

# THRU THE GREEN

The Golf Course Superintendents Association of Northern California

MAY/JUNE 2014

Northern California Chapter  
**GCSAA**

*Stanford*  
GOLF COURSE



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## ON THE COVER:

An aerial view of the Stauford Golf Course. Photo by Joann Dost.

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## Office Notes

By **BARBARA MIKEL**

Stanford University Golf Course, June 23, 2014 is the venue for the Seventh Annual Clifford and Myrtle Wagoner Scholarship & Research Tournament. Ken Williams, CGCS will once again host a wonderful day of golf followed by patio hors d'oeuvres & auction.

In 2000, Affiliate members of the association began a tournament to raise fund for turfgrass scholarship and research programs. Retitled in 2004 to the "Clifford and Myrtle Wagoner Scholarship & Research Tournament" to honor Clifford Wagoner and his wife, Myrtle Wagoner. Clifford, a three-time president of GCSANC and a president of the national association, GCSAA, provided leadership to the industry for decades. His wife, Myrtle Wagoner, served as association administrator from 1960 to 1989.

Annually we award scholarship to northern California students and provide monies for research projects relevant to golf courses in northern California. We greatly appreciate your involvement and support. It is truly critical to the success of this worthwhile event.

Grab your friends, golf friends, and all who would like to participate. Some great golf outings, vacation outings and product will be available online and onsite for you and your guests.

Historically, with the support of superintendents, pros and industry companies, the Nor Cal Tournament raises funds for expanded scholarship & research programs.

Last year over \$25,000 was raised and \$18,000 donated to scholarships and research projects in California. With your continued participation and support, this year will continue that great history.

Vacation in Idaho anyone? The location is Donnelly, ID northeast of Boise. The area is high-end summer-winter/recreational access. Lake Cascade McCall and Tamarack Sky area is north.

There are items already posted. Take a look:

<http://equipment.gcsanc.com/>

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## NorCalendar

**JUNE 23**

**Seventh Annual Clifford and Myrtle Wagoner Scholarship Research Tournament**

*Stanford University Golf Course*

**AUGUST 11**

**Tri Chapter Meeting**

*Del Rio Country Club*

**DECEMBER 5**

**December Meeting**

*Del Monte Golf Course and Hyatt Regency Monterey Hotel & Spa*

### More Details?

Visit [www.gcsanc.com/events/](http://www.gcsanc.com/events/)

## New Members

**Jeff Henninger**

**Delta Bluegrass**

*Affiliate*

**Suzanne Johnson**

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## President's Message By GARY INGRAM, CGCS

What does sustainability mean to you?

- Recycling?
- Natural resource management?
- Reducing your carbon footprint?
- Environmental stewardship?
- Maintaining your business viability?
- Community involvement and social acceptance?

Recently I was tasked to help develop a comprehensive "Sustainability Action Plan" for my course after participating in a six-month business program about sustainability. What was discussed was that successful sustainability is not just about Environmental Stewardship and Natural Resource Management, but included social, economic, and environmental issues as well.

A few weeks ago I attended the "Symposium on Affordable Golf" at Dairy Creek Golf Course in San Luis Obispo that could have been titled the "Symposium on Sustainable Golf." What I enjoyed most was the overwhelming collaboration of superintendents, managers, professionals, owners, suppliers, architects, and numerous water and economic specialists. Together we joined forces to discuss the current state of our industry and evaluate potential action plans to keep golf affordable and sustainable. During this two-day event there were interesting talks and roundtable discussions relative to water, golf equipment, design, course setup, golfers' overall expectations and how these issues relate to the cost of golf.

The list of diverse speakers and roundtable participants was exceptional including:

**Jim DeLaby**  
PGA Professional, Jim DeLaby Golf Instruction

**Tom Elliot CGCS**  
Monarch Dunes Golf Club

**J. Rhett Evans**  
Chief Executive Officer, GCSAA

**Josh Heptig**  
Director of Golf Operations, Dairy Creek Golf Course

**Ben Hood**  
Design Associate, Richard Mandell Golf Architecture

**Ted Horton, CGCS**  
Senior Consulting Superintendent, Valley Crest Golf Maintenance

**Mike Huck**  
Principle, Irrigation & Turfgrass Services

**Craig Kessler**  
Director of Government Affairs, Southern California Golf Association

**Richard Mandell**  
ASGCA Associate, President Mandell Golf Architecture

**Mike McCullough**  
Recycled Water Program Assistant,  
Monterey Regional Water Pollution Control Agency

**Tim Moraghan**  
Principle, ASPIRE Golf Consulting

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**Dick Rugge**

*Former Senior Technical Director, USGA*

**Andy Staples**

*Associate ASGCA, Andy Staples Golf*

**Dick Wilhoit**

*President/CEO, Estrella Associates*

**Wes Wilhoit**

*Senior Vice President, Estrella Associates*

**Bruce Williams**

*Owner, Bruce Williams Golf Consulting*

One of our biggest challenges during this event was defining affordable. The average cost to the consumer to play the game has declined in the last 10 years yet the cost to provide the golf experience has only continued to increase. No one would argue that is a good business plan! Golfers' current expectations and perceptions continue to escalate the cost to maintain the courses and to play the game. There were so many courses built, supply outweighs the demand. The time to play 18 holes continues to be a deterrent and not enough new people are taking up the game. How to educate our customers and adapt to the rising costs, while still providing an enjoyable product will be our primary challenge. It even gets more muddled when we discussed the business of golf versus the game itself.

I hope you don't think I came away with a gloom and doom attitude. There were numerous good ideas including focusing on

course setup: hole placement, speed of greens, and height of cut and how they effect pace of play. Speakers discussed design concepts to reduce maintenance costs while improving overall enjoyment. Turf reduction has become a must, not us only for water conservation but as an economic necessity. We discussed the numerous expensive, non-necessaries, but aesthetic features that are added to golf courses such as the extensive use of bunkers. Many times these are installed as decorations rather than for strategy. If we focus on form following function, design versus decoration, strategy versus aesthetics and focus on keeping golf fun we can help return the game to being more affordable for everyone.

We were also reminded that to be successful we must invite the 90% of the public that doesn't play golf to enjoy our facilities. Community outreach is essential to our success. Golf courses are beautiful pieces of land that are major assets for both our communities and the environment. Dairy Creek Golf Course was a great example of bringing non-golfers to see their efforts to be more sustainable and how they are contributing to the San Luis Obispo community.

Golf and its venues seem to be on an upswing, but to continue this trend we must to focus on collaboration. Events such as the Symposium on Affordable Golf and organizations that bring all facets of our industry together are critical to our success. The GCSANC will continue to be part of these efforts.

If you have any ideas please do not hesitate to contact your association and we can share with your colleagues.

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## Editor's Ramblings

By **MIKE SOUZA**

Seriously, who really wants to read or hear me rambling? I have to hire people to listen to me ramble all day long about how they are running the crew, we could be better at what we do, can't you keep this equipment fixed, why isn't this done yet and oh, we need to water less, wow, we are kind of dry. I don't want to ramble. I'd rather think about how much more rain we need to receive this spring so we don't have to figure out how much more irrigation cut backs we need to plan for on top of the cut backs we did last year and the year before that. I would rather try to figure out new ways to get members to do what many of them don't do. Keep the carts away from the greens, fix ballmarks, replace divots, read the newsletters and look at the schedule of maintenance procedures laid out for the year before they complain that their tournament is the day after we de-thatch and topdress the place. No rambling here. I had a friend from college that rambled similar to Brad Pitt in Snatch. We had to have a special dictionary in order to understand him. The more he drank the faster he rambled, and with a bit of a bit of

a slur. Surprisingly we understood him better. If we had a couple of drinks we understood him even more. Something about focusing the mind and being able to dissect what we were hearing syllable-by-syllable. We have thought about seeing if this type of rambling approach would work with a Green Committee or Board of Directors. Have not pulled the trigger on that one yet. You know you are rambling when the person you are talking to starts to yawn while they are gritting their teeth and sucking the air in through their nose. It's like being caught by the last committee member after the Green Chairman cut them short at the meeting and they did not get to finish going through their list of grievances and completely ignore your feats of strength. Everyone else had the good sense to clear out of the room. If you make eye contact they caught you. Mike, what's happening? I've been meaning to talk to you about those TPS reports. Should have gone out the back way which is what I am going to do here.

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## Time to Donate

### Seventh Annual Clifford & Myrtle Wagoner Scholarship & Turfgrass Research Fund Donation

The Clifford & Myrtle Wagoner Scholarship & Research Tournament is our fundraising event. Annually we award dollars to worthy students and research projects relevant to golf courses in Northern California. We greatly appreciate your involvement and support. It is truly critical to the success of this worthwhile event.

