

The Green Sheet



Central Pennsylvania Golf Course Superintendents Association

Volume 7 Issue 2

April 1999

**April Meeting
Butter Valley Golf Port
Tuesday April 6th, 1999**

**CPGCSA Board of Directors Meeting
10:00 AM**

**Speaker - 11:30 AM
Lunch - 12:00 Noon
Golf - 1:00 PM**

Hot Wing Night @ the Washington Inn - 5:30 PM

Golf Course Profile

Butter Valley was the family farm turned into a public golf course. The property has been in the same family for eight generations. The original deeds to the property hang in the shack shop and date back to 1782. The front nine opened on Memorial Day of 1969, followed by the back nine in July, 1969. Ten years ago an adjoining farm was acquired and two new holes were constructed on that property. The 10th and 11th holes were combined into one Par 5 with the former 10th tee becoming the practice green. This adjustment prevented any additional golf balls from coming through the snack shop windows. Two years ago the barn was given a cosmetic facelift with a full line pro shop and six practice bays constructed inside. Currently, there are three new bunkers in various stages of construction, as well as some tee expansions. New this year is a GPS tracking system for golf car traffic control. The most unique feature about Butter Valley is the airstrip dividing the first 14 holes from the last four holes.

Butter Valley Superintendent Profile

John Gehman, our beloved immediate past president, has been involved with Butter Valley for the full 30 years of its existence. Becoming the superintendent, general manager, and owner was an evolutionary process common to family owned businesses. Mom and Pop retired about 12 years ago, following 12 years of on-the-job training. With a father still nosing around and a son still fresh out of turf school, there's never a shortage of opinions on the right way to accomplish any one simple task. The biggest problem with being the owner and superintendent is who do you fire when things turn to crap???

**Severe Drought Could Be
Lurking in the New Year
By Paul Nussbaum**

If you think it's dry now, just wait. Much of the United States is due in the next two years for a drought as bad as — or worse than — the Dust Bowl drought of the 1930's, federal climate researchers said this past March.

On the grand scale of time, the eight-year drought that created the Dust Bowl was only average, according to scientists for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). Using historical data such as tree rings, archaeological remains, and lake bed sediments, the scientists concluded that the "mega-droughts" in the 16th and 18th centuries parched much of the Great Plains and what is now the Western United States.

"Future droughts may be much more severe and last much longer than we have experienced this century," said Connie Woodhouse, a scientist at NOAA's National Geophysical Data Center in Boulder, Colo. She said that historical data indicates the severe droughts of the 20th century were not unusual events and suggest droughts of this magnitude can be expected once or twice a century. "There's a twenty year periodicity of drought; we're not sure what that is due to, but it seems to be fairly regular," said Woodhouse. "So if that's true, we should be expecting another drought, maybe a big drought in the next two years."

SEE DROUGHT on Page 3

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President's Message

Well It's That Time of Year Again. Can you believe that winter is over and it was another year without snow (at least in Pottstown, PA) and that spring is just around the corner? Time seems to go so fast in the so-called off-season.

Speaking of time, the longer I work in this industry, there seems to be "not enough time" in a day. All of us are granted the same amount of time - 86,400 seconds per day -- and for some this seems not to be enough while others are able to get things done regardless of time constraints.

It is more than a simple matter of time management. It is a matter of establishing priorities based on a distinction between "want to's" and "have to's."

A "want to" is just what it says-something you want to do. You want to go fishing. You want to take your wife or girlfriend to a new restaurant. You want to take your family to the shore. There is no penalty if you do not do it, but you want to. You want efficiency to increase. You want costs to go down. They all sound like important objectives, but until you tie those desires to some reward or punishment, they remain wants, wishes, or dreams.

A "have to" is something you have to do - or else! If you do not do it you will suffer some sort of negative result. You have to pay your taxes or the IRS will get you. You have to get your employees to focus on job quality or you will lose members, or worse turf. You have to lower your costs so you can be competitive. "Have to's" come with an implied consequence.

The key is really to make sure all your "have to's" receive your full attention and not allow your "want to's" to keep you from getting your "have to's" done. Time is what you make of it. Make time to attend the monthly meetings - your course and crew will be there when you return. Make the meeting dates a "have to" not a "want to." Do not suffer the negative result from not learning what is new in our industry and share some of your knowledge.

