



# THE NEWSLETTER

April 2002

of the ***Golf Course Superintendents Association of New England, Inc.***

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

## Russ Heller joins fraternity of “retired” editors who left their personal stamp on The Newsletter

Every now and then we'd play catch with a ball we labeled, “story ideas.” Russ Heller, our beleaguered outgoing GCSANE Newsletter editor, threw them too hard for me. In fact, one floored me.

“How 'bout doing a feature on our board of directors?” he suggested. “Just call each board member and ask him just what it is he does. You should be able to rap that up in no time.”

Yeah, like I had a couple of lifetimes to spare. Which means that subject was dropped when my thoughts drifted to the officious sounding position of Newsletter Chairman. Frankly, there weren't and aren't enough hours in the day to cover what the Newsletter editor puts into the planning, proofreading, and uh, sweating out the production of our monthly newsletter.

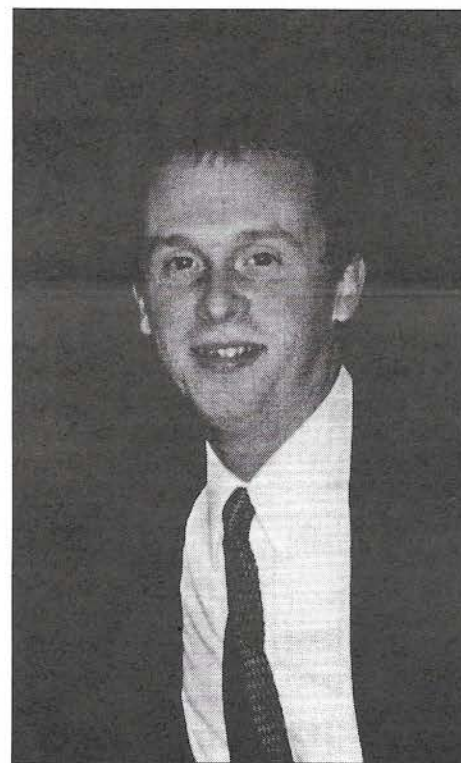
For the most part, our association has been blessed with a steady stream of editors who burned the midnight oil and turned over one glowing edition after another. Beginning with the non-stop

team of Leon St. Pierre and Dean Robertson and running through the last green light navigated by Heller, GCSANE Newsletters have delivered a plethora of information, education, and just plain entertainment to members for almost 80 years.

Heller, in a show of his patented impish humor, has led himself to believe he's been around the publication's presses for all of them. You can't blame him for thinking the editor's job is one without a starting point or a titanic task without end. However, departing editors always have felt that way. You can't blame them either. They are a gritty and indispensable lot.

All of our Newsletter leaders have left their mark . . . some indelible. St. Pierre, then Robertson, lined up controversial subjects and took them on like Marines storming an invasion target. Mike Nagle was a painstaking craftsman who sought perfection in every edition. Kip Tyler was full of new ideas and the adventurous spirit to see them through fruition. We even had a self-appointed writer-in-waiting in Ron Kirkman, whose flair for saying something in 100 words when only five would do was the talk of the Newsletter row. His was an admirable albeit futile effort.

Our latest ex-editor brought most of the qualities listed above to the job when he took over three years ago. Heller did his predecessors one good turn better. Somehow he was able to delegate responsibility to a cadre of young superintendents who provided much of the



*“All we could do was report the facts and make sure everything was accurate.”*

**Russ Heller**  
**Franklin Park G.C.**

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legwork to set up subjects for interviews and even threw in a story suggestion or two. In fact, it was that kind of administrative acumen that helped propel Russ upward in his career.

He wasn't always golf course superintendent at heart. In fact, he tinkered with other potential careers. First, he thought he might want to be an electrical engineer, having a feet-wetting experience at the University of Lowell. Then he made an abrupt and bold change in his business outlook when he enrolled in the Joe Brinkman Baseball Umpires School in Florida. That became a sort of quirky move when Russ found himself in a basement-floor minor league with the dream of making the big leagues.

