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THRU THE GREEN

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From The President

Okay, now you've done it. For nine months, I've managed to keep this message light and mostly humorous. Now it ends. As much as I hate to do this, you've forced me to get up on my soapbox to preach.

I've got to tell you, I'm a bit dismayed at the apathy, or lack of participation that many of you show toward taking a leadership role in **your** professional association. You guys and gals should be standing in line to volunteer or run for a leadership role. I know you've got opinions on how things should be run; you've told me so. This isn't brain surgery; if you can read this message, and have an IQ of about 45, you're more than qualified to lead this association. Heck, we all know that our Executive Secretary does all the real work anyway!

I don't think that this problem is unique to our association. I know that the GCSAA has had similar problems in the past. I'll even bet that the Northern California Chicken Pluckers have problems getting people to serve on their board or committees. I used to belong to a ski club in a former life and we had similar problems. People used to say that they were too busy at work. Well folks, this is work,

Office Notes

By: Barbara Mikel

A reminder. The office will be closed from 2-5-96 to 2-26-96. The answering machine will **not take messages** so please give me a call after I return from Orlando, Florida.

If you move or change jobs be sure to send the current information to the office for the Membership Directory. We will be formulating the Directory

and this association, and the benefits that you derive from it, help you do your job better.

"I don't have the time," you say. You probably waste more time hanging out in the pro shop each morning that I put in on association business each day. "It's a lot of work," you say. Yea, it can be, but this message is the hardest thing that I've had to do as President. Let me fill you in on the negative aspects of volunteering time for this association. . . . You know, I really can't think of any. Let me tell you about the good stuff. First, you get a really neat phone company credit card so you don't pay for any of the calls that you make. And you **will** make lots of calls, which brings me to the second point. You will talk to, and make friends with colleagues around the area, state, and even around the nation. (Think of the possibilities if you play lots of golf.) You will discuss areas of common interest, needs and problems, and work toward common goals. The friends you will make will last well beyond your board service. Believe it or not, most of you guys are worth knowing and I value the friendships that I've made through this association. Most of us have chosen this profes-

sion because we really like what we're doing. Association service is an extension of this profession, and it really is rewarding.

Now I know, most of you have legitimate excuses, I mean reasons, that you can't take a more active role. Maybe your wife has just had triplets and you think that maybe they might take a little more of your free time, or maybe you're in the process of building a 36 hole golf resort, or just maybe you're finding it hard balancing your time between your wife and girlfriend. Well, give it a year or so, and then step forward. But what about the other 10% of you? You say you've never been asked? Maybe you don't know who to talk to? Maybe you've been waiting to be nominated by someone? Well consider yourself asked. Consider yourself nominated. Call our nominating committee chairman Randy Gai. I'll even give you his phone number, (510) 654-8972. If it makes a difference, call him collect if you like. Hey call him at home if you want. He just told me he's a light sleeper, so he might even answer the phone late at night. As they say on TV, **Just Do It!**

See you in Orlando,

Richard Lavine, CGCS
President

shortly after the annual meeting in April. It is your responsibility to make sure we have current information. The information from your renewal questionnaire will be used. If you received a second request for the information questionnaire, please fill it out or the information in the Directory will be last years and will not include fax numbers or updated information.

I hope you saw the notice in the last newsletter about our gift certificates being accepted by GCSAA. They do have quite a lot of quality education materials also. If you have received a gift certificate for the first time, a reminder; the certificates are redeemable at any pro shop. The certificates are PGA approved. The pro sends the certificate to our office for redemption.



Positions Open

Golf Course Superintendent

Saratoga Country Club has an immediate opening for a full time Golf Course Superintendent. This golf course is a 9-hole facility, double teed, par 68. Yardage for 9 holes is 2,450. The rating/slope is: Men's 18 - 65.0/119, Ladies 18 - 69.5/121 and the Ladies 9 - 35.0/122 & 34.5/120. There is a driving range and 6 tennis courts as well as an active clubhouse, with pool attached.

Applicants must have a qualified application certificate for pesticide application; 3 years experience in golf course management either as a head superintendent or significant exposure as an assistant superintendent; and able to work with and communicate with a Spanish-speaking crew. The golf Course Superintendent reports directly to the General Manager. Salary and benefits package is commensurate with experience.

