



CHIPS & PUTTS

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE
POCONO TURFGRASS ASSOCIATION

Founded in
1936

VOL. 4, NO. 8

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 1998

LIMITING LIABILITY FROM LIGHTNING

The New Jersey Senate has passed S.B. 166, which provides immunity from liability or certain recreational activities and from injuries caused by "Acts of God". The bill would also provide immunity to a person, corporation or public entity for damages resulting from an "Act of God", or for damages caused by negligent acts in the implementation of procedures or the operation of equipment designed to warn or detect an "Act of God". This bill is in response to *Maussner et al vs. Atlantic City Country Club*, in which Maussner sued for damages caused by lightning.

The Appellant Division ruled that while a golf club had no obligation to establish procedures for warning golfers of impending lightning strikes, if the club established such procedures and those procedures were not followed properly, the club could be held liable. This bill now sits in the Assembly Committee on Judiciary.

FROST DELAYS

Are you looking for a way to explain to your golfers why frost delays are necessary? Check out the feature on frost delays in the *For Your Golfers* area of the GCSAA Web site. This feature is written for golfers and can be posted at your club or used in your club newsletter. The Web site is located at www.gcsaa.org.

INFORMATION SERVICES PROVIDES HELP WITH FALL PROJECTS

GCSAA's information services has the resources available to help you plan and carry out your projects, from bunker renovation and car path construction to irrigation and drainage improvements.

Information Packet

Information packets, which include articles from a variety of sources plus abstracts of additional resources, are available on the following topics:

- bunkers
- car paths
- driving range
- drainage
- golf course construction and renovation
- golf course planning and development
- irrigation
- maintenance and pesticide storage facilities
- USGA putting green construction

You may also want to be prepared for late season golfers by ordering the winter play information packet. This packet includes information you can use when explaining your winter play practices.

Packets are available to members for \$15 each (\$50 for nonmembers). To order an information packet, call the service center at 800-472-7878.

Custom searches

In addition, information services also provides custom

search services for topics not offered as an information packet. The first 30 minutes of the service is free for members. The fee is \$30 per hour after the first half-hour. Contact Susanne Clement, librarian/curator, at 800-472-7878, Ext. 607, for more information or to request a search.

GCSAA Membership reaches 19,000

Since January 1994, GCSAA membership has grown 46 percent (up from 13,000), representing all regions of the nation, and 65 foreign countries and all categories of membership.

In this issue.....

- Joseph Valentine, Sr. Remembered
- Board Notes



President's Message.....

Well, the time many of you have been waiting for has arrived....the annual elections meeting in October. A chance to get new Board members voted in and to get rid of the "old wood." I know a few people who have been looking forward to this meeting like children anticipating Christmas morning!

It's been quite a learning experience for me over the past two years. There have been many difficult times, both personally and professionally. We have come a very long way. Great job, everyone.

Many thanks to all the past presidents and past board members who have worked very hard in the past. I know for certain the current Board of Directors, along with our new president, Jack Bird, will steer this Association straight and to the next level.

To all the members for giving me this opportunity - thank you.

MANY, MANY THANKS TO:

...Melinda Wisnosky for her patience and hard work to get us to the next level.
...Steve Stranzl for sticking it out one more year. I wish you would stay on...
...Jack Bird for keeping it simple, st____. Good luck! The target gets bigger.
...Scott Schukraft for keeping the financials in line and "being my worst nightmare."
...Jeff Peters for telling me how great I am.
...Gene Huelster for putting together an educational program and telling it like it is.
...Tony Grieco for his incredible knowledge and sarcasm.
...Jim MacLaren - too many things to thank you for...
...Tom Wilchak for promising to keep it going.
...Kelly Kressler for dumping me for Tony and being "my bro."
...John Chassard for rumbaing "the Good O'l Boys of the Poconos", and all the support.
... "Uncle" Paul Weiss for bringing an incredible amount of simplicity to things.
...Ron Tugend for making sense out of our financials.
...Mark Reed for telling me about the target.
...Hal Parr for "the phone call."
...the BOD at Fox Hill Country Club
...all the members for giving us input both positive and negative.
...all the host clubs over the past few years.
...to my Wife and Family for being there for support.
...and everyone else I forgot!!!

I'll still see you all at the meetings!

Ronald C. Garrison, CGCS

From the Editor's Desk.....

