



# THE NEWSLETTER

January 2019

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

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## *The GCSA of New England Presents the 2019 Distinguished Service Award to Chris Petersen by Peter Rappoccio, DSA Committee Chairman*



*From left: Peter Rappoccio, Chris Petersen, Dave Johnson*

Chris Petersen has been a tireless advocate of superintendents throughout New England and his generosity of spirit has been appreciated by all who have been in his presence. As one nominator stated, “Chris Petersen and Tom Irwin have been huge supporters of the Golf Course Superintendent, GCSANE and any and all fundraising efforts including, but not limited to, the S&B and before that the Turf Research Tournament”. The Tom Irwin company has been the title sponsor of the UMass Alumni Turf Group’s Dr. Joseph Troll Classic golf tournament since its inception. The company has also been the top sponsor of the Association’s Scholarship and Benevolence tournament since its beginning over 25 years ago.

The Tom Irwin company and the Petersen name is synonymous. Chris grew up in the business, following in the footsteps of his father, Jack Petersen. Chris’ son, Ben is the third generation of the Petersen family to be an integral part of the company.

Though being the president of the company requires time in the office, he still spends time with company clients and provides technical and professional advice to his clients and others in our industry. He is always reaching for ways to help those in our industry succeed in their lives and be successful at their facilities.

Chris has volunteered his time to many important issues in today’s environment and has been an advocate for Superintendents and distributors Chris served on a committee which met with regulators in helping to educate regulators on the effects of the nutrient management act a few years back, and has served on R.I.S.E; an association who represents industry professionals educating the public on safe use of pesticides. Chris was also a member of the committee chosen to help select back then, our Association manager and now Executive Director, Don Hearn.

Chris and his company have been top-level supporters of virtually all the events and programs in our professional world. Superintendents, Assistants and those in need have benefitted from the generosity of the Petersen family and the Tom Irwin company. Chris honored his father by establishing the Jack Petersen Fund which distributes financial aid to those who need a helping hand.

Another nominator stated in part “On a national level he has worked hard to change the attitude of companies to invest in their people and superintendents.”

Chris Petersen is a recognized as a leader, an innovator, and an inspirational individual. These traits, along with his contributions to our profession and the turfgrass industry make him the outstanding choice for this year’s Distinguished Service Award.

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# Thoughts From Your Executive Director *by Don Hearn*

The Association's Annual Meeting is the meeting that is special to many of our members. Past Presidents meet and discuss the events that took place over the past 12 months. In addition, they offer a perspective from their years of service that provide valuable input to the current board of directors that help move the Association forward. We're grateful for their participation.

Past Presidents who attended and their years in this office.

Ron Kirkman	1980-1981	Mike Hermanson	2004-2005
Brian Cowan, CGCS	1982-1983	Pat Daly, CGCS	2009-2010
Dick Zepp, CGCS	1988-1989	Jason Adams	2011-2012
Bob Ruzala	2000-2001	Mark Gagne	2013-2014
Jim Fitzroy, CGCS	2002-2003	Mike Luccini	2015-2016



*from left: Dave Johnson, Donny D'Errico (former board member), Brian Skinner, Eric Richardson, Ryan Emerich, Bob Dembek, Peter Rappoccio, David Stowe, Mike Luccini, (not pictured, Keith Tortorella)*

The Annual Meeting is the time when the new Board of Directors is elected. This year's board members are:

President	Dave Johnson, The Country Club
Vice President	Peter Rappoccio, CGCS, Concord Country Club
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Director – Education	Ryan Emerich, Vesper Country Club
Director – S&B	David Stowe, CGCS, Newton Commonwealth Golf Course
Past President	Michael Luccini, CGCS, Franklin Country Club

Another highlight of the Annual Meeting was the opportunity to recognize our 25-year members. Those celebrating this milestone are:

Jason Adams	Blue Hill Country Club
Chuck Bramhall	Harrell's
Chris Cowan	Atlantic Golf & Turf
Bill Yanakakis	Rockport Golf Club
Ed Gianni	Halifax Country Club
Glenn Larrabee	Target Specialty Products
Doug Preston	Southwest Greens

Not all were able to attend. Those attending are pictured below.

