



## Turfgrass Excellence—Private Category

**Jason Goss** Sonoma Golf Club | Sonoma, CA

**Career Highlights:** Jason Goss is now in his seventh year at Sonoma Golf Club where he originally served as a 1st assistant, and in the summer of 2007 was promoted to head golf course superintendent. Prior, he was employed at Santa Rosa G&CC, and even had a stint helping construct a par-3 course in Sonoma County.

**Education:** Jason earned an AS degree in Turfgrass Management from Michigan State University.

**On Course:** The fairways and tees at Sonoma Golf club consist of poa annua/chewings fescue/rye, and poa annua greens. There haven't been any major on-course renovation projects in the past few years, however, there's been great success interseeding fairways with chewings fescue for five consecutive seasons, improving playability as well as reducing water and fertilizer/chemical usage.

**Special Projects:** Jason's turf care background also includes preparing the course for the Charles Schwab Cup Championships (Champions Tour event), three during his tenure as golf course superintendent.

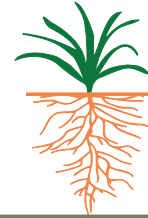
**Jason's Course Management Philosophy:** "We manage the soil not the grass. If the soil is right, the grass will be right," states Jason. The color green and managing for aesthetics is not necessarily number one on the priority list at SGC. It's about playability first, then aesthetics. To keep this championship-level course in good

shape it takes a staff of 21 full-time and two part-time employees.

**Jason's Management Style:** "I like to manage the way I like to learn, mostly through osmosis and also by example. I've worked on golf courses for more than 22 years and have done nearly every job imaginable. My staff members get a chance to see me jump in and do the work whenever necessary and that helps when I have to, on occasion, give corrective instruction. They know I've performed the tasks before and I am still willing to do it when needed."

**Dream Foursome:** If Jason could choose, he'd be teeing it up with his Dad, plus golf legends Fred Couples and Arnold Palmer.

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### George Santana Distinguished Service Award

Randal "Randy" Gai, CGCS Claremont Country Club | Oakland, CA

**Career Highlights:** At the mere age of 13, Randal "Randy" Gai, CGCS, started as a caddie at the historic Alister MacKenzie-designed Claremont Country Club. After attending college at Chico State University, Randy returned to the club with the idea of caddying there for a short stint, that is, until he could find the "right job" outside of golf.

However, as fate would have it, a temporary position emerged at Claremont (working for Golf Course Superintendent Stanley Burgess) and he took the job. It was followed by a two-year mechanic assignment, and next, a position as assistant golf course superintendent.

In 1979, when Burgess left Claremont CC, Randy was offered the favored position as golf course superintendent, an assignment he capably held until 2012 when he was named the club's Director of Golf & Grounds. Randy retired from Claremont at the end of 2013, and left the club safe with Josh Clevenger as head golf course superintendent.

**Chapter Involvement:** Randy's contribution to the GCSANC span several decades. He served on the GCSANC board of directors in the early '90s and was president of the Chapter in 1994. He also served on the planning committee for The Institute with Dr. Ali Harivandi. Randy has hosted GCSANC events over the years; one of the more recent (which he co-hosted with Josh Clevenger) was the 2013 Annual Wagoner Scholarship & Research Tournament.

**Community Involvement:** In addition to his involvement with the GCSANC, Randy has supported community-based programs like The First Tee of Oakland, as well as numerous charitable events, including those raising necessary funds for cancer research.

**Honors:** He is a former recipient of the GCSANC Golf Course Superintendent of the Year Award (1995), GCSANC Turfgrass Excellence Award (1991).

**Education:** Randy has a B.A. degree in Business Administration from Chico State University. He is also a Certified Golf Course Superintendent, coveted status he's held for 25 years.

**Previous Honors:** GCSANC Turfgrass Excellence in the Private Category, GCSANC Golf Course Superintendent of the Year Award

**Dream Foursome:** In his dream foursome, joining Randy at the first tee would be Jason Dufner, David Feherty, and Carl Spackler.

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### **Bert Graves Memorial Affiliate Award**

**Adrian Bertens** *Hydro Engineering | Danville, CA*

**Career Highlights:** Adrian Bertens, founder of Hydro Engineering, got his start in the irrigation business with Rainbird’s international marketing department in Southern California. Next, he was offered a sales rep position with General Irrigation. In 1972, he was given the opportunity to serve as a sales representative for Toro in northern California, a position he

gladly held until 1984. Along the way, Adrian obtained his contractor license and eventually started his own Nor Cal-based company, Hydro Engineering.

