



# The Green Sheet

Central Pennsylvania Golf Course Superintendents Association

Volume 25 Issue 5

Founded ~ April 11, 1939

August 2018

## *David Rafferty Dedication, Leadership, & Service Award*

Dear Fellow Central Penn Members:

The Board of Directors is seeking nominations for the 2018 Rafferty Award. This award recognizes dedication, leadership and service to CPGCSA and its members.

The award will honor the memory of Dave Rafferty. Dave was a Past President of our association as well as the North-west PA GCSA and the Allied GCS of Pennsylvania. He was a forerunner in educating our elected and regulatory officials to the benefits of golf turf to the environment.

Dave was a mentor to literally dozens of superintendents, assistant superintendents and other members. He worked tirelessly to assist anyone who sought his council. We realize no one will fill Dave's shoes but we are dedicating this award in his memory. We will recognize members who have selflessly given themselves to benefit our association and its membership.

This award is designed to honor current and former superintendents attaining a minimum of 14 years association membership. This is the number of years Dave was a CPGCSA member. All classes of membership shall be eligible to receive the award although superintendent or retired superintendent nominees will receive favored consideration. The award is dedicated to a superintendent who worked hard for our association. Other classes of membership will not be ignored but must show outstanding dedication, leadership and service.

We have many deserving members. Please return nominations by **August 31, 2018**.

### **Previous Recipients**

- 2003 – James MacLaren
- 2004 – Charles Cadiz
- 2005 - Terry Wueschinski
- 2006 – Gregory Borzok
- 2008 – Jeffrey Fry
- 2009 – Samuel Snyder
- 2014 – Faron Stoops

.....*Application form on Page 7*.....

## **Ag Officials Hope to Stop Spread of Spotted Lanternfly**

By: [Matt Heckel](#)

Aug 06, 2018

HARRISBURG, Pa. (WHTM) - The spotted lanternfly was first discovered in Pennsylvania four years ago and has since spread from Berks County to 13 other counties.

The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Department of Agriculture on Monday explained how they're working to contain and control the invasive insect that's native to Southeast Asia.

Officials said \$3 million in the state's budget and \$17.5 million in USDA funding has gone toward education and research. A \$1.9 million statewide survey will make sure the insect isn't spreading.

The spotted lanternfly threatens fruit trees, hardwoods, grapevines, and hops.

Counties like Lancaster and Lebanon have been quarantined since June to slow the spread.

"The spotted lanternfly, as we have learned, is an excellent hitchhiker," Pennsylvania Agriculture Secretary Russell Readling said. "We do not want it traveling with us."

If you're in a quarantined area, you should keep your windows rolled up and avoid parking under trees.

If you live outside one of the quarantine zones and believe you may have seen the spotted lanternfly, a hotline has been set up for you to call. It's 1-888-4-badfly.



## Wet Weather and Diseases Create Problems on Pennsylvania Golf Courses

June 17, 2018 by *Pete Landschoot*

Abnormal temperatures and frequent rains during the spring of 2018 have led to mowing injury and disease problems on Pennsylvania golf courses. The worst of the problems began to occur in central and western PA during late May, when daytime temperatures climbed into the 80's and night temperatures were in the mid to high 60's.

Mowing is always a challenge when turf is wet and soils are saturated, but when coupled with rapid late-spring growth, the result can be scalping injury on putting greens. One of the worst cases I observed was on a course where the membership requested the superintendent curtail his spring aeration and topdressing practices. Towards the end of May, the bentgrass became puffy and was severely scalped when mowed under wet conditions.



Mower injury on bentgrass putting green.

Diseases are always an issue this time of year, but timely fungicide applications and good cultural practices typically keep damage to a minimum. This year's abnormal spring weather ushered in some unusual disease problems, some of which we are still trying to diagnose.

