

THRU THE GREEN

February, 1998



The Golf Course Superintendents Association of Northern California

— Committed to Responsible Turfgrass Management —

Dues Increase Proposed by Budget Committee

The budget committee met on December 2nd and December 11th to review the current financial status of the GCSANC. The committee members, Bob Costa, CGCS, Gary Carls, CGCS, Dave Davies, CGCS, and Barbara Mikel looked carefully at all aspects of the current financial structure, the current management contract with EASI Management and plotted strategies for the future.

The two meetings produced 5 goals and identified a number of areas of concern for the future. The goals for the current budget are as follows:

Increase both allocated and unallocated reserves.

Allocated reserves are funds specifically designated for use in the operation of the Association. Unallocated reserves are used to fund new programs as approved by the board of directors.

Eliminate subsidies for special events (i.e. Christmas Party, Superintendent/Pro)

These events have historically been run at a deficit.

Increase efficient use of the current budget.

Evaluations of all programs and operations have shown areas for improved efficiencies. Utilizing new technologies and less duplication of efforts.

Make Committees more accountable for their budgets.

All committees have budgeted funds. In the past, events and programs have run over budget with little or no explanation and no plan for future budget consideration.

Continue to provide strong member programs.

The board will continue to survey the membership for direction in programing and allocate funding based on membership priorities.

The committee has projected a balanced budget for the 1998 fiscal year. There is, however, a serious concern for the fiscal health of the Association in the near future. Four major issues arose during the review.

EASI Management has assumed numerous duties that were not a part of the original agreement with the Association. This time requirement is paid for by the Chapter in the form of contract funding. Specifically, special events, additional mailings and work associated with the GCSAA affiliation agreement add to the work load already agreed upon. Each responsible for an additional charge in our operational budget.

The State Association (CGCSA) relies on a payment of dues from our chapter GCSANC pays \$5 for each dues paying member to the CGCSA to help pay for business related expenses, a state lobbyist and membership in the GCSAA Platinum Tee Club.

Business related costs have skyrocketed in the last 5 years. Postage is up 47% for the meeting notices, directory mailings, newsletter and notices for special events. In addition we have upgraded technology hardware and software to facilitate the business operation.

The affiliation agreement with GCSAA brought with it a requirement for **Directors' insurance**. This cost has been absorbed into the budget over the last 2 years and is over \$1,500 a year.

The result of these increases is a recommendation for a 20% dues increase for this year. The increase would be effective with the 1999 membership renewal and immediately for new members joining the Association

Discussions have been raised regarding the dues structure for Affiliate members that work for the same company and a number of suggestions have been made. Advertising and fund raising options have also been presented and will be discussed at the annual meeting. Please contact your Affiliate representatives for more information. There will be more details to follow as specifics regarding any proposed dues increase develop. You are encouraged to contact any of the committee members or your Board of Directors for information or comment on the proposal.

New Advertising Program, For 1998

A new advertising program was recently unveiled by Bob Costa, Thru The Green Editor. The program was developed around three basic objectives; provide affiliate members with greater advertising opportunities, create advertising incentives and reduce the costs associated with the newsletter. The move was in response to the recent budget review in which a mandate was issued to reduce expenses. "The newsletter has been operating at a significant deficit for the last several years," said Bob Costa, editor since the spring of 1996. "In order to achieve fiscal responsibility we felt some changes were in order." One of the considerations was to reduce the newsletter schedule to every other month — a sure fire cost savings but a disservice to the members.

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Advertising Program (Cont'd)

The current strategy includes incentives for business to utilize full page inserts. "I have always felt that the insert was the most cost effective way to advertise," said Costa. "Everyone who opens the newsletter is likely to see your ad." With the new program, each new member who chooses within the first six months of joining, to advertise by way of an insert will receive a one time discount. In addition, existing members who purchase two inserts within the calendar year get one additional insert at no cost. "The new member discount is a great way for an affiliate to introduce itself to the membership. I really believe it's value priced," Costa concluded.

The other major change is placing a term limit of one year on the popular 2 x 3 ads. "We felt as though we have a responsibility to the affiliates to provide as much opportunity for advertising as possible. By establishing a term limit we expect greater participation." I expect to have a letter out soon explaining the program to all of our affiliate members. I certainly look forward to their continued support and thank all of those who have participated in the past." Costa suggested the program should take effect by March 1, 1998.

Independent Distributors Show Support of Superintendents

The Independent Turf and Ornamental Distributors Association demonstrated their support of golf course superintendents by contributing \$5,000 to the GCSAA Foundation, thus becoming a member of the Platinum Tee Club. The Associations members are made up of independent distributors whose primary business is calling on golf course superintendents. "The independent distributors who make up the ITODA have long shared the goals of advancing scientific development and addressing environmental issues that are the key goals of the GCSAA Foundation," said Association President, Steve Dickinson.

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