



# THE NEWSLETTER

Golf Course Superintendents Association OF NEW ENGLAND, INC.

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January 1990

## NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, February 6, 1990  
Mt. Pleasant G.C., Lowell, MA

9:00 am	Director's meeting
10:30 am	Regular meeting
12:00 Noon	Lunch
After Lunch	Educational, Session

Host Superintendent—Jack Hassett

Reservations Required by Jan. 31—  
(508) 458-7300



Jack attended the winter school at Univ. of Mass., and has an associate degree in business administration.

Jack was the supt. at Manderley on the Green, Ontario, Canada for 5 years. He was born in Lowell, MA and still resides there with his wife Monique and 12 year old daughter, Julia. In his spare time Jack enjoys golf and skiing.

**Directions**—From 495 & 128, take Rte. 3 north to exit 32 (North Chelmsford-Westford). Enter rotary-take first right which is Westford Rd. (Lowell). Follow for 8/10 mile passing Ford & Hyundai Dealerships and take a right at 'Y' onto Westford St. Follow for 1/2 mile, take your 6th right onto Staples St., club is at end of street.

*An opportunist is  
somebody who does  
what you were going to  
do, one of these days*

## House with Job... 'Super' or Not?

The house we live in.

If you are a golf course superintendent, life and the house you live in can be complicated.

Take the plight of Tatnuck's Steve Chiavaroli.



Eleven years ago, Steve agreed to take over the super's role at Tatnuck under an arrangement where part of his compensatory package was full use of a house with all utilities paid for by the club. Good deal?

"At the time it was for me," explained Chiavaroli the other week as he looked forward to another Christmas with his wife and five children at the old homestead. "I think that overall the benefits outweighed the loss of other things attached to home ownership, like equity. Certainly, it gave us financial independence in the fact that we were able to buy other items without worrying where the payments would come from."

As the years and Steve's family grew, it appeared that the combination of house and salary was working well for them. The house was big enough to accommodate the increase in the size of the Chiavaroli household and the television sets, refrigerators and cars always took on that brand-new look.

However, while Steve held up to the bargain, the house or its physical properties didn't. Recently, Tatnuck officials asked him to check out housing, prices et al in the area because of the possibility the club-owned property had gone beyond reasonably-priced repair.

"In a word, the house suddenly got as old as it looked," Steve said. "Actually, it's 200 years old and the club has to wonder whether or not it's worth the money to dive into extensive repairs. The last amount I heard was something like \$60,000. But, according to some estimates, the range could be anywhere from that to \$150,000."

Something else popped into the situation when soundness of structure became somewhat of an issue. So, when Chiavaroli heard of this, he began to wonder what would be in store for him and his family over the next few months or the lead-in to the next school year.

"That's the big hang-up as far as we're concerned," Steve alluded to the inconvenience of relocating in the middle of the school year. "It definitely would be a hardship thing for us and the kids. I know the decision's a tough one for the club but I'm hoping they make it soon."

Regardless of the uncertainty he faced under those conditions, Chiavaroli says he wouldn't mind if the house could be refurbished and his family stayed put under the old house-salary agreement.

"I really haven't come to any conclusion about how much I'd need in a salary increase to offset the loss of the house and the other things that go with it," Steve offered. "I know for me to go out and buy a house in the same area would be tough. As for equity, that's a personal thing. There are other ways to build equity besides buying a house."

An altogether different set of circumstances underline the experience of Dick Duggan in the house-salary

*Continued on page 2*



## HOUSE WITH JOB?

*Cont. from pg 1*

arrangement versus the sole-salary contract agreement.



Duggan admits a real hassle developed while he was in negotiations with Concord Country Club officials when he sought the superintendent's position there

six years ago.

The problem arose when the club assumed Duggan would want to continue an age-old custom there—living in a house on the grounds and accepting it as an appreciable part of the salary structure. On the contrary, Dick was against it from the start and said there was no way he could come to Concord under those conditions.

"One of the real problems at that time was trying to put a face value on the house that each party would be happy with," Duggan told. "They asked me to come in with a figure and there was no way I could

tell how much it was worth.

"However, the thing that threatened to stymie the old deal was the location of the house. Even if I wanted to come in and live under the house-salary offer, I couldn't ask my family to spend what might be a long, long time in a house practically set in a parking lot."

Eventually, Duggan and Concord met each other's price (minus the house) and the relationship has prospered since. The house is still there and being used as a club office.

"I probably did them (Concord) a favor when I turned down the house," Dick added. "That office is something they needed all along. They're very happy with the way things turned out."

The house-salary situation, then can lead to complications of a special kind. But the issue is still even-stephen. Chiavaroli could live in the house Tatnuck gave him, Duggan couldn't at Concord. Which probably is one of the things that makes the golf course superintendent's world go 'round.

