

December 2017

Commonwealth Crier

News from the Virginia Golf Course Superintendents Association



President's Message

Winter seems to have come early to Southwest Virginia and has provided a welcome respite. We just held our Annual Conference at The Darden Business School at UVA and by all accounts it was a great event and we will be planning next year's meeting based on that input. The guiding force was to provide a variety of subjects so that there would be something of value for everyone.

One of the subjects discussed was that of employee and assistant recruitment and retention. By all accounts attendance at turf schools around the country is down. Many superintendents in Virginia have noticed the lack of assistants available in the hiring pool. I believe it is our duty as an association to help in any way we can.

As such we can start by looking at a two-pronged approach. First by encouraging the development and implementation of programs to develop "in house" talent at Virginia golf courses, through crew seminars and education and to provide modest scholarship assistance for such programs. Secondly, we need to continue to market the job of superintendent to today's high school students.

I would encourage all members to go into the conference season with these goals in mind and to pick the brains of fellow superintendents at local and national meetings and seminars for ideas and success stories. I would also encourage local outreach and recruitment at local high schools through guidance counselors, golf coaches, agricultural programs, and for those superintendents with children, through direct contact. This is going to take a grassroots effort on our part. Already we are seeing some results from the VSGA and a commitment to get the message out to junior golf programs, thanks to Matt Smiley, who attended our annual meeting.

Events in the near future include the annual Rounds4Research auction. I strongly encourage participation this year. This can be done by donating and bidding on Virginia rounds, or by encouraging others to do so.

I would also like to invite any superintendents in the state to join in National Golf Day activities in Washington DC – this was a great success last year and it continues to showcase our profession as leaders on the national stage.

I am also excited about our annual fundraiser, which will be held at Independence Golf Club on May 21, where Virginia Tech is developing some great research for the central part of the state.

In closing let me express my thanks to exiting board members, Steven Ball and Eric Spurlock, who have done a great job in the past year. Replacing them will be Garrison Fowler and Ian Grove. Also I would be remiss if I didn't thank all our Partners who provide much needed support so that we can continue to provide for our members.

I would also like to extend the best wishes of everyone at the VGCSA to Dr. Erik Ervin, who will be leaving Tech for greener pastures in Delaware. Thanks, Erik, for your commitment to the turf program and research on our behalf – it hasn't gone unappreciated.



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VGCSA President



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Annual Conference a Hit in Charlottesville

Great Speakers and a Great Location

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In just its fourth year, the VGCSA Annual Conference has matured into a “can’t miss” experience for Virginia’s golf course superintendents and associated industry colleagues. Revels and Finch continued to serve as the presenting sponsors.

“Nice job, good venue, very good speakers, great location,” remarked veteran Fred Biggers, CGCS, of Wintergreen Resort.

The Inn at Darden on the UVA campus played host to a crowd of over 100 who came for education, networking, CEU credits, and, of course, FUN!

The two-day conference began on the afternoon of December 4th, featuring a USGA Green Section pre-con event on “Colorants” at Farmington Country Club. Attendees learned about the popular off-season products for warm season grasses in the classroom first. Then they saw a live demonstration of “painting” on Farmington’s new short game practice area – it was impressive. Elliott Dowling of the USGA coordinated the event with Scott Kinnan, CGCS of Farmington.

Then the conference officially began at the Darden Conference Center in an ideal setting. After introductions by President Mark Cote, Dr. Cale Bigelow of Purdue University presented “Assistants Pipeline — Who is available to Hire?” The Virginia Tech graduate discussed one of the most important topics facing clubs in the region — just where are the next superintendents coming from? Turf program enrollment is down, and Bigelow interacted with the audience to generate ideas to tackle the problem.

The second presentation was a “Fireside Chat” with the world’s preeminent sports psychologist Dr. Bob Rotella, a Charlottesville resident. Rotella and moderator Damon DeVito entertained the audience with stories from PGA Tour players, and many of his principles of positive visualization are applicable in a job setting. He mentioned that Tiger Woods may have put limits on

himself, by setting Jack Nicklaus’s record for majors as his goal. He said if Tiger had a bigger goal, he might already have surpassed Nicklaus! He hit the “comfort zone” of almost achieving it — a good, but not great, outcome for a person of his abilities — interesting! Set your goals high!

Then the VGCSA Annual Meeting, presented by Landscape Supply, took place. President Cote gave a fun and informative review of the 2017 activities of the association. Awards Chairman Aaron Wells had the pleasure of presenting the annual awards to Brent Graham (Environmental Stewardship) and Rob Wilmans (Distinguished Service). Wells then introduced Neil Jones of Buy Sod, who announced Scholarship Awards to Cole Vincel and Madilyn Wheeler. Cote presented the President’s Award for Lifetime Service to H.T. Page, who drew a standing ovation. (See detailed award articles in this newsletter)

Cote then recognized and thanked outgoing board members Eric Spurlock and Steven Ball. And he thanked all the Partners for their tremendous support of the association. This included event sponsors Revels & Finch, BASF, Bayer, Landscape Supply, Syngenta, Harmon Turf Services, Vereens, Old Dominion GCSA, Trinity Turf, Genesis Turfgrass, Riverside Turf,

Buy Sod and Target Specialty Products.

