

2021 Northwest GCSA Turfgrass Expo

It is time to gather and celebrate great education and networking opportunities! After a year of limited options to interact with peers in person, excitement is already building for this huge event, perfectly timed for 2021! Join us at the Coeur d'Alene Resort, October 11-12, 2021 for two days packed with opportunity. We have been waiting since 2017 to once again bring together three golf course superintendent chapters in a central location. Registration to the Northwest GCSA Turfgrass Expo will be open to all and offers no geographical boundaries.

Each speaker selected brings valuable expertise that will benefit your facility. A variety of topics will be presented to enhance playing conditions, tackle troublesome challenges, address environmental concerns, improve your team's environment, and even help to improve your own communication skills. And importantly, each speaker excels at offering an enjoyable experience.

Education will also be found outside of the meeting space. A must will be the opportunity to engage with knowledgeable allied partners at the trade show and a friendly round of golf at the world-renowned Coeur d'Alene Resort. Please note the 2017 trade show space sold out within a couple of weeks of registration opening.

We understand you want to plan ahead and registration information will be available the first of June. The summer issue of the newsletter will include an in-depth overview of the October event.

2021 Rounds4Research Auction

Our members and their facilities really came through for us this year with record participation in the Rounds4Research Auction. We can't thank you enough and we look forward to sharing the results of the event.

PPGCSA Events:

*Scholarship/Education Golf Events see above right
Northwest GCSA Turfgrass Expo October 11-12,
2021, Coeur d'Alene Resort, Coeur d'Alene, Idaho
For event information, visit ppgcsa.org*

*PPGCSA "Almost" Spring Meeting March 7 & 8,
2022, GranTree Hotel, Bozeman, MT*

Thanks MSGA!

The MSGA annual grant of \$5,000 makes a true impact in a normal year. In the absence of anything normal in the past year, we are even more appreciative—if that is possible.

Over the past year, Peaks & Prairies GCSA and the Montana State Golf Association worked closely to communicate to each of our memberships regarding COVID-19 updates, as they related to play and maintenance. We are fortunate to enjoy a great working relationship with the MSGA.

We thank the MSGA Board of Directors for their continued support through our 2021 grant!

Last Call for Directory Updates

Our annual membership directory will be going to print soon. Please take a moment to review your personal or company profile and make any needed changes by clicking on "your profile" under the members only tab. Need to reset your password? Visit "Be in the know" of our website home page ppgcsa.org.

Scholarship/Education Tournaments - 2021

We have our dates and locations! Protect these dates on your calendar and watch for more information via email blasts and by visiting our calendar event on our website ppgcsa.org. A variety of hole sponsorship opportunities are available.

June 29: Pryor Creek Golf Club, Huntley, Mont., Cole Clark, Superintendent. **September 14: Kendrick Golf Course**, Sheridan, Wyo., Chris Cremer, Superintendent.

May We Offer You an Incentive?

You all know it is in the best interest for your facility and your industry to have your facility BMPs in place. Do you believe you don't have the time to take on such a project right now? Guess what! It can be accomplished in 15 minutes if you decide to simply adopt the state BMPs. In fact, you could even adopt the state BMPs

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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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Peaks & Prairies Golf Course Superintendents Association

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THE PERFECT LIE is published quarterly by Peaks & Prairies GCSA, and is edited by Lori Russell. Our newsletter is not copyrighted, but we would appreciate credit being given when original material is reprinted. Advertising and article deadlines are the 10th of February, April, July, and October.

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President's Message

Super Meeting

Mike Kitchen, CGCS

Teton Pines Resort & Country Club, Jackson, Wyo.

Several years ago, Peaks & Prairies made the decision to join forces with the Inland Empire GCSA and Idaho GCSA to try a "super meeting." The thought was by pooling our resources we could offer an even better educational experience and provide greater exposure for our allied partners. After much deliberation, the decision was made to try out this concept and the "Northwest GCSA Turfgrass Expo" was born. The Coeur d'Alene Resort was chosen to host this event based on its location, reputation, and amenities. Other than the hurricane winds on the golf course, it was a great success in 2017. Based on the event's overwhelming success, it was decided to plan a second edition of the event. Lori and the respective boards have been working hard to ensure this expo exceeds your expectations. We have lined up a fantastic group of speakers including Brian Horgan, PhD, of Michigan State University; Mike Richardson, PhD, of the University of Arkansas; Paul Koch, PhD, of the University of Wisconsin; Cory Isom of the USGA; and Henry Delozier of Global Golf Partners. Each of these presenters is a top-notch dynamic speaker; we are lucky to have such a talented group to headline our expo.

