



THE NEWSLETTER

April 2016

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.

President's Message

Dear fellow GCSANE members:

This Masters weekend edition of the President's message is coming on the heels of a wild and unforgettable week of weather here in the northeast. Yesterday morning saw temps dip into the mid teens in many of our locations. Coupled with several inches of existing snow our 2016 golf season came to an abrupt, albeit temporary, halt.

The recent New England Golf Summit was hosted by former GCSANE president Jason Adams and the folks at Blue Hill Country Club. If you were one of the 150 or so attendees you were treated to a great day of camaraderie and very informative presentations by many of the golf industry's leading experts. Special thanks go out to our friends at the MGA for organizing a first class event.

As we roll into the golf season I'd strongly encourage you to take some time and attend one of our monthly meetings if you haven't done so in a while. We currently have a full schedule of golfing events and sites for 2016 featuring many

of our region's top clubs. Additionally, we are joining forces with our allied superintendent associations (RIGCSA and GCSACC) for both our April and May golf events to help promote industry camaraderie and vie for bragging rights!

As always, don't hesitate to contact Don Hearn or any of our directors in the event we can be of assistance on any level. Hopefully I'll see many of you on the golf course in the coming months. ❖

Best Regards,

Michael D. Luccini CGCS
GCSANE President



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May 16, 2016

The 12th Annual Dr. Joseph Troll Turf Classic Pinehills Golf Club, Plymouth, MA Joseph F. Felicetti, CGCS Hosting Honoring Paul F. Miller, CGCS

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Thoughts From Your Association Manager

March was a busy month for all with course preparations for opening day and arranging the many details needing to be nailed down before the season begins. March is also the month that GCSAA hosts the Chapter Leaders/Executives Symposium at the headquarters in Lawrence, Kansas.

This year I attended the symposium with Jeff Urquhart, the Association's Secretary/Treasurer. We arrived on Monday, March 27, mostly a travel day for us. Tuesday was a work and education day. Wednesday was the same with all leaving by late afternoon for travel to home.



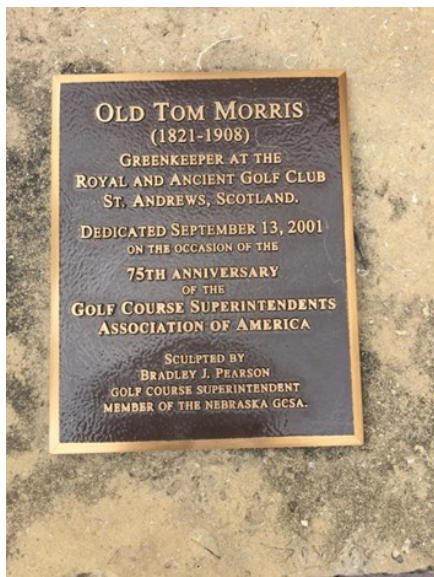
Jeff Urquhart left, and Kevin Doyle

This year's meeting, like others, was one filled with information about GCSAA, its mission, how it represents our best interests from a professional and association standpoint and how we can perform our responsibilities in a way that makes for a more proficient organization.

Just as we learn from each other as superintendents, Jeff and I learned from others, particularly during the roundtable discussions where a lot of ideas were shared, successes noted and not so successful ideas were reviewed. Overall, this

was a learning experience for us and we felt comfortable talking with others and learning from their experiences.

All the GCSAA Field Staff representatives were in attendance and the Northeast Region's Kevin Doyle served as our guide and host during our stay in Lawrence. Kevin made sure those from his region were well taken care of and served as an ambassador of good will.



I'm constantly impressed by the talent, much of it unrecognized, that superintendents have. The sculpture of Old Tom Morris, flanked by Jeff and Kevin in the photo, was created by a golf course superintendent! Bradley J. Pearson from Nebraska created the beautiful sculpture at our national headquarters. The sculpture's significance is captured on the plaque at the base of the "Old Tom" figure.

It seems most superintendents are having extreme difficulty recruiting employees at all levels for positions in our industry. There surely is more than one answer to the problem and Chris Donato, superintendent at Bass Rocks Golf Club in Gloucester is heading up an informal group to explore ways to address the problem and discuss possible solutions. Brian Skinner, CGCS, the Association's Education Chairman is the liaison between the group and the Association's board of directors. I know they'll appreciate input both from a problem and solution view. No one has a monopoly on good ideas or different thinking, so please contact Chris at donato404@aol.com or Brian at brianskinner@bellevuegolfclub.com to share your thoughts.



