

Delegates Meeting

By Jim Vanherwynen, Certified Golf Course Superintendent, South Hills Country Club

On October 28th through the 30th I was privileged to represent the WGCSA as your Chapter Delegate. Upon arrival Friday the 28th we took a tour of the headquarters in Lawrence and had the opportunity to meet Chapter Delegates from Chapters around the country. 93 Chapters were represented with more than one third of those being new Delegates such as myself. It was enlightening to me to get on the property and one of the first things you see is the Old Tom Morris statue which is truly a work of art. The statue, which stands seven feet tall, was sculpted by Superintendent Brad Pearson of Holdrege, Nebraska. One instantly feels a sense of history for the game and its connection to St Andrews. The headquarters facility is top notch and a fantastic venue to host meetings in a very comfortable setting.

The weekend is filled with many discussions of the state of the GCSAA and the value they give their members, the industry itself, and an exceptional opportunity to put a face to a name for which we have seen or read about in trade magazines or at the GIS. It is an opportunity to get intimate with the Board of Directors of the GCSAA, the candidates for new directors, and other Superintendents from around the country who share the same passion for our profession as we all do. New ideas arise continuously throughout the weekend as the communications are very open and candid. If you recall, Jeff Millies brought back the idea of PAR4Research from a delegates meeting and with the help of an outstanding committee have made this an extremely popular and successful endeavor for the golf community in the State of Wisconsin along with the members of the WGCSA.

During the weekend I learned about the numerous opportunities the GCSAA has for its members such as the redesigning of the website and the online job board, the self assessment tool, online forums, IPM planning guide, social media presence and the Field Staff Support. I also learned that coming soon there will be free webcasts, an expanded Field Staff in the NE and NW regions, guide for sustainable practices, expanded on-demand courses, nutrient management templates, and golf course energy use & conservation reports. One thing I was truly impressed with was how much "behind the scenes" programs that many of us take for granted or simply don't know is how much advocacy and government relations and programs takes place on the local, state and national levels. The media & public relations involvement with golf 20/20, WE ARE GOLF campaign, NPDES and H2B programs and the National Parks

& Recreation Association to name a few.

The bottom line is the GCSAA is in the forefront of Environmental Stewardship and Sustainability and securing our future through supporting industry efforts to grow the game, strengthen industry's position with lawmakers, create greater affiliation between members and the Environmental Institute for Golf so as to put positive perception in the public eye which is increasingly more important. Ultimately The GCSAA continues to build engagement on the chapter level, enhancing their ability to provide and serve their members which equals – you. Once again I came back from the meeting enlightened and was grateful for the opportunity. Here is a brief summary of the Delegates meeting from the GCSAA.

"Ask and you shall receive" was the theme for the 19th GCSAA Chapter Delegates Meeting, conducted Oct. 28-29-30 at GCSAA headquarters in Lawrence, Kan., and the Airport Hilton in Kansas City, Mo.

Association executive staff and elected leaders solicited feedback and frank discussion on a multitude of topics and charged attendees to communicate with their respective chapters upon their return home. GCSAA Vice President Sandy Queen, CGCS set the tone in his welcome to the delegates saying "we want to hear from you. It is vital that you share this information with your chapters."

Value of Membership

GCSAA President Bob Randquist, CGCS repeated a message that he has emphasized throughout his term in office: GCSAA must enhance the value of membership and demonstrate it to the members. He outlined several new programs implemented in the past year including expansion of the field staff program, creation of a new job board, growth of social media, a new website, new resources to enhance sustainability of the golf facility and the online Self Assessment Tool to measure member competency and identify resources to facilitate improvement.

This discussion and an open town hall meeting format generated many suggestions as to how GCSAA might increase and demonstrate value, with many ideas focused on delivering value at the chapter level through field staff and enhanced use of technology.

Second-year delegate Jeff Berg, Class A member representing the Virginia GCSA said the many ideas offered were a by-product of the board's willingness to listen and engage the

delegates. "Sometimes it's good to shake things up a little," Berg said. "Stirring the pot is not necessarily a bad thing if it's done positively. We came out of the weekend with items on which both GCSAA and the chapters can take action."

Field Staff Expansion

Randquist elaborated on the field staff program, noting that four regions (Florida, Great Lakes, South Central, Southwest) were staffed and two more would be assigned by the end of 2011 (Northeast, Northwest). All nine GCSAA regions are slated to have resident field staff by the end of 2013. He said the directive for the program remains unchanged: to create a greater link between the association and its chapters – something he believes is happening "to an even greater degree" than he had expected this early in the program.

GCSAA staff also provided several examples of the activities where field staff have helped to facilitate chapter effectiveness through association programs including strategic planning, advocacy, membership growth and allied association relations. A roundtable discussion was conducted among smaller groupings of delegates to examine areas for opportunity and measures of success for field staff. The feedback was loud and clear that the program had great potential to create an even greater impact in the future.

"I was one of the early naysayers," Minnesota GCSA delegate Kevin Clunis, CGCS said. "But once we began hearing about the successes and how it was helping chapters, my president asked me 'how fast can we get ours?' I'm sold on it."

Member Standards: 10 Years Later

For Randquist, the meeting featured a bit of a "Back to the Future" moment with the introduction of the Member Standards Advisory Group which has been formed to take a strategic look at the impacts the membership standards have had on the association and its members. It has been 10 years since members approved the implementation of member standards by a 3 to 1 margin. Randquist, who served on the group that coordinated the development of those standards, said the current board felt the review was prudent, but not based on any preconceived notions.

"Ultimately there may be no changes to the standards," Randquist said. "But the board felt enough time had passed since the implementation that we could get some feedback on the impact. We selected the advisory group, but that is as far as we went. What they find will not be directed by the board."

The group, which will work independent of the board, will review the impact of the standards to determine if the goals are being met, if there have been any unintended consequences, and make recommendations to the board on a future course of action in regards to standards. The 11-member

group will be chaired by GCSAA Past President Sean Hoolehan, CGCS and with GCSAA Past President Tim O'Neill, CGCS serving as vice-chair. It will feature a diverse cross section of the membership including certified members, Class A,

SM and C representatives. There is no firm deadline for the group's report, but an update on the group's progress will be delivered

at the 2012 Chapter Delegates Meeting.

Additional Discussion Items/Activities

- It was announced that beginning Nov. 1, GCSAA webcasts would be free of charge for all members.

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- It was announced that members wishing to apply for certification can now do so immediately upon attainment of Class A status. The additional requirements of one year as a Class A and 5.0 education points have been removed.
- GCSAA continues to grow its collaboration with allied golf associations to strengthen the game of golf. It is imperative that representatives of those organizations on the facility level work in the same fashion to affect positive change as well.
- Newly appointed chief operating officer Richard Konzem was introduced.
- Candidates running for board and officer positions made presentations and hosted breakout discussions
- An in-depth presentation on GCSAA government relations efforts revealed collaboration among staff, chapters and allied associations is having a positive impact.
- Four chapters made presentations on programs they have instituted with the assistance of GCSAA resources in the areas of BMP development, media/public relations, strategic planning and government relations.
- The GCSAA promotional package on the Golf Channel was well-received and supported as an important investment of funds.
- Outlined were new features for Conference and Show, and the National Championship and Golf Classic including edu-

cation programs, networking opportunities and cost-saving options available to attendees. This includes a chapter incentive program for golfers who have not participated in the tournament in the past two years.

Candidates for The GCSAA 2012 Board of Directors

PRESIDENT - Sandy G. Queen, CGCS

VICE PRESIDENT - Patrick R. Finlen, CG

SECRETARY/TREASURER - Keith A. Ihms, CGCS & John J. O'Keefe, CGCS

DIRECTORS (4 members are on the slate to fill 2 open director positions.) -

Rafael Barajas, CGCS, Darren J. Davis, Mark F. Jordan, CGCS, Bill H. Maynard, CGCS

Peter J. Grass, CGCS, remains on the board with one year remaining in his two-year director term. Robert M. Randquist, CGCS, will serve on the board for one year as immediate past president. Both secretary/treasurer candidates have one year remaining in their director terms, so the board will fill the secretary/treasurer's vacated director seat by appointment following the election.

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As of Nov. 1, 2011 all live and On Demand webcasts are free to members, and participants earn 0.2 education points by completing the evaluation survey after the webcast.

Remaining 2011 Live Sessions

Dec. 6: GDDs for Timing PGR Applications
Dec. 15: Dollars & Sense of Foliar Fertilization
Dec. 20: Ten Amendments to Better Soil
Dec. 21: Critical Eye for the Turfgrass Guy

On Demand Webcasts

Sessions are available in agronomy, business, communication, environmental and leadership.

Simply log in as a member at GCSAA.org, find the webcast link under the education tab and search the topics for the session you want. GCSAA will e-mail you a link to watch the session.

The nice thing is you can stop and start a On Demand Webcast if you are interrupted or to take notes.

GCSAA Scholars Program

The Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) has awarded scholarships to 13 college students as part of the GCSAA Scholars Program administered by GCSAA's philanthropic organization, The Environmental Institute for Golf.

Applicants must be enrolled in a recognized undergraduate program in a major field related to golf/turf management and be a GCSAA member. Undergraduate applicants must have successfully completed at least 24 credit hours or the equivalent of one year of full-time study in an appropriate major.

- Michael McNamara, Mendenhall Award Winner, Penn State university, \$6,000.
- Royal Healy, Allan MacCurrach Award, University of Massachusetts, \$5,000
- Wayne Shane Lee, Abassador Award, Penn State University \$2,000
- Clinton Steketee, Michigan State University, \$2,250
- Peter White III, University of Massachusetts, \$2,250
- Tyler Manly, Michigan State University, \$2,000
- Tyler Patton, Penn State University, \$2,000
- **Dustin Bernau, University of Wisconsin, \$750**
- Anthony Minniti, University of Connecticut, \$750
- Matt Carstens, Washington State University, \$500
- Colton Fees, Oklahoma State University, \$500
- Jake Halak, Ohio State University, \$500
- Jason Von Engen, Iowa State University, \$500



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