

TurfgrassMatters

Spring 2018



First Green First Trip at Westminster National

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President's Report – Michael Bostian

In the last edition I was foolishly optimistic about the state of Mid-Atlantic golf heading into 2018. We were teased in February with some great temperatures and things were starting to wake up rather quickly. March treated us to a late winter that lingered and facilities were forced into a holding pattern. The cherry on top was a snow storm on the first day of spring. Go figure. That's weather for you in the Mid-Atlantic.

Many facilities that depend upon daily revenue are well behind the curve to start the season off. Maybe Tiger Woods can snag a trophy on one of these upcoming Sundays and properties can piggyback off of a new buzz around the game of golf. Tiger has already proved in just a few short weeks that he is the only one that can move the needle in this era. I imagine our friends at Avenel will have a large crowd to deal with in late June.

Just like Tiger, MAAGCS is already rocking and rolling into the 2018 season. Our joint social at GIS saw over 300 people come through the door. It may have been a bit noisy, but it was sure nice to get out in public and not be hidden in some ballroom or hotel hallway. Two strong supporters of MAAGCS received special recognition during GIS in San Antonio, both Finch and Turf Equipment and Supply were named national distributor of the year from their parent companies. Pretty awesome to know that we have such great partners in this region who are all looking out for us and helping shape our plans to provide great conditions for our customers.

Two weeks after GIS, we had another fantastic turnout at the yearly Education Seminar at Ten Oaks Ballroom, with over 180 members in attendance. The education continued the first week of March when the first annual Mid-Atlantic Golf Council meeting took place at Belle Haven. 150 professionals from around the region gathered to hear the state of the industry from the leaders of all the allied golf associations.

Our March event at TopGolf brought about another first for this association since I've been a member. Chris Harriman treated his entire staff to an afternoon off and they all seemed to have a blast. Cattail Creek alone provided for nearly a third of the attendance. The event was a case in point of how TopGolf is attracting a different segment to the game of golf. Will all those new players ever transition over to traditional golf? Highly unlikely. But Jay Karen, CEO of NGCOA, says that you will be left on the outside looking in if you don't try to implement some of the small things that is making the TopGolf business model successful.

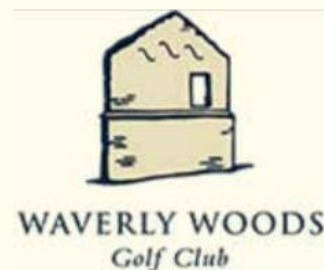
John Easterbrook, PGA, also warned that we need to be more welcoming to new players now more than ever. There is a rigid structure that tradition has imbedded into our game. The familiar process has always been: check in, grab a cart — but not that cart, hit balls — excuse me where is the range, go see the starter, have fun — don't take too long, want food — these are the only things we have for people on the turn. Do what you can to make the course setup fun and make the onboarding process easy.

One of the last sticking points from a recent MAAGCS event was the presentation Paul Jacobs gave from the USGA and it echoes the aforementioned onboarding process. I have been noticing more and more instances on Twitter of new employees being welcomed with a care package, including safety gear, maps, uniforms, YETIs and so on. Show your staff that you appreciate them by sprucing up their work environment, specifically the break room. It sets the mood for the day and is no better example to showcase the standard of course conditioning that one should expect or for that matter deserves.

Take care of those that take care of you, past president Chris Harriman has set the bar high. Enough from me, now get back to work!



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Volunteers Needed for The National at TPC Potomac

Event to be Held June 25–July 1

TPC Potomac is excited to serve as the host site for the The National. Tournament organizers are currently planning for the upcoming events. As most of you know, the volunteers play a crucial role in the daily set up and maintenance of the golf course.

The goal this year is to assemble a team of 40-50 volunteers for a full week of competition. Positions will fill quickly so if you are interested in joining the crew, please complete the online application form as soon as possible.

The volunteer program is an integral element to the success of the operation during the championship. The only requirement for volunteering is that you are currently working in the turfgrass industry or enrolled in a turfgrass program at a college or university. TPC Potomac would prefer volunteers commit to the full week of competition, if this is not an option a minimum of five shifts will be required.

To volunteer please visit <http://www.maagcs.org/page-1809897/6050775#6050775> and click on the volunteer button.

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Mid Atlantic Allied Associations Host Conference

The allied associations in Virginia and Maryland were proud to host a regional golf conference at Belle Haven Country Club on March 6. Speakers from five national organizations presented and interacted with over 160 attendees from the golf industry about the future of the game. National speakers included Jay Karen, CEO of the National Golf Course Owners Association (NGCOA); Rhett Evans, CEO of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA); John Easterbrook, PGA, CMO of the PGA of America; Craig Annis, Director of Communications from the USGA; and James Cramer, Director of Communications for World Golf Foundation.

The event was organized and run by the Mid-Atlantic Golf Council, made up of the regional golf associations (Middle Atlantic Section of the PGA, Virginia State GA, Maryland State GA, Mid Atlantic Chapter of NGCOA, three local chapters of the CMAA, Washington Metropolitan GA, Middle Atlantic GA, and three chapters of the GCSAA). These organizations came together as an organization to provide state wide Economic Impact Studies, Best Management Practices for golf courses, and local and national lobbying of government entities on golf related issues. This conference was a great example of the different golf associations working together for the benefit of the golf industry.

Kicking off the conference was the dynamic Jay Karen of the National Golf Course Owners Association. He acknowledged the challenges facing golf but also noted some "tailwinds" for the industry. The fact that courses are closing and no new ones are being built is a move toward shoring up a supply and demand imbalance. The numbers for junior golf, particularly for girls, is strong. He suggests embracing team golf, both for juniors and adults (leagues). Golf is doing a better job of tapping into family spending. Technology is being used to improve the golfer experience. Regarding TopGolf, he suggests to take pieces from their motto and to not get too consumed in converting their customer base. An interesting stat he dropped was that last year, Korea had more



Jay Karen of NGCOA and Rhett Evans of GCSAA share a laugh.

simulator rounds than rounds on golf courses.

