



# THE NEWSLETTER

September 2007

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

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## Youthful Sadowski Helps Turner Hill Continue to Shine

By Gary Trask

John Sadowski has received his fair share of compliments for the work he and his staff have done at Turner Hill Golf Club ever since he took over as head superintendent back in 2004. There have been accolades from *Golf Digest* (No. 12 in the Massachusetts Best of State Rankings, 2007), high acclaim from the area's top amateur golfers after the course staged last year's New England PGA Championship and, of course, the kind words he hears on almost a daily basis from the club's members.

But of all of the flattering comments that have been passed on to Sadowski, none resonated louder than when a certain golfer by the name of Padraig Harrington played the course this past summer and was effusive in his praise for the conditions of the course. Simply put, recognition from national magazines are nice, but when the reigning British Open champion offers his personal seal of approval and mentions you by name, you know you've done something right.

"Yeah, that was pretty cool," admitted Sadowski of the comments made by Harrington, who was in the area for the Deutsche Bank Championship and visited Turner Hill for a Wilson Golf sponsored event. "I mean here's a guy who has played all over the planet on the greatest courses in the world and he couldn't have been more complimentary about our course. He was

real sincere, so coming from a guy like that, it really meant a lot to me and everyone else at the club."

Sadowski described his first impressions of the Turner Hill property as "breathtaking" and if you've ever stepped on the grounds of this Ipswich, Mass. club you realize that he's not using even a hint of hyperbole. The 311-acre site sits smack dab in the



**Turner Hill's 17th Green and Clubhouse**

middle of 10,000 acres of the Willowdale State Forest. It features sweeping views from the highest point of the course, which is 270 feet above sea level and offers sight lines from New Hampshire to Boston. There's also plenty of history to go along with the

property thanks to a 19th century Edwardian mansion that serves as the centerpiece of the entire development.

"It's an amazing place," Sadowski gushed. "I was blown away when I first visited. I almost had to pinch myself because I realized that I was going to be the one responsible for maintaining it and making it shine."

Adding to that daunting task was the fact that when Sadowski was named Turner Hill's head super he was relatively inexperienced. He graduated from Penn State University in his home state of Pennsylvania back in 1998 and immediately began working for Troon Golf as an assistant super at Legend Trail Golf Club in Scottsdale, Ariz. He began his slow trek to the Northeast two years later when he was transferred to Eagle Ridge Resort and Spa in Illinois, where after biding his time as an assistant for a year, the club promoted him to head super. In 2004, the opportunity at Turner Hill presented itself and Sadowski, then just 28 years old, jumped at the chance.

"I guess it was a little nerve-wracking to come in as a young guy without a ton of experience and be given the job at such an exclusive club," Sadowski, now 31, admitted. "But I was confident in my abilities and

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John Sadowski - continued from page 1

obviously so were the people at Troon. Dana Frye and Michael Hurdzan did an unbelievable job designing the course and what I've tried to do is maintain it and try and bring it to the next level and I think that's what we've been able to do."

Despite the rave reviews the course itself has received, it has been far from smooth sailing at the club. The original investor in the project - Ipswich native Ted Raymond - bought the property from Missionaries of Our Lady of La Salette for \$4.5 million in 1997, but his grand plans for a lavish residential real estate development and high-end golf club fell far short of what he had hoped for. Eventually, he ended up selling his stake in the property this summer to a members group derived from some of the original investors in the club and ever since that sale was completed there's been reason for optimism.

"It was tough because there was a lot of uncertainty; for about six months nobody had any idea what the future was going to hold," said Sadowski, who lives in nearby Wakefield with his wife Stephanie, a fellow Pennsylvania native. "But now we obviously have some very intelligent people running the place and we have stability. I think we're on our way to getting to the point where everybody hoped and dreamed this club would be from the very beginning." And if Sadowski has anything to do with it, the course itself will continue to be the property's biggest asset. Sadowski says what sets him apart from a lot of his colleagues is that he's an avid, and talented, golfer himself. He's been a scratch player ever since his college days and he continues to play competitively.

