



# THE NEWSLETTER

Golf Course Superintendents

Association OF NEW ENGLAND, INC.

Sponsors and administrators of the Troll-Dickinson Scholarship Fund – Awarded yearly to deserving Turf Management Students.

March 1997

## Mike Nagle concludes busy three years as editor of GCSANE monthly newsletter

Mike Nagle and *The Newsletter* hit it off better the second time around.

The year was 1985 . . . the front end of it . . . and GCSANE president Don Hearn was looking for the annual show of hands that “never occurs.”

At the moment, Hearn was in need of someone to succeed Doug Johnson as chairman and editor of *The Newsletter*. But there were no takers. There seldom is, because overseeing the association's monthly publication is listed among the world's most unwanted jobs. Probably because it is endless and a cause celebre for most of the criticism cast by skeptical GCSANE members before, during, and after the group's monthly meetings.

There was Hearn, his pleas falling on deaf ears, and the deadline for the next edition of *The Newsletter* on the verge of passing by. Then, from out of the blue came Mike Nagle.

True to Mike's fears, the next 12 months of 1985 don't qualify for a highlight film of his distinguished career. Therefore, his sigh of relief was heard from one end of the section to the other the following January when Ron Kirkman slid into the editor's seat.

“I know now that I wasn't ready for it,” Nagle recalled 12 years later at this year's annual meeting. “I wasn't focused for it. It just wasn't the right time.”

What readers of *The Newsletter* saw three years ago, when Mike heeded the call of another president (Steve Chiavaroli), was the second coming of that publication's editor. Nagle accepted the call, and for these many months of planning, editing, and trips to the printer, has shown plain hard-nosed commitment to the job.

“I had no idea what the scope of the job presented,” Mike described his early dilemma. “Coming up with feature

subjects and Super Speaks Out questions probably was the most trying part of it. You have to make it interesting, and the topics must be pertinent to the profession and ongoing times. The word ‘deadline’ comes to mind. I guess I was thinking deadline quite a bit. There's much discipline involved along those lines. You can't kiss off one or two days in *The Newsletter's* making just because you don't feel like doing it. You have to make yourself do it.”

Of course, editing the publication is not a one-sided agonizing task, and Nagle doesn't wish to imply that whatsoever.

The publication for which he was responsible took a prominent place among the best of its kind on the national front. “The satisfaction of seeing *The Newsletter* come out every month just about the way you planned it more than offsets the labor of the job,” Mike explained. “And for us,

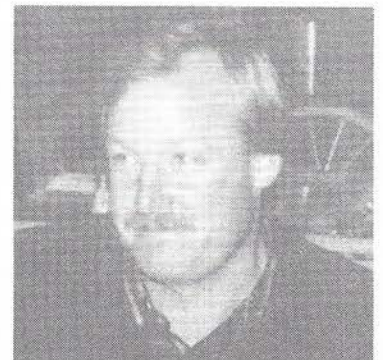
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**“The satisfaction of seeing  
The Newsletter come out every  
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offsets the labor of the job.”**

**Mike Nagle  
Worcester C.C.**







**PRESIDENT**  
Robert DiRico, CGCS  
326 Fuller Street, West Newton, MA 02165  
617-527-6968 Fax 617-527-0069  
Brae Burn Country Club

**VICE PRESIDENT**  
Kavin F. Osgood  
14 Inman Lane, Foxborough, MA 02035  
617-630-1950 Fax 617-969-8756  
Newton Commonwealth Golf Course

**SECRETARY**  
James Fitzroy, CGCS  
357 W. Squantum Street, North Quincy, MA 02171  
617-328-1776 Fax 617-328-9479  
Presidents Golf Course

**TREASURER**  
Robert Ruszala  
69 Gellinas Drive, Chicopee, MA 01020  
413-256-8654 Fax 413-592-0120  
Hickory Ridge Country Club

**TRUSTEE**  
Michael Nagle, CGCS  
51 Lincoln Avenue, Holden, MA 01520  
508-853-6574 Fax 508-856-7170  
Worcester Country Club

