

THRU THE GREEN

The Northern California Chapter of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of Northern California



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events in 2018.*



Annual Meeting, Meadow Club



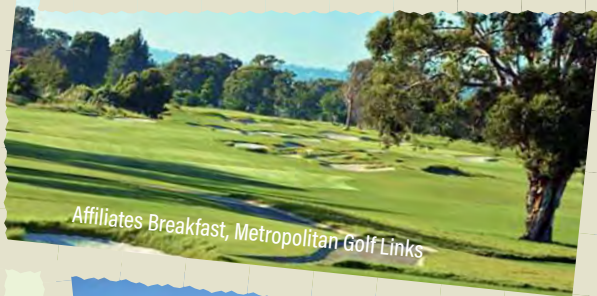
Tri-Chapter, CordeValle Golf Club



Holiday Meeting, Del Monte Golf Course



GCSANC-USGA Regional Conference, Silverado Resort



Affiliates Breakfast, Metropolitan Golf Links



GCSANC S & R, Lake Merced Golf Course



USGA Field Day, San Jose Country Club



Institute, Contra Costa Country Club



Assistant Superintendent Boot Camp

Northern California Chapter
GCSAA

November / December 2018

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Photos by Pete Galea, CGCS



Thank you to all of the courses that hosted GCSANC events in 2018.

INSIDE

NORCALENDAR	3
PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE	
by Stacy Wallace	3
EDITOR'S NOTES	
by Brian Boyer	4
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT	
by Marc Connerly	5
EMPLOYMENT TRAINING	
by Marc Connerly	7
FROM THE FIELD	
by Jeff Jensen	9
A BLAST FROM THE PAST	12
ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT BOOT CAMP	
by Conner Galea	13
GCSANC HOLIDAY PARTY	14
ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT PROFILE	
by Conner Galea	17

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President's Message

By **STACY WALLACE**

GCSANC President, Superintendent, Bay Club at StoneTree

By the time you read this, hopefully we have all received some rainfall. Along with that, I am sure everyone is working on their 2019 Operating and Capital budgets. It is a good time to reflect on the 2018 season and determine what was successful and revise programs that did not perform as expected.

We are coming off a successful Institute and Assistant Boot Camp. Thank you to everyone who attended and to all the great speakers for the excellent content they brought to the table. It was our first year overseeing the Boot Camp and we are excited with the results and the ability to enhance it in the coming years.

Upcoming events are the Annual Meeting January 14th at Bay Club StoneTree, and the Golf Industry Show February 2nd – 7th in San Diego. The California Room will be the evening of the 6th at the GIS. Hopefully you can attend all or a few of these events.

We have also just finished taking nominations for the 2018 GCSANC Awards, to be presented at the Annual Meeting, so we hope you will be at the Annual Meeting to see the award presentations and acknowledge the winners.

Along with reflecting on the 2018 season and planning for 2019, hopefully you take some quality time for yourself and your family and enjoy your holiday season!

Happy Holidays to all,

Stacy Wallace

NORCALENDAR

January 14, 2019

GCSANC Annual Meeting

Bay Club StoneTree

Novato

March 4, 2019

**GCSANC/USGA Regional
Conference**

Claremont Country Club

Oakland

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Editor's Note: "200+"

By **BRIAN BOYER**, GCSANC Vice President; Superintendent, Cinnabar Hills Golf Club

For most of you reading this edition of Thru the Green, this will be the first time in 200+ days that you will be reading it with stress levels that have hopefully been alleviated with the recent rains. While that big of a stretch without rain is difficult, would you really want to live in California if it were any other way?

During September, the Bay Area did enter into its most minor drought stage, and if abnormal rainfall occurs this winter, we could be right back to where we were. Before we start talking about global warming or climate change, though, let's take a breath and be thankful for the water we did receive.

Enjoy this stress-free edition of Thru the Green!

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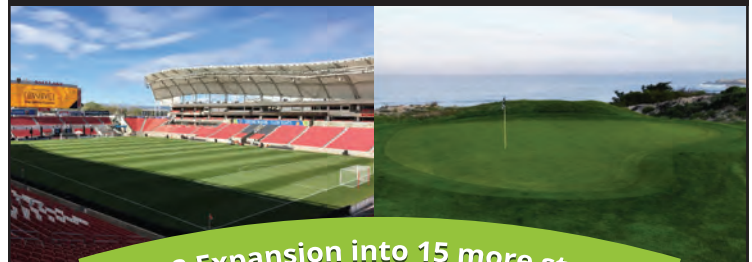


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Executive Director's Report

By **MARC CONNERLY**, *GCSANC Executive Director*

The final issue of *Thru The Green* for the year offers a chance to reflect and give thanks, as well as the opportunity to look ahead to the coming year.