Following Jay's presentation was James Cramer, VP of Communications for the World Golf Foundation (WGF). James gave a synopsis of the foundation's initiatives accentuating their mission to unite the golf industry. The First Tee, World Golf Hall of Fame and Golf 20/20 are the three main components of the WGF, all of which encourage participation and growth of the game. Reaching new audiences is an important aspect of their mission and WGF has created their Diversity Task Force to lead this initiative. The four demographics that the task force is focusing on are woman, caddies, juniors and the millennial population.

Craig Annis, Head of Communications for the United States Golf Association (USGA) explained how the USGA is using data to establish trends. One example was a mapping program that was used to track the amount of golf balls that entered a particular bunker during the golf season. With this data it was discovered that the particular bunker had a very low amount of balls entering it, raising the question of the bunker's value, versus its maintenance requirements and expenditures. You can see more about this program at rm.usga.org.

Craig also discussed the Play9 program which encourages golfers to play 9 holes of golf when time is not permitted to play a full 18 holes. This program has raised the awareness of the game.

Next up was John Easterbrook, Chief

Membership Officer for the PGA of America.

One topic covered was the intimidation factor of golf. New golfers sometimes feel uncomfortable and out of place the first time they visit a golf course. Breaking down this barrier is an important goal to grow the game. The PGA is doing this by focusing on education for PGA professionals that will enhance the faculty training at their courses and also improve PGA member engagement with their customers.

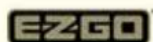
Rhett Evans, CEO of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA), closed out the morning session. Rhett stressed teamwork and collaboration as a key to success in the industry, especially now, with new laws and political viewpoints that are singling out the industry as a whole. Labor, environment and government affairs are at the top of this list. Through the best management practices initiative and grassroots Ambassadors programs, GCSAA is at the forefront of these issues. Education was another important aspect of Rhett's presentation. He told the group that GCSAA and The First Green have entered into a partnership and how the GCSAA First Green Program is engaging with elementary schools students. Superintendents and owners invite the students to their golf course for a half-day field trip to engage in STEM education activities.

Following the presentations was a panel discussion with all five of the tremendous speakers. Audience participation was plenty, and the guest host moderator Bobby Vermillion of *Endless Golf* did an excellent job.

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Lentz Wheeler of Springfield GCC and Kevin Monaco of TESCO enjoyed the event



Mark Cote of VGCSA and Mike Bostian of MAAGCS congratulate 50-50 winner Chris Sandels of Chevy Chase Club



Jeff Holliday of VGCSA and Ryan Kraushofer of MAAGCS share a laugh

Another Top-5 Finish – Max Sturges

It is the Super Bowl of turfgrass. Its timing makes the Sports Turf Managers Association (STMA) Competition feel like a pre-season game, a warm-up for the big event. It is Turf Bowl, an annual competition held at the Golf Industry Show (GIS), hosted by John Deere.

The 2018 Turf Bowl competition was held in San Antonio, Texas during the second week of February. The competition consists of a written exam developed by superintendents, and a written essay. The exam focuses on all facets of the superintendent profession. The written essay is based on a business/financial case-study scenario. Each team submits one exam and essay, which are then graded by superintendents. With 53 teams comprised of 194 students from 28 colleges spanning the continent, we knew it was going to be a challenge to break into the Top 10.

Just like for STMA, we began preparing in early October; sections were divided up and scenarios were assigned. For the Turf Bowl, we knew we would have to dive into greater detail in order to reach the same height of success we experienced with our Top-5 finish at STMA.

This year, eight University of Maryland (UMD) students divided into two Turf Bowl teams. Joining previous STMA competitors Kurtis Sommer, Brendan Keane, and myself were fellow IAA students Bobby Jeffrey, Nicolas Tardif, Clayton Young, Conrad Mellin, and Keaton Klee. Team A consisted of Tardif, Keane, Klee, and myself. Team B was made up of the remaining four students: Sommer, Jeffrey, Young, and Mellin.

The night before the exam, our group went to a Mid-Atlantic Association of Golf Course Superintendents (MAAGCS) networking event held on the scenic San Antonio Riverwalk. At the gathering, we were cheered on and motivated by IAA alumnus Scott Furlong, the Superintendent of the Robert Trent Jones course located just outside of Washington D.C. Scott joined us in some good-natured bragging and gloating, to show Penn State who the “real” turf students were. The director of Penn State’s turfgrass program, Ben McGraw, was right there to respond with some friendly trash-talking which fired us up even more.

As we took the exam the next morning, teamwork was in great display. Working together to identify various diseases, insects, grasses, and weeds, we came out of the exam confident that we would breach the Top 10 with the hope of even making a Top 5 finish. With the impending 24-hour wait until the following night for results, the tradeshow provided a welcome distraction.

During the tradeshow, our IAA Turfgrass Lecturer and Advisor Geoff Rinehart set up tours for us with the United States Golf Association (USGA) booth and the Toro Equipment booth. At USGA we glimpsed new rule changes happening in the game of golf and new innovations into the specifications of a USGA sand-based green. At the Toro booth we met up with another IAA alumnus, Mark Dupcak; he showed us around what was arguably the largest booth in the entire show, taking



us from machine to machine. The highlight: Toro’s new Outcross, a tractor-meets-utility vehicle.

The night the results were to be announced, our team put on its Sunday best and headed to the closing ceremony. This year, GIS brought every team up to the front of the stage for the announcement. We were confident we had made the Top 10, but uncertain how high we climbed. After months of work and preparation we thought we had a good chance of winning. Winning teams were announced beginning with tenth place, then ninth, eighth, seventh, sixth. When our name had yet to be called, anxiety quickly set in. I personally felt nauseous as I thought, “wait, did we actually get first?”

“In fourth place, Team 23, University of Maryland.”

