

(Continued from page 39)

intention of release in 1914. That publication intention never happened and the draft remained in the hands of his long time associate, J.B. McGovern, until its return to the Ross family recently. The American Society of Golf Course Architects and the Ross family recognized the importance of printing the manuscript. Ron Whitten, architectural editor of *Golf Digest* (and a luncheon speaker at the Wisconsin Golf Turf Symposium a couple of years ago), clearly had a hand with presentation.

Curiously and coincidentally, the U.S. Open golf course (Oakland Hills) and the U.S. Women's Open golf course (Pine Needles) were both Donald Ross designed golf courses.

The book is about early golf course design and can in no way be compared to the Hurdzan volume. Maybe the most significant thing about both books being released in the same year is that the comparison between the two demonstrates how far golf course architecture, construction and management have come in 75 years. Ross' book is a collection of topics treated with some brevity by who is, I think, golf's all-time favorite course designer. These short essays are occasionally complemented with Ross blueprint drawings and some excellent b/w photos. The paper, ink color and font give the book an antique, priceless and dated feeling.

The book compares favorably with the 1995 winner, *THE SPIRIT OF ST. ANDREWS* by Alister MacKenzie, and I'll confess I like the rambling narrative style of the St. Andrews book better. But it is only a matter of splitting hairs — both authors were Scottish born, early golf course architects who trained under Old Tom Morris. I really don't want to choose one over the other!

The charm of this book, for golf course superintendents, comes in the subjects treated by Donald Ross. Most of the earlier architects were also very good turf men — agronomists, if you please — oftentimes learning that part of golf as thoroughly as they did design or playing strategy. The topics in this volume range from "Don't Overfertilize" to "Mowing Greens" and there isn't a single one that won't interest you.

These two books are terrific, for different reasons, and I recommend

them without reservation or qualification. Both are from Sleeping Bear Press. We owe, I think, a debt of gratitude to Brian Lewis for bringing these and a number of other golf course books to fruition.

When you are in Madison next January for the Wisconsin Turfgrass Association EXPO, do yourself a favor and visit the new Barnes and Noble Bookstore near West Towne. It is minutes from the Holiday Inn. The store is the company's second largest in the country — the largest is on Fifth Avenue in Manhattan — and fitting for a town ranked second in per capita annual book purchases. It is a great store. I was cruising through it one day and ran across a reviewer's copy of *MAKING THE GRASS GREENER ON YOUR SIDE* by Ken Melrose. Melrose was the CEO of The Toro Company at the time the book was written in 1995. Melrose is still at Toro; the office of CEO (or president?) is now a committee of three as I read recently.

The book was written for people

operating in large workplaces, not limited ones like our golf course shops. But, surprisingly, a lot of what he says can be applied to our operations. It is quite practical and full of real life examples and illustrations from Toro's operation under Melrose.

I enjoyed the unabashed references to the golf course and turfgrass industries. For example, the book is sectioned into four headings: I.) Preparing the Soil, II.) Seed Not Sod, III.) Managing and Maintaining the Turf, and IV.) The Harvest. Chapter 14 is titled "The Grass Can Be Greener on Your Side," the same as the book title.

It is only a 225 page book — I read it entirely in two nights and found it pleasant reading. I wouldn't suggest, necessarily, that you run out and buy it, but it was worth my time. It reminded me of a few years ago when I sat and ate dinner with Melrose at a GCSAA conference, due to the kindness of Dr. Jim Watson. If you'd like to read this book, you can borrow mine. 🌱

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## Root Zone Amendment Effects on the Quality and Nutritional Status of Creeping Bentgrass Putting Greens

By Christopher L. Kerkman and Dr. Wayne R. Kussow  
Department of Soil Science, University of Wisconsin-Madison

The putting green used in this study was constructed in 1993 according to USGA standards at the O. J. Noer Turfgrass Research and Education Facility. The green was constructed with 10 different root zone mixes blended from 3 different sands, 6 organic amendments and one inorganic amendment. The objectives of the project were to assess the effects of the amendments on putting green quality and on the nutritional status of the greens. Some of the more important and useful observations resulting from the study are the subject of this report.