Is there anyone to look up to anymore? Our politicians lie, cheat and steal. Our religious leaders swindle people out of millions and get caught with hookers or little boys in hotel rooms. Celebrities abuse drugs and wake up in neighbor's beds or worse, dead. Sports stars practice all of the above with great proficiency. So who's left? Well, I learned an important lesson the other day that I hope sticks with me for a long time. One of our employees turned down a promotion, which came with a substantial raise, but more responsibility and time requirements. When asked why he turned it down, he simply stated, "I have, and always will, give 110% to my job while I am here at work, but my family is my No. 1 responsibility, and right now they need me at home as much as possible." What struck me most was his next comment. When asked, "Why, is there a problem at home?", he said, "Yeah, lots of them. They're all over the news. So, if I'm not there for my kids, who will they look up to?" I guess it's a fact of life that the bad boys will always get the headlines, but there is one role model we all have control over, and hopefully getting the message right now.

Tony Grieco, CGCS



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Melinda Wisnosky



1998 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Monday, October 19, 1998

22nd Annual Joseph Valentine Memorial Golf Tournament. The Philadelphia Cricket Club, 415 W. Willow Grove Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19118. Contact: John Chassard, Lehigh C.C., 2319 S. Cedar Crest Blvd., Allentown, PA 18103, 610-967-4643 or P.T.C., P.O. Box 1078, Lemont, PA 16851-1078, 814-863-3475 or fax 814-863-3479.

Tuesday-Thursday, November 3-5, 1998

Penn State Golf Turf Conference, Nittany Lion Inn, State College, PA 16801. Contact: Peter Landschoot, Dept. of Agronomy, 116 ASI Building, University Park, PA 16802, 814-863-1017 or P.T.C., P.O. Box 1078, Lemont, PA 16851-1078, 814-863-3475 or fax 814-863-3479.

Tuesday-Thursday, January 5-7, 1999

Eastern PA Turf Conference & Trade Show, Valley Forge Convention Center, 1200 First Ave., King of Prussia, PA. Contact: Scott Guiser, Bucks Co. Coop. Ext., Neshaminy Manor Center, Doylestown, PA. 18901, 215-345-2383 or P.T.C., P.O. Box 1078, Lemont, PA 16851-1078, 814-863-3475 or fax 814-863-3479.

BOARD NOTES

The Pocono Turfgrass Association's Board of Directors is sad to announce it will be losing three of its members this year. Jeff Peters, Scott Schukraft, and Steve Stranzl will not be returning for another term next season.

Jeff has served on the board for over ten years, two as president of the Association. He has chaired numerous committees, most recently the Nominating/Long Range Steering and GCSAA Affairs. In addition, Jeff served as our Chapter Delegate to the GCSAA and was instrumental in our gaining Affiliate status.

Scott Schukraft has spent five years on the Board and was the driving force behind our publication, *Chips & Putts*, and all the revenue generated through advertising. Scott was also instrumental in revising our By-Laws and obtaining Affiliate status. He has in the past served as our Chapter Delegate to the GCSAA and was Secretary/Treasurer this year.

Steve Stranzl emerged from the shadow of his better-known father to become a most productive member of the Board. During his three years of service, Steve chaired several committees, including most recently Scholarship & Research and Government Relations. Steve worked on the revision of our By-Laws and obtaining GCSAA Affiliate status, all while commuting from the Reading area to our meetings.

These gentlemen have all done a great service to our Association and should be commended for their efforts. Please take a moment to thank them. I am sure it will be greatly appreciated.

Please Note!

The address for the Pocono Turfgrass Association has changed. All correspondence should be addressed as follows:

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c/o Melinda Wisnosky
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MEDIA/PUBLIC RELATIONS

Are you prepared?

Your phone rings and on the other end of the line, a newspaper reporter wants to ask you a question. Regardless of the nature of the query, you can and should take steps to prepare yourself for media inquiries. First impressions can be lasting. Therefore, it is the first few moments of an interview that are likely to shape the media's portrayal of you, your club and/or the profession. Here are just a few points to consider:

***Maintain an even keel.** Contrary to popular opinion, the media is not predisposed to negativity. A question might have the appearance of being negative, but it is the tone of your response that often shapes the perspective of an article or further line of questioning. Remember, the media come to you for information. The clearer you communicate, the more likely your message will be heard in the manner you desire. Practicing responses to questions in private is excellent preparation for an actual interview.

