



Curdy Visits GCSAA Headquarters

James Curdy, Desert Aire Golf Course, Mattawa, Wash., and Lori Russell attended the 2015 Chapter Leader/Executive Symposium at GCSAA headquarters in late March.

Representatives of 23 GCSAA chapters came together to focus on their leadership skills to lead their chapter as well as course facilities. Numerous topics were covered during the event including leadership, governance, operations, communications, a breakout between the chapter leaders and chapter executives to discuss applicable topics, as well as a small group discussion among the five northwest chapters in attendance. (Picture: David Phipps (GCSAA), Wade Altchwager (Peaks & Prairies GCSA), Lori Russell, James Curdy (Inland Empire GCSA), Gerald Flaherty, CGCS (Idaho GCSA), and Peter Grass, CGCS, (GCSAA Vice-President).

Who Does Not Appreciate Maintenance Tips?

In this issue you will find several tips and tricks for the golf course submitted by Jason Habeck, CGCS, Lewiston Country Club. There is not one person reading this newsletter who won't read Jason's article in its entirety. It is a topic everyone appreciates. In the past we featured innovative ideas from Derek Bigler, Circling Raven. We know we have many innovative members. Take a moment now to note some of your own ideas and contact Lori so they may be shared with your peers.

Inland Empire PGA Section Pledges \$5,000 Grant

Thank you to the Inland Empire Chapter of the PGA! As announced by Kathy Gildersleeve-Jensen, President, the section will support the IEGCSA through a 2015 grant of \$5,000.

Assistant Superintendents Have Been in Demand

Do you regularly review the job postings in the member's only section of the Inland Empire GCSA website? If so, you are aware we had a large number of job postings from the northwest over the past few months, with several specifically seeking assistant superintendents. If you have staff ready for a move up in their career, there are many courses who would appreciate you sharing the open positions with your staff.

Lacy and Hicks Making a Difference in the Industry

Bo Lacy, CGCS, Tri-City Country Club, spoke at the 2015 GIS during the Agronomic Solution Session, "Buzz About Bees and Other Pollinators. and Kevin Hicks, Coeur d'Alene Resort, was recognized as "Best Twitter Feed - 2015 Super Social Media Awards, by Golf Course Industry Magazine, also at the GIS. These are two great examples of superintendents reaching beyond their own facility and making an impact.



"The Inland Empire GCSA is established to serve members, advance the profession and promote the enjoyment of golf through responsible golf course management practices."

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Tips and Tricks

Jason Habeck, CGCS

Lewiston Golf and Country Club, Lewiston, Idaho



As superintendents, we are always coming up with ways to be more efficient, make our staff more productive, and, in this day and age do more with less. Everybody has their

tricks, and I thought I would share a few things we have developed over the years. I am sure many of you have better ideas than I do and I would love to hear them as we are always looking to improve.

Answering the Radio

How many times have you called somebody on the radio and your first question is, "Where you located?" They reply, "14 green." And then you carry on with your radio conversation. Instead, train your staff to answer the radio, "14 green, go ahead." Wherever they are located they say their location first and now you just saved the first step of every radio call.

Sand Caddies

Sand and seed

buckets at par 3 tees rarely get used because the golfer has to bend over and when the buckets are used, often half the scoop gets spilled as they move to their divot. It can be further complicated because the buckets catch water and the wet sand needs to be dumped. Our solution was to build a metal holder that holds one or two sand bottles. They are waist height, keep the sand dry, and the bottles make it easy to apply the right amount. Because of their accessibility, they are used more often.



Signs on the Course

Explaining Agronomy

To further communicate with our golfers, I place signs on the golf course explaining things I want members to see or understand. It doesn't take any time; just use a short laminated piece of paper with a brief description. You will be amazed at how many members tell you they read your post and never noticed that on the course before.

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Repurpose Driving Range Tee Mats

Take an old range mat, flip it upside down, and attach a 2x4 with a cable. Tow it behind a cart for light topdressing applications and it will brush in topdressing sand as good as, if not better, than a coco mat that costs \$500.

Hose Reels

Your staff will love you. Handwatering is one of the most important things with fast and firm conditions. Instead of dragging hoses in and out of a cart, put hose reels on the side and un-rolling and rolling up hoses is made easy. Upgrade to the electric version if you do a lot of handwatering.

