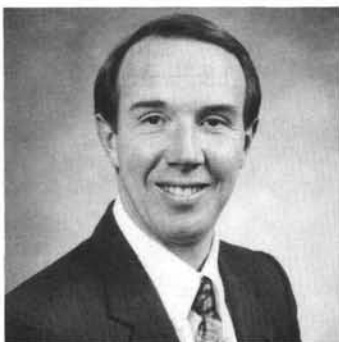


If You Have No Critics You Likely Have No Successes



by Bruce R. Williams, CGCS
GCSAA Director

Recently, the GCSAA members of the Midwest Association of Golf Course Superintendents have been provided an opportunity to evaluate a number of proposed by-law changes. It was the intent of the current Board of Directors of GCSAA to present these proposals in advance of the GCSAA annual meeting to encourage dialogue and that has been accomplished. The membership will make the final decision on these by-law proposals in Anaheim. Contrary to what some may think, the Board of Directors works on behalf of the membership and tries hard to be visionary and develop plans and programs that will benefit our profession. I have been pleased with the number of GCSAA members that have called me regarding the issues and other concerns within the association. These calls have not been limited to solely MAGCS members but have been from all parts of the country. Every call was productive and helped to establish a factual foundation for a sensible exchange of ideas.

Unfortunately, there are some members of GCSAA who choose to find fault with most everything we do. Those individuals never comment on the excellent quality of our educational offerings, our great magazine, our outstanding government relations program, the premier conference and show in the turfgrass industry, a strong certification program, and a development department that continues to raise significant funds for scholarship and research. These are only a few of the major functions of GCSAA. We are a clearinghouse for the collection and dissemination of information that will help our members better manage their respective golf courses. This is our mission and I know that we are accomplishing our goals.

The question had been posed lately as to whether we are an association or a business. There is no question in my mind that we are both. An association is an organization formed for a common objective. A business is defined as a trade or profession, and an environment for the exchange of goods or services. It is very clear that we are a group that was organized with a common goal and we are operating in today's business environment. As your Board of Directors, we must make logical business decisions, with the future of the association in mind. We must also continue to provide service to the membership of the organization.

(cont'd. page 10)

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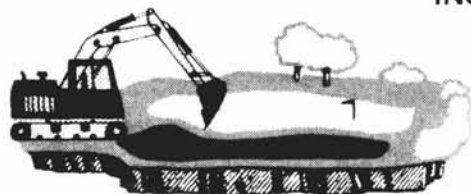
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(Bruce Williams cont'd.)

I would be remiss if I did not respond to some of the statements made in last month's **Bull Sheet** as many of these comments were based on emotion rather than fact. I wish that the author had approached the issues with an open mind and had sought the facts rather than basing the article on unfounded personal opinions. The author should have taken a few minutes to ask the members of the Organizational Study Committee or the Standards Committee why they proposed the by-law changes. To my knowledge, the author did not discuss the issues with any of the GCSAA Board of Directors or staff but has established his opinions for personal reasons without taking the time to discuss the issues.

The GCSAA has no desire to become the USGA, PGA, CMAA, etc. as the author queried. We need to look at other membership classifications though. It is our hope that we could provide education and information to others in the golf industry in addition to our core membership of golf course superintendents. Few members would dispute the need to send our message out to groups other than golf course superintendents. The golf course superintendents will continue to be the nucleus of our great association and will be the individuals who will set the tone for our activities with their right to vote. As far as GCSAA Scholarship and Research is concerned, we have expanded our fund raising efforts over the past few years and we have employed a full time individual to direct these activities. The results from this have shown a minimum of \$88,500 in new revenues for Fiscal Year 92/93. We have built up about \$350,00 in the Robert Trent Jones Endowment Fund and are currently undertaking a fund raising effort to support research in a toxicology study of golf course superintendents and applicators. Any way you choose to interpret the financial statements of GCSAA S&R we are doing very well in our efforts to support education and research. I suppose the author of last month's article would prefer to see us raise \$13,000 and hand out \$13,000 in scholarships and research grants rather than raise \$208,000 and have expenses of \$95,378 netting \$112,622 and not including an additional \$53,480 that was committed to the RTJ Endowment Fund. The reality is that we are operating quite well in the S&R subsidiary of GCSAA and that can readily be seen in the GCSAA financial statement.

The profession of managing golf courses has been acknowledged worldwide and GCSAA now has 970 members outside of the U.S. This accounts for 8% of our current membership. There have been requests from other countries to bring our programs and educational offerings to them. In doing so, we can help enhance the knowledge required to maintain the many new developing golf courses in different parts of the world. We go where we are invited and have no desire to force ourselves on any foreign country. We have been well received in the areas of the Pacific Rim, and those operations will not, in any way, influence the day to day operations of GCSAA. We are providing a conference and show and developing a membership base in the most rapidly expanding part of the world for golf course development. Who is better suited to offer the education and services to these areas than GCSAA?

