



The Green Sheet

Central Pennsylvania Golf Course Superintendents Association

Volume 23 Issue 2

Founded ~ April 11, 1939

May 2016

May Meeting

Joint Meeting with Pocono TGA

Reading Country Club

5311 Perkiomen Avenue
Reading, PA 19606

Wednesday, May 11, 2016

Dr. Mike Fidanza - Speaker - 11:00 AM

Lunch - 11:45 AM

Golf - 1:00 PM Shotgun

Appetizers/Cash Bar - following Golf

*There will be a CPGCSA Board of Directors Meeting
at 9:00 AM.*



Golf Course Profile

The Reading Country Club was formed in 1922 and began construction in 1923 under the design of early American architect Alexander Findlay of Scotland. Known as the father of American Golf, Findlay's brush would stroke many layouts during the same era of great course design. Despite the age of the course, Reading still boasts one of Findlay's most intact layouts.

Over the years, especially mid-century, Reading was one of the premier clubs outside of Philadelphia, hosting several professional tournaments and even a Ryder Cup Challenge match in 1953. The tight fairways, rolling hills and postage stamp greens have challenged the game's best including Snead, Middlecoff, and former Reading Pro Byron Nelson. Notable locals Chip Lutz and Betsy King also played many of their early rounds at Reading CC.

A true "shot-makers" course, Reading measures a mere 6,162 yards from the tips, but its' forced carries and lengthy par 3's can challenge even the best golfers. A true pleasure to play for the wise golfer who stays in the fairway and below the pins, The Reading Country Club is a jewel of early American golf.

Superintendent Profile

After receiving his B.S. of Agronomy from Penn State in 1992, Brian Ahrens spent two years at Galen Hall Golf Club before arriving at the Reading Country Club in March of 1994 as the assistant superintendent. Named the interim superintendent in August of the same year, he was promoted to the full time superintendent position in January 1995 and holds the same position today.

He married his wife Christy in September of 1995 and over the next few years welcomed three children; Hunter, Maryn, and Tucker. Aside from the busy family life, Brian enjoys hunting, playing golf and taking in the occasional rock concert.

Meeting Sponsored by:



President's Message

I have finally found the time to write my first President's message. Is it me? Or does it seem like 2 weeks ago we were shoveling out from that giant blizzard in January? Now all of sudden we're into our pre-emergence programs and fertilizing and spraying and mowing stuff? As I get older, time slips by faster and faster. The value of time is constantly increasing, compiling our list of things to do that seems to grow longer and longer.

I would like to congratulate the newly elected Board of Directors, and thank them for taking the time to help and serve on the Board. Thanks to Alan for navigating us through 2 more years as President, and continuing to actively help out as Past President.

We look forward to a great meeting at Reading Country Club this month. Brian has been preparing for this event for months now. I don't mean rolling greens and trimming creeks.....I mean he's been spending his lunch breaks on the driving range! If I know Brian, his greens have probably been aerated three times already this year, so they should be nice and healthy by the time we play!

I'm going to set some time aside to attend the May meeting. Hopefully you all will as well.

See you soon,

Chad

May is First Green Month

April 28, 2016 – May is First Green month, and golf courses across the U.S. and Canada are hosting local schools for First Green STEM* field trips.

In a First Green field trip, golf course superintendents host students where they test water quality, collect soil samples, identify plants, design plantings, and calculate the square footage of parts of the golf course that the superintendents deal with every day. The students are also introduced to playing golf.

Golf course superintendents need to be highly-trained in STEM to manage their golf courses; they share this knowledge with teachers and students, showing real world applications that inspire student interest in STEM, while exposing them to the game of golf.

- **STEM = Science, Technology, Engineering and Math**

WHAT IS FIRST GREEN?

First Green is an innovative environmental and STEM education outreach program using golf courses as environmental learning labs. Golf course superintendents and/or local golf course representatives host students on field trips where they test water quality, collect soil samples, identify plants, design plantings, assist in stream bed restoration and are involved in the ecology and environmental aspects of the golf course. The students are also introduced to many other aspects of golf. A tax-exempt non-profit, First Green was founded in the State of Washington in 1997 and is expanding nationally.

