

of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of New England, Inc. Sponsors and administrators of the Troll-Dickinson Scholarship Fund – Awarded yearly to deserving Turf Management Students.

Hard Work and Perseverance Pay Off for Youthful Greg Cormier

By: Gary Trask

sults. After graduating with a Plant Sci-

ence and Turf Grass Management de-

gree from the State University of New

host to eight major championships and

the 1995 Ryder Cup - as a spray tech-

nician. But he quickly moved his way

up the ranks and in the spring of 2006

he was named the head super on the

West Course at the 36-hole Oak Hill.

"It was a grind at times, but I

learned so much it was worth every

second." Cormier says of his time at

York back in 2003, Cormier got his

start at Oak Hill - which has played

Greg Cormier realizes he has plenty of colleagues in the golf superintendent business that have been at the trade for almost as long as he has been alive. But Cormier doesn't apologize for the fact that at 28 years old he has already been a superintendent at two highly acclaimed courses with rich traditions.

Instead, he explains that he has earned these positions through hard work, dedication and, above all, producing a product that his superiors have been more than happy with.

"I know people are probably sur-

prised when they hear how young I am," says Cormier, who is set to begin his second year at Nashawtuc Country Club in Concord, Mass. following a stint at the esteemed Oak Hill



room for error." Cormier's wealth of experience in five short years at Oak Hill certainly helped his cause when he applied for the job at Nashawtuc last year. And the allure of returning to the area in which

Country Club in Rochester, N.Y. "But that's OK. Because I know in my heart that I've paid my dues. And as long as I keep doing my job the way I was taught and keep my golf course in prime condition, my age isn't going to matter. All that matters is results."

Indeed, the golf superintendent business is "result oriented" and the two clubs where Cormier has plied his trade since 2003 are the kind of courses that demand high-quality rePhoto Source: Nashawtuc Country Club web site

put in 100 or 120-hour weeks. I definitely feel like I experienced nearly everything there is to experience on a golf course during the five years I was there. I was exposed to everything."

In addition to his duties at Oak Hill, where he worked the 2003 PGA Championship and 2008 Senior PGA Championship, Cormier also volunteered to work at the 2005 Presidents Cup at the Robert Trent Jones Golf Club in Virginia, as well as the 2007 U.S. Open at Oakmont Country Club in Pennsylvania. "I've seen my fair share of big

"I've seen my fair share of big events and experienced the kind of pressure that comes with it," he says with a rise of excitement in his voice. "Those are nationally televised events. When you're assigned to a hole at an event of that magnitude, everything needs to be perfect. There are no excuses. You have to have the right guys doing the things that they are most comfortable with, and there's really no

he grew up made the job a perfect fit for Cormier, who was born and raised in nearby Westford, Mass. and still has family in the area.

"I had resumes out all over the country, but this was the one job I really, really wanted," Cormier admits. "I was just so fortunate that it opened up right around the same time I was looking. When I got the job I was

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Cormier - continued from page 1

thrilled. It couldn't have worked out any better."

Cormier said he thought his age might hamper him in nailing down the dream job. He knows full well that there were other candidates with a lot more experience than him.

"But I went through the same process that every other candidate did and in the end they chose me," he says. "It was a very fair and lengthy interview process. So I don't have to apologize for getting the job. They picked me for a reason and I'm certainly glad they did."

Once he arrived at Nashawtuc which hosted a Champions Tour event for decades until the main sponsor backed out last year - at the start of last season. Cormier had to face another obstacle. Not only was he coming to a new course, but he was also replacing Paul Miller, who sat in the head super's chair at the course for the previous 24 years.

"Yeah, that made it a little bit tougher because everybody from the members to the green committee to the staff were used to the same person running the show for so long," he says. "But I have to say that the transition was very smooth. The members have really made me feel welcome and I feel think the first year went very well."

Cormier says that he is a "goaloriented" manager and likes to lead by example as he heads a crew of as many as 20 people during the peak of the season.

"I'm young enough that I can be in there with them doing the dirty work and that's what I like to do," he says. "I'm not a sit-in-the-office type of guy. I like to be out there as much as time allows, and I like to get involved in whatever it is we're doing that particular day."

