

Spring 2011

Commonwealth Crier

News from the Virginia Golf Course Superintendents Association

President's Message

The 2011 golfing season has arrived! Spring has sprung and has made its rather wet appearance this year. The tulips and daffodils are up and the aerifiers are all put away (for some, maybe not) and having gone through numerous times I'm sure. I hope all of you have had a good start to 2011 and that we ALL come out of it on the good side of things.

First things first ... **May 2nd** is the **Tollie Quinn Golf Tournament and Virlinia Cup Qualifier!** This year's Tournament is to be held at The Federal Club with host Mike Richards. The Virlinia Cup will be hosted by the Carolinas GCSA this year as they try to uphold the tradition of quality golf courses as host sites. Good luck participants and let's go VGCSA ... beat the Carolinas!

There were a lot of happenings over the last couple of months during the winter of 2011. The GIS show was another great conference, and our social event in Orlando was simply outstanding. I would like to thank our sponsors of our Orlando event who made it all possible. Those sponsors were, in no special order: BASF; Finch Services; G.L. Cornell; Nutramax Laboratories; Quali-Pro; Bayer; Mid-Atlantic Dryject, LLC; Davisson Golf; Winfield Solutions; Plant Food Company; McDonald and Sons; Landscape Supply; Syngenta; Hydro Designs; Coggin Agronomic Solutions; McDonald Design Group; Turf Equipment and Supply; Tom Rash Company; and Herod Seeds. What a great time and show, thanks to all those that were in attendance!

I would like to take a moment and say "THANKS" to our 2011 Industry Partners. As you look through your *Commonwealth Crier*, please take a moment and read our Partner Page (page 9) that has our 2011 Partners listed. I ask, like every year, that you support them as they have supported us. We are truly in strange economic times



and we greatly appreciate those partners that have stood by and supported us. Partners, without your committed support, we as the VGCSA would not be where we are today. The VGCSA is as committed as ever to providing needed leadership, communication, and benefits to its members and we simply could not do it without support from you.

Through the hard work of our loyal membership, the golf courses maintained by VGCSA members have earned the reputation as some of the finest and best managed facilities in the country. As evident by Bayville Golf Club hosting the 2011 U.S. Women's Mid-Amateur Championship, Kinloch Golf Club hosting the 2011 U.S. Senior Amateur Championship, and in 2013 Laurel Hill Golf Club will play host to the U.S. Amateur Public Links Championship. Congratulations and all the best to those courses!

I would like to "Thank" the current and past leadership of the VGCSA for continuing to put forth excellent opportunities and benefits for our members such as: educational opportunities, golf and social events, a quarterly newsletter, a membership directory, government relations, research donations, community relations, scholarship contributions, employment referral services, and of course, environmental stewardship information.

Two of our most popular events, the Joe Saylor and our Assistant's Forum, have been recognized nationally for our community relations with our "Toys for Tots" program at the Joe Saylor and our outstanding educational opportunities at our Assistant's

Forum. This year's **Joe Saylor** will be held at Creighton Farms on **October 31st** and our **Assistant's Forum** will be held at Dominion Valley Country Club on **November 7th**.

As I enter into my second year as your President, I look forward to serving our members to the best of my ability and ensure that we are moving forward as an organization. I cannot tell you how satisfying it is to serve with colleagues such as Mr. Matt Boyce, Vice President; Mr. Jeff Holliday CGCS, Secretary/Treasurer; and Mr. Eric Spurlock, Past President. I look forward to hearing from Charlie Fultz on how we can help with the challenges our industry partners are facing and the input he will give the board. I can't wait to work with David Callahan on putting together another exciting Assistant's Forum and allow him to be the voice of the assistants to our board.

I would also like to "Thank" Dan Taylor, Chris Petrelli, Mark Cote, Dave Lewallen, and Jeff Van Fleet for their continued leadership on the board. Gentleman, I look forward to closely working with you on putting our members first and continuing to run a first class organization. Last but not least a big "Thank You" to Mr. David Norman, our Executive Director, for all that you continue to do for the VGCSA.

Our big initiative, The "Best Management Practices" guide, is well under way with the first reading taking place this past winter. We look forward to the final version this coming fall. I would like to "Thank" our BMP Committee: Walter Montross, Cutler Robinson, Dick Fisher, Jeff Snyder, Christian Sain and our Chairman Peter McDonough for all their hard work and dedication to this important project. One of the financial vehicles to fund this project

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2011 VGCSA Meeting and Event Schedule

April

28 SVTA Meeting, Spotswood CC

May

- 2 ODGCSA Tollie Quinn Tournament & Virgina Cup Qualifying, The Federal Club
- 9 Landscape Supply BMP Fundraiser, The Water's Edge CC
- 10 VTA Fundraising Tournament, Roanoke CC
- 17 GWGCSA BMP Fundraiser, Goose Creek GC
- 26 SVTA Meeting, The Woods Resort, WV

June

- 13 TTA Dick Cake Memorial, Elizabeth Manor G&CC
- 14 VTA Meeting, Blue Hills GC
- 21 GWGCSA/ODGCSA North-South Challenge, Pendleton GC

July

- 12 VTA Meeting, Primland Resort
- 12 SVTA Meeting, Loudoun CC
- 18 Wee One Foundation Tournament, Cypress Creek GC
- 20 GWGCSA Maintenance Open, Forest Greens GC
- 25 CMAA VA's Chapter Fundraiser for BMP, Hermitage CC

