



# TURF TIMES

The 60th ANNUAL MICHIGAN TURFGRASS CONFERENCE will be held Monday thru Wednesday, JANUARY 15th - 17th, LANSING, MICH.

Volume 18 No. 11 [Jan 1990]

The program has been extended to three full days. Registration opens at 7:30 A. M., Monday, January 15. Basic Schools begin at 9:00 A. M. Monday. Since Basic Schools are available on a first come basis, first served basis, we encourage you to pre-register for these schools. If you pre-register you will find shorter lines as well as a price advantage.

The opening Research Reports Session has been moved to Monday afternoon which will be followed by the Michigan Turfgrass Foundation Annual Business meeting. There will be opportunity to raise turf management questions which have come up in 1989 at the end of the Research Reports Session or during the MTF Annual Business Meeting.

There are so many interesting subjects, speakers, Vendor's Appreciation Hour on Tuesday from 5:00 to 7:30 P.M., 11 basic schools, ( 6 on Monday 5 on Wednesday), annual meeting M.T.F., opportunities for employment and so much more that anyone in the green industry cannot afford to not be there.

The actual location is the **Clarion Hotel and Conference Center**, on south Cedar Street of Lansing.

If there is any question or need of information, please call Mike Saffel (517/353-9022 or Kay Patrick (517/321-1660).

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## GCSAA,S INTERNATIONAL SHOW DRAWS GOLF COURSE INDUSTRY TO ORLANDO

Orlando, one of Florida's hottest golfing destinations, is set to host and expected 15,000 attendees for the 61st International Golf Course Conference and Trade Show. The Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA), sponsor of the annual event, is predicting that new records for both attendance and trade show participation will be set with the 1990 Conference and Show, which is set for Feb. 19-26.

Exhibit space at the newly expanded Orange County Convention/Civic Center was 95% sold by the end of October. More than 70 new exhibitors are already scheduled to display their lines at the 1990 show. The total number of exhibitors for the 1990 show is expected to be between 475-500. The 1989 GCSAA Trade Show in Anaheim, CA. featured 463 exhibitors from the United States and around the world.

Millions of dollars worth of turfgrass equipment and golf course management products will be on display during the Trade Show, which is set for Feb. 24-26. The latest innovations to help golf course superintendents stay on top of their profession will be unveiled at the two-and-one half day show, recognized by **Tradeshow Week** as one of the 200 largest trade shows.

(continued on page 2)



# NORTHERN MICHIGAN TURF MANAGERS ASSOCIATION

3733 APOLLO DRIVE • TRAVERSE CITY, MICHIGAN 49684 • 616-943-8343

(Continued from page 1)

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C. E. "Tuck" Tate  
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49635  
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Irrigation equipment, drainage systems, geotextiles, seed, turf chemicals, safety products and all manner of turf maintenance equipment will be featured in the exhibit hall, along with the whole gamut of golf course accessories.

The 1989 GCSAA Conference and Show drew more than 14,000, including more than 1,000 international participants representing 39 countries outside the United States.



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## YOUR DIRECTORS FOR 1990 AND THEIR ASSIGNMENTS

Many of you will be contacted to give of your time and talent to help make our programs successful, so be prepared and hopefully be willing to give of yourself. Thanks.

November 8, 1989

Dear Board Member:

You have volunteered to serve on the following N.M.T.M.A. 1990 season committees. As discussed in the last Board meeting it is the responsibility of the committee chairman to pick their individual workers. It is also a Board objective for 1990 to involve as many people from the membership at large as possible enabling more people in the association to become active. A committee should have a minimum of three members.

### Program & Golf

Paul Holmes (chairman)  
Bob Steinhurst CGCS  
Dave Little CGCS

### M.T.F. Benefit Day

Charlie Menefee CGCS (chairman)  
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### NMMA Fund Raiser

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Brian Holmes

### GCSAA Liaison

Charlie Menefee CGCS

### MTF Liaison

David Longfield CGCS

BE ACTIVE - Remember this is your Association and it will only be as good as you make it.

Tom Reed  
Executive Secretary

## BEHIND THE GREEN BY JEFF HOLMES

Happy Holidays fellow Turf Members. Having recently been elected, President of the NMTMA, I would like to explain our future plans for the upcoming year.

As each of you know, our organization has progressed forward each and every year. The upcoming year is no exception to the rule, and we the board, would even like to think that it is a pace setting year for future years to follow.

Just to mention a few of the highlights for this year, they are as follows:

- Fine tune and resubmitt our NMTMA survey.
- Look for new topic speakers for our monthly meetings.
- Make our chemical disposal day happen.
- Continue to improve our newsletter publication.