The drainage problems at Nashawtuc are another formidable task that Cormier now faces on a daily basis. The 2006 Bank of America Championship was cancelled because the course was too wet, so Cormier is often glued to the local weather forecast looking for any hint of heavy rains.

"It can be tricky, but we dealt with it OK last year," he adds. "If I see we're going to get hit with some wet weather in five days, we basically will stop irrigating and get as dry as we can without killing the grass. And it's crucial to know when you should pull the dam boards and drop the pond levels. Sometimes we're at the mercy of the weathermen and that can be unnerving at times."

In addition to acclimating himself at his new position last year, Cormier was also pretty busy at his home in Chelmsford. He and his wife Beth had their first child, Ryan, right smack dab in the middle of last golf season.

"It was a busy time, for sure, but all three of us got through it some how," Cormier says with a laugh. "My wife has been great. She knew before we got married that between April and November I wasn't going to be around too much and that didn't change because of Ryan. So this offseason has been a lot of fun because I've been able to spend more time with them."

With a growing family and his whole career ahead of him, Cormier is now focused on doing whatever it takes to keep Nashawtuc to the standard it has always been, and hopefully some day see the master plan that has been drawn up for the club through.

"I am very happy with the way things are going right now. As long as I can continue to improve the golf course and keep my superiors are happy, I wouldn't want to be anywhere else." 🛠

Gagnon Recognized for Excellence in Government Relations by National Golf Association

Richard Gagnon, a Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) Class A superintendent at Segregansett Country Club in Taunton, Mass., has been selected to receive the 2010 GCSAA Excellence in Government Relations Award in the compliance category.

The award will be presented at the 2010 <u>GCSAA Education Conference</u> during Celebrate GCSAA! presented in partnership with Syngenta, Feb. 9. Formerly the Opening Session and Welcoming Reception, Celebrate GCSAA! is hosted by GCSAA President Mark D. Kuhns, CGCS. The conference (Feb. 8-12) will be held in conjunction with the <u>Golf Industry Show</u> (Feb. 10-11) at the San Diego Convention Center.

"Rich is such a passionate leader in our industry," Kuhns said. "It is an honor to recognize his government relations work. He is a shining example of GCSAA and its members seeking to be part of the solution, not part of the problem."

In a cost-saving effort, Gagnon hired high school students to work on his grounds crew. In preparation of employing minors, he teamed up with Ron Smith of Sports Club Management, a company that provides training for employees concerning right-toknow, safety training, and labor laws, to get the attention of the Office of the Massachusetts Attorney General to better define the child labor laws as they relate to golf course management. Gagnon put together a checklist of all the commonly used pieces of golf equipment, including color photographs, to better enable reviewers in the Attorney General's Office to determine how the law applied to each piece of equipment.

From these proactive efforts, the Fair Labor Division in the Office of the Attorney General helped interpret the laws as they apply to the turf management business and clarified the tasks minors may perform in the workplace. The information was compiled into a checklist that Gagnon shared with other golf course superintendents across the commonwealth to assist in complying with state child labor law requirements.

"Rich took it upon himself to tackle an issue that he knew would require a lot of time and effort, but one that he also knew could cause problems to the industry if it was not addressed," Smith said. "The potential trouble the use of teenage employees could have caused was eliminated thanks to his foresight, his ingenuity, his powers of persuasion, his work ethic, and his professionalism."

Gagnon graduated from Bishop Fenwick High School in his hometown Peabody, Mass., and earned a B.S. degree from Salem State College in 1991. He is also a 1995 graduate of the University of Massachusetts with a B.S. degree in Plant and Soil Science. Gagnon currently resides in Mansfield, Mass., and has two daughters, Taylor 11 and Lindsey 9.

Gagnon served as the assistant superintendent at the Salem Country

Club in Peabody from 1996-2003 before becoming the head superintendent at Segregansett. The Salem Country Club, a Donald Ross design and host of five USGA Championships, hosted the



Rich Gagnon

U.S. Senior Open in 2001.