Three years later he saw the light, headed for Stockbridge School and came away with a promising position as assistant to Wayne LaCroix, learning the golf course maintenance ropes and also getting a peek at his future while giving Wayne a hand with the *Newsletter*. As it happened, eventually he succeeded his boss as *Newsletter* chairman and went out on his own as the first head superintendent at the fledgling Tewksbury Country Club.

Heller also had a stop at Chelmsford Country Club before landing at Franklin Park Golf Course. That was his base of operations as the clock ticked down on his tenure as *Newsletter* editor.

The *Newsletter* whisked through some timely issues under Russ' leadership. It served as the sounding board when a number of veteran superintendents were involved in questionable job severance situations. He displayed an admirable penchant for fairness in the handling of sensitive issues where the possibility of a break in relations between different generations of superintendents within the GCSANE clouded things.

"All we could do was report the facts and make sure everything was accurate," Russ commented about those steamy times. "I never felt caught between the older and younger members. I have friends in both generations. Naturally, I know more of the younger guys because I am one of them. Regardless, no one likes to see anyone lose his job, especially when there's thinking that performance had nothing to do with a dismissal."

The *Newsletter* had its light moments with Heller in command. Russ tried to insert soft levity into some of the articles, pointing out that things weren't all that serious when a particular issue boiled down to a misunderstanding or an over-reaction.

So, Russ Heller joins the legion of *Newsletter* legends . . . all my bosses. He made our pages sing with jingoism. His successor, Ken Crimmings, will do well to concentrate on emulating an editor who never took himself too seriously while heading up a first-class publication.

**GERRY FINN**

## CALENDAR . . .

- April 22 **GCSANE Monthly Meeting**  
Juniper Hill G.C.  
Northborough, Mass.  
Supt. - Tom Ackley, CGCS  
Guest Speaker: Terry Bastian,  
Waterflowers Ecological Design
- May 6 **Scholarship & Benevolence Tournament**  
Belmont C.C.  
Belmont, Mass.  
Supt. - Arthur Silva, CGCS  
Guests: Joe Gordon, Jim McCabe
- June 10 **GCSANE Monthly Meeting Joint Meeting with Cape Cod**  
Indian Pond G.C.  
Kingston, Mass.  
Supt. - Tom Harrington
- July 15 **GCSANE Monthly Meeting Joint Meeting with Rhode Island**  
Fall River C.C.  
Fall River, Mass.  
Supt. - Tom Ohlson, CGCS
- August 19 **GCSANE Monthly Meeting Individual Championship**  
Blue Hill Country Club  
Canton, Mass.  
Supt. - Vincent Iacono
- Sept. 23 **GCSANE Monthly Meeting Supt./Club Official Tournament**  
Wellesley C.C.  
Wellesley, Mass.  
Supt. - David Barber, CGCS
- Oct. 7 **GCSANE Monthly Meeting Team-of-Two Championship**  
The Ranch G.C.  
Southwick, Mass.  
Supt. - Mike Stachowicz
- Nov. 4 **GCSANE Monthly Meeting Nine-Hole Meeting**  
Whitinsville G.C.  
Whitinsville, Mass.  
Supt. - Paul Wilson



## President reports on Larson's resignation from board, S&B event, N.E. Turf Conference, & drought warning

At the March 26, 2002 meeting of the GCSANE Board of Directors, Rob Larson's resignation from the board was regrettably accepted. Rob began a new position with the Tom Irwin Co., and on behalf of the board and GCSANE we all wish Rob much success with his new endeavor. At that meeting, pursuant to Article V, Section 4, paragraph 2 of our bylaws, the board voted to appoint Jason Adams of the Norfolk G.C. to fill Rob's unexpired term. Jason has been at Norfolk for three years and prior to that was an assistant at Oak Hill in Fitchburg and the Shattuck in New Hampshire. Jason will serve as Membership Chairman.

