

6th Annual Chapter Delegates Meeting

*MGCSA Chapter Delegate Keith Scott Traveled to GCSAA Headquarters
In Lawrence, Kansas and Came Back With This Report*

ACTIONS TAKEN

Recommendations to the GCSAA Board of Directors

Extend the current affiliation agreement for an additional five years, with minor changes to the annual reporting requirements. Affiliated chapters should be required to submit all annual affiliation requirements to GCSAA by March 31. Additional language under Article IV, Section G would enforce the attendance of representatives at the Chapter Delegates Meeting. If an affiliated chapter fails to send a representative, who is a member of the affiliated chapter, to the Chapter Delegates Meeting for two consecutive years, the chapter delegate's right to vote at the next annual meeting would be suspended.

Summary of Major Discussion Points

(The following are discussion points made during the meeting. It does not necessarily mean that action will be taken on the suggestions that were given.)

- *Article III, Section B* — The affiliation agreement allows affiliated chapters to use the affiliated chapter logo within the logo usage guidelines that were approved by GCSAA's board of directors. Affiliated chapters must ask for permission to use the primary GCSAA logo.

- *Article IV, Section G* — Should the meeting title be Chapter Delegates Meeting or Chapter Relations Meeting? It was agreed that this annual event is now referred to as the Chapter Delegates Meeting. The delegate should be the most active and involved member, and is responsible for bringing the opinions of the chapter's members to the meeting. The chapter delegate should participate in the Meet the Candidates activities and should share that information with the chapter's voting delegate.

- It is difficult for some of the smaller affiliated chapters to select a representative to attend the meeting. However, chapters with active board members should be able to identify one member to be the delegate.

- Chapter delegates are permitted to represent more than one affiliated chapter, if a chapter is unable to send a representative. However, the representative must be a member of the affiliated chapter. In a dire emergency, the chapter could send its paid administrator as the representative. The chapter administrator must be fully informed of their responsibilities as chapter delegate, and must report back to the chapter board of directors and members on the meeting outcomes.

- If an affiliated chapter fails to send a representative to the Chapter Delegates Meeting, who is a member of the chapter, for two consecutive years, the chapter delegate's right to vote at the next annual meeting shall be suspended. A letter will be sent to all eligible voting members of the chapter, notifying them that their chapter lost its privilege to vote as a block at the annual meeting. Each eligible voting member of the chapter must register during voter check-in times at the conference and show, in order to cast a vote at the annual meeting.

- *Article VI, Section C5a* — Affiliated chapters will not be required to publish a notice that their chapter is on probation or suspension.

- *Article IV, Section D2* — Affiliated chapters should always submit a copy of proposed amendments to their bylaws to GCSAA for review by legal counsel. This ensures that the chapter bylaws are not in conflict with GCSAA's bylaws.

- The purpose of requiring chapters to complete a standard annual report form is for GCSAA to be informed about chapter meetings, activities and events in advance. GCSAA staff may be able to provide planning assistance or resources for these events.

- It will be difficult to provide meeting and event information for the upcoming year on the annual report form because some affiliated chapters do not have their plans finalized at that time. Regardless, chapters should submit the information that is available at the time to GCSAA.

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Election / Soliciting Volunteers Candidates' Campaigns

- In past years, the candidates for GCSAA officer and director positions have spent many dollars and hours conducting telephone campaigns. It is a financial burden to them.

- Running for office is an opportunity, not a burden. Candidates should take advantage of the Meet the Candidates session and group presentations to talk with the chapter delegates. It is the candidate's choice to conduct a telephone campaign.

- GCSAA will develop a listserv for candidates and delegates to communicate by e-mail. Delegates may post questions to the candidates. The candidates may reply directly to the delegate, or post their reply to all listserv subscribers. Listserv participation is optional, but is cost effective. Candidates may contact delegates through the listserv and/or by telephone.

- Some chapter delegates are not interested in receiving telephone calls from the candidates. Delegates that do not wish to be contacted should not provide their telephone numbers.

- Delegates who wish to be contacted by the delegates should provide a telephone number where they may be reached directly.

- In their campaign brochures and materials, candidates are encouraged to provide their telephone number and an ideal time for the delegates to reach them. The brochure should also contain other background information that delegates need to know about the candidates.

- A booklet or standard operating procedure that clearly defines the role and responsibilities of chapter voting delegates is needed. This information could be passed on to new voting delegates as they transition into this role.

- Candidates could send a postcard to the voting delegates, requesting a specific appointment time to speak with them.

