

THRU THE GREEN

February, 1996

The Golf Course Superintendents Association of Northern California



Environment, Affiliate Agreement Highlight General Meeting

By: Bob Costa

Under gray sullen skies, 40 association members gathered at Silvercreek Valley Country Club to participate in the January general meeting. The environment, and the proposed affiliate agreement with GCSAA were the main topics of the afternoon meeting. Each resulted in a lively discussion, and left much to contemplate for the drive home.

Craig Breon, representing the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society, and Julia Bott, from the Loma Prieta chapter of the Sierra Club began the program by discussing their views regarding golf course development and associated management practices. Both Mr. Breon and Ms. Bott were clearly opposed to the location of golf courses on sites that resulted in the major alteration of the landscape. They urged superintendents to make environmental considerations such as creating buffer zones and avoiding stream disruption when involved in construction, or renovation projects.

With regard to existing management practices, they emphasized the need to recycle all green waste, including herbaceous plant material. The composted material, they suggested, could be made available for use on the golf course, or utilized by cities or communities in median areas. Also mentioned was the expanded use of IPM, and projects which provide refuge for raptures, such as bats and owls for rodent control.

Mr. Breon, with some reservation, spoke favorably about the New York State Audubon Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses, endorsing most of their programs and recommendations designed for golf courses. He suggested that useful information could also be obtained through local chapters of the Native Plant Society, Sierra Club and Audubon Society.

Other environmental projects offered by Ms. Bott included the use of native plant species in non-playable areas, the benefit being a reduction in the use of pesticides and fertilizers and an increase of species diversity.

Several in attendance pointed out the willingness of superintendents to act responsibly with regard to the environment and highlighted various projects they have undertaken. Others were anxious to begin projects and were searching for guidance and information to get started.

Both Mr. Breon and Ms. Bott invited superintendents to contact them if they could be of future assistance and emphasized the need for golf course operators and superintendents to establish dialogue with environmental groups well before undertaking a new project or major renovation. For those interested in more information, Ms. Bott can be contacted at (415) 390-8414. Mr. Breon can be reached at (408) 252-3748.

After a brief intermission, Leon Snethen, who recently resigned his post as Vice President, spoke to the group on the proposed GCSAA affiliate agreement. Leon, who attended the Chapter Relations meeting in September, pointed out that the primary purpose of the proposed agreement is to unify the relationship between GCSAA and local chapters, allowing GCSAA to be the voice of the majority of golf course superintendents nationwide. One of the major requirements of the affiliation agreement is dual membership. Beginning on July 1, 1997 all Superintendents and Assistant Superintendents who wish to become NEW affiliated chapter members or, members of the GCSAA would be required to join both organizations. Other requirements our chapter would face, Leon stated, would be minor bylaws changes and additional annual reporting.

GCSANC President, Rich Lavine followed Leon's presentation with a summary of the various GCSAA bylaw amendments which will be put to vote at the annual meeting in February. In essence, Rich explained, if the amended GCSAA bylaws, are passed at the February meeting, GCSANC members will be faced with the decision to amend their bylaws in April, at the annual meeting, and consent to sign the new affiliate agreement, or disassociate themselves with GCSAA. Rich concluded the general meeting by encouraging those who had questions, or comments to contact him.

The meeting adjourned and moved upstairs to cocktails and an excellent dinner capped with raspberry cheesecake. Sincere thanks and appreciation is due to Nick Checklenis, the host superintendent, the staff at Silvercreek Valley Country Club and to those who attended. Each contributed greatly to the success of the meeting.

Thru The Green

From the President	2
Positions Open	3
Naumann's NorCal News	4
Scholarship Committee Report	4
Strictly Business	5
GCSAA Services	6
Some Things Never Change	6
Want Ads - Help Wanted - NorCalendar	8