

Turf's Up in the Inland Empire

Spring 2026

Roy Studebaker

Honored with Distinguished Service



Roy Studebaker was honored with the prestigious William Griffith Distinguished Service Award at the 2026 "Nearly" Spring Meeting. On behalf of the association, the award was presented by Jeff Gullikson, CGCS. As a long-time member, Roy has been a quiet leader all through his career and influential on so many he has met in his life. And giving? Definitely. Giving has always come naturally. It is our

honor to have you as a member and friend, Roy. And Bill Griffith would be proud.

Bubar Attends Chapter Leadership Symposium

The Chapter Leaders/Executives Symposium held at GCSAA headquarters in Lawrence, Kan., offers an opportunity to network with other association leaders from around the country and share ideas as the annual event provides leadership training, development, and support to chapters.



IEGCSA Vice President, Brandon Bubar, Avondale Golf Club, represented the Inland Empire GCSA along with Lori Russell, Executive Director.

Summer Outing

July 7, 2026

Circling Raven Golf Course, Worley, Idaho, Kalman Zaranec, host



Crew Challenge

August 6, 2026

Palouse Ridge Golf Course, Pullman, Wash., Mike Bednar, host



Priority Action Needed

Message (excerpt) from GCSAA

Superintendents are proven stewards of water, nutrients, and plant protection products. At the same time, we find ourselves responding to public narratives in which uninformed opinions, sensational claims, and questionable science can spread more quickly than verified data. As GCSAA seeks regulatory flexibility and certainty for our members regarding pesticide applications, we need tangible evidence that our industry not only supports BMPs in principle but actively implements them in practice. Between now and May 4 (National Golf Day in Washington, D.C.), we are asking all facilities to adopt BMPs.

It only takes a GCSAA member a few minutes to finalize a BMP facility manual. The upgrade is designed to tailor these manuals to reflect your management approaches to your golf course. Those changes can be made at any point now or in the future.



Help us *advocate for the golf industry* by completing your BMP today

A publication of the Inland Empire Golf Course Superintendents Association



Inland Empire Chapter

GCSAA

Golf Course Superintendents Association of America

Inland Empire GCSA
Board of Directors

Brent Austin, President
LaGrande Country Club

Brandon Bubar, Vice President
Avondale Golf Club

Dan Frederiksen, CGCS
Secretary/Treasurer
The Golf Club at Black Rock

Zach Bauer, CGCS
Coeur d'Alene National Reserve

Kevin Hicks
EarthWorks

Mitchell Larson
Yakima Country Club

Tom Walker
Coeur d'Alene Resort

Edward Wetherell
Circling Raven Golf Course

Kalman Zaranec
Circling Raven Golf Course

Past President
Ivan Gibbs
Leavenworth Golf Club

Assistant Liason
Joe VanHoomissen
Kalspel Golf & Country Club

Inland Empire GCSA
Lori Russell, Executive Dir.
P.O. Box 5003
Missoula, MT 59806
(406) 273-7779
iegcsa@iegcsa.org
iegcsa.org

First Aid and Fairways:

Lessons in Teamwork, Preparation, and Safety

Kal Zaranec, GCS, Circling Raven Golf Club
Alpine Patroller, Lookout Pass Ski Patrol

Lookout Pass Ski Patrol is one of the oldest ski patrols in the country, joining the National Ski Patrol shortly after its founding in 1938. Today, our patrol consists of approximately 60 volunteer patrollers and six paid professionals, all dedicated to providing first aid and transport for our guests on the mountain.

I joined the patrol in 2023 after completing an intensive training program based on the Outdoor Emergency Care curriculum. The course was fast-paced—often covering four to five chapters per week—combined with hands-on skill development. The depth of medical knowledge and practical training far exceeded my initial expectations, and I feel fortunate to have completed the program and been welcomed to join the patrol.

After three seasons on patrol, I've realized that while skiing and golf course management may seem worlds apart, they share several similarities in regards to operations, teamwork, and responsibility. Most notably, they both rely heavily on one unpredictable factor: Mother Nature.

