



The Green Sheet

Central Pennsylvania Golf Course Superintendents Association

Volume 31 Issue 5

Founded ~ April 11, 1939

September 2024

October Meeting Canceled

Due to the duration of rainfall and remnants of Hurricane Helene, the October 7th meeting at Hanover Country Club has been canceled. I appreciate their willingness to host the meeting, but these are unprecedented circumstances for all of us and we will all be scrambling to reopen our facilities. Our struggles pale in comparison to the devastation to millions and loss of life.

Best wishes to everyone to finish the year well. Ironically, the long-range October forecast is dry.

Pete Ramsey
Central Penn President

Thanks to Bill Brooks for offering to host us for the October Meeting - - Hopefully we will be able to return in the future!

Bill Brooks graduated from Penn State with a BS in Agronomy in May 1988. Immediately upon graduation, he began working as Assistant at Lehigh Country Club in Allentown. In 1991, Bill was hired as Superintendent at Corning Country Club in NY and had the opportunity to host the LPGA Corning Classic for 2 years. Bill was then hired as Superintendent at Hanover Country Club in 1993 and has been there ever since.

Hanover Country Club was designed by JW Gitt and constructed in 1923. Gil Hanse was called on to do revisions to the course in 1996 and in 2009, a much-needed Master Plan was completed by course architect, Mark Fine. At this time, Mark was able to convince the members of the need to remove several trees throughout the golf course. Bill's favorite quote from Mark was, "This is a great property. It sure would be nice if you could see it." Since then, approximately 1200 trees have been removed with more to go. Members have responded positively to the new views and better turf quality.



Where To Plant Trees and Shrubs on the Course

How to identify the best and worst spots to place golf course features.
September 2024 | John C. Fech

How can something be the best and worst at the same time? If it's a tree or shrub on a golf course and in a good or bad location, it's easy. Even though many members or regular golfers may look at a plant and say to themselves something like, "The more plants the better," poorly placed trees and shrubs can quickly become unhealthy plants.



From the golfer's perspective, a well-placed tree is helpful to gauge distance when hitting an approach shot.

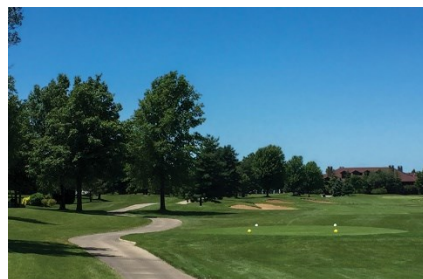
Photos by John C. Fech

There are lots of classic good and bad locations, as well as those unique cases that a particular course has. Shining a little light on them helps to have more of the positive ones and fewer of the negatives.

The common tendency to regard trees and shrubs first and foremost as an aesthetic feature is strong, but there's much more to it than just good looks.

Yes, trees add color, texture, verticality, depth and appeal in all seasons, but there's also a strong functional dimension to tree placement. Perhaps the best way to consider the functionality of a golf course ornamental is to view it as a "therefore" subject, in which you ask yourself, "What is it there for?"

Golf course architects routinely cite two to three reasons why a tree is placed in a certain location, at least one of which is how it will function. The overall goal is to solve a problem, not create one.



Safety can be enhanced via good tree placement.

Classic purposes and locations

Many groups of trees and shrubs are purposely utilized, including backdrops for greens, dogleg identification, screening for undesirable views and noise reduction, pro-

tection and liability/safety separation, obstacle/increase difficulty elements, shade for clubhouses/refreshment stands, framing, accenting/visual appeal, habitat trees and signature features.

These are the important functional benefits that woody plants provide. Taking a close review of these considerations will result in an enhanced capacity to manage the trees and shrubs on the golf course properly and a significant reduction in outlays of resources.

As an active process, it's integral to evaluate and identify properly and poorly placed trees by discussing with team members in an exercise that involves asking the tough questions of, "Where should they be?" and, "What could be a problem here?"

Particularly helpful in this effort is the input from employees who have significant work experience at other golf courses. Their comments and insights often provide a valuable perspective when considering the purposes of various well and poorly placed specimens. On the other hand, just because it was done there doesn't necessarily mean it works well here; each course is unique, even though the categories are the same.

