

CGCOA Honors Steve Plummer and Mike Huck for their Contributions to the Association and the Golf Industry

CA- The California Golf Course Owners Association (CGCOA) honored its 2015 award winners at the association's annual meeting and education conference held at Black Gold Golf Course, a Kemper Sports-managed facility, located in Yorba Linda, CA.

In addition to the coveted *Course of the Year Award*, which was bestowed on Poppy Hills Golf Course (Pebble Beach, CA), the CGCOA presented other golf industry awards to worthy recipients.

The prestigious *Ted Horton Distinguished Service Award* was presented to CGCOA Member **Steve Plummer**, CGCS, President of Championship Golf Services, Inc. This award (named in tribute to Ted Horton, CGCS, a long-time supporter of the CGCOA), recognizes an individual who has contributed to the betterment of the association as well as to the golf industry.

In addition to his role as CEO of Championship Golf Services, Inc., Plummer is a certified member of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA). With the support of his key team members, Plummer manages the golf operation at Tustin Ranch Golf Club (Tustin, CA), as well as Anaheim Hills Golf Course and Dad Miller Golf Course, both located in Anaheim, CA.

Plummer's contributions to the CGCOA are expansive. He is past president of the association and continues to stay involved as an active board member. He supports CGCOA programs and initiatives through his dedicated involvement as well as through sponsorship participation.

"Many attributes come to mind when describing Steve Plummer....he is a visionary, a true leader, and one that is fully dedicated to the future of golf," said CGCOA Executive Director Marc Connerly. "He steered the CGCOA through challenging times, demonstrating impeccable leadership and character, and continues to remain an integral part of the association today. There's no person more deserving of this special honor than Steve Plummer."

The coveted *For the Good of the Game* was presented to **Mike Huck**, president of Irrigation & Turfgrass Services. This award is presented to an individual who has worked tirelessly as an advocate for a program, initiative or cause that helps shape the future of golf in a positive way.

Mike Huck has volunteered endless hours to help protect the future of golf in California. With more than 30 years' experience in the golf industry (12 of them as a golf course superintendent using recycled irrigation water), Huck is an expert in turfgrass management with particular emphasis in irrigation water quality assessment, saline & recycled water management, irrigation system auditing, and sprinkler uniformity evaluation.

Huck was a founding member of the initial golf consortium in California, which pre-dates the more recent formation of the California Alliance for Golf (CAG), of which he is also a founding member. He participated in the drafting of the inaugural *California Golf Economic Study* with UC Berkeley and Clemson University and has been a contributor to more recent economic and environmental studies conducted on behalf of the California golf industry and Golf 20/20. Because of his keen knowledge he is often asked to serve as a panelist and/or presenter at various educational conferences hosted by the GCSAA, USGA, CAG, Symposium on Affordable Golf, Council for Watershed Health, among others.

“Mike Huck not only meets the criteria for the CGCOA *For the Good of the Game Award*, he exceeds it,” said CGCOA Awards Committee Chairperson Emmy Moore Minister. “This exceptional individual continues to share his knowledge openly with others, so they, in turn, can be successful as course owners as well as water resource managers.”

The 2015 CGCOA annual meeting and education conference was made possible through the generous support of **Topgolf** and **Agri-Turf Distributing**.

Olivas Links Golf Course and Yocha Dehe Golf Club at Cache Creek Named CGCOA Community Enviro Award Winners

At the CGCOA annual meeting and education conference at Black Gold Golf Course (Yorba Linda, CA), the association presented its 2015 CGCOA *Community Enviro Award* to two golf facilities that demonstrate excellence in the area of Environmental Stewardship.

The criteria for this award includes a variety of components such as: reduction of water usage, utilization of drought-tolerant plants, efficient on-site recycling, encouragement of on-course natural habitats for birds and other small animals, and the ability to increase citizen awareness on how golf courses are “friends of the environment” and how golfers can support stewardship efforts.