Environmental Conditions

Just like golf, the success of a ski season depends entirely on weather conditions. This past winter's mild, warm, and wet weather may have benefited golf courses, but it created significant challenges for ski operations. The lack of sufficient snow cover not only impacts business but also increases the risk of injuries on the mountain.

consistency. Without proper coverage, neither operation can function safely or effectively.

Key Takeaways for Golf Course Operations

My experience with ski patrol has led to meaningful changes in how we operate at Circling Raven:

- **Improved Communication:** We've strengthened our radio communication to ensure clear, consistent communication across the team.
- **Standardized Training:** Each season, every team member is retrained on all essential tasks. This ensures consistency in performance, regardless of who is operating equipment or completing a job.
- **Team Member Profiles:** We've implemented accessible profiles for each team member, including equipment training records and emergency contact information. In a recent on-course medical emergency, this system allowed us to quickly contact emergency services and provide critical information to first responders while responding to one of our team members.
- **Enhanced Safety Preparedness:** We've upgraded first aid kits within our carts and in the shop, we have an AED on site, and require annual CPR training for our team members. While we hope these tools are never needed, preparedness is essential.

A Final Thought

As we head into the season, I encourage everyone to consider the following:

- Are you prepared to respond to a medical emergency involving a team member or guest?
- Do your team members know who to call and how to communicate the injury or illness to first responders?
- Is your team prepared to respond if you are the one in need?

In critical moments, preparation, training, and teamwork can make all the difference; after all, your life may depend on it.

I hope you all have a safe and successful season ahead.



Daily Operations

Much like our golf course maintenance teams, ski patrollers work largely behind the scenes. Our day begins early, before the lifts start turning. We prepare runs, set boundary lines, install signage, and take proactive measures to reduce risk for guests. Our commitment to early, detail-oriented preparation is the same as in our daily golf operations at Circling Raven.

Team Dynamics

Success in both environments depends on strong teamwork. Clear, effective communication is essential—whether coordinating a response to an on-mountain injury or managing daily operations on the golf course. On patrol, we rely on each team member's strengths, ensuring efficient care and rapid transport for patients. Ultimately, we are only as strong as our team.

Defined Roles and Responsibilities

Each patroller is assigned specific zones and responsibilities for the day. This structure ensures proper coverage across the mountain and prevents over-concentration of resources at a single incident. Similarly, on the golf course, clearly

defined roles are critical to maintaining efficiency and



VENTRAC



TORO



Looking for turf equipment or irrigation solutions? Let us help to determine what best suits your needs. See our website to view all of our product lines.

We've got what you need to get the job done right. Contact us:
800-585-8001
sales@turfstar.com
www.turfstar.com



TORO



HARPER
TURF EQUIPMENT

Failing Forward

Alison Hanson, Intern, The Golf Club at Black Rock

This industry is forever growing and evolving. It truly is the embodiment of "If it is not broken, make it better." However, one thing that is commonly overlooked when it comes to progress is that failure is the first step. Everyone needs to fail before they can become great. Even then, they are still going to fail a few more times. I have experienced firsthand what having a fear of failure does to a worker. Fear that you are going to get yelled at, or humiliated in front of the crew, or even lose your job. When you have that anxiety in the back of your mind, you overthink every move you make and you are more likely to fail in the end, anyway. To overcome this, we must reframe failure as a good thing and use it as a resource to move forward and grow.

I do not hold shame in my failures because they brought me to where I am today. I believe that if I had not had the opportunity to fail the way I have, I would not have had the opportunity for growth and progress that I've experienced. I am not here to say you should intentionally fail whenever you have a chance to. I'm also not saying that as a manager you should never be upset with your crew members for messing up. Instead, I am saying that when it happens, do not let it deter you from moving forward. The only thing to do when failure falls on your lap is figure out what to do next.

A worker should feel safe to fail at work. They should feel comfortable messing up and know that it won't cost them their job or credibility. Of course, there are (Right "We Made it Through 2025" presenters Jeff Gullikson, CGCS, Charlie Jones, Alison Hanson, Ed Wetherell)

limitations to this rule. If a crew member consistently makes mistakes and clearly shows they do not care to try, that is a different issue. However, if a crew member shows up on time every day and demonstrates a willingness to learn new things, then mistakes are bound to happen now and then. This job involves trying new things, experimenting, and taking risks because you never know what might come from it. Giving your crew the freedom to fail allows them to be creative and think outside the box, possibly improving how you have always done things. In my view, a good worker is willing—willing to learn, willing to try, willing to take risks. This means being willing to make mistakes and then fix them.

