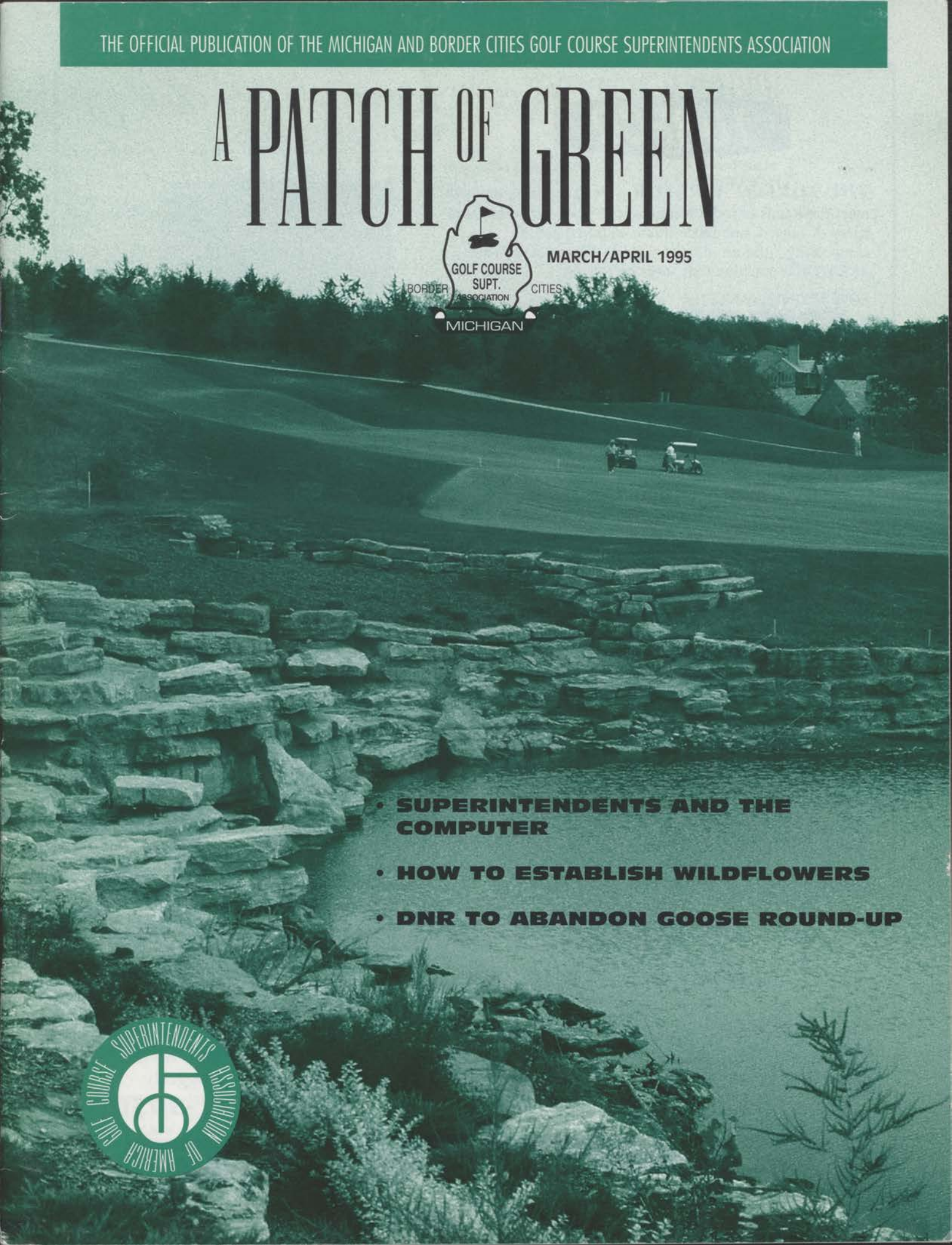


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MARCH/APRIL 1995

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## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**April 24**

West Shore - Canadian Joint Meeting

**May 19**

Special Olympics Fundraiser - Bald Mountain

**June 12**

Cattails

**July 10**

To be announced

**August 7**

The Orchards - invite a member

**September 11**

Greystone

**October 24**

Annual Meeting - Maple Lane

**December 11**

Year in Review - Birmingham

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# on par **with the** president



While I have just a few more weeks of quiet time, I was peering out my office window watching a group of birds feeding at our feeder and catching a glimpse of four deer running across #2 fairway. I reflect back to January at the Michigan Turf Conference Research. One topic of great interest was how to keep our environment safe while maintaining high standards of turf quality. The updated research is strong and interesting.