**TRUSTEE**  
David Comee  
65 Marquette Street, Gardner, MA 01440  
508-297-1223 Fax 508-297-0911  
The Winchendon School Country Club

**TRUSTEE**  
Arthur Silva, CGCS  
35 Pennacook Road, Tewksbury, MA 01701  
617-484-5360 Fax 617-484-8321  
Belmont Country Club

**FINANCE CHAIRMAN**  
James B. Conant, CGCS  
606 River Road, Marston Mills, MA 02648  
508-362-1136 Fax 508-362-8666  
Kings Way Golf Club

**GOLF CHAIRMAN**  
Michael J. Hermanson  
100 Eaton Street, Gardner, MA 01440  
508-632-2713 Fax 508-632-2029  
Gardner Municipal Golf Course

**EDUCATION CHAIRMAN**  
Michael V. Iacono, CGCS  
42 Newton Street, Weston, MA 02193  
617-899-7913 Fax 617-647-0602  
Pine Brook Country Club

**NEWSLETTER CHAIRMAN**  
Wayne F. LaCroix, CGCS  
97 Gould Road, Andover, MA 01810  
508-475-6638 Fax 508-475-9488  
Andover Country Club

**PAST PRESIDENT**  
Edward L. Brearley  
189 Matfield Street, West Bridgewater, MA 02379  
508-584-6568 Fax 508-583-0978  
Dahn Tibbett Professional Golf Services



**GCSANE Headquarters - Golf House**  
190 Park Road, Weston, MA 02193  
(800) 833-4451 Fax (617) 893-6137

Newsletter Editor . . . Wayne LaCroix, CGCS  
Contributing Editor . . . Gerry Finn  
Business Manager . . . Robert Ruszala

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the people responsible for the last three years of publication, it reached national acclaim two years ago when we were runner-up for best newsletter in our category of GCSAA-sanctioned monthly editions.

"I accepted all the favorable comments about that achievement just as I accepted the criticism after we published certain articles. It balanced out. One other thing, I never took the negative comments personally. Whoever made them had a right to express them, and in a couple of cases, what was said gave us reason to improve the product.

Nagle, a native of Turners Falls, Mass., began his superintendent career in 1980 when he completed a Stockbridge placement tour at Fenway G.C., Scarsdale, N.Y., and immediately accepted the head post at Bonnie Briar Country Club in Larchmont, N.Y. Three years later he became superintendent for the tradition-wrapped Worcester Country Club. This year marks his 15th season at the Worcester Country Club.

When Mike returned to the editor's desk in 1993, his time was stretched. His family, wife Kathy and daughters Sarah (15) and Else (10), took up most of Mike's spare time away from the course. Needless to say, his responsibilities are substantial, keeping the polished look on a club that hosted the 1925 USGA Men's Open, the 1927 Ryder Cup, and the 1960 USGA Women's Open.

"Taking on the editor's job was a real challenge," Mike said. "I'm in love with the profession, and my obligation to our organization is one of my priorities. Being on the board forced me to attend monthly meetings. There, I saw the heart and soul of our association, the same members who show up month after month. That's a real show of support."

Nagle couldn't leave the subject of *The Newsletter* without showering a few of his predecessors with plaudits. "It all goes back to many years ago and the old editions," he said. "People like Leon St. Pierre and Dean Robertson were among the pioneers who championed *The Newsletter*. More recently, Kip Tyler really changed the face of *The Newsletter* with his innovations and determination to make its content top shelf. There were others. They all helped make it what it is today."

**"I'm in love with the profession, and my obligation to our organization is one of my priorities."**

**Mike Nagle  
Worcester C.C.**

This shift, Mike's second time around in the embrace of *The Newsletter*, is over. Now on board to keep the ship steady as she goes is Wayne LaCroix, who is full of the enthusiasm and energy required to get those "proofs" back to the printer in time for monthly publication.

