



CHIPS & PUTTS

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Trees and Turf



Woody plants and turfgrasses are both critical components of design plans for homes, offices and parks. Trees and turf offer distinct personal, functional, and environmental benefits. Personal preferences for color, fragrance and form should complement the functional properties of size, shape, density, and placement of plant material.

We've all seen thinning grass under large shade trees; large surface tree roots that cause safety hazards and mowing obstacles; young trees that don't seem to grow; and tree trunks badly damaged by lawn mowers or string trimmers. All of these undesirable affects can be caused by trees and turf growing too closely together.

Turfgrasses provide many of the same environmental benefits as trees. They

- ♦ change carbon dioxide into the oxygen we breathe
- ♦ cool the air by changing water into water vapor
- ♦ stabilize dust
- ♦ entrap air polluting gases
- ♦ control erosion.

Turfgrasses, in addition to being environmentally beneficial, are attractive in formal and informal designs. There are many advantages to combining trees and turf in the landscape.

Selection

When trees and turf are used in the same areas, extra attention must be given to plant material selection in addition to the usual hardiness, climatic and soil needs. An effort should be made to make the trees and lawn compatible. Grass is generally a sun-loving plant. Most grass species will not grow well in areas that get less than 50 percent open sunlight; however, new varieties with improved shade tolerance are being introduced. Consult your garden center specialist or sod producer for recommendations of shade-tolerant grasses for your area.

In areas where the lawn is the primary design feature, select woody plants that do the least damage to grass growth and maintenance. The woody plants should be small, have an open canopy (trees that allow sunlight to penetrate to the ground) or have a high canopy. Select trees that do not root near the soil surface; surface rooting is most serious where a shallow topsoil is present. Remember, tree

roots get larger as the tree gets older.

Competition

Trees, shrubs, ground covers and lawn grasses all require sunlight, water and rooting space for growth. Each plant in the landscape competes with the neighboring plant regardless of type or species. Some even produce chemicals that are exuded from roots to restrict growth of nearby plants. For each plant to do well, it must have adequate space. Since perennial woody plants increase in size each year, they require additional space over time. The landscape design should provide adequate space for these plants to mature.

While shade is the biggest, most obvious problem trees create for turf growth, a tree's roots also contribute to poor turf performance. Contrary to general thinking, most tree roots are in the top two feet of soil. More importantly, the majority of fine, water absorbing roots are in the top six inches of soil. Grass roots ordinarily occupy a much greater percentage of the soil volume than tree roots and out-compete them for water and nutrients, especially around young trees. However, grass root density is often much lower in areas where trees were established first. In these situations, tree roots compete much better for water and nutrients and prevent or reduce the success of establishing new turf.

Competition is especially important when transplanting, seeding or sodding. The newest plant in the area must be given special treatment and must receive adequate water, nutrients and sunlight. This frequently means that competing sod should be removed from around transplanted trees and shrubs, or that some of the lower branches should be removed from existing trees above a newly sodded lawn. In any

(Continued on page 3)

In this issue.....

- ♦ A buy.com "Thank You"
- ♦ June Profile: Duane Schell
- ♦ May Meeting Results
- ♦ How Leaders Listen & Converse



President's Message.....

I hope all is well in your neck of the woods. First of all, I'd like to welcome our newest board member Duane Schell. Duane volunteered his time and energy to fill one of the two positions we have open until October. Thanks, Duane!

It was really refreshing to see the many volunteers at Glenmaura helping out for the Buy.com Tournament (see below). It really goes to show you what type of camaraderie we have as an association. And for one, I'm proud to say I'm a member.

In closing for this month, I have to take the blame for the meeting notice (Blue Ridge Trail) in a more timely fashion. I'm sorry, and we will try to do better on that.

Thanks, Gene

Member's Forum

Gene,

The members of the Pocono Turfgrass Association really helped out big time for the tournament. Each golf course listed had superintendents, employees and friends help out with the event. Please express sincere thanks and appreciation to everyone who volunteered with time and equipment. The only way an event like this is successful is because of the help provided by others. Again thanks to everyone from Glenmaura National Golf Club, my staff and myself.

