



TURFGRASS MATTERS

March 2014

The “Vendor’s” Perspective

“The real value of the GIS is this concentrated and dedicated face to face networking time”

Each year as we transition between seasons in the golf industry, as we move from one tradeshow into the next, there are certain activities that remind us just how quickly time passes. The annual Golf Industry Show, or GIS, is the most significant of those key ‘off-season’ events for me. Depending on your geography, the timing of this event may or may not mark the beginning of the next golfing season; in the mid-Atlantic it is really up to Mother Nature. Weather aside, the timing of this show is such that most people have mentally transitioned into the new calendar year, and with most other tradeshows behind us, it really

marks the beginning of a new season for vendors supporting the industry.

Aside from the fact that the weather is always nicer at the show than it is in the mid-Atlantic in February, the real value of this time away from the normal routine is that we have an opportunity to see many customers and industry associates in a concentrated period of time. It is valuable time to spend re-connecting with old friends while also developing new relationships. Considering the various modes of communication we have in this ever-changing age of electronics, one might conclude that this show has diminished in value for vendors as technology has altered how we gather and share information. My feeling is that the value of the GIS for vendors has actually risen in this age of digital communication, but not because of it. Before we go back into our routines of emails, texts, e-blasts, Facebook posting and tweeting, we have an opportunity to kick the season off right with some good old fashioned face-to-face networking. When I boil it all down, the real value of the GIS is this concentrated and dedicated face-to-face networking time.

On the tradeshow floor, hundreds of distributors and manu-

facturers eagerly await customers and prospects to stop by their booth so that we can show off what’s new and exciting for the upcoming season. While new product helps attract customers into the booth and we hope that our products become the “talk of the show”, our goal is to engage in conversations with customers. However, if a vendor relies solely on the new product lures, then the GIS may not provide an acceptable return on investment as the number of interactions may be too few.

In order to maximize the value of the GIS, anyone can mitigate the risk of having too few interactions while at the GIS. Value is a relative term and I am certain that some individuals achieve greater value from the GIS than others. Between the tradeshow, association meetings, lunch meetings, and various other events it doesn’t take long to fill up one’s schedule with opportunities to network with customers and

industry associates. The formula is simple – the harder one works preparing for, and then executing a plan for the GIS, the greater the overall value of the show. All it takes is setting some appointments ahead of time and then good time management during the show to ensure several quality customer interactions. We want to know what you expect from us before, during, and after the show, so please allow us the opportunity to understand this ahead of time so that we can prepare to meet those expectations. For any vendor, the GIS is just like most things in life, the more we put into it, the more we get out of it.

So, scheduled appointment or not, whenever you’re passing through a vendor’s booth at the GIS or any other tradeshow for that matter, please allow us the opportunity to understand how we may be able to help you be more productive and successful in the

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President's Report



Mike Barrett

2014 has been a very busy year thus far. I headed south to Orlando for a couple of weeks to broaden my knowledge of the golf course industry. In January, I attended the PGA Merchandise Show with my Head Golf Professional. We toured the trade show floor at the Orange County Convention Center looking at everything from equipment, apparel, software systems, shoes and golf course and driving range accessories.

In February, I headed back to Orlando for the Golf Industry Show (GIS). The GIS is comprised of the following associations: Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, National Golf Foundation (NGF), National Golf Course Owners and Operators (NGCOO), the USGA and the National Association of Golf Course Architects. While there, I took several classes and spent numerous hours on the trade show floor learning about the latest technologies available to our industry professionals. Chris Harriman and I attended the New York Chapter's review of Best Management Practices for the golf course management industry and spent time with GCSAA staff discussing BMP's for our association. I also enjoyed the Chapter President's Breakfast with the GCSAA Board of Directors and CEO, Rhett Evans where the strategic goals were discussed. Breakfast was followed by a great round table discussion about the golf industry and it was reported that attendance and educational seminar participation were both on the increase in 2014.

A short trip across town landed me at the Club Managers Association of America (CMAA) National Conference. I was able to take in some additional education, visit another great trade show and engage in some great networking opportunities. While at the show, I learned that one of my very good friends and mentors, Robert G. Paskill, CCM, passed away on October 30th. Bob was the General Manager at Argyle that saw something in me and gave me my shot in the industry as a Golf Course Superintendent. Bob supported my decision to obtain Certification and always pushed me to constantly improve myself both personally and professionally. I will miss him very much.

The MAAGCS Annual Educational Conference was once again a huge success thanks to Galen Evans, Steve Evans and our sponsors. It is a tremendous amount of work lining up speakers, assisting with travel arrangements, securing hotel rooms and scheduling meals for our out of town guests. In addition, many hours are spent obtaining GCSAA Continuing Education Units (CEU's), approving Pesticide Re-certification in multiple states and making sure the requirements for Nutrient Management Re-certification are met. This event continues to grow each year and with new laws and requirements headed our way, we are committed to providing our member's quality education and accurate information so that we can keep up with changes in our industry.