After adjournment, the group enjoyed the Syngenta Reception in the beautiful South Lounge. That evening, Ian Grove of Target Specialty Products hosted a networking party, with Monday Night Football featured.

The second day of the conference opened with a networking breakfast. Attendees then moved into the conference hall for a dynamic lineup of speakers.

Tim Hiers, CGCS of the Club at Mediterra in Naples, FL kicked it off with “Challenges and Opportunities,” after an introduction by Old Dominion GCSA President Paul Van Buren. Tim has been ranked among the top five superintendents in the country. His topic covered communication. He noted that “the doors of opportunity swing on the hinges of opposition.” He inspired the audience to lead and to not be afraid to ask questions. Tim’s presentation was recorded and is available at www.vgcsa.org.

Next up was GCSAA’s Government Relations man, Bob Helland, with an update on the new GCSAA PAC (Political Action Committee), along with an encouraging report on legislation now that Republicans are in power. The Ambassadors program is doing well and Virginia is nearly fully represented with superintendent

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Award Winners congratulated by President Cote – L-R: Brent Graham, CGCS, Rob Wilmans, H.T. Page, Mark Cote, Cole Vincel, Eric Spurlock.

Annual Conference *cont.*

volunteers. He encouraged participation in National Golf Day, set for April 18, 2018.

After lunch, Dr. Bigelow returned with “Organic Nutrition Programs.” With the public’s concern over synthetic fertilizers, there are a lot of good organic options to consider. He also looked at different turf varieties, examining their resource needs. He noted that different clubs will have different budgets, which means different options for nutrition.

Then it was the perfect time (mid-afternoon) for “Energy Management” by Everette Fortner, Associate VP, Career and Professional Development at UVA. Fortner’s interactive presentation challenged the audience to discover their ultimate mission and to rate their engagement with work, family, health, friends and their community. Are they using their energy in tandem with their mission? It was a look inward, which the audience enjoyed.

Batting cleanup in the conference was the USGA Green Section’s Addison Barden on “Employee Recruitment & Retention.” Barden travels extensively for USGA, interacting with hundreds of turf professionals. He notes the challenges to hire and retain good assistants and crew members, and he emphasized the need to enhance jobs as best you can. The goal is to convince employees they can’t afford NOT to work for you.

President Cote wrapped it up with thanks to all the speakers, then he conducted drawings for two great prizes — a Yeti cooler and four Redskins-Broncos tickets donated by Buy Sod. Jeff Whitmire won the Yeti, and Dave Smith won the Skins tickets. The conference was adjourned.

See more photos on p. 11



The USGA Green Section presented a “Colorant” workshop, hosted by Scott Kinnan at Farmington Country Club.



Dr. Cale Bigelow gave two great presentations and enjoyed his speaker’s gift.



Tim Hiers, CGCS gave a dynamic presentation on “Challenges and Opportunities”.



A little shuffleboard match during the Monday Night Football Party.



The Darden Conference Center showcased great facilities for over 100 conference attendees.

Wilmans Recognized for Distinguished Service

Rob Wilmans of Newport News has been recognized by the VGCSA with its Distinguished Service Award for 2017. The award is “presented to a member who has given his time unselfishly in promoting golf course management and unification of the Virginia Golf Course Superintendents.” By all accounts, Wilmans earned the distinction through his professionalism and integrity, and his interaction with his fellow superintendents.

Wilmans is superintendent at James River Country Club and the 2017 President of the Tidewater Turfgrass Association (TTA). He grew up in Fairfax County, and his introduction to golf course management began with a summer job at Philadelphia Country Club, during his junior year at Villanova University. He really enjoyed his taste of the profession, so after Villanova, he decided to get a Turfgrass Management degree at Virginia Tech.

While at Tech, he did an internship at Hanging Rock GC outside of Roanoke. His first job after graduation was at Sycamore Creek in Richmond as a spray tech. Then he went to Chestnut Creek (now Westlake GC) at Smith Mountain Lake as first assistant. That led to a lengthy stint at Elizabeth Manor G&CC, home of the Eastern Amateur. He was hired as assistant there and was later promoted to superintendent. Then in 2015, he landed the superintendent job at James River Country Club, one of the best clubs in the Commonwealth.

Wilmans first got involved with TTA while he was the superintendent at Elizabeth Manor, and he served on their board. He was elected President for 2002 and continued to support the association afterwards. Then for three years, 2012-14,



Rob Wilmans

he was the TTA's External Vice President on the VGCSA Board. TTA then recruited him back to service, and he is finishing out a term as President this year — a lot was accomplished.

In consideration for this award, the VGCSA board noticed that TTA grew membership over 10% in 2017, while only one other local association showed growth. They noticed the events were organized and well attended. They noticed their low entry fees for meetings and events — was this a deliberate strategy?

Wilmans comments, “We try to have the events free or at a minimal cost, in an effort to boost participation. TTA has been run at a break-even for the past few years, so they used some of the money in the bank to subsidize the event cost, because most guys pay for events out of pocket. Spring events are the best attended, and the social event at TopGolf is the biggest event of the year. The joint meeting with ODGCSA has good participation.”