GCSAA is a leading golf organization and has as its focus golf course management. Since 1926, GCSAA has been the top professional association for the men and women who manage golf courses in the United States and worldwide. From its headquarters in Lawrence, Kan., the association provides education, information and representation to more than 20,000 members in more than 72 countries.

GCSAA's mission is to serve its members, advance their profession and enhance the enjoyment, growth and vitality of the game of golf. The association's philanthropic organization, <u>The Environmental Institute for</u> <u>Golf</u>, works to strengthen the compatibility of golf with the natural environment through research grants, support for education programs and outreach efforts. Visit GCSAA at <u>www.gcsaa.org</u>. *****

For more information contact:

Chava McKeel, GCSAA senior manager, information and public policy, 800-472-7878, <u>cmmckeel@gcsaa.org</u> Richard Gagnon, Segregansett Country Club, 508-823-0466, sccturf@hotmail.com

Source: GCSAA Press Release

GCSANE Proposed Bylaw Amendments

The following Bylaw Amendments are being proposed in accordance with Article XIII, Section 1 of the GCSANE Constitution and Bylaws. These proposed bylaws will be voted on at the March 2010 Regular Meeting. They may be passed by a two-thirds vote of the regular members present at that meeting.

Article V Government

Currently Reads:

SECTION 1

The Officers of the Association shall consist of a President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer elected as provided in Article VI. All officers of the Association shall also be Class A or B members of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America.

Proposed Bylaw Change:

SECTION 1

The Officers of the Association shall consist of a President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer elected as provided in Article VI. All officers of the Association shall also be a Class A member or Superintendent Member of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America.

Currently Reads:

SECTION 2

The Association shall be governed by a Board of Directors consisting of the aforementioned officers, four Trustees, the Chairman of the Finance Committee, Educational Committee, Golf Committee, Newsletter Committee and the Immediate Past President, all of whom shall be Class A members of the Association and a majority of whom shall be Class A or B members of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America. They shall be elected for a term of one year, excepting the Trustees. The Affiliate Trustee shall be a member of good standing of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of New England.

Proposed Bylaw Change:

The Association shall be governed by a Board of Directors consisting of the aforementioned officers, four Trustees, the Chairman of the Finance Committee, Educational Committee, Golf Committee, Newsletter Committee and the Immediate Past President, all of whom shall be Class A members of the Association and a majority of whom shall be a Class A member or Superintendent Member of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America. They shall be elected for a term of one year, excepting the Trustees. The Affiliate Trustee shall be a member of good standing of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of New England.

Article IV, Membership, Section 1. Members, Paragraph 1: Change "himself" to "him or herself" and change "him" to "him or her" .

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* UMass Plant Diagnostic Lab submis-

GCSANE Elects Board of Directors for 2010

January 20, 2010

NORTON, Mass. – The Golf Course Superintendents Association of New England elected its new slate of officers for the 2010 season.

Patrick J. Daly, CGCS of Framingham County Club will serve as President; Jason S. Adams of Blue Hill Country Club as Vice President; Russell E. Heller, CGCS of Franklin Park Golf Course is the Past President; Michael W. Stachowicz of Dedham Country & Polo Club as Treasurer; Michael Luccini, CGCS of Franklin Country Club as Finance Chairman; Mark Gagne of Walpole Country Club as Secretary; Richard T. Gagnon of Segregansett Country Club as Trustee (Membership Chairman); David Stowe, CGCS of Newton Commonwealth Golf Course as Golf Chairman; **David Johnson** of Whitinsville Golf Club as Education Chairman, **Carl Miner** of Presidents Golf Course as Trustee (Scholarship and Benevolence Chairman); **Jedd Newsome** of Springfield Country Club as Newsletter Chairman; **Michael Rose** of Belmont County Club as Trustee (Government Relationship Chairman) and **Dave Wallace** of New England Turf as the Affiliate Trustee.

