



## November Marks the Return of the Institute

By Bob Costa, CGCS

For NorCal Superintendents, fall represents the time of year when the word relax can be reintroduced into their vocabulary. Slowly, the focus begins to shift from the daily demands of summer into thoughts of winter projects; the holidays and some much needed time away. It also represents, the return of the GCSANC's premier educational event - The Golf Course Superintendent's Institute. The annual event, which is developed in conjunction with the UC Extension Service, returns this year to the popular Santa Rosa

Hilton.

This year's two-day program unfolds on Monday November 5th, with the educational session, trade show and reception. The educational program, will feature a series of practical discussions on equipment. With a wide range of knowledgeable, local speakers, complete with trade show, the conference promises to be highly educational and entertaining. Tuesday concludes the event with the annual golf tournament hosted by Ed Bale and Northwood Golf Club.

Because of the nature of this

year's program, superintendents are encouraged to take advantage of a special registration fee that will allow their Assistants and Equipment Technicians to attend at a reduced fee. "One of our objectives last year was to increase the participation level of Assistant superintendents," said Bob Costa who has served on the Institute's Education Committee since it's inception. "The reduced fee proved to be highly successful, with a record number of Assistants attending. We're hopeful that in November, along with their Assistants, Superintendents will be joined

by their Mechanics."

Lodging for this year's Institute is available at the Santa Rosa Hilton (formerly the Doubletree). For more details look for the Institute program, which should be arriving in late September.

### Discount Rate Offered for Institute

Superintendents attending this years Institute, can bring along their Assistant or Equipment Technician for a special reduced price of \$85 dollars. The special rate represents a \$50.00 savings over the regular registration fee.

## Turf Star to Sponsor Joint Meeting

Less than one year ago, a new name showed up in our territory - Turf Star. Turf Star came about as the merge of two of Toro's leading distributors - West Star Distributing and California Turf. Turf Star is jointly owned by the principals of West Star and California Turf with Gene Warne serving as CEO and Leonard Gregory as President. The purpose of the merge was to create a company that can better compete in the California market and provide the best opportunity for golf courses, contractors, and dealers to purchase turf equipment, irrigation equipment, contractor equipment, and consumer products. One of the first and most important benefits to our customers was the addition of a larger parts depot in a new Turf Star facility in Fresno, California. This operation continues a tradition established by West Star of providing better than 95% fill rates for customers needing parts by the next day—to the entire state of California. The ability to provide parts

service at this level and to provide customer service in the time frame that golf course superintendents require is driven by the investments in equipment that Toro Distributors have made over the years. From state-of-the-art computer systems to being among the first to use pagers and cellular phones, Toro distributors have maintained a competitive advantage through technology. As important as that technology is, however, the sales people that you work with are the key to maintaining a golf course to today's standards. While new in name, Turf Star brings a sales staff with a level of experience that is unmatched. While you may be very familiar with your individual sales rep, the following short "bios" will give you an idea of the resources that each salesman has within our team in Northern California

**Chuck Talley** - Turf Equipment Sales Manager - Sacramento - Chuck started working for a Toro Distributor (Brady-Holmes) 26 years ago. Chuck

started out as an equipment mechanic then switched to sales and promptly won Toro's national Rookie Salesman award. In the early 80's Chuck worked with superintendents from Sacramento south to Fresno winning another national Toro award - the "Green Blazer". While working at Duke Equipment, Chuck became the Sales Manager for Turf Equipment. When asked to reflect on his years in the business, Chuck says he is proudest of the people he has trained to follow in his footsteps - a group that includes 4 Toro Rookie of the Year winners and 3 Toro Green Blazer winners.

**Don Kittleson** - Turf Equipment - Reno, Nev. - Don started out working at El Dorado Hills GC at a very young age in the summers so that he could play golf for free the rest of the year. He continued working on the golf courses and spent 5 years as a golf professional. His love of the game kept him in the industry when he started working for West Star 6 1/2

years ago.

