



Tee to Green

PUBLISHED BY THE METROPOLITAN GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENT ASSOCIATION

Special Feature

METROPOLIS HONORS VADALA WITH A 'PIECE OF THE ROCK'

This has to be one of the most touching tributes on record to a club superintendent.... Recently, Bruno Vadala, superintendent of Metropolis Country Club in White Plains, NY, was honored by club members for his 40 years of untiring devotion to the club.

Primarily through the efforts of Metropolis Club President Allan Waxenberg and Green Chairman Richard Trauner, the club had a four-foot-thick piece of granite placed in front of the brand-new maintenance building. To this huge rock, they had fastened a bronze plaque with the following inscription:

To Bruno Vadala

In recognition of 40 years of untiring devotion, skill, and caring for the golf course and grounds of the Metropolis Country Club.

With grateful appreciation from the club members.

November 5, 1988

Located a few hundred feet up the club's long driveway at the main entrance, the tribute sits at one of the most prominent spots on club grounds. Apparently, Metropolis officials and members wanted to make sure that guests would be made immediately aware of the club's special feeling for its superintendent.... A well-deserved special feeling. As Gene Borek, the club's head golf professional, notes: "I've never seen anyone with more pride in his work than Bruno Vadala. This

course is his baby—his flesh and blood. Bruno is something special. We sure could do with a few more Bruno Vadalas in this world."

And how did Bruno react to the tribute he must pass a hundred times a day? "I think it's an honor," he says with extreme humility that has ingratiated him with his colleagues over the years. "I love this place. I love the members. They've been wonderful to me and my family."

A Long List of Credits

As a high-schooler in the Greenburgh area—just two minutes' walking time from Metropolis—Bruno fell in love with the course and its then superintendent, Joe Flynn.

The late Joe Flynn, who served as Metropolis' superintendent for 29 years, took the young Vadala under his wing, spoon-feeding him the benefits of his vast turf knowledge. But Bruno also had the benefit of his father's expertise, as George Vadala served as Joe's crew foreman the entire 29 years.

While under Joe's and his Dad's tutelage, Bruno made it a point to get some formal education. He attended the Turf Management School at Rutgers University, which prepared him to take over the assignment as superintendent when Mr. Flynn passed on—some 30 years ago.

In later years, Bruno credits a few others with easing the worry and burdens of his assignment: MetGCSA members and, particularly, Jim Ful-



Bruno Vadala, superintendent of Metropolis Country Club

wider of Century, Sherwood Moore, then superintendent of Winged Foot, and Anthony Grasso of Metro Milorganite. "We've helped each other by sharing not only our secrets, but also our problems," he says. "And that's what our association is all about—sharing secrets and know-how."

Bruno served as *(continued on page 7)*

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DROUGHT RESTRICTION UPDATE...

and more

There's good news. This year's drought restrictions have been greatly reduced, thanks to the political savvy of Ted Horton (director of sports and grounds at Westchester Country Club) and Joe Alonzi (superintendent at Fenway Golf Club)—and the efforts of all the Westchester County superintendents who responded to the survey regarding golf club water use and financial statistics.

Originally, the Drought Emergency Task Force wanted golf courses to limit watering to a couple of hours a day and to only tees and greens—no fairways. But by successfully pleading our case, Ted and Joe were able to get the Task Force to agree to fewer restrictions—particularly for clubs with their own water source. Clubs able to draw from ponds or wells, for instance, are allowed to water at 85 percent of their original volume. Those dependent on County water supplies must now cut water use by 50 percent.

It's important to note, however, that all clubs must still file a variance application with Westchester County for the privilege of irrigating under the Phase II drought restrictions.

Although this has been a major victory for Metropolitan area superintendents and golf clubs, our representatives have indicated that we're still not being given the same advantages as other commercial industries. But they do feel that, if we continue to fight for our fair share, we may be able to reduce water restrictions even further during future droughts.

Obviously, these efforts will make our jobs somewhat easier, but ultimately, it's the Metropolitan area golfers who will benefit by being assured of a little more green grass to play from when Mother Nature isn't helping out.