Andy Jubinski, Superintendent; Glenmaura National GC

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Blue Ridge Trail C.C.
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(Continued from page 1)

case, DO NOT do any deep filling around trees. Mulching is an alternative to turf around trees and its use eliminates potential competition. A 2- to 4-inch layer of wood chips, bark or other organic material over the soil, under the drip line is recommended because it:

- ◆ helps to retain soil moisture
- ◆ helps to reduce weeds and controls grass
- ◆ increases soil fertility when mulch decomposes
- ◆ improves appearance
- ◆ protects the trunk from injuries caused by mowing equipment and trimmers that often result in serious tree damage or death
- ◆ improves soil structure (better aeration, temperature and moisture conditions).

Maintenance Practices

Maintenance practices for trees and turf are different, and treatment of one can unintentionally damage the other. Because tree and grass roots exist together in the upper 6 to 8 inches of the topsoil, treatment of one may damage the other. Fertilizer applied to one plant will also be absorbed by the roots of a nearby plant. Normally this is good, but excessive fertilization of either trees or turf can result in tree-crown or grass-blade growth greater than that desired.

Many herbicides or weed killers that are used in turf can cause severe damage to trees when misapplied. This can occur on windy days, causing the drift to fall on non-target plants or on hot days when the herbicide may vaporize and diffuse into the air. While most herbicides do not kill free roots, some, such as soil sterilants and a few others, do. Herbicides that can cause tree damage have statements on their labels warning against using the product near trees.

Watering of lawns is beneficial to trees if the watering is done correctly. Trees need the equivalent of one inch of rain every seven to ten days. Frequent, shallow watering does not properly meet the needs of either trees or turf and can be harmful to both.

Turf growing under or near trees should be mowed at the top of its recommended mowing height. Mowing off no more than one-third of the grass blade's height and letting the clippings remain on the lawn will do much to ensure a healthy and vigorous lawn. In an ideal situation, tree and turf maintenance would be handled by the same individual in order to maximize the benefits of all maintenance practices.

Special Situations

- ◆ Placing fill dirt around existing trees. Fill dirt is frequently added around existing mature trees so that a level or more visually desirable lawn can be established. Fill dirt changes the ratio of oxygen to carbon dioxide around free roots and the roots may die. Consult a tree care expert before adding fill or constructing soil wells around tree trunks.
- ◆ Establishing lawns around existing trees. Preparation of a seedbed for lawns requires disruption of the upper 4 to 6 inches of topsoil. This soil contains the feeder roots of trees. Damage to tree roots often results in declining tree tops.
- ◆ Creating free root buffers with turf. A sufficiently wide strip of turfgrass between trees and hard surfaces such as building foundations, sidewalks and roads can help to reduce the potential damage caused by tree roots as well as provide an area where water and nutrients can soak into the soil and be beneficial to both turf and trees.
- ◆ Lawn watering in arid sites. Homes are sometimes built in woodlots. In the West, this is especially damaging when dryland trees encounter watering required to maintain grass. Excess water at the tree trunk encourages growth of fungi that can kill trees.

Thin turfgrass growing around trunk-scarred, weak trees need not be a common sight in the landscape. With proper preplanning, proper plant selection and placement, and reasonable management, the many and varied benefits of both trees and turf can be readily achieved.



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Bob Eichert

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June Meeting Superintendent Profile ...

Duane Schell - Blue Ridge Trail Golf Club

Blue Ridge Trail is located in Mountain Top, Pennsylvania twenty miles north of Hazleton and fifteen miles south of the Wilkes-Barre / Scranton area of Pennsylvania. Nine holes of the golf course were established in 1992 and the last nine holes were completed in 1997. The course was designed by Alt Clark & Associates and features a wide variety of scenic views and a great golfing experience.

The golf course measures 6,633 yards from the back tees and 6,144 yards from the forward tees. Each hole is carved through the woods and sports one hundred acres of maintained turf. Native areas (wetlands) exist on most holes of the course that add to the layout and keep the golfer honest by promoting accuracy with their golf shots. Turfgrass selections on the course include a mix of ryegrass & bluegrass fairways, ryegrass tees, bentgrass greens, and a blend of ryegrass, bluegrass, & fescue roughs.

Golf Course Superintendent; Duane Schell is assisted in the maintenance of this piece of property by three full-time employees and twelve seasonal employees. His general work philosophy allows employees to "think for them selves" and he stresses, "treating employees with respect." He expects everyone on his staff to be able to fulfill any duty on the course and promotes personal satisfaction with their job. The ultimate goal of benefiting the course is the basic idea he instills in each individual.

