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## @GCSANC?

To even better serve its members, the Golf Course Superintendent's Association of Northern California can now be found on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/gcsanc](http://www.twitter.com/gcsanc). Before you roll your eyes at the thought of twitter, please take a moment to read what it can provide you. What we hope to provide with Twitter are all GCSANC news and events, local Superintendent news and blog updates, and educational info from all parts of the country. Ultimately we want to provide you another resource since you can never have too many.

There is no need to sign up on Twitter so we invite you to take a peak and see the potential it can provide.

**Thru The Green** published bimonthly by the **Golf Course Superintendents Association of Northern California.**

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# OFFICERS & DIRECTORS 2012

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The association office is always busy this time of the year. We are finalizing renewals and preparing for the GCSAA Conference. Also, there are lots of new members to process. That's always good!

I hope all of you are getting some unexpected golf rounds this winter with the unexpectedly nice weather. The USGA Green Section Meeting is well underway at this time and you look forward to a good meeting and some wonderful golf at host club, Ruby Hill Golf Club. This will be a "first meeting" for Nor Cal at Ruby Hill. Thanks to Steve Agin for the hosting.

We are always looking for content for the web and the newsletter. We have had some great articles by Sean Tully, Meadow Club and look forward to more! If you have an interest or "off hours" hobby why not share it? It is always fun to see "another side" to our

members. You are a varied lot! Please don't feel intimidated or shy. Just sit down and write a short note.

I hope all of you saw the photo of GCSANC, Past President, Vice President, GCSAA Pat Finlen, and CGCS with Clint Eastwood during the California Golf Writers Dinner and the NCGA Awards program in Monterey.

Congratulations to Tim Powers, CGCS, GCSANC Secretary Treasurer, for his Environmental Leaders in Golf Award. Tim and CourseCo's work at Crystal Springs are a shining example of golf and the environment coexisting peacefully and positively.

Sharp Park continues to have solid support in San Mateo. San Mateo County Supervisors unanimously adopted a Resolution Jan. 24, 2011, directing the County Manager to negotiate with San Francisco to preserve Sharp Park Golf Course. Hopefully, this issue can be resolved before the court date.

## TWENTY-FIVE YEAR PIN RECIPIENTS



Terry Grasso, Sequoyah Country Club; Don Paul, Diablo Golf Course; Joe Faulkner, San Francisco Parks and Recreation, Retired.

**APRIL 2**  
**Superintendent Field Day**  
*Olympic Club*

**MAY 14**  
**NCPGA/GCSNC/CMAA Official Pro-Am Presented by E-Z-Go**  
*Rancho Murrieta Country Club*

**JUNE 11-17**  
**U.S. Open**  
*Olympic Club*

**JULY 2**  
**Wagoner Scholarship & Research Tournament**  
*Sonoma Golf Club*

**AUGUST 13**  
**Tri Chapter Meeting**  
*TPC Stonebrae*

**OCTOBER-NOVEMBER**  
**Superintendents Institute**

**DECEMBER 7**  
**Holiday Golf and Dinner**  
*Del Monte Golf Course*

*More Details?*  
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## NEW MEMBERS!

**Frank Johnson**  
Tayman Park Golf Group  
*Associate*

**Kevin Breen**  
La Rinconada  
*Class A Superintendent*

**Matt Coombs**  
The Preserve Golf Club  
*Class C Assistant Superintendent*

**Timothy Greenwald**  
*Class A Life*

**Lou Tonelli**  
*Class A Life*





# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE By Rodney Muller



## *Improvise, Adapt and Overcome*

Like many of you who read the golf publications that appear in our mailboxes, I am also seeing more articles on the *state of our business*. The common theme that runs throughout each of them is *improvise, adapt and overcome*. Well, my friends, that happens to be the unofficial mantra of the Marine

Corps—a mantra that is based on the fact that the Corps once received Army hand-me-downs and the troops were poorly equipped. Despite the limitations, the Marine Corps has been effective primarily due to the creativity of its people and its success-based attitude.

