

"AN ELECTION REFLECTION"

By Bill Roberts

As I stated in the WGCSA "Election Update" column in the January-February issue of "THE GRASS ROOTS,"

"The GCSAA election process has given the Wisconsin Golf Course Superintendents Association the opportunity to make new friends and acquaintances all over the country and for that alone it has been well worth the effort. However, the most gratifying aspect for me has been the amount of energy and enthusiasm from my fellow WGCSA members. I'm convinced that the hard work will be rewarded in Washington, D.C. and I want to say thanks to everyone in Wisconsin for the support."

I believe, in reflecting on our efforts at the recently concluded GCSAA International Golf Course Conference and Show, that the statement is as valid today as it was when made in the days preceding the election.

We did, in fact, make new friends from all across the country in general and in Illinois, Minnesota, Ohio, Indiana, West Virginia, Iowa, Kansas and Nebraska specifically. I remain gratified by the support from all members of the WGCSA and I see an organization that has benefited, in terms of national exposure, political maturity and local cohesion, by working toward a common goal. We should not forget those benefits nor should we let go of them now that the 1985 election is over. San Francisco is only 11 months away.

I am convinced that we did not lose anything in Washington, D.C. but rather that our hard work was rewarded. We were disappointed by the final vote count but it is my perception that Wisconsin did itself proud by its effort in and by its approach to the GCSAA election process.

No Chapter worked harder, beginning last August with the initial "Election Committee" meeting and the vote of support at the Stevens Point Country Club meeting. No Chapter was more thorough with its contact mailings

and telephone calls. The miles traveled to Indiana, to Central Illinois, to the Chicago area, to Northwest Illinois and to Minnesota paid off. The organization and the attention to detail evident in our "hospitality suite" proved to fellow Superintendents that we are a "first class" organization made up of "first class" individuals. We showed ourselves as winners from start to a very close finish.

We were told very early in this endeavor that "first time candidates always have a tough time," that "it may require several attempts," that "the size of your Chapter is going to hurt." We heard each of these statements over and over. Well, while we may not have upset that bit of conventional wisdom, we certainly weakened its foundation. A young, "too shy," first-time candidate from a small, 68 vote Chapter came within 67 votes this year. We were rewarded in Washington, D.C. and need only to clean up that "vote total" detail in San Francisco.

I cannot overemphasize my thanks to all WGCSA members and yet there is need to express appreciation to some of you individually. Thanks to Monroe Miller for encouragement from the time we first talked, for a tremendous job with the "Election Issue" of "THE GRASS ROOTS" and for the hours on the telephone. Thanks to Tom Harrison for a great list of contacts and the time it took to compile it. Thanks to Danny Quast and Wayne Otto for their quiet, effective efforts before and through Conference Week. Thanks to Roger Bell for his back-slapping enthusiasm and encouragement from start to finish. Thanks to John Krutilla for his sincerity. Of course, thanks to Randy Smith and Pat Norton for their efforts with the Wisconsin "hospitality suite" which was a pleasant, organized and overall first rate environment (also thanks to Joanne Smith and Sue Norton). Thanks to the volunteers who worked the "hospitality suite" including Ed Devinger, Dennis Robinson, Bob Welch, Randy Witt, Jerry Kershasky, Ray Wozniak, Steve Blendell, Jim Latham, David Murgatroyd and Steve Schmidt. Thanks to the WGCSA Board of Directors and the "Election Committee" members including Jim Belfield, Mark Kienert, Bruce

Worzella, Jeff Bottensek, Bill Douglas, and Dale Marach for time spent in meetings, for contacts made and for support.

Two other individuals deserve further, special mention. Rod Johnson assumed the role of Voting Delegate this year and established himself as an effective, credible and respected voice in the process. Seeing the results of his efforts, from our daily phone conversations to the tremendous amounts of correspondence, from the hours spent contacting other Voting Delegates to the time spent in conversations at the Conference (time he could have spent with his wife Janelle and son Brent) make me proud to call him a fellow Superintendent and my friend.

Finally, to my wife, Pat, for a lot of things in general but in this endeavor specifically for encouraging me to spend the time I felt was necessary to do this pursuit justice. She is a "player" who listened to the "rough drafts" of a lot of correspondence, who understood the frustrations, both real and imagined, who put up with inconvenient travel schedules, who hung in there during those long hours at the hospitality suite and was still smiling at the end and who didn't ask a lot of questions when the results were final. Thanks, Pat.

When all is said and one, it is difficult to remain disappointed for very long. We did our best, representing ourselves in a professional manner and we deserve to feel proud of that. It serves as a tremendous base for San Francisco. As I mentioned to an associate from a neighboring association, "We may have been delayed but we certainly haven't been derailed." We learned some things this year and with that knowledge in mind, and all other things being equal, I can't wait to get right back in there in 1986. San Francisco is only 11 months away. Time is getting short.