August

- TBA TTA Norfolk Tides Game
- 9 VTA Meeting, Willow Creek GC
- 25 SVTA Meeting, Waynesboro CC

September

- 20 GWGCSA/MAAGCS Meeting, 1757 Club
- 22 TTA Meeting, Nags Head Links, NC
- 29 SVTA/VTA I-81 Cup, Wintergreen Resort

October

- 18 VTA Annual Meeting, Pete Dye River Course
- TBA GWGCSA Superintendent/Assistant Tournament, Fauquier Springs
- 31 VGCSA Joe Saylor Memorial, Creighton Farms GC

November

- 1 GWGCSA Annual Meeting, Evergreen CC
- 7 VGCSA Assistants Forum, Dominion Valley CC
- TBA ODGCSA Annual Meeting, Independence GC



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Tollie Quinn Tournament & Virlina Cup Qualifier

The Federal Club • Glen Allen, VA • Monday, May 2 • 10:00 am Start

It's time again to dust off our clubs and get our game ready for the Tollie Quinn Golf Tournament on **Monday, May 2nd** at The Federal Club. Originally this tournament was started to honor the late Tollie Quinn for his efforts in our industry, but recently it has been the catalyst for crowning the VGCSA Superintendent Golf Champion. Jeff Whitmire is the past Champion from 2010 among other previous titles.

Like last year this event will qualify four Superintendents and one Assistant Superintendent from the VGCSA to the Virlina Cup. Along with the five qualifiers, Captain Eric Spurlock will pick two more contestants for the Captain's Pick slots and the remaining contestant will be selected by our Sponsor of the event. This event is open to all members of the VGCSA.

Last year's Captain Eric Spurlock will be leading the team again this year to the

Carolinas for another potential victory in charming Beaufort, South Carolina. Although the dates and courses have not been announced, the eight member team will travel over a long weekend in late September or early October to Beaufort for one day of practice, a second day of Four Ball and Foursomes matches and a third day of Singles matches.

The Carolinas GCSA will uphold the tradition of quality golf courses set by Salisbury CC, The Foundry and Kinloch last year. The Virlina Cup promises to be another spectacular event and we hope you try to qualify.

The Federal Club is a semi-private golf and country club within the Mountain Run residential development. It is located just north of Richmond, six miles west of Interstate 295 on Mountain Road (Route 33) in Hanover County. The Federal Club is an Arnold Palmer Signature Course designed by Arnold

Palmer in 2007. It features a 7,073 yard 18 hole par 72 golf course. The Federal Club features A1/A4 bentgrass greens, Declaration bentgrass fairways and Bluegrass fescue roughs. Trevor Hedgepeth has been at Federal Club since construction and is now serving as the General Manager. Mike Richards has been with the club since 2008 and has been the Superintendent since 2010.



*Eric Frazier
ODGCSA
President*



*Matt Boyce
VGCSA VP &
Golf Chairman*

Big Events to Benefit BMP

The call to action to support the VGCSA's "Best Management Practices" program has been broad. First, the Virginia Golf Council pledged its support—including the Virginia State Golf Association, the Middle Atlantic PGA, the Club Managers Association of America Virginias Chapter, the National Golf Course Owners Association Virginia Chapter, and of course, the VGCSA itself.

Then it was the corporate entities getting involved. First it was **Precision Labs**, with a promotion to dedicate a percentage of sales to the effort. This was followed by **Wurth, Club Car** and

Helena with similar programs.

Now there are some significant golf events coming up to raise money for BMP as well. The first is the **Landscape Supply tournament on May 9th at The Water's Edge** on Smith Mountain Lake. This event is spearheaded by "Team Connelly," namely Kevin and Patrick, as well as host superintendent Jeff Snyder. There's a goal for 100 players and a big donation through broad sponsor involvement (see brochure inserted with this newsletter).

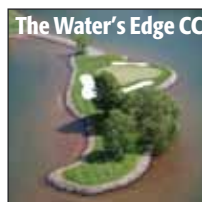
VGCSA President Jeff Berg is hosting his own BMP event on May 17th at his

own course, **Goose Creek GC**. As one of the historic courses in the area, Berg hopes to draw a good crowd from northern Virginia and the beltway region, but of course everyone is invited. It will be a captain's choice format, and entries will be handled through the Greater Washington GCSA.

Later in the summer, the CMAA Virginias Chapter is dedicating their annual fundraising tournament to the BMP. It's set for July 25th at **Hermitage Country Club** in the Richmond area. Entry information is on the VGCSA website calendar (www.vgcsa.org).



WURTH  GROUP



Virginia Agribusiness Council Praises General Assembly for Legislative Efforts Favorable to State Agribusiness Industry

The Virginia Agribusiness Council and its members today praised the 2011 Session of the Virginia General Assembly for its passage of key legislative proposals that protect the interests and advance the commitment to water quality of the agribusiness industry across the Commonwealth.

Council members were pleased that the General Assembly strengthened constitutional protection of private property rights, provided funding for Virginia Cooperative Extension agents and established guidelines to restructure the extension program, and established sensible animal care standards. Virginia's professional turf and agriculture industries also joined with legislators in supporting proposals to protect the state's water resources.

