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THE CONN. CLIPPINGS

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FEBRUARY 1979

Volume 12, No. 1

GCSAA In Atlanta — A Huge Success

Approximately 40 members of CAGCS were among the 6,500 registrants who attended the just concluded GCSAA Conference and Show held in Atlanta, Georgia. More than 150 hours of educational sessions were offered with such topics as water usage, turf management, fertilization, sand topdressing, conflict management, and landscaping. Speakers included USGA Green Section personnel, university professors, environmentalists, management consultants, and other turf management specialists.

The week's events began with the presentation of the GCSAA Distinguished Service Award to Dr. C. Reed Funk of Rutgers University for his world renown work in plant breeding. Also presented at the opening session was the Leo Fesser Award to Dan Jones, CGCS, for his article which appeared in the July issue of *The Golf Superintendent*. The highlight of the opening session was provided by Dr. George H. Labovitz of Boston University School of Management whose talk, "Managing for Productivity" excited all who listened. "The classical model, 'Shut up and do what I tell you,' just doesn't cut it anymore", he said. "Management today is burdened with great expectations. People are demanding more of us as managers than ever before." The successful manager of today must motivate workers by delegating responsibility and then allowing workers the freedom to plan how they will execute their assigned tasks.

A multi-million dollar show of supplies and equipment covering 4.5 acres of floor space greeted attendees on Tuesday of conference week. For three days this show offered exhibits of the latest in equipment and supplies for the green industry. Innovations for 1979 included solid state irrigation controllers, small horsepower diesel engines, a totally new fungicide, as well as many other tools intended to make our industry more efficient.

(Continued on page 2)

Red Pines Destroyed By Insects

By Ann Bove

About a third of the state has been infested with red pine scale, caused by an insect that apparently originated in Connecticut, according to George Stephens, a forester with the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station in New Haven.

Stephens said the insects called *matsucoccus resinosa*, first was noticed in Easton in 1946. "It has never been described anywhere else in the world," he said.

There is a theory that the insect may have been brought to the state on a plant from the 1938 World's Fair in New York.

It takes about eight to ten years for a red pine to be destroyed by the scale. The insects hide under the bark, sucking liquid from the branches until they die. They don't seem to attack the main trunk of the tree, Stephens said.

"It is very difficult to control. Spraying is not very successful because the insect is under the tree bark," Stephens said, and the outward signs of the disease are not obvious.

The only successful way to control the disease is to cut down infested trees, but that decision lies with property owners, he said. Red pines account for about 15 percent of the soft wood forest in the state.

The scale is spreading one to three miles per year to the north and east sections of the state and in New York, east of the Hudson River. A small outbreak has been reported in western New Jersey. In Connecticut, it has been reported in New Haven county, as far north as Burlington and as far east as Rocky Neck State Park.

"I'm afraid no place in Connecticut will be spared," Stephens said. "Only maybe the colder areas near Litchfield." He said although the insect can endure cold temperatures, it usually does not live in extremely cold areas.

The red pine is planted near reservoirs, he

(Continued on page 2)

Avoid The Temptation Of Sand Topdressing

John R. Hall, III
Extension Specialist, Turf

Editors Note: In past issues articles have been included regarding sand topdressing. The following is presented as an alternate view.

Many golf course superintendents are observing with great interest the experimental practice of frequent sand topdressing of golf greens. The cheaper cost of straight sand topdressing is certainly tempting when compared with some of our more commonly used topdressing materials. The choice of a topdressing mixture is no less important to the quality of a putting green than the choice of soil mixtures for new green construction. Bad decisions in either instance can lead to golf greens which are costly to manage at best or impossible to keep alive in the summer, at worst. The most expensively constructed greens, utilizing mixes specified by laboratory tests can be ruined by the improper choice of topdressing material.

Topdressing of bentgrass greens has as its primary function the "truing" of greens by stabilizing the puffy thatch layer that normally develops in a bentgrass turf. It has come to be realized that topdressing also encourages stolon rooting aids, in thatch decomposition, stimulates new shoot growth, provides micro-organisms antagonistic to parasitic fungi and provides nutrients to the turf. In winter overseeding of bermuda it serves to improve seed-soil contact and enhance germination. In vegetative establishment with stolons or sprigs, it aids in rooting. In northern climates topdressing is utilized to protect against winter dessication. In situations where the existing greens soil is inadequate, frequent, heavy topdressing is utilized to actually "rebuild" or modify the existing golf green soil.