All indications from the first 3 years of the study are that the USGA recommendation that the root zone amendment contain >85% organic matter is too stringent for Wisconsin conditions. The putting green with the highest quality ratings has consistently been that whose root zone amendment is peat humus containing only 64% organic matter. There seems to be several reasons for this. One is better moisture retention than one gets with a highly organic root zone amendment. Associated with this increased moisture retention has been the absence of localized dry spot. The key figure here seems to be retention of an average moisture retention capacity of more than 12% water volume in the root zone.

The increased moisture retention by the peat humus green is not due to the ability of the peat humus itself to hold more water than, say, a Canadian sphagnum peat. Rather, what seems to be at issue is the amount of organic matter in the root zone mix. All mixes were 80/20 volume blends. Because the peat humus had a bulk density more than double that of the highly organic peats and blending was on a volume basis, the peat humus root zone mix ended up with nearly one percent more organic matter on a weight basis.

Across the 6 organic amendments there were significant relationships between root zone mix organic matter content and moisture retention and between amendment fiber content and root zone organic matter content. The higher the organic matter content of the mix, the greater the amount of water retained in the top 3 inches of the root zone. The higher the fiber content of the amendment (and the lower its bulk density), the lower the organic matter content of the mix and the lower the amount of water retained in the top few inches of the root zone.

The significance of these relationships lies in the fact that throughout this study there has been a strong relationship between the moisture retention properties of the greens and their quality. This began with the rate of bentgrass establishment and has continued through the first two years after grow-in. Thus, our conclusion is that in the selection of organic amendments for root zone mixes, attention needs to focus more on the moisture retention capacity of the mix than saturated flow or infiltration rate.

An interesting observation involved the development of localized dry spot on one replicate of a treatment that has generally not had the problem. This occurred during a two-week period in which irrigation was the only source of water and daily water inputs on each plot were being monitored. Due to persistent drying winds over a period of three days, this particular plot received only 1/3 the intended amount of irrigation. That's all it took for development of prominent localized dry spots. One year later, the dry spots still persist. While an isolated observation, the implications seem to be that drying down greens for tournament play or deliberately keeping greens on the dry side runs the risk of creating localized dry spot, particularly when the root zone mix has been compounded from a highly organic amendment at a volume ratio that results in less than 12% moisture retention in the root zone.

Choice of root zone mix amendment was found to have some effect on the nutritional status of putting greens that, at a level subservient to moisture retention, can influence

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putting green quality. Fertilizer nitrogen found in the clippings for one month after application of 15N labeled ammonium sulfate was significantly different among the different root zone mixes. The reasons were differences in the moisture retention capacities of the different root zone mixes and non-uniformity in irrigation water application. Leaching of fertilizer N beyond the 8-inch depth of the root zone resulted in less uptake by the bentgrass. The amount of leaching increased significantly for those plots constructed with root zone mixes with low moisture retention capacity and situated in those areas of the green that consistently received more than average amounts of irrigation water.

Laboratory studies showed that all of the root zone mixes required approximately the same amount of fertilizer P to raise soil test P by one unit. This ratio turned out to be 0.029 lb P<sub>2</sub>O<sub>5</sub>/1 ppm soil test P per yd<sup>3</sup>. While this ratio was quite constant across the various mixes, there were major differences regarding the optimum soil test P level for turfgrass. We found that this ranged from 5 ppm P in the straight sand root zone to 32 ppm P in the root zone mix blended with peat humus.

Type of root zone amendment also affected the potassium relationships in the root zone mixes. When the mixes contained peats with more than 85% organic matter, soil solution K<sup>+</sup> concentrations were 3 or more times higher

than in the mixes containing amendments with mineral contents in excess of 17%. This difference in solution K concentrations readily explains why USGA greens typically have excessive K<sup>+</sup> leaching rates.

From this research, we feel that the USGA recommendation that the organic amendment in root zone mixes contain at least 85% organic matter should be modified, at least for putting greens in northern regions of the country. Allowing for higher mineral content in the amendment will lead to higher moisture retention in the root zones. In our experience, this will result in more rapid and uniform bentgrass emergence, better putting green quality, and less susceptibility to formation of localized dry spot. Of secondary importance may be reductions in the amounts of fertilizer N and K required. While we've experimented with only one peat humus amendment, indications are that use of the material in root zone mixes will not result in unacceptably low water infiltration rates. Measures taken in 1995 revealed an infiltration rate of 13.1 inches/hour in the peat humus treatment, which was not significantly different from the Canadian sphagnum peat and Dakota reed sedge root zone mixes.

