



The Green Sheet

Central Pennsylvania Golf Course Superintendents Association

Volume 29 Issue 5

Founded ~ April 11, 1939

September 2022

September Meeting

Dauphin Highlands Golf Course

650 S Harrisburg Street
Harrisburg, PA 17113

www.golddauphinhighlands.com

Host - Jon Szekeres

Tuesday, September 20, 2022

Registration begins - 12:00 Noon

Lunch - 12:30 PM

Golf - 1:30 PM Shotgun

Appetizers/Cocktails - Following Golf

Host Superintendent Profile

Jon Szekeres began working at Dauphin Highlands when construction started in 1994. He has been Superintendent since 2004. Jon completed an internship in 1989 at Augusta National and has worked at over 25 Master's Tournaments. He graduated from Penn State University (Turf Management) in 1990 and began his career at West Shore Country Club and then Blue Ridge Country Club. Jon's daughter, Madeline, played golf at Lebanon Valley College and currently lives in Maryland. He lives in Middletown with his two dogs who are big fans of the golf course. In his free time, Jon enjoys archery hunting, cooking, golf and traveling.

Host Course Profile

Dauphin Highlands Golf Course opened in August of 1995 with Bill Wall serving as the original Superintendent. The course was designed by Bill Love of Ault, Clark and Associates. Dauphin Highlands offers bent grass greens and fairways. It is a parkland style course with gently rolling fairways, elevation changes, and large greens. It caters to both low and high handicap golfers. Recently, a state-of-the-art irrigation system was installed. It continues to be one of the most popular courses in the Harrisburg area.

David Rafferty Dedication, Service & Leadership Award

The award honors the memory of Dave Rafferty. Dave was a Past President of our association as well as the Northwest PA GCSA and the Allied GCS of Pennsylvania. He was a fore-runner in educating our elected and regulatory officials to the benefits of golf turf to the environment.



Dave was a mentor to literally dozens of superintendents, assistant superintendents and other members. He worked tirelessly to assist anyone who sought his council. We realize no one will fill Dave's shoes but we are dedicating this award in his memory. We recognize members who have selflessly given themselves to benefit our association and its membership.

This award is designed to honor current and former superintendents attaining a minimum of 14 years association membership. This is the number of years Dave was a CPGCSA member. All classes of membership shall be eligible to receive the award although superintendent or retired superintendent nominees will receive favored consideration. The award is dedicated to a superintendent who worked hard for our association.



Thomas C. Ocepek, CGCS

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



Presidents Message

Looks like everyone finally got some rain the last couple weeks. That should help with the aerification recovery and overseeding everyone is doing. I keep kidding myself that the summer stress tapers off after August 15th. That has not been true for years now.

Our last meeting of the year is at LedgeRock Golf Club and it's a big one. Thank you to Alan Fitzgerald for all his work on this event. This will be another opportunity to bring a four man team from your club if you wish. You may invite your golf pro, general manager, committee members or owners for your team. If not just play with your buddies from Central Penn. LedgeRock is also hosting the First Green Program from 9:00-12:00 prior to the CPGCSA shotgun at 12:30. You are welcomed to come and participate and volunteer to help the kids. At the conclusion of our four man scramble there will be a reception with dinner to honor our 2022 Dave Rafferty DSA recipient Tom Ocepek.

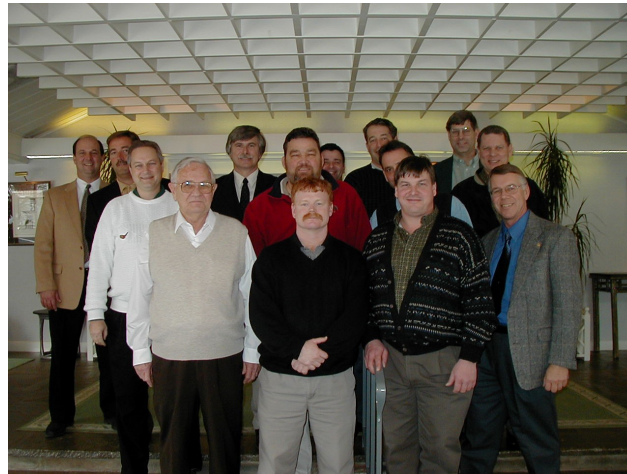
Should be a wonderful day at an incredible facility. Looking forward to seeing everyone and hearing some stories from Tom's career. A great way to wrap up the 2022 Central Penn Season.