**Education:** Adrian holds a degree in Agriculture Economics from Wageningen University in the Netherlands, his native homeland.

**Formula for Success:** When you ask Adrian about his success in the irrigation business (as a rep and/or as a company owner) he will quickly tell you, “It’s based on relationships....it’s all about relationships.” Over the years, Adrian has worked closely with golf course superintendents on scores of irrigation-related projects, including those at Blackhawk CC, Cypress Point Club, Pebble Beach GL, Ran-

cho Canada GC, Shoreline GL, and Spanish Bay GL, to name a few.

**Chapter & Community Involvement:** Adrian has supported GCSANC events and educational offerings. He has also dedicated endless hours in the successful planning and hosting of the Chapter’s Annual Christmas Party. This popular golf & banquet event has proven to be one of the “best-attended” GCSANC celebrations each-and-every year; where members and spouses gather to celebrate, and where camaraderie is off the chart.

**He Keeps on Giving:** Adrian may have retired in 2009, but nothing stops him from staying involved-- not only with the Nor Cal Chapter but also within the game of golf, evidenced through his association with the Men’s Club at San Ramon Golf Club. Adrian plays golf regularly and enjoys the camaraderie amongst fellow men’s club members at San Ramon. He serves on the club’s fundraising committee whose annual tournament benefits Breast Cancer Research. Because of his passion for the game, Adrian also volunteers as a marshal at PGA Tour events and USGA-hosted championships.

**Dream Foursome:** According to Adrian, it would include PGA standout player Phil Mickelson, Champions Tour Player Mark O’Meara, and PGA TOUR Player and golf icon Tiger Woods.



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### **Bert Graves Memorial Affiliate Award**

**Mike Ligon** *Jacobson West | Northern California Territory*

**Career Highlights:** Mike is a successful Nor Cal sales rep for Jacobsen West, a Textron Company, an organization that is fully committed to providing outstanding sales, service, and parts to its customers. Mike's territory spans from the Bay Area to the lovely Monterey Peninsula. His 23 years in the industry also include assignments with West Star Distributing,

H.V. Carter Company, Sand Channel and Golf Ventures West.

**Education:** Mike attended Diablo Valley College and Contra Costa College with focus in Electrical studies.

**Chapter Involvement:** In the late '90s, Mike volunteered his time serving as a GCSANC affiliate director. Since 2010, he has worked diligently in the successful revival of the GCSANC Holiday event at Old Del Monte GC, and has kindly garnered event sponsorship support from Jacobsen West as well as E-Z-GO, Smithco, and Turf-

co Manufacturing. Additionally, Mike and his fellow reps have supported other GCSANC events throughout the years including the statewide California Room reception held in conjunction with the Golf Industry Show.

**Community Involvement:** Mike and the Jacobsen West team believe in giving back, and are supporters of various charitable organizations including The First Tee.

**Previous Honors:** GCSANC Affiliate of the Year Award (1996), Jacobsen Pacesetter Award (1996), National Mower Top Sales U.S. (1998).

**Love of the Game:** Mike picked up a golf club at the age of 13 and has been playing the game ever since. In the early '80s he enjoyed a stint competing in Golden State mini tour events. Fast forward to 2013, Mike earned title as GCSAA Affiliate National Champion (Gross division), and also earned honors as GCSAA National 4-Ball Champion with playing partner/GCSANC Member Terry Grasso.

**Dream Foursome:** Mike would be joined by Golf Greats Arnold Palmer, Jack Nicklaus and Gary Player.



### **Golf Course Superintendent of the Year**

**Wayne Kappelman**—*Sharp Park Golf Course | Pacifica, CA*

**Career Highlights:** Wayne Kappelman is the Golf Course Superintendent and Park Services Supervisor (Golf & Turf division) at the Alister MacKenzie-designed Sharp Park Golf Course. This popular, 18-hole course is located along the California Coast within the town of Pacifica (San Mateo County), yet owned by the City & County of San Francisco.

Since 2009, Wayne has done a masterful job maintaining the course, and today, he proudly describes it as "the all-organic" Sharp Park. His professional experience also includes tenure as golf course superintendent at Harding Park GC (2006-2009) and greenskeeper at Harding Park GC (2002-2006). Prior to his work in the golf & turf care industry, Wayne (who grew up in Milwaukee, Wis.) and also worked in the hi-tech industry in Silicon Valley.

**Education:** Wayne has earned a few degrees, one in Business and Economics from Lakeland College, (Sheboygan, WI), a degree in History from the University of Wisconsin, and a Diplôme D'Étude Français University of Bordeaux, France.