So did the event strategy create memberships growth, or was membership growth directly targeted? Wilmans answers, “We didn't specifically target membership growth, and a positive is a group of younger guys started showing up for meetings. I think moving away from the golf outings and gearing meetings toward social networking — this seems to be getting more guys involved. And that helps grow membership.”

In 2017, Wilmans hosted the VGCSA's premier golf event, The Joe Saylor Memorial, at his course. He brought a true passion to make it the best one ever, and he was totally involved from the outset of planning. He worked with Jeff Whitmire (VGCSA Secretary/Treasurer), and they decided to make it a little bigger, with more stuff going on. They also wanted to make it more fun and keep it casual. The event was a huge success, and it all benefitted the Toys for Tots organization, the official charity of the US Marine Corps.

So what will the TTA focus on in the future? Wilmans has Mike Hall lined up to take the presidency, and he forecasts more cost-effective events in an effort to bring membership out. He suggests creating a buzz by the core participants, who will help drive attendance. He also suggests dedicated emails to get people to go to the meetings.

As a personal note, Rob lives with wife Jamie near the club in Newport News. They have two grown girls out of the house. And let's not forget about Ruby, their beloved dog, an American bulldog. Rob is trying to make more of an effort to play golf, and he would like to see more superintendents doing the same.

2018 VGCSA Member Survey

Coming soon to your email mailbox

Graham Recognized for Environmental Stewardship

Brent Graham, CGCS of Williamsburg, VA has been recognized by the VGCSA as just the seventh recipient of the VGCSA Environmental Stewardship Award. The award is presented “in recognition of distinguished and meritorious service in the environmental stewardship of Virginia golf courses, and in grateful appreciation for unselfishly promoting the profession of golf course management, which led to the advancement of the association.” Graham is the Golf Course Superintendent at Two Rivers Country Club in Williamsburg, situated at the convergence of the James and Chickahominy Rivers.

Graham’s introduction to golf course management began at age 16 working on a course in Hinckley, OH. One attraction was the free golf, and it was his job throughout high school. His interest was really piqued when he got to attend the 1999 US Open at Pinehurst – his Dad’s former golf teammate was the Director of Agronomy, Brad Kocher. It was there he started to consider a career as a superintendent, and Mr. Kocher recommended he pursue a four-year degree. He received his BS in Agronomy from The Ohio State University.

Graham’s internships during college were at Pinehurst and The Club at Cordillera in Vail, CO. Then he moved to Virginia after college as Second Assistant at Two Rivers Country Club. After a year and a half, he was ready for his first superintendent job at Patuxent Greens in Maryland. An untimely sale of the course put him back in Virginia at Honey Bee GC at the beach, then back to Two Rivers as First Assistant.

One of his cherished memories at Two Rivers was the opportunity to work for one of the all-time greats, Bob Ruff. He enjoyed six years with Mr. Ruff until he lost his battle with cancer. Graham was named his successor, and he continues to serve the club.

Due to its unique location on two rivers, following sound environmental practices at the club are essential. It is a 190-acre footprint, and all holes except three are surrounded by protected wetlands. On the James City County RPA (Resource Protection Area) map, the entire course

lays inside the area, except three holes. This is a course that could not be built under current laws. Doing things right is not a choice.

At Two Rivers, the primary source of water is runoff. Storm grates all fill into ponds, which become the irrigation source. This is supplemented with a deep well, which they are in the process of re-permitting. The well water is high in sodium and bicarbonates, which creates different challenges for different types of grass. They have planted 10 acres of native hard fescue mix to lessen water needs amidst a robust residential community.

Currently they are looking into redoing the entire irrigation system (with exception of greens, which were done in 2012), with a new system designed to conserve water. The proposed system features rows of heads surrounding each fairway, with two adjacent heads, one pointing to the rough and the other to the fairway, to allow pinpoint watering.

Other conservation measures include the use of slow release, polymer-coated fertilizers. Graham also notes that people have a stigma that golf courses use pesticides often, but that is not the case. He along with most other superintendents spray as little as possible. There is really only 3 acres of turf (greens) out of 190 acres that are regularly sprayed with pesticides. He remarked, “People don’t know how safe these things are in the market and how little we use them.” He has decreased pesticide use by 15-20% on greens, with the new greens that were installed in 2012.

The club is invested in its environmental footprint, always conscious of potential impacts. Wildlife on the course includes lots of whitetail deer, and he establishes food plots for sustainability and management. There is a large fox population, plus turkeys, coyotes and all kinds of birds and waterfowl.

Graham also touched on the importance of having a nutrient management plan and certified applicator’s licenses. “People don’t understand how much goes into protecting wildlife and environment,” he noted. An example is a high tech \$60,000 sprayer which ensures accurate application. It is



Brent Graham

expensive to do things the correct way.

Graham also noted the importance of BMPs (Best Management Practices). “You can’t just put this on the shelf,” he said. “Recently I was working with a groundwater permit writer, and he was asking all kinds of questions. I selected applicable sections from the VGCSA BMP Manual and sent them over – he was impressed. We are on track to get our permit.”

Graham is also grateful for an excellent relationship with his GM, Ken Underwood. “He stands up for our golf course as much as he can. Plus our members are also supportive of doing things the right way.”