This report is based on the M.S. thesis of Chris Kerkman. Chris received his M.S. degree in June, 1996 and is employed by Egypt Farms, Baltimore, MD. ♣

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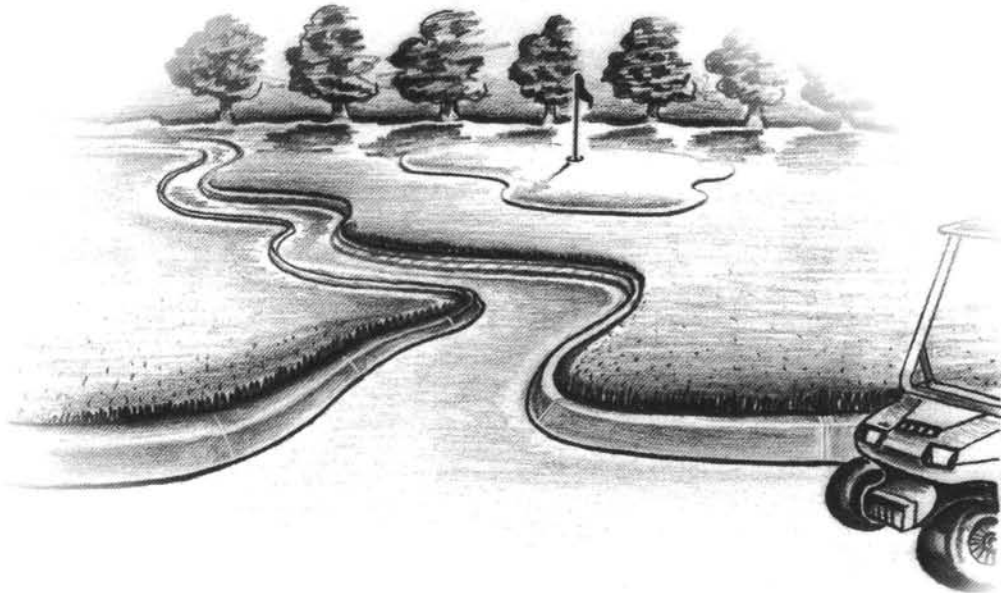
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# TURF 2000

By Steve Millett  
Department of Plant Pathology  
University of Wisconsin-Madison

"Turf 2000." It sounds like the title GCSAA will call that year's international conference and show, or even a new mower model or the first commercially available transgenic turfgrass. It is going to be a weird feeling writing out a check and dating it 2000. We will probably get sick of hearing Prince's song that goes, "Tonight I'm gonna party like it's 1999!" The new century hype will probably drive us all crazy. The fact of the matter is that the 21st century is fast approaching us and turfies of the world must be prepared to meet the challenges of the new millennium. What will be the key challenges facing superintendents in the next century?

I believe that the key research and educational challenges facing golf course superintendents in the next decade are how to recruit, train and educate superintendents, researchers and educators. Because they are, after all, the secret to success. If superintendents have the best colleagues, researchers and educators on their team, then any obstacle they face can be overcome. Challenges such as nature conservation, occupational hazards, media relations and biotechnology deployment will be easily handled. The key challenge facing superintendents is self-improvement of individuals and the profession through recruiting, training and education.

Recruiting the best personnel involves the ability to identify quality prospects and the enthusiasm and energy to catch their attention. A key question that should be addressed is, "How are superintendents going to convince quality college students, researchers and educators that this profession is the place to be?" Well, here I am, a

non-superintendent, writing about challenges facing superintendents. The Wisconsin turf industry somehow recruited (or put a spell on) a botanist to study snow mold of bentgrass, be active in turfgrass extension programs and help teach the turf leaders of tomorrow. Wisconsin superintendents must be doing something right because there is also a group of young and enthusiastic turfies that are majoring in turfgrass here at UW and at other less fortunate universities across the nation. These young turfies are the leaders of tomorrow and they know the superintendent profession is the place to be, otherwise they wouldn't be working so hard to obtain their degrees.

