



The Green Sheet

Central Pennsylvania Golf Course Superintendents Association

Volume 29 Issue 6

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October/November 2022

2022 GCSAA Chapter Delegates Meeting

GCSAA Board of Directors and Executive Update – GCSAA Chief Operating Officer Kevin P. Sunderman, CGCS briefed the delegates on his recent resignation from the GCSAA Board as vice president to assume the role of GCSAA Chief Operating Officer. While the GCSAA Bylaws allow for the president to fill vacancies on the board, it was decided to allow the vacancy to remain until the Annual Meeting and Election in February due to the short time span. As Mr. Sunderman had already been nominated for president in 2023, legal counsel advised to re-open the nomination process to allow the membership to put forth any suitable candidates to fill the open board positions.

The role of the GCSAA president is one that works to build relationships, set strategic direction, and lead the GCSAA Board in meaningful conversations. Each year of board service is critical in the development of the board member to take on the role of president. Especially important in this development are the terms as vice president and secretary/treasurer. Therefore, Kevin P. Breen, CGCS has accepted the nomination to serve a second term as president thus allowing the natural progression and development of the remaining board members.

Mark Jordan, CGCS has served on the 2022 GCSAA board of directors as immediate past president. The GCSAA bylaws currently specify this position as limited to a 1-year term. Due to Kevin Breen, CGCS being nominated to serve a second term as president, the immediate past president position on the board would not be filled due to the 1-year term specification. The immediate past president brings value to the board through experience, external relationships and provides valuable counsel. A bylaws change would be necessary for this board position to remain filled by Mark Jordan in 2023.

The President's Message – GCSAA President Kevin P. Breen, CGCS focused on three items during his President's Message to the delegates. Community, Key Initiatives and Challenges on the horizon. Mr. Breen shared his inspirational message regarding community and GCSAA. Being a part of a community, a group of people who want to come together to connect, is the main reason GCSAA exists. Mr. Breen touched on several of 2022's key initiatives including National Golf Day, First Green, DEI and the Delegates Meeting. He ended his presentation encouraging the delegates to continue to advocate on behalf of the profession and the industry to combat increasing threats to golf in the future.

Association Report – CEO Rhett Evans briefed the delegates on the state of GCSAA by starting with membership numbers and a financial update.

- Membership Numbers – Total membership is now over 19,000 up 1.35% from 2021, with Class A and Equipment Managers leading the way. Mr. Evans emphasized that growing Class C and Equipment manager members will also be a focus in 2023.
- Financial Update – Mr. Evans noted that two years of a pandemic and now inflation has created financial challenges with all organizations and GCSAA isn't immune. However, due to the strong financial stewardship of past GCSAA Boards and prudent financial management by the staff leadership, the association remains resilient.
 - ◇ GCSAA generates revenue from the following:
 - * 37% Industry
 - * 25% Member Dues
 - * 17% Reserve Funds
 - * 13% User Fees (e.g., registration)
 - * 8% Foundation and Other Sources
 - ◇ GCSAA spends this revenue on the following:
 - * 31% Education, Advocacy, Publications, Environmental Programs
 - * 27% Conference and Trade Show
 - * 16% Member and Chapter Programs
 - * 9% Marketing and Branding; Outreach and Communications
 - * 17% Support & Administrative, Occupancy, Depreciation

Mr. Evans emphasized that while in the near-term being able to utilize a much higher level of reserve funds to support programs and services is a positive result of years of past sound financial management, a priority of growing new and existing sources of

Presidents Message

Well 2022 is almost in the books. Wasn't sure what to expect this year since we started off with ice damage and a cold spring but once the temps warmed up it turned out to be a pretty good year. Seems like supply chain issues and staffing are still the biggest issues but the public still has the fever to play golf. Good thing it's time to park the mowers since the world is running out of diesel fuel.

The October meeting At Ledge Rock was one of those beautiful fall days you dream about. It was great to see the kids from the First Green Program learning about our industry. Congratulations again to Tom Ocepek on the 2022 DSA award. He has always been very supportive of Central Penn and one of the best examples of nothing replacing personal interaction among peers in our industry.

Thank you to those that hosted meetings this past year. 2023 looks like it will be just as much fun!

Pete Ramsey

David Rafferty Dedication, Service & Leadership Award

This year's recipient of the David Rafferty Dedication, Service and Leadership Award is Thomas C. Ocepek, CGCS. Tom is a native of Western Pennsylvania and has worked in the golf industry since 1971 when he started as a caddy at Westmoreland Country Club. Tom then went on work on the grounds crew at Cloverleaf Golf Club and shortly thereafter he became the assistant superintendent. Tom remained at Cloverleaf until he started in Penn State's Turf Grass Program, graduating in 1988. Tom interned at Oakmont Country Club while at Penn State. Upon graduation Tom accepted a position at Wilmington Country Club. Then 1989, Tom took the position of Superintendent at Heidelberg Country Club in Bernville, where he has remained the superintendent. Tom received his Golf Course Superintendent Certification in 2003. He has served on the Board of Directors of the Central Pennsylvania Golf Course Superintendents Association in all roles, including President. Tom has been married to his wife Louise for over 38 years and has three children, Erin, David and Mary.