We were devastated. Not only had we not made the top-3, but we failed to beat Penn State’s number one team. Yes we had won an \$800 check and IAA Director Glori Hyman was very proud of our performance, but to us, we felt we hadn’t reached our goal. Rinehart reminded us that 4th place was a huge success, considering the 2017 team had finished 9th. We’re looking forward to an even better finish for next year’s competition.

In addition to the educational benefits of the tradeshow and competition, our team of “Turf Terps” experienced the culture of the famous San Antonio Riverwalk and networked with many turfgrass industry professionals. GIS is an event that I look forward to going to for many years as I progress in the industry.

The author, Max Sturges is a first year Golf Course Management Major in the IAA. He currently works at Worthington Manor Golf Club in Urbana, Maryland and will be doing his internship at Oakmont Country Club in Plum, Pennsylvania this upcoming summer.



BMP Update

As golf course superintendents in Maryland, we have demonstrated our environmental stewardship efforts by being the first state to publish a golf course best management practices (BMP) book and website (www.marylandgolfbmp.org) using GCSAA's new BMP template. Using the template and in cooperation with turf scientists at the University of Maryland, we adapted and expanded the BMPs specifically for our state. In addition to protecting our natural resources, these BMPs also afford the opportunity for regulators, legislators and the public to understand our role as environmental stewards.

Though publishing the BMPs was a significant milestone, it was just the beginning of our BMP efforts. In February, GCSAA rolled out the new Facility BMP tool at the GIS conference in

San Antonio. Using the state BMP as a starting point, each facility with a GCSAA membership will be asked to complete a site-specific BMP manual. Participation in this effort will communicate to regulators and legislators our commitment to implementing BMPs on every golf course.

GCSAA will be sponsoring workshops later this year for superintendents to attend to develop facility BMPs. In addition, GCSAA has recorded a webinar on facility BMPs, available on the GCSAA website to help superintendents with the use of the online tool. More information on the workshops will be announced as soon as it is available. In the meantime, everyone is encouraged to continue becoming familiar with the BMPs.



For more information, contact Chris Harriman at Chris@cattailcreekcc.com.



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USGA Tips for Tournament Success

Tournament golf at every level — from local outings to national championships — provides golfers an opportunity to put their game to the test. At the same time, golf course superintendents may use the opportunity to showcase their ability to produce quality conditions on the golf course. Unfortunately, it only takes one or two unforeseen events to erase all of the hard work that went into preparing the golf course for a big event.

When preparing a golf course for a tournament, avoiding big mistakes should be considered a success all on its own. Following are some important factors involved with preparing for and hosting a successful event.

Course Conditioning

In preparation for tournaments, goals should be set for green speeds, height of cut, mowing frequency, moisture content and overall conditioning. Reaching these goals during the tournament is ideal, but special care needs to be taken so that the turf is not stressed heading into the tournament. Conversely, if turf is managed too delicately prior to the event, and then maintenance intensity increases rapidly, turf decline could result. Turf quality should not be compromised for a tournament.

Drainage

During a golf tournament, rain can be one of the most detrimental events, resulting in poor playing conditions, maintenance difficulties and complications with the rules of golf. Ideally, poorly draining areas would be addressed and resolved prior to a tournament, but that is not always possible. Some of the key areas that can become problematic following heavy rain events can be addressed within course set-up.

Hole Locations When selecting hole locations, difficulty and pace-of-play need to be considered, but weather must also be accounted for. When inclement weather is forecasted, avoid using low-lying or poorly draining areas. Selecting a hole location that is appropriate for the weather forecast may be the difference between completing a round or a suspension of play.

Tee Marker Placement Proper tee placement goes beyond avoiding standing water on the

teeing ground itself. Tee markers should be placed to minimize the number of tee shots landing in areas of poor surface drainage.

Bunkers The priority for bunker maintenance during a tournament should be returning the bunkers to a playable condition. If staffing is plentiful, this could mean pumping any standing water out of the bunker and returning it to normal condition.

In the worst cases, the ability to remove standing water could be limited. If this is the case, it is important to provide an area of sand in the back portion of the bunker to serve as a drop area. The rules of golf allow for a golfer to take relief from casual water within a bunker, but the ball must remain in the bunker. If there is no area to take relief within the bunker, no closer the hole, the golfer may drop outside the bunker but will incur a one stroke penalty.

Putting Green Speed

Putting green speed is an important factor of putting green quality, but should be secondary to producing smooth and true putting surfaces. Ideal putting green speeds for tournament play should demand great touch when putting and invoke a player's imagination when recovery shots need to be hit around the green. Ideal putting green speeds vary from course to course for reasons including architecture, putting green size, firmness, weather conditions, demographics of competitors and the number of rounds played during the tournament. During a tournament, putting greens speeds may be faster than for regular play, but even during a tournament it is possible to have putting greens that are too fast. Putting greens that are too fast can be detrimental to pace of play, plant health and golfer enjoyment.

Maintenance Time Frames

To ensure that maintenance does not interfere with play, it is critical to know precisely how long each maintenance task will take to complete and how many staff are required. Special attention should be paid around the first, tenth and eighteenth holes. If play is delayed for weather, synchronizing maintenance with the golf schedule becomes easier if pre-determined time requirements are established for different maintenance tasks.

Equipment

Non-conventional start times for maintenance mean that operating without daylight becomes necessary. While it may seem intuitive, it is a good idea to make sure that all mowers and equipment have lights — that work. The amount of equipment needed should be evaluated well in advance of the tournament, and if additional mowers are going to be added to the current fleet, they need to be adjusted and tested prior to the tournament.

Plan for the Worst But Hope for the Best

Organize a "rapid response" cart, which has all tools and maps necessary to address issues that could include: irrigation breaks, damaged cup liners / hole edges, ball marks, divots, dead vehicle batteries, fallen or damaged trees, etc. Dedicate a member of the maintenance team who is detail oriented and trustworthy to go behind maintenance on every hole to make sure all clippings are cleaned and all playing surfaces are ready for play.

