

# Turf's Up in the Inland Empire

Summer 2017

## Speaker Lineup and Topics Highlight the Value of the 2017 Combined Event

We have assembled several of the top-rated speakers in the industry for the Northwest GCSA Turfgrass Expo, at the Coeur d'Alene Resort. The topics range across the board, appealing to courses of all sizes and budgets. Our audience is in a fast-paced industry addressing so many different responsibilities, it isn't always easy to just stop for hours on end – but these speakers will keep you interested and engaged. Also enjoy an informative trade show, and a friendly round of golf pitting the chapters against each other for bragging rights. More information about our speakers and about this event is found by visiting [iegcsa.org](http://iegcsa.org) calendar.

## Early Response to Northwest GCSA Turfgrass Expo

The initial response to the Northwest GCSA Turfgrass Expo, October 16 -17, has been even better than we anticipated.

The speakers and topics are excellent, the opportunity to gather and network in the region is special, the Coeur d'Alene Resort is outstanding, and the response for the trade show is phenomenal.

### IMPORTANT

We need you to make your hotel reservations now if you are planning to attend (or even considering) – please don't wait. It is important we have time to add more rooms to the block so we can accommodate everyone at this great price. Call (800) 688-5253 and specify Northwest GCSA when making your hotel reservations. If you prefer to make your reservations online, visit the calendar event of the [iegcsa.org](http://iegcsa.org) homepage to click on the link. Our great rate is Single-Double: \$129.00 (+ surcharge and tax).

### We can invoice you

Is this an unusual time in your budget to pay for the fall meeting? We still ask you to complete the registration material and indicate you need an invoice. Payment can follow next quarter.

## Return to The Drury Plaza

We heard you – The Drury Plaza in San Antonio, Texas was a smashing hit at our last visit. Our chapter room block will return to The Drury Plaza for the 2018 GIS, February 5 – 8. The hotel offers two complimentary meals a day. Enjoy a free breakfast that includes hot items such as biscuits and gravy, scrambled eggs and sausage. Receive beverage tickets, as well as what you could enjoy as a snack or a meal – a variety of hot food and cold food that changes daily, from 5:30-7:00 p.m. each day

All rooms include microwaves and refrigerators, and free wireless throughout the property. There is even a rooftop pool on the property. With only a four-block stroll to the convention center, GCSAA bus service will *not* be available.

Our block is open and it usually closes in November. So, as always, we encourage you to make your reservations early.

Our Chapters of the Northwest hospitality room will be February 7, 2018. Stay tuned for more information and sponsorship opportunities.



**It has been more years** than we can remember since the IEGCSA gathered for summer golf and networking (above) – just because we could. 47 players enjoyed a fabulous round of golf at The Club at Rock Creek. The event rolled out before the regional smoke rolled in – and it was a beautiful day that was highly supported by hole sponsors, as well as players. Thank you to everyone at The Club at Rock Creek for your hospitality!

A publication of the Inland Empire Golf Course Superintendents Association

Inland Empire Chapter  
**GCSAA**  
GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENTS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

# The Journey

## Jamie Colson, GM/Superintendent SunCountry Golf Course, Cle Elum, Washington

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It wasn't long ago I ran into a young golfer who asked me, "How did you get into golf?" This young man reminded me of myself back in the day, so I proceeded to tell him how I got started! I definitely didn't give him this long version! ☹️ But, it made me think back to the journey it has been. There have been a lot of great people who have helped me get to where I am today, and I am forever grateful for each of those folks!

Born in McCall, Idaho, in the 70s, my grandparents and Dad ran Colson Home Dairies until I was probably two, maybe three. Around that time they sold the Home Dairies and followed a dream of my dad's to the Salmon River, where my parents were the caretakers and operated two different ranches. The only way in was by boat or airplane! What I can remember as a young kid, being able to spend my days on the Salmon River on the boat was pretty amazing, from hunting and fishing with the clients each and every day, to catching steelhead in the fall and winter - which I have to admit was my favorite!