Nagle is sure Wayne will keep the change on an orderly course, and leaves amid words depicting a job well done. Three years as editor of *The Newsletter*? That's a load. You'd better believe it.

Next on the organization agenda for Mike is serving as new membership chairman. "Lots of work to be done there," he remarked. "We're going to overhaul our directory, not just tune it up."

It never ends for Mike Nagle.

**GERRY FINN**

## Calendar

- |             |   |
|-------------|---|
| March 5     | <b>Calibration &amp; Safety of Pesticide Application Equipment</b><br>GCSAA Seminar<br>Rockport, Maine              |
| March 6 & 7 | <b>Plant Nutrition &amp; Fertilizers</b><br>GCSAA Seminar<br>Farmington, Conn.                                      |
| March 10    | <b>GCSANE Monthly Meeting</b><br>Dean Junior College<br>Franklin, Mass.   |
| March 18    | <b>Turfgrass Ecology</b><br>GCSAA Seminar<br>Syracuse, N.Y.   |
| April 22    | <b>Pro/Media/Superintendent Tournament</b><br>Walpole Country Club<br>Walpole, Mass.<br>Supt. - Mark D. Gagne, CGCS |
| April 28    | <b>GCSANE Monthly Meeting</b><br>Juniper Hill Country Club<br>Northborough, Mass.<br>Supt. - Thomas L. Ackley       |



# The Super Speaks Out

**This month's question:** *What is the winter play situation at your course, and how do you cope with people who insist that golf is an endless season?*

**Bob Desrosiers, assistant, Fresh Pond Golf Course:** "The course is a public (City of Cambridge) one and the rule is that the end of the season comes the day before Christmas. That's it. Before then, and if there is no snow cover, we do have play. Most of it comes from the diehards. We allow them to play and use the regular greens. But no one goes on the greens until the frost is gone.

"Naturally, everything depends on the weather and we target our opening around the elements. We like to reopen in March, as early as possible. Weather will dictate that date. Meanwhile, Fresh Pond is dark in January and February. At that time? We have lots of walkers, lots of runners, lots of dogs. But no golfers."

**Tom Ackley, Juniper Hill Country Club:** "We really don't anticipate anything in the way of late winter play. We don't invite it, and we look to closing the course in early December. This year was a week earlier than last because of the snowfall the first weekend of the month.

On the few times that we do allow winter play, the regular greens are in use. We also use our Lakeside course (Juniper is 36 holes) when play continues into the winter months. But that's rare, an exception.

"Reopening is another story. We take the signal from the conditions. We don't reopen until the frost is out of the ground, usually around April 1."

**Bob Chisholm, Ridder Golf Club:** "This was an experimental off-season for us, or the first year that we allowed winter play. Therefore, it was a new experience, and the results are still to be assessed.

"We are a public course, and as such, can use the income. This year was unusual in that there was no snow cover, at least through the months of December and January. I suppose this was a good time to see what full winter play would do to the condition of the golf course.

"What we did get from golfers was a fair amount of play. In fact, the numbers were more than we expected. They liked what they saw and responded accordingly.

"We set up the course with temporary tees. That was the only change from the setup for the regular season. Otherwise, we used regular greens, kept the driving range open, and changed the cups when we could.

"Another experiment was the use of golf carts. We allowed the weather conditions to tell us when and when not to let them out. The rule was that they could be used when the ground was frozen.

"Remaining open for the winter hasn't keep us from our off-season maintenance program. The winter opening was only an experiment. We have clay-based soil, so we'll be taking a hard look at the overall effect on the turf when the regular season opens."

**Don Blakely, Harwich Golf Club:** "I've always said that winter golf is just for those hardy souls who can withstand the elements. And that's the way I'd describe anyone playing here this winter.

"We don't encourage winter play and most of the time we close around the middle of December. However, we didn't have the heavy snowfall like we did a year ago, so we stayed open a little longer. Winter playing conditions were slightly different from the regular season. We used regular greens but closed all the tees. When we changed pins, we put them in places toward the next tee, meaning that we

tried to cut down on wear and tear on the greens as much as possible.

