

GCSAA Chapter Relations Meeting Summary

By Dave Davies

The GCSAA Chapter Relations Meeting was held September 7 and 8 at the Association Headquarters in Lawrence, Kansas. A number of important issues were discussed as well as a report by GCSAA staff on the current condition of the Association.

The issue of primary concern to our membership is the proposed dues increase for 1997. GCSAA has introduced a number of new educational programs, entered the World Wide Web and addressed the issues brought forward in the 1993 Arthur Andersen Report. This report was instrumental in the reorganization of the Association's business structure. As a result of restructuring staff responsibilities, challenging current business practices and focusing efforts in the direction of Board mandates, the Association has been able to forego a dues increase for the last 6 years. A great deal of discussion took place among the delegates with opinions ranging from "no increase" to "why has it taken so long" and "it should be more". The GCSAA Board expects to have a proposal for an increase to \$250 for A and B members at the conference in Las Vegas.

A progress report on the current status of Chapter reaffiliation was given. I was pleased to see that our Chapter was one of only 8 nationwide that has completed the process. Congratulations to both last years and the current board for the timely completion of this process.

Membership standards were another not item for discussion. Currently GCSAA has no standards for membership. Upon successful completion of a specific number of years of service, members are advanced to the next level of membership. It is the feeling of the delegates in attendance that GCSAA should establish standards for education or chapter involvement to maintain membership status or move on to the next membership level. Specifics for the standards have not been discussed and the membership committee has been given a timetable of 5-7 years for implementation. Delegates voiced a desire to accelerate that schedule if at all possible. President Bruce Williams, CGCS, noted the priority will be to do a thorough job of setting up the standards so they are easily recognizable by the public as well as allied associations in our industry. This will help our membership in attaining the recognition as professionals in our industry. This will help our membership in attaining the recognition

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In addition to membership standards, there is a desire on the part of GCSAA to standardize the logo used by chapters. The purpose of this is to make our logo more recognizable as the standard for golf course superintendents, in much the same way as the PGA logo is now used. Image and public recognition are prominent items in the current boards agenda. Discussion by delegates centered on ways to develop logos that allowed individual chapters their own identity while still maintaining a common GCSAA logo.

The C membership classification, changed during the election in Orlando, is under review by the membership committee. There is a desire by some current C members who are "career assistants" to retain their right to vote. A survey was sent to all C members prior to the conference and the results of this survey were used in the discussion regarding possible classification changes. The membership committee is expected to have a proposed bylaw change ready for a vote in Las Vegas. Details for the change are not complete but should involve an opportunity to upgrade to a new voting classification after three years service. This upgrade will also include a dues increase to the current A rate.

A number of issues that you may read about in the upcoming issues of Newline are the new GCSAA web site, the chapter seminar rebate program, member service center, a member credit union, changes in member health insurance and the code of ethics.

The most permanent theme of the conference was the continuing efforts on the part of GCSAA to enhance and improve our level of professionalism through the advancement of our educational opportunities. Public perception of our industry continues to be less than desirable from the non-golfing community and we as an industry need to continue to improve our position in the professional arena.

I was impressed with the number of very creative, hard working individuals that have the best interests of our profession in mind. It is important to remember than opinions need to be voiced to your current board, questions should be asked and information should be made available to all those affected. Without these avenues of communication we have no association and we lose the trust and faith we need to have in each other. **Get Involved!!!** ♦

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