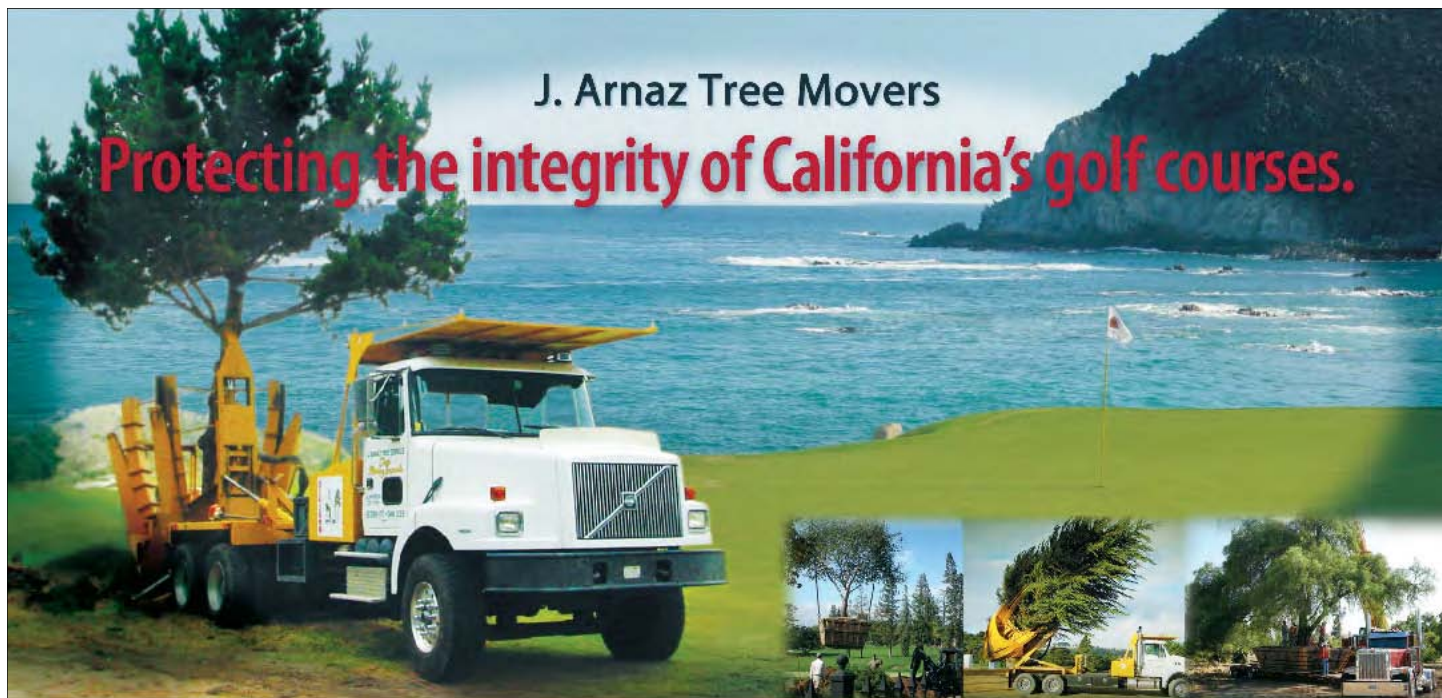
**IMPROVISE:** As superintendents we tackle budget cuts, prolong years of equipment service and face environmental pressures so 'improvise, adapt and overcome' has become a component of our business model. This model is nothing new, but has only been amplified over the past decade or so. It is our success-based attitude and creativity that keeps us moving forward in these fluctuating times. For instance, Mr. Paul Chojnacky demonstrated vision and creativity and put Pasatiempo out front as winner of the Herb Graffis Business Person of the Year by *Golfdom* magazine. I encourage you to read the story, "The Guy's Got Guts (and Goats!)" as it is a great illustration of the importance of improvising in our industry.

