

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

WGCSA Board Hosts Strategic Planning Meeting

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

The weather seems to finally be turning for the better after one of the coldest off seasons our State has ever seen. The golf courses are slowly greening up, and the golfers are making their way to the tee. It hardly feels like we have hit the Golf Season, but we have already had two of our Summer meetings. I would like to thank our host Superintendents and courses, Matt Kregel at The Golf Club at Strawberry Creek and Bruce Worzella at West Bend Country Club. It is an honor to have such great facilities in fantastic condition to be able to hold our events at. Thanks again to all who have offered their courses to hold our events.

On March 19, 2014 members of the Wisconsin Golf Course Superintendents Association Board of Directors met and held a strategic planning session with GCSAA Associate Director of Chapter Outreach Steve Randall and Great Lakes Field Staff Representative John Miller. The mission of the session was to help the WGCSA design a roadmap of activities for the coming months and years to build additional momentum of a well-organized chapter.

The members were asked to write down ideas and expectations that we would like to accomplish during the session. Some of them were:

- Learn where we have been and where we are going
- Educate the golfers as to what we do
- Fill vacant positions from within the region
- Members understand the value of membership
- Educate public to our existence
- Increase our status as leaders within the golf industry as a whole
- Commitment to UW
- Communication and participation with allied associations
- How to keep assistants involved
- Communication between the board members, not leave it all to Brett (Chapter Manager)

The board then went into the SCOR analysis to determine the Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities and Risks of the chapter.

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STRENGTHS:

- Strong board with young/savvy personalities
- Fall symposium
- Camaraderie/networking
- Strong chapter executive
- Official newsletter – The Grassroots
- Financial standing (money for research, etc.)
- Economics of golf industry in Wisconsin
- Strong industry partner program
- Diverse board, different regions from the state, different facilities involved
- Membership – consistent from number standpoint, are leaders in the industry
- History – strong group who have been influential for seasons
- Education
- Web site
- Communications
- University of Wisconsin connection

CHALLENGES

- Ensuring the younger generation sees value
- Getting more members
- Declining golf revenue/declining staff/declining time to accomplish things for the chapter
- How easy are we to do business with? Using PayPal – is that the best?
- Knowing what members want... Would a survey make sense
- Geography (large)
- Communicating to allied organizations and avid golfers what we do/what our value is
- Being seen as the “voice” with issues affecting golf/golf course management
- Professional image – Branding
- Offering education that we should

OPPORTUNITIES

- Utilizing field staff
- Promote/Proactively talk to media to discuss golf
- Larger variety of education topics
- Roughly ½ of courses are members
- Fall symposium
- Schedule/Format
- Grow and make it a true regional show
- Giving back to the industry – scholarship, research, industry presentations
- Volunteer work
- Using Facebook with other social media
- Tap into other associations to help portray image – not utilizing synergy (two-way street)
- Web Site – content to non-members
- Regional Education
- Using technology – share documents, use for SOPs
- Developing our own foundation

RISKS

- Competing with other shows/education opportunities
- Costs
- Economy – potential hyper-inflation
- Staff leaving/taking them for granted
- Being complacent
- Competition among other association
- Environmental issues/concerns



PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

Mission Statement

Following the SCOR analysis, we moved into a discussion on the mission statement. We decided to take some of their existing statement and condense it. The following before and after mission statements are below.

Was: The Wisconsin GCSA is committed to serve each member by promoting the profession and enhancing the growth of golf through education, communication and research.

New: The Wisconsin GCSA is dedicated to ensuring members have the resources to provide quality playing conditions, advocating on behalf of the golf course management profession and supporting the future of golf.

Vision Statement

Following the mission statement discussion we moved into the vision statement for the chapter. Ultimately the vision points out how the chapter should be viewed by its members. It also provides a forward-thinking thought process to uncover a bigger picture perspective. The vision statement is as follows:

Was: The Wisconsin GCSA is dedicated to increase the value provided to its members and to the profession by:

- *Enhancing the professionalism of its members by strengthening our role as a leading golf organization in the state*
- *Growing and recognizing the benefits of a diverse membership*

throughout Wisconsin

- *Educating and promoting our members as leaders in environmental stewardship*
- *Offering affordable, high value educational programs at the forefront of technology and service*
- *Being key to enjoyment and the economic success of the game of golf*

New: The Wisconsin GCSA is dedicated to increase the value provided to its members and to the profession by:

- **Be recognized as the leading golf organization in the state**
- **Growing and serving a diverse membership**
- **Advocating environmental stewardship**
- **Offering valuable educational programs at the forefront of technology and communication**
- **Being critical to the enjoyment and economic success of the facility**

I would like to thank the WGCSA Board of Directors, Executive Director Brett Grams, the Golf House of Wisconsin for hosting our meeting, and the GCSAA Team of John Miller and Steve Randall that helped to facilitate the planning session. It was obvious that a lot of thought and research had been done prior to the meeting and helped to promote a lot great discussion. I wish all of you the best of luck in the 2014 Golf Season and I hope to see each and every one of you at one of our Summer event. Thank you for your support of our Association. ✓



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