*from left: Jason Adams, Chuck Bramhall, Chris Cowan, Bill Yanakakis*



The sad part of the Annual Meeting is announcing those who passed away during the prior year. Two highly regarded members passed away in 2018.

Bob Mucciarone, Life Member, joined in 1952, died March 24, 2018.

Bob was retired and the long time Superintendent at Dedham Country and Polo Club.

Dr. Noel Jackson, Life Member, joined 1993, died May 29, 2018.

Dr. Jackson was a well known and highly respected member of the turfgrass research community from the University of Rhode Island.



Our speaker was Henry DeLozier, Partner in Global Golf Advisors. Currently he serves on the Board of Directors for Audubon International. He is a Past President of the Board of Directors for the National Golf Course Owners Association (NGCOA). He is known across the globe for his thought leadership in golf-related businesses, he has been called one of the “Most Influential People in Golf” since 1999 by the

Crittenden publications. Henry is one the most highly regarded speakers in our industry. His presentation at the Annual Meeting was motivating and filled with thoughts we all can use at our club, course and business.

We are fortunate to have representatives from our industry attend this meeting. It’s always good to know we have positive and close working relations with these representatives. While not all could attend because of other commitments I would like to recognize those who did.

Peter Costello, Board of Directors, Mass Golf

Kevin Doyle, Northeast Field Staff Representative, GCSAA

Kevin Eldridge, Director of Rules and Competitions, Mass Golf

Mark Gagne, Director of Member Services, Mass Golf

Elaine Gebhardt, Executive Director, New England Golf Course Owners Association

Jesse Menachem, Executive Director/CEO, Mass Golf

Jim Skorulski, Senior Agronomist, USGA Green Section

Gary Sykes, Executive Director, New England Regional Turfgrass Foundation

Our supporting members and companies are to be recognized and thanked for their contributions to the success of the GCSA of New England. Those listed below have offered company support at an enhanced level to all our members through their participation in this program.

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## Ryan Emerich

Golf Course Superintendent – Vesper Country Club Tyngsborough, MA



Ryan has had a very successful two years at Vesper Country Club. According to those who know him well, he is a great leader who is always up for a challenge. Ryan recently volunteered to be on the GCSANE board, and he is one of the better golfers in our association.

### Tell us about yourself?

I grew up in Lancaster, PA. My wife, Heather, and I have two young daughters, Kendall (4) and Laurel (2). We enjoy spending time together as a family. I am the type of person who enjoys a wide range of activities, I am up for anything, but I particularly enjoy snowmobiling and skiing.

### How did you get into the turf industry?

#### What is your work history?

As a kid, I was working as a bag room attendant at Bent Creek Country Club in Lititz, PA and quickly realized that I would rather be outside than in the pro shop. The Superintendent, Jim Loke, hired me to work on the Grounds Crew and encouraged me to pursue a Bachelor's Degree in Turfgrass Science from Penn State University.

After graduating from Penn State, I was fortunate to work at Saucon Valley Country Club for eight years. Saucon is a massive property (850 acres). It has three 18 hole golf courses (Old, Grace, and Weyhill) and a short course, all of which were ranked in "Americas Top 100 Golf Courses" at one point or another. At the Weyhill course, I worked alongside Architect Tom Marzolf on the sympathetic restoration which involved the reconstruction of greens, tees, approaches, and bunkers. After the Weyhill restoration, and under the guidance of Architect Andrew Green, I developed and managed the Grace Course reconstruction which involved shifting fairways and bunker renovations.

### What has surprised you the most about the turf industry?

The camaraderie between fellow superintendents, assistants, and distributors has always surprised me. It's about the industry and the success of all of us. To me, it seems that most everyone is in this business for more than just yourself.

### What kind of challenges do you face at Vesper and how are you overcoming those challenges?

Vesper rebuilt their greens in 2010 with a USGA sand-based rootzone. They utilized a liner in-between the original push up collar and the new greens mix. Unfortunately, the liner has caused some issues; it heaves the collars in the winter causing scalping in the spring. Also, it heats up during the summer months, melting out the grass on either side of the liner. Through various methods, we continue to cut out the liner to avoid future issues.

