

# Tee to Green

South Texas Chapter  
**GCSAA**  
GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENTS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

September  
2009

## Two steps that can help you fight drought

By Bart Fox

A local weather person in Houston recently pointed out that this summer has included the Houston area's driest and hottest three-month period in recorded history. From May 1 through the end of July, the area had received a total of 3.46 inches of rain, while average daily temperatures have been 0.2 degrees higher than historical averages.

The weather pattern appeared to change slightly during the middle of August, at least bringing a little more rain into the picture. Maybe that marked the beginning of the end of the drought conditions we've been experiencing, and maybe not.

In either case, there are two things I, as an agronomist, about which I wish to raise your awareness, especially considering the excessive conditions of the past several months.

The biggest single issue we face is, of course, keeping the roots of our grasses hydrated. There may be a number of steps you can take to address that issue. One of them, even though the turf may not be growing optimally, is to keep including growth regulators in your spray program.

Growth regulators are part of the "normal" spray program at the majority of golf courses. Most turf managers apply growth regulators to slow the growth of their turfgrass, which reduces mowing activity and the clippings it produces. In general, growth regulators will help tighten up your turf and will help it take whatever advantages it can, given the current conditions, to remain as healthy as possible.

The most important thing to consider is how you can help turfgrasses improve their water use efficiency (i.e., increased drought tolerance). University trials have demonstrated a 15 to 25 percent reduction in water use when turf is treated with Primo Maxx, for instance, so that may be one option.

The second issue relating to soil moisture is the lack thereof involves grub control. The threshold for turf loss as a result of white grub activity is extremely high for bermudagrass. White grubs can't eat enough bermudagrass roots to cause turf loss during a normal year. We, however, are not experiencing a "normal"

year, and most turf managers in Texas apply a grub insecticide for cosmetic reasons in any circumstance.

While grubs (except for the hunting billbug) themselves may not directly cause enough damage to kill bermudagrass, they attract predators such as skunks, armadillos and even hogs to your course. It almost goes without saying that those can destroy large areas of turf when they're digging and foraging for white grubs and other foods.

And that's the biggest reason for applying a grub insecticide right now (although mid-May through August is generally considered the optimal time period). Remove the grubs and you'll help your turfgrass fight off the effects of the heat and drought, and you'll remove the reason grub-eating animals find their ways onto your course and into your grass.

Hopefully, the rains mentioned at the beginning of this article indicate the starting point of a return to more normal weather (and turfgrass growing) conditions. I, for one, will be very glad to see that happen and I can return, too, to answering questions about weed identification or a good disease control tank mix or algae problems.

In other words, give me the good ol' days, please. I'm sure you feel the same way.

*Bart Fox is a Senior Technical Sales Representative for Syngenta Professional Products.*



Bart Fox

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It's September! That's a good thing if you're ready for a few days when the temperature stays below 95 and maybe even a night when they dip below 70. Sometime this month, we'll get our first little cool front of the fall. It won't be much and it won't last long, but it's a sign that one of the best times of year for golf in southeast Texas is on it's way. I, for one, can't wait—the cooler temps make everything seem a little easier, and a little more fun.

With any luck, that first little breath of fresh air will come about Sept. 14, when we'll be hosting the Texas Trophy gathering at Memorial Park. That might be a little too much to ask, but it can't hurt, can it? In any case, the tournament is always a lot of fun, so I hope you've signed up to help us win on our home turf.

There are details about the tournament elsewhere in this issue of *Tee to Green*, but if you need more, all you have to do is go to our web site ([www.stgcsa.org](http://www.stgcsa.org)) or the Lone Star GCSA web site ([www.lsgcsa.org](http://www.lsgcsa.org)) for the complete picture.

And to make sure you don't forget, our September meeting will be held in conjunction with the tournament, at Memorial Park from 10 to 11 a.m. on Sept. 14. The USGA Green Section's Bud White will be the featured speaker. The cost of attending the meeting is only \$15 and is payable at the door, but you must provide an RSVP to Marian Takushi (281-494-0094, [stgcsa@windstream.net](mailto:stgcsa@windstream.net)) to be able to attend.

At least a couple of other things are on our front burners right now and deserve special notice.

We're currently in the process of accepting nominations for our

second-ever Sonny DuBose Superintendent of the Year Award. The deadline for submitting a nomination is September 30, so if you haven't acted already, you need to do so quickly.

All the details and forms needed to submit a nomination can be found within a link on the home page of our web site. This is the only award we vote on and bestow upon one of our members. You'll get your chance to vote on the final selection at our 2009 Annual Meeting; but I hope you'll take the extra step of nominating someone you believe worthy of the honor.

