



TEE TO GREEN



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Metropolitan Golf Course
Superintendents Association

President's Message

In Memory of a Longtime Member and Friend

I was sad to learn of the loss of longtime MetGCSA member and friend Bert Jones. Bert was a great supporter of the superintendent who truly understood just how much the superintendent means to the golf industry.

He was a conscientious businessperson who would answer a call for service no matter where you were located or the size of the order. If you told Bert you needed something at 6 a.m. on Sunday, he'd be there at 5:30 a.m. waiting for your arrival.

I remember meeting Bert in 1972, when I was an assistant superintendent. He would always take time to talk to me. I also remember how well he presented himself—and his irrigation system—to the Board of Directors at the Huntington Crescent Club where I was superintendent. His positive attitude and thorough product knowledge was a winning combination.

But equally impressive was that even after he'd sold the irrigation system to us he didn't just hand the job over to an underling. No, not Bert. He came to the club in his work clothes and, together with his partner Ken Kubik, proceeded to draw up a plan that was carefully tailored to the course—before any installation work began.

Bert was always (continued on page 2)

Special Feature

One Club That's Not Teed Off by Ban on Metal Spikes

Country Club of Darien Launches Successful "Spikeless-Only" Policy. . . Superintendent Tim O'Neill Explains How.

At many clubs, metal spikes will die hard—if they die at all. Not so at Country Club of Darien. As of July 1, this club became the first—and only—in Connecticut and Westchester to jump on the "ban" wagon and put a permanent kibosh on metal spikes.

Joining the ranks of 65 clubs across the country that currently enforce a permanent ban on metal spikes (and the nearly 200 clubs that strongly encourage spikeless shoes), Country Club of Darien gave members just short of a year to make the transition to spikeless play. To date, the response has been exceedingly favorable—and the agronomic results equally promising.

Here, Country Club of Darien Superintendent Tim O'Neill offers insight, not only into the many turf-related benefits of sporting spikeless shoes, but also how his club has managed—what appears to be—a flawless launch into a "Spikeless-Only" Policy.

We hope you'll find this piece interesting but, perhaps more impor-

tant, a good source of information for your Greens Committee and board.

Spikeless Inspiration

"One of the reasons I think this policy has been so well received is that it came from the members themselves—more specifically, a group of members who had played golf at Muirfield Village in Dublin, OH. This top Nicklaus course has banned metal spikes, offering my members the opportunity to experience both the feel and putting surface effects of golfing with spikeless shoes.

"They were also able to see, firsthand, at least one of the club's strategies for enforcing its spikeless policy: The day they played Muirfield, a golfer had somehow slipped onto the course with metal spikes. One of the club's locker room attendants followed the trail of spike marks—which were apparently quite obvious on the otherwise pure greens—and then replaced the player's metal spikes with Softspikes right on the spot. It's their policy to replace every (continued on page 4)

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In Memory of a Longtime Member and Friend

ready to take you to lunch. He would listen to all your gripes—about members who didn't understand what you were facing or irrigation systems that malfunctioned or grass that you lost or even why the Yankees lost to the Red Sox. Whatever the conversation, he listened well and always had a few words of good advice.

He clearly loved the industry—and gave back to it at least as much as he

received. Whenever his name is mentioned in conversation, it always brings a smile to my face . . . and many pleasant thoughts and memories to mind. (Who could ever forget that "old black magic"?)

My condolences to Gerry and all the family. We share in your grief, and we will truly miss him.

JOE ALONZI, CGCS
President

Spotlight

Salem Super Hosts the Met Team Championship Qualifier

Salem Golf Club is perhaps the only club around where the same superintendent has been on the job since the day it opened—more than 30 years ago. Bob Bruce, host of the Met's July 25 Monthly Meeting and Team Championship Qualifier, is the superintendent who carries this honorable distinction.

It all began in 1964. That's when Lawrence Management of Bronxville, an apartment and co-op complex firm that owned what is now the Salem Golf Club's 138 acres, began to develop the property.

Bob had been working with the company as a plasterer and truck driver since 1962 and had apparently made quite an impression. With the approval of John Arresto, the firm's superintendent of construction, Bob was charged with managing the maintenance of the golf course.

Says Bob about this unusual opportunity: "God's will brought me to Salem Golf Club. I had never caddied or played golf in my life," he says. "But I was a hard worker and eager to learn."