**Matt Engleman** - Turf Equipment - Elk Grove - Matt has been a commercial sales rep with Turf Star for 3 1/2 years. He has been involved in the golf industry for over 14 years - since his high school years in Southern California. He played golf for Clemson University before returning to California. Whenever time permits you can find him fishing for bass on the California Delta.

**Mike O'Barr** - Turf Equipment - Fresno - Don't be mistaken by the Michael on his business card, he's Mike. After working in customer service for 16 years, Mike credits the good people he's met and working outdoors as the reasons he loves this job so much. He's been working the Central Valley and foothills for Turf Star for almost a year.

**Mitch Frasier** - Turf Equipment - Napa - Mitch started working

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for West Star in May of 1985 as the commercial sales rep for the Solano, Sonoma, Napa, and north counties. While he enjoyed his work in the Ag market, his love of the game of golf brought him to West Star. By focusing on customer service through the years, Mitch has been able to create many relationships that extend beyond work.

**Kevin Castle** - Turf Equipment - Newark - Kevin is the commercial sales rep for the San Francisco peninsula and east bay region. He originally started working for West Star in 1997 as our "El Nino" irrigation representative. After a brief time away from this industry, however, he realized how much he missed the relationships and enjoyment of this business. We are happy to welcome him back to the Bay Area golf scene.

**Marc Barrientos** - Turf Equipment - Salinas - Marc is a single guy from out of state - his reasons for coming in - the weather in California is incredible and the golf courses speak for themselves. Marc has been in the Turf business for 10 plus years. His background includes managing a lawn and garden store for two years, then selling fertilizer, seeds, and chemicals in Indiana for 3 years. Taking on the big city in Chicago, Marc was a turf rep for Jake, Ransome, Cushman, and Ryan.

**Michael Ginelli** - Irrigation Sales Manager - Martinez - Mike started working on golf courses while still in high school, learning how to water with a quick coupler system on moonless nights. While going to school at Cal Poly in SLO, he had a great summer job at Avila

Beach on the golf course. That led to full time work and part time school. After graduation, a short stint at Pleasant Hill GC was followed by a few years with Ewing Irrigation. Mike joined West Star in March of 1983 and still finds that golf irrigation is the most challenging and enjoyable aspect of golf operations.

**Kevin Eppich** - Irrigation Sales - Alamo - Kevin's experience on golf courses is also varied and lengthy. Prior to joining Turf Star, Kevin had worked as an assistant superintendent, aquatic specialist, and fertigation representative. He has been with Turf Star for 3 years and seen tremendous improvement in his golf game and his territory. Kevin's success in working with golf course superintendents earned him Toro's 2000 Irrigation Rookie of the Year award.

**Bob Sylvester** - Irrigation Sales - Sacramento - Bob has also been with Turf Star for close to three years. While now specializing in irrigation, Bob's first golf course work was as a subcontractor during construction on projects such as Silver Creek GC and Paradise Valley GC. Bob's territory takes him from the south end of the San Joaquin Valley to Reno north to the Oregon border.

With an experience level in the golf business that averages over 13 years per person, Turf Star provides our customers with sale representation based on hands-on experience. We bring an understanding of the opportunities you face every day to make your golf course better. So while our technology makes your job easier, our hope is that our people make it more enjoyable. /



*Hosts Jim McPhilomy and Joel Erickson with David Karp*



*GCSANC Members enjoy the evening at Cordevalle*

## Condolences To the Lavine Family

The young son of Rich Lavine, CGCS, of Peacock Gap GC tragically fell from a second story window recently. The accident happened in a house the Lavine's were vacationing at near Donner Lake. The boy suffered severe head injuries and is fighting for his life at a hospital in Reno. Rich and his wife have been staying at the Ronald McDonald house near the hospital. We are sending our prayers and wish the family the best during this time of crisis.

If you would like to send a card, the address of the Ronald McDonald house is 323 Main St. Reno, NV 89502. They may also be reached there by phone at (775) 982-4680.