



THE NEWSLETTER

June 2008

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

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Brae Burn Country Club Plays Key role in Recovery and Rescue Efforts after Deadly MBTA Crash

By: Rich Gagnon

When Bob DiRico first heard from a neighbor there was some commotion going on near the hospital, which was down the street from his Newton home, he didn't think much of it. A few moments later a neighbor informed him there were helicopters landing on the fairways of the Brae Burn Country Club. At first he thought the neighbor was joking and quickly realized that this was a serious situation and he needed to do what ever he could to help. On the way over to the golf course his cell phone rang and he was informed that there was a serious train crash and he needed to get there as fast as he could.

On Wednesday, May 28th at 6:00 p.m. on the Riverside line of the MBTA in Newton a green line trolley driven by a female MBTA employee, who was on the job for the past 9 months, slammed into the rear of another trolley killing herself and sending seven other people to the hospital. The terrible accident happened just off the 13th hole of the Brae Burn Country Club where Bob DiRico has been a fixture as golf course superintendent for the past 20 years. Because the accident happened so late in the day none of DiRico's staff was working but luckily Assistant Superintendent Tim Brignolo, who is provided housing by the country club and lives on campus, was able to answer the first call that came in. It was the Newton Police Department and they needed permis-

sion to land a helicopter on the 13th fairway and to access the accident via the golf course with police, fire, and rescue vehicles. Permission was granted and the rescue efforts were underway. The rescue teams had no other option but to use the golf course to access the site as the opposite side of the tracks has a very steep slope



Rescue helicopters were an unfamiliar sight on the fairways of Brae Burn Country Club moments after the fatal MBTA train crash.

Photo by: Michael DiRico

and there are many homes as well. The maintenance staff wasn't the only department at Brae Burn CC to spring into action as the pro shop staff including assistant professional Ryan Jewett was the first to open gates and direct traffic for the many rescue vehicles racing to the scene. Bob DiRico stated that "Ryan was out there for 6 hours directing rescue personal to the crash

site and also keeping the traffic away from the greens and tees. He did a fantastic job."

At 7:00 p.m. it was decided that assistant superintendent Michael DiRico was going to stay all night to direct traffic around the irrigation system to avoid any breaks. "These were not just pick-up trucks and vans; these were huge fire trucks, MBTA trucks

and extremely heavy vehicles capable of doing a lot of damage. My first concern was for the safety of the passengers and the rescue of the trapped operator and secondly I was concerned about the golf course" said Bob DiRico. Quickly there were 14 ambulances, fire trucks from Newton, Wellesley, and Needham as well as 2 helicopters sitting on his 12th and 13th holes. Bob DiRico said: "It was a very tense moment for all that were

involved as the rescue teams tried to free the trapped woman from the wreckage. They did everything they could to save the woman. This was the kind of crash that the "jaws of life" would be useless. It was too huge and special equipment needed to be brought in."

The MBTA driver was finally freed from the wreckage at 1 a.m. but unfortunately it was too late. There was little the rescue teams could have done as

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MBTA crash - continued from page 1

the front of the trolley folded under itself and took the driver with it and trapped her for seven hours. According to MBTA personnel the trolleys are made to collapse to prevent them from folding like an accordion. It seems the accordion effect was prevented but the collapse unfortunately folded up underneath the train.

The National Safety and Transportation Board (NTSB) showed up on Thursday the 29th and completely took over the investigation as to what happened. The investigation included a full reenactment of the crash. The same type of trolley, at the same exact time of day, with the same light signals, audio equipment and at the same speed. They wanted to check things such as if the sun was a factor and if the signals were working properly. The results of the investigation may take as long as a year to be released.

As far as interrupting play at the club, the membership was able to play 15 holes and had to only close 12 thru 14 on Thursday and Friday. There were 50-70 vehicles on the 12th and 13th fairways for two full days. The fairways held up extremely well as there were only minor ruts and burn marks from the exhaust of cars that were left idling for several hours. The only restoration that needed to be done was that of an access road which had at least 200 huge vehicles traveling through it each day. This repair work was being done by a private contractor in the first week of June.

The clubhouse management team should also be applauded as they were providing endless supplies of sandwiches for the rescue teams around the clock. It was a full team effort at Brae Burn Country Club including kitchen, maintenance, pro shop, and office employees.

"It was a very tense moment for all that were involved as the rescue teams tried to free the trapped woman from the wreckage. They did everything they could to save the woman. This was the kind of crash that the "jaws of life" would be useless. It was too huge and special equipment needed to be brought in."

**Bob DiRico
Superintendent,
Brae Burn CC**



Brae Burn Country Club's fairways looked like a parking lot for several days following the MBTA train crash.

