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CAN'T MAKE IT TO ORLANDO?

There are always ways to get the information you may be missing.

It's that time of year again. The time for many of us to get out of the cold weather and head south for the annual Golf Industry Show (GIS).

In an article I wrote about this time last year, I gave my top excuses (and my answers) for not continuing your education. A large portion of that article was based on the opinion that EVERYONE should be making an attempt to get to GIS. This year, I'm going to tell you why that might not be necessary if your primary goal is continuing your education.

IS IT ONLY GCSAA MEMBERS WHO NEED EDUCATION? First, let's look at the numbers. There are fewer total superintendent/assistant members in GCSAA (roughly 12-13K) than there are golf courses in the United States, thus leaving a lot of superintendents and their employees out of the loop when it comes to what's offered at the annual conference.

While I can't be certain that all of those individuals are looking to continue their education, I would be willing to bet a large portion of those associated with the golf course maintenance industry seek information on a regular basis. They may not be sitting in half-day seminars, but nevertheless they are looking for help.

So for those of you that are not members of GCSAA or aren't provided with the funds to travel to the annual conference this year, I say it's not that big of a deal. First of all, there is only so much education you can actually sit through at GIS and second, there are a ton of other options closer to home.

LOGISTICALLY IMPOSSIBLE TO SEE IT ALL. While GIS and the GCSAA educational sessions have probably the largest number of educational seminars in a

concentrated time and place, it's not really possible to attend more than a few in any year.

This year the conference education is primarily limited to two days (Monday and Tuesday) with a few specialty sessions ("Answers on the Hour" and "Tech Tips on the Half") on Wednesday and Thursday. This means from a seminar standpoint that you can take two 8-hour seminars (have fun with that) or four 4-hour seminars. That's actually

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a lot of education to push into a short period of time and probably enough to fry a brain or two along the way.

The benefits of the annual meeting is the diversity of the seminars which give attendees more options to build an educational program that best suits their needs. Unfortunately, the fact remains that many of you in the industry just aren't given the opportunity to attend.

YOU'VE GOT OPTIONS. The way in which we get information is certainly changing and is undoubtedly becoming more diverse. We have the traditional education found in universities across the country, national and regional conferences, and a multitude of online resources that all provide some level of information.

REGIONAL CONFERENCES. I will skip over the role of a formal education (it's just flat out necessary to advance) and go right to the regional conferences, which are perhaps the best way to experience the educational opportunities and net-

working of GIS at a fraction of the cost.

While some of you may have a more difficult time than others finding "regional" conferences, I have to believe that there are a large number of opportunities for most.

Some of the larger regional conferences include the Carolinas Show, The New England Regional Turfgrass Conferences, and the Ohio Turfgrass Foundation Conference. These conferences attract thousands of people

annually and have much of the hype and buzz of GIS. They all have educational seminars (many of which are the same as those offered at GIS), big-name keynote speakers and relatively large trade shows.

In addition to some of the larger regional shows, many state turfgrass associations have multi-day conferences that offer a similar level of information. In Pennsylvania, we actually have four annual conferences reaching thousands of attendees including the Eastern, Western, Northeastern and Penn State Conferences. That's a lot of education offered in a relatively small region.

TAKING IT ONLINE. So you can't afford to go the national conference and you have another excuse why you just couldn't make it to your regional conference this year. Well there's another option for you and it comes at the convenience of being able to sit in your pajamas with a cup of coffee while you learn.

A variety of online resources are
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COMPANY	WEBSITE	PAGE
Amvac	www.amvac-chemical.com	41
Aqua Aid	www.aquaaid.com, www.verde-cal.com	71
BASF	www.betterturf.basf.us	63
BASF / Transition HC	www.betterturf.basf.us	37
Clivus Multrum	www.clivusmultrum.com	26
Club Car	www.ClubCar.com, www.newcarryall.com	2-3
Cushman	www.cushman.com	61
Dakota	www.dakotarev.com	36
Direct Solutions	www.aatdirectsolutions.com	34-35
FMC / Echelon	www.fmcprosolutions.com	27-30
FMC / Zombie Weeds	www.fmcprosolutions.com	7
Foley United	www.foleyunited.com	79
Grigg Bros.	www.griggbros.com	51
Hunter Industries	www.hunterindustries.com	39
Jacobsen	www.jacobsen.com	80
John Deere	www.JohnDeere.com/Golf	22-23
JRM, Inc.	www.jrmonline.com	56
JWB Marketing	www.geesedamage.com	65
Neptune's Harvest	www.neptunesharvest.com	38
Nufarm	www.nufarm.com/us	59
Otterbine Barebo, Inc.	www.otterbine.com	32
PBI/Gordon Corp.	www.pbigordon.com	38
Penn State University	www.worldcampus.psu.edu	75
Performance Nutrition	www.pnfertilizers.com	50
Petro Canada	www.civitasturf.com	47
Plant Food Systems	www.plantfoodsystems.com	40
Redexim Charterhouse	www.redexim.com	67
Richway Industries	www.richway.com	46
RYAN	www.ryanturf.com	57
Sensient	www.sensientindustrial.com	69
SipcamAdvan	www.sipcamadvan.com	53
Spring Valley	www.springvalleyusa.com	45
Spyker Spreader	www.spyker.com	58
Standard Golf	www.standardgolf.com	49
STEC Equipment	www.stecequipment.com	73
SUPERthrive / Vitamin Institute	www.superthrive.com	46
Syngenta / Acelepryn	www.WeevilTrak.com	17
Syngenta / Daconil Action	www.GreenCastOnline.com/DaconilAction	15
Syngenta / Secure	www.GreenCastOnline.com/Secure	19
Target Specialty	www.target-specialty.com	48
Toro	www.toro.com	33
Trojan Battery	www.trojanbattery.com	25
Turf Diagnostics & Design	www.turfdiag.com	56
US Battery Mfg.	www.usbattery.com	43
Weed Man	www.weedmanfranchise.com	65
Winfield Solutions	www.winfield.com	5

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available that offer the same high level of education that the national and regional conferences are known for. The best part is that they all come at a fraction of the costs associated with registering for and traveling to a conference.

Although I pointed out the large number

of industry professionals that aren't members of GCSAA, the association's members have free access to a wealth of webcasts. These webcasts, as you might have guessed, are taught by many of the same people you would find teaching at conferences across the country. **GCI**

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