These items are only the start of what the board is working on. Don't forget if you have any input please contact a boardmember.

I am happy to be the President of the NMTMA and can assure you that the board and myself are going to work hard toward moving our association forward in the industry.

The holiday season was kicked off this year with a beautiful Christmas party for the Mid Michigan and Northern Michigan Turf Managers Association. This joint party was a couples get together held at Garland, on December 2nd. A good time was had by all that attended. The dinner and socializing time was definitely the focus of the get together but this was also accented by superb service, excellent lodging accomodations, cross country skiing, and horse drawn sleigh rides. The activities were limited only by your imagination. A great big thanks goes to the Mid Michigan group for organizing this party and inviting us to participate. If you didn't attend this year you won't want to miss the party again next year, sign up early.

The Ohio Turfgrass Foundation Conference was held in Columbus, Ohio, December 4-7. This conference was well worth the time taken out of your schedule and the cost was approximately \$300.00 if sharing room expenses.

I would definitely recommend this conference if you are unable to attend the National. The topics of discussion were all current and very informative. If desired you can make most of your contacts for chemical updates and new equipment at the Trade Show. No, it is not as big as the National Show but it sure is a close second. Yes, it is bigger than the MTF Conference.

The MTF Conference is our next educational update and I will look forward to seeing you there. Don't forget you only get out of the conferences what you put into it. If you don't open the book you'll never know what it's about.





*A Reflective Overview:*

## On People, Politics And Wisdom At Work

*Every season  
brings new dimension  
to the human comedy.  
Keeping it all in perspective  
is the key  
to avoiding  
tragic endings.*

If you look hard enough from the clubhouse out across number three and due south, you might spot someone standing under an old oak tree, surveying all 18 holes in his kingdom. That's me.

It's about 20 minutes before the onslaught of golfers and about three hours after the arrival of the crew that works on the course. Everything's been done that needs to be prior to the day's play. With a little luck, the only thing that will be making the daily golfers hot will be the summer sun.

With my back against the oak tree as I scan the scene while waiting for the warm Southern breeze to dry the dew off the grass, I can't avoid chuckling at the sight of a golfer emerging from the clubhouse wearing kelly green pants, yellow socks, an orange shirt and \$175 golf shoes sporting large leather tassels. He wouldn't be caught dead in that garb anywhere but here.

Why do they wear that stuff? It tends

to make me stand out like a sore thumb when I play in the conservative clothes I favor — but I guess that's part of the price we pay in the larger interest of our profession today. . . .

I should mention that I have become very fond of this old oak tree during the four years I have been here. The only time the old oak ever let me down was once when it allowed a woodpecker to disrupt my thinking by making an unwarranted deposit on my brand-new lime-green golf cap. The rest of the time we've spent together has been of great value to me professionally and emotionally. This tree has been here longer than any of the rest of us and for that alone, it would have earned my respect.

Upon my arrival at the course shortly after first light on this particular warm, cloudless morning, I found myself to be in a particularly reflective mood. It was

probably just as well that there weren't any members around then, because I developed an irrepressible urge to ask that oak tree a direct question. "Tree," I said, "superintendents, club managers and golf professionals come and go with the seasons. How is it that you get to stay? What makes you so special that

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**"Son, I've been able  
to stay around  
for 100 years  
for good reason. . ."**

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they built around you rather than remove you?"

Do you know what that tree said — or at least what I thought it said?

"Son," it said, "I've been able to stay around for 100 years for good reason. I don't make a fuss about who sits in my

(continued to page 5)

Wisdom  
(continued from page 4)

shade. I don't comment on who picks up my fallen limbs for firewood. I never get involved in arguments that take place under me.

"Birds live off me and peck at me constantly. Squirrels run all over me and folks frequently knife me in the bark. I just go on and grow — and forget it. I guess it's just all in the way I play the 'politics' that go with being here."

Just about the time the tree and I had really gotten down to discussing country club survival techniques, one of the members — 84 years old, retired and rich — suddenly appeared out of nowhere. He narrowly missed the old oak with his golf car and spilled a beer as one of the tires dropped off the edge of a bunker. I silently pondered the likelihood of his making it as far as the first tee, not to mention the full 18. Picking up his now empty beer can, he gave me his customary "What're-you-gonna-do-about-it" look, to which I responded, "Have a nice day."

Have you ever heard an oak tree laugh?

