GCSANC HAS PRESENCE AT CA GOLF WRITERS BANQUET

The California Golf Writers Association turned 50 this year and its annual awards banquet at Pebble Beach was almost like a birthday party. Several GCSANC members were in attendance, not just to help blow out the candles on the birthday cake but in support of colleague **Steve Byrne** (Mira Vista Golf & Country Club) honored as *Golf Course Superintendent of the Year*.

Byrne shared the stage with fellow honoree **John Abendroth** recognized as *Golf Professional of the Year*. Abendroth co-hosts *Hooked on Golf* Radio Show (KNBR 680AM) an assignment shared with his good friend, **Mitch Juricich**. Both gentleman are GCSANC advocates and frequently remind their listeners about the significant role of the golf course superintendent.

For those who've never attended a golf writer dinner, you should. Held during the AT&T Pebble Beach National Pro-Am week, the event attracts golf writers, producers, amateur and professional players, celebrities, golf historians and industry leaders. A few local superintendents attend, but others are absent (and rightly, so) as they prepare their respective course/s for the PGA TOUR event slated that week.

While the golf writers are celebrating their 50th year, it's been just less than a decade that the GCSANC has been formally included on the VIP invitation list. Thanks to the support of CGWA members like **Bob Murphy** (master of ceremonies), **Kristen Hunter** (event chair and co-owner of Hunter PR), and **Ron Agostini** (golf writer for the *Modesto Bee*) and others too, the GCSANC Superintendent of the Year is now recognized at the banquet along with other dignitaries.



Award recipient Steve Byrne with golf broadcaster and fellow honoree Roger Maltbie, Jason Green and Mike Souza.

Recent GCSANC honorees join the ranks of respected **Class "A" Life Member Clifford Wagoner, CGCS**, a former *Golden State Award* recipient, honored at the banquet in 1988. His wife, **Myrtle**, (a loyal GCSANC supporter) recalls, "It was the year they moved the awards dinner from Monterey Peninsula Country Club over to The



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WRITERS BANQUET (Continued)

Inn at Spanish Bay so they could accommodate the huge crowd." The event still attracts more than 350-450 golf enthusiasts.

"It's a special evening not just because of all the networking that goes on," stated GCSANC Past President Jason Green, "but because you never know who might just show up out of the blue." Sure enough, Actor Bill Murray popped in towards the end of the dinner hour, tossed out a couple one-liners about his good friend/honoree Bob Murphy and followed it up with a few light-hearted words about golf course superintendents. Before you knew it Carl Spackler himself, slipped out the back door and was on his way, but not before a local paparazzi captured a photo of the Caddyshack star with honoree Steve Byrne, witnessed by GCSANC Members Mike Souza and Jason Green.

After dinner, guests remained in the ballroom visiting with friends, colleagues and celebrities, reminiscent of good times past. Last year, ESPN's **Chris Berman** posed for a photo with chapter members. This year former PGA TOUR Player and **NBC Broadcaster Roger Matlble** joined GCSANC'ers for a quick visit and snapshot, too. "It's moments like this, that golf course superintendents have an opportunity to visit with others closely associated with the game," stated **GCSAA Director Pat Finlen, CGCS.** "It's also an excellent forum for folks to learn more about our members and their commitment to professional excellence."

GCSANC Superintendent of the Year Steve Byrne stands proudly with his wife Samantha, at the California Golf Writer's Banquet at The Inn at Spanish Bay.



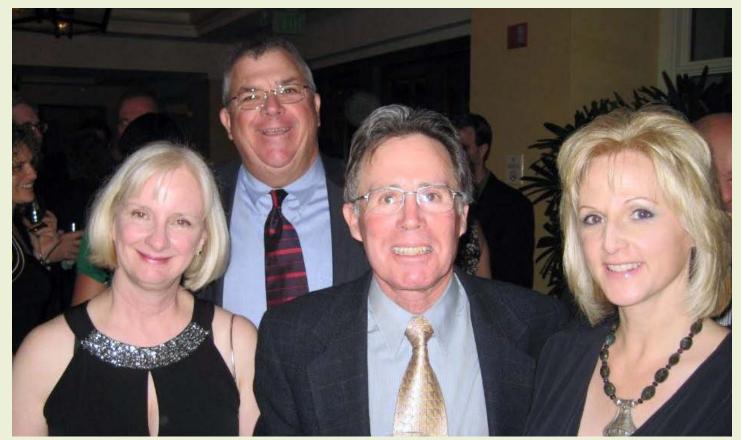
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Mr. and Mrs. John Abendroth were joined by GCSANC Member Steve Good and his wife at the Golf Writer Dinner.

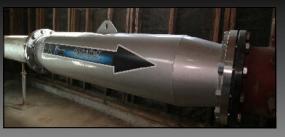
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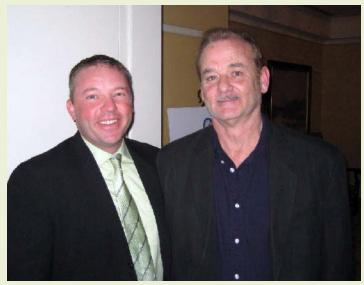


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WRITERS BANQUET (Continued)

Better start saving now if you're interested in attending next year's banquet, as it's a little on the pricey side, but it's worth it. There's also a raffle associated with the event and funds raised benefit youth scholarships. To learn more about the CGWA awards banquet, contact GCSANC Communications Consultant Emmy Moore Minister at EmmyPGA@aol.com.



GCSANC Honoree Steve Byrne takes time out for a photo with Actor Bill Murray of Caddyshack fame.



John Abendroth and Mitch Juricich, long-time hosts of KNBR's Hooked on Golf radio show.

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