For those of you not familiar with the town of Coeur d'Alene and The Coeur d'Alene Resort, prepare to be

impressed. The posh, yet affordable, resort is a premier facility in the Northwest and in the nation. The dynamic town has many fine restaurants and bars within easy walking distance of the resort. Typically, the "Chamber of Commerce" weather in mid-October is delightful: warm sunny days followed by cool or even crisp evenings.

Don't miss out! The event is scheduled for October 11-12 — add it to your calendar now. See you there!



BMP Incentive continued from page 1

for now and then further edit the BMPs for your facility later.

Our chapter was responsible for finalizing the BMPs for Montana and Wyoming—our primary region. To help encourage completion of facility BMPs in these two states, we offer this incentive as proof of importance.

Any Montana or Wyoming PPGCSA member who completes their facility BMPs by September 15 will be placed into a random drawing. There will be (3) \$75 cash prizes for each state.

The random drawing will take place at the Northwest GCSA Turfgrass Expo. Someone from your facility must be present to collect the cash prize. If no one is in attendance from your facility, a \$75 donation will be made to the GCSAA Foundation in your name.

The real win for you is the completion of the document. We encourage all members to do so, with or without a drawing!

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The Power of Pigment

Travis Martin, Meadow Lake Golf Course
Columbia Falls, Mont.

For as long as I can remember, Meadow Lake Golf Course, located in Northwest Montana, struggled with ice-covered greens in the spring. Year, after year, of grueling physical labor chipping away at

the layers of built-up ice—hoping that somehow the turf survived. Each year a new plan was hatched in an attempt to reduce the labor required. They ranged from black sunflower seeds, to charcoal,



to Milorganite, to solid-tine aerification. Every attempt resulted in endless shoveling of stubborn ice that refused to melt from the greens.

While I was organizing the chemical room one winter, I picked up our colorant
continued page 6



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Pigment continued from page 4

we used with our fall fungicide application and I caught the two words: Ice Melt. I paused for a moment and read through the usage section of the green pigment and was intrigued by the rates recommended for melting ice.

On that day it was 24 degrees Fahrenheit with a chill in the air from a north wind, but the sun was out and shining bright. I thought to myself, "What the heck, let's give it a try." So, I dug out the trusty backpack sprayer and mixed up a gallon solution using the highest recommended labeled rate and marched out to our ice-covered parking lot. It was obvious no melting was occurring on the day in question; everything had a dry, frozen look to it. Curious if I could get anything

to melt in these conditions, I sprayed out three trial squares on various ice patches and a few more on some snow banks. Pleased with my snow graffiti, I cleaned the sprayer and walked out to see already visibly melting conditions. Within 24 hours, the patches were bare down to asphalt and the snow banks had noticeable shrinkage. Pleased with the results from my parking lot trials, I figured this upcoming spring it was worth a shot.

Spring weather watching is always an anxious time of year, guessing and second-guessing when the "window" will hit for snow removal on the greens. Everyone seems to have their own indicators, but for me it's daytime highs in the mid to upper 40s, with overnight lows in the upper 20s or low 30s. Other indicators would include full sun for a



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week with a warm southern breeze. As much as I try to force Mother Nature to move the timing earlier, it always seems to hit the first week in March.

The time we hit to clear the greens of snow, snowpack averaged around 18-inches with a solid two to three-inch layer of ice at the base. Using the tractor, I set off to clear greens, with my assistant following behind with the backpack sprayer to apply the green pigment. At



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Pigment continued from page 6

the end of the day, three of the greens were clear of snow. We went back to inspect the first green we cleared and were pleasantly met with bare turf—NO ICE! Over all, green after green showed complete melt. Only a few with shadow areas had minimal ice needing handwork, as the sun did not have direct contact with the green pigment. Having successfully exposed the greens with minimal labor, I became a believer and have implemented this practice for the past three years. One observation we had this past season is the shade of the pigment does matter—the darker the better.

