

Attention! June 8 - 21

Peaks & Prairies GCSA will once again participate in the Rounds 4 Research program. The 2013 and 2014 auctions generated funds for our PPGCSA programs and for the EIFG, and we are hoping to grow the numbers – both in donations and in participation - for 2015. But to do so, we need your help. Please donate your rounds of four with carts. Encourage your pro shop to help you spread the word. Without golfers to bid, the program will not succeed.

At least 80 percent of the proceeds from our donated rounds will be distributed to our chapter for use on research-based programs such as education, scholarships, advocacy and agronomic research.

To complete your donation on line, please visit <http://www.rounds4research.com/donate-a-round/>, or contact either Cole Clark (406)850-8611, Cody Schulke (509) 432-3744, or Jory Horsley (307) 751-5585.

Scholarship/Education Golf Events for 2015!

Well, we need your help. We are seeking courses to participate in hosting a Scholarship/Education Golf Event. These two golf events, one held in Wyoming and the other in Montana, make a huge difference to our annual continuing education and scholarship programs, thanks to the great support in sponsorships as well as attendance. Please contact Jason Busch (Scholarship Chair) or Danny Renz (Tournament Chair) to volunteer your course - or even to get more information about being a host.

PPGCSA Events:

PPGCSA Fall Meeting & Trade Show

October 27-29, 2015, Billings, Mont.

Peaks & Prairies GCSA Scholarship Education Golf Tournaments, TBA

“Almost” Spring Meeting

March 7 & 8, 2016, Helena, Mont.

Grass Elected to VP

Congratulations to Peter Grass, CGCS, elected as GCSAA vice president at the 2015 conference and show. A longtime member of Peaks & Prairies GCSA, he has been an active member of our association over the years, and it was to the benefit of the profession that he began serving on the national level. Grass has been the superintendent at Hilands Golf Club in Billings, Mont., since 1991. Previously, he served as the assistant superintendent at Hilands for nine years. He holds a bachelor's degree in business administration from Eastern Montana College in Billings.

Northwest Turfgrass Expo

Please keep this on your radar! In 2017 - actually October 17 & 18, 2017 - the Peaks & Prairies GCSA, Inland Empire GCSA and Idaho GCSA will come together for one grand meeting and trade show at the Coeur d'Alene Resort, Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. This event will be held in place of our usually Fall Meeting & Trade Show - for this one year. In addition to can't miss education opportunity, there will be a friendly golf event between chapters.

If You Love Golf Like We do, Thank a Superintendent

You may have heard about the simple, yet brilliant, Thank a Golf Course Superintendent campaign. The great spots feature PGA pros expressing their appreciation to your profession. Visit the homepage of the Peaks & Prairies GCSA website and click on the link to see for yourself.

In addition, anyone can send a note of thanks by visiting the Thank a Superintendent on the GCSAA website. There is an option to send a note of appreciation to a superintendent. In addition, the person completing the note of appreciation will also be entered to win an all-inclusive experience to the 2015 PGA Championship at Whistling Straits.



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“Peaks & Prairies Golf Course Superintendents Association is dedicated to furthering the education of our members for the betterment of golf and its environment.”

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President's Message

Sean Sullivan, CGCS
The Briarwood, Billings, Mont.

As Lori patiently waited for this President's Message, I found myself mentally stuck. I had no topics to share; complete writer's block. Even cranking out a paragraph for the Club's newsletter was difficult. It wasn't even useful info, just responding to criticism or a complaint. After exceeding my deadline, I resorted to sending Pat Jones, noted editor and writer, a Facebook message. I explained I was stuck and asked how to get unstuck. He told me to quote Mark Twain and tie some quotes into a general topic. Then I got my epiphany. I got the idea to talk about networking.

Had I not attended the PPGCSA Fall Meeting for the education and networking opportunities, I would not have met Pat Jones. Then, quite possibly, I might not have solved my dilemma. Such is the power of networking. In this instance, after a personal first contact, I use social media to continue my networking with Pat. Reaching out to someone, in this instance

about writing, has helped tremendously.