**ADAPT:** Congratulations to Tim Powers, CGCS at Crystal Springs GC, for bringing home the top spot in the 2011 Environmental

Leaders in Golf Awards. I am always amazed at the recipients of the ELGAs because I believe they showcase how creative superintendents are. ELGA winners are *out front people* steering the business of golf in a positive direction; a direction that allows youth and non-golfers to become involved with the sport by learning the value golf can provide nature. Tim adapted his entire maintenance operation to Audubon certification standards and is sustaining those efforts according to his prestigious award.

**OVERCOME:** The effort to overcome and Save Sharp Park from the anti-golf groups will be a short-lived victory if we rest on our achievement. We owe so much to Richard Harris, Bo Links and the California Golf Alliance for taking on such a task. If for some reason the community of Pacifica and city of San Francisco did not prevail, we too would feel the repercussions on our business. I would contend that the anti-golf group has their work cut out for them. Sharp Park has everything going for it; design, community, affordable public golf, environmental stewardship and most importantly, people who are willing to fight for golf.

Let me wrap this up by saying superintendents don't always have the best of circumstances, the ideal piece of equipment or enough funding to do the job at hand. Despite our limitations, we have a creative ability to drive our business, create a place of enjoyment and provide recreation for many. Improvise, adapt and overcome—it's a mantra that we can all learn from...or live by.



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# BOARD UPDATE



LEFT: Recently elected GCSANC Board Members are (L to R) Brian Boyer (Cinnabar Hills GC), Assistant Representative David Procter (Ruby Hill GC) and Jim Abate (PGA TOUR at Harding Park GC). RIGHT: Incoming President Rodney Muller presents outgoing President & Annual Meeting Host Glenn Mathews with appreciation plaque for his dedicated service to the association.

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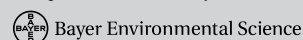
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# AFFILIATE PROFILE



**Name:** Jeff Roberts

**Employer:** Sierra Pacific Turf Supply

**Position:** Outside sales

**Years in the Business:** 30 years

**Previous Employment:** Golf Course Superintendent

**Education:** B.S., Ornamental Horticulture, Chico State

**Family:** Fiancée, Katie, and dog, Kayos.

**What was the first car you ever owned?** 1977 Plymouth Duster

**How fast did you drive it?** Sold it before I got my license.

**What is your favorite band?** Green Day

**How did you get into the business?** Setting up softball fields for the Chico Area Rec. Dept., then worked cutting out cartpaths with a sodcutter at Butte Creek Country Club. Only got to about 110 in Chico that summer.

**What did you learn that they never taught you in college?** Nothing they taught you in management classes works for a maintenance crew.

**Please list your fantasy foursome:** Carl Hiaasen, Scott McNealy, John Feinstein

**What is #1 on your bucket list?** U.S. Open Tennis or Kentucky Derby

**What's the best bit of professional advice ever tossed your way?** Only 25% of a superintendent's job is growing grass... didn't believe it but...

**What accomplishment are you most proud of?** College degree

**What's your favorite restaurant?** Fandango

**Beer or wine?** Raised in Chico...Sierra Nevada Torpedo...although Kings Mountain Pinot Noir 2007 is pretty hard not to drink.

**Favorite course to play:** Top 5: Bandon Dunes, Butler National, Spyglass Hill, Carnoustie, Old Course

**Ipod top 5:** REM, Green Day, Evita, Bolero-Ravel, Les Miserables

**What's your favorite vacation spot?** Wailea

**Favorite hobby:** Golf

**Strangest thing you've ever seen on a golf course:** While killing the Kikuyu at Pebble Beach, the fairway caught on fire due to a cigar. Gorse bush on fire in middle of the Open Championship at St. Andrews.

**Name your top superintendent influence:** Michael Sauls

**Name your top life influence:** My dad, Homer Metcalf

**Lowest score you ever shot and course:** 59 at Deep Cliff

**Worst comment a superintendent ever made to you (Affiliate):** "I'm happy with my suppliers, you don't need to stop by."

The hardest part of your job: Matching my products to my customers' needs.

