



WESTERN VIEWS

September - October, 1995

Official Publication of the West Michigan Golf Course Superintendents Association

Newly Elected in 1996 to the W.M.G.C.S.A. Board

At the annual meeting held in October at Cascade Hills Country Club six positions on the board were filled. Newly elected are:

- Paul Schippers CGCS - President
- Doug Boyle CGCS - Vice President

- Kieth Paterson CGCS - Sec./Treasurer
- Kurt Thuemmel CGCS - Director
- Jeff Hopkins CGCS - Director
- Tom McGuinness - Director

Leaving the board are Steve Tedhams CGCS and Chris Fochman CGCS. Remaining on the board as

immediate past President is Harry Schuemann CGCS, Al Bathum, Kathy Antaya and Mike Herbst CGCS as directors.

Please congratulate the newly elected and the outgoing members of the board!

Professional Development Catalog is Key to Year-Round Planning

The Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) recently distributed a new, comprehensive Professional Development Catalog that provides more information on educational opportunities and association services than any previous publication. Presented in partnership with the Valent U.S.A. Corporation, the catalog provides members a more integrated approach to GCSAA services.

The Career Development section of the catalog outlines services and materials that can help individuals define a career path and achieve related career goals. For example, the Employment Referral Service, available only to GCSAA members, is a weekly list of employment opportunities. The Employment Resources Kit offers tips on topics such as how to network and prepare for interviews.

More than 160 GCSAA seminars in 80 locations across the United States and Canada are outlined in the catalog. Seven seminars, including "Lake and Aquatic

Plant Management", "Spanish and Golf Course Management", and "The Superintendent as Grow-In Manager" are offered for the first time in 1995-96. Seminars being held at GCSAA's 67th International Golf Course Conference and Show are described in detail as well.

Two new correspondence courses: "Emergency Planning and Community Right-To-Know", and "Personal Protective Equipment for Pesticide Applicators", have been added to the menu of options that allows students to learn at their own pace. Eight GCSAA correspondence classes, each designed to be completed in seven to 14 hours, are now available.

Also included in the catalog is information on two important GCSAA education programs: the Environmental Management Program and the Certification Program. Program participants can now more easily review options for classes in their areas of study.

GCSAA Technical Information Services (TIS) listings form another large section of the catalog. TIS offers a wide selection of prepackaged materials that provide answers to some of the most common issues facing superintendents. Textbooks, GCSAA research reports, training videos and copies of GCSAA's television show, "Par for the Course", also

are included in the TIS bookstore listing.

Free copies of GCSAA's Professional Development Catalog may be obtained by calling 800/472-7878.

Since 1926, GCSAA has been the leading professional association for the men and women who manage and maintain golf facilities in the U.S. and worldwide. From its headquarters in Lawrence, Kansas, the association provides education, information and representation to more than 14,500 individual members from more than 50 countries. GCSAA's mission is to serve its members, advance their profession, and enrich the quality of golf and its environment.

Fall Party a Success

The annual fall party was held at Blythefield Country Club on November 3rd. Steve Tedhams and Kathy Antaya, party organizers, did a great job as usual. Doug Boyle and the staff at Blythefield did an excellent job to prepare for the evening. The group of one hundred listened to the fine D.J., Rick Ruether, and enjoyed a sumptuous meal.

If you did not attend, plan to next year. It's a great way to enjoy the end of the season and treat your spouse to a nice evening out.

Editor's Note: Please write me if you have any corrections or if you are interested in doing an article for us:

Western Views
3725 Cascade Rd., S.E.
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
Grand Rapids, MI 49546
LIBRARIES

OCT 10 2003

Cats: A Worldwide Problem

Editor's Note: You may ask what this has to do with golf course management, but if you are involved in developing or have an active audubon program, this may be of interest!

Several recent studies have been confirming a long-standing belief among wildlife managers: free-roaming cats pose a worldwide threat to wildlife. Game birds and small mammals are particularly vulnerable. The scope of the damage has not been pinned down yet, but the studies indicate that the problem is huge.