The Scholarship and Benevolence Committee has been very active preparing for our May 6 event at Belmont C.C. We expect a full field, so please get your applications in as soon as possible. We will be remembering Gary Luccini at the event and are pleased to announce his wife, Kathy, and sons Michael and Brian will join us for golf and dinner that day. Also featured that day will be two golf writers who did such a great job informing the public about the winter damage in 2001. The Board has voted to award Joe Gordon of the Boston Herald and Jim McCabe of the Boston Globe honorary membership to the GCSANE. Joe and Jim will be joining us for the day and we look forward to recognizing their efforts on our behalf.

We still need your help in making this year's Scholarship and Benevolence event a success. The raffle is an important source of revenue for the event and a large part

### FROM THE PRESIDENT

of the interest in the raffle is the golf rounds from area clubs. So please send certificates for golf to Russ Heller. Any conditions your course places on the rounds are certainly acceptable. We also have some other great prizes. Bob Healey has again donated a stay at Myrtle Beach and the prize includes

two airline tickets. Additionally, we will be offering two more airline tickets to any destination in the continental United States. As always, there will be wonderful golf equipment and apparel.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has issued a level-3 drought warning. We all are aware of the lack of rainfall in recent months. Since last July, the state has experienced over a 15" deficit in rainfall. GCSANE, through its publicity committee, has sent a press release to all news outlets warning of steps superintendents may need to take if we don't receive significant rainfall in the spring months. We will monitor the situation and take whatever actions are necessary to education the golfing public about the drought. And if you need some assistance with education materials, let's remember what a great resource the GCSAA is to member superintendents.

And finally, congratulations to Gary Sykes and the entire Board of Directors of the New England Regional Turf Conference & Show for another magnificent event. The educational sessions were of the highest quality, with many national renowned speakers. And while nationally most trade shows in all industries were below normal in the post-September 11 world, this show actually grew. The Conference and Show is a wonderful asset to anyone involved in turfgrass management in the Northeast.

**Jim Fitzroy**  
President, GCSANE

*The GCSANE, through its publicity committee, has sent a press release to all news outlets warning of the steps superintendents may need to take if we don't receive significant rainfall in the spring months.*

## Meet host superintendent Arthur Silva, CGCS, Belmont C.C.

The Scholarship & Benevolence Tournament is always an exceptional day for the membership and this year's tournament May 6 will continue that tradition. Arthur Silva, CGCS, will be our host and the members will enjoy a great day of golf at Belmont Country Club. This year marks the 10th year for this particular tournament and a special year, as a memorial to Gary Luccini.

Arthur is a longtime and active member of the GCSANE. He was an association trustee from 1995-1999, and at present serves as finance chairman. He is very dedicated to his work and his time at Bel-

mont C.C. He practically grew up there, and has worked in various capacities for the past 31 years. He started working as greenskeeper for Belmont C.C. a few years

### HOST PROFILE

after graduating from Lowell Trade High School. He continued as greens-keeper until 1973, and then moved up to assistant superintendent. In 1982, he became superintendent at Belmont C.C. and has been there ever since. In 1988 he became a certified golf course superintendent.

Belmont C.C. is a private 18-hole, Donald Ross-designed course which opened in 1918. It's a par-71 with greens of velvet/poa mix. The tees are bent/poa mix with 26 acres of fairway also made up of bent/poa mix. There are 120 acres of rough which have a blue fescue mix.

Arthur has been married almost as long as he has been at Belmont C.C. He and his wife, Mary, have been married for 30 years. They have two children, Marc (28), and Christine (23). When Arthur is not at Belmont C.C., he enjoys playing soccer and a good game of golf.



# With impending drought crisis in New England, it's time to prepare water use – and PR – strategy

by Bob Healey

By now I'm sure you've heard on the news or read the newspapers the growing concern with the lack of rainfall we in Massachusetts are experiencing. Since last fall, our rainfall total is some 15 inches below normal. The lack of winter snow cover throughout the New England region only exacerbates the issue.

