



# THE NEWSLETTER

December 2017

of the **Golf Course Superintendents Association of New England, Inc.**

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## *Presidents Message by David Johnson*

Earlier in my career friends, family and acquaintances would often ask me: What do you do the rest of the year when golf is not being played? I remember feeling guilty in my answer that would include taking vacation, which I could take only in the winter months, working on course construction, tree removal and refurbishing all of the equipment and course accessories. I have no idea why I would feel guilty or embarrassed answering because my answer was completely true.

I bring this up because it seems that every year my busy season goes further and further into the winter months. I am busy with all of the things mentioned above, but on top of this I am busy planning and managing capital projects, reviewing staff and making adjustments which often includes interviewing candidates, agronomic planning and the big push to get early ordering complete, trying new equipment and making purchases for the club. I could go on and on. Needless to say, anyone who knows me at all now, just asks if I am able to slow down and enjoy any time away from the club?

So now I will say that I hope you are taking your opportunities to enjoy some down time enjoying family and friends and to simply have time to recharge your batteries. It is hard to believe that 2017 is coming to an end and the first snow storm has already occurred. This means that spring will be next, so plan your time away from the club before it is too late.

Our winter meeting schedule is underway and began with the December meeting at Warrior Ice Arena in Brighton, MA. The day began with the Bruins hitting the ice in a very high paced practice that lasted about 45 minutes. Following practice we enjoyed a nice lunch that was catered by The Stockyard Restaurant. We conducted a business meeting that lead right into our first guest speaker Joe Sacco, Assistant Coach of the Boston Bruins. Joe is a native of Medford and played in the NHL for 13 seasons and competed in 738 games. Joe is a true professional who informed the room with insight into preparation and leadership, which is crucial in the success of an NHL team and coach.

Jesse Menachem, Executive Director of the MGA was our next guest speaker. Jesse focused on the imminent merger of the MGA and WGAM, which has been in the works over the past two years. This is a very exciting time for both associations and for golf in the Commonwealth. Stay tuned for updates on this front. We at GCSANE are very grateful for the continued support from Jesse and the MGA, which includes the complete production of the Green Operation Survey, New England Golf Summit, an office for GCSANE at Golf House and the list goes on.

Kevin Doyle, GCSAA Northeast Field Rep was our final speaker of the day. Kevin's presentation focused on the First Green educational program in which GCSAA is supporting Superintendents who are hosting middle school field trips to golf facilities. This program is intended to expose children to the science of our trade, our environmental impact and all of the fascinating things we do each day, especially from a young person's perspective. Kevin's talk on this subject is a must-see for all who are passionate about the future of our game and profession.

Our next meeting is our Annual Meeting on January 11th at the Renaissance Hotel at Patriot Place. The day will be focused on business, networking and enjoying a great day with friends and colleagues. Sign up early as it will be a sell out.

Until then enjoy the Holidays and all the best in the New Year.

David Johnson, GCSANE President

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## *Thoughts From Your Executive Director by Don Hearn*



Ed Downing

This is the time of year when most are giving thanks for many reasons. It's appropriate for me to give thanks to all our commercial members and affiliates for the strong support they've provided to our Association this past year. While it might not be most obvious, we would be nowhere if it wasn't for their continuing support, both financially and donating their time to help with Association business and to serve on the Board of Directors as a liaison between the board and the commercial community. The past few years Ed Downing from New England Specialty Soils represented the commercial interests as the representative on the board. Ed is a tireless worker and caring member of our Association. Many of you from the commercial side have dealt with Ed during his promotion of the Partnership Promotion Program (PPP). He has been an untiring advocate of the program and the benefits of enrollment. Ed will be leaving the board in January. His position will be filled by Keith Tortorella from Country Club Enterprises. Keith is an expert in our industry and will be a welcome complement to the board. We wish Ed and Keith continued success and look forward to their continuing contributions to the GCSA of New England.



The annual meeting of the Green Industry Alliance (GIA) was conducted during the New England Grows show held at the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center, November 29.

This is where we are brought up to date by our legislative agents, BCB Government Relations, Inc. Kathy Bell and Steve Boksanski, the B's of BCB, highlighted some of the relevant bills being considered by the legislature and what has been happening with various hearings and the timing of legislative actions. It's always an interesting day where we get to see other members of the GIA and realize golf is not the only industry in the sights of those who seek to create what they believe will be a better world to live in. Unfortunately, many times the consequence of the actions are not thought out or based on reality. While we sometimes think we get picked on, the golf community has been doing a good job telling our story in a way that is sensible and based on real-world experiences. Our representatives to the GIA are Greg Cormier, Peter Rappoccio and myself. Greg and Peter have represented our concerns with various government agencies and in front of legislative committees. Their input has been very helpful to those who are wrestling with regulations that can have an impact on our activities. Our thanks to Greg and Peter for all the time they devote on our behalf.