Good or bad or both?

Though each group of plant purposes can be described in several ways, the following are some functions that trees and shrubs can provide. As each is reviewed, it's important to consider the obvious benefits but also the possible unintended problems that can be created or just develop on their own.

Backdrops for greens, visualization and depth perception

Wide-open greens without depth perception often make it difficult for golfers to gauge distance and the lay of the land when they hit an approach shot from the fairway to the green. A few well-placed trees behind the green can help provide a distance perspective for them. On the other hand, too many trees can greatly reduce airflow and sunlight, create disease-development conditions and limit photosynthesis, producing weak turf plants. If possible, it's best to locate trees on the east side of a green, as afternoon sun provides more valuable sunlight intensity than morning sun. A healthy balance between the two is ideal. Of course, trees naturally increase in size, so this must be evaluated each year.



A backdrop of trees can help golfers with perspective.
Photo by Peter Szarka

Protection for tees, greens and other targets, liability safety separation

Errant golf shots can be problematic for neighboring properties, particularly those of residential homeowners. Some of the liability can be reduced by judicious tree placement. The eventual size of the tree needs to be taken into account when choosing species and deciding exactly where to plant them, as shade and air flow is a concern here as well.

Dogleg Identification

When a golf hole changes direction, it can be less than obvious to a golfer, especially one who has never played the course. Well-placed trees and shrubs can provide helpful cues that the hole plays this way, not that way. Even small specimens can be valuable in this situation.



When a golf hole changes direction, trees can help make this known. Photos by John Fech

Signature features

Some courses have trees that they are known for and are rather famous indeed. Others have trees that they are simply proud of, either for the perfect placement or its great condition. Well-adapted but underutilized species for the area often fall into this category as well.

Welcomes/entrances, naming association.

The first impression that the space around a clubhouse or an entrance to a golf course makes is often the one that sticks with a person for a long time, either good or bad. Well-chosen, -placed and -maintained specimens help to make sure that impression is a good one. Shrubs, groundcovers, annuals and perennial flowers often enhance this positive association.

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Obstacle/increase difficulty elements

Golf course architects often place certain elements on a hole to present obstacles or increase difficulty for the golfer. Trees used in this way should be monitored frequently to ensure that the original intent remains in place.

Shade for clubhouses/refreshment stands/patio dining

Certain spaces on the golf course are more enjoyable to be in if a little shade is cast upon them. These include clubhouse patios, refreshment stands and other gathering places. However, considering the frequency of human occupation in these locations, it's imperative that these trees be in excellent condition with no defects.

Framing

To highlight certain areas or features such as a view to the clubhouse, a memorial, a piece of sculpture or a green, trees can be used in a framing manner, much like a picture frame. This usually involves placing trees on two sides or in some cases to create an overhead canopy more or less surrounding the object or view. These plants should be inspected regularly for condition issues as well.

Narrow strips

Generally, trees and shrubs don't perform well in narrow spaces; however, the plants may be needed for screening or backdrops. When using woody plants in narrow planting locations, it's best to limit the choices to species that will have small-to-moderate-sized root systems to avoid entanglement and eventual demise.

Filling in gaps in screening and understory

In many cases, when a tree or shrub dies, a gap is created. Other gaps exist when plants are needed underneath other plants to add depth and height variation. It's important to consider the eventual size of a "fill-in" tree as well as whether it is shade adapted, as most will grow in half-day or filtered shade.



Settings such as this make a great first Impression.



Obstacle plants should be reevaluated periodically to determine if the intent is currently being provided.

Habitat trees

In some situations, perhaps there isn't a need to replace a dead tree with another one, as it could become a tree that provides a home for desirable raptors, pollinators and song-birds. The first consideration for these is the safety of the golfers and the proximity to valuable property, such as maintenance sheds and pump houses.

Accenting/visual appeal

Finally, beautification should be on the table. After all, no one wants to look at an ugly golf course. As trees and shrubs are chosen for aesthetic appeal, it's crucial to keep in mind that form follows function. In other words, the plant has to meet a need first and look pretty second.