Pete Ramsey
Central Penn President

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.

Dave Rafferty Distinguished Service & Leadership Award Past Recipients

- 2003 - James MacLaren
- 2004 - Charles Cadiz
- 2005 - Terry Wueschinski
- 2006 - Gregory Borzok
- 2007 - Kenneth Dietrich
- 2008 - Jeffrey L. Fry
- 2009 - Samuel Snyder
- 2014 - Faron Stoops
- 2018 - Pete Ramsey
- 2019 - Gregory C. Fantuzzi
- 2020 - Wanda S. Fry



Dave Rafferty and Tom Ocepek pictured with fellow CPGCSA Past Presidents.



Tom and Louise Ocepek at a CPGCSA event

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Chad Oxenreider
Brian Ahrens
Jeff Green
Kevin Mark

The DSL Presentation will be held on October 4th at LedgeRock Golf Club

First Green Program

First Green is an innovative environmental education outreach program using golf courses as hands-on environmental learning labs. First Green coordinates outdoor STEM field trips at golf courses that allow students to perform hands-on experiments and tests, all within the focus of their schools' environmental science curricula. In these outdoor "labs," students test water quality, collect soil samples, identify plants, conduct math activities and work with local issues, such as streambed restoration or owl-nest restoration. First Green has recently debuted three learning labs in Spanish, extending the reach of this program.



Alan FitzGerald of Ledge Rock Golf Club

First Green was founded in 1997 and is a program of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA). It is administered by the Environmental Institute for Golf, the philanthropic organization of GCSAA.

Join us at the October 4th Meeting to learn more about this program.

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Membership News

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Please see a list of our Association Sponsors on Page 13.

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

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

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GCSAA Launches Property and Environmental Stewardship Practices Survey

The survey is part of the third phase of the Golf Course Environmental Profile series, which provides critical data to golf industry for assessment and best practices
August 30, 2022 | GCM Staff



The Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) will seek critically needed data from superintendents regarding property details and environmental stewardship practices to support the profession and industry as part of the ongoing efforts to maintain necessary golf course management resources.

To collect the data, an in-depth questionnaire will be sent electronically to superintendents at approximately 14,000 facilities. The property profile and environmental stewardship practices survey is part of the third phase of GCSAA's Golf Course Environmental Profile survey program, which consists of three surveys that are funded by the GCSAA Foundation. The property profile and environmental stewardship practices survey will be open Sept. 1 through Oct. 17.

Since 2006, the data collected has enabled GCSAA to help members succeed and support the golf industry. GCSAA needs representation from across the U.S. from members, non-members and all facility types. Superintendents should look for an email from the National Golf Foundation, which is conducting the survey on behalf of the GCSAA, or find access on GCSAA's website. The Golf Course Environmental Profile survey program will be administered by Mark Johnson, director of environmental programs for GCSAA. The information will be analyzed independently by J. Bryan Unruh, Ph.D. and Travis Shaddox, Ph.D. All superintendents should participate, and those who complete the survey will receive 0.50 service points and be entered into drawings for prizes.

"The data from the surveys has been vital in our efforts to advocate for the profession and industry," said GCSAA President Kevin P. Breen, CGCS, superintendent at La Rinconada Country Club in Los Gatos, Calif. "It demonstrates the proactive environmental best practices that superintendents use to maintain their facilities."

The results from the property profile and environmental stewardship practices survey will be announced in 2023 and compared against numbers published from the first phase in 2007 and the second phase in 2017.

This is the last of three surveys in the third phase. The first survey, Water Use and Management Practices, was conducted in the fall of 2021 with results announced in July of 2022. The second, Nutrient Use and Pest Management survey was conducted in the spring of 2022 with results to come later this year. All the topics closely mirrored the first two phases.

For more information about the Golf Course Environmental Profile, visit www.gcsaa.org/GCEP.

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Verdure: Turfgrass is not the largest irrigated crop

Data shows turf on golf courses isn't the biggest use of water.