John Madison and William B. Davis of

(Continued on page 3)

Connecticut Association Of Golf Course Superintendents

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Home 203-261-0526

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The object of this association is to encourage increased knowledge of golf course management and greater professionalism through education, research, exchange of practical experience and the well being of each individual member.

The CONN. CLIPPINGS is an official publication of the Connecticut Association of Golf Course Superintendents, Inc.
Stephen G. Cadenelli, *Editor*
127 Country Club Road
New Canaan, CT 06840

Red Pines (continued from page 1)

said, where one doesn't want leaves falling into the water supply. The wood from red pine often is used for log cabins. Stephens said he has been researching the disease for about four years.

CREDIT:
Hartford Courant

Lost & Found

Found in Connecticut Suite
at Peach Tree Hotel
London Fog Raincoat Size 38
Contact Bob Chalifour
445-6912

Note To Newsletter Editors

The Members of CAGCS and myself are pleased to send you copies of our Newsletter. However, if you do not wish to receive it and return a copy of your newsletter, please let me know.

Thank you,
Steve Cadenelli, Editor

GCSAA In Atlanta (continued from page 1)

The annual election saw Charles H. Tadge, CGCS, of South Euclid, Ohio chosen as GCSAA President for 1979. The Vice-President for the new year is Melvin B. Lucas, Jr., CGCS, of Long Island, New York. Directors elected included Michael Bavier, CGCS, of Illinois and Edward Dembnicki, CGCS, of South Carolina. Two bylaw changes of a minor nature were also approved.

Newsletter Editor Awards went to John Chaney of the Southern Arizona GCSA, Dave Fearis of the Central Illinois GCSA, and Ray Gerber of the Midwest Association of GCS.

Ironically, a severe ice storm struck northern Georgia during conference week. This fact was most noticed by those superintendents who participated in the golf course tour, the final event of the week. Many thousands of manhours will be needed to clear debris from this storm. Many, many pine trees were severely damaged. Highlighting the tour was a visit to the Atlanta Athletic Club, host club for the 1976 U.S. OPEN and home club of the late Bob Jones. This club represents the great tradition of the game of golf as it should be.

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Future Happenings

University of Massachusetts
Fine Turf Conference and Show
February 27, 28 and March 1, 1979
Springfield Civic Center
Springfield, Mass.

CAGCS Monthly Meeting (Luncheon)
Hawthorne Inn, Berlin, CT
March 13, 1979

Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station OPEN HOUSE "Plant Science in the Spring". Program starts at 1:15 p.m. Talks scheduled include; "Green Grass with Less Work", "From Alexander to Zoar: A Report on Lakes" and "The Ticks Around Us". Laboratory tours are also scheduled. Talks will be held in the Donald F. Jones Auditorium at the Experiment Station. There is no charge for admission.

Many Thanks

The following contributed towards the "Baskets of Cheer" that were given at the Christmas Party. Their generosity is very much appreciated.

Bob Lippman	Westchester Turf Supply
Bill Somers	Somers Turf Supply
Bob Kennedy	Hart Seed Co.
Steve Butler	Larchmont Irrigation
John Grant	Old Fox Chemical Co.
Curt Stimson	The Magovern Co.
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Dick Smith	I&E Supply
Tom Porter	Alpine Tree Care
John Callahan	Tom Irwin Co.
Ed Sanson	Cloro-Spray
Al Arison	O.M. Scott

From The S&R Committee

For its donation to Cornell University, the Committee has received from Dr. Richard Smiley two reports:

1. Fusarium Blight: A Research Progress Report
2. Fungicide Effects on Non-target Processes in Turfgrasses

Any member who would like a copy of these reprints may have one by contacting any member of the S&R Committee.

The Committee has received a special "thank you" from the MGCSA for its donation to the Hyperode Fund.

The final Research Report is being finalized and will be made available to membership when received.

