



THE NEWSLETTER

January 2001

of the *Golf Course Superintendents Association of New England, Inc.*

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

Don Hearn – a champion of the profession – sent packing after 29 years at Weston G.C.

The dossier on Don Hearn, substantiating his travels in an orbit available only to those who constitute the high and mighty of their profession, suggests that he was an untouchable in terms of job security. By now we all know those travels had to be considered nothing less than vanishing footprints when the Weston Golf Club dismissed him as its golf course superintendent last September.

At the time Hearn gave the act the full treatment. "Let's not mince any words here," he demanded. "Dismiss is too soft a word for what the people at Weston did to me. Let's come right out and say it . . . I was fired."

Hearn is also content to leave the whys and wherefores of his sudden and unexpected discharge dangling in the wind. "I don't dwell at all on why it happened." He refused to speculate about the reasons a respected, virtually

revered superintendent would be cut loose after serving that one club for 29 distinguished years. "A small group of people had this plan to get rid of me. They wanted me to become history before I was ready to be history."

The incident deserves review, not the least important fact that Hearn was only the second superintendent to hold that position at Weston in the last 56 years. His predecessor, Phil Cassidy, was aboard for 27 years before retiring in 1971. So, long term superintendents have been a constant at Weston in the last century.

Hearn tried to focus some rationale into the blurred picture. "I guess I was working for the same club but not the same people who hired me almost 30 years ago," Don strained for an answer to the dilemma. "If I were stealing; if the staff was about to start a revolution; if I wasn't showing up. All those things (which never happened, of course) . . . well . . . I might understand it.

"But the explanations were ridiculous. My greens chairman said it was nothing I had done wrong. I seemed to get along with all the board members and as many members as I know. It happened so suddenly. It was a complete surprise. However, there were people out to get me, people who ganged up on me. I don't even want to talk about the final vote numbers to get rid of me."

To get a grasp of the overview and the impact Hearn's firing has generated, it's worth turning back a decade or so to the world of the golf course superintendent and Don's place in it. Then, he had just

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Don Hearn

been elected president of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA), only the second from the New England association regional chapter to earn that high honor. The other was Dick Blake, who won the GCSAA presidency in 1971, coincidentally the same year Hearn took over at Weston.

Hearn's term as national president was a whirlwind of conventions, seminars, cross-country and beyond meetings, and just plain nonstop appearances trumpeting the profession and bringing international recognition to his top priority, the Weston Golf Club. Incidentally, that year when Don had to put a slide rule to his GCSAA schedule and his Weston duties, the club was behind him one-hundred percent.

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THE NEWSLETTER

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Hearn described his one-year as GCSAA president as the highlight of his career. "One of a kind stuff," he chirped. But it also was a productive 12 months as he guided the profession away from an old, maybe antiquated "school of hard knocks" mentality to one based on stepped-up as well as ongoing education.

"It's different now," Hearn explained. "No doubt, the profession is moving away from complete dependence on a 'learn-while-you-earn' philosophy. There's no getting away from the fact that the superintendent has to build on his experience with knowledge gleaned only from an educational endeavor and an appreciation of what an educational program can affect."

Hold on a second, here. Remember, those are the sagacious words of the man his local club superiors were to kick out on his ear a few years down the road.

Hearn's contributions as GCSAA president, then, amounted to a foundation for his successors and the rest of the membership to build on. Championing the group's education program was just one of Don's deliveries. Another was a big improvement in the relationship between golf course superintendent and club professional. Right now that gap has virtually vanished. Then, too, so has the opposition to the GCSAA's certification program, another area where Hearn battled to bring more credibility to his profession.

So, when someone, who constitutes the heart and soul of the game of golf's most important operational ingredient (the superintendent), gets the ax, and is thrown to the wolves at an age (54) incompatible with reinventing a new career, the world we live in takes on an even darker side.

Don admits things could have been worse. "Fortunately, I was in the second year of a three-year contract when this thing hit me," he leveled. "Thank God for small things. It means there's no immediate pressure on me to get a job. But that day will come if I haven't regrouped before December 31, 2001."