So far, some of the most solid research has been done in Australia, where cats have become public enemy number one, largely owing to their impact on wildlife. In Melbourne, bumper stickers proclaim: "The Only good cat is a flat cat." Several Australian municipalities are officially "cat-free zones." Cat curfews are in place in many urban areas.

Free-roaming Australian cats do tremendous damage to local wildlife. In one study, David Paton of the University of Adelaide estimated cats prey on 186 species of Australian

birds, 64 mammals, and 97 reptiles and amphibians. His research showed that the

1.8 million cats in Victoria and New South Wales alone killed some 60 million vertebrates a year. Each cat averaged eight birds, 16 mammals, and eight reptiles annually. On average, cats destroy more birds than are produced in urban areas, Paton concluded. He thinks Australia's cats kill 3.8 billion animals a year.

Carole Webb of the Victoria Cat Protection Society thinks that within 10 years all Australia cats will be confined to residences all the time.

According to Tom Dalyell, science editor of *New Scientist* magazine, domestic cats have been responsible for the near-extinction of many species of sea birds on some remote oceanic islands. In Britain, cats kill over 70 million wild mammals and birds a year.

In North America cats have also been damned for their impact on wildlife. Nova Scotia biologist Bob Bancroft estimates Canada's five million cats kill close to 70 million wild birds a year.

"States and provinces could control cats; it seems logical that cats running at large should be controlled," said Moi Chromek, a wildlife legal specialist with the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources in Toronto. "For centuries, European law has classed cats at large as pests, to be destroyed."

"But house cat control is a tricky matter," he added. "So many people like them. People don't like to clean out litter boxes, so they send cats outside, knowing they kill birds. This is not Mother Nature at work. Letting cats kill wildlife is not a crime, but it is not ethical, either."

Alex Dzubin, formerly with the Canadian Wildlife Service,

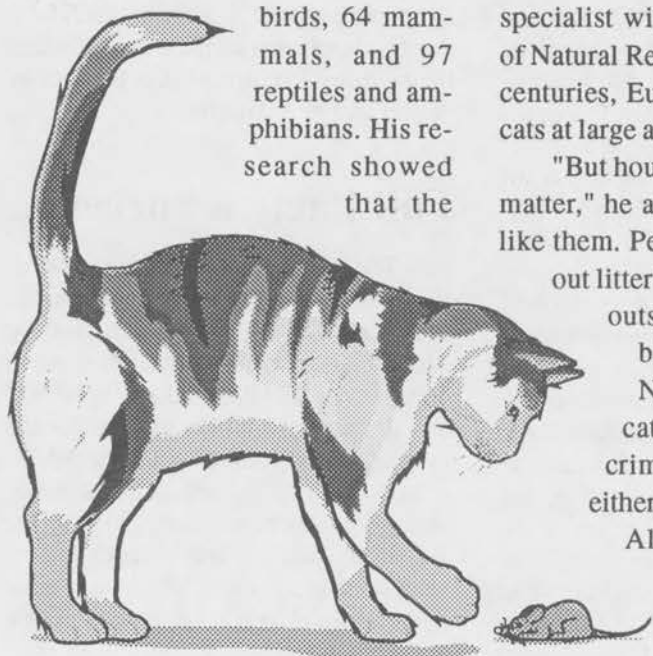
thinks that cats kill many nesting ducks, especially in dry years.

There is no doubt that cats impact heavily on U.S. wildlife.

- 1915 — The Massachusetts Agricultural Bulletin warned that cats caused "an enormous decimation of birds."
- 1940 — The Missouri Game Commission claimed "cats in Missouri kill more game each year than do hunters."
- 1949 — *The New Yorker* estimated that cats "probably kill a hundred million birds a year."
- 1956 — The Massachusetts Commission of Fisheries and Game attributed two million bird deaths a year to cats in that state.
- 1960s — U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service researchers found that 226 cats under study killed 2.7 birds and small mammals daily per cat. Prey included woodcock, grouse, prairie chicken, bobwhites, pheasants, grey partridge, snipe, doves, wild turkeys, rabbits, hares, and squirrels.