June 2022 | Mike Fidanza

In the classic movie, “The Princess Bride,” Inigo Montoya utters that unforgettable line: “You keep using that word. I do not think it means what you think it means.” This phrase should be applied to an often-misinterpreted statement from a journal publication by Cristina Milesi et al. in 2005. The article had good intentions by discussing turfgrass ecosystems as potential carbon sinks to mitigate climate change. The authors used geo-analysis methods and models to estimate the total land area of turfgrass in the U.S. to be about 40 million acres (16.2 million hectares).

Those with a not-so-friendly attitude toward turfgrass, lawns and golf courses often cite the Milesi article for this one statement: “The analysis indicates that turfgrasses, occupying 1.9% of the surface of the continental United States, would be the single largest irrigated crop in the country.” Look closely at that statement, and those two words “would be” assumes that if every square foot (or square meter) of turfgrass in the U.S. were irrigated, then turfgrass would be the largest irrigated crop in the U.S. Think about that: Every square foot (or square meter) of turfgrass as lawns, parks, athletic fields, golf courses, sod farms, roadsides, cemeteries, airports, commercial spaces and public spaces, and other various patches here, there and everywhere, is irrigated? Of course, every square foot of turfgrass in the U.S. is not irrigated. The truth is, turfgrass is not the largest irrigated crop in the U.S.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Economic Research Service reported 91.7 million acres (37.1 million hectares) were planted with corn (maize). So, if all that corn were irrigated, wouldn’t that be the single most irrigated crop in the U.S.?

What about golf courses? In the U.S., golf courses cover about [2.2 million acres \(890,000 hectares\) of land](#). While almost all golf courses utilize irrigation, about one-third of the total land at a golf course is not managed turf (i.e., lakes, forests, parking lots, buildings, etc.), and about [24% of the managed turf is not irrigated](#). So, how does the 1.1 million acres (445,000 hectares) of irrigated golf course turf compare to 12 million acres (4.9 million hectares) of corn that’s actually grown under irrigation, or a total of 58 million acres (23.5 million hectares) [for all irrigated crops in the U.S.](#)?

Although the Milesi article attempted to estimate total land area of turfgrass, there is not one comprehensive acreage and eco-

conomic impact information source for the U.S. turfgrass industry. A proposal has recently been submitted to the USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service for funding to conduct a "National Turfgrass Industry Survey." The goal is to determine the actual turfgrass land acreage and use, and to provide a better understanding of the size, scope and economic impact of turfgrass in the U.S.

The noble intention of the Milesi article was to show that turfgrass ecological communities represent opportunities for carbon sequestration. A possible criticism in the article points to the use of fertilizer and other turf management inputs that possibly offset the carbon sequestration benefits. However, the article does not consider best management practices (<https://bit.ly/30THzuw>), nor does it recognize that many turf areas have little to no management inputs. To be fair, the Milesi article did not intend to be used as a source to support those with a negative opinion of turfgrass or the turfgrass industry.

So, let's set the record straight: (1) turfgrass is not the single largest irrigated crop in the U.S.; (2) even if every square foot (or square meter) of turfgrass were irrigated, it would not be the single largest irrigated crop in the U.S. — that honor would go to corn; and (3) turfgrass represents so



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many [positive benefits to the environment, society and the human race.](#)

After reading this, Inigo Montoya can say, "You keep using that statement. I think you know what it means now."

Source: Milesi, C., S.W. Running, et al. 2005. Mapping and modeling the biogeochemical cycling of turfgrasses in the United States. *Environmental Management* 36:426-438.

Thank you to Michael Richardson, Ph.D., professor, University of Arkansas, and Casey Reynolds, Ph.D., executive director, Turfgrass Producers International, for providing additional insight into this important topic.

Mike Fidanza, Ph.D., is a professor of plant and soil science in the Division of Science, Berks Campus, at Pennsylvania State University in Reading, Pa. He is a 20-year member of GCSAA.

www.gconline.com/research/news/turfgrass-crop-irrigation



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What's The Big Idea?: Taming Trees to Improve Turf Acclimation

Learn how effective tree care and pruning can help preserve your warm season grasses.

August 2022 | Jack Fry

As we're in late summer, thoughts of efficiently acclimating grasses for the upcoming winter come to light. And light is a major factor. In the transition zone region of the U.S., it's quite common for winter injury on warm-season grasses to occur in areas where shade is prevalent, for they receive less "photosynthetically active radiation," or PAR. Shade prevents warm-season grasses from producing carbohydrates through photosynthesis that are important in the cold-acclimation process, reducing their ability to survive winter. Warm-season grasses require more PAR than cool-season grasses, and some species also differ in how well they tolerate shade.

