

Summer 2014

Commonwealth Crier

News from the Virginia Golf Course Superintendents Association

President's Message

It seems as if this summer has flown by here in the Richmond area with erratic temperatures and less than frequent rain fall, a huge difference from this past spring. Several thunderstorms have rolled through and selectively delivered rain everywhere but Salisbury Country Club. I know the boys further east have had their fair share of rainfall as Hurricane Arthur rolled through and dumped several inches of rain from Williamsburg to the beach. Hopefully the rest of the summer will provide mild temperatures and more frequent rain to guide us into the fall. We have a very busy schedule coming up this fall to include our inaugural Fall Conference and Joe Saylor golf tournament, the Assistants Forum, the Wee One Tournament and the Virlina Cup matches.

The VGCSA was represented at National Golf Day in May. David Norman visited the offices of Senator Tim Kaine, Senator Mark Warner, Congressman Eric Cantor and Congressman Frank Wolfe. The key points were the environmental stewardship of golf course superintendents, the economic impact of the golf industry and our opposition to the Waters of the US (WOTUS), where the EPA would bring more regulations to regional and local waterways. David, as always, thanks for representing us at the national level.

I am looking forward to our Fall Conference which will be held in conjunction with our Joe Saylor Golf Tournament this coming October 20th and 21st. We have a great line up of speakers to include Rhett Evans, the CEO of the GCSAA; Pat Jones, Publisher and Editorial Director of *Golf Course Industry* magazine; Darin Bevard, Mid-Atlantic Director of the USGA Green Section; and Dr. Mike Goatley, Jr., Professor & Turfgrass Extension Specialist, Crop & Soil Environmental Sciences, Virginia Tech. This should be an excellent educational opportunity and I would encourage you to sign up as soon as possible.

The Joe Saylor golf tournament, a two-man best ball event, will be held on October 20th at The Federal Club hosted by



Matt Drayton, Golf Course Superintendent. There is a brochure included with this newsletter with all the pertinent information. I would also like to thank our event sponsors Revels Tractor & Finch Services, Lebanon Turf, Newsom Seed, and Agrium Direct Solutions for helping make this a first class event.

The Assistants Forum will be held at Spring Creek Golf Club Monday October 27th, hosted by David Callahan, Golf Course Superintendent, and Brian Vincel, CGCS, General Manager. Details on the event are still being finalized but I'm sure Chad Karr, our Assistants Representative, will have a great line up with valuable information for current Assistants. Spring Creek has been in the process of completing the construction of their new clubhouse which looks to be an outstanding complement to a magnificent golf course.

The last time the VGCSA won the Virlina Cup, Eric Spurlock was the Captain. This fall he will be making a return as Assistant Captain to help lead a strong VGCSA field consisting Matt Boyce (playing captain), Jeff Whitmire, Scott Cornwell, Ed Eagle, Jeff Snyder, Aaron Wells, Bobby Friend and the Assistants' Representative J.D. Dickinson. The event will be held at the beautiful Primland Resort, hosted by Brian Kerns, Golf Course Superintendent, on October 5th-7th. A huge thanks to Steve Dorer, Sam Camuso and Syngenta for the sponsorship and continued support of this event. Bring back the hardware boys!

The Wee One event has become a personal favorite of mine as its main goal is to raise money to support one of our own in financial need due to a medical hardship. Phil Bailey, Golf Course Superintendent at Cypress Creek Golf Club, has spearheaded

this event for past several years and has tirelessly work to make the event one of the best in the area. The tournament will be held on November 10th at Cypress Creek Golf Club. I would encourage everyone to participate and bring a group of your members or a group of buddies. All money raised goes to a great cause. Kudos to the management of Cypress Creek for donating their facility for this tournament.

On a business side, I wanted to remind everyone in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed that the DCR has extended the date for the use of the grant money for assistance in obtaining your Nutrient Management Plan. The new extension date has been moved to August 31st so if you have started the process I strongly encourage you to do so as soon as possible. There is a list of DCR recommended planners on our web site.

I would like to take this time to recognize Frank Flannagan and our annual Buy Sod Scholarship winners. Frank will be retiring this summer and beginning his new career as a fairway operator. Congratulations on a great career and enjoy your time off.

Congratulations to Jordan Cochran of Martinsville, Layne Zirkle of Amherst, and Jacob Whitfield of Haymarket, our 2014 Buy Sod Scholarship winners. Thanks also to John Robertson and Buy Sod for their continued support of this scholarship program.

Finally I would like to thank our Partners for all their support, the strength of our Association depends on these relationships. I would encourage all of our members to support those who support us. I hope everyone enjoys the rest of the summer and

just remember, fall is just around the corner.



Jeff Holliday, CGCS
VGCSA President

Andrew Green Forms New Design Firm

Noted regional golf course architect Andrew Green has announced the creation of A.H. Green Design and Green Golf and Turf. Green is well known for his 13 year affiliation with McDonald and Sons and McDonald Design Group. He expressed his gratitude to the McDonald Family for their longtime support. He will continue to have a working relationship with McDonald and Sons but will also have the option to work on a wide range of in-house projects and with other quality golf course contractors.