Fast forward to middle school where I took up golf for the first time. My love for the game has continued to grow ever since then! While hitting balls on the range one day at Quail Ridge (Clarkston), the head golf professional asked me if I was looking for a job. He proceeded to tell me about how I could get free golf...so I took him up on it. Each evening I would ride my bike over to the course and would hit a few buckets of range balls, all while continuing my bad swing

habits until he finally said, "Kid, if you are going to be hitting balls every day you should probably be doing it the correct way." That was the only lesson I think I have taken to this day and I am proud to say I am a single digit handicap-

### From being the range boy to today:

After graduating from high school, I knew I wanted to stay in golf in some fashion, but wasn't sure I was ready for

college. So, after declining a couple golf scholarship offers, I figured I needed to work for a year (or so),

save some money, and then pursue my dream of being a college athlete. It was late summer of 1998 when the college athlete thing

seemed like so long ago and I wasn't sure if I was made for school. You guys can relate to that a little bit, I am sure! While working two jobs trying to decide what I wanted to do, Mike Waisanen hired me at Clarkston Country Club. Before long, he saw something in me (not sure why Mike, but thank you!) and offered me the assistant superintendent job when the assistant moved on, and I accepted. Boy, am I glad I did.

I stayed working for Mike until I made the switch to try out the public side of golf. In the spring of 2001, I was hired as the assistant at Quail Ridge Golf Course, working for Paul McCarthy. Looking back, I couldn't have asked for two better people to get me started in the golf industry.

As we all can relate to in some fashion, as a young man I figured there wasn't anything I didn't already know - as far as golf course maintenance went. At the age of 26, with nothing but hands-on experience and just the day-to-day learning from two amazing superintendents, it was time for me to move on from Quail and try to become a superintendent.

I accepted my first superintendent job in 2004 at St. Maries Golf Course in St. Maries, Idaho. This nine-hole track was a thing of beauty, and was nothing like what I was used to in the Lewis/Clark valley. St. Maries had four seasons with fungicide treatments and different irrigation practices to consider. I wondered what in the heck I had gotten myself into. However, the golf membership and the town supported this young kid in a way I didn't think possible. There are folks in St. Maries today who are still great friends to my family and me!

As many of you may have noticed, I was on

continued page 4



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Colson continued from page 2

these three-year stints at each course, so in 2007, I felt it was time to look for an 18-hole adventure. Well, I got close to that, as Suncadia Resort in Cle Elum, Washington, was building its third golf course. I always wanted to be part of golf course construction. Matt Atterberry was leading the charge at Suncadia at the time, and he hired me to be the Assistant on RopeRider during the completion of construction. I arrived with 11 holes completed and just starting the grow-in process! Matt is another superintendent and friend to this day who I can call just to shoot the breeze with, or if I have questions, he is always willing to help! Blessed to have worked with such great superintendents!

Today, I am the superintendent and general manager at Sun Country Golf Course in Cle Elum. I took over Sun Country in the spring of 2009. Sun Country was a nine-hole course that had just finished adding nine holes, and it was ready to open. The first two seasons I was strictly able to focus on just the golf course, but during the downturn of the economy - it was the start of my third season - we downsized and I was asked to be the GM and superintendent! I had always wanted to be a part of the entire operation and here was my shot. The alpine golf course is a thing of beauty, where our slogan remains, "The views are free." We also have 14 RV sites, where folks love to come stay and play.

Back in October 2012, I became a very lucky man and married my best friend and love of my life, Andrea. We have three children - Madison (13), Conner (9) and Canyon (4). We live in Ellensburg where the kids are very involved in sports. Madison is on a 12U softball team out of Ellensburg that won the PNW regional tournament and they are headed for the Babe Ruth World Series in Florida the end of July/first of August! We couldn't be more proud of the stud she is!!

Thanks again to the guys who have helped me get to where I am today. God Bless!



## Assistant Profile

### Randy Hayes Palouse Ridge Golf Course Pullman, Washington

We were driving to Walla Walla for the spring meeting, and Mike announces, "Oh, by the way, you need to write a personal profile for the newsletter." That's what happens when your boss becomes a new Inland Empire GCSA board member. Thanks, Mike!

However, it got me thinking. I asked Lori at the meeting, "What should I address?"

"Oh, you can write about anything," was her reply. "Great, can you throw me a bone?" "No, do what-ever!"

Before I offer a little history about myself, I want to pass along that, at the spring 2017 meeting in Walla Walla, we heard a presentation about writing resumes. Updating and rewriting your resume along with your professional profile is a great exercise. It makes you think about what you have learned over the last few years. It offers the opportunity to evaluate where you are in your professional life. What are your priorities and do these priorities correspond with those of your superintendent and the golf club? Going through the process can make you a better leader to your crew.

I also want to create a challenge to the assistant superintendent community in the Inland Empire Chapter. The articles received from assistant superintendents each year are a result of personal invitations - mainly from our assistant liaison, Jacob Teaford. We challenge you to not wait for an invitation. Write about a project on your course, or write a personal profile. Profiles provide association members insight into their fellow Inland Empire assistant superintendents. For example, I spent 30-years as a photographer/photojournalist before returning to the University of Idaho and acquiring a degree in landscape architecture.