**The hardest part of selling to superintendents (Affiliate):** Knowing how much or little they want to see me.

**The most rewarding thing in your job is:** Helping people do their jobs better.

**Few people know I like to:** Read as much as I do.

**If you weren't in the business of growing grass what would you be doing?** Something else outside...fire lookout?

**What's in your garage?** 3 dozen putters, 3 sets of irons, dozen woods, 3 bikes, 2 unicycles, 3 flyrods, skis, skateboards, sails for our boat.

**What's in your closet at home?** Clothes and lots of wide-brimmed golf hats

**What's in your office?** Laptop and golf magazines

**What magazines do you subscribe to?** *GolfWorld*, *GolfWeek*, *Golf Digest*, *The Week*

**Do you collect anything and why?** Putters—you never know when the one you are using will run out of putts.

**Worst piece of equipment ever owned?** PING irons

**Worst place you have ever slept?** Under a stairwell in Salamanca, Spain

**Stupidest thing your wife has asked you to do?** Never been married...ask in a year.

**Closest to death you ever came?** Mallory Weiss syndrome in Scotland....tearing of the esophagus due to an "alcoholic binge" ie.. drink and barf.

**The invention that you thought of but someone else made the million dollars and not you?** Still have mine, may need it if SS is not available...

**Do you expect to collect on social security?** Yes, been paying in for over 30 years.

**What were your favorite activities as a child?** Playing sports in the street with the other neighbor kids. Grew up on a cul de sac. Riding my bike to the park to fish.

# ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT PROFILE



**Name:** Dan James  
**Employer:** The Peninsula Golf and Country Club  
**Position:** Assistant Superintendent  
**Years in the Business:** Golf business: 18; Golf maintenance: 12  
**Previous Employment:** Kauri Cliffs, Matauri Bay, Northland New Zealand... Pebble Beach Company NCGA Intern, Pebble Beach, CA...Oakmont Country

Club, Oakmont, PA...The Olympic Club, San Francisco, CA

**Education:** Cal Poly SLO Horticulture

**GCSANC Work or Interests:** I'm interested in meeting more guys (and hopefully playing more golf) around the area. I don't do enough networking and would like to see what other courses have going on.

**Other Organizations:** GCSAA, NCGA, MLB

**Family:** Wife Sarah, dog Pete, cats Jack and Gus.

**What was the first car you ever owned?** 1985 Volkswagon Vanagon

**How fast did you drive it?** As fast as I could while making sure it didn't rattle apart.

**What is your favorite band?** Pearl Jam

**How did you get into the business?** My introduction to the game was at a young age, caddying for my Dad in numerous NCGA amateur events. I eventually started caddying at Burlingame Country Club in Hillsborough, worked in the Pro Shop at Coyote Point GC, then got my first maintenance job raking bunkers for John Fleming on the Olympic Club Ocean Course.

**What did you learn that they never taught you in college?**

How to load a vicon with 1,000 lbs. of compost out of a 2,000 lb. sack without spilling 500 lbs. on myself and smelling like a cattle farm for the rest of the day.

**Please list your fantasy foursome:** My Dad, Bill Murray, and the Dalai Lama

**What is #1 on your bucket list?** Oktoberfest in Munich...

Playing golf in the Kingdom would work too.

**What's the best bit of professional advice ever tossed your way?** "Anybody can grow grass, cowboy." —Andy Shaffer, the (famed) Olympic Club

**What accomplishment are you most proud of?** We recently completed a bunker renovation here at the PGCC. I was fortunate enough to play a major role in not only the scheduling of the day to day course maintenance but the actual installation of the bunkers themselves. I worked closely with our architect, Ron Forse, to get the lines exactly where he wanted them. Also, I gained great experience working with our contractor Earth Sculptures. Ray Rodriguez from ES taught me volumes about how to do things the right way. There are so many pitfalls in construction!