So with no formal turf school training, this Tyler, Alabama, native gathered a five-member crew and literally brought the course to life, assuming complete control of growing the turf. Bob was also able to see the golf course architect, Ed Ryder, at work.

"Ed knew how to design a golf

course," says Bob, "but he always found a way to overspend. And he loved to party," adds Bob with a chuckle. "I called him a madman who knew his work."

After five years on the job—in 1969—Bob decided to pursue the turf training he'd bypassed. He enrolled in UMass Stockbridge's Short Course, where he credits Dr. Joe Troll and Geoffrey Cornish for inspiring him to stay in the turf industry. One year later, he furthered his turf knowledge by successfully completing the Short Course at Rutgers, under the watchful eye of Dr. Ralph Engel.

Turf Troubles

But all the schooling in the world wouldn't have made it any easier to deal with some of turf troubles that quickly became apparent at Salem. Explains Bob: "The original soil profile here is heavy clay/loam. That means we have a lot of compaction, so during rainy periods, water puddles up and doesn't move."

Though Bob's managed to improve the soil profile somewhat with heavy, regular topdressing applications, he still can't run a full watering cycle all at once. "We run half the watering cycle, allow standing water to penetrate, and then come back later to finish up the cycle," he says. And that's without an automatic irrigation system, which makes

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Salem Super Hosts the Met Team Championship Qualifier

watering all the more labor intensive.

But Bob had fair warning of the problems that lie ahead when, during construction, they lost the #6 green twice. They finally moved the green to its present site. But to stabilize the USGA mix of the time, they used dead sand and logs. "Now that the logs have settled, the green is left with some sizable undulations," says Bob. "Much of the course is like a swampy peat bog," he adds.

Nothing proved that better than what happened in 1980 when they decided to dredge their man-made irrigation pond, which runs from #14 green to #17 tee. "While the pond was being dredged with a drag line," explains Bob, "I saw a crack in the approach of #14. I could sink a whipping pole all the way up to the handle and still not touch bottom."

On further inspection, he found that the crack stretched, amazingly, from #14 to #17. Needless to say, they stopped the drag line and never attempted it again. "Now, we use an excavator every few years to pull out whatever it can reach," he says.

Improvements Planned

Despite these maintenance trials, Bob is happy at Salem. "The course is interesting," he says, explaining that no two holes are alike. And he adds: "I love the outdoors, getting my hands dirty, and growing grass. It's self-fulfilling to see the fruits of your labor." But Bob will tell you, there are no quick fixes when conquering challenges: "You can't cut corners if you want to achieve the proper results," he says with conviction.

He'll soon be putting that philosophy into practice when they bring Hole #13 back to its original state. This 406-yard, par 4—once featured in *Golf Magazine*—has an elevated tee, where a small lake can be seen on the right side. It ends on a large green with a horseshoe-shaped sand trap.

"The trees that once provided a beautiful tree line now protrude over the fairway, blocking the outline of the trap from the tee," says Bob. "We'll correct this in the near future."

Also on Bob's to-do list are replacing

his quick-coupler irrigation system with an automatic one and installing drainage throughout the entire course. In addition, Bob would like to bring in an architect to reoutline the fairways, reconstruct a few greens, and work to bring back the original beauty of the course.

Preaching Is His Pastime

Bob has been an active member of both the Met and Hudson Valley Golf Course Superintendent Associations for 25 years. He's also been a NYSTA member for the past 15 years.

Though the turfgrass industry is his number one concern, Bob puts as much—if not more—of his heart and soul into preaching. Nicknamed "The Reverend" by some of his peers, he has been the Pastor of The Second Baptist Church in Poughkeepsie, NY, since 1987. But he began spreading God's word in 1982. "There is nothing I like more in this world than preaching," says Bob. "I'm not sure where all this came from, but for many years as a weekly churchgoer, I felt an emptiness. Then, after months of dreaming about God and crying in the middle of the night, I decided to study at the New York

Theological Seminary." One and a half years later, Bob left and began preaching. "I like to tie together the two things I'm most fond of, so many of my sermons include nature," he says.

This past April, Bob expanded his religious responsibilities, becoming vice president of the Progressive State Baptist Convention of New York. In this role, Bob is charged with overseeing 47 Progressive Baptist churches in New York—from Staten Island to Elmira.