"I'd like to stay active in the golf business, whether as a superintendent or not. But I can see a trend in the dismissal rate of long-term superintendents and the new wave philosophy concerning on the

"A small group of people had this plan to get rid of me. They wanted me to become history before I was ready to be history."

Don Hearn

job. The people running the club want someone who won't be around a long time. Security is being lost on the profession. The super feels like the manager of a baseball team, one with a jaded past and a dubious future. Yeah, it's scary."

Weston once was the goal of many golf course superintendents. It was the job everyone coveted. How will recent events affect that standing? Oh, it will still have its huge budget and it's lofty visibility. However, some of its members, both venerable and cherubic-faced, must cringe when they rewind their lifetime tapes to the part where Don Hearn was terminated. It ain't pretty!

GERRY FINN

CALENDAR . . .

- January 29 **GCSANE Annual Meeting**
Walpole Country Club
Walpole, Mass.
Supt. - Brian Walters
- Feb. 11-18, 2001 **GCSAA 72nd International Golf Course Conference & Show**
Dallas, Texas
- February 13 **Stockbridge School Job Fair**
UMass, Amherst, Mass.
- February 26 **GCSANE Monthly Meeting**
Newton Commonwealth G.C.
Newton, Mass.
Supt. - David Stowe
- March 7-9 **New England Regional Turfgrass Conference & Show**
Providence, R.I.
- March 19 **GCSANE Monthly Meeting**
Franklin C.C.
Franklin, Mass.
Supt. - Gary Luccini

4th Annual New England Regional Turfgrass Conference & Show

March 7-9, 2001
Rhode Island Convention Center
Providence

A Combined Six States Show...

Show & Conference Pass Includes

- Opening Reception
- Admission to Trade Show
- Educational Sessions
- Keynote Speaker
- Show Reception
- Luncheon Voucher(s)

Over 400 Turf Related Booths Await You...

Meet professionals on the cutting edge of turf management. See the latest in equipment, products and supplies. Join fellow lawn, golf, sports, landscape, municipal and other turf industry professionals.

GCSAA SEMINARS:

Tuesday, March 6 • 8am - 5pm

Advanced Weed Management

TRADE SHOW HOURS:

Wednesday, March 7 • 5pm - 8pm

Thursday, March 8 • 10am - 2pm / 4pm - 6pm

Friday, March 9 • 9am - 2pm

EDUCATIONAL SESSION HOURS:

Wednesday, March 7 • 9am - 5pm

General Session & Keynote Speaker Jim Nantz

Thurs., Mar. 8 • 8am-10:30am / 2pm-4pm

Fri., Mar. 9 • 8:30am-11am / 11:15am-1:15pm

Informative Presentations

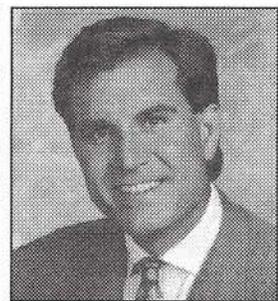
- Golf Course Management
- Lawn & Landscape
- Sports Turf & Municipal Turf Management
- Equipment Management
- Student Career Seminar

Certification Credits

Pesticide Applicators Recertification Credits have been requested for all New England states, NY & NJ.

Keynote Speaker • March 7th • 4pm
Jim Nantz

Anchor of *The NFL Today* the CBS Television Network's NFL pregame studio show, Jim Nantz has covered virtually every sport since joining CBS in 1985. His credits include serving as anchor of CBS's golf coverage, including the PGA Championship and The Masters.