Things change — sometimes removal is best

If there is one thing that is constant, it's change. It's important to keep the functional and visual benefits in mind when placing them. And even though they are small when installed, they grow every year and get bigger. It's imperative that they don't cast too much shade, get in the way of golf play and/or necessitate unnecessary maintenance. If and when they do, removal is a viable option.

As you ponder each of these purposes, consider that some trees will serve several functions and others just one or two. As you evaluate the status of other features, pests or problems on the course, it just makes sense to give a second thought to the purpose of the trees nearby. Whether it is done hole by hole or randomly, it creates valuable insights that can be used in many proactive ways, including avoiding the removal of trees that provide invaluable benefits and bolstering the defense of your retain-or-remove decisions to various golf course stakeholders.

Fortunately, you don't need to go it alone. When contemplating the value of a particular plant or group of plants, reach out to a local International Society of Arboriculture Certified Arborist or horticulturist at a nearby land-grant university. These professionals have the experience, knowledge and the tools necessary to provide helpful recommendations and guidance when choosing and retaining trees and shrubs in various locations.



Shade is a double-edged sword on a golf course.

John C. Fech is a horticulturist and Extension educator with the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. He is a frequent and award-winning contributor to GCM.

Presidents Message

Well its been raining now for 6 days. I think etiolation of the brain is kicking in. Watching the devastation from Hurricane Helene is sobering. Cant feel sorry for us after seeing that. Besides, my dad used to tell me if you're looking for sympathy, you can find it between shit and syphilis in the dictionary.

People have a tendency to silo themselves during rough times. I am grateful to friends who checked in and encouraged me. The other day I was given the opportunity to do the same. I coached wrestling in our school district from 2002 to 2013. I ran into one of the young men I coached during those years. We had a great group of kids and parents and his family was a big part of it all. I ran into him at the UPS store. His father recently passed away suddenly. He moved home to take care of his mother and took over his fathers business to keep the family and employees afloat. I could tell he was struggling. I told him to hang in there and remember how we used to talk about overcoming adversity. Told him his dad would be proud of him. He struggled to hold back his emotions. It was a timely message for him and I'm glad God allowed me to deliver it.

Hard to always know what people around us are going through. What really matters is what we do when we find out.

Pete Ramsey
Central Penn President

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GCSAA Chapter Delegates Meeting

The Chapter Delegates Meeting, October 28-30 at GCSAA headquarters in Lawrence, Kan., brings together representatives from GCSAA-affiliated chapters to discuss issues affecting the profession, the association and its members. Delegates will also meet candidates for the 2025 GCSAA Board of Directors.

Corey Barnes will be attending to represent Central Penn. If you have any questions or concerns that you would like him to address during this meeting, please call or email: 717-816-3087 or cbarnes@chambersburgcountryclub.org.



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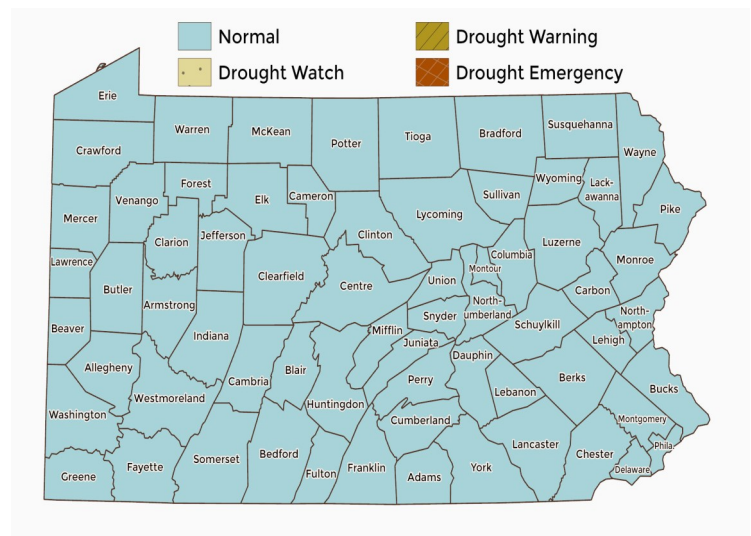


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Our expert panel covers some novel approaches to reduce winter stress injury on cool-season turf.