**Special Projects Earlier in His Career:** Wayne was deeply involved with course preparation work for the 2005 American Express Championship and the 2009 Presidents Cup, both held at Harding Park GC.

**Community Involvement:** Wayne has been a supporter of the community-based "Save Sharp Park" campaign spearheaded by the SF Public Golf Alliance. He has also provided educational tours to golfers and non-golfers over the years, as well as to members of the media who've been following the fate of Sharp Park.

**Chapter Involvement:** Wayne and his staff were involved with

the development of three Public Service Announcements (PSA's) made possible through the GCSANC and the GCSAA's matching grant program. The PSAs showcase the important role of a golf course superintendent with focus on environmental sustainability. They also cast a positive light on Wayne's dedicated work through San Francisco's Department of Rec & Parks.

**Giving Back in the World:** Wayne has volunteered his time as an English Teacher in Laos, SE Asia.

**Previous Honors:** He is a recipient of Golfdom magazine's prestigious 2013 Herb Graffis Businessperson of the Year Award.

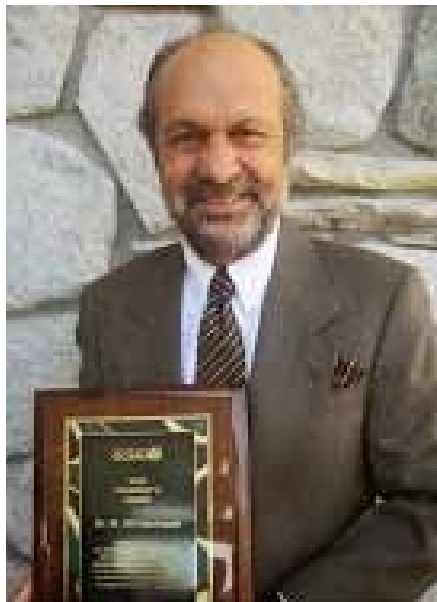
**On Course:** With a small staff of six and a very modest budget, Wayne works diligently to keep the MacKenzie-designed course in good shape for the hundreds of local golfers who take great pride in calling Sharp Park their "home" course. (approx. 50,000 rounds are played each year at Sharp Park GC).

**Course Management Philosophy:** According to Wayne, the number one priority at Sharp Park is the protection of endangered species and the enhancement of habitat for wildlife around the golf course. In accordance with this aim is maintaining the course through sustainable methods that include using only organic products and fertilizers. Wayne believes, that only by protecting the environment can we ensure the continuation of the golf course and that it will be enjoyed for generations to come.

**Wayne's thoughts on receiving this highly coveted Award:** "I feel very lucky and honored to receive this award, especially in our area where there are so many outstanding superintendents as well as such iconic golf courses. It makes me proud that the Northern California Chapter of the GCSA would recognize our efforts to create a sustainable model for golf at a local muni."

**Dream Foursome:** Alister MacKenzie, Aaron Rodgers, the Dalai Lama, plus Wayne, all teeing it up at Sharp Park!

# Dr. Ali Harivandi—Worthy Recipient of the Prestigious GCSANC Presidents Award



The Northern California Chapter of the GCSAA is pleased to announce that Dr. Ali Harivandi, Emeritus, Environmental Horticulturist with UC Cooperative Extension is the worthy recipient of the association's 2013 Presidents Award. He was presented the honor during the chapter's Annual Meeting in early January at Oakhurst Country Club in Clayton, CA.

The GCSANC Presidents Award is a highly coveted honor, and un-

like other awards, this distinction is bestowed only on rare occasions-- to an individual who has made exceptional contributions to the Association and to the turfgrass industry. And as most GCSANC members know, Dr. Harivandi has dedicated his career to extensive research and education in the areas of turf, soil and water for the benefit of the Industry.

This honoree, holds both M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in Turfgrass Management from Colorado State University, where he was a Research and Teaching Associate while completing his graduate studies. He joined the University of California Cooperative Extension in the San Francisco Bay Area in 1980.

Dr. Harivandi has been published extensively in both scientific and popular press. To be exact, he's been published 380 times. His work appears in books, scientific journals, professional and trade journals, and also in several University of California publications. Additionally, he's been featured on several occasions in this publication, *Thru the Green*, and in other leading golf and turf care publications.

Dr. Harivandi has played an integral part in GCSANC education, through his exceptional planning and involvement in Institutes, Seminars, and Field Days. His research and findings have been invaluable to golf course superintendents, spanning beyond the Northern California Chapter. In addition to his written work, Dr. Harivandi has served as a keynote speaker and expert panelist for the GCSANC and at other professional and scientific meetings regionally, nationally and internationally.

