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# COURSE CONDITIONS

SUPERINTENDENT SPOTLIGHT  
MiGCSA PRESIDENT

JEFF HOLMES, CGCS

AT EGYPT VALLEY  
COUNTRY CLUB

SUSTAINABILITY IS A  
PROCESS – NOT A  
ONE-TIME PROJECT

2015 MICHIGAN SKINS  
GAME SAN ANTONIO

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Forest Dunes Golf Club




**COURSE**CONDITIONS

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# MiGCSA MEMBERSHIP REPORT

## SUMMARY OF CLASSES 5/18/15

	CURRENT MEMBERSHIP	SPRING 2014 MEMBERSHIP
<b>Class A</b>	<b>259</b>	<b>255</b>
<b>Class SM</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>74</b>
<b>Class C</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>121</b>
<b>Class AA</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Class AFF</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>181</b>
<b>Class D</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>Class E</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Class H</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Class R</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Class SA</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>792</b>	<b>799</b>

Please log in to your account at [www.migcsa.org](http://www.migcsa.org) to renew your membership for 2014. If you are unsure of your status contact us at [info@migcsa.org](mailto:info@migcsa.org) or 1-888-3-MiGCSA.



# PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE



JEFF HOLMES, CGCS

Happy spring and hopefully early summer to everyone! Once again, Mother Nature threw us a curve ball coming out of winter; it has been real hit and miss who received ice damage and who did not. This spring the damage has been a little more widespread throughout the state. Everyone is looking for the answer of what to do for fall prep and what not to do, but I really don't think the answer is out there yet. If you have not had damage, keep your fingers crossed and if you had damage, I wish you a quick recovery.

As the President of the MiGCSA this year, I would like to share a few thoughts with you that have maybe put me in the position that I am in professionally. I have been in the turf business as a superintendent for 32 years and of that I have been involved in associations, other boards and committees for probably 25 of those years. That certainly has been my own choice and I would not want to give any of the experiences back. Every volunteer job has been enjoyed and has helped me to understand the business better.

My point of this article is that getting involved at any level will offer great opportunities to develop yourself further in the business. The turf industry today is way different than when I started 30 plus years ago, but at the same time there are similarities as well. An area that is still the same would be people. Participating in the association and being involved put me in touch with several people at many different times. One can never start too early networking and you can never have too many friends or contacts. Certainly, each individual has to help themselves and put yourself in the right place at the right time or put the word out what you are looking to accomplish. It can be amazing how many people can actually help you accomplish a goal that you have set. Sometimes a simple phone call, reference letter or letting you know about an opening somewhere can help achieve the goal that is set.

There are many ways to get involved and everyone is different in what they can do. With the technology of today, and only getting better everyday, you can be on a committee and never attend a meeting in person, and yet be a very critical part of the committee input. As far as people getting to know you, I still think the in person process works best, but you can still be a positive force being off-site. The level higher than the committee is probably the board of director. Again, I realize that this is not for everyone but if you have never tried getting involved, how can you truly answer the question? You can volunteer for committees and boards outside of our business as well and develop new skills. The skills that you acquire can only help you. Our jobs are becoming more and more involved towards understanding the financial side of the company as well as the agronomic side.

I have only held three jobs since becoming a golf course superintendent, but each time I have been able to move to a new job there have always been other people involved that I had met in the business. I will admit that being in the right place at the right time has always helped and I always tried to put myself there and not leave it to luck. I am not saying, that you have to commit yourself to endless hours of volunteering, but don't be afraid to step out of your comfort zone once in awhile and introduce yourself to someone new. I always challenge myself to meet someone new at each meeting, I don't always succeed, but more often than not I will meet someone.

The last thought that I will share in regards to getting involved is the personal reward of accomplishment. When the whole event or process comes together you and your team or committee realize that all the work was worth the time put forward and hopefully you helped out some other people on the way. Being on the board of the MiGCSA gives you the feeling of accomplishment and that feeling is created because of the great people that you get to work with. They are passionate and dedicated to accomplishing goals.

Thanks for being a member of the MiGCSA and your input is always welcomed.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Jeffrey T. Holmes".

Jeff Holmes, CGCS  
Golf Course Superintendent  
Egypt Valley Country Club  
President, MiGCSA

# SUSTAINABILITY IS A PROCESS – NOT A ONE-TIME PROJECT

## Chris Lewis

Far too often, whenever articles are written about golf facilities' environmental sustainability efforts, the media tends to only focus on one specific project at a time, rather than each of the subtleties required to achieve sustainability initiatives.

But Paul Galligan, a 35-year superintendent veteran and member of the MiGCSA, knows better than that. For years, he has utilized a variety of tactics to ensure Acme, Michigan's Grand Traverse Resort and Spa maintains long-term, continuous environmental and economic sustainability. Galligan believes golf resorts and courses' sustainability procedures should constantly evolve, be practical and realistic, and, most importantly, increase facilities' bottom lines.

"If superintendents lose money as a result of their sustainability approaches, their methods are simply not sustainable," Galligan says. "They must do everything they can to maintain budgets that allow their businesses to be profitable at the end of each fiscal year."

He continues, "With regards to environmental sustainability, superintendents must help each of their fellow colleagues understand they are stewards of the environment, and each of their work practices has a direct impact on the environment."

To achieve long-lasting environmental and economic sustainability, Galligan advises superintendents to consistently search for new work practices that lower their annual costs, a pursuit that should never end.

In fact, for years, Galligan has initiated a wide range of sustainability techniques at Grand Traverse Resort and Spa, resulting in substantial cost savings on a long-term basis. By applying the following techniques, amongst others, Galligan believes other select superintendents



may be able to lower their golf courses' expenditures as well, and, in turn, provide more sustainable environments to future generations of golfers.

**Create Unmaintained Natural Areas.** Each of Grand Traverse Resort and Spa's three golf courses – The Wolverine, The Bear, and Spruce Run – were designed by three separate designers with three unique design concepts in mind. For example, The Wolverine course primarily has large fairways, while The Bear has quite a bit of space between most of its holes to allow for future development.