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You Better Belize It - Part 2

Chris Thomas
Royal Palms Golf & Spa, Placencia, Belize



We did it, moved to Placencia, Belize and downsized to two suitcases, a carry-on, and one personal item per person. Wow, this was over two and a half years ago, but I remember the day clearly. A new adventure on the horizon! The drive from the airport to our new rental condo was a little quiet. As my wife, daughter and I drove to our new home there wasn't a lot of conversation. I could feel that we were all a little panicked and anxious. As I always tell people, it's one thing to vacation in Belize, but another to live in Belize. There isn't a gas station (convenience store), fast-food restaurant, or grocery store on every other corner. But wait, there are grocery stores on every corner and sometimes we have to frequent at least three to four of them to find all the ingredients for one recipe. However, we only have two gas stations and they are located 10 miles from our home. I have to laugh because every time we go to fill up, we know there are two important considerations. First, you must ask if the credit card machine is working and then you have to ask if they have fuel that day. And to top it off, fuel is very expensive at \$5.50/gallon, on average. My wife, however, loves fueling in Belize as she doesn't have to pump her own

gas. Groceries are very expensive, as well, if you want Americanized food. A bag of Doritos will cost you \$6 for a small bag, and we won't even talk about how much Oreos will run you. Belize can be very expensive if you want the lifestyle that we are accustomed to back in the U.S. However, if you want to live like a Belizean and eat stewed chicken, rice, and beans, it can be very affordable. Cable TV, internet, and cell phones are about 50% cheaper than in the U.S. If you adjust to the living standards, you can really stretch your budget.

So, back to the drive. The village was very quiet as it was the slow season. The drive was quiet, as well. There were no return tickets to fly home in a week —no way out. This is our new home. I still laugh today thinking about it. We arrived at our condo, took the suitcases in and unpacked all of our

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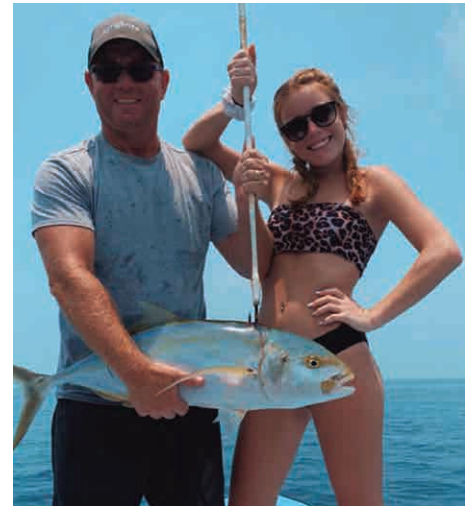
belongings in 30 minutes. I will say that it was a very peaceful time for me. No worries about greens, staff, and every other concern that goes with managing a golf course, along with food and beverage, and the pro shop, since I had been the GM at Riverton Country Club for three years. My stress level was really at an all-time low. Life was good. If I only knew then what the next two years would be like!

The first six months were somewhat like vacation with work during the week and snorkeling, fishing, touring Mayan



ruins, and frequenting different waterfalls on the weekends. Oh, yes! No more working on the weekends. I go to work at 7:00 in the morning with no golfers to worry about and no grass to keep alive.

It was time to settle in and obtain a work permit, and to start getting permits from the government to build the golf course. Sounds easy, right? I didn't know it at the time, but this was a huge mountain to climb. As the saying goes, "It's not what you know, it's who you know." The most important way to move your project along is to make relationships. I am



blessed to have a wife that is very outgoing and is accustomed to getting involved in the community. Getting involved in church and the community has been the



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foundation for our success of the project.

Within two months, I had all paperwork filed to the Department of Environment, so I thought. The onsite visit was very quick and their response was timely, as well. After that first visit, they sent a letter stating that the first step would be obtaining an Environmental Compliance Plan (ECP). I fully understood that there would be a permitting process, but I wasn't prepared for a two year journey getting there. Of course,

COVID didn't help the process, either.

