No Tax Relief
Twenty-three Sarasota-area courses have resorted to legal means in their fight for tax justice. 3

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New wetlands regs impact development
By Mark Leslie
WASHINGTON, D.C. — The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has changed a wetlands permitting regulation that will affect commercial and residential developers across the board.

Ten percent of golf course projects built the last few years would have been affected by the new parameters had they been in effect, according to Dr. Stuart Cohen, president of Environmental & Turf Services, Inc. of Wheaton, Md.

The regulation is Nation Wide Permit (NWP) 26, which is routinely re-issued every few years. In recent years, it has allowed projects affecting 1 to 10 acres of isolated wetlands or stream headwaters. People could impact as much as 1 acre of wetlands without seeking permits. Under the new parameters, which went into effect in December, the 10-acre maximum of wetlands that a development can affect has been reduced to 3 acres and the 1 “free” acre parameter.

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Pesticide-free courses not in the cards?
By Mark Leslie
COLUMBUS, Ohio — Faced with the rigors of foot traffic and golfer demands for low cutting heights, consistent ball lie and roll, superintendents’ attempts to be pesticide-free are futile, according to a panel of scientists.

Speaking here at the Ohio Turfgrass Foundation Show & Conference, Drs. Dave Shetlar and Joe Rimelspach of Ohio State University and Dr. Stuart Cohen of Environmental & Turf Services concluded that, with a handful of exceptions, no golf course is pesticide-free.

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McGinnis: Supers need more credit, support
By Peter Blais
PEORIA, Ariz. — Getting course owners and club members to appreciate the contributions of their superintendents will be the primary goal of new Golf Course Superintendents Association of America President Paul McGinnis.

“Superintendents simply don’t receive the support and credit they deserve,” said the head superintendent at Moon Valley Country Club here, who will assume the GCSAA presidency at the association’s annual meeting in Las Vegas this February.

“We have quotes from Ben Crenshaw, Tom Watson and Rees Jones testifying to the superintendent’s importance. But the word hasn’t gotten out enough yet. We’re planning educational seminars for owners and green chairmen at both the annual meeting and at regional seminars around the country.

“We’ll continue to use Newsline [the GCSAA newsletter], which is mailed to members...”
Appreciation, credit for supers are GCSAA goals

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Appreciation, credit for supers are GCSAA goals

Continued from page 1

owners and club presidents. We hope our superintendents will supply us the names of the key people at their clubs so we can educate them as well.

McGinnis, a 19-year GCSAA member and director since 1992, sees himself as a bridge between the chaotic times the association experienced four years ago and the relative calm of today.

"I was one of the first of the new group of board members who helped change the association’s direction," he recalled. "Last summer we had some productive meetings with the Professional Golfers Association. We barely spoke five years ago. We may have different points of view, but we realize that we are in this golf industry together. We told [GCSAA Chief Executive Officer] Steve Mona and [Chief Operating Officer] Joe O'Brien to improve our relations with the allied groups and they've done a great job."

In addition to the officer and board of director elections, the membership will vote on a proposed 20-percent dues increase and several bylaw changes at the annual meeting.

The dues increase would raise annual fees from $210 to $250 for classes A, B, and C-V (a newly proposed assistant’s designation) and $125 for Class C (assistant) superintendents. Delegates at September’s chapter relations meeting endorsed the idea of a dues increase and the chapter relations committee forwarded that recommendation to the board.

"After seeing the financial figures and considering how we’ve increased programs, educational sessions and public relations efforts, without raising dues, they [chapter delegates] decided it was time for the membership to step to the plate," the incoming president said. "It’s been six years since we’ve had a dues increase. According to one study, most associations get 20 to 21 percent of their revenues from dues. We’re around 17 percent right now."

BYLAW AMENDMENTS

One amendment would waive the dues requirement for Class AA (retired members), which currently stands at $15.96 per year. It would remove the requirement that a member be 55 to qualify for AA Life status, instead requiring the retired member either be a former board member or voting member for 25 years. There are 441 life members meaning the amendment would reduce revenues by $7,000 annually.

"Retired members have basically paid that amount to stay on our insurance rolls," McGinnis said. "The feeling is these people have put in their time and given their service and we ought to give them something back."

The proposed new C-V class of assistant superintendent mentioned earlier would have the same privileges as their counterparts but would be required to pay the same dues. Currently assistants pay half what a head superintendent pays.

To qualify for the voluntary Class C-V status an assistant would have to have at least three years experience and be employed as an assistant. The Class C title would continue to be an option for assistants who would pay half dues, but not be allowed to vote or hold office. The membership will vote on this proposed bylaws amendment at the annual meeting.

"The C-V designation recognizes there are assistants who want to remain in that position and want the right to vote," McGinnis said. "These people are very valuable to their courses and the GCSAA."

REAFFILIATION AGREEMENTS

Another topic likely to be discussed at the annual meeting, although no vote is in order, is the progress of the re-affiliation agreements. McGinnis said 60 percent of the chapters had met all their re-affiliation obligations as of mid-December and he expected 90 percent to be on board by the March 31 probation deadline.

"Many of the chapters have their annual meetings in December, so we expect to field many reaffiliation applications in the next couple of months," McGinnis said. "Only 10 or 12 chapters have indicated they won’t stay with GCSAA and most of those are turfgrass rather than superintendent associations. Many of those who haven’t reaffiliated yet are in the process of doing so or simply put a late start."

McGinnis said members of several smaller chapters, including the Mohawk Valley and Rio Bravo GCs, could end up joining larger chapters. "I don’t think we’ll lose anybody because of the reaffiliation agreements," the incoming president said. "We expect to have between 90 and 95 [there are currently 103] chapters when the dust settles."

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