"The Agribusiness Council took a proactive approach to several critical industry issues this year including industry-driven environmental stewardship in light of the Chesapeake Bay TMDL (Total Maximum Daily Load) amending Virginia's constitution to provide additional property rights protections, addressing the critical role of Virginia Cooperative Extension for the agribusiness community, and establishing basic care standards for agricultural animals in keeping with industry practices," noted Council Board Chairman Ollie W. Kitchen, Jr. of MeadWestvaco in Covington.

"We had great results working with the legislature to address these proactive, industry-driven measures. I'm very pleased to report that the Council's efforts to represent agribusinesses across the Commonwealth were met with successful results during this General Assembly session."

The following key issues and the resulting legislation passed by the 2011 General Assembly were cited by the Council for protecting the interests of its members:

Lawn Fertilizer Restrictions and Nutrient Management for Golf Courses

Through legislation introduced by Del. Ed Scott and Sen. Ryan McDougle, the Virginia Agribusiness Council's members in

the professional lawn care, golf course, and landscape industry voluntarily agreed to help reduce urban nutrient loss for Virginia's streams, rivers, and the Chesapeake Bay. Beginning in 2014, lawn maintenance fertilizer will no longer contain phosphorus and all lawn fertilizers will have "good practices" labeling. **By 2017, all public and private golf courses will implement a nutrient management plan.** The Commonwealth is encouraged to provide consumer education on best practices for lawn care and provide consumers a list of lawn care operators who are in compliance with regulations. These voluntary actions by the turf industry will enable the state to meet many of the 2017 goals set out in its Watershed Implementation Plan which has been accepted by EPA and included in the Chesapeake Bay TMDL.

Agricultural Water Quality Implementation Goals

In light of the Chesapeake Bay TMDL, the Council advocated for farmers to be provided both flexibility and certainty in meeting water quality goals. This effort led by Del. Ed Scott calls upon farmers to develop and implement "Resource Management Plans." By providing a level of "safe harbor" the legislation creates a strong incentive for farmers to adopt and maintain a Resource Management Plan containing best management practices that are most effective for their unique operations. The legislation will increase the implementation rate of agricultural best management practices needed to meet the challenging Chesapeake Bay TMDL goals. With only one vote in opposition, the General Assembly wholeheartedly supported allowing farmers to develop whole-farm conservation plans as their contribution to improving water quality statewide.

Private Property Rights

After four years of effort, property rights protections prevailed as the 2011 General Assembly passed a resolution spearheaded

by Del. Johnny Joannou. In 2007, the General Assembly enacted law to define "public use" to ensure that private property cannot be taken by a public entity for a private benefit or gain. The resolution passed this year places similar provisions in the Constitution and defines the just compensation landowners should receive when their property is taken by eminent domain. Provided this resolution passes the 2012 General Assembly and voters in November 2012, stronger protections for private property rights will be included in Virginia's Constitution - a key victory for all landowners.

Virginia Cooperative Extension

A new restructuring effort for Virginia Cooperative Extension will include agribusiness industry stakeholders along with local government and extension agents. The General Assembly agreed with Council members that such involvement is critical to an effective new structure. Extension provides farmers essential information for their operations and leadership 4-H programs for youth statewide. Additional funding from the legislature will also allow vacancies in Extension staffing across the Commonwealth to be filled.

Agricultural Animal Care

The Council and industry partners took a proactive step by examining Virginia's laws pertaining to the care of agriculture animals and determining that care standards for agriculture animals should be established. Del. Bobby Orrrock and Sen. Philip Puckett carried legislation that will create a specific, reasonable standard in law for agricultural animal care to protect both animal welfare and responsible animal husbandry practices. Also supporting this important measure were the Virginia Veterinary Medical Association, local governments, animal control officers, and the McDonnell Administration.

Off and Running

J. Rhett Evans, the new CEO of GCSAA, has wasted little time in taking on the challenges—and examining the opportunities—that await the association in the coming years.

Special to *Commonwealth Crier*, reprinted from *Golf Course Management*, April issue. (Article edited to fit space constraints.)

J. Rhett Evans is a runner, a dedicated triathlete who has competed in countless events around the country, and faithfully puts in his miles each and every day. This love of running has come in handy for the newly appointed chief executive officer of GCSAA, because ever since the 42-year-old was officially elevated to that post in late January of this year, he's done almost nothing but run, from one event to another, one issue to another, tackling his new duties head-on.

From the GCSAA Education Conference and Golf Industry Show in Orlando in early February to the Far East for the China Golf Show in March to help cultivate GCSAA's newly developed support of that international event and then back to Florida again a few weeks after that for a meeting of the national association's board of directors, Evans has been on the move, getting a crash course in the challenges—and the opportunities—that he will face as GCSAA's new executive leader.

With a background in event and facility management in both Utah and Arizona, a long stint as the director of parks, recreation and commercial facilities in Mesa, AZ, and two years with GCSAA as, first, its chief operating officer and, later, its interim CEO, Evans won over GCSAA's board of directors with "a track record of success everywhere he has been," according to 2010 GCSAA President James R. Fitzroy, CGCS.

"He has experience in the golf industry, both on the facility level and from an organizational perspective," Fitzroy continued in the press release announcing Evans' hiring. "He has experience in managing a large staff and being accountable to a variety of constituents. And, he is a consensus builder. That will serve him well with GCSAA members and in the increasingly collaborative golf industry."