Two diseases that showed up on putting greens and fairways in May and early June in central PA were *Microdochium* patch (formerly called Fusarium patch) and leaf spot. Typically, **Microdochium patch** produces distinct circular pink or reddish-brown patches, about 3 to 6 inches in diameter, during periods of wet weather in May. The pink or red color comes from fungal fruiting structures called sporodochia, which give rise to millions of microscopic slightly curved spores called conidia. Conidia are spread from plant-to-plant by water, mowers, or golf shoes. The pathogen of *Microdochium* patch, *Microdochium nivale*, is the same pathogen that causes pink snow mold. The difference between these diseases is that *Microdochium* patch does not occur under snow cover, and usually occurs in late spring. *Microdochium* patch can cause disease on bentgrasses, but is more



Symptoms of *Microdochium* patch on a putting green, and close up of individual patch on *P. annua*

common on *P. annua*. A number of fungicides are labeled for control of *Microdochium* patch, including azoxystrobin and azoxystrobin combination products (Headway, Strobe T, and others); Concert II (chlorothalonil + propiconazole); Instrata (chlorothalonil + propiconazole + fludioxonil); Fame+T (fluoxastrobin + tebuconazole); Interface (iprodione + trifloxystrobin); and others.

**Leaf spot** is a disease of bentgrass greens and fairways. It often shows up as circular or irregular reddish-brown patches of varying sizes during periods of persistent, light rain in May and June. Spots on individual leaves have red or reddish-brown borders, and can be observed with a good-quality hand lens or dissecting microscope. As the disease progresses, spots coalesce and develop into blighting of entire leaves and stems. Although the cigar-shaped spores of the pathogen(s), *Bipolaris* or *Dreschlera* spp., are easy to identify using a microscope in a diagnostic lab, they are too small to be observed in the field. Many different fungicides can be used to control leaf spot diseases, including those containing iprodione, chlorothalonil, and the strobilurins.



Leaf spot symptoms on bentgrass fairway in Central PA

....continued on page 3....

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## Wet Weather....continued

During early June, several golf courses in the Pittsburgh area experienced damage on *P. annua* putting greens and fairways from one or more root and crown diseases. Root/crown diseases are difficult to diagnose because fungal pathogen structures used for identification are not easily observed in root tissue, more than one fungus may be present in the roots, and some fungi on or in roots revert to pathogenic activities only when plants are under environmental or cultural stress. Despite these issues, disease outbreaks were diagnosed as a Pythium root disease and/or summer patch. The fact that root diseases are occurring this early in the season reflects the unusual weather conditions experienced in May and early June. In the case of root/crown diseases, fungicides are most effective when applied prior to symptom expression. Disease symptoms may continue to develop when fungicides are applied after the disease becomes apparent.



This disease of *P. annua* on a putting green in western PA was diagnosed as summer patch.

<http://psuturf.com/2018/06/wet-weather-and-diseases-create-problems-on-pennsylvania-golf-courses/>



# Rich Gdovin

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## President's Message

I recall about a month ago, many of us were praying for the skies to open and provide some relief from the mini drought that we were dealing with. I would officially like to retract my request and return to the mini drought that was taxing us and our irrigation systems.

The past month or so has been by far the worst period of summer I have experienced in my career. Drenching rain after drenching rain has left many of us scratching our heads wondering when it will stop, and when we can get out to repair the damage. Most of us have been crushed by floods, followed by 90 plus degree weather which cooks low spots and natural drainage patterns, leaving a black merky mess that can't handle any traffic, much less any equipment. Now we have the exciting task of poking holes, which many golfers believe are the favorite days of our year, and they despise us for it. Of course, about two weeks after the hell that we go through, we turn into geniuses again and all is good, and they forget.

Well my friends, this is a year that I personally will not soon forget. And I have written myself little memos and notes to warn my future self of what I learned too many years ago to remember to not do.

We all have this ability, but it seems the older we get, the more about the past we forget.

Oh well, its just grass. And we are all good enough at what we do to recover and move on.

Enough Whining!