To continue to provide guests quality playing surfaces on a reduced budget, Galligan and his staff began to study each course and the areas in which most golf shots were being played from to determine which areas, large or small, could be unmaintained, rather than mowed on a weekly basis. By selectively and continuously converting mowing areas into unmaintained natural areas, Galligan has reported a steady rise in cost savings every year since 2009.

**Develop Buffer Zones.** Galligan has also created buffer zones – areas of unmaintained grass and plants between the maintained areas of golf courses and





waterways – at each of Grand Traverse Resort and Spa's three courses. Prior to the mid-1990s, these areas were typically mowed to the water's edge; now they are usually left unmaintained, thereby lowering the resort's maintenance expenses considerably.

"Buffer zones and unmaintained, natural areas have no initial costs, yet they provide immediate cost savings by reducing labor, as well as the usage of equipment and fuel," Galligan states.

**Naturalize Bunker Slopes and Faces.** Due to the significant cost savings of unmaintained, natural areas and buffer zones, Galligan and his staff decided to experiment with bunker slopes and faces as well, often allowing them to become natural. As Galligan expected, the savings were immediate, as equipment, labor and fuel costs were again reduced at a new found rate.

After careful research and long term planning, combine with over 30 years of experience, Galligan also proposed that select bunker renovation projects could mostly be completed by in-house golf course maintenance staff members, rather than outside contractors. Although this process should be handled individually depending on the property, Galligan has tackled this issue by prioritizing each bunker project with flexible time lines.

"By removing old sand, repairing drainage, and adding polymer lines and new bunker sand ourselves, we have consistently saved money throughout the last seven years," Galligan says. "We have even begun stockpiling old bunker sand for roadways and parking lots in the winter, as a means of recycling."

**Let Tree Stumps Accumulate.** Each year, Galligan and his staff must remove dozens of trees from Grand Traverse Resort and Spa, typically due to natural causes. Rather than removing stumps whenever a tree is cut down, Galligan allows stumps, that are not in play or unsightly, to accumulate over time to the point in which a contractor is not as busy and may be highly motivated to get the Resorts business.

"Sometimes we will even rent stump grinders and do the work with in-house labor," Galligan states. "This process has also been very cost-efficient. Especially when upwards of fifty stumps may be involved."

**Communicate with Everyone.** "We are more fluid speaking to guests than a lot of other resorts," Tim Norman, General Manager, Grand Traverse Resort and Spa, says. "Customer service is a key issue for long-term success, so we advise Paul to speak with our customers as often as possible."

In doing so, Galligan is able to receive their feedback on a wide array of issues, including course conditions, playability and pace of play, which he uses as a means



to improve upon his team's wide variety of initiatives. Galligan is also a member of the resort's executive committee, allowing him to communicate with all resort employees, no matter which department they work in. This has served as an excellent tool to receive input from different sources.

By regularly communicating with customers and fellow colleagues, Galligan can have an impact on the entire organization – environmentally and economically.

"Paul understands the decisions we make today will have an impact on tomorrow's outcomes," Norman adds. "With that in mind, the line of communication between staff, customers, and even executives must be opened at all times to ensure today's sustainability initiatives result in future cost savings."

Special thanks to Dave Richards, Resort and Golf Marketing [resortandgolf.com](http://resortandgolf.com) and Brian Walters Photography [brwphotos.com](http://brwphotos.com)



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Thursday, June 4	Legislative Golf Day (Capitol Building, Lansing)
Wednesday, July 8	Mid Golf Event (Eagle Crest G.C., Ypsilanti)
Wednesday, July 29	Tuck Tate Championship (Hidden River Golf & Casting Club)
Thursday, August 6	LaFontaine Outing (Coyote Preserve)
Wednesday, August 12	MTF Field Day (Hancock Turfgrass Center)
Wednesday August 19	MiGCSA State Championship (Eagle Eye G.C.)

Please visit [www.MiGCSA.org](http://www.MiGCSA.org) for all of the latest and most up to date information. You can quickly and easily register for events, view past issues of Course Conditions, browse and post items for sale, post and browse classifieds, and so much more. If you need help logging in email us at [info@migcsa.org](mailto:info@migcsa.org)





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# THE 3RD ANNUAL MEET AND GREET

**O**n May 8 the Assistant's Committee hosted the 3rd annual Meet and Greet at Tam-O-Shanter Country Club. This event was sponsored by our 2015 MiGCSA Industry Partners. Attendees had a great time interacting with one another while playing games like corn hole and horse shoes. The committee would like to thank Tam-O-Shanter Superintendent Kyle Barton his Assistants John Fritzges & Patrick Stranahan for hosting the event and a special thank you to Equipment Technician Tom Mungeons for manning the fryer and giving us some good southern low country boil! Thank you to all the people involved in this event and supporting the Assistant Superintendent's Committee!



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## A FULL ROUND



# JEFF HOLMES, CGCS

*Jeff Holmes, CGCS was elected to be the 7th President in MiGCSA History at the Annual Meeting on January 20th, 2015. Jeff started in the golf industry when he was 17 at Alpena Golf Club. He is entering his 22nd year as the Superintendent at Egypt Valley Country Club in Ada after working at Alpena Golf Club and The Grand Traverse Resort. Jeff has been married to his wife Louanne for 29 years; they have two children, Justin 23 and Stephanie 21.*

## HOW DID YOU BECOME INVOLVED IN THE BUSINESS?

A friend of the family, Bud McSorely, called my Mom and asked if I needed a summer job when I was 17 years old. He knew that I had worked at my grandparents' farm since I was 12, using tractors and being around the equipment, so he thought that I would have a good chance of filling the position. I went over and applied and landed the job.

## WHERE WAS THE FIRST COURSE YOU WORKED ON?

Alpena Golf Club in Alpena, MI. **What was your first job on that course?** I don't remember, but I started in late summer and I do remember I was mowing early on. We walk mowed greens. **When did you know that this was a job you wanted to do as a career?** After the first summer, I liked the idea of going into the business. The gentleman (Mike Newell) that I was working under was attending the MSU Turf program and taking care of the course in the summer. He gave me a lot of answers throughout the summer as we worked together. Originally, I was looking into being a forester, but the pay and job opportunities looked kind of slim. **What was your favorite job that summer on a course?** I don't know if I had a favorite job, but I did enjoy the fact that we each did all of the jobs. Mow greens, tees, fairways, rough, string trim, cut cups, water, the whole works. I learned a lot in a short time of being on the golf course.