The recipient of the *CGCOA Community Enviro Award* in the Northern California region is **Yocha Dehe Golf Club at Cache Creek Casino Resort** (Brooks, CA), a Troon Golf-managed facility.

Over the last 3 years, this popular resort golf course (which is the property of Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation), has transitioned 45 acres of previously irrigated native areas to non-irrigated native grasses with a savings of 1 million gallons of water per year per acre, equating to a savings of 45 million gallons annually.

Yocha Dehe strives to be as environmentally-friendly as possible, while still providing pristine playing surfaces for golfers. Approximately 40% of fertilizing needs are comprised of organic matter, and they continue to look for innovative ways to increase that amount.

Additionally, the golf course (which is part of Cache Creek Casino Resort) maximizes its ability to recycle. The maintenance team culls through all garbage on the golf course and separates the aluminum and plastic bottles for recycling. Specially marked bins are strategically placed throughout the clubhouse and maintenance building, with pickups throughout the week from Waste Management.

This award recipient is using biodiesel (as a diesel fuel replacement) in the course's maintenance carts. This project was initiated two years ago, and the course is now proud to report the use of recycled cooking oil from the casino in its maintenance carts.

Each year Yocha Dehe serves as a venue for a two-day education conference where more than 100 golf course superintendents gather on site to learn more about the latest in water saving techniques and technology.

The recipient of the *CGCOA Community Enviro Award* in the Southern California region is **Olivas Links Golf Course** (Ventura, CA), a Kemper Sports-managed facility.

Olivas Links offers a natural golf experience unique to Ventura County. The rustic tranquility of the course transports players to a place where the competition is between man and nature. The property showcases views of the Ventura Harbor, Ventura hillside, and the Channel Islands.

Owned by the City of Ventura, this course provides golfers with the opportunity to play in a temperate climate with coastal beauty and scenic surroundings. Launched in 2009, it is an active participant in *Green to a Tee*, Kemper Sports' proprietary program focusing on environmental initiatives within several core areas of facility operations, including golf course maintenance, habitat management and water conservation.

The facility uses 100% reclaimed water for irrigation (as does its sister course Buenaventura Golf Club). The course turf is Paspalumturf, which is salt-tolerant, thus requiring less water to flush out naturally occurring salts in the soil. The property also utilizes the Toro computerized irrigation system to carefully measure and control water usage, and has expansive "Native-Areas" that require less course maintenance and helps to conserve water.

Olivas Links Golf Course recycles golf course green waste, as well as tree wood for decorative bed chipping and in-house course tee markers. They also recycle all maintenance equipment oil plus all paper, plastic and aluminum, and all customer drink containers.

Recent projects include the installation of a drought-tolerant 12.5 acre driving range that includes 29 hitting stations with both artificial and natural grass tee options, and artificial surface greens with decomposed granite surrounds resulting in a more natural look. The new design reduced water consumption and eliminated the need for fertilizers and pesticides.

Olivas Links Golf Course promotes and encourages wildlife sightings and is home to hundreds of animals and species which can be spotted by golfers who tee it up on this environmental-friendly course. Golfers view birds of all shapes and sizes (including owls, storks, swans, blue jays, hawks, geese), as well as numerous reptiles and mammals. The staff at Olivas Links also works closely with the Ojai Raptor Center, reporting any injured birds.

“Oliva Links Golf Course and Yocha Dehe Golf Club are both exceptional golf facilities on a variety of levels, especially from an environmental perspective,” said CGCOA President Ron Zraick. “Their commitment to conservation and water resource management along with recycling programs and sensitivity to surrounding habitat is what makes them both worthy recipients of the Community Enviro Award.”

In addition to a memorable awards ceremony, the CGCOA held its annual education conference entitled: *Lessons from Other Industries*. Informative presentations were provided by Evan Bailey (Marriott International), Ryan Vance (Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim), Brett Darrow and Shannon Lanyi (Quick18), and Tommy Zraick (Disney).

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