

# CONTENTS



## COVER

The Presidio Golf Course

## CONTENTS

Office Notes . . . . .	3
Event Calendar . . . . .	3
President's Message . . . . .	4
2009 Elections . . . . .	5
CGSANC Award Winners . . . . .	6
Sustainable Pesticides . . . . .	10
Q & A with Mike Garvale, CGCS . . . . .	12
Comparing Budgets . . . . .	13
Feature Course: Presidio Golf Course . . . . .	14
WTH? . . . . .	16

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## OFFICE NOTES



### BARBARA MIKEL

Hope all of you had a wonderful holiday! The New Year is bringing MANY changes to GCSANC. This is our first electronic newsletter. Thanks to all the board member and newsletter contributors for staying on track for this inaugural issue. The transitions to new technologies offer all of us opportunities to grow and keep our skills sharp. Thanks to In the Loop Golf, the new publisher, for making this transition seamless. My personal thanks to Man Yin Tang, Dann Lann and Valencia Printing for four years of paper publishing.

The upcoming year will be eventful with a new board and new opportunities. The first issue of the electronic *Thru the Green* is behind us but the new board will turn its attention to developing a new web site, [www.gcsanc.com](http://www.gcsanc.com). It will offer an online membership directory; meeting registrations and membership application for a start. Technology, ecology and cost considerations all drive this program. Look for the "debut" in the near future.

## LOOKING FORWARD



### NORCALENDAR

**JANUARY 13, 2009**

Presidio Golf Course Annual Meeting

**JANUARY 31-FEBRUARY 7**

GCSAA GIS New Orleans

**JUNE**

Superintendent Pro

**JULY**

Crew Appreciation

**SEPTEMBER**

Superintendents Institute

**OCTOBER**

President's Cup Harding Park Golf Course

NCGA & GCSANC Assistant Superintendent "Bootcamp"

**NOVEMBER**

California GCSA Annual Meeting

California Polytechnic University, San Luis Obispo

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



### BRIAN NETTZ, CGCS

*Presidio Golf Course*

Wow, 2008 is over. We are set for the GCSANC Annual Meeting January 13 with golf at the Presidio Golf Course and lunch following our scramble format event. We decided to have the meeting post-golf because we would not be so rushed to get on the course. The annual meeting is one where we wanted to allow for a more relaxed environment so people have time to connect with ones that they may not often get to see. We have a great speaker that will provide stories of motivation and hope during difficult times. I hope you will enjoy it.

This year the GCSANC Board really worked hard on your behalf. It was truly a great board with a variety of impressive thinkers and personalities. It was a very progressive year for the association thanks to the willingness and capability of the board to tackle a variety of tough issues. I am honored to know all the

people in the GCSANC volunteer leadership and their support, most notably Barb. As far as Barb is concerned, I think you really have to be President to fully grasp and appreciate what the effort she gives does for our membership. This year the GCSANC Board of Directors: completed a new salary survey, developed an outreach campaign through radio PSAs that elevate awareness of course superintendents, started our own web site (look for gcsanc.com soon), and launched *Thru the Green* as a web-based newsletter. My thanks to the board of directors and everyone who had a part in these accomplishments for volunteering their time and impressive talents.

Additionally I would like to thank the membership for affording me the learning and leadership opportunity that comes only from board level service. I am grateful to have had the chance to serve on our association board and as a representative of our board at GCSAA functions.

I look forward to serving as Past President and being available for past president consulting if need be. Serving as a GCSANC Board member and alongside some of the tremendous talent in this association has been my honor.

## NAUMANN'S NORCAL NEWS

**MIKE NUNEMACHER** is leaving Castlewood CC to enjoy life in Idaho. For Mike it was a quality of life issue and is looking forward to fishing and golf and letting Valerie be the bread winner, at least for a while. Replacing Mike is **Lou Silveira**. Lou has been the super at Brookside Country Club in Stockton...**Moody Ayeb** is the new Director of Golf maintenance for the City of Livermore Golf Courses under the management of CourseCo.