Send resume to: Joe Callan, General Manager, Saratoga Country Club, 21990 Prospect Road, Saratoga, CA 95070

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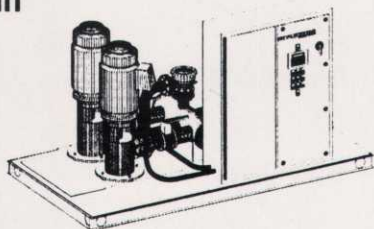
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Naumann's NorCal News

Mike Higuera has accepted the Superintendent position at Mtn. Shadows Golf Course in Rhonert Park. Mike was the Superintendent at Aptos Seascape GC prior to his move. Both are American Golf managed facilities . . . Campbell Turner has left El Macero CC in Davis to take the Superintendent position at Riverview CC in Redding . . . Leon Snethen has left Saratoga CC to work with Farwest Turf Products in Benicia. He is filling the position vacated by Ron Seibel, who is now working with Sierra Pacific Turf Supply . . . A December storm update brings Presidio Golf Course into the news. The winds were so severe that they win the prize of most damage. Over 150 trees fell down not to mention countless limbs. Nine holes were opened within one week after the storm and the other nine within one more week . . . Long time member Al Mooser has decided to retire as Superintendent at Manteca GC. His long career included stops at Crystal Springs GC, Hidden Valley Lake CC and San Luis Obispo CC

Attention Affiliate Members

The Annual Meeting is nearly here. The Affiliate Membership will be electing a new Affiliate Representative to the Board of Directors. This elected position is a two (2) year term. This is your opportunity to become more involved as a liaison person between the Board and other Affiliates. The responsibilities include but are not limited to attending Board Meetings and managing the Annual Scholarship Golf Tournament.

The election will be held at Peacock Gap Golf and Country Club on April 25th. Three Affiliate Members have already expressed interest in serving on the Board. If you wish to run, please contact Bob Whittaker or Mike Ligon. Nominations will be accepted from the floor.

Please make time to attend the Annual Meeting and cast your vote.

Shasta Cascade GCSA Needs Your Support!

The SCGCSA and American Golf are sponsoring a golf tournament to generate funds to help Gary Clayton and his family with their ever increasing medical costs. Gary was the Founding President of the SCGCSA and has been battling cancer for over 5 years. Gary is taking time off from work to intensify his efforts to beat this disease. The tournament is scheduled to be held at the Golf Club at Tierra Oaks on February 26.

Please phone Dan Kowall — 916-275-0725 or Tom Jefferson — 916-926-0625 to find out how you can help or to enter a team. Thank you.

Scholarship Committee Report

By: Roger Martinez

The Scholarship Committee, comprised of Roger Martinez, chairman, Wayne Lindelof, Gary Carls, CGCS, and John Holmquest is proud to announce this year's scholarship recipients. The choices again this year were difficult due to many outstanding applicants, but they did come up with nine winners. The President's Award Scholarship goes to Jason Lee Green. Jason is a junior at Cal Poly, SLO and will be graduating in 1997.

The other winners are:

Stephen Leas, U.C. Davis
Zach Martin, Butte College
Keven James Reguera, Cal Poly, SLO
Dale Engman, Cal Poly, SLO
Donna Burris, American River College
Thomas March, Cal Poly, SLO
Trent Barr, Cal Poly, Pomona
Valerie Fricken, Cal Poly, SLO

The committee wishes to thank all the applicants, and encourage them to reapply next year.



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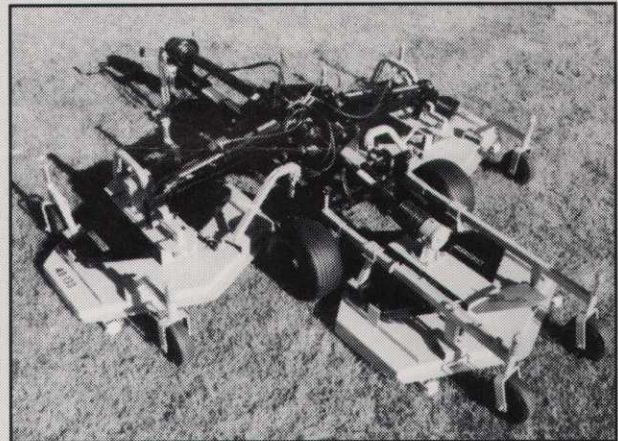
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Strictly Business

Bob Costa

One of the frequent criticisms of Golf Course Superintendents is their failure to fully understand the business aspects of golf course operations. Superintendents have gained a reputation as spenders, and as a result, their requests for new equipment, capital improvements, and additional labor have often been met with scrutiny. Conversely, it's not uncommon to hear a superintendent grumble, "they want better playing conditions, but they never seem to want to pay for it."