**GERRY FINN**

## The Super Speaks Out

**Welcome to The Super Speaks Out—a monthly feature which offers the golf course superintendent a forum to express his or her views on topics and issues relating to their profession.**

**This month's question:** *Having had experience with contract arrangements under which a house becomes part of your salary structure, what is your opinion of the practice?*



**Dave Barber, Blue Hill Country Club:**

"I'll be starting my 11th year at Blue Hill in February and I have to say that I've been happy living on the course for as long as

I've been here.

"It seems to me that all we ever hear about this issue is the negative side of the picture...things like not being able to build equity and being too close to the job to create a situation where the superintendent becomes married to it.

"Well, neither of those disadvantages, and they're so-called as far as I'm concerned, ever bothered me.

"Financially, I've prepared for the day, if it ever comes, that I leave here. In other words, I wouldn't be in that much of a bind if I had to go out and face a different world where I provide a house and everything that goes with it.

"As for the fact that I'm as close to the job as the nearest call from a member, that just never happened for me. In all my years here I've never been buttonholed for the picayune things. It just doesn't work that way.

"The neighborhood where I live is very conducive to bringing up a family the way we'd all like to and the club has made improvements to the house. They even built us a two-car garage.

*Continued on page 3*

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## THE SUPER SPEAKS

*Cont. from pg 2*

"So, the arrangement has worked well for me. Sure, I'm closer to the job but I've worked that into an asset as well. The biggest plus, though, is that my family likes it, too. That makes it a plus all-around."

**John Petraitis, Crestwood Country Club:** "You're talking to a man who's had the both of the salary-house, sole-salary life as a super and both sides have selling points."

"My first 15 years here I lived in a club-owned house and the experience was such that it didn't have all that many negatives."

"However, after those 15 years, I thought I wanted to try it the other way. That was in 1973. I bought a lot for \$5500, the right time, too, because that same lot goes for about \$55,000 today."

"I followed up by building a house there after what turned out to be positive discussions with the club concerning the change. I just wanted to own my own home and Crestwood understood."

"I don't have to say too much about the fact that living on club property and not having to pay utilities did a lot for my buying power. I traded the car more often and bought things without hesitating because of no way to pay for them."

"Then, too, Crestwood members always were aware of the proximity of the house to their needs. Yet, I can honestly say they never came looking for me when it was so easy to find me."

"Therefore, I can't complain about either setup. I was happy living in their house and I'm happy living in mine. I guess that means it isn't an issue, right?"



**John Streeter, Woodbridge Country Club:** "How timely. I mean your call. It came just as I had agreed to move from Cliffside to

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Woodbridge. And, guess what? A house came with the job at Cliffside and same goes at Woodbridge.

"That's okay with me, too. At first I was a little leery about being so close to the club and having to depend on someone else to provide a home for me and my family."

"But I've learned there's nothing wrong with the situation, just as long as the superintendent doesn't allow the club to put too much emphasis on the value of the house in contract negotiations."

"Once the super gets this straightened out, that the arrangement doesn't jeopardize the salary aspect of the contract, the live-on-the-premises agreement is something I recommend highly."

"No travel time. That's a big positive result for me. In fact, I even find myself getting to the golf course early. I don't know. It just keeps me on top of things and, in reality, it even cuts down on my overall hours spent on the course."

"As for loss of equity. No problem. When I came to Connecticut, I bought property even though I knew a house came with the job. We rent that house, equity is building and we're moving up on the profession's salary ladder. Is all this right for me? You said it."

**GERRY FINN**

## GCSANE Joins Green Industry Council

Phyllis M. Gillespie,  
Executive Director

The Green Industry Council is pleased to announce the formation of a Public Policy Committee. This committee will serve as a vital link between our industry and our legislators. Specifically, the committee will involve our industry in the decision making process enabling us to influence policies and regulations in the best interest of our industry, our clients and the environment we enhance and maintain.

In the past, the GIC has been instrumental in influencing the decisions in the state. This Committee will strengthen and organize that effort, putting us on top of the issues and allowing us to act in a proactive manner. We will stand with MA Farm Bureau, the Cape Cod Cranberry Growers Association and others as a group concerned about the future of its industry.

Fully functioning by January 1, 1990, the committee is currently setting guidelines and operating procedures as well as securing your participation. The GIC strongly encourages all member associations to participate in this coalition so that all segments of the industry are represented. A separate assessment, set by the committee, will secure your voting seat and provide the necessary fund~ to operate and secure the services of a professional lobbyist.

The committee's agenda this month includes the review of a new Pesticide Reform bill presented by Representative Steven Angelo, Chair of the House Committee on Natural Resources and the meeting of lobbyist Jeffrey Fleming of Kevin Harrington ~ Associates. As Executive Director of the GIC, I will sit on the committee, keeping our membership informed and providing the resources and networking already established through the GIC. It is our intent to work with all groups, opening the lines of communication and understanding in the development of workable legislation and regulations.

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