



Three long-time friends — Tom Emmerich, Charlie Shaw and Dave Smith.



Mike Lee, Jeff Spence and Larry Lennert enjoying conversation at the Wisconsin Hospitality Room.



Parents-to-be Sheri and Randy Swonger.



Chad Grimm and Gabe Lopez in our WGCSA Hospitality Room.

people you like but only get to visit with once a year. It is work, too. There aren't enough places to sit and rest, maybe on purpose. Despite fabulous weather, I thought the attendance was very good.

As the GCSAA conference has grown, so have the learning opportunities and the resulting conflicts. Simply put, you cannot be two places at once. I fret over what I was not able to do while at the show. This isn't a complaint, just fussing over reality. I would suggest extending conference a day and keeping the schedule clear during show hours, but it is long enough as it is. Cost has to be factored in, also.

The general session on Friday morning was another winner. GCSAA has had Ken Blanchard on the conference program in the past, so I knew his lecture would be good. And it was, especially his comparison of ducks and eagles. Quack! Quack!

Marc Davison represented

Two of Milorganite's newest employees — Wayne Otto and Tisa Overman.



Wisconsin at the chapter editors' seminar, accepting the GCSAA award for the winning entry in category two.

The USGA Green Section educational program was at its usual excellent level. The speaker roster consisted entirely of Green Section agronomists, which I think is a good way to go since their accumulated experience and observations are unmatched.

The Friday afternoon offerings

were many, but I headed back to the equipment show, hoping to finish so I could listen to the golf course management sessions between 10 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. on Saturday.

Frank Rossi gave an excellent lecture, like he always does, and he is willing to tackle tough subjects. By the time these talks were over, the show floor was closed. As it seems to happen each year, I feel sad when the conference is actually over for another year.

I haven't gone to the dinner show for three years now, after 29 years of not missing one. The cost has gotten high, the entertainment at the last few I attended was lousy, and the head table activities had become more than I could handle. I don't know that I will ever attend again.

GCSAA needs to breathe some life into the bookstore. The exciting days of book signings and bargains and authors are apparently over. For heaven's sake, why aren't academics, like Dr. James B. Beard, invited to sign their textbooks? Dr. Beard was in town - I visited with him at the Marriott - and his book was sold out. And the selection of books was so-so; some of us would like choices of golf books other than textbooks. They are missing the boat on this, big time.

The conference was one of the best I have attended and I hope we can get back to San Diego, soon. It was so wonderful to see GCSAA staff friends - Margo Campbell Szabo, for example, and Steve Mona. The opportunities to learn and better oneself are close to overwhelming, just as it should be.

So, we are back to Orlando next year. Orlando has now become my second favorite place for conference. God willing, I will be there. 🌿



From atop the John Deere booth — the 2004 GCSAA Equipment and Product Show.



The UW-Madison Turf Class had a beautiful display, manned by Jake Schneider and Ben La Barre.



A bird's eye view of the show from high atop Toro's display.



Ralph Nicotera, a former Wisconsin kid who has done well in his career — he's VP of sales for Jacobsen.

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