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Oct. 23 @ noon, Central

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Preparing for the Commercial Drone Pilot's Exam—Amy Wilber

Oct. 30 @ noon, Central

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How to Develop a Lightning Plan for Golf Facilities - Evan Bentley and Charlie Woodrum

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Peter Landschoot Retires After Serving as Extension Turf Specialist for 35 years

September 11, 2024
By Jeff Mulhollem

UNIVERSITY PARK, Pa. — Peter Landschoot, professor of turfgrass science, retired this fall with emeritus status after serving as the resident turfgrass management specialist for Penn State Extension for 35 years. By all accounts, his work has had an impact both inside and outside the College of Agricultural Sciences.

Landschoot recently was honored by the Keystone Athletic Field Managers Organization, which presented him with the Fowler Founders Award at its annual conference. That award, named in memory of Donald Fowler, a Penn State Extension educator, recognizes individuals for their dedication to making a difference in the sports turf industry of Pennsylvania.

“Throughout his very long and distinguished career, Peter has been a selfless, hard-working and thoughtful faculty member who makes an impact with everything he does,” said Erin Connolly, professor and head of the Department of Plant Science. “Peter had responsibilities in teaching, research and working with the turf industry, and he has done an excellent job with his diverse set of duties. The department is grateful for his hard work and dedication. We will miss his leadership and consistent focus on helping students and stakeholders.”

Connolly called Landschoot “a skilled and highly effective instructor” who taught the following courses: "Case Studies in Turfgrass Management," "Case Studies in Golf Turf Management" and "Turfgrass Management Practices in the United Kingdom and Italy." As a member of Penn State Extension’s Green Industry Team, she noted, he has provided key leadership on all turfgrass extension activities, and he has done an excellent job helping to smooth the merger of the horticulture and agronomy programs. He also oversaw Penn State’s turf research facility.

In addition, Connolly said, he ran an integrated applied research and extension program focused on several aspects of turfgrass management. A recent focus has been nutrient management, and his efforts and collaborations led to implementation of new nutrient management legislation.



Peter Landschoot recently was honored by the Keystone Athletic Field Managers Organization, which presented him with the Fowler Founders Award. That award, named in memory of Donald Fowler, a Penn State Extension educator, recognizes individuals for their dedication to making a difference in the sports turf industry of Pennsylvania. Credit: Keystone Athletic Field Managers Organization.



Peter Landschoot in the field presenting a workshop on nutrient management in turfgrass management. Credit: Penn State. [Creative Commons](#)

“In response to federal and state efforts to curb nutrient loading in the Chesapeake Bay, I devoted a significant portion of my extension work to addressing nutrient management issues in turfgrass systems,” Landschoot said. “I served on the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection’s Urban/Suburban/Rural Watershed Implementation Plan Committee, which was instrumental in developing a plan to meet the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s total maximum daily load goals for reduced nitrogen and phosphorus.”

This plan became the foundation for a series of bills and a new turfgrass fertilizer law that was enacted in 2022 (Act 83). During the leadup to passage of the new law, Landschoot participated in hearings on proposed fertilizer legislation with the state Department of Agriculture, the Pennsylvania Fertilizer Advisory Board and various trade organizations.

Landschoot provided summaries and updates on proposed

fertilizer legislation and the new fertilizer law to trade organizations and in extension meetings and workshops, and he wrote articles in newsletters on this topic. He also developed and published a manual on turfgrass fertilization for professional applicators that is now used in nutrient management training sessions throughout Pennsylvania.

“Without a doubt, the most satisfying part of my job was working with and responding to the needs of thousands of professional turfgrass managers, industry and government representatives, consultants, and homeowners,” Landschoot said “Over my 35-year career, I tried to respond to every phone call and email. Another satisfying part of my job was advising undergraduates and teaching my capstone case studies course to hundreds of resident and World Campus students.”