Before Evans took off for his trip to China, he sat down with *GCM* for a wide-ranging discussion that touched on his goals as GCSAA's new CEO, issues that will be facing the association and the business of golf course management in the coming years and, yes, even the state of his golf game.

A video version of this interview, which was recorded at GCSAA headquarters in Lawrence, Kan., will be available on *GCM*'s blog, From the Desk of *GCM*, at <http://gcm.typepad.com>.

GCM: Tell us why you wanted the job of chief executive officer of GCSAA? What interested you about the challenges of the position, and what are some of the top things you believe the association, with you at the helm, can accomplish?

Rhett Evans: We're in some challenging times, and so it begs the question "Why would you want to come into a situation where there's lots of work ahead?" I thrive on ... those types of challenges. I certainly believe in what GCSAA is all about. We have positioned ourselves in a way that we will be successful, and that is something that I want to be a part of, so it was a natural fit. (As chief operating officer) I was involved with a lot of the initiatives and the things that we had going forward, so this would allow me to continue to move some of those things forward with our great staff and with our wonderful members.



Rhett Evans, CEO, GCSAA

GCM: The last several years have been challenging ones economically for both GCSAA and the golf course management industry as a whole. What would you tell superintendents or industry partners asking you why they should continue to have faith in this industry and in this business?

Evans: In North America in particular, the industry's been hit hard. We're not growing. We're actually contracting in terms of net growth of facilities. We're looking at the number of individuals that are entering the game, and that's been stagnant. The number of rounds has been stagnant.

Why would (someone) want to come into an industry that is stagnant? The answer is simple: Golf has withstood the test of time. It's been around for years and years, and it will continue to be around for years and years.

GCM: What do you see as the biggest challenges facing golf course superintendents — and, as a result, GCSAA — in the next decade? Conversely, what are some of the biggest opportunities for this business?

Evans: Golf will look different in the future. ... As we look out over the next 10 years, the challenges that I see are the same top three that are facing the association as well as our members. First, our members will continue to have to do more with less. It's the reality. They're going to have to continue to figure out how to manage their courses with less resources, staff and budgets. And as they do that, we here at GCSAA have to continue to give them the best practices, the innovative tools to make that work.

(The second challenge will focus on) the environment — water in particular, and fuel as another resource that's going to be challenged in the coming years. Those two things in particular will reshape the way that we have to do business.

(Our third challenge will be) growing the game in general. All of us in this industry, whether we're a club manager, whether we're a PGA professional, whether we're a superintendent, whether we're an owner — whoever we are, we all have skin in the game, and we all need to figure out ways to grow the game. And I think superintendents — because of the impact they can have on pace of play and playing conditions and

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Off and Running cont.

making it enjoyable for people to come back and experience satisfaction on the course — have a direct connection to the growth of the game.

Just turn those (challenges) around, and all three can be opportunities, and we can win at all three. Here at GCSAA and The Environmental Institute for Golf, we're (developing the) leading best management practices. We're supporting research. We're advocating on behalf of (environmental) issues. When it comes to player development, we're working closely with our allied associations, sitting around the table working on programs such as Get Golf Ready and The First Tee.

We're even turning doing more with less into an opportunity. Every year at our conference and show, (we bring together) folks that can network, that can share insights for tricks of the trade that superintendents can take back and utilize at their courses. We're also able to deliver good and unique information that can help superintendents navigate these challenging times through our website, through our forums, through our magazine.

GCM: Associations across the board are constantly challenged by their members and prospective members to define their value proposition — what members can expect to receive for their membership dollars. How does GCSAA plan to respond to similar inquiries about the value of membership in this association?

Evans: We need to welcome those questions here at GCSAA and learn what it is our members need for their membership dollars. And you don't necessarily do that by sitting in an office. You need to be out with the members and you need to be bringing the members into those discussions. Through our committees, we're able to bring members from throughout the country, throughout the world, throughout various (types of) facilities — from municipal to high-end private — into the (association's headquarters) building to listen and figure out together what it is we need to deliver

to create that value. As we go forward with the field-staff program, we have another opportunity to touch the member and to gain that insight.

You're going to see a redesigned website that's based on feedback from our members. You're going to see refined education and the way that we deliver that, whether it's through webinars or through podcasts. And the list goes on.

GCM: GCM: GCSAA recently announced its support of two PGA Merchandise Shows in China. What is GCSAA looking to achieve in its support of international events, and why do you feel the time is right for GCSAA to be looking to expand its presence overseas?

Evans: If this were just a merchandise show, we wouldn't be interested. But like our own GIS, the shows in Asia bring together manufacturers of those things that our superintendents consume — chemicals, fertilizers, equipment to maintain the course. We're going over there to explore how GCSAA can help our members who are over there and our vendors who are doing business in those emerging markets ... especially (in the area of) education. If (we discover) there are some things that we can deliver, and we can deliver them in a cost-effective manner, then we're going to put a plan together (for) overseas.

GCM: Since the start of 2011, GCSAA has expanded its field-staff program and now has field-staff representatives on the ground in Florida, the Southwest, the Great Lakes and the South Central regions, with two more to come in other regions before the end of the calendar year. Why is this initiative important to GCSAA, and more to the point, why is it important for superintendents at the local level?