Researchers at the University of Wisconsin estimate that cats are the most plentiful mid-sized predators in Wisconsin and Minnesota. Stan Temple, biologist at the University of Wisconsin, estimated recently that cats in that state kill "hundreds of millions of creatures a year." He thinks that cats destroy 47 million rabbits in the U.S. annually, and called the scope of mortality "shocking."

At the root of this enormous loss of wildlife is cat biology. According to biologist R.G. Browne of the University of Massachusetts, hunting behavior is innate in kittens and is reinforced by parental example. Furthermore, cats continue to hunt whether hungry or not. "Domestic cats do not



Continued on page 3

Cats, continued

hunt out of necessity," he explained. "They hunt for pleasure." Temple calls most house cats "subsidized predators" because they are fed well at home. One Michigan study found a single cat killed 1,660 mammals and birds in 18 months, even though it was fed at home.

In addition to the predation by cats on wildlife, there is also the elevated risk to natural ecosystem caused by cat-borne diseases. "Cats are important vectors for carrying diseases, especially toxoplasmosis," said wildlife disease specialist Ed Addison of the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources Research Station at Maple. "They also carry feline immunodeficiency virus, feline distemper, feline leukemia virus, and rabies."

Cats are enormously abundant in North America. In 1966, the U.S. cat population was estimated to be about

35 million. By 1987, the figure had leapt to 56 million. At present, there are believed to be close to 70 million cats in the U.S. and 5 million in Canada. Studies by researchers at Cornell University indicate each cat prowls over an area of about 100 acres, but some roam much farther afield.

Various measures have been considered to deal with cats, but few have been put into practice. "Cat control has been widely discussed, but it usually goes nowhere in North America," Chromek said. "There is a fear of too much flak from cat lovers. Cats are like sacred cows."

The best cat control method is contraception, according to James Richards of Cornell University. The World Health Organization recommends vasectomy. Gonadotropic contraception holds some promise.

The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals recently issued a statement claiming "irate citizens are tired of outdoor cats killing birds and generally making a nuisance of themselves." The SPCA hopes to convince governments to put in place "mandatory cat identification" involving microchips, tattoos, and external tags.

There is no lack of evidence indicating cats kill wildlife. It is becoming something of a dilemma whether to even conserve wildlife habitat where burgeoning cat predation threatens to reduce wildlife populations to the degree where such measures do not work.

"What's the point of worrying about bird habitats if we turn a blind eye to what cats do to those same birds?" Bancroft observed.

*From an article by Dr. Robert Allison
printed in "Critter Chatter"*

Turf Management Report: How to Solve Winter Turf Injury

by Nor-Am

Turf in a weakened condition resulting from disease or pest damage, low or excessive moisture, lack of fertility, or poor root development is much more susceptible to winter damage. At no time is the importance of healthy turf more significant than during fall months. But even a lush, vibrant turf often cannot withstand the pressures of severe winter weather. Winter injury re-

sults from many different extreme conditions. Symptoms are often complex, since many of the injuries can interact. Some of the conditions include:

Ice Sheet Damage: Turf covered with ice for extended periods can experience injury from oxygen suffocation and toxic gas buildup, but these conditions are rare. More commonly, freezing and thawing cycles cause crown hydration, which reduces winter hardiness.