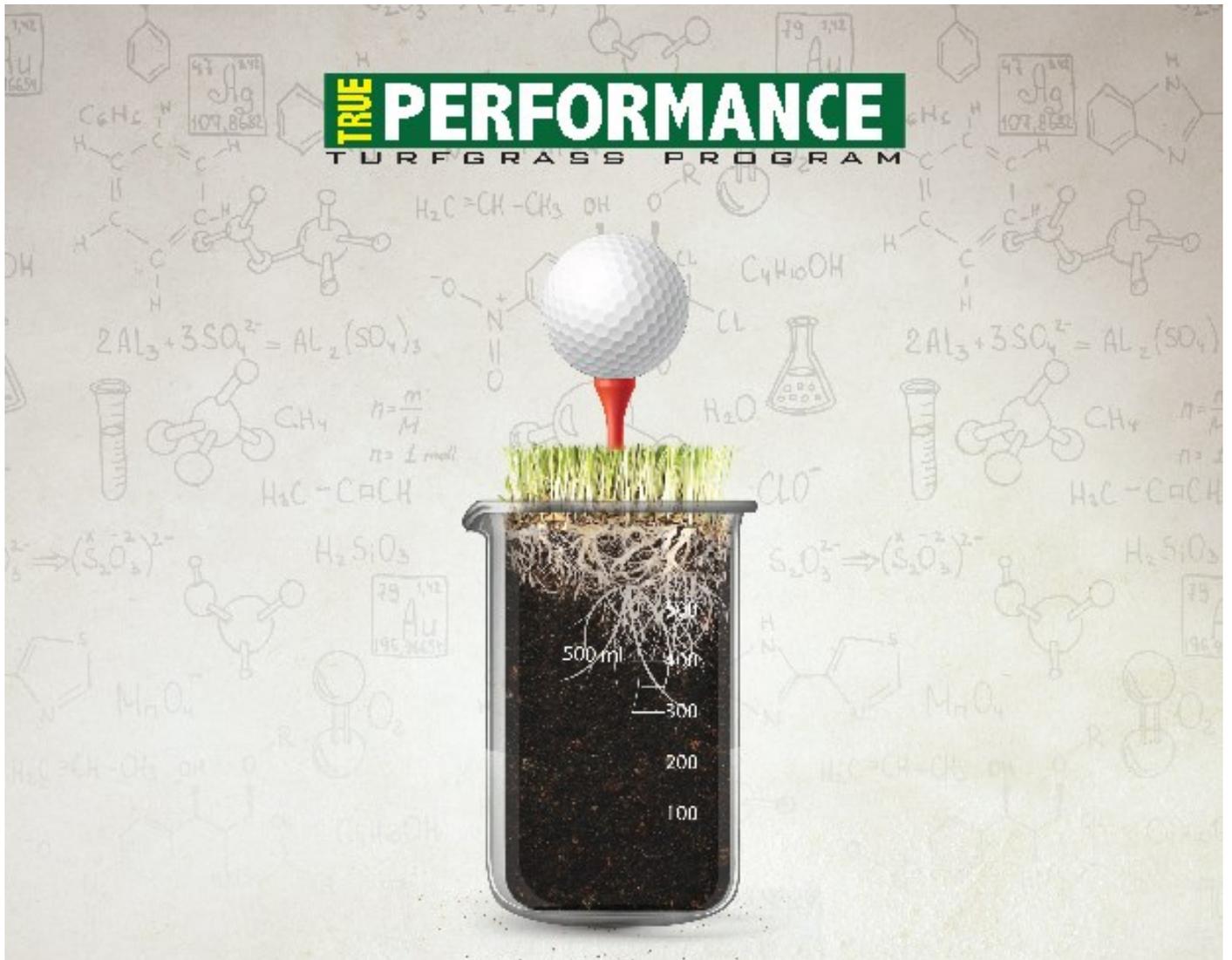
On a lighter and much more enjoyable note, I would like to congratulate My good friend Andrew Dooley and his wife Amanda on the arrival of their first child Grace Marie, born on August 17<sup>th</sup>. For those of you who were unable to join us at Andrew's course in July, you missed out on a great (yet hot) time. Berkshire CC is always one of my yearly stops and the course was in beautiful shape. I also want to thank Jim Nagle for the educational talk provided.

As I said before, October is right on the horizon, which brings us to our biggest and most well attended event of the year, that would be the Oktoberfest. Moccasin Run is the location, and I'm excited to play it. I hope that many of you can attend and make it a nice get away after all the crap that lies ahead of us over the next 5 or 6 weeks.

Once again, I reiterate, if you need advice or just some guidance toward recovery, you have neighbors, friends and colleagues. Don't be one of those that are too proud to reach out. Some of us have been through the battles before, and despite the years of experience, we are all in the same war.

Hang in their folks, best to you all!

Brian Ahrens



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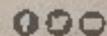


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## Up to Speed: A brief history of green speed

The demand for faster green speeds gave rise to intensive golf course maintenance practices and near-perfect present-day putting surfaces.

By Thomas A. Nikolai, Ph.D.