What had put me into such a reflective mood on this particular morning was an incident involving a longtime friend. He had managed the turf at one of the more affluent clubs everyone always talks about as being the closest thing to perfection one could ever hope for.

This friend had all his professional tickets punched and had an impressive background. A graduate of a major university with a degree in agronomy and turf management, he had been a scholarship student with high grades and had apprenticed under a championship course superintendent before he was selected — out of a field of more than a dozen highly qualified applicants — for the high-visibility, prestigious job.

A Certified Golf Course Superintendent for several years, he kept the course well-manicured and free of weeds, with lush green turf and reliably plush playing conditions. Now, combine all the background factors with his being nice-looking, well-dressed, mild-mannered and eager to please, and you would think that my friend would have been a permanent fixture wherever he worked.

So why mention this obviously high-performing and professional turf manager? Well, I just heard very early this morning that his green chairman handed him his walking papers — my friend has been fired.

What did he do wrong? He failed to incorporate one thing into his job that would have done more to ensure that he kept it than anything else. He didn't have a friend who could convey to him the essence of the "oak tree" philosophy concerning professional



longevity.

So what is my friend the wise old oak tree saying? I think it would best be interpreted this way: "You can be an expert in your field and accepted as a 'good ole boy' where that's part of the local culture and you may even play a good game of golf — but if you want to develop any longevity as a superintendent, other manager or golf professional at a country club, you'd better be able to play your best at the dominant game of 'work place politics.'"

Work place politics can be a monster with many heads and with countless ways to inflict lethal wounds upon even the most professional manager. Many

a dream and professional aspiration have been shattered in their infancy because some inexperienced but well-meaning superintendent, club manager or golf pro has gotten into a conflict with an influential member or committee person.

Of course, most clubs may deny the existence of politics in the work place. But politics can always be found in any work setting. It's not uncommon for politics to be hidden just beneath the surface in even the most relaxed atmosphere, waiting like a land mine for any unsuspecting employee to make the wrong step. Some places certainly have more of these professional land mines than others, but every club in the world has a few.

I often think about a humorous conversation of some time back, when an exasperated assistant superintendent mentioned that his first golf course would be one without any politics involved. He was quickly disillusioned by his boss, who told him that when that course was discovered, they would be competing for the job.

Every once in a while, when I am leaning on the old oak tree, it will tell me about something that transpired in its shade during seasons long past. I remember the tree once telling me about an altercation that took place between a longtime member, who happened to be a dentist, and a veteran superintendent. The dentist was unloading a grievance when the superintendent interrupted him with, "Look, you don't grow grass, and I won't pull teeth." Now, I suppose that little bit of expressed wrath made the superintendent feel better — but the dentist had the last word: "If I ever get into a position to fire you, I will." He did and . . . he did.

A little diplomacy has kept more key salaried employees on the job than any amount of skill could ever do. That's another way of saying "learn to communicate."

The wise employee will never assume that he is communicating until his request or message is confirmed by some response, such as a member repeating the message and tacking on a "good idea, we'll do it." Of course, another verbal sign that your message has been received may arrive when you are informed that you have been fired.

Club managers, superintendents and  
(continued to page 6,

golf pros must be actors and not reactors. When their actions are criticized or when rules are violated by members



who misinterpret the reason for them, the employees will either act or they will react. When they react, they usually risk stimulating opposition. When they act in the proper manner, they usually gain support.

Consider the following type of reaction and the underlying messages:

Following a hard week of long hours on a very expensive project, a superintendent observed a member cutting across soggy fairways and even knocking down one of the 36 signs that read "Golf Cars Restricted To Paths." The member drove right up to the superintendent, got out of the golf car, assumed a combative stance and yelled, "Why in the hell are the cars restricted to the paths?" With righteous indignation, the superintendent yelled back, "Because we pick one day a month to @#! people off, and this is the day!" It sure felt good, I bet, but it sure was the wrong thing to say.

What that member was really saying

was this: "I spend a lot of money as a stockholder in this club. It costs me a bundle to play golf and I don't want to walk when I play."

What the superintendent was saying was this: "You hired me for my expertise in turf management, and I am doing what you hired me to do. I'm sorry if my job interferes with your personal comfort."

In such a conflict, the superintendent may be right — but the member is likely to win. In exchange for getting in the final word, the superintendent may earn a permanent enemy.

Many club members live on a fixed income, and although that income may be in the five- or six-digit range, it is fixed nonetheless. Many of these individuals — like many others today — live at about 101 percent of their income.