Photo by: Michael DiRico



Firefighters worked frantically to rescue the driver from the wreckage of the MBTA train.

Photo by: Peter Lobo

Nashawtuc Gets High Marks

By: Mike Cassidy

Paul Miller has just completed his twenty-first Senior Tour event at his club, and if you go to the beginning, Nashawtuc CC is the longest running host on the senior tour and has been at this same site for the past 26 years.

When asked what the best part of hosting this event year after year, Paul's response was simply put. "Pushing the course to its limit every year at this time and learning from each event because there are different challenges each year. This year's challenge was a second flush of Poa seed production due in part to the cool nights leading up to the mid June tournament." He had no option but to groom the seeds out the week before the event.

Chemical control would have compromised optimal speed expectations and may have caused a puffy surface. Obviously he made the right call...very positive feedback from all players.

Paul is the conductor that makes everything click at the right time. He oversees 1700 volunteers for this event and makes every one of them feel that their task is the most important which leads to his success every year. His staff gets fired up for tournament week and again Paul is the one that has to coordinate every aspect of the course conditioning with the help from the key people on his staff. He stressed the importance of sticking with a program at all times because something as routine as cutting greens can become confusing if one guy gets out of his normal routine.

"One of the neat things you get from hosting a tournament for 21 years is the player relationships/friendships that he has developed over the years". Bob Charles is one of his favorites because he has been around for a very long time and always makes a point to

say hi to Paul and chat. The "younger" players are a bit less approachable. It seems like it takes a couple of years on the senior tour before they realize they have it pretty good out there. With that said, the reason many of these Pro's return to Nashawtuc every year is the great job Paul and his staff and volunteers pull off every year which makes this a very popular stop on the Senior Tour. Great job Paul!

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Massachusetts native Kirk Hanefeld explodes out of a green-side bunker during Saturday's action at the Champion's Tour, Bank of America Championship golf tournament held annually at Paul Miller's Nashawtuc Country Club. Hanefeld finished Saturday with 4 straight birdies and finished 20th overall.

Photo by: Rich Gagnon



Assistant's Corner

The Importance of Internships

By: Ethan Tease

As interns roll in from turf programs near and far, I've been reflecting on my own experiences I had during three summer internships. I gained more knowledge and experience from those three summers than all four years at school. I am not saying school was not important, I learned other valuable information, but there is something to be said about hands-on experience. I've been thinking about how valuable those experiences have been for me and the importance of a well designed, well rounded internship.

One of the first things that I did not realize the importance of is to write a list of goals for the summer. For a first year intern this is something that could be done together with the superintendent or an assistant, but in successive years the intern should be able to set goals based on previous experience

and what they hope to achieve in the coming months. I did not write down goals at the beginning of my internships and I feel I missed out on some opportunities because of that. Aside from the goals, it is important that the intern gets involved in every aspect of the daily routine.

Of course the daily routine can often be far from routine, however, a typical day involves course set-up, mowing, irrigation and chemical applications. I found being involved in the course set-up routine with the assistant superintendent to be a valuable experience. Not only does this provide the opportunity to understand the importance of and the rules behind moving tee markers, changing cups, etc., but it is a great way to learn about the game, the course and the crew.

Mowing is obviously an important

task to understand and be familiar with. I think it is important to get to know all of the varied types and techniques of mowing entailed at golf courses. The more machines an intern can get familiar with the better. Knowing the machine, it's purpose and it's potential, is important for scheduling, managing personnel, and quick mechanical trouble-shooting.

While we are on the subject of trouble-shooting, that's the name of the game when it comes to working with irrigation. There is so much involved in an irrigation system that it seems even a lifetime of internships and classes cannot prepare someone for all the problems that can arise. Certainly in 3 or 4 months an intern can learn enough to have a good foundation on which to further their knowledge.

Spending a week with an irrigation tech can provide an enormous amount of knowledge. Just sitting down with a sprinkler head, taking it apart and understanding their component is a great learning tool. Even if it is a slow repair week, cleaning nozzles, checking flow rates and spray patterns is useful.

Another part of a typical day at the course is the application of chemicals, be it pesticides, fertilizers, growth regulators, etc. Understandably there may be some interns that do not feel comfortable handling the responsibility of applying chemicals early on, especially using spray equipment (and likewise, superintendents may not be willing to put the responsibility of properly applying thousands of dollars worth of chemicals onto manicured turf in the hands of such a person). But, everyone needs to get their start and I believe even an untrained intern should have the opportunity to become familiar with the process. Even if it means having them get involved in the calibration, tank mixing, and tank cleaning process. Learning how to calibrate is a great tool. Also, just getting them to drive the sprayer to and from the load-

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Thunderstorms & Lightning Safety Tips

By: Ron Smith, MBA, CPSI

As we slowly transition from late Spring to early Summer the days get longer and the temperatures rise. The warmer weather brings with it many benefits. Unfortunately, it is also usually accompanied by an increase in thunderstorms and lightning.