When GCSAA, PPGCSA, and all local chapter affiliations advertise their meetings, they always invite everyone for the education and networking opportunities. Both continuing education and networking are vital to the development of the professional greenkeeper. Keeping up with the latest research and technology through meetings, Internet, magazines, and other forms allow greenkeepers to keep up with the evolution of the golf course maintenance industry. Networking allows us to enhance our problem solving skills and/or helps us provide a better-conditioned course. We can talk with others about what research and technologies work and in what situations they work best or worst. Networking allows us to bounce ideas off like-minded colleagues. Also, networking allows us to stay in touch with our friends. The personal touch is always the best form of networking, which is why it is important to attend as many events, such as the GIS, Fall and Spring PPGCSA meetings, and the annual Scholarship Golf Outings, as possible. Both education and networking opportunities are readily available to all those so inclined. There are no benefits to those who shy away from these opportunities. Facilities that make the claim that they can't afford for their employees/employee to attend educational seminars are doing themselves a disservice. I urge everyone to get engaged with the associations and chapters, especially for the educations and networking benefits. What you learn and the problems you can solve will exceed the costs associated with attending. At the very least, call up your fellow greenkeepers and have a chat.

So here's my Mark Twain quote: "No one can learn all there is to know. The subject is just too big. Besides that, it changes everyday." Thanks, Pat.

Kind regards, Sean Sullivan, CGCS

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It's all About the People

Bill Griffith
 Director - Agriculture Center of Excellence
 Walla Walla Community College

are two major areas that hinder motivating employees. One of those areas is a lack of organization and clear directions to the staff. The other main observation is that the supervisor's communications to the staff are seldom or negative in nature. Employees want a leader who leads and provides consistent communication

observe maintenance crews in action as I visited internship sites using students in the turf management program. I have visited more than a 150 worksites in the last 10 years and have seen some really great, motivated crews and some not so good. This presentation is about those observations and some materials gained from other sources. I would like to credit the Leadership Catalyst Organization and their book "The Ascent of a Leader" by Bill McThrall and Bruce McNicol and a book "Whale Done" by Ken Blanchard. I have observed that there

to the employees. Informed workers are much more likely to be motivated.

The Link Between Organization and Motivation

Organization gives workers confidence, direction and power and organization plans out the workday, workweek and even longer planning. Something visual works best and is much more likely to be understood than just verbal planning and direction. Advance notice of tournaments, special maintenance practices and scheduled events empowers employees because they know what to expect and are mentally prepared. When employees know the plan, they are better able to process what needs to be done and are more efficient at doing their job.

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Motivating Employees

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The Link Between Sharing Goals and Motivation

Setting and sharing goals with all of the staff moves the organization forward because the staff has a better idea of the big picture. If you want your workers to buy into the goals of the organization, make them part of the goal setting process. Communicate the short and long term goals to your workers regularly.

Reaching your goals is the perfect opportunity to give positive reinforcement, which can go a long way in motivating your employees. Employees who know the big picture of the puzzle are better able to fit the pieces.

The Power of a “Gotcha” Management Style

Gotcha’s are great at noticing when workers do something wrong and communicating the same to workers. Gotcha’s may correct wrong behavior, but, they seldom have any long lasting motivational effect. In fact this management style becomes very counter productive and the employee will eventually not believe what you are saying about them. Another closely relat-

ed area to this is to remember to concentrate on the behavior or action, especially patterns of behavior. Obviously these situations need to be dealt with, but we need to be careful to differentiate between the person and the behavior or action. The other thing that happens with a “Gotcha” management community is that critical attitudes and words flourish. This will then become part of the maintenance crew’s normal operating procedure and the crew interaction with each other will become critical in nature. Gotcha management styles erode trust from those we manage and produce fear, uncertainty and resentment. One positive comment will usually stop critical comments and change the direction of the conversation.