As far as the regional staffing concept is concerned, it has appeal in many parts of the country as a liaison to help coordinate government relations activities. Many chapters have re-

(cont'd. page 11)

quested this type of help in the past as most chapters cannot afford their own staffing. I would like to see a regional staff setup in one part of the country before we cover the whole country. Contrary to the previous month's author these individuals that would serve as field staff would not "come to tell him how to run his golf course". The author commented that "he could call on Randy Kane, Tom Fermaninan, Dave Wehner, Hank Wilkinson, and many more at no cost and know that they are doing research locally." Unless I am mistaken, these gentlemen do **not** work for free and are supported by all of the taxpayers and in some cases subsidized by research grants made by groups like CDGA, GCSAA, USGA, MAGCS, etc. They all do a great job but how can one assume that they perform their jobs at no cost.

The author of the aforementioned article also stated that "I am sure the GCSAA Standards Committee was very heavily influenced by the staff of GCSAA in presenting the By-Law changes to give more control to the Board and Staff." How can you make such a statement without talking to those on the Standards Committee? It is a shame to see such attacks published with reckless abandon by those who don't research their facts.

The previously published comments about the voting procedures were unfounded as well. It was correct that there were approximately 5000 to 6000 votes cast at the New Orleans annual meeting. With the concept of one person one vote, we don't know how many votes **would** be cast but we do know that there is a potential that 8300 votes **could** be cast. I think that the author has little faith in his peers to cast their votes. The proposed system would involve more people in the decision making process. Realistically, we are providing an alternative to the current voting procedures. Some members find the current voting process less than desirable. Let's let each of the MAGCS members decide their destiny.

The author also asked why we need more membership classifications and other questions that were previously covered. Some people don't read the information in our publications or don't listen to the organized presentations arranged by the MAGCS. And then there are those who are so set in their thinking that they are not willing to listen to any views other than their own. The author asked the readers to "give it some thought". I only wish he had given the issues some thought based on the facts. It saddens me to see such an impulsive negative reaction. I only wish the author could find something good about GCSAA. I guess criticizing doers is more fun than proposing possible solutions.

I would hope that each member of GCSAA would evaluate the by-law proposals thoroughly and take the time to make up their own minds without being intimidated by the ones who whine and complain the loudest. This is what the democratic process is all about. I invite any GCSAA member to contact me personally to discuss the issues. Ultimately, it is **you**, the GCSAA member, that will set the tone for the future of our association and profession.

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Joel Purpur sent this photo in on a quick way to mount a 16 h.p. Billygoat Blower to a golf cart. Take off the wheels and handle — clamp it on and away you go. Greens, tees, and fairways are able to be blown without getting tired.

Clinic & NCTE Update

by Dave Blomquist, Education Chairman

The annual Midwest Clinic was held on November 18 at Medinah C.C. For those not in attendance, you missed a great program. First time, long time, and in time superintendents shared their experiences about everything from Cockatoos to Superintendent/Assistant relations. A panel of some of the finer mechanics in the area presented a report on the state of their profession and the individuals that comprise the association. It was very enlightening.

The highlight of the day was not the slide that showed Mike Baviers' bare bottom (sorry Mike), rather, it was Captain Al Haynes. Capt. Haynes is the pilot who flew the ill-fated DC-10 that crashed in Souix City, Iowa. His talk included a video presentation along with slides that supported his 5 reasons that 188 people survived the tragedy.

At the NCTE Bruce Williams conducted a workshop on Teamwork Concept of Golf Course Maintenance. 75 people attended and gained some insight into developing a more cohesive unit at their clubs. Thanks to Bruce for taking his time to share this program with us!

On the second day of the conference the MAGCS sponsored a roundtable pesticide discussion. Well over 300 people were in attendance! We were able to gain an insight to the pros and cons of pesticides and our general welfare. Highlights of that session:

- "Everything is dangerous, the question is what are the benefits vs. the risks" — Dr. Tom Lang, IL Dept. of Health
- "There aren't many birds on golf courses" — Barbara Mullarky, Mother Earth Network

Look for extended coverage of this discussion in the next issue. Special thanks go out to Marlin McMannis, Assistant Superintendent River Forest Golf Club, for videotaping Capt. Al Haynes at the Clinic and the Pesticide Roundtable. These tapes will become available in the MAGCS video library.