This latter point was highlighted recently by lightning striking a member of a golf course maintenance staff in southern Connecticut in early June. The good news is the employee was only slightly injured and was able to return to work fairly soon after the incident.

The employee was returning to the maintenance facility after hearing the club's lightning detection system's horns sounding an alarm. He was walking in the rough along a tree-lined fairway when lightning struck both him and a nearby tree.

The superintendent of the club is a

client of mine and he called me after the incident to assist with the investigation of the accident. Our review revealed all the proper steps had been taken but an employee was injured nonetheless.

Based on the fact that even when you take the appropriate precautionary actions lightning can still strike you and/or a member of your staff, I felt it was important to insure people are not increasing their chances of being struck by not fully understanding thunderstorms and lightning. Consequently, I have summarized several of the key points presented by the National Weather Service.

Thunderstorms affect relatively small areas when compared with hurricanes and winter storms. The typical thunderstorm is 15 miles in diameter and lasts an average of 30 minutes.

Nearly 1,800 thunderstorms are occur-

ring at any moment around the world. That's 16 million a year! New England averages 10 to 30 *thunderstorm days annually*.

Despite their small size, **all** thunderstorms are dangerous. Every thunderstorm produces lightning, which kills more people each year than tornadoes. Heavy rain from thunderstorms can lead to flash flooding. Strong winds, hail, and tornadoes are also dangers associated with some thunderstorms.

Lightning has been the #2 weather killer in the United States over the past 30 years, killing more people than hurricanes and tornadoes combined. An average of 93 people is killed and 300 injured each year by lightning.

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ing pad allows them to get comfortable with the machine and its components. Likewise, getting comfortable with the application of granular chemicals with a mechanical spreader is equally important. As with spray equipment, knowing how to correctly calibrate a spreader is an important skill.

Along with some of these important daily skills an intern should get to know during an internship, I feel it is important to try and provide some unique experiences that create a lasting impression. Renovation projects, big and small, provide knowledge that will be indispensable for an entire career. Renovations are multifaceted and can provide lessons in growing-in, budgeting, materials, machinery, and attention to details. I was able to be involved with some bunker renovations, which despite all the long hours and tireless work, provided a great deal of information that I still look back on today.

One opportunity that I am grateful for as an intern was the ability to volunteer at the U.S. Women's Open at the

Orchards in South Hadley, Massachusetts. This is something I will always remember. Volunteering at a tournament is a tremendous experience. Not only did I see and experience the immense undertaking that is involved in hosting a tournament, but I was able to network with many people. By working that week I got to know the superintendent and the assistant at the Orchards, which helped me obtain an internship there the following summer. It was a tremendous opportunity and the superintendent at the course I was interning at had to sacrifice the loss of two interns for a week, but we returned with an increased appreciation for our work and an experience that we will keep forever.

These thoughts and ideas come from my own experiences as an intern at three respected courses in Massachusetts. What I hoped to achieve with this article was to inspire superintendents to consider more closely their internship programs. An intern should leave an internship with the feeling that they have gained valuable knowledge and relationships so that they can successfully begin a young, promising career.

reer. Likewise, a superintendent should feel proud to know that they have given an intern the skills and experiences with which to become successful. What a great feeling it would be to see a young, untested college kid turn into a successful superintendent.

“An intern should leave an internship with the feeling that they have gained valuable knowledge and relationships so that they can successfully begin a young, promising career.”

Ethan Tease

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No place OUTSIDE is safe during a thunderstorm. The safest location is a fully enclosed building with wiring and plumbing. Such buildings are safe because of the wiring and plumbing.

Unsafe buildings include picnic or beach shelters, large outdoor tents, or other buildings that do not have electricity or plumbing.

The second safest location is a hard-topped car, SUV, bus, etc., but not a soft-topped convertible.

Don't use the telephone during the storm. Lightning may strike telephone lines outside.

Don't work on fences, telephone or power lines, pipelines, or structural steel fabrication.

Don't handle flammable materials in open containers.

Stop tractor work, especially when the tractor is pulling metal equipment, and dismount. Tractors and other imple-

ments in metallic contact with the ground are often struck by lightning. Get out of the water and off small boats.

If no buildings are available, your best protection is a cave, ditch, canyon, or under head-high clumps of trees in open forest glades.