The Power of a Well Done Management Style

“Well Done’s” learn to notice when things are being done right and communicate the same to workers. What do we pay the most attention to, when workers do something wrong or when they do something right? Unfortunately, of all of our response options, the one that is most used is, “no response.” Over a period of time, consistent no responses tend to be perceived as negative in nature. We need to understand what a positive difference it makes in their motivation when people are appreciated for what they do right. Well Done’s communicate to workers when they see progress, not just when something is done perfectly.

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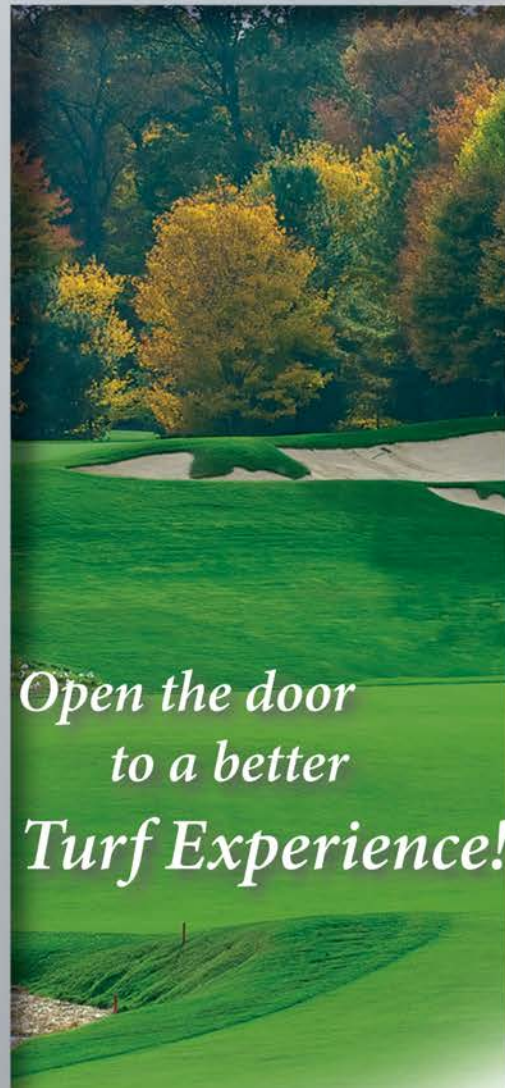
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Motivating Employees

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Do not confuse this process with manipulation, which is used only for the manipulator's benefit. The goal is to get people self motivated so that the reward comes from within when they do a good job. They will learn this best if we model it to them. One of the best quotes from Ken Blanchard's, "Whale Done" is, "Praise progress, it's a moving target." Write this on on your wall or make a sign above your desk, but make sure to keep reminding yourself of how important it is to recognize progress. Accentuating the positive is a learned process and only works when it becomes a habit. How many of you wake up just before the alarm goes off every morning? That is a learned habit, and when we repeat something often enough, it becomes a habit and eventually part of our character. Involve your employees in helping to add ways to accentuate the positive at your work sites. This also works well in the area of customer service as it gives the employees ideas for better customer service and communicates to them the importance of good customer service. We need to consistently model customer service to our employees and reinforce the message that without the golfers we wouldn't have a job. Work places that practice affirmation and well dones create an environment of safety and trust. People will only be willing to hear and accept the truth in a place that has trust and is without fear. If our employees are given consistent affirmation, they will really take notice when we point out a mistake or a behavior problem.

Try this with one or two people for a week or two and see if it doesn't make a difference. Start by making a list of items every time you see an employee do something right and then comment on these things individually to the employee. Remember to look for progress from your employees and praise them for it. You might want to consider practicing this in your personal life and you will probably be surprised at the difference it will make in your personal relationships. As a parent it made a tremendous difference in my relationship with my children when I started appreciating them for what they did well and focused less on what my expectations were for them. Finally, promote a work site that will encourage the employees to learn and grow. Make your positive and redirective comments to individuals first, then to groups when necessary. A well-motivated work force will always accomplish more and make the manager look good.

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Our Own Park

Chas Walker, Exchange City Golf Corp., Billings, Mont.

As I sat down to write this article, my mind wandered all over the board about what to write. A project at the course? Maybe an issue that we deal with, or one of the many hot topics in the industry today? Blank. What would be a good topic? Start and delete over and over. With the day wasted, I loaded up the computer and went to get my kids from school.

