



CHIPS & PUTTS

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POCONO TURFGRASS ASSOCIATION

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In the News.....

Open a newspaper lately and for one reason or another, you'll find an article with a golf course superintendent's name in it - and he usually belongs to the PTGA!

One such article entitled "Now I'm A Believer!" appeared in *Panorama* (August 1997) concerning the Sand Springs Golf Course in Drums, PA. The author, Joyce Steinman, described her tour of the new front 9 at Sand Springs. According to the article, she was very impressed with what she saw, such as, the 5th Hole which is built in a deep quarry, and the breathtakingly beautiful hole on No. 8 which will be their signature hole. Sand Springs is a public course located just off Route 309 in Drums, PA. Although public, it has the look and feel of a private course. **Jim Kohler**, a PTGA member, is the golf course superintendent.

Jeff Peters, CGCS and current past president of our association, was featured in an article written by staff writer Bobbi Dempsey for the Times Leader on Sunday, September 28. The article was entitled "This guy's grass always greener." Jeff discussed the management of a golf course, giving the general public an overview of the day to day problems and procedures. He pointed out the problems of vandalism, such as the time someone drove a car across the putting green and right into a ditch. He explained about deer and other wildlife on the course and how they are left undisturbed. "The trend now is to design courses to enhance wildlife and be environmentally friendly," Jeff said. At one point he was asked whether he had any problems with groundhogs, such as Bill Murray had in the movie "Caddyshack". With Jeff, groundhogs are not the problem, but lightning is. As you all know, lightning can play havoc with the irrigation system. The article was complete with pictures of Jeff on the golf course.

Another article written in the Times Leader by Erica Michelstein concerned a unique feature on a golf course. It seems PTGA member **James Woychik** is quite the artist. When a few trees fell

on the Hollenback Golf Course due to a couple severe summer storms, Jim got to work. But not the way you think! He took out his chain saw, but instead of cutting up the trees, he carved and painted them. He ended up turning a thick trunk into a totem pole and a fallen tree with multiple limbs into a three-headed dragon. A picture of the "dragon" and Jim headlined the page, along with the caption "Artwork scores hole in one." Great idea, Jim.

Keith Snyder, CGCS, who was a golf course superintendent at DuPont Country Club for 21 years, is now the golf course superintendent at Great Bear Golf and Country Club. "Great Bear Superintendent Returns to Pocono Mountain Lair" was printed in the *Golf Pennsylvania - Golf Northeast*, Fall 1997 issue. Five years ago Keith bought land seven miles from Great Bear. He had intended to use the land after he retired. But when he saw how close the Jack Nicklaus signature course was to his property, he decided to apply for the position. There followed two years of hectic, often 15-hour days, whereby 460 acres of rugged wilderness was turned into a beautiful golf course. Keith toured the course with Jack Nicklaus several times, and he found his experiences with Nicklaus to be both enlightening and enjoyable. The course is now open and Keith has more time to spend with his wife and daughters. He is also getting closer to the golf course maintenance end of the business - which while he enjoyed the construction, he stills prefers the course maintenance.

Country Club of the Poconos was recently certified as an Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary. An article was published in the *Golf Course News*, October

(Continued on page 3)

IN THIS ISSUE.....

- ◆ Calendar of Events
- ◆ Tree Care
- ◆ Lightning on the Links



President's Message.....

The leaves are falling, and the grass is growing. The staff is smaller, and the work takes longer to get finished. The air is brisk, the kids are back to school, archery season is reaching its peak, Penn State is ranked #1, I mean #2 (again), and the fall and winter conferences will be starting soon. What a great time of year!

The only bad thing is that we will not have another PTGA golf meeting until March or April 1998.

Congratulations need to be extended to our newly elected Board Members at our annual election meeting at Split Rock. Jack Bird was re-elected as Vice President, Scott Schukraft won the election for the Secretary/Treasurer position, Gene Huelster and Tony Grieco were elected new board members. Thank you for re-electing me as your President. We look forward to another exciting year.