Our April meeting will be held at Butter Valley Golf Port on April 6, 1999.

See you all at the meetings!

Theodore S. Zabrenski, President



Butter Valley Directions:

Get to PA 100 either off of the PA turnpike or off of I-78. Head toward Bally. Once inside Bally turn east on 7th street. The golf course is 1.5 miles outside of town. For more detailed directions look the on the internet at www.buttervalley.com.

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Membership News

The following individuals have applied for membership into our association. If there are no written objections within the next seven days, they will be accepted into our association at the next meeting.

Mark Blest, Superintendent
Honey Brook Golf Club Class A

David Boniface, Superintendent
Pilgrim's Oak Golf Club Class B

Jeffrey M. Granitz, Assistant Superintendent
Golf Club of Felicita Class C

Robert Orazi, District Manager
Koontz Irrigation and Supply Co. Class AF

We would like to welcome the following individuals into our association.

Richard Hall, Manager
Sarver Irrigation Class AF

Samuel Baird, Salesperson
Finch Turf Equipment Class AF

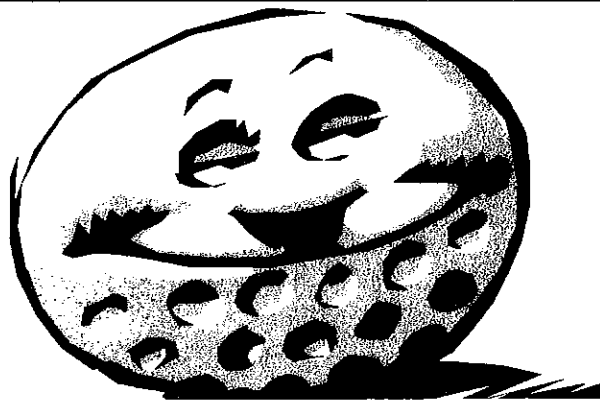
David Feldman, Salesperson
Finch Turf Equipment Class AF

Alfie Gardner, Salesperson
Terra Professional Products Class AF

Daniel Fick, Salesperson
Northern Nurseries Class AF

If you know of anyone who may be interested in membership into the association or has questions on the status of their applications, please have them contact Mark Malasavage at (717) 533-3269.

Enclosed with this Green Sheet is an updated CPGCSA Membership Application. This current application was revised in April 1998 for compatibility with the GCSAA affiliation agreement. Please make some photo copies for your files and dispose of any earlier copies without the 4/98 revision date. Thanks!



DROUGHT from Page 1

Pennsylvania, New Jersey and the rest of the mid-Atlantic region are now suffering drought conditions that began this summer, and part of Texas and Florida have endured dry spells, while the rest of the nation has been much wetter than usual this year. With the national average precipitation of 28.39 inches, preliminary data suggest that January - October 1998 was the wettest such ten month period on record for the contiguous United States. The 1961 - 1990 normal for the same period is 24.84 inches.) The same conditions that created the mega-droughts of the past "could recur in the future, leading to a natural disaster of a dimension unprecedented in the 20th century," said Jonathan Overpeck, head of NOAA's Paleoclimatology Program. Overpeck and Woodhouse reported their research in the December issue of the Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society.

The researchers used precipitation estimates based on studies of tree rings in Iowa, eastern Montana, Oklahoma and eastern Wyoming to conclude that there were droughts as severe as the Dust Bowl in the 1750's and three times during the 19th century, from the early 1820's to the 1890's. A much worse, prolonged drought apparently ravaged the western part of the continent in the 16th century. The researchers said there is evidence a drought started in the southwest around 1565 and spread to what is now the entire western United States by 1585.

Today, things could be worse.

Overpeck said global warming and land-use patterns "could make the Great Plains even more susceptible to a severe drought in the future."

Increased cultivation of marginal lands and excessive use of the Ogallala Aquifer beneath much of the Plains could increase the impact of future droughts, the researchers said.