### How do you present your golf course?

I believe in championship playing conditions on a daily basis. I concentrate on the details. I feel like most golfers notice small details more than overall appearance.

### In an ideal world, what would you change about our industry or golf in general?

Does it matter what they read on the stimp meter if they putt true? It would be nice if golfers would not worry about the speed of the greens and focus more on how the greens are rolling. I am an avid golfer who cares more about how consistent and how smooth the greens are than a reading off the stimp meter. As an industry, we should stop talking about green speed and find another metric to quantify the playability. Relying on the stimp meter has, from time to time, led us astray; as we have seen in the US Open.

### What type of manager are you and what kind of message do you present to your team?

I like to make work enjoyable for everyone while maintaining high standards and efficient task completion. What you put into a situation is what you are going to get out of it. The effort is the key component!

We thank Ryan for stepping up and participating. If you are interested in having your story in the newsletter, please contact Eric Richardson at [erichardson@essexcc.org](mailto:erichardson@essexcc.org)

# Chapter Delegate Recap 2018

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I learned a lot on my first trip to the Kansas Headquarters of the GCSAA. Here is a recap of the November 13-14 2018 Chapter Delegates meeting.

One of the biggest things I realized and thought I already knew, was that there is a building full of dedicated professionals out there in Kansas working very hard every day, for all of us and our clubs. There are so many resources available to the membership and those on our staffs. These resources exist to help us become smarter, more efficient, more polished, and almost everything you can think of to advance your career and be the best superintendent for your club. You just have to make the time to explore the website, the videos, webinars and other opportunities available.

Among the multiple pages of pre-meeting agenda items and advance information and a busy two days, here are the most noteworthy topics for me to share with GCSANE members:

There were 89 delegates plus directors and GCSAA board members and field staff. Mexico is newest chapter (number 99)

GCSAA is alive and well, President Davis shared the board's commitment to the Mission and Vision and how they all participated in personality tests for a better understanding of each other and how best to work together.

EIFG and Rounds 4 research presented checks back to the 5 highest fund raising chapters and noted that the program is gaining traction each year with a goal of \$400,000 next year.

BMP push has resulted in 10 states with BMP's in place and 10 more scheduled to wrap up theirs by 2018. Goals to finish all states by 2020 seem realistic. Success stories were shared of over 100 bans having been enacted and all golf within those bans were exempted because of the BMP program already in place!

Current membership of association is over 18,000. Future goal is to move towards a sustained membership of 20,000 or more. Benefits of larger numbers offer the following advantages; better revenue, a bigger voice in Washington, more good people to draw from for leadership positions and advocacy efforts at all levels local, national and individual.

Dues increase is being recommended by the GCSAA Board due to an increase of the CPI of 4.5% over the last two years. This translates to a \$20 bump for Class A/B members to \$400 and \$10 for Class C to \$205. The Equipment Tech option for \$95 will remain a terrific value and great way to increase overall membership toward 20,000.

New Membership categories/strategies are being explored to lure new members from the approximately 7,500 clubs (out of 15,000) without a GCSAA member and retain existing members. New classification ideas are:

Friends of the Golf Course Superintendent, which would target golfers and advocates with suggested dues @ \$50-75.

Facility classification targeting smaller clubs with dues closer to \$200 without being able to vote or hold office.

Additional information on these new classifications is being offered to delegates later in the month prior to voting at the annual meeting in San Diego.

Candidates for 2019 Board all offered presentations and visited with us in small groups so we could ask questions and have a good understanding of their goals, commitment and reasons for running.

Those running for 2019 are:

For President – Rafael Barajas, CGCS

For Vice President – John R. Fulling, Jr., CGCS

For Secretary/Treasurer

- Kevin P. Breen, CGCS

- Mark F. Jordan, CGCS

For Director (electing three)

- T.A. Barker, CGCS

- Paul L. Carter, CGCS

- Doug D. Dykstra, CGCS

- Jeff L. White, CGCS

There were multiple other topics covered including chapter outreach, government affairs, GIS rotation (Las Vegas, San Antonio, Phoenix and New Orleans are part of the 3rd city consideration), and I would be happy to share my best understanding of them if anyone is interested in reaching out to myself or Kevin Doyle. If you are fortunate enough to have an opportunity to make the trip to Lawrence I recommend it, you won't be disappointed.



