



THE NEWSLETTER

Golf Course Superintendents

Association OF NEW ENGLAND, INC.

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July 1996

Environmental preservation goals guide Jeff Carlson & Charlie Passios

Jeff Carlson and Charlie Passios are immersed in golf projects that are miles, and yes, oceans apart, but their perspectives walk hand-in-hand. Each veteran superintendent is building a course with improvement and preservation of the environment as his guide.

Carlson's most recent tour of duty as construction superintendent takes him to Scituate. The site of the 18-hole municipal course, as well as its name, makes for overflowing intrigue. Widow's Walk is being carved out of an abandoned sand and gravel pit which once provided the materials for such well-known construction projects as Logan Airport.

Turning south-southeast, and a lengthy boat ride away, lies the Nantucket Golf Club, where Passios has developers leaning on his expertise on the road to completing that 18-hole private layout. It's Charlie's first connection with a scratch-to-finish golf course after a distinguished career at the Hyannisport Club.

Not so with Carlson. He was in on the ground floor of a similar Corcoran

Jennison project at the Ocean Edge Golf Club in Brewster. Jeff was an integral part of the construction process there, and then stayed on as Ocean Edge's head superintendent through its maturing stages. His assignment at Widow's Walk is similar, as he expects to remain the super there when the course takes off its wraps in a projected gala opening July 4, 1997.

The Widow's Walk architect is Dr. Mike Hurdzan, whose design touches can be seen at the Sterling, Willowbend, and

Dennis Highlands courses. Dr. Hurdzan shares his of enthusiasm for Widow's Walk with Carlson. He has the layout stretching to about 6,500 yards over a spread of spectacular views. Included on the card will be five par 3s and five par 5s. That's interesting in itself.

"Actually, this is a restoration attempt," Carlson observed. "When the first steps were taken, the site was in beat-up condition. Half of it was used as a dirt bike grounds and other half as a dump. What a transition this is going to be, since half will be a well field for the town water supply, and the second half will be transformed into a golf course."

"It really is an experimental project, with the emphasis on bringing the environment back to snuff and developing the golf course as an environmental monument to the area. There will be grasses for which maintenance is considered that require less pesticides and less water. And that's just for starters."

Widow's Walk will feature other innovations sure to put a smile on Mother Nature. The greens makeup triggers sure-fire excitement in that there will be six USGA-specs greens, six California greens (which means 100 percent sand base), and six push-up greens. During the maturation and refining stages, measuring devices will determine which set suits environmental causes best.

Another first will raise a few eyebrows in the establishment of stacked wall

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Jeff Carlson
Widow's Walk Golf Course

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bunkers, using recyclable products as their defining boundaries. "We're all looking at this with much anticipation," Carlson said. "The particular products for the bunkers are old, used pieces of carpet. They're being collected and made ready to serve as sand trap walls. We're really anxious to see how this turns out."

Nationally-acclaimed architect Rees Jones is staking out the overall run of at least 6,900 yards to create the championship course at the Nantucket Golf Club. Jones needs no introduction. His works, some in conjunction with his famous father, Robert Trent Jones, are considered masterpieces in golf course galleries.

It's said that Nantucket needs a second course to join Sankaty Head as island golfing showcases. That's why the new club was conceived by 50 founding members who formed an informal partnership with the National Heritage Foundation and the Massachusetts Audubon Society in a construction process that includes an endangered species program.

"The species in question is the bushy rock rose," Passios explained. "This rose is considered a treasure in these (Nantucket) parts, and we think it's the first time a golf course has committed itself to such a project of protecting and encouraging propagation of the plant, as well as several Pennsylvania sedge plants."

The Nantucket layout is being constructed by the Wadsworth Company, which has had a hand in some of the country's finest golf courses. Passios is right in the middle of things, too, as "Manager of Golf Course and Grounds."

"The course is set on much virgin land," Charlie disclosed. "Preserving a good portion of it is in the framework of the overall project. Preservation of certain parts of that land along with rehabilitating old, discarded land is on the list of top construction priorities."