Volunteers at the Chapter Level

- There is a lack of volunteers at the local level to serve as chapter officers and board members. "Recycled" board members serve multiple terms in leadership positions.

- Hiring a chapter executive director or administrator takes the administrative burden away from the chapter board of directors. This allows them to have a more enjoyable and rewarding experience while serving their association.

- Delegates were reminded to submit their GCSAA committee interest forms to GCSAA no later than November 1. The applicant's chapter president must sign the forms. Affiliated chapters may adopt GCSAA's volunteer form as their own, in order to recruit volunteers.

- Chapters are encouraged to use the "1998 Leadership Handbook for GCSAA Affiliated Chapters" as a guide to

recruiting and working with committees and volunteers.

- Some chapter officers have a two-year term. This allows them time to understand their roles and responsibilities, and to become effective leaders.

- One affiliated chapter uses a trustee system, where former chapter leaders serve as advisors to the current officers and board. They encourage new volunteers to become involved.

- Chapters may also consider outsourcing administrative services. Affiliated chapters may want to consider using a secretarial service or staff from turf foundations to manage the chapter's day-to-day operations, and maintain membership, accounting and financial records.

- Appoint and solicit new members to serve on committees. A personal invitation to serve is usually effective. Train them to become committee chairs, and encourage them to become leaders of the association. Chapter leaders need to develop strong communication skills, be given incentives and should be provided with educational opportunities in order to serve effectively. Professional development units (PDUs) are available from GCSAA as recognition for chapter service.

Election Process

- A new voting system is in place, which automatically assigns individual votes to the individual's affiliated chapter, unless the individual objects.

- Smaller chapters may have fewer votes, but they have as much clout as the larger chapter.

- Publishing the election results in *Newsline* improved the accountability of voting delegates, but has caused more splitting of votes.

- Chapter delegates are the most informed, and should carry their members' votes to the annual meeting.

First Tee Program

- The program provides economically disadvantaged youth, ages 18 and younger, with an opportunity to play golf at affordable facilities. George Bush is the honorary chair of this program. The PGA, PGA Tour, LPGA, USGA and Augusta National are involved in this program.

- GCSAA's role in this program is as significant as we wish to make it. GCSAA's affiliated chapters can become involved by serving as spokespersons for the superintendents' profession, or by speaking to the youth about superintendents' golf at the golf facility.

- Youth will learn: the rules of golf, how to play, golf course etiquette, agronomy and the positive impact of golf on the environment.

- Affiliated chapters may become involved in the program by serving as role models, by acting as grow-in or maintenance advisers, by contributing equipment and by allowing time for youth to visit their golf courses and learn about the superintendent's role.

- Some professionals will be hired to manage the First Tee golf facilities. GCSAA could consider paying the dues

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of a class A or B GCSAA member that is strictly employed at a lower budget First Tee facility.

Affiliated chapters could provide expertise and give advice to the manager of the First Tee facility. This is a good example of members serving members through chapters.

- Youth who complete the program receive a card that designates them as First Tee graduates. This card allows them to play at designated 18-hole courses and other facilities for a reduced rate.

- Affiliated chapters are encouraged to promote the program in their chapter newsletters and through their chapter Web sites.

- Golf course superintendents may donate used equipment (i.e. ball washers) or provide other in-kind donations to the program.

- GCSAA will match local affiliated chapters with local facilities. Chapters are encouraged to support their local First Tee initiatives. They need to be proactive in identifying the “movers and shakers” in their community that are willing to develop a local First Tee program. Affiliated chapters should volunteer one of their superintendent members to serve as a representative on the local board. This is an opportunity for local golf course superintendents associations to increase their visibility in the community.

- Affiliated chapters may wish to identify potential land in their area (i.e. city parks) that could be developed into a First Tee facility.

- A list of First Tee program contacts will be provided to chapter delegates with the meeting outcomes.

- GCSAA will investigate the possibility of having its own First Tee facility, of providing scholarships to First Tee program participants who wish to pursue a career as a golf course superintendent, and of allowing First Tee to host its

annual meeting during GCSAA's international golf course conference and show.

Environmental Steward Award Program

- The number of applications submitted for this program has been significantly low since 1996.

- A standardized application form and a more simplified judging process are now in place to encourage more members to apply for an award. The awards will be made by affiliated chapter instead of by USGA region. Those receiving awards will still be required to meet minimum criteria, but this change allows for increased opportunities to recognize environmental leaders. Additional changes include evaluation in six specific categories including the ineligibility of previous national winners. These enhancements were made based on feedback from GCSAA members.

- Affiliated chapters benefit from having members apply. It has major PR value, and it educates employers and influential golfers about the superintendents role and their achievements.