We welcome you or your club or company participation with a dollar donations or an auction item; raffle prize any and all donations. We accept all donations of golf play, equipment or apparel for the auction.

Let us know what you can contribute. Thanks again, for those already making a donation!

You may use the donation form on the facing page or contact one of the committee members listed below:

**Ryan Smith:** ryan.smith@belkorpag.com (209) 944-5714

**Vince Keats, CGCS:** vjkeats@gmail.com (707) 481-1338

**Brian Boyer:** bboyer@cinnabarhills.com (408) 323-7820

**Barb Mikel:** gcsanc@att.net (530) 626-0831

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## Clifford & Myrtle Wagoner Scholarship & Research Tournament Donation

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Please send completed form and donation by **June 17, 2014**

Questions ? Please contact any of the following committee members!

Ryan Smith <mailto:ryan.smith@belkorpag.com> (209) 944-5714

Vince Keats, CGCS <mailto:vjkeats@gmail.com> (707) 481-1338

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## Know Your History, Know Your Course

By **SEAN TULLY**, Golf Course Superintendent, Meadow Club

For the third time in as many years, I sent my proposal to present a seminar at the Golf Industry Show. I hope that this time I make the cut! I was lucky to have had a chance in 2013 to present an early version of my proposed talk at the State Meeting at Winchester Country Club. The topic as most would come to expect, was on golf course history!

I have always felt that as a Superintendent I should know as much as I can about the golf course where I work. This goes well beyond knowing when and what to apply for anthracnose, or how much water goes out on a nightly basis. Just as important, is knowing some of the design features on your course, so we can maintain them to play as the architect intended them. This idea helped shape the title of my presentation, "Know Your History, Know Your Course."

Not all courses are blessed with a rich history and even those so lucky, have somehow managed to lose theirs or woefully neglect it. A golf course has many stories to tell and it can be hard to read all of them given the changes made to golf courses over the years. Wide open fairways free of trees and large greens with undulating putting surfaces have been replaced with tight fairways lined by trees and small greens. These factors are lost on the "pace of play" or "grow the game" crowd.

This is where we come in as superintendents to work towards educating our members or golfing public to the possibilities found on most every golf course. Go out onto the golf course and find your favorite hole and identify what makes it so. Keep this to the design of the hole—not the fact that you had a hole-in-one or something similar. Trees don't count!

So after a quick tour of your course, maybe you identified a green that accepts shots from the right side of the fairway better, or a green that slopes from front to back and requires a bump and run for the ball to finish nearer the hole. Now take a look at some of the holes on your course that you don't like and you may see some of the same features presented, but trees or mowing practices have long since removed these options.

Make a study of your golf course and learn all you can about its original design and work from there on ways to improve the current version. It can be as easy as shifting a mowing line or making

sure the approach for the 6th green is firm to allow for run up shots. For too long, some of the more important golf courses that come to mind had lost their way and only recently made efforts to correct them. The more higher rated courses tend to set the tone for most other golf courses. We want to be like (fill in the blank) golf course is all too often the quoted reason for changes made to a golf course. This year's U.S. Open at Pinehurst #2 having been recently restored for historical as well as sustainable reasons, will be put to the test like no other course before it. It will either be a nail in the coffin or the latest in trendsetting course set-ups—I prefer the latter!

Be ready to answer your golfers' questions about what they are seeing at this year's U.S. Open, it could help your course in the long run!

For more reading take a look at these articles:

<http://www.pinehurst.com/news/pinehurst-2-restoration-hole-hole-tour/>

<http://mobile.golfweek.com/news/2011/apr/11/restoration-leaves-pinehurst-no-2-better-ever/?templates=mobile>

Looking forward to this Open for the potential it has for other courses to address these issues. How many tree programs got started after the U.S. Open at Oakmont? I know that our program was bumped up to a higher priority and it has been great! Hope it plays out the same post-Pinehurst!

