



Newsletter

June 1960

The May meeting was held at New Bedford C.C. Our host, Mike O'Grady, had the course well groomed and a perfect day was enjoyed by all who attended. The barbecue was delicious and from all reports everyone had a wonderful time.

Results of the golf tournament are as follows:

low gross - M. Wendell
1st. net - Art Cody
2nd. net - Bill Ash & Bruce Silven

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Henry Mitchell, Supt. Coonamessett C.C. was voted a member of our association.

An application for membership was read from Donald Blakely, Supt. Merrimack C.C.

The Directors recently met at the Framingham C.C. for a special meeting. A picture was taken and a history of our association is being prepared by Joe Butler which is to be published in the Golf Course Reporter.

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NEXT MEETING SUPT. - CHAIRMAN

June 6, 1960 Pinebrook C.C. Weston, Mass.

Equipment demonstration - 10:00 - 11:00 A.M.

Luncheon & Speaker - 12:00 - Al Radko, U.S.G.A. Eastern Director

Please register for golf and play after attending lunch, no golf allowed before lunch.

Your host Supt. is Howard Farrant.

PAYOLA
by R. D. Gidel

Who are you paying off, Dad?

The mood of the mode is pay off now and worry about the consequences later. We buy our way in or our way out, as the case may be. Anything to bulldoze our way to the objective 'cause everything and everyone has a price.

The kids are paid off by letting them have their way, to keep peace and quiet around the house.

The spouse is paid off by letting her handle the loot, so she'll quit nagging about the take-home pay.

Grafting politicians are paid off when John Q. Citizen doesn't bother to vote.

The Commies are paid off by our criticizing the government without putting in an oar to help better it.

A poor educational system is paid off by not taking personal interest in the kids' schooling.

Poor TV programs are paid off by buying the sponsors' products.

The Devil is paid off by sleeping, instead of getting out of the sack and into a pew on Sunday.

Phonies, frauds, and confidence artists are paid off by our not reporting them to the authorities.

Our egos are paid off by thinking we're better than the next guy and above danger warnings, safety rules, and safety devices.

Pay offs are made in many other ways other than with green stuff. Some are a great deal more lethal, too, when you lay an eye, hand, lung, career, or family on the line to pay off a moment of haste, neglect, inattention or foolishness.

You can't buy your way out of a pine box. You can't buy back a severed finger, mashed leg, or punctured retina. You can't buy back a mangled little girl or boy.

Latch on to safety, Dad. Payola is for the pigeons.

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ACTORS IN THE DARK

Sitting the other night in the Radio City Music Hall enjoying the usual grandiose musical extravaganza, I felt a particular train of thought begin to flow through my mind. I glanced over the immense audience as they responded so enthusiastically throughout the show. Here were thousands of happy people from all over America tossing their cares and problems aside to relax and to share in the splendid performance of the entertainers and the orchestra.

There is a great parallel between the performance in Radio City and the performance given daily in season by the golf course superintendent. Both performers are providing entertainment for vast numbers of people. Both are artists, and both labor long and enthusiastically for the love of their work and to provide enjoyment for others. Both have devoted years of training to the perfection of their profession.

However, while there are certain similarities in the function of these performers, there are two sharp differences. One involves recognition; the other the pay check.

In the case of the actor, his long hours of rehearsal and his grueling performance under the lights are rewarded by a loud ovation and repeated curtain calls. He is directly in the limelight and appreciated by those who enjoy his performance.

The superintendent on the other hand never stands in the limelight. His performance is quiet and professional like. His contact with the public is infrequent or rare in most cases. He is a man behind the scene, yet it is his professional ability and his artistic touch that makes possible millions of rounds of golf each

year. Others cannot perform this role because they lack the training and experience required for modern golf turf maintenance. Many have tried and their failure has proven this point.

Along with lack of recognition (and really because of this fact) the golf superintendent in many cases draws a salary lower than the average factory worker or unskilled laborer. Yet the latter performs a simple routine requiring little or no training, imagination or management ability, while the golf superintendent has under his direct operation real estate and facilities valued in the millions. He is involved in business management, labor relations, engineering, creative arts, and, of course, all the technical phases of turf-grass production.

No one expects or suggests, of course, that the salary of a golf superintendent should approach that of the stage star. It should however, be in line with comparable positions in other fields such as stationary engineers and park superintendents, and it should certainly be at least as high as that received by the heads of other departments in golf. Certainly the training of the superintendent is as involved and as professional as any department in golf and certainly, the importance of this position to the game of golf is indisputable.

Why then, should a professional man and self styled business manager suffer this lack of recognition and financial disadvantage? The answer is simple. The golf superintendent has been an ACTOR IN THE DARK.

Imagine the results at the Radio City performance if the lights were suddenly turned off and the performers left in the dark. This has been the case with many in our profession. Aside from his ability as a turf-grass technologist, every superintendent determines his own degree of acceptance and often success by his performance "under the lights"; that is, his acceptance by the public.

Let us not deceive ourselves. There are men in our profession whose lack of ability as superintendents has limited their success--and the advance of the entire profession. Fortunately however, these cases are few and becoming fewer as professional qualifications for golf turf management are advanced.

On the other hand, there are many men in our profession who are very long on grass growing know-how, but very short on public relations. Their full success has been limited because their personality and their ability has never been fully recognized. They have been performing on an unlighted stage. They have been ACTORS IN THE DARK.

THE SOLUTION?

What is the solution to this dilemma? It lies in professional growth and readjustment. First, our Association and our Membership must face this problem squarely. Superintendents everywhere must recognize that there is far more to our profession than merely growing and cutting grass. The profession is as strong as its weakest link, and there are still many foremen or greenskeepers operating golf courses. It is the full responsibility of the GCSAA to rescue these men. Bringing them into Chapter and National Associations should be the first step of assistance. As they become active in association affairs--attend conferences, meet successful superintendent--their professional outlook will improve and their individual stature will grow.

Secondly, the Association and each individual member must develop better professional and public relation programs. In my next column, I will discuss ways of "Putting the Best Foot Forward."

Gene C. Nutter

The Editor
Dick Blake