- Applicants that are members of more than one affiliated chapter may list that information on the application. This increases their opportunity to be selected as an award winner.

Membership Standards

- Research was conducted during the past year on education programs, an occupational study, and employer perceptions by SRI International (consulting firm) and Mullen (public relations firm). The results of their research and studies was to be presented to the Membership Standards Resource Group for review at its October 4-5 meeting.

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Thank You



At this time of Thanksgiving, we would like to take the opportunity to thank you, our customers, for all of your support throughout the year. Have a very happy and safe Thanksgiving holiday.

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- The challenges faced by smaller affiliated chapters should be taken into consideration.

- Chapter delegates are in general agreement that membership standards will take time to develop and implement. Overall, delegates are pleased with the progress made. They will have an opportunity to provide more input at next year's Chapter Delegates Meeting.

Government Relations

- Chapter delegates are encouraged to write letters to Congress, asking them to tell the Environmental Protection Agency to collect and use real-world data when determining pesticide use restrictions under the Food Quality Protection Act. Affiliated chapters are encouraged to attend local and state coalition meetings. Affiliated chapters located in states without coalitions are encouraged to become involved with a coalition in a nearby state.

- Chapters may also wish to contact candidates running for Congress or state office from their district. Handwritten letters, telephone calls, and messages via fax and e-mail are all effective ways to contact lawmakers.

National / Chapter Media Relations

- GCSAA has moved from a reactive to a proactive association, as it builds relationships and contacts with the media. We have an obligation to educate the media and the golf world about golf course superintendents and the association.

- Affiliated chapters need to make contact with their local media and let them know that you're an accurate, accessible source. Remember that the members of the media work on deadlines and have different schedules from superintendents. Let them know when, where and how they can reach you.

- Chapter delegates had the opportunity to review a GCSAA media kit. These kits are available for chapters to distribute to their local media. A notebook of media clippings was also distributed for delegates to review the recent media coverage that golf course superintendents have received.

- Affiliated chapters are encouraged to schedule a media day, where local members of the media are invited to play golf, meet golf course superintendents and learn more about the profession. A second opportunity to do this is by inviting members of the media to high profile events, such as major golf tournaments.

- Affiliated chapters can assist GCSAA with PR and media relations efforts by monitoring public opinion and local news that affects superintendents and the golf world.

- Affiliated chapters should send their membership directory to the local media. This is a resource that puts members of the media in touch with golf course superintendents.

- Projects that receive funding through the Chapter Cooperative Research Program and the Grant-in-Aid Research Program focus on regional agronomic problems.

- If an affiliated chapter has just begun a multiple-year research project, the chapter may submit a proposal for funding. GCSAA's Research Committee approves funding for projects based on their merit.

Affinity Programs

- Chapters will have the opportunity to be more involved in the marketing of affinity programs. They are now being marketed under one package, called Super Advantage programs (includes travel, rental car discounts and the Golf-Links credit union).

Compensation Survey and Employer Relations

- Overall, the results of the 1998 survey show that golf course superintendents are comfortable with their compensation. Chapters were asked to help define what information should be gathered for future surveys.

Miscellaneous Issues

- Many affiliated chapters have a "waiting line" of representatives who would like to attend the Chapter Delegates Meeting.

- A list of affiliated chapters that do not send a representative to the Chapter Delegates Meeting should be published.

- Chapter delegates should remember the importance of sharing the meeting outcomes and information presented and discussed at the meeting with their board of directors and members.

- Development of a mission statement for the Chapter Delegates Meeting was suggested. This would help chapters identify the most appropriate member to represent their chapter at this annual meeting. A mission statement will be discussed by the Chapter Relations Committee, and their recommendation will be communicated prior to next year's Chapter Delegates Meeting.

- Nine golf course superintendents participated in a focus group on Friday, September 18 with two representatives from Etonic. The purpose was for the superintendents to share ideas on how to enhance the bottom of Etonic shoes to make them more agronomically friendly. The superintendents were impressed that Etonic took the time to ask them what they thought about their shoes.

- Golf course superintendents continue to have buying power and the authority to make equipment purchase decisions. Superintendents often work with management companies who sign exclusive contracts with manufacturers, and encourage them to purchase products that are of the highest quality and that have service providers available when equipment repairs are needed.

- GCSAA's chapter guide on the Web site includes general information about affiliated chapters' dues structure, and annual meetings and events. GCSAA will post additional information on upcoming meetings and events on the Web site if chapters are willing to provide it. Chapters are responsible for notifying GCSAA when the information needs to be updated.