

# Reader forum

## Roundtable reactions

I really enjoyed your GCSAA roundtable discussion in the March issue of GOLF BUSINESS. For once it was stimulating to have superior participants discuss issues without mincing words.

However, for the record, I will always side with the dedicated Dave Harmons of our association who love the "art of greenkeeping." A member of GCSAA for 24 years, I am and want to be only a golf course superintendent. General managership is not nor will it ever be our business, unless you are unhappy and looking to go downhill to something less rewarding than success in our turf profession. If you are, then go directly to your new brethren. Go to the managers' or professionals' meetings and conferences. But please don't attempt to mix us up. We know what makes us happy.

I think there is a new wind rising in our GCSAA organization. With strong and enlightened golf course superintendents like we are getting now to serve on our national board, I am sure we are going to see some positive changes in our association.

So stick around, boys — you might learn something.

**Paul "Old Jake" Voykin**  
**Superintendent**  
**Briarwood Country Club**  
**Deerfield, Ill.**

Yes, we have problems, but our association problems will always be with us because we are dealing with people and their viewpoints. I have been a member of GCSAA for 7 years, and our needs are changing from year to year just as our needs are changing from year to year in our own job positions and maintenance programs. The GCSAA has made many changes in the association to meet today's needs of the members and will continue to make changes to meet the needs of tomorrow.

I attended the annual business meeting of our national conference in Atlanta in February, and the presentation given by George Cleaver about the association and what it does for the members was excellent. I was very pleased to be a member of the GCSAA.

The GCSAA is not in business to make you a golf course director — this is up to each individual as to what he may want out of life. The GCSAA deals with many people and it is only human nature that a certain percentage may not agree. I and our chapter association believe in the GCSAA, and those who do not should get out and then our position will become stronger.

**Fred Meda**  
**Golf course superintendent**  
**Myrtle Beach National Golf Club**  
**Myrtle Beach, S.C.**

I feel sorry for the person who stated during your GCSAA roundtable discussion that he got nothing out of the educational meetings. Perhaps if he attended a few of them the story might have been different. He did state that he attended the keynote address. He also stated the only way he could think of to hurt the GCSAA was to withhold his dues. If he had paid attention to the keynote address he might have found out that you do not get things done by reprimand.

This same person also stated, "What do we hire for an educational director but a superintendent?" I would think he would be elated that a mere superintendent got the job. He also used the word "we" and he is not even a member.

**Harry Meusel**  
**Superintendent**  
**Yale University Golf Course**  
**New Haven, Conn.**

This is the finest magazine in the golf industry today. The GCSAA roundtable article in the March issue was outstanding and very truthful. I believe that GCSAA is a weak organization and drastic changes are needed. I have been a Class A member for 15 years.

**Norman C. Dennehy**  
**Golf course superintendent**  
**Abeniqui Country Club**  
**Rye, N.H.**

I was pleased to finally see some people actually discussing some of the basic problems with our profession. I do not agree with all of the points brought forth in the roundtable discussion, but they were exposed to the readers of this magazine, which benefits everyone in the golf business.

The majority of golf course superintendents do not project themselves as the professionals they are and, therefore, do not get the recognition they deserve. Unfortunately the "Old Jake" syndrome is our only recognition in many instances. We can recognize ourselves as professionals and pat ourselves on the back all we want, but if we don't project ourselves further than the confines of our own organization, then we have nobody to blame but ourselves for the lack of recognition by the general public.

Basically much of the educational program at annual conferences is redundant. This unfortunately is the nature of research data. However, it is this very research which has fostered our professional outlook as well as made us aware of the importance of continuing our unending search for modernization of our maintenance practices and techniques.

The educational sessions do seem to

ignore the management aspect for the most part. This aspect includes the management of resources (both natural and financial), people, and time. Perhaps we should devote more sessions to this topic.

Some proposals we should consider are increasing the number of talks given by golf professionals, club managers, and general managers. We as superintendents can ill afford to ignore the impact these individuals have on us as managers.

As far as the GCSAA putting sanctions on clubs for the dismissal of a superintendent or other unpopular action, no way. Personally, that's a can of worms I wouldn't want opened. We are a professional organization, not a labor union.

In conclusion, I think GOLF BUSINESS is a good sounding board for all opinions on these matters.

**Roger A. Stewart Jr.**  
**Golf course superintendent**  
**Riverside Golf Club**  
**North Riverside, Ill.**

I am a member of the board of directors of my club and also serve on many other committees, but my real love has been the greens and grounds of the golf club. I have read your magazine for many years and always enjoy the many informative articles in it.

In the article in the March issue concerning the six superintendents discussing their opinions, pro and con, about the workings of a golf course, your panelists had some very positive things to say. I believe that the superintendents' public relations effort must be to the members themselves — after all, most members do not realize that over \$200,000 is spent annually on the golf course, and they do not know the breakdown between wage overhead and normal purchase of supplies.

The superintendents should not be a "Jake in the barn," but should make themselves known to the general membership. I think it would be a positive step if the superintendent might attend a portion of a board meeting.

Again, hats off to your panel. I think it would prove very positive if members would read this article.

**Bud Brody**  
**First vice president**  
**Lake Merced Golf & Country Club**  
**Daly City, Calif.**

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