Bob credits religion with making him "a better and happier husband, father, and friend." He and his wife, Eva, have been married 39 years and have five children: Guendolyn, Cheryl, Patrice, Robert Jr., and Kenny. For 26 years, Bob and his family lived near the course. Now, they live in Beacon, NY, close to his church.

Bob says someday he hopes to retire to the property he owns in Augusta, Georgia, and run a small vegetable farm—work for himself. But right now, he says he is very content in his dual career . . . as superintendent and preacher.

SCOTT C. APGAR
Metro Milorganite, Inc.

Notable Notes

In Memoriam

We regret to announce the death on June 22 of **Bert Jones**, a supporting member of the MetGCSA for more than 25 years.

Most of you probably know Bert best from his affiliation with Grass Roots Turf Products, a company he cofounded with Ken Kubik in 1978. (Please be sure to read Joe Alonzi's tribute to Bert on pages 1 and 2.)

We'd like to extend our deepest sympathy to Bert's wife, Gerry, and his three sons, Gregory, James, and Timothy.

Newly Certified

Jon Jennings, superintendent of The Patterson Club in Fairfield, CT, has been designated a Certified Golf Course Superintendent by the GCSAA. Congratulations, Jon!

Birth

Congratulations to Huntsville Golf Club Superintendent **Scott Schukraft** and his wife, Heidi, on the birth of their daughter, Alaina Claire, on May 3.

One Club That's Not Teed Off by Ban on Metal Spikes

golfer's metal spikes with Softspikes—free of charge—before they enter the course.”

Smoothing the Way for Spikeless Golf

“This group of members was so convinced of the benefits of using Softspikes that, last fall, they launched a campaign to encourage our entire golfing membership to replace their metal spikes with the urethane alternatives.

Attendants in both the Men's and Ladies' Locker Rooms have been equipped to offer on-the-spot spike replacements to members and their guests. Most of our members had their shoes converted over the winter. Guest changecovers are still being done.

And all spike changes are complimentary—at least for the time being.

“The reception to Softspikes—even at the start of our trial period—was so positive that the Golf Committee and Board of Directors committed to going 100 percent spikeless by July 1 of this year.

“Even outings held at the club are spikeless. Participants are informed, in advance, that they can either have their shoes converted on their own or bring their shoes—with metal spikes removed—and have them outfitted with Softspikes by one of our attendants.

“To date, the club has invested about \$3,500 in replacement spikes—a small price to pay for the many resulting benefits.”

The Pluses of Softspikes

“Some of the positive outcomes that our members, golf professional, clubhouse staff, and I have noticed:

- Softspikes are more comfortable, putting noticeably less strain on feet, ankles, knees, hips, and the back. According to our Pro Ed Nicholson, ‘99.9 percent of our members find it far easier to walk 18 holes in spikeless shoes.’
- Golfers needn't putt through spike marks on the greens. With heavy play (25,000 rounds per year), our small greens (90,000 square feet for 20 greens) were taking a beating. This season, the greens are noticeably healthier and smoother, with little wear around the hole after a day of play. As a

Read 'Em and Weep . . .

Golf Shoe Facts and Figures

Who's to Thank for Spikeless Spikes:

Softspikes were designed by former golf course manager Ernie Deacon and inventor Faris McMullin. Proving that necessity breeds invention, the two devised the spikeless spike to be worn during winter in their home state of Idaho, where metal spikes were banned because of the severe damage they would do to the region's frozen greens.

When they found that manufacturing these urethane rubber spikes was too costly to market only locally, they took them national. In 1993, they introduced the shoe as an alternative for seniors and “people with bad feet” but, of course, soon found the biggest selling point was that they totally eliminated spike marks from putting surfaces.

Today, Softspikes are available in every state, as well as Canada, England, Spain, Germany, Australia, and Guam.

Metal Spike Menaces: USGA studies to investigate the effect of golf shoes on turfgrass have revealed that golf shoes

with metal spikes cause more turf damage and longer-lasting turf damage under all conditions than any other shoe tested.

Metal spikes weaken the turf, impairing its ability to compete with poa annua and other undesirable plants. And contrary to popular belief, the spikes do not help to aerify the greens, but rather create a perfect seed bed for poa. What's more, the weight-bearing shoulder of the metal spike has been found to promote soil compaction.

The Price Clubs Pay for Metal Spikes: Ten years ago, the USGA estimated that metal spikes caused about \$20 million in damages to a golf course and clubhouse area. In 1995, it's fair to assume that metal spike damage will amount to more than \$40 million.