Mr. Schell has been the Superintendent at Blue Ridge Trail for the last four seasons and has recently become a Class A Member of the Superintendents Association and is planning on working towards his certification in the near future. Duane is accustomed to hard work and is no stranger to the industry. He began working at the Sugar Loaf Golf Club at the age of thirteen and spent ten years learning the basics of the golf course management position. With a B.S. from Bloomsburg University in Business Administration and a certificate from the Two-Year Technical Program from Penn State in Turfgrass Management, Duane is well educated in handling all aspects concerning this profession. He interned for Terry Laurent, CGCS and Bob Stiffler at the Saucon Valley courses. Duane is quoted as saying, "He was very fortunate to have an internship that granted the opportunity for an excellent learning experience." He spent most of his time on the Weyhill Course but also spent some time working on the Grace Course.

When not working on the golf course, Duane enjoys spending time with his three-year old daughter, Kyra, and his wife of four years, Mary. His other leisure time is usually spent riding his motorcycle or playing golf.

by — Jeff Koch

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Sell Yourself and Reduce the Competition

By: Marvin Walberg

My problem is that I just turned 52 and I'm out of work. My experience is in commercial sales. I recently completed an interview and the employer said that I had just what he was looking for: sales and work experience and maturity. You can imagine my surprise when he said, "I wish I could find someone in his or her early twenties with your experience." He almost got my fist in his face! He was totally sincere in his belief that there was someone in their early twenties with all my years of experience and maturity. How can I overcome blatant age discrimination? How can I convince any employer that my age and experience is an asset, not a liability?

R.B. (New Brunswick, Canada)

I think I'd laugh in that employer's face before putting my fist there, but it is incredible that any employer would say something like that—much less believe it—particularly since he manages a sales organization. He must understand the bottom line advantage of experience and maturity is prospecting, making the presentation, and closing the sale.

You're a seasoned salesperson. Now, consider yourself the product and develop a sales plan. First of all, who ever said 52 is old? Even if you work only until the past standard for retirement (65), you have 13 more years to go—a veritable career time period. Most employers would be thrilled if a key employee lasted five or six years!

Regardless of how a sales person is compensated, the good ones work like they're on straight commission. They earn what they make, and the more they earn, the more the employer profits. If an employer has to nurture and train a 22-year old, there's a cost factor involved until that person is up and running. Not so with you. You have contacts, experience, and maturity. You have been nurtured and trained in your field. You're ready to run and sell. Believe in your product and prove your sales ability. Sell a prospective employer like a straight commission salesperson would. Sell your strengths. It's a win-win situation for you and your next employer.

I promised some help in reducing competition in your job search and following through with the selling process. We want to reduce the number of people competing with you for any job, and we want you to know where you stand even when the employer doesn't let you know. Consider these points:

- ◆ It's expected that you'll follow up on advertised job openings, but don't make this approach your main activity.
- ◆ Know what you want to do—and are prepared to do—for your next employer. You should be able to explain it in 25 words or less to anyone in any industry.
- ◆ Network with everyone you know and everyone you meet. Get out and advertise what you want in your next job.
- ◆ Get to know the reference librarian in the career section of your public library. He or she can help you research companies that use (and probably need) people who do what you do.
- ◆ Get the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of company officials who make hiring decisions or may be able to influence the human resources department.
- ◆ Remember: You don't need an invitation to contact any employer. And, if you do the things that that employer needs, you may have eliminated all other competition for that job! (Editor's Note: Ethical !?)
- ◆ Make contact with employers and ask for the interview, don't just hope for one. Say, "I'd like to meet you in person and discuss how we can help each other. Would Tuesday morning about 10 work for you, or would Wednesday afternoon be better?" Then wait patiently for an answer. A good salesperson knows when to stop talking!
- ◆ When you get interviews, know the name and address of your interviewer and don't leave empty-handed. Ask what step comes next— and when.
- ◆ Follow up on every interview, good or bad, with a short thank-you note mailed or hand-delivered within 24 hours. If you want the job, say so in the note. Don't assume anything.
- ◆ If you don't hear from an employer in a few days, make a call, send email, or drop a note in the mail.
- ◆ You should stay in touch and keep control. Good selling!