Maybe my credibility to talk about how I think workers should be managed is limited, since I am just an intern. However, I have experienced many types of managers. I have seen how people respond and work under different managerial styles. One thing I'll say is that I failed way more times under strict management than I have under understanding management. Feeling



you have the freedom to fail relaxes your mind and gives you more space to think things through. Now that I have had the freedom to fail, when I realize I have messed up, part of me is oddly excited. I failed, someone will come help me, and they will teach me how to fix it and what I could have done to avoid the mistake. I get to learn something. And as an intern, that's the best part of the job. You get to learn a lot and experience many new things every day. So yeah, bring on the failures and mess-ups!



Greg Baer
Principal Landscape Architect
Irrigation Consultant

10027 N. Palisades Wy.
Boise, ID 83714
Ph. 208.859.1980
greg@baerdg.com

www.baerdg.com

HELENA

People...Products...Knowledge...

Chris Concienne 509-795-9175
conciennec@helenachemical.com

One Source For Your Entire Course.

New ideas, real working solutions, and time management that puts YOU back in the driver's seat. At Horizon, we make your job a little easier.

Contact your local Golf Representative to learn how we can help you today.
Nick Newman..... 208-929-2522

Your Local Horizon Stores:
Hayden, ID 208-762-3399
Spokane, WA 509-467-6601

Horizon
800 PVC TURF
HorizonOnline.com

Beyond the Greens

Justin Frederick, MBA
La Grande Country Club

In today's digital world, social media has become far more than a place to share photos—it's a platform to build identity, tell stories, and connect with a wider community. For golf course maintenance teams, it offers a unique opportunity to step out from behind the scenes and into the spotlight. That's exactly what Grounds Crew Mafia is doing: turning everyday course maintenance into a compelling brand that engages members and attracts new interest.

Traditionally, the work of a grounds crew has gone largely unnoticed. Golfers enjoy pristine greens, striped fairways, and perfectly edged bunkers without fully understanding the expertise and effort required to maintain them. Through social media, Grounds Crew Mafia brings that process to life. By sharing videos of mowing patterns, course setup, irrigation strategies, and seasonal challenges, the team showcases the skill and precision behind every detail. This kind of content not only educates viewers but also builds a deeper appreciation for the course itself.

What sets Grounds Crew Mafia apart is its identity. The name alone creates intrigue and a sense of camaraderie, turning a maintenance crew into a recognizable and relatable brand. Social media allows that identity to grow through humor, behind-the-scenes moments, and team highlights. Featuring crew members, sharing their personalities, and documenting the daily grind helps humanize the operation. Members begin to recognize the faces behind the work, creating a stronger connection and sense of community. Another major advantage is improved communication. Golf course conditions are always evolving due to weather, maintenance practices, and long-term improvements. Grounds Crew Mafia uses its platform to keep members informed—whether it's explaining why greens are being aerated, why certain areas are temporarily closed, or how current work will improve play in the future. This level of transparency helps shift the narrative from confusion or frustration to understanding and support.

Engagement is where social media truly shines. Grounds Crew Mafia can interact directly with members through comments, polls, and Q&A sessions. Whether asking for input on course changes or simply responding to feedback, this two-way communication builds trust and loyalty. Members feel like they're part of the process rather than just spectators.



Consistency and authenticity are key to success. Grounds Crew Mafia doesn't need overly polished content—what resonates most is real, day-to-day storytelling. A quick clip of rolling greens before a big event or a snapshot of frost delays can be just as impactful as a professionally edited video. The goal is to stay consistent, stay genuine, and let the work speak for itself.

In the end, Grounds Crew Mafia represents more than just a social media page—it's a shift in how golf course maintenance is perceived. By embracing digital platforms, the team is building pride, strengthening relationships with members, and creating a brand that reaches far beyond the course. It's proof that with the right approach, even the most behind-the-scenes roles can take center stage and make a lasting impression.