The Stats on Spike-pocked Greens: The USGA has computed that a player averages 28 paces per green; 28 paces times 24 spikes (the average golf shoe has 12 spikes) means 672 impressions;

672 impressions times 18 greens equals 12,096 impressions per round per player.

Assuming that a course gets 200 rounds each day, the greens receive 2,419,200 impressions daily or more than 72.5 million spike marks each month.

Each time a golf ball strikes a spike mark, it briefly loses contact with the putting surface, and over a distance of several feet, these subtle bounces can cause a significant reduction in ball roll.

A recent study conducted at The Ohio State University Turfgrass Research Center in Columbus also revealed a noticeable difference in the trueness of ball roll between Softspiked and metal-spiked test plots. In the softspiked plots, the ball rolled true, even as it slowed, while in the metal-spiked plots, the ball was more apt to vary in its course, especially as the ball speed decreased.

It's no wonder golfers complain they can't sink a putt!

result, I've been able to reduce the number of times I change cups from four to three times per week. And the turf, being healthier, better tolerates weekly rolling.

- Members can now wear their golf shoes anywhere inside the clubhouse and on our flagstone patio, areas that were previously off limits to metal spikes.

- The club expects Softspikes to spare carpeting, carts, wood steps, bridges, and asphalt walkways, adding up to significant savings in repairs and replacement costs."

Few Negatives Cited for Turf-Friendly Alternative

"The downsides to Softspikes are few, though some golfers feel their traction isn't as secure when they swing—particularly on hilly areas of the course, which at Darien are few, since the course is relatively flat.

"Critics will also tell you that Softspikes are slippery on wet surfaces,

especially wooden bridges, but I say what's more slippery than metal spikes on smooth cement, tile, or stone?

Besides, most clubs that encourage Softspikes are trying to make slick surfaces more secure by treating wood



"... 99.9 percent of our members find it far easier to walk 18 holes in spikeless shoes."



surfaces with aluminum oxide or covering them with a synthetic material. At Darien, we're covering both wooden bridges and wood walkways around the clubhouse with all-weather carpeting.

"The only other concern I've heard is that Softspikes are less durable than

metal spikes, lasting 30 as opposed to 50 rounds. The replacement costs are slightly higher as well, depending on the quality of metal spike. Typically, Softspikes run about \$1 more per pair of shoes.

"It's these few points, as well as a dogged attachment to the ol' tried-and-true, that make it difficult for superintendents, themselves, to convince their memberships to go spikeless. It really takes a day of Softspikes-Only play on a course to see, and feel, the benefits—not unlike what the Met did with our meeting at Middle Bay Country Club.

"At Darien, I was fortunate that a few vocal members were willing to campaign for Softspikes. As with any new policy, though, this one will be up for review at the season's end. But my guess is that Softspikes aren't a passing fad; at Country Club of Darien, they're here to stay."

TIM O'NEILL, CGCS
Country Club of Darien

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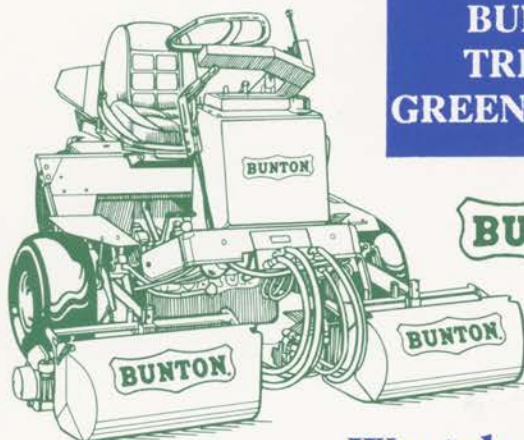
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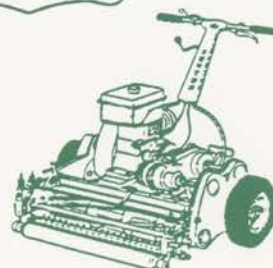
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Superintendents and Managers Enjoy a Day at Bedford

Bedford Golf & Tennis was host to the May Superintendent/Manager Tournament and Meeting. Thirty-two managers participated, making for a total of 124 golfers. This is more rounds than Bedford normally does in a week! In spite of the large crowd, host Superintendent Bob Nielsen and Manager Bill Burke did an outstanding job. The golf course was firm, fast, and immaculate. The lunch, the stations on the course, and the cocktail reception were first class. Virtually everyone raved about the day. Special thanks, too, to Golf Pro Tony Chateauverte for his generosity with the gifts.