## Thoughts From Your Executive Director *by Don Hearn*

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The Massachusetts Golf Association recently hosted a media and informational day at the George Wright Golf Course in Boston. Both the George Wright and William Devine courses were highlighted for the restoration of these inner-city gems. The courses have been undergoing the restoration under the guidance of Mark Mungeam, President of Mungeam Cornish Golf Design and a member of our Association. His work

at George Wright has focused on restoring features designed by Donald Ross. A similar mission has been undertaken for the William Devine course, where Superintendent Russ Heller, a Past President of our Association, has been responsible for making sure the restoration proceeds as designed by the architect. Superintendent Len Curtin, is the one responsible for the restoration at George Wright. Both courses will be in the limelight next summer as they will be hosting the Massachusetts Amateur Championship, July 9-13. George Wright will be hosting the Massachusetts Women's Amateur Championship & Presidents Cup July 30–August 2. Both Russ and Len will be very busy next summer.

We were treated to an insight of the upcoming merger of the Massachusetts Golf Association and the Women's Golf Association of Massachusetts. The merger will be effective January 1, 2018. Jesse Menachem, Executive Director of the MGA went through the phases leading up to the merger and how the two groups will become one. They will be promoting the game and its benefits to all existing golfers and promote the game to future participants.



Jesse also made note of the cooperation between our respective Associations and how this helps them when reviewing courses and conditions for the many events they conduct each year. 2018 will see 125 events conducted by the MassGolf group.

Kevin Doyle, GCSAA Field Staff representative for the Northeast region gave a presentation on the value of The First Green program. This program started in the state of Washington and has spread to other parts of the country. It teaches children in our schools the value of having a golf course as a green space in the community. It also explains the efforts being made by those in our industry to steward land in a responsible way. He also explained how exposure to our industry at a young age might be the seed needed to grow our team of future employees in the golf industry. Kevin would be pleased to offer his support and guidance if you think you would like to host a group at your course. Please contact him at [kdoyle@gcsaa.org](mailto:kdoyle@gcsaa.org).



The December meeting took place at the Warrior Ice Arena, which is located on the New Balance campus in Brighton, MA. The arena is the practice facility of the Boston Bruins. The team's practice routines were watched by all who attended the meeting. Through the efforts of Brian Skinner, we were treated to an insight of the Bruins training and practice routine from assistant coach Joe Sacco. Joe is a member of Bellevue Golf Club and was generous with his time spent with us after the practice session. He also donated a hockey stick signed by the entire Bruins team.



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### **Sarah W. Stearns, PWS**

Sarah Stearns is a Professional Wetland Scientist with B+T and part of the family-owned **Southers Marsh Golf Club** in Plymouth, a longtime member of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of Cape Cod. Sarah has 19 years of public and private golf course experience as well as a unique understanding of the challenges of balancing course maintenance with member/player management.

Sarah has developed relationships with golf course superintendents and managers through her recent services to assist **The Country Club, USGA, TPC Boston, Cohasset Golf Club, Brae Burn Country Club, Franklin Country Club, Nashawtuc Golf Club, Oakley Country Club, Plymouth Country Club, Portland Country Club** as well as other New England clubs prior to working at B+T. In particular, Sarah had a significant role with the design, permitting and construction of **Boston Golf Club** in Hingham, which included numerous regulatory approvals, as well as a coordinated effort with the golf course architect, site contractors and club owners.

We are also pleased to consult with the **Steering Committee for the Development of Best Management Practices (BMP) for Massachusetts Golf Courses**. We look forward to contributing to the preparation of this manual so that it is as beneficial to superintendents and managers as possible.

Please contact Sarah Stearns at 508-366-0560 or [sstearns@bealsandthomas.com](mailto:sstearns@bealsandthomas.com) for more information and to learn how we can assist with your golf course projects.



## Offense versus Defense *By: Kevin Stacey*

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A more effective way to think about your day and daily time allocations is offense and defense. Offense means you're doing what you'd like to do, what's on your agenda, the things that are on your list. Since it's football season, an analogy would be when a team has the ball and is running its pre-scripted plays.

Defense would be when you're reacting to what's happening around you. Just like in football the defense doesn't know what the offense is going to do, so it must react to what's happening once the ball is snapped. Not all defense is bad. As a golf course leader, it's a core part of the mission of your job: to provide service and solve problems that are presented to you. However, it's easy to be pulled in as many directions as a high-handicapped golfer hitting on a fairway.

When I was a manager of provider relations at an HMO, much of my day was spent being on the defensive, reacting to problems and complaints that providers had or helping the people that worked for me with issues that arose. The job was generally 80% defense and 20% offense. That was nothing to feel bad about since that was the nature of the job, as it was considered a service position. In fact, problems with providers could be viewed as opportunities to strengthen the relationship by successfully solving them. It was important for me to acknowledge this reality, not fight it and make myself crazy about it.

However, I had to prioritize and defend my 20% of offense time. It's so easy to stay in a frantic defensive mode with the mindset of, "I have so much to do, I have so much to do." That 20% of my day was roughly 90 minutes. I had to set boundaries around this. I had to make sure it happened. This is the essence of time management and where the sanity and sense of control is found. Regardless your role, not everything is, or should, be allowed to be considered an emergency. There must be some time carved out for offense each day since that's where we make sense of things.

To create your offense ask yourself, "What would you like to have happen? How would you like things to go, or what would you like to accomplish? What are some of your long-term goals for your golf course?" What are you going to be hit with next month or what is down the road that you know you'll have to address?