Presented by:

The New England Regional Turfgrass Foundation
in cooperation with the University of Rhode Island
and the University of Massachusetts

For the benefit of the New England Golf & Green Industries. Proceeds dedicated to the support and development of turf research and education

Watch your mail for your registration form or call
(401)848-0004 or visit us online at www.NERTF.org

The Super Speaks Out

This month's question: *In light of weather conditions that tested the validity of summer, how did the 2000 season turn out for your maintenance program?*

David Ferrantino, The Milton-Hoosic Club: "This was my first year as a head superintendent, so it began as a year of transition and adjustment. The biggest concern at the start of my stay here was getting over the jitters or the strain on my nerves the situation caused. So, I had to gradually slide into the job and that took a few weeks. After that I calmed down.

"The unusual cool, wet spring and early summer didn't have that much of an adverse effect on my conditioning program as far as disease goes. The only fly in the ointment might have been my aerification timing and the cool weather we had in May. The two got together and it caused a slow recovery period or time for the holes to close up. But that was strictly minor league stuff.

"The hardest part of my first year was the fact that I had to get through it without a first assistant. It was my fault in part because word of the job being open didn't get out until March. However, the two veteran superintendents I worked under, Jim Reinertson and Paul Jamrog, came to the rescue. When I got in a jam, one or the other bailed me out with help.

"Milton-Hoosic is a unique club in that it doesn't have a traffic problem. In fact, it's common to see only two or three four-somes on the course on Friday afternoon in the middle of summer. It's real private. I think we average about 9,000 rounds a year. So, that being the case, it gave me a chance to get a good communications program going with the members. They were great. They treated me like a member. I played several times with members and it actually gave me more of a perspective for what I had to do as head man.

"As for employment problems, I fixed that by hiring a couple of postal workers who work nights and like to play golf. They worked out fine for me in the mowing department where the center of activity dominated maintenance in the early months of the wet season. Otherwise, this first year was a good one once I got my confidence level where I wanted it to be."

Gary Mondor, Crestview Country Club: "I guess the low points in my year were ones most superintendents experienced. One was the frequency of rain, the other was being in an unemployment percentage area that threatened to bottom out right off the charts.

"All the rain in spring and early summer made for a reassessment of my mowing schedule. For one thing, the modern mowing equipment we have today was a big help. We really have the weapons to combat rapid grass growth. The other, of course, was my crew. Those guys mowed at all hours of the day and at all days of the week. The only area where it may have caused inconveniences for our members was the roughs.

"However, we have very understanding members especially when they can relate golf course problems to ones they have at home. No one could keep up with mowing their lawns, so they appreciated the big job we had keeping up with the fairway and rough heights here.

"The employment problem just never seemed to go away. You know, when there are a lot of other jobs around and they appear more attractive than the ones we offer, it's hard to find people who don't mind coming in at 5 a.m. We're still looking to the definitive answer to this one.

"Overall, though, it wasn't that bad a year. We heard good reports on the condition of the course. Our greens remained as fast as the members like them, so there was no problem there. Our play was down because of the rain early on, but we were the rules rather than the exception. So, I feel pretty good about 2000."

Gary Summerton, John Cain Golf Club: "Here in New Hampshire we had the same kind of spring and early summer weather as the rest of New England. It was wet and it was cool . . . for a very long time.

"There is a slight difference in climate, though. It's ironic but our golf season at John Cain began and ended with the same

visit by the elements. When we opened April 7 we had two inches of snowfall and when we closed October 28 we had another two inches of the white stuff. So, snow served as bookends for a season that had its ups and downs.

THE SUPER SPEAKS

"This is my fifth season here and this one served up challenges. The wet conditions were such that we never could keep up with the mowing. But it was not the fault of my crew. My hat's off to them. They mowed morning and night in an attempt to keep ahead of the game. Why, they even mowed in the rain. They wouldn't give up. They really came through for me.

"The employment situation was another sticky one. We're situated in the Lake Sunapee area where the unemployment rate stands at 1.5%. That's just about as low as it gets. I would get help all right but it was the kind of help that never seemed to stick around. Therefore, there was a lot of coming and going during the season. And with the grass growing like crazy, the turnover of personnel didn't ease the mowing problem.