Marvin Walberg works a job search/sales trainer and writes the weekly column "Getting Hired" for newspapers across the country. Your comments are welcome. Send job search questions and success stories to mwalberg@bellsouth.net. Please be sure to include your name and location.



Received by the PTGA Office:

Dennis E. DeSanctis
86 Bergen Mills Road
Monroe Twp., NJ 08831

May 9, 2001

Gene Huelster
Pocono Turfgrass Association
R.R. 1, Box 219
Harding, PA 18643

Dear Mr. Gene Huelster and the PTGA membership,

Recently I was awarded one of your \$500 scholarships and I want to express my sincere appreciation and gratitude for the financial support you have given me. The scholarship will greatly assist me as I attempt to pay back my student loan. This summer I will be doing an internship with Aventis Environmental Science and possibly entering a graduate school program in the fall. Throughout my career I will support the PTGA in appreciation for what you have done for me. Thank you...

Sincerely,


Dennis E. DeSanctis

Winners of the May Meeting: Valley CC (Individual Stableford Scoring)

First Flight: Low Net 0-15

- 1st - Tom Wienert 64 points
2nd - Ron Garrison 51 points

Second Flight: Low Net 15+

- 1st - Nick Curry
2nd - Rick Pany

Closest to the Pin

- #9 - Tom Wienert

Longest Drive

- #10 - Tom Wilchik



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How Leaders Listen and Converse Masterfully




"The only factor becoming scarce in a world of abundance is human attention."
- Kevin Kelly, Wired

While listening on the telephone or in person, make every effort to:


- ◆ Listen with a pleasant facial expression. This shows sincere interest in the person with whom you are communicating. Give your listener(s) your undivided attention. Never make a person asking you a question feel as if he/she is bothering you. Avoid frowning, squinting your eyes, scoffing, and any other semblance of annoyance or frustration.
- ◆ Ignore distractions and focus only on your conversation partner(s).
- ◆ Allow others to express their *complete* thoughts before you respond. To achieve this, count to two before responding after your conversation partner has stopped speaking.
- ◆ Guard against presuming that you already know what others *mean* or how they *feel*.
- ◆ Ask questions to ensure your understanding of others' needs.
- ◆ Restate your understanding of your communication partner's needs or concerns and state when you will address and resolve them. Use examples to clarify and support your communication efforts.
- ◆ Remain calm even when someone misunderstands you (you may think that you were clear but that may not be your listener's perception) or disagrees with you.
- ◆ Make eye contact rather than wristwatch and/or wall clock contact! By glancing frequently at your wristwatch or the wall clock, you will be perceived as bored, distracted, or rushed.

"Learn to listen. Opportunity knocks very softly."
- H. Jackson Brown, Jr.

— Adapted from: Lisa Micunek's, *Enhancing the Image of the Golf Course Superintendent and Golf Industry Professionals Part I*. (The author is a GCSAA seminar instructor and the president of Accent on Success, a firm specializing in etiquette & protocol.)




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POCONO ROUNDUP

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE POCONO
TURFGRASS ASSOCIATION

PTGA would like to welcome the following New Members

Joe Sellers, Premier Turf Solutions

David Mack, Assistant Superintendent; Glen Oak CC.

Dave Mathers passed away Friday, 6/15. He was our factory representative for Jacobsen for MANY years. Also, of course a PTGA Member. He retired quite awhile ago. He lived in Trucksville. No set arrangement were available as of Sat. 6/16.

PTGA Awards 2nd Scholarship:



Congratulations to Dan Tanto, for receiving the 2001 Patterson scholarship award. Dan was awarded the scholarship at the May meeting, which was held at his home turf, Valley C.C. Eric and Dan did a great job preparing the course for the event. The food was also exceptional. Overall, it was a great day. Our president, Gene Huelster, was there to present the award.

To give you a brief background of Dan, he is a Penn State graduate of the two-year turf program. Again, he is the assistant superintendent to Eric Reed at Valley Country Club. Dan has been in the business for two decades. As an irrigation contractor Dan has done work for Merion, Augusta and a host of other top-notch courses in the U.S. Dan also participated in the preparation for the 1994 Men's U.S. Open and 2000 Men's U.S. Amateur at Baltusrol. Good Job Dan!



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c/o MELINDA WISNOSKY
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POSTAGE

NAME & ADDRESS

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED.