

## End of Year Thoughts

By Chad Harrington, Golf Course Superintendent, Autumn Ridge Golf Course

I am not sure this is my favorite time of year, but I definitely look forward to some of what late fall and early winter bring to our profession. Many of the superintendents in Wisconsin burn the candle at both ends during the golf season. We try to be everything to everyone, and unfortunately that dedication to the golf course can sometimes leave the most important ones in our lives getting the short end of that burning candle...including ourselves.

The recent weather change has afforded me to take the time for a few things that I have been putting off for a while. The first thing would be a knee surgery, that by no means was anything I was looking forward to and by default of the down time from a trip to the hospital, a little time to sit, with my leg up of course, and think about where 2013 had gone.

It seems like yesterday we were getting ready to usher in 2013. My first year in this position with our association has truly been a whirlwind. I look at all of the goals those of you who have served on this board have been able to accomplish during your time as leaders and I am honored and humbled to follow in


your footsteps and want to thank you for the groundwork you have laid for our association to follow. I, like I am certain many presidents of the WGCSA before me, have goals. One of my goals has been to attempt to work with our allied associations within our state to help enhance our presence and opportunities we may have as superintendents. Some of what I have found in conversation with many of the other golf oriented associations is that things are not easy at this time. I know that is preaching to the choir talking to all of you and at a time when other associations struggle to maintain membership; ours continues to be loyal and sound.

A few years ago, well at least I would like to believe it was just a few, under the Presidency of Mr. Dustin Riley the WGCSA Board of Directors went through a strategic planning session. I actually believe it to be four or five all day planning sessions with Steve Randall from GCSAA who help guide and organize the board thoughts into what we at that time were considered a list of long term goals and pathways for the WGCSA. Some of the items that we discussed

were matters of articulating into print what was the objective and mission statement of the aAssociation, but what took the longest was looking back at all of the great things we had done and where we had grown from and setting realistic goals and expectations for the future. One of the overwhelming sediments that came from all of the hours of conversation was that with our profession getting more and more time consuming to our lives, is that we would need help.

Our association hired Mr. Brett Grams as our Executive Director and he has done a fabulous job of guiding the WGCSA during an extremely turbulent time, he has done so in a very organized and fiscally responsible way. I urge all of you to thank Brett for his efforts. He has more than picked up the slack for items that could have slipped through the cracks he has afforded our association the ability to keep marking goals off of our preverbal checklist. That brings me back to being able to sit back with my leg up and think.

Our association is now at a point where we have discussed hosting another strategic planning secession and I have talked to Mr. John Miller, the GCSAA Regional Field Staff Representative, about sitting down with us again. We have discussed being able to do this between the first of the 2014 and our Spring Business Meeting. I ask each and every one of you to take a moment during this somewhat less hectic time of year in the golf world and ask yourself, "where do I want to see this association go in the next ten to twenty years". "What have we done well and what can we improve upon." I would love to hear from each of you as we start to assemble a new set of goals, a new set of standards, and a new set of priorities for the future of the WGCSA.

I hope that all of you had a great 2013 and even better 2014. I would also like wish each of you and your families a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and I look forward to talking to you soon. 



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