Your offensive plan for the day may just be that you want to focus for 45 minutes each on two projects or situations. In many cases, you may not complete them, but focusing on it for 45 minutes will move the ball forward. Normally after spending 45 focused minutes on something it no longer feels as daunting.

Many people feel that all they do each day is put out fires. There's not much of a sense of accomplishment in that. There

could be some joy if you feel fulfilled by helping others. However, many times there is guilt and regret for other things that you haven't gotten to, which contributes to stress. One manager at a company where I was doing an internal time management training memorably told me, "Kevin, I don't need any more firefighters, I need a fire-preventer. I would love someone who can anticipate and resolve things before they descend into crisis mode."

So, how much time do you typically spend on offense each day? If you don't think you can, try coming in earlier when your workplace is quieter, or hide somewhere where you can't as easily be found and interrupted. Sometimes it is so easy to get drawn into the busy work and we can feel compelled to work on certain matters. A part of effective time management is testing your assumptions and theories. What do you think would happen, would the earth stop spinning if you make yourself unavailable and focused on a long-term goal for a while? Can you aim for at least 45 minutes each day? It feels much better to be investing your time as opposed to spending it.

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*Today's article is by Kevin Stacey, CEO and founder of TrainRight, Inc. He helps individuals and organizations get their TimeRight™ and MindRight™ to increase effectiveness, results, profitability, and peace of mind. Contact him at 1-800-603-7168 or kevin@kevinstacey.com to learn how his programs can help your team reach peak performance.*

# Tips On Table Manners *By Don Hearn*

*Below are some tips to help make your dining experience more comfortable. Certainly, some you already know, others might be new to you. Regardless, all will have some significance to help make your dining with others more comfortable.*

## Table Manners Tip #1

**Reservations.** Call a day or two ahead; or a week or two ahead if the restaurant and day are popular. Reconfirm the reservation by calling on the day of your visit. Call the restaurant during meal hours to speak to the official reservationist.

## Table Manners Tip #2

**Hot Beverages.** To test the temperature of a hot beverage, take a single sip from the side of the spoon.

## Table Manners Tip #3

**Finger Food.** When finger food is taken from a tray, place it on a plate. Don't lick your fingers; use a napkin. When in doubt about whether to use fingers or a utensil to eat a particular food, watch those about you and proceed accordingly. If you're still in doubt, use a utensil, usually a fork.

## Table Manners Tip #4

**Ready to Order.** To show you are ready to order, close your menu and place it on the table.

## Table Manners Tip #5

**Paying the Check in a Restaurant.** If you are the host, inform the waiter or maitre d' that you are to receive the check. Once the meal is finished, ask the waiter for the check. If there is no established host at a business lunch or dinner, the most senior professional is generally responsible for the check.

## Table Manners Tip #6

**Two Utensils.** Food served on a plate is eaten with a fork, and food served in a bowl is taken with a spoon. When two eating utensils or two serving utensils are presented together, such as a fork and spoon, the fork is used to steady the portion, and the spoon to cut and convey the bite to the mouth.

## Table Manners Tip #7

**Tasting Another Person's Food.** Either hand your fork to the person, who can spear a bite-sized piece from her plate and hand the fork back to you, or (if the person is sitting close by) hold your plate toward her so that she can put a morsel on the edge.

## Table Manners Tip #8

**Dropped Utensils.** If you drop a utensil, pick it up yourself if you can and let the waiter know you need a new one. If you cannot reach it, inform the waiter and ask for a replacement.

## Table Manners Tip #9

**One Thing at a Time.** Do one thing at a time at the table. If you want to sip your wine, temporarily rest your fork or knife on the plate.

## Table Manners Tip #10

**What to do with your Hands.** When holding a utensil, rest your other hand in your lap. When not holding any utensils, both hands remain in the lap. Do not fidget, and always keep your hands away from your hair.

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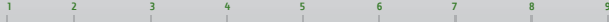
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*December 2017*





Here we are heading into the holiday and winter season. Black Friday and Cyber Monday have come and gone, and all the hustle and bustle of family is still to come. For me, I used to look forward to my children bolting for the tree on Christmas morning holding out hope that Santa had delivered the goods. Now they are older and wiser (for lack of a better

term), and we simply hope they get off their phones long enough to say “hi” to the visiting friends and family. As for items under the tree for me? I always enjoy the gifts that keep on giving. In the world of giving, you might be overlooking an opportunity to enjoy a gift of continuing information.

You could learn the immediate impact of tree removal from a superintendent in British Columbia, Canada. Want to incorporate duties utilized at Shinnecock or Hazeltine National? Updates from turf researchers as it happens? Are you on Twitter?

That’s right, all this and more are right there on Twitter. Yes, there is also political banter, items (good and bad) that go viral, but if you target your audience correctly, the learning opportunities and resources are endless.

With the sun at its lowest angle of the year, it is the absolute best time to show decision makers the impact of shade on your golf courses. Recently, a tree removal video posted by @march\_meadows showed the immediate impact of a conifer removal. One tree removed, full sun on the green. Perfect communication tool.

