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POCONO TURFGRASS ASSOCIATION

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## CHIPS & PUTTS

### PREPARING FOR TURF DORMANCY (DORMANT FEEDING)

By Dr. Bruce J. Augustin, The Scotts Co.

Late fall is the time of the year to put the finishing touches on northern turf before winter. Cleaning up the leaves and one last mowing are the obvious chores to do before the snow falls. Often forgotten is the very beneficial maintenance practice of late – fall fertilization.

Regularly spaced fertilizer applications throughout the growing season provide the nutritional requirements for a healthy, quality turf. Fertilizer is commonly applied in early fall from late August to mid-September. The turf shows an immediate response to fertilizers applied in the early fall due to the optimum conditions that typically exist for the cool-season turfgrasses.

Late fall fertilization is not a maintenance practice that yields immediate results. It is a step for the future – the spring!

Turf fertilized in the late fall is the first grass to green up in the spring. The late fall fertilization provides a spring green-up without the usual flush of growth. An additional benefit of the late fall fertilization is that the early spring fertilization can be reduced by one half to three fourths pound of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet without adversely effecting turf quality. This is particularly important to those turf professionals who have to mow the properties they fertilize.

Proper timing of the late fall fertilizer application is important. Applications should be made after the grass has stopped producing clippings, but before it has lost its green color.

Typically, these conditions occur in late November to early December when the daytime temperatures stay below 50 degrees Fahrenheit and the ground is not frozen. During this time, the

turfgrass plants are storing sugars from photosynthesis for future use, but not using them for current leaf growth.

Fertilizing too early can lead to problems with winter injury. Turfgrass leaves and stems can become succulent with extra water if turf is fertilized while the plants are still actively producing clippings in the late fall. Plant damage occurs when ice crystals form from excess water inside the turf plant and the crystals pierce the cell walls.

Fertilizing too late on brown, dormant turf is not a practical maintenance practice. Turf does not readily take up nutrients once it has reached this condition. The turf roots become less and less active as the soil reaches the freezing point and hence the turf plant receives very little benefit of fertilizer applications at this time. Also nutrient losses to leaching and runoff can increase since the turf is not intercepting them.

The success of the late fall fertilizer application is due to nitrogen. This has been proven in university tests. Depending on the budget and management program, fertilizers such as urea or other soluble nitrogen sources are perfectly suited for late fall fertilization. Burning and volatilization are of little worry at this time of the year. Rapid uptake is important so that the nutrients are fully utilized prior to dormancy. Slow release nitrogen sources can be used if the turf is growing on sandy soils where the

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#### In this issue.....

- Election Results
- Meeting Results
- One Opinion



## **President's Message.....**

In place of the President's Message, I have been asked to put together a brief financial "State of the Union." As most of you know by now, there was a \$10.00 dues increase approved at last month's elections for superintendents and affiliate members. This increase was necessary to meet the ongoing expenses associated with running this organization. When Scott Schukraft took over the responsibility of secretary/treasurer, our finances were in complete disarray. Scott was able to neatly organize our finances before handing me the responsibility of "balancing" the budget. I am happy to say that with the dues increase, our association is now both organized and fiscally responsible. The preliminary 2000 budget shows a profit of \$325, not a lot of room for error, but manageable. I am committed to not only making sure that we follow this budget, but that we do not ask for another dues increase until every dollar spent has been gone over with a fine tooth comb. If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact me at my office (610-838-0934) or e-mail me (sbrg@ptd.net).

*Tony Grieco, CGCS  
Secretary/Treasurer*

## **From the Editor's Desk.....**

Another year has come and gone – this one punctuated by one on the severest droughts in memory. Then, as to be expected, it was broken by torrential rains that caused severe flooding at various locations. One such course had ten ton bridges lifted off their pilings and washed downstream. Oh, well, another "typical" season the golf course.

Now the growing season is over, it is time to reflect and get ready to reload for the new millennium. Getting prepared involves analyzing the past experiences and what worked and didn't work, and what to do to make corrections.

Hence, the list of "Bear, Buck, Doe, Show." After the hunting season is the time to hit the show circuit and find out what is new on the horizon and how it may fit into your future plans. Also, it is a great time to meet new people and renew old acquaintances and share the trials and tribulations of their season.

Much has been written in other publications about the importance of putting everything in perspective in relation to what is REALLY important in life. Maybe now is the time to reflect and analyze on how much time was spent on the relentless pursuit of perfection in lieu of spending quality time with family and friends.

As I write this, the new bulletin is about the sudden and tragic death of Payne Stewart, who was killed in a plane crash. He was devoted to the game of golf, and I hope he was also devoted to his family, which I am sure he was.