BT BARR-TECH
COMPOST

We Build Healthy Soil.

Cole Groshens: (509) 904-5369 | coleg@barr-tech.net | www.barr-tech.net

Desert Green
Turf

PREMIUM SAND BASED SPORTS TURF

Nathan Cox
President, Golf and Sports Operations
509-750-1614
nathan@desertgreenturf.com

Jazmin Orozco
Sales + Trucking Coordinator
509-350-0707
jazmin@desertgreenturf.com

FLORATINE
NORTHWEST

Richard Strautman
President

4651 Ann Court
Bellingham, WA 98229

☎: 3603057619
✉: stretch@floratinenw.com
www.floratinenw.com

Thank you Charlie Jones and Meadow Springs Country Club! 2026 "Nearly" Spring Meeting

Event
Sponsor



Lunch Sponsor



Break Sponsor

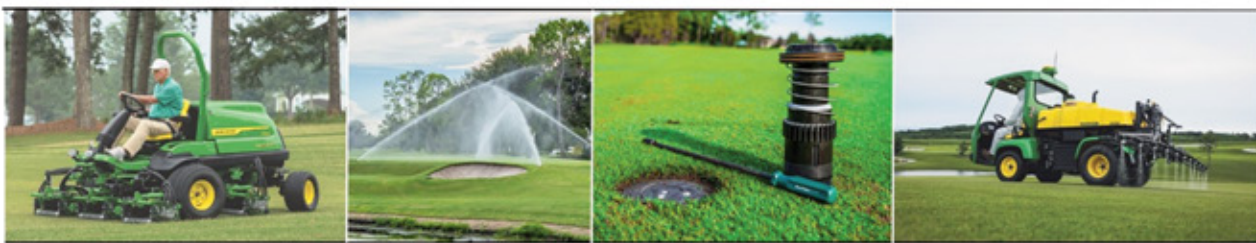
EARTHWORKS
PACIFIC GOLF & TURF
PBI GORDON
RIDGETOP GOLF
SYNGENTA
TURFSTAR WESTERN

Hole plus Pin Prize:
HELENA AGRI-ENTERPRISES
PLANET TURF
WILBUR ELLIS

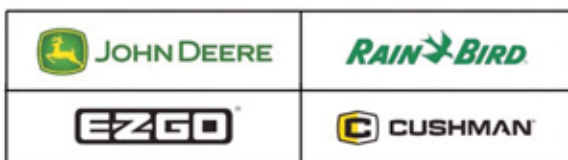
Hole Sponsor:
BARR-TECH COMPOST
EARTH MEDICINE
FLORATINE NW
HORIZON DIST.
PACIFIC GOLF & TURF
REDOX BIO NUTRIENTS
TURFSTAR WESTERN



**YOUR TRUSTED GOLF SUPPLIER
FOR THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST**



WE PROUDLY CARRY:



VIEW OUR
FULL
EQUIPMENT
LINEUP:



FOLLOW US:

@PGT.GOLF
 PACIFIC GOLF & TURF
 PACIFICGOLFTURE



1-800-368-9158

2026 Chapters of the Northwest Hospitality Room Sponsors and about in Orlando, GCSAA CTS

Diamond:



Gold:



Silver:



RIDGETOP GOLF
Golf Course Renovate & General Construction



Bronze:



Jim Connolly- Distribution & International Sales
509-951-0270
Jim@planeturfusa.com

Jared Whitaker- Alaska, Central Washington, Wyoming
509-977-1354
Jared@planeturfusa.com

Jordan Anderson- Inland North West
816-217-7363
Jordan@planeturfusa.com

Aaron Stamer- Western Washington & Oregon
509-301-4589
Aaron@planeturfusa.com

Shane Hughes- Southeastern Washington, Eastern Oregon, Southern Idaho
509-954-5773
Shane@planeturfusa.com

<https://planeturfusa.com>





A Greenside Chat with Tom Cagle

Tom Walker, Coeur d'Alene Resort, Coeur d'Alene, Idaho



1. Aside from Kalispel Golf and Country Club, what has been your favorite course to play? I grew up in Leavenworth, so I have years of great memories at Leavenworth GC. I learned the game of golf

there, had my first job in high school washing carts, and got my first maintenance experience there with Ivan. It's still one of my favorite places in the world!