By Don Hearn

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High School Students Feeding Bay State Agriculture Industries

By Michael P. Norton, State House News Service

STATE HOUSE, BOSTON, APRIL 5, 2016

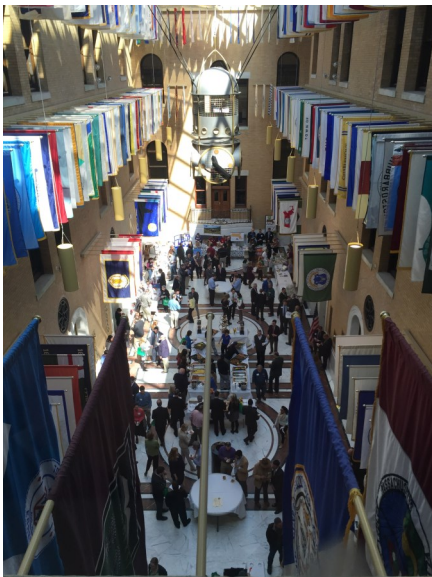
Matt LeClerc lived 75 miles from his Templeton home in the 1980s while attending Norfolk County Agricultural School in Walpole.

On Tuesday, the 45-year-old who runs his family's 80-acre Valley View Farm in Templeton pointed through a crowd of current agricultural school students at a particular woman and somewhat loudly told the New Service, "She was the reason I went to college." The woman, 30-year Norfolk Agricultural School Superintendent Suzanne Green, caught LeClerc's eye and they quickly greeted one another and shared a hug.

Matt LeClerc, a 1989 Norfolk County Agricultural School graduate, credited Superintendent Suzanne Green, who is still at the school, with convincing him to go to college.

Leclerc said that while in high school, he thought he'd end up as a laborer, but said Green told him he was "too smart" and "better than that" and made him take his SATs before he graduated in 1989.

Green attended the State University of New York College of Agriculture and Technology at Cobleskill. After graduating with a degree in livestock production, he worked as a meat science lab instructor at the college for 11 years and then returned to Templeton where he raises livestock and is a full-time butcher.



The students joined farmers, agricultural organizations, and state officials to celebrate the annual Agriculture Day, including "Taste of Massachusetts" exhibits featuring tasty home-grown food items.

"This is one of the few days when you walk into the State House and it just smells great, from one end to the other, and that's because there's so much product and hard work and sweat on display across this building," Gov. Charlie Baker said

during brief remarks to participants.

The school in Walpole is one of four public agricultural high schools and officials said all four have wait lists. The others are Essex Technical High School in Hamilton, Bristol County



Agricultural High School in Dighton and Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School in Northampton.

The Norfolk "Aggie" is marking its 100-year anniversary in 2016, according to Green, who noted the school's 300-acre campus was originally located in the geographic center of the county to guard against lengthy commutes for students who traveled to school by horseback.

In an interview, 27-year Norfolk County Agricultural School Principal Tammy Quinn said 80 percent of the school's graduates go on to college or trade schools and pursue careers as veterinarians, marine biologists, arborists, mechanics or in landscape, golf course management or "farm to table" industries.

Students who wish to attend Norfolk must apply and the school has students from 70 communities, said Quinn, noting 100 students were on wait lists after 140 freshman were recently accepted.

Quinn, who grew up in Roslindale, started working at the school as a substitute teacher, then worked as a math teacher for 20 years before becoming principal. She will take over as superintendent in July.

Joining their counterparts from the other public agricultural schools, Green and Quinn brought about 40 students with them to the State House.

Brad Mitchell, legislative director at the Massachusetts Farm Bureau, briefed the students on key bills, including one affecting taxes paid on farms (H 3507) - Mitchell said some farm owners are "land rich, but cash poor" - and an omnibus agriculture bill (S 2171).

Brad Mitchell, legislative director at the Massachusetts Farm Bureau, briefed Norfolk County Agricultural School students Tuesday on key bills, including one affecting taxes paid on farms (H 3507) and an omnibus agriculture bill (S 21710. Mitchell said some farm owners are "land rich, but cash poor."

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Dedham Rep. Paul McMurtry said the school in Walpole helps Massachusetts meet its skilled labor needs. "High demand," he said, pointing to the students grouped on the Grand Staircase for a photo. "High academic standards and just great all-around students."

"It's truly a jewel," said Stoughton Rep. Louis Kafka. "It's one of the county's best kept secrets."

Baker said many Massachusetts businesses in the agricultural industry have been passed down through the generations. "This is a community and an industry that's been with us since the very, very, very beginning and will always be part of the fabric of Massachusetts," Baker said. The governor said he is amazed that despite Massachusetts' relatively small population and size, it has 7,000 farms and "we are a top five player in terms of the amount of product that's sold from farm directly to consumer. We have always been a national leader in sort of grow local, buy local, support local." ❖



Kevin Doyle - GCSAA Updates



This might be getting old, these newsletter articles about government relations items. I reviewed my files and found nine, yes, nine articles specific to or relating to government affairs issues in only four years. So, is this going to be another one? Yes, it is. It will not be about motivating you to fight back on legislation affecting you, but about what there you

can learn from others. There is a popular saying: If you don't have a seat at the table, then you are probably on the menu. I would like to introduce you to the residents of South Portland, Maine (see entrée), and (a side of) the Maine GCSA, found on page two of your menu.

