



WESTERN VIEWS

May-June, 1996

Official Publication of the West Michigan Golf Course Superintendents Association

WMGCSA 1996 Meeting Schedule

- August * Coffees at different sights
 Sept. 30 Golf Day,
 Gull Lake C.C.
 *Sept. or
 Oct. Annual Meeting
 Nov. 1 Fall Party,
 Walnut Hills C.C.

* Dates to be determined.

MEMBER NOTICE...

Meeting Payment Policy - Beginning in 1996, all meeting expenses will be on a CASH ONLY BASIS. There will be NO CHARGES ALLOWED. This will give us more control of all transactions and will eliminate having the host club having to handle all the billings.

Meeting Cancellation Policy - This is a reminder of a current policy. If you make reservations for a meeting and are unable to attend, and you do not cancel, you will be billed and expected to make a payment.

President's Message

It is hard to believe the year is half over and fortunately we have not suffered like last season. I would like to take a minute and reflect upon our monthly meetings. I am very pleased with the attendance and participation of the host clubs. Hosting a meeting of your peers is never easy, and mother nature can add to the pressure. All of the facilities we have visited have done an outstanding job. I really hope the membership appreciates the opportunity to visit these clubs.

One item that should be mentioned is regarding the number of members that do not have established handicaps. All members that play in association events should have an accurately established

handicap. To establish a handicap is very simple, and available to anyone. All members that are employed at golf clubs can have a handicap done by their course, this should be a benefit to all employees of golf clubs. The members who are not employed by clubs, or do not belong to any course can have a handicap kept by any area course. A small fee may be required, it is usually \$10.00. Once a player has signed up

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Meetings and Golf a Success in '96

In spite of a rough start, all meetings have drawn a large crowd. The weather was a bit rough in Kalamazoo, but some brave souls took advantage of the day anyway. The next three meetings were planned well because the weather was great for all of them. I guess we were due, with Spring as slow and wet as it was. All the golf courses that have held a meeting this year have been in great shape and we appreciate the hospitality.

Again, if you are interested in holding an event in 1997, please contact a board member.

W. Bruce Matthews Legacy Award Given!

At the Grand Haven meeting, May 21st, Kara Thuemmel received the Legacy Award for 1996. She won the monetary award for an essay composed by her that competed against other essays turned in by other children and stepchildren of fellow W.M.G.C.S.A. members. The Legacy Award will be given each year to help financially with a college education for an entrant who wins the award. If you have any questions about the 1997 award please contact a board member. Good luck with school in the future, Kara Thuemmel!

Editor's Note: Please write me if you have any corrections or if you are interested in doing an article for us at:

Western Views

Cascade Rd., S.E.

Grand Rapids, MI 49546

President's Message, continued

for a handicap, only two more items are required. Posting your scores and doing it correctly, any PGA professional or member of his staff can assist you in this endeavor. Having an accurate

handicap is just another step in the upgrading of our profession.

Congratulations to Kara Thuemmel on winning the Matthews Scholarship for 1996. This award was

presented at the May meeting at Grand Haven Golf Club on May 21st.

Paul Schippers
President

GCSAA Members and Ethics

GCSAA members abide by a *Code of Ethics* to promote and maintain the highest professional standards of service and conduct. In addition to the code, professional courtesy and respect for fellow members guide a GCSAA superintendent in situations that fall outside the code.

Golf at Another Course: When invited to play or visit another golf course, GCSAA members make a courtesy telephone call to the superintendent of the course to let him/her know about the visit. **Employment:** GCSAA members are committed to high ethical standards when pursuing employment. When conducting a job search, members do not send their resume, unsolicited, to a course without an open position. If employers seek to hire a member superintendent before their current superintendent has resigned or has been discharged, a superintendent will not discuss the employment opportunity until the current superintendent has been notified.

12 Principles in the Code:

Recognize and discharge all my responsibilities and duties in such a fashion as to be a credit to this Association and profession.

Practice and insist upon sound business and turf management principles in exercising the responsibilities of my position.

Utilize every practicable opportunity to expand my professional knowledge, thereby improving myself and my profession.

Maintain the highest standards of personal conduct to reflect credit

and add to the stature of the profession of golf course management.

Base endorsements, either written or verbal by means of any medium, strictly upon satisfactory personal experiences within the item identified.

Refrain from encouraging or accepting considerations of any value without the express understanding of all parties that said consideration is available to all in similar circumstances, and that no actions shall be forthcoming as a result of acceptance.

Recognize and observe the highest standards of integrity in my relationships with fellow golf course superintendents and others associated with this profession and industry.

Assist my fellow superintendents in all ways consistent with my abilities.

Abstain from the untruthful debasement of, or encroachment upon, the professional reputation or practice of another superintendent.

Lend my support to, and actively participate in, the efforts of my local chapter and National Association to improve public understanding and recognition of the profession of golf course management.

Abstain from any unfair exploitation of my Association, industry or profession.