The place of employment will survive, but let's hold on to our REALLY important things in life – your loved ones, family and friends. AMEN.

*Jim MacLaren*



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leaching potential is high. Typically rates of one to two pounds of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet are applied.

Other nutrients like phosphorus and potassium were assumed to be beneficial at this late time of the year, but the cold soil temperatures limited their uptake into the roots and proved of little added value for the following spring. If soil tests indicate the need for phosphorus and potassium, they should be applied in late spring or early fall when the turf is actively growing.

Late fall (dormant) fertilization is a great management practice to provide a high quality turf. Plan ahead for healthy, high quality turf next year!

# Election Results!

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## SEPTEMBER MEETING EAGLE ROCK LODGE

Many thanks to Doug Witcraft and the staff at Eagle Rock. Except for the cold rain, a great time was had by all who attended. The nine holes in existence are a great layout and were in excellent condition. Those who toured the next nine were impressed by its potential. Congratulations, Doug, and GOOD LUCK in your next venture. You can't keep a good man down.

Another Doug, Doug Linde, from Delaware Valley College gave a great presentation on the various ways to suppress runoff and how it should be of concern.

### Golf Winners

#### 1st Flight

1st	Duane Schell Gary Gendimenico
2nd	Jack Patterson Len Predtechenskis
3rd	Doug Linde Tom Wilchak

#### 2nd Flight

1st	Willie McCousland Mike Condur
2nd	Tom Weinert John Bodock
3rd	Bob Cevetello Bob Hovell

#### 3rd Flight

1st	Dennis DeSanctis Matt Brown
2nd	Chip Demmeck Jason Witcraft
3rd	Jim McGall Jim MacLaren

#### Closest to the Pin

#2	Aaron Kramer #8 Jason Barndt
<b>Longest Drive</b>	
	Gene Huelster – 348 yards

### From Gene Huelster.....

We are winding down another year, and what a year it was. As we enter a new millennium, let's keep a positive approach to what is going on within the Pocono Turfgrass Association. We are trying to make it better for all of us. We need your help to continue with the forward progress that has been made already. So please, come up with some ideas for next year's educational schedule, and we will try to accommodate those ideas as best we can. If you are interested in taking a more hands-on approach, volunteer for a committee.

Have a great fall, and we'll see you soon.

Dean Snyder  
President

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## ONE OPINION

(Reprinted from 1997 USA Today  
Submitted by Sankey Brumley)

Because golf is a game that demands focus, Douglas Funkhouser, 39, has a serious handicap. Every time Funkhouser sees a jackrabbit zigzag across the fairway, he's jarred into thinking about all the chemicals the bunny must be ingesting from the greens.

Then he's off on a tangent: Each of the nation's 15,703 golf courses (and still counting) consumes as much water as a city of 6,000; and nearly 10 million acres of the planet are paved with pesticide hungry golf greens and fairways.

Concentration smashed, Funkhouser gathers his clubs and heads home. "I know all the destruction is absurd, but how do you fight the Tiger Woods phenomenon?" ponders the Palm Desert, CA resident. "If you want to compete in business, golf is how you make a lot of contacts."

Funkhouser's conundrum - can you be a golfer and also care about the environment? - is becoming common as more baby boomers get in the swing. According to the National Golf Foundation, boomers account for the bulk of the nation's 24.7 million golfers, with Tigermania winning converts every day.

For years, golfers could get away with the comforting belief that the game was compatible with nature. After all, courses seemed nothing more than big, groomed meadows.

More recently, new boomer-duffers weaned on green politics, have come to see that argument as "greenwash."

"If you are a conservationist and you play golf, there is no way around the fact that you're a bit of a hypocrite," concludes Steve Nagle, a golfer who works to protect the dwindling bighorn sheep in Palm Springs, CA, where battles sizzle over courses planned in the species' canyon habitat.

Others argue that turning golf into an environmental issue is creating a bogeyman that doesn't exist.

In Carmel, CA, for instance, environmentalists are fighting Canada Woods North, a golf course and resort proposed by resident Clint Eastwood. "(Golf courses) make an easy target," responds Michael Hurdson, a golf course architect and consultant, and environmental plant physiologist. "Years ago they may have had more adverse impacts, but that is old news. A lot could actually be said that a golf course could improve a habitat."

But others see menace beneath the manicured fairways. "A golf course looks like a wild place," says David Dilworth, a 44-year old golfer who opposes another Carmel course, slated to be built on an ancient Monterey pine forest. "But if you look closer, you realize it's more like a big green billiard table. Totally manufactured."