The Nantucket venture has come under much attention from other sections of the country. In fact, on an early June day, Par for the Course, a national TV show sponsored by the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, was filming a piece on the Nantucket Golf Club progress report, with further plans to stop off at Widow's Walk for a similar gig there.

"I think both of our courses (Widow's Walk, Nantucket) could become actual benchmark efforts for future golf course

"... We think it's the first time a golf course has committed itself to a project of protecting and encouraging propagation of the plant (endangered bushy rock rose), as well as several Pennsylvania sedge plants."

**Charlie Passios
 Nantucket Golf Club**

construction in the country," Carlson added. "For years we (superintendents) have been practicing and pushing for environment-friendly approaches to golf course maintenance, but in relative seclusion. Very soon it will become a well-known fact that golf and the environment are not enemies. These two courses are a step in that direction."

GERRY FINN

Calendar

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| July 16 | GCSANE Joint Meeting with RIGCSA
Agawam Hunt Club
West Barrington, R.I. |
| August 12 | Superintendent / Club Official Tournament
Oak Hill C.C.
Fitchburg, Mass. |
| September 23 | GCSANE Monthly Meeting
Twin Hills Country Club
Longmeadow, Mass. |
| October 1 | GCSANE Monthly Meeting
Stow Acres Country Club
Stow, Mass. |
| October 23 | NEPGA/GCSANE Shanahan Memorial Pro-Supt. Tournament
Willowbend Club
Cotuit, Mass. |
| November 4 | GCSANE Monthly Meeting
Nabnasset Lake Country Club
Westford, Mass. |
| Jan. 13-15, 1997 | Mass. Turf Conference
Hynes Convention Center
Boston, Mass. |

The Super Speaks Out

This month's question:

How has the seasonal help picture at your course been shaping up this year, and what changes, if any, have emerged?

Dave Kahrman, The Thompson Club: "I base my seasonal help philosophy on the accepted theory now going through the rounds of country clubs around the country. It says that as the expectations of the members go up, so do the demands I have on my crew. In other words, if I'm to meet expectations for a better conditioned course, I have to have better workers."

"That's probably why for the first time in nine years I've had a drastic turnover in personnel. There are 12 people on the crew here and this year seven are new."

"There are a lot of reasons for the big change in numbers. Perhaps the wage dilemma has something to do with it. I start my guys at the going rate of about \$7.00 an hour and pick it up according to the results I receive. Those results are important because I react to my help on a performance basis. If they perform, they stay, and almost always get a boost in pay. If they don't perform, they're gone."

"This may seem rough, but I give my people more than enough time to find out if they can hack it here. Usually, I put new workers on probation for one month. They have that time to either shape up or ship out. Sometimes, it doesn't take more than a week for some to admit they can't do the job. So they quit, giving me opportunity to try replacements."

"This year has been a tough one in matter of putting pressure on myself and my crew. Because of the severe winter we went through, much of the end-of-season clean-up chores and minor improvement projects had to be put on hold. Therefore, when the spring weather finally arrived, I had to push my crew in two directions. One was finishing off what began in the fall and the other had to do with picking up preparations for the opening of another season. It all boiled

down to requiring help that could get both jobs done."

"I just kept pushing to find out who could make it in terms of reliability and positive results until I came up with the 12 workers capable of meeting the grooming expectations of our members. Eventually, it all came around nicely and right now I feel comfortable with what I ended up with."

Scott Merrill, Wayland Country Club:

"I start my seasonal help at \$7.00 an hour. That's not too bad for inexperienced people who have to learn the job as they go along. So, I'm convinced the question of wages doesn't enter into the problem of landing a solid crew and retaining them."

"I've had a lot of success with retired people, even though some of them aren't able to do the strong-arm jobs younger workers can do. Regardless, I usually depend on retired workers to do specific things. In the long run they take pride in their efforts and their input becomes an automatic plus in the general scheme of my maintenance program."

"It seems to me that as the season goes along, my seasonal help loses interest in what they're doing. It could be that the mid-summer temperatures put a crimp in their work ethics. It's no fun walking behind a mower in 95-degree heat, but there aren't too many pure labor jobs that are fun when the heat and humidity start climbing out of sight."