During the March 21, 2002 regional conference hosted by the United States Golf Association, Duane LeVangie, Manager of Water Programs for the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), discussed the impending water crises in Massachusetts.

Our state monitors water levels and usage using a (1-5) scale, with level-1 meaning no water issues and level-5 indicating drought conditions. We currently are at level-3 statewide, indicating a "drought watch." LeVangie noted that unless we receive substantial rains over the next few months, he envisions the state moving to level-4, "drought warning," before summer. A statewide "drought warning" level-4 requires cities and towns, among other requirements, to cut water consumption by an immediate 50 percent.

*Massachusetts law allows each of its 350 cities and towns to formulate their own regulations and restrictions as the local water purveyor. Thus each city and town will enforce their own unique regulations.*

Massachusetts is unique in its methods of water control. Unlike most states, Massachusetts law allows each of its 350 cities and towns to formulate their own regulations and restrictions as the local water purveyor. Thus each city and town

## WATER USE

will enforce their own unique regulations. Expect regulations to range from 100 percent ban in the use of automatic sprinkler systems, to restrictions regarding days to water (even or odd), hours of operation, withdrawal limits, or any combination thereof. Also, be aware that the local cities and towns may, under their own guidelines, implement varying levels of restrictions at any time prior to the DEP issuing a level-four declaration.

Do not think since your water source is non-potable, you have no concerns. Massachusetts regulations allow cities and towns to restrict non-potable water consumption and/or withdrawal rates. Your wells, ponds, rivers, and streams are not immune to these potential restrictions.

Every golf course superintendent should expect some level of water use restrictions in 2002. Superintendents should develop a pro-active approach regarding watering as we enter this growing season with their owners, greens chairmen, and membership.

Immediately inform your membership, greens chairman, and owner of the present situation and the consequences of potential "drastic actions" required by water restrictions to golf course maintenance and conditions this year.

Develop a hierarchy of golf course water requirements from greens, tees, approaches, fairways, bunkers, nurseries, non-playable areas, roughs, plant beds, and other ground irrigation. Use this hierarchy reversed, when required to restrict water consumption.

Review your course, expand existing "non-maintained" areas, and propose new "non-maintained" areas. Talk to the membership about raising the height of cut to roughs, fairways, tees, and greens

to encourage deeper roots and reduce water requirements. Forewarn membership to expect some turf areas to go brown or dormant this season.

Highlight to your membership your pro-active approach and steps you are taking now to minimize and react to the impact of expected water restrictions. Information delivered now to the membership, their understanding of the present "drought watch," and the ramifications to their course of a level-4 "drought warning" should help ease you and your club through this drought situation and prevent a surprised or upset membership.

Hopefully, this spring delivers much-needed rains. A big late-season snowstorm would be very welcome. Be pro-active in your watering approach this spring, encourage the roots to grow deep, water only when needed, and only what's necessary.

Bob Healey

Irrigation Management and Services

*Information delivered now to the membership, their understanding of the present "drought watch," and the ramifications to their course of a level-4 "drought warning" should help ease you and your club through this drought situation and prevent a surprised or upset membership.*



# New England Turf Conference a record-breaker

By Gary Sykes

We recently held the 5th New England Regional Turfgrass Conference & Show at the R.I. Convention Center on March 5-7, 2002. This year's show was the largest, with 466 booths representing over 200 companies and record attendance of over 2500 paid attendees.