Do you lose sand from some flashed bunkers during the winter? Winds during the off season can create problems with exposed sand. So, when @Greensideup17 (Andy Wilson of Bethpage State Park) posted a picture of pallets placed inside bunkers by @jonjennings to alter the wind effect on the sand at Shinnecock, folks took notice. One of which was @ct\_turf (Chris Tritabaugh of Hazeltine National), who also uses a similar technique.

Again, you don’t have to set the Twitter world on fire, post every little thing you do or follow so many people that you can never catch up. You can follow those who can impact your ability to do your job, post golf-related items that may affect others, or even grow your world by interacting with people you find interesting. Or, you don’t have to post at all. You can follow @GCSAA for resources and ways to take advantage of your membership opportunities.

Perhaps you are already a part of the Twittersphere, if so I hope you are enjoying it. If not, I urge you to dip your toe a bit or jump in. You may find a gift of information that can benefit you more than you think.

I want to wish you all a wonderful holiday season and a happy new year. I enjoy serving you all as your field staff representative.

As a reminder, off-season tasks often include tree work. I have used the Newsletter to highlight safety resources available through UMass, allied organizations, and manufacturers in the past. I urge you to revisit those and share with your staff often ([The Newsletter, October 2013](#)).

## GCSAA Resources and Deadlines

**you Get Cool Stuff from your Association Already**

### EIFG Golf Facility Membership Program

The Golf Facility Membership Program recognizes a facility’s commitment to advancing environmental stewardship. Through donations of \$250 or more, participants enable the EIFG to support and fund research, education, advocacy and more.

Participating facilities receive various forms of recognition from the EIFG and GCSAA as well as marketing materials to demonstrate their support to their patrons and community.

#### Let your facility know

Promote your support of the EIFG with this [letter to facility members](#).

## GCSAA GOLF CHAMPIONSHIPS

The GCSAA Golf Championships, presented in partnership with The Toro Co., is a members-only event benefiting the EIFG. GCSAA Golf Championships registration is now open. Tournament registration closes Jan. 3. Any registrations processed/received after Dec. 20 will be assessed a \$50 late fee.

GCSAA has developed resources to help you outline the benefits to you and your facility of attending the 2018 Golf Industry Show and GCSAA Golf Championships. View the resource below for information specific to the Golf Championships, and access additional planning tools in the [Attendee Resources](#) section.

[GCSAA Golf Championships Justification Resource](#)

## GCSAA member needs survey

You should have received an email linking you to the member needs survey. Please take the few minutes to complete.

GCSAA is asking for your help in completing one of the most important surveys GCSAA will conduct of its members. The GCSAA Member Needs Assessment is a survey that focuses on two basic questions: 1) How are we serving your needs with our current programs and services; and 2) How might we better serve you in the future?

If you need another link to the survey, please contact me.



## Upcoming FREE webcasts:

- Jan. 9: [Documenting Your SOPs - equipment management series](#)  
[Carlos E. Arraya, CGCS, and Chris Rapp](#)
- Jan. 24: [An Inside Look at GCSAA's Best Management Practices Resource for Facility BMP Plans](#)  
[J. Bryan Unruh, Ph.D.](#)
- Jan. 31: [Creating Habitats for Monarch Butterflies & Pollinators on Golf Courses](#)  
[Chip Taylor, Ph.D.](#)


Again, if I can be of any assistance, please feel free to contact me.

**Kevin Doyle**

GCSAA Field Staff

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*December 2017*



# CHAPTER DELEGATES MEETING OUTCOMES

## NOVEMBER 7-8, 2017

### KANSAS CITY, MO AND LAWRENCE, KS

TO: 2017 Chapter Delegates Meeting Attendees DATE: 11/22/2017

FROM: Darren J. Davis, CGCS    CC: GCSAA Board of Directors    J. Rhett Evans

## Key Outcomes

- Proposed Bylaws revisions will move forward as written
- Proposed Election process will move forward
- The 2018 Assistant Superintendent Committee will review awarding education/service points for individuals taking the certificates

The GCSAA Board of Directors, 2018 board candidates, and 88 delegates representing 94 of GCSAA's 99 affiliated chapters, convened at the Hilton Kansas City Airport Hotel and GCSAA Headquarters on November 7-8, 2017, for the 25th annual Chapter Delegates Meeting. Twenty five of the delegates were first-time attendees.

Darren J. Davis, CGCS, GCSAA Vice President, called the Chapter Delegates Meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. on November 7. Mr. Davis introduced the GCSAA Board of Directors. He welcomed everyone to Kansas City and thanked them for their time and participation at the meeting.

## President's Association Briefing

President Bill H. Maynard, CGCS called on the attendees to be a force for good in the world, in their profession, and in the association. President Maynard explained that he was inspired by reading the book, "The Fred Factor", by Mark Sanborn. There are four principles Mr. Maynard hoped the delegates would take to heart:

- Everyone makes a difference
- Success is built on relationships
- Create value for others
- Reinvent yourself regularly

Mr. Maynard challenged the delegates to take these principles to heart and make a difference in the world around them.

## CEO Briefing

GCSAA Chief Executive Officer, J. Rhett Evans, began his presentation with a quote from GCSAA founder, Col. John Morley. The quote speaks to the association being founded on justice, faithful brotherhood and generous benevolence. Those foundational truths still hold firm today. Mr. Evans thanked the chapters and membership for their generous contributions to the GCSAA Disaster Relief Fund. As of the meeting, \$150,000 had been raised.