I need to thank Kelly Kressler, our Membership Chairman for the past two years. He has stepped down this year to pursue some personal goals, but he will be back! Also, thanks again to Mike Vella for handling the Secretary/Treasurer position for the past two years.

As always, it is an honor and a privilege to be a part of this Board of Directors. We will again be taking some big steps in the months to come and improving our organization. We recently hired an accountant to track and update all our finances. He is Ronald J. Tugend, Sr., EA, from RJ Accounting & Tax Services. He is an avid golfer and has worked with numerous other organizations. We will have our annual audit and new budget in place well before the end of December.

We are still looking for members to volunteer for committee positions. It is going to be a long, hard winter, and the association will be busy as usual. Please pick up the phone and call your neighboring superintendent, have lunch, chew the fat a bit, and stay in tune with what is going on.

Thanks for coming out, and I'll see you all at the conferences and trade shows!

Ronald Garrison, CGCS

From the Editor's Desk.....



Ah, what a pleasure it is, as a chapter newsletter editor, to find another writing talent. Such was the case with this month's article featured on the first page of this issue. While I was away vacationing in sunny Florida, our managing editor, Melinda Wisnosky, took the "bull by the horns" and her initiative produced this fine article. I must confess, I didn't leave her much direction, other than a pile of newspaper articles, clips, and a blurb about what I promised I would write about when I returned from Florida! Knowing all too well that the deadline would be difficult, if not impossible, for me to keep, she wrote the article for me. I want to thank Melinda from the bottom of my heart for a job well done!

Scott A. Schukraft, Editor



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(Continued from page 1)

1997 issue entitled "CC of Poconos, 'a living thing,' joins Audubon program." Country Club of the Poconos near Marshalls Creek, PA, encompasses 150 acres of wetlands, forest, rock walls and mountain streams. According to **Bob Meaney**, Golf Course Superintendent and member of the PTGA, "Our course accommodates the natural contours of the land and preserves the wildlife habitats...but also plays like a dream." They instituted many procedures that are environmentally friendly in combating and preventing disease and infestation. They also instituted programs to promote healthy turf while protecting wetlands, and upgraded and expanded an irrigation system that would use less water and ultimately reduce spread of turf diseases. Congratulations to Bob and CC of Pocono on their Audubon certification.

Another golf course, **Huntsville Golf Club** in Lehman, PA, recently won the NE PA Environmental Partnership Award. The club was featured in the Times Leader on Saturday, October 4, in an article called "When On the Green Means More than a Place to Golf." The article explained about the various environmental procedures that Huntsville implements and also the many partnerships with local organizations, such as, Wyoming Seminary Lower School and the Greater Wyoming Valley Audubon Society that helped them to win the award. Huntsville, along with several other regional winners, was honored at a reception and dinner where Golf Course Superintendent **Scott Schukraft** and Horticulturist **Karen Balchunas** accepted the environmental award. Congratulations to Huntsville!

It may be the time of year, or simply a coincidence, but there have certainly been several very fine articles concerning golf course superintendents and their courses in the newspapers lately. Who knows, maybe next time we will be reading about you!



1997 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

DECEMBER 9-11 - New Jersey Turfgrass Expo '97, Trump Taj Mahal Hotel, Atlantic City, NJ
Sponsored by the New Jersey Turfgrass Association

...and in conjunction with the NJ Turf Expo '97:

DECEMBER 8 - Maximizing Teamwork, Atlantic City, NJ, a GCSAA sponsored seminar.

DECEMBER 9-12 - Ohio Turfgrass Foundation Conference and Trade Show, Columbus Convention Center, Columbus, OH

JANUARY 6-8 - Eastern PA Turf Conference & Trade Show, Valley Forge Convention Center, Contact Michael Smith at 610-828-0253 or P.T.C. at 814-863-3475 or fax 814-863-3479.