Heather and Gorse

by Mark V. DelSantro, CGCS

Greetings and salutations to all of you fellow heather and gorsers. Thanks to a proclamation from our new commander and chief, Ted Zabinski, heather and gorse lives for at least one more year. My only tidbit of advice for Ted would be to make sure there is no presidential cigar smoking in the oval orifice!

The winter has once again come and gone. Thankfully "*la nina*" failed to announce her presence with any serious authority (at least in our part of the country). I'm sure everyone is scrambling to finish up any last minute winter projects and duties before the rush of spring.

It is during this time of year when most superintendents send out their pesticide bids. I personally hit an all-time record for the most number of companies submitting bids in a year. It seems every year there are at least one or two more new kids on the block looking for a piece of the pie.

It is during this bidding process that I'm reminded of an issue that bothers me to no end. It is a product feature of the bidding companies that drives me towards the brink of insanity. The politically correct term that most chemical companies use for this feature is "agency pricing." A more truthful and descriptive terminology would be "price fixing," and as far as I'm concerned, it is illegal.

Last time I checked weren't we supposedly living in a free market economy? Competitive pricing is an integral part of that economy. Any time consumer product prices are prefabricated this violates the nature of the beast. Didn't some of the major airlines recently get convicted of colluding to fix the prices of airline fares? Similarly, didn't Major League Baseball go through the same thing a few years back? In each of these cases, the free market structure was compromised by limits. So, what's the difference between those situations and price fixing pesticide product costs? Professor DelSantro can be quoted as stating "It ain't a whole lot!"

Some of the chemical company representatives with which I've discussed this issue claim that since the price fixing is being done by the manufacturing companies, it is not a violation of the antitrust laws. In my putridly oblique opinion, this is merely a technicality that should not supercede the fact that from a consumer standpoint, the distributors should have the right to decide the price for which they would like to sell the products.

I'm sure I'm not alone in stating that I don't always make purchases from the companies offering the lowest price. A number of other considerations go into my decision making process. What kind of relationship do I have with the salesperson and their company? Has that salesperson been there for me when I needed something? Does that salesperson call ahead and make an appointment? How many other products am I purchasing from that company? How tight is my pesticide budget? How fast can I get the product? The list can go on and on.

The bottom line is that in a free market society, competition is normally considered a healthy thing. Why do the product manufacturers care at what price the distributors sell the product? The negotiation of product pricing is part of the standard process. Imagine a society in which everything we purchased had predetermined fixed prices. Can you say "socialism"? Maybe we should socialize every aspect of everything we do as Americans; the homes we buy, healthcare, taxes (no matter what our income), retirement plans, our automobiles, etc. Maybe we could rename our country the NUSSR (New United Soviet Socialist Republic). That's the New Soviet Union for those of you who are over fifty and attempting to stay productive (Bygones!).

Make no mistake about it; a rose by any other name...doesn't change the stagnant, malodorous stench coming from the chemical manufacturing plants. Regardless of any legal loophole they have found in the system definition, their philosophy directly contradicts the ethical considerations for which our society is based.

So, what is a poor lowly golf course superintendent to do? One option is to explore your alternatives. The price-fixed products certainly are not the only products on the market. Unfortunately, does any sane individual believe that Novartis, for example, cares whether Joe Superintendent buys their product, when a million other superintendents are? I think not! Maybe the best option is to take the issue up with the GCSAA. Considering that this affects all superintendents, the GCSAA has more leverage than the CPGCSA when it comes to dealing with these big bureaucratic companies. Maybe it is time for the GCSAA to step up to the plate and start doing something that directly benefits the people who support its very existence. Sounds like a good foundation for a "Herculean" GCSAA Presidential campaign (Think about it, Sammy!). That's my unobtrusively putrid view from the heather and gorse.

Classification _____ Date accepted by Board of Directors _____ Date accepted check _____

CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENTS ASSOCIATION

I hereby apply for membership in the **Central Pennsylvania Golf Course Superintendents Association**, an affiliate of the **Golf Course Superintendents Association Of America**. Membership in the GCSAA is mandatory for Class A and B members and recommended for all other classifications.

Enclosed is my application fee of \$50.00 (Dues will be billed upon acceptance and classification.)