Alan FitzGerald, Tom Ocepek,
Chad Oxenreider



Tom and Assistants - Past and Present



Pete Ramsey, Tom Ocepek, Wanda Fry

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Kevin Mark

Chapter Delegates Report - cont'd

revenue will need to be a priority over the next few years. Evans ended his presentation with a call to action for the delegates to lead out together by encouraging current members to increase the number of new equipment managers and assistant superintendents to help combat the labor crisis and ensure future leadership.

Government Affairs Update – Chava McKeel, Director, Government Affairs shared with the delegates updates on important issues and initiatives the Government Affairs team is currently working on such as the value of golf, water pressures, labor shortages, pesticide, and fertilizer issues and new power equipment regulations and bans. Ms. McKeel highlighted the success of the Grassroots Ambassador Program and plans to expand it in the near future to ensure the program's inclusivity, strength and sustainability. She announced that plans are underway for an in-person 2023 National Golf Day and closed her presentation with a recap of the historic EPA-GCSAA Smart Sector Partnership. Two trophies were given out to the Metropolitan GCSA and San Diego GCSA for their participation in the inaugural GCSAAPAC Chapter Challenge.

2023 GCSAA Conference and Trade Show Update – Chief Marketing Officer Ed Several briefed the delegates on the newly reimagined GCSAA Conference and Trade Show (CTS). The 2023 CTS has been transformed into an interactive experience attendees won't find anywhere else. Mr. Several walked the delegates through the new CTS schedule as well as the GCSAA Golf Championships and highlighted a few key events and education opportunities.

- Seven interactive facility tours will be held on Monday and Tuesday. Attendees will be able to visit and learn from experts at local Orlando golf courses.
- GCSAA Welcome Celebration presented in partnership with Syngenta will be held at Aquatica Beach and will be a great atmosphere to re-connect with friends and colleagues.
- Interactive Grass Stage on the trade show floor will feature forward tees, an actual green, demo areas and more.
- GCSAA Sunrise Celebration – is the new opening session to be held on Wednesday.
- GCSAA \$Bucks is a new program enabling attendees to earn points by visiting booths to bid on valuable merchandise at an auction Thursday afternoon. Points tracked on the CTS app
- Auction at the end of the trade show event where members can bid on valuable merchandise using points earned throughout the CTS.
- 70 education seminars and 20 Power Hours.
- GCSAA Golf Championship presented by Toro – added a Par 3 shootout, women's flight and easy new Chapter Team sign up process.

GCSAA Foundation – Ryan Flickinger, Executive Director, GCSAA Foundation updated the delegates on the efforts made to enhance the Foundation's brand awareness,



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diversification of donors, and number of charitable gifts made annually. While continuing to focus on its mission to raise funds for advocacy, education, and research, the Foundation invites input on how it can better partner with chapters and serve GCSAA members. Through a new annual fund and major gift giving program, the Foundation seeks to become the leading philanthropic partner for members and stakeholders within the golf industry. Mr. Flickinger also presented the dates for the 2023 Rounds 4 Research auction – April 24 – April 30. Rounds 4 Research has raised over \$2.5 million in the last ten years. In 2022, the Foundation granted \$385,000 to participating chapters.

Environmental Programs – Mark Johnson, Director, Environmental Programs promoted the development of facility BMP manuals using the GCSAA's Facility BMP Planning Guide, both individually and through chapter initiatives. Mr. Johnson shared with the delegates that creating a facility BMP manual is putting the practices already in place at a golf course in a guide form to use when sharing information with owners, greens committees, the community, and legislators. The delegates were updated on the growth of the initiative.

- 1,200 facility manuals have been created.
- Conducted 70 workshops with 18 more scheduled.
- A total of 23 BMP webinars have been held.

Mr. Johnson also touched on the Golf Course Environmental Profile surveys and thanked the delegates for championing the completion of these surveys in the past. The Water Use Management Practices survey has been completed and published and had good news to tell regarding the golf industry's reduction in overall water use since the last survey was conducted. Nutrient Use and Management Practices is complete and will be published in the coming weeks. Followed by a Pest Management report in March. Finally, the Property Profile and Environmental Stewardship Survey just closed and the results will be published in a report coming out spring 2023.

Chapter Outreach Task Group Update – Paul L. Carter, CGCS, Chair, Chapter Outreach Task Group and Steve Randall, Director, Chapter Outreach briefed the delegates on the outcomes of the task group meeting.