When asked his strategy when local groups or environmentalists make negative comments about golf, his approach is to start asking them questions, such as ‘why do you have this point of view?’ That allows him to respond diplomatically, citing science and best practices.

Graham was asked what this award means to him. “At first I was surprised, but when you start thinking about what we do for environment and educating people outside the golf community, it’s pretty cool.”

On a personal note, Graham lives in Williamsburg with wife Melissa and their 11-year-old daughter, 9-year-old son and a border collie that helps out at golf course. The club has had no geese problem after getting the dog.

Page Wins Presidents Award for Lifetime Service

H.T. Page of Moneta, VA is the winner of the 2017 VGCSA Presidents Award for Lifetime Service. The VGCSA's highest award is "to honor those superintendent pioneers who were instrumental in state and local affairs, but who may no longer be actively involved in the VGCSA.

Qualifications include twenty years or more of service to the turfgrass industry, at least ten of which were as a superintendent". On all accounts, Page has earned the distinction.

Page grew up near Wintergreen, and did not enter the profession as a golfer, like many superintendents. He worked summers on the maintenance staff from high school on, then went to Piedmont Community College. He credits the late Bob Ruff as the man who really helped him open the doors and move him along to become a superintendent, through his constant encouragement. He was an assistant at the Devil's Knob Course and in 1990 transferred to the Stoney Creek Course.

In 1991, Page got his first job as superintendent at The Waterfront alongside Smith Mountain Lake, working for Ron Willard, a prominent developer. In 1996, Mr. Willard bought Chestnut Creek Golf Club and renamed it Westlake, then Page became the director overseeing both courses, a post he retains to this day.

Being located in Southwest Virginia, Page's colleagues were all members of the VTA (Virginia Turfgrass Association), now one of the VGCSA local associations. Page really became involved with the VTA, working with Bob Ruff as a board member, later serving as President.

In the late 1990's, Peter McDonough was spearheading the creation of a statewide umbrella organization to establish GCSAA affiliation all across Virginia. So Page got involved with the VGCSA in its infancy. He represented VTA and attended several organizational meetings. The VGCSA was formally organized and incorporated in 1999, and Page was one of the founders.



H.T. Page

Page recounts some of the top superintendents and industry reps he worked with during his career. He regarded Bob Ruff, Sr. as a super guy, who influenced him greatly. Also Barry Graham, Joe Hammer, and Jeff Snyder were people he respected in the industry.

In the early days, Page was active and regularly attended local state and national conferences. Professional networking and getting together for meetings was particularly valuable. Now Page notes that technology has changed everything, and everyone is so easily accessible. Thus monthly meetings are not as important as they once were, but they are still significant.

Page was asked about his observations on how the profession has changed during his tenure. "Communication has improved greatly, and technology has really helped," he remarked. "Equipment is better, and new tools, such as the internet and smart phones, are at our fingertips. Also new research is good – there are just so many options, it can get overwhelming!"

Page also commented on challenges facing the industry. "There are not as

many young people or students now. I don't know that as many people are exposed to our end of the business, because we are behind the scenes so much. There has been a downswing in golf — closing courses has hurt us — and there is more competition for entertainment dollars."

Page did note that public golf has taken great strides. "There are many nice ones around now, which was not the same as when I started," he said.

Page has had a longtime relationship with the Virginia Tech turf team. He has cooperated with test plots on his courses, including seeding experiments. They sprigged Zoysia on Westlake entirely, and on Waterfront they tested two holes to study how shade affected the Zoysia sprigs.

Page showed gratitude for his outstanding staff. "Read Harris (Waterfront) and Chris Powell (Westlake) really help make my job easy I can't say enough about them and our people."

When asked what this award means to him, he remarked, "I'm really surprised because it has been a while since I've been involved directly in the association. I'm very humbled, because there are so many deserving people."

Page shared an amusing story of attending a local meeting in Roanoke one year — he looked around and told a buddy, 'we need to get these Old Timers out.' His buddy told him, "I hate to burst your bubble, but that's what YOU are!"

On a personal level, Page's family includes wife Rhonda, his son Early and his daughter Hilary. Recently his son and daughter-in-law brought forth a first grandson. Page remains an active runner, putting in 30-40 miles a week and still trying to compete. On the side, he owns Brooks Mill Winery with his wife, featuring fruit wines. He grows the berries and makes the wine, while Rhonda handles the business full time.

Mid-Atlantic Regional Golf Conference • Belle Haven Country Club • Alexandria, VA

Save the Date: Tuesday, March 6, 2018

Wheeler, Vincel Win Buy Sod Scholarships

The Buy Sod VGCSA Scholarship program was established in 2012 by Buy Sod, Inc. as a means to support the children of qualified golf course superintendents, who plan to attend an institution of higher learning, following graduation from high school. High School seniors who are the children of Class A or B members in good standing of the VGCSA are eligible for the program. The program is based on sales to customers in Virginia. Neil Jones is the Golf & Athletic Field Sales manager for Buy Sod.

This year the Selection Committee has named Madilyn Wheeler of Roanoke, VA and Cole Vincel of Charlottesville, VA as the 2017 recipients of a \$1,500 scholarship each.