Conclusion

Keep the remainder of the golf season in mind when preparing for a tournament. Tournament conditions should provide an appropriate challenge to the competitors, but pushing too hard can result in poor conditions for the remainder of the season. This is especially important for early – mid season events that conclude during a time of year when turfgrass recovery is limited.

Although the importance of surface refinement and course detailing should not be diminished, being prepared for unfortunate events and severe weather patterns — if they happen — can separate a good event from a great event.



Paul Jacobs
USGA Green Section
Agronomist

Rounds4Research 2018 Campaign

MAAGCS Aims to be Among the Nation's Leaders

The Rounds 4 Research program was designed to address a critical shortage in turfgrass research funding by auctioning donated rounds of golf online. The program is administered by the Environmental Institute for Golf, the philanthropic organization of the GCSAA. Although there is a wide scope of research going on, some key areas include disease management, insect management, turfgrass management and water quality. Funds from this program are also used to support the EIFG's Chapter Cooperative Research Program which works with GCSAA-affiliated chapters by providing matching funds for applied agronomic or environmentally related research. This is a powerful program and MAAGCS has benefited greatly from these matching funds. So, please use this opportunity to donate a foursome and help raise money for future research projects.

In 2017, the R4R auction raised more than \$200,000, nationally! This year, the auction is set for April 30-May 6, so get your donations in soon! Donating is quick and easy! You can simply fill out an on-line form or use the form included in this mailing and send to the EIFG. EIFG can create the winner's certificate for you.



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The diagram is a circular 'Wheel of Solutions' with 'AGRONOMIC CHALLENGE' in the center. It features 16 segments, each representing a different agronomic challenge and the corresponding Floratine product used to address it. The challenges and products are as follows:

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- Salt and Toxicity:** Perk Up ProteSyn
- Water Retention:** Maxiplex Pervade, Calphlex, Turgor, Propel
- Localized Dry Spot:** Retain Pro, Maxiplex Eon 75, Eon Bio
- Aerial Defense:** Maxiplex Pervade, Retain Pro, Propel
- Density:** PK Fight, Defense-Man/Mag, Floradox, ProteSyn, Defense CuZn
- Recovery:** Per "4" Max, Renaissance, ProteSyn, PK Fight
- Low Sunlight / Shade:** Astron, PK Fight, GlycoFuze, P-48, Free IS
- ProteSyn:** Knife Plus, Renaissance, Largo, Iron Maid
- Color:** Turgor, ProteSyn 5.0 Cal, Fight's On
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- Micro nutrients:** Maxiplex Oxyflor, Eon Bio, Eon 75

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Assistants Corner – Matt Harvey

The Handshake

The handshake is one of the most important gestures someone can bestow upon you. The handshake has no bias to your culture, gender or race. You can use the handshake in a wide variety of settings; whether it be in business, friendship or a casual greeting of a stranger. A proper handshake is an important gesture no matter who you are. But that's not what this is about.

As we wind-down from this year's education events and trades shows and begin to start the new golf season, Assistants had/have opportunities to engage themselves and attend events. For a variety of reasons Assistants may not have attended these events, but opportunities are there. Reasons like budgeting, time constraints or lack of knowledge the event exists might lead to a limited participation.

It is imperative for Assistants to be engaged in these events and programs however. One of the most important tasks any Assistant can do for themselves and their career is to network. Getting away from your course and talking with other Assistants and seeing what everyone else is doing and going through. Meeting leaders in our industry and introducing yourself can not only serve you better in your career, but there is a wealth of knowledge out there that you will never find in a book or from an app on your phone. Years of experience from Superintendents, that also attend these events, are always willing to pass along their knowledge.

Getting out in the community and being an ambassador for our industry can't be underestimated either. Events like the First Green Program and National Golf Day put the focus on what we do as an industry. The First Green Program is getting out in the community and teaching young kids about our industry. Planting seeds at a young age to maybe make future Turf Managers. Going down to our nation's capital for National Golf Day and talking to law makers and showing them what we actually do to improve then environment by being good stewards of the environment, only makes our industry look better.

What I am saying, as an Assistant, ask to attend these events and conferences. You might not be able to make every one of them, but there will be ones you are able to attend. Participate, meet people and have an open mind at these events. What I want you to do is get out there and shake a few hands. Meet the leaders in our industry. Be an ambassador for our industry. You never know who you might run across, and maybe one of the hands you shake could open countless doors of opportunity and knowledge.



Matt Harvey

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Government Relations Update – Eric David

The 2018 Maryland Legislative Session for the golf course industry was both interesting and challenging for the Mid-Atlantic. A bill to ban the use of Chlorpyrifos, trade name Dursban, was proposed in the House of Delegates and was cross-filed in the Senate. As golf course superintendents, we know the value of having this chemical at our disposal and do not support the state regulating an already EPA regulated product. Chlorpyrifos is an effective chemical against the adult annual bluegrass weevil and is used in rotation management to keep pesticide resistance from occurring. Pests that become resistant to chemicals cause a much bigger risk, due to the inability to control damaging populations. Once resistance occurs, the sole option our industry has for controlling adult annual bluegrass weevils continues to become more ineffective, even with repeated applications. Golf courses would suffer negative economic impacts, because of poor playing conditions.

As a group, the superintendents in our association did a great job coming together to fight this bill. Many of our members wrote letters of opposition to the Senate and House Committees, which was the first step in opposing the bill. Mark Allman, Tim Kennelly, Joe Haskins, and Chris Harriman went to Annapolis to testify in front of the Committees, which showed our representatives that this was an important bill to golf course superintendents. Our lobbyist, Joe Miedusiewski and Lindsey Thompson from Maryland/Delaware Agri-Business did great work helping our association organize and stay informed on the legislation. Without their assistance, we would not have been able to put together a strong opposition counter argument. Even with great arguments and facts to support our opposition of the bill, it took last minute phone calls to Senators to stop the bill.

