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Pasatiempo #13

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May/June, 2010

By this time, you are all engaged in the business of golf course maintenance. Hopefully the weather hasn't upset maintenance schedules too much; it's been an odd year in Northern California.

If you haven't already done so, please visit the web site: www.gcsanc.com. Now available are printable Adobe PDF directory files in three different categories: Company, Last Name and Membership Classification. We are in the process of creating a new online directory using the "NXTbook" media. This is same media format used in Thru the Green. Since the old directory format is so popular, we decided to investigate the "flip page" style. More importantly for lot of you, it will be printable to ride along in your car while you travel the roads of California.

The membership renewal period for 2010 has been completed. A small number of 2009 members are not with us this year. Most lapsed as a result of job relocation, unfortunately some due to job losses. We are looking forward to the return of these members in the future.

There are lots of interesting and challenging events this year in the California golf industry. In this issue of *Thru the Green*, you will see mention of the California Alliance for Golf meeting. Another golf industry meeting was called at the invitation of Lyn Nelson, CEO of NCGA. It brought together association executives and volunteer leaders representing Northern California allied industries. For a full day the discussion updated the state of the golf industry in Northern California. GCSANC President Thomas Bastis, CGCS and I attended the meeting at Poppy Hills. It involved economic, environmental and social impacts and "good of the game" issues. This first of its kind meeting was a constructive introduction to many of the other "faces" in Northern California Golf.

NAUMANN'S NORCAL NEWS



DON NAUMANN

Dennis Orsborn has accepted the superintendent position at the Las Positas Golf Course in Livermore. He is replacing **Moody Aye** who has moved to another position within CourseCo. Dennis is a 25+ year superintendent coming to N. California after considerable experience in the Palm Springs area. Las Positas GC is owned by the City of Livermore where **Jeff Shafer** is the Director of Golf.....

Scott Carrier is the new superintendent at Foxtail Golf Course in Rohnert Park. Scott was with Eagle Golf overseeing over sixty courses in Texas. It is a return trip for Scott as he had been superintendent at San Geronimo GC prior to his move to Texas.....**John Jorgensen** is the new superintendent at Lone Tree GC in Antioch. John is replacing **Wayne Lindelof, CGCS** who has moved on to a Federal Government position at Fort Mason in San Francisco.....



MAY 6

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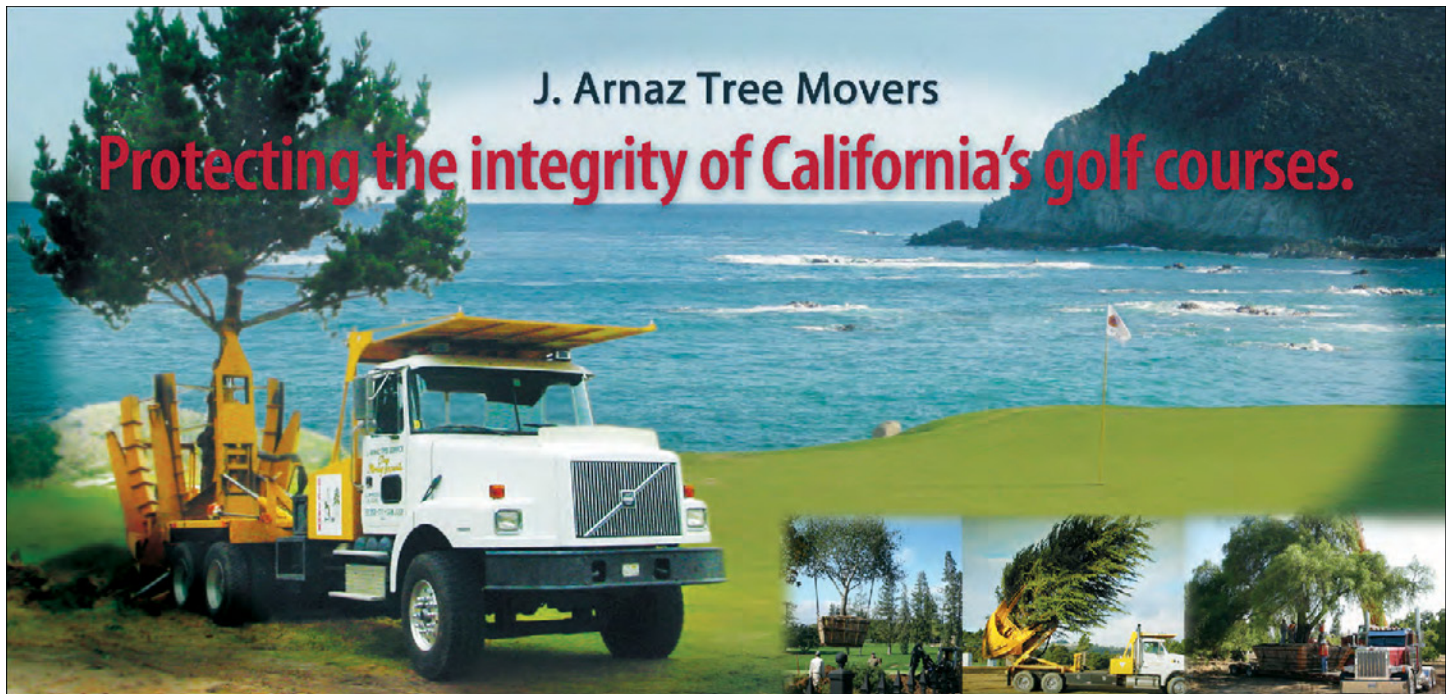
Is the excitement back in the game of golf? With the awesomeness of the Masters, Tiger's return, and the U.S. Open at Pebble Beach (free entrance with your GCSAA gold card); golf is definitely in the air. But, are we back? I recently attended a "pulse check" at the NCGA headquarters asking just that question...are we back? The question seemed answerable, but only to a point. Everyone is doing their best staying afloat but it seems each organization is going in different directions. We are fractured and not united in our message towards getting new golfers, environmental advocacy and political lobbying. When you think about the USGA, PGA, CMAA, NCGOA, NCGA each spreading their own individual gospel, it makes sense to combine our efforts. Should we rely upon our own California GCSA and the \$3600 we annually give to continue marching to the beat of our own drum or does some sort of alliance seem like a better option? I can say that there is a potential alliance out there in the California Alliance for Golf (CAG). CAG first made its mark by organizing the fight against the "Tax on Golf" bill and its ultimate defeat. Currently, the Alliance is reorganizing and seeking our help in the future for potentially bigger and greater causes. We will have a better idea where they are heading in the upcoming months. I would be interested in your thoughts on the matter.