Sheet of Plywood for Test Plots

Whenever you apply a critical application like a fungicide, growth regulator, or even a liquid fertilizer, lay down a small sheet of plywood on the corner of your practice green as a test plot. It is the best way to see if you really needed that fungicide application, or what effect the growth regulator or fertilizer is having on your turf. (Continued page 5)





HUMIC SOLUTIONS

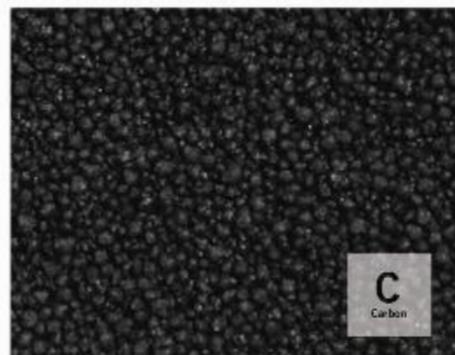
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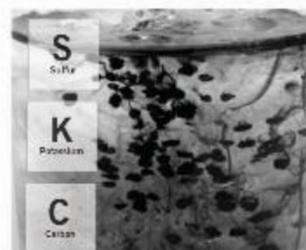
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Mow the Practice Tee Front to Back

By mowing front to back you will leave more divot mix in the divots for re-growth. Side to side or even diagonal allows the reels to dip into the divot and dig out germinating seed; front to back will allow the reels to ride on top of the divot lines.



Cheat Rolling

On days when you mow and roll greens, only roll the portion of the green where the cup is. There are many studies that have been performed by the USGA and it shows golfers can only tell speed by how the ball rolls out at the end, not at the beginning of their 40 ft putt. We roll 5-6 days a week but yet the entire green is only getting rolled twice a week because we roll 1/3 of the green each day.

Weigh Your Grass Clippings

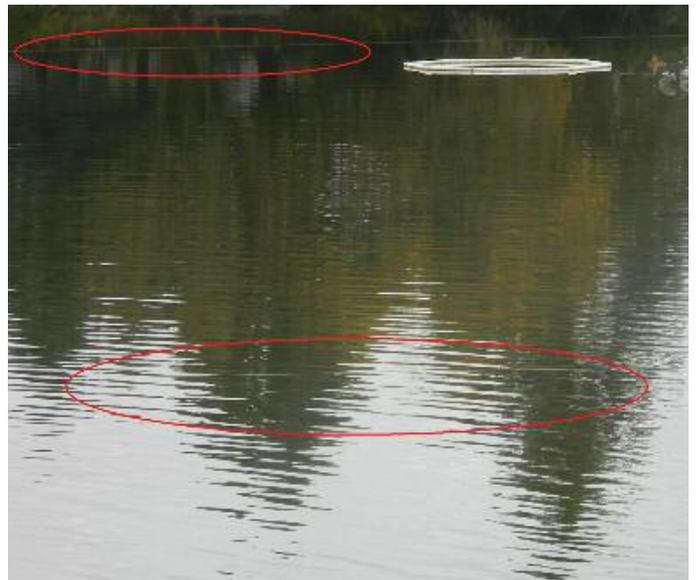
About four years ago we started having the staff weigh the clippings in the back of their cart after they finished a walk mow route. The data and analysis collected has been amazing. We can see as greens start to lean down before the color even tells they are getting hungry, we see the effect each application has on the turf in a quantitative measure, and we know exactly what to feed them going



into every large event. Each walkmower most likely has the clippings in the back of the cart. Put a scale and shovel at your dump area and your staff can weigh and record their clippings everyday.

No More Geese

Place fishing lines across the pond. We have all tried every trick out there to eliminate geese – decoys, lights, alligator heads, swans, and noise devices. For me, the geese figure it out every time but stringing monofilament fishing line from side to side about 5 feet above the water and 25 ft apart has worked every time and it continues to work - until you take the lines down. We go from 125 geese to zero overnight, because they think it is netted and they will not fly into a net.



Communicate Through Social Media

Communication is one of the most important parts of our job, and may be one of the most difficult due to our time on the course and lack of interaction. We all try to communicate with members and guests as much as possible, but nowadays people want it when they want. If you haven't taken the plunge into social media, you must. It is so powerful and you will find you will reach many people through social media. Do some research, study up, and approach slowly, but start using any combination of a blog, start Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, or email notifications.

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Rock Curbing

Without curbing along your cart path, golfers are always parking two tires on the grass. We removed the area that did not have turf, poured in four inches of concrete, and placed rocks in the concrete. It looks natural and you will always have all four tires on the path.

Set Heads with a Bubble Level

Irrigation heads are only as efficient as the way we set them and operate them. Don't trust your eye, but instead give your staff a bubble level to ensure each head is set to a perfect levelness.



Greenhouse your Winter Dormant Plugs

During the winter months, dig a couple samples out of your greens, plant them in a sand media, cover them with a clear cup like a greenhouse, and set them in the window sill of your shop. In 3-4 days you will know exactly what you are going to be up against come spring. You can start preparing and planning months in advance.