NAME _____

HOME ADDRESS _____

CITY & STATE _____ ZIP _____ HOME PHONE _____

DATE JOINED GCSAA _____ GCSAA# & CLASSIFICATION _____ PESTICIDE LICENSE # _____

DATE OF BIRTH _____ SPOUSE'S NAME _____

EMPLOYER _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY & STATE _____ ZIP _____ WORK PHONE _____

(1) State your present position: _____ If, superintendent, Certified? _____

(2) How long have you been at this position?

(3) Summarize your previous golf course experience:

(4) List any turf organizations you are or were associated with:

(5) List your educational background:

(6) Briefly explain why you would like to join **Central Pennsylvania GCSA**:

(7) How many **Central Pennsylvania GCSA** meetings would you estimate you would be attending throughout the year?

(8) Check category of membership you are applying for:

- ☐ Superintendent ☐ Assistant ☐ Course Employee ☐ Owner
☐ Commercial - Type of Business _____

I do hereby acknowledge that this information must be reviewed by the Membership Committee and the Board of Directors. If accepted I pledge to participate actively in all Association functions and to serve the Association whenever called upon. I do also pledge to observe the By-Laws and Code of Ethics of the **Central Pennsylvania Golf Course Superintendents Association** and the **Golf Course Superintendents Association of America** and conduct myself as a professional at all times.

