



THE NEWSLETTER

March 2009

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

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An Early Passion Leads Jim Medeiros to the Top of His Profession and Thorny Lea Golf Club

By: Gary Trask

Discovering a passion can never happen too soon in life. Just ask Jim Medeiros, who found his at the young age of 11 years old. That's when Medeiros began working as a caddy at Crestwood Country Club in Rehoboth, Mass. He didn't know it at the time, but it was a job that would carve a path for the rest of his life.

"You learn more about just golf when you caddy," Medeiros, now 59, recalls. "It can be a humbling experience lugging golf bags around for guys a lot older than you. You learn how to deal with people. You learn how to interact. It's a great learning experience."

Medeiros was a part-time looper at Crestwood CC straight through his teenager years as he attended Coyle High School in Taunton, Mass. When his guidance counselor at the time asked him what his plans were after high school, Medeiros said he was unsure. That's when he was told about the Stockbridge School at UMass.

"I had no idea that you could actually go to school for a few years and come away with a degree in turf management," says the native of Fall River, Mass. "By that point I had already fallen in love with the game and I loved being outside all of the time. I figured it was perfect for me."

Indeed it was. This season, Medeiros, a 1970 graduate of Stockbridge, will be starting his 39th year in the business when he opens the fairways at Thorny Lea Golf Club in Brockton, Mass.

Four decades is a long time to spend in any industry, but spending that amount of time as a golf course superintendent is even more remarkable. But, as Medeiros points out, there have been ups and downs along the way.

"It's not all fun and games; it's a serious business," he says. "But you can never take it personal. People get let go from their jobs every day in all walks of life. To be honest, I think it's good for someone to be fired once or twice in their lifetime. It teaches you to pick yourself up from the floor, dust yourself off and move on."

That's exactly what Medeiros did three years ago and he once again landed on his feet. This time at Thorny Lea GC, where he says he's as happy as he's ever been in his career.

"I didn't hit a home run by getting this job, I hit a grand slam," he says. "I could tell as soon as I came through the gates on the day that I interviewed that it was the right place

for me. The people here are genuine. They're respectful. And they share the same love of the game of golf that I do. It's really something special to be able to maintain a course for great golfers like you find at Thorny Lea."

The 18-hole, Wayne Stiles-designed private course has a history of attracting long-term superintendents. The club opened in 1900, yet Medeiros is just the fourth man to sit in the head superintendent's chair. He replaced Joe Ripka, who ended a 40-



Thorny Lea Golf Club

Photo Source: Thorny Lea Golf Club

After an internship at Mount Kisko Country Club in New York, Medeiros served as an assistant at Fenway Golf Club in White Plains before getting his first head super job at Bronson Country Club in Shelton, Conn. where he spent nine years. He then landed at the Golf Club of Avon in Connecticut for 12 years before being let go and moving on to Wannamoisett Country Club in Rumford, R.I. where he was given yet another pink slip after a dozen years on the job.

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year run at the course back in 2006.

"Joe did an unbelievable job," Medeiros says. "I had quite a course to work with once I got here."

Making the transition even more seamless was the fact that Medeiros inherited a crew with almost as much experience at the club as Ripka. Ray Sands, the crew mechanic, is in his 30th year at Thorny Lea while assistant super Sean Smith and spray technician James Scott have each logged in more than 20 years at the club.

During the season, Medeiros usually manages a staff of 12 workers and his philosophy as a boss has always been the same.

"I think if you ask anyone who has ever worked for me before they'll tell you that I'm fair," says Medeiros, who takes great pride in coming in early every Saturday morning and setting up the course for the weekend. "If you come in on time and do your job, we aren't going to have a problem. I just always try to treat people like I would want to be treated."

Medeiros has used all three of his sons on his staff over the years. His oldest son, Jamie, 33, was an

assistant with him in Connecticut before becoming a firefighter in Rhode Island. Both Scott, 32, and Kevin, 24, work for their father at Thorny Lea.

"It's become a family affair," Medeiros says. "They kind of grew up with the job. My wife Susan was a waitress as they were growing up. So as I came home from work, she'd be going out the door to her job. But we made it work. We've been married 36 years, so we've done something right."