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To make a long story short, if you plan to excavate over 50,000 cubic yards of material, you have to do a level three Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). What does that mean? One must hire a Belizean environmental team to assess the entire project. This is costly and takes about six months. There are soil tests, water tests, wetland impacts, lagoon depths, water current, and the list goes on. In the end, we now have a 386-page document convincing



Belize It - Part 2 continued from page 11

DOE that a golf course is safe for Belize. Working with my environmental team was a blast. They are highly educated with master's degrees from the United States. The initial onsite visit was in October 2018 and we received our ECP October 2020. I assure you that would have taken longer with-out building strong relationships along the way. This project has also grown tremendously over the last few years. Initially, we started out with 42 acres and had a master plan to build nine holes. We have now acquired an additional 200 acres. Phase 2 will include an additional nine holes.

During the permitting process I was able to secure a work permit, residency for both my wife and me during COVID, social security cards, a Belize driver's license (and yes this is how it is spelled on the license), and a pesticide license. I will not get into too much detail on this as the newsletter would be three pages longer. Lets just say relationships are key. Mystic and I joke around about all of our experiences and think it would be fun to write a book and share all of our experiences.

Oh yeah, and we moved my son and daughter-in-law down right before COVID kicked in, and he too has obtained his work permit and Belize driver's license. This has been exciting for me to be doing this project with my son, Tayte, right by my side.

Once we received our ECP we wasted no time starting construction. As of today, seven holes have been shaped, except for construction of tees, greens and bunkers. All holes have been raised 3', as we are building the course in a swamp/jungle mix. Now most of the course is 3' to 6' above sea level. The first month of construction was very challenging as we had a visit from hurricanes Nana, Iota and Eta. We had over 40" of rain during that period and a YTD total of 110". I laugh thinking our yearly average in Riverton, Wyoming is 8" per year. We are currently six months into construction and have two more months of moving material to finish the last two holes. I believe we will start installing irrigation and drainage in September, pushing for seeding in December. I was fortunate to contract with a local construction company. They have been amazing to work with, know how to navigate through difficult site conditions, and have a great relationship with the government agencies doing periodic site checks. We are building the course with

three excavators, a dozer, and three dump trucks.

It has been an amazing journey and the memories will last forever. Living overseas is not for everyone, but it is fun to experience different cultures. Growing up I lived in Singapore for eight years. I am thankful for that experience as it has made this change a lot easier. I will say going through COVID was extremely difficult. Lockdowns, curfew from 8 pm to 5 am, only allowed to exercise from 5 am to 8 pm, Sunday lockdowns where you couldn't leave your property, no swimming in the sea, no fishing, police checkpoints, and the list goes on.

I am super excited for the next several months, and hope to be up and operating by May of 2022. Will keep you all posted.



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Midland Implement Co.

Celebrating 100 Years 1920-2020



Julien Pates
Midland Implement, Billings, Mont.

The year 2020 presented all of us in the industry and around the world with many significant changes to our everyday lives, while we all tried to navigate the waters of uncertainty during the coronavirus pandemic. However, through it all the golf and green space industry provided a silver lining that we could look forward to and are grateful for. It allowed most of us involved with the industry the opportunity to continue to do business as usual both on and off the course, and have a sense of a “some-what” normal lifestyle, while trying to cope with the changes that were presented on a daily basis. This allowed us at Midland Implement to continue to work through what was going on in the world and to continue to serve all of our customers. It also allowed us to silently celebrate the year of a milestone for our


company, the “100th year in business.” While the conditions weren’t ideal, we, like many others pushed on through all of the uncertainty. On December 1, 2020 Midland Implement had a small employee gathering at our “front counter” with champagne and cake to remember what we have accomplished, not only through this year of challenge but ninety-nine others, as well. In December of 1920, my great grandfather, Carl A. Rahn and his business partner, Ronald Ries, alongside their fathers,



The Original Midland Implement on Montana Ave. in 1920



Midland Implement Display floor in the original building in 1920



Richard Strautman
President

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Mike Marr (left), Gordon Robinson (center) Earl Morrison (right) Irrigation Team 1954

H.J. Ries and A.A.D. Rahn, started a small retail and wholesale business called Midland Implement. Specializing in agriculture products along with irrigation lines and many others, Carl and Ronald guided their team through a very unique and difficult time through the 20s all the way into the mid-50s distributing items such as wagons, case cars, appliances, and Emerson-Brantingham farm equipment. They were in a small office building (Ciao Mambo's Italian) with a warehouse space (Uberbrew) located on historic Montana Avenue in Billings.