Later that night as the kids were doing their homework, I started on mine. Do we ever get away from homework? It didn't take long for my oldest daughter, nine-year old Madison, to ask me what I'm working on. I tell her and she replies, "You could write about how you have two daughters and all the fun things we do when we come to work with you." Bingo - the kid's a genius. Crisis averted; topic found.

I don't know if many of you have kids or if you ever take, or took, them to your course with you, but I do. Any

chance I get to have my kids out on the course learning and interacting with others, I take. Thankfully, it has never been an issue with my employers and hopefully it stays that way.

Madison has been coming with me since she was three and she is hardcore. It's all business when she is around. She knows the name of everyone on the crew, what jobs need to be done for the day, and who does them. She has a great eye for detail and loves the rules and regulations of the course. My youngest daughter, Samantha, likes to go to work - just not early. She would make a great night waterman. She enjoys sneaking up on

the rabbits, rolling down hills and the snack shack.

One evening, I had to go back to work to check on something, so the girls and my wife came with me, like they often do on evening trips to work. Play was closed on the front so we were the only ones around and the kids wanted to run barefoot in the rough. Awesome, what kid doesn't need good exercise? When they came back to the cart, one of them said, "Dad, it's like we have our own park." I thought to myself, "You're right; it kind of is." There's no better place for a kid to grow up.

When they are with me early in the



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see how plants live. They hate ball marks. When in the shop they have helped work on equipment – getting wrenches and small things like that, but they have had to learn how to read fractions and what that means, all at the same time. Shop safety has been big for them, also; why we keep the shop clean and why everything has a place for safety and efficiency. If they would keep their room as clean as they like the shop to be, that would be great.

Last year, we decided to put in a garden on the course. The girls planted all the seeds and helped with the layout,

whenever they were at work it was their job to weed and harvest as needed. They took ownership in this project, and really liked giving the produce to golfers and the staff.

I am very fortunate that I am able to spend time with my kids where I work. They understand that a lot of effort goes into any job a person has, but when you do it right, and give it your all, you will be rewarded. So, if you have kids or grandkids, or maybe just know a kid who needs to get outside, what better place to grow their mind and get their hands dirty than on the course with you.

mornings, I take setup duty. This gives me a chance to visit with them and give them a job to do, as well. They love setting up the tee complexes and choosing where cups should be cut. They have learned why a golf course is set up the way it is, and that has taught them that there are rules that we all have to follow in life and golf. When cupping, they get to see what is happening below the surface, look at the roots, feel the soil and



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Grass Note

“It’s a Small World”

**Pete Grass, CGCS
GCSAA Vice President
Hilands Golf Club, Billings, Mont.**



If any of you have ever been to Disneyland (Calif.) or the Magic Kingdom (Walt Disney World, Fla.), I will assume you went with kids and were dragged begrudgingly on the, “It’s A Small World” ride. Okay, maybe only me (bad dad?). It actually is a very cute boat ride around an indoor depiction of children and their cultures from around the entire globe. The catchy or - depending how you look at it - annoying thing about the ride is that the song of the same name plays over and over as you ride. The language just changes to the area depicted. Exit the ride and have that tune is stuck in your head for many hours afterward. It might be going through your head again, right now.

Okay - what does this have to do with anything golf related? I bring it up because I recently attended the BIGGA (British International Golf Greenkeepers Association) Annual Conference, held in Harrogate UK. While there I realized how small our “WORLD” has become. Physical size has not changed, but many other things about it have changed in my

lifetime. In about 12 hours (a normal summertime workday) you can go east or west on a plane from the US and end up halfway around this “small world”. The Internet and long-range planes have made access to information and interaction, both physical and electronically, extremely convenient and that means lots of it is happening. I, being an AARP eligible (not a card carrying member yet), 55 year-old superintendent, remember not long ago when we only communicated and interacted with folks within 10 miles of each other, not 10,000. The great thing about today is that, provided you use it, the wider your network of colleagues and information stream is, the more professional and educated you become, which translates into your ability to do your job better.