And Now, a Word About Our Dues

I would like to ease the minds of those individuals who felt our 1989 dues increase of \$70 would cause a large drop in MetGCSA membership. With nearly all dues payments accounted for, it appears we've lost what would be considered an insignificant number of Class A and C members. And at the same time, we've picked up a large number of applicants, who will more than make up for the few people who have resigned.

The dues increase has enabled us to raise nearly \$9,000 for turfgrass research this year. These funds will support research projects that will directly benefit all our members and, just as important, help the MetGCSA establish a long-term rapport with area universities.

A "Sign" That Things Are Changing—for the Better

Finally, I hope you will take the time to read the article on pages 1 and 7 about Bruno Vadala and the unprecedented recognition he received from Metropolitan Country Club. Do you know of any other club that has put up a stone monument and plaque as a tribute to its superintendent? Obviously, for his 40 years of unselfish service and consistent high level of management, Bruno has become one of Metropolitan's most valued employees.

Not only should we be happy for Bruno, and congratulate him for this great honor, but we should also be pleased that Metropolitan club members have singled out their superintendent as a professional who's made significant contributions to their club.

This thoughtful tribute is just one sign that the image and professional status of the golf course superintendent are changing—for the better.

Once again, congratulations, Bruno!
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Clippings

GIVING BUGS A BUG THAT'LL KNOCK 'EM DEAD

Pretty soon, you may be able to get rid of your gypsy moth problems without chemical pesticides. At least that's the word from scientists at the Boyce Thompson Institute for Plant Research, an independent research center at Cornell University in Ithaca, NY.

Right now, they're using genetic engineering techniques to custom-design viruses that'll kill plant-gobbling pests—such as gypsy moths and cabbage loopers—but leave beneficial bugs, like honeybees, alone.

"Our goal," says virologist Alan Wood in a recent *Newsday* interview, "is to mimic the epidemics of virus infections that occur naturally in insects and, ultimately, develop a microbial pesticide that could become an alternative to the synthetic pesticides."

This summer Wood and his colleagues hope to run the first U.S. outdoor experiment involving release of a genetically engineered virus into the open environment—all this with the permission of the Environmental Protection Agency, of course.

The virus to be tested is an altered version of a baculovirus, a naturally occurring virus that causes lethal infections in such leaf-chewing insects as cotton bollworms, European sawflies, and Douglas fir tussock moths.

Apparently, naturally occurring forms of this virus have been used to protect farm crops for the past 40 years—but with only moderate success. The problem is that, in its natural form, the virus doesn't kill insects fast enough; in fact, the worms can live as long as 10 days after infection, allowing them enough time to do substantial damage.

By altering the baculovirus, Wood and his colleagues hope to speed up its ability to knock off host insects or, at the least, stop them from eating. Time will tell. Test applications are planned for June, July, and August.

NEW LOGRO GRASS—A CUT ABOVE THE REST

If you'd like to mow less, spray less, and still have fairways that'll make your membership happy, you may be interested in a new breed of grass that's been brought over from the Emerald Isle.

Called logro, this wonder grass is bred to grow no more than six inches high and, according to turf researchers, needs to be cut about two-thirds as often as traditional types of grass.

But that's only the half of it. Logro is also reported to be disease-resistant and to grow horizontally along the ground, resulting in good ground cover—even after close mowing. "It also maintains an attractive color," says Queens University turf researcher David Johnston in a recent interview with *Landscape Management*.

The grass, along with two herbi-

cide-resistant varieties called Duchess and Countess, are now being tested in Texas, parts of Canada, New Zealand, and East Germany. The winner so far in all heat-tolerance tests? Duchess grass, reports Johnston.

GRUB ALERT

Eighty-nine may be the grub's lucky year. According to industry specialists, last year's drought sent many of the grubs in search of moister soil—and so far beneath the soil's surface that it'll be tougher for the grub-control material you apply to reach them.

So how do you get to the little buggers before they get to your greens, tees, and fairways? If you take the advice of Michael Villani of the New York State Agricultural Experiment Station in Geneva, NY, at the least, you should be sure to have adequate soil moisture before going in for the kill.

Special Announcement

Hear Ye, Hear Ye!

Nominations are now being accepted for the Sherwood A. Moore Award. This award is presented every year to an individual who has "Advanced the professional image, status, and reputation of the golf course superintendent."