When there is no shelter, avoid the highest object in the area. If only isolated trees are nearby, your best protection is to crouch in the open, keeping twice as far away from isolated trees as the trees are high.

Avoid hilltops, open spaces, wire fences, metal clotheslines, exposed sheds, and any electrically conductive elevated objects.

If your hair stands on end or your skin tingles, lightning may be about to strike you. Drop to the ground immediately. Rubber-soled shoes and rubber tires provide **NO** protection from lightning.

Follow the 30-30 rule to be safe. Watch for dark skies, threatening clouds, or increasing winds, even if it is not raining.

- When you see lightning, count the time until you hear thunder.
- If that time is 30 seconds or less, the thunderstorm is within 6 miles of where you are and is dangerous—you are close enough to be struck.
- Seek shelter immediately.
- Wait at least 30 minutes after the last clap of thunder before leaving shelter.
- Don't be fooled by sunshine or blue sky! Lightning often strikes outside of heavy rain and may occur as far as 10 miles away from rainfall.

If someone is struck by lightning, call 911 or your local emergency number to get immediate medical care.

You are in no danger of an electrical charge if you touch a victim or administer CPR.

I hope everyone has a safe summer. If you would like a copy of this article in Spanish please contact me at ron-smith@sportsclubmanagement.com and I will email one to you.

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Host: Peter Hasak
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Tournament Results:

1st Gross:	Scott Mackintosh, David Vanleuwen	67
2nd Gross:	Rob Anderson, Jim Nelligan	70
1st Net:	Rick Stark, Jim Mulhern	59
2nd Net:	Ron Smith, Greg Holder	62
3rd Net:	Dennis Friel, Joseph Piana	64*

Closest to the Pin #3: Patrick Van Vleck
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Closest to the Pin #13: Dan Murphy

*Denotes winner of the card match

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Marlborough CC	Dennis Friel	Woods Hole GC	John McCannell
Nehoiden GC	Mark Gagne	Hickory Ridge CC	Ken Munsey
Newton Commonwealth GC	John Bresnahan	Titleist Golf Bag	Tom Harrington
Norfolk GC	Don Filio		

Please note:

Winners who have not yet received their prize may contact Sharon Brownell @ sbrownell@verizon.net

Winner of South Carolina Condo Raffle:

Joe Piana, Norwood Country Club

Congratulations to the 2007 GCSANE Scholarship Recipients:

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Schofield Memorial Scholarship:

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Please note: 2008 GCSANE Scholarship applications are due August 1st and may be obtained by contacting Sharon Brownell at sbrownell@verizon.net

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GCSAA expands TGIF access to all member superintendents

The most comprehensive index of turfgrass information in existence is now available at the touch of a button to all GCSAA Class A and Superintendent Members.

Through an agreement between the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) and Michigan State University's Turfgrass Information Center, the Turfgrass Information File (TGIF) can be accessed by Superintendent Members along with Class A members, who were given access in 2007. GCSAA Class A and Superintendent Members can enter the TGIF through the GCSAA Web site at <http://www.gcsaa.org/solutions/TGIF.aspx> or by clicking on Solutions/Tools on the left-hand side of the gcsaa.org homepage and then clicking on Turfgrass Information File (TGIF).

The TGIF is a computerized database available through the Web that covers full scope of the turfgrass industry, including content from journals and magazines, research reports, conference proceedings, Extension bulletins, books and book chapters, technical reports, theses and dissertations, web documents, published Q-and-As, scanned golf course plans, and video interviews. In all the TGIF contains more than 130,000 records and continues to grow daily. Among its holdings is the complete digitized archive of GCSAA's *Golf Course Management* magazine and its predecessor from 1933 to the present.

For more information contact:

[Carrie Riordan](#), GCSAA director, information and public policy, at 800-472-7878, ext. 3610

[Margo Campbell Szabo](#), GCSAA senior information services librarian, at 800-472-7878, ext. 3604

[Pete Cookingham](#), Turfgrass Information Center, at 517-432-6123, ext. 274

Just a reminder that during the golf meetings, it is proper etiquette to not tee off while the group ahead of you is within range. During the Member/Guest tournaments, you are responsible for your guest's actions.

CALENDAR

July 22, 2008:

The University of Connecticut Field Day

For more information please visit: www.turf.uconn.edu/fieldday08.

July 28:

GCSANE Monthly Meeting

Walpole Country Club
Host: Mark Gagne

August 19:

GCSANE Monthly Meeting

Individual Championship
Marlborough Country Club
Host: Ken Crimmings, CGCS

August 20, 2008:

The University of Rhode Island Field Day

Pre-registration is now open. For more information, please contact Dr. Rebecca Brown (401) 874-2791.