S&R Committee

Sand Topdressing (continued from page 1)

the University of California have conducted topdressing research utilizing sand materials common to the west coast and produced desirable results. The University of California guidelines suggest utilizing sand particles between 0.25 and 1.0 mm in diameter and using 1/9 cubic yard of topdressing per 1000 sq. ft. of green (about 1/30" thick) at each topdressing (1). Topdressing frequency is dependent upon the growth rate of the bentgrass, but for calculation purposes, three week intervals between topdressings appear to be normal in their region. Pesticides, nutrients and bentgrass seed are added to the topdressing as pressures dictate. The system is apparently working well under California's environmental conditions.

There are several areas of concern that come to mind when one contemplates a change in topdressing mixtures from the traditional sand-soil-peat or weblite-soil-peat to straight sand. Some of the more obvious questions arise from our current observation of sand-peat greens and from what we know to be the characteristics of sand as a growing medium. We must assume that the end result of long term use of the light, frequent sand topdressing is a bentgrass green growing in a layer of sand. Straight sand or sand-peat mixtures have been noted to exhibit the following characteristics:

- 1) excessive water infiltration
- 2) excessive nutrient leaching
- 3) lower microbial activity
- 4) hydrophobic drying
- 5) lack of moisture reservoir
- 6) susceptibility to layering

Excessive water infiltration - The idea of improving water infiltration rates with sand topdressing is valid but one must ask where is the water going? If the 2 or 3 inch layer of sand is finally achieved after 5 or 6 years of sand topdressing, it is likely the rapidly infiltrating water is going to build up at the interface between the newly applied sand and the old soil. Will this zone become anaerobic causing death of roots in mid-summer? Obviously, this is not a problem in western states where rainfall seldom exceeds 8 inches per year and irrigation is the primary source of water. On the east coast, however, we receive 40 to 55 inches of rainfall per year and it often comes in excessive spurts. Our two most popular topdressing mixtures (70% sand-20% peat-10% soil and 65% weblite-15% soil-20% peat) are providing infiltration rates around 8 inches per hour. A sample lab analysis of a straight sand with 95.8% of the particles between 0.25 to 1.0 mm, 1.5% silt and 0.3% clay exhibited an infiltration rate of 88.7 inches per hour. On the east coast where water is provided in uncontrollable amounts perhaps we are better off not having the infiltration that would come with a 3 inch

layer of sand on top of an existing greens mixture with a considerably slower infiltration rate. Our excessive moisture is now moving off primarily as surface drainage. In situations where surface drainage is inadequate, sand topdressing is not going to solve the problem.

Excessive nutrient leaching in the straight sand greens and sand-peat greens is consistently necessitating higher nitrogen and potassium fertilization levels except in those cases where undecomposed organic matter is used and nitrogen is released. Is building greens that require more nitrogen a move in the right direction, if we consider current and future fertilizer prices? The 1973-74 fertilizer-food shortage just gave us a "pre-shock" of things to come.

Lower microbial activity. Sand greens are likely to be less active microbiologically than mixtures containing soil. It's possible that urea formaldehyde products will be utilized with less efficiency on sand greens because of the requirement for microbiological breakdown of urea formaldehyde to plant utilizable nitrogen forms. Will thatch layers decompose slower with sand topdressing than with a mixture containing microbiologically active soil?

Hydrophobic drying has been a problem on some sand-peat greens. The formation of water repelling organic layers on sand particles in sand-peat mixes that have been allowed to dry out have created considerable headaches. The rewetting of these hydrophobic areas is extremely difficult and has led to death of the bentgrass in some instances. Can we safely assume this won't happen in sand greens? It does not appear to be happening in conventional sand-soil-peat greens.

A lack of moisture reservoir in sand and sand-peat greens is a serious concern. Water delivery systems, as advanced as they are, still leave a lot to be desired in a 3 to 5 MPH breeze. With a sand or sand-peat green one literally has no margin of error. The sand green requires constant "babysitting" to insure uniform distribution and continued replenishment of the small moisture reservoir held by the sand.