The Board of Directors is working hard to provide great value for your membership and implementing programs and services that enhance our profession. If you have any suggestions or comments on how we can improve, please let us know.

The “Vendor’s” Perspective Continued

upcoming season. We recognize that you are very busy at the GIS with all of the seminars and various events, so the tradeshow may not be a priority for you, but please understand that we are there to network with you. The value of face-to-face communication is something that will never be replaced with any technology. So, please dedicate some time to chat with us in person before returning home to the inevitable bombardment of digital communications from vendors.

As Kevin has done an excellent job stating what the significance of our industry’s premiere event means to the vendor contingent, I will echo his sentiments and add some perspective from the “soft goods” side of the show.

We all, whether competing or complimenting each other with our products, strive to be the leaders in innovation and highlight these accomplishments in front of what is likely to be the largest group of decision makers together in one setting.

Preparation is certainly a key factor to maximize the ROI (return on investment), however even considering that attendance was down considerably from the last show in Orlando, traffic at times can seem overwhelming. We all hope to interact with our individual customers, particularly when you are part of a company with several regional reps. However, there are times that we are engaged with a customer from a counterpart’s territory and miss a chance to meet with those we have a direct relationship with.

This should not be viewed as a deterring factor, but rather an opportunity to gather a different perspective. Again, pertaining to the soft goods side, the same products may serve a slightly different purpose and are likely being utilized at different times of the year based on region. From the broadest view, joining these conversations promotes the networking and interaction that benefits each of us so greatly. Additionally, it offers an opportunity to reflect on the success or possible shortcomings one may have encountered with a product, opening the door for discussions surrounding potential solutions.

Many times, technical staff, R&D and leadership personnel are present and can participate in these conversations first hand, allowing them to either offer advice or gather information to take back to implement measures to improve on an existing product. This is also a great time for those who attend education to take what has been presented and follow up directly with the manufacturer regarding research results and proposed uses.

One final area that I considered to be greatly beneficial that may be overlooked, are the activities surrounding the tradeshow itself. I had the opportunity to participate in the Golf Classic that was held the weekend leading into the show. I am humbled and grateful that the MAAGCS took me on as their affiliate

representative for the tournament. There are few times throughout a given season when you are able to interact with members in such a relaxed environment and the last thing on anyone’s mind is worrying about their golf course (except, of course the host facility superintendent).

Granted, we owe it to our employers to maximize business opportunities from both sides of the table, but to interact on a personal level, whether its listening to someone talk about going to Disney and sharing the experience with their family or getting the group together to watch the “big game” and exchange a little tactful banter, is something that goes well beyond the next “what’s new” conversation and will be reminisced for a long time to come.

I look forward to a great season for everyone once all the tradeshow hoopla has passed and we go back to doing what drives us to keep improving in a very demanding, yet very rewarding industry.

Hopefully, we can recreate and build on these memories in San Antonio in 2015!

Kevin Monaco & Sam Camuso



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In February the MAAGCS sent three teams to the National Championship and Golf Classic in Orlando. The tournament was held on five different golf courses: Disney's Palm, Magnolia, Lake Buena Vista Golf Courses and Marriott's Grande Pines and Hawks Landing Golf Clubs. A Four-Ball tournament was held on the first day. This is a one day tournament where participants play with a partner of their choosing in a better ball competition. The Golf Classic is held on the second and third day. This is a flighted event in which a single player competes in modified stableford format.

This MAAGCS traditionally sends one of the largest contingents of representatives to this tournament (we probably have the best time as well). It is a great way to build relationships with your peers in the industry,

both locally and from around the globe.

Highlights of the individual competition included Pat McNamara (Piedmont GC) placing 7th gross and Troy Brawner (Bethesda Country Club) placing in 6th gross in flights 1 and 2, respectively. Chris Harriman (Cattail Creek CC), Mike King (Mount Vernon CC), and Mike Mueller (Herndon Centennial GC) all tied for 6th net in flight 4. Chris Harriman and Mike

Mueller also tied for 7th gross. Bo Jumbercotta (Landscape Supply) tied for 9th in the affiliate flight.

In the Chapter Team competition, the team of Mike Augustin, Chris Harriman, Andrew Robertson, Bryan Bupp, and Sam Camuso had a strong showing, placing 4th in low net score in a field of 32 teams from around the country. The other two teams had fun.