"There was one hard-and-fast rule, though. The first time we saw footprints on the greens we closed the greens and the course."

**Matt Crowther, Mink Meadows Golf Club:** "This is my first year here and I can tell you about the kind of golfers that play Mink Meadows. Right now it's about 10 degrees, and the winds are howling. It has to be below zero as far as the wind-chill factor is concerned. Yet, there are four cars parked in the lot, and there are two foursomes on the course.

"Therefore, yes, we do allow winter play, but as I said, this is my first year and I don't know how winter golf will affect the condition of the course when we're going full bore in the spring.

"Mink Meadows is a nine-hole, semi-private course. It's a links-style course and we have 220 members. However, that is reduced to around 50 when the regular season ends. Over the long winter I'd say we have around 25 players a day. That's a good amount, since it can get real cold when that wind comes in off the water.

"There's a first here this year, because it's the first time the course has allowed golf carts for winter play. I don't have any idea what this will mean when the regular season's here. I do know we are noted for unusually wet springs.

"Other than the stout-hearted players who tee it up in the winter, the off-season has been highlighted by the redesign of one hole. We've rebuilt the green and built a new back tee (75 yards from the regular tee) so that the hole will play to a par-five for the back nine.

"In winter there are only two of us, my mechanic and I, compared to 10 on the summer crew. Oh, one more thing. Our most recent cut of greens came on Jan. 5. Needless to say, we didn't interfere with too many golfers."

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**"The first time we saw footprints on the greens we closed the greens and the course."**

**Don Blakely  
Harwich Golf Club**

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**GERRY FINN**



## Ouimet Fund News

# Matthew Barratt wins Joseph A. Morrill Award

Matthew Barratt of Rochester and Allendale Country Club has been presented with the Joseph A. Morrill, Jr. Award by the Francis Ouimet Scholarship Fund.

Barratt worked on the course superintendent crew at Allendale Country Club and is a senior at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst. The Morrill Award is for a Ouimet Scholar attending turfgrass or agronomy school who intends to have a career as a golf course superintendent.

Barratt majors in plant and soil science at UMass with a minor in business administration. He is also involved in intramural sports. He continues to work summers at Allendale and intends to become a golf course superintendent. Barratt was recently awarded the prestigious Troll-Dickinson Scholarship by the Golf Course Superintendents Association of New England.

"Matthew Barratt is a very dedicated young man and we are happy to present the Morrill Award to him. We are also delighted that the Golf Course Superintendents Association of New England has recognized him," said Stephen Buckley, Jr., Ouimet Fund President.

The Morrill Award was founded in 1982. It is named after the late Joseph A. Morrill, Jr., founder and longtime treasurer of the Bay State Seniors Golf Association. The Morrill Award is funded by proceeds of that organization.

A total of 11% of the current Ouimet Scholars have worked in course superintendent operations, and the Ouimet Fund is very actively supported by the Golf Course Superintendents Association of New England.

## GCSAA News

### Worried about a lawsuit from spikeless shoes?

In a bizarre Wisconsin case, a golfer, who over a six-hour period consumed eight beers and five mixed drinks, tripped when his golf spikes caught in a brick ramp, fell face first, broke his jaw, and shattered his teeth.

Results: An appeals court upheld a lower court decision awarding the golfer \$41,540 in damages against The Indianhead Golf and Recreation Club. Although a doctor testified that the plaintiff, Dale L. Larson, was in a stupor with a blood alcohol level of 0.28 present 90 minutes after the accident, the court said the club was negligent, since gaps in the bricks could have caused even a sober person to fall.

Lesson: "Premises liability" is a growing area of litigation for golf facilities. To avoid or minimize liability, any man-made change such as a brick path should be examined as part of your club's liability prevention program to eliminate dangerous situations or give appropriate warnings to the public. It is not difficult to predict the outcome in the same Wisconsin court if a sober golfer, wearing spikeless shoes, slipped on a wet surface, such as wood, where no warning was posted, and sustained a serious injury.