July 2018 - <https://www.gcmonline.com/voices/news/green-speed-history>

The term “green speed” didn’t exist until the balata golf ball replaced the gutta-percha ball around the dawn of the 20th century. This equipment change raised golfers’ expectations and led to the need for putting green research.

In his 1929 article, “Research work planned in Great Britain,” Sir Robert Blyth Greig lamented that the USGA was leading the way in golf research. He also noted, “Old Tom Morris used to say that there should be ‘nae puttin’,” meaning that the pitch or run up should always be so dead that the putter was not required. Times have changed, and a good player wants now to have a reasonable chance to hole a 10-foot putt, a feat which would have been pure fluke in earlier days. It is a question if we are not making too much of the putting in the interests of the game, but whether we are or not, the demand is for true uniform surfaces.”

In 1932, the first green speed study was performed with a bulky piece of equipment known as the Arnott mechanical putter, which was built to test whether there were differences in green speed among eight creeping bentgrasses. The result? The assumed green speed differences among species did not exist.

In his 1937 article “Introducing the Stimp,” Eddie Stimpson said he invented the Stimpmeter because green speed was an issue, and, “It occurred to us that there was no way of measuring how fast putting greens are.” He also reported six green speed measurements from three different golf clubs. The average green speed from those measurements was 2.5 feet.

Thirty-seven years later, in 1974, Stimpson still owned the only Stimpmeter in the world. At that time, he wrote, “Putting greens — How fast?” and reported green speed measurements taken from 1946 to 1973. The average green speed over that period remained 2.5 feet, which included the green speed from the 1963 U.S. Open, which was 2.7 feet.

At this point, there are two important considerations: the history of putting green maintenance, and modifications made to the Stimpmeter after 1974.

The first reported mowing height, from 1922, was about 0.375 inch. Following that report, advancements on putting green mowers allowed for lower heights of cut. By 1930, research indicated that putting greens should be mowed at 0.187 inch each day, and results from a 1947 height-of-cut survey reported 29% of courses mowed at 0.187 inch, 40% at 0.25 inch, and 31% at 0.312 inch. Finally, in 1973 James Beard wrote that mowing heights were as low as 0.2 inch.

Mowing heights and other maintenance practices changed very little between 1930 and 1973. Therefore, it’s logical that Stimpson’s green speed measurements changed very little during that time.

In the mid-1970s, the USGA modified the Stimpmeter by making the ramp longer and changing the U-shaped groove to a V, which decreased the friction created when the ball rolled down the ramp. Before releasing their modified Stimpmeter (briefly known as the “Speed Stick”), the USGA took green speed measurements in 1976 and 1977 on more than 1,500 greens in 36 states. The average green speed was 6.5 feet.

The USGA’s Stimpmeter was released in 1978 following vast improvements in greens mower technology that included thinner bedknives that made it possible to mow as tight as 0.125 inch. Superintendents lowered their mowing heights, increased topdressing frequency and micromanaged fertility inputs, which led to smoother, more consistent speeds.

Research pitched in by promoting more rolling. Although many believe that increased green speeds cost more money, it has been documented that rolling in place of mowing can lead to faster green speeds while promoting healthier greens at lower cost.

Today’s savvy superintendents know putting surface undulations help determine the ideal green speed for their clientele. To sum up: Changes to the golf ball a little over 100 years ago led to changes in golfers’ expectations, which, in turn, led to the need for research. Research led to the need to make measurements, which led to the Stimpmeter, which led to advancements in mower technology. Superintendents then tweaked maintenance practices to fine-tune green speeds, creating today’s near-perfect putting surfaces. It was truly a team effort.

In closing, I would like to wish the Stimpmeter a happy 40th anniversary!

*Thomas A. Nikolai, Ph.D., the “Doctor of Green Speed,” is the turfgrass academic specialist at Michigan State University in East Lansing, Mich., and a frequent GCSAA educator.*

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**Central Pennsylvania GCSA David Rafferty DSL Award  
Nomination Form**

I nominate the following individual for CPGCSA's 2018 David Rafferty Dedication, Service and Leadership Award for his/her outstanding contribution to the advancement of the profession of the golf course superintendent.