**What's your favorite restaurant?** The tap room at the Sierra Nevada Brewery

**Beer or wine?** See previous question.

**Favorite course to play:** The Olympic Club Lake Course

**Ipod top 5:** Pearl Jam, Cake, Black Crowes, David Grisman, Bert Bacharach

**What's your favorite vacation spot?** Winter in Yosemite, summer in Tahoe, anytime in Hawaii

**Favorite hobby:** Following the San Francisco Giants...TORTURE!

**Strangest thing you've ever seen on a golf course:** 30 minute fireworks display over our 8th fairways here at PGCC. Our club celebrated its centennial this year and threw a massive party capped off by one of the best fireworks displays I have ever seen. We cleaned up all the shells with a buffalo blower and a Toro sweep-vac. Well worth it.

**Name your top superintendent influences:** Frank Zamazal, John Flemming, Bob Lopic, Tom Huesgen, John Zimmers, Jeff Steen, Jack Holt, Bob Yeo, Michael Phillips, Pat Finlen, and Geoff Plovonich.

**Name your top life influences:** Mom and Dad. No one else comes close.

**Lowest score you ever shot and course:** Even par at Franklin Canyon

**The hardest part of your job:** Pleasing all the different groups at a private club. Additionally, the toughest part of pleasing everyone is when you know someone might not be your biggest fan, but saying hello and engaging them anyway.

**The most rewarding thing in your job is:** Seeing hard work pay off in a finished product whether it's a strong stand of turf or a new bunker.

**Few people know I like to:** Participate in Tough Mudder. Look it up, it's a great experience. You might wonder why I would pay to put myself through a meat grinder, but you have to understand, I'm a Giants fan.

**If you weren't in the business of growing grass what would you be doing?** I would probably be an accountant. I've never met a poor accountant.

**What's in your office?** Other than the usual golf related items... a kennel for Pete, a box of protein bars, and a pile of dishes I need to take back to the clubhouse.

**What magazines do you subscribe to?** *Baseball Digest*, *Cooks Illustrated*, and *The New Yorker*

**Do you collect anything, and why?** I'm collecting more and more gray hair from a combination of long summers, co-workers who forget things I've told them one hundred times, my wife, and the Giants.

**Worst piece of equipment ever owned?** My wife's 2000 Oldsmobile Alero. She inherited it from her great aunt and I can't wait to get rid of it. Only 50k miles if anyone's interested. It hasn't broken down ever, but I just get that feeling. I never drive it. [djames@thpgcc.org](mailto:djames@thpgcc.org)

**Worst place you have ever slept?** In a rat-hole of a hostel in Venice. We had an early flight home and planned on sleeping in the terminal to save money only to find out the terminal closed overnight. We needed a night of cheap housing and obviously chose wrong. I've been in cleaner gas-station restrooms. My wife slept fully clothed.

**Stupidest thing your wife has asked you to do?** She asked me to be quieter when I eat cereal. Seriously.

**Do you expect to collect on social security?** Yes. Big brother will take care of us all.





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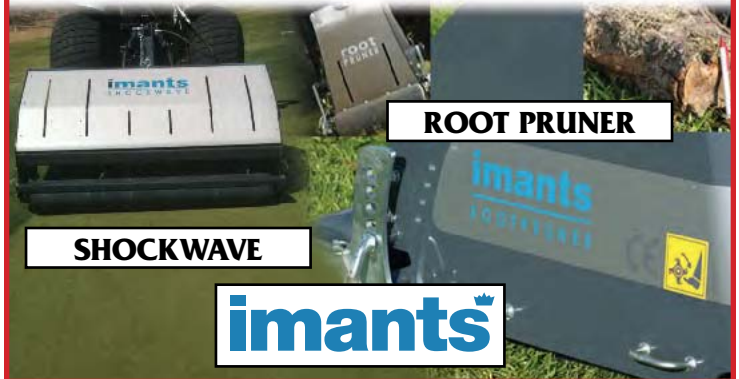


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## GCSANC Turfgrass Award

The GCSANC Turfgrass Excellence Award is presented to an individual for their high level of achievement as they uphold quality standards in turfgrass maintenance. Award criteria take into consideration: overall course condition, conservation and environmental factors, course activity, and maintenance budget.