Founded in 1924, the Golf Course Superintendents Association of New England is dedicated to serving its members, advancing their profession and enriching the quality of golf and the environment. For more information contact:

Jedd Newsome, Golf Course Superintendent, Springfield Country Club (413) 250-6408 ↔





Geoffrey Cornish Tribute and Dinner

Please join with the New England Regional Turfgrass Foundation and enjoy a Grand Dinner and a Tribute to the Life and Career of Golf Course Architect Geoffrey Cornish. Wednesday, March 3, 2010 7:30 pm R.I. Convention Center Rotunda



Dr. Geoffrey Cornish, ASGCA Geoffrey Cornish was born in Winnipeg, Canada in 1914. He received a bachelors degree from University of British Columbia, and a master's degree in Agronomy from the University of Massachusetts.

Geoff worked as an associate to noted Canadian golf course architect Stanley Thompson and with pioneer turfgrass scientist Dr. Lawrence Dickinson at UMass. He spent time as the Head Greenskeeper at St. Charles Country Club in Winnipeg. Served in the Canadian Army overseas in World War II.

Geoff has designed over 200 courses and additions around the world. He joined the American Society for Golf Course Architects in 1967 and served as President in 1975. He has received numerous awards including the 1981 GCSAA Distinguished Service Award, the Donald Ross Award from the ASGCA in 1982 and in 1996 was inducted into the Canadian Golf Hall of Fame. He has taught golf course architecture at Harvard University and in many seminars across the country. In 1987 he received a Honorary Doctorate from the University of Massachusetts.

All proceeds and donations from this dinner, will be directed to: "The Geoffrey and Carol Cornish Fund for Enhanced Learning Opportunities." This fund will establish a new and valuable endowment in the Stockbridge School of Agriculture.

Thanks. Patrick Daly

January Thaw

By Jim Skorulski, Senior Agronomist, Northeast Region

January 28, 2010

The recent 50° temperatures and heavy rains that occurred recently marked the official January thaw for New England. This has been a relatively good thaw, if there are such things in the middle of winter. Winter thaws and rain events are always a concern to northern turf managers, who hate the sight of standing water on putting and fairway surfaces. The standing water can hydrate the plants, which then are more susceptible to the colder temperatures that often follow. Fortunately, for the near term, the forecast for relatively mild temperatures, following the recent heavy rains, should provide time for the water to recede or flow off playing surfaces before the next round of cold temperatures reach the area.

Ice sheets may form at some northern locations as a result of the thaw or rain events. Prolonged ice cover brings fears of suffocation or anoxia. This phenomenon is thought to occur when dense ice sheets or impermeable covers prevent gas exchange from the soil. Oxygen levels drop while carbon dioxide increases, leading to anaerobic respiration. Anoxia is most likely to occur when the ice sheet forms over heavy soils that are not deeply frozen. Microbial respiration continues to occur during those conditions, utilizing oxygen that cannot be replaced under the ice sheet. Annual bluegrass exposed to anaerobic conditions for two to three weeks have been shown to lose cold temperature hardiness and become even more vulnerable to injury. The higher levels of carbon dioxide and other gases produced during anaerobic respiration may in themselves become toxic to the grass.

Anoxia is less likely to occur in sandy soils or in soils where a deep frost layer is in place. The condition requires some time to form, but it is a good idea to keep an eye on greens encased in ice, especially once the ice is in place for three to four weeks. Check below the ice for the sweet, sickly smell. If present, there is a good chance that the plant's hardiness is being affected, and some action to remove the ice may be required. This is not an easy task, and should be considered only if an anaerobic condition has developed and the weather remains favorable.

The good news is, the longest days of winter are behind us and the sun's strength improves with each day. We believe most golf courses in the region have survived December and January thaws with the grass still intact. A few days of moderately cold and dry weather followed by a blanket of new snow would be a welcomed sight and a good way to enter the month of February.

To those of you going to San Diego, have a safe trip and make sure to stop by the USGA booth while walking the floor. We hope to see the rest of you at the New England Regional Turfgrass Conference and Show in early March. A USGA session is scheduled for Tuesday, March 2nd, covering many diverse topics ranging from winter injury and annual bluegrass control to the impact of local rules of course rating and speed of play. Learn the real story behind the 2009 US Open from Craig Currier and Dave Oatis. Gain valuable financial survival skills to lead your golf course through the economic challenges that lie ahead. This is an exceptional educational opportunity for turf mangers and green chairpersons, and a great way to start the 2010 golf season. The educational session will be followed by Keynote Speaker Steve Palermo, followed by the trade show's Grand Opening and Reception. <

Northeast Region Green Section-Dave Oatis, Director <u>doatis @usga.org;</u> Adam Moeller, Agronomist <u>amoel-</u> <u>ler@usga.org</u>; Jim Skorulski, Senior Agronomist <u>jskorulski @usga.org</u>.