Present information and participate as a witness voluntarily in all proceedings to which there exists evidence of a violation of this Code of Ethics.

*Source: GCSAA Code of Ethics;
Joseph Hubbard, CGCS,
Jonathan's Landing at Old Trail,
Jupiter, Fla.*

Sources Going Online

Many familiar organizations have begun to go online. Here are a few you may be interested in if you are an Internet subscriber:

• Department of Environmental Quality

Quality <http://www.deq.state.ml.us>

• GCSAA

Education damont@gcsaa.org

Government Relations ckelly@gcsaa.org.....and.....cnicks@gcsaa.org

Membership cborman@gcsaa.org

Publications murban@gcsaa.org

Technical Information Services dbishop@gcsaa.org.....and.....sclement@gcsaa.org

• New MDNR Forest Health Website

..... <http://www.dnr.state.mi.us/www/frnd/pest/forheal.html>

INTERNET SITES FOR WATER RELATED INFORMATION:

<http://pubweb.ucdavis.edu/document/coopext/water.htm>

<http://www.arsuda.gov/>

<http://ag.arizona.edu/AZWATER/main.html>

<http://h2o.usgs.gov/>

<http://www.dwr.water.ca.gov/>

<http://www.epa.gov/docs/>

Human Resource Management

Superintendents need to be professional people managers as well as turf managers. While there is extensive written material on the subject of personnel management and many classes available, the class offered by the GCSAA addresses the problems unique to superintendents.

On February 21, Bree Hayes, Ph.D., led a day long seminar on human resource management at the Sylvan Resort in Gaylord, Michigan. The topics included: Personnel Selection; Performance Appraisals; Dealing with Problem Employees; Dismissals; and Problem Solving.

I was surprised with her recommendation that the interviewer of a prospective employee should speak only 30% of the time. The interviewer must make a real effort to get the candidate to open up and speak freely. She recommends that a structured written format be used to improve consistency between interviews and

warns against the common problems of stereotyping applicants, making evaluations too soon, or asking questions unrelated to job performance.

We discovered that while most superintendents use some form of performance appraisal, few like them or put much faith in them. We tend to use them to spotlight performance problems of a few employees and find them next to meaningless for the rest. Bree recommends using a system that has only three possible scores: exceeds expectations; meets expectations; does not meet expectations. Those of us who have been using 5, 7, or ten point systems have seen "grade inflation" eat away at any meaning to these numbers. We agonize at trying to decide which number should be given for each area rated and end up giving too many high numbers to avoid disappointing our average employees. With a three point scale, only exceptional performance

or poor performance need attention. Most employees, most of the time, simply meet expectations. Bree recommends doing evaluations four times per year. It is desirable to have the employee participate in setting objectives and in evaluating their performance. Appraisals should focus on the development of the employee and not be viewed as a disciplinary tool.

Confrontation of an employee sound like a very negative thing. Bree pointed out that this is a necessary and positive tool for management, and if done properly, relieves stress and improves communication. It is important to get problems out in the open where they can be dealt with. To use confrontation effectively, it is critical that we pick the appropriate time and place, use a reasonable tone of voice, be specific, and be focused on resolving the problem. Screaming at an

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Human Resource Management, continued

employee in the lunch room, in front of other employees, that they are idiots and never do anything right is a good example of what not to do.

I have taken several management classes dealing with some of these same topics. But these classes focused more on the personnel of large corporations. By being able to focus on superintendents specifically, Bree is able to cover an impressive amount of material in a single day. I have spent considerably more time and money for classes that provided less help for a superintendent trying to manage a crew.

Tom McGuinness

In Memoriam

JENNINGS, Mr. Dale Lavon of Augusta

Died June 5, 1996. Dale was born in Franklin Township; DeKalb County, Indiana, on July 30, 1931, the son of Charles L. and Bertha Mildred (Ball) Jennings. He was a Superintendent for Gull Lake View Stonehedge Golf Course since 1973. He was a veteran of the U.S. Army, having served during the Korean Conflict, and a member of the American Legion Hickory Corners Post. He was preceded in death by his brother, Marvin. Surviving are his wife, Janice, whom he married November 20, 1955 in Hamilton, Indiana; 3 daughters, Lana Jennings of Battle Creek, Amy and Rick VerKow of Mattawan, and Dawn

Jennings of Kalamazoo; a brother, DeWaine and Betty Jennings of Hicksville, Ohio; a sister, Lois and Dayton Lockwood of Waterloo, Indiana; several nieces and nephews. Cremation has taken place. Services were held Saturday, June 8 at Parchment-Redmond Funeral Home, Rev. Ed Hommes officiating. Interment of cremains in Yorkville Cemetery. Memorials may be made to Hospice of Greater Kalamazoo or the American Cancer Society.

Classified Ads

For Sale—Lely Spreader, pull-behind. Call Brian Geerlings 616-642-9421.



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