Even earlier, I was a photojournalist for the Idaho Falls Post





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Register newspaper and had spent eight years floating around the oceans with the U.S. Navy. As a photojournalist, I always loved taking golf photos. The moments that can be captured are truly amazing and I am sharing some of my favorite golf pictures with this article.

After relocating back to the Palouse area from Idaho Falls, I began gaining experience with golf course turf management. During my first winter back, I was hiking at Moose Creek Reservoir, east of Moscow, Idaho, and I met a family looking for a Christmas tree. We chatted for a bit and I found out the family was related to John Harbottle III, who happened to be the design-architect for the Palouse Ridge Golf Club at the time. I was introduced to then superintendent, Todd Lupkes, and my career in golf course maintenance began. I started at the Palouse Ridge in 2008, the year of grow-in. My job was to mow, then mow some more. After that, keep mowing. It makes one really get to know the golf course. By the end of the summer, I knew every bump of every fairway and all the hazardous areas in the rough, along with each blade of grass on the greens. It was a great learning experience.

I spent the next four golf seasons working at the Palouse Ridge while attaining a landscape architecture degree. I pushed my new university skills and ideas to Mike and Todd about course landscape maintenance, and their receptiveness helped me achieve the position I am in today.

When Mike moved to the superintendent position at the Palouse Ridge after Todd was appointed general manager, he encouraged me to apply for the assistant position. My appointment to the assistant superintendent early in 2016 has given me purpose. I believe I have the ability to help build an environment (for the future) that provides the community with an appreciation of the game of golf, and also a great outdoor experience.

Recently, I learned an assistant superintendent must be adaptable to any situation and know how to do just about anything. I have the responsibility of attempting to bring a new crew together each summer and then watching over them like a "mother hen" as

they scurry away from the nest each morning attempting to achieve the goal you have assigned. An assistant superintendent needs to be flexible, organized and just a little crazy. Your superintendent has a lot on his/her mind. The more you can help them, the better the overall product.

And for the folks at the spring meeting present for the technology conversation, I own a flip phone. There you go, I'm old school and I'm okay with that. Drives Mike crazy at times.

As an assistant superintendent, I have learned so much. You never stop learning. I always believe we should attempt to come together to help one another. We should never stop working as a team!



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**\* Summer Outing Results \***

**Division I 15 and under handicap**

1st	Geoff Haynes	72	\$150.00
2nd	Mike Kingsley	73	\$100.00
3rd	Darcy Otto	4	\$ 50.00
Last	Michael Newman	90	\$ 25.00

**Division II 16 handicap and up**

1st	Cary Allison	70	\$150.00
2nd	Richard Harrison	71	\$100.00
3rd	Nick Newman	73	\$ 50.00
Last	Will Self	83	\$ 25.00

**Closest to Pin**

#2	Tom Ask
#5	Todd McCord
#12	Terry Holt
#17	Geoff Haynes

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Hiring today is very different than it was just six years ago. At that time, when I put an ad out for staffing, I would end up with a file folder stuffed full of apps. So many would come in that I would have the luxury to pick and choose through the massive selection to find that one or two to interview and hire.

Fast forward to now. When ads go out for hiring, I am lucky to get one or two applications returned to me. Over the years, as the application inquiries have dwindled, we have had to resort to "Plan B." For us, that means training the core staff that we have and growing them. Our city is expanding leaps and bounds each year, which leads to an increasing need for parks, golf, streets, facilities and fleet staff. What do we do when we are growing and can't find people?

The city was fortunate to find a handful of young staff a couple of years back, who started out as maintenance seasonals. During their time here we have seen the potential in them and invested time and training so that they may grow and be better equipped as leaders among the crews. So far, we have had good luck with this system. We have discovered some great qualities in them, which we have been able

to build upon. As they have grown in their few short

years, they have been able to move into positions of higher responsibility, allowing us to train and mold them the way that suits our crews best. There is certainly a cost associated with training - but it is priceless when you have people who grow through the positions and learn the work environment and culture firsthand. In the end, this has been a better fit for our staffing and we have found success through this process.

On a lighter staffing note, a very crucial and important part of our maintenance crew is the four-legged kind. We have a pup named Callie (Calloway) who helps with the goose problem in the winter, and chases marmots and mice in the summer season. In between her routes she supervises the shop mechanic and has lunch duty with the parks staff. Her responsibilities include therapist, guard dog, rodent control, public relations and more.