"I think that really gives me a better understanding of what the golfers are going to expect from me," he said. "The best way to get a feel for your own course is to get out and play it. There's no other way to find out what's going on out there. You can't just drive around on your golf cart. I think playing the course helps you see the course



The 18th at Turner Hill

from a whole different light, so I get out and play at least once a week, usually twice."

He also says a large part of his rise in the field is the fact that he's always "thinking long term" and that he makes it a point to learn from his mistakes.

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## CALENDAR

- |            |  |
|------------|--|
| Oct. 22    | <b>GCSANE Monthly Meeting</b><br>Pleasant Valley C.C.<br>Member/ Guest Tournament<br>Host: Donald D'Errico                       |
| Oct. 25    | <b>GSCANE Assistant Supt. Tournament</b><br>Tedesco CC<br>Co-Hosts: Peter Hasak and Patrick McDonald                             |
| Nov. 6     | <b>GCSANE Monthly Meeting</b><br>Brockton C.C.<br>9-Hole Tournament<br>Host: Justin Bousquet                                     |
| Nov. 14&15 | <b>GCSAA Seminars</b><br>"Annuals and Perennials"<br>"Cutting Costs Not Corners"<br>Cyprian Keyes GC<br>Host: Richard Zepp, CGCS |

# GCSAA CEO tapped as new World Golf Foundation CEO Mona to leave GCSAA

September 26, 2007

**NOTE:** Earlier today, PGA Tour commissioner Tim Finchem announced that Steve Mona accepted the newly-created Chief Executive Officer position of the World Golf Foundation. Mona has served as the CEO for the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) since November 15, 1993. Attached is additional information and a statement from GCSAA President Ricky D. Heine, certified golf course superintendent and general manager at The Golf Club Star Ranch, Austin, Texas.

**PGA Tour News Release:**

<http://www.pgatour.com/2007/r/09/26/wgf/index.html>

**GCSAA CEO, Steve Mona biography and photo:**

<http://www.gcsaa.org/about/leadership/mona.asp>

<http://www.gcsaa.org/news/downloads/exec.asp>

## Statement: GCSAA President Ricky D. Heine, CGCS

“Speaking for the GCSAA Board of Directors and the association’s 20,000-plus members, it is indeed a bitter-sweet day. We are extremely happy for Steve and his wife Cyndi for this wonderful opportunity. The World Golf Foundation is fortunate to have a person of Steve’s intelligence, integrity and vision to be its first chief executive. Just as GCSAA has prospered under his leadership, so too will the World Golf Foundation achieve even greater accomplishments with Steve at the helm.

“At the same time, we are sad to lose Steve as our leader. He has meant so much to the association. Under his guidance, he directed the association through a period of unprecedented growth, and helped to elevate the golf course superintendent profession. In his nearly 14 years, the association not only developed highly valuable programs and services that benefited not only the members, but the

facility, the business and the game, as well. The association is strong and well-positioned for continued success, thanks in large part to his direction. I believe his appointment also speaks well for GCSAA as a focused, responsive and dynamic organization that has been integral in enhancing the game. His selection will benefit the entire golf



**Steve Mona  
GCSAA CEO**

industry. While Steve is leaving, it does not mean we are saying goodbye. We will still interact with him and the World Golf Foundation on a fairly regular basis.

“The GCSAA Board of Directors will meet in the near future to chart its course of action. Our strategic governance system presents a framework for succession. Steve has agreed to serve as our chief executive officer for up to another six months.”

## Statement: GCSAA Chief Executive Steve Mona, CAE

“It is difficult to put into words how tough this decision was to make. The Golf Course Superintendents Association of America is a wonderful organization and I will miss my direct association with it. The professional members -- the superintendents and their assistants -- are extremely talented, possess great integrity, are passionately loyal and are tireless in their support of each other. They truly are golf’s ‘unseen heroes.’ The other membership classes, including industry representatives, educators, students, etc., provide the glue that helps to keep the

association functioning at such a high level.”

“I have had the good fortune of serving with more than a dozen loyal, dedicated and visionary boards of directors. They have never wavered in their commitment to GCSAA’s mission and they have always provided the resources to enable the staff to achieve GCSAA’s objectives. The achievements of the association are due in large part to their foresight. I am committed to helping the board achieve association goals and engage an effective and efficient transition during the next six months. The GCSAA staff is wonderfully talented and tireless. It has been a pleasure and a privilege to be on the same team with each and every one of them. I will truly miss my day-to-day interactions with them.”