Looking back on 2018, it was a year of many successful and well-attended events for GCSANC. Including the recent USGA Field Day and the Pacific Coast Seed event at Hedgerow Farms, as well as the Assistant Superintendent Boot Camp (organized by GCSANC this year for the first time), the Tri-Chapter, and the six typical annual events (Annual Meeting, USGA Regional Conference, S & R, Institute, Holiday Meeting, Affiliates Breakfast), the association played a role in organizing 10 events.

Due in large part to the outstanding venues, including Meadow Club, CordeValle and Lake Merced, among others, attendance was up considerably this year over last, and participation by Superintendents and Assistants also increased.

On more than one occasion, I also received feedback that events and venues were the best that people had experienced in years. We're happy to get that feedback from members, and now that the bar has been raised we are prepared to meet the challenge of delivering similar quality events in the coming year.

A great deal of thanks is owed to many for the momentum of the association, but in particular the current Board deserves tremendous credit and praise for their countless hours of hard work and dedication to the association and its members. It's no secret how busy the life of a Superintendent is, yet somehow the Board members, and in particular the Executive Committee, are there at a moment's notice to reply to an email, sit in on a committee call, attend an event, or address a sudden issue. They work together exceptionally well as a team, and the best interests of the membership and the Superintendent profession are at the heart of everything they do. Please thank them for their efforts the next time you encounter a Board member.

Much gratitude is also owed to the many sponsors of GCSANC. We realize that each company has its own budget constraints and capacity for supporting the organization, and we appreciate all of the support, both large and small. One company, though, went so far above and beyond that they are owed a special mention; that company is Turf Star. Not only did Turf Star renew their annual sponsorship, but they doubled that sponsorship when we made the request midyear. Then they generously sponsored the Boot Camp when asked again. And finally, without solicitation on our part, they sponsored the Holiday Party happy hour. That degree of unselfish giving deserves recognition, so a monumental "Thank you" to the entire team at Turf Star for supporting GCSANC and helping to fund our events and programs. We hope to see you at the upcoming Institute and/or Boot Camp, and wish you a happy fall!

Looking ahead to 2019, arguably the biggest task on our plate will be tackling the issue of labor and attracting and training qualified candidates for Assistant positions. The Board has discussed development of an intern program, and another exciting opportunity is the State of California's Employment Training Panel (ETP), which has the potential to provide GCSANC with the funding necessary to train future Assistants. You can read more about the ETP program in my article about it later in this issue.

On behalf of the Board and staff of GCSANC, we wish you a very happy, safe and prosperous Christmas and New Year, and we look forward to seeing you at a GCSANC event in 2019.

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Employment Training Panel *Opportunity For Funding Assistant Training*

By **MARC CONNERLY**, GCSANC Executive Director

Employers statewide pay an Employment Training Tax on top of the taxes that are withdrawn from an employee's paycheck each pay period. That tax funds a program known as the Employment Training Panel (ETP), which carries the purpose of improving the job skills of California workers.

The program provides money to employers based on the number of employees participating and training hours attended. The money can be used to pay the trainer, to reimburse the employer for employee wages while undertaking training, or a variety of other uses. Employees participating in the training must meet a specified wage requirement (roughly \$17 per hour).

ETP began in 1982, and has reimbursed employers well over \$1 billion for training workers in more than 80,000 businesses.

Non-profit trade associations can also receive funding from ETP, which is where GCSANC enters the picture. Because the funding application process can be a cumbersome one for employers, GCSANC is considering applying for ETP funding

through the state, then using that funding to provide free Assistant Superintendent skills training to our members.


That brings us to how you can help. In order to determine how much funding we qualify for as an organization, we must estimate how many people would participate in the training, and how many hours of training they would undertake. If we underestimate how many hours of training should be provided, we run the risk of exhausting the funds before all members have had a chance to participate. If we overestimate the training necessary, the association is at risk of losing money on the endeavor, so an accurate estimate is important, and your input is critical.

Please take less than 5 minutes to provide feedback to us about your training needs at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/N9C76HQ>.

We appreciate you taking the time to help GCSANC provide valuable training to our members. It is our hope to get this program off the ground in late 2019.



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From the Field

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

As we approach the Christmas holiday and the end of another year, I would like to thank all of our GCSANC members for your support of GCSAA and my position during the past year. 2018 had its share of challenges for the golf industry nationwide, but I'm glad to say that because of your support, GCSAA will be 18,000 members strong heading into the 2019 calendar year. Much of that growth has been fueled by the expansion and addition of programs and resources for our members.