One of only seven states to not have preemption on these matters, each city and town in Maine has the availability to develop their own chemical or fertilizer ordinances. Welcome to the battlefield of South Portland, Maine. The city of South Portland has been developing a ban on synthetic pesticides since June 2015, including both public and private property. Where do these ordinances come from? Well, just down the street in Ogunquit, Maine — where there are no golf courses — an ordinance has been passed. That's right, in Ogunquit you can't purchase or use synthetic pesticides on public or private land. How does this happen? Not having a seat at the table and not pushing back.

The city of South Portland city council — six councilors and one mayor — heard from the group that pushed through the Ogunquit ban. The group who has taken a seat at the table from the beginning consists of Protect South Portland, Beyond Pesticides (Washington, D.C.), Friends of Casco Bay and Osborne Organics. The city staff was then tasked to develop an ordinance to ban synthetic pesticides and move the subject to further workshops. That is when outside voices finally had the ability to be heard. After the ball had started rolling.

I recently attended the council meeting where the first reading of the synthetic pesticide ban took place. As written, golf is mostly exempt, for now. The mayor made it clear that he will look to amend the ordinance to include golf courses.

This may not have wide support, but who knows? One councilor explained her wavering opinion of the ban stating that her octogenarian neighbor really enjoys his lawn, and she would hate to enact an ordinance that would take that enjoyment away from him.

Is this an isolated case? No. For those who have had their ear on such measures, Montgomery County in Maryland — a state without preemption — has been embroiled in a similar process. South Portland will join Ogunquit with some level of restriction, with the city of Portland, Maine soon to address a similar ban.

We have a strong message to send out to policymakers on the value that the golf course management industry — and the turf industry at large — provides to society. The environmental stewardship of highly-educated superintendents helps. The economic impact of our industry as employers and tax payers, and our means of charitable giving, also move the needle. But fear and passion trump all of those, and those looking to advance their anti-pesticide movement have and utilize those tools every chance they get, so claim your seat at the table: Be proactive, be vigilant, be willing to offer your expertise when it is needed or you might be living in the next South Portland.

GCSAA Resources and Deadlines

you Get Cool Stuff from your Association Already:

Update your business card

If your patrons or members need to know who to thank after viewing the "Thank a Golf Course Superintendent" commercial, be sure to have an updated business card available! Find out how here:

[GCSAA member business card order form](#)

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Top celebrities support 2016 "Thank a golf course superintendent" campaign

Celebrities who enjoy playing golf, like Grammy award-winning entertainer Justin Timberlake and NBA Hall-of-Famer Charles Barkley, have joined the promotion to "thank a golf course superintendent." The tagline will be used in television and radio commercials, as well as 2016 print and online advertising by GCSAA. The 30-second commercials will again air on the Golf Channel beginning in April. There will even be a sweepstakes to offer golfers the opportunity to win a trip to the American Century Celebrity Golf Championship in Lake Tahoe, Nev., in July, by personally thanking a golf course superintendent. Visit the following to watch the video and listen to the radio spot:

<http://www.gcsaa.org/community/chapter-leaders/managing-your-chapter/materials-for-chapter-outreach>

Want to add this to your club media (newsletter, Facebook, Twitter) please let me know. The GCSAA marketing department will format this appropriately for you!

Help us gather key data: Take the latest GCEP Survey

The Property Profile and Environmental Stewardship Survey is now open. This latest survey in the Golf Course Environmental Profile focuses on collecting information regarding land use, turfgrass species and other non-turfgrass land-

scapes to compile data on overall property use on golf courses around the nation. Your participation provides vital information needed to advocate for the golf industry and superintendent profession. The GCEP is sponsored by the USGA in conjunction with the EIFG. To take the survey click [here](#).

GCSAA 2016 Member Engagement Opportunities

Want to volunteer at the GCSAA level? It is not too late yet! GCSAA is encouraging those interested in 2016 committee/task group service to apply. Contact Kevin Doyle to find out how.

Upcoming FREE webcasts:

May 5: Waiting for the Other Limb to Fall - Minimizing Tree Liability

May 10: I Wanna Be More Social

May 11: Managing Bentgrass under Summer Stress Conditions

May 26: Empowering Your Career - Equipment Management Series

Again, if I can be of any assistance, please feel free to contact me.

Kevin Doyle
GCSAA Field Staff

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How to Quit Asking Bad Questions and Start Asking Great Questions

I will venture a guess that all of us have experienced this at some point in time: We've developed a plan or made a decision and was pretty sure it would work. But, we needed some reinforcement that the plan or decision was proper and really *would* work.