“I am pleased and proud of my tenure at GCSAA. The accomplishments are certainly not the work of any one individual; rather they are the result of the combined efforts of elected leaders, the members, industry and staff. I point to the development of member standards, the revamping of the education program, the maturation of the GCSAA Foundation to The Environmental Institute for Golf, the increased recognition for the profession, the creation of a sponsorship program, the launch of the Golf Industry Show and the strengthening of chapters as key milestones in my time at GCSAA. But again, these are not my achievements. These are the work of many. “I appreciate the trust PGA Tour Commissioner Tim Finchem has placed in me. I have always admired the manner in which he has led not only the PGA Tour, but several of the game’s major initiatives as well. It will be a challenge and great opportunity to lead the World Golf Foundation as the various organizations around the world seek to elevate the game globally.”

Source: GCSAA Press Release

"Everybody makes mistakes," he added. "The key is to make sure you learn a lesson from them and don't let them happen again."

It is that kind of philosophy that has helped Sadowski gain great satisfaction from getting up in the morning and going to a job he has wanted to do ever since he was a 16-year-old kid working on the grounds crew at Pittsburgh North Golf Club.

"This is the only job I've ever known and the only job I've ever wanted so I feel very fortunate," he said. "Sometimes when you have those days when everything just clicks, there's nothing better. When the course looks good, it's playing good, the weather cooperates and the golfers are happy...those are the moments that you feel real good about the job you've done and that all the hard work you've put into it was worth every second."

## Upcoming GCSAA Web Casts:

How to Read Your Soils Report	10:00:00 AM	10/16/07
Improving Your Powerpoint Skills	12:00:00 PM	10/18/07
Organic Golf	12:00:00 PM	10/23/07
Building a Bridge, not a Gap	2:00:00 PM	10/30/07
Bunker Sand Selection	12:00:00 PM	11/07/07
Rules of Golf	12:00:00 PM	11/13/07
Purchasing Technology with Confidence 2007	2:00:00 PM	11/29/07
Financial Management and Budgeting	12:00:00 PM	12/05/07

In addition, GCSAA offers a host of "On Demand" web casts, a list of which can be found at [www.gcsaa.org/education/webcast/archivedwebcast.asp](http://www.gcsaa.org/education/webcast/archivedwebcast.asp)



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# Hidden Dangers in the Mechanic's Area

By Ron Smith, MBA, CPSI

One of the areas of golf course safety that I feel is often overlooked is the equipment maintenance component. While the vast majority of equipment managers and mechanics certainly value their own safety and the importance of maintaining a safe shop, it has been my experience that many of their co-workers in the maintenance crew don't fully appreciate the dangers that exist in the "mechanic's bay."

Two (2) of the dangers I would like to highlight are the use of compressed air, and the chemical "Methylene Chloride." Compared to some of the other dangers present in the mechanic's work area; heavy equipment, sharp blades, arc welders and grinding equipment, compressed air safety might not seem like a pressing problem. But it is a very real hazard, and it certainly deserves attention--especially since most of your workers probably don't think compressed air is dangerous.

**Basically, there are three hazards associated with compressed air: air pressure, flying particles, and noise.**

- Air under a lot of pressure can penetrate the skin, causing hemorrhaging and pain. If compressed air gets into the body through cuts in the skin, an air bubble (embolism) could

form in the bloodstream, and that could kill a worker if a bubble gets to the heart or lungs. Furthermore, compressed air entering the body through the mouth or nose can cause injury to internal tissues and organs. Compressed air that hits an eye can blow the eyeball from its socket, and compressed air blown into an ear can rupture the eardrum.

- Air pressure of 40 pounds can drive chips and other particles into the eyes and face with the force of shrapnel. Flying particles can also cause cuts and bruises to other parts of the body.
- Compressed air is noisy, too. Noise levels can sometimes reach or exceed 120 decibels.