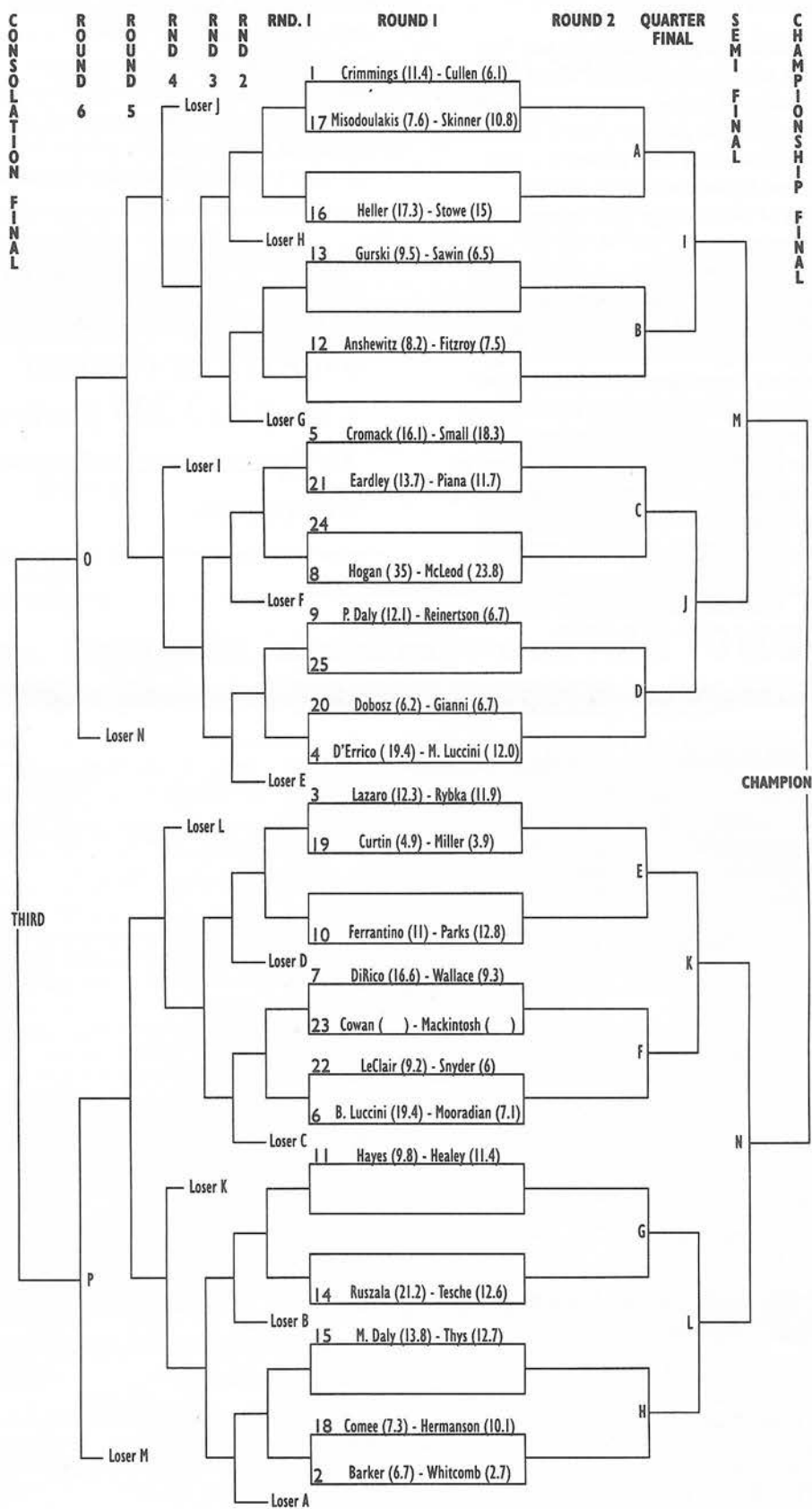
## CONFERENCE NEWS

It has certainly been a successful and exciting endeavor to be part of over the last 5-plus years. We have had the pleasure of seeing the show increase in size from 355 booths and 1800 attendees in 1998, and now to those numbers we have seen this year through the hard work of our show manager David Rosenberg and his staff. We have had the opportunity to listen to excellent celebrity speakers in Jim Palmer, Doug Flutie, Joe Theismann, Jim Nantz, and this year with Capt. Scott O'Grady. They have shared precious experiences with us and have encouraged everyone who would listen to build professional relationships with your employers and workers; close personal relationships with your families; and they even have slipped in a word or two about your relationship with deity.