I remember when I was an assistant and my boss would ask my opinion on a plan of action or a product or procedure. I felt good when my opinion was asked, but I really didn't have the experience to know if the plan would have a strong chance for success. My responses were based on what felt good and reasonable based on my limited knowledge. Whenever I ask others for their opinion or answer to a question I think back to my earlier days and my responses. Ultimately the decision is mine and I believe this creates pressure to ask the proper question.

Here are some ways people ask questions the wrong way - and how you can ask the right way:

1. Lead the Witness

Asking a question that assumes a particular answer is easy to do when you already think you're right and just want people to say you're right.

Examples:

- "Don't you think we should go ahead and topdress next week?"
- "Do you think we should wait any longer to syringe?"
- "Can anyone think of a good reason not to take a break?"

Each question assumes an answer: You clearly think you should topdress, begin syringing, and take a break. Though a few people may disagree, most won't - the answer you want to hear is obvious.

A better way:

- "What do you think we should do about the plan to topdress?"
- "Wilt isn't widespread yet. What do you think we should do?"
- "When do you think will be the best time to take a break?"

Each is objective, direct, and does not include an answer in the question. And each also leaves room for a variety of options.

2. Stick to Either/Or Questions

You have a timing problem and have thought of two possible solutions. There are positives and negatives to both. So you seek input from a team member. "Should we just scrap aerification and rework the whole plan," you ask, "or should we continue and hope for the best?" Most people will pick one answer or the other. But what if there's a better option you haven't considered?

A better way: "There is some very hot weather on the way. What do you think we should do?" Maybe you'll get a "scrap it." Maybe you'll get a "continue."

Or maybe you'll get a, "What if we tell the green chairman, owner, etc., there is a potential problem, and the reason we're moving forward with, or scrapping, the plan is because of these reasons..."

Either/or questions, just like leading questions, assume some answer. Instead of sharing options, just state the problem. Then ask "What do you think?" Or "What would you do?" Or "How should we handle this?"

And then stop and let people think. Don't rush to fill in the answer.

3. Don't Look for Clarification

Asking questions can make you feel vulnerable when you're in a leadership role. (You're supposed to have all the answers, right?) That makes it hard to ask questions when you don't understand, especially when you're *supposed* to understand.

Don't worry: Asking for clarification is easy. Just say:

- "I'm impressed. Now pretend I don't know anything about how that works. How would you explain it to me?"
- "That sounds really good. Let me make sure I don't miss anything, though. Can you walk me through it one more time?"
- Or, best of all: "I have to be honest: I'm not sure I understand what you're saying, but I really want to." (A little humility goes a long way.)

Above all, don't pretend you understand when you don't, all you do is waste the other person's time and make the person wonder later why you didn't try his or her idea.

Now let's flip it around.

Here's how to ask great questions:

1. **Limit the actual question to one sentence.** Feel free to state the problem or issue in detail, but limit your question to one sentence. "How can we improve quality?" "What would you do if you were me?" Sticking to one sentence helps ensure your questions are open ended.
2. **Provide options in the question only if those truly are the only options.** But keep in mind those rarely are the only options. The odds you've already thought of everything are pretty slim.
3. **Don't shade the question.** You may think you know the answer. Great. Keep that to yourself. Make your questions answer-neutral.
4. **Follow the same principles for follow-up questions.** Stay short. Stay open ended. Stay neutral.
5. **Talk as little as possible.** You already know what you know. Great questions are designed to find out what the other person knows. So stay quiet and listen. You never know what you'll learn when you ask the right way. ❖

By Don Hearn

April Horticulture Tips

By Jim Diermeier, CGM Horticulturalist, Winged Foot Golf Club

Planning ahead is important. The point is to have a general idea of what colors and plants you want in your garden while also considering the seasons to follow. This means not only picking bulbs, but also looking later down the road to how your garden will appear in the fall going into winter. This will save you time and energy later, especially during those hot summer months. Study your landscape and search for where there are gaps where another bulb can be planted and scout flowering trees and shrubs to add more color in the fall. Anything related to your landscape beds will always be dependent on how well you plan ahead. Preparation is everything!

General Landscape

- Continue to remove winter mulches and debris
- Continue to dig beds in preparation for planting
- Complete adding compost to planting bed soil
- Place peony supports
- Cultivate planting beds and carefully remove weeds
- Remove mounded earth from roses
- Prepare bare-root and potted roses for planting; soak overnight in fish emulsion
- Continue to apply horticultural oil sprays to control insect pests on trees if temperature is over 40

Planting

- Continue to plant deciduous and evergreen trees and shrubs, weather and soil conditions permitting
- Plant out seedlings of cool-season annuals like pansies and snapdragons
- Continue to plant and transplant perennials
- Complete rose planting

Pruning/Fertilization

- Complete removal of diseased, weak, or crossing branches
- Complete rose pruning but wait until after flowering on climbers and ramblers