## WELCOME

### IAN BRAY

Assistant Superintendent  
*The Course at Wente Vineyards*

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# 2009 ELECTIONS

GOLF COURSE ASSOCIATION OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

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*The Course at Wente Vineyards*

## CANDIDATES: Superintendent Directors (3)

### STEVE AGIN

*Ruby Hill Golf Club*

By introduction I have been in the golf business most of my life. My passion for working outdoors and the game of golf has taken me to interesting locations here in the states and a ten year stint in Asia. Most recently we have made Northern California our home and have been happy here at Ruby Hill Golf Club since 2001. It would be a pleasure to serve on the board of directors of the GCSANC. I have a genuine respect for the current and past leadership of our organization and I feel its time for me to give back to an organization and industry that has been so rewarding to me both personally and professionally. Should I be nominated I will endeavor to build on past successes and help shape the future direction of the organization.

### RODNEY L. MULLER

*Tilden Park Golf Course*

I have been the golf course superintendent at Tilden Park Golf Course in Berkeley since 2006. Previously, I was the assistant superintendent at Monarch Bay Golf Course in San Leandro and Topeka Country Club in Topeka, KS. I have a B.A. degree in Human Relations and Management from MidAmerica Nazarene University in Olathe, KS and a B.S. degree in Agriculture-Golf Course Management from Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS. I have been a GCSAA member for 9 years.

It would be an honor to serve our membership as a GCSANC director. Although my tenure as a Californian has been short, I could not have accepted the nomination without support from my new-found friends and colleagues in our association.

I believe our professional image has been enhanced by our local chapters through media, charity, and our own hard work as individuals. It is my position to build on our foundation and principles that promote our association as industry leaders. I am passionate about growing and retaining membership. We are a diverse group of individuals with a variety of interests other than our enthusiasm for golf. I will do my best to incorporate non-golf interests into our member meetings and publications.

High standards of course conditions and advances in turf care technology keep continuing education a priority for every superintendent. Professional development has set us apart from others in the industry and has made the superintendent a valuable resource. I pledge to keep education subject matter relevant and advanced as topics are selected.

Thank you for your continued support and consideration.

### JOHN PINA

*La Rinconada Country Club*

My name is John Pina and I have been the Golf Course Superintendent at La Rinconada Country Club since 1999, and have been in the profession in the Bay Area since 1995. It is an honor to be on the slate for the 2009 Board of Directors for the GCSANC. Our association has provided me with many great opportunities, experiences, and friends over the years. As a member of the Board I would work to improve these great benefits of our association.

Thank you.

### DALE SIMPSON

*Crow Canyon Country Club*

My name is Dale Simpson. I am the Golf Course Superintendent at Crow Canyon Country Club. I am also a Regional Director of Agronomy for the Northern California Region for ClubCorp USA. I have been at Crow Canyon Country Club and have been a member of the GCSANC for 8 years. During my 8 years here, I have gotten to know many of the Superintendents in this area and on several occasions depended on them and the GCSANC for help in some way or another. Now, I feel I am at a point in my career, that I can begin to give back to the GCSANC and the people who have helped me along the way. I would be honored to serve on the board, in whatever position needed, in order to help the association and its members.

### MITCH TANKERSLEY

*Sports Turf Consultant*

*Ewing Irrigation, Agronomics & Erosion Control*

Serving on the GCSANC Board of Directors as an affiliate would be an honor.

I've been a member of this chapter for 5+ years as both an Assistant Superintendent and now Golf Course Supplier. Having two perspectives on our industry is certainly of value to our chapter and its membership. Serving on the board as an affiliate director will allow me to share my experiences in the field and help tackle the challenges our industry must face.

## ADDITIONAL AFFILIATE CANDIDATE

### JEFF HART

*Southern Links*



# GCSANC AWARD WINNERS

## Golf Course Superintendent of the Year

## George Santana Distinguished Service Award



### STEVE BYRNE

Mira Vista Golf & Country Club • El Cerrito

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS:** In addition to Steve's current position as golf course superintendent at Mira Vista G&CC, his professional experience spans assignments at Diablo Country Club, the Wykagyl Club (NY), and the Sandwich Club (CT). **CHAPTER INVOLVEMENT:** He has served two years on

the board of directors and is currently secretary/treasurer. This year (while faced with the challenge of mandatory water rationing) Steve managed to volunteer time on the Education & Institute, Programs & Golf committees. Last year he served on the Scholarship committee and hosted a chapter Christmas gathering for his peers. While trying to wrap up a major fairway drainage project on his course just recently, Steve still found time to launch a GCSANC book donation project for Children's Hospital in Oakland, CA. **PREVIOUS HONORS:** Former Bert Graves Memorial Tournament Winner. **EDUCATION:** Steve is a graduate from the Professional Golf Turf Management Program at Rutgers University. Steve's thoughts on receiving Golf Course Superintendent Award: "I was blown away when I received the news from Awards Chairman Brian Bagley... to the point of stuttering. During a year when water rationing and dry conditions were overwhelming at times, my course and crew continued to be my main priority while also trying to help our chapter whenever I could. To be awarded this honor this year is both humbling and inspiring. I continue to learn that our profession is more than growing grass. Reaching out to other superintendents, charitable organizations and serving our membership has been more rewarding than ever imagined."