***Organize your thoughts and materials.** Since the media look to you as a source of information, your responsibility is to deliver it in a manner that is understandable. It is justified to be unable to provide data because it is not available, but it is unforgivable to spend 10 minutes furiously shuffling papers and stammering to the reporter because you cannot find a file folder of key information. That sends a message that you are unorganized and/or unreliable, and you may be portrayed as such. Keep accurate files and organize them so they are easily accessible. If the nature of your answer is technical or requires a detailed explanation, it is perfectly allowable to ask the reporter if you might return the call after spending a few moments to gather information and collect your thoughts. The reporter will appreciate an accurate answer, rather than one that is incorrect because

it is "off the cuff."

***Share your experiences and feedback.** How do your peers handle media responses? Save newspaper articles or keep notes of television broadcasts as examples of the do's and don'ts of interviewing. Contact others who have done interviews before or allow for discussion of media activities at chapter meetings. You may want to invite a member of the media or a media training specialist to give you some assistance in this area.

***Have a feel for the media.** Be aware of what the media are reporting. Depending on the size of market, your media may be the local newspaper or it could be a newspaper, three television stations, a local golf magazine and a handful of radio stations. Make it a point to see how they cover golf and the environment. It may be helpful to keep a Rolodex card of each media outlet with notes on the names of the reporters and the type of stories done in the past. This knowledge will help establish relationships and credibility with the media.

***Be proactive.** Why wait for the media to come to you? If you have a good story idea, share it with the media. This tactic goes a long way in creating a positive relationship with reporters and allowing you to present the information from your perspective as the authority. Having identified you as a reputable source of information, the media will now turn to you for future projects. Again, collect the names and telephone numbers of the media in your area and have them available for quick reference.

Media relations, environmental media relations and emergency communications guidebooks are available to you in working with the media. GCSAA members may request free copies through the service center at 800-472-7878.

Do you have a media/public relations tip you would like to share with your fellow superintendents? Do you need assistance in working with the media? Contact Jeff Bollig, Senior Manager of Media/Public Relations, or Kristi Frey, Public Relations Specialist, at 800-472-7878, by fax at 785-832-4433 or via e-mail at media@gcsaa.org.

HERITAGE RIVERS

NASDA News President Clinton has designated 14 rivers throughout the nation as American Heritage Rivers. The communities along these rivers will receive help implementing plans to restore and protect the environmental, economic, and cultural values of the rivers and riverfronts. Federal agencies will coordinate federal plans, functions, programs, and resources. The fourteen designated rivers are: Blackstone and Woonasquatucket Rivers in MA and RI; Connecticut River in CT, VT, NH, and MA; Cuyahoga River in Ohio; Detroit River in MI; the Hanalei River in Hawaii; the Hudson River in NY; New River in NC, VA, and WV; Rio Grande in Texas; Potomac River in MD, PA, VA, WV, and WA; St. Johns River -FL; Upper Mississippi River in IA, IL, MN, MO, and WI; lower Mississippi River in LA and TN; upper Susquehanna and Lackawanna Rivers in PA; Willamette River in Oregon.

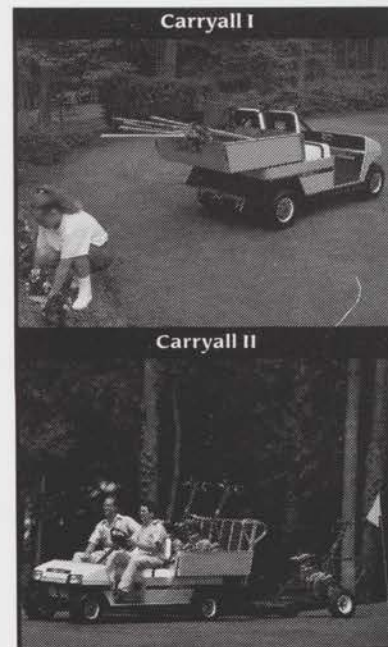
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Joseph Valentine, Sr. 1886-1966

As leaders in our industry, we must remind younger turf professionals of our heritage as our predecessors did for us. If you work in or around PA, there is no better place to start then with Joseph Valentine, Sr. Members of his family have graciously provided us with the following biography. If you don't know who Joseph Valentine, Sr. was, or think Penn State's research center was named after a holiday in February, please take the time to read the follow article.

One of the finest 20th century legends in golf course research and design was Joseph Valentine, Sr., an Italian immigrant who nurtured the renowned Merion Golf Club from its infancy to the international prominence it enjoys today.