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March 31st—Grass Roots Exhibit Tour

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Crofton Country Club

April 10th— Assistants Meeting

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May 27th—Chesapeake Challenge

Queenstown Harbor (Joint Event with ESAGCS)

September 19th—Couples Cruise

Baltimore, MD

October 22nd—Annual Championship

Argyle Country Club

November 3rd—Assistants Golf Outing

Worthington Manor

The Turfgrass Pathology Research Fund

In 2013 the MTC voted unanimously to support an effort to establish an Endowed Chair of Turfgrass Pathology Research in the Department of Plant Science and Landscape Architecture (PSLA) at the University of Maryland. The Mid Atlantic Association of Golf Course Superintendents is supporting the MTC in trying to raise as many funds as possible.

All Donations will be put to good use in supporting turfgrass research infrastructure, such as campus labs and the Paint Branch Turf Research Facility and the turfgrass pathology position, in the Department of Plant Sciences and Landscape Architecture at the University of Maryland.

MAAGCS has already committed \$25,000 over 5 years to this important fund. MAAGCS also donated \$520.00 that was collected from the 50/50 at last month's Education Seminar. However there's a long way to go to reach the \$1.5 million needed to make this a full endowed chair position for University of Maryland. We are about half way there at this point with some very generous donations from other allied associations as well as private donors. Let's see how much money we can raise for the Turfgrass Pathology Research Fund! There are currently three ways you may donate to this fund. The first two ways are when you renew your MAAGCS membership and every time you sign up for an event online you will have the option to donate \$10,\$20, or \$50.00. The third way you can donate to this fund is by going to www.maagcs.org and clicking "Donate" right on the front page. This will allow you to donate any amount you wish.

All donations no matter the size will be greatly appreciated and put to great use.



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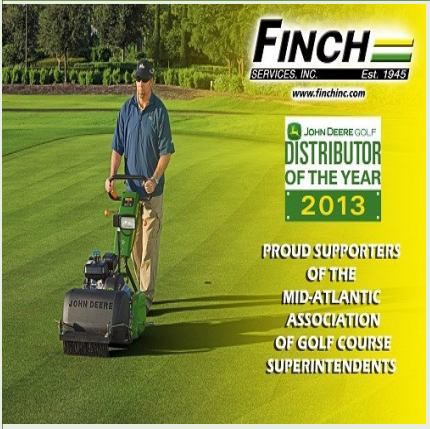
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Michael Larsen Retirement

Earlier this year nearly 80 MAAGCS members met at Sol Azteca in Olney, MD to celebrate the retirement of Michael Larsen, CGCS. The staff at Sol Azteca served some great food and refreshments that made for a great event.

Michael Larsen retired from Woodmont Country Club last month after serving their membership for 31 years as the Golf Course Superintendent. Woodmont Country Club has hosted the U.S. Open Sectional Qualifying Tournament for the last 27 years. Michael also held the Superintendent title at Hillendale Country Club for 10 years before joining Woodmont Country Club. He also worked at Baltimore Country Club as an Assistant Superintendent. He graduated from the Institute of Applied Agriculture at the University of Maryland in 1971.

Michael Larsen served numerous years on the MAAGCS Board of Directors. He held all of the Board of Director's positions over the years and served as the MAAGCS President for two consecutive terms. He has held the distinguished title of Certified Golf Course Superintendent for 35 years.

Many Woodmont Country Club staff members were at the event and I am sure that Michael was happy to spend some more time with his extended family. The event came to a nice close with Michael sharing some humorous stories from his career with help from a couple of close friends.



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Government Relations Update

Recently, the MDA gave "no support" which killed a proposed bill prior to testimonies, which would have made neonicotinoids restricted use pesticides. This has become an issue due to the collapse of honey bee colonies all around the world. Extensive research is being conducted by chemical manufacturers to show how these products can be used safely without adverse effect to honey bees. New labeling is being developed for some of these products. Please make sure to familiarize yourself on the safe and correct usage of neonicotinoids on your golf courses. Remember, the label is the law on all pesticide applications.

Thinking "outside" the box is extremely important to all golf course superintendents. We often come up with innovative ideas to get done what others think is impossible. This forward thinking also applies to our government relations work. As pesticide and fertilizer use comes under increased scrutiny, we need to think about how we can best use our products safely and efficiently. For instance, at Norbeck Country Club, we made a point of making our roughs "bee safe" for the use of neonicotinoids. The easiest and most safe way for us was to target clover. The most common form of honey you find in the grocery store is "clover" honey. By eliminating clover, you eliminate the plant which attracts honey bees. Thus, you have a stand of turf around greens, tees, and fairway roughs where honey bees will not fly and land. Now neonicotinoids can be applied safely on days with no wind. Every one of us have countless ways of improving our golf course while

protecting the environment, and showing the public our good works. We are the leaders in turfgrass and the environment.