Another rewarding experience, he explained, was serving as director of the agronomy graduate program for more than 10 years and as co-director of the agricultural and environmental plant science graduate program for the past four years.

“It was also exciting working with international and national turf research organizations — mostly on environmental issues — including the Scandinavian Turf and Environmental Research Foundation, the Italian Golf Federation, the U.S. National Turfgrass Evaluation Program Policy Committee and the United States Golf Association Research Committee,” Landschoot said. “Serving on these committees and reviewing research proposals was a huge learning process for me. The travel experience was interesting as well.”

Despite being retired, Landschoot continues to be involved in a volunteer capacity in nutrient management issues in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. He currently serves on a panel of experts to review and update turfgrass nutrient management recommendations for the Chesapeake Bay Program’s [Urban Stormwater Workgroup](#) and assists the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture with an outreach program for “watershed friendly” lawn care practices.

[Peter Landschoot retires after serving as extension turf specialist for 35 years | Penn State University \(psu.edu\)](#)
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PENN STATE TURFGRASS

Turfgrass Job Fair and Watschke Scholarship Golf Tournament

Turfgrass Job Fair

October 15, 2024 (8:00 AM-11:30 AM)
Penn State Hetzel Union Bldg (HUB) - Robeson Center -
Alumni Hall, Pollock Rd., University Park, PA 16802

Watschke Scholarship Golf Tournament

October 15, 2024 (11:00 AM-6:00 PM)
Penn State White Course,
1523 West College Avenue, State College, PA 16801

About the Event

The Turfgrass Job Fair offers fantastic opportunities for professionals, industry representatives, and students to connect with future career prospects. In the afternoon, enjoy the exciting Watschke Scholarship Golf Tournament and awards dinner, which supports student scholarships, adding a competitive and enjoyable element to the day's activities.

Event Details

The Turfgrass Job Fair kicks off the morning, followed by the Watschke Scholarship Golf Tournament in the afternoon and an awards dinner in the evening. Multiple opportunities await sponsors, golfers, and job fair exhibitors to enhance their engagement with these events.

Turfgrass Job Fair

The Turfgrass Job Fair is a dynamic platform where students from Penn State's esteemed turfgrass programs converge to seek part-time or full-time employment opportunities in diverse fields such as golf, sports, lawn care, and industry roles. Companies looking to tap into this exceptional talent pool can secure a job fair booth or table to engage with prospective candidates. Exciting activities like resume reviews, mock interviews, and giveaways are in store for attendees. While the event welcomes everyone, businesses keen on participating must register for a job fair booth or table, while job and internship seekers can register for free, making it an invaluable opportunity for both students and companies to connect and grow.

Thomas L. Watschke Scholarship Golf Tournament

The Golf Tournament is a heartfelt and impactful event dedicated to honoring the legacy of Dr. Thomas Watschke, a renowned figure in the turfgrass industry. As a professor of turfgrass science at Penn State, Dr. Watschke advised undergraduate turfgrass science majors and played a pivotal role in coordinating the undergraduate turfgrass science program in the Department of Plant Science. His dedication to education and mentoring shaped the careers of countless students. Beyond academia, Tom's expertise was sought after worldwide, as he provided invaluable consulting services to numerous golf courses across the globe. This annual gathering not only celebrates his invaluable contributions but also serves as a powerful platform to generate vital funds for the Penn State Turfgrass Scholarship Award established in his honor. As participants come together to enjoy a day of golf, camaraderie, and shared passion for turfgrass management, they directly support the education and development of future turfgrass leaders, ensuring Dr. Watschke's profound influence continues to shape the field for generations to come.

The funds from tournament sponsorships will cover expenses, and all generated proceeds will be directed toward the Watschke Scholarship in the College of Agricultural Sciences. Additionally, there will be opportunities to contribute to various other endowments and fellowships within the turf program, including the Duich Endowment, Turgeon Endowment, Zontek Endowment, Latshaw Fellowship, Shaffer Fellowship, and McNitt Fellowship.

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