Evans: Times have changed, and we have to be more focused. We can't be all things to all people because we don't have the resources to do so. We have less staff; we have a smaller budget. The field-staff

program is a way that we can be more concise, that we can touch the member who's just got their head down working hard, that we can take those products and services that we've spent time and money to produce based on member needs and member input, out to the field. Everything we've been hearing (about the field-staff program) is positive and we're excited to move it forward. Obviously, as with any new initiative, there will be tweaks and changes along the way, as we get feedback from the members.

GCM: GCSAA has long collaborated with allied associations and other organizations in the game of golf in efforts to strengthen the game and grow participation. Why are these collaborations important to GCSAA, and what value trickles down to members?

Evans: (As a superintendent) at your own facility, how would your daily interactions be or how successful would your facility be if you didn't have a strong relationship with your PGA professional, if you didn't have a strong relationship with your club manager? What if you didn't have a strong relationship with your owner? If you're going through a renovation or you're building a course, what if you didn't have a strong relationship with the architect or the builder?

The answer's pretty simple: (Superintendents) have to be able to have those types of relationships to really move the ball faster down the field. As efficient as we are and as passionate as we are about the game of golf and about this industry and the profession, GCSAA can't do it alone, either. We need the help of our allied associations, just like our superintendents need the help of their entire team at their facility to make decisions and to make their course successful.

Virginia's Golf Industry Steps Forward in the Chesapeake Bay Restoration

Peter McDonough, Golf Course Superintendent, The Keswick Club

News stories related to the Chesapeake Bay have spawned a great deal of debate and ideas in recent discussions, especially in regard to clean-up efforts of the waterway. That said, sometimes the positive steps businesses are taking to be part of the solution are overlooked.

Rest assured the game of golf has been accountable for its actions in the areas of environmental stewardship.

During the most recent General Assembly session, nine fertilizer bills were introduced in legislation involving Chesapeake Bay restoration. Golf as a whole was part of an omnibus package that also enveloped other green industry partners.

With the full support of the Virginia Golf Council, the industry demonstrated proactive leadership by taking the commonwealth's voluntary Nutrient Management Planning (NMP) program and proceeded to require that all golf courses have NMP's in place by July 1, 2017.

With negotiations involving many parties, including the Virginia Agribusiness Council (VAC) and representation on Capitol Hill, the Virginia Golf Council's legislative partners achieved results that set an important standard for other states to follow.

A great deal of credit goes to Virginia Agribusiness Council President Donna Pugh Johnson and Vice President Katie Frazier for their countless efforts on behalf of golf as the industry continues to work in generating awareness on this issue.

Both House Bill 1831 and Senate Bill 1055 will impact clubs and facilities in the future. In the box above are some of the highlights and pertinent facts that will ultimately affect golfers and golf courses.

Highlights of House Bill 1831 and Senate Bill 1055 Affecting Golfers and Golf Courses

- Nutrient Management Plans will be required for all golf courses in Virginia by July 1, 2017.
- The Department of Conservation and Recreation will develop a cost-share assistance program by July 1, 2015 for all golf facilities.
- The Nutrient Management Plans must be approved by the Department of Conservation and Recreation within 30 days.
- The plan must be revised every five years unless the facility is performing a major course renovation or redesign.
- The civil penalty for violations is \$250.
- Prohibition of phosphorus does not include "starter" fertilizer for use on new, repaired, or renovated turf and when soil tests in the past three years indicates phosphorous deficiency.
- The information collected by Department of Conservation and Recreation is exempt from the Virginia Freedom of Information Act.
- Golf courses are exempt from local ordinances governing fertilizer use and application.
- The commonwealth will assist with interest parties the development of Best Management Practices for consumer information.

The Best Management Practices manual for golf involves several organizations and individuals. With this in mind, a thorough document is being developed and should be completed early this fall. The allied golf associations in Virginia will be providing further communications and assistance in helping to educate the management at clubs throughout the Commonwealth.

Virginia's golf leaders are serious about emphasizing and taking action with respect to managing golf courses in a responsible manner. Beyond being sound environmental stewards, the game provides a great source of recreation and golf's very nature teaches important life lessons to children.

Enjoy your golfing summer!





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Member Profile: Rob Wilmans, Superintendent

Elizabeth Manor Golf & Country Club • Portsmouth, VA



Golf holes at your facility: 18

Years at your current golf club: 16

Years as a golf course superintendent: 15

Favorite hobbies: golf, fishing, reading

Favorite professional golfer: Jim Furyk

Favorite sports team(s): Washington Redskins, Virginia Tech Hokies

Biggest role model as a professional: Robert Ruff, Jr.

How did you get your start in the golf maintenance profession? I had a summer job at Philadelphia Country Club that I really enjoyed. When I was trying to choose my career path I had great memories of working there, and went on to Virginia Tech to study turf and landscape management.

What has been, to date, the most rewarding part of being a golf course superintendent? The most rewarding part of being a superintendent has always been Friday afternoon when all the work is complete and the course looks its best. Happy golfers for the weekend, you cant beat that feeling.

What would be one thing, if you could, change about the golf course superintendent profession? I wish we had the ability to pay the staff more so that people would stay in golf course maintenance and be able to make a decent living at it.