### DAVID SEXTON, CGCS

The Meadow Club • Fairfax

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS:** David has spent 27 years at the MacKenzie-designed Meadow Club following his seven-year tenure at Ojai Valley Inn. His career was launched while still in his senior year at college, with a one-year stint at Paso Robles Golf Club. **CHAPTER INVOLVEMENT:** David's

contribution runs deep. He's served on GCSANC board of directors and held office as secretary/treasurer, followed by multiple years of service on the annual audit committee. He's hosted GCSANC events, one of his favorites was the 2007 Superintendent/Pro Tournament. This past summer his course hosted The Langley event raising money for growth of the game initiatives with Arnold Palmer serving as the dignitary for the day. David has hosted numerous other events including the last six MacKenzie Collegiate Invitational Tournaments, and the Pac Ten Championship this past Spring. David enjoys sharing his knowledge with others, serving as a speaker at GCSANC educational seminars and most recently as a panelist at the 2008 Institute. **EDUCATION:** David holds an AA degree from Merced Community College and a BS Degree in Ornamental Horticulture from Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, and is now celebrating his 25<sup>th</sup> year as a Certified Golf Course Superintendent. **PREVIOUS HONORS:** The Marin Municipal Water District Award for Excellence in Water Conservation (1988) and the GCSANC Excellence in Turfgrass Management Award (1992). In 1994 David won the CGCSA Annual Golf Tournament (net division). **INTERESTING PASTIME:** David describes himself as a birder, spending his free moments hiking the hills and coast with binoculars in-hand in search of birds. No wonder David is a member of five local and national bird and wildlife organizations. Through his efforts, the Meadow Club has been recognized as an Audubon International Certified Wildlife Sanctuary. **ON COURSE:** When it comes to the course he prefers a natural look, as if it evolved from its native surroundings. Under the direction of Architect Mike DeVries, David has completed a six-year restoration, returning the course closely to its original Alister MacKenzie design.

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# GCSANC AWARD WINNERS

## Turfgrass Excellence—Public Category

## Turfgrass Excellence—Private Category



### BRIAN BOYER

Cinnabar Hills Golf Club • San Jose

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS:** Prior to his current position as golf course superintendent at Cinnabar Hills Golf Club, Brian worked as an assistant course superintendent at San Francisco Golf Club for over three years and at Cattails Golf Club (MI) the four years prior. **BRIAN'S COURSE MAINTENANCE**

**PHILOSOPHY:** "I like to keep a course hard, fast, and as consistent as possible (on a daily basis) while being environmentally and economically minded." **BRIAN'S MANAGEMENT STYLE:** "I manage according to two quotes or mantras. The first: *It is not those who know how that succeed, but those who know why.* I feel that the employees will be better off working for me and/or the next person if they know why we-are-doing-the-things-we-are-doing. Another favorite slogan: *The only mistake is a mistake made and nothing is learned from it.* I've always thought that too many people are worried about making mistakes and that ultimately causes more mistakes." **HONORS:** Brian shares honors with the rest of the Cinnabar team, as the facility has been recognized Best Public Course in Silicon Valley (5 times) and CGCOA Golf Course of the Year (2 times) and received ranking on Golf World's Readers Choice (Top 45 in USA). **EDUCATION:** BS in Turfgrass Maintenance from Michigan State University. **WATER MAN TOO:** Besides his responsibility overseeing maintenance for a busy 27-hole facility, Brian is responsible for the production and delivery of drinking water to all on-site consumers. "We had a well but with foresight from our owners, an ultrafiltration membrane treatment plant was installed in 2000 to supplement the well. In 2007 I received special licensing to run the plant and distribute water. The overall experience has been quite challenging, has expanded my knowledge immensely and has definitely helped strengthen my time management skills!" **HISTORICAL NOTE:** Cinnabar Hills GC may have opened its doors in 1998, but it's rich in history. According to Brian, when you enter Cinnabar's clubhouse you'll find the Brandenburg Historical Golf Museum, packed with golf memorabilia. The most recent addition to the museum includes trophies (the exact replicas) of those presented at the four major championships.