## WHERE DID YOU RECEIVE YOUR EDUCATION?

Alpena Community College and Michigan State University. **What part of that education do you use most often on the job?** I would have to say that I learned how to trouble shoot and solve the problem. **What course did you go to after college?** Alpena Country Club, I was hired in as the golf course superintendent. What I realized that first year on the job was that attending MSU and meeting the professors was more powerful than you could imagine. When I needed help, I knew I could call one of the professors and they would walk me through the situation that I was trying to solve.

## WHAT ARE YOUR EXPECTATIONS FROM THE MIGCSA?

Being that I am serving as President of the association this year, I would like to see our board of directors continue to improve the association. This can happen by bringing value to the membership through continued education, further our financial independence, growing our membership, and engage in community efforts where we can help and be supportive to one and other.





**HOW HAVE YOU GIVEN BACK TO YOUR PROFESSION?**

I have served on boards and been President for the NMTMA, WMGCSA, and currently the MiGCSA. Have served on the MTESP and MTF board, participated in other committees in the industry, mentored several individuals in the turf industry, conducted mock interviews for many years and given talks to various groups.

**WHAT ARE YOUR HOBBIES?**

Deer camp, camping, home improvements, family events, hanging out with friends, snowmobiling, boating, riding in the 57 Chevy that I restored, pretty much anything.

**WHAT IS THE MOST DIFFICULT PART OF YOUR JOB?**

People, when everyone is clicking life is good and when people are not getting it, you have to buckle down harder to accomplish the task at hand whether you like it or not.

**WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST ISSUES FACING SUPERINTENDENTS TODAY?**

Doing more with less! Staffing is becoming more difficult and budgets are tight. **What do you believe the biggest issue will be in the future?** I feel that labor will be tough to find and water usage will continue to be reduced.

**WHAT DO YOU DO IN YOUR SPARE TIME?**

I'm up for anything that is not a waste of time. Sports, working on something, having fun with others, just keep moving. Oh, I stump grind after work.

**DO YOU PLAY GOLF?**

Yes **What is your handicap?** 14 **What is your favorite golf course you have played?** I am partial to many of the courses in Michigan, but my greatest experience was probably playing Pinehurst #2 before and after their renovation and experiencing the history. **What golf course would you love to experience once in your life time?** I would like to go to Ireland one time. **What is your favorite golf club in the bag?** Taylor Made "Rocketballz".

**WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PIECE OF EQUIPMENT YOU HAVE IN YOUR ARSENAL FOR GOLF COURSE MANAGEMENT?**

For the benefits, I like the Graden and the Toro 648 aerifier.

**WHAT ONE PIECE OF ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO A NEW SUPERINTENDENT?**

Be patience and flexible, it is not your course.

**WHAT IS THE CULTURAL MANAGEMENT PRACTICE YOU COULD NOT DO WITHOUT?**

Sand topdressing!

**HOW DO YOU RATE IMPORTANCE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT'S ROLE AND INFLUENCE IN THE GOLF INDUSTRY?**

If the superintendent is not employed, there would not be a quality golf course. This person and position is vital for a facility to survive. The superintendent wears many hats and goes on being a task master throughout the property day after day.



## 5 THINGS YOU DID NOT KNOW ABOUT JEFF HOLMES

1. I WAS PRESIDENT OF THE NMTMA, WMGCSA, AND NOW MIGCSA.
2. HAVE MENTORED MORE THAN THIRTY INDIVIDUALS OVER THE YEARS.
3. HAVE A STUMP GRINDING BUSINESS THAT RUNS AFTER HOURS.
4. I RESTORED A 57 CHEVY THAT I STILL HAVE TO DATE.
5. HAVE BEEN HOST TO 11 PGA CHAMPIONS TOUR EVENTS.



# OFF COURSE

WHAT OUR MEMBERS ARE UP TO WHEN THEY ARE OFF THE COURSE

## SOMETHING'S COOKING

Rob Pylar

My passion for cooking didn't begin as a passion but rather a necessity. My student internship was completed in 1993 at the Aronimink Golf Club near Philadelphia and while we were fortunate to live in a great house on the course, meals weren't provided. Being blessed with a mom that cooked incredible meals each day, cereal and ramen noodles weren't going to cut it and I couldn't afford to eat out. I did however have my mom and my sister (who was in culinary school at the time) as resources and I put them to work. I purchased a few cookbooks, learned the basic terms, burned up the phone lines and while I succeeded in accomplishing my primary goal of not setting the house on fire, my early "experiments" were hit-and-miss. A few dishes needed to be discarded and ironically, I ended up with cereal and ramen noodles. But I found the creative process fun and over 20 years later cooking is definitely a passion. I have a "Big Green Egg" grill and the two house specialties are Delmonico steaks and lobster tails. Advice for beginners: use simple, high-quality ingredients – olive oil & butter, salt, pepper, fresh herbs and good wine. If you wouldn't drink it, don't cook with it. Let go of your fears - cooking for someone is one of the most generous and thoughtful things you can do and if it's edible it will be appreciated. And if your "experiment" doesn't turn out as planned? Well, that's what that good bottle of wine is for!

## VACATION "BOATING"

John Tuckerman, Ravines Golf Club

During the slow seasons I enjoy hunting, fishing, and snowmobiling. But to keep a level of sanity during the heat of the Michigan summers, boating is my get away from the course. My wife, Dawn, and our two kids, Natalie and Johnny, look at boating as a mini vacation. Our home town of Saugatuck is located on the Kalamazoo River, and a 20-minute boat ride gets us to Lake Michigan. On Saturdays, I prep the course – by noon, we can have the boat loaded with food and drinks for the day and be on the lake by 1:00. Most of the time, we meet friends on the beach north of the Saugatuck channel and only be 10 miles from the course, but feel like we are 100 miles away. When Lake Michigan is rough, we head up river with our little fishing boat to meet with friends, have a cook out and just relax.



