



Chapter Delegates Meeting Offers Insight and a Look Ahead

Compiled by David Brandenburg, Editor, *The Grass Roots*

Ninety GCSAA chapter delegates, representing 95 chapters, convened in Lawrence, Kan., and Kansas City, Mo., Oct. 9-11 to participate in a wide range of discussions, including the state of the golf economy, association governance, golf's relationship with the environment, and membership growth and retention.

Candidate presentations

In addition, candidates for president, vice president, secretary/treasurer and two open director positions met with the delegates. A shortened version of the candidate presentations will be available on GCSAA TV in the near future. Fitzroy, Wollaston Recreational Facility/Presidents Golf Club in North Quincy, Mass., is running unopposed for president; as is Bob Randquist, CGCS at Boca Rio Golf Club in Boca Raton, Fla., for vice president. Current directors Sandy Queen, CGCS at City of Overland Park, Kan., and Pat Finlen, CGCS at The Olympic Club in San Francisco, Calif., oppose each other for secretary/treasurer. Both of their two year director terms expire this year. Four candidates are vying for two open director positions: Bob Farren, CGCS at Pinehurst (N.C.) Resort; Todd Lupkes, CGCS at Palouse Ridge Golf Course in Pullman, Wash; Bill Maynard, CGCS at Milburn Golf and Country Club in Shawnee, Kan.; and Mike Wooten, CGCS at Cedar Ridge Country Club in Broken Arrow, Okla.

Association operations and financial update

Thirty-one of the 39 new chapter delegates participated in an orientation session to learn more about their role and in greater detail how GCSAA functions as an association. The full contingent of delegates heard a state of the association presentation from GCSAA Chief Executive Officer Mark Woodard, CGCS. He noted GCSAA has been challenged financially by declines in industry advertising, trade show space, and conference and show attendance. However, he said GCSAA is in a better position than many associations because of a healthy financial reserve, a supportive industry, a loyal membership and no long-term debt.

Woodward also said the association's solid footing is buoyed by its participation in numerous allied association initiatives and by the importance owners and influential golfers place on the golf course superintendent.

"In my first 15 months on the job I have had the opportunity to travel all over the nation and meet with a broad spectrum of the industry," Woodward said. "Two things stand out: First, golf has never been more unified and

committed to strengthening the game; and second, the recognized value of the GCSAA member is at an all time high. GCSAA has its challenges, but the leadership really looks at the situation as one of opportunity. We are in a strong position and much of the credit for that goes to the membership."

Sustainability

Delegates were also updated on the work of GCSAA and The Environmental Institute for Golf in sustaining the game. Chief among the efforts is the Golf Course Environmental Profile. GCSAA Director of Environmental Programs Greg Lyman explained that the nutrient survey results would be released in early December, building on the land use and water use/conservation reports issued over the past two years. Lyman noted that the data from the surveys has been crucial in working with lawmakers, media and allied golf associations in detailing golf's environmental footprint. Lyman also discussed the importance of the development of the new superintendent competencies, which will include an element of environmental management.

Perhaps the highlight of the meeting was a presentation on sustainability by University of Kansas Professor of Journalism and Mass Communications Simran Sethi. An internationally respected authority on sustainability and contributor to NBC Nightly News, Oprah Winfrey Show and Planet Green Channel, Sethi spoke about the sustainability with a focus on the triple bottom line: people, planet and profit. She applauded GCSAA, its members and The Institute for their commitment to transparency and continuous improvement in managing facilities.

"It's a challenge for you, and I realize that," Sethi said. "You have to serve your employers and you are pressured by golfers for perfection. You must have patience in this effort. Communications will be important. You will have to demonstrate why a change of behavior is important. Use the tools out there that are available to help. I think what the association and you are doing is wonderful. As long as the association and you are committed to transparency and continuous improvement, then you can be successful against detractors."

Other discussions included:

- GCSAA governance issues, including voting procedures, dual membership and the chapter affiliation agreement, which will be renewed Dec. 31, 2009.
- Efforts by GCSAA to manage its expenses and gen-

erate new revenues. While the board will approve the association budget in December, the sentiment is not to raise member dues for 2010.

- The health of the GCSAA Education Conference and the Golf Industry Show, as well as the future rotation of the event.
- GCSAA advocacy efforts with lawmakers, media and other audiences.
- Best practices by chapters to increase effectiveness and engagement.
- GCSAA membership recruitment and retention activities.

After nearly 10 years, GCSAA's first digital publication, *Newsweekly*, will cease production next month. In an effort to reduce the amount of e-mail sent to GCSAA members, consolidate communication efforts and eliminate duplication of information, the last issue will be published on Dec. 17.

You will be able to find the information usually contained in *Newsweekly* on the GCSAA homepage, www.gcsaa.org, in the digital version of *Golf Course Management* magazine, and in the GCSAA members-only publication *GCSAA This Week*.

GCSAA has instituted a staff furlough for Nov. 23-25 and will observe the Thanksgiving holiday Nov. 26-27. In addi-

tion, GCSAA will be closed Dec. 24-Jan. 1 for the Christmas holiday, for an additional staff furlough Dec. 28-31, and for the New Year's Day holiday Jan. 1. The association headquarters will provide minimal services through its call center on the days of the furlough.

The partnering associations of the Golf Industry Show (GIS) will team up with the San Diego Food Bank for the second annual GIS service project, presented in partnership with The Toro Co.

The San Diego Food Bank, which relies entirely on volunteers to sort, pack and distribute food, provides nearly 24,000 meals a day and feeds over 360,000 people per month. On Monday, Feb. 8, GIS will send both a morning and an afternoon shift, of 100 volunteers each, to work on site at the food bank. Attendees can visit www.golfindustryshow.com for more information and to register to participate in this worthwhile cause and give back to the San Diego community. Also during the week, attendees may donate food and money at the convention center.

At the 2009 GIS in New Orleans, \$10,000 was raised for the New Orleans Area Habitat for Humanity, and almost 200 volunteers worked on the construction of eight new homes. 🌱

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