The study of groundwater contamination is one research project that can provide golf course superintendents with information to answer many of the questions being asked by our clients. With the use of four monolith drainage lysimeters constructed by the research team, it was shown that less than 20 percent of nitrogen applied to the turf grass plant ever reaches below the thatch layer. The nitrogen that is present in the soil is largely organic and must be considered immobile; however, it is available to the plant. The amount of leachate found was less than .01 percent of nitrogen content. The turfgrass plant, consisting of chipping, verdure and thatch, uses 100 percent of all nitrogen applied.

The potential exposure to golfers and golf course maintenance personnel was another interesting point. Using daconel 2787, the research status of seven body parts were tested. Four were below limits, and the highest levels were detected on the hands. Reading in milligrams/hour, a measurement of .1160 was found — well below standards. Also, virtually no risk of inhalation was found to either golfers or maintenance crew workers.

Another very interesting and innovative study from one of our peers is being researched at the Meadows Club at Grand Valley State University. Although the course was not yet under construction, Superintendent Kathy Antaya began studying the water quality of three sources entering and leaving the property. She has compiled good information and is continuing the study while performing everyday maintenance programs on the newly constructed course.

These three examples of research being conducted in Michigan proves that today's golf course managers are very involved and extremely interested in preserving our beautiful environment.

You will note, while reading the Board of Directors Committee assignments, I have added a new committee to the list. Mark McKinley will head up the Membership Relations Committee, which will pursue the many questions dealing with your membership. If you have any ideas, suggestions or questions, please contact Mark by calling the Detroit Golf Club.

I hope everyone has enjoyed their short time off from their hectic growing season and that you are ready to again work side by side with nature in our desire to produce high-quality and environmentally friendly spaces.

Jay Delcamp

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"Yeah, I know. I got stuck last time. I learned my lesson."

"Well, I'd also like to thank you for making your reservation so promptly. I see, by my records, you called the day you received the flyer. That way you didn't forget and we can have a "count" for the host. I can't tell you how many people wait till after the deadline date to make their reservation. Seems so inconsiderate to me, to everyone involved: the host, the club and the committee in charge. It also isn't too easy updating that list."

"Well, you know. I don't think the guys give it that much thought...until it's too late. They get busy...you know."

"I understand. It just doesn't take much time to be considerate."

"Guess I better go."

"Sorry for bending your ear. Just one of my pet peeves, I guess."

"Thanks, Kate."

"Anytime, Pete."

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# SUPERINTENDENTS ARE BECOMING COMPUTER LITERATE

by Mike Plague

It can cause more anxiety than a stretch of hot, humid August days and nights. But a growing number of superintendents are tackling the challenge of becoming "computer literate" and reaping the rewards.

"I think everyone should have a computer," says Kevin Dushane of Bloomfield Hills Country Club. "It's a great management tool if used correctly," echoes Jim Timmerman of Orchard Lake Country Club. Personal computers still were relatively new and expensive when Dushane, Timmerman and a handful of other Border Cities superintendents first started using them in their offices some eight years ago.

But the growth of computer-controlled irrigation systems and the continued drop in the price of computer equipment has spurred a dramatic increase in the number of superintendents now using computers.

"For not being a computer buff, I was surprised how much I had started to depend on it," says Steve Kolongowski, who gave up his computer when he moved from Washtenaw Country Club to The Captain's Club last season.

"If you don't use the computer, you can't maintain efficiency within your operation," says Jerry Faubel, Saginaw Country Club superintendent. Faubel has automated nearly every aspect of his organization in the seven years since he has been using a computer. In addition to the most common applications, such as budgeting and inventory tracking, Faubel has implemented more advanced uses, including:

- Computer-aided design (CAD) drawings of the entire course, including drainage and irrigation layouts
- An electronic time clock system which records employee hours and computes payroll information as employees punch in and out with credit card ID badges.

"The value of the computer becomes greater as more information is gathered," Faubel explains.

Quick access to information is often cited by superintendents as the greatest benefit of computerization. "It's a big filing system for me," says John Nowakowski of Great Oaks Country Club, a computer novice until three years ago. "If I want certain information, I can find it right away without searching through file cabinets."

When it comes to communicating information, the spell checking, grammar checking and desktop publishing capabilities of software programs can be invaluable. "I think it (computer) gives me a better professional image with my superiors," says Mike Jones of

Continued on page 11

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Lochmoor Country Club, who uses his computer to generate reports and budgets.