Such realizations have given rise to the Global anti-Golf Movement, a loose-knit outfit that battles environmental and cultural ravages caused by golf course development world-

wide. In Japan, where the group began, whole villages have been obliterated to make way for new courses. Founder Gen Morita is a classic conflicted boomer. Once an avid golfer, Morita retired his clubs out of concern for the harm caused by golf course development.

Quitting the game altogether is certainly one response to the golf vs. the environment conundrum. Not so long ago, such a radical solution would have appealed to boomers who rallied around the "No Compromise" ethic of groups like Earth First!

But now that that baby boomers are older, they have allowed that compromise might not be such a bad thing. "The normal course in midlife is for people to moderate," says David Wolf, a consultant who specializes in the consumer habits of boomers. "There is more give-and-take in the mature mind."

Recognizing boomers' zest for conciliation, the USGA is researching strains of turf that requires less water and fewer pesticides than the emerald carpets displayed in televised golf matches.

"Golfers are going to have to accept more brown turf, accept less than perfection," says Kimberly Erusha, a director of education for the USGA.

And the Sierra Club is encouraging a score card system in which golf courses would make public their management habits, then be rated on their efforts to protect the environment.

The organization also advocates that new courses be restricted to previously degraded sites such as quarries, landfills and mines, says Mark Massara, director of the Sierra Club's California Coastal Program.

Boomers seem to be most taken with solutions that let them have their golf and be good Earth stewards, too.

In Palm Springs, self-described "baby boomer hacker" Nagle says he will continue to play golf, but boycott courses that encroach on areas where bighorn sheep roam. "I just can't see the need to invade the habitat of a threatened species so I can chase a white ball around."



**Diary of a Greenskeeper****SUNDAY**

4:00 A.M.: Returned pro's phone call from last night. Boy, what a mouth! Can't take a joke. Greensmower didn't show up until I had mowed five greens. I would have fired him, but I would have had to finish the greens myself. Club manager called, asked us to remove the fence along the front lawn so his party could park on the grass. A discussion ensued. Played nine holes with pool manager. He likes bingle, bangle, bongle. It takes him three to get on a par three, but he gets his bingle. Hate that game. Went home. Club manager called, said we forgot to take down the fence. Told him we didn't forget! House chairman called. Wife and I discussed, again, an unlisted phone number. Napped on hammock. Can't wait for Monday.

**OCTOBER MEETING  
BETHLEHEM GOLF CLUB**

Thank you, Tom Wilchak and the staff at Bethlehem Golf Club for hosting our October Meeting. The weather turned out lovely for an autumn day and the course played, as usual, in its impeccable condition. It is hard to believe the amount of grass on the course for the amount of play they receive during the year, not to mention the drought. Good job, Tom! The mayor should give you the keys to the city.

**GOLF WINNERS**  
Two Man Scramble
**1st Place with a 68**

Gary Phillips  
Chris Phillips

**2nd Place with a 69**

Dan Kelleher  
Marty Kelleher

**3rd Place with a 73**

Tony Grieco, CGCS  
Kelly Kressler

**Closest to the Pin**

#4 Dan Kelleher	#14 John Bodock
#8 Gary Phillips	#6 Tony Grieco, CGCS



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*A message from your golf course superintendent and GCSAA*



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 King of Prussia, PA

November 9 – 11, 1999  
 New York State Turf & Grounds Exposition  
 Syracuse, NY

January 25 – 26, 2000  
 Virginia Turf & Landscape Show  
 Richmond, VA

November 15 – 18, 1999  
 West Virginia Turf Conference & Trade Show  
 Morgantown, WV

January 27, 2000  
 NE PA Turf School & Trade Show  
 Wilkes-Barre, PA

December 7 – 9, 1999  
 New Jersey Expo  
 Atlantic City, NJ

February 9 – 11, 2000  
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## POCONO ROUNDUP

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE POCONO  
TURFGRASS ASSOCIATION

### BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENT

Congratulations to **Eric and Becky Reed** on the birth of their daughter, Megan.

### NIKE TOURNAMENT COMING TO GLENMAURA NATIONAL G.C.

Congratulations and Good Luck to **Andy Jubinski, Jeff Koch**, and the crew at Glenmaura National on being selected as the future site for the NIKE Tournament in June 2000. More on this later!

### CONDOLENCES

Our sincere condolences go out to Parker Biery and his family on the death of his wife Margaret.



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POSTAGE

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED.

### CONGRATULATIONS!

To **TODD MOYER** (Lake Naomi/Timber Trails)  
Winner of the DELTA GUARD VOLKSWAGON BEETLE

Below is Todd Moyer accepting the keys to the Volkswagen Beetle he won in the drawing for Delta Guard, the new insecticide by AGREVO.

Presenting the keys to Todd is Shaun Barry, our AGREVO representative.