The wise salaried manager will remember that money is just as important to an independently wealthy person as it is to one not so affluent. If you are perceived in any way as "ripping him off," the offended member will fight for his rights like a cornered bobcat. Try never to become the central object in a discussion of withering benefits. You'll find that it is easier to replace the cause of dissension than to deal with the grumbling.

One more example to drive the point home:

At the end of a particularly grueling week, a club manager was approached by a member while eating at the grill. The member thought that maybe it would be a good idea to offer a breakfast menu with some biscuits or breakfast sandwiches. The tired, frustrated manager's retort won him an adversary: "What do you think this is? This is a country club, not a fast food restaurant!" That manager is no longer eating at the grill.

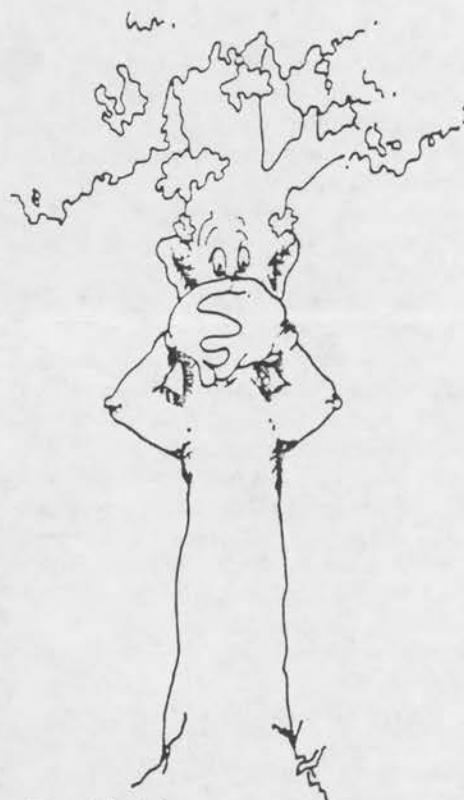
The old tree and I have made one key observation for all salaried managers to consider: The club belongs to the members. They run it, they use it, they paid for it, they are paying for it and they pay your salary. If they vote to stain the greens in multicolored hues for next Easter, may I suggest that you might be wise to begin considering how to do it? (And don't call the affluent, eccentric gentleman whose idea it was in the first place a "dirty old man," even to someone else. The country club

grapevine is second to none in the world.)

So, here I am, once again leaning against my old oak, reminiscing about all that water under the political bridge. As I think about all the superintendents, club managers and golf professionals who have bitten the proverbial dust, I am watching a familiar little old man, littering the course with beer cans and running over clearly marked sprinkler heads. To my right, one of the senior member's teen-age grandsons is attempting to stab one of our algae-eating fish as it tries to feed. The cocky young kid has just looked over at me in defiance, and I can tell he has been briefed about who runs things around the club. How I would love to deposit him in the water hazard he is vandalizing.

No, on second thought, I think I will go over and smile at him instead. I swear that old tree just laughed again as an acorn struck me on the golf cap.

*(The preceding was submitted for adaptation in GCM by Jim Harris, CGCS, of Tennessee in collaboration with Mike LaRiviere, a placement officer for Roth Young Personnel, Memphis. It should be noted that the article is based on the cumulative professional experience of the two men. Harris has almost three decades of experience on different golf courses. The article is not intended to reflect upon any single club or its members.)*



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Golf Course Management/May 1987



## PRUNING GUIDE

The following is a pruning guide adapted from the September 1989 "Dundee Leaflet" newsletter by Dundee Nursery and Landscaping, and the Minnesota Extension Service publication "Pruning Trees and Shrubs" (AG-FO-0628) by Mervin C. Eisel, Extension Horticulturist.

Common questions asked at the Extension office and at local nurseries is when to prune a particular kind of shrub or tree. Hopefully this guide will aid in knowing the correct time of year to prune for optimum effect. Any dead, diseased, or damaged branches can be pruned as soon as they are noticed even though the time of year may be less than desirable for pruning.

### KEY:

- 1 - WINTER: December, January, February. This helps prevent possible disease and insect infestations. "Bleeding" of sap doesn't hurt trees.
- 2 - SPRING: before growth starts. Usually because flowers on new wood or because plant is grown for foliage effect.
- 3 - EARLY IN GROWING SEASON: generally May-early June.
- 4 - DURING GROWING SEASON: pines should be pruned before candles (new growth) have fully opened and become woody. Usually in early May.
- 5 - RIGHT AFTER FLOWERING: usually done because plant flowers on old wood.
- 6 - SUMMER: best time is when it is not rainy or humid. Locust should be done after July 15.
- 7 - FALL: best when plant has lost its leaves for the year.