Automating chemical application and inventory records is almost a necessity to keep up with the paperwork created by today's regulatory environment. Nobody knows that better than Frank Bartlett, superintendent at Selfridge ANG Base. As a federal employee, Bartlett says he has had "at least eight major inspections" in the three years since he computerized his chemical record keeping. Bartlett says the computer has "kept him on top of compliance" and that the inspectors have been "totally amazed by the records that I have in my system."

Recording information into the computer system is the critical starting point, and often the most challenging aspect of computer use for a superintendent. "You have to keep up with the input of your data. If you don't, you can't analyze and use it," cautions Jim Timmerman.

To ensure that he doesn't "lose touch with employees or what's going on with the golf course," John Nowakowski uses a part-time secretary for data entry. Other superintendents, like Mike Jones, use the off-season to catch up on recording information. "As a superintendent, you need to be out on the course and not behind a desk," Jones says in agreement.

When it comes to weather forecasting, however, some superintendents have found that looking at a computer screen can be even more effective than being outdoors on the golf course.

"I've always felt that the less water the better, so I'm always tinkering with my irrigation programs," says Tom Gray of Franklin Hills Country Club, explaining how he uses the computer to closely monitor weather and his irrigation system. Armed with information that he receives via modem from an on-line weather service, Gray says he can make better irrigation and fertilization decisions.

"I've gotten as close as five minutes to predicting when a rainstorm is going to hit the course," he says. Gray's proficiency with the on-line weather system has given him a certain notoriety at his club. He frequently receives phone calls from the pro shop when weather threatens an outing or tournament.

And some members have been so impressed with Gray's forecasting ability that they've asked him for weather predictions before making vacation plans, sometimes as much as six months in advance, he says, laughing.

Although national on-line weather services charge an access fee, Dan Tobiczyk of Marysville Golf Club found a weather information source that doesn't cost any more than a local phone call. Tobiczyk uses his modem to dial into a local airport for weather information, an idea he got from a community newspaper. Although the airport weather has fewer graphics and more pilot jargon than the national services, Tobiczyk believes the local source can be more accurate.

Information accuracy also is important when it comes to equipment records. Jim King, mechanic at Great Oaks Country Club, started automating all the equipment maintenance records at his course three years ago. "I don't have

Continued on page 12



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to worry about forgetting anything," King says. "All our equipment and their preventive maintenance schedules are loaded into the computer."

In addition to keeping on top of routine maintenance and having better control of his parts inventory, King knows exactly how much it costs to keep each piece of equipment running smoothly. This information is crucial for making decisions about equipment replacement.

Many novice computer users, like King, found the learning experience not as frightening as they initially expected. "Don't be afraid, don't let it intimidate you," Kevin Dushane advises new users.

That advice can ring hollow, though, to a first-time computer buyer who must contend with confusing "techno-terminology" and an overwhelming number of product and feature choices. Dan Toboczyk offers this simple advice: "Get the most capacity you can afford because you'll eventually use it."

Although the Windows environment makes today's computer software programs easier to learn and use, some superintendents still believe there's nothing like personal assistance. "If you get one, have someone who knows computers sit down and work with you to get started," recommends John Cooney, superintendent at Gowanite.

So, you've found the hardware and software that's perfect for you and you've finally gotten productive using it. Now it's time to kick back, relax and enjoy all that spare time, right? Wrong, says Tom Gray.

Gray views his computer just like any other piece of equipment that is used to help run the course—strive for efficient usage, upgrade when necessary and budget for replacement.

"The computer industry is moving so fast, you can't be afraid to upgrade, and don't ever think that what you have is good enough."

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## **DNR TO ABANDON GOOSE ROUND-UP**

by Tim Dorner, CGCS

After more than 20 years of capturing and relocating nuisance Canada geese, the State of Michigan has decided to cancel the "goose round-up program" due to the lack of areas in which to release the birds. The state also is putting an end to the egg shaking program that started last year. In this program, the state allowed residents, associations, golf courses and park officials at various locations throughout southeast Michigan to shake the eggs, killing the embryo and keeping the eggs from hatching. It met with much resistance from sportsmen's groups who argued that it allowed private individuals to decide what happens to a state resource.

What are the alternatives for controlling the goose population? According to Julie Parsons, a wildlife biologist with the DNR, "Where hunting can safely occur, this is by far the best method to control nuisance geese populations. If you cannot hunt the birds, then the only other options left are harassment and repellents."

Several area superintendents have been using dogs to chase the geese away, but this method is only effective if you are very persistent. Quite often, the geese become used to the dog because they see it not as a threat, but only as an inconvenience. You may chase them away in the morning and they come back later that day.