## GET TO THE POINT JACK!

Kevin Welp, CGCS

After the grind of a long summer I really look forward to our annual pheasant hunting trip to South Dakota. My brother and I meet up with some friends from around the country in Hosmer South Dakota (population 208) for a week chasing ring necks.

This year will be Jack's (my 1 year old Black Labrador pup) first season of hunting out of Hosmer. Jack was bred out of "pointing lab" stock and from recent training sessions seems to be the real deal. Labradors are typically flushing dogs but some breeding programs have focused on pairing Labs that instinctively "point" and have developed a pointing line that will rival the "classic" pointing dog breeds in trials and in the field. Some "Classic" pointing dog snobs (which includes some fellow MIGCSA members) will argue it's not a true point. Whatever you want to call it, it's incredible to see a Labrador Retriever lock up on a bird. What a versatile hunting dog! From waterfowl to upland birds they cover the gamut. I am so impressed with the line I have a deposit on another pup from an upcoming litter. I plan to name him Arnold (Arnie). So I will have Jack and Arnie (superintendents and their dog names!)

I am really looking forward to getting out to Hosmer South Dakota this year! Only 178 days, but who's counting!





## TO TREE OR NOT TO TREE

Trees. They can be beautiful. They can be messy. They provide shade for golfers, which can be nice. They provide shade for turf grass, which can be not so nice. Some are big. Some are small. Some are wide. Some are thin. They all have tree-alties of their own.

Everyone has different opinions about trees on golf courses. Many architects that venerate the golf courses from the early part of the century – The Golden Age of Golf Course Design -- believe trees should be used minimally, if not utilized at all; that the essence of true golf course design does not include trees. This philosophy stems from the origins of golf course design in Scotland, where trees were naturally not part of the golf course landscape.

Other architects, schooled and trained more in the second half of the 20th century, believe trees to be an integral part of the golf course design palette. Tree lined, parkland golf courses are considered by many as the pinnacle experience in golf.

There is no right or wrong answer regarding one's desire for trees in their golf experience. Just as there is no right or wrong regarding answer whether someone prefers red wine or white wine. But, there is a conflict when a golfer desires both trees, and exceptionally healthy turf conditions. It is a simply a fact of biology that turf grass needs sunlight to thrive. And, trees preclude sunlight from reaching the turf plant. Therefore, it is often difficult to have great turf conditions on tree lined, parkland golf courses.

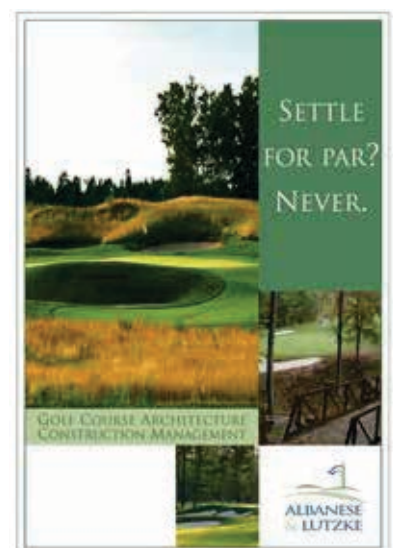
Another aspect of trees on a golf course is the idea they provide protection; a common, and seemingly logical concept. Trees can be big and tall and often stop balls from traveling to other areas of the golf course where they might hit something or someone not intended. But, there is a counter to this idea, which has equal validity. Trees often create a false sense of security for golfers, and can create a situation that is also not safe. Most golfers understand that when they hit a ball astray, and

towards other people, they should yell "fore" to warn of the possibility of a being hit. But, when trees are present between the golfer hitting the ball and those in potential danger, the golfer hitting the ball may 1. Not see the golfers that may be in danger; 2. Believe the trees will function as deterrent to them being hit. And for these reasons, they might believe yelling "fore" to be unnecessary. And, because trees are not perfect barriers, the golfers in range of the wayward shot may be in more danger than had the trees not been there at all. In addition, golfers that are out in the open yet have been seen and verbally warned, will usually turn away, and cover their heads. If hit, the worst damage would likely be a bruise on the body or the arms covering their head. Golfers that are not seen or warned because of the false senses of security created by trees, are more likely to be hit in areas of the body that can be exceptionally damaging, such as in the eye or the head.

Another artistic piece of advice regarding trees -- less is more. Let the special trees stand out, by getting rid of the less special ones. Trees need space to grow and form their natural habit. Don't crowd them, and they will add greatly to the visual composition golfers will experience.

Like them or not, trees are a part of the golf landscape. But, like bunkers, greens, tees and other features on the golf course, they need to be designed to fit with the overall goals and intentions of the golf course design.

**Paul Albanese, ASGCA**  
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# 2015 MICHIGAN SKINS GAME SAN ANTONIO

Dave Pawluk, CGCS

**T**his year we brought back the great tradition, history, camaraderie, and fun of the Michigan Skins game. We played two fun courses: one called the Republic Golf Club and the other, Canyon Springs Golf Club. The weather was in our favor for the two-day event with the temperatures in the low to mid 70's. We even enjoyed some sunshine and a light breeze!

We had players for both days from all over the Country. Our group was comprised of players from Indiana, Michigan, California (GCSSA board member), North Carolina (a Penn State grad who filled a spot at the last minute. But he was such a fun guy that we invited him to come back next year!), 2 MSU turf students, an Industry Partner vendor and a player from north of the border (We are hoping to have a few more Canadian friends join us next year). All the players ranged in handicap from 5 to 20 (who played to a 15).

We also would like to thank the MiGCSA for the donation of golf balls for the closest to the pin contests. Some of our Industry Partners donated to the prize money for both days. They were Shaun Watson of Watson Golf, Dave Hermann of Herman and Associates and Derek Carroll with FIP Irrigation. With their help it made for a wonderful time for everyone.

On the first day we had a number of new players from the turf industry and some old friends that have played before. We did an individual person with handicap format, trying to keep everyone in the game. On day one 1st place went to Matt Cielen with a 71 net score. 2nd place had a tie between Bob King and Mike McKeel (a current MSU student) with a net 74. We also had 2 closest to pins and they were taken by Dave Pawluk and Bob King. To wrap up day One, we had 9 skins that were won by Bob King, Matt Cielen, Jim Naulger and Dave Pawluk.



