

# WESTERN VIEWS

April 1994

Official Publication of the West Michigan Golf Course Superintendents Association

## Inside

- Mechanic's Corner.....Page 2  
 Welcome, New Members...Page 2  
 G.A.M. Meeting Recap....Page 2  
 Winter Ski Trip.....Page 3  
 Presidents Message.....Page 3  
 Roundtable Meeting Rev...Page 3



From left to right: Kevin Barton, Gary Spahr, Brian Vanderbaan, Tom McGuinness, John Wiersema, Kevin Henley, Dave Wheeler. See story, *Winter Ski Trip*, page 3.

## 1994 Meeting Schedule

- March 1 . . . . Cascade Hills C.C., Roundtable meeting  
 March 15 . . . Kent C.C., G.A.M and WMGCSA meeting  
 April 18 . . . . Blythefield C.C., meeting and golf  
 May 11 . . . . Grand Haven G.C., meeting and golf  
 June 13 . . . . Arbor Hills, joint meeting with MBCGCSA and golf  
 July 12 . . . . Winters Creek G.C., meeting and golf  
 Aug. 9 . . . . Forest Hills G.C., afternoon coffee  
 Aug. 10 . . . . The Moors G.C., morning coffee  
 Aug. 11 . . . . Marywood G.C., afternoon coffee  
 Sept. 12 . . . . Battle Creek G.C., Golf Day\*  
 Oct. 4 . . . . Silver Lake C.C., Annual Meeting and golf  
 Oct. 25 . . . . Equipment Managers Seminar\*

\*Date or sight still pending

*Editors Note: Please write me if you have any corrections or if you are interested in doing an article for us at:*

**Western Views**  
 1447 Hope S.E.  
 Grand Rapids, MI. 49506

## A New Season.....A New Crew?

Much of a golf course superintendent's success depends on the abilities of his grounds crew. This is the line item that more of our annual budget is spent on, in most cases, than fertilizer, pesticides, equipment and irrigation parts combined. Without the crew, little is accomplished. A good crew and the growing season breezes by with the golf course and the equipment in fine shape. A poor crew and the summer is more than trying and the conditions of both your stomach and the golf course suffer. This human element of our profession is the one item that, in my wanderings among all the new and improved items on the trade show floor, was not displayed. Nor will a sales person bring this to your maintenance facility and say, "These guys will perform more efficiently at a lesser rate." Finding the right people to fit in with your's and the existing crew member's personality can be challenging.

What do you look for in a person, at a time when the quality of work just isn't what it used to be. (Is this a comment made by every generation?) Aside from the questions about name, address, social security number, and previous places of employment, on the application, find out: what the prospective employee does in their spare time; if they do have any future plans past this job or next school year; if they know any of your present or past crew members; how they're funding their education. Did they show up

on time for the interview? Was their first contact by telephone or in person? Something can be told about a person's character by each of these questions. Concluding whether this person sitting in front of you will fit into your operation or not is a judgement call.

Most of the time you are correct in deciding who to hire. These people become good workers who show up on time and learn their assigned tasks the first time it is explained. Occasionally, however, you are deceived by first impressions and end up with a poor employee. Unfortunately, workers are much like batteries in a golf cart: the best are pulled down to the level of the worst.

A new growing season is upon us. With some luck, a good crew will be punching in and the grounds operation will be running smoothly. I doubt there will ever be a booth at the International Golf Course Conference and Trade Show which features cloned employees, all named "Dave". And even if there was, I believe I would continue hiring in the manner I do now. The variety of abilities and personalities certainly can make a summer interesting. I enjoy the challenge of melding all the different abilities and personalities into an efficiently working grounds crew.

Paul Richter

## Welcome to New Members

- \* Howard Altman, Territory Manager for United Horticulture Supply.
- \* Richard Dilorenzo, from Yuma Arizona.
- \* Robert Doezema, Sales Representative for Green Growth Supply Co.
- \* Kirk Dohm, from the Moors Golf Course in Portage, MI.
- \* William Eitel, Superintendent for Hidden Valley Golf Course in Shelbyville, MI.
- \* Craig Hoffman, M.S.U. student internship at Grand Traverse Resort.
- \* Mark Glasson, Vice President for D & C Distributors Inc.
- \* Julie Voshei, Sales Representative for Boylan Sales Inc.