This was the first opportunity for the MAAGCS to show legislators that we are a responsible group of golf course superintendents by using the Best Management Practices (BMP) document as evidence. This document proves to the government that we are highly educated, responsible professionals, when it comes to the environment and individuals around our facilities. The proponents of the bill are already working get this bill reintroduced in 2019. Smart on Pesticides Maryland is the group making claims that chlorpyrifos is confirmed to cause autism and will push the bill for next year. As an association, facts and research are the best strategy we can use against these claims. We must rise above emotional arguments and scare tactics used to push an agenda.

I am proud to be part of an association that was able to quickly and effectively pull together, to stand up against this bill. This legislation came quickly, but our group organized, fought back, and had a successful run. As we move forward, our group will have to be more proactive to legislation. The opportunity to get BMP's in front of lawmakers was useful and proved that the creation of this document was an important undertaking by our group. This will not be the last time we will have to fight to keep our tools and products from prohibition.



Eric David

United States Naval Academy
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Orioles Hooky Day at Camden Yards on June 13

Wednesday, June 13 vs. Boston Red Sox • 3:05 First Pitch • Section 60 / 3rd Base Line, Lower Level Seats!

This event is open to all members, non-members, equipment managers, wives, children, staff, pros, GMs, owners, friends and family alike! This will be a fun family atmosphere and with a 3:05 first pitch there will plenty of time to prep your golf course, meet the family, have lunch, watch the ballgame and be home as the sun sets! We currently have 40 tickets reserved so be sure to sign up early! You will not want to miss it!

Tickets – \$41 each: Please register and complete payment online through the event page on the MAAGCS website. You can pick up your tickets at Will Call on the day of the game.



The Importance of Mentoring – Max Sturges

Twenty years ago, there were 52 students who were in the golf course management program at UMD. Currently, there are seven students enrolled in the program, including myself. What's changed? What's happened over the past two decades that's caused this decline in golf course management enrollment? Why are superintendents struggling more and more to find dedicated, driven employees?

I can answer this from a millennials' perspective, as I was struggling to find my path and motivation until I found my groove at Worthington Manor Golf Club in Urbana, MD.

Being a part of the generation that's viewed as having a weaker work ethic, but knowing that's not the case for all, I hesitate to belittle my own generation. However, as I matured and gained more work and life experience, my perspective on work ethic shifted. Working in the industry for the past four years I've learned the difficulty of motivating some millennials to get the job done. I humbly say this from personal experience as I absolutely struggled with seeing a job through and reporting to work in the off hours, just to name a few shortcomings.

What helped propel my growth was crossing paths with my current boss, Kirk Warburton, Superintendent and General Manager at Worthington Manor Golf Club in Urbana, MD. With his support and encouragement, together we designed a strategic plan for my career growth. I enrolled in a turf program, took on more leadership responsibility and was required to put in long, but rewarding hours. Knowing that my efforts would translate to growing my career made all the difference in my work ethic. I was actually motivated to work.

I was always told growing up to work in an industry you love, and you'll never work a day in your life. Fortunately for me, I found my niche, not based on a dollar sign or a social title but based on something that I am truly passionate about.

I'm sure for many of the Assistants reading this, the story of having a mentor in the industry that taught us how to work is a shared experience. With that being said, how can our industry capture the knowledge of the experienced superintendents and impart it onto the new generation of turf heads sooner rather than later?

It is my understanding that some superintendents are adopting new strategies to work with the millennial generation. For instance, some are instituting "shift-work," where a crew works mornings, and a separate crew works afternoons. Only time will tell whether or not this will be an adequate solution.

In my opinion, if all green departments had recruitment plans focused on high school students for work during the summer season, we could promote our industry to the next generation.

Though these employees may not be experienced, labor and money will have to be spent to train them and there may be jobs you won't be comfortable letting them tackle and yes, they're only working summers and weekends, but they have the potential to be the next students in a turf program and perhaps eventually superintendents.

If we introduce them to the positives of working in this industry we might be able to increase the enrollment in turf school. We may be able to convince people that a career in the golf industry will be more satisfactory than sitting at a desk from 9-5.

If superintendents and assistants take these students under their wing like Kirk Warburton did for me, who knows, maybe there won't be enough job openings for all the people graduating from turf school. Just some food for thought. Gotta get back to work now.



Getting to Know Tony Lewis



Tony Lewis
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Equipment Program Director

Montgomery County Revenue Authority Golf

What type of technical training or certification programs have you completed?

I went through the GCSAA TETCP (Turf Equipment Technician Certification Program) Spring 2017. I then passed the EETC Engine exams over the summer. This was more to see how the outdoor power tests were proctored and how the content compared to a program geared more towards turf. No technical training or college experience.

What value do you see the Equipment Manager certification and membership classifications in advancing our industry?

A tremendous value. This goes hand in hand with the increasing standards in quality of cut, equipment operation, and intricate control systems. The classification helps remind us that the Superintendent/EM is a working relationship and success relies on constant feedback from both sides.

How did you get into your existing role?

Hard work and people willing to take a chance on me. Jay Nalls hired me as an assistant mechanic at 18, Teddy Blauvelt hired me as Equipment Manager at 20, and Jon Lobenstine promoted me to Program Director at 26. I'm thankful for that and couldn't have done it without learning fast or knowing who to call if I didn't have an answer.

What do you like most about the turf industry?

The camaraderie and morning rides to check the quality of our product. If I worked on cars or trucks for a living I'd really be missing out.

What excites you about the Equipment Managers programs by the MAAGCS and GCSAA?

The resources we have locally through our vendors for great events to network and learn. The GCSAA is working on the next level of certification which will likely include peer evaluations, similar to CGCS.

What new technologies are you most interested in 2018?