In the year 1958 with the company growing, Carl Rahn, Ron Ries and their team opened up their new location. In

the middle of the Northern Pacific railyard and industrial area the current Midland Implement building opened its doors. The new building gave the team almost three times the warehouse space of their existing building along with a 5-acre yard. This allowed them to diversify even more and become a wholesale powerhouse in the territory—adding product lines like Toyota Land Cruiser, David Brown tractors, continued page 16



George Ellinghouse, Vic Meyers, Dwayne Zimmerman with the first Toro Golf Equipment Midland Implement had at a Trade show in 1964

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Current Midland Implement building when it opened in 1958

100th Anniv. continued from page 15

Dunlop tires, Westinghouse appliances, and Zenith electronics. In 1954 some familiar names in our local industry, Mike Marr and Gordon Robinson, were hired onto the growing team and expanded their reaches to their customers with cutting line irrigation equipment and engineering. A few short seasons later, Midland Implement brought in the full Toro Product lineup in 1964. This expanded the business into a new line of work and products.

The second generation of leadership, lead by my grandfather, Seabrook Pates, assumed the reins of the company in the 1970s. Married into the Rahn family, Seabrook came from the San Francisco area with a business degree and a hungry passion to take the business to the next level and continue to guide this company through growth and development. During this time our company grew tremendously, alongside our dealers in the 60s-90s. Midland Implement distributed items ranging from electronics to furniture. We expanded our operations and opened secondary storefronts in Great Falls, Spokane, and two that we still operate and distribute out of — one in Bozeman and the other in Missoula.

Seabrook would welcome his three boys into the business during the mid-70s and early 80s. Rahn, Randy, and Gary Pates would divide and manage different aspects of the business. During the mid-80s and 90s, Rahn Pates, the oldest of the three, would branch off and develop his own business, moving him away from the family business. At this time, the two brothers, Gary and Randy, divided their roles in managing the company, with Randy overseeing the golf and grounds side of it and Gary leading

the way with our landscape and contractor side of the business. Through this time, we sold and distributed products from around the world, including electronics, furniture, and appliances— before the big box stores opened. Supplying farm equipment dealers with the latest ag products, servicing golf courses and municipalities with equipment and irrigation, and providing contractors' landscape and irrigation products for our growing states and economies still are the controllers of the company—operating and managing Midland since 1920.

When Midland Implement began distributing golf course products throughout the territory, the customer base was very limited, with very few courses in very limited areas across both Montana and Wyoming. Over many years of economic growth, Midland Implement has been directly involved with almost 100 percent of the courses that make up the golf industry in the area. From new course construction, renovation of irrigation systems or pump stations, and especially on the distribution of course maintenance products over the past 65 years. We've worn a lot of hats over the seasons, priding ourselves on representing the industry's most innovative product lines from Toro to Turfco, Wiedenmann to Watertronics, Ryan Equipment to Regency Wire products. For a long time, we were one of only five worldwide distributors that simultaneously represented Toro and Rain Bird golf course irrigation products. As you all have continued to support our business over many years, we will continue to be here to support you and your team for many years to come.

New Peaks & Prairies Members

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Bill Roberts Golf Course
2201 N Benton
Helena, MT 59601
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Todd Lupkes
Old Works Golf
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Assistant Superintendent Certificate Series

David Phipps, GCSAA Northwest Field Staff

By now I'm sure you have all heard of the GCSAA's Assistant Superintendent Certificate Series (ASCS), but never given it much thought. If you're an assistant and you are reading this newsletter, I hope I can at least pique your interest enough to continue reading. If you're a superintendent, I implore you to read further and discover a way to help your assistant develop personally and professionally.