**Make sure your workers wear essential personal protective equipment (PPE).** It's a safe bet that some of your employees probably don't think about the need for PPE when they use compressed air. It's essential for preventing the kinds of injuries just identified. Recommended PPE includes:

- ✓ Safety glasses with side shields or goggles
- ✓ Face shield
- ✓ Hearing protection
- ✓ Dust mask or respirator (may be required, depending on materials in use and the work environment)

**Focus on safe work rules.** Your compressed air safety training should include, at a minimum, these key points:

- Make sure the line you're working with is an air hose, not a gas or water line. (Sometimes hose lines cross and a worker could be fooled.)
- Inspect the hose to make sure it's in good condition and properly connected.
- Keep air hoses off the floor where they can be tripping hazards or become damaged.
- Prevent sharp objects from rubbing against air hoses.
- Always coil the hose--without kinks--when it's not in use and hang it over a broad support, not on a hook or nail.
- When you have a choice of pressure, use the lowest pressure that will do the job.
- Never point an air hose or air gun at anyone--including yourself.
- Choose a safer, better way to clean dust from your clothes, such as a brush or vacuum.
- Don't fool around when using an air hose. It's a tool that should be used with caution, not a toy for engaging in horseplay.

**Methylene Chloride** is a chemical that has a number of uses such as metal degreasing and paint removal. It is also used to strip finishes from furniture prior to refinishing as well as in the manufacture of other chemicals. Included in the other chemicals Methylene Chloride is part of are brake cleaners, carburetor cleaners, and parts cleaners.

"Overexposure to Methylene Chloride can cause respiratory or central nervous system failure, and poses an increased risk of cancer to exposed employees," said Assistant Secretary of Labor for OSHA Edwin G. Foulke, Jr. Given its potential for adversely affecting the health of employees overexposed to it, OSHA created a standard, CFR1910.1052, that specifically addresses the use of Methylene Chloride in the workplace. Included in the standard is the requirement for air quality monitoring to determine exactly

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how much exposure workers have to the chemical at work.

**Eliminate the use of products that contain Methylene Chloride.** There are many alternative products in the marketplace that can be used for cleaning brakes, carburetors, and used parts that do not contain Methylene Chloride. I have been assured that these products perform just as well, if not better, than the ones that contain Methylene Chloride. Even't if they don't perform as well the slight change in performance is more than offset by eliminating the potential danger to your employees and the time and cost of implementing the required air quality monitoring program.

If you have any questions concerning compressed air safety and/or Methylene Chloride please contact Ron Smith, MBA, CPSI at 877-848-5978.

## The 2007 Compensation, Benefits and Operations Report is now available!

Information is included on salaries, budgets, fringe benefits, education levels, retirement and more. As a GCSAA Chapter Executive, you have access to the final report as a resource to help your members. Please keep in mind that as this report is to support our members, and the data should not be shared outside our membership.

As in the past, GCSAA regularly surveys all Class A and superintendent members about their compensation and benefits, with the last report being published in 2005. For 2007, GCSAA contracted with **enetrrix** to administer the survey on a secure web site and invite superintendents to participate. This year's survey resulted in a total of 4,078 respondents – a 39.3 percent response rate overall.

### Here are some highlights from the 2007 Compensation, Benefits and Operations Report:

o The average salary among golf course superintendents is \$73,766.

This a 7 percent increase from the average base salary reported in the 2005 salary survey, or 3.5% each year.

o For Class A members with 5 to 9 years experience who are responsible for 18 holes, the average salary at a private facility is \$81,628. For Class SM members with 5 to 9 years experience who are responsible for 18 holes, the average salary at a private facility is \$75,120.

o For Class A members with 5 to 9 years experience who are responsible for 18 holes, the average salary at a public facility is \$61,366. For Class SM members with 5 to 9 years experience who are responsible for 18 holes, the average salary at a public facility is \$54,329

o The average base salary reported for an assistant superintendent is \$37,032; 7 percent higher than the average salary reported in the 2005 salary survey, also 3.5% per year.