PLANT	PRUNE	PLANT	PRUNE	PLANT	PRUNE
Almond, Flowering	5	Elder	2	Plum (fruit tree)	1
Apple	1	Elm	1	Plum (ornamental)	5
Apricot	1,5	Euonymus,		Poplar	1,6,7
Arborvitae	3	(Burningbush)	2	Potentilla	2
Ash	1,6,7	Falsespirea	2	Privet	5
Aspen	1,6,7	Fir	2	Rhododendron	5
Azaleas	5	Forsythia	5	Rugosa (shrub) rose	2,5
Barberry	2	Ginkgo	2	Serviceberry	5
Birch	1,6,7	Hackberry	1	Smoketree	2
Boxwood	3	Hawthorn	1	Snowberry	2
Buckeye	2,7	Hemlock	3	Spirea (Anthony	
Buckthorn	2	Honeylocust	1,6	Waterer; Goldflame;	
Cherry, Canada Red	1,5	Honeysuckle	5	Curly Leaf; Daphne;	
Cherry, Meteor;		Hydrangea	2	Froebeli)	2
North Star	1,2	Ironwood	1,2,6	Spirea (Arguta: Fairy	
Cherry, Nanking	5	Juniper	3	Queen; Snowmound;	
Cherry Plum	1,2	Lilac	5	Prunifolia;	
Chokeberry	5	Linden	1,6,7	Vanhoutte; Thunbergi)	5
Chokecherry	5	Magnolia	5	Spruce	2
Coffeetree,		Maple	1,6	Sumac	2
Kentucky	1,2,7	Mockorange	2	Tamarack	2
Coralberry	2	Mountain Ash	1	Tamarix	2
Corktree	1	Ninebark	2	Viburnum	5
Cotoneaster	1	Oak	1,7	Walnut	6
Crabapple	1	Olive, Russian	1	Weigela	2
Curant, Alpine	2	Pear	1	Willow	1,6,7
Deutzia	5	Peashrub	5	Winterberry	2
Dogwood	2	Pine	4	Yew	3

Credit: Minn. "Hole Notes".

*"Remember, a plant is a living thing, and should be treated accordingly. Unlike most living things, it has no way to make its needs known other than its appearance, which will reflect the kind of treatment it receives from its guardian — YOU!"*

AUTHOR UNKNOWN

# NEWS RELEASE

December 1989

National Institute on Park  
and Grounds Management  
PO Box 1936  
Appleton, WI 54913  
(414/733-2301)

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 12 & 13, 1990 are the dates for the Athletic Turf Management Seminar in East Lansing, MI.

Topics are geared toward the area and will provide an update on the latest techniques and methods involved in the management of athletic fields.

### Scheduled topics include:

Construction and Reconstruction: Do It Right the First Time, Dr. Paul Rieke  
Selecting Grasses for Seeding and Overseeding, Dr. J.N. Rogers  
Weed Control Programs for Athletic Fields, Dr. Bruce Branham  
Fertilizing for Healthy, Wear Tolerant Turf, Dr. Paul Rieke  
Compaction and Wear Effects on Athletic Fields, Dr. J.N. Rogers.  
Mowing, Overseeding and Reestablishment Practices, Dr. Bruce Branham  
Cultivation, Irrigation and Scheduling, Dr. Paul Rieke  
Limited Resources, Small Work Force, But Big Results, Art Bushen  
The Farmington Hills Sports Turf Program, John Maddern  
Midland's Management Program, Lon Andersen

Continuing Education Units (CEU's) will be available to those wishing to participate. It is a good opportunity to show supervisors your willingness to improve. For further information, contact National Institute on Park and Grounds Management at the address or phone number above.

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### SUPERINTENDENT POSITION AVAILABLE:

Where: Skyline Golf Club, Black River Falls, Wisconsin  
Number of holes: Was 9 holes however 9 more completed in 1989  
Basic requirements: Man or woman experienced with at least a two year Associate degree in Turf Management and is a golfer.  
Salary: In the mid 20's with fringe benefits and provisions for local and national attendance at conference and educational seminars.  
Contact: Thomas E. Lister, 920 Fillmore St., P. O. Box 370, Black River Falls, WI 54615 Phone: (715) 284-7453 FAX (715) 284-4780  
Background: What our community may not be able to offer in salary we can offer in quality of life. Black River Falls is a small community located on Interstate 94 about halfway between Minneapolis/St. Paul and Madison. We are a prosperous rural city and offer wonderful opportunities to young families.