We have seen interest grow in New York and other states about our success and the quality of our education programs. We have had many speakers across the country and world come and share their research and information with us. Sometimes we've even had four education sessions going at the same time. Over 200 attendees took advantage of the four seminars that were offered. Attendees have received many re-certification credits for pesticide licenses and association certification programs. The receptions and social events have gotten even better each year. A conference bookstore, and the sale of turfgrass management books at discounted prices, has been a successful addition to the show. Turf management products were made available

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## Gary Luccini Memorial 4-Ball Championship





## 2002 N.E. Turf Conference & Show draws 2500 attendees

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at discounted prices through our first Silent Auction. Exciting raffles of TVs and stereos, and friendly competition in the driving ranges, golf simulators, and putting contests have added fun and interest to the show atmosphere.

All of these things have made the show one to be proud of, but the greatest beneficiary, besides the individuals who have attended, has been turfgrass research. Since the inception of the show five years ago, the New England Regional Turfgrass Foundation has donated over \$330,000 toward turfgrass research and education. We are confident that local turfgrass managers are already able to do their jobs more efficiently, more effectively, and of course with a higher degree of safety, through research that has been

funded through this foundation. As we wrap-up the final issues of this year's show, we prepare for the next. Your input to the board of directors is valuable. Each association has two members on our board. Please take the time to talk with them, which will help the foundation

*Since the inception of the show five years ago, NERTF has donated over \$330,000 toward turfgrass research and education.*

continue to enjoy the success that has brought it to this point. Just a reminder: it was not one man's dream that put all this together, but it has been the collaborative efforts of many people with similar vision.

The NERTF Board of Directors wishes to thank everyone who participated in this year's 5th anniversary Conference and Show, especially those who donated to our first Silent Auction. Over \$3600 was raised for turf research! We thank all our sponsors who helped our efforts in making this year's conference and show second to none. The keynote speaker, the show program, the coffee and Danish near registration, the trade show lunch, and other sponsorships are all very much appreciated by those in attendance. Only 358 days left till next year's show. Lets work together to make it our best yet!!!

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

### MEMBERSHIP

**Proposed for Membership:** Ben Neuman, Superintendent, Swanson Meadows Golf Club; Michael Guiney, Assistant Superintendent, Wayland Country Club; John Rourke, Assistant Superintendent, Poquoy Brook Golf Club; Stephen O'Brien, 2nd Assistant Superintendent, Salem Country Club; Ciccarella Landscaping, Friend, Woburn, Mass.; Winding Brook Turf Farm, Friend, Wethersfield, Conn.; Norfolk Power Equipment, Friend, Wrentham, Mass.

**Welcome New Members:** Christopher Ryder, Superintendent, Sankaty Head Golf Club; Coley Jason Penrose, Assistant Superintendent, Sankaty Head Golf Club; Mark Klimm, Superintendent, LeBaron Hills Country Club; Kris Jamrog, Superintendent, Beaver Brook Golf Club; Robert B. Skinner, Assistant Superintendent, Fresh Pond Golf Club; Derek Mannion, Assistant Superintendent, Red Tail Golf Club; Manny Mihailides, Affiliate, DGM Systems.

### INFORMATION

**UMass Turf Research Field Day** will be Wednesday, June 19, 2002 at the UMass Turf Research Facility, River Road, South Deerfield, Mass. Pre-register before June 14. For additional information visit the web site at [www.umassturf.org](http://www.umassturf.org).