Susceptibility to layering. Two things are certain—no two golf course superintendents will run a golf course the same way and very few will stay at any one golf course more than 20 years. This creates a potential for changes in topdressing mixtures that could be lethal, especially if a sand topdressing program has been used. If a new superintendent feels the sand topdressed greens are too droughty and switches to any topdressing that holds moisture under a greater tension than the layer of topdressed sand, a false water table effect is created. The new topdressing that holds more water at a greater tension will not release it into the sand layer until enough pressure (water) is present to release the water into the larger pore spaces of the sand layer. This same problem could arise on sand-peat greens

where topdressing containing soil is utilized. Percolation through this interface will likely get worse with time as the soil topdressing layer gets thicker because it will tend to retain more moisture and the false water table depth will increase. Once the layer is deeper than the aeration times, the only sure solution is to rebuild the green.

Obviously there are a lot of unanswered questions with regard to the use of sand topdressing. Common sense tells us that if you currently have a topdressing mixture that works—don't change. Once you switch to sand topdressing, there is no turning back without considerable cost—agronomically and possibly financially.

Developing a topdressing mixture that has the right capillary and non-capillary pore space, infiltration rate, moisture retention, pH and bulk density is not an easy matter. It requires laboratory tests that are quite complicated. Commercially prepared topdressing mixtures meeting USGA specifications and complying with VPI&SU greens mixture recommendations are available. Yes, they do cost more than sand—but in the long run the cost of commercially prepared topdressing is inexpensive when compared with the costs associated with reconstructing a green or maintaining a green that has been abused with bad topdressing practices.

References

- 1) Madison, J.H. and Davis, William B., 1977. *Problems or Progress*. Tee 2 Green Corp., 1212 W. 8th Street, Kansas City, Missouri, pp. 16

CREDIT:

Tech Turf Topics
VPI&SU, August 1978

1979 Committee Assignments

This association can only be successful if you, the member, actively participate. The following committees have been established to formulate plans and events for the coming year. To be successful they need your input. Please contact any member on a committee with your ideas.

Membership

Ken Kelliher, Chm.
Michael McDermott
Timothy Michaud

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Richard Cook, Chm.
Bill Somers
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Fran Rogers

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Eric Johnson
Mark Loper

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Stan Sablak
Tom Gresh
Fran Rogers
John Ferry
Gary Bryant
Bob Viera

Organizational

Study Committee
Steve Cadenelli, Chm.
Richard Hosking
Charles Baskin
John Lynch
Charles York
William Dest

Meeting Dates and Locations - 1979

March 13	Hawthorne Inn (luncheon) Berlin, CT
April 17	New London C.C. Paul Grover—Host Supt. New London, CT
May	OPEN
June 5	Country Club of New Canaan Steve Cadenelli—Host Supt. New Canaan, CT
July 17	Watertown Golf Club Bob Viera—Host Supt. Watertown, CT
August 14	Yale Golf Club Harry Meusel—Host Supt. New Haven, CT
Sept. 11	Edgewood Golf Club Peter Pierson—Host Supt. Cromwell, CT
Oct. 9	Oak Lane Country Club Tom Pepe—Host Supt. Woodbridge, CT
Nov. 8	ANNUAL MEETING Mike Wallace—Host Supt. Rockledge Country Club West Hartford, CT

Make Landscaping Plans Now

Even though the ground is frozen and cold winds blow, now is the time to make plans for changing your landscape. By observing snow drift patterns, snow loads on plants, paths in the snow, etc., you can gather a lot of valuable information to aid in planting decisions later on.

If snow drifts often form where they block doors, driveways or paths, you should look around for the cause of the drifting. Snow drifts form when an object slows the wind enough to make it drop its load of snow. If the obstruction is a moveable structure or landscape plant, its removal may save a lot of shoveling after the snow falls.

Being aware of where snow drifts form and where snow is likely to slide off roofs should be taken into consideration when planning additions to your landscape. Some plants, notably evergreens, can be badly damaged by heavy snow loads. Others, such as forsythia, benefit from the protection of a snow drift, which keeps its flower buds from freezing. Contact a local nurseryman or extension agent for information that applies to your area.

Snowfalls can offer you an opportunity to do some detective work. Observe footprints and tire tracks to determine the paths that others take, and use landscaping to block traffic across vulnerable areas or create attractive paths for foot and car traffic.

Plan landscape changes now—and write them down to refer to next spring and summer.

New Members

The following have been voted in as new members of our Association. Congratulations and Welcome!