September 15:

GCSANE Monthly Meeting

Twin Hills Country Club
Team of Two Championship
Host: Matt Kowal

September 29, 2008:

The 2008 Joseph Troll Classic at Lyman Orchards Golf Club, honoring George B. Thompson.

October 29:

GCSANE Monthly Meeting

Country Club of Halifax
Member/Guest Tournament
Host: Edward Gianni, CGCS

November 13: GCSANE Monthly Meeting

Bellevue Golf Club
9-Hole Tournament
Host: Brian Skinner

UMass Extension

UMass Extension Turf Program Upcoming Events

July 22 - Turfgrass Identification and Selection Workshop
UMass Joseph Troll Turf Research Ctr.
S. Deerfield, MA
9:00 am - 3:00 pm

July 31 - UMass Turf Open House
UMass Joseph Troll Turf Research Ctr.
S. Deerfield, MA
4:00 pm - 6:00 pm

Mid August Date TBA - Dollar Spot Resistance Field Trials and Oriental Beetle Discussion
Wianno Club, Osterville, MA

October 30 - 2008 Turf Season in Review: Research from Field and Greenhouse, Results from On-Golf-Course Trials
UMass Amherst, Amherst, MA
8:30 am - 12:00 pm

For program details and registration information, please visit www.umassturf.org or call (508) 892-0382



SAVE THE DATE

SEPTEMBER 29, 2008

THE DR. JOSEPH TROLL TURF EDUCATION FUNDRAISER

LYMAN ORCHARDS

HONORING GEORGE THOMPSON, CGCS



Turfgrass Science Program

College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Department of Plant Science

JULY 22, 2008

Plant Science Research & Education Facility in Storrs, Connecticut

The University of Connecticut invites you to the 1st Turfgrass Field Day

To celebrate the 10th anniversary of its Turfgrass Science Program, the University of Connecticut's College of Agriculture and Natural Resources will host its 1st Turfgrass Field Day on July 22, 2008.

The first of this Biennial Field Day Event will focus on current research projects conducted in the areas of professional turfgrass management. The 2008 Turfgrass Field Day at the University of Connecticut offers exciting educational opportunities for turfgrass managers of all levels.

The date of the Field Day has been selected in order to provide the best opportunity to view the research plots when they are under the greatest summer stress. Viewing the research at this time of the year will provide managers the opportunity to question the UConn turf experts on management recommendations for the remainder of the season. Cutting edge research in the areas of pest control, golf and sports turf management, lawn care and others will be presented.



Discounted registration offered to members of the following associations:



NESTMA
New England Sports
Turf Managers Association

**Connecticut
Park
Association**

www.TURF.uconn.edu/fieldday08



77th Rhode Island Turfgrass Field Day August 20, 2008

The University of Rhode Island's C.R. Skogley Turfgrass Research Facility, Kingston, RI 02881

Tentative Event Schedule

7:30 – 9:00 AM: **Registration and Check-in.**

9:00 AM– 1:00 PM: **Visit with commercial exhibitors.** (Visit with regional turf products and equipment distributors. The URI turf field day hosts the largest gathering of regional product distributors outside the New England Regional Turfgrass Conference and Show)

A light buffet breakfast will be served until 10:30am.

10:30 AM– 1:00 PM: **Tour of the turf plots and re- search demonstrations.** (Variety trials, fertilizer trials, insecticide, fungicide and herbicide trials)

1:30 PM: **Adjourn to Laurel Lane Golf Course for an event sponsored by the URI Turf Alumni; separate fee (to be determined) paid to Rhode Island Turfgrass Association.**

Contact Vicki Wallace at vhwallace@cox.net.



Pre-Register NOW!

Registration and payment must be received by August 8th for vendors. Pre-registration by August 8th is suggested for everyone. Admittance fee increases to \$40 after August 8th. Vendor booth fee includes one registration. Registration includes the cost of breakfast and a URI Field Day Book. Charges for the post-Field Day event at Laurel Lane are separate. Make checks payable to: **URI Turfgrass Foundation**, and send to Dr. Rebecca Brown – URI Turfgrass Field Day, University of Rhode Island, Dept. of Plant Sciences, 210 Woodward Hall, Kingston, RI 02881 (send payment along with the completed form below). Please call 401-874-2791 for additional information.

Company: _____

Contact: _____

Address: _____

Registration _____ people at \$30.00 each = \$ _____
(\$40 after August 10th)

Booth fee _____ booths at \$75.00 each = \$ _____
(includes 1 registration)

Total Due \$ _____

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