# *A Lighthearted Beginning To The Year by Don Hearn*

To begin the new year on a light note I thought it would be good to start it with a few laughs, smiles and smirks. A friend sent me these aphorisms. What's an aphorism? An aphorism is a statement of truth or opinion expressed in a concise and witty manner. The term is often applied to philosophical, moral and literary principles. So here goes.

- I read that 4,153,237 people got married last year. Not to cause any trouble, but shouldn't that be an even number?
- I find it ironic that the colors red, white, and blue stand for freedom until they are flashing behind you.
- Relationships are a lot like algebra. Have you ever looked at your X and wondered Y?
- America is a country which produces citizens who will cross the ocean to fight for democracy but won't cross the street to vote.
- You know that tingly little feeling you get when you love someone? That's your common sense leaving your body.
- My therapist says I have a preoccupation with vengeance. We'll see about that!
- I think my neighbor is stalking me as she's been Googling my name on her computer. I saw it through my telescope last night.
- Money talks ... but all mine ever says is good-bye.
- You're not fat, you're just easier to see.
- If you think nobody cares whether you're alive, try missing a couple of payments.
- Money can't buy happiness, but it keeps the kids in touch!



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*January 2019*



## GCSAA Update *by Kevin Doyle*



Over two years ago, I received a call from a member in western New York. The chapter board revisited a long-bantered notion that consolidating with some area chapters would be beneficial and wondered if I could help reach out to area chapter leaders for a potential meeting to discuss the matter. Just over two years later, the Western New York

GCSA became the first of four chapters to vote to consolidate. The other three chapters (Northeastern GCSA, Central New York GCSA, and Finger Lakes AGCS) will discuss and vote by spring 2019. Lots of hard work was done by more than a dozen members spanning the four chapters. That is a great story in and of itself. The topic I'd rather focus on now isn't the journey, but the final message they discovered on that journey: increased efficiency and better communication will lead to more value for their members by consolidating.

Coming off the historically wet and challenging 2018 season, try and imagine the GCSANE without Don Hearn. Your board members trying to manage a facility of their own while conducting chapter business including promoting and executing beneficial events would not have come close to the standards you expect as GCSANE members. Because of that, and every other important task Don covers in his duties for GCSANE, the value to you as a member would have suffered. Of the four chapters consolidating in New York only one has very little outside assis-

tance as they are nearly exclusively volunteer driven. The consolidation committee considers a paid executive a key for efficiency, and a tremendous value for members.

Communication is another key uncovered by the consolidation committee. A newsletter like yours only exists for one of the four chapters and social media is underutilized by most. Having dedicated members to spearhead communications initiatives with a chapter executive running point is tremendously valuable. Do you read *The Newsletter*? I hope so, because no matter how engaged you are, your member editors work very hard to add value to your membership through this newsletter. While calling the GCSANE membership directory a communication tool might be a stretch, should you wish to reach out to any of your fellow GCSANE members, that directory offers several means to do so. Communications at the chapter level is a huge driver of value.

Delivering additional value is an end goal of the consolidation initiative in New York. Even if they successfully fulfill the efficiency and communication goals above, the challenge still remains in engaging the membership. Even though your chapter fulfills the items above, they must attempt to engage members too. What piece are you playing in the success of the GCSANE? The value proposition turns both ways. The more you put into your local chapter, the more you will get out of it. Serve on a committee, write for *The Newsletter*, volunteer at an event, consider serving on the board. Take the initiative and you will get more value out of your GCSANE membership than you ever thought possible.



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On the wall at GCSAA headquarters you will find a quote from founder Colonel John Morley, who firmly believed, "No life is, or can be, self-existent. We depend on each other". In New York, just as in the New England region, it must be the members who make the chapter and those within it successful, not the chapter who drives the success of the membership.

## GCSAA Resources and Deadlines you Get Cool Stuff from your Association Already

### Get a nationwide snapshot of compensation and benefits

2019 Survey now open

The 2019 Compensation and Benefits Survey is now open. GCSAA members should have received an email on Dec. 17 to fill out the survey and assist with this important project. Please submit your survey by Jan. 28. If you did not receive the survey email, contact Greg Stacey, senior manager, market research and data, at 800-472-7878, ext. 5152.