Louis Toth - Associate
Aqua-Lawn, Inc.
Fairfield, CT

Safety Notes

BE SURE YOUR VISITORS ARE PROTECTED. Visitors at your work areas are entitled to the same protection that your employees receive. Provide any protective devices they may need and insist that they follow the same safety rules that your crew does.

DIAL 800-424-9300 IN PESTICIDE EMERGENCIES. Chemical manufacturers have established the Pesticide Safety Team Network, with a 24-hour toll-free phone number. PSTN also has trained teams available to help with cleanup and disposal of spilled pesticides.

NO CHEATING! It's not unusual to see a mechanic put a pipe or hollow tube over the handle of a wrench—a "cheater"—to get more leverage. This can be extremely hazardous, since the manufacturing tolerances of these tools are designed taking only hand-applied force into account. Using a cheater can cause a sudden break or bend in the wrench handle.

BACK TO BASICS. Soap and water is still the best and safest for cleanup, according to the National Safety Council. Gasoline, naphtha, kerosene, turpentine and lye preparations are dangerous to use and often not as effective.

SAFETY RULES FOR WORKING WITH COMPRESSED AIR:

- * Wear safety glasses at all times.
- * Don't use compressed air to blow dust off your clothing or hair—and don't ever point the nozzle at yourself or another person.
- * Don't rely on a kink in the air hose to stem the flow. Use the valve to turn off the air. Check the condition of the hose before you turn the air on.

TAKE A MINUTE FOR SAFETY. Consider scheduling a regular "safety break" for employees, when all other chores are suspended and a few minutes are spent looking for evidence of unsafe conditions.

Create A Fire Protection Plan

Do your employees know what to do if a fire breaks out in your shop or maintenance building? Are they prepared to take immediate action to ensure safety and to minimize property damage?

The first step is to prevent loss of life. Employees should know the nearest exit from each enclosed work area, plus one or two alternative routes.

The second step is to notify the fire department. Emergency telephone numbers, including fire, police and ambulance, should be posted next to every telephone, and the location of any alarm boxes should be well known to all employees. If practical, one or more employees should be charged with the responsibility of seeing that the proper authorities are called in such cases.

Fire extinguishers are a vital part of an effective fire protection plan. By equipping your work areas with the proper types of extinguishers, potentially major fires can be contained, drastically reducing property damage and injury to employees.

Fire extinguishers usually come in three basic classes: A, B and C.

Class A extinguishers are generally air-pressured water, soda acid, pump tanks or gas cartridge types. They are only effective on wood, paper or textile fires, and should not be used on flammable liquid or electrical fires. This type of

extinguisher works by wetting down the fire's fuel, lowering its temperature and extinguishing it.

Class B extinguishers usually use dry chemicals or carbon dioxide, and are most effective against flammable liquid fires, including oil, gasoline, paint or grease. They may also be used to fight small Class A fires.

Class C extinguishers also are dry chemical or carbon dioxide types, especially designed to be used against electrical fires. They may also be used for small Class A or B fires. Class B and C extinguishers work by replacing the oxygen the fire needs to burn with carbon dioxide, smothering the flames.

The number and types of extinguishers you need depends on the amount and kind of fire hazards in the various areas of your shop. Class A extinguishers, where appropriate, should be no more than 75 feet of travel distance apart, and Class B and C extinguishers should be no more than 50 feet apart. Extinguishers are also available that use an all-purpose chemical and may be used on all classes of fires.

Have extinguishers inspected regularly and recharged promptly after use, and see that employees are given periodic instruction on their use. Your local fire department or extinguisher supplier may be able to help you set up a training program.

What Can You Ask When You Interview?

As spring approaches, superintendents' thoughts turn to the annual chore of hiring a summer crew. Nobody likes to interview applicants for jobs, but antidiscrimination laws now make the task even more difficult.

Laws vary from state to state, but it is almost universally true that asking questions about religion, race, age or ethnic background is illegal. In some states, it is also illegal to inquire about marital status. Be very careful about asking even indirect questions if they might reveal information that could be prejudicial.

So what *can* you ask?

You are entitled to an employment history, including names and addresses of previous employers, and to details about the education the applicant has received. You may ask for dates, the names, the schools, and about any diplomas or degrees received. You may also ask if the applicant ever used a different name, so you can check past employment and education records.