SUPPORTERS

Supporters of First Green include the United States Golf Association (USGA), Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA), Washington State Golf Association, Pacific Northwest Golf Association, the Northwest Turfgrass Association, Western Washington Golf Course Superintendents Association, Western Canada Turfgrass Association, local golf clubs, **public and private** school systems, and individual contributors who assist the organization through monetary grants and participation in field trips.

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Membership News

We would like to welcome the following individuals into our association.

Christopher Bender Class C
Assistant Superintendent, Chambersburg CC

Bill Corcoran Class AF
Sales Manager, Lawn and Golf Supply Company

Joey Filippini Class FM
Superintendent, Golden Oaks Golf Club

Benjamin Gotwalt Class C
Assistant Superintendent, Hershey Country Club

Brandon Snyder Class C
Assistant Superintendent, Berkshire Country Club

Brady Pnacek Class C
Assistant Superintendent, Hershey Country Club

Samuel Yoder Class C
Assistant Superintendent, Hershey Country Club

If you know of anyone who is interested in membership into the association, please have them contact Wanda at 717-279-0368.

Membership information is also available on the Central Penn website at:
www.cpgcsa.org

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Important Golf Turf Issues From 2015

An informal survey was conducted among Central and Eastern Pennsylvania golf course superintendents in fall 2015. Many issues are out of the control or influence of golf course superintendents. Here is what they had to say.

Top 5 Issues in 2015

1. Labor (availability, training, employee morale)
2. Budget
3. Weather (weather extremes, too wet/too dry)
4. Pests: diseases — dollar spot, brown patch, summer patch weeds — crabgrass insects — annual bluegrass weevil
5. Plant physiology: winter injury, ice damage, winterkill, summer stress, water conservation and water use

Top 5 Things You'd Like Turf Students to Know

1. Personnel management, people skills, how to work with/ deal with people, politics of working with golf course committees, communication skills, work ethics
2. Equipment maintenance
3. Finance and budgets, and managing golfer expectations

- vs. golf course turf maintenance
4. How to anticipate environmental stress, how to hand-water/syringe, turf disease ID, more realistic work experience on golf courses or in the turf industry
5. Spanish language

What You Would Change About Your Profession

1. Better work/life balance, hours and pay, job security, retirement plan
2. Change golfer expectations, educate golfers (about turf agronomics), realistic golfer demands and expectations
3. More golfers
4. More respect for the superintendent as an important employee of the golf course
5. Less emphasis on green speed

Update submitted by Michael Fidanza, Ph.D., Professor of Plant and Soil Science, Penn State University.

Pennsylvania Turfgrass Winter Edition, Volume 5, No. 1



IT'S ALL ABOUT TIME

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Directions to Reading Country Club



From Harrisburg, PA

- * Take PA Turnpike to Morgantown Exit 298 (old exit 22)
- * Take Route 176 North for 10 miles to Pottstown 422 East exit
- * Take 422 East to traffic light at 47th Street
- * Directly after 3rd traffic light merge onto the NEW Shelbourne Rd. ramp to your right
- * At the stop sign turn left onto Shelbourne Road
- * Make a left at the same light onto 422 West
- * Reading Country Club is the first driveway on the right

From Allentown, PA

- * Take Route US 22 West to Route 100 South
- * Take Route 100 South to Route 222 South
- * Take Route 222 South to 422 East toward Pottstown
- * Follow 422 East to traffic light at 47th Street
- * Directly after 3rd traffic light merge onto the NEW Shelbourne Rd. ramp to your right
- * At the stop sign turn left onto Shelbourne Road
- * Make a left at the same light on 422 West
- * Reading Country Club is the first driveway on the right

From Philadelphia, PA

- * Take Route 76 West to 422 West
- * Take 422 West toward Pottstown for approximately 35 miles
- * After passing Dairy Queen on the left, proceed to the next traffic light
- * Go through this traffic light
- * Reading Country Club is next driveway on the right

From Scranton/Wilkes-Barre/Hazleton

- * Take Route 81 South to 61 South toward Frackville
- * Follow 61 South past Pottsville, Hamburg and Leesport toward Reading
- * At Cross Keys Business Center, turn right onto 222 South
- * Follow 222 South which turns into 422 East
- * Take 422 East to traffic light at 47th Street
- * Directly after 3rd traffic light merge onto the NEW Shelbourne Rd. ramp to your right
- * At the stop sign turn left onto Shelbourne Road
- * Make a left and the same light onto 422 West
- * Reading Country Club is the first driveway on the right

6th Circuit Makes WOTUS Decision

2016-05-02 | Bob Helland, GCSAA - May 2016

A recent action by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 6th Circuit increases the likelihood that a decision on the merits of the EPA's Clean Water Rule (commonly known as WOTUS) could come soon.