### SCOTT LEWIS, CGCS

Menlo Country Club • Woodside

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS:** Scott is approaching his 25<sup>th</sup> year of dedicated service at Menlo Country Club. He served prior as assistant golf course superintendent at Calusa Country Club in Miami, FL. His early career work experience includes a stint as a LPGA Tour caddie and a broadcast assistant for CBS Sports during the Doral Eastern Open in 1983 & 1984.

**COMMUNITY & INDUSTRY INVOLVEMENT:** Member of the USGA and NCGA. Former National Technical Advisory Committee Member for Seed Research of Oregon.

**SCOTT'S COURSE MAINTENANCE PHILOSOPHY:** "It's about the greens, stupid! The important thing is to keep the important thing, the most important thing. Nearly half of the game is played on the greens and you can have everything else perfect but if the greens aren't good, the rest really doesn't seem to matter." **SCOTT'S MANAGEMENT STYLE:** "It's about getting the right person to do the right job at the right time. It's a cliché and very simple, but if you want respect you have to give it. I'm always asking my staff what they think needs to be done. It's important to me that they remain part of the process...investing of themselves and their ideas in the final product, which often helps ensure better quality of work too." **EDUCATION:** BS in Education, Parks & Recreation Administration from Florida International University (Miami, FL) where Scott was also a member of the Men's Golf Team. He holds a degree in Horticulture & Turf Management (with Honors) from North Iowa CC. Scott also holds the distinction as a certified golf course superintendent.

**PASSION FOR THE GAME:** Scott has a passion for the game on a variety of levels. Besides his superior agronomic skills, he has an appreciation for golf course architecture evidenced by the unique books and renderings you'll find in his office. When his schedule permits, Scott enjoys teeing it up on some the world's most noted courses.

## MEMBERS TO BE RECOGNIZED

Two fifty-year members and six twenty-five-year members will be recognized at the Presidio Golf Course.

In 1959, Howard Fisher, Jr. and Ed Stocke joined the Golf Course Superintendents Association of Northern California. Both members are now enjoying retirement! We are looking forward to presenting each one a gold pin acknowledging their dedication to the association.

We will also be making presentations of gold-filled twenty-five year pins to six members who joined in 1984.

## MAKE IT COLOR!

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# GCSANC AWARD WINNERS

## Bert Graves Memorial Affiliate Award



### PETE BOWMAN, CGCS

Target Specialty Products  
Northern California Territory

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS:** Pete is a territory manager for Target Specialty Products, following a similar position with UAP Professional Products (2005-08) and an eight-year tenure as sales rep with Sierra Pacific Turf Supply (1997-2005). Part of

Pete's success as a supplier is derived from earlier experience as course superintendent at Diablo Grande Resort and Merced Hills Golf Club in the early to mid '90s. **CHAPTER & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT:** Pete has dedicated his time on a variety of committees including Education, Scholarship & Research Program and the Pro-Superintendent Seminar & Tournament. He serves as an affiliate director for the GCSANC and is past president of the Sierra Nevada and California State chapters. Pete has served on the GCSAA Education, Conference & Show committees. He has coached youth athletic programs for many years and is a supporter of The First Tee. **PREVIOUS HONORS:** Affiliate of the Year Award, Volunteer of the Year—City of Stockton Parks & Recreation Department, Certificate of Appreciation from San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors and California State Assembly. **EDUCATION:** A graduate of California Polytechnic University-San Luis Obispo with a degree in Ornamental Horticulture, Pete is also a certified golf course superintendent for the past 15 years. **PETE'S THOUGHTS:** "I feel fortunate to be the first recipient of this recently re-named award in tribute to Bert Graves, a true legend in our industry. I am honored to see my name along side all the other individuals who've received this award prior...many who are still very active, giving of their time and resources for the betterment of our association. Yes, it's always nice to be recognized by your peers, too."



▲ Award winner Scott Lewis, CGCS (3<sup>rd</sup> from right) stands proudly with his crew at Menlo Country Club.



▲ Director of Golf, Adam Schiro with award-winning superintendent Brian Boyer at Cinnabar Hills Golf Course.