"Our play was down 30% from opening day until mid-June when the weather turned to a more moderate tone. Both the number of rounds and the condition of the course improved right through the end of the season. So, when we closed the grass was green, lush and our rounds figure was at a pretty normal 22,000.

"What I like most about the year was the fact we had no summer stress. I bet I watered only about 20 times all year. And once we got rid of early-season snow mold there wasn't a sign of turf disease. It was just getting over the cool, wet early-season hump. Once we got on the other side it was an easy ride down to the end of the year."

GERRY FINN

Anonymous statements in job security article draw rebuttal from “young” superintendent

(A note from the Editor: It seems that the December feature article (“Superintendents speak their mind on the profession’s shaky job security”) raised a few eyebrows among the membership. While it was generally well-received, some people had an issue with the anonymity of the interviewed superintendents. Anonymous quotes have become increasingly accepted over the last several years. We would like people to be held accountable for their words and actions. To avoid any personal ill feelings, those people with whom Gerry Finn spoke preferred to remain nameless.

GCSANE NEWS

Everyone – please do not take what was said personally. We all know the children’s rhyme about sticks and stones. Not everyone shares the same ideas. While the “leeches” comment may have been a regrettable one, it was said and must remain. To be sure, there are unethical deeds performed in our industry from time to time. Overall, though, the superintendent’s profession remains one of the classiest in the land. We must remember that this job is like few others. There are not many people who can relate to what we do. We should strive to help each other and remain friends (or at least friendly).

Without further ado, I present the one rebuttal that was received. Mike Varkonyi has raised some excellent points. I would like to thank him for taking the time to share them with us.)

Dear Mr. Finn,

As a new member of GCSANE, I regret that my first contribution to *The Newsletter* will be a negative rebuttal. I feel, however, that to leave this unsaid would be more regrettable. As I read your article, “Superintendents speak their mind on the profession’s shaky job security,” I immediately questioned why the superintendents quoted requested anonymity. As I read further, I realized why. It was regretful to see that you printed what this individual had to say about “young superintendents”.

The anonymous superintendent said: “In line with that, those same people want to do business with employees closer to their age and perspective. So, they zero in on the young golf course superintendent to do the job. In turn, the young superintendents are hanging around like leeches

ready to cling to any opportunity to advance their careers. Personally, I’m convinced they couldn’t feel better about what’s happening.” Reading on in your article, I see that you used this as a link to the rhetorical question of ‘is this the attitude’ or just wild accusations.

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President seeks opinions, golfers, volunteers, . . . and party-goers

In our last *Newsletter* the anonymous opinions expressed were not those of GCSANE, but rather of some of our members who were interviewed for the story. The topic of superintendent job security and stability has always been a hot-button issue. We would like to hear your opinions on this subject. Please write to our *Newsletter* editor, Russ Heller, with your views. Russ is looking to have some “Letters to the Editor” published in *The Newsletter*. In addition, if anyone would like to write an interesting article on something the membership would benefit by, please do so. This *Newsletter* is our communication to our membership. Please feel free to share an idea, story, or family happening with us.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

The Annual Meeting had to be changed because of the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday. We regret any inconvenience for the last-minute change, but we felt this was necessary. Many of our members have this holiday off and can spend this day with our families. In our business we get very little time off in the regular season, so it is very important that this time be spent with our loved ones.

Mike Iacono will be in charge of our chapter teams at the GCSAA golfing events in Dallas. If anyone would like to play on one of our chapter teams, please contact Mike. Good luck to everyone playing in this event. We hope to see some trophies when you get back from the “Big D.”

Speaking of Dallas, the Hospitality Room will be at the Adams Mark Hotel on Thurs., Feb. 15, 6-8 p.m. We will be in Dallas Room C. We will again be in the Nor’Easter Room with all our allied associations from the New England/Northeast area. We hope to see everyone there!

As of this writing, our Scholarship & Benevolence Tournament will be May 7 at Marlborough C.C. Please mark your calendars now. More information will follow.

We are always looking for volunteers to serve on various GCSANE committees. Anyone interested in serving on a committee should call me at (413) 256-8654.