**J.C. Girouard**, formally superintendent of Fresh Pond Golf Course, is now superintendent at Meadowbrook Golf Course.

**Bob Dembek**, formally at Stow Acres, is now at Lexington Golf Club.

**Strategic Planning Day** will be held on April 26th, 2002. Michael Iacono, CGCS has formed a committee to meet with a representative from the GCSAA on developing a mission statement and 5-year plan for GCSANE. Members of the committee include: Jim Fitzroy, CGCS; Pat Daly, CGCS; Ron Dobosz Jr.; Bob Ruzala; Kip Tyler, CGCS; Ron Kirkman; Bob DiRico, CGCS; Paul Miller, CGCS; and Steve Gregg.

**The Super Speaks Out** returns in the next issue of the Newsletter. Please e-mail any suggestions for topics or questions to editor Ken Crimmings at: [kccrimmings@charter.net](mailto:kccrimmings@charter.net).

**Congratulations** to Jim Favreau and his wife Jackie on the recent arrival of twin boys, Patrick and Ethan.

**Best wishes** to Brian Cowan on a speedy recovery.

### POSITION OPENINGS

**Golf Course Mechanic, The Blissful Meadows Golf Club, Uxbridge, Mass.** The Blissful Meadows Golf Club is a semi-private 18-hole golf course. The position is a full-time, year round

position for the right person. Individual must have knowledge of small engine servicing, hydraulics, reel servicing, and diesel engines. Compensation is commensurate with experience and includes two weeks paid vacation. Position is open until filled. Send resume to: Joseph Wagner, GCS, Blissful Meadows Golf Club, 801 Chockalog Road, Uxbridge, MA 01569.

**Assistant Superintendent/Mechanic, Tewksbury Country Club, Tewksbury, Mass.** This full-time position as golf course mechanic includes frequent mowing and supervision of a five-man crew for nine-hole privately-owned public golf course that hosts 40,000 rounds per year. At least two years in golf course equipment maintenance and repair is required. Salary and benefits commensurate with experience. Deadline: April 30, 2002. Send resume to: Mike Young, Superintendent, Tewksbury Country Club, 85 Livingston Street, Tewksbury, MA 01876.

**Superintendent, Kingswood Golf Club** is a 20-hole semi-private course in Wolfeboro, N.H. Qualifications include superintendent or assistant experience, proven success in staff management, experience in communicating and working with a board of directors, and experience with irrigation systems. A degree in turf management is a plus. Must have or obtain a N.H. pesticide license. Send resume to: Kingswood Golf Club, P.O. Box 687, Wolfeboro, NH 03894; fax: (603) 569-3561; E-Mail: [kgc@worldpath.net](mailto:kgc@worldpath.net).



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Cut-away view

Patent Pending



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- 6.5 to 21.6 gpm

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- Interchangeable nozzles
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### G880



- Long Distance Rotor
- Through-the-Top Servicing
- Full circle
- Interchangeable nozzles
- 3 1/2" pop-up height
- 67' to 88' radius
- 22.5 to 57.9 gpm

