

TOOLS FOR TOMORROW: GETTING IN TOUCH WITH GPS, GIS AND SENSOR TECHNOLOGY

WENTE
VINEYARDS

2009 Institute—A Chance to Educate, Collaborate, and Congratulate

The Northern California Chapter of the GCSAA in cooperation with the UC Cooperative Extension recently held its 2009 Institute at The Course at Wente Vineyards in Livermore, CA.

The conference, with its technological theme, was tri-dimensional in nature. It was a chance for attendees to learn more about technological products, which help maintain quality turf while maximizing water conservation and minimizing other inputs such as fertilizers, pesticides, etc. Secondly, it was a chance to collaborate and network with industry experts, educators, and vendors in two additional settings—at the product/service trade show & wine tasting, and the following day on The Course at Wente Vineyards during the Davey Cup Series golf event.

According to event co-chairman **Michael Souza**, the following industry experts provided invaluable insight: **Erik Gakstatter**, principal with Discovery Management Group, **Aaron Johnsen**, founder of Turf Intelligence, LLC, **Jason Bass**, a certified arborist and president of Stratapoint, Inc., **Bernd Leinauer, Ph.D.**, professor and extension turfgrass specialist in the Plant Sciences Dept. at New Mexico State University, and **Jason Hill, Ph.D.**, advanced engineering manager with The Toro Company.

A conference highlight occurred when **Patrick Gross** (southwest director for the USGA Green Section) presented institute co-founder **Dr. Ali Harivandi** (environmental horticulturist at U.C. Cooperative Extension) with the prestigious Piper & Oakley Award. This honor is bestowed upon an individual who has contributed significant time and expertise towards USGA Green Section programs, and thus, to the game of golf. Harivandi, whose exceptional work and outreach efforts could fill volumes, was both humbled and honored by the special distinction. He received plentiful congratulations from the dozens of GCSANC members on-hand for the awards presentation.

Special thanks are extended to host **Glenn Matthews**, his staff and the entire Wente Family, event co-chairmen **Dr. Ali Harivandi** and **Mike Souza** (Richmond CC), committee members **Steve Agin** (Ruby Hill GC), **Thomas Bastis**, CGCS (California GC), **Gary Carls**, CGCS (Sunnyvale GC), **Dean Cravelho** (Round Hill CC), **Greg Dunn** (West Coast Turf), **Greg Fernald** (Target Specialty Products), **Gary Ingram**, CGCS (Metropolitan GL), **Rodney Muller** (Tilden Park GC), **Dave Wilber** (Sierra Pacific Turf Services), and **Ryan Zuehlsdorf** (Roddy Ranch GC.)

Warm thanks is also extended to institute sponsor **Diana Nisbet** and the team at **Syngenta**, a company with 20 years of experience in developing and marketing turf-related products. [To learn more about Syngenta visit <http://www.syngentaprofessionalproducts.com/ppmain.aspx>.]

In addition, we thank our loyal vendors who participated in the trade show, and lastly, our cup series sponsor **Blaine Boccignone** with the **Davey Tree Expert Company**. [To learn more visit <http://www.davey.com/cms/site/f280a1eec66b9846/index.html>.] Special congratulations are extended to Davey Cup Series winners **Dave Sheldon**, Fountaingrove Golf and Athletic Club, First Place Net and **Jeff Hart**, Southern Links, First Place Gross.



Dr. M. Ali Harivandi with the Piper and Oakley Award.

Dr. Charles V. Piper and Dr. Russell A. Oakley were among the earliest scientists to conduct studies in the fields of turfgrass science and golf course management, and served as the first Chairman and Co-Chairman of the USGA Green Section when it was formed in 1920. They were men of great character, keen vision and remarkable achievement, whose contributions to the improvement in early greenkeeping methods cannot be overstated. The Piper and Oakley Award, established in 1998, periodically recognizes others who have so generously contributed to the programs and activities of the USGA Green Section and the game of golf as a volunteer.

Dr. Harivandi joins the ranks of notable recipients: Jaime Ortiz Patiño, Dr. James R. Watson and Dr. Victor R. Gibeault.