Day Two turned out to be a bit cloudy, but cooler. The sun came out later in the round and we wound up having a nice day. Our number of golfers increased to 12 that day and we did a two-man team event. First place was won by the team of Matt Cielen (again) and Jim Naugler with a score of net 62. 2nd place was taken by Rafael Barajas (GCSAA board member) and Mike McKeel (again) with a 63 low net. Third place was won by Gary Thommes and Scott Rettmann with a 67 low net. Closest to the pins were won by Jim Naugler and Bob King that day. We had 10 team skins to finish up that day, with Team 2 of Gary Thommes and Scott Rettmann took 4 skins. Team 1 of Bob King and Mike Wright having 2 skins. Team 3 of Dave Pawluk and Erik Guinther had 2 skins. Team of 4 of Rafael Barajas and Mike McKeel got a skin also. Team 5 (Jim Naugler and Matt Cielen) also took home one skin.

A big thank you to all that participated in the 2015 Michigan Skins Game and to all the people who helped out this year. Next year we are playing in San Diego! We will be starting a little sooner to get the information out to the people who would like to join us.



# THANK YOU

## TO MiGCSA'S 2015 INDUSTRY PARTNERS

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# DR. RON CALHOUN

Residex

*Dr. Ron Calhoun has been married to his college sweetheart Kristi for 23 years. They have a crew of six children Emily, 20; Ben, 18; Samantha, 14; William, 12; Timothy, 10 and Bethany, 5. Ron received his education from MSU with a Bachelors in Horticulture, his Masters and Ph.D in Crop and Soil Sciences. Four years ago he embarked on a new adventure with the Turfgrass division of Residex as the Director of Education, Research and Development.*

## HOW DID YOU BECOME INVOLVED IN THE GOLF BUSINESS?

I was a horticulture student at MSU. I remember the day I walked by A166 and overheard Trey Rogers talking about putting green construction. I stopped in my tracks and said out loud, "there's a class for that?" By the end of that week I'd added turfgrass management as a second major and spent the next summer working at Woodlawn GC in Adrian, MI.

## WHO HAS BEEN THE GREATEST INFLUENCE ON YOU IN YOUR PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL LIFE?

Personally, Paul Rieke and John Piper – Professionally, Doug Buhler and Bruce Branham

## PLEASE DESCRIBE IN DETAIL ONE TRUE FUNNY STORY FROM YOUR CAREER THAT YOU SHARE OFTEN WHEN IN THE COMPANY OF OTHERS IN THE INDUSTRY.

My first day on the golf course the superintendent (formally trained as a dentist) took me from hole to hole to show me the spots of Poa interfering with the bentgrass greens. My first job was to spread Scott's TGR on three of the greens. The following week, those greens were completely orange (except for the spots...of bentgrass! He had convinced himself that greens were bent with a few Poa spots when in-fact, the greens were Poa with a few bentgrass spots. Ouch!

## WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST ISSUES FACING SUPERINTENDENTS TODAY?

The constant stream of information available to superintendents is both awesome and potentially overwhelming. I think achieving balance between personal and professional responsibilities is the greatest challenge we face. Ten years from now you won't get a mulligan to go back and attend the Little League game or the birthday party. It's a challenge every day.

## WHAT ARE YOUR EXPECTATIONS FROM THE MICHIGAN GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENTS ASSOCIATION?

I have so much admiration for the professionals in the MiGCSA. I have had the opportunity to interact with superintendent associations all over the world. I consider the MiGCSA to be among the most well-educated, professional groups that I get to spend time with. I am so appreciative of all the opportunities

the MiGCSA has given me, particularly when I was just getting started.

## WHAT IS YOUR MOST EMBARRASSING MOMENT DEALING WITH A CUSTOMER?

The day I tried to pitch in and deliver a pallet of fertilizer to a course near my house. I got the pallet jack stuck on the lift gate and a five-minute stop became a 35-minute stop. I was dressed for a meeting and ended up sweating through my shirt and tweaking my back. After I hopped back in the truck I received a text message from the warehouse manager telling me to be careful with the pallet jack near the lift gate because it could get stuck and would be a really frustrating. I remember thinking that was good advice...too late.

## WHAT IS YOUR BEST ADVICE TO DECISION MAKERS WHEN DOING BUSINESS?

Record-keeping! Identify your expectations ahead of time. Evaluating ROI of products and maintenance practices is way more meaningful if you identify what good looks like ahead of time. Go back and evaluate to see if what you did provided the result you desired. Otherwise, it's just hope and emotion.

## WHAT IS THE MOST REWARDING PART OF BEING IN AN INDUSTRY SUPPORT ROLE?

The turf industry is filled with the best people I have ever met. I get a lot of satisfaction from seeing folks succeed. It's gratifying to help people and hear back about a solution that worked for them.

## WHAT IS YOUR BEST SUCCESS STORY?

Professionally, I'm probably most proud of GDDTracker. It was something that started as a periodic email to 40 superintendents in Michigan in 2001 and sort of took on a life of it's own. When we automated the email alerts and the data feed the system really took off. I still get a kick out of seeing GDDTracker pulled up on a superintendent's computer monitor when visiting a course.

## WHAT DO YOU ENJOY MOST ABOUT YOUR POSITION?

I really enjoy puzzles. Nothing is more fun than developing novel solutions for real-life problems that face our customers. It's



the best when I can help connect a customer with a piece of information they were looking for and they say, "that's exactly what I needed to know."

#### WHAT ARE YOUR HOBBIES OR SPECIAL INTERESTS?

I am a frustrated woodworker. I love being in the shop and my kids are old enough now to share the interest.

#### WHAT DO YOU ENJOY DOING OUTSIDE OF WORK?

I really enjoy playing music (drums, piano, bass guitar, etc.). My son Ben, my future son-in-law and I have had several opportunities the last few years to lead music at weekend youth camps. It's pretty great to spend time with them doing something we enjoy.

#### WHAT WOULD YOU CONSIDER THE VERY BEST PRODUCT YOU OFFER AND WHY?

If I don't say Turf Fuel I might get fired. It's super fun to be part of a research and technology team that's linked directly to product development team. It's cool to ask, "What if?" and be given the freedom to try and make it happen.