- Prune late flowering shrubs such as buddleia and hydrangea
- Prune early spring-flowering shrubs immediately after flowers die
- Wait to prune evergreens, hedges and other shrubs until early summer
- Fertilize fruit trees and roses
- Fertilize perennials when you see 2-3" of new growth
- Fertilize bulbs as they finish blooming

Bare-rooted vs. B&B

Studies have suggested that BR planting can be just as viable as B&B transplanting for species that tolerate being moved BR, up to three inch caliper, are root dipped, and are given proper early maintenance. This has many time-and money-saving implications for those that are contemplating any landscape improvements. BR trees are on average one-third to one-half less expensive than B&B trees. Because they are so much lighter and many more can fit on the bed of a truck, they are cheaper to ship. Planting BR trees costs virtually nothing when done by crews with shovels. The cost of planting a B&B tree, by contrast, is markedly higher because the sheer weight of the ball requires machinery and machinery operators to load the tree, unload it, and to get it into the ground. Because of the machinery used to harvest them, BR trees have about 200% more roots than B&B trees (Haug 1996). Furthermore, planting depth is enhanced by seeing the root flare on BR trees, and soil interface problems are avoided. BR trees can be moved with just as much success as B&B trees, BR deserves a second look.

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Seasonal Interest Trees/Shrubs

This list is by no means inclusive of all spring flowering trees and shrubs. These plants are colorful, fragrant, easy-to-grow and provide unique spring flowers. ❖

Amelanchier species - Serviceberry
Chaenomeles japonica - Japanese Flowering Quince
Lonicera fragrantissima - Winter Honeysuckle
Mahonia aquifolium - Oregon Holly Grape
Magnolia species and varieties - Magnolia
Pieris japonica - Japanese Andromeda
Prunus species and varieties - Flowering Cherry
Rhododendron mucronulatum - Korean Rhododendron
Skimmia japonica - Japanese Skimmia
Spirea thunbergii - Thunberg Spirea
Viburnum carlesii - Korean Spice Viburnum



Amelanchier /spring



Amelanchier /fall



Chaenomeles japonica



Lonicera fragrantissima



Mahonia aquifolium



Mahonia aquifolium/hedge



Magnolia species and varieties



Pieris japonica



Prunus species and varieties



Rhododendron mucronulatum



Skimmia japonica



Spirea thunbergii



Viburnum carlesii

2016 New England Golf Summit Highlights

Sunny skies and a brisk spring air provided a warm welcome for more than 140 golf industry professionals and enthusiasts to the **2016 New England Golf Summit**, which was held at Blue Hill Country Club.

The season “kick off” event featured seven dynamic speakers who touched on a diversified set of issues and topics ranging from presentation in golf design to the hottest trends in equipment.

“It was a great day and we were thrilled to have so many people take time to attend the Summit and enjoy what was a tremendous slate of speakers,” said **Jesse Menachem**, the MGA’s executive director who served as master of ceremonies. “There was a palpable excitement in the air about the positive momentum that we see in our industry.”

Kicking off the day was a keynote address by **Jay Karen**, CEO of the National Golf Course Owners Association. Karen, who took over his post in October, noted that he is seeing significant changes in the circles of leadership at the top of the golf industry and there is a distinctive youth movement emerging.

“We have 24 million customers,” said Karen. “That means that we have 24 million people coming into our facilities. There is a sentiment out there that is very Wall Street in that if you aren’t growing you are dying. But the reality is that we are actually a very healthy industry.”



From left: **Jesse Menachem (MGA)**, **David Mazur (Club Marketing)**, **Brad Klein (GolfWeek)**, **Jim Skorulski (USGA)**, **Jay Karen (NGCOA)**, **Mike Johnson (Golf Digest)**, **Mike Stachura (Golf Digest)**, **David Staebler (USGA)** and **Tom Bagley (MGA)**

David Mazur, a club marketing expert who currently serves as general manager of Kernwood Country Club, implored golf clubs to continue to enhance and promote its brand to engage more and different golfers and visitors.

“It is no longer a matter of if we should market our clubs,” said Mazur. “It is a matter of how.”

Brad Klein, longtime golf architecture editor for Golf-Week magazine, drew many laughs during his presentation

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when he showed the ways that golf course operators often-times get lost in complexity and forget about a more simplified approach to golf course design and presentation.

“Every golf course can cultivate something unique about its landform,” said Klein, author of seven books on course design and 2015 winner of the American Society of Golf Course Architect's Donald Ross Award for life-time achievement. “You have to make some decisions about what you can do and what you can't do well. What is your character? What makes it special?”

Another highlight from the day came courtesy of **Mike Stachura** and **Mike Johnson**, the senior equipment editors at Golf Digest who came up with the idea of the magazine's Hot List.

In addition to speaking about the future of golf technology, the senior editors described the painstaking process of developing the list each year and how they have teams of professionals – including players and even rocket scientists – who help them accurately rate equipment without bias.