The award will be presented at the annual Green Chairman/Superintendent Tournament this Fall, so be sure to get your nominations in no later than **July 21**. Just contact any one of the following Awards Committee members:

- Pat Lucas, Chairman
203-359-0133
- Guido Cribari
914-779-8260
- Mike Maffei
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Spotlight

Scott Schukraft Hosts April Meeting

The April meeting of the MetGCSA was hosted by Scott Schukraft, superintendent at Rolling Hills Country Club in Wilton, CT. Scott's been at Rolling Hills for seven years. He started as assistant superintendent in 1982 and then, a year later, took over as superintendent.

For Scott, all it took was one round of golf to convince him to join the ranks of golf course superintendent. He pursued a bachelor's degree in Natural Science and Agronomy from Delaware Valley College of Science and Agriculture. During that time, he interned at Lehigh Valley and Saucon Valley, two country clubs in the Allentown, PA, area. His first position out of college was assistant grounds director at Bladesprings, a large resort course in Virginia.

What does Scott like best about the profession? "The job's everyday challenges and the opportunity to work outside," he says. One of his latest challenges was completing a water management and conservation project on the course. He and his crew built new ponds connected by pipes and gate valves and spillways, which control water flow into the irrigation pond.

Scott credits his success as superintendent to hard work, dedication, and organization. But thoroughly enjoying what he does also helps—a lot.

Along with playing golf, this "eligible bachelor" enjoys snow skiing and traveling in his spare time.

BERT DICKINSON

Westchester Country Club

May Meeting Scheduled for Silver Spring Country Club

Peter Rappoccio, property manager at Silver Spring Country Club in Ridgefield, CT, will be hosting the MetGCSA May managers meeting. Peter began at Silver Spring in 1978 as superintendent. Then, six years later, he was promoted to property manager and assumed the added responsibility of maintaining the tennis courts, pool, and clubhouse grounds.

Though he's spent the majority of his professional life in the golf course business, Peter started out as a rehab counselor with a bachelor's degree from Saint Francis College in Maine. After realizing he'd rather not "spend all his time in an office," Peter decided to pursue a two-year degree in Turf Management at Rutgers University.

Peter got his start in the business at Fairview Country Club, where he worked as both a crew member and then assistant superintendent. Though he enjoys the daily challenges of the job, Peter says he makes a conscious effort to maintain a balance between work and family life. He takes time out of his busy schedule to coach his two sons' soccer, T-Ball, and basketball teams, and he's also the president of their school's PTA.

Peter lives on club grounds with his family: Peter, 10, Timmy, 7, and his wife, Birdie, who's also involved with the Ridgefield school system—as a registered nurse. In his spare time, Peter enjoys playing racquetball and vacationing with his family. —BD

Stableford Tournament Winners

1st	Fred Scheyhing	9th	Ted Maddocks
2nd	Harry Ward	10th	Vince Sharkey
3rd	Pat Dawson	11th	Scott Schukraft
4th	Jeff Scott	12th	Don Sappern
5th	Wade Haynes	13th	Todd Polidor
6th	John Hawthorne	14th	Barry Anes
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SAFETY FIRST

Putting a safety and training program into practice at your club

In a profession with high accident potential, it might pay to look into starting up a safety and training program that could save your crew—and you—from a serious job-related accident. But that's not the only benefit to putting a program into practice. Here are five other reasons for implementing a safety and training program at your golf course:

1. To prevent the absence and—worst case—the loss of a valuable employee
2. To improve the quality, quantity, and uniformity of your crew's work
3. To reduce the number of equipment breakdowns by training employees in equipment operation and maintenance
4. To prevent lawsuits against you or your golf course
5. To show employees that you're

truly interested in their welfare

Convinced? Then read on for a few tips on how to get a program up and running.

Getting Started

There's no set formula for a sound program. To make it work, you've got to tailor it to the specific needs of your particular operation. Here are a few things to consider:

- **Analyze past accident statistics.** Try to determine the leading causes of most of the accidents in your department; then develop a program that will address those causes. For instance, if you find the majority of accidents have involved a particular piece of equipment or have occurred during a specific weather condition, you'll want to focus on those areas in your first safety sessions.
- **But don't wait until an accident happens.** Remember, your program should be designed to *prevent* accidents—not react to them. With that in mind, here are other topics worth building in to your safety and training program: powered

maintenance equipment and small tools; mowing equipment; poisonous plants, insects, and snakes; tree maintenance; tractors, loaders, and backhoes; trucks and company automobiles; golf carts and utility vehicles; pesticide safety; fire safety and prevention; first-aid training.