- Chapters - \$63,570
- Individuals - \$5,735

- Corporate - \$20,521
- GCSAA/EIFG - \$40,000
- GCSAA staff contributions - \$19,616

The delegates heard from Field Staff in regions that were effected by natural disasters. Each field staff informed the attendees of how the money raised helped members in their area.

Benevolence Mr. Evans shared that GCSAA has entered into an agreement with the Wee One Foundation. The Wee One Foundation's mission is to assist golf course management professionals (or their dependents) who incur overwhelming expenses due to medical hardship without comprehensive insurance or adequate financial resources. As part of the agreement, GCSAA will provide a financial donation and promote Wee One's cause and events through various media channels.

The GCSAA immediate past president will serve on the Wee One Benevolence Committee.

## Report of GCSAA

Mr. Evans provided an overview of GCSAA financials. The association remains on solid financial footing with revenues outpacing expenses. GCSAA is expected to have \$18,066,000 in revenue and \$17,963,000 in expenses in 2017. The Golf Industry Show remains the association's largest revenue generator and brought in 3.88 million in net revenue. The outlook is positive for GIS to have another successful year in San Antonio. The association continues to focus on increasing value in GCSAA membership by spending its resources in key member services and initiatives. Those areas include – research and environmental programs, chapter outreach and government affairs. The financial statements for GCSAA and EIFG are audited on an annual basis by an independent certified public accounting firm. For the 2016 calendar year, the CPA firm gave both financial statements a clean or unmodified opinion, which is the highest rating possible.

Mr. Evans reminded the delegates that last year GCSAA set a goal to achieve 20,000 members by 2020. Membership is the lifeblood of GCSAA and chapters. Currently, GCSAA has 17,380 members. Clearly, work remains to be done in this area. The association will achieve its goal by remaining mission focused, looking for growth opportunities internationally and increasing brand recognition in GCSAA.

## International Initiatives

International opportunities are an area for growth for



GCSAA. Mr. Evans shared information surrounding three countries:

- Ireland – GCSAA has granted a license to the Golf Course Superintendents Association of Ireland to allow them to consume GCSAA educational content for a fee.
- Canada – The recent CanAm Tournament is an example of partnering with Canada to support networking and education opportunities that benefit both associations.
- Mexico – In Mexico, the interest to collaborate with GCSAA was so great they agreed to change their association name and to officially become an affiliated chapter of GCSAA.

The Mexico GCSA is now the 99th GCSAA chapter.

## Branding

Mr. Evans concluded his presentation with a discussion on branding. What's in a brand? Why is branding important not only to GCSAA, but the membership?

- Branding builds value and credibility
- Branding improves recognition
- Branding creates trust
- Branding generates opportunities

It is important that GCSAA increase the visibility of its brand to create recognition and value with employers and golfers. This increased brand recognition benefits the membership as a whole. The association has various branding initiatives such as the relationship with the Golf Channel and the Thank A Golf Course Superintendent Campaign. These initiatives have been successful forays into extending the brand in new markets. Mr. Evans advised that the association can do better. He asked the delegates to consider helping with brand outreach by:

- Continuing to represent GCSAA. Consider sitting on a committee or task group. Become a Grassroots Ambassador. GCSAA needs volunteer input to keep the association strong.
- Increase the profession's brand presence by including the GCSAA logo on scorecards, business cards, place stickers on equipment, or consider GCSAA apparel for staff.
- Consider adopting the universal logo for affiliated chapters. GCSAA will pay up to \$1,000 to assist in the transition and do the design work.

## Rounds 4 Research Auction

Darren J. Davis, CGCS and Mischia Wright, Associate Director, EIFG presented information on the Rounds 4 Research Auction. Mr. Davis thanked the Rounds 4 Research Task Group for their hard work at this year's meeting. The task group provided valuable insight that helped the 2017 Rounds 4 Research Auction garner its most successful year yet. The number of rounds donated increased 26% from 2016 and the number of rounds sold increased by 33%. Marketing in the social media sphere was a focus for the auction, with significant gains on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook. The top five fundraisers were:

- Carolinas GCSA - \$50,000
- Georgia GCSA - \$19,826
- Florida GCSA - \$15,614
- Tennessee GCSA - \$13,235
- GCSA of New Jersey - \$10,358

Ms. Wright invited Florida GCSA delegate, Nick Kearns, to offer his thoughts on running a successful Rounds 4 Research campaign. Mr. Kearns encouraged delegates to get organized. The Florida chapter created a committee that took ownership of this initiative in their state. They worked with all of the local chapters to ensure rounds were being donated. They even went so far as to create a pamphlet illustrating research needs in the state and how it would benefit the golf facilities. The committee relied heavily on the EIFG staff to help with mailings and marketing.

The 2018 Rounds 4 Research Auction will be held April 30-May 6.

## State BMP implementation and Next Steps

Mark Johnson, Associate Director, Environmental Programs gave an update on GCSAA's goal to have all 50 states with a BMP in place by 2020. Mr. Johnson thanked the chapters that have been working diligently within their states to make this goal a reality. Ten states have a BMP Manual in place, with 3 more set to come online this winter. In all, there are 31 states in progress. The State BMP initiative is gaining steam and is expected to hit the goal by 2020!