Madilyn Wheeler is the daughter of Dan Wheeler of Roanoke Country Club, and she is a senior at Glenvar High School in Salem. She has memories of her Dad taking her to the golf course from an early age, being amazed at all of the hard work accomplished on any given day. She has always loved riding in the golf cart with her father, impressed with the spectacular condition of

the golf course, but always wondering “why doesn’t our yard look like that?”

Madilyn gave golf a try, but she quickly learned that her real passion is swimming, where she excelled as a State Champion. Being with her father on the job taught her how to work hard and that dedication can pay off. Madilyn plans to attend a four-year university next year, either the University of Virginia, Virginia Tech or James Madison University.

Cole Vincel, son of Brian Vincel of Spring Creek. Cole is a senior at Monticello High School here in Charlottesville. From

the age of six his father let him tag along to the golf course, where he witnessed the hard work and competence required to maintain and keep a golf course beautiful. At age twelve, he became an active member of the maintenance team at Spring Creek, starting with small jobs, which increased as he grew.

During his senior year, Cole interned under Superintendent Ryan Holbrook and began working towards his Virginia pesticide license. Cole hopes to attend Virginia Tech where he can further his education and possibly pursue the superintendent profession, like his father.



Madilyn Wheeler



Cole Vincel

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Taylor, Heath Win Old Dominion GCSA Scholarships

For the second year in a row, Old Dominion GCSA has awarded scholarships to employees of golf clubs where there is a VGCSA member. The annual scholarship tournament was held at Richmond Country Club in April, and money was generated to award two \$1,000 scholarships. The winners are Angela Taylor and Sean Heath.

Angela Taylor of Roanoke works as the Horticulturist at Hunting Hills Country Club under Chuck Cooke. She developed a strong work ethic and passion for working outside after a year-long

internship at Tuckahoe Lamb and Cattle Company. Angela's passion has led her to Virginia Western Community College, where she is seeking higher education in the horticulture field to further her knowledge. This is a field she is passionate about and intends to spend the rest of her life pursuing.

Sean Heath of Annandale works at Mount Vernon Country Club under Mike King. He worked his way up from a part time greens mower, to registered spray technician and is now an assistant-in-training with a full time position. He

credits Mike King and Russ Bennett for guiding him in the right direction and sharing their encouragement in his ability. An avid golfer competing in junior, high school and VSGA amateur tournaments, he has developed quite a passion for a finely manicured golf course and hopes to grow in the business and become a superintendent one day. Sean is currently a part time student at Penn State World Campus, taking courses in turfgrass management.

Research Update: Mapping Spring Dead Spot Using Drones *Official Research Co-Sponsored by VGCSA and EIFG*

Jordan C. Booth, CGCS and M.S. Candidate, David McCall, Ph.D., Virginia Tech Department of Plant Pathology, Physiology, and Weed Science

Spring dead spot (SDS) is among the most destructive diseases of bermudagrass in colder regions of adaptation. While SDS has an irregular distribution, the disease frequently reoccurs in the same locations from year to year. *Ophiosphaerella* spp. infects bermudagrass in the fall and predisposes the warm-season turfgrass to isolated patches of winterkill. Symptoms appear in the spring and can persist for months, resulting in poor playing conditions. While fungicide treatments have proven most effective in the fall, symptoms are no longer present to guide application. A common suppression tactic has been to apply two or three 'blanket' fungicide applications across the entire managed acreage in the fall. Due to the large acreage, turfgrass managers have

opted for more affordable fungicides, producing sporadic results. Site-specific applications based on historical disease incidence may provide the option to use more effective fungicides.

Disease tracking and site-specific management are not new to turfgrass management. However, emerging technologies such as unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) or "drones" present opportunities for rapid mapping of large areas. This research aims to develop effective methods to map, evaluate, and quantify SDS epidemics. We are also evaluating site-specific fungicide applications, based on historical disease incidence, with blanket applications. Initial results are encouraging but more data will be necessary for validation. Fungicide reduction averaged

51% in 2016 and 65% in 2017. Initial disease suppression data showed that site specific applications of penthiopyrad were statistically equivalent to full-coverage applications. This research demonstrates how treated fungicide acreage can be reduced using site-specific management from SDS distribution maps.



Dr. David McCall



Jordan Booth

Dominion Charity Classic Returns to CCV

For the second year in a row, The Country Club of Virginia hosted Dominion Charity Classic on the famed James River Course. Held in October, VGCSA member Christian Sain, his team, and volunteers from the VGCSA, had the course in immaculate condition.

This year the Classic was the first event of the Charles Schwab Cup Playoffs. Bernard Langer won in dramatic fashion, holing an eagle putt on the par-5 18th hole on Sunday

to beat Scott Verplank by one stroke.

The Dominion Energy Charity Classic is focused on making a positive impact by supporting charity programs. Birdies for Charity gives area charities an opportunity to generate contributions through donations or based on the number of birdies made by players during the tournament. The Virginia Value Veterans (V3) program is the tournament's primary beneficiary. The support helps create

employment opportunities for transitioning military service personnel by helping Virginia employers implement best practices in recruiting, hiring and retaining veterans. In addition, military associates and their dependents received complimentary Grounds admission.