My only regret in my career was waiting until I was a superintendent to become a GCSAA member. Today GCSAA offers so much in terms of education and opportunities for the assistant. All it takes is a career mindset and the sky is the limit. When I first met Mitch Savage, he was the assistant at Green Valley Ranch Golf Club in Colorado. Mitch wasted no time connecting with me and soon became a highly engaged member. In no time he was traveling to make presentations as an assistant and he eventually landed a role on the GCSAA Assistant Superintendent Task Group. From there he helped develop the Assistant Superintendent Certificate Series. Soon after, Mitch became the superintendent at the Broken Tee Golf Course in Englewood and is now superintendent at CommonGround! Golf Course in Aurora. I would say Mitch is one of those exceptions out there. But to my point, as an assistant you can tap into the ASCS and it will put you on the same track as Mitch. All you have to do is put your mind to it.

Today there are almost 3,400 Class C members in our association, most of who are aspiring to become a superintendent. GCSAA is dedicated to advancing the profession of assistants and helping them prepare for the next step in their career. So far, there have been 78 individuals who have completed the ASCS and who are well on their way to bringing a higher level of professionalism to their facility.

The ASCS is composed of certificates covering key competency areas of:

- Agronomy
- Business

- Leadership and Communications
- Environmental Stewardship

The certificates are golf-centric, available to GCSAA members and non-members, and can be completed in any order. It is strongly recommended the candidate has at least two years of work experience in the job duties of an assistant superintendent before beginning any of the ASCS certificates. However, the certificates are available to all and not limited to assistants.

The Principles of Golf Course Agronomy and Principles of Golf Course Business certificates are earned by passing exams



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of the same name. These exams are online, open-book, and do not require a proctor. Candidates will have three hours to take the exams, which are administered in two sections. A five-minute break will be offered between part 1 and part 2. The cost of each exam is \$40 for members and \$60 for non-members. You will have two attempts with each purchase of the exam.

For both, Principles of Golf Course Leadership & Communications and Principles of Golf Course Environmental Stewardship certificates, candidates must watch a series of webinars and will then need to pass the quiz associated with each of the required webinars.

Additionally, the Principles of Golf Course Leadership & Communications certificate requires the candidate to demonstrate proficiency in the competencies covered in the certificate by completing two of the following ancillary activities:

- Work with a mentor and document the experience.
- Write and have published an article for a chapter newsletter or GCM.
- Volunteer on a GCSAA, chapter, or golf organization task group or committee or participate



Kalman Zaranec

in hosting a GCSAA First Green event at your course.

- Give a presentation and document the experience.

The Principles of Golf Course Environmental Stewardship certificate also requires the candidate to demonstrate competency proficiency by completing one of the following ancillary activities:

- Complete the GCSAA IPM exam.

- Participate in your state's process to develop BMPs.
- Complete the facility BMP template for your course.

The fees for these two certificates are:

- GCSAA members: \$50
- Non-members: \$75 for the certificate plus an additional \$60 per webinar

There are 14 webinars in the Leadership & Communications certificate, and 10 webinars in the Environmental Stewardship certificate.

The ASCS would not be possible without the generous support that GCSAA receives from John Deere Golf. John Deere is providing \$100 gift certificates to the first 50 participants and \$50 gift certificates to the next 50 participants who complete the program in 2021. There are still gift certificates available

for you to qualify to earn.

I would like to congratulate Kalman Zaranec, Circling Raven Golf Club, for being the first to complete the program from Idaho, as well as Mark Lyon, Teton Pines Resort & Country Club for being the first from Wyoming! Mark offered the following comment from his experience in completing the ASCS:



Mark Lyon

"The ASCS program worked well for me because it was so adaptable. Once you identify the areas where you have weaknesses, or less experience, you can choose your elective courses specifically to help build those skills. I also like how the program lets you kind of zoom out and get a more macro perspective on the position of assistant superintendent. We can all get into our own routines of daily tasks and managing employees and kind of lose sight of the big picture. I liked how the program covered such a wide array of topics allowing me to evaluate all the aspects of my position and how I was performing in each one."

Kudos to both Kal and Mark for taking the initiative and completing the program. Who's next?!



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