2. If you weren't working on the golf course, what line of work would you have pursued? My first degree was a B.A. in Elementary Education. I spent a decade mostly as a substitute teacher, high school track coach, and working as a wedding DJ during the summers before getting into agronomy. I still get to scratch the education itch by teaching Intro to Turf Management at Spokane Community College.

3. If you were selected to go on The Amazing Race with another IEGCSA member, who would you want as your teammate and why? For sure I would take Joe VanHooissen. First off, we already have a proven track record of success as a dynamic duo. Secondly, he could handle all the things that require physicality, like lifting heavy things and reaching for high things, while I did all the things that a little guy can do, like watching him lift heavy things and reach for high things.

4. What would your dream foursome be? Al Czervik, Ty Webb, and Judge Smalls. I gotta get in on that money match!

5. What do you enjoy doing outside of work? Besides golfing, I enjoy spending time with my wife and daughter, playing guitar, and hanging out in my garage building wobbly furniture. Also, now that I'm in my 40s I've gotten really into groaning,



clutching my back, and falling asleep in chairs.

6. How many years have you been in the industry, and what was your first job? a. This will be my fifteenth year in the industry and the fourteenth as a member of GCSAA. My first job in golf course maintenance was on the crew with Ivan Gibbs at Leavenworth Golf Course. My first job after turf school at WSU was an internship at Merion Golf Club in Ardmore, PA.

7. What is your favorite meal? My wife makes a great spicy Korean pork with rice that you make the little lettuce wraps with. I get to have the leftovers for lunch all week!

8. What's your go-to work shoe for out on the golf course? Georgia Boot 6" Wedge. They're what my dad wore for years as a lineman and journeyman electrician. If they were good enough for him, they're good enough for me. Also they have a tread that's gentle on greens.

9. What is the best story you have about someone calling off work? When working in Calif., there was a guy who was involved in a legal battle with the club over an alleged back injury at work. He had been advised to continue to call in sick every day. For four years there was a fresh message on my phone every morning—a thousand variations of "Good morning, Tom. I can't make it in today because my back hurts."

10. Who are the four golfers on your Mount Rushmore of golf? Arnold Palmer, Jack Nicklaus, Seve Ballesteros, and Tiger.

11. When given the choice, do you tend to prefer sweet foods or salty foods? Definitely sweet. It's a problem. I'm currently easing myself off of eating S'mores Cereal for breakfast every morning and I had to stop keeping gummy bears in the house. Having a seven-year-old hasn't helped. She's an enabler.

12. What's the best concert you've ever been to? I saw Chris Isaak in Seattle when they were

still doing concerts on the pier, like 1998 or 1999ish. That was a fantastic venue. Before that, I didn't think women throwing underwear on stage was a real thing. Turns out it's a real thing.

13. Tell us about your family. I have been married to my wife, Grace, for ten years. She works at a Treasury Analyst downtown and is an avid gardener (very, very avid). Our daughter, Edith, just turned seven. She enjoys softball and ice cream. We also have a cat named Rosie. She enjoys eating and shedding.

14. What is your favorite sports team and why? I was a huge Sonics fan when I was a kid, during the Shawn Kemp / Gary Payton years. They were so fun to watch! I kind of lost interest in the NBA after they moved so I'm excited about the possibility of them coming back.

15. If you had the power to change one rule in golf, which one would you change? Everyone gets three mulligans per round, like timeouts in football.



maintenance made simple

WE PROVIDE HIGH-QUALITY COURSE MAINTENANCE TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT TO SUPERINTENDENTS NATIONALLY. WE SET THE STANDARD FOR FAST SHIPPING, EXCEPTIONAL CUSTOMER SERVICE, AND QUALITY PRODUCTS. WE MAKE MAINTENANCE SIMPLE.



CERTIFIED SUPPLIER
ROBOTIC MOWERS



Call Us 406-595-5977 Visit Our Website ALBATROSSGOLFSUPPLY.COM

ALBATROSS GOLF SUPPLY
P.O. BOX 124
COEUR D'ALENE, ID
83435