JANUARY 29 - Northeastern PA Turfgrass & Grounds Maintenance School, Mountain Laurel Resort, Contact Andrew McNitt, Dept. of Agronomy, PSU, 814-863-1368 or P.T.C. at 814-863-3475 or fax 814-863-3479.

FEBRUARY 24-26 - Western PA Turf Conference & Trade Show, Pittsburgh Expo Mart/Radisson Hotel, Contact P.T.C. at 814-863-3475 or fax 814-863-3479.



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GOLF COURSE TURFGRASS MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Applications are now being accepted for Penn State's Two-Year Golf Course Turfgrass Management Program for the class beginning in September 1998. There is an application fee of \$35.00 and the deadline is December 31, 1997. Applications can be obtained by calling 814-863-0129 or by writing to: Golf Course Turfgrass Management Program, The Pennsylvania State University, 221 Ag. Sciences and Industries Building, University Park, PA 16802-3504.

"Happiness does not come from possessions, but from our appreciation of them. It does not come from our work, but from our attitude toward that work. It does not come from success, but from the growth we attain in achieving that success."
Anonymous



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Happy Thanksgiving!



To the Members of
the PTGA and their Families,
we wish you all a very
Happy Thanksgiving Holiday!

From the Board of Directors
of the PTGA



LOOK OUT FOR LIGHTNING ON THE LINKS!

According to the *New Jersey Law Journal*, a New Jersey court has passed down the nation's first known ruling that lightning is not an act of God when it hits a golfer. The court cited breakthroughs in engineering and forecasting that have given golf courses the capability to protect golfers from lightning. Therefore, though courses don't have an affirmative duty to protect their patrons from lightning, they are liable if they establish protective systems and the systems don't work. The opinion suggests that courses can escape liability if, in effect, they decline to interpose themselves between God and golfers. In this case, the Atlantic City Country Club's practice was to monitor the weather and it had an evacuation plan that consisted of the golf course personnel driving onto the course to warn golfers. According to the defense, a United States Golf Association (USGA) poster placed in the clubhouse

recommended immediate reaction to dangerous situations and advised golfers to seek shelter if you feel danger from lightning or storm is imminent. In March 1993, a foursome on the course noticed lightning and began walking toward the clubhouse (there were no man-made shelters along the way). The plaintiff put up an umbrella and was subsequently struck by lightning. He survived, but was injured and sued the club and its owners. This case sets new precedence that lightning is increasingly falling into the category of hurricanes and tornadoes - disasters that have become more predictable. All managers should consider their options and research the expense associated with installing a warning system and shelters.



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GCSAA's 69th International Golf Course
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The Pocono Turfgrass Association *Patterson Scholarship* is awarded annually to second year two year students and fourth year four year students. One applicant is chosen as the recipient of the scholarship and given honorary membership to The Pocono Turfgrass Association for that calendar year.

Requirements for consideration are:

- ◆ Applicant must be a second year student in a two-year program, or a fourth year student in an undergraduate program in a turfgrass related major.
- ◆ Applicant must submit in writing why he or she feels that he/she should be considered for the scholarship.
- ◆ Applicant must include what he or she feels his/her contribution to the turfgrass field will be.
- ◆ Applicant must submit a letter of endorsement from his/her employer in the turfgrass field. This endorsement may come from an employer from an internship program.
- ◆ Applicant's request for consideration and his or her employer endorsement must be submitted TOGETHER on or before December 31, 1997.
- ◆ Applicants requesting consideration for the Patterson Scholarship should send requests to:

The Pocono Turfgrass Association
c/o Melinda Wisnosky
147 Hayfield Road
Shavertown, PA 18708

POTASSIUM: A KEY TO GOOD TURF QUALITY

By Dr. Mike Stewart

Turf adds to our quality of life daily...often in ways that we don't even notice.