To be standing in the GCSAA booth with Michel O’Keefe, who runs the Ohio State International student program, was an eye opener for me. It was great to see and meet the constant

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Grass Notes

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flow of mostly 20/30 year-old superintendents, who left their home countries around the world to go to school at Ohio State, intern, and often work a few years at US courses. They all retain their GCSAA memberships and are employed around the world, from the UK, Europe, Asia, India, Russia, the Middle East and, it seems like, everywhere in between. Penn State and Michigan State have a similar program, also.

Our chapter president, Sean Sullivan, CGCS, who has been a BIGGA Member for several years, was also attending the conference. An ironic moment happened while we were together at our booth. Sean commented how rare is it to have two superintendents from Billings at the same conference in England, when Rhett Evans, GCSAA CEO added that he had just then received an email from Lori Russell (freaky).

For those of you who just attended the GCSAA Conference and Golf Industry Show (GIS), you can attest as to how many languages/accents you heard and, if, you checked out name badges, the wide variety of countries represented. GCSAA has members in 83 countries and at least 60 of them had someone there in San Antonio. This event is by far the largest and most comprehensive gathering in the world of superintendents, course managers, head greenkeepers, deputy course managers/greenkeepers (a new term I picked up over the pond) - our

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equivalent of assistants, equipment managers/mechanics, and any other term used to describe the men and women involved in golf facility maintenance.

The world of golf course management is huge, but the way we can share ideas and information with each other and both physically and electronically “meet” is getting SMALLER every day.

To access the member's only section of the PPGCSA website for the first time, please use your email address provided to the association as your user name, click on forgot password, and follow the prompts.

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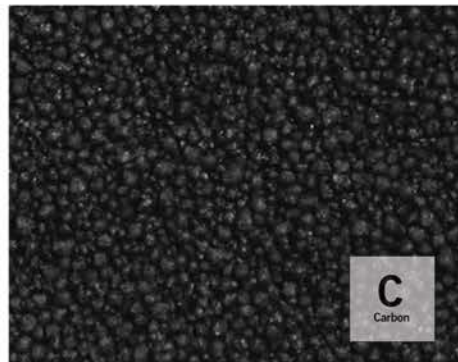
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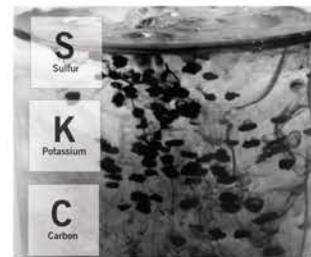
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KNOWLEDGE = POWER

Brandon Barkley 3 Creek Ranch, Jackson, Wyo.

More than a few wise men have declared that with knowledge comes power and I presume most would agree. For turf managers, several available resources help us acquire knowledge. Fortunately for us, the available tools are too numerous to list in full. Many of you are already masters in obtaining the information required to manage the challenges of your specific facility. However, I hope I can highlight a few of the resources that I have found beneficial in gaining knowledge.

As noted by most, one of the largest tools available is the GCSAA. At the GCSAA annual convention, there are over 400+ hours of classroom based educational opportunities and a very informative tradeshow. If the annual convention is not an option for you, the GCSAA website is equally as informative. Membership provides access to a consistent source of webinars, career resources, the latest agronomic research, and business management practices. An additional resource for knowledge, and an added benefit to a GCSAA membership is the ability to access The Turfgrass Information Files (TGIF). Spearheaded by Michigan State University, the TGIF database monitors both past and present journals, magazines, and research reports relating to all things turf. Simply put, if it relates to turf, then it can likely be found in the TGIF.

Although a bit of an unorthodox approach, social media is another tool that I have found beneficial in acquiring knowledge. Sites such as Facebook and Twitter can keep you in touch with some of the brightest minds and current advancements in the industry. Many turf blogs also deserve notice as a form of social media that allows one to stay on par with some of the latest trends. TurfNet has done an excellent job highlighting several blogs in the turf industry.