Having been exposed to public golf for nearly twelve years, the last several as a manager of superintendents, I have had the opportunity to view this long standing controversy from both perspectives.

When I was actively superintending, I was as guilty as anyone of showing up to work each day with blinders on. My first priority was the condition of the golf course, I just assumed the business was profitable.

Over the last several years I began to realize that the way you pay for labor, new equipment and capital projects such as, irrigation systems, cart paths and new greens, is with the

money generated from profit. An argument could, and often is made by those involved in golf course maintenance that a courses ability to be profitable is directly related to the quality of the product, "let me spend more so we can make more," they say.

As a result, the "I need to spend more, why can't you spend less?" battle rages on. The fact of the matter is, there lies wisdom in both approaches to generating profit. In this highly competitive marketplace to attract and retain customers you have to provide a product that provides both quality and value. If you don't your customers will go elsewhere, where they're sure to find it. The challenge is to continuously improve product quality, while generating sufficient profit to pay for additional labor and capital improvements.

Superintendents, particularly those at public facilities, need to periodically remind themselves that although your responsibilities lie primarily in providing the finest playing conditions possible, the bottom line, as in any business for profit, is what counts.

Occasionally, you may have
(Continued on Page 7, Col. 3)

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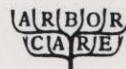
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GCSAA Provides Host of Services

Increasing your technical knowledge and level of professionalism are two key ingredients for a successful career as a Golf Course Superintendent. GCSAA can help. As a member, a wide range of educational opportunities and services are available to assist you in your professional development. Many of these programs are highlighted in the **1995-1996 Professional Development Catalog** which was distributed to all members this fall. Here's a quick rundown of some of those programs:

Career Development — A wide variety of materials are available including a job referral service and employment resource kit. The resource kit includes five booklets which take you step by step through the entire employment process.

Technical Information Services — TIS provides a wide assortment of prepackaged materials that provide information on some of the common issues facing superintendents. Also available, are a large assortment of video materials that can be rented or purchased for use in training, safety programs or, for self improvement instruction.

Public Relations and Media Services/Public Affairs

— These two departments can provide assistance in the development of a public relations campaign, guidance in media relations, and tools for communication with the golfing public.

Seminars — Education seminars are available nationally, regionally and through correspondence courses. Participation can expand your knowledge of the industry and sharpen your business management skills. The Technician Training Program also has been developed to provide a fundamental level of instruction for Assistant Superintendents, Golf Course Mechanics and Spray Technicians.

Certification — The Certification program offers superintendents an opportunity to attain recognition for achieving high standards of professional excellence.

Those of you who are members, or those who are contemplating membership, are urged to take advantage of these and many other services which are available. For more information consult your Professional Development Catalog, or contact the GCSAA headquarters at (800) 472-7878.

Some Things Never Change

By: Mike Huck, Agronomist, USGA Green Section

After reading Dr. Alister Mackenzie's book, *The Spirit of St. Andrews*, I was amazed at how many statements and observations he made that are absolutely timeless. He addresses architecture, construction, greenkeeping and playing the game with foresight and complete candor. He really tells it like it is, or was, since the book was written in 1934. I suddenly realized that not much has changed over the sixty years since the book was originally written when I constantly found myself thinking "I have heard this somewhere before."

Mackenzie's comments concerning committees and management hold true to this day. It was his opinion that a permanent green committee should be maintained. He felt that having a permanent committee was the only way continuity could be preserved. Mackenzie stated that when a committee is appointed they will initially make mistakes. He then goes on to say that just as they begin to learn from these mistakes, they resign from office. A new committee is formed that will make even greater mistakes, and so it goes

on. I think, Mackenzie is absolutely right, the most progressive and successful courses we visit have long term committees and management teams. Unfortunately, this case is more often the exception than the rule.