Some of the other harassment techniques include stringing a wire about 12 to 18 inches high around your pond. Geese like easy access to and from the water and having the wire there makes them nervous. Letting the vegetation grow up around your pond can serve the same purpose as the wire.

Frightening devices have been used in some areas with good results. These include various "cracker shells" that can be shot out of a firearm. Cracker shells usually shoot a projectile over the flock, exploding and making a loud bang with no harm to the geese. Another scare device is an L.P. gas cannon that produces a loud thunderclap and works on a timer. Although these types of scare devices are used quite frequently in agricultural situations, most golf courses find this method less appealing due to city and township ordinances and their proximity to housing development—not to mention the fact that most golfers expect to find a little peace and quiet when they are on the course. Before using any of these scare devices, you should notify the DNR and get a permit to harass. Also check local ordinances to be sure such devices are legal in your area.

Currently, there are a few companies manufacturing a methyl anthranilate-based product for use as a goose repellent. Methyl anthranilate is a naturally occurring compound found in concord grapes. The geese find its taste extremely offensive and leave in search of greener and tastier pastures. Because this product was approved just



last year, few people have tried it yet. Parsons says that the DNR will be testing this chemical, and she is trying to get other superintendents and park managers to try it as well.

Parsons admits that it is a problem that is not going to go away easily. "Golf courses offer all the essentials for the survival of these geese: food, water, cover and nesting habitat to raise their young. We also know that geese tend to nest in areas where they learn to fledge; therefore, their numbers are increasing geometrically, especially in urban areas."

In most cases, the harassment techniques just mask the problem. The flocks are just being pushed from place to place as they continue to reproduce. The real problem that we face is overpopulation of the species. The only way to get results is to lobby the DNR and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to come up with a solution to this problem.

If you have comments, concerns or ideas about nuisance geese, please put them in writing and direct them to: Mr. George Burgoyne, Chief MDNR-Wildlife Division, Box 30444, Lansing, MI 48909.

## Membership Meeting



Superintendent Rick Murphy, Bay Pointe Golf Club, hosted January's membership meeting. Daniel Donohue and an associate, representing Detroit Financial Group, gave the presentation on personal money management, which focused on savings and

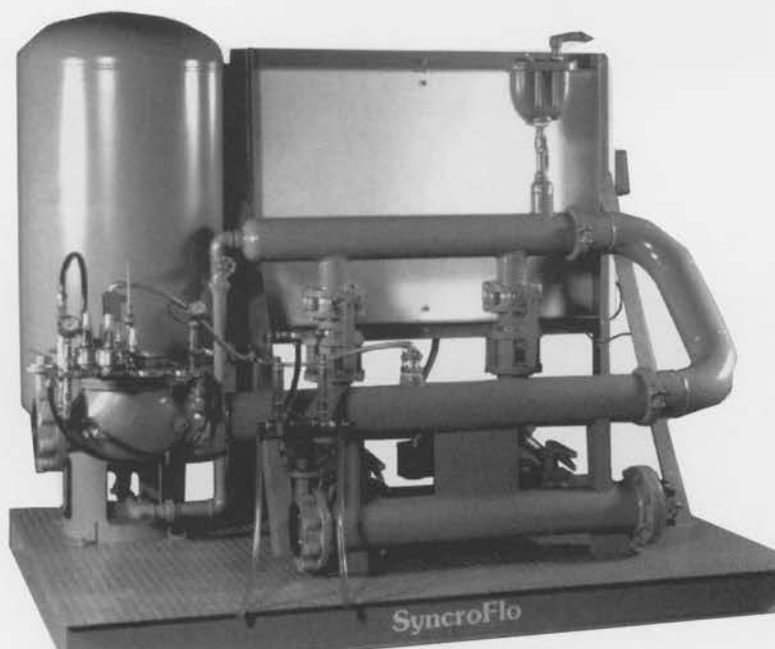
retirement, insurance and personal estate planning. They emphasized that the earlier you start, the more benefits and rewards you can accrue, so it is wise to let time be your ally, not your enemy. A financial analysis of your money management strategies only will benefit you in the future.

According to the presenters, a good definition of estate planning is: "I want to control my property while I'm alive, take care of myself and my loved ones if I become disabled, and when I die give what I have to whom I want, the way I want and when I want and, if I can, save every last tax dollar, professional fee and court cost possible."

Any questions can be directed to: Daniel Donohue, Detroit Financial Group, (810) 353-5600.