As far as our group goes, we have some great events and programs coming down the pipeline. The Superintendent Field Day at Pasatiempo May 6 will definitely give course superintendents a few tools to sharpen their water management skills. The program highlights turf reduction and construction techniques, design considerations, grass selection for naturalized areas, and tree impacts from drought and reclaimed water use. Then next month, the Superintendent/Pro Tournament is scheduled at Silver Creek on June 21. Check your calendars and get your Pro on the list for some spirited competition.

In research news, we just engaged Dr. Jim Baird from UC Riverside to conduct a 2-3 year study on Experimental and Commercially Available Herbicides and Plant Growth Regulators for Selective Control of Annual Bluegrass in Creeping Bentgrass Putting Greens in Northern California. He will also study Optimizing Weed Management in Naturalized Areas on Northern California Golf Courses. Look for updates on this research in the future.

Here's to the start of a great season and continued rain.

Thomas



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Cypress Point Club and Mackenzie's Bunkering

A Little Tidbit from the Field BY AKONI GANIR



One of my favorite things about Cypress Point is the design of Mackenzie's camouflage bunkering. From tee to green his bunkering masterfully shapes the holes and disguises the perception of landing areas. When you look back from green to tee those same bunkers play a disappearing act and blend into the terrain of the golf course. They are so well hidden, that if you're not paying close attention you could easily drive into one when driving from green to tee. Every once in awhile, I'm suddenly forced to do a brake check to keep from accidentally rolling my cart into a bunker.

In fact, the following is a true story that occurred during my first season as Assistant. We had just bought a brand new buffalo blower. The same day it was delivered we had one of our more seasoned crewmembers take it out to blow rough clippings. The only thing I remember is looking over from the next hole and seeing a giant white cloud of dust, or what I thought at the time was smoke. My first thought was, "did something just blow up?" When I arrived at the scene, I found that this crewmember had driven his cart and buffalo blower into a bunker while trying to quickly get out of the way of some golfers. Needless to say the blower tipped over onto its side and was blowing an enormous cloud of white bunker sand/dust into the air. Of course, myself and the golfers near by were concerned about the employee and after making sure he wasn't hurt, one of the caddies that witnessed the whole thing looked at me with a blank stare saying, "Did that really just happen?"

A little about me...