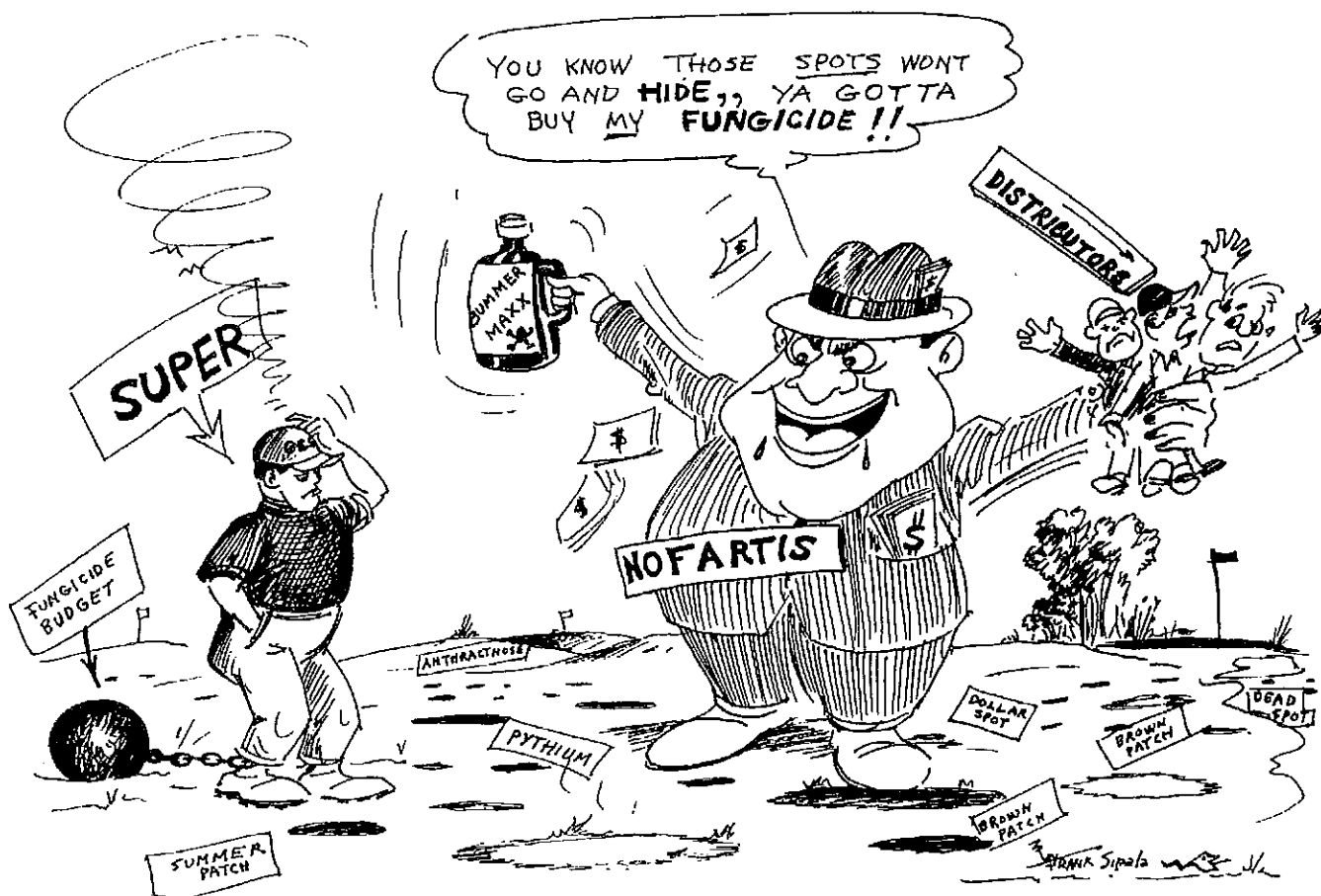
SIGNED _____ DATE _____

Must be attested by Class A Members:

Attestor _____ Attestor _____
Club _____ Club _____

Applicants and attesting members will be notified to be present for an introduction to the Board of Directors before Applicant is accepted into the Association. Applicants will not be accepted unless completed in full. Enclose check or money order (no cash) payable to CPGCSA and send to Secretary:

Wanda S. Fry
P.O. Box 1420, Lebanon, PA 17042
(717) 279-0368



Pennsylvania Turfgrass Council Briefs January 1999

The 1998 edition of the Annual Research Reports from The Center for Turfgrass Science at Penn State University is in the process of being mailed to all PTC members. The manual is an excellent source of information pertaining to the current research activities being conducted at Penn State. The primary purpose of these reports is to keep our membership informed of their importance in supporting Turfgrass Research at Penn State. Also being mailed is a letter explaining the role of the Sustaining Member and the benefit of that membership to the individual or company and to the continuing progress of Turfgrass Science in Pennsylvania. Please watch for both these mailings. If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact John Chassard, the PTC Membership Chairman at (610) 967-4643.

Upcoming Events

The 23rd Annual Valentine Tournament
October 18th, 1999 Gulph Mills Golf Club

Turf Equipment Auction

DATE: May 1st, 1999

LOCATION: Walnut Acres Golf Club

Hamburg, PA Berks County

TIME: 9:00 AM

AUCTIONEER: Robert A. Arner

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: (800) 338-1466

Turf Equipment For Sale:

Toro 5100 Fairway Mower	\$9,000
Toro 14 H.P. Sand ProW/Plow	\$2,800
Smithco Spray Star 1600 W/Raven	\$7,000
1991 Toro 223D	\$6,000
1989 Jacobsen Greens King IV	\$4,500
(2) Toro Greens Aerifiers	\$4,500
Lastec Articulator Five Gang	\$5,000

Call (800) 338-1466

Ask for either Mark or Parker

USGA Rules of Golf

For those of you who claim to be golf fanatics, here's the scenario:

You're playing in the final round of a PGA tournament (stroke play) with Tiger Woods, and you are tied for the lead with just one hole to play. Off the eighteenth tee, both of you pull your drives into the left rough. Since you hit your drive further than Tiger could ever dream, it's his play. When reaching his ball, Tiger finds that his ball has come to rest behind a rather large boulder that in theory will obstruct his chances of hitting his next shot on the green. Considering he's the fan favorite, about ten of his groupies come out of the crowd and with a "Herculean effort" move the large stone out of Tiger's line of play. Tiger proceeds to hit the ball on the green. The crowd goes nuts! Upon reaching your ball, fifty or so yards closer to the hole, you find that you're in the same situation that Tiger was just in, with a large boulder obstructing your chances of hitting the green. You beg and plead for assistance, but no one in the crowd will assist you. You and your caddie together can't move the rock. Knowing that Tiger is on the putting green, you attempt hit a heroic shot, but fail miserably. You manage to take a bogey on the hole, while Tiger two putts for a one shot victory. Afterwards, before you sign the scorecard, you vehemently protest to the U.S.G.A. Rules Official questioning the equity of the situations. Do you have a leg to stand on?