Bay Pointe personnel, as usual, were excellent hosts.

Note: Rick Murphy's story on his above-ground storage tank was featured in Golf Course Management, January 1995.



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## SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED

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More than 17 scholarships and awards were presented at the MTF conference. The MTF's Norm Kramer Award was given to Marc McMullen, son of Fritz McMullen of Forest Lake Country Club. Congratulations to the McMullen family for their hard work and continued contribution to our associations.

The MBCGCSA Award winners were Michael Mulkey, four-year winner, and James Simmons, two-year winner. Michael has worked at West Branch Country Club for the last three years, and has been treasurer of the Turfgrass Science Club and secretary of Brody Hall government. He will graduate in December 1995.

James Simmons interned with Tom Gray, Franklin Hills Country Club, and will graduate in March 1995. He holds a GPA of 3.77 (and also was MSU Turf Club pool champion)! The importance Jim places on professionalism is a great start toward his future goals.

Awards chairman Dave Picot had help from the following interviewers: Brian Lens, Mark McKinley, Dave Montgomery, Doug Palm and John Nowakowski.



*Four-year award winner Michael Mulkey (R.) with Dave Picot, awards chairman.*



*Two-year award winner Jim Simmons (R) with Dave Picot.*



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## Irrigation Reporting Form Simplified

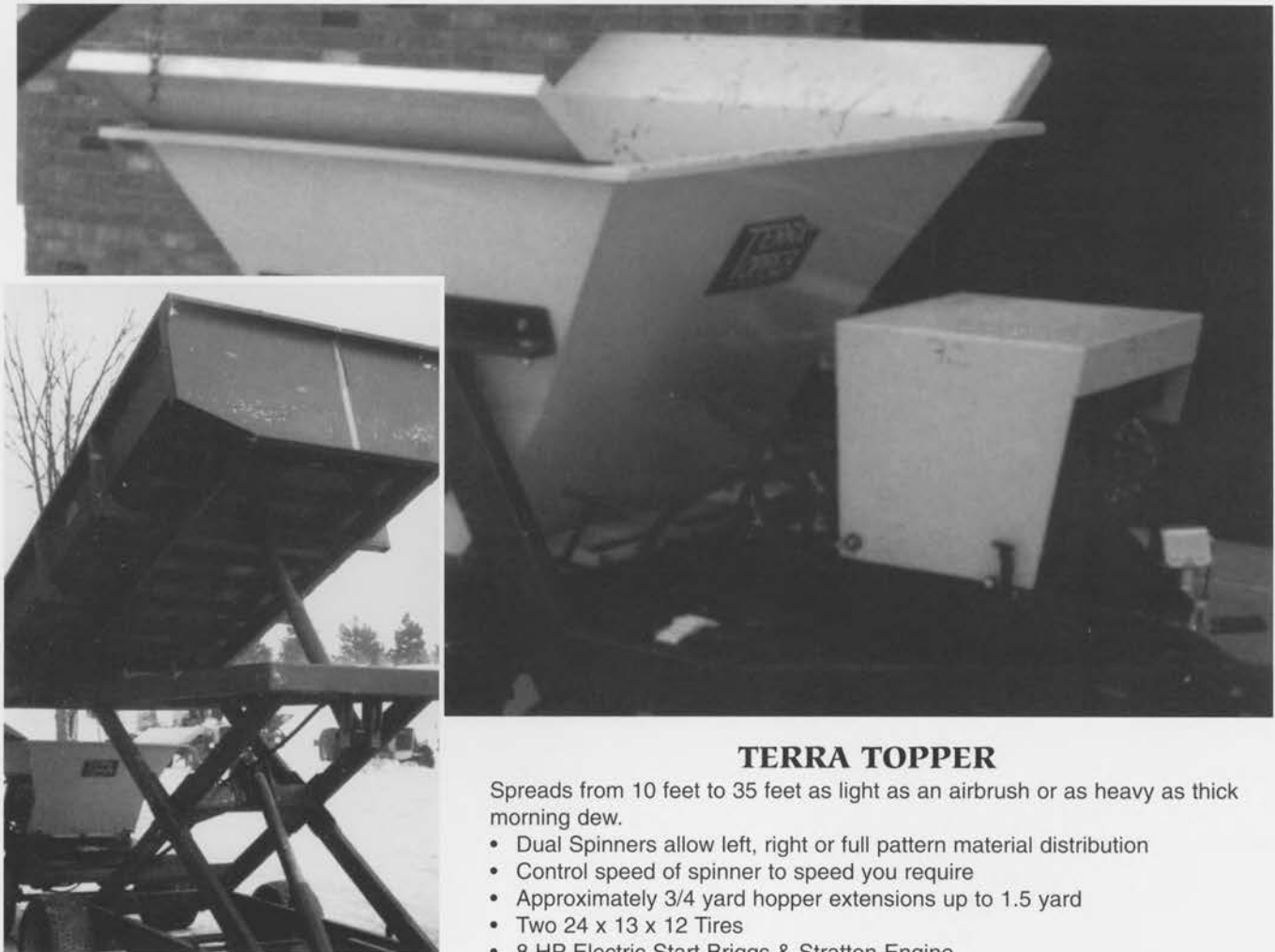
In December, the Department of Natural Resources notified superintendents of Michigan's Water Use Reporting Program and provided a 1994 irrigation reporting form.