#### IF YOU COULD TRAVEL TO ANY TIME IN GOLF WHEN WOULD IT BE AND WHY?

Probably back to high school when my dad and I would play a few times each week. Golf was the way that I could spend time with my dad. We would golf with Mr. Strohl and Mr. Boylan twice a week at Hill's Heart O' The Lakes in Brooklyn, MI.

#### HOW LARGE IS YOUR TERRITORY?

I provide technical support and training for 61 salesmen. We have 28 locations in 14 states and two Canadian provinces.

### 5 THINGS YOU DID NOT KNOW ABOUT DR. RON CALHOUN

1. PERFORMED IN 20+ COMMUNITY THEATER PRODUCTIONS DURING JUNIOR HIGH AND HIGH SCHOOL.
2. DECIDED TO ATTEND MSU OVER OSU AFTER THE MSU DRUMLINE WON A NATIONAL DRUMLINE COMPETITION DURING MY SENIOR YEAR IN HS.
3. TRIED OUT FOR SAID DRUMLINE AND ENDED UP PLAYING CYMBALS IN THE MSU MARCHING BAND FOR THREE YEARS.
4. MY WIFE AND I ARE BOTH PROJECT LEADERS FOR OUR LOCAL WEBBERVILLE 4-H CLUB.
5. I HAVE A DAUGHTER GETTING MARRIED ON AUGUST 22ND THIS YEAR (IN MY BACKYARD!)
6. I CAN DO AN IMPRESSION OF GORDIE LAFONTAINE AND JOE VARGAS BUT IT IS HARD TO TELL WHICH ONE IS WHICH.
7. ASKING ME FOR 5 THINGS AND GETTING 7 IS WHY MY KIDS NEVER ASK ME ANY QUESTIONS.

## INDUSTRY PROFILE



FROM NATIONAL



STEVE RANDALL

## GCSAA REGIONAL ROUNDUP

BY STEVE RANDALL

**GCSAA Announces New Field Staff Representative for the Great Lakes Region**

*Shane Conroy has accepted the position of Field Staff Great Lakes Regional Representative (IL, IN, KY, OH, MI, WI) in the Chapter Outreach department. Shane will be working remotely from his home office in Chicago, Illinois.*

*Most recently, Shane was a Turfgrass Accounts Manager for Spectrum Technologies, Inc., a firm that manufactures and distributes leading edge measurement equipment to the agricultural market, in Aurora, Illinois. Prior to working for Spectrum, Shane was the Assistant Superintendent at Park Ridge Country Club in Park Ridge, Illinois. Before Park Ridge Country Club, Shane was a Professional Intern at the Carolina Country Club in Raleigh, North Carolina and prior to that was a Grounds Crew Associate at Kalamazoo Country Club in Kalamazoo, Michigan.*

*Shane has been a Class C Board of Directors Representative for the Midwest Association of Golf Course Superintendents (MAGS) and a Board of Directors member for the Illinois Turfgrass Foundation.*

*Shane holds a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration from Western Michigan University and an Associate's degree in Turfgrass Management from North Carolina State University.*

*Shane's first day was May 26th.*





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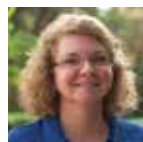
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# BELLE ISLE COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Troy Evans, Assistant Committee Chairman

On April 23 the Assistants Committee hosted the 2nd annual Belle Isle ball diamond clean-up. Our group teamed up with Justin Jacobs the founder of [comeplaydetroit.com](http://comeplaydetroit.com) to complete a field makeover and enhance the playability of these fields. We pulled weeds, edged the infield skin and gave an overall cleaning to the dug outs and commons area where people gather. We will continue to search for events that allow us to give back to the city, state and environment that we love and live in. Special thanks would go to the US Coast Guard stationed at Belle Isle who came out in large numbers to support and assist us in the labor! I would like to thank Oakland Hills, Birmingham, and Bloomfield Hills Country Club's for allowing their employees to engage in this



great opportunity in revitalizing the park on Belle Isle. The Committee would like to give a huge thank you to Rob Pylar from Bayer who provided us with lunch, water and a strong day of physical labor. Thank you to all who supported the event and continues to support the Assistant Superintendent's Committee.



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# CAN/AM CHALLENGE RECAP

Sally Ross, OGSA Executive Manager

The 39th annual Can/Am Challenge took place on April 27th, 2015 at Pointe West Golf Club in Amherstberg, ON with host superintendent Monte (Lamont) Anderson.

While the day dawned cold and moderately windy with a light rain, the rain subsided, however the sun never did appear and the golfers braved the cool and windy conditions.

Despite the weather, all 68 of the registrants played and were treated to a course that was in outstanding condition considering the late spring and lack of warm temperatures.

While the cup was originally presented to the Americans (26 to 25) and accepted by the first low gross team of Todd Genske (Eagle Crest GC) and James Higgs (Spartan Distributors) with a score of 70, a calculation error became apparent and after review the match scoring was changed (28 to 23) in favour of the Canadians. The Canadian first low gross team was John McLinden (Ladies GC of Toronto) and John Alpaugh (Allturf), with a score of 72.

American low net team winners were Dan Dingman (Birmingham Country Club) and Greg Matthews (Residex). Canadian low net winning team was Paul Giordano (Bayer) and Doug Kennedy (Seven Lakes Golf Club).

Second place low gross winners were Ben Neuman and Eric Davey for the Americans, and Dan Friesen



*Todd Genske and Jim Higgs with the Can-Am Cup*

and Mark Durand for the Canadians. John Cooney and Dale Bauer garnered the second place low net for the Americans, and Trevor Morvay and Christian Kuhn took the honours for the Canadians.

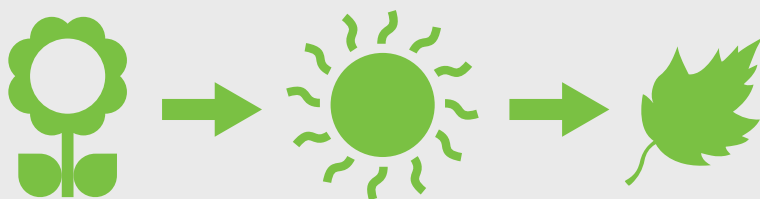
The three closest to the pin winners were Greg Brown (Essex G & CC), Rhod Trainor (Hamilton G & CC) and Gary Thommes (Red Run GC), while Aaron Campbell from Turf Care captured the longest drive award.