Training and educating quality recruits is probably the most difficult challenge. The reduction of federal and state support of universities is being felt by turfgrass students, researchers, educators and the industries that demand them. GCSAA reports that 88% of all golf course superintendents have some sort of college training, while 67% have a two- or four-year degree. The bottom

line here is that most superintendents have a college degree and should be concerned about current trends in higher education.

Tuition increases are one reason why more students are working to pay for college now. A recent study shows the percentage of working students has increased from 34% in 1970 to 46% now. This added pressure prevents some from pursuing higher education. A recent survey shows the cost of attending college is rising more than the inflation rate. College costs have moderated in recent years, but tuition and room and board at both private and public schools have soared. The college board survey says that four-year public colleges and universities this year boosted tuition, on average, by six percent for undergraduates. Room and board also went up an average of six percent at four-year public colleges and four-year private schools.

Graduate students are not exempt from this money squeeze. Research assistantships awarded to graduate students at UW in 1996

*(Continued on page 46)*

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start at \$16,632 per year. Tuition for this fall semester totalled \$6,647.95 (that's about \$14,000 per year if you count summer school). Well, that doesn't leave much money for food or rent. Ahhh, the life of a graduate student! Ever heard the saying, "You can't get something for nothing?" Adding insult to injury is the IRS sticking it to the UW about not taking taxes out of our measly assistantships. Of course the IRS won the lawsuit. To compensate for this "potential loss of income," Virginia Hinshaw, Dean of The Graduate School, has ordered an assistantship increase of \$996 per year because, "You (graduate students) are our #1 priority and we are willing to forego support of other programs to meet your needs." Gee, thanks Virginia.

Researchers and educators are also faced with doing more with less money. The competition for the few remaining funding sources has become a cut-throat game that will eventually hinder scientific progress and creativity. The funding sources

aren't there anymore. Universities are now seeking help from the industries that demand quality graduates and research. The Wisconsin Turfgrass Association, the Wisconsin Golf Course Superintendents Association and some select turf professionals have responded by joining with the University of Wisconsin in supporting various extension, research and educational programs. This joint venture has set a precedent that others are looking to as a solution. Hopefully, this ingenious partnership will carve out great rewards for the turf industry of Wisconsin.

Don't get me wrong about the importance of other issues facing superintendents. Environmental issues will be a continuous challenge. Over the last decade, the turfgrass industry has shifted from a heavy reliance on pesticides to an enlightened protection and conservancy of the environment. Where are we going with this environmental emphasis? Are superintendents becoming more like park naturalists? Will the Sierra Club and turf industry team together and build a "Mother

Nature's Golf Course?" Significant changes have and will continue to occur in regards to the industry's protection of the environment. It is vital to our success that there be a clear and long term plan that includes a diversity of viewpoints.

Occupational hazards are also key issues that will challenge superintendents. Does pesticide exposure increase your chances for cancer? What action should be taken to protect superintendents? Should monies be allocated for more health research or should it be spent on safety education? What are the appropriate safety education actions? Energy and monies should be spent emphasizing the protection of humans in the work place ENVIRONMENT.

Through the WGCSA, WTA, GCSAA, and other allied associations, golf course superintendents have made many advancements in recruitment, training and education during the last decade. The pace must be kept because the challenges of tomorrow can only be met if we have high quality colleagues. 🌱

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# 1996 Chapter Relations Meeting Synopsis of Recommendations

By Mark Kienert

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The fourth annual Chapter Relations Meeting was held September 7-8, 1996 in Lawrence, Kansas. Representatives from 88 chapters came together to discuss pertinent issues and provide direction for the future of GCSAA.

Paul McGinnis, GCSAA Vice President and chairman of the Chapter Relations Committee, asked the chapter delegates to share their concerns and ideas on issues ranging from finances, technology, membership and election activities. With that in mind, the chapter delegates participated in discussion on a variety of topics and issues. The major points and recommendations on each issue are outlined below.

## Issue #1.

Is a dues increase needed to generate revenue for the association, to sustain program activity for the next three years and have to moderate bottom line of revenues over expenses? A scenario of a 20% dues increase was discussed.

The potential solutions were to maintain the status quo, or to develop projects and services that set a vision for the future.

