CMAA marks 50 at Chicago meeting

A slide show of memories and all the hoopla that goes along with celebrating a half century in existence marked the Golden Anniversary of the Club Managers Association of America last month in Chicago — the city where it all began in 1927.

The CMAA went all out in the Conrad Hilton, showing the nearly 1,000 managers in attendance what this conference would be one to remember. Outgoing national president Harry Gray played the master of ceremonies for the weeklong tribute to the trade. There was even a theatrical salute to the association, which because of the poor sound system in the Hilton put most present in line for a good pair of earplugs.

It wasn't all pageant, though. There was some serious business and the CMAA got down to it at its annual business meeting. Twenty-four bylaw changes were proposed to the membership, and there were some definite disagreements between the leadership and the rank-and-file.

In the opening, the natural progression in the chain of succession occurred, as Josef Auerbach, Wichita (Kan.) Country Club, assumed the presidency as Gray left office. George Burton, Oak Ridge Country Club, Hopkins, Minn., moved up from his secretary-treasurer spot to the vice presidency. Burton was also chairman of the bylaws committee.

Hotly contested this year was the vacant secretary-treasurer post to the vice presidency. George Burton, Oak Ridge Country Club, voiced the loudest opposition since the wording in it seemed to make the definition more vague. Jim Brewer, Los Angeles Country Club, voiced the loudest protest against this plan, and the membership was aroused enough to vote it down. Board member Ray Watts, Houston Club, tried to defend the proposal, stating that the change was being made to broaden the membership base into facilities that were indeed clubs, but were privately-owned operations and did not have a board of directors. The board prerequisite had been made many years before the industry changed. Regardless, Brewer and E.M. Fraser, St. Petersburg (Fla.) Yacht Club, told the board to "go back and do your homework."

Issue 6, which would allow provisional members leaving the business for a job in the commercial side to still receive assistance from the CMAA, was voted down. Another similar suggestion for allowing associate members to reenter the association was also stopped.

Six names were proposed new members through the use of a "request for membership application" was tabled. Former CMAA national president John Outland, now chapter secretary for the Texas Lone Star section, made it clear that the proposal, if adopted, would double the workload of the chapter people and further burden the national office with paperwork.

Awards were also in big supply, as Gray announced that two past presidents were being made honorary members of the CMAA. Jerry Marlett, CMAA president in 1973 and now a director of the National Golf Foundation's club operation consulting service, and Charles E. Smith, CMAA president in 1965, were presented with gold membership cards.

More awards were handed out to the chapters themselves and their members. Chapter growth award was grabbed by the Arkansas Razorback chapter, which registered 30 percent growth over the last year, better than any of the 54 CMAA units. Chapter activities honors went to the Metropolitan chapter.

Individual awards started off in the Idea Fair competition with Robert M. Ward, Runway Bay, Bridgeport, Tex., winning the food and beverage category. In the party ideas competition, Michael S. Locke, Country Club of Lincoln (Neb.) took top prize, while the country club ideas section fell again to Robert MacDougall, Pinehurst Country Club, Littleton, Colo. Management ideas award was won by Plato Neocleous, The Sutter Club, Sacramento, Cal.

Menu competition came in several categories with Peter Ditlev, Minnehaha Country Club, Sioux Falls, S.D., taking the special party menu award, while Richard Owens, Highland G&CC, Indianapolis won it for country club menu, and Jim Ford, Berrien Hills CC, Benton Harbor, Mich., took country club dinner menus.

As always, the week leading up to the final business meeting was accentuated with education and CMAA Director of Education Paul Gomez gave the membership a wide variety of seminars to attend.

The most-talked-about session had to be the one conducted by Tony Marshall, associate dean at Florida International University, Miami. With a flair for the theatrical, Marshall's seminar on legal tidbits for the manager bordered on the risque, but he got his points across on member liability and the law in general. His humorous use of audiovisual display also added a fresh touch to sessions which often bore audiences.

For example, Marshall emphasized how simple it is for the manager to lessen the chances for liability, by just posting signs around the clubhouse indicating impending danger. Stating it can save a club the hassles that go along with possible liability actions in court.

Outgoing CMAA national president Harry Gray gavels in the 50th annual conference at the opening session at the Conrad Hilton. Gray, club manager at Northwood CC, Dallas, presided over the week-long Golden anniversary event.
Earl Brooks, professor at Cornell University, spoke on management communications and supplied a number of concrete suggestions enabling the manager to better illustrate his program to his employees. Working with subordinates and communicating well with them was the focal point of Brooks' presentation. He made it clear that most management failures are based on a lack of clear-cut goals and a manager's subordinates understanding them.

Effective delegation of authority is probably the manager's greatest tool, according to Brooks. Most subordinates view their bosses as tool, according to Brooks. Most managers and think the problems of other managers and popular for learning about the and a manager's subordinates un-

“Business starts with customers,” said Florida International's Mike Hurst during his conference entitled “Food for Thought.” Hurst noted managers with foodservices must have a commitment to excellence. It all starts with the employees, though, Hurst said. When interviewing prospective employees, gauge their personality traits. If they can sell themselves to you, then they should be able to sell your members or customers on your club and its services.

Management consultant Don Thoren gave an overview of different types of management techniques and suggested that managers could select which one would best suit their operation. Individual roundtable discussions later focused on a variety of topics, including: golf cars, decorating, laundry/dry/linen, problems with ERISA, taxation, certification in the CMAA, what the National Club Association was up to, insurance, and computers.

Accounting target of NCA task force

One of the most confusing aspects of country club operations today is the various ways each facility handles its books. There seems to be no common denominator to club accounting.

Seeing the problem, the National Club Association has recently gathered together some of the best accounting minds in the trade as a task force to combat this. NCA President Milton Meyer, Jr., says the task force will draft guidelines to be issued by the subcommittee on accounting standards for nonprofit organizations of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants.

PGA assistants get own national event

Keeping his pledge to establish more national events for all PGA members, President Don Padgett has announced the first annual national championship for club assistants this fall in Brockton, Mass.

Thorny Lea Golf Club will play host to the event, sponsored by local golf shoe manufacturer Foot-Joy. Dick Tarlow, president of Foot-Joy, has announced his firm will provide the total tournament purse of $25,000.

Contestants from each of the 39 PGA sections are expected to compete in the 54-hole tournament, which will run September 28-30. Padgett has made it clear that more such events will allow many of the fine, young golfers in the association an opportunity to compete for national titles.