The Turf Equipment Technician Certificate Program (TETCP) added Level 2 (launching in December) and our team is in the process of working on a certification program for equipment managers. Passing Level 1 and Level 2 exams will be a prerequisite for going through the certification program.

Additionally, we launched our Assistant Superintendent Certificate Program. Principles of Agronomy and Principles of Golf Course Business exams are now available, with Leadership/Communication and Environmental Management being developed. To date, 80 members have passed Principles of Agronomy and another 49 have passed Principles of Golf Course Business.

In June, we took over operation of The First Green Program. First Green is a STEM education and environmental outreach program that uses golf courses as

learning labs. I encourage you to consider hosting a field trip at your facility, as it's a great opportunity to promote your facility and the game. GCSAA is expanding the program and will also use it to educate high school age students on careers in turf.

In August, GCSAA partnered with Hays Cos., a leading national insurance and financial services organization, to provide a variety of product and service offerings exclusively to GCSAA members. The programs include health, dental and vision coverage, accident and life insurance as well as financial services.

As we head into 2019, we have many other programs and projects in store for our membership, with a focus on chapter and member outreach. We realize as the golf maintenance industry evolves, we need to stay a step ahead and provide our members with tools, education and resources to get the job done.

Happy Holidays to you and your families, and best of luck in the New Year. 2019 will be sure to present us with many opportunities and challenges alike.

I look forward to seeing you at the January GCSANC Annual Meeting, and If you have any questions, please contact me at jjensen@gcsaa.org and don't forget to follow me on Twitter @GCSAA_SW for daily industry updates.

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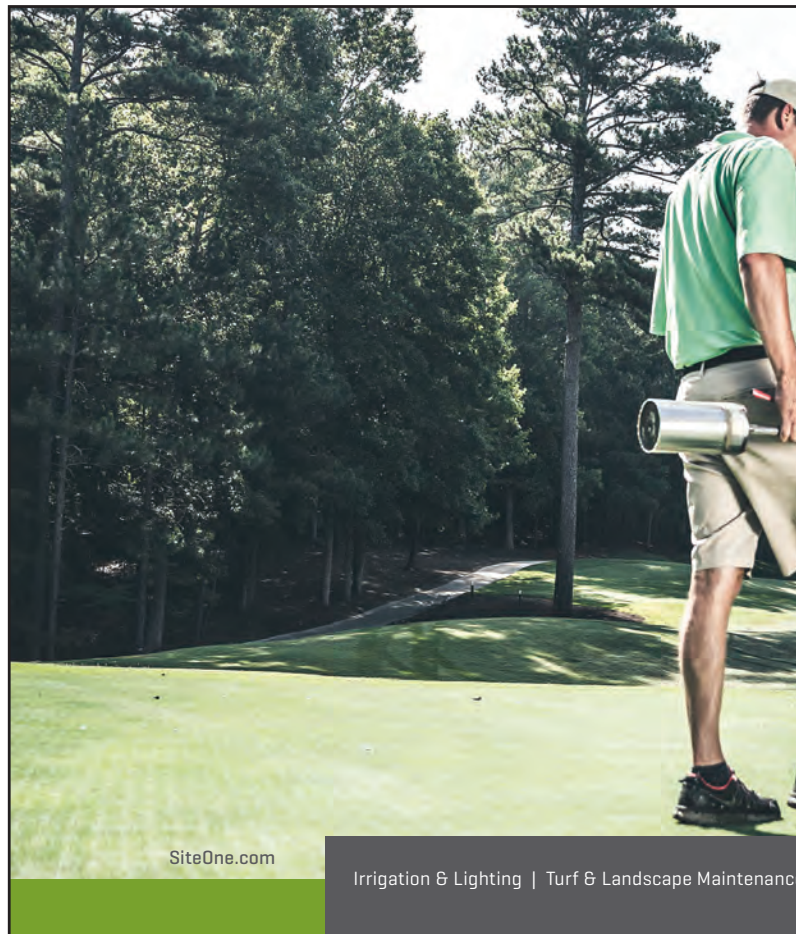
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Assistant Superintendent Boot Camp Recap

By **CONNER GALEA**, *Assistant Superintendent, San Francisco Golf Club*

This year's Assistant Superintendent Boot Camp in Monterey was a great learning experience for Assistants. The two-day event was able to teach assistants from the Los Angeles area to Lake Tahoe and even Oregon to talk with us about warm season grasses, water issues, financial planning, projects, and sprayer technologies.

Dr. Jim Baird and Dr. Brandon Horvath discussed utilizing warm season grasses, and how breeding programs have changed over the years to supply us with the best grasses for providing great playing surfaces on our courses, despite the ever-increasing water restrictions.