Speaking of TurfNet, turf-based websites are also great sources for obtaining knowledge. Since its establishment in 1994, TurfNet has been a platform for turf managers to share invaluable experiences, opinions, and useful knowledge. A personal TurfNet favorite of mine is TurfNetTV. Not only can you pick up useful tips and tricks but it also provides comedic relief. A relative newcomer to turf websites is Turf Republic. In many ways, Turf Republic conveys similar resources as other turf-based websites, but with a modern and dynamic approach.

Lastly, your very own Peaks & Prairies Chapter of GCSAA is a great source for you to obtain additional knowledge. Linking all regional turf managers and industry professionals, PPGCSA provides localized seminars, webinars, trade shows, and scholarship opportunities. In addition to the aforementioned, networking opportunities and extension services are a few more resources that are available.

While many turf resources come with a fee, several are cost-effective, if not free. Many of you are already aware of the various means to access useful turfgrass information. However, I hope that I was able to bring to the forefront a few more tools you can add to your arsenal. Taking advantage of the many great resources available to us as turf managers goes a long way in making us true assets to our facilities.





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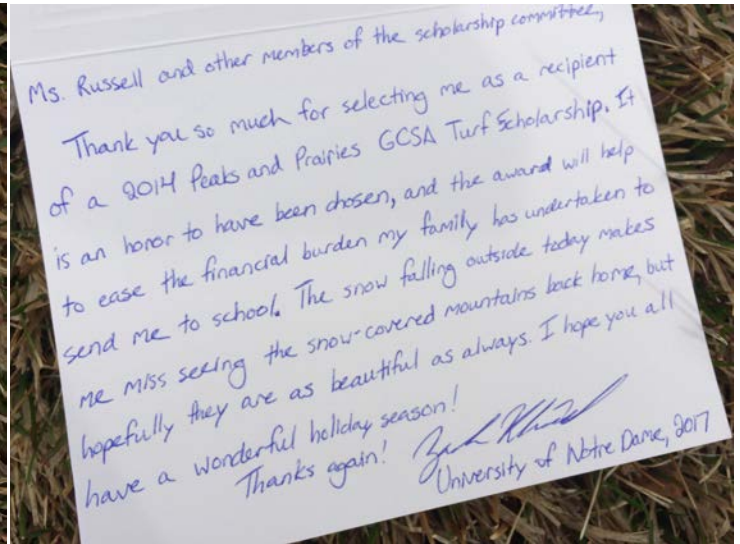
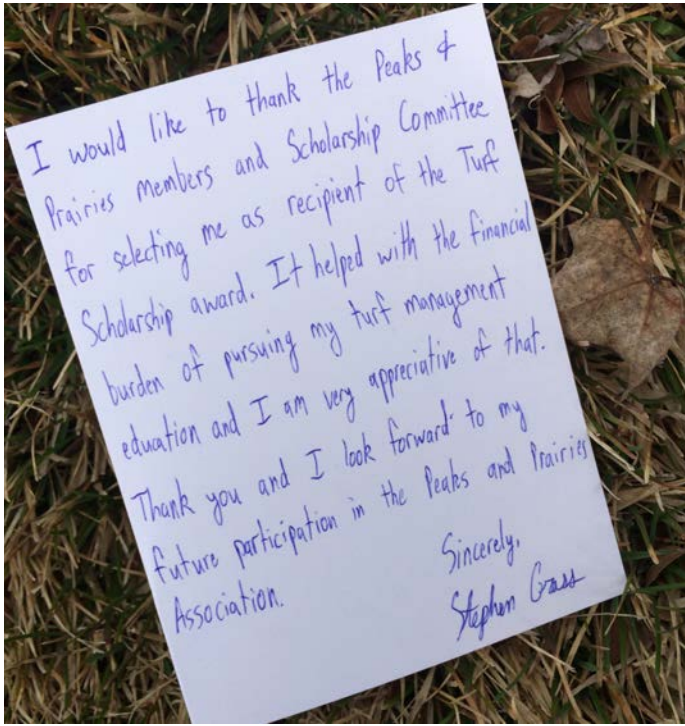
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Thank you for awarding me the Turf Scholarship Award. I am pleased to be found worthy of such an honor. This award will greatly contribute to my education as well as my future success. I am proud to belong to an organization that values education and chooses to support its members so graciously. I look forward to a rewarding career in turf management. Thanks!