In a straw poll, approximately 25 delegates preferred to vote on a possible increase in membership dues at the 1998 annual meeting in Anaheim, while approximately 66 delegates preferred voting on a dues increase at the 1997 annual meeting in Las Vegas. It was unanimous that a dues increase is merited at some point. The issue will be referred to the board of directors for possible placement as a ballot issue at the 1997 annual meeting in Las Vegas.

## Issue #2.

Beginning July 1, 1997, individuals who join a local chapter must also join GCSAA to fulfill the dual membership requirement. A verification process must be created to ensure that member who joins a local chapter also joins GCSAA and vice versa.

It was recommended that GCSAA work with each chapter as needed to ensure a smooth process in handling the paperwork after the dual membership requirement takes effect, but would like to develop a standardized plan in handling membership applications and payments. A new member should apply at the chapter level first, and the chapter should then forward the GCSAA membership application and dues payment to GCSAA for processing. This would ensure that new members join the chapter of their choice first.

## Issue #3.

GCSAA chapters have raised concerns during the re-affiliation process. Chapter delegates received a survey prior to the meeting, asking them to rank six affiliation

issues in order of importance. The six items were the time, efforts and resources needed to complete the tax-exempt and incorporation requirements; the dual membership requirement and its effect on superintendents from small budget or nine hole courses and whether it will limit chapter growth; problems acquiring insurance; how the directors and officers composition requirements may limit chapter growth; bylaw's conformity; and financial burdens for smaller chapters.

Survey results indicated that the dual membership requirement was of the greatest concern to chapters, followed by the directors and officer's composition requirements, bylaw's conformity requirements, financial burdens on smaller chapters, tax-exempt and incorporation, and problems with insurance, respectively.

GCSAA will try to identify current problems with these affiliation items as well as other affiliation concerns that the chapters are experiencing and find solutions to the problems to help every chapter re-affiliate with GCSAA. GCSAA's chapter relations department staff will work with chapters to resolve any affiliation issues that arise at any

*(Continued on page 49)*

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time and will keep chapters updated on affiliation progress. Chapters who have not submitted affiliation materials to GCSAA by October 1 will receive a phone call from one of the Chapter Relations Committee members, encouraging them to submit affiliation materials before the December 31 deadline.

#### Issue #4.

GCSAA is seeking a better way to use its logo to increase exposure on "Par for the Course" and the Web site, and is seeking a method to harmonize GCSAA's logo.

In a straw poll, about 50% of the delegates liked the idea of using one unified logo, while the other 50% preferred not having a unified logo. This brought on a question, which is more important — the ownership of the chapter logo or the aesthetics? About 30-40% of the delegates felt that the ownership of the logo was important while about 20% felt that the aesthetics (graphic look) were more important. The additional 40-50% of the delegates didn't have a strong feeling about either, but are pleased with their current chapter logo.

GCSAA and the chapters will continue to explore options and identify opportunities to increase logo exposure for both GCSAA and the chapters.

#### Issue #5.

At the 1996 annual meeting in Orlando, an amendment was passed to lower the dues for class C members

from \$210 to \$105. In addition, class C members lost the right to vote. Should class C members regain some the privileges they lost, such as voting rights? In addition, should there be a split in classification for class C members between career assistant superintendents and those who intend to become superintendents (entry-level assistants)?

The delegates had to decide whether to submit a proposal to the Bylaws Committee that would add an additional classification for assistant superintendents to recognize career assistants.

In a straw poll, approximately 70% of the delegates said they would like to vote on the split in the classification for assistant superintendents at the 1997 annual meeting in Las Vegas, while approximately 30% of the delegates preferred to table the discussion until next year and consider voting on the issue at the 1998 annual meeting in Anaheim.

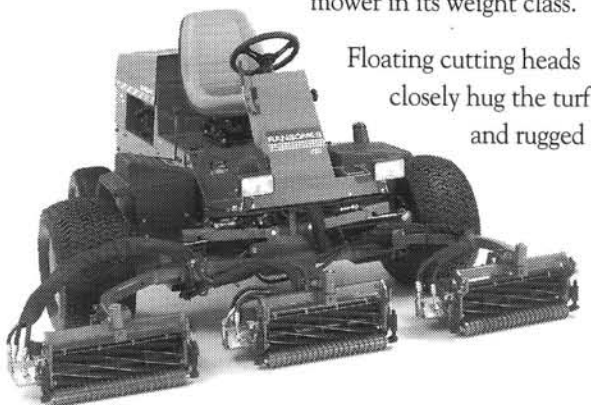
It was decided to send to the Standards/Bylaws Committee a recommendation to create a bylaw's amendment that would be voted on by the membership at the 1997 annual meeting in Las Vegas. This amendment would add an additional classification for career assistants in the class C category. Any member who volunteers to be classified as a career assistant would be required to have at least three years of experience as an assistant superintendent, would pay annual dues of \$210, would have voting privileges, would carry a gold card, and would be required to comply with the dual membership