The Champions Tour players selected the Dominion Energy Charity Classic as the Tour's #1 tournament for the second consecutive year.



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Carolinas Team Reclaims Virlina Cup in NC Mountains

The Virlina Cup is back in the Carolinas, and the event will be around for a long time to come. Those were the biggest outcomes of the eighth annual matches between the Carolinas GCSA and Virginia GCSA at Highland Country Club in Highlands, NC in October.

The Carolinas claimed the trophy, beating Virginia 9.5 to 6.5 over four-ball, foursomes and singles competition. Virginia held the cup, having won it in 2016. Then Mark Brazinski, speaking for the event sponsor Syngenta, made a very popular declaration. "We want you to know we are behind this event for a long time to come," he told players. "We're not going anywhere."

Brazinski then presented to the trophy to O'Neil Crouch from Old Town Club in Winston-Salem, NC. Carolinas non-playing captain Tim Kreger invited Crouch to accept the trophy as the only player on the team who took part in the first Virlina Cup in 2010. Crouch was congratulated by VGCSA's Jeff Whitmire, CGCS.

Leading the way for the Virginia Team was Brent Graham, CGCS of Two Rivers Country Club, a rookie who was undefeated, with a 2.5-0.5 record. Graham's assistant, Garrison Fowler, also did not lose, registering a win and two halves. Other top Virginia scorers were Scott Cornwell



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of River Creek CC (2-1) and Chip Bass of Falling River CC (1.5-1.5).

The competitors, were impressed by the golf course conditions presented by Superintendent Brian Stiehler, CGCS, MG. Green speeds were in excess of 12.5' for all three days of the event.

Next year's event will rotate to Virginia in October at Princess Anne Country Club in Virginia Beach.

Scoring Summary

Four-Ball Matches

Agazzi/Daniel (C) halved Graham/Fowler (V)
Pope/Morrow (C) df Hedgepeth/Roberts (V)
Boyette/Graham (C) df Whitmire/Zarnstorff (V)
Cornwell/Bass (V) df Crouch/Sheffield (C)

Foursomes Matches

Graham/Fowler (V) df Graham/Morrow (C)
Pope/Sheffield (C) df Whitmire/Bass (V)
Cornwell/Zarnstorff df Crouch/Boyette (C)
Agazzi/Daniel (C) df Roberts/Hedgepeth (V)

First Day Score: Carolinas 4.5, Virginia 3.5

Singles Matches

Whitmire (V) df Crouch (C)
Graham (V) df Sheffield (C)
Boyette (C) df Roberts (V)
Daniel (C) halved Bass (V)
Pope (C) df Zarnstorff (V)
Fowler (V) halved Agazzi (C)
Morrow (C) df Cornwell (V)
Graham (C) df Hedgepeth (V)

Singles Score: Carolinas 5, Virginia 3

Final Results: Carolinas 9.5, Virginia 6.5



2017 Virginia Team – Front (L-R): Matt Zarnstorff, Trevor Hedgepeth, Captain Jeff Holliday;
Back (L-R): Garrison Fowler, Chris Roberts, Chip Bass, Jeff Whitmire, Brent Graham



Garrison Fowler and Brent Graham were undefeated for the Virginia Team.



Chip Bass and Scott Cornwell teamed up in the Four-Ball matches for a Virginia win.

At the VGCSA Annual Conference



Noted Sports Psychologist Dr. Bob Rotella entertained the audience with tales from the Tour.



Bob Helland of GCSAA covered Government Relations.



Addison Barden of the USGA Green Section covered employee recruitment and retention.



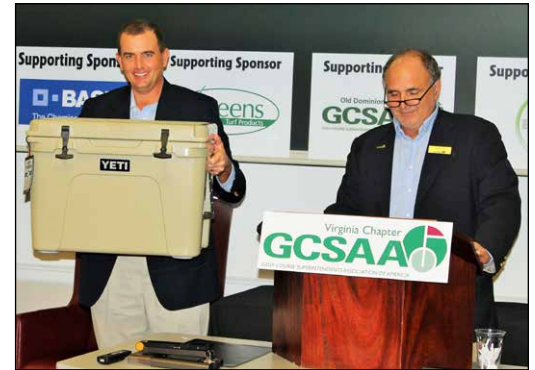
Everette Fortner of UVA injected some energy into the conference with his interactive session.



Mark Merrick of Genesis Turfgrass and Sam Smith of Hidden Valley CC enjoyed the reception.



Ian Grove of Target Specialty Products and Garrison Fowler of Two Rivers CC were welcomed to the VGCSA Board.



Jeff Whitmire was the surprise winner of the Yeti drawing, presented by Mark Cote.

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Assistants Forum a Success at Belmont Country Club

On Monday, October 30, Belmont Country Club and Aaron Wells, Golf Course Superintendent, hosted the Assistants Forum, jointly presented with MAAGCS and coordinated by board members Steven Ball of Ballyhack Golf Club (VGCSA) and Mark Jones of Baltimore Country Club (MAAGCS).