From the GCSAA Leader Board,  
Jan./Feb. 1997.

## GCSANE News

### "Remember when?": People & events of GCSANE's past

*Remember when?* retraces some of the GCSANE's steps, recalling the group's significant events and individuals along the way.

#### 25 years ago

Replying to the question about the need for periodic examination as part of the GCSAA's certification program, Joe Rybka of the Thorny Lea Golf Course opined: "I think one examination is enough. I am convinced that a golf course superintendent keeps up with the changing times while on the job. That's part of his dedication to the profession."

"You take a man who goes to college and graduates. He doesn't have to go back every five years and take his finals all over again. I think the same should apply here. After all, we can't expect to be running around with a book in our hands all the time."

"There is only one situation when I think a re-examination is in order. That would be when a man gets out of the business for a few years and wants to come back in. Then and only then would I recommend it."

#### 15 years ago

The GCSAA tournament preceding the convention in New Orleans was held at Walt Disney World's Palm and Magnolia courses. Thirteen participants from the GCSANE took part in the event under sunny skies, with temperatures in the mid-70s. Among the prize winners were Arthur Washburn, 8th low gross in red flight; Dave Barber, 6th net in red flight; Doug Johnson, 6th net in blue flight; and Paul Miller, winner, closest to the pin. Another "winner" was Bert Frederick of Vesper, who succumbed to high gross hon-

ors because of what he claimed was, "an acute attack of bursitis on the 14th tee."

#### 5 years ago

Chester Sawtelle Day was proclaimed in Marblehead, Mass. by the town's board of selectmen. The honoree is the founder of Sawtelle Brothers. For the first time, as part of the town's Christmas Walk, the Person of the Year for that event also was proclaimed First Citizen of Marblehead.

"It's the least we can do," selectmen chairman Tom McNulty said. "It's also the most we could do. I can't think of anything better to do for someone who loves his town as much as Chet Sawtelle. He's been an inspiration from every point of view. He's never slowed down, never gotten old. Any setbacks, he's just overcome them. The man just has a tremendous zest for life."

GERRY FINN



## Turf Science

# Battling infestations of moss & algae in turf

by Art Bruneau (*Extension Turfgrass Specialist*) and Bill Lewis (*Extension Weed Control Specialist*)

(From agronomy information leaflet published by The North Carolina Cooperative Extension.)

Infestations of algae and moss in the turf are associated with unfavorable conditions for growing healthy, dense turf. Algae are unicellular or multicellular threadlike green plants that form a thin dense green scum over the soil surface. This scum forms a tough black crust when dry which acts as a barrier impeding the entrance of water and nutrients into the soil. Algae are competitive in compacted, waterlogged soils and during warm, sunny, humid conditions.

Mosses are green plants with leaves arising from all sides of a central axis. Mosses may grow erect or prostrate. They typically form a thick green mat at the soil surface. Conditions favoring the growth of mosses include low fertility, poorly drained soils, high soil acidity, excessively wet soils, soil compaction, excessive thatch or a combination of these factors that add up to thin or weak turf. Mosses are very competitive in cool, moist, shaded locations, such as the north side of buildings and wooded areas.

Physical or chemical removal of these pests will only be temporary unless growing conditions are improved. In some areas you may choose to use a mulch cover (pine straw, bark, etc.) or plant a shade-tolerant ground cover instead of turfgrass. The following practices can help you prevent or control algae and moss.

**Cultural.** (1) Plant shade-tolerant grasses. (See N.C. Agricultural Extension Service Publication AG49, Carolina Lawns.) (2) Conduct a soil test to determine proper lime and fertilizer needs. Lime is necessary to reduce soil acidity. Proper fertilization will aid in preventing weed encroachment. (3) Avoid excessive watering and improve irrigation scheduling if necessary. (4) Aerify (core) compacted soils. (5) Increase air movement and light penetration in shaded

areas by removing unnecessary undergrowth and pruning tree limbs. (6) Improve drainage.