Sincerely,

Mike Kunda



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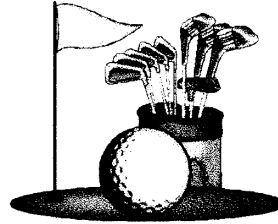


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(right) A few more of our sponsors of the hospitality room!



December 4, 2014

Dear Board and Committee Members:

On behalf of my wife, Heather, I would like to thank you for selecting our son, Zach, for the PPGCSA Legacy Scholarship. He will represent the scholarship, the association, and its members with dignity and integrity.

As you know, a college education, especially at the University of Notre Dame, is a significant financial commitment. This scholarship goes a long way towards tuition, books, room, board and travel expenses.

Again, thank you to the PPGCSA Board of Directors and the Scholarship Committee. We are blessed and humbled to have the support of our association and its membership.

Sincerely,

Kurt Klonsinski, CGCS

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Water Quality Testing

David Phipps
GCSAA NW Field Staff

From the GCSAA NW Regional Blog

So you say your course is environmentally friendly? You're keeping detailed records of all your pesticide applications. You manage your facility off of a strict IPM plan and you have adopted your state's latest and greatest BMP's. Maybe you have been recognized by your community or even received an award for your environmental prowess.

Let's now put the shoe on the other foot. Let's say you are an activist from the local environmental watch dog group and the superintendent from the local golf course just happens to meet you. He touts all the great things happening at his golf course. You are impressed as he rattles off his accomplishments including the wonderful nest boxes and his latest community outreach program. Then, you ask him about the fate of all those chemical applications being made to the lush green fairways, greens and tees and say, "How can you prove the chemicals aren't getting to the creek that runs through the property?" The superintendent's reply, "Turf is one of nature's best filters and nothing ever reaches the stream." You reply, "Prove it!"

It was the year 2000 and that's the scenario that went through my mind when I was building Stone Creek Golf Club. Luckily, the Oregon Golf Course Superintendents Association had just completed their first edition, and winner of the GCSAA Presidents Award, BMP document, titled the OGCSA Environmental Stewardship Guidelines. The first component that stood out was the water quality monitoring section.

The late Dr. Michael Hindahl was the main author of the Oregon Guidelines

and he was writing custom environmental plans based on the Oregon Guidelines. I submitted a request to the Stone Creek owners, which at that time included a group of investors and Clackamas County, that we hire Dr. Hindahl to write such a document. They didn't flinch at the \$10,000 price tag. It was never a question that they couldn't afford it; the response was that they couldn't afford not to do it.

Written into the plan was the water quality monitoring protocol. Dr. Hindahl came out to the property twice annually, spring and fall, and took water samples which were tested for nitrates, orthophosphates and any pesticide that was applied within six months prior to the test. This wasn't cheap, ranging between \$3,000 and \$4,000 per test. The difference in price was based on the type of chemistry I was applying. Over the next 12 years, I easily spent close to \$100,000 on water testing alone. Was it a waste of money? If you ask Clackamas County, which bought out the investors after the first year, they still say it was worth every penny. I had accumulated 10 years of data before I began to back off because I had set a baseline of no detections. If anyone had ever stopped me and asked if I could prove that the pesticides I was applying weren't getting into the adjacent stream, I had proof!

The reason why I had a third party take the water sample and follow a strict chain of command was to prevent any questions as to the validity of the test. Currently, in Oregon, there is a local firm that is offering the service as an inclusive package deal, avoiding the unknown by offering a battery of tests for a single price. In an ever increasing budgeted industry, this can be a tough pill to swallow. If cost is an issue, then perhaps you can just test for nitrates and orthophosphates. The cost will be significantly lower. Water quality testing will give your property and its owners a peace of

mind knowing that your course and the surrounding environment are in good hands.

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