"As far as my crew makeup goes, I have little carryover from last year, except for those retired people who came back with the same enthusiasm they had when last season ended. But this is the way it is most of the time. The younger workers

are reluctant to return and the older ones can't wait to get back to doing something productive."

"This is my 11th year at Wayland, third as head super, and the trend remains the same. New faces appear and do the job as best they can until they run out of the right mindset for the job. It would be nice to have a group of workers who can afford to be part-timers forever. But that isn't going to happen."

Mike Iacono, Pine Brook Country Club:

"My seasonal help story is like the song goes, or what a difference a year (day) makes."

"A year ago I went through 38 bodies to get a 22-person crew. That was a real weed-out situation. However, it was worth it because of the 22 I wound up with, all returned except one this year."

"I think we always have to keep in mind that working the maintenance shifts at a golf course is dirty and hard duty. That's why it's important to get the right mix of people to form a well-rounded crew."

"Fifteen of my group are what I call regular full-time or seasonal full-time. That means they are the dependable core section of the crew, and believe it or not, eight of them are over the age of 65."

"Those eight older men do most of the rider mowing. They are all happy in their work and get here early enough so that their work day usually is done by noontime. In fact, that full roster of 22 probably is down to six or seven when afternoon play picks up after the heavy mowing is history."

"The key to seasonal help is mental attitude, an attitude that reflects the feeling that a person doesn't mind being laid off at the end of the season. Another strong point for keeping some of the younger guys on the job is an incentive clause in their work agreement. That payoff is a full week's pay after someone works 15 straight weeks. You'd be surprised how it keeps kids from quitting."

"Wages always will be a factor in maintaining a quality crew. I begin with \$7.00, but I wish I could pay \$10.00. Somewhere in between is a happy medium. How happy? I know that when I round up my crew for the following season."

GERRY FINN

GCSAA News

GCSAA Conference & Show Committee streamlines registration & adjusts show hours

The Conference and Show Committee of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) met on April 23 at the Alexis Park Resort and Spa in Las Vegas to review the success of GCSAA's 67th International Golf Course Conference and Show and plan improvements for next year's event in Las Vegas.

The second largest event in the golf industry, the 1996 conference and show, held in Orlando, Fla., had record breaking attendance of 21,784 participants, with nearly 700 companies exhibiting at the trade show. The committee discussed changes to streamline the registration process to better handle this volume of attendees, especially at peak times.

"Distributors only" hours, held the first half-day of the Orlando trade show, are scheduled for 9-12 a.m. on Feb. 10. Based on the committee's recommendation, the "members-only" hours will be discontinued in 1997, allowing the trade show to open to all attendees at noon. Trade show hours will be extended the final day, Feb. 12, until 5 p.m. for the Las Vegas event only (see schedule below).

The committee also recommended that the Opening Session and the Environmental General Session begin at 6 p.m. to provide more time for seminar participants to complete the day's activities and travel to Bally's Casino Resort for these important events.

Traditionally, GCSAA members have been given preferential treatment in registering for education seminars via an "Early Bird" brochure mailing that differed in content from the updated "Fall" brochure. The committee endorsed a plan to have members continue to receive the early mailing. The second mailing to the general public will use the same brochure. Updated information will be available in Newsline, Golf Course Management and the preview edition of the daily conference and show newspaper "Showtime," and on GCSAA's world wide web site. Attendees will be able to register by printing the registration form available there

The 1996 conference had record-breaking attendance of 21,784 participants, with nearly 700 companies exhibiting at the trade show.

and faxing or mailing it to GCSAA. Plans call for on-line registration by the 1998 conference and show.

GCSAA Director Michael Wallace, Certified Golf Course Superintendent (CGCS) at Hop Meadow Country Club in Simsbury, Conn., chaired the meeting. Other Conference and Show Committee members in attendance were: Tim Barrier, superintendent at Rancho Santa Fe Golf Club in Rancho Santa Fe, Calif.; David R.