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"I had no idea that you could actually go to school for a few years and come away with a degree in turf management. By that point I had already fallen in love with the game and I loved being outside all the time. I figured it was a perfect fit."

Jim Medeiros, CGCS



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President's Message

Greetings, this past month I was asked to spend countless hours considering what to write for the Newsletter. Instead I have been discussing various techniques of greens aeration with my Greens Chairman and Board members, speaking to Framingham's fire marshal regarding my underground storage tank, trying to finalize my spray program, and contemplating whom to draft in my fantasy baseball league.

Some things to consider this month:

- I hope that all members will remember that the economy has affected budgets and staffing levels. Superintendents should consider not only the differences in ground conditions and growing environments but also budgets when and if they are asked to comment on another's golf course.

- Have you heard about the Third Party Inspections of UST Systems that need to be completed prior to August 8, 2010? Check out the following link for more information.

www.mass.gov/dfs

- I know that there was an e-mail sent out recently about the Pesticide Use Reporting. It's due on May 15th. Check the following link for more information.

www.mass.gov/agr/pesticides

- The 60th Annual Ouimet Banquet is on April 27 this year with Tom Watson as this year's honoree. I spent this past weekend interviewing candidates for scholarships and we all should make sure that any staff member who is eligible applies for a scholarship. Also you should be expecting a call from either Jason Adams or one of his Ouimet Committee members for spon-

sorship of this year's Marathon. This is a great opportunity for the golfing community to give back to golf and society by assisting youth in furthering their education.

Our next monthly meeting is April 27th at Whitinsville Golf Club. Considered by many to be the best nine-hole golf course in the country. Whitinsville recently brought Gil Hanse aboard to work on a master plan. I hope to see you all there enjoying Dave Johnson and his staff's hard work.

Until next month, may the simple pleasures of life including good friends, family, health, happiness, and peace be with you and your families. ❖

Pat Daly, CGCS
GCSANE President

Scenes from the Framingham Country Club March Meeting

(Photo Source: Rich Gagnon)



President Pat Daly, CGCS speaks at Framingham CC on March 19th



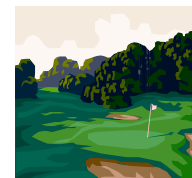
Dave Johnson introduces guest speaker Attorney John W. Davis



John Davis spoke about employment laws and your rights as an employee



Mark Richard, CGCS socializes with fellow members



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UMass Turf Management Update

By: Pat Vittum

Latest Message By Pat Vittum

Date: March 16, 2009

Category: Insects

Subject: White Grubs

The warm temperatures of this past week have gotten people to thinking that perhaps spring is just around the corner. If that is true, then it must be time to start thinking about turf insect activity.

White grubs have been deep in the soil profile for the winter but now that the air temperatures are rising, the frost line is rising as well, and the grubs will not be far behind. That means there will be many people wondering about the best approach for grub control this year. (In fact many of you in southeastern Massachusetts may already be seeing new grub damage, courtesy of the European chafer.)

One of the traditional approaches has been to apply a neonicotinoid (something like imidacloprid, or Merit™; thiamethoxam, or Meridian™; or clothianidin, or Arena™). The labels for all these products suggest that the ideal timing of application is when the adults are laying eggs (anywhere from mid June to late July, depending on your location and the species of grub). You can probably push that a little bit earlier and still get good control. But there are no formal field trials that have been conducted that can tell us whether spring (i.e., April or May applications) will control grubs that are present in the spring.

Keep in mind that the combination products (Allectus™ contains Merit™ plus Talstar™, Aloft™ contains Arena™ plus a generic form of bifenthrin should be used in the same way if targeting white grubs. Applying when adults are laying eggs would maximize their effectiveness against grubs. But of course you might also be trying to get the benefit of the pyrethroid, so a slightly earlier application is tempting. The best curative option to manage grubs that appear in the spring remains trichlorfon (Dylox™). This is a very soluble product and moves readily

through the thatch. If you need to clean up a grub problem, apply Dylox™ as soon as the soil temperatures warm up to at least 55 to 60 degrees. Remember that Dylox™ is on the "do not use" list for Massachusetts school grounds. There is another approach that will be an option for most of you this year.