The year 2000 was one that was very wet, and it seemed like the grass never stopped growing. This year was also my first as president, and one I will cherish forever. I look back and cannot believe it went by so fast. I am very fortunate to have a great Board of Directors who worked hard and made my job seem easy. The membership of GCSANE was always well represented, and of this I am very proud. The amount of meetings with IPM, Government Relations, WGAM, MGA, Ouimet, AMGO, Field Days, Conferences, Club Managers, Pesticide Bureau, USGA, et al, were many. I can tell you that not one of these meetings was missed. The Board of Directors does a terrific job, and you should all be aware of their hard work. We look forward to another year of serving our membership. Please let us know how we can help you in the future.

Respectfully, Bob Ruzala
President, GCSANE

Massachusetts Pesticide Exam schedule for 2001

The following is the Massachusetts Pesticide Exam schedule for the year 2001 at the Cape Cod, Springfield, and Waltham locations.

(Snow date only if the Department-Pesticide Bureau reschedules exam due to inclement weather.)

August 24 (no snow date) August 17
 September 14 (no snow date) September 7
 October 19 (October 22) October 12
 November 16 (November 19) November 9
 December 14 (December 17) December 7

EXAM SCHEDULE

CAPE COD

Cape Cod Community College
 Rte. 132, 2240 Iyanough Road
 West Barnstable, MA 02668

Exam Date (snow date) Application Deadline
 March 13 (March 14) March 6
 May 29 (no snow date) May 22

(Snow date only if the Department-Pesticide Bureau reschedules exam due to inclement weather.)

SPRINGFIELD

Springfield Technical Community College
 One Armory Square
 Springfield, MA 01101

Exam Date (snow date) Application Deadline
 March 15 (March 16) March 8
 (Cafeteria-Bldg. 20 on Pearl St.)
 June 22 (no snow date) June 15
 (Rm. 602 & 614 in Bldg. 17)

WALTHAM

UMass Eastern Extension Center
 240 Beaver Street
 Waltham, MA 02452

Exam Date (snow date) Application Deadline
 January 19 (January 22) January 12
 February 9 (February 12) February 2
 February 23 (February 26) February 16
 March 2 (March 5) February 23
 March 9 (March 12) March 2
 March 23 (March 26) March 16
 March 30 (April 2) March 23
 April 6 (April 9) March 30
 April 20 (April 23) April 13
 April 27 (April 30) April 20
 May 11 (no snow date) May 4
 May 18 (no snow date) May 11
 June 1 (no snow date) May 25
 June 15 (no snow date) June 8
 July 13 (no snow date) July 6
 July 27 (no snow date) July 20
 August 10 (no snow date) August 3

(Snow date only if the Department-Pesticide Bureau reschedules exam due to inclement weather.)

Exam Times

Private and Commercial Certification exams start promptly at 9 a.m.
 Commercial Applicator (core) and Dealer exams start promptly at 12:30 p.m.

Snow Times

Call 617-626-1841 for a pre-recorded message with exam dates, location, and cancellation information. In the event of bad weather, call after 6:30 a.m. the morning of the scheduled exam and listen to the message. If the exam has been canceled, the message will inform you and indicate that you should report on the snow date.

GCSANE camera captures festivities at Essex County Club



Association's Annual Holiday Party held Saturday, Dec. 9, 2000



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

MEMBERSHIP

Welcome New Members: Scott Whitcomb, Mass. Golf Association, Affiliate.

Proposed for Membership: Steven Smith, Indian Ridge C.C., Assistant; James Stavros, Cape Anne G.C., Superintendent; Mark Morrison, Shaker Hills G.C., Assistant; Mike Hannigan, R.F. Morse & Sons, Affiliate.

INFORMATION

Belated thanks are in order to Joe Rybka and the staff at Thorny Lea G.C. for hosting the December meeting of GCSANE.