## Changes

- \* Jon Oconnor, a M.S.U. grad from Juday Creek G.C., will be the superintendent at Gull Lake
- \* Dan Litogot will be the superintendent at the new course, Heritage Glen, near Paw Paw, MI.
- \* Bob Murphy, from Tyler Creek, will be taking over as superintendent at Riverside C.C.

## G.A.M. Meeting Recap

The Golf Association of Michigan and the Western Michigan Superintendents Association held their joint spring meetings at Kent Country Club on March 15th. Many area Superintendents, Golf Professionals, Club Managers, and Club Officials were in attendance. We met Bret Marshall, Director of the G.A.M., and he explained the role of the association and some of their goals for the future. One goal that is close at hand is the G.A.M. Research Day at M.S.U. on April 25th (A mailer should be out soon on that). James Sweeney, of the U.S.G.A., spoke about combatting slow play on the golf course.

Dr. Bruce Branham did an abbreviated talk on Poa Annua management and control. These were just a few of the topics covered.

One of the talks I found particularly interesting was "The Year in Review" by Robert Vavrek of the U.S.G.A. He showed many pictures covering the rains of summer that affected many midwest golf courses. The continental breakfast and lunch were great, as well. Of course Keith Paterson, as always, was a gracious host.

If you attended, remember to write down your points towards recertification for your pesticide applicators license.

Al Bathum

---

## Mechanic's Corner

At Cascade Hills C.C., we recently completed our winter maintenance on equipment. This winter, while going over our equipment needs from the previous growing season, we remembered the problems we have had with two of our four fairway mowers. We use Jacobsen LF 100s, set at a height of 1/2 inch. We usually mow the fairways in the morning when the grass is still wet from dew, irrigation, or, as in the case of last summer, rain. These mowers had not been equipped with rear roller scrapers and they would collect clippings on the roller and throw the height of cut off. Cleaning the rollers off by hand was not effective because the clippings built up too quickly. We looked at the price of scraper bars from a local supplier and it would cost in the area of \$100 per machine to outfit the mowers. We decided to make our own at this point. The superintendent had seen this done at his previous

course and it had worked quite well.

We bought twenty feet of 5/16" steel rod, twenty 5/16" fender washers, and the 5/16" bolts and washers to hold them to the frame. We then cut the rod to fit the length of the back roller and run from one end of the frame to the other and welded the fender washers on each end. We then ran the bolt through the fender washers, through the hole that was in the side frame that Jacobsen so kindly put there and doubled washered and nutted it on the other side. The 5/16" bolt is a size smaller than the hole in the frame so it allows you to snug the rod up tight to the roller to prevent build up of clippings that would eventually clog the roller and prevent it from turning. These, as well as the factory scraper, will still get clogged upon occasion but it should help eliminate the step cutting we would get before.

If you have any questions, feel free to call Randy Grueztmacher at Cascade Hills C.C., 949-1420.

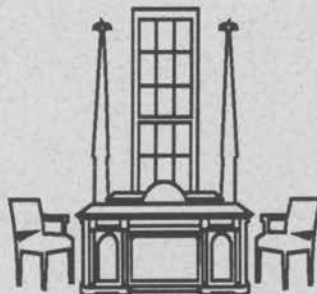


## President's Message

Finally! Winter is almost over. I don't remember, as a kid, periods of bitter cold in the minus 20's. Frankly, I don't care if I ever see it that cold again. It is 33 degrees today....a very good sign. The snow cover was good all winter. I know some ice formed on greens. I hope the ice didn't pose any problems for anyone.

The W.M.G.C.S.A. Board of Directors has been working very hard on the new year's agenda of

meetings and events. If any member of our Association would like to be on a certain committee, please call



any board member. We would like to have you, and your input is important to the direction of the W.M.G.C.A. This year's Board of Directors is committed to bringing you both education, as well as avenues to pursue, towards compliance issues. Get involved!

See you at the next meeting. It will be a good one.

Respectfully,  
Harry Schuemann

### Roundtable Meeting Reviewed

It was a mild day in early March when some of the top minds in Turfgrass Management met at Cascade Hills Country Club to exchange ideas and experience. The West Michigan G.C.S.A. President, Harry Schuemann, opened the meeting, introducing our host for the day, Al Bathum.

The person responsible for selecting the speakers, Doug Boyle, introduced them to the 48 people attending. It was obvious from the lack of breaks the audience took all day that they didn't want to miss a thing.