Acelepryn™ (chlorantraniliprole) is a new insecticide from DuPont, which received federal registration in April 2008. At the time of writing (16 March), only two states have not yet approved it: New York and Hawaii. That means it is available in all the other states. I believe it will eventually be available in a flowable (soluble concentrate) formulation and a granular formulation.

Acelepryn™ has activity against many different turf pests and is extremely effective against white grubs. It looks very promising against annual bluegrass weevils (ABW) in many situations, and also works against billbugs and caterpillars. In fact at the ABW rate, it provides 10 to 12 weeks of caterpillar control.

Acelepryn™ has a totally new mode of action (it has to do with movement of calcium ions in muscle cells). The receptor site on insects is highly sensitive, while humans and other vertebrates are virtually insensitive to the action. As a result, USEPA did not require that DuPont include a signal word on the product - not even Caution.

Acelepryn™ will be most effective if applied between 15 April and 1 June. In fact DuPont is guaranteeing applications made between those dates! The rate of application can vary between 8 and 16 fluid ounces per acre. The product is systemic and takes a while to get into the plant tissue. The low rate, applied in April or May, will have enough residual to control white grubs in the fall (but will not control grubs that are present in the spring). The higher rate normally would be used in some of the "tough to manage" ABW populations or for slightly later summer applications targeting grubs. ❖

Medeiros - continued from page 2

In addition to playing golf (he's a 16-handicap) and watching as much of it as he can both in person and on TV, Medeiros is also a huge fan of all sports. He and Susan have had season tickets to the New England Patriots for more than 30 years. They also have two new grandchildren to enjoy.

But if it sounds like Medeiros is getting ready to retire, guess again. He says he expects to continue to work until he's "not physically able to get out of bed and do it anymore."

"I don't know if I have it in me to be at Thorny Lea for 40 years like Joe was," he says with a laugh. "But I'm in no hurry to retire. I love this place. The people here really appreciate playing a great course and they treat me and my staff great."

For example, every Friday afternoon during the season Medeiros gets invited by the members to play a round of golf with them. And if his schedule allows it, he typically jumps at the chance.

"I've worked at other places for 12 years and didn't get invited to play the course once," he says. "That just goes to show you the type of people I'm dealing with here. Why would I want to be anywhere else?" ❖

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Government Relations Update

By: Peter A. Hasak, Tedesco Country Club

There are two things I have been thinking of or should I say wondering about in the days prior to finally sitting down and writing this informational update. Today is March 26th, I uncovered 21 greens 10 days ago, give or take, and I irrigated the windswept greens of Tedesco CC for 15 minutes the other day because of overly dry soil conditions and the telltale “footprinting” of wilting, primarily *Poa annua* greens. After all that snow, I was bit surprised that the North Shore is almost 3 inches below our average precipitation for the year! Remember the “Drought Emergency Plan” that goes into effect this year?

The other item is more broad, wondering what ultimate affect this tough economy will have on our clubs, our operations and ourselves. We have seen relief to a degree in lower fuel pricing than many of us budgeted for. What happens if the new fuel taxes are passed?

I bring up these scenarios to begin to illustrate the work of Government Relations within the GCSANE. What I have found in two short years is that it items like this and so much more. Two years ago the GCSANE agreed to join the Green Industry Alliance. The GIA is comprised of like –minded professional associations including Mass. Arborists, Mass. Nurserymen, the irrigation installers etc., and is represented by the

firm of Shanley, Fleming and Associates of Boston. This partnership has already proved to be an invaluable resource in keeping an open eye on the ongoing legislative processes of the commonwealth.

We have met with the Department of Agricultural Resources, I have had an individual meeting with Commissioner Doug Petersen of the DAR, we are presently making plans for a Legislative Day this coming July 15th and have recently attended Agricultural Day at the capital which was an eye opening experience to say the least. Every experience to date has been a positive opportunity to shed a positive light on our Association, our issues as they pertain to government and the game of golf as a whole.

At Ag day last month, I was able to meet and discuss at length our issues with Senator Petruccelli of East Boston who is the Chairman of the Senate Environmental Affairs Committee, who plays a large role in the funding of the DAR. He requested that we join him for a private meeting in the near future to discuss further any role he could play that may be of help to us.

During the “New England Grows” show in February, the GIA made a formal decision to begin an annual “Legislator of the Year” award as of 2010, to be awarded annually at the

show to a deserving member of either government body who has actively pursued our cause(s).