Please note that the Annual Meeting date has been changed to January 29. This was done due to the fact that it was originally scheduled on Martin Luther King Day. To help ensure good attendance at this important event, it was necessary to make the change. The board of directors apologizes for the error. The Annual Meeting will still be held at Walpole C.C.

The annual 9-hole budget meeting will be held January 30 at 9 a.m. at the Whitinsville Country Club. Please call Paul Wilson at (508) 234-2533 for further information.

If any GCSANE member is interested in receiving a scholarship application for his/her child attending college, please contact David Comee. Applications are available from him by calling (978) 297-1223.

Best wishes to Gary Luccini. He was scheduled to undergo surgery. We all wish "The Bear" the very best.

Mike Iacono will be the liaison for the 2001 Golf Championship to be held in Texas before the GCSAA conference. If anyone needs information concerning the team event, please contact Mike at (781) 899-7913.

Please note that GCSANE dues for 2001 have increased \$5. The fee schedule is now this: Regular, Associate, Assistant, and Affiliate members will pay \$155; Friends will pay \$255. The initiation fees have not changed and remain \$75 (\$500 for Friends). This very small increase was necessary to help offset the rising cost of doing business.

Johnson & Wales University is now offering a Golf Management concentration. Scholarships for this will be available through GCSANE. For more information on the scholarships, contact Bob Ruzsala. To contact Johnson & Wales about their program, call (800) 232-2433.

Congratulations to the following people, all making new stops:

Kent Lemme has left Vesper Country Club and is now back at Taconic Golf Club.

David Laffey is now the superintendent at Oakley Country Club. He previously served in that position at Franklin Park Golf Course.

Russell Heller has left Chelmsford Country Club and is now the superintendent at Franklin Park.

Scott Reynolds has left Charles River C.C. and is now superintendent at Charter Oaks G.C.

Congratulations to Don Nunes, superintendent at Chicopee Municipal G.C. He was recently designated a Certified Golf Course Superintendent (CGCS) by GCSAA. Don has been superintendent at Chicopee since 1997.

Mark your calendars for the annual "Nor'easter" reception. It will be held at the Adams Mark Hotel in Dallas on February 15, 6-8 p.m.

Golfweek's Superintendent News is sponsoring an 18-hole Team Championship in Dallas on Wednesday, February 14 at the Four Seasons Resort and Club. Entry is \$200/person and includes greens fees and awards dinner (casual dress). You get a pair of Etonic golf shoes, Gustbuster umbrella, windshirt, and a dozen balls. The tournament is open to superintendents and assistants and is limited to 56 teams. It is a 2-Ball Best-Ball format. Individual entrants will be paired with other entrants if needed. The tournament site is a 20-minute drive from the Dallas Convention Center. To enter or for more information, call (877) 805-4653, or e-mail ac@golfweek.com.

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Assistant. Cedar Hill G.C. is a 9-hole municipal course in Stoughton, Mass. Responsibilities include overseeing a grounds crew and the day-to-day operation of course maintenance. Individual must have a two-year degree in turf management and one-to-three years of experience on a golf course staff. Must have or obtain a Mass. pesticide applicator's license. Compensation is commensurate with experience. Benefits include health insurance, life insurance, paid vacation, and paid local & national dues. Send resume by January 30 to: Ron Dobosz, Supt., Cedar Hill G.C., 1137 Park Street, Stoughton, MA 02072.

Superintendent. Ponemah Green Family Golf, located in Amherst, N.H. (45 minutes from Boston), is seeking a qualified individual to maintain and improve a 9-hole course, grass range, and grounds. A great opportunity for the "step up" from first assistant. Individual must have worked as a superintendent for two years or as an assistant

for four years. Must be a self-starter, enthusiastic, and have the desire to work in a team atmosphere. Must have or obtain a N.H. supervisory-level pesticide license. Please send resume by January 30 to: Kerry Studley, Director of Golf/General Manager, Ponemah Green, 55 Ponemah Road, Amherst, NH 03031.