Mike Herbst talked on the

see *Review*, page 4

### Winter Ski Trip

On Tuesday, January 25, twelve men went north and braved the elements on the ski slopes of Crystal Mountain. They were: Al Bathum, Pat Fifer, and Dave Wheeler from Cascade Hills; Brian Vanderbaan and John Wiersema from Valley Turf Inc.; Jim Granfield from Winters Creek; Gary Spahr from Cedar Chase; Kevin Henley from Crystal Springs; Tom McGuinness from Silver Lake; and Steve Tedhams, Kevin Barton, and Ben Christie from Forest Hills.

It was an outstanding day on the slopes with no major wipeouts

see *Ski Trip*, page 4

### Advertisers for 1993

Please Patronize them as they have made this newsletter possible.

Amturf  
Benham Chemical  
Century Rain Aid  
Custom Aerification  
D & C Distributors  
D. G. Irrigation  
Environmental Structures  
Green Growth Supply Co.  
J. John Gorney, Inc.  
Kleins Fertilizer  
Lebanon Total Turf Care  
Lesco  
Michigan Sand Co.  
Michigan Turf Equipment  
Moilema & Son

Myles Excavating  
Nor Am Chemical  
Nugent Sand Co.  
O. M. Scott  
Parmenter & Andre  
Peerless-Midwest  
Raymer Pump  
Spartan Farm & Lawn  
Spartan Distributors  
Standard Sand  
T. C. I.  
Turfgrass Inc.  
Valley Turf  
Van Manan Oil  
Wilbur-Ellis

SERIALS

### Want Ads

Lesco 500, gas, 2300 hrs, runs well, rear roller cleaners, spare gang, best offer, may demo. 874-5558

.....  
National, 84 inch, with electric reel lift kit. 1500 hours. Asking \$2,500 (517)785-4683

.....  
Lely Fertilizer Spreader, pull behind.. Vertidrain, pull behind unit. 949-1420

.....  
WMGCSA members, to place add, write editor. Ad will be placed in next available issue.

**Review** (cont. from page 3)

importance of green speed and some of the tools he uses in keeping his greens fast. This led to a short discussion on what are acceptable stimpmeter readings in the area.

Harry Schuemann spoke of his recent experiences with growth regulators used in reducing clippings on fairways, and of his plans for further research in this area.

Charles Scott told of his use of bulk fertilizers and shared some suggestions regarding purchase and maintenance of bulk hoppers.

Doug Boyle's topic was the use of organic products on the golf course.

Gary Peters related his experience with "Roots" and "Pana Sea" in root development and filling in damaged areas.

Roger Barton brought us up to date on his success with the use of artificial turf on tees and suggested how this technology may solve some driving range tee problems.

Steve Glossinger gave a detailed presentation on the project of replacing the

sod on the greens at Point of Woods Country Club.

Paul Richter had some creative suggestions regarding problem solving, obtaining information and disbursing it.

Tom McGuinness made a plea for articles for *The Western Views* Newsletter. Yes, you too can see your work published!

Bill Fountain shared many of his ideas and forms he's developed for selecting, testing, and training employees. This led to a discussion about various legal issues regarding personnel management.

Keith Paterson reviewed his installation of fuel vaults.

Al Bathum gave a detailed report on his recent construction of a spraypad/chemical storage facility.

Kurt Thuemmel impressed us all with his story of the challenging project of constructing an entire maintenance facility in today's world of spiraling costs and extensive regulations.

Greg Lyman was the final

speaker, bringing us up to date on various environmental topics. One of the hottest topics was one regarding the recent study about disease occurrences in superintendents and how the media had mishandled it. (There will be a mailing to all members on this topic soon.)

Many thanks to all those who worked so hard to make this Roundtable Meeting such a success, particularly Doug Boyle and Al Bathum. For those who missed it, get with it. You don't want to miss this again next year.

---

**Ski Trip** (cont. from page 3)

except for Al Bathum, seen only by Jim G. That's real good considering it's been many years for some of the guys.

We had a great lunch in the parking lot with beer, sandwiches, Schnapps, pickled bologna, Amaretto, chips and cheese. (see cover photo)

Look for us again next year with the hope to include more people.

Steve Tedhams



1447 Hope S.E.  
Grand Rapids, MI 49506

**BULK RATE  
U. S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
GRAND RAPIDS, MI  
PERMIT NO. 582**

Peter Cookingham  
Turfgrass Infor. Center  
W - 212 Library  
East Lansing MI 48824