PGA and Champions Tour veteran Bobby Wadkins headlined the education portion of the event that focused on etiquette and professionalism. Bobby shared his ideas of how the golf course maintenance staff should interact with club members, the golf professional staff, and vendors as they represent themselves and the clubs that employ them. Bobby also shared personal stories from his time on tour traveling the world, and how hard work and respect for others ultimately paved the way for his success.

The panel segment was also a hit with representation from some of the top superintendents in the region. The panel included Bobby Wadkins, Aaron Wells (Belmont CC), Trevor Hedgepeth (Kinloch GC), and Sean Baskette (Hidden Valley CC). A Q&A session took place with audience members asking the panel a multitude of questions regarding how to address specific situations as a golf course employee, in a professional manner. A popular narrative was to treat others the same way you would like to be treated, if the roles were reversed.

Following the education meeting, there was a clinic with Bobby Wadkins and the first ever Ryder Cup style match between MAAGCS and VGCSA for the Cup Cutter Trophy. High winds and chilly weather made for a shortened clinic with Bobby; however, many players were able to get a quick one-on-one lesson with the Champions Tour Major winner, a once-in-a-lifetime experience. Aaron Wells and his staff had the golf course in superb shape, even after the heavy rain that fell the evening prior. It was a hard fought match, coming down to the final scorecard. The MAAGCS was leading 7-6 only needing a tie in the final match to claim the trophy. However the VGCSA team held strong and won the final point resulting in a tie for the match. We will have to wait for the next installment to see who will claim the trophy. Both associations now share the record of 0-0-1 in the event.



Steven Ball and Mark Jones with the Cutter Cup Trophy



Steven Ball, Bobby Wadkins, Mark Jones



Panelists Bobby Wadkins, Aaron Wells, Trevor Hedgepeth, Sean Baskette



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2017 Joe Saylor – A Memorable Event

The 13th Annual Joe Saylor Memorial Tournament brought fun competition and generosity to James River Country Club in Newport News, VA. The event memorializes Joe Saylor a leader of the Tidewater Turfgrass Association who passed in 2005. Joe was superintendent at James River CC for many years.

This year's event was hosted by Rob Wilmans, who partnered with Jeff Whitmire of Williamsburg CC to stage the best event to date! The two-man captain's choice event feature some good golf, but mostly a lot of camaraderie and fellowship. There was a "warm-up" reception prior to golf, an on-course cookout, special craft beer offerings, lots of contests and prizes, and the treat to play on one of the best-conditioned courses in the Commonwealth.

As usual, the US Marines were present to collect all Toys for Tots donations that our attendees provided for children in need! This has always been a huge success, our members donated over 100 new toys.



Results

Low Gross Champions

Jeff Whitmire-Jeff Yarborough 62

Member-Member Flight (net)

Tommy Adams-Scott Mauldin 62.6

Member-Guest Flight (net)

Ed Eagle-Billy Sayre 61.7

Member-Pro Division (net)

Russ Dodson-Mark Ross 63.4

Closest-to-the-Pin

Jeff Whitmire #3
Bob Friend #7
Matt Pound #13
Don Nelson #15
John Pennypacker #17

M&M Longest Putt

Tommy Adams

BASF Putting Contest

Scott Mauldin

50/50 Winners

Russ Dodson – 1st
Chip Bass – 2nd



Host Rob Wilmans of James River CC helps the US Marines with the Toys for Tots Drive.



Congratulations to overall low gross champions Jeff Whitmire and Jeff Yarborough coming out of the Member-Member Division with a 62!



Mark Ross tries a little "land fishing" with Ted Huhn of BASF



In the Member-Guest Division Ed Eagle and Billy Sayre took the net title with a net score of 61.7!



The winners from the Member-Member Division are Tommy Adams and Scott Mauldin with a net score of 62.6! (shown with Jeff Holliday)

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News from Local Associations

ODGCSA News

The Old Dominion GCSA had a great event in conjunction with the state conference, featuring Tim Hiers from The Club at Mediterra. Tim was energetic and shared his passion about the turf management side of the business. He illustrated ways he has showcased his facilities to youth groups, parents and community leaders, which had a great impact and created better awareness for what the turf care professional does on a daily basis. The class was well-attended, with good interaction from the audience. There was a lot of positive feedback about the choice of the speaker and the venue.

The ODGCSA had their annual meeting on December 5th as well. Old Dominion Scholarships were awarded to Sean Heath

at Mount Vernon CC and Angela Taylor from Hunting Hills CC — each received a \$1,000 Scholarship, supported by the sponsorship of Smith Turf and Irrigation.

The new board for the ODGCSA was also elected. The board of directors will be Jay Wade, President, Superintendent (Magnolia Green); Chris Roberts, VP, Director of Grounds (First Tee Properties of Richmond/Chesterfield); Chad Karr, Secretary/Treasury, Director of Maintenance, (Stonehenge CC); Jeremy Waddell, Superintendent, (Golden Horseshoe Golf Club); and Paul Van Buren, Past President, Superintendent (Kanawha Club).

The ODGCSA board has eagerly started planning for the 2018 season. Some of the

dates have already been established. March 15th will be the March Madness Social, and on April 23rd the Scholarship tournament will be at Magnolia Green. More details will come at the beginning of the year. We look to have an exciting year for 2018 and hope that you can join us for the events that we have in store. If you have any questions or concerns please let your Board of Directors know so we can better serve your needs.