**Chemical.** (1) Algae may be controlled with copper sulfate at the rate of 2 to 3 ounces per 1,000 square feet or one teaspoon in 8 gallons of water. An application of 5 to 10 pounds of ground limestone per 1,000 square feet prior to reseeding will help to inactivate the copper sulfate that may be toxic to grass seedlings. Punch holes in the alga crust or remove the crust entirely to allow turf recovery in these areas. Prepare a new seedbed and replant if large bare areas exist. (2) Moss may be controlled with copper or ferrous sulfate sprayed at 5 ounces per 1,000 square feet in 4 gallons of water. Applying concentrated amounts (10 ounces per 1,000 square feet) of

ferrous ammonium sulfate to the moss spots when the moss is damp offers another means of control. Ferrous ammonium sulfate should not be watered in. An application of 5 to 10 pounds of ground limestone per 1,000 square feet prior to reseeding will help to inactivate the copper sulfate that may be toxic to grass seedlings. Physical removal of the moss by raking may be needed to allow for recovery in these areas. Prepare a new seedbed and replant if large bare areas exist.

Follow good establishment practices as discussed in Carolina Lawns.

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## UMass Extension News

### Professional Turfgrass Management Guide now available from UMass Extension

**What is the Professional Turfgrass Management Guide?** UMass Turf Program specialists have written and produced this guide to provide professional turf managers with management alternatives, integrated pest management strategies, and information on pesticide options critical for turf pest management decision making. Turf managers will find the latest information on insect, weed, and disease control, as well as nematode control and plant growth regulators. A monthly pest damage monitoring chart is also included to aid turf professionals in scouting for pests and identifying damage.

#### Why has the Professional Turfgrass Management Guide been produced?

It has been designed to inform turf managers about alternative pest control techniques whenever possible, based on integrated pest management strategies. Its comprehensive format also provides information on pesticide options for professionals to use in the decision making processes involved in pest management.

#### Who should purchase the Professional Turfgrass Management Guide?

The guide is intended to be used by professional turf managers and others working in the green industry who desire to expand and refine their knowledge of turfgrass care. It is suitable for anyone interested in professionally maintaining turfgrasses in a competent and environmentally responsible manner.

#### When can you purchase the Professional Turfgrass Management Guide?

The guide is available right now, just in time for the 1997 turf growing season!

#### How can you purchase the Professional Turfgrass Management Guide?

The price is \$10.00. Send check (payable to the University of Massachusetts) to: Bulletin Distribution Center, Draper Hall, University of Massachusetts, Box 32010, Amherst, MA 01003-2010; Tel. (413) 545-2717. Please include your name, your complete mailing address, the number of guides you are ordering, and inventory number: TURF-1700-C216.



## GCSAA News

## GCSAA sounds the alert on two regulatory issues

The GCSAA recently issued the following government relations information on two subjects of interest to the golf course superintendent:

### The Worker Protection Standard

As you may know, an EPA Interpretive Guidance Work Group issued a Question & Answer document indicating that sod farms, greenhouses and nurseries operated by golf course superintendents (for product testing and replacement) would be subject to the Worker Protection Standard, even though golf courses are exempt.

GCSAA and others appealed to the EPA to reconsider this interpretation, but the Work Group decided not to change its position about the scope of the rule.

GCSAA's government relations committee members have already contacted their members of Congress to ask them to urge the EPA to address the problem. The Office of Pesticide Programs reported it would address the issue, but nothing has happened yet.

Your help is needed. Your U.S. senators and representatives have jurisdiction over the regulatory and enforcement authority of the EPA. A call or letter from you asking for help on this issue may get it resolved quickly.

A call or letter will prompt your legislator to contact the EPA congressional liaison office and ask it to reconsider or ex-

plain its action. As we work directly with the EPA to reverse this decision, the expression of interest by key legislators will influence how agency officials respond.