Presently, we are reviewing a long list of proposed legislation that could impact our businesses. Stephen Bok-sanski of Shanley, Fleming does a terrific job of weaving through the maze for us and keeps constant vigilance on any bill, pro or con, that may have an effect. Updates, alerts and of course action as required are the norm.

We will keep you fully informed of items and events as they are presented to us. Look for a direct link soon on our web site to the Massachusetts Drought Emergency Board, the authority over water restrictions in the commonwealth.

With the prospect of a more powerful EPA on the horizon, coupled with stronger local and global pressure for our operations to be more sustainable, I can guarantee that our profession will continue to evolve in a positive manner to meet the needs of our clubs, businesses and the public. Please share your thoughts and concerns, and by all means if you see activity on the local front, we are here to help. ❖

A Win is Still a Win!

By: Gary Sykes, NERTF Executive Director

On March 2-5th the 2009 New England Regional Turfgrass Conference and Show was held successfully in Providence. The four day schedule was chock full of informational events including 8 Monday seminars that were attended by more than 300 turfgrass professionals even as a late season snow tried its best to disrupt the schedule. The seminars went on as scheduled and by mid-morning most attendees were able to safely make their way to Providence.

Bill Morton, CGCS of The Misquamicut Club in Westerly, RI welcomed everyone to the opening session Tuesday morning as president of the NERTF. Tuesday, was a fact-filled day with many associated with the USGA Golf House and USGA Turf Advisory Service conveying to attendees the importance of working together especially during less than desirable economic times. URI friends and Alumni lunch was hosted in the Rotunda. Several interested sports turf managers attended a seminar by Dr. Jason Henderson titled, "Making Sense of Soil Tests." Keynote speaker Greg Gumbel added enduring substance to overcoming challenges as he refreshed everyone's memories of Olympic triumphs by individuals who had to defeat great personal challenges in order to succeed. The trade show opened that afternoon to an energetic buzz, as commercial exhibitors introduced interested participants to new products and programs.

The annual UMass Alumni and Friends Breakfast was held Wednesday morning and provided a great way to start the day catching up with fellow grads and university personnel including Dean Steve Goodwin. Wednesday's educational sessions were met with approval to attendees for their content by notable professors and professionals. In 2009, we introduced a new morning session titled, "Turf and Ornamentals" to provide additional

credit opportunities and topics that are in and around the turfgrass managers area of responsibility, but may not be directly a turfgrass topic exclusively. It was a new offering to try and interest some of the fringe turfgrass management individuals and companies. With a topic like the Asian Longhorned Beetle infecting local forests, all would agree it was timely addition. Wednesday's trade show experience was nota-



bly lively as a very good walk-in registration increased crowds to as high of levels as we have experienced on any other Wednesday's before. An over-packed room in the mechanic's session learned many new tricks of the trade dealing with small engines and electrical troubleshooting.

Additional activities included our successful Live Auction Wednesday on the trade show floor which raised nearly \$20,000 for turfgrass research. The auction was guided again by the Master Family Auction Team of Manny Mihailides and Danny Calise to help raise increasingly crucial research funds from donated products of exhibitors and attendees. Jack Nugnes, CGCS of the Oyster Harbors Club was the largest contributor to the auction's success and will receive a free 3-day conference and show pass in 2010!

The second event was the inaugural NERTF Turf Bowl team competition, and was competed on between students from UMass, URI and UConn.

Conducted by immediate past-president Robert Ruzsala and representatives of all three schools, students were mixed into teams of three and proctored during a 60 question 5-section test and an additional 25 identification specimens of turfgrass plants, diseases, insects, weeds and seeds. The teams had 1½ hour running clock to finish their requirements and then the scores were tallied to determine which team won the competition. The results were that UMass Team #2 (Alex Brooks, Scott St. Pierre, Shawn Wynn all of UMass) scored the highest. They received personal plaques and a Turf Bowl Plaque will include their names for posterity! Congratulations to all competitors!