A common routine on warm-season grasses in areas that experience cold winters is to increase the mowing height in late summer and autumn. Why? More leaf area also enhances the ability of the grasses to absorb PAR. That said, it's sometimes easy to not recognize the lack of PAR that is occurring in areas that experience morning or afternoon shade.

On some golf courses, shade issues become more significant years after trees have been planted. As trees grow larger, they can impact the visibility of greens, playability and performance of turf. However, trees can also form strong relationships with golfers, which can make their removal more difficult.

But it can be done. At Oakmont (Pa.) Country Club, the original architect, Henry Fownes, valued the benefits of an open golf course lacking trees, and that's largely how the course was presented from the early 1900s to the mid-1940s. Thereafter, thousands of trees were planted and began to impact play years later. Beginning in the mid-1990s until the U.S. Open in 2016, over 12,000 trees were removed at Oakmont. More information on this from the USGA [can be found here](#).

I recently visited a private club in the Kansas City area that also began as a relatively open, tree-free golf course over 50 years ago. That changed many years after thousands of small trees were planted shortly after opening. If trees cannot be pruned efficiently or removed to maximize light, grasses will suffer from reduced growth due to shade, and are inclined to experience more winter injury. Trees may also extend roots into soil on fairways and tees, which can also impact turfgrass growth. Bermudagrass and zoysiagrass in the Midwest often exhibit winter damage on shaded tees, perimeters of fairways that are lined with trees, and other areas where shade extends across the surface.

On golf courses where a superintendent's request for tree removal can be problematic, turf species are sometimes changed to assist in shade tolerance. For example, some zoysiagrasses, such as Emerald or Diamond, are more tolerant of shade than bermudagrass and are used to provide better turf quality in shady areas in the South. In the Midwest, it's quite common for significant cold injury to occur to zoysiagrasses or bermu-

dagrasses in shady spots. This may result in frequent purchase of sod to replace turf, or conversion to cool-season grasses in those areas.

There are ways to measure levels of shade on areas of golf courses throughout the growing season, and some companies can provide such services. Superintendents can also use technical instruments that measure PAR. Mike Richardson, Ph.D., and his co-authors outlined strategies for light measurement in this [GCM article](#) from October 2019.

Such information can serve as valuable evidence for superintendents attempting to communicate shade issues with those who are emotionally attached to trees. In addition, highlighting courses that recognize the benefits of open space, such as Oakmont, can also be of benefit. Undoubtedly, trees are beautiful. Nevertheless, quality of turf on the golf course is commonly reduced when trees reach a size where they begin to impact photosynthesis of warm-season grasses that are sensitive to cold.

Jack Fry, Ph.D., is a professor of turfgrass science at Kansas State University, currently working at the school's Research and Extension Center in Olathe, Kan. He is a 25-year member of GCSAA and was recently awarded GCSAA's Outstanding Contribution Award for 2022.

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2022 Meeting Schedule

September 20

Dauphin Highlands Golf Course
CPGCSA Golf Championship

Participation in the CPGCSA Association Championship is optional.

The top 4 winners of the Championship Flight will be eligible to represent Central Penn at the MET Area Team Championship Golf tournament at Lehigh Country Club on October 17, 2022.

October 4

LedgeRock Golf Club
First Green Program
DSL Presentation

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Times Are Changing

September 02, 2022

Elliott L. Dowling, Senior Consulting Agronomist,
USGA Northeast Region

With Labor Day right around the corner, someone forgot to tell Mother Nature to turn down the heat. In fact, she has kept up the heat well into September or early October in recent years. Conversely, she seems to hold the heat until May, when she used to let it loose in April.



Extended summer heat can cause problematic weeds like goosegrass to outlast preemergence herbicides. This is one of many issues caused by hot weather continuing into fall that requires an adjustment in maintenance practices.

This shift in the seasonal weather pattern has several implications for golf courses and superintendents. First, it shifts some preemergence herbicide applications later into the spring, or even early summer. The variable spring weather patterns also influence annual bluegrass weevil activity and subsequent applications.