GPS sprayers and hopefully a better preview of autonomous technology. We all know labor is an increasing challenge and I'm excited to see and find ways to cross this bridge. It's an exciting time to be an Equipment Manager.

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GCSAA Report – Chase Rogan

Sign of Strength

According to *Business Insider* magazine, the red and white Coca-Cola logo is recognized by 94% of the world's population. It is so synonymous with a pleasant experience, that Coca-Cola translates to “delicious happiness” in Mandarin. While we aren't Coca-Cola, the GCSAA logo plays an important role in telling the story of superintendents and making our brand visible and recognizable.

The logo is the cornerstone of our “branding” efforts. Branding builds credibility and familiarity with employers, golfers and non-golfers alike. It establishes trust and reinforces our strong position within the industry and allied associations.

Earlier this year, GCSAA was named as one of the National Golf Foundation's Top 100 Business in Golf, which recognizes “the most successful, influential and prominent companies, organizations and associations in golf.” NGF did not publicize its Top 100 with a bulleted list of names, but rather with a graphic of the 100 logos of those businesses fundamental to the importance of the industry. We are very proud to see the GCSAA logo share the spotlight with those of other key influencers.

When the GCSAA logo is shown as part of our relationship with the Golf Channel or in our national campaigns such as Thank a Superintendent, it's not just representing the national association. It's representing every chapter and every member.

Ten years ago, GCSAA began a program to encourage chapters to adopt the affiliated chapter logo to make sure the awareness and recognition of our logo and brand was shared on the local level. For the early adapters of the program, when GCSAA receives national recognition, it was also making a connection at the local level.

We believe it is so important for chapters to adopt the affiliated logo, that GCSAA is offering grants specifically to help with the cost of the transition. The primary function of the affiliated chapter logo is to identify at a glance the affiliated chapter and its relationship to GCSAA. This logo is for chapters that want to show their affiliation with GCSAA. As an affiliated chapter of GCSAA, it is mutually beneficial and of strategic importance for the local chapter and national organization to utilize consistent branding style guidelines. You can learn more about the program at <https://www.gcsaa.org/resources/chapter-resources/affiliated-chapter-logos>.

As we increase our national and international profile, bringing the GCSAA family together under one logo is even more important. After nine decades, we are a strong and influential organization because our chapters provide a firm foundation. With a unified branding effort on the local and national level, we are all coming together to increase awareness of the profession and make a stronger association for every member.

New Education for Assistants

Within any industry, continuing education is an important asset in professional development. Our industry is no different, and superintendent positions are as competitive as ever. For assistant superintendents looking for their first opportunity, this education could be a key factor in separating themselves from the pack. Particularly, it should be highlighted and leveraged on a resume to show potential employers that you are engaged in actively trying to improve yourself beyond the degree you may have previously earned.

To help you reach your educational goals,

GCSAA has been developing and will soon be releasing education certificates for assistant superintendents. The certificates will cover four competency areas including: principles of golf course agronomy, business, communications/leadership, and environmental management. Although these certificates are geared toward assistants, any member or non-member can take the exams (cost is cheaper for members) to help improve their skills.

The first two exams, agronomy and business, were released in January 2018 with an associated study guide, and each exam is



Chase Rogan

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between 70-75 questions. The remaining two exams will be developed and released later in 2018.

For assistants or others looking to hone their mechanical intuition, GCSAA also has eight competency exams for equipment managers and covering: cutting units, drivetrain systems, electrical systems, engine technology, hydraulic systems, metalworking and fabrication, spray systems, and fundamentals of turfgrass operations. These certificates are currently available for any member or non-member, and can be found at gcsaa.org.

The Power of Personal Notes – Kevin Doyle, GCSAA

To be brief, this is a message about the power of a personal note. I have written about the power of using the phrase “thank you” in the past; this is a little different. I have always tried to incorporate the use of such notes, and encourage others to do so too. The notes you will read below are special. They are real, come from an interesting source, and touch on a very important subject to those who received them. Some are very funny, others are very deep in meaning. All are a special way of thanking a golf course superintendent for exposing them to the game of golf, and more specifically, the role of a superintendent.

This year at the Golf Industry Show, several field staff representatives took part in a First Green field trip in conjunction with a GCSAA seminar. It was a great opportunity to participate in another field trip, my third, and see how others operate their student learning curriculums. After the on-site portion of the First Green trip, the group got to meet back at the convention center and hear from a panel of superintendents who have run trips at their facilities recently.

One of those on the panel was Ryan Kraushofer, general manager of Westminster National Golf Course, Westminster, Md. Kraushofer shed light on his course’s success with schools in his county and also noted the benefits he received as a turfgrass professional. Some of those benefits were at the personal level.

Within days after hosting his First Green field trip consisting of fifth graders, Kraushofer was to marry the love of his life. As a thank you, the students who visited had the ability to send their First Green host “Advice for the Newlyweds from a Fifth-Grader.” Kraushofer was kind enough to share some of the personal notes he received from the students. As a reminder, this is marital advice from **fifth-graders!**

Dear the Kraushofers,

One of the things I recommend is to not talk about grass all the time your wife will get annoyed.

Dear Ryan,

Always make the wife happy. If you are in an argument, if you know you are wrong admit it. If you know you are right, still admit you are wrong. If you have a happy wife you have an easier life.

To Mr. and Mrs. Kraushofer:

Be nice to one another. I know it can be hard but at least try. Also, you should never argue either but if you do, admit it if you are wrong if you don't it could end in more arguing. You should also go do sports that's fun and enjoyable unless you are playing with competitive 5th graders, I should know. Golfing sounds good and where have I heard that before.

Dear Ryan,

Don't always try to defend yourself. Also, don't purchase pants without the wife's consent. Have a good time and always offer to help. Shower her with pedals after the wedding.

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Kraushofer,

Hello. Here is some advice to have a happy life together.