## Next Steps

Once states have created and adopted state-level BMP plans the next step will be for facility level plans. Mr. Johnson explained that superintendents will be able to log in to the GCSAA BMP Tool and create a facility level plan based on the state BMP manual. More information about all of these programs and progress being made in this area will be available at the 2018 Golf Industry Show and on [gcsaa.org](http://gcsaa.org).

## Government Affairs Briefing

Chava McKeel, Director, Government Affairs along with Robert Helland, Director, Congressional Affairs and Michael Lee, Manager, Government Affairs, briefed the delegates on three key initiatives and asked all members to get involved in GCSAA's advocacy efforts.

## GCSAAPAC

GCSAA now has a Political Action Committee (GCSAAPAC) to support advocacy efforts on behalf of the membership. Having a PAC allows GCSAA to build Congressional champions to advance GCSAA's agenda. The PAC will grant greater access and visibility with Members of Congress and increase the association's profile with allied golf groups. It will help GCSAA remain a leader in golf advocacy. There are two ways that delegates and members can be a part of the GCSAAPAC. By volunteering to serve on the PAC Board, or by contributing to the fund.

## National Golf Day

Next, delegates heard plans for the upcoming 2018 National Golf Day which will be held on April 24-25, 2018. This event continues to bring together allied golf associations through the We Are Golf coalition. The lobby day brings together hundreds of attendees spreading the coalition's message regarding golf's charitable, economic, environmental and fitness benefits to Congressional leaders. 2017 was the first time a community service project was included and it was successful. Delegates were encouraged to share the dates of National Golf Day and to ask their chapter to consider sending a representative.

## Grassroots Ambassador Program

The Grassroots Ambassador Program is entering the 4th year of matching a member of Congress with a GCSAA professional member. GCSAA has 305 Grassroots Ambassadors. There are still districts open and in need of volunteers. This program has been successful because of dedicated volunteers meeting with their member and establishing relationships.

## Task Groups Update

GCSAA is focused on growing its value proposition with current and potential members. This will help the association achieve its overall membership goal of reaching 20,000 by 2020. GCSAA asked three task groups to help increase the value in membership to students, assistants and equipment managers. The delegates heard about exciting new programs that stemmed from the task groups work.

## Equipment Manager Task Group

GCSAA Director, Mark F. Jordan, CGCS and Shelia Finney, Senior Director, Member Programs gave the delegates an update on the Equipment Manager Task Group's work in 2017. The task group helped launch two new certificates in 2017 – Metalworking and Fabrication; Fundamentals of Turfgrass Operations. This brings the total of certificates available to 8. The task group will continue to work towards creating a new Certified Golf Course Equipment Manager designation. Another area of focus has been the creation of a Chapter Toolkit for Equipment Manager Education. The toolkit is available on [gcsaa.org](http://gcsaa.org).

## Student Task Group

Mr. Jordan and Ms. Finney continued the task group update session by briefing the delegates on work conducted by the Student Task Group. The student task group provided feedback on a new online mentoring program; suggested free student web membership and helped with a new marketing piece aimed at high school students and their parents. The task group also helped identify potential topics at GIS and gave their thoughts on a new Student Pavilion area that will be on the Trade Show Floor. All of these items are focused on increasing the visibility of student members and their importance to GCSAA, and the future of the profession.

## Assistant Superintendent Task Group

Darren J. Davis, CGCS and Shari Koehler, Director, Professional Development dived into the final task group update. The Assistant Superintendent Task Group was excited to roll up their sleeves and get to work on the brand-new Assistant Superintendent Certificate Series. These certificates are aimed at helping assistant superintendents market their expertise and knowledge, although they will be available to everyone. The Agronomic and Business exams will debut by the end of 2017. The 2018 task group will further define the remaining certificate criteria for content relative to communication/leadership, and environmental management.

## Delegate Questions surrounding the task group presentations:

- *How long would it take to work through all the certificates?* All the programs are self-paced with no prerequisites between certificates. Therefore, it's up to the individual to decide when he/she is ready to sit for the exam.
- *Are the exams available in Spanish?* No, at this point only in English.
- *Will there be education points or service points available to individuals going through the certificate process?* Not at this time. Staff will make a note to have the 2018 Assistant Superintendent Committee review and make a recommendation.
- *How much do they cost?* For the Equipment Manager certificates, each individual has the opportunity to take the exam twice (if needed.) The cost is \$40 for members; \$60 for non-members. The Assistant Superintendent Certificate Series would potentially work the same way. The price has not been set yet.

The delegates discussed the various initiatives and overall were supportive of the task groups efforts. In conclusion, Mr. Evans noted that these programs and services are aimed at the labor shortage facing the industry and finding new ways to provide qualified individuals to fill that gap.