Nominee Information (please type or print):

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Street: \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Nominator Information (please type or print):**

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CPGCSA Membership Class: \_\_\_\_\_ Date submitted: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please provide information regarding the nominee's contributions to the advancement of the golf course superintendent's profession and the nominee's involvement in activities within the Central Pennsylvania Golf Course Superintendent Association and/or other associations with local, state, regional or national influence plus community service.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
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Attach additional sheets if necessary. Use a different form for each nomination. Additional forms may be photo copied or requested from CPGCSA from the address listed below.

**All nominations must be received by August 31, 2018.  
Mail completed forms to: CPGCSA, 1314 Porter Avenue, Scranton, PA 18504  
or email to: cpgcsa@hotmail.com**

## Rethinking Bunker Maintenance

By George Waters, USGA Green Section

June 21, 2018

Bunkers play a prominent role in golf. They provide strategy, challenge and aesthetic beauty and are a topic of many spirited and enjoyable discussions after a round. The earliest bunkers were naturally occurring areas of bare sand scattered throughout the links landscape. They were rough and rugged places, scoured by wind and filled with footprints and clumps of vegetation.

Over time, bunkers became formalized and golfer expectations for bunker playability increased. Today, the bunkers at most golf courses are intensively maintained and account for a large part of the maintenance budget.



*Embracing some bunker imperfections at Sweetens Cove helps keep green fees down and allows staff to focus on greens and fairways. (Rob Collins)*

Paul Jacobs, a USGA agronomist for the Northeast Region, finds bunker maintenance to be a common topic during Course Consulting Service visits.

“When I hear that there are concerns about bunker playability at a golf course, consistency is often an underlying issue,” said Jacobs. “What I try to explain is that total consistency in bunkers is impossible to achieve because of a wide range of factors outside the superintendent’s control. Striving to achieve consistency becomes an increasingly expensive proposition that draws time and money away from other parts of the course.”

“Just because it’s possible to maintain bunkers at an extremely high level doesn’t mean that level of maintenance is desirable at most golf courses,” said Jacobs. “I think we’re going to see more facilities reevaluating their bunker maintenance programs and deciding that some of that time and money would be better spent elsewhere.”

Sweetens Cove Golf Club, a public nine-hole facility in South Pittsburg, Tenn., is demonstrating that bunkers don’t have to be perfectly manicured to enhance the golf experience. A recent redesign of the golf course has brought the facility national attention for its approach to providing affordable and enjoyable public golf.

Rob Collins was one of the golf course architects involved in the renovation, and he went on to become the owner and operator at Sweetens Cove.

“We felt strongly that interesting bunkering was going to be an important factor in attracting more golfers, but we also knew that we were going to be limited in the level of maintenance,” said Collins. “Managing golfer expectations was going to be key to our success.”

Collins and the staff emphasize to their customers that sand is meant to be a challenge at Sweetens Cove and that a certain level of imperfection in the bunkers is to be expected. Embracing that imperfection helps to keep green fees affordable – \$20 to play nine holes during peak season – and allows superintendent Brent Roberson and his team of four to focus more resources on maintaining smooth putting greens and wide fairways.

Roberson explains that prioritizing is the key to bunker management at Sweetens Cove: “Our goal is to fully rake the bunker floors at least twice each week. Beyond that, we touch up areas that see a lot of play and address any major disturbances in the sand that could cause playability issues. We don’t edge bunkers and we don’t always rake the bunker faces; that helps us save time that we can focus on other tasks.”

“We use a mechanized bunker rake to make the raking process as efficient as possible and every member of our team pitches in where they can, but we aren’t going to be able to get to every footprint every day. We accept that, and it seems like the golfers do, too.”

Reducing the time and resources devoted to bunker maintenance is not something that only appeals to affordable public courses. Golf facilities across the spectrum are finding ways to streamline bunker maintenance while maintaining good playing conditions. At Baltusrol Golf Club in Springfield, N.J., superintendent Mark Kuhns and his team are fortunate to have plenty of resources at their disposal. However, with 36 holes to maintain and high expectations from golfers, time is one resource that always seems to be in short supply. With more than 200 bunkers spread across two courses, any efficiencies in bunker maintenance can have a big cumulative effect. A few years ago, Kuhns decided to try a new method of raking bunkers to improve playability and ended up saving a lot of time in the process.

“We were getting some comments about the bunkers – that the faces were soft, balls were getting stuck against the edges and so on,” said Kuhns. “To address these issues, we decided to try a method of raking called the “Aussie Method” where you leave the bunker faces smooth and only rake the floors.”