Another hot button . . . our elections for the 2009 Board of Directors and officers will be here before you know it. We've been talking with a number of potential candidates for the last several weeks, and, in accordance with our bylaws, we will publish the list in the October issue of *Tee to Green*.

If you have an interest in serving, there is still time to add your name to that list. If you're eligible, I hope you do. Serving produces many of its own rewards, not the least of which is knowing you've helped the STGCSA move forward within the southeast Texas community of golf.

That point can't be emphasized enough. Collectively and individually, we play an important role. If you've been around for the past decade or so, you know how hard (and how much) we have worked to improve the Chapter and its value to our members.

To keep the momentum going, we need the future help of new people who are willing to continue our ongoing projects, and,

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e-mail: [stgcsa@windstream.net](mailto:stgcsa@windstream.net)

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Steve Hunter

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e-mail: [srhunter@mindspring.com](mailto:srhunter@mindspring.com)

### Lone Star Representatives

Doug Browne, Steve Chernosky, George Manuel

## September Meeting

**Monday, September 14, 2009**

Memorial Park Golf Course

1001 East Memorial Loop Drive, Houston, TX 77007

Host Superintendent — Jason Harsh

Please RSVP by September 11 by calling

Marian Takushi at 281-494-0094, by e-mail at

[stgcsa@windstream.net](mailto:stgcsa@windstream.net) or through the direct link on the

"Upcoming Events" page of [www.stgcsa.org](http://www.stgcsa.org).

**Speaker:** Bud White USGA Green Section  
"Tricks of the Trade"

**Meeting time:** 10 a.m.

**Cost:** \$15 at the door (includes lunch, RSVP required)

### Directions:

Exit West Loop 610 at Memorial, Go inbound (east) on Memorial and turn left at the first entrance to Memorial Park (East Memorial Loop Drive). Proceed to the golf course.

*The STGCSA's September Meeting is being held in conjunction with the 2009 Texas Trophy Tournament. However, you do not have to be playing in the tournament to attend the meeting, but you must provide an RSVP (see above) to attend the meeting.*

## One more note of thanks

Another big thank you goes out to all of the members of our association who volunteered their time and efforts during the 2009 Shell Houston Open.

Even though it was a hot and humid day, the 36 volunteers that showed up for our volunteer golf outing on Aug. 12 enjoyed a nice round of golf and great food and drink.

For those volunteers who weren't able to make it, you were missed— maybe next year. Thanks again to everyone who helped. We hope to see back next year. We couldn't do it without your help.

— Randy Samoff

*Golf Course Superintendent, Redstone Golf Club*



## Membership Moves

Former STGCSA Board of Directors member Dennis Klene has taken on golf course superintendent duties at Evergreen Point Golf Club.

A "Welcome to the club!" notice goes out to Todd Barten, the owner of Sand Express, LP.

## A call for volunteers

Ladies and gentlemen, mark your calendars— the LPGA is returning to Houston!

The 2009 LPGA Tour Championship, sponsored by IMG and hosted by The Houstonian Golf & Country Club, is scheduled to take place Nov. 16-22.

Yes, that date is no misprint, and it is easy to remember— 2010 will be here before you know it, and then it will be too late to sign up to help marshal the practice facilities during the event.

The tournament will take place the week before Thanksgiving, but this is no turkey of an event! The LPGA Tour has requested our Chapter's help with their premiere event. Where else can you see the top 120 money winners on the LPGA Tour? Not at the Shell Houston Open or at the Administaff Small Business Classic.

We will need 25-30 volunteers to work the practice facilities during tournament week. The volunteer package is a very reasonable \$55 dollars and includes a shirt, badge and other perks. Any person that works at least 3 shifts (hours to be determined later) will receive a complimentary round of golf at their leisure after the event.

I will serve as chairman of the committee, so please do not hesitate to contact me ( [twerner@houstoniangolf.com](mailto:twerner@houstoniangolf.com), 713-628-1096) if you or anyone you know is interested. Anyone that would like to serve as a captain can contact me, as well (I would like to have at least three captains). so sign up now and avoid the rush later!

— Tom Werner, CGCS

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## Out of Bounds: Asiatic Clams Invading Irrigation Systems

By Dr. Anthony Camerino and Brittany Melancon

An irrigation professional called my office recently, asking about a clam clogging irrigation pipes at a golf course in Texas. His questions were, "what is it and how do I get rid of it?"

Having never heard of the problem (the state's turfgrass specialist had not, either), I did some research. Unfortunately, I found no decisive answers, but what follows is a summary of what I dug up.