Scott Mauldin, CGCSA
ODGCSA
External Vice President

TTA News

This fall the TTA held its annual/business meeting at Broad Bay Country Club. It was a magnificent event and venue, with great golf and service. Thanks to Justin Helms for all his work — the course was in great shape and everyone had a fun time.

There was a lot of open discussion on the upcoming year and events of interest. Last year, the TTA had a growing membership thanks to Rob Wilmans and his Board of Directors for all their efforts. We are looking forward to continuing this trend. The TTA is sad to see Rob Wilmans stepping down as President, but are grateful for all his arduous work to continue the TTA Tradition.

We are proud to welcome new President, Mike Hall (The Riverfront Golf Club). Mike has been the Superintendent there for two years, and prior to that he was the superintendent at Elizabeth Manor. Other Officers are: Vice President, Justin Helms (Broad Bay Country Club), and Secretary/Treasurer, Mark McCaughan (Harrell's). We also welcome to the Board: Director, Mike Brumbaugh (Greenbrier Country Club). He will be joining veteran BOD's Jeremy Friscaro (Elizabeth Manor Country Club), and Tim Doran (Kingsmill Country Club).

2018 is shaping up to be another

momentous year with Mike at the helm. We are looking forward to continuing current events and welcome new ideas and opportunities for the next year's schedule. The year will start out in February as Top Golf will be the venue for the first meeting.

The TTA wishes everyone the very best this winter!



Pete Stephens, CGCSA
Tidewater Turfgrass
Association
External Vice President

SVTA News

The SVTA held its Annual Fundraiser on October 19 at Caverns Country Club. The winning team was financier Bob Butterworth, Lentz Wheeler (Superintendent at Springfield Golf & Country Club), Benny Benton (Assistant Superintendent at Bristow Manor) and

Jim Vann (Lawnmate Quality Lawn Care). Congratulations on a great round!

The SVTA raised about \$1,300 for the Virginia Tech Foundation. Also, Thanks to Eric Ferrell and his staff for having the course in great shape.

I hope everyone has a wonderful holiday

season and we will see you in 2018.



Ed Eagle
SVTA External Vice
President

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News from Local Associations

VTA News

Hard to believe we are getting to roll the calendar over to 2018. Where has the time gone? I believe we can chalk this year up as a success. Weather for the most part cooperated and all in all I believe most everyone would take another year like this anytime.

Winter in the southwest part of the state always brings about the unknown. Part of me is hoping for a winter like last year with plenty of golf and unseasonably warm weather, while the other part of me wants a typical winter so we can concentrate on tree work, drainage and other winter chores that often get put to the side during the golfing season. Throw one good snow

event in and I will be happy.

The VTA had another successful year, wrapping up our season with a meeting at Ballyhack Golf Club hosted by Steven Ball. The course and the weather were absolutely perfect and was a great way to wrap up the year. Madilyn and Cassie Wheeler, daughters of Dan Wheeler from Roanoke Country Club were this year's recipients of the Bob Ruff Scholarship. Madilyn is a senior at Glenvar High School and Cassie is currently a first year at the University of Virginia. It is always great when we can help out a fellow superintendent and their families.

This winter the VTA Board will be getting together to build another strong

meeting schedule. As always, we are looking for new ideas and other ways to increase participation besides meetings and golf and are more than happy to take suggestions.

We look forward to seeing everyone around this winter in Fredricksburg for the MATE conference and in San Antonio for the GIS. Stay warm and hope everyone has a great holiday season.



Sean K. Baskette
Hidden Valley Country Club
VTA President

News from the GWGCSA

We had a great fall season here in the Greater Washington area. Mild weather with several rain events made it an ideal time to establish new seed or help recover turf in damaged areas. Leaf removal season seems to get longer every year, and I'm sure everyone is glad to be done with that task.

A lot of people outside the golf business probably think we go home for the winter and wait for spring to arrive, but project season is here. We all shift gears this time of year to examine how our agronomic program performed and start working on

projects that will help us out for next year.

Whether it's installing drainage, renovating bunkers, or working inside the shop finding ways to become better organized, we're busy all year. Most of us are also responsible for the snow removal at our clubs. Let's hope that any snow we get this year only falls during the work week and not on the weekend!

A special thanks to our President Bo Jumbercotta and the rest of the GWGCSA board this year for all of their time and effort in making 2017 one of the best years yet.

The GWGCSA added a few new events to the schedule this year, which were very successful and member attendance has increased. The 2018 GIS is just around the corner and I'm looking forward to seeing everyone in San Antonio.



Aaron Wells
GWGCSA External VP

Save the Date: Wednesday, February 7, 2018

VGCSA / MAAGCS / ESAGCS Social Event at GIS

The VGCSA will once again be hosting a joint social event with our Maryland friends at the Golf Industry Show.

The Event will take place on Wednesday, February 7th. The host venue for this year will be Howl at the Moon, the #1 nightlife spot in San Antonio that's keeping the Riverwalk dancing! Part bar and part concert hall, Howl creates a non-stop party with live music. With our VIP section it will be a fantastic event!

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