In the next five to ten years, what are the biggest challenges we face as golf course superintendents? Water and nutrient usage as it continues to be regulated more and more by government agencies.

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What Does a Good Golf Course Superintendent Cost?

Bruce Petrelli, CGCS

Let us begin with a premise, you have a golf course and need a golf course superintendent to take care of it. Well if you need a superintendent, why not find a good one; an individual with the education, experience and the basics involved in the profession.

The simple definition of "golf course superintendent" is the person responsible for the care and maintenance of the golf course. The search for a good superintendent must include someone who has affection for golf, knows the rules of golf, and has the talent to maintain it for the golfer.

Now let us get into the many areas where education and experience are needed. The golf course surface is comprised mainly of grass. The superintendent will need to know which varieties can handle the environment of your golf course. They will have to know the characteristics of each variety, plus any special needs they may have. The superintendent will be called on to assure the health of the grass. If the grass is under stress or distressed they will need to diagnose the cause and a cure. Once again, the superintendent's education and experience contribute greatly to making the best plan.

The soil the grass grows in is another key element. What is the make up and nutritional value of the soil? Is it heavy clay or perhaps sandy soil? If the soil is of poor quality, what is needed to modify it to keep the grass healthy? Of course greens, tees, fairways and roughs will all have different maintenance needs in the same soil. If only the superintendent will be so lucky as to only deal with one soil type.

Safety in all aspects of the golf course maintenance is job one. Safety with all pesticides is a must for people and the environment.

Turfgrass disease is also a great concern when attempting to maintain healthy turf. Your superintendent must know what types of disease they will be encountering. What conditions will bring out which diseases? They must be able to diagnose those diseases and put together the best fungicide program available to prevent or overcome them.

The same concerns can be used for insects that damage or kill the grass. The superintendent's plan for the best insecticide program must include concern with the plant's health and what is best for the environment. In addition to insects, some superintendents will also have to deal with nematodes and the damage they inflict.

Weeds are also going to be competing for space with the grass on your golf course. Again the superintendent has to identify those plants and develop the best products and a schedule to combat them.

Many superintendents use wetting agents and plant growth regulators as part of their plan to keep the grass healthy and playable for the golfers

Nutrition is a key factor in caring for the turfgrass. The superintendent must know the nutritional needs of your grasses: weighing your soil and grass types, factoring in the weather, and the amount of play, how different types of fertilizer respond, and then developing the correct nutritional plan.

Every golf course has to drain properly and have a sufficient irrigation system. This author and many others feel drainage is the biggest factor in turfgrass health. On the irrigation front, water systems keep evolving, getting more complicated and sophisticated, and the quality of the water you are using is becoming poorer.

Next, your superintendent should have some basic knowledge of golf course design and construction. Both are factors on your course and have an effect on the playability and maintenance.

The maintenance of the golf course is accomplished with a number of different types of equipment. The superintendent must possess a working knowledge of a vast number of types and using this knowledge to match the proper equipment to your course.

Your superintendent does not have to be an attorney. But your superintendent must have knowledge of laws and regulations as they relate to the maintenance of the golf course. These could be local, state or federal laws on regulations. This may also include labor laws or regulations dealing

with use of pesticides, fertilizers or water.

Let us not forget the superintendent/business manager. While you may say golf is a game or sport, it is also a business. Smart business decisions go a long way in determining the cost and condition of your golf course. Most golf courses, regardless of their type, are competing with similar golf courses for members and customers. So the right superintendent may be the difference between success and failure of your course.

Other areas your superintendent may need to include in their background are: bunkers, IPM, landscapes, tree maintenance, budgeting, presentations, renovation work, pond, lake and waterway maintenance, wet land protection, golf carts, swimming pools or clubhouse maintenance.

Well, that is quite a list of areas that your search must consider when looking for a good superintendent. But there is one more, the most important: people.

Communication and dealing with people is most important of all. Your superintendent will be hiring and if necessary, firing the people doing the maintenance work on your golf course. The employees will need training, safety instructions, and direction from your superintendent.

Then you have the people who will supervise the superintendent. They are owners, club presidents, general managers, board members or golf professionals. Other people that can cross our paths will include fellow superintendents, committee people, sales representatives, university persons, industry people, consultants, outside contractors, architects and of course golfers.

In conclusion, if you were to ask employers how much your superintendent costs; they will probably answer, our superintendent's salary is \$xxxxx. With all the areas that superintendent decisions affect cost, the salary is only a small part of that answer. Now if you thought my answer to, **how much does a good superintendent cost** was going to be a monetary one, sorry to disappoint. The answer is a good superintendent does not cost; they *save*.



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Kevin McIntire, Lexington Country Club



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News from Local Associations

News from the GWGCSA

In the Greater Washington region, the weather has created a “hurry up and wait” scenario. Coming out of winter, several stretches of mild weather were encountered. Soil temperatures rapidly climbed into the mid 50s and the trees and shrubs started to bloom. We then had 2 inches of snow on the ground four days ago. Go figure. I think in my next life I would like to come back as a weatherman. There is no other job that you only have to get things half right and still get paid.