Source: www.USGA.org



Only a thin layer of ice remains at a western Massachusetts golf course following this week's rain and warmer temperatures. A few additional days of above freezing temperatures should help melt the remaining ice and allow the water to move off the surfaces before the next wave of cold temperatures reach the area.

GCSANE Annual Meeting - Cyprian Keyes Golf Club January 20, 2010 Host: Richard Zepp, CGCS







Welcome to the newest members of the GCSANE Board of Directors (from L-R): Jedd Newsome and Michael Rose





GCSANE 2010 Board of Directors (L-R): Michael Luccini, CGCS; Richard Gagnon; Russell Heller, CGCS; Jedd Newsome; Carl Miner; David Stowe, CGCS; Mark Gagne; Patrick Daly, CGCS; Jason Adams; Michael Rose; Michael Stachowicz; David Johnson; Dave Wallace

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Keynote Speaker Tuesday, March 2 · 3:45pm former MLB Umpire Steve Palermo

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Tuesday, March 2 • 4:30pm-7:30pm with reception Wednesday, March 3 • 10am-5pm ~ Live Auction 4pm Thursday, March 4 • 9am-1pm

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Watch your mail for your registration form or call (401)848-0004 or visit us online at www.TurfShow.com

DIVOT DRIFT... announcements ... educational seminars ... job opportunities ...tournament results...and miscellaneous items of interest to the membership.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Our condolences are extended to the Wogan Family on the passing of Philip A. Wogan on January 15, 2010 at the age of 91. Philip was the golf course superintendent at the Essex County Club from 1957-1985. He then devoted himself full-time to golf course architecture. During his career, Philip designed over 40 courses in the New England area and redesigned dozens more. In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made in his memory to the Hospice of the North Shore, 75 Sylvan St., Suite B-102, Danvers, MA 01923.

Wishing a speedy recovery and all the best to Steve Mann's wife Pat who had a stroke in January.

Our condolences are extended to Manny and Bess Mihailides on the passing of Bess' brother George Vardakis in January. Best wishes for a speedy recovery to Joanne Cornicelli who recently had foot surgery.

Save the date for the 2010 Rhode Island Turfgrass Foundation Golf Tournament hosted by Drew Cummins (URI Alumnus, Class '92) on Tuesday, April 27, 2010 at Agawam Hunt, Rumford, RI. Registration and buffet lunch will start at 11:30 am with a 1:00 pm shotgun start and dinner to follow. Also a reminder that the RITF Luncheon will be held on Tuesday, March 2 at the NERTF Conference and Show in the Rotunda from 11:30 am to 1:00 pm for URI alumni and friends.

As in the past, *The Newsletter* continues to invite Affiliate members to submit a press release about new personnel, new products or a company bio. We will print each and every release free of charge. This is a great way to advertise for free.

Welcome to a new tool to help link students and employers. This is a new web site called GreenJobsNE.org. This was developed in the spring of 2009 by Brian Maynard (URI Plant Sciences faculty) and Thomas Briggs (URI Computer Sciences student). The site offers employers a place to post jobs, internships and volunteer opportunities and a place for students to post their contact information and resumes. Presently all jobs and resume postings are approved by Brian Maynard. This is not just a tool for Rhode Island students and employers which is why we named it GreenJobs New England. Please feel free to try out GreenJobsNE.org and direct any comments or questions to Brian Maynard (401-874-5372 or bmaynard@uri.edu).

TROLL SCHOLARSHIP

The Troll Scholarship Committee has awarded two scholarships. Each recipient will receive \$1000 each. The recipients for 2010 are Royal Healy and Noah Goldstein. Both Royal and Noah attend the University of Massachusetts turf program.

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