As for summer, it means you need to be flexible with planning cultural practices and potentially use dates later in the season when cooler weather is more likely to occur. In addition, plan for regular maintenance to continue later into the fall than what used to be considered normal. This means that turf health needs to hold on for 30-45 more days as well. Even in a normal year this is a challenge, but when the weather is as hot and dry as it has been this year, courses are struggling to balance plant health with playability and golfer traffic.

It's uncertain if seasonal weather patterns will one day return to what we used to consider normal. What we do know is that superintendents must plan with the information they have, and right now summer weather seems to be lasting until the end of September or early October. Control the variables that you can but be ready to adjust programs when necessary and know that golf courses are likely going to show some stress late in the year. Grass and maintenance teams are tired this time of year, and while one of them can take a few days off and rest, the other must deal with constant heat, cart traffic, unrepaired ball marks, lack of rain and countless other stressors placed on it.

Northeast Region Agronomists:

- Adam Moeller, director, Green Section Education – amoeller@usga.org
- Darin Bevard, senior director, Championship Agronomy – dbevard@usga.org
- Elliott L. Dowling, senior consulting agronomist – edowling@usga.org
- John Daniels, agronomist – jdaniels@usga.org

How Statements of Intent Help Your Team

Mission, vision and value statements cover every part of an organization. Learn why they have worth for your maintenance team.

June 27, 2022 | Bernie Cronin

Mission statements were popularized in the 1980s as a way for organizations to articulate who they are and what they do. Today, these declarations appear throughout an organization’s messages and communications and are featured prominently on organizational websites. And now, these mission, vision and value statements have an even greater importance as they expand to the divisions and departments within an organization. When I walk into an office or lobby or visit a website for the first time, I immediately look for some reference to the organization’s purpose.



When a mission is felt deep within an organization ... everybody is focused, and amazing results occur.

Photo by Shutterstock

By definition, a mission statement is a concise explanation of an organization’s or department’s purpose and its overall reason for existing. The mission statement supports the vision and serves to communicate purpose and direction to employees, customers, vendors and other stakeholders.

Vision and value statements are slightly different. A vision statement looks forward and creates a mental image of the ideal state that the organization or department wishes to achieve, while a value statement lists the core principles that guide and direct the organization and department culture.

GCSAA does a good job of putting its mission — “GCSAA is dedicated to serving its members, advancing their profession and improving communities through the enjoyment, growth and vitality of the game of golf” — and vision statements — “To be the global leader in golf course management” — front and center in everything it does.

Now I challenge all golf course superintendents to develop a mission statement of your own, stating why your maintenance department exists, the value you create and those who benefit from your role in making the condition of the golf course a source of pride that provides a pleasant experience to those playing the course.

In a previous article I wrote for GCM (see “How to manage your manager” in the August 2021 issue), I wrote about your club’s mission and suggested crafting and displaying a mission statement for your maintenance department that builds off the one already in place at your facility. I wonder how many of you did that? It’s a relatively easy exercise but a valuable one that helps you align your team’s goals with those of the overall facility.

To get started, you need to understand your facility’s mission. Not all golf facilities have written mission statements, but your team still fits into accomplishing a common goal or purpose. Figure out where your team’s efforts best fit, and share that knowledge with not only your team members but also your facility’s green committee and board members.

Next, get to work on the actual mission itself. Ask yourself, “Why do we exist?” and “What is our purpose?” Remember that most mission statements average 29 words, so keep it short, simple and impactful. As you develop your mission statement, remember that you’re not alone. I encourage you to involve your entire team in the process. Remember, this is an exercise that is valuable to all and can be a great team-building opportunity.

Once you have a mission statement in place, don’t keep it a secret. Make sure you and your team know the mission and how they impact it every day. It can even be a great tool to use in hiring and asking candidates how they feel about working within such a purpose.

As you and your team work to finalize your mission statement, don’t be afraid to shoot for the stars. My favorite one is just 12 words — “To organize the world’s information and make it universally accessible and useful.” Can you guess whose mission statement that is? Yep, Google. When a mission is felt deep within an organization, like it obviously is at Google, everybody is focused, and amazing results occur.

Bernie Cronin — president and founder of Bernie Cronin International, a corporate consulting firm that assists organizations in achieving their organizational goals — is a frequent presenter at the GCSAA Conference and Trade Show.

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The Green Sheet

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