

CHIPS & PUTTS

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Panorama Golf Course

Darrin Larkin, Golf Course Superintendent

July's meeting takes us to the Northern Tier of Pennsylvania. Panorama Golf Course is located just outside of Forest City in Susquehanna County. Panorama is an 18 hole daily fee course that plays 7,256 yards from the tips. Bill Griffiths, a local pro, laid out the course in 1963 on a former dairy farm that was owned by Paul Vauter. Panorama opened the following year and is still owned by the Vauter family. The clubhouse is part of the original barn, and the former milk house is currently being used for reel and bedknife sharpening, as well as fertilizer and pesticide storage. The many pine trees that you will see there were planted by Paul and his son Dick, the current owner. A staff of four full time and two part time employees assist Darrin in maintaining the 150 acre layout.

Darrin Larkin has been the superintendent since 1997, after completing the two-year program at Penn State under George Hamilton. While at PSU, Darrin interned at Buck Hill Falls Golf Course. Darrin also serves as the current president of the Pocono Turfgrass Association, as well as sitting on the Board of the Pennsylvania Golf Course Superintendents Association.

Since our last meeting at Panorama, there have been some changes. Cart paths have been put in, over 250 poplar trees have been removed, and many bunkers have been renovated. Bunker renovation is still an ongoing project, with more work to be done in the fall. Other future projects include additional tee boxes for the seniors and a retaining wall along the creek on #11. Panorama is well known for its length, but its most memorable hole is #15. Hole #15 is a dogleg right with a tee shot over a pond to a small landing area. From there, the green is protected by trees to the right and behind the green and an elevated bunker to the left. This hole was recently highlighted by WNEP as one of its "Elite 18" golf holes. With only two par 3's and two par 5's, you'll be challenged by some very long par 4's.



President's Message.....

I would like to thank John Hollick for hosting the June meeting at both Three Ponds Golf Club and Knoebel's Amusement Resort. I don't think we have had the opportunity to have a monthly meeting and a family day wrapped up in one convenient event. This was a joint meeting with the Keystone, but it might be a venue where all of Pennsylvania's seven chapters can have a joint meeting. Everyone that went thoroughly enjoyed the day. Whether this can become an annual event or one that we schedule every few years remains to be seen, but I'm sure we'll be going back soon.

If anyone would like to contribute to *Chips and Putts*, please contact Melinda at the PTGA office. Writing an article yourself or passing one on that you feel our members will benefit from would be greatly appreciated.

Darrin Larkin



Panorama Country Club, Hole #12



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Developing and Maintaining Native Areas at Edgewood Country Club

By Paul E. Dotti, Class A member, Superintendent
Edgewood Country Club, Rivervale, NJ

PART I

Not all golf courses were historically designed or constructed with native or natural landscape areas, like many courses are today. The idea of native landscapes can be a challenging proposition for superintendents, who manage courses that were built with the sole emphasis on "areas of play". These native areas were originally created for several important reasons:



- The first reason, which probably was the main selling point, was the reduction in labor, fuel, water, pesticides and fertilizers by reducing the maintenance in these areas, which would be reflected in our budgets.
- The second reason was to preserve or enhance the wildlife on or around our golf courses.
- The final reason was to add contrast or challenge to the golf course by having bronze fescue or blue-stem areas surrounding manicured turfgrass.



The challenge includes, but is not limited to, designing new areas, creating layouts, identifying maintenance issues, securing implementation costs, dealing with golfers' expectations, and addressing complaints.

At Edgewood Country Club, there are 27 holes developed within a location that would probably be acceptable for 18 good holes. We started off slow with one area and converted it to wildflowers and established another area as a low maintenance area, where no seed was added, and we just let it grow to see what happened. Many of our rough areas were not irrigated, so this was an easy transition for us. The first year the members raved about the wildflowers.

Continued on Page 4

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We decided to naturalize as many areas as possible during the second year. Approximately 30 acres later, the golf course had a totally different look. We had at least 10 areas or holes that had wildflowers and an additional 8 areas that were simply native areas.



Wildflowers were visible from every part of the golf course and large natural areas were almost on every other hole. We became a Certified Audubon Sanctuary with Audubon International shortly after developing these areas and most members accepted the environmental stance we were taking.

Our savings in labor, fuel, fertilizers, water and pesticides totaled close to \$10,000 per year. Wildlife began to increase with more hawks and foxes looking for prey in these newly created areas. Songbird populations were diversified as new blue bird boxes, purple martin houses and wildflower areas offered nesting and food sources.

In my experience, the original perception from our members was that we were not maintaining the golf course or we were forgetting to mow certain areas. The golf course went from being maintained from tree line to tree line, to now having these areas that were very natural in appearance. Once these areas matured, especially wildflower areas, the complaints turned to compliments. We rode these waves of compliments for a good year or two before some complaints began surfacing.

Suddenly, the wildflower areas did not have that full season of blooming flowers after the annuals died back the year before and the perennials were only flowering in mid summer. The native areas were beginning to show more green vegetation in the form of weeds, which stuck out like sore thumbs. Then, the complaints of lost golf balls and slow play came about and now the shift was from full acceptance of this program to justifying why we were doing it....again.



Part II to follow in July!



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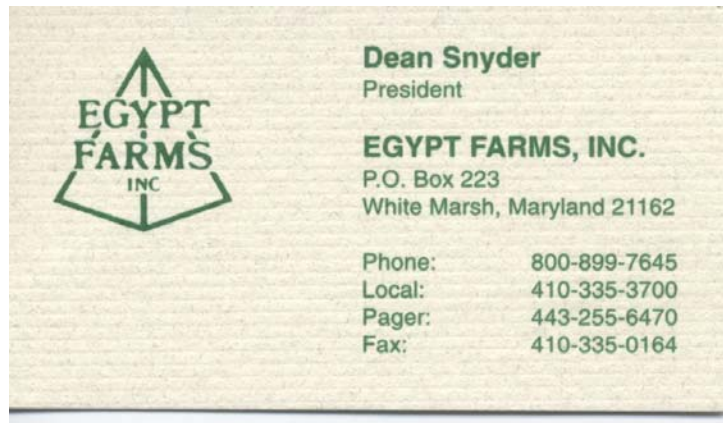
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A dime has 118 ridges around the edge.
A cat has 32 muscles in each ear.
A crocodile cannot stick out its tongue.
Al Capone's business card said he was a used furniture dealer.
A dragonfly has a life span of 24 hours.
All 50 states are listed across the top of the Lincoln Memorial on the back of the \$5 bill.
A goldfish has a memory span of three seconds.
A "jiffy" is an actual unit of time for 1/100th of a second.
A shark is the only fish that can blink with both eyes.
A snail can sleep for three years.
Almonds are members of the peach family.
An ostrich's eye is bigger than its brain.

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POCONO ROUNDUP

FAMILY EVENTS



The recently held Family Fun Night with the Yankees was a great success. The PTGA would like to thank Matt Brown and Tom Drayer of Turf Equipment and Supply for sponsoring the event.

Another great family get together -Knoebels Three Ponds- not only a joint meeting with Keystone, but a chance to bring out the family and enjoy some time together in the park.

PTGA MEETING SCHEDULE

April 30	Fox Hill Country Club
May 22	Sugarloaf
June 2	Three Ponds Golf Club
July 15	Panorama Golf Course
August 11	Elmhurst Country Club
September 29	Frosty Valley CC
October 13	Wyoming Valley CC

CONDOLENCES

Our deepest condolences go out to the family of John Farrell who passed away on Monday, June 23, 2008.

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