Raking bunkers in this way keeps the sand on the faces firm, which helps prevent plugged lies and encourages balls to gather toward the bunker floor. The bunker faces are not raked on a daily basis, which can generate significant time savings over the course of a year.

“Golfers have really appreciated the playability and aesthetics that come with this method and we’re happy to save some time raking that we can devote to other areas,” said Kuhns.

“Our goal is to provide a very high level of playability in our bunkers, but we don’t want to spend more time on them than necessary. In addition to using the Aussie Method, if we see a bunker that hasn’t been touched I tell the staff not to rake it as long as the playability and presentation is still up to our standards. Why go through the motions if you don’t have to? We have plenty to do out here.”



Using the “Aussie Method” at Baltusrol, where bunker faces are not raked daily, can improve playability and save maintenance time. (USGA/Russell Kirk)

As golf facilities work to focus limited resources where they are most needed, bunker maintenance is sure to be an ongoing topic of discussion. The USGA’s Jacobs reminds us that golfers have a tremendous influence on how maintenance dollars are spent. “If golfers can be open-minded to more efficient techniques for bunker maintenance and accepting of the occasional tough lie in a bunker, a facility can focus more resources on the greens and fairways where we all try to spend most of our time.”

*George Waters is a manager of Green Section education for the USGA. Email him at [gwaters@usga.org](mailto:gwaters@usga.org).*

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## Golf Course Notification

The Mid-Atlantic region is experiencing a challenging stretch of weather associated with an over-abundance of rainfall, which will likely lead to turf damage and/or loss on a variety of playing surfaces. Many areas had a very wet spring as well, which did not allow proper root development and inhibited the efficacy of pre-emergent products for control of crabgrass and similar weeds. Since spring, the weather has been all or nothing, extremely dry or extremely wet.

Over the last 10 days or so, rainfall has been so great that superintendents have not been able to mow grass, leading to the difficult question of whether to mow and risk mechanical damage, or hope for dryer weather in the coming days. Regardless of what each course manager decides, there is still a good chance that either option will result in some turf injury or loss, as the current circumstances dictate such an outcome. When rain persists as heavily as it has during this stretch, it eliminates possibilities for mowing the golf course without rutting, scalping or damaging plants and equipment.

Likewise, with saturated soils and typical July heat, grass plants become more susceptible to stresses that can kill turfgrass stands and degrade playability. Turfgrass roots are bound to shrink, restricting the plants' ability to fight off stresses and survive. Furthermore, the saturated soils do not allow proper air-exchange in the soil, creating an anaerobic environment. Even where all necessary and feasible adjustments are made to protect the playing surfaces, losing turf during a year like this is likely inevitable.

While Superintendents always want to provide playing conditions that are the best for our golfing community, please exhibit patience with course conditioning over the next several weeks. Even if the weather cooperates, it will take time to put courses back together from managing clippings, re-constructing bunkers, and lowering mowing heights to desired specifications. As we approach August and the heat that comes with it, this challenge becomes even more difficult.

Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

Chase Rogan, M.S.  
Field Staff, Mid-Atlantic Regional Representative  
GCSAA

*GCSAA is dedicated to serving its members, advancing their profession, and enhancing the enjoyment, growth and vitality of the game of golf.*

## Membership News

The following individual has applied for membership into our association. If there are no written objections within the next seven days, he will be accepted into CPGCSA at the next meeting.

Marc Campbell, Superintendent  
Class FM ..... Liberty Forge Hospitality, Inc.

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

James Dennison, Superintendent  
Class B .....Carroll Valley Golf Course

If you know of anyone who is interested in membership into the association, please have them contact Wanda at 717-279-0368 or [cpgcsa@hotmail.com](mailto:cpgcsa@hotmail.com).

Membership information is also available  
on the Central Penn website at:  
[www.cpgcsa.org](http://www.cpgcsa.org)

*Congratulations to Andrew and Amanda Dooley on the birth of their daughter, Grace Marie Dooley.*



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**2018 CPGCSA Meeting Schedule**

**October 2**  
Moccasin Run Golf Course  
Oktoberfest Tournament

**2019 Winter  
Educational Meeting**

*January 28, 2019*

**Country Club of  
Harrisburg**



**The Green Sheet**

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