfaces which often exist on high traffic areas, the aerifier holes create a desirable zone for new root development to occur. Even late fall aerification (after the last football game) is beneficial since roots will continue to develop until the soil freezes tight. Aerification followed by a topdressing and overseeding has been used successfully in many turf areas to fill in worn and damaged areas. In some cases, including high use athletic fields, multiple (3 to 5) aerifications may be necessary during the year. Spring aerifications may promote invasion by crabgrass unless otherwise treated with a herbicide. Aerifications in mid-summer when the ground is hard will likely do more damage to the aerifier than good to the turfgrass!

DIVOT DRIFT ...announcements...educational seminars...job opportunities, tournament results...and miscellaneous items of interest to the membership.

MEMBERSHIP

Proposed New Members:

Glenn Lachapelle, Assitant, Brae Burn; Robert LeBlanc, Assistant, Westminster Country Club

JOB OPPORTUNITY

Oak Hill Country Club Fitchburg, MA

Golf Course Superintendent

Private, member-owned club seeks superintendent responsible for maintenance of 18-hole golf course, tennis courts, swimming pool and grounds. Duties include management of Grounds Department operations and supervision of personnel. Superintendent reports to Grounds Committee and Board of Directors.

Available operating budget is consistent with other top-quality private clubs. Club has made significant capital investments in Grounds Equipment over past several years.

Position requires proven experience as Golf Course Superintendent or Asst. Superintendent; excellent turf management skills; ability to develop budgets and achieve operating results; and supervisory skills. Must be able to communicate and work effectively with Grounds Committee, Board of Directors and members.

Position offers attractive salary and benefits including health insurance, use of vehicle and payment of GCSAA dues. Please send resume to:

Bernard DiPasquale

Grounds Committee Chairman

Oak Hill Country Club

840 Oak Hill Road

Fitchburg, MA 01420

JOB OPPORTUNITY

Berkshire Hills Country Club, Pittsfield, MA

Golf Course Superintendent

Course Operation: Semi-private membership; 18 holes 6,700 yardage; \$270,000 annual operating budget; automated tees and greens irrigation.

Duties: Golf course maintenance; budget and purchasing responsibility; clubhouse, lawns, trees and shrubbery.

Annual Basic Salary: \$33,000-\$42,000 to commensurate with experience.

Benefits: 90% paid health; paid annual vacation; dues for membership in GCSAA national and regional; expenses for educational seminars; use of club vehicle; family membership privileges (includes golf and swimming).

Requirements: Degree in agronomy, turf management course or equivalent; experience as a superintendent or assistant superintendent at an 18-hole course; strong management and communication skills.

Responsible To: Chairman, Greens Committee

Position Available: January 1, 1994

Application Deadline: January 7, 1994

Send To:

Berkshire Hills Country Club

P.O. Box R

Pittsfield, MA 01202

Attn: T. Breen

F.Y.I. CONTINUED

packaged with registered labels and is now available for shipment to you!

Your old labeled product is not legal to sell or transport at this time. Grace-Sierra management met with members of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region IX Pesticide Enforcement Branch on Sept. 21 in the ongoing effort to resolve the issue of your old labeled inventories of Duosan WP and Duosan WSB Fungicide products. Region IX must reach consensus with EPA headquarters' Office of Pesticide Programs and the Office of General Council regarding how you will be allowed to ship (sell) your old stock. Grace-Sierra anticipates the EPA will respond to our request within the next week, but we have no assurances regarding a final solution.

Grace-Sierra realizes the burden this situation has placed on your resources, and we appreciate your patience and support. Please be assured we will continue our efforts with the EPA to resolve this problem as soon as possible.

Please contact your Territory Manager or Greg Wahl at 800-723-4769 ext. 556 if you have any further questions.

F.Y.I.

EPA REGISTRATIONS FOR DUOSAN® WP AND DUOSAN® WSB GRANTED

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What Is The 1994 New England Golf Summit?

Through a cooperative effort, the major New England golf associations (New England Association of Golf Course Superintendents, New England Club Managers Association, New England PGA and the New England Golf Association), have arranged a New England Golf Summit to take place during the 1994 golf season. Date and Place to be named later.

The New England Golf Summit will bring together an informed group of golf experts to share their views and advice for your benefit. These recognized authorities, representing the sponsoring organization, will participate in workshop discussions on a variety of valuable topics. Time will be reserved in each workshop for questions from the audience. This will give all attenders a special opportunity to discuss their concerns with a very knowledgeable group of leaders in the golf industry.

What Is The Format?

During the course of the sessions there will be workshops running concurrently. Each attendee will be able to attend a few workshops of her or his choice. It is suggested that each club should arrange to have its attendees cover as many of the workshops as possible. A luncheon will follow at the conclusion of the workshop sessions.

Who Should Attend?

The expertise and insights offered at the New England Golf Summit will be invaluable to club officials, committee chairpersons, managers, golf course superintendents, professionals and other individuals with a special interest in golf in New England.



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