1. *Don't go to sleep angry, if you fight resolve it as quickly as possible*
2. *Talk about important decisions before making them*
3. *Forgive each other. Remember that you love each other and that sometimes people make mistakes*
4. *Don't use technology during potentially nice moments such as dinner or vacations*
5. *Remind yourselves how lucky you are!*

Dear Ryan,

If you want good advice, keep on reading! (I've happened to go to a lot of weddings, so I know a thing or two!) First of all, you should get a 5- to 7-year-old girl to throw the pedals, because everybody will go: awwww! Also, use some breath freshener before you kiss, because if your breath smells bad, it would be awkward (don't ask why, I just know). Otherwise, I'll wish you good luck! Hope everything goes well; also, be a happy couple!

Dear Ryan,

Remember some of this advice on your wedding day:

1. *Whenever your wife says, do I look good always say yes. Never yeah you look fine always say you look fantastic or gorgeous or wonderful.*
2. *Tie your shoes. While dancing you don't want to go face first on the floor. Trust me, it's very embarrassing...*
3. *Always listen to your wife. Remember anything you do can ruin a perfect relationship so be the greatest husband you can be.*

The one message I'm about to say is directly to Mr. Ryan, make sure you have about the same love for your golf course and your wife. Ok? Make sure to get everyone a gift on Valentine's Day! A lot of money will go into this and a lot of time will go into this!

Dear Mr. Kraushofer,

You've got to make sure to buy the Mrs. lots of shoes. She will be so happy. I know my mom is happy when my dad gets her flowers. Be sure to keep her happy because the first time you make a mistake, she will be very angry, so keep her very very very very happy!

Dear Mr. Kraushofer,

Forgive your wife • Love your wife • Help your wife • Party with your wife • Kiss your wife

These notes were a simply a way to say thank you for a school visit to a golf course. If you talk to Kraushofer, you will find that those notes took on a much deeper meaning. In fact, he told me they were some of the best wedding gifts they received, and they shared many of these notes with their guests!

While you hope to convey a message when writing a note of thanks, what may in fact seem simple to you the sender may well have a much deeper and more profound effect on the recipient!

Equipment Manager Exam Strategies – Tony Lewis

The GCSAA Equipment Manager exams are coming to GCSAA Equipment Manager members this Spring. In anticipation of these exams, Anthony Lewis, Equipment Program Director for Montgomery County Revenue Authority, provided a brief overview of some basic test taking tips.

Following the release of the GCSAA Equipment Manager exams, rating yourself on the testing objectives and seeking the right resources to study (including the official guides) are the most important steps for success. An often-overlooked facet is test taking strategies. Below is a sample question from the cutting unit exam:

What is the correct method to check the cut on a cutting unit?

- A. Make sure it cuts on the leading end of the reel blade
- B. Make sure it cuts on the trailing end of

the reel blade

- C. Make sure it cuts on the left side and the right side of the cutting unit
- D. Make sure it cuts on the left side, the right side, and the center of the cutting unit

Correct answer is D

Testing Objective: Identify the correct method to check the cut on a cutting unit.

Eliminate one or two clearly incorrect answers right of the bat then choose between the distractor and correct answer. First impressions are usually the best response but feel free to skip ahead and come back to it later.

Knowing the proper terminology is key. This applies for not just the technical terms in the objectives lists but also for the primary word

in a question. In this case, it's method. Defined as "a manner or mode of procedure, especially an orderly, logical, or systematic way of instruction" we know the answer should be set locations on multiple parts of the reel. Another example for a different exam would be knowing the definition of axial and radial play or centrifugal for the Drivetrain category.

Look for answers that are opposite one another. Chances are one of them is the correct answer especially if the other two choices appear irrelevant.

Overall in our industry there will always be topics for debate with multiple techniques or opinions. The questions were written with the testing objectives in mind and I recommend you do the research for the technical answers before sitting down for an exam session.

Assistants Meeting Coming Up on Monday, May 14

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VGM Club

Letter from the Editor – Tyler Bloom



Tyler Bloom

Sparrows Point Country Club

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Dear Members,

So much for March going out like a lamb! I am anxious to see grass starting to grow, but it was an enjoyable winter. The MAAGCS put on another great slate of education events, and it was nice to catch up with colleagues in the region to review programs, labor and talk shop. We can all bust on Chris Harriman for being “that guy” who brought his entire staff to Top Golf. In all seriousness, kudos to Chris and the Cattail Creek team for setting the benchmark for staff participation.

As I write this article, my wife Jayme is within three weeks of the delivery date of our first child. I thought taking on my first superintendent job was a shell shocker – parenthood should be quite interesting. One of the rewards of following most of you on Social Media is following the growth/maturation of your children. I believe the award for funniest child goes to Tucker Schultheis with his quips on Paul. Thanks to industry friends and colleagues who have sent well wishes or eased my tension with horror stories. Looking forward to many firsts in the coming weeks and months.

The spirit of this newsletter touched on education and outreach, and the MAAGCS can tip its hat as we are at the forefront of both. The BMP initiative has caught fire and the website is clean, professional and thought-provoking. I highly suggest spending some time with your assistants to review the recommendations and begin to document your efforts cohesively with the template. I’m certain that most of us are already following most recommendations and will take it one step further to the decision-makers of your club. Champion your efforts and post these efforts on a bulletin board at the clubhouse.

Ryan Kraushofer continues outreach with the First Green program at Westminster National. His efforts exemplify not only outreach, but also the right step in recruitment of our future labor market. I am a firm believer that if you’re sitting around waiting for the textbook version of an intern to walk through your door for \$10.00 per hour or a retired high school teacher to mow rough five days a week, then you are behind the curve. Although I agree the labor market doesn’t seem as plentiful as when I came into the industry, let’s be real. Did the industry ever really have pick of the litter? I think our industry got a little complacent, and the recent shift in labor trends has been a wakeup call.