Davies, CGCS at Palo Alto Municipal Golf Course in Palo Alto, Calif., William G. Fielder, CGCS at Spanish Trail Golf and Country Club, Las Vegas; Dennis Maskell, superintendent at Shadow Creek Golf Club in North Las Vegas, William D. Rohret, CGCS at Sunrise Country Club in Las Vegas; J. Kevin Roffl, superintendent at Eastwood Golf Club in Orlando, Fla.; and Donald Scott Sutton, superintendent at Sunrise Country Club in Las Vegas. Other members of the Conference and Show Committee for 1996 are: Timothy Dagg, superintendent at Canyon Gate Country Club in Las Vegas, James Edward Hodnett, CGCS at O.B. Sports Inc. in Las Vegas; Collier Miller, CGCS at Tournament Players Club at Summerlin in Las Vegas, James R. Sprankle III, superintendent at Paiute Resort in Las Vegas, and Brad C. Vowles, CGCS at Angel Park Golf Course in Las Vegas.

(For a complete daily schedule as of 5/17/96, please turn to page 6.)

GCSAA News

GCSAA creative team receives SNAP Excel Award for publications

The marketing/creative services team from the GCSAA headquarters staff has won a gold award in the 1996 SNAP Excel Awards competition. SNAP, Society of National Association Publications, recognized the achievement at an awards luncheon May 24, in Washington, D.C.

GCSAA's entry, the 1996 Orlando International Golf Course Conference & Show publications, received the award in the convention publications, convention marketing campaign category. The purpose of the Excel awards is to recognize excellence in the work of professionals in the editorial, graphics, advertising, and marketing aspects of association publishing.

The marketing/creative services team consists of Teri Harris, manager; Krista Wagner and Kristi Frey, coordinators; Kelly Neis and Lisa Slavin, graphic designers; and Bev Schuster, production/mail supervisor. Last year, the 1995 San Francisco Early Bird Registration Brochure won a silver award in the same category.

SNAP presents Excel awards in 11 categories, and more than 900 entries were received in the 1996 competition. Based in McLean, Va., SNAP is a non-profit, professional society serving the needs of association and society publications and their staffs. SNAP strives to develop and maintain high standards of editorial and advertising content for association/society journals and publications.

GCSAA News

GCSAA Tournament Committee meets to change deadline, propose improvements

The Tournament Committee of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) met April 15-18 at the Hyatt Regency in Irvine, Calif., to finalize recommendations for the 1997 members-only golf championship to be held in Las Vegas, and to preview courses for the 1998 tournament.

More than 700 golfers competed in the 1996 GCSAA Golf Championship held in February in Orlando, Fla., as part of GCSAA's International Golf Course Conference and Show. The Tournament Committee has recommended to the

association's board of directors that registration not exceed 720 participants.

Other recommendations made by the committee include:

- Changing the tournament entry deadline to Nov. 15, 1996.
- Enhancing the tournament software package to ensure timely postings of second-day tee times and correct pairings, including an automated tee-time system.

- Grandfathering entry into the 1997 event those competitors who have played three of the past five years, if registration is received on or before Oct. 1, 1996.
- Providing handicap and flight information to participants in advance.

The committee's recommendations were approved by GCSAA's Board of Directors at their spring meeting, held May 2-5 at the association's headquarters in Lawrence, Kan.

The 47th GCSAA Golf Championship will be held Feb. 5-6, 1997, in Las Vegas at the following courses:

- Sunrise Country Club - West Course
- Badlands Golf Club
- Las Vegas Pautie Resort - Nu-Wav Kai (Snow Mountain) and Tav-ai Kaiv (Sun Mountain) Courses
- Wildhorse Golf Club
- Las Vegas Hilton Country Club

For the third year, the GCSAA Golf Championship will be in partnership with The Toro Company. Toro helps staff the tournament, contributes tee prizes, and hosts social functions for tournament participants. Toro also makes donations to The GCSAA Foundation in the names of the individual flight and team winners.