Spray Fairways

If you are not spraying your fairways and still applying granular, you should really consider it. After I made the switch, I wish I would have done it many years ago. I now spend less money with far superior conditioning. The variety and types of products that we can apply via liquid is far superior to any granular. With proper calibration we can spray fairways in under four hours and stay ahead of golfers with one sprayer.

Pre-mix Tank

With more and more different types of chemical applications being offered, a pre-mix tank is a must. They can be purchased or you can build your own; it will cut down on mix time tremendously. There is also research proving we are not

getting the full effect of our products because we are not getting them "completely" mixed in our spray tanks, compared to ag equipment that mixes products a lot more.

Cut Three Cups to Prepare for Winter

If your golf course is open all year around, but you do minimal maintenance in the winter, in the fall cut three cups in your green and cover the two not in use with a disc. Now you can easily rotate pin locations all winter even, if the green is too firm to cut a cup. The most important time to rotate your



traffic on dormant turf is right when you can't cut a cup.

Roller Base Sprinklers

We all have those areas that are lacking irrigation. Instead of having somebody handwater those areas, put a small sprinkler on a hose and let it run for while. You can even mount a hose end wetting agent applicator into the hose.

Document Everything with Pictures

With today's technology, you cannot take enough pictures. Take pictures of everything because you never know when you will want to use it for a comparison in the future. Pictures are the first step in every capital project you want to get approved.

I hope I have offered a couple of ideas useful for your golf course to either make your job easier and/or improve course conditions.

Do you have any ideas to share? Next time you see me at a local meeting or conference, please share your ideas. Here is the part where Lori would encourage you to share your ideas with her— regardless if it is just a short blurb or a full article.

Good luck in 2015 and I hope it is a good year for everybody.

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It's All About the People

Bill Griffith, Director
Agriculture Center of Excellence
Walla Walla Community College

For a number of years, I have been interested in ways to motivate employees and have had many opportunities to observe maintenance crews in action as I vis-

ited internship sites using students in the turf management program. I have visited more than 150 worksites in the last 10 years and have seen some really great, motivated crews and some not so good. This presentation is about those observations and some materials gained from other sources. I would like to credit the Leadership Catalyst Organization and their book "The Ascent of a Leader" by Bill McThrall and Bruce McNicol and a book "Whale Done" by Ken Blanchard. I have observed that there are two major areas that hinder motivating employees. One of those areas is a lack of organization and clear directions to the staff.

The other main observation is that the supervisor's communications to the staff are seldom or negative in nature.

Employees want a leader who leads and provides consistent communication to the employees. Informed workers are much more likely to be motivated.

The Link Between Organization and Motivation

Organization gives workers confidence, direction and power, and organization plans out the workday, workweek and, even longer planning. Something visual works best and is much more likely to be understood than just verbal planning and direction. Advance notice of tournaments, special maintenance practices and scheduled events empowers employees because they know what to expect and are mentally prepared. When employees know the plan, they are better able to process what needs to be done and are more efficient at doing their job.

The Link Between Sharing Goals and Motivation

Setting and sharing goals with all of the staff moves the organization forward because the staff has a better idea of the big picture. If you want your workers to buy into the goals of the organization, make them part of the goal setting process. Communicate the short and long term goals to your workers regularly.

Reaching your goals is the perfect opportunity to give positive reinforcement, which can go a long way in motivating

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your employees. Employees who know the big picture of the puzzle are better able to fit the pieces.

The Power of a “Gotcha” Management Style

Gotcha’s are great at noticing when workers do something wrong and communicating the same to workers. Gotcha’s may correct wrong behavior, but they seldom have any long lasting motivational effect. In fact, this management style becomes very counter productive and the employee will eventually not believe what you are saying about them. Another closely related area to this is to remember to concentrate on the behavior or action, especially patterns of behavior. Obviously these situations need to be dealt with, but we need to be careful to differentiate between the person and the behavior or action. The other thing that happens with a “Gotcha” management community is that critical attitudes and words flourish. This will then become part of the maintenance crew’s normal operating procedure and the crew interaction with each other will become critical in nature. Gotcha management styles erode trust from those we manage and produce fear, uncertainty and resentment. One positive comment will usually stop critical comments and change the direction of the conversation.

The Power of a Well Done Management Style

“Well Done’s” learn to notice when things are being done right and communicate the same to workers. What do we pay the most attention to, when workers do something wrong or when they do something right? Unfortunately, of all of our response options, the one that is most used is, “no response.” Over a period of time, consistent no responses tend to be perceived as negative in nature. We need to understand what a positive difference it makes in their motivation when people are appreciated for what they do right. Well Done’s communicate to workers when they see progress, not just when something is done perfectly.