First off let me clarify my name as people are always curious why it's so different. My first name, "Akoni" (Uh-coe-nee) is of Hawaiian origin, which translates to Anthony or Tony in English. My last name, "Ganir" (Gun-ear) is of Filipino origin. So to clarify even further I am half Filipino with a Hawaiian first name. I'm from Portland, Oregon and my background in this industry goes back 20+ years to a small family owned landscaping business. When I left home at the ripe age of 18, I told myself I'd never push a mower for money again. About

6 years later I graduated from Oregon State with a Turf & Landscape degree. When I finished school I went to work at Cypress Point Club as an NCGA Intern. I've been very fortunate to move up since being here and am now entering my fourth season as Assistant Superintendent under the mentoring of one of the finest superintendents: Mr. Jeff Markow, CGCS.

The accompanying pictures are of the 5th hole at Cypress Point. The first picture was taken from the beginning of the fairway looking towards the green. The second picture was taken from behind the green looking back.



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California GCSA Government Relations News

BY JIM HUSTING, CGCS

This is our first article (in hopefully a series!) updating the Nor Cal membership to the government relations work we are involved with for the California GCSA. I will start this series off for now, but eventually someone else will continue on following in my footsteps.

Currently, the California GCSA has formed a “new” Government Relations Committee as I am about to officially resign my chairmanship of some 13 years. The Government Relations Committee is currently composed of me, Jim Ferrin, CGCS, Kevin Breen, CGCS, Jim Alwine, Kevin Friesen, CGCS, Rafael Barrajas, CGCS, and Stuart Rowland. Most all of the six California GCSA chapters are represented and as the process moves forward I am quite confident that these individuals will do a great job.

The California GCSAA Government Relations Committee monitors legislation emanating out of Sacramento and also responds to the different regulatory agencies that affect our profession. We work closely with lobbyist George Steffes and Dennis Loper of Capitol Partners. George has been advising us on the different issues over the years, and now Dennis is eventually going to take over George’s role. Both George and Dennis are golf enthusiasts. Their love of the game has brought them to us and vice versa. Our relationship is one of mutual respect and I have had the pleasure to see George in action on our behalf many times. This relationship that we have is quite unique in that there are not many GCSAA chapters that even have a lobbyist. The California GCSA realizes this and will continue to benefit from this relationship as the years progress. Quite frankly, and I am a bit prejudiced, but it is the most important benefit that the local state chapters receive from the state organization. Without us, you would go it alone in the government relations arena.

Currently, we are monitoring some 40 bills that have been introduced this year in Sacramento. They range from pesticide usage, to water usage and reporting as well as a myriad of others. This includes just about anything that we feel our membership and profession needs to know. The bills are generated by Susie Steffes, George’s daughter, from a system that we formed some 13 years ago with the appropriate buzzwords. From there, legislation is

reviewed and the committee decides which bills to monitor and watch as they migrate from the various committees and legislative chambers. If there is a particular bill or regulation we feel needs to be announced, the CGCSA Government Relations Network sends out an e-mail notice to all those members on the Network. Many of you are on that Network and do receive those notices. Currently the Network numbers well over 400 industry members from all around the state, so notices do get out there. This is a “grassroots” network and sometimes it requires a response. Legislators do take notice when one of their constituents responds to an issue...so yes; you do and can make a difference.

We are also monitoring very closely, and have responded to a California DPR proposed new regulation concerning pesticide applications near surface waters of the State. This one is a biggy! The California GCSA, with the help of GCSAA, drafted a response to this proposal and we actually got a personal audience with the officials from DPR about these proposed regulations. There may not be anything we can do about these proposed regulations, but at least they now know who we are. The CGCSA GR Committee will continue to respond to DPR as the regulations have not been officially adopted yet. If they are adopted, look for some very strict restrictions on certain pesticides that golf courses are currently using. These would most certainly include some type of “buffer zones” along waterways, which the DPR interprets as any stream, river, pond, lake, ditch etc.etc.

Well, I hope I have not been too boring in this first California GCSA GR Update! It has been too long since I have written anything to inform this chapter on just what I have been doing these past 13 years. I apologize for that. I am excited however, that what has been established in the past will continue on into the future. The individuals that have volunteered to carry on the CGCSA GR Committee and Network are fine professionals and individuals! We will continue on in the government relations arena to represent our profession in the best way possible. Until next article, stay involved and be vigilant!



Sierra Pacific Expands Rain Bird Coverage

As of March 15, 2010, Sierra Pacific Turf Supply has become the authorized Rain Bird Golf Irrigation distributor for the northern San Joaquin Valley to the Oregon border, including Lake Tahoe and the northern Nevada markets. To service this new territory, Kelly Kerr has joined the Sierra Pacific golf irrigation team to provide service in these areas. Kelly has over 20 years experience in the golf irrigation industry. Along with Tom Jackson, Golf Sales Manager, and Rick Visser, Technical Support and Service in northwestern California, Kelly Kerr is part of a team with nearly 60 years of golf irrigation experience. Sierra Pacific still remains the coastal distributor for Rain Bird Golf Irrigation from Monterey County to the Oregon border.