George Renault III, Certified Golf Course Superintendent (CGCS) at Burning Tree Club in Bethesda, Md., is chairman of GCSAA's 1996 tournament committee. Other tournament committee members are: Edward W. Fischer, CGCS, Old Elm Club, Libertyville, Ill.; Les Kennedy Jr., CGCS, Country Club of Waterbury, Waterbury, Conn.; William F. Ploetz, superintendent, Independence Golf Course, Gonzales, Texas; Joel A. Ratcliff, CGCS, Sedgfield Country Club, Greensboro, N.C.; Nick L. Vance, CGCS, Falls Road Public Golf Course, Rockville, Md.; and Samuel T. Williamson, CGCS at Ojai Valley Inn and Country Club, Ojai, Calif.

GCSAA News

Industry group makes suggestions to enhance GCSAA trade show

Bruce R. Williams, CGCS, president of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) chaired a meeting of industry partners April 22 at the Alexis Park Resort and Spa in Las Vegas. These partners met to provide feedback on GCSAA's 67th International Golf Course Conference and Show held in February in Orlando, Fla., and to suggest ideas for next year's trade show in Las Vegas.

The partners, formally known as the Industrial Advisory Council (IAC), provide important input to the association from the exhibitor's point of view. The group discussed several enhancements:

- Improving aisle and booth signage. Possible changes include having more "you are here" signs throughout the trade show floor.
- Implementing a new automated lead retrieval system for all exhibitors.
- Improving communication with small exhibitors.
- Discontinuing the product literature kiosk.

- Relocating the allied association pavilion next to the GCSAA member services area.

Also of concern to the group were the delays that occurred at on-site registration in Orlando and confusion over the "members-only" trade show hours. These concerns were addressed by GCSAA's conference and show committee, which met the following day.

GCSAA Vice President Paul S. McGinnis, CGCS, attended as IAC vice-chairman. Other IAC members are: Michael Alexander of Club Car Inc., Carla Barebo-Ott of Otterbine Barebo Inc.; Dennis Brown of The Toro Company; Steve Burrell of Southern Corporate Promotions; Dave Ferguson of Ransomes America Corp.; Bill Liles of Ciba Turf & Ornamental, Terri Lohmann of Sandoz; John Mielke of Jacobsen, Division of Textron; Clair Peterson of Deere & Company; Tom Rogers of R & R Products Inc.; David Thrailkill of SyncroFlow Inc.; Doug Toews of International Seeds Inc.; and Roger Underwood of Becker-Underwood Inc.

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Host Superintendent Profile

Meet host superintendent Wayne Zoppo, Agawam Hunt Club

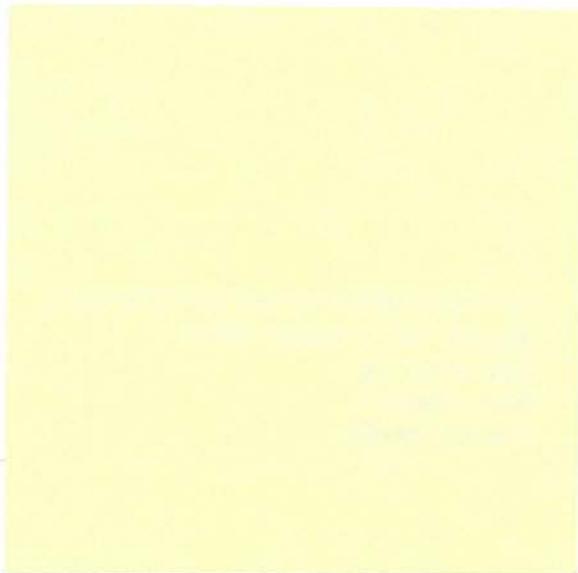
Our host for the July joint meeting with the RIGCSA (Rhode Island Golf Course Superintendents Association) is Wayne Zoppo.

Wayne has been the golf course superintendent at the Agawam Hunt Club in

East Providence, R.I., for 30 years. At AHC, he maintains an 18-hole golf course, 10 grass tennis courts, and four clay tennis courts. He is a 1964 graduate of Stockbridge.

Wayne served the RIGCSA as president in 1972, and also the GCSANE as president in 1976-77. He became a Certified Golf Course Superintendent in 1990.

Wayne and his wife Gin reside in Seekonk, Mass., with their three children, Todd, Tara, and Lindsay. In his spare time Wayne enjoys golf and traveling. He is also a big New England Patriots fan!



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