You may ask for a current address and for the length of time the applicant has lived there. You may ask if he or she is a U.S. citizen and if not, what his or her status is.

You may inquire about any physical or mental handicaps that relate directly to the applicants' performance of their duties.

You have a right to know if the applicants have ever been convicted of a crime, and if they have, you may ask where, when and about the final settlement of the case.

Ask the employees if there is anything else about their job that they would like to know, or if there's anything else about their background that you should know.

When you have completed this portion of the interview, you may find it useful to ask other questions as well, to determine whether the applicant will be able to work effectively for you.

Consider these:

* *Describe the best and the worst boss you've ever had.*

Ask yourself which you resemble the most.

* *What parts of your last job did you like the best?*

How does that job compare to this one?

* *What do you consider your greatest talent? Your worst weakness?*

What does that imply about the applicant's probable performance in this job?

By comparing the answers to these questions to the work situation at your course and the position you envision for this employee, you can draw some useful conclusions about how satisfactory his or her performance would be.

CREDIT:
Forefront

Grass Catcher

One of CAGCS's newest members, Jack Serleto, of the Cohasse Country Club was featured in an article published by the *Southbridge News*. Jack, a Southbridge native, returned home to the Cohasse Country Club after 14 years of building golf courses with the Moore Golf Co. and the New Golf Co. The article told of how he has been able to use this experience in making some changes at Cohasse.

It is this type of recognition and publicity that will inform the golfing public about the role of the superintendent and his responsibilities in managing the golf course. Congratulations Jack!

★★★

Many thanks to Sue and Fred Bachand and the Social Committee for their fine work in putting together the Christmas Party at the Wethersfield Country Club. Thanks also go out to the members of that club for inviting us there. Everyone in attendance had a very enjoyable evening.

★★★

CAGCS member Walt Lowell, pro-superintendent at the Canton Public Golf Club was recently named "Home Professional of the Year" by the Professional Golfers Association. This is a very distinguished honor that carries much respect. Walt is a former president of the Connecticut Section of the PGA and has been instrumental in creating a good working harmony between the golf professionals and the golf course superintendents.

★★★

Approximately 30 people attended the educational session sponsored by CAGCS and held at the Connecticut Agricultural station. Although the turnout was lower than expected it did demonstrate that this type of meeting can be of great help to those who are interested. Let the members of the Education committee know if you wish to see this type of program presented again next year.

★★★

Congratulations to Jim Mederios on passing his Certification test. Jim is now entitled to use the initials CGCS. Although there continues to be discussion concerning the merit of the Certification Program there is no doubt that by passing this comprehensive exam a golf course superintendent proves to himself and his employer that he has put himself above the ordinary.

★★★

With the listing of Daconil as a restricted chemical the point arises that sooner or later all of us who are responsible for chemical applications are going to have to be licensed. At the recent review sessions and subsequent testing in January 54% of those taking the test passed. This may seem low but compared to past tests it shows a marked improvement. If you were one who just missed don't wait too long before retesting. The information is still fresh in your mind and with a little more work a passing grade can be achieved.

Steve Cadenelli

Editorial Comment

How unfortunate that the publisher of a national trade magazine deems it necessary to insult and demean members of a national professional organization. Publisher Richard Morey in the recent issue of *Turfgrass Times* for unknown reasons has taken it upon himself to chastise GCSAA, its Executive Director, and the staff of *Golf Course Management*, formerly *The Golf Superintendent*. His comments which are terribly negative and divisive, serve no sound purpose whatsoever. Furthermore, comments of this nature have nothing to do with his magazine.

Members of GCSAA and surely the Executive Committee of GCSAA realize theirs is not a perfect organization. Constructive criticism and helpful comments will always be welcome and helpful. The task ahead is not to tear down but to build a better and stronger national superintendents' organization. In this regard Mr. Morley's comments again are useless.

Members of GCSAA, CAGCS and any readers of *Turfgrass Times* should evaluate the comments of the publisher and make their feelings known to him. Only through positive actions will the profession of the Golf Course Superintendent and the green industry in general prosper and grow.

Editor

The Following Companies Are Contributing To The Support Of The Conn. Clippings:

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