Born in Abruzzi, Italy, in 1866 as Giuseppi Valentini, he felt his original calling was to the priesthood, and attended an Italian seminary for a number of years. But his continuing correspondence with relatives and friends who had found their "dream" in America inspired him to emigrate here, which he did at the age of 19 in 1906. He then Anglicized his name, took a job in a Camden, NJ bank, and enrolled in night school at Haverford College in Haverford, PA to learn English.

Joe Valentine embodied the enthusiasm and tireless drive of so many "new Americans" of his era.

Then, at age 21, he was struck by tuberculosis.

Doctors told him to find a job working outdoors for the good of his health, so in 1907 he took a groundsworker position at Merion Cricket Club in Haverford, PA. Many European immigrants likewise took this type of work, and Valentine easily got along with his co-workers.

When Merion's East Course was laid out in 1911 (originally as an adjunct to Merion Cricket Club), Valentine became permanent foreman under greenkeeper William Flynn. But when Flynn had to take a leave of absence in

1918 to do war work for the Bethlehem Steel Company, Valentine was made temporary greenkeeper. After World War I, Flynn returned briefly to Merion, but then left to help launch the famed golf course design firm, Toomey and Flynn.

So Valentine, at age 32, was made Merion's greenkeeper, where he would devote the next 45 years and earn prominence as one of the 10 best courses worldwide. (Toomey and Flynn is credited with the extraordinary layouts of such outstanding courses as Rolling Green Golf Club (Springfield, PA), Philmont Country Club (Huntingdon Valley, PA), and yes, Merion Golf Club). Over the years, Valentine maintained a close working relationship with Bill Flynn, partly because their skills were complementary - Valentine, an expert on turfgrass and course maintenance, and Flynn, a well-known golf architect skilled in golf course construction.

Deeply interested in agronomy and a student all his life, Valentine persuaded Penn State University in 1919 to establish a formalized course for greenkeepers - the first in the U.S. and still highly esteemed today for its turfgrass program. (Upon Valentine's death in 1966, Penn State named its agronomy research facility The Joseph Valentine Turfgrass Research Center, which is supported in part by the Joseph Valentine Memorial Fund, established by Merion Golf Club's Dean Hill, Jr.)

Also in 1919, Valentine married 29-year old Adelina Talone, daughter of a well-known Italian immigrant who ran a profitable tailoring shop in Bryn Mawr, PA. They had six children (two of whom died in infancy), and their sons, Joseph, Jr., Victor and Richard all worked on Merion's East and West Courses as teenagers. "Richie", a Penn State graduate, would succeed his father as greenkeeper upon Valentine's retirement from Merion in 1963. Even today, several of Joe Valentine's children, grandchildren, and even spouses of grandchildren are involved in

the golf course business.

A truly dedicated agronomist, Joe Valentine continually searched for new strains of grass and maintenance strategies which would withstand the tough weather and playing conditions characteristic of so many northeastern U.S. golf courses. The most famous of his findings was "Merion Blue", a strain of Kentucky bluegrass, which Valentine discovered at Merion behind the 17th tee. Found to be exceptionally hardy, heat-resistant and able to be cut very low, Merion bluegrass was brought before USGA Green Section 1937, and would reign as the standard American fairway grass for many years. In 1964 Valentine was awarded the USGA Green Section Award for his lifelong services to golf. He died on March 18, 1966, one day short of his 80th birthday.

Merion is said to be better known because of the "Merion Blue" discovery than for all the golf played on the course for its 80-odd year life. And Joe Valentine will not only be known as the man who put Merion "on the map", but as the first golf course superintendent to elevate the turf profession to the well revered stature that it holds today.

IN MEMORIAM

It is with sadness that we report the deaths of two former Penn State faculty members who were instructors to many of us in the Agronomic and Horticultural fields of study.

John Washko, professor of Agronomy from 1946 until his retirement in 1977, died on May 31, 1998, at the age of 86.

Francis H. "Frank" Witham served Penn State as assistant professor of Botany, professor of Horticulture and Plant Physiology, and headed the Department of Horticulture. Frank died on July 29, 1998 at the age of 62.



News Bits

As we are wrapping up our 1998 season, I would like to thank Dr. Bruce Clarke for an excellent presentation at Water Gap C.C. A big thank you to all of our speakers throughout this year; without them we would not have been able to develop such a strong educational program. Please keep in mind that we would still like to try the round table discussions for next year.