I am pleased to announce 2011 meeting schedule. Of particular note, we are currently able to accept credit cards for meeting registration and fees. The schedule of events are as follows:

- **May 17**, Goose Creek Golf Club (BMP fundraiser)
- **June 21**, Pendleton Golf Club (North-South Challenge w/ODGCSA)

- **July 20**, Forest Greens Golf Club (Maintenance Open)
- **August**, Open
- **September 20**, 1757 Club (joint meeting w/MAAGCS)
- **October**, tentative at Fauquier Springs Country Club (Superintendent/Assistant)
- **November 1**, Evergreen Country Club (Annual Meeting)

As a reminder, VGCSA membership dues were due at the end of February. If you have not done so already, please submit your payment as soon as possible. Thanks, and here is to a wonderful season for all.



Jeff Van Fleet
GWGCSA
External Vice President

President's Message cont.

is the “Rounds4Research” campaign was just completed. This is the second year we have been involved in the auction and I would like to “Thank” those that participated in this innovative online auction. Tee times from golf courses across the Commonwealth were donated and were bid upon and auctioned for this good cause. “Thanks” again to all of you that stepped up to the plate and made donations, we had over 85 golf courses participate.

Congratulations also goes out to our committee on their success on House Bill 1831 and Senate Bill 1055. Please read on further (page 7) as to how it affects golfers and our golf courses.

As some of you may already know, we have three big BMP fundraising tournaments scheduled this year. The first is the Landscape Supply Tournament on **May 9th** at the Water's Edge on Smith Mountain Lake. This event is spear headed by Patrick and Kevin Connelly as well as host Jeff Snyder (see insert in this issue of

the Crier). The second is the Greater Washington BMP Golf Tournament to be held at Goose Creek Golf Club (my place) on **May 17th**. All entries for the Goose Creek event will be processed through the GWGCSA. The third is the Annual Virginia's Chapter of the CMAA BMP Tournament to be held on **July 25th** at Hermitage Country Club. We look forward to seeing you all at one of these great events. Visit our website at www.vgcsa.org for more entry information.

As we press on with the many issues and challenges we face as an industry, it is important to stand together and speak with one voice. That voice I speak of includes superintendents, assistant superintendents, equipment technicians, our staff, our academic advisors, our club managers and officials, our members and customers, and of course our industry partners. I would encourage all of us to reach out to fellow members and neighbors when in need and help where necessary. Why you may ask?

VTA News

We are fast approaching the beginning of our “meeting season” here in Southwest Virginia and we are excited about our locations and speakers. In an effort to both boost attendance as well as a thank you for continued support we are going to implement some incentives for attending meetings. We rolled them out at our first meeting at Hidden valley CC in Salem on April 12th where Dr Erik Ervin spoke about Biostimulants and some of his current research.

Our fundraiser will be at Roanoke CC on May 10th where we are looking forward to a large turnout and the information for this is in the mail as I write this.

The weather seems to be finally cooperating and other than a snow shower or two spring has finally sprung. For those of us with cool season grass it has been a good start as we come upon aerification season I know all are keeping their fingers crossed for a more “normal” spring although we haven't seen one of those in a few years.



Mark Cote
VTA President

Because we are all in this together, whether we like it or not. If anything should come up in the near future, please get a hold of anyone of us on the board—we are simply here to help and provide you the best organization we can. I would finally like to wish each of you a successful 2011 golf season. I look forward to seeing you all at a local association meeting or BMP tournament near you. All the Best!



Fairways and greens,
Jeffrey L. Berg
VGCSA President

News from Local Associations

SVTA Update

Golf rounds in February of 2010 were non-existent with the heavy snow cover that we had. This year has thankfully not been so harsh although spring in the Shenandoah Valley has been a tease. We seem to be getting little bursts of warmer air followed by cold, wet winter weather. What a difference a year can make! Overall, golf rounds are up. This is great for revenue and business, but it can take a toll on the golf courses with divots, ball marks, and golf cart damage.

The SVTA held its first meeting of the year at Bowling Green Country Club in Front Royal, VA. The meeting was well attended and we had a great speaker, Keith Happ, from the USGA. The format was an informal, roundtable discussion in which Keith answered questions from the attendees. This led to great dialogue on many topics including; aeration, fertility, weed management, water quality, diseases, and US Open preparations. The weather in the afternoon did not cooperate, so few stayed to play golf. Seven brave souls ventured out in the cold damp weather.

We are looking forward to the **April 28th** meeting at Spotswood Country Club in Harrisonburg, Virginia. Dr. Shawn Askew from Virginia Tech will be our speaker and he plans to give us an update on research plots he has at Spotswood Country Club. Our **May 26th** meeting will be at the Woods Resort in Hedgesville, West Virginia. This will be a golf-only event because it is our qualifier golf tournament to determine who will represent the SVTA in the June, VTC Research Golf Tournament.

The Shenandoah Valley Turfgrass Association hopes everyone has a productive spring full of growth on the golf course and number of rounds played at your course. THANK YOU to all of the golf courses that supported Rounds 4 Research!



David Lewallen
SVTA
External Vice President

TTA News

It seems our hopes for an early spring don't seem to be coming true. I had the pleasure of aerifying greens with snow flurries the other day. That was a first for me. The TTA schedule has already begun, with our first event on March 22nd at Honey Bee Golf Club. Thanks to host Jeremy Friscaro GCS for a great conditioned golf course. We had a presentation by Pete Maybach on water testing and topdress sand analysis.