The golf rivaled the conditions: It was pretty remarkable with two holes-in-one: Bill Perlee, superintendent of Burning Tree Country Club in Greenwich, CT, aced Hole #12, while Bruce Campbell, manager of Aspectuck Valley Country Club performed a similar feat on #10. Congratulations also to the following tourney winners:

Superintendent/Manager

Low Gross Winners

- 1st Earl Millett/Dan Vasquez
Ridgeway Country Club
2nd Frank Lamphier/Bruce Campbell
Aspectuck Valley Country Club
3rd John Carlone/Nick Batos
Middle Bay Country Club

Low Net Winners

- 1st Tony Grasso/Max Sanz
Metropolis Country Club
2nd Scott Niven/Peter Tunley
The Stanwich Club
3rd Bert Dickinson/George Caevers
Willow Ridge Country Club

Two-Man Best Ball

Low Gross Winners

- 1st Cliff Cable, *Innis Arden GC*
John Farrell, *Lofts Seed, Inc.*
2nd Tom Watroba, *Quaker Ridge GC*
Dan Cancelleri, *J.A. Jackson Corp.*

Low Net Winners

- 1st Byron Johnson, *Terre Co. of NJ*
John LeClair, *Lakeover National GC*
2nd Jim McNally, *Greenrock Corp.*
Wayne Remo, *Rock Spring Club*

Longest Drive

- Tom Heaney, Manager
Deerpdale Golf Club
Wayne Remo, Superintendent
Rock Spring Club

Closest to the Pin

- Bruce Campbell, Mgr (Hole-in-One)
Aspectuck Valley Country Club
Scott Stark, Superintendent
Fenway Golf Club

DAVE MAHONEY

Siwanoy Country Club

Golf Events

Poa Annual Golf Tournament

Monday, August 21
Mount Kisco Country Club, Mount Kisco, NY
Host Superintendent: Fred Scheyhing, CGCS

September MetGCSA Meeting

Tuesday, September 12
Metropolis Country Club, White Plains, NY
Final Round: Championship Qualifier
Host Superintendent: Tony Grasso

Social Event

Don't Forget This Year's . . .

Summer Social

Tuesday, August 22
Fairview Country Club
Greenwich, CT
Host Superintendent: Richie Marcks, CGCS

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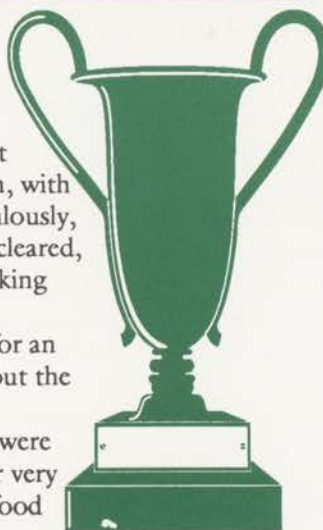
Heritage Hills Takes Invitational Trophy

The Met Invitational appeared headed for "Rainout Theater" as a full field started out in a driving rain, with thunder and lightning predicted at 100%. Miraculously, after one hole of play, the rain stopped, the skies cleared, and the competition heated up—with Heritage Hills taking this year's Invitational Trophy.

A very special thanks to Richie Marcks and his staff for an impeccable golf course. The entire field was raving about the conditions.

Drew Campbell, Mike Loper, and Walter Campbell were outstanding in getting everyone onto the course, under very adverse conditions, and providing us with exceptional food and service.

Also thanks to everyone in the field for having the faith that we would play. Those with the faith—and a pro who could putt were:



MetGCSA Two-Ball: First Round Results

Advancing in the first round of our Two-Ball Tournament were the following Class A and Class B players. (Note: The winners in the teams grouped below will face each other in the second round.):

Class A

Matt Ceplo/Tony Baviello *over*
Rick Schock/Gregg Stanley

Dave Mahoney/Dennis Petruzzelli *over*
Les Kennedy/John Streeter

Tim Powers/Tim Garceau *over*
Fred Scheyhing/Chuck Martineau

Jon Jennings/Mark Fuller *over*
John Carlone/Tim O'Neill

Tony Savone/Ron Demkovich *over*
Mike Mongon/John O'Keefe

Bob Alonzi/Joe Alonzi *over*
Tony Grasso/Greg Wojick

Wayne Remo/Jim McNally *over*
Bill Perlee/Bill Bodemer

Tim Moore/Todd Polidor *over*
Bob Nielsen/Joe Camberato

Class C

Dan Cancelleri/John Apple *over*
Al Tretera/Ernie Rizzio

John Hawthorne/Frank Amodio *over*
Ron Shapiro/Frank Savakis

Charlie Siemers/Scott Apgar *over*
Bob Lippman Sr./Bob Lippman Jr.