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## Symposium On Affordable Golf

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**GCSANC members joined other California Chapter Members at the 2014 Symposium on Affordable Golf at Dairy Creek GC, a Zero Waste golf facility in San Luis Obispo, CA.**



**(L to R) The SOAG brought together GCSACC President and Event Host Josh Heptig of Dairy Creek GC, Symposium Founder Richard Mandell, ASGCA, and GCSANC President Gary Ingram of Metropolitan GL.**



**GCSANC Members and longtime friends Pete Bowman, CGCS, (with Jacobsen West) and Abelardo Pacheco with Rancho Solano GC, have a chance to catch up at the recent SOAG Conference.**



**GCSANC Member Ted Horton, CGCS, serves on a panel with CTLF Founder Bruce Williams, CGCS, and Tim Moraghan, Principal with Aspire Golf Consulting, at the Symposium on Affordable Golf. Panel topic: The Folly of Replicating Tournament Conditions.**

# California Turfgrass and Landscape Foundation Update

By **BRUCE WILLIAMS**

The California Turfgrass and Landscape Foundation experienced a very active year in 2013. We now have 2.5 years under our belt, and most would consider where we've come from to our current status as a success. Yet, we are truly a work in progress with plenty of room to grow.

The basics have been set and as a foundation and we are emerging well from solid cornerstones while still needing to adjust a little in areas that are not as resourceful as initially anticipated and others that are taking a little more time to cultivate. Overall, it has been quite positive.

I am pleased to announce:

- Revenues raised for 2013 were \$268,119.35
- Expenses for 2013 were \$47,182.63
- Grants in the amount of \$132,448.29 were distributed to UCR for research

The majority of our revenues are derived from a variety of sources:

- GCSAA Chapters
- PGA Sections
- Golf Associations
- Water agencies
- STMA Chapters
- Dues
- Rounds 4 Research
- Corporate donations

In addition to five GCSAA chapters, we continue to gain support from many other allied organizations and businesses. We will continue to work diligently to "get the message out" to all stakeholders and supporters regarding our mission, goals, and efforts throughout the state.

The Southern California Section of the PGA (SCPGA) has been one of our strongest supporters, we appreciate their dedicated support and we expect that to continue. The Sports Turf Managers Association (STMA) support is respectable, given the size of their organization. I have been fortunate to attend several of their meetings and have assisted them with education. Most importantly, they understand what we are doing and want to support us the best they can. The Southern California Golf Association (SCGA) is another superstar organization and always there for us. CEO Kevin Heaney and Craig Kessler, Director of Governmental Affairs, are a delight to work with.

Landscape is not listed above (as a revenue source) as we have yet to receive any donations/support from that sector. Each year I make a point to attend (and have a gratis booth) at the shows in Long Beach and at the LA Convention Center. While interest in the CTLF has been good, it appears it will take some additional work and possibly a new strategy to help engage this group of potential supporters.

Water agencies really stepped up this past year with significant grants for a large and now a smaller project. We are currently under two grants and those surely help to support graduate assistants and offset some labor and equipment costs—and it helps keep the UCR program moving forward.

## Communications and Presentations

In 2013 I attended as many meetings of groups as is possible. That will continue in 2014. This year I would like to gain more momentum for CTLF in the Nor Cal Region. I will make a concentrated effort to visit:

- Northern California Golf Association (NCGA)
- Northern California PGA Section (NCPGA)
- Northern California Chapter of the GCSA (GCSANC)
- Sierra Nevada Chapter of the GCSA (SNGCSAA)
- Nor Cal STMA

## UCR

The field day in September was evidence of a strong program at UCR. Dr. Baird and team have five graduate assistants and a couple of other post-doctoral researchers working on breeding programs and such.

Over the next few months it is important for Dr. Baird to give focus to his tenure so we have him around for many years in the future! I have written a letter in support of his tenure.

## Website & Facebook Page

We had a good, solid year utilizing Facebook (for that is the social media platform I am most familiar with). I appreciate those who have followed us on FB and those who've re-shared our messaging/posts on their FB pages. We have also utilized Twitter for communicating our message during the UCR field day, and such.

## Rounds 4 Research

This program is still in its infancy. As I commented last year I do not see this being a primary fundraising program, but more as a support mechanism that could expand over time. The best news here is that the various GCSAA chapters are receiving some revenues from this program that they are sharing with CTLF.

## Golf Preserves

This program generated no income in 2013 but it had no expense. Sign-up has been slow and we have only two golf courses committed so far with a couple of others expressing interest.

## NC State Plant Diagnostics Pathology

We got off to a slow start with this program in 2013 since so many golf courses have their own sources for this service. However, we will continue to promote this service through the various GCSAA chapters and STMA. The team at NC State can turn around your samples quickly and at a reasonable price...Please give them a try!