Potassium is second only to nitrogen in the amounts required by turfgrass plants. Soil potassium can be quickly depleted under turfgrass. Therefore, regular applications of potassium fertilizer are usually necessary to achieve optimum performance. In some cases, the recommended potash rate may be as much as twice that of nitrogen.

Proper potassium fertilization of turfgrass has been shown to be associated with several benefits. These include:

- Increased disease resistance
- Increased cold and heat tolerance.

The winter hardiness of warm sea-

son grasses such as bermudagrass is improved with increases in potassium levels. The heat tolerance of cool season grasses such as Kentucky bluegrass is associated with adequate levels of potassium.

- Improved overall ability to endure stressful conditions. Satisfactory levels of potassium cause an increase in leaf turgor pressure (decrease in succulence), thicker cell walls, and increased vigor.
- Turfgrass is more likely to endure and recover from stressful conditions.

The recent trend in turf areas with heavy traffic has been toward more sandy growing media to combat soil compaction. Soil testing and removal rates should be used to determine turfgrass fertilization needs. Stress factors such as the degree of traffic should also be considered when designing a turfgrass fertility program.

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PRUNE IN WINTER? YOU BET!

People tend to forget about their trees during the winter months. We assume that because the trees are dormant, little or no care is necessary or even possible.

Actually, the winter months can, and should, be utilized by those of us who are concerned with the health of our trees. While dormant pruning provides the same benefits as does pruning during other times of the year, it may have definite advantages in certain situations.

- During the summer, it is common for the area underneath trees to be planted with annual or perennial flowers. During the winter months, flowerbeds do not pose as much of a risk and damage to understory plants is minimized.
- Damage to turf underneath trees is negligible due to the frozen ground.
- There is little interference with other gardening or recreational activities.
- When a portion of a tree's canopy is removed during the dormant season, we often notice an increase in new growth from the remaining branches. This occurs because the energy stored in the roots and branches is channeled to fewer growth points.
- The absence of leaves allows the branching patterns of trees to be easily seen. Crossing branches and weak crotches are more visible, which enables the arborist to correct faults and help the tree to grow into a safer tree with a better form.
- Equipment access to trees may be improved over frozen ground.



Tree Care Checklist

WHY FERTILIZE?

- ✓ To enhance tree health and appearance.
- ✓ To improve a tree's defenses so that it can fend off insects and disease.
- ✓ To help tree roots compete with the grass and other roots for nutrients.
- ✓ To help aerate the soil.
- ✓ To replace the nutrients that are lost when twigs, leaves and other natural materials are not left to decompose.
- ✓ To encourage roots and shoot development.
- ✓ To address specific nutrient deficiencies.

WHY PRUNE?

- ✓ To cleanse the tree and enhance tree health.
- ✓ To clear branches from buildings, wires, traffic areas, etc.
- ✓ To remove lower branches that are, or soon may be, obstacles.
- ✓ To create vistas to enhance a view through a single tree or groups of trees.
- ✓ To improve the shape and structural integrity of a tree.
- ✓ To remove deadwood, broken and potentially hazardous branches.
- ✓ To create "windows" to allow light to beam through areas requiring more sunlight.

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A message from your golf course superintendent and GCSAA

MEETING NOTES

GOLF AT PAUPACK HILLS

September's meeting was held at Paupack Hills Country Club with host, Mark Monahan. This was a joint meeting with the Philadelphia Association. Guest speaker, Dr. Peter Landscoot, showed us a slide presentation on golf course management overseas. Mowing grass with sheep and goats? Yes, they do! His slides proved it. Low maintenance, cheap fertilizer. Thanks, Dr. Landscoot.

Mark has been at Paupack Hills for approximately fifteen years. He's a 1970 graduate of Penn State University. What a beautiful course! Mark has made the course what it is today by reconstructing holes #2 and #3, building a new green on #2 and changing the hole layout to a dog leg left. He changed #3 from a Par Three to a Par Four by reconstructing the tees and moving them back. He's converted fairways to bentgrass, and the list goes on and on.

