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Myrtle Wagoner, The First Lady of GCSANC
By Gary K. Carls CGCS

One of the keys to any successful association is having key staff to run the day-to-day portion of the operations. For the last 45 years, we at GCSANC have been blessed with two chapter executive secretaries that have kept numerous Boards of Directors on course. Currently Barbara Mikel fills the role, but the lady who started the great tradition was Myrtle Wagoner.

In 1941 Myrtle married Cliff Wagoner and in the next six years they had two children, Shirley and Darryl. Today she has two grandkids and two great grandchildren. Like many women of the time, Myrtle was able to stay home and raise the children while Cliff was off earning the family income. Myrtle liked to sew and often took sewing classes to further develop her skills. When Cliff got more involved with the local superintendent chapter, Myrtle would regularly attend chapter meetings. When collecting money for meals at chapter functions became a problem, Myrtle volunteered to help. That was the beginning of her long association with GCSANC.

Over the years, Myrtle’s role with GCSANC continued to evolve as the chapter grew larger. She first became an official employee of GCSANC in 1960 and by 1965 was making a whopping $600 per year in addition to a $100 bonus for 1964. In 1968 Myrtle was given an attaché case and the title of Executive Secretary. She did her 1st edition of the newsletter in September 1971. In 1974 she was given free lunches and her pay was all the way up to $1750 per year.

Those of us who joined the association in those times were fortunate to have Myrtle at the helm. She always made it a point to know everyone by name. She felt it was an important part of her job to know the members. I was always amazed at how well Myrtle seemed to know everyone when I had a hard time remembering just a few new names from month to month.

Cliff describes their years together as, “a

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Myrtle Wagoner (Cont'd)

great example of teamwork” and a their relationship together as “complimentary.”
Cliff played little golf and Myrtle only tried a few times. They had many other things to
do that didn’t really allow much time for
golf. As Cliff advanced in his career, Myrtle
was always there to help in whatever way
she could. She would help out in the office at
Del Rio CC when staff was a little short
handed. When Cliff was given the assign-
ment to develop the Certification Program at
the GCSAA, Myrtle was the one that typed
all of the correspondence required in the
process. When Cliff was working on some
projects in Africa after his retirement from
Del Rio CC, Myrtle would help out by
typing reports for him. Although she didn’t
ski much, she joined the Modesto Ski Club
in 1963 because Cliff enjoyed skiing and she
would often just go along on the trips and
watch the others ski. She also helped
maintain the reservations for their ski lodge.
She and Cliff also joined the local Model A
club in 1980 and enjoy taking trips and
participating in the various group functions.
Myrtle enjoys traveling, so it wasn’t all
work all the time. She has enjoyed traveling
to the many places she and Cliff have been
able to go because of his work or involve-
ment with GCSAA. They have made visits to
all 50 states and 8 provinces in Canada. She
has attended 45 GCSAA Conferences with
Cliff over the years and is looking forward to
many more.
Myrtle officially retired in 1989 and was
given a “Special Distinguished Service
Award” from GCSANC. That doesn’t mean
she has stopped working on behalf of
GCSANC. As part of the GCSANC 65th
Anniversary in 1997 she and Cliff compiled
a historical record of the chapter. This
included both a scrapbook and a written
compilation of all the chapter records that
were available since 1932. She was also a
key member of the planning for the 65th
Anniversary meeting that was held at
Bayonet/Blackhorse in 1997 that included
historical displays and showcased the history
of our chapter. In 2000, the chapter donated a
copy of the scrapbook to GCSAA for their
historical collection. Myrtle and Cliff drove
their Model A, on which they have logged
over 70,000 miles, back to Lawrence,
Kansas to deliver the scrapbook.
Myrtle set the standard for what a chapter
Executive Secretary should be. Her dedica-
tion to GCSANC and its members help make
the chapter what it is today. Even in retire-
ment she and Cliff continue to be actively
involved with the chapter and she still seems
to remember all the names of those of us
who joined while she was working for the
chapter. It’s always nice to talk with her
when she attends a meeting and get her
insight in the direction the association is
going. If I didn’t know better I would think
she was still working for all of us. Thank you
Myrtle, for all your hard work over the years
and we look forward to your assistance in
planning the 75th Anniversary in a few more
years.

(Left to right) Having a great time at the 2002 California Golf Writers Dinner at the
Links at Spanish Bay are Vice President Bob Lapic, Affiliate Member Don Naumann,
and Secretary/Treasurer Patrick Finlen. They were in attendance that evening as fellow
GCSANC Member Bob Costa, was honored as Golf Superintendent of the Year by the
California Golf Writers Association.

Bob and Anita Costa at the Awards Banquet.