Currently, there is nothing new on the potential "pesticide ban" for Montgomery County, MD. Magi's lobbyist, Ellen Bogage, feels we need to be ready before any proposed legislation is produced. She would like to have a database of key members/clients prepared for when a bill comes out. Karen Reardon from RISE and Ellen Bogage can then contact those people to send letters and call Council members. As we discussed at the Mid Atlantic Educational Seminar, we need to have the support of homeowners and clients in Montgomery County. They will be asked to send handwritten letters to the Council Members against any proposed legislation. This needs to be more than pesticide applicators against this issue. This is not a public safety issue, nor is it truly an "environmentalist" issue. Golf course superintendents know how to use pesticides safely to improve the environment. This is a public image and personal right issue. We need individuals who do not want the government telling them what they can or

cannot use in their home, or on their personal property. Their testimony will carry so much more weight than us saying how we need products to keep our golf courses in pristine conditions. Ellen Bogage has no evidence of an imminent bill.. She thinks Leventhal may still put in a bill, but he may not. It is best to prepare ourselves for the worst so we can be ready. Please feel free to email me if you are willing to do outreach to get interested clients / members to become a part of this process. I will get you added to Karen Reardon's email list. As golf course superintendents, we do not want to "spearhead" this program, however we can bring interested parties to the table to help out.

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Education Seminar Recap

On February 26th, MAAGCS held our Annual Education Seminar at the Ten Oaks Ballroom in Clarksville, MD.

Over 160 superintendents, assistants, landscapers, vendors, educators, and students attended the event which was once again the largest crowd in the Education Seminar's history. The day was a huge success with GCSAA Education Points provided to everyone and over half of the attendees getting recertified for their pesticide licenses.

The day began with a Year-in-Review by Darin Bevard of the USGA. Darin always provides an enlightening presentation, looking back on the trials and tribulations of the previous year. This year it was nice to not see any local golf courses in the death and disease photos!

The next presentation by Dr. Beth Guertal of Auburn University focused on phosphorus fertilization and water quality. After hearing about her research, it seems like everyone should reconsider how much phosphorus they apply, even when soil tests say you are deficient.

Dr. Shawn Askew of Virginia Tech followed after the morning coffee break to give his thoughts on PoaCure and Pylex. Dr. Askew has seen great things with both of these products and recommends that everyone consider adding them to their arsenal to combat Poa Annua and Goosegrass.

Before lunch we heard from Dr. Kevin Mathias from the

University of Maryland who was joined by Joe Haskins and Marlin Ewing Jr. to talk about control of Annual Bluegrass Weevils. Everyone has seen varying levels of success in controlling this pest. The real take-away from this talk was that if you aren't looking back at your previous year and making alterations in your plan for the future, there is a good chance that you will get burned by this pest.

After lunch we talked technology with Bill Brown, CGCS, and CEO of Turf Republic. Bill shared with everyone some of the best protection for our smart devices and some apps that are very beneficial to superintendents.

The last presentation of the day followed our famous ice cream break. Kurt and Eric Wittman, the owners and operators of Terra Firma Plant Care, provided insight on how to solve stubborn landscape issues with proper plant selections and using Integrated Pest Management.

The day was made possible by the terrific support of all of our sponsors, namely Turf Equipment and Supply, who title sponsored the event again this year. Turf Equipment and Supply has been a great asset to the MAAGCS and the value they place on continuing education is top notch. We look forward to seeing everyone again next year at this event as MAAGCS looks to continue to provide some of the best continuing education opportunities in the area to all of our members!





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Mid-Atlantic Chapter GCSAA

GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENTS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

TURFGRASS MATTERS

“The Mid-Atlantic GCSA is dedicated to providing value to members through programs and services that enhance our profession”

The Mid-Atlantic GCSA Chapter and Members will be consistently recognized as:

- Supportive of growing the game
- Supportive of turfgrass research and the golf course management profession
- A strong allied golf organization partner
- Leaders in environmental stewardship
- Promoting government relations and advocacy efforts

Over the past two years there have been several website improvements including online bill pay, event registration, and an area to list used equipment you have for sale. We would like to keep improving the website but we need some help from you. We would like to add members blogs and twitter feeds directly to our website but in order for this to happen we need you to email us with a link to your blog. If you have a twitter account start following us @MidAtlGCSAA and we will be able to link your twitter account to the website.



Interested in seeing your courses photos in a publication of Turfgrass Matters ?

Go to www.maags.org and click on the link on the front page to email us your photos.

We will then use your photos either in the newsletter or on the Mid-Atlantic website.

Turfgrass Matters is published 4 times annually and is available online at maags.org

Phone: 888-643-8878

E-mail: maags@earthlink.net

Chapter Executive: Theresa Baria

Editor: Ryan Kraushofer