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# GCSANE Monthly Meeting – October 22<sup>nd</sup>

## Annual Member/Guest Tournament

### Pleasant Valley Country Club

#### Host: Don D'Errico

In 1959, Pleasant Valley Country Club was carved out of an expansive three hundred fifty acre apple orchard. The course was designed by Donald Hoenig, with input from owner Cosmo "Cuz" Mingolla and with the intent of hosting major professional events. Pleasant Valley may be regarded as a predecessor to the modern TPC courses in that Heonig and Mingolla configured the layout and features to make is "spectator friendly". Hoenig is also credited with the design of the Raceway Golf Club in Connecticut and the Firefly Golf Course in Seekonk, Massachusetts. Over the years, there have been minor renovations made to Pleasant Valley by Cornish and Silva and later Robert McNeil.

Professional golf came to Sutton, Massachusetts beginning with the 1962 LPGA Lady Carling Open. The PGA Tour began its annual retreat to Sutton in 1965 with the Carling World Open, which welcomed international golfers from eleven countries and offered a record purse of \$200,000. Since then, Pleasant Valley has hosted forty-seven National Championships on both the LPGA and PGA Tours.

Our host, Don D'Errico, is in his 6<sup>th</sup> season at Pleasant Valley. Prior to PV, he was superintendent at Hope-dale Country Club for 6 years. Don got

his start in the business when Michael Luccini talked him into working for his father, Gary at Franklin Country Club in 1991. Don learned the ropes under the watchful eye of "The Bear" at Franklin for 6 years. He is a graduate of the Winter School at UMass and the 2 year turf management program at Rutgers University.

Don sites the ongoing drought and limited water supply as his greatest challenge this year. He has had to ration water to portions of the course and credits his two assistants, Tom Livingston and Nate Henry, with helping to keep the course in great condition this year despite the lack of rainfall.

Don's favorite holes at PV are the 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, and 10<sup>th</sup>, which he refers to as their "Amen Corner." These holes are a demanding stretch of golf that often make or break a round. Don's advice for those playing the course is to lag those long putts and not to read too much break on the very large and gently sloping greens. Don lists Agawam Hunt, Wannamoisett and Eastward Ho! among his favorite layouts and on his "must play" list are Oyster Harbors, Kittansett and Hyannisport.

After work, Don's children, Matthew and Danielle keep he and wife Pam busy with their activities

### Meeting Details

9:00 am: Registration  
 10:00 am: Lunch  
 11:00 am: Shotgun  
 4:00 pm: Heavy Hors d'oeuvres (golf attire)

Field Limited to 128 players

Cost \$150 per player

including hockey, soccer and karate. When not spending time with his family, Don plays guitar in a band with friend Brian Luccini of Tom Irwin Co. and Don touts Brian as "a great bass player and songwriter". Fishing for stripers is another summer hobby for him. In the winter, he enjoys skiing and snowmobiling.

-Mark Gagne

#### 2007 Compensation Survey - Continued from page 6

As in the past, all GCSAA member superintendents who responded to the survey have access to a complimentary subscription to the report. Those who did not respond to the survey may purchase a copy by members for \$100, and non-members for \$400.

To access the report, or get information on how to purchase the report, go to [www.gcsaa.org](http://www.gcsaa.org) and select the Career Tab. Then click on the

announcement on the left side of the page, or call 800-472-7878.

If you have any questions or receive questions about the Report contents, please forward them to [career@gcsaa.org](mailto:career@gcsaa.org) or call 800-472-7878 and speak with Tawnia Showalter or Lyne Tumlinson.



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# Rounding the Home Stretch

By Jim Skorulski, Senior Agronomist

The season of weather extremes continues. It all began with the unusually warm winter, followed by the coldest April on record, and then one of the driest months of August in a long time. Non-irrigated roughs and the trees are really beginning to show the effects of the dry weather in New England. Some trees are experiencing premature fall color and or leaf drop. Reports of mature oak trees dying also have been heard in some eastern parts of Massachusetts where the trees have suffered from insect defoliation and the stresses brought on by the dry weather. Conversely, some areas farther south have received heavy and untimely (for aeration operations) rainfall. Regretably, some courses suffered damage of putting green turf as a result of the untimely rain events.

Poa annua/bentgrass roughs also have suffered from the long and now dry summer. This too is to be expected as these grasses develop excessive thatch, become shallow rooted, and are very susceptible to disease. The grasses do not stand up well to traffic and provide a difficult playing surface even at their best. The traditional late summer aeration and fertility programs, together with cooler weather and natural precipitation, will stimulate new growth and recovery of the less desirable rough grasses, but the same set of problems will likely reoccur in the future when more difficult weather conditions return.