Please call GCSAA at (913) 832-4459 if we can help you identify your senators or representatives, or be of any other assistance. Please send copies of any letters you send or receive to GCSAA so we can track contacts made on this issue.

To call, refer to the information below.

### Environmental audit & disclosure

With more and more suppliers and consulting firms offering environmental audits to golf courses, the golf course maintenance industry has a strong interest in having protections for this activity under the law.

Many courses find environmental audits very useful in identifying ways to reduce risk to the environment and improve compliance with federal and state law. However, volunteering to have an environmental audit conducted on golf course maintenance operations has some risks.

Without the immunity protections of environmental audit and disclosure laws or regulations, enforcement agencies could use the auditors' records to levy fines for violations discovered during the audits. Without a legal protection for subpoena, or privilege, outside persons could subpoena the records and use them to

support lawsuits against the facility for injuries to themselves or the environment.

**EPA, state action.** In recognition of the value of voluntary audits in improving compliance and protecting the environment, EPA updated its policy in January to broaden immunity from federal fines for violations discovered during voluntary environmental audits, as long as the violations were corrected. EPA is opposed to making audit records privileged. Eighteen states have also adopted laws or regulations offering immunity from fines levied by state enforcement agencies. Many state laws also render audit records privileged.

**S. 582.** Senate Bill 582 would protect environmental audit reports from discovery in legal actions, as long as violations are voluntarily disclosed to appropriate federal or state agencies, and appropriate efforts to achieve compliance are promptly initiated. The "Voluntary Environmental Audit Protection Act" (S. 582) was heard before the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee on Tuesday, May 21. GCSAA presented written testimony, as did the Ad Hoc Group for Environmental Audit and Disclosure Legislation. It was apparent action would be delayed until 1997.

Senators need to hear from golf course superintendents about the value of environmental audits and the need for the protections of S. 582.

*continued on page 8*

## DIVOT DRIFT...announcements...educational seminars...job opportunities ...tournament results...and miscellaneous items of interest to the membership.

### GOVT. RELATIONS

A two-tiered pesticide notification registry that could create notification duties for homeowners is being considered by the Maine Board of Pesticide Control. Under a two-tier plan, the registry would be open (no physician's statement needed), although those with documented health problems would get a higher level of notification. If registered individuals notified neighbors of their status, the neighbors would also have notification obligations. At a public hearing in November, pesticide users, including a representative of the Maine GCSA, opposed registries based on the practical and economic burdens they would create, and the stifling effect on IPM approaches to pesticide use.

A bill to exempt seasonal golf course employees from unemployment compensation laws has been introduced in the Maine legislature.

A pesticide notification and recordkeeping bill is expected to be introduced in Massachusetts. The bill is modeled after legislation in New York.

Local primacy legislation introduced in New Hampshire would allow local governments to again control the use of pesticides. The bill would repeal a 1993 pesticide preemption.

### INFORMATION

**Congratulations** to John Kotoski on becoming a Certified Golf Course Superintendent. John passed

the six-hour certification examination that consists of six sections: Knowledge of GCSAA and the Certification Program, The Game and the Rules of Golf, Turfgrass Management, Pest Control Safety and Compliance, Financial Management, and Organizational Management.

### POSITION OPENING

**Equipment Manager.** Pine Ridge C.C. is accepting applications for an equipment manager. Position available March 10, 1997. Three years experience as head or assistant mechanic required. Salary commensurate with experience. Call John Kotoski, CGCS, at (508) 892-9110 for job description and benefits package. Fax resumes to (508) 892-4509.



# Please patronize these FRIENDS of the ASSOCIATION

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The TurfNet program includes TurfNet-Monthly, the popular newsletter of cutting-edge turfgrass management, TurfNet Online, the first Windows-based online service exclusively for the golf course industry, and TurfNet Research Reports, detailed reports on 16 categories of turf maintenance equipment based on input from TurfNet members. Woven throughout these components is a database of

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### GCSAA sends alert . . .

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