“Each year we ask ourselves how can we be more thorough,” said Stachura. “Everyone thinks that the Hot List is a bunch of cool-looking photos in the magazine, but in reality it is more about the endless spreadsheets of data we collect and keep.”

Stachura noted that innovation is about one third of the overall score, while two thirds focuses on a combination of performance and club sound and feel. Research – they said – also tells them how important club fitting is for golfers regardless of skill level.

“We have golfers tell us all the time that they just aren't good enough to be fitted for clubs,” said Johnson. “We tell them that if you think that you aren't good enough to be fitted for clubs than that is the main reason why you should be fitted for clubs.”

Attendees also received valuable information from USGA experts on the topics of agronomy and Rules of Golf.

Jim Skorulski, agronomist for the Northeast Region and a co-presenter with Klein, addressed some emerging challenges facing golf courses including pesticide controls and water issues.

“How are we going to do business going forward in the future?” asked Skorulski. “Water around this region is cheap right now, but it will be a huge issue moving forward. The USGA has been all over this issue and will continue to focus on it.”

David Staebler, a director of rules education who is based out of the USGA headquarters in Far Hills, explained the relationship between the USGA and R&A and addressed the four major changes made this past year to the Rules of Golf and Handicapping including the changes made to peer review and playing-alone scores.

He also explained how the USGA and R&A are working together to revise the Rules of Golf to make them easier to read, understand and apply by all golfers.

The New England Golf Summit was a collaborative effort of the Alliance of Massachusetts Golf Organizations (AMGO) and comes one year after the group released the results of an [economic impact study](#) during at Massachusetts Golf Day, which was held last March at the Massachusetts State House.

“We heard today that golf is the most powerful vehicle for relationship building,” said Menachem, who noted during his welcome that the Massachusetts golf industry's gross economic output is \$2.7 billion. “That idea was on full display today from the collaboration of the allied organizations to the genuine interest and engagement from the speakers and attendees.”

Prior to the start of the featured presentations, attendees took part in breakfast round tables led by the AMGO organizations. Topics of the round tables ranged from women in golf, golf course operation, agronomic challenges, charity and golf and bringing special person programs to a golf facility.

The AMGO Task Force is made up of representatives from the following organizations - the Massachusetts Golf Association, the New England Section of The Professional Golfers' Association of America, the Golf Course Superintendents Association of New England, the New England Chapter of the Club Managers Association of America, the New England Chapter of the Golf Course Owners Association, the Women's Golf Association of Massachusetts, the Deutsche Bank Championship, the Francis Ouimet Scholarship Fund and the New England Golf Association. ❖



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Water Wisely: Quick Tips to Ready for the Irrigation Season

By Paul Roche and Matt Mikucki



The irrigation season is just around the corner and preparing your system for what lies ahead can help put you in the best possible position for irrigation success. There are several components of the irrigation system that can be easily checked and adjusted to ensure proper performance. There are also a few steps that can be taken to fine tune areas that can make the system more serviceable.



Active sprinkler

Central controls are the brains of the irrigation system. A best practice to ensure you are ready for the irrigation season is to perform the following simple maintenance procedures:

- **Back-up** all programs and databases. Some manufactures offer an online service or you can easily backup yourself onto a flash drive. Keep the flash drive stored in a safe place in the event it is needed and consider doing a weekly update to include new programs that you create throughout the year.
- **Renew** or ensure you are current with your control system service plan so that you have the support from your irrigation equipment manufacturer for online or on phone technical support and next-day replacement components.
- **Grounding** and surge protection devices should be checked to ensure that your electronic equipment is protected going into lightning season. This service is typically offered by the manufacturers authorized distributor for the equipment or a qualified golf course irrigation contractor.

Sprinklers are probably the most important component of the irrigation system and because they are responsible for distributing water across your golf course, they need to be checked on a routine basis. Some simple maintenance procedures will ensure that they are ready to perform when needed:

- **Level** sprinklers will distribute water more evenly. A field level (electronic or mechanical) or app on a cellular

phone can be placed on top of a sprinkler to determine if a sprinkler is level or tilted. One field test showed that two sprinklers in a pattern that had a 3-degree tilt affected distribution uniformity by 10 percent, which can cause increased runtimes and exaggerated wet and dry spots due to the less uniform distribution of water. Upon leveling, the sprinklers uniformity increased from 71 percent to 81 percent. Level sprinklers so that they are no more than 2 degrees from level.



Sprinkler level check

- **Visually inspect** sprinklers to ensure that they are rotating properly, nozzles are not clogged or obstructed, and part circle sprinklers are properly adjusted.
- **Replace** defective internal assemblies or drive assemblies with new ones.

Water distribution audits should be a conducted on irrigation systems that are five years or older to ensure that ex-

pected uniformity is being achieved as nozzles can wear over time and change water distribution patterns and uniformity.