■ **Effective safety training begins by enforcing basic safety rules and procedures—every day on the job.** That means, for instance, asking employees not to smoke while fueling equipment or reminding them to use caution on steeper hills when it's rained the night before.

■ **Regular, formal training sessions are the key to making your program work.** Whether you decide to hold weekly, monthly, or bimonthly training sessions, you should set a schedule—and stick to it.

⇨ **TIP:** After each session, it's a good idea to ask your employees to sign an attendance sheet that briefly outlines the topic discussed and any handouts and audiovisual aids *(continued on page 7)*

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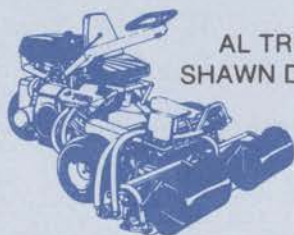
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METROPOLIS HONORS VADALA

(continued from page 1)

secretary and later president of the MetGCSA. He has been actively involved in the association practically since its inception in the early 1950s.

Reflecting on Good Fortune

"That monument out front of my office," notes Vadala in closing, "serves as a constant reminder to me of my good fortune. The good fortune to have schooled under my Dad and Mr. Flynn. To have had Dennis Flynn—Joe's son, now the superintendent at Brae Burn—and Tony Grasso—my daughter Lucille's husband, now superintendent at Willow Ridge—working with me at Metropolis. And finally, I'm fortunate to have had my own son, Gregory, school under me and move on to become superintendent at Southward Ho Club on Long Island.

"I've been blessed, haven't I?" asks Bruno, almost apologetically. Yes, he has—even with a "piece of the rock," courtesy of the kindly members and officials of Metropolis Country Club.

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Call Vince Sharkey

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SAFETY FIRST

(continued from page 5)

you used. Then keep the sheets on file. They're one of your best defenses against a lawsuit. If someone sues because they were injured on a piece of equipment that was the topic of a training session, then you've got yourself some good ammunition.

■ *Make training sessions hassle-free by setting up a training room.* Whether you choose your shop, locker room, or an area in the clubhouse, it's a good idea to find a permanent spot for your training sessions—and equipment. The benefit: You won't waste valuable time setting up and dismantling audiovisual equipment each time you run a training session.

Training Aids: Where to Get Them

It's true, safety and training aids are in short supply, but you *can* find them if you know where to look.

Here's where to start your search:

■ Contact your equipment manufacturers and sales reps; they'll sometimes supply safety and training videos for their equipment at no extra charge. The GCSAA, USGA, Na-

tional Golf Association, and even the Hotel and Restaurant Association are also good sources of safety and training materials. (See "Directory of Safety and Training Videos," below, for a list of video suppliers.)

■ Scan trade magazines. They periodically publish articles on safety and training techniques.

■ Talk to superintendents who have set up safety programs. They may be able to offer helpful hints and cautions, suggest videos they've tried and liked, or even loan a personal slide collection or other materials.

In the end, it's important to keep in mind that effective safety and training programs are not developed overnight. But with a little determination and a lot of commitment, both you and your employees will benefit—by having a safer and more productive work place.

MARY MEDONIS

Westchester Country Club

Mary Medonis, assistant superintendent, has helped implement a safety and training program at Westchester Country Club. You may want to read the more in-depth article she and Ted Horton, director of sports and grounds at Westchester, wrote on this subject for the April issue of Golf Course Management.

Directory of Safety and Training Videos

Here is a partial listing of suppliers of comprehensive, easily understood safety and training videos.

American Management Association

9 Galen Street

Watertown, MA 02172

SUBJECTS: Supervisory training

Deere & Company

Distribution Service Center

Safety Films Department

1400 Third Avenue

Moline, IL 61265-1304

SUBJECTS: Tractor safety

GCSAA Headquarters

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