### GCSANC Excellence in Turfgrass Management at a Public Facility



**Abelardo "LaLo" Pacheco**  
*Rancho Solano Golf Course*  
*Fairfield*

Prior to his current assignment as golf course superintendent at Rancho Solano Golf Course, Abelardo "Lalo" Pacheco gained plenty of experience during his 14-year tenure at Franklin Canyon Golf Course, first as an assistant and later advancing to golf course superintendent.

Today, he oversees the Baird-designed Rancho Solano Golf Course in Fairfield, CA, which is well known for its manicured fairways and large, tiered greens. This par-72 course, which spans 6,705 yards from the longest tees, receives accolades from golfers about its fine condition and meticulously maintained greens.

Lalo's work philosophy is simple: maintain the course as if it were your own. He insists his staff takes great pride in its work. He also

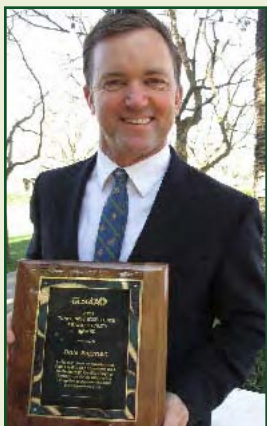
encourages them to play golf and is convinced that crew members who play the game have a better understanding of customer needs.

According to Lalo, Rancho Solano and neighboring Paradise Valley Golf Course (which he also oversees) are both committed to environmental excellence and are participants in Kemper Sports "Green to a Tee" initiative. This program focuses on best practices in recycling, water and energy conservation, habitat management plus staff education and training.

Growing the game in an affordable way and reaching out to the community are important at Rancho Solano, a facility touted as the best-valued course in the region which also serves as the home course for two local high school golf teams.

Lalo accepted the Turfgrass Excellence award at the Course at Wentle Vineyards with two of his brothers proudly in attendance. They, as with Lalo, are dedicated GCSANC members.

### GCSANC Excellence in Turfgrass Management at a Private Facility



**Dale Engman**  
*Mayacama Golf Club*  
*Santa Rosa*

Dale's professional experience in turfgrass started prior to his tenure at Mayacama Golf Club. His career kicked off right out of college, at the Meadow Club where he started as a project manager and then assistant superintendent. Dale admits working for David Sexton at Meadow Club taught him plenty about project implementation and the details of irrigation management, knowledge he still utilizes today as golf course superintendent at Mayacama Golf Club.

2012 marks Dale's 11th year at the award-winning Mayacama, a club which finds itself ranked amongst the best by GolfWeek and Golf Digest. A graduate from Cal Poly -San Luis Obispo (with a degree in Ornamental Horticulture), Dale started at the Jack Nicklaus-designed course in the summer of 2000 as assistant superintendent and held that position for a year during construction and grow-in. He was asked to "take full reins" just a month prior to the club's grand opening in 2001. Dale well-remembers the opening day event attended by Golf Hall of Famer Mr. Jack Nicklaus.

When you ask Dale about his management style he is the first to admit he's definitely a "hands on" manager. He wants to know how to conquer every job-out-there, and takes pride in mastering those tasks, so he can serve as a positive example for his staff.

At this par-72 course (with 6,759 yards from the longest tees), Dale and his team continue to improve on what they have. Through Fall of 2011 they rebuilt a handful of tee complexes and will continue with the project through this Spring while also keeping the stands of ryegrass pure. Add to that, the ongoing effort to control Poa.

Mayacama, (a walking-only course) sits on a natural site with several waterways running through the property. According to Dale, he continues to monitor the waterways and maintains them to preserve their native state. In 2009, Mayacama was certified by Audubon International as a member of their Cooperative Sanctuary Program. According to Dale, it was a rewarding process which involved both club and community members.

When it comes to community Mayacama gives back by hosting the Schultz Celebrity Classic, an annual event which has raised more than \$2.5 million for Sonoma County charities benefiting youth.