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(Continued from page 49)

requirement. (For some, losing the "gold card" had more significance and was worth paying a higher price.) Any member who is classified as an entry-level assistant would have less than three years of experience as an assistant superintendent, would pay annual dues of \$105, would not have voting privileges, would carry a green card and would not be required to comply with the dual membership requirement.

**Issue #6.**

The Membership Committee has proposed that class AA members pay no membership dues, which would result in a reduction in membership dues revenue. Currently, class AA members pay \$16 annually. Class AA members must have served as a golf course superintendent for a minimum of 25 years, be retired as golf course superintendent, and be at least 55 years old.

When the delegates were polled, approximately 85% of delegates were in favor of waiving the dues for class AA members, while 15% were in favor of requiring class AA members to continue paying \$16 annually. The proposal to waive the dues for class AA members was sent to the Standards/Bylaws Committee for creating an amendment that would be voted on at the 1997 annual meeting in Las Vegas.

**Issue #7.**

Currently, to become a class A or B member of GCSAA, the individual must be a golf course superintendent and must pay \$210 dues annually. There are no minimum requirements or continuing education standards for membership and certification is a voluntary standard. Presently, there is no room for professional growth in the GCSAA classification system for members to take on other leadership roles within the golf industry. In addition, GCSAA is not currently able to identify a minimum skill level of its members.

One of the potential solutions brought onto the floor for discussion was to identify and consider the implementation of entry-level membership standards.

In a straw poll, a majority of the delegates wanted to proceed with the creation of entry-level membership standards and approximately 60% said they would like the process to move more rapidly than the 7 years originally suggested.

The Board will proceed with appointing a resource group to begin developing standards. The timeline may be accelerated, depending on how the program develops.

Progress on creation of standards will be brought back yearly to the delegates meeting for review and input. The membership standards would be implemented for class A, B, and C members, but careful consideration would be given to establishing entry-level maintenance standards for career assistants.

**Issue #8.**

If a member or non-member of GCSAA feels that a violation in the code of ethics has occurred, there are certain steps that should be taken to address the alleged violation.

Some of the partial solutions would be to increase awareness of situations that may result in violations of the code of ethics and assist chapters in developing procedures in how to deal with possible violations.

Recommendations would include considering and adopting an entry-level standard that requires members of GCSAA to follow the code of ethics.

Chapters need to be aware when there is a false claim of membership or when an individual claims to be a certified golf course superintendent they respond to the individual. When a club advertises for an open position, GCSAA should inform the club that they should contact GCSAA and verify that its finalists for the position are indeed members of GCSAA and/or certified before making a job offer to an individual. Newsline and other communication vehicles should be utilized to inform members about good ethical behavior.

**Issue #9.**


GCSAA is seeking ways to better serve its chapters through the chapter seminar program.

Major problems were economic. Potential solutions were to provide input into whether chapters should continue to receive rebates for chapter seminars, what efforts should be made to increase seminar attendance, and whether the overall education program should show a profit, break-even, or incur a loss of revenue.

In a straw poll, a majority of the delegates said that if the regional seminars cost was decreased, attendance would not increase proportionately, but if the cost of attending regional seminars doubled, attendance would decrease.

Most of the chapter delegates wanted the current rebate program for GCSAA regional seminars to continue, while about 15% of the delegates wanted the chapters to put forth some effort to get the rebate. About 50 of the delegates were in favor of the education program breaking even (expenses equal revenue) and about 36 of the delegates were in favor of letting the education program run deficit funding at a reasonable level.

There was agreement that the goal is to educate the membership and a profit or loss is not crucial; therefore, making a profit on the regional seminar program and using those funds for future programs is not a priority at this time.



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