- Affiliation Agreement due 12/31/2022 – a new affiliation agreement will be sent to all GCSAA chapters and will be due to GCSAA Headquarters by the end of the year. The task group proposed and the GCSAA Board approved amending the affiliation agreement to include an Equipment Manager membership classification to Section IV.B.1. This means all chapters who do not currently have an equipment manager membership classification will need to add one to their bylaws. Adding this classification provides consistency among all chapters and allows chapters and GCSAA to promote the equipment manager.
- Affiliated Chapter Logo Use – GCSAA updated its logo back in 2019 and encouraged chapters to adopt the new brand at that time. Mr. Carter reminded the delegates that partnering with GCSAA by adopting the brand makes chapters easily recognizable and provides a consistent message and the chapter may continue to use their existing logo in a co-branded format. GCSAA funded grants of \$1,000 are available to help with the transition.

Member Dues Discussion – GCSAA Secretary/Treasurer Jeff L. White, CGCS brought forward a proposal from the GCSAA Board of Directors to adjust membership dues at the 2023 GCSAA Annual Meeting.

- Member dues equates to 25% of GCSAA revenue and helps to fund member programs and services.
- The delegates requested and approved a dues adjustment process back in 2006 that would keep pace with the increasing costs of providing member programs and services and reduce or eliminate the negative impact that large, infrequent dues increase had on membership growth and retention.
- The process would adjust Class A/B/C dues every two-years based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) but is not automatic and must be voted on by members at an Annual Meeting.
- The membership approval rating has been strong, ranging from 87%-97%.



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- The process was extended to three-years during the Great Recession and again during the pandemic, which resulted in a dues adjustment for 2022.
- Given the significant 8% rise in the CPI in 2022, the Board is proposing a one-year adjustment versus waiting two years and having a significantly larger CPI adjustment that could negatively impact member growth and retention.
- The recommended dues adjustment to be voted on at the 2023 Annual Meeting translates to a \$35 increase for Class A/ B and a \$20 increase for Class C.

Benevolence Policy Update – Jeff L. White, CGCS advised the delegates there would be a Bylaws amendment on the ballot at the Annual Meeting to amend verbiage in the existing Benevolence Fund section. Current Bylaws language provides sole authority to the Trustees of the Benevolence Fund (President, Vice President, and Secretary/Treasurer) to oversee activities of the fund. However, management of the fund is the responsibility of the entire Board of Directors, so this amendment will simply update the language in the Bylaws to align with current management practices.

Professional Development Updates – Kevin Sunderman, CGCS brought the delegates up to date on how the newly streamlined CGCS program was doing. The new process which kept eligibility requirements the same but removed the self-assessment and portfolio requirements for applicants has been an overwhelming success. There have been 22 newly certified individuals in 2022 with an additional 73 applicants currently in the process of becoming certified.

Mr. Sunderman briefed the delegates on the new Certified Turf Equipment Manager (CTEM) program. The criteria to become a CTEM is as follows:

- Current Turf Equipment Manager.
- 3 or more years' experience.
- Complete Equipment Manager Certificate program (Level 1 and Level 2).
- Pass facility attesting.

Mr. Sunderman finished his presentation by discussing employee/workforce development through the lens of employee training and development. He asked the delegates to share what types of training and videos, or webinars would be beneficial to them during the small group breakouts.

FFA and First Green – Leann Cooper, Senior Manager, Chapter Services briefed the assembly on GCSAA's youth outreach efforts. First Green is GCSAA's Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) environmental outreach program that uses golf courses as living laboratories. K-12 students participate in hands-on learning stations hosted by GCSAA members. The program continues to grow and is now in 34 states. GCSAA's goal with the National FFA is one of awareness and outreach. FFA National has over 850,000 members in nearly 9,000 chapters throughout the United States. Through exhibiting at the national convention, hosting a Career Success Tour at Indianapolis Motor Speedway Golf and Grounds and becoming involved in FFA's Nursery and Landscaping Committee, GCSAA is making inroads with students that the golf course industry can be a rewarding career.

Town Hall Session – The GCSAA Board of Directors and delegates participated in an interactive town hall session. The session was facilitated by GCSAA President Kevin P. Breen, CGCS and included questions surrounding updating chapter bylaws, logo usage, publication costs, the dues adjustment, and other items.

Candidate Breakouts – the delegates had the opportunity to meet and question the candidates running for the 2023 GCSAA Board of Directors. The candidates are:

For President – Kevin P. Breen, CGCS
For Vice President – Jeff L. White, CGCS
For Secretary/Treasurer
T.A. Barker, CGCS
Paul L. Carter, CGCS
For Director (electing three, two-year positions)
H. Scott Griffith, CGCS
Steven J. Hammon
Ryan S. Kraushofer, CGCS
Christopher A. Reverie
Jennifer L. Torres
Michael L. Upchurch
Richard Wit, CGCS

*Thanks to Central Penn GCSA Board Member and Chambersburg Country Club Superintendent
Corey Barnes for representing our association at the Chapter Delegates Meeting!*

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*Survey of 255 golf course superintendents conducted via TechWalkdate in Sept. 2021.