Do not confuse this process with manipulation, which is used only for the manipulator’s benefit. The goal is to get people self motivated so that the reward comes from within when they do a good job. They will learn this best if we model it to them. One of the best quotes from Ken Blanchard’s, “*Whale Done*” is, “Praise progress, it’s a moving target.” Write this on your wall or make a sign above your desk, but make sure to keep reminding yourself how important it is to recognize progress. Accentuating the positive is a learned process and only works when it becomes a habit. How many of you wake up just before the alarm goes off every morning? That is a learned habit, and when we repeat something often enough, it becomes a habit and eventually part of our character. Involve

your employees in helping to add ways to accentuate the positive at your work sites. This also works well in the area of customer service as it gives the employees ideas for better customer service and communicates to them the importance of good customer service. We need to consistently model good customer service to our employees and reinforce the message that without the golfers, we wouldn’t have a job. Work places that practice affirmation and well dones create an environment of safety and trust. People will only be willing to hear and accept the truth in a place that has trust and is without fear. If our employees are given consistent affirmation, they will really take notice when we point out a mistake or a behavior problem.

Try this with one or two people for a week or two and see if it doesn’t make a difference. Start by making a list of items every time you see an employee doing something right and then comment on these things individually to the employee. Remember to look for progress from your employees and praise them for it. You might want to consider practicing this in your personal life, and you will probably be surprised at the difference it will make in your personal relationships. As a parent, it made a tremendous difference in my relationship with my children when I started appreciating them for what they did well and focused less on what my expectations were for them. Finally, promote a work site that will encourage the employees to learn and grow. Make your positive and redirective comments to individuals first, then to groups when necessary. A well-motivated work force will always accomplish more and make the manager look good.



Top Gerald Flaherty, CGCS (IDGCSA), James Curdy (IE GCSA), Wade Althwager (PPGC-SA), Natalie Barker (IGCSA)
GCSAA Board Members, Keven Breen, CGCS (Director), President John O’Keefe, CGCS; Vice President, Peter Grass, CGCS

News from your Field Staff

David Phipps, GCSAA Field Staff,
NW Region

We have some new faces within GCSAA's marketing and communications department, and Associate Marketing Director, Russell Sypowicz and Marketing Manager, Whitney Hofer, along with Craig Smith, Director of Communications and Media Relations, have been busy this spring creating the "Thanks a Golf Course Superintendent" promotional campaign. The campaign is aimed at the country's 25 million golfers and features a combination of television, radio, internet and print media.

The television spots (15 and 30 seconds) are anchored by 18-time major champion Jack Nicklaus and feature numerous PGA TOUR, Champions Tour and LPGA Tour professionals including Rory McIlroy, Ricky Fowler, Jordan Spieth, Matt Kuchar, Jay Haas, Fred Funk, Michelle Wie and CBS Sports Golf Analyst Nick Faldo. The spots can be viewed in their entirety at <http://www.gcsaa.org/community/chapter-leaders/managing-your-chapter/materials-for-chapter-publications> and will run throughout 2015 on The Golf Channel.

The radio spot (30 seconds) again features Nicklaus thanking golf course superintendents and is running on SiriusXM PGA TOUR Radio (Sirius 208, XM 93) as well as golf radio shows throughout the country. Listen to the spot at <http://www.gcsaa.org/community/chapter-leaders/managing-your-chapter/materials-for-chapter-publications>.

The internet and print campaign features a giveaway for a trip to the 2015 PGA Championship at Whistling Straits. Golfers who submit an online thank you note to their local golf course superintendent are entered into the giveaway. The thank you notes will then be passed onto the mentioned golf course superintendent as well as the superintendent's employer.

I am excited to see some of the new superintendent recognition initiatives and I'm sure you will be pleased once you start seeing and hearing them. I want to thank you for your support of GCSAA and I hope you all have the opportunity to enjoy some golf this spring. If I can be of any assistance, please don't hesitate to contact me at dhipps@gcsaa.org and make sure to follow me on Twitter @GCSAA_NW for regular updates from the golf industry. *Below - Karen Armstead (First Green),*

Steve Kealy, Dave Phipps at the Chapters of NW Hosp. Room



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We thank everyone who donated products to the chapter's silent auction and everyone who supported the auction through bidding. We would like to especially mention and thank our top two donors - **Western Equipment** and **Lane Mountain Bunker Sand**. This auction supplements the important programs of the association and helps keep your dues as low as possible.