## Free Irrigation Analysis

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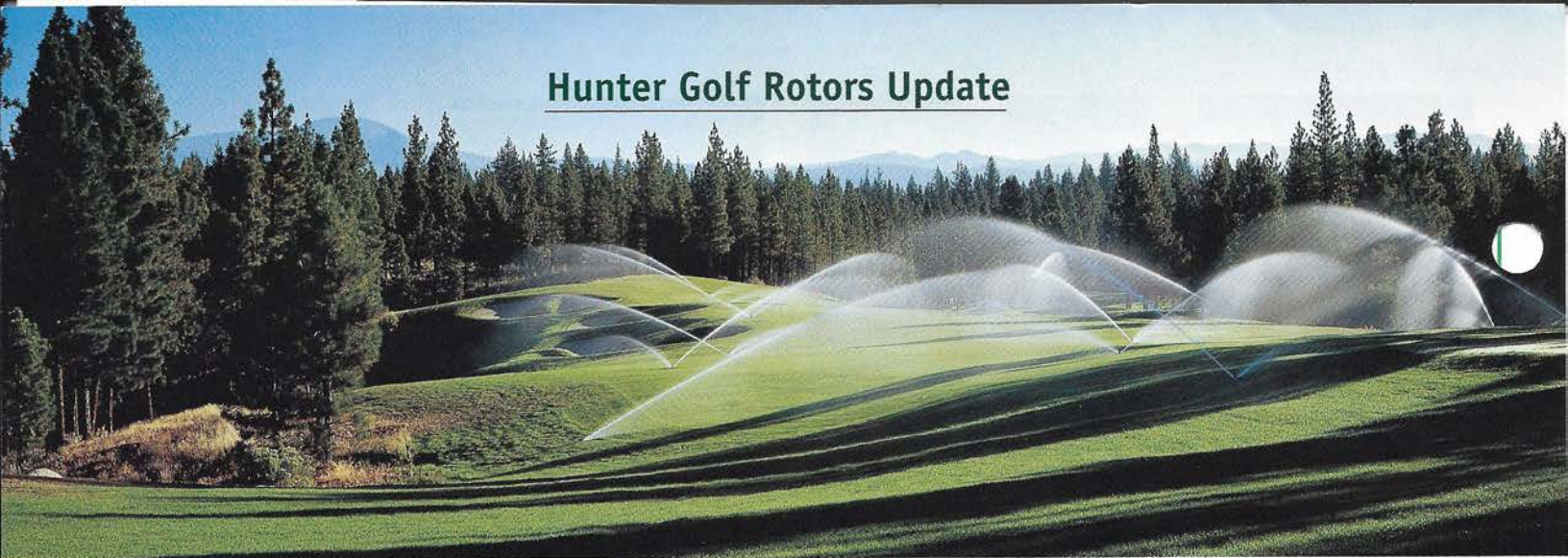
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# Meet host superintendent Thomas Ackley, CGCS, Juniper Hill G.C.

The April meeting of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of New England will be held at Juniper Hill Golf Course in Northborough, Mass. Tom Ackley, CGCS, will be our host for the day. Tom is well known throughout the association, having been a member for the past 13 years. Tom became a Certified Golf Course Superintendent in 1995.

Juniper Hill G.C. is a busy public facility comprised of two 18-hole courses, Riverside and Lakeside. Riverside opened its front-nine in 1931 and was designed by Homer C. Darling. The back-nine was designed by Geoffery Cornish and opened in 1954. It is a par-71 with a slope of 123. The challenging fairways consist of Poa/Kentucky bluegrass/rye. The tees are seeded to poa/bentgrass. There are 42

acres of fairway and 2.5 acres of tees. Greens, which are Poa/bentgrass, average 4000 sq. ft.

## HOST PROFILE

The Lakeside course was designed by Phil Wogan, and opened in 1991. It is also a par-71 with slope of 127. The greens, which average 4500 sq. ft., are Providence creeping bentgrass. The 22 acres of fairway and 2.5 acres of tees were seeded to a mix of rye, colonial bent, Kentucky bluegrass, and creeping red fescue.

Tom has been at Juniper Hill since 1989, with Al Sanders handing him the reins in 1990. Tom actually started working there as a caddy in 1961. He began his turf career under the guidance of his dad,

Glen Ackley, at Westoro C.C. in 1971. After graduating from the University of Massachusetts in 1975 with a B.S. in forestry, Tom stayed in the turf field waiting for the job market to open up in forestry. That never happened. He was superintendent at Westboro C.C. in 1978, then became his father's assistant at Marlboro C.C. Tom stayed at that position until 1989, when his career began at Juniper Hill.

During his time at Juniper Hill, Tom has participated in the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program. He is an avid bird-watcher. He has also stayed active with environmental issues, including employee safety and right-to-know, storage/disposal/recycling, IPM, UST, and water quality/withdrawal issues.

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