Mike McCullough talked about the many different water projects going on in Monterey, and how they are capturing water and recycling it for us to use. Utilizing the reverse osmosis process will allow us to capture any bit of water and use it at home, in our cities and on golf courses.

Roger Stewart discussed negotiating at work, but it doesn't end with wages. Everything is up for negotiating, from salaries, to projects, to benefits. You don't always have to have everything right now, so ask to revisit the topic in six months. It is important to come to a conclusion that benefits both sides of the conversation in a timely manner.

Evan Harris coached assistants about budgeting in our personal lives. We practice budgeting at work everyday and we should use that skill in our personal lives as well. From taking advantage of the 401K program through your club that matches your contribution, to making coffee at home, saving you \$2.50 a day from your favorite coffee shop, there are many small steps that can be taken to build a solid financial foundation for your future.

Doug Ayers from Corral de Tierra Country Club and Jay Blasi, a local golf course architect, discussed renovations and restorations. They discussed problems we can run into while working on a project or how people achieve the end goal with some creative thinking. Jay Blasi has completed projects at many local courses, utilizing every resource known, including old pictures, talking with other clubs and looking at old aerial photos.

Steve Johnson from Smithco talked about new GPS sprayers as a way to save time, money and lower pesticide outputs. With labor costs going up in California, we have to adapt and change how we do things. By using GPS sprayers, courses are able to save 10%+ per year on applications, and allocate that time and money elsewhere. This is the next step in our line of work, and talking with other local superintendents, they swear by the technology.

Thank you to GCSANC, Turfstar, Textron Golf, and great speakers for helping put on a great program. I look forward to seeing all of you Assistants next year for another incredible Assistant Superintendent Boot Camp.

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Assistant Superintendent Profile: Kenton Brunson, The Links at Spanish Bay

By **CONNER GALEA**, *Assistant Superintendent, San Francisco Golf Club*

It's always great to showcase some of the up and coming talent in our industry. Northern California has some of the richest history in golf, with great courses and hardworking crews that keep them in exceptional condition. For this issue, we interviewed Kenton Brunson from The Links at Spanish Bay in Pebble Beach.

CG: What made you decide to get into golf maintenance?

KB: My father-in-law is the General Manager at Walla Walla Country Club in Washington state and before being promoted he was Superintendent for 20+ years. After I graduated from Washington State University, he suggested that I get into the business.

CG: What is your proudest accomplishment in the industry?

KB: I am graduating in two weeks with my Master of Business Administration from the University of Arizona. Being able to balance work, school, and life the past two years is something I am extremely proud of.

CG: Who would you consider your most influential mentor in the industry?

KB: Shawn Emerson (Desert Mountain), Jeff Steen & Chris Dalhammer (Pebble Beach Company), and Jeff Blanc (Walla Walla CC)

CG: Where did you grow up?

KB: Richland, Washington

CG: Your best Nicknames?

KB: Never had one!

CG: If you could drive any vehicle, what would it be?

KB: GMC Sierra

CG: Do you have any pets?

KB: Two dogs who live a better life than I do (Dexter & Lulu)

CG: What is the funniest thing you have ever seen on a golf course?

KB: While I was at Desert Mountain, our Director of Golf played a prank by coiling up a dead rattlesnake and placing it in a high traffic area. He was able to scare over a dozen people all while getting it on video.

CG: What is one thing that most people don't know about you?

KB: I love the outdoors, but haven't found the time over the last couple of years (hunting, fishing, hiking).

CG: What was your lowest score playing golf, and where?

KB: 80 at Walla Walla Country Club.

CG: What is your favorite manual labor job on the golf course and why?

KB: Mowing fairways or cutting cups. I like being able to get out there with the crew and be able to interact with them.

CG: Greatest piece of advice anyone has given you?

KB: The grass doesn't stop growing on the weekend.

CG: If you had to survive on a deserted island for 1 year, aside from food and water, what 5 items would you bring with you to occupy your time?

KB: Airstream, peloton, my wife & two dogs

CG: Favorite Beer?

KB: Stella Artois!

CG: If you had your choice, what would you do in retirement?

KB: Retire in Scottsdale and play as much golf as possible.

CG: Favorite sports teams?

KB: Mariners, Seahawks

CG: What's your favorite type of grass to manage as a putting surface and why?

KB: I have managed poa, bentgrass, and Bermuda. I believe that bentgrass has the best opportunity to consistently create a smooth and true surface.

CG: If you could have lunch with anyone, past or present, who would it be?

KB: Tiger Woods

CG: What do you enjoy outside of work?

KB: Spending time with family, going to the beach, and traveling



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