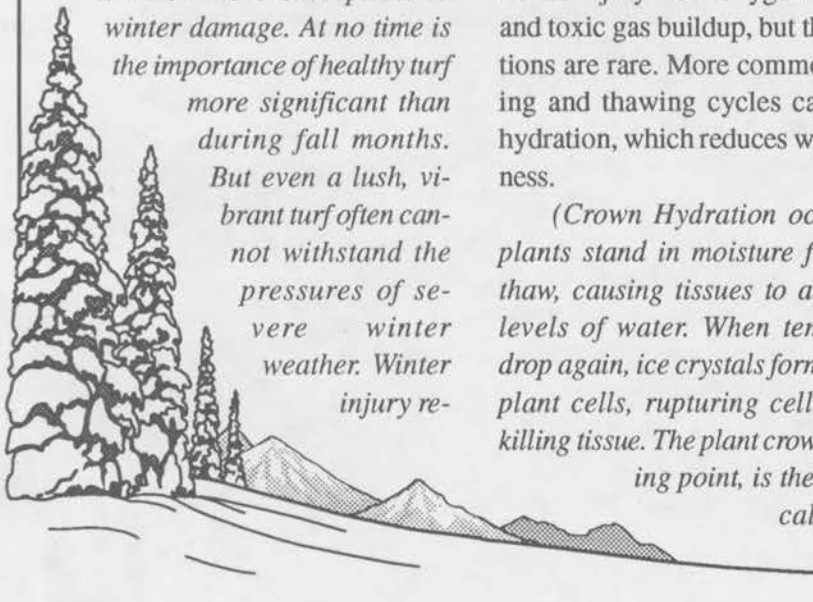
(Crown Hydration occurs when plants stand in moisture following a thaw, causing tissues to absorb high levels of water. When temperatures drop again, ice crystals form within the plant cells, rupturing cell walls and killing tissue. The plant crown, or growing point, is the most critical tissue affected by these

*freezing and thawing cycles. Damage appears in irregular-shaped areas, similar to direct low temperature kill. **Poa annua** is most susceptible to this type of winterkill.)*

Low Temperature Damage: Direct kill may occur in freezing-thawing situations, when turf experiences a rapid drop in temperature (usually below 20°F). Poorly hardened plants with a high moisture content are more susceptible to this type of winterkill. Leaves and stems appear water-soaked, turn brown and become matted. A foul odor is often evident, and damage occurs in large, irregularly shaped areas.

Chill Injury: Most commonly seen on warm-season turf grasses, chill injury occurs when green pigment production ceases during periods when temperatures dip below 55°F along with

Continued on page 4



Turf Management, continued

high light intensity. Generally, grass leaves appear light brown to white.

Desiccation Injury: This condition is common in regions with high winds and low relative humidity, but can occur anywhere turf remains unprotected and soil moisture is limited due to low temperatures or drought. Leaves and shoots turn white to silver and plant tissue is not matted down. Damaged areas vary from small patches to large irregularly-shaped areas.

Frost Heaving Injury: Freezing and thawing cycles on wet soils move the surface during ice formation, pushing crowns and roots out of the soil. Roots can be severed from the plant. Symptoms include tissues turning white or silver to tan. This condition is most common on seedling turf.

Traffic Injury - Frozen Ground: Foot and vehicle traffic on frozen leaves causes mechanical injury by rupturing cells in leaves and shoots. Frost damage is common when traffic occurs in early morning before frost leaves the turf. Damage to frozen turf appears as white or silver areas, taking on the shape of footprints or tire tracks.

Traffic Injury - Slush-Covered Ground: Traffic on slush-covered turf causes crown hydration and reduces winter hardiness. Damage is most severe when temperatures drop below 20°F following heavy traffic injury, except patterns tend to be more regular.

Diagnose Winter Injury Early: early diagnosis of turf winterkill or in-

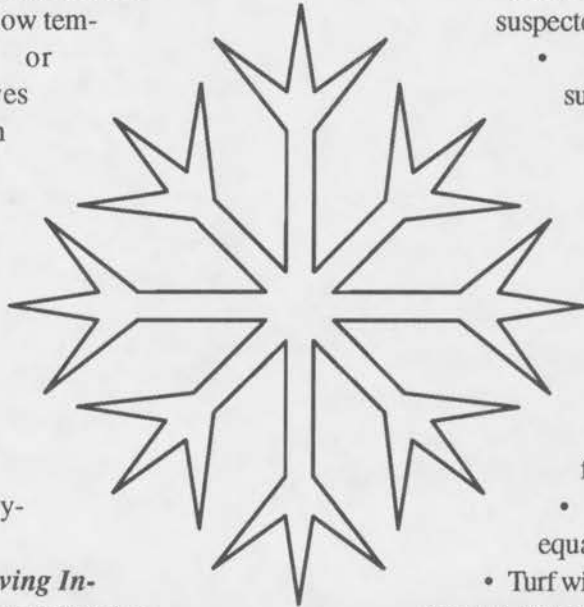
jury is essential to alleviating damage. Diagnostic steps should be taken prior to normal greenup in the spring. If you suspect winter injury, take the following steps to determine the extent of turf damage:

- Collect turf plugs from suspected sites.
- Place plugs in suitable container for short-term growth.
- Place containers in a greenhouse or well-lighted area, preferably a window facing south.
- Keep turf adequately watered.
- Turf will initiate greening in 5-7 days, depending on growing conditions.
- Assess the extent of greening after two to three weeks.