The big winner of the one skin awarded was Mark Durand from Ontario Seed Co. who won \$335.00, with the added bonus of the prize monies being a mix of Canadian and US dollars.

All in all, an outstanding day at Pointe West! John McLinden acted as MC for the prizes and awards and thanked the host superintendent Monte, as well as the outstanding staff at Pointe West for a successful event.



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## THE BETTER HALF



## JOHN WESSELS

*John Wessels has been at Forest Dunes Golf Club since 2003. He was hired on as Natural Resources Manager, which included duties as the course horticulturalist and liaison to Audubon International to facilitate their Gold Signature Certification. John has been married to his wife Shawna for 7 years and they have two boys Peyton, 4 and Preston, 2.*

**WHERE WAS THE FIRST COURSE YOU WORKED ON?**

Forest Dunes Golf Club was my first and continues to be the only golf course that I have worked on. **What was your first job on that course?** I was hired on as Natural Resources Manager. Basically the course horticulturalist and liaison to Audubon International to facilitate our Gold Signature Certification. **When did you know that this was a job you wanted to do as a career?** That first summer after starting at Forest Dunes. I like the atmosphere and the nature of the work. **What was your favorite job that first summer on a course?** Landscaping the front entrance and clubhouse parking lot. I was allowed to be creative, but it was slightly challenging because it was necessary for those areas to blend in with the natural surroundings and not look totally out of place or manufactured.

**WHERE DID YOU RECEIVE YOUR EDUCATION?**

Ferris State University - Associates of Science in Ornamental Horticulture Technology, Bachelors of Science in Small Business Management. **Where did you go to after college?** After college I was branch manager for a landscape and lawn care company in Gaylord, MI. I did that until my opportunity at Forest Dunes. **Who was the first Superintendent at that course?** Jim Bluck **What did you learn from that Superintendent in the first year?** The concept of providing a product that the golfer will walk away from our golf course and not be able to pinpoint exactly why they loved it, but that they loved it. Thus, the need for everything to be in its place.

**WHAT DO YOU DO IN YOUR SPARE TIME?**

Spend as much time with my wife and kids as possible. We love anything outdoors. Our kids are young, so we just started long distance traveling with them and that is an amazing experience for us and them.

**WHO MAKES YOU LAUGH THE MOST ON YOUR CREW AND WHY?**

Our equipment manager Dan Darling. He keeps everyone on there toes and is always good for a laugh. I especially love his one liners of wisdom.

**WHAT TYPE OF IRRIGATION SYSTEM DO YOU HAVE AND APPROXIMATELY HOW MANY IRRIGATION HEADS?**

Toro, excited to get the lynx system this year! Over 1200 heads.

**WHAT IS THE CULTURAL MANAGEMENT PRACTICE YOU COULD NOT DO WITHOUT?**

Aerification

**WHO IS THE GREATEST INFLUENCE IN YOUR PERSONAL LIFE?**

My wife, Shawna. She is my heart and soul. Very understanding of the position that I have and is my greatest supporter.



### WHY DID YOU CHOOSE A TURFGRASS MANAGEMENT CAREER PATH?

I always loved being outside and some of my first jobs as a very young child were mowing the neighbors lawn and for one of the businesses in my home town.

### WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST ISSUES FACING ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENTS TODAY?

Breaking the stigma that being an assistant is not a good career. I feel that having a good assistant that stays at a property for extended periods can enhance the property through knowledge .

### WHO INFLUENCED YOU THE MOST ABOUT TURFGRASS MANAGEMENT, WHO ELSE INFLUENCED YOU PERSONALLY?

Jim Bluck has been a huge influence on my professional and personal life. Another great influence is my father who taught me the value of hard work and dedication.

### WHAT IS THE MOST VALUABLE THING YOU HAVE LEARNED IN THE GOLF COURSE MANAGEMENT PROFESSION?

That changes happen often, whether it is weather conditions, turf issues, equipment issues, or employee issues. So you must be able to anticipate some and handle the others appropriately.

### WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PIECE OF EQUIPMENT YOU HAVE IN YOUR ARSENAL FOR GOLF COURSE MANAGEMENT?

648 Aerifier **What piece of equipment would you like to add to your arsenal for golf course management?** TDR meter.

### DO YOU PLAY GOLF? WHAT IS YOUR HANDICAP?

I do play golf and enjoy it. **What is your favorite golf course that you have played?** Prince Course, Princeville, Kauai. And of course Forest Dunes. **What golf course would you love to experience once in your lifetime?** Augusta National. **What is your favorite golf club in the bag?** Hybrid

### IF YOU HAD A MULLIGAN IN A TOTALLY DIFFERENT CAREER CHOICE, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

I would love to build and drive old cars.

### WHAT IS YOUR OPINION OF THE ROLE OF THE MECHANIC IN RELATIONSHIP TO THE ASSISTANT?

This is an invaluable relationship.

### WHAT IS YOUR BIGGEST PET PEEVE CONCERNING GOLF COURSE ETIQUETTE?

Ball marks and divots

### WHAT ARE YOUR OPINIONS OF GREEN SPEED AND THE GAME OF GOLF TODAY?

Too much emphasis is placed on speed versus its impact on play, turf health, and contouring of greens.

### NAME ANY THREE PEOPLE WHO WOULD MAKE UP YOUR "DREAM SCRAMBLE TEAM"

Phil Mickelson, Rory McIlroy, Tiger woods

### WHAT ARE YOUR EXPECTATIONS FROM THE MICHIGAN GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENTS ASSOCIATION?

Continued educational opportunities and keeping up with current golf maintenance techniques.