Overseeding the thatchy rough areas with Kentucky bluegrass and fine fescues is not a viable option. Those grasses germinate and establish too slowly to compete with the existing grasses in those areas. Perennial ryegrass will germinate quickly and competes well with the existing grasses, but its Achilles heel continues to be gray leaf spot disease. The release of new perennial ryegrass varieties with improved gray leaf spot resistance is promising, but expensive fungicide programs are likely once the gray leaf spot disease is again active in the region.

The most successful approach for addressing the poor quality roughs continues to be regrassing with sod. This option makes it possible to reestablish a more durable and disease resistant Kentucky bluegrass or Kentucky bluegrass/fine fescue turf. The playability of the surface provided by these grasses is superior and the results are immediate. This regrassing approach removes the unwanted grasses and thatch mat, and also provides an opportunity to thoroughly cultivate and amend the soils if necessary to improve structure and fertility. Regrassing alone will not solve problems with poor irrigation coverage, shade, tree root competition, concentrated traffic flows or inadequate fertility. Those issues also need to be addressed if improved playing conditions are to become a reality.



*Pictured above: Annual bluegrass/creeping bentgrass roughs surrounding greens and fairways are usually at their worst condition in late summer. Now is the time to develop renovation programs to address these poor quality grasses.*

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*The most successful approach for addressing the poor quality roughs continues to be regrassing with sod.*

Jim Skorulski,  
USGA Senior Agronomist

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Source: Northeast Region Green Section- Dave Oatis, Director [doatis@usga.org](mailto:doatis@usga.org); Jim Baird, Agronomist [jbaird@usga.org](mailto:jbaird@usga.org); Jim Skorulski, Senior Agronomist [jskorulski@usga.org](mailto:jskorulski@usga.org)

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

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **Welcome New Members:**

Daniel Allen, Assistant, Kernwood CC

### **Proposed New Members:**

Gregory Caron, Assistant, Hatherly CC  
Daniel Fuller, Affiliate, BISCO

Congratulations to Andrew and Natalie Eick on the recent birth of their daughter Avery Beatrice. Andrew is the Assistant Superintendent at the Kittansett Club.

Congratulations to Steve Mann, CGCS of the Captains Golf Course on renewing his certification status with GCSAA.

All members are encouraged to contact Julie Heston to announce new arrivals so that we may purchase a savings bond in recognition of their birth. Phone: (401) 934-3677 or [jheston@verizon.net](mailto:jheston@verizon.net)

### **Bernhard & Co is sponsoring a trip for 10 GCSAA Class A members to England!**

Ten GCSAA Class A members will travel to the British & International Golf Greenkeepers Association's (BIGGA) Turf Management Exhibition (BTME), Jan., 21-26, 2008 in Harrogate, England.

Bernhard and Company, manufacturers of Express Dual and Anglemaster, is sponsoring the delegation for a second year as part of their ongoing educational initiative.

Delegates chosen will have the opportunity to attend Europe's largest golf and sports turf managers conference and exhibition. Attendees will participate in education seminars, network with greenkeepers from the UK and Europe, and visit several different styles of golf courses in England.

Bernhard and Company will cover expenses for airfare, accommodation, conference registration, education

seminars and transportation. To become eligible, register online at [http://www.bernhard.co.uk/gcsaa\\_regform.0.html](http://www.bernhard.co.uk/gcsaa_regform.0.html) or call (888) GRIND IT (474-6348).

## **S&B Committee Update**

The Scholarship & Benovence Committee (Chairman Ron Dobosz, Jim Small, Mike Hermanson, Dennis Friel, Dave Comee, Ed Gianni, Bob Healey and Steve Curry) are pleased to announce that this year's event, held at the TPC Boston, raised \$23,045. Of that, \$8,500 was awarded as scholarships to children of GCSANE members. This brings the total amount of scholarship awards since the fund's inception to \$73,500.

## **GCSANE Friends and Affiliates**

### **"End of the Season" Advertising Special**

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