## Key Areas of Work/Research

Dr. Harivandi's work has spanned a variety of "key" areas including: Turfgrass management and variety improvement; water conservation; soil and water salinity management; use of recycled water for irrigation; efficient irrigation practices; reclamation and re-vegetation of disturbed lands; development of new landscaped sites (e.g. golf courses, parks, sports fields, cemeteries); turfgrass

weed, disease and insect management; and urban green waste management.

## On the Forefront of Water Conservation and Sustainability

While Californians have been forced to conserve water in recent drought-ridden times, Dr. Harivandi has been committed to the cause for quite awhile. He was a leader in introducing turf that requires less water and maintenance (i.e. tall and fine-leaf fescue species). He even designed a map that shows evapotranspiration estimates which helps prevent overwatering, a guide that residents and landscapers can use when programming their sprinkler systems. In early 80's, he first introduced the concept of using recycled water for turfgrass irrigation at golf courses and elsewhere. His research and educational activities related to recycled water irrigation has now made the practice common. He taught a one day seminar on this topic at the national Golf Industry Show for 22 consecutive years. Currently close to 30% of south western US golf courses are irrigated with recycled water.

## Organization and Affiliations

This honoree stays involved, evidenced by the numerous organizations he has supported (and/or served with) during his 33-year tenure with UC Cooperative Extension. They include Turfgrass & Environmental Research Advisory Committee (USGA), CSAA Technical/Resource Advisory Committee (1988-1993), Crop Science Society of America, American Society of Agronomy (Certified as Professional Agronomist), Soil Science Society of America (Certified as Professional Soils Specialist), American Society for Horticultural Science, International Society for Horticultural Science, International Turfgrass Society, European Turfgrass Society, and Turfgrass Producers International.

## Previous Awards and Special Distinctions

Dr. Harivandi adds the GCSANC Presidents Award to other honors he has received throughout his stellar career. His previously-earned distinctions include 2009 Piper & Oakley Award (USGA), The International Sustainability Council, Certificate of Excellence (The Council for Agricultural Science & Technology), Excellence in Teaching & Outstanding Service (UC Davis Extension), Industry Award for Excellence in Public Information (Northern California Turf and Landscape Council), Research & Education Award (Nor Cal Water Efficient Landscape Conference), Research & Education Award (Northern California Turfgrass Council), 1990 Distinguished Service Award (GCSANC), and 1995 Distinguished Service Award (GCSAA).

"We are fortunate to have Dr. Ali, so closely affiliated with our association," said GCSANC Outgoing President Jon Christenson. "He has been recognized world-wide as a top expert in recycled water and he constantly shares his knowledge with us...providing viable solutions, which in turn, help us become better turf managers and environmental stewards. There is no one more deserving of this award, than Dr. Ali."



## From the Field

By **JEFF JENSEN**, GCSAA Field Staff, Southwest Region

This column will find many of you just returning from the annual Golf Industry Show, Education Conference and GCSAA Golf Championships in Orlando. I sincerely hope you enjoyed all of the events, hospitality and education that were provided at this very successful show. We appreciate your continued support of the event and look forward to San Antonio in 2015.

As we move into spring, GCSAA wants to hear from our members concerning our strategic vision for GCSAA moving forward and ask for your assistance with key projects when they arise. There are numerous volunteer opportunities throughout the year in which you can engage with GCSAA staff, the GCSAA Board of Directors and your fellow members that have a positive impact on the golf industry. Whatever your interest may be – water management, the environment, government regulations or member relations, GCSAA has a project or a committee that you can assist with.

Take a moment to complete a survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/VPFKSLH> to indicate that we can call upon you in the future when engagement opportuni-

ties arise. The feedback you share on this survey will also give you the avenue to identify topics that interest you. You will receive 0.25 service points for taking the time to complete this survey.

Additionally, I will be reaching out to Northern California members this summer to identify those who have interest in serving as a GCSAA government relations liaison. More information on this program will be available shortly and we are hoping to have commitments from members by July.

We look forward to working with you and making sure we have our member's best interests in mind. If you have any questions concerning the survey, please contact Scott Woodhead, associate director of member relations at 800-472-7878 ext. 4418 or [swoodhead@gcsaa.org](mailto:swoodhead@gcsaa.org).

Thank you for your support of my position and if I can do anything to make your member experience more beneficial, don't hesitate to contact me at [jjensen@gcsaa.org](mailto:jjensen@gcsaa.org). For current updates and regional news, follow me on Twitter @GCSAA\_SW or check out the Southwest Region blog at <http://gcsaa-southwest.blogspot.com>.

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