Areas with less than 50% greenup should be considered extensively damaged, and will require renovation to ensure satisfactory quality. Lesser damaged areas can be recovered with extra attention to proper fertilizing, watering and mowing. Keep traffic off damaged areas until adequately recovered.

Take Action Early: If you determine that your turf suffers from winter injury, plan early to reseed those areas in the spring. Some of the steps you may wish to consider include:

- Communicate with your membership or customers to alert them that some turf areas will be under renovation.
- Ascertain equipment needs.
- Arrange your seed purchases and locate the best source.
- Plan your herbicide and fertility pro-



Hiring? _____

12 Questions to Streamline the Process

1. Describe your present job responsibilities. Which are most difficult and why? Which are most enjoyable?
2. Of which accomplishments in your present job are you most proud? What was your best idea regardless of achievement?
3. What would you like to have accomplished but haven't in your present job? What prevented you from doing so?
4. What particular strengths and weaknesses would you bring to this position?
5. What do you know about our golf course and this position?
6. What would it take to succeed in this position?
7. What elements are important to your job satisfaction and that of your subordinates?
8. Describe what qualities would make an ideal boss for this position.
9. What are your short- and long-term career objectives?
10. What are the biggest frustrations in your career?
11. How would you describe your personality? How would your associates describe you?
12. Why should we hire you?

Source: David Stefan, President, ChaseAmerica Inc., Jupiter, Fla. and GCSAA Newslite



Clubs Don't Get What They Pay For... They Get Much More

When I first became a golf course superintendent, I thought to myself, "Boy, are we ever well paid for what we had to know and were responsible for." It was pretty simple with no stimpmeter, little television coverage and minimal government interference. However, towards the end of my career and now as a sales rep I say to myself, "Boy, the golf course superintendent of the 1990's is grossly underpaid." If you ever get away from this profession, I guarantee that you will realize it more than ever.

First of all, personnel management is almost a full-time job. Many crews are as much as 50% larger than what they were in the 70's. Also dealing with your employees is much more difficult. You can't just fire an employee because he is a worthless worker without experiencing all kinds of repercussions. You have OSHA, Right-To-Know and MSDS sheets... all good things, but they tie up your golf turf perfecting effort.

The government with its environmental concerns has the superintendent dancing to their tune of rinse pads,

chemical storage facilities, certification, posting, ground water, wetlands, rivers, streams and lakes. You're dealing with the DNR, EPA, fire departments, audubon societies and preservations groups that protect fish, geese and birds... and pterodactyls if they could.

Mowing and cultural practices are at a level that could not have been dreamt of years ago. If you don't keep up, your members/patrons will play somewhere else, or you will be working somewhere else. Public courses are maintained more like or better than many private clubs of the 70's.

Thanks to television, your members are expecting their golf facilities to be maintained like that of Augusta National or that year's U.S. Open. They do not realize that those courses are maintained to a climactic superintendent's performance and not a day in, day out effort.

Today, tools of the trade range from the stimpmeter to the self-contained weather station to soil temperature and moisture gauges. Computerization is part of the irrigation systems, pumping

stations and also spray equipment.

Chemicals were simple, inexpensive and long lasting. Now there are PGR's, DMI's, systemics and very target specific compounds. Twenty-five acres of fairways are chemically treated like only greens were. Years ago dollar spot, brown patch, snow mold, cutworms and dandelions were the superintendent's only concerns. Today anthracnose, summer patch, ataenius, aphodius, Japanese beetle grub and plant growth regulation are also considerations in the day-to-day program of the golf turf manager.

On top of all of this, play has increased dramatically, not to mention outing play, which is so critical to each club's income. Just try to get some work done!