The Board of Directors approved a \$500.00 contribution to Rutgers University for development of the new research facility in New Brunswick.

Keep your eye open for GCSAA seminar sign-ups. We are co-hosting two seminars in White Haven, January 7, 1999 "Preventative Maintenance on Turf Equipment" and January 8, 1999 "Maximizing Teamwork". Both seminars will be at the Ramada in White Haven. These are two great seminars, so please plan to attend.

We have a tentative educational meeting planned at Pocono Farms Country Club in November. Please keep an eye out for a special mailing concerning this meeting. I am very excited about it, as I'm sure you will be.

Please feel free to contact me with any input you may have, good, bad or indifferent, about our educational sessions.

Thank you for your support and have a great fall season.

Gene Huelster



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A message from your golf course superintendent and GCSAA



1998 PTGA MEETING SITES

October 20, 1998 - Fox Hill Country Club
Host: Ron Garrison, CGCS

October 19, 1998 - Philadelphia Cricket Club
22nd Annual Valentine Memorial Golf Tournament
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MEETING NOTES.....SUPERINTENDENT PROFILE

Many thanks go out to Charlie Labar and the staff at Delaware Water Gap for a wonderful day. Great food and hospitality certainly made the day. Thanks also go out to Dr. Bruce Clark for his informative talk on the upcoming New Turf Grasses and the great accomplishments that are happening at Rutgers.

Following are the results of the day's golf:

Closest to the Pin - #4: Tom Drayer, 9'8"
Closest to the Pin - #12: Jack Bird, 6'9"
Longest Drive - #7: Ron Garrison

1. Martin, Sr/Martin, Jr. 65 (Match Cards)
2. Stranzl/Pany 65
3. Allen/Wallzak 66
4. Huelster/Garrison 67
5. Hogan/LaBar 68

This month's meeting will be at Fox Hill Country Club. The host is our president, Ron Garrison. Ron is a graduate of Penn State University and has been in the turfgrass industry for 17 years. During that time Ron has worked through two course constructions and four PGA tour events at the TPC of Connecticut. The highlight of his career was not only having Kelly Kressler work for him as his assistant, but having the responsibility of overseeing the construction and grow-in of the Center Valley Club, which hosted a Nike event this past summer. Originally from Berwick, Ron is married to Amy, and they have two children, Haleigh and Logan.

Look forward to seeing everybody at the meeting at Fox Hill Country Club on October 20.



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POCONO ROUNDUP

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE POCONO TURFGRASS ASSOCIATION

This being the final (I hope) Pocono Roundup for this year, it is time to editorialize.

Golf course construction/renovation is in the midst of a boom, much as it was in the mid '60's. Whether this can be attributed to the economy or whatever the fact is, there is a plethora of renewed interest in golf. It bodes well for our profession and those who chose to follow us in this endeavor.

Also in the past few years, we have experienced a glut of mega mergers. The Textron deal (Ciba/Sandoz - Novartis), (Zeneca - ISK), (Noram - AgrEvo), and (ProLawn - Lesco). Sorry if I missed some. The question is: Is bigger better?

Gray leaf spot (Ryegrass Blast or *Pyricularis grisea*) really reared it's ugly head in 1998. It was predicted in July and for those privy to this advice had the upper hand in controlling the disease. For those with Ryegrass fairway now is the time to do some serious cost analysis on keeping the Rye or changing to another specie. The disease was confirmed all the way up to the NY border, as far west as Pittsburgh. Nobody is immune, just either lucky or over budget. Years ago the thought of having bentgrass fairways was out of the question because of the perception of its higher maintenance costs,

but times have changed! With the new varieties of bent and the advanced maintenance equipment available, this is not the case.

Our new plant pathologist, Wakar Utidin, and Sky Bit are working on modeling to predict when Grey Leaf spot will occur again in 1999. Wakar is pursuing a grant in aid from GCSAA for research dollars for controlling the pest. These grant in aids require some matching funds from the local associations impacted by the research required; hence, the need for the Pocono Turfgrass Association and its surrounding chapters to band together for a common cause.

Which brings me to my final thoughts - We are in "this thing of ours" together for now and also for our future or those who follow us. By using our Association and the allied associations, we can make our profession easier and more enjoyable by participation in meetings, cooperating with each other, sharing ideas, and having respect for each other.

See you in 1999.



AMEN

From the Reverend Pocono Peddler



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