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The Environmental Institute For Golf Fosters Golf's Greener Side

Golf courses offer not just a beautiful place to engage in a family friendly sport, but a variety of benefits to almost any community—economically, environmentally and recreationally.

Committed to strengthening the compatibility of the game of golf with the natural environment, The Environmental Institute for Golf (EIFG) is a collaborative effort of the environmental and golf communities and provides programs and services for all who come in contact with the game of golf. The EIFG is the philanthropic organization of GCSAA.

World Golf Hall of Fame Member Greg Norman serves as chairman of The EIFG's Advisory Council. "I think the unsung heroes in all this are the superintendents," Norman said. "They're responsible to the local environment. That's why I became involved in The Environmental Institute for Golf."

The groundwork for the EIFG began more than 50 years ago as GCSAA's Scholarship and Research Fund, but has evolved in both name and purpose to meet the changing demands of the golf course industry. Throughout the decades, the EIFG's accomplishments have included:

- **Funding of applied scientific research projects.**
- **Continuing education curriculum in delivering practical information to advance the knowledge, skills and abilities of golf course superintendents to manage golf facilities in an environmentally-friendly manner.**
- **Information, tools and resources to continuously advance environmental stewardship practices.**
- **Annual scholarships to students to advance their knowledge of golf course management, as well as assist children and grandchildren of GCSAA members who are seeking higher education.**

Although The EIFG has a rich history, it continues to look toward the future. In 2006 and with funding provided by The Toro Giving Program, it launched the Golf Course Environmental Profile. This multi-year project collected information from superintendents about their courses to determine the physical features found on golf courses, practices used by superintendents to maintain golf courses, and inputs and outputs associated with management of golf courses.

This collection of data will serve as the basis for "sustainability" within golf by providing the means to measure continuous improvement and provide data to guide industry environmental efforts. The data will provide the means for individual facilities to identify and make improvements, as well as to communicate golf's values within their communities. GCSAA has and will use the data to define the competencies necessary for a superintendent to be successful and then design education programs to support the competencies.

But what do all this environmental information, research and support mean to the golfer and the communities in which they live?

"There is so much tremendous value in the green space that we deliver with these golf courses," Norman, CEO of Great White Shark Enterprises, said. "So I am saddened in many ways when people don't understand that because, at the end of the day, the impact that we generate for the community is tremendous."

With a focus on continual improvement, The EIFG is leading a program that will provide the golf industry with a sustainable approach to golf facility management—"Golf's Drive Toward Sustainability."

Sustainability in golf is about ensuring profitable operations while making decisions that are in the long-term interest of the environment and communities. The aim is to continue to make improvement through professionally managing and conserving resources and inputs, and reducing waste, while providing playing conditions that satisfy today's golfers and will appeal to tomorrow's golfers. The three most pressing issues facing golf facilities today are water conservation, water quality protection and energy conservation. The program's tools and resources will concentrate on these areas.

Backed by the golf industry through the support of the World Golf Foundation, "Golf's Drive Toward Sustainability" builds upon the success the industry has enjoyed and provides resources to improve performance in the future. The objective is to facilitate collaboration among associations and organizations to build a toolbox of resources that will be available to facilities to strive toward sustainability.

A menu of resources will be developed for the entire golf facility to use to demonstrate continuous improvement. The cornerstone will be a comprehensive list of best management practices (BMPs) that will prompt the creation of new tools and support existing programs.

WGF chief executive officer Steve Mona applauded the direction of the program and congratulated those associations and organizations who have committed to it. "This program and its wide support base are vital to the continued health of the golf industry," Mona said. "Golf is not unlike any other industry in that government, the media, special interest groups and the general public are casting a more critical eye. This program will validate where we are making progress and identify what actions are needed."

GCSAA CEO Mark J. Woodward, CGCS, noted the strength of the program is its systematic approach. "We sought and achieved widespread support to keep this from being seen as a program for only the golf course. Second, the profile project gave us a body of data that was previously non-existent. We then established competencies for superintendents with an environmental focus and have developed education to support them. Next, we will roll out the BMPs later this year that will allow all components of golf facilities to demonstrate and document progress. This all sets the stage for the golf industry to better advocate and position itself as one that is committed to continuous improvement."

For more information about The Environmental Institute for Golf, the Golf Course Environmental Profile, "Golf's Drive Toward Sustainability," or to show your support, visit www.eifg.org.



