

ALAN ANDREASEN, CGCS

GARNERS OVERALL ELGA AWARD



He's been there and done that more than most, but one wonders if Alan Andreasen has ever enjoyed the journey more than he does now.

Andreasen, CGCS, has been a superintendent for half of his 62 years, has worked at a dozen golf courses of all sizes and shapes from one end of California to the other and has developed a strong sense of what's right and what's wrong about golf course management.

One thing the 28-year GCSAA member has learned in his time is that a golf course can be as compatible with nature as you want it to be and that building successful working relationships and teamwork is the way to get there.

Putting that lesson into practice has turned what might have been the twilight of a career into a never-say-die dawn. At year's end, Andreasen reached the crest of a wave of recent recognition when he was named the overall winner in the 2005 GCSAA/Golf Digest Environmental Leaders in Golf Awards for his stewardship efforts at Los Lagos Golf Course, a benchmark municipal venue in San Jose, Calif.

Alan Andreasen aspired to be a golf professional early in life, but wound up following in his father's footsteps and became a superintendent in the early 1970s, settling for a bit of glory in the GCSAA golf championships with a top-10 finish in the championship flight once and twice winning the Senior I flight. His journey has been long and generally rewarding. And, thank goodness, whatever goes around comes around.

Back in the 1980s during one of his longer stints, 11 years at Hacienda Golf Club in La Habra Heights, Calif., Andreasen had an intern, Ray Davies, whom he eventually promoted to assistant superintendent. As good assistants often do, Davies went on to make a name for himself. Now a CGCS and 23-year GCSAA member, he is currently director of golf course maintenance and construction for CourseCo Inc., a management company with more than a dozen facilities under its umbrella, mostly in the San Francisco Bay area.

In 2001, Davies was looking for a superintendent for one of

CourseCo's properties, Rancho Del Pueblo in San Jose — a job that soon would also include the maintenance responsibilities at a new course the city was building, Los Lagos. Davies turned to an old friend, and an out-of-work one at that: Andreasen. The latter took the reins at Rancho Del Pueblo and kept a keen eye on the construction of Los Lagos, including grow-in. When the new venue, designed by Brian Costello, opened in 2002, Andreasen got the job of running both facilities.

"He resurrected my career, no doubt about it," Andreasen says of Davies. "I had bounced around a little bit and was at the awkward stage of being a superintendent unemployed."

Battlefield determination

From the beginning, there has been no doubt of the intentions of Davies, CourseCo and the city of San Jose. Los Lagos was to set a standard for the balance between golf and the environment after a struggle of more than a decade to earn state and federal approval.

"I'll give the city a lot of credit. It took them about 12 years to get the project permitted.

There was a lot of resistance from a number of groups," Andreasen says, noting that a tributary, Coyote Creek, runs through the course and drains into the Bay, with environmentally sensitive areas along the route.

Once Los Lagos opened, Andreasen was on a fast track to environmental recognition, thanks to the acquired awareness of his employers. For one thing, CourseCo is a winner of the California governor's Environmental and Economic Leadership Award for sustainable practices. More importantly, the city gave golf course maintenance at Los Lagos its marching orders from the outset — a definitive, 11-point environmental management blueprint.

While strict guidelines pertaining to water use (less than half of the course's 175 acres are irrigated), water quality and turf-care inputs obviously are at the heart of the city plan, overall it closely reflects the ELGA criteria — Water Management, Resource Conservation, IPM, Wildlife Habitat Preservation and Education/Outreach — and then some.

"The standards that the city adopted for the maintenance of the golf course adheres to sound environmental practices," Andreasen says. "It is a part of CourseCo's corporate culture to implement such practices."

The friendly touch

Andreasen's biggest role probably has been swinging public perception to golf's favor by establishing an environmental resource committee that includes his assistant superintendent at Rancho Del Pueblo, Damian Guzman, superintendent Donald Paul at Los Lagos and other managers at the two venues.

(Continued on Page 12)

Presidents's Message

(continued from Page 3)

As the golf business moves into the 21st century, it will be even more important that we work closely with our allied associations- the PGA, the CMAA, and the CGCOA and other allied associations. This last year we invited the Northern California PGA, Club Managers Association of America, and the Golf Course Owners Association to participate in our Superintendent Institute, and those who participated benefited from the experience. This year our Supt-Pro tournament is posted on the NCPGA event calendar, and we know it will be another successful tournament for us. It's my hope that we will continue to work closely with all allied associations, and in doing so we will promote the value of the golf course superintendent, both at your facility and in the eye of the public.

The golf course superintendents can either get involved and take an active role in the future of golf or... we can sit back, let others take the lead and before we know it, we'll lose the opportunity for input and others will be making the decisions that directly effect us and our careers. A strong and active association can help keep us active participants in the future. But it can't be done without you stepping up and actively participating in the GCSANC as well as with other organizations.

This year we will be conducting a chapter-wide compensation survey (which has not been done since 2000). Please participate in the survey as the information gathered will be beneficial to all of us. In 2006, I would also like to see our Chapter become more strongly aligned with the five other chapters within California under the umbrella of our State Chapter.

As your president you can count on me to be available to you throughout the year. You can also count on the entire board of directors to be accessible to you. If there is anything that we can do to help you at your course or with your career please call on us. We are here to serve you.

In closing, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to serve as president of our association. In addition, I would like to thank Association Manager Barbara Mikel for her tireless efforts on our behalf. I would also like to thank outgoing president Vince Keats for hosting a memorable annual meeting and golf event at his club. Special thanks are also extended to our entire board of directors, past presidents and past board members for all their hard work in years past. Equally as important, I would like to thank our affiliate members for all your support throughout the years. Together we can look forward to a promising future for our association.

(Continued from Page 11)

Alan Andreasen, CGCS Earns Overall ELGA Award

Off the course, Andreasen is strong on what he calls fostering relationships. He has won over some of the project's staunchest antagonists, officials of the Wildlife Center of Silicon Valley, whose facility was a victim of the golf course construction, by helping the group raise funds for rehabilitating rescued animals. The resource group conducts field trips for a nearby elementary school, emphasizing the positive interaction between the course and Mother Nature as well as promoting The First Tee program at Rancho Del Pueblo.

In three short years, Los Lagos has been certified as an Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary and has won two ELGA chapter awards. And now, it has won the "whole thing," as Andreasen says while admitting that his sights were set on three chapter prizes in a row.

"It's truly a delightful surprise," he says of the overall ELGA. "It's important to me because it makes me feel good about the things we've done. But, most of all, I know how important it is to the people I work for. That's my driving force in these things. Also, now that I can't win golf awards any more, winning environmental awards is a great replacement."



A good time was had by all at the California Golf Writers Banquet at The Inn at Spanish Bay (Pebble Beach, CA). GCSANC Golf Superintendent of the Year Bob Lopic (seated front row center) was honored at the gala event. Family and friends were on hand for the special occasion.