▲ Award winner David Sexton, CGCS with Jim Tunney and Jason Green.

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# COMMUNICATING SUSTAINABLE USE OF PESTICIDES

By Todd Burkdoll, BASF Technical Specialist

Superintendents are faced with all kinds of job-related questions, particularly about the agronomics of using pesticides and other chemicals on their courses. Many are having a hard time clearly explaining the benefits of chemical use to curious golfers and community members, and as a result, sometimes avoid the topic. However, communicating with the public is no longer optional; superintendents must address questions, ease concerns and take part in community education programs on a regular basis in order to continue building and sustaining community confidence.

Many people assume pesticides are toxic and harmful to their health. That belief, however, is rarely grounded in science. Antibacterial soap, dishwasher soap and laundry detergent are technically toxic pesticides because they kill germs; however, when used correctly, they do not harm humans. The same goes for chemicals that are used to protect plants. Just as soap controls harmful pathogens that humans encounter, fungicide controls pathogens that damage plants.

Simply put, plants—like people—get sick. For example, when their systems get overrun, plants can suffer from environmental stress that creates conditions for pest pressure and disease. When that happens, medication in the form of pesticides is required to nurse the plant back to health. Like human drugs, pesticides today are highly targeted to specific problems, including fungi, weeds and insects.

The need for plant medication, so to speak, is understood by most people. But they may need more explanation about the science behind responsible chemical use.

**The Safety Stance.** Scientifically proving with reasonable certainty that a pesticide will not harm people or the environment is a fundamental part of the product-approval process. The United States has one of the strictest registration processes in the world. Federal law requires that before selling or distributing a pesticide in the United States, a person or company must obtain registration, or license, from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Before registering a new pesticide – or a new use for a registered pesticide – the EPA must first assure the public that the pesticide is considered safe, when used according to label directions. To make such determinations, the EPA requires more than 100 different scientific studies and tests from applicants.

Even before they go through government review, these chemical compounds are tested for toxicity by non-biased, third parties. If a pesticide receives a “strike” against it at any point during testing process, the manufacturer does not approve it for government testing.

Once the product is registered, it is selected and applied by highly trained professionals. Just as a pharmacist would recommend

medicine for a specific ailment, superintendents work with industry experts—including chemical applicators with years of formal education—to prescribe a pesticide for a specific problem.

Not all pesticides are equal. Toxicity levels vary by product and instructions for use are clearly outlined on each pesticide’s label. Labels are designed to explain the correct application procedure, so the chemical has little or no direct negative impact on organisms beyond the targeted pest. As a rule, chemical experts consistently stress the importance of reading and following the pesticide label.

As a precautionary measure, most pesticides cannot be bought over the counter. Some products also require applicators to post signs or flags that alert the public that a given area has been treated recently. The signs, which usually are left standing for 24 hours, are simply informative, since no danger to humans or animals exists after application. In many cases, the majority of pesticides break down naturally in the soil after controlling target pests.

What is your role? Some superintendents have taken a proactive communication approach to combating the general public’s misperceptions and fear of pesticides. Superintendent Jed Spencer, CGCS, for Chenal Country Club in Little Rock, AR, participates in monthly Greens Committee meetings and now hosts annual open houses to give all members a behind-the-scenes look at how he maintains his course. In addition to addressing topics such as chemical and fertilizer use, maintenance and even golf etiquette, his crew operates equipment for participants, allowing them to get a firsthand look at what his crew does and how they do it. Spencer’s goal is to educate the community, and show members the purpose behind his crew’s actions.

“The response to our communication efforts has been extremely positive,” Spencer said. “Community members really appreciate the visual component. It reduces concerns about the possible effects our treatment plan could have on them and their surroundings.”

Spencer has taken additional steps to show his concern for the environment, which the community has applauded. Three years ago, he formed a partnership with Ducks Unlimited to establish a wood duck colony on the course, which helps attract the birds and allows his crew to manage the population. He also maintains a chemical building on his property that houses a 1,000-gallon storage tank for recycling chemicals.

Fred Gehrisch, superintendent for Highlands Fall Country Club in Highlands, N.C., holds educational forums for residents living on or near his course to explain what his crew is spraying and why. He also writes a regular column for his local newspaper that addresses course issues such as the scientific benefits of safely controlling disease and invasive plants on his course.

Gehrisch also is involved in a study under way by the University of Missouri on salamanders at 10 courses in the area—including his