Second Assistant. Haverhill Country Club is a private 18-hole country club built in 1925 by Wayne Stiles. Responsibilities will include employee training & supervision, chemical spraying, fertilizer applications, the overall maintenance of a Toro 8000 irrigation system, and all other duties relevant to the management of a private golf course. A minimum of a two-year degree in turfgrass management or comparable experience is needed. Must have at least two years of golf course experience, a working knowledge of an irrigation system, and be willing to obtain a Mass. pesticide applicator's license within three months. Compensation is commensurate with experience. Excellent benefits and 401(k) plan. Please send resume to Matt Behl, Superintendent, The Haverhill Country Club, P. O. Box 250, Haverhill, MA 01861.

Second Assistant. Bass Rocks Golf Club is a private 18-hole golf course with frequent ocean views. Founded in 1895 and designed by Herbert Corey Leeds, three new holes were constructed and a new irrigation system was installed in 1997. The candidate must have a desire to excel, be willing to work long hours, and have the ability to attain a Mass. pesticide applicator's license. Individual must have a minimum of a Turf Winter School certificate and two years of turf maintenance experience. A self-motivated team player is desired. Responsibilities include crew supervision, course set-up, scouting, plant protectant application, irrigation operation/maintenance, and drainage installation, as well as many other duties. Compensation includes paid winter vacation, 80% employer-paid health insurance, and salary. Please send resume by February 12 to Patty Knaggs, Golf Course Superintendent, Bass Rocks Golf Club, P. O. Box 303, Gloucester, MA 01930.

ITEMS FOR SALE

1994 Toro Reelmaster 5100-D with 23 HP Mitsubishi diesel engine and 2-wheel drive. Excellent condition. \$8,000 or best offer. Call Ron Hansen, CGCS, for further information at (603) 863-4044.

Please Patronize these FRIENDS of the ASSOCIATION

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December Newsletter feature article provokes rebuttal

continued from page 4

I understand your journalistic technique, but completely disagree with the means. If you print erroneous, controversial, and downright insulting quotes anonymously, I believe you must share in the negative rebuttals. If anonymity was the only way to have superintendents give you feedback for the article, I feel that you should have looked for a different means to write this article, edited out such quotes, found superintendents willing to have their name printed, or not written the article.

The originator of this quote, I feel, was incorrect and insulting. I am not sure of the duration of his tenure at his present club, but it seems like he has been there for awhile and is over the age of 50. For the record, I am 35 years-old, and have been a superintendent for nine years, four of

which at my present club. I consider myself a "young" superintendent; therefore I take his remarks very personally. I have never been a leech nor do I intend to be one in the future. To be as broad in his comments as he was, is as bad as club officials being age discriminatory. I do not feel good about seeing other superintendents lose their jobs. I lost a job four years ago, and it is not good for the profession as a whole for anyone to lose his job. I believe that many jobs lost are the result of politics in the clubs and not conditions on the course. I have chosen not to apply to certain clubs when the superintendent position has opened up in a manner that I believe unfair or unprofessional. I choose not to apply for the reason that if after 25 years of dedicated service a club rudely disposes of their superintendent, what would they do after one year? Or two? Or three?

According to statistics from GCSAA, the average stay for a superintendent is five years. Maybe the superintendent that stays 25 years at one club is the anomaly.

Every superintendent is different. Some want to move on to have new challenges, some stay for family reasons, others for political reasons. Whatever the reasoning, we are all in the same profession. We should conduct ourselves in more of a professional manner than those around us. We should be willing to help each other, young or old, in whatever way possible. If a "young" superintendent does feel the way you say, they should look into the future. In 10 years I will be 45, so how could I feel good knowing that I may lose my job because I am too "old". If you do not know me, ask around, and see that I would do whatever any of my friends/superintendents ask of me. I consider you all my friends and age has nothing to do with it. Lets refrain from making statements that may cause dissension, animosity, or worse, cliques.

Sincerely,
**Michael Varkonyi, Superintendent,
Reservation Golf Club**

FIRST CLASS



Return to:
175 Highland Avenue
Needham, MA 02494-3034