### Upcoming Webinars

Jan. 8 @ 10 a.m. : Leading from the Turf UP! Armen Suny and Tom Wallace

Jan. 16 @ 10 a.m.: Weed Resistance, The Future of Herbicides??? presented by PBI Gordon Travis Teuton, Ph.D.

Jan 17 @ noon: Torturing the Grass aka Turfgrass Cultivation – Physical Practices part of the ASCS Prep series. Beth Guertal, Ph.D.

Jan. 22 @ 10 a.m.: Using Fine Fescues for Naturalized Areas presented by the Fine Fescue Commission. Maggie Reiter

Jan. 23 @ 2 p.m. : Calling All Recruiters! An Equipment Manager's Guide to Recruiting and Mentoring the Next Generation Chris Rapp

Feb. 20 @ 10 a.m. GDDs & PGRs: Will these letters save you money? Austin Brown

Feb. 26 @ 10 a.m. Poa on Bermudagrass Greens presented by PBI Gordon. Jay McCurdy, 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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January 2019




## **Keeping Up With Communications Through The Winter**

**By Greg Cormier CGCS,  
GCSANE Newsletter Editor**

Speaking from experience, one of the most common questions I would get from golfers during the off-season, or just before or after the winter was: “so what do you do all winter”. Some would even ask if I went south to Florida. We all know that winter can end up being as busy or close to as busy as summer once we combine snow removal, tree work, shop and equipment maintenance and refurbishing course accessories. If you have to manage paddle tennis courts that’s another whole conversation.

Most superintendents are doing a great job at communicating with members throughout the golf season. Frequent updates go out on turf conditions, tournament preparation and updates on staff changes ect. Do you continue that same level of communication through the winter? Some people use social media while others send emails, e-newsletters or update people through posting hard copy communications throughout their clubhouse. Winter is also a great time to write communications to keep on file for aeration time and other events that you know you will need to communicate during the season. If you draft documents now, all you need to do is tweak them in season rather than drafting the entire document when you are tired and busy during the season.

It can be beneficial to stay engaged with your members or golfers all year to update them on your team’s accomplishments with tree work, projects and preparations for next season. This helps get them excited about returning in the spring, explains your winter labor budget, and may prevent the question of “what do you do all winter?”



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The advertisement features a photograph of a man in a dark polo shirt and light-colored trousers walking on a golf course path. He is leaning against a large tree trunk on the left. The background shows a well-maintained golf course with green grass, sand traps, and trees under a clear blue sky.

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The image shows a large pile of dark, rich compost. A green excavator is positioned at the top right, dumping more compost into the pile. The background consists of tall, thin trees under a blue sky with some clouds.

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***January 2019***



## Thank you to the following superintendents who hosted meetings in 2018

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### John Eggleston

Kernwood Country Club

### Ryan Emerich

Vesper Country Club

### Mike Hughes

Whitinsville Golf Club

### Mike Fontaine

Ledges Golf Club

### Mike Poch

Foxborough Country Club

## WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

### Paul Brand

Assistant Superintendent, Franklin Country Club

### Paul Campagna

Assistant Superintendent, Chicopee Country Club

### Austin Cyrus

Assistant Superintendent, Franklin Country Club

### Timothy Jencunas

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### Brian Joyce

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If you will be attending the GIS in San Diego, this year's Nor'easter social will be held in the Gaslamp District at Florent Restaurant and Lounge, 672 Fifth Avenue, from 6:30 to 9:00 PM. All GCSA of New England members are welcome to attend. You are a guest of the Association and there is no charge to attend. This is a nice time to catch up with people you may not have seen for a while. It also provides you the opportunity to meet new people in our industry. As importantly, it provides an informal setting where you can hang out in a casual environment with others from the Northeast.

## Back Issues!



Past issues of the NEWSLETTER are available using this link: <http://bit.ly/GCSANEnewsletters>.

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. Who said nothing in this world is free? Free advertising to better your company, wow what an offer.

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*January 2019*