Water distribution audit

Valves and valve boxes are often overlooked but they are key components of a properly functioning and serviceable irrigation system. For instance:

- **Air release valves** are an important part of any irrigation system. An air release valve will continually vent air from the system. Air can be a very destructive force as it is compressible and can violently exit the irrigation system through sprinklers. When this happens, water accelerates at high speed to replace the air which creates water hammer. Make sure air release valves are open and operating correctly.
- **Drain valves** should be closed and visually inspected to determine they are not leaking. For systems that have been winterized, an overlooked open drain valve is not uncommon and can be the reason for the pump station cycling.
- **Isolation valves** or mainline gate valves should be checked to see that they are open and that they are accessible if needed through the season. They should be clearly marked on the record drawing. Being able to quickly locate and access an isolation valve in the middle of the season, if needed, is very important to help facilitate system maintenance or repair. Consider using a different color valve box cover to help easily identify them on the golf course.

continued on page 16

- **Quick coupler valves** can easily get lost over the winter months. Locate and test quick coupler valves so they are ready for action when needed. It won't be long before hose-end watering is needed, so it is best to be prepared. Consider installing additional quick couplers in areas that require regular hand watering to help reduce the labor to get hose-end water to those areas on the golf course.

- **Valve boxes and valve box covers** protect components and help ensure easy access and service as needed. Replace any broken boxes and have some spare covers available so they can be replaced as needed.

Controllers are often overlooked. They should be checked and tested before the main irrigation season begins. Here's what you can do:

- **Test each station** to ensure that each station output circuit and solenoid is operational. Winter lightning and surge can blow fuses or damage solenoids so be prepared to make those replacements if needed. Leave a spare fuse or two in each controller in the event one is needed during the year.



Controller check

- **Infestations** of mice, insects and other pests are quite common during the winter as they look for a warm place to nest. Pedestal controllers are an attractive location so take a portable vacuum cleaner with you to clean out any pedestal that has some new visitors. Plug any conduits that are providing an entry path with duct seal.

- **Communication tests** should be conducted to make sure all controllers are "online" and check to ensure that controller ID's are properly programmed into each faceplate and that communication cards are properly plugged in and functioning.

- **Grounding** and surge protection devices should be checked to ensure that controllers have the maximum protection against surge heading into the season. This service can be provided by your irrigation distributor or contractor.



Grounding verification

Two-Wire systems require routine system maintenance. For instance:

- **Diagnostic tests** should be completed at the central control system. Conduct pass/fail tests, operational tests, check voltages and determine if the amp draw on each wire path is correct. If you are not familiar with all of the test procedures with a two-wire system, contact your distributor and schedule a service call for them to conduct a tutorial for you and your team.

- **Grounding** and surge protection devices should be checked. Because there are more grounding locations on a two-wire system, courses should contact their distributor or

contractor to come in and test six holes every year to ensure that the grounding system is maintaining the level of protection required.

Pumping stations are often referred to as the "heart of the irrigation system." The pumping station must be well cared for so that it is ready to perform when needed. Consider these points:

- **Pump service companies** can provide an extensive pre-season check of station components. Checking items like oil, grease, pump rotation, pump packing, and amp draw at the beginning of the year can help identify potential problems before the pump station is required to operate at full load. Give yourself time to complete any service items before the season begins.

- **Slowly fill** the piping system if the system was drained. An empty piping system on a typical 18-hole golf course can hold 25,000-30,000 gallons or more. When water is drained and replaced with air, there is a significant potential for damaging pipelines and fittings when air is evacuated as water fills the lines. If water is introduced too quickly, air can be compressed and when valves or sprinklers are activated, the air is quickly replaced with water that is coming behind it to fill the void. This is when water hammer occurs. A good rule of thumb is to introduce water at a rate of 1 foot per second or less which equates to no more than 150-300 GPM of flow for most irrigation systems. If you do not have a written procedure, contact your irrigation system designer or consultant for more information. Keep in mind, while you are filling the pipelines, air should be released through air release valves, drains, quick couplers and sprinkler heads. On most courses, the start-up process should take three or more crew members up to two days or more.

- **Alarms and safeties** should be checked to ensure they are working properly and ready to protect the pump station and irrigation system if needed.

- **Flow meter and flow logs** should be updated and prior year data should be recorded and stored. Check to ensure that the flow meter is properly calibrated. This is essential for pump station operation and to comply with flow reporting requirements.

- **Screens** should be checked and cleaned. Check the screen on the source intake as well as any screens on the pump station. Make sure they are properly cleaned and clear of debris.

- **Pressure maintenance pump** should be checked to see if it is working properly and not cycling too often. A good rule of thumb for most courses is the pressure maintenance pump should not cycle more than 3-6 times an hour when there is no irrigation running or system flow demand, although this can vary greatly due to the size and age of the irrigation system. If your pump station is cycling more than that then search for a leak(s) that may be causing the cycling.