## Hiring from Within

**Jennifer Camp**  
**Parks and Recreation Director,**  
**City of Liberty Lake**



The second four-legged team we have on staff are of the hoof kind.

Seven goats make up the weed maintenance department and are on duty from April through September. They make their rounds from the golf course to the parks, chomping their way through a delicious feast of knapweed, dalmation toadflax, and skeleton-weed. During the process of weed control functions, they also serve as a petting zoo for the local families who often stop by to see them in action. They have become well known celebrities as they frequently grace the city's Facebook pages. These four-legged critters are a lot of work, but they are part of what makes our jobs a little more fun.



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# WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY TURFGRASS MANAGEMENT – FIRST 75 YEARS

**William J. Johnston, PhD, WSU, Pullman,  
June 2017**

*With my retirement (although I am still actively involved with four research projects), the WSU Turfgrass Program is now down to one active member, Charles Golob, Turfgrass Research Supervisor. The program at the Western Washington Research Extension Center (WWREC) at Puyallup has been defunct for several years and potentially is permanently terminated. WSU administration and industry stakeholders (turfgrass and seed industry personnel) are currently in the process of redefining the direction of the current Pullman program as “Grass Ecology.” This will leave OSU and Walla Walla CC as the only dedicated turfgrass research/teaching/extension (other than Master Gardner’s and county agents) academic units in the Pacific Northwest.*

*The Northwest turfgrass industry needs to decide if it:  
1) needs and values a Turfgrass Program at WSU and  
2) is willing to financially support the program.*

*To begin this process, I have provided the following history of the rich, diverse, productive, and beneficial, to both industry and the public, Turfgrass Program at WSU for the past 75 years.*

Like many programs, the WSU Turfgrass Program (Research, Extension, and Teaching) came into fruition due to the effort of many people at the university and in industry. The earliest turf research was not in Crop & Soil Sciences, but in Plant Pathology. In 1941, Chester Gould joined the WWREC at Puyallup, specializing in the control of northwest turf and bulb diseases. Chet published the first turf related research in 1949 on fairy ring.

In 1948, a group of golf course superintendents approached College of Agriculture Dean Shaffer to seek WSU’s help in research and hosting an annual conference for their rapidly expanding industry. Al Law, field crops professor in Agronomy & Soils, was assigned the task and the 1st Northwest Turfgrass Conference was held at Pullman. Significantly, this turfgrass conference is the longest, continuously held turf conference in the

USA (probably in the world).

In 1955, Al Law began teaching the first turfgrass class in the western USA (Turfgrass Culture). During the 1950s, Ken Morrison, Extension agronomist, initiated one of the initial, if not the initial, turfgrass correspondence courses in the USA, thus spreading the WSU program globally. J.K. Patterson released ‘Cougar’ and ‘Cougar II’ Kentucky bluegrass cultivars and served as Roy Goss’s PhD advisor.

A major milestone occurred in 1958 when Roy Goss was appointed ½-time Research and ½-time Extension turfgrass specialist. WSU now had its 1st full-time turf person. Roy established the turfgrass research field lab at Farm 5 at Puyallup in 1958. Roy and his wife, Marcie, established the R.L. Goss Turfgrass Endowment in 1988 to support turfgrass research and higher education, and in 2006 the research farm at Puyallup was named the “R.L. Goss Research Farm.”

Goss’s research focused on turfgrass diseases, climate injury, and nutrient deficiencies, notably, N, P, and S. Roy developed an international reputation at WSU and was awarded the Distinguished Service Award by the GCSAA, Pacific Seedman Assoc. Award, and the O.A. Vogel Faculty Award at WSU. Gary Chastagner replaced Gould in 1978 and continued research in turf grass diseases for many years. Shiou Kuo, soil scientist at Puyallup, also worked with Roy and Stan Brauen on the relationship of lime, phosphorus, and aluminum on annual bluegrass and bentgrass during the 1980s.