## Field Day

I am happy to report that attendance numbers were up for the 2013 Field Day. Jim and the UCR team did an outstanding job and CTLF made sure to help promote the event, which resulted in the largest attendance record ever! We had a great table top with room for more sponsors next year, and it all supports a quality program at UCR.



### Membership

CTLF membership experienced a slight increase in 2013, similar to most other organizations. You start with a core group and then build from there. While a 10 or 15% increase doesn't mean a lot in terms of actual income to the CTLF, it does speak volumes in terms of growth, actual supporters and additional recognition/visibility of the organization.

### Goals For 2014

- Increase revenues through membership, sponsors, collaborative programs and donations
- Strengthen alliances with the SCTC
- Continue communication and face time with various groups
- Make greater inroads into the water agency and landscape communities through members (i.e. Pam, Doug and Chuck) who are already a part and well-networked with these key stakeholders
- Improve content on the website
- Continue to grow the UCR Fall Field Day
- Work on strengthening alliances and support in Nor Cal Region

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## From the Field

By **JEFF JENSEN**, GCSAA Field Staff, Southwest Region

Much of my last six months has been spent dealing with water issues that have become so prevalent throughout the southwest United States.

As you are well aware, California has been the hardest hit, experiencing its driest year on record since 1895. While the golf industry can't control what Mother Nature throws or doesn't throw at us, we do have the ability to better our situation.

Golf industry water conservation task forces have popped up throughout the state and work proactively with water agencies and municipalities to address restrictions, develop conservation plans and assist in building long-term water policies that are effective for the golf industry, water agencies and California communities. Task forces exist in the Coachella Valley, Los Angeles, Sacramento, San Diego and San Luis Obispo and have accomplished some great things in a short amount of time.

While these task forces, along with assistance from the CGCOA, GCSAA, SCGA and the USGA can provide much needed help to the industry, the bottom line is that over 3,000 water agencies exist in California and restrictions/policy varies from agency to agency.

As former Speaker of the U.S. House Tip O'Neill once said, "All politics is local," the same can be said for water policy. With that being said, the onus needs to go on golf facilities to be keenly aware of their current situation in regards to water. Below are some tips to assist your facility:

- Find out how your facility is classified by your water agency/municipality. Is the facility classified as a com-

mercial user? Is it lumped in with agriculture? Is there a golf course only classification? Courses have been reclassified without their knowledge.

- Check your respective classification for restrictive language or ordinances that may pertain to the golf industry.
- Set a meeting with your individual agency/municipality to proactively discuss any issues or concerns you may have about water allocations, conservation, pricing, restrictions, etc. With ongoing and proactive dialog, you can affect long-term strategies that can only be achieved through deliberation and the freedom from crisis, giving you the ability to deal with current or future circumstances however and whenever they arise.
- Attend City Council and water agency meetings when time permits. If you can't attend, read over the minutes posted to the respective websites. Search for any information that could have a negative effect on the golf industry and your facility.
- Strive to make your water management plan and conservation goals transparent. Create a culture of openness and free flowing information with government regulators, employees, golfers, media and the general public.

I hope you find the above information helpful and if I can be of any assistance, please don't hesitate to contact me at [jjensen@gcsaa.org](mailto:jjensen@gcsaa.org) and make sure to follow me on Twitter @GCSAA\_SW.



## Bill Hagan Recognized

NCGA recognized long time GCSANC member, Bill Hagan as "Course Rater of the Year" for his volunteer activities with the NCGA. Congratulations, Bill!





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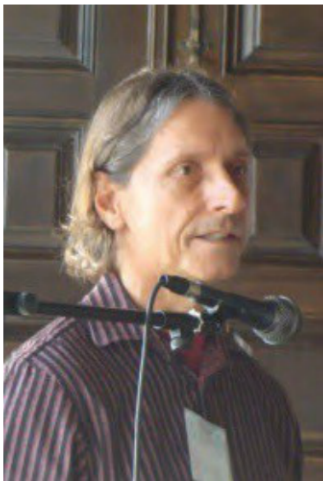


## ***Superintendents Field Workshop 2014, Sequoyah Country Club***

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▲ Speaker addressing the Sequoyah Superintendents Field Workshop:



**Bill Vandivere**  
Clearwater Hydrology



**Brian Fenske**  
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