Thanks to the efforts of Greg Lyman and representatives of Michigan's golf course associations, that form now is being simplified.

You may either submit the original form or wait for the new one to be issued.



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# THE MICHIGAN TURF FOUNDATION CONFERENCE - ONE MEMBER'S VIEW

by John Shreve

I've just returned from the 65th Michigan Turf Foundation Conference and thought I would highlight some things that impressed me. These are only my opinions and impressions, which may vary from yours. Here they are in random order:

**The Weather** - With the exception of some fog, it was perfect. It was nice to attend the conference and not worry about plowing snow. I remember last year's 26 below temperature with heavy snow cover. At least this year Mother Nature held off until the conference was over. Hopefully, this recent snow cover will protect our unfrozen turf from the sudden temperature drops associated with the much-feared direct low temperature kill—a frequently discussed topic at this year's conference.

**Dr. Beard's Presentation** - Once again Dr. Beard did an excellent job teaching us about plant nutrition in regard to stress tolerance. Not to take away from the other schools, I noticed that this was the best attended basic school, as many superintendents enjoy learning from one of the pioneers in the industry. I think Dr. Beard surprised us all with his slide presentation at the annual awards luncheon. I came away from it with a much greater understanding and appreciation of the early pioneers of the MSU Turfgrass Management program.

**The Jack Frost Session** - Believe it or not, this was a well-attended session. Once again it shows the dedication that superintendents have to achieving perfect golf course conditions. It shows that the leaders in this business will do what it takes to get the information they need to succeed—even if they lose a little sleep on the way. I got a lot of good information from this session, as did many of the other

attendees, I'm sure. We need to give credit to the speakers, Greg Lyman, Scott Warnke, Mark Collins, Kevin Dushane and Ronald Calhoun, for sharing their time with us.

**The Annual Awards Luncheon** - I was unsure how Dr. Beard's talk would compare to the long-standing tradition of motivational speakers of the past, but, as mentioned earlier, he surprised us all with his excellent slide presentation on the history of the Turfgrass Program at MSU. Even if you don't normally attend this event, you may want to consider it for next year. It's always entertaining, usually motivational and, this year, even relevant to our profession and industry. Congratulations to Dr. Beard and all the people who were responsible for planning this luncheon.

**All the Participation of Superintendents** - We should all tip our hats to Kevin Dushane, Dan Quast, Kathy Antaya, Mark Jackson, Clem Wolf from, Dave Bolyard, Jerry Cyr and Kurt Thummel for sharing their stories with us. Thanks to these fine folks we now have a better understanding of top-dressing and aerification, environmental impacts and benefits of golf courses, winter injury and use of protective covers, greens construction

Continued on page 18



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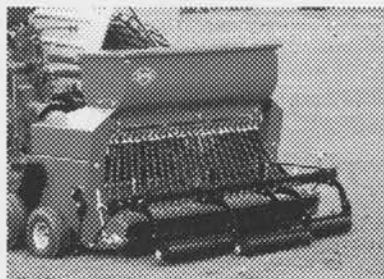


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The Michigan Turf Foundation Conference (continued from page 17)

and the urgency of supporting and using our own turfgrass information file at MSU. It's interesting that Dan Quast from Illinois was the one telling us that we better support our own library before we lost control of the ability to access all this great information already at our fingertips. The number to call to get on line with the Turfgrass Foundation is (800) 446-TURF.

These are just a few highlights; there are so many more that I haven't mentioned. If nothing else, the conference allows us the chance to renew old friendships, meet new people and share information and ideas to improve our respective courses and jobs.