Thursday morning began with our 2nd annual Research Breakfast with participants presenting overviews of what is going on at their schools concerning turfgrass research. A subdued crowd shared the trade show floor and education sessions that morning, not nearly the numbers of

Wednesday, but still actively interacting with exhibitors. Education session attendees showed interest in topics that included Lyme disease among other turfgrass disease concerns. Before people knew it, the overhead door flew open at 1:00 pm and exhibitors scurried to pack their items and the show floor was empty and a sea of waste by 5:00 pm.

It was still a solid show though attendance numbers have been better in other years. The reality is economics have hurt or impeded just about all facets of our industry. We look forward optimistically and focus on continuing support of turfgrass research and education in New England. Will Rodgers once said, "A Farmer has to be optimist or he wouldn't still be Farmer." Our industry as well must move ahead the best it can looking forward to better days!

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NERTF - continued from page 6

We would like to thank all of our exhibitors for supporting the efforts of the New England Regional Turfgrass Foundation and for marketing your products with us during this trying economy. Especially to our sponsors: Andersons Golf Products, Bayer Environmental Science, Floratine, Harrell's, Lebanon Turf, Syngenta, Tom Irwin, Turf Products Corporation, and Winding Brook Turf Farm thank you for your support and help to us with our receptions, refreshments, programs and lanyards and making the New England Regional Show the "best" regional show! Many thanks to all the auction donors that have helped the foundation expand research through the NERTRT. BIG thanks to all attendees and presenters for supporting the industry through your efforts of becoming better turfgrass professionals through networking, education and purchasing the best products on turf! Everyone involved together have made the 12th Annual New England Regional Turfgrass Conference and Show a continued success and yes..... another WIN! ❖

Photos from the 10th Annual New England Regional Turfgrass Conference and Show

(Photo Source: Rich Gagnon and Gary Sykes)



Hosted by Drew Cummins

URI Alumnus, Class '92

Tuesday, April 28, 2009

Agawam Hunt

15 Roger Williams Avenue, Rumford, RI 02915

11:00 am: Registration

11:30 am: Buffet Lunch

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Welcome New Member:
Kevin Banks, Asst. Superintendent, Framingham CC
- Congratulations to Nick Welch, Assistant Superintendent at Oak Hill CC in Fitchburg who was married to Erin Drake, Assistant Superintendent at Pine Brook CC in Weston on February 21st.
- Our condolences are extended to Mike Cornicelli and family on the passing of Mike's mother Phyllis Cornicelli on February 27th.
- Our condolences are extended to John Winskowicz and family on the recent passing of John's mother.
- Our condolences are extended to Bill Yanakakis and family on the recent passing of Bill's mother.
- As in the past, *The Newsletter* continues to invite Affiliate members to submit a press release about new personnel, new products or a company bio. We will print each and every release free of charge. This is a great way to advertise for free.

CALENDAR

- April 27:**
GCSANE Monthly Meeting
Whitinsville Golf Club
Golf Tournament and Education
Host: David Johnson
- April 28:**
Rhode Island Turfgrass Foundation Golf Tournament
Agawam Hunt
Host: Drew Cummins
- May 11:**
GCSANE Monthly Meeting
Joint meeting with GCSACC - Bear Cup
Franklin Country Club
Host: Michael Luccini, CGCS
- June 17:**
UMass Turf Field Day
Joseph Troll Turf Research Center
South Deerfield, MA
- June 24:**
GCSANE Monthly Meeting
Member/Guest Tournament
Segregansett Country Club
Host: Rich Gagnon

July - TBA

August 18:
GCSANE Individual Championship
Marlborough Country Club
Host: Ken Crimmings, CGCS

September 28:
GCSANE S&B Tournament
Brae Burn Country Club
Host: Robert DiRico

October 15:
GCSANE Monthly Meeting
Hatherly Country Club
Host: Richard Caughey

November TBA:
GCSANE Monthly Meeting
Milton Hoosic Club
Host: Jeff Urquhart

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Phone: 401-934-3677 Email: jheston@verizon.net

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Root zone mixes, divot mixes, topdressing blends, bunker sands, cart path mixes, bridging stone, & hardscape supplies. Charlie Downing, Rob Fitzpatrick - (800) 4-AA-WILL

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Rick Forri - (413) 534-8896

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47 Falmouth Rd., Longmeadow, MA 01106
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114 Summer St., Maynard, MA 01754
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Avon, CT 06001
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