John Currie/Joe Kennedy *over*
Ken Clear/Mike Cook

Quick highlights: Both the defending champs Schock/St Stanley and Tretera/Rizzo were ousted. Also the medalist qualifier Mongon/O'Keefe have been eliminated, along with our inaugural champs, Scheyhing/Martineau.

In losing to Remo/McNally, Perlee had a hole-in-one and chipped in.

After trying hard to qualify, Carlone/O'Neill are bumped from the first round. One step at a time guys.

Finally, in the Alonzi/Alonzi victory, Bob's 60 Net proved to be the deciding factor in a match hard fought and played well by all.

With some of the favorites gone and the heat coming, the second round promises to be a real shootout. —DM

Low Net Winners

58 *Heritage Hills of Westchester*
Todd Polidor, *superintendent*
J. Cipriano, *golf professional*
Mr. Currie, *green chairman*
Mr. Delano, *club official*

60 *Brae Burn Country Club*
Dennis Flynn, *superintendent*
K. Moser, *golf professional*
Mr. Nissman, *green chairman*
Mr. Rich, *club official*

61 *Preakness Hills Country Club*
John O'Keefe, *superintendent*
E. Mumford, *golf professional*
Mr. Green, *green chairman*
Mr. Fand, *club official*

Low Gross Winners

67 *Siwanoy Country Club*
Dave Mahoney, *superintendent*
C. Bolling, *golf professional*
Mr. Wichser, *green chairman*
Mr. Stapleton, *club official*

68 *Middle Bay Country Club*
John Carlone, *superintendent*
T. Shifflet, *golf professional*
Mr. Haft, *green chairman*
Mr. Aronson, *club official*

70 *Westchester Country Club*
Joe Alonzi, *superintendent*
M. Wanser, *golf professional*
Mr. Aronstein, *green chairman*
Mr. Portale, *club official*

Longest Drive

Steven Murphy, Amateur
Knollwood Country Club

Erich Mumford, Golf Professional
Preakness Hills Country Club

Closest to the Pin

Mitch Cohen, Green Chairman
Jim Calladio, Superintendent
Milbrook Club

Dan Pratt, Club Official
Mark Wanser, Golf Pro (Hole-in-One)
Westchester Country Club

Congratulations to everyone who participated.

DAVE MAHONEY
Siwanoy Country Club



Quotable Quote



"Competitive golf is played mainly on a five-and-a-half-inch course: the space between your ears."

Bobby Jones
Professional Golfer

Two Tips for Staying on Top of Your Paperwork

Staying on top of your paperwork may seem like it should be kid's stuff (especially compared to the trials we all encounter on the golf course this time of year), but for most of us, it's a never-ending struggle.

Here are two tips from organizational expert and author Sunny Schlenger for managing the avalanche of paper that flows into your office every day.

Tip #1: Approach each piece of paper with the question, "How do I plan to use this?"

Most people get hung up on "where should I put this paper," but that only complicates matters. To help you answer the "how" question, remember you basically have only four options:

1. Throw it out.
2. Pass it along to someone else.
3. File it.
4. Take action on it.

The important thing is to make a

decision—even if it isn't a final one—each time you touch a piece of paper.

Hint: Try sticking red dots on the paper each time you pick it up. The measles effect might help convince you that paper's got a disease that needs tending to.

Tip #2: If you're the type who saves everything that might be handy someday, you probably have a lot to trouble finding anything through the thicket of "stuff" in your office. Before you get chased out into the streets by your clutter, you should cross-examine yourself with this battery of questions:

1. Have I used or referred to this item in the last year?
2. Is the information tough to get your hands on?
3. Will this be expensive to replace?

If you can answer no to all of these questions, it's time your wastebasket saw active duty!



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