

1994 GCSAA Chapter Relations Meeting September 25-26, 1994 Lawrence, Kansas

By Mark Kienert

Approximately 71 local chapters of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America meet in Lawrence Kansas in September to discuss current issues of the "National." The meeting was part of the continuing two-way communication efforts being promoted to improve chapter relations and dialogue between headquarters and members. The intended goals of this program are to identify and to fully utilize the tremendous talent base of leadership that is found at the local grass roots level and to utilize this wealth of talent to identify issues that will promote the image of the golf course superintendent.

GCSAA President Joseph Baidy gave a "State of the Association" speech. He informed the delegates that most of GCSAA Headquarters is now computerized with an updated PC at most employees' desks. A new network central computer will be on-line soon.

GCSAA will be a part of Golf Asia once again in 1995. Any programs of this nature must pass a seven point program test before they would be co-hosted by the GCSAA. The Singapore Office is now closed. The GCSAA has leased out approximately 20,000 square feet of empty space in the headquarters building to a Minneapolis firm that specializes in scanning surveys. This lease is good for one year only and has two 6 month renewal clauses attached to it. The St. Andrews Drive building has a tenant and a selling price is being negotiated with this party.

GCSAA has implemented sponsorships of the preconference golf tournament and it is hoped this will allow for greater flexibility. All golf merchandise will be sold to the members "at cost" as a way better serving the members. Scanners will be used at the upcoming annual meeting and elections to help speed ballot count-

ing process. They will be used also at the headquarters to scan surveys.

"Par for the Course", GCSAA video magazine, is in the negotiation stage with ESPN to reach a larger audience. The Scholarship and Research name has been changed to the GCSAA Foundation for tax reasons. All future issues of the *Leader Board* will be sent to all course officials free.

GCSAA's new Chief Executive Officer, Stephen F. Mona, reviewed the past nine months. We were told of the three mandates given by the board and progress to this point in meeting them. For the most part, the internal workings of GCSAA is up to date with the staff reorganization and group services clustered to provide better service to the members. A new budgeting system is in place and a strategic plan has been developed. The strategic plan will assist the member with career development, improve chapter relations and continue research into all phases of our business. There will be a new drive toward membership involvement.

Committees, as in the past, will be chaired by members to keep the focus on superintendent driven issues. Steve promised to maintain and to deliver the highest of professionalism and responsiveness to the members as he could. (Authors note: After having attended this meeting and after having spent some time in conversation with Steve at the Wisconsin Golf Turf Symposium, I am very impressed and excited about the new GCSAA leadership team. A talent base is in place with many fresh ideas on implementing programs to solve issues. The focus has shifted from expansion to that of supplying services to the members.)

Joe O'Brien, GCSAA new Chief Operations Officer, discussed GCSAA relationships with the allied associations like PGA, LPGA, Golf Course

Builders, Golf Course Architects, USGA, CMAA, PGA of America, NGF and RISE. Those discussions have produced some results as each group would benefit by each other's strengths in the marketplace. For example, the PGA offered to help the GCSAA through their experience in audio-visual production, help us upgrade our commercials and news magazines, etc. Some of the interactions between professional groups were used to dissolve any hidden agendas that may have been present.

Joe also stressed that the "chapters are the foundation of the National." To further this notion, he served as the facilitator, presiding over a two-day discussion of issues
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SPRING VALLEY TURF PRODUCTS

of Jackson, Wisconsin

will be holding their annual

Turf Fair on

FEBRUARY 8, 1995

at The Country Inn in

Pewaukee, Wisconsin

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and how each could be best served by the local chapters and the National. Twenty-three pages of issues were discussed. With over 70 plus members in attendance, it was sometimes difficult to draw concrete conclusions. Joe worked on getting the most out of each discussion by separating the issues and keeping the group focused. There was banter back and forth as the issues were wrestled with. Those issues dealt with the relationship between the GCSAA and local affiliated chapters and how to improve them. Some of the problems discussed dealt with the leadership continuity in the affiliated chapters. The GCSAA discussed ways in which they could provide chapter management assistance. The Chapters need the GCSAA for its government relations support not only in Washington, but at the state and local levels. It was decided all problems need to be communicated to the GCSAA for coordination and support. Problems with information distribution between the chapters and GCSAA

was addressed. The ultimate goal here would also improve interchapter communications on all levels.

Julian Arendondo, GCSAA Chief Financial Officer, discussed that the GCSAA is now challenging all expense or cost components of the association. Just because a company has been awarded a contract in the past does not necessarily mean it will receive the same considerations in the future. Monthly budgets and expense sheets have been compiled and month/yearly projections are being planned.

Julian is also responsible for the surveys published by the GCSAA. GCSAA will survey all non-GCSAA members that are members of local chapters. The intent here is to identify why these local members are not National members and to implement procedures to bring them in. Staff plan to identify more reasons than just the cost that keep superintendents from joining GCSAA.

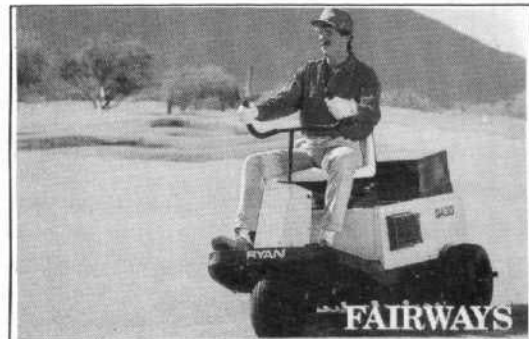
An outcropping of last year's chapter relations and delegates meeting was the suggestion that this meeting

would serve as the forum for "meet the candidates." This program was always held in conjunction with the GCSAA International Turfgrass Conference and Show. Delegates would have to give up many hours of valuable conference time which they felt was not to the benefit of employers. All candidates were given the traditional five minutes to plead their case and to answer questions posed to them by the delegates. If you have any comments or suggestions that I could forward to GCSAA, please feel free to put them in writing so that I can forward them to headquarters. Please pay attention to all the candidates up for election and speak up for them on their behalf.

To this end, I'm reminded of Steve Mona's quote that the GCSAA would no longer be a part of the status quo—that is, always organized to meet the last challenge....not the next one. They appear very well organized and poised to take on all new challenges with a new vigor into our Association. I have a feeling that GCSAA is really going to take off. 🍀

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