If you aren’t selling your work environment and improving the culture on a daily basis, then don’t expect employees to be enthusiastic about the same old routine. Yes, there will be employees who want to punch the clock, put in eight hours of work and introvertly be on their way. Are they moving the needle for your organization? Probably not, but can fit a specific niche. Beggars can’t be choosers either.

We all do a great job in developing agronomic plans, budget plans and project plans, but our shortcomings in adaptation has been in recruiting. I think the easy scapegoat is to look at some of our recent circumstances with reduction in turf school enrollees, status of H2B program and wage laws. No question these all impact daily operations, and I can’t imagine not having the commitment of veteran, skilled employees due to government action or inaction. We have to adapt and look at various methods to fill niche positions and staff roles. It is amazing to hear the same story, “I put out a Craigslist or Indeed ad and I’m not getting any applicants.” Are you are expecting candidates to go through these web-based platforms to supplement a 15 to 20-person staff a month ahead of the season? As Cris Carter would say, *C’MON MAN*.

Not to toot my own horn, but three years ago, entry-level employees at our facility were at the bottom of the pay scale wage in Baltimore County and tenured employees weren’t too far behind. We were losing 50-70-percent of our staff for the same reasons I read in GCM, GCI or Superintendent’s magazines. It didn’t take a rocket scientist or human resource manager to

Continued on p. 22

Letter from the Editor (cont.)

figure it out. There was no engagement and excitement to be a part of our organization. Four years later, we now have four staff members with turf certification and another four signing up this year. Our retention rate has improved to 87-percent with a diverse work environment. Sparrows Point Country Club isn't a Top-100 facility with unlimited resources and with a history of moving entry level employees to management or specialty roles.

These intangible benefits are created through ideas within our industry, and are readily available with little to no cost, but taking little risk to think outside the box. There are many great examples in our area of Superintendents who seem to be adapting and moving forward. The skill sets gained working on a golf course maintenance team translate to most if not all professions. That is one area that should be sold to prospective employees.

The GCSAA is out in the industry collecting ideas and spearheading new initiatives to develop your assistants, equipment managers and staff. Shelia Fenney and Chase Rogan recently spoke to our staff about their commitment to growth and willingness to support their development. They aren't just talking the talk, they are walking it. Again, a free resource for all of you to use.

I'll put on my MAAGCS hat for a second, because the examples listed above are reasons you should be participating in the MAAGCS and gaining value out of your association. Does McDonald's or Wawa send their managers to continuing education? Probably not. Advocate this to your Board or General Manager. You can keep good people if you invest time and demonstrate growth opportunities. You may not be able to provide a tangible increase in wage, but engaging your staff into our events can go a long way.

Cultural differences are a challenge to deal with in the workplace, and I suggest spending time with each individual staff member periodically throughout the season. It is eye opening at times to listen to staff provide insight and feedback, and often can be a reality check. Translating this information to the decision makers can hit moments of truth for your organization. I am very fortunate to work at a facility that embodies teamwork, and our members are very supportive of our efforts. However, engaging them into the process of team building and the workplace culture has paid dividends.

Get your Green or Golf Committees to have a meeting at the maintenance facility. It was eye opening for our Golf Chair to see the work environment our employees walk into daily,

and he has since been a huge ambassador of our team. Our team has received a healthy dose of donations to improve the break room – refrigerator, appliances, washer and dryer, uniforms. This was a result of a conversation with my Golf Chair.

As you can tell, I am a bit passionate about this concept of doom and gloom in relation to labor force. I'd be a hypocrite if I didn't admit that I'm as guilty as the next person to venting my frustration at times, but there are some things that can go a long way. Develop a plan with the Green Committee, General Manager and Board to develop and attract staff members from entry level all the way through to your assistants. If we have no plan for their growth, why should we expect growth in our own operations?

Hopefully, we all see mild temperatures, timely rainfall and consistent growing conditions soon. I will be following the match play event via phone as I learn the nuances of diaper changing and perfecting nap times.

Warm Regards,
Tyler Bloom



MAAGCS Schedule of Events

May 8th: Tuesday	First Green Field Trip, Westminster National, Westminster, MD
May 14th: Monday	Assistants Event, ABW Sampling, Manor Country Club, Rockville, MD
May 29th: Tuesday	Chesapeake Challenge, Queenstown Harbor Golf Club, Queenstown, MD
June 13th: Wednesday	O's Hooky Day, Camden Yards, Baltimore, MD
July 19th: Thursday	The Open Championship Social Event, City Dock, Annapolis, MD
August 6th: Monday	The Stewards of the Chesapeake, Chevy Chase Club, Chevy Chase, MD
October 24th: Wednesday	MAAGCS Annual Championship, Waverly Woods Golf Course, Marriottsville, MD
December 11th: Tuesday	MAAGCS Annual Meeting, TBA



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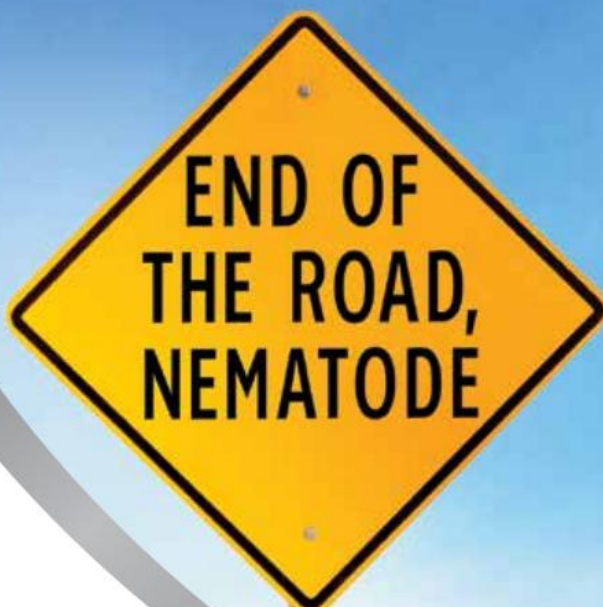
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