The entire 6th Circuit has rejected requests to review an earlier decision by a three judge panel from the 6th Circuit to move forward on the rule's merits. So unless the Supreme Court decides to address the question of jurisdiction, which is not likely, the panel could issue a decision soon.

As we noted [previously](#), the three judge panel had decided on February 22, 2016 that the circuit court was the proper court to review the merits of WOTUS (not the district courts). The two justices in the majority had differed as to whether that was due to 1) controlling language in the underlying Clean Water Act or 2) the court's prior decision in *National Cotton Council v. EPA*. Several plaintiffs to the litigation argued that this split merited the entire 6th Circuit's rehearing of the question of jurisdiction (known as an "en banc" hearing). The 6th Circuit disagreed.

What this means is that without any further intervention by a higher court on the question of jurisdiction, the 6th Circuit will be able to turn to the merits of the WOTUS rule. Plaintiffs could decide to appeal to the Supreme Court, but such an appeal is likely not to be considered. Appeals are not automatically heard and with the current vacancy on the Court, due to the death of Justice Antonin Scalia, the number of cases the justices have accepted has fallen. Also, the Supreme Court could just as likely decide to wait until a final decision by a lower court on WOTUS before deciding to hear any appeal. As we noted [previously](#), a temporary, nation-wide, stay of WOTUS has been put in place by the 6th Circuit.

Congressional oversight over – as well as efforts to halt – WOTUS continue as well. The Senate Small Business Committee, chaired by Senator David Vitter (R-LA), held a hearing on April 27th on "[How small businesses were left out of the rulemaking process for WOTUS](#)". Representatives from the Small Business Administration and National Federation of Independent Business testified. And the Senate took up an amendment by Senator John Hoeven (R-ND) on April 21st to defund WOTUS as part of the Fiscal Year 2017 Appropriations process. This amendment earned 56 votes in support, short of the 60 threshold required under Senate rules.

GCSAA's advocacy efforts on WOTUS will continue. Bob Helland, director of congressional and federal affairs, will continue to represent golf on this issue on Capitol Hill, and the topic will also be a focal point during discussions on Capitol Hill during National Golf Day on May 18.



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PA Budget Update

By Chase Rogan

A recent budget impasse in PA had the turf industry playing defense. Penn State extension services, which the turf industry relies on, were in danger of being defunded. Extension agents in the state encouraged industry members to reach out to the state legislator to voice opposition of losing extension, and I'm told the response was tremendous. In speaking with Dr. Landschoot, Penn State Professor and Extension Specialist, he was very grateful for the engagement of the industry, and believes it made a big difference in the outcome. Not only did extension keep their funding, but they also got a 9% increase in their budget. Not bad.

Likewise, the state assembly was considering a recreational tax implementation to increase revenues, which would have included taxes on greens fees. Luckily, no tax was ever implemented. While this news comes as a relief for now, the state will still have to pass a budget for the next fiscal year, which turns over in June. Our lobbyist, Malady & Wooten, tells me this will be another challenge facing the industry, as these budgetary topics (extension, recreational tax) could be on the table once again.

Stay tuned for more information and action alerts should we need to engage another grassroots effort in voicing our opinions with the new budget. In the meantime, we will have a great opportunity to speak with our legislators face-to-face during PA Golf Day, set to be hosted in Harrisburg on June 22nd. Contact me if you'd like to be involved!

Chase Rogan is the Mid-Atlantic GCSAA Regional Representative. He can be reached at 785-832-3609 or crogan@gcsaa.org.

May 18 is the ninth Annual National Golf Day. Advocates from the golf allied association representing 35 states will be in Washington, DC for the event. The advocates that are attending National Golf Day will be talking about the labor, environmental and tax issues that affect the golf industry.

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**2016 CPGCSA
Meeting Locations**

May 11
Reading Country Club

June 13
Royal Manchester Golf Club

September 17
Penn State Football Game

October 3
West Shore Country Club

Mark Your Calendar.....



**Penn State
Turf and Ornamentals
Field Days
will be held from
August 10 -11, 2016**



The Green Sheet

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