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Congratulations to Lee Kozsey from Syngenta

on his retirement later this month! Lee has been a member and sponsor of CPGCSA since June 1995.



October 2022 at Ledge Rock Golf Club
Drew Swigert, Dalton Viering, Lee Kozsey, John Erickson

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FIRST GREEN LIAISONS TO HELP GROW THE PROGRAM NATIONWIDE

GCSAA recently launched the First Green Liaison network to spur growth of the program throughout the United States. First Green Liaisons will help promote First Green in their chapters, states, and regions by hosting field trips, acting as a mentor to first-time hosts and providing community outreach and support of First Green. The First Green Liaison is an engaged chapter member who is a GCSAA Member in good standing and is passionate about First Green's mission:

- Support environmental education, stewardship and STEM learning.
- Illustrate the environmental and community benefits of golf courses.
- Introduce the next generation to the game and careers in golf.

First Green Liaisons will grow the program and support the mission by engaging in various activities such as:

- Host/organize First Green field trips and invite his/her chapter members to attend as a train-the-trainer opportunity.
- Work to create relationships with area school districts, private schools and youth groups in order to generate awareness of the First Green program.
- Speak at chapter meetings and events on First Green.
- Work with GCSAA to improve the First Green program.
- Attend local STEM and school events and staff a First Green booth.

Perhaps their most important role will be to act as a sounding board and mentor for individuals interested in hosting a field trip but need some extra support. Liaisons will be able to travel and volunteer at field trips in their state as their schedules allow.

GCSAA is pleased to announce the first nine [First Green Liaisons](#). Our goal is to have a liaison in all 50 states.

PENNSYLVANIA LIAISON

Alan Fitzgerald, MG
Golf Course Superintendent
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Mohnton, PA
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alan@ledgerockgolf.com

To find out more about the First Green Liaison program and to volunteer, visit the [First Green Liaison](#) page.



Alan FitzGerald of
Ledge Rock Golf
Club

First Tee Program/ CPGCSA Meeting at Ledge Rock Golf Club





Thanks to Alan, LedgeRock Golf Club and the volunteers with First Tee for allowing us to experience this program.

Our hope is that it continues to expand in Central PA!

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#MaintenanceMonday

November 18, 2022

Adam Moeller, Director, Green Section Education
USGA Northeast Region



Performing topdressing and other time-consuming tasks on days dedicated to course care or during built-in gaps in play greatly increases maintenance efficiency and avoids disruptions to play.

Labor challenges, a never-ending maintenance to-do list and full tee sheets make it difficult for golf course maintenance teams to prepare the course while working around play. Inspired by our goal of helping golf courses improve playing conditions and maintenance efficiency, the Green Section Education team began using #MaintenanceMonday for social media posts on a regular basis to highlight the benefits of closing a course for dedicated maintenance time. Many superintendents create social media posts using #MaintenanceMonday, but many others express frustration in not having the ability to close the course.

When asked why a maintenance day isn't incorporated into the weekly or monthly schedule, losing revenue while the course is closed is often cited as a concern. Although a slight reduction in revenue can occur, the long-term benefits of maintenance days are well worth it. The key reasons for closing a golf course for all or part of a day each week include:

- Routine maintenance and larger projects can be completed efficiently, which allows the maintenance staff to deliver the best possible conditions.
- Employees can perform tasks faster when they don't need to stop or move to a different hole to avoid play.
- It's best to perform maintenance practices like venting and topdressing when a golf course is closed because they can be disruptive and potentially dangerous to perform during play.
- With a break in play, the maintenance team can complete disruptive tasks quickly and have things cleaned up before play resumes.

Maintenance days are even more important when you consider the labor shortage nearly every golf course is experiencing. Fewer employees and more rounds make keeping up more dif-

icult than ever. Without adequate time, some important tasks simply cannot be completed, and golf course conditions suffer.

If a course can't manage a full day without play, even dedicating a morning to maintenance can make a big difference. Another strategy is to [create a gap](#) of a few hours during the day without tee times. The [maintenance team can then operate in the gap](#) between groups without disrupting play.

For a golf course operation to be successful, course maintenance time needs to be a priority. Dedicating a day or a few hours each week to maintenance makes it possible to complete critical tasks without interfering with play. The end result is increased efficiency, better playing conditions and happier golfers.

Northeast Region Agronomists:

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Current Drought Declaration Status

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