## 5 THINGS YOU DID NOT KNOW ABOUT JOHN WESSELS

1. I AM AN EAGLE SCOUT
2. I OWN AND RIDE A MOTORCYCLE
3. I AM RUNNING MY FIRST MUD RACE THIS JUNE.
4. I AM AFRAID OF HEIGHTS
5. I LOVE WINE TASTINGS



# A CALL FROM CAMPUS

## EUROPEAN CRANE FLY AND ANNUAL BLUEGRASS WEEVIL

BY DAVE SMITLEY

Two species of crane flies from Europe: *Tipula paludosa* (European crane fly) and *Tipula oleracea* (common crane fly) are now established in many locations in southeast Michigan and in the greater Grand Rapids area. The adult stage of both of these pests looks like a giant mosquito with a wing span of more than an inch. They prefer moist soils, so they are most likely to be found in irrigated turf, although with enough rain they can develop in almost any lawn. The European crane fly adult flies, mates and lays eggs in August and September and may be seen in or near infested lawns or golf turf in large numbers. The second species, the common crane fly, also emerges from late July to September, but may also have a second generation of adults that emerge in the spring. The larvae of both species, called "leatherjackets," grow to become nearly an inch-long and look like a brown or gray caterpillar with no head or legs.



European crane fly adult (left) and larvae (right). Dave Shetlar, OSU

In October the leatherjackets consume enough turf roots, stems and leaves to cause visible injury to lawns or golf courses. Turf damage begins to appear as a general thinning of the infested turf, but may progress to large dead patches. Symptoms like thin turf and digging activity by skunks and raccoons may appear to be caused by grubs, but the presence of gray to tan-colored leather jackets will confirm the pest as European crane fly. Leatherjackets can be brought to the surface by drenching with a soapy water solution – 1 ounce dish wash soap in 2 gallons of water. Leatherjackets also tend to come to the surface when an insecticide is applied. This can be a nuisance on golf courses if large numbers of leatherjackets appear on tees, greens and fairways.





Turf treated for grubs in the spring are **not** protected from European crane fly damage in October. However, if grub treatments are made in July or August, they should also protect against European crane fly damage in the fall. See the table below for a list of products that are effective against European crane fly. Note: fall treatments tend to give better results than spring treatments, but the best products also provided reliable control in the spring as well.

**Products to use for European crane fly and best timing as reported in University research tests at locations with a climate similar to southern Michigan.**

Time of Year	Product	Percent Control
October (late July to October)	Safari, Arena, Allectus	85 – 100%
October	Merit, Sevin, Talstar	50 – 95%
Late April to Mid May	Arena, Safari, Aloft, Meridian	80 – 100%
Late April to Mid May	Dylox, Merit	75%
Late April to Mid May	Tempo, Allectus, Sevin	35 – 60%

We are still looking for a good test site in Michigan where we can conduct an efficacy trial. This could be irrigated rough on a golf course, or a large lawn area where we can maintain control plots which may have some damage. We would appreciate any suggestions you may have for potential sites. If you know of a good location please send an email to Terrance Davis (Terry) at: [tdavis@msu.edu](mailto:tdavis@msu.edu).

**Annual bluegrass weevil** is a major golf course pest in the northeast United States. Because it is often resistant to pyrethroid insecticides, it can be very difficult to control. We have been expecting it to arrive in Michigan because it became a problem in Pennsylvania and Ontario at least five years ago. Maybe we should consider it a blessing that it has not yet become a golf course pest in Ohio or in Michigan. Apparently it was found for the first time in eastern Ohio in 2014. Still, it is wise to be aware of this future pest so that when it does appear we will recognize it and take the steps needed to control it before we see too much turf damage.

Watch for patches of dead annual bluegrass that appear in June or July on aprons around greens or on fairways. Usually, only the annual bluegrass dies, although bentgrass can become

infested. Annual bluegrass weevil can be distinguished from anthracnose by the presence of sawdust-like frass, hollow stems, and the tiny (1/16th of an inch) weevils and their larvae (legless white grubs, 1/16th of an inch-long). The grubs may be found inside of annual bluegrass stems, and the adult weevils will float when cup-cutter samples of turf are submerged in water. The damage itself may look very similar to anthracnose damage. Golf course superintendents that see unusual patterns of annual bluegrass damage, especially on the collars around greens, can send a cup-cutter sample (only 2" or less of soil, please) to me and Terry at: Terry Davis, Department of Entomology, 288 Farm Ln/Rm 243 Nat Sci Bldg, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824. Phone: 517-355-4663. Also, if samples are sent to the MSU Turfgrass Diagnostic Lab, 578 Wilson Rd, Room 102 CIPS, East Lansing, MI 48824, they will be forwarded to my lab to check for annual bluegrass weevil after they are done. Note: there is a charge for samples sent to the Turfgrass Diagnostic Lab.



## ASSOCIATION UPDATE



ADAM IKAMAS, CGCS

**Community**

As we head into year eight of the MiGCSA from the former four chapters we have seen so many successes. The improvements overall are numerous and hard to miss,

I write about them often in this space. But today I want to cover one of the areas where we can improve. When I say we I do mean we, as the MiGCSA is not us and them it is just us, we are all together in this group bound by our profession regardless of the name of the umbrella.

One thing I have heard is after the change to the statewide organization that some of the local flavor has slipped away. I can say that I agree with this to a point. Back when we had four local chapters that were being run by volunteers and some with limited staff it was a priority to plan and promote local events for their chapter. Some feel like this has gone away. I would like to think of it a different way. Now we are able to promote and manage events so much more efficiently which is great but it does not take the need for local involvement and promotion of local events. Now if you have an idea for an event in your area it is so much easier to bring it to fruition. The communication lines are clear the organization is there, but that alone is not enough. So I ask you as a member reading this blog to take on that challenge of creating

a local event and bringing it to the MiGCSA to help make it a reality. Promote it to your colleagues in your area like it was done with the original chapters but with the power of the statewide presence. There have been some great examples of this that are in process right now, the Meet & Greet at Tam O'Shanter on May 8th, the Tigers game on May 21st and the Belle Isle clean up efforts last week. These are all member driven ideas, not from the Board or a Committee.

So let's get local, what do you want to see happen in your area of our great state? Get some friends together and plan it out, let us know and you will be amazed at how fast we can get it promoted and filled up.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Adam Ikamas". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending from the end.

Adam Ikamas, CGCS  
MiGCSA Executive Director



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