## First Green

Ms. Finney presented information on First Green, a program that provides STEM Education opportunities for children using the golf course as a learning lab. The First Green has been around for 20 years and is based in the Northwest. Ms. Finney asked the delegates how many had hosted, or heard of, First Green Field Trips. Many of the delegates raised their hands. GCSAA and the EIFG are supportive of First Green because these field trips introduce kids to the golf course and potential careers. It has the opportunity to impact these young minds and tackle some challenges that the industry has been faced with – lack of qualified assistants, declining enrollment in turf programs and a labor shortage. The EIFG Board of Trustees will discuss taking over the management of The First Green program at its winter meeting. Potential next steps in the evolution of the program could be to add high school curriculum and partnering with universities and chapters to grow this program nationwide.

## Election Process

Keith A. Ihms, CGCS, GCSAA Director, briefed the delegates on proposed changes to the election process. The changes are based on feedback received from the delegates, an effort to make the election process clearer and put the decision in the hands of the membership/delegates.

The changes would affect the election of directors and the process to fill the seat of a director who either resigns, or has been elected to the Secretary/Treasurer position.

### Election process proposed changes

- No proposed changes to President, Vice President or Secretary/Treasurer election process.
- Each open director position would be voted on one at a time vs. the current process of voting for all open director positions at the same time.

### Unexpired Terms/Vacancies on the Board

- There is a proposed bylaw change that would require an immediate vote by ballot for any vacancy that might occur due to the unexpired director's term in the Secretary/Treasurer election. This unexpired term would be voted on after the open position(s) for director(s). Currently, if there is an unexpired term due to the Secretary/Treasurer election, it is filled by presidential appointment.
- A proposed change to the bylaws would also address how to fill a term due to a resignation on the Board. Currently, the President appoints a replacement. The change would be to have the President appoint a replacement only until the next election. Then the delegates would vote on the replacement.

## Delegate Discussion

The delegates discussed the proposed election changes and offered thoughts regarding the new process. A few delegates expressed concerns that the new process would allow larger chapters to have greater influence due to the voting of directors individually. However, others thought it wouldn't really change the outcome. Most delegates seemed supportive of voting on unexpired terms, rather than the current process of filling those by presidential appointment. A few delegates noted they trusted the Board of Directors to make that decision.

## Governance Updates

Peter J. Grass, CGCS, Immediate Past President and Shelia Finney shared that GCSAA recently hired a new legal team, Hutton & Howe. As part of the transition process, counsel reviewed all of GCSAA's governance documents. Including the GCSAA Bylaws, Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct Guidelines and offered recommendations. The Standards and Bylaws Committee reviewed the recommendations and agreed that they should be brought forward to the delegates.

## Proposed Bylaws Revisions

As a reminder, these revisions and the proposed addition are not in effect. They require a 2/3 majority vote by the delegates at the Annual Meeting to pass. There will be a total of 9 bylaws changes for the delegates to consider at the Annual Meeting. The delegates were presented with the exact changes that they will be voting on in February. Here is a synopsis of the proposed changes:

- **Proposed revision to Article 1, Section 1:** Currently, only A and B members living in the United States (excluding Alaska) are required to belong to an affiliated chapter. Now that GCSAA has two international chapters, Ontario GSA and Mexico GCSA, the proposed change to the bylaws will extend the dual membership requirement internationally if there is an affiliated chapter nearby.
- **Proposed revision to International Member:** The changes to the definition would only allow international superintendent membership in countries without a GCSAA Affiliated Chapter. It goes hand in hand with the change in Article 1, Section 1.
- **Proposed revision to Article V, Section 4:** This change would allow vacancies, or unexpired terms due to the election process (Secretary/Treasurer election) to be filled by ballot immediately following the election for the open positions for director.
- **Proposed revision to Article VI, Section 2:** The revision states the appointments to fill a vacancy on the Board of Directors will only remain in effect until the next scheduled election. At which point, the delegates would vote to fill the remaining term.
- **Proposed revision to Article VI, Section 3:** This revision cleans up and consolidates language surrounding the process of removing a GCSAA Board member.
- **Proposed revision to Article VIII, Section 1 (B):** Brings the technology used while holding "Special Meetings" up-to-date.
- **Proposed revision to Article VIII, Section 1 (D):** Speaks to allowing board members to waive notice of meetings by emailing or messaging the Secretary of the Board. Adding 21st technology options.
- **Proposed addition to Article VIII Meetings:** Adds the Chapter Delegates Meeting to the Bylaws and outlines the consequences of nonattendance. This is consistent with the Affiliation Agreement.
- **Proposed revision to Article XIV Dissolution:** Cleans up language surrounding how the assets of GCSAA would be distributed if it dissolved.

## GCSAA Code of Ethics & Professional Conduct Guidelines

Hutton & Howe offered their thoughts based on recent court cases and the defensibility of certain items in the GCSAA Code of Ethics. The board made the following revisions:

- Struck all items that were not legally defensible.
- Item 1 now refers to a member being convicted of a felony.
- Item 2 refers to falsifying membership documents.
- Items 3 and 4 refer to seeking employment in a slanderous or defamatory manner.

The Professional Conduct Guidelines were revised to include items that were struck from the Code of Ethics as not being legally enforceable. Any item referring to employment seeking activities were removed. The GCSAA Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct Guidelines can be found on [gcsaa.org](http://gcsaa.org). The delegates then broke into small groups to discuss the proposed changes to the election process and in the governance documents.