Possibly the most dramatic year for the WSU Turf Program was 1980. Stan Brauen, forage agronomist at Puyallup, assumed Goss’s research appointment when Roy shifted to 100% Extension. Stan worked on many areas of turfgrass management (fertility, weed control, diseases, etc.), but his most notable contribution was the release of ‘Putter’ creeping bentgrass, which was a highly successful cultivar for Jacklin Seed Co. Also, in 1980, as WSU was deciding between a forage and turf position at Pullman, a group of eastern Washington parks and golf course superintendents, lead by Sam Angrove, Bud Ashworth, Herb Brown, Tom Wolf and others, convinced College of Agriculture Dean Robins that serving the turf industry needs was the better of the two options. Bill Johnston was hired, replacing Al Law, to teach, conduct turfgrass management research, and develop the undergraduate turfgrass major, which at the time had one student. Under Bill’s guidance, the turf major experienced dramatic growth peaking at 35 students in 2002. During the recent “recession,” student numbers began to decline, but have currently stabilized at 13-17 majors. Notably, essentially 100% of WSU turf majors found jobs in the turf industry upon graduation. Approximately, 300 WSU

continued page 8



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turf majors are today making contributions to the turf industry in the PNW and across the USA. In recognition of his dedication to advising, teaching, and the development of young turfgrass professionals, Bill, aka “Dr J,” was awarded both the “Outstanding Advisor” and “Outstanding Teacher” of the year.



Bill and his research technician, Charles Golob, developed two research sites at Pullman. The current six-acre site, the Turfgrass and Agronomy Research Center, is one of the best-equipped and maintained university turfgrass research facilities in the western USA. Due to its unique location, and lack of other turf programs, the WSU turf program at Pullman served the turfgrass industry and public over a vast geographic area from the Cascades to the Rockies and from southern Canada to Utah. Thus, the Pullman program has been quite diverse. Species, cultivars, and germplasm were evaluated for adaptation to the intermountain PNW, snow mold disease control and management was conducted for 20+ years, and a continuous effort to control *Poa annua* with herbicides (‘Tenacity’, ‘Xonerate’, ‘PoaCure’, and microorganisms) was ongoing. Research led to the labeling of numerous products (‘Acclaim’, ‘Finale’, ‘Tenacity’, ‘Instrata’, etc.) for use in WA, ID, and MT.

Environmental studies were funded by the USGA on nitrate and PCNB leaching at the Coeur d’Alene Resort GC floating green and by the City of Spokane on the use of reclaimed water for golf courses. The USDA funded studies on pollen flow and glyphosate resistant hybridization in *Agrostis* and diversity in Kentucky bluegrass germplasm. In addition, several hundred presentations and reports were delivered to the public and industry during Bill’s 36 years at WSU. In 2016, Bill was awarded a GCSAA distinguished service award for a lifetime of leadership, commitment, and service to the PNW turfgrass industry.

In response to the needs of the grass seed industry, Bill initiated a turfgrass seed production research program in 1987. Initially working on weed control (wild oats and downy brome) and diseases (ergot, silver top, and rust), the research focus shifted to working with growers to identify alternatives to the practice of open-field burning of Kentucky bluegrass. Bill and Charles worked with the grass seed industry (IGGA and WTSC), the Washington Dept. of Ecology, and the USDA for 20+ years on the field burning issue. In addition to the groundbreaking research quantifying emissions from field burning of Kentucky bluegrass, the program developed bluegrass germplasm that would produce acceptable seed yield and turfgrass quality without field burning. Bill attended 100+ meetings of the Dept. of Ecology’s Agriculture Burning Practices Research Task Force representing academia.

Roy Goss retired in 1988 and Gwen Stahnke was hired at Puyallup with a 75% Extension/25% Research appointment. From 1988 to 2013 Gwen gave hundreds of extension presentations to the industry and the booming population of Western WA. Gwen’s research focused on crane fly control and Gwen was regarded as a world leader in crane fly research. She also conducted turfgrass research on phosphorus and the identification of *Pythium* species. Gwen continues to be involved in the turf

industry nationally (GCSAA “Turf Bowl”) and regionally as an Instructor of Turfgrass Management at Walla Walla CC, where Elite American Educators recognized her in 2016 for her dedication, achievements, and leadership in turfgrass.



Eric Miltner replaced Stan Brauen in 1998 (Stan retired 1999) with a 100% Research appointment in turf. Fertility and nutrient management (primarily N and P) were the focus of his research program. Eric also made contributions in environmental turfgrass research, a key issue in the environmentally sensitive Puget Sound region, on the accumulation of soil P from natural organic sources, water quality monitoring on golf courses, and compost contamination with clopyrrolid.

Eric left WSU in 2011 and currently works for KOCH Turf and Ornamental, Gwen left WSU in 2013 for WWCC, and Bill retired in 2016. WSU and industry stakeholders are currently redefining the WSU Turfgrass Program to meet the needs of the public, industry, and students for, hopefully, the next 75 years.

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