Paupack Hills is a privately owned country club, with Mr. Dewitt Cox at the helm. We would like to thank Mr. Cox and those involved for sharing their George/Tom Fazio designed course with us.

Mark paired up 14 teams. Pocono vs.

GOLF AT SPLIT ROCK

The new nine holes were open at Split Rock Country Club, and they ate up dozens of golf balls. Scot Seidel, superintendent, did a wonderful job preparing for the attack. Scot is a 1995 Penn State graduate. He has been at Split Rock for two years and was previously at Golden Oaks. The golf course is a Bob Sterret design. They currently have 18 holes with 9 more holes under construction. They hope to open the newest 9 holes by the spring of 1998. Good luck, Scot, with all the construction and upkeep.

Bragging rights went to Jonathan Switch who won First Flight with a match of

Philadelphia. Format was better ball of partners. The Pocono boys were too hot. The result: Pocono - 8; Philadelphia - 4. Ties: 2. Better luck next time, Philly Boys! We were lucky enough to have Mark play for Pocono, as he is a member of both associations.

First Flight - 70

Tom Dryer
Rich Sassanan

Second Flight - 73

Gary Phillips
Craig Phillips

Third Flight - 76

Todd Moyer
Sankey Brumley

Fourth Flight - 81

John Bodock
Jason Barndt

Low Gross - 73

Eddie May
John Farrell

Low Net - 64

Pete Beblavy
Chip Presendofer

Second Net - 65

Sean Cullen
Bob Cevetello

cards - 75 over Tony Grieco.

Second Flight - Steve Stranzl - 85 and John Downer - 86.

Third Flight - Jim MacLaren - 97, matched cards with Tony Stranzl.

Fourth Flight - Mike Stranzl & Jody Savitz.

What a day for the Stranzl's!

Jonathan Switch had Closest to the Pin. Short Drive was Tom Wilchak. We had six skins winners. Leading off with an eagle was Ron Garrison, Steve Stranzl, John Vojick, Jack Bird, Tony Grieco, and John Downer. Names like these prove that miracles can happen.

We would like to thank Scot and all the staff at Split Rock for a great day.

Closest to the Pin
Gary Phillips - 5'10"

Longest Drive
Warren Savini

Thanks again to Mark for his hospitality and all the help he gave us with this tournament.

Jack Bird, Golf Committee





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POCONO ROUNDUP

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE POCONO
TURFGRASS ASSOCIATION

It is with mixed emotions that we report **Hal Parr, Jr., CGCS**, has accepted the Golf Course Superintendent responsibilities at The Tradition Golf Club in Burlington, Kentucky. Word is, The Tradition is the third rated club in Kentucky. Hal would like to wish everyone well, and he extends an invitation to stop by if you are in the area. Otherwise, he will see you at the National Conference and Show. His telephone number is 606-586-5079. Our best wishes and sincerest congratulations to Hal and his family as they adjust to a "new home."

Egypt Farms has recently hired Steve Chirip as Territory Manager. Steve comes to the position with 20 years of experience in the turf industry and looks forward to meeting and giving you the highest quality service and information he can.

Darrin M. Batsky, formerly of Orange County Golf Club, NY, is now the superintendent at Glen Oak Country Club, Clarks Summit, PA. Welcome to the area and to the Association, Darrin.

We would like to welcome the following new members:

Darrin Batsky, Class B, Glen Oak Country Club
William Lopatofsky, Class AF, NE Distri. & Equipment
Doug Witcraft, Class A, Eagle Rock Golf Club

Elections were held during the meeting at Split Rock Country Club last month. Following are the results:

President - Ron Garrison
Vice President - Jack Bird
Secretary/Treasurer - Scott Schukraft
Elected to the Board for two year terms - Gene Huelster and Tony Grieco

We are soliciting PTGA Meeting Sites for 1998. What better way to show off your course than to host a PTGA meeting for all your fellow PTGA members. Please contact Vice President Jack Bird at 717-698-6384.



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