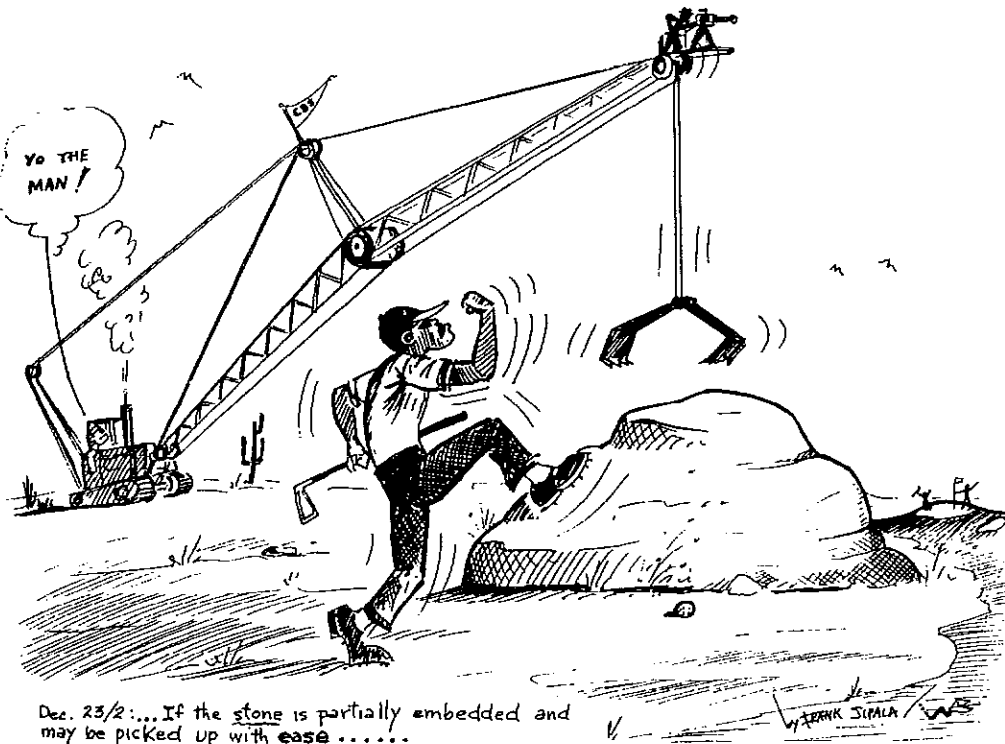
This is a subject that I guarantee will be discussed by the U.S.G.A. at their annual Rules Meeting later this year. At the forefront of this debate is the definition of a loose impediment. The Rules of Golf define loose impediments as "natural objects, such as stones, leaves, twigs, branches, and the like, dung, worms, and insects and casts or heaps made by them, provided they are not fixed or growing, are not solidly embedded and do not adhere to the ball. Sand and loose soil are loose impediments on the putting green, but not elsewhere. Snow and natural ice, other than frost, are either casual water or loose impediments, at the option of the player. Manufactured ice is an obstruction. Dew and frost are not loose impediments." Taking this a step further, in Tiger's case, is the definition of solidly embedded. Decision 23/2 addresses the meaning of solidly embedded in the definition of a loose impediment. It states "if the stone is partially embedded and may be picked up with ease, it is a loose impediment. When there is doubt as to whether a stone is solidly embedded or not, it should not be removed."

At the Phoenix Open a few months back, an incident similar to this occurred when Tiger's ball came to rest behind a large boulder, and eight to ten of his fans moved the boulder with a extreme amount of exerted effort. At the time, the Rules Official allowed Tiger's posse to move the boulder. The only reason Tiger is absolved from any responsibility is that he checked with the Rules Official prior to allowing his posse to work. In this case, even if the

Rules Official was incorrect, Tiger would not be penalized.

Unfortunately, the situation mentioned in the first paragraph could have easily happened. In the event that it had happened, as Tiger's opponent, you would be, as we in the business say, "S.O.L." Sometimes, I guess it pays to be popular. Especially when the difference between first and second on the PGA Tour can be as much as \$500,000.

Thanks to the events that occurred in the Phoenix Open, in the future, you'll be likely to see more golfers contracting their own bull dozers.!!!



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The Green Sheet