Mackenzie states that committees consisting of doctors, lawyers, engineers and architects recognize the value of mental training and experience in their own professions, but often place little importance on it when it concerns the design and maintenance of their golf course. He noted that committees often have a difficult time paying for "mental labor" such as the services of an architect or consultant, but would not hesitate to spend excessive sums of money for laborers. He infers that if he were hired to oversee a course's construction from the start, his expertise would result in savings that would offset his fee several times. I again agree with Dr. Mackenzie and the same scenario holds true when a good superintendent is hired, versus a lesser qualified individual.

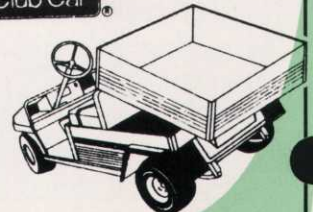
Concerning golf course design and construction Mackenzie stresses one word, this was "finality". He states

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that the goal should always be to do things correctly the first time so that funds will not have to be spent later correcting mistakes. If funds are lacking, he suggests finishing the greens and tees first, because bunkers and fairway irrigation can be installed later. Meanwhile, the golf course can still be used. He points out that it costs more money to correct a poorly designed and built course than it would have cost to have properly constructed it in the first place. Each of us has often used the old cliché, "there is never enough time or money to do things right the first time, but there is always enough time and money to do things over." Finality is a word that should become a part of all of our vocabularies.

Mackenzie felt strong that "specialists" should be hired to engineer irrigation and drainage systems and sent as far as to say "this is an age of specialists". He felt if the architect did not devote all his energies to the design of the course and attempted to design the irrigation and drainage systems, it would be a disservice to the course owners. Mackenzie also saw value in hiring outside consultants for soil analysis and plant selection advice. He understood that local knowledge was key to the success of his projects. Many committees questioned his decision to hire these consultants, he said, citing their hesitations to pay for "trained minds and mental labor."

Regarding greenkeeping, he said that good greenkeepers keep a careful watch on their turf, and have

sleepless nights until they overcome everything that may be the matter with it. He compares turf maintenance to medicine when he said, "the best physicians are those who prescribe poisonous drugs only after most careful consideration." No treatment was required if nature could provide the cure, he felt. He also made the point that there was a lot to learn regarding turfgrass maintenance practices and that more money needed to be dedicated to research. One can hardly argue with any of these statements.

Concerning the game, Dr. Mackenzie thought that the best way to learn and understand the golf swing would be to study the exact sequence of movements each joint within the body makes in the process. Interestingly enough, the USGA is currently conducting biomechanics research and gathering data similar to what Mackenzie suggested. Most importantly he reminds us that "golf is a game and should be played for fun" and "the only reason for the existence of the game is to promote the health, pleasure and even the prosperity of the community." This is something I feel too many people have forgotten.

I think one would agree that each of the cited examples still applies today in some way to our modern golf business. These selected topics only scratch the surface of the many observations and points Mackenzie makes throughout the book. If you have not had the chance to read the *Spirit of St. Andrews*, I highly recommend that you do so. You may even want to recommend it to your committee members. They may not only find it interesting, but educational. It seems true, that some things never do change. ♦

Strictly Business

(Continued)

to make sacrifices like allowing carts on the course under wet conditions, sending employees home on rainy days, reducing your staff size during the slower times of the year, performing some maintenance activities without closing a portion of the course, or maybe just increasing the overall efficiency of your operation.

Don't be disappointed if, in your effort to become more sensitive to the financial health of the business, or after altering your maintenance program to increase profit, you find that you still have to campaign just as aggressively for funds to improve your facility. What you likely to gain, aside from a new piece of equipment, or additional labor, is recognition from your manager or owner, that your skills as a Golf Course Superintendent are multidimensional, thereby, increasing your value as a key member of the Management Team. ♦

GCSAA Joins The Web

When you're in Orlando next week, don't forget to stop in at the GCSAA member services booth to check out the GCSAA Home Page on the Web. This is a prototype of the service that is expected to go on-line by July 1, 1996. Staff members David Bishop and Nancee Torkelson will be demonstrating the use of this system and all the member benefits that will be only a few keystrokes away. **Check it out!**

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