Follow these procedures to help put your irrigation system in a position for success before the irrigation season begins. Develop a maintenance check list that you can follow throughout the year that includes daily/weekly/monthly checks of key components. Utilize your distributor, manufacturer and authorized pump service provider for technical support and contact an experienced irrigation system designer or consultant for help when needed. ❖

Original Source: April 12, 2016 edition of *Superintendent* magazine www.superintendentmagazine.com

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Golf course lakes and ponds are aesthetically pleasing features, provide a challenge to golfers and often serve as vital irrigation sources for watering turf. Managing a golf course lake or pond, however, can be complicated. These aquatic ecosystems need dedicated care in order to maintain healthy water quality, effective algae and nuisance aquatic weed control and an abundance of beneficial vegetation. SOLitude Lake Management is committed to providing full service lake and pond management solutions to communities and golf courses throughout the US. Our deep devotion and approach to beautiful, healthy waterbodies is unmatched.

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Customized Solutions for Golf Course Lakes and Ponds. "Cookie cutter solutions" are no way to manage a lake or pond, and this is particularly true when it comes to managing the aquatic resources on your golf course. Golf course ponds often serve as an irrigation source for watering the turf, which limits herbicide compatibility and makes nutrient management all the more important. Another complication is that while lakes and ponds are an important component of the golf course, the majority of the budget is allocated to essential maintenance of the turf. For our golf course clients, we perform a detailed site assessment to establish a baseline understanding of the current conditions. We then focus on sustainable and cost-effective strategies that will allow them to meet their goals for both their ponds and their turf.



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opportunities for turfgrass professionals of all levels.

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opportunity to view the research plots when they are under the greatest summer stress. Cutting edge research in the areas of lawn care, sports and golf turf management will be presented.

Attendees will have an opportunity to discuss ongoing research and management concerns with the UConn turf team. In addition to seeing the latest



research results, turfgrass professionals have the opportunity to interact with exhibitors and discuss the latest developments and challenges in the industry.

AGENDA:

7:30	Registration opens/continental breakfast
7:30-8:45	Visit with exhibitors
8:45-9:00	Welcoming remarks
9:00-11:30	Guided tour of research plots
11:30-12:00	Visit with exhibitors
12:00-1:00	Lunch
12:30	Ice cream social with exhibitors in vendor section
1:00-3:00	Visit with exhibitors
1:30-2:30	Afternoon Workshops (Separate registration required)
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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome New Members:

- **Adam Bennett**, Co-Superintendent, The Country Club
- **Michael Danforth**, Assistant Superintendent, Juniper Hill Golf Course

Our condolences are extended to Bob DiRico and family on the passing of Bob's mother, Lillian DiRico, who passed away on March 27, 2016. Bob is a long time member and Past President of the Association.

Our condolences are extended to the Petty family on the passing of Richard "Scratch" Petty. Scratch passed away March 27, 2016. Scratch was a long time friend and known to many in our business. When we had our August meeting at the Marlborough Country Club, Scratch would attend as a spectator and sit behind the 18th green to watch for his friends to play the hole. He was always friendly and had a quick smile for everyone.

Paul Jamrog of Barrington, RI has joined the Sales force at **Atlantic Golf and Turf**. Paul will focus on the North Shore of Massachusetts and southern New Hampshire. Paul brings two years of sales experience and over 30 years as a Golf Course Superintendent to his customers in Golf, Lawn Care, Sports Turf and Nursery. He can be reached at (401) 524-3322 or paul@atlanticgolfandturf.com

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Golf Course Superintendents Association of New England

The Newsletter - Rate Schedule

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Company Name: _____ Phone # _____

Address: _____

Contact Name: _____ Email _____

Issues (List month and total number): _____

Amount of Check: _____ (Made payable to "GCSANE")

Member Rates:	Monthly Rate	4 Times Per Yr. (Save 5%)	6 Times Per Yr. (Save 10%)	8 Times Per Yr. (Save 10%)	Annual Rate (Save 15%)
<input type="checkbox"/> 1/4 page (vertical; 3.75" wide x 5" deep)	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 90.00	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 342.00	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 486.00	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 648.00	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 918.00
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****DEADLINE for ads: The first of the month for that month's issue.***

Ad Preparation Specifications:

File Specifications for Ads Supplied in Digital Format: Ads may be sent either by email or by mailing a CD to the address below. Formats preferred are .GIF; .JPG and .PDF. Ads can also be accepted in Microsoft Word or Microsoft Publisher files. Full color is available with all ads.

Advertising Design Services: Design services are available by request and consultation and will be billed separately.

Send all Newsletter ads to:

Julie Heston

36 Elisha Mathewson Road, N. Scituate, RI 02857

Phone: 401-934-7660 / Fax: 401-934-9901

jheston@verizon.net