*Dr. James Beard gave the luncheon talk on "The History and Future of Turfgrass Management," which recognized numerous people whose roots are with MSU and now are major contributors to the industry.*



*MBCGCSA President Jay Delcamp (middle) presents symbolic check of \$27,000, raised at our Big Event, to MTF President John Maddern (L) and MSU President Peter McPherson. The money will go to the Endowment Fund and for research grants.*



*Michigan State University President Peter McPherson welcomed luncheon guests. He emphasized that the university has been successful in keeping an MSU education affordable.*



*Superintendent Jeff Akers (middle), representing Links of Pinewood's owner Ernie Fuller, presented \$5,500 from the Invitational Event, held in October. With Akers are (L.) Jon Maddern and (R) President McPherson.*





*The esteemed professors of MSU, whose hard work is reflected by the recognition of MSU as a leader in the turfgrass industry (L. to R.): Dr. James Crum, Dr. David Gilstrap, Dr. Paul Rieke, Dr. Trey Rogers, Dr. Joe Vargas Jr. and Dr. Bruce Branham.*



*MTF's 1995 Board of Directors (L. to R.): Steve Murphy, Tyrone Hills Golf Course; Bruce Matthews, Design 3; President Jon Maddern, Elk Ridge Golf Course; Harry Schuemann, Pointe O'Woods; Jim Brocklehurst, J&B Consultants; Kathy Hilbert, Amturf Seeds; Past President Jim Bogart, Turfgrass Inc.; Jim Timmerman, Orchard Lake Country Club; Tom Gray, Franklin Hills Country Club; Tom Smith, Grass Roots; Doug Johanningsmeier, Turfgrass Inc.; Bary Bartsch, Huron-Clinton Metro Parks; Executive Director Gordon LaFontaine, Pineview Highlands Golf Course.*



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# HOW TO ESTABLISH WILDFLOWERS

by Steve Sump, Superintendent-Rouge Park Golf Course

During the past three years, we have been naturalizing areas to enhance the environment and reduce the amount of maintenance at Rouge Park Golf Course. (Rouge Park Golf Course is owned by and located in the city of Detroit. It has been operated by American Golf Corporation for the past four years.) The success of this project is mainly due to the establishment of wildflowers in multiple natural areas.

Establishment of wildflowers, contrary to the popular belief that they are easily grown, requires almost as much care as producing quality turf. The reward for a properly established plot, however, greatly outweighs the effort that must be put into it.

## Site Selections

1. To begin a wildflower area, you must carefully select your site. As with turfgrass, good drainage is very important. Poorly drained or compacted soils will produce unsatisfactory results.
2. Wildflowers generally require at least eight hours of direct sunlight per day. Shade mixes are available for areas with poor sunlight.
3. It must be possible to supply irrigation at the site if necessary.

## Wildflower Seed Selection

- 1) Consult with your wildflower seed experts before selecting seed for your areas. They will help you determine what mixture is best for your hardiness zone and geographic area. You also can select native species for your area.
2. I recommend measuring the area before you seed. Various mixtures and species range in

price from \$10 to \$250 per pound, with rates ranging between five and 10 pounds per acre.

3. I use a 1:4 ratio of native perennial wildflowers and Midwestern wildflower mixture at approximately eight pounds per acre. The Midwestern mixture has about 60 % annual wildflower seed. You need to have a good portion of annuals or your plot will not flower the first year.

Continued on page 23

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4. The wildflower seed then is blended with nonaggressive Sheep and hard fescue. I recommend this because it aids in spreading the wildflower seed uniformly and helps to achieve a more meadow-like appearance. Do not use an aggressive filler such as ryegrass!

1. The area should be void of as many weeds and competitive grasses as possible. I prefer to apply a Glyphosate product to the site as soon as the grass is actively growing. (A soil fumigant may be used as well to prevent crabgrass and other weeds from germinating later.)

2. After the Glyphosate has taken effect, cultivate the area to a depth of one inch or less. The deeper you cultivate, the greater the chance of dormant weed seed being surfaced. (I aerify the soil with a fairway aerator several times.) Allow the soil to dry for a couple of days. As with turfgrass, soil to seed contact is a must for successful establishment of wildflowers.

1. When I plant wildflowers, I put in the exact amount of seed mixture to do a specific area. Open the hopper just enough to allow a very light flow of seed. Seed over the plot several times until the seed in the hopper is gone.

2. Wildflower seed should not be planted any deeper than 1/16 inch deep.

3. With the seed dispersed, I then roll the area one time to press any remaining seed into the soil.

1. In southeast Michigan, you generally can sow wildflowers from April through June. I prefer to wait until there is no chance of seedlings being damaged by frost or freezing. (I don't know how frost will affect wildflower for sure.)