## Town Hall Session

The GCSAA Board of Directors established the practice of conducting “town hall” meetings to further enhance the communication and information sharing between GCSAA’s elected leaders and affiliated chapters and members. The town hall format is an open forum where chapter delegates have the opportunity to have a dialogue with the GCSAA Board of Directors who will answer questions and share information on items of interest and importance to chapters and members.

Darren Davis facilitated the discussion between the delegates and the GCSAA Board of Directors. The delegates discussed the outcomes of their small group discussions surrounding the election process changes, proposed bylaws changes and governance document revisions. The feedback received generally ran along these themes:

- Overall, the groups supported the changes in the election process.
- Several groups suggested looking into voting technology that could speed up the process.
- While the delegates didn’t care for the removal of job poaching language from the Code of Ethics, they realized that the law is the law and didn’t want the association to get into trouble over it.
- There were great conversations around the new certificate programs for Equipment Managers and Assistant Superintendents. Several delegates encouraged the Board to consider not charging members for these certificates.
- There was a robust discussion structure of the board. Should there be representatives from each region, or facility type? Delegates also voiced their opinion that they wanted the best candidates to run, not necessarily an individual from a certain region.

## Candidate Presentations

Chapter delegates had an opportunity to listen to presentations from candidates running for elected office. After the presentations, delegates participated in the “Meet the Candidates” session where they asked questions of the candidates in breakout groups. The 2018 GCSAA Board candidates are:

- **Office of President** – Darren J. Davis, CGCS
- **Office of Vice President** – Rafael Barajas, CGCS
- **Office of Secretary/Treasurer** – John R. Fulling, Jr., CGCS and Mark F. Jordan, CGCS
- **Director (electing 2)** – T.A. Barker, CGCS, Kevin P. Breen, CGCS, Nelson Caron, Kevin P. Sunderman, Rory Van Poucke and Jeff L. White, CGCS.

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Scott Conrade is an Aquatic Biologist based in SOLitude’s **Oneonta, NY** office. He designs and performs sustainable treatments for SOLitude’s mid-Atlantic clients, and ensures the long-term waterbody goals of the clients are exceeded. Scott graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Environmental Science from SUNY Oneonta. Before joining the team full-time in 2017, Scott worked seasonally for SOLitude over the course of three summers.



Michael Meritet is an Aquatic Specialist focused on helping clients achieve their lake and pond goals through best management practices and ecologically sustainable strategies. Michael is based out of SOLitude’s **Virginia Beach** office and has extensive experience working with mechanical, biological and chemical solutions. He earned his bachelor’s degree in Fisheries and Aquaculture from SUNY Cobleskill, and worked as a bayman and on a large-scale aquaponics farm before joining SOLitude.



Eriq Cote is a Mechanical Specialist based out of SOLitude’s **Shrewsbury, MA** office. He is experienced with the operation, tow and repair of mechanical harvesters and hydro-rakes. Eriq studied Automotive Technologies at Harvard Ellis Tech where he focused on troubleshooting, maintenance and repair of gas diesel engines. He has completed 4 ASE certifications, as well as the Honda CDX program.



Chris Mann is a Technical and Business Analyst who assists SOLitude with process documentation, corporate strategy and analysis, and IT and telecom projects. Chris works out of SOLitude’s **Virginia Beach** office, and is a graduate of Christopher Newport University in Newport News, VA. He has a Master’s degree in Business Administration from Bellevue University and has a strong combination of business experience and technical skills to support SOLitude’s Administrative and Operations teams.



Allison Tabisz is a Services and Contracts Administrator focused on processing service agreements and supporting SOLitude's Operations and Administrative teams from the company's **Virginia Beach** office. Allison has more than a decade of business and management experience, and has utilized her administrative expertise in a variety of fields ranging from catering and events to healthcare. She holds a degree in Business Administration with a focus in Technical Management from DeVry University.



Bret Ervin is a Services and Contracts Administrator based out of SOLitude's **Virginia Beach** office. He is focused on supporting SOLitude's Field and Operations teams through contract and service order review and processing. Bret has a Bachelor of Business Administration degree in Business Management with a concentration in Technology, Innovation and Entrepreneurship from James Madison University. Prior to joining SOLitude, Bret was a leader in the gourmet seafood business in Outer Banks, NC, where he focused on all aspects of restaurant management, including operations, sales, catering and customer service.



Sharon Mertes is a Regional Administrator and Client Relations professional based out of SOLitude's **Hackettstown, NJ** office. Sharon is one of the first points of contact for clients and vendor partners and ensures SOLitude's internal and external communications are timely and productive. Sharon has a Bachelor of Science degree from Kean University and brings a wealth of business experience in her support of Field staff, Regional Directors, and Operations teams.



To read full bios and learn more about SOLitude Lake Management's team visit: [www.solitudelakemanagement.com/team](http://www.solitudelakemanagement.com/team)

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Golf Course Superintendents Association of New England, Inc.

**Summer Went on the Wagon**

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Nov. 3, 1980  
Directors Meeting 9:30 a.m.  
Regular Meeting 10:00 a.m.  
Lunch 11:30 a.m.  
Lunch 12:30 p.m.  
Golf

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