Cutler Robinson CGCS at Bayville CC presented at our meeting on April 19th at James River Country Club. He spoke about his participation with the BMP project that the VGCSA is spearheading and his involvement with environmental causes including the Lynnhaven Inlet.

We had good attendance for our first two meetings and look for an even better turnout for the rest of the year.



Chris Petrelli
TTA External VP
Cedar Point Country Club

News from the ODGCSA

2011 looks to be an exciting year for the ODGCSA. Andrew McCormick, Hanover CC, joins us as our newest Board member and Scott Kinnan, Farmington CC, will serve as our Certification Liaison for the GCSAA. Unfortunately, we will soon be looking to replace Tommy Adams who is to be congratulated for his new position with Helena Chemical Company.

The 2011 calendar of events has already started with March Madness held at Champps Sports Bar on March 18th. On April 1st Willow Oaks hosted "Nutrient Management Plans, BMP's, Government Relations, and other Topics that Effect your Facility." This event was the brainchild of our current president

Eric Frazier with assistance from the VGCSA and Peter McDonough.

On **May 2nd** the Tollie Quinn will be held at The Federal Club with the top 5 finishers qualifying for the Virgina Cup. Pendleton Golf Club will host the "North/South" on **June 21st**, a joint meeting with the GWGCSA. Glenmore Country Club will be the site of our joint meeting with the SVTA in September.

The ODGCSA will not plan a meeting in October so that we can all support the VGCSA's Joe Saylor event at Creighton Farms on **October 31st**. Our meeting and social calendar will wrap up at Independence Golf Club some time in November with the annual meeting/par 3 shootout.

Members of the ODGCSA have a big year in front of us. Rest assured that we have elected a knowledgeable and passionate Board. I know I speak for the entire board when I say we look forward to a very successful year and the hopes that our event participation increases. Please make a conscious effort to attend as many meeting as you can.



Dan Taylor, CGCS
External President
ODGCSA

Spring Planning

Darin S. Bevard, senior agronomist, Mid-Atlantic Region

In spite of cool, below-normal temperatures, our typical early-season pests are starting to emerge. In recent travels on golf courses, annual bluegrass weevil (ABW) adults have been easy to find. Applications of insecticides to kill adult weevils before they can lay eggs will need to be made soon. The half-green/half-gold stage of forsythia is a good phenological indicator for these applications, but maintain regular scouting for weevils on your property if they have been a problem in the past. For those who have not been affected by ABW, aggressive scouting is recommended for this insect pest, as new golf courses are impacted every growing season.

Initial applications for *Poa annua* seedhead control have been performed in most of the region, although northern areas have yet to reach the necessary growth stage of *Poa annua* for these applications. Remember, when timing your applications, the goal is not to control the first seedheads that emerge.



2011 Turf Advisory Service (TAS) Fee Schedule

**Price shown below includes a \$600 discount
IF payment is received BEFORE May 15, 2011**

**If payment is received
AFTER May 15, 2011**

Half-day visit(s) at \$1,800 each

Half-day visit(s) at \$2,400 each

Full-day visit(s) at \$2,600 each

Full-day visit(s) at \$3,200 each

Municipal, state park and military courses can provide a purchase order number prior to the May 15th, 2011 deadline to receive the early payment discount.

Rather, the goal is to control as many seedheads as possible with the applications. Timing is essential. If there are any questions about timing of application, do not hesitate to contact our office.

Preemergent crabgrass and goosegrass applications should be made soon if they have not already been made. While cold temperatures have been an issue, crabgrass germination will occur as soon as warmer temperatures persist. Do not be lulled to sleep by this period of cold temperatures.

Every spring we hear the debate about putting green aeration timing. Should we aerate in late winter/early spring or wait until later in the spring when warmer temperatures are more likely? Each spring, the results are different. In 2010, it was very warm in the early spring. This allowed for rapid healing from core aeration in spite of the early timing of this program. Fast forward to 2011, and those courses that aerated early are suffering through very slow healing because of cold temperatures. With all of the technology and products that are available, it's still tough to overcome cold temperatures when trying to get the grass to grow aggressively. Thus, in 2010, the "early birds" made out very well, and the golfers benefited. In 2011, those with later aeration dates will probably subject their golfers to less inconvenience because warmer temperatures should reduce the length of time required for the greens to heal from aeration. The moral

of the story is that a superintendent can do the exact same programs at the exact same time each growing season, and weather conditions lead to a completely different result!

As a reminder, **there is no fee increase for 2011 Turf Advisory Service (TAS) visits if payment is made before May 15, 2011.**

Take advantage of this year's \$600 prepayment discount. Keep in mind that our fees include all travel expenses. The 2011 fee schedule can be found in the above box.

Your visit can be scheduled at any time during the year. The goal of the TAS is to provide unbiased information about golf course maintenance programs, course conditioning, problem-solving and budgeting. We encourage participation of interested course officials as we visit their primary asset—the golf course.

The Mid-Atlantic Region agronomists are part of your agronomic support team. If you have a question or concern, give us a call or send an e-mail. Stan Zontek (szontek@usga.org) and Darin Bevard (dbevard@usga.org) at 610.558.9066 or Keith Happ (khapp@usga.org) at 412.341.5922.



Darin S. Bevard
Senior Agronomist
USGA Mid-Atlantic Region

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