2. The earlier you seed, chances are greater that the soil may be saturated or too wet for good cultivation.

The last two years, I planted in the second week of May, with excellent results.

1. The key to success to many wildflower plots is irrigation. As with turf, you cannot allow the seedbed to dry out. During dry weather, I irrigate the plot every other day until the plants were 2-3" tall. After that, the plants maintain very well on their own.

2. Germination occurs in 2-4 weeks. Most wildflowers appear as small round leaf dicots. They may look like common weeds, but they are most likely wildflowers. (Look along the slits from the seeder.)

Continued on page 26



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3. Last year, the flowers began to bloom around July 1 in my newly planted sites. By mid-July, full bloom! My plots established in previous years were in full bloom by mid-May.

In the autumn, when the flowers are dried and frail, chop the plants down to a height of 4-6 inches. This allows seed dispersal from the annuals and allows sufficient sunlight to penetrate the seedlings next year. The perennials you planted will begin to flower next year as well.

By following the correct procedures in site selection, soil preparation, choice of seed mixtures and planting, you will enjoy a magnificent array of color all summer long, with minimal maintenance.



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# — WEINGARTZ —

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Ray Weingartz, Sr. founded Weingartz as a small feed and farm supply store in 1945. Since then, Weingartz, with locations in Farmington Hills and Utica, has grown to become Michigan's largest lawn, snow and outdoor power equipment dealer. Over the years, the products have changed to meet customers' needs, yet the original commitment to quality products and excellent customer service have not.

In its third generation, family remains an important part of Weingartz's success. Ray Weingartz, Jr. took over the leadership reins 25 years ago, and much of his family is very involved in the business. Ray's four sons, one of his daughters and two sons-in-law play an active role in the everyday operations of the business. The Weingartz family, nevertheless, is just a small part of the family of employees at Weingartz. Currently, there are approximately 80 full-time employees, many of whom have been with the company for 15 or more years.

With such a large family involvement and many longtime employees, Ray always has felt that a big key to success is planning and commitment. So, after many years of planning and researching locations and layouts, a dream was brought to reality in March 1992 in Farmington Hills when Weingartz added its second location. This state-of-the-art, 42,000-square-foot facility includes a spacious 11,000 square feet of showroom. The showroom's wide array of equipment reflects the company's broad customer base—a mix of 55% residential, 45% commercial. In addition to the showroom, there also is a 4,000-square-foot parts area, a 12,000-square-foot basement/warehouse and a 4,000-square-foot service area. With this type of facility, Weingartz stands poised to offer their customers the very best in service, selection and value.

In 1995—their 50th anniversary year—Weingartz management and employees are celebrating by making a genuine recommitment to make the extra efforts necessary to satisfy their customers. One of the big ways that Weingartz plans to offer more to their customers involves a complete remodeling and expansion of the Utica store, beginning this summer, so it will match the modern, state-of-the-art stature of their other building in Farmington Hills.

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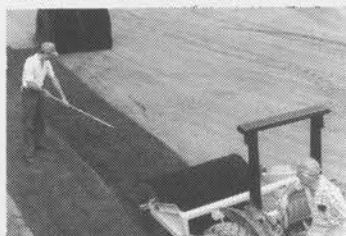
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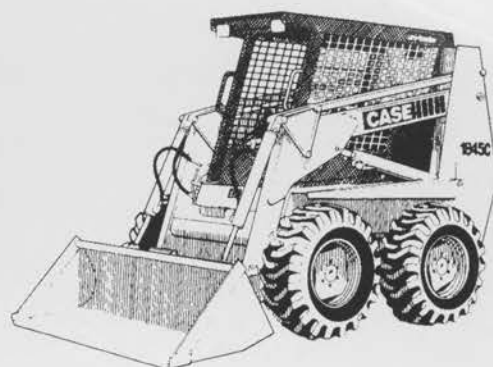
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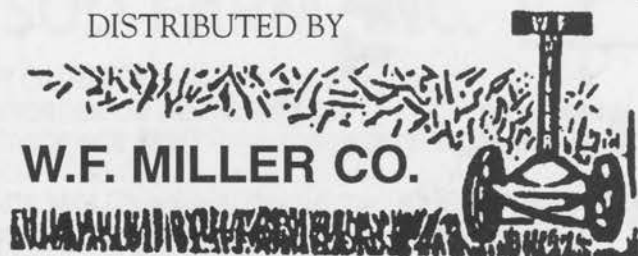
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