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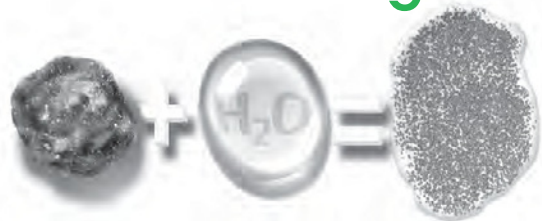


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Discovery in Legumes Could Reduce Fertilizer Use, Aid Environment, Say Stanford Researchers

Escalating use of nitrogen fertilizer is increasing algal blooms and global warming, but a discovery by Stanford researchers could begin to reverse that. They have revealed a key step in how symbiotic bacteria living in legumes turn nitrogen into plant food, which could be used to improve the process in some plants, reducing the need for chemical fertilizers.

BY LOUIS BERGERON

Nitrogen is vital for all plant life, but increasingly the planet is paying a heavy price for the escalating use of nitrogen fertilizer.

Excess nitrogen from fertilizer runoff into rivers and lakes causes algal blooms that create oxygen-depleted dead zones, such as the 6,000 to 7,000 square mile zone in the Gulf of Mexico, and nitrogen in the form of nitrous oxide is a potent greenhouse gas.

But new findings by Stanford researchers that reveal the inner workings of nitrogen-producing bacteria living inside legumes such as soybeans could enable researchers to blunt those negative effects and aid efforts to make agriculture more sustainable.

“We have discovered a new biological process, by which leguminous plants control behavior of symbiotic bacteria,” said molecular biologist Sharon Long. “These plants have a specialized protein processing system that generates specific protein signals. These were hitherto unknown, but it turns out they are critical to cause nitrogen fixation.”

The ability of legumes to capture nitrogen from the air and turn it into plant food, or “fix” it, also leaves the soil enriched through the plant matter left after harvesting, creating a natural fertilizer for other crops, which is the basis for crop rotation. Alternating legumes with other crops has been a major component of agriculture around the world for thousands of years. Yet until recently, little was known about how nitrogen fixation worked, or why some legumes are efficient at fixing nitrogen and others poor.

The key part of the process that Long’s research group uncovered is a plant gene that triggers a critical chemical signal. Without the signal, no nitrogen gets fixed by the bacteria. Dong Wang, a post-doctoral scholar in Long’s lab who pinned down the gene, is first author of a paper describing the work, published February 26 in *Science*. Long, a professor of biology, is senior author.

Do-it-yourself nitrogen fixing

The beneficial bacteria in question reside inside the nodules of legumes such as peas, beans, alfalfa and clover, where they pluck molecules of nitrogen from air in the soil and turn it into ammonia, which feeds the plant. It sounds simple, but it is a complicated and poorly understood process. Only bacteria that contain a special enzyme are capable of this sort of “nitrogen fixing” using airborne nitrogen—no other type of living organism can do it. All other plants have to get their nutrients from using already fixed nitrogen in the soil.

Stanford molecular biologist Sharon Long’s discovery could reduce the need for harmful chemical fertilizers.

This special ability allows legumes to flourish in nitrogen-poor soils, whereas other plants require applications of manufactured nitrogen fertilizer to grow well. But even legumes can’t flourish without the right symbiotic bacteria.



Sharon Long

PHOTO: LINDA A. CICERO / STANFORD NEWS SERVICE

“When you deal with a natural soil, you are dealing with a lot of complexity. Everything we learn about what makes symbiosis work gives us a tool to understand why, sometimes, symbiosis fails.” Long said. “Plant breeders who are trying to help develop better-adapted plants can now analyze traits such as this. We’ve given them a new tool.”

The more efficient that legumes can be made and the wider the range of environments they can thrive in, the more they can help reduce the need for chemical nitrogen that runs off into water or sinks into the groundwater or decomposes into a gaseous form, Long said.

The gene’s the thing

The legume that Long’s team worked with is called barrel medic, a forage plant similar to alfalfa. They tracked down the newly discovered gene by studying mutant plants that were failing to produce healthy nodules on their roots.

While bacteria inside normal nodules will thrive, in the defective nodules of this plant those bacteria can’t provide the benefit they are wired to deliver. Long said that the mutant “contained perfectly good bacteria, but was making these lousy nodules.”

Wang found that the mutant plants generated the proper precursor to the protein needed to nudge the bacteria into fixing nitrogen. But the critical enzyme for processing that precursor into the final signal was missing. So the bacteria simply sat, the nodules didn’t develop, and no nitrogen was fixed.

By comparing the genome of the mutant plants with normal plants, the group found a gene that was missing from the mutants. Suspect-