The golf course superintendent has always worn many hats (including budget manager), but the extent of responsibilities, vastness of expertise expected and time given makes him the most under-compensated of all club employees.

Chris Fochtman

Advertisers

Please patronize our advertisers as they have made this newsletter possible.

AgrEvo	(614) 726-2857	O.M. Scott	(616) 361-2106
Amturf	(616) 792-2241	Osburn Industries	(313) 292-4140
Benham Chemical	(313) 474-7474	Parmenter & Andre	(616) 458-1546
Boylan Sales	(616) 685-6828	Peerless-Midwest	(616) 527-0050
Century Rain Aid	1-800-347-4272	R.A. Manley Irrigation Consultants ..	(810) 651-5729
Chipco/Specialty Products	(313) 782-0323	Spartan Distributors	(616) 887-7301
Custom Aerification	1-800-269-6181	Standard Sand	(616) 842-5180
D&CDistributors	1-800-888-7779	Superior Uniform Sales	1-800-536-0718
D&G Irrigations	1-800-334-7011	T.C.I.	(517) 725-7145
E-Z-Go Textron	1-800-336-1016	Terra International Inc.	1-800-321-9347
Ellis Sales	1-800-962-4128	Tire Wholesalers Company, Inc.	(616) 775-6666
Fitzgerald Henne Inc.	(517) 482-8810	TriTurf	(616) 943-8343
Green & Grow	(616) 964-9989	Turf Drain Inc.	(810) 471-6750
Kleins Fertilizer	1-800-642-3172	Turfgrass, Inc.	(616) 866-9389
Kubota of Grand Rapids	(616) 364-7031	Turf Services	(616) 842-4975
Kurtz Bros. Inc.	1-800-223-7645	United Horticultural Supply	(810) 852-2838
Lebanon Fertilizers	(313) 673-7146	Valley Turf	(616) 532-2885
Lesco	(616) 784-4929	Van Manen Oil	(616) 453-6344
Michigan Sand Co.	(517) 773-2030	Water Tronics	1-800-356-6686
Michigan Turf Equipment	(616) 554-3310	W.F. Miller Co.	(313) 349-4100
J. Mollema & Sons	(616) 940-1441	Wilbur-Ellis	1-800-873-5599

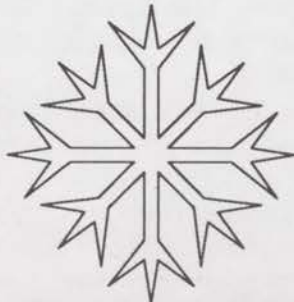
Turf Management, continued

grams.

Proactive Approach Pays Off:

Even if you experience severe winter injury on your turf, you can assure your membership or customers of a quality turf in the spring by planning early to re-establish damaged areas. A proactive approach will yield positive results a few months down the road.

*Presented as a public service
to professional turf managers by
NOR-AM Chemical Company and
Hoechst-Roussel Agri-Vet Company*



Classified Ads

For Sale - 1992 Cushman GA-60 Fairway Aerifier. Only 122 hours on it. Excellent shape. Asking \$13,000 or best reasonable offer. Call Jon Maddern at 517-785-4683.

Assistant Golf Course Superintendent needed. Call Steve Tedhams at 616-949-8330.

GCSAA Seminars Coming Soon To Your Area

Human Resource Management

February 21, 1996
Gaylord, Michigan
(Code #847)

Drainage Systems

February 22, 1996
Gaylord, Michigan
(Code # 848)

Calibration and Safety of Pesticide Application Equipment

March 19, 1996
Grand Rapids, Michigan
(Code # 924)



Register Today! Call 800/472-7878

For a more detailed description of seminars, with dates and registration forms, please refer to your GCSAA Professional Development Catalog 1995-96. You may also reference your monthly issue of *Golf Course Management*.

Watch your mail for reminder postcards highlighting seminars in your area!



3725 Cascade Rd., S.E. • Grand Rapids, MI 49546

BULK RATE
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
GRAND RAPIDS, MI
PERMIT NO. 582

Pete Cookingham
MSU Main Library
W - 212
East Lansing MI 48824