The Asian clam (*Corbicula fluminea*) is a small, fresh-water, bivalve mollusk. This non-native clam is known as a biofouler. Management of this pest is estimated to cost about \$1 billion dollars annually.

The large numbers of clam shells produced by this mollusk species clogs water intake pipes, and an accumulation of the mollusk's shells can lead to failure of power plants and industrial water systems. Irrigation canals, irrigation pipes, and drinking water treatment plants can all be impaired due to the clam.

It is thought that the mollusk was first introduced around 1930 on the west coast of North America by Chinese immigrants for the purpose of food production. By the 1970s, the clam occupied most of the Mississippi Basin, the Gulf Coast and the eastern United States.

The clam is a filter feeder, meaning it consumes phytoplankton

and other aquatic microscopic organisms. The clam is "discharged" by its mother when it is only 1 millimeter in size.

On a golf course, the likely route by which the clam will infest an irrigation system is an infested irrigation pond. Clams likely infest irrigation ponds from nearby infested water bodies. When water is pumped out of an infested nearby stream into an irrigation pond or a near by infested stream floods, there is potential for an irrigation pond to become infested. The only other likely route is direct introduction of the clam by man on equipment.

Detailed control information for this clam is hard to find. Screens and filters on all intake pipes should prevent infestations. Other sources cite the use of ozone, peroxide, chlorine and bromine to kill clams in irrigation pipes. Heated water has also been used to kill the clam in confined situations.

*For more on this subject, please see these websites:*

<http://fl.biology.usgs.gov/corbicula4.pdf>

[http://weblogs.nal.usda.gov/invasivespecies/archives/2009/03/asian\\_clam\\_corb.shtml](http://weblogs.nal.usda.gov/invasivespecies/archives/2009/03/asian_clam_corb.shtml)

[http://www.in.gov/dnr/files/Asiatic\\_Clam.pdf](http://www.in.gov/dnr/files/Asiatic_Clam.pdf)

*Dr. Anthony Camerino is a Commercial Horticulture Agent and Brittany Melancon is a summer intern with the Harris County Office of Texas AgriLife Extension.*

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The Texas AgriLife Extension Service's 2009 Environmental Golf Course Management Field Day will be held at The Clubs of Kingwood on September 28. Golf Course Superintendents of America Association Continuing Education Units will be available to members attending the gathering; the size of the audience

## Texas AgriLife set for conference



"Upcoming Events" page. You may also call Marian Takushi at 281-494-0094 for more information.

will be limited to the first 50 registrants; the cost is \$30.

Registration can be accomplished through the STGCSEA office—complete details and a registration link can be found on the Chapter web site on the

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

continued from page 2

equally important, who are willing to help us begin new projects to build on what has already been done.

If that sounds like you, please call one of our Board members or officers within the next couple of weeks to discuss the opportunities. The October issue will go to our printer by the third week of September—if you're going to be a candidate, your name must be included in the list published in that issue.

One other item I want to spend a few inches talking about is a proposed change to our meetings schedule for next year. What we (your officers and Board members) are considering is rearranging our schedule so that we begin earlier in the year (with a meeting in January or February) and skip a summer meeting (July probably).

The reasons are many, but among them are the fact that many of our members take summer vacations, forcing them to miss a meeting or two, the heat of summer, and the long gap between meetings (from November to March) that has been a factor for a number of years.

As I said, we're still discussing the possibilities. Your feedback about the idea is important, so again, I'll ask that you let us know . . . soon . . . what you think.

We'll be putting together the 2009 schedule during the next couple of months and if we're going to have an "early" meeting, it's important that we set that date and let you know about it well before the end of this year.

So, please think about it and share your thoughts. Thanks, as always, for taking time to read my column. See you at Memorial Park (and Go STGCSEA!).

— Lee Gravett



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Tomball Country Club

Please send resume to:

Mike Porter, President, Tomball Country Club

22303 Walden Way, Tomball, TX. 77375

E-mail: accepted-Blairline@juno.com

### Grounds Superintendent Needed

Hobbs Country Club — Hobbs, New Mexico

Please send resume to:

Dave Rennhack, Director of Golf, Hobbs Country Club

FAX: 575-393-5169 • E-mail: dave@hobbscountryclub.com

### Assistant Mechanic Wanted

Whispering Pines Golf Club

Please contact: Michael Dieckhoff, Golf Course Superintendent

1532 Whispering Pines Drive, Trinity, TX 75862

Phone: 936-594-4690 • Fax: 936-594-4685

E-mail: mdieckhoff@whisperingpinesgolfclub.com

### Golf Course Superintendent Position Available

Pheasant Trails Golf Course — Dumas, Texas

An application may be obtained by

contacting Brenda Koehn, City of Dumas HR Director

Phone: 806-935-4101, ext. 106 • E-mail: bkoehn@ci.dumas.tx.u

### Golf Course Superintendent Wanted

Nueva Vista Golf Club — Midland, Texas

Please send resume to:

Jon Crain, Nueva Vista Golf Club

6101 W. Wadley, Midland, TX 79707

### Horticulture/Resort Landscape Superintendent Needed

La Torretta Del Lago Resort & Spa — Montgomery, Texas

Please contact: Nicholus Muñoz, HR-Recruiting Manager

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Direct: 936-448-3037

### Second Assistant Superintendent Needed

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before the 10th of each month to include your job listings, etc.,  
in the following two issues of Tee to Green.

To include your job posting on the STGCSA web site, contact  
Marian Takushi (stgcsa@windstream.net, 281-494-0094).



**2009  
South Texas GCSA  
Superintendent/Pro  
or Member/Member Tournament  
The Club at Falcon Point**

**Superintendent Pro**

*Gross Results*

Robert Blalock & Sam Chapman	66
Sean Wilson & Toby Grubert	68
Terry Gill & Ken McDonald	69
Kelly Morgan & Ryan Polzin	69

*Net Results*

Russell Birkhimer & Jim Dickson	48
Ray McFarland & Tom Wolfenberger	49
Patrick O'Neal & Dan White	52
Leander Schuette & James Brown	54

**Member/Member**

*Gross Results*

Alan Hess & Adam Hess	68
Ricky Palacios & Phil Taylor	68
Jeff Jowell & Chris Webster	68

*Net Results*

Willy Plowman & Ed Schultheis	45
Jerry Takushi & Richard Kane	48
Randy Samoff and Lance Ladet	49

**SPECIAL CONTESTS**

<i>Hole</i>	<i>Contest</i>	<i>Winner</i>
1	Closest-to-Hole	Jeff Jowell
2	Closest-to-Hole	Glen Noska
3	Long Drive	Russell Birkhimer
4	Closest-to-Hole	Sean Mack
5	Closest-to-Hole	Kevin McGuire
6	Closest-to-Hole	Justin Lonon
7	Closest-to-Hole	Stan Ludwig
8	Long Drive	Josh Zellars
9	Closest-to-Hole	Jerry Takushi & Richard Kane
10	Closest-to-Hole	Brandon Crumpler & Karl Ludeke
11	Closest-to-Hole	Collins Bean & Josh Zellars
12	Long Drive	Pat Neuendorff
13	Closest-to-Hole	Russell Roten
14	Closest-to-Hole	Nick Johnson
15	Closest-to-Hole	Chris Teafiller
16	Closest-to-Hole	Jeff Jowell
17	Closest-to-Hole	Richard Kane
18	Long Drive	Josh Zellars

**Please refer to the August issue of *Tee to Green* or [www.stgcsa.com](http://www.stgcsa.com) for current 2009 STGCSA Points Lists standings (on the Upcoming Events page, within the Elkins Lake golf results.**

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## 2009 STGCSA SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

### September 13-15

Texas Trophy Tournament

Memorial Park GC

Host Superintendent:

Jason Harsh

### September 14

Memorial Park GC

Host Superintendent:

Jason Harsh

### October 13

The Golf Club at Cinco Ranch

Host Superintendent:

Wade Warmes, CGCS

### November 9

Willow Fork CC

Host Superintendent:

Willy Plowman

Gross/Net Skins

### December 11

Annual

Awards Banquet

and Ceremony

Golfcrest CC

Host Superintendent:

Lee Gravett

*For additional details about each monthly meeting and golf outing, please visit the "Upcoming Events" page of [www.stgcsa.org](http://www.stgcsa.org).*

"One natural hazard, however, which is more or less of nuisance is water. Water hazards absolutely prohibit the recovery shot, perhaps the best shot in the game."

— William Flynn, golf course architect

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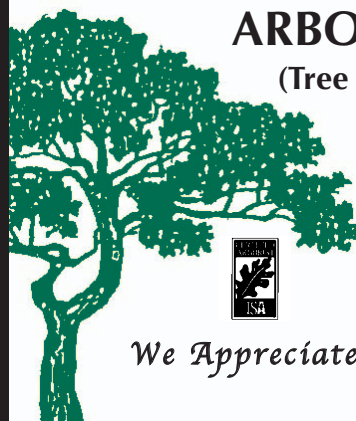


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