Green remarked, "golf course architecture is a unique craft that demands attention to detail, a sense of teamwork, and a love for the game and its history. I believe the ability to concentrate solely on my design projects will yield



Andrew Green (R) visits with superintendents Scott Kinnan, CGCS (Farmington CC) and Kevin Fortune (Glenmore CC) during the BMP Tournament

outstanding quality and more focus on customer needs. I will also continue my mission to grow the game of golf through distinctive designs that balance

challenge, playability, maintenance, and aesthetics. Golf should be enjoyable and creative strategy that produces a variety of shots is key to good golf. This is the basis of A.H. Green Design."

Green has partnered with his brother Sam to form Green Golf and Turf as a home for A.H. Green Design, as well as a place to provide a range of other golf and turf services in the future.

His new contact information:

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Green Golf and Turf / A.H. Green Design
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New Grant for Nutrient Management Planning

\$100,000 in Support for ALL Courses in Virginia

The budget process for the Commonwealth of Virginia is never easy, and when state funds become a little scarce, everyone flinches at each and every stroke of the pen. This season was no different, as lawmakers had to reconvene in June to pass a budget this year. So what are the odds of a new program getting funded, when others are being cut? Not good, but that didn't stop VGCSA efforts to get a new grant program passed to support nutrient management planning for ALL golf courses in Virginia, not just for those courses in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

Thanks to a great team approach led by Katie Frazier of the Virginia Agribusiness Council, and the VGCSA Government Relations team, led by Rob Wilmans, success has come! Central to the success was the support of the Department of Conservation and Recreation.

"I just confirmed with our Division Director that the \$100,000 has been earmarked for nutrient management plans for golf courses in the state, with no less than 40% of that money being spent outside of the Bay watershed. I will work with our Nutrient Management Program Manager and our Division Director to see

how we will distribute the money when it becomes available," said DCR staffer Derik Cataldi.

"We were all holding our breath until the final budget was published," said VGCSA President Jeff Holliday, CGCS. "We are very grateful to Katie and Derik for their cooperation to get this in the budget. And of course Rob Wilmans did a great job getting out in front of this opportunity!"

This news comes on the heels of an extension of the original grant of over \$100,000 for courses that are in the Bay watershed. It was recently announced that this grant program has been extended until August 31, 2014. This program offers grants of \$10/acres – most courses would get between \$1,000 and \$1,500 covered.

The VGCSA's government relations team will continue to work on behalf of Virginia's superintendents and golf courses.



Derik Cataldi



Katie Frazier



Rob Wilmans

The grant process is administered through DCR's approved planners, so simply select one:

Angela Whitehead, Soil Horizons
soilmapper@yahoo.com

Robert Habel, Five Oaks Consulting
habelrf@gmail.com

Gary Maul/Matt Austin, Essential Elements NMP
essentialelementsnmp@gmail.com

Peter Maybach/Jeff Michel, M&M Consulting
mmcons@verizon.net
mmwetest3@verizon.net

Paul Hartzell, Growth Enhancers Turf Consultants
turf dawg@verizon.net

Kurt Fellenstein, Trinity Turf Inc.
kurt@trinityturf.net

Charles Thornton, Tellus Consulting
chasthornton@gmail.com



Whitmire, Dickinson Claim VGCSA Titles at Viniterra

On a challenging rainy day, Jeff Whitmire, CGCS and J.D. Dickinson outlasted the rest of the field at Viniterra Golf Club in New Kent to claim the 2014 VGCSA Superintendent and Assistant titles respectively.

For Whitmire, it was a bit of "old news" as he claimed an unprecedented seventh crown in the event which started in 2000. The superintendent at The Williamsburg Club managed a 78 on a course that played extremely difficult, but that score did not separate him much from the competition. Scott Cornwell of Winchester Country Club tied Whitmire, but lost the scorecard playoff to finish as runner-up. Bob Friend, CGCS of The Brookwoods GC was third at 80, with Brent Graham of Two Rivers Country Club finishing fourth with 81.

In the Assistants Division, the Kanawha Club's Dickinson turned in the day's best score, a 75, which bested Cedar



Point's John Vermillion, who carded a 77. "It was all short game today," said and excited Dickinson, who also earned a spot on the Virlina Cup Team. "I didn't hit a lot of greens but got it up and down," he added. Scott Ingram of The Williamsburg Club and Greg Caldwell of Primland tied for fourth at 83.

Steve Dorer of Syngenta was on hand to congratulate the qualifiers for the

Virlina Cup, including Whitmire, Dickinson, Cornwell and Friend. Cornwell had previously qualified by winning the Greater Washington event a week prior, thus Friend was added to the team. The Virlina Cup is a Ryder Cup style event featuring VGCSA versus the Carolinas GCSA. Virginia will play host on October 5-7 at the fabulous Primland Resort in Meadows of Dan.



Jeff Whitmire, Steve Dorer & J.D. Dickinson

New GCSAA Ambassadors Program Launched

The official launch of the GCSAA Grassroots Network occurred on July 1. Within the larger Network, GCSAA is looking for 535 members (Class A, SM, C) to serve as GCSAA Grassroots Ambassadors. Ambassadors will be paired with a Member of Congress. GCSAA will educate and train Ambassadors to build positive, proactive relationships with their Members of Congress. GCSAA wants to make sure our elected officials understand and appreciate the golf course management profession and make decisions that protect golf facilities. Learn more about GCSAA Grassroots Ambassadors at <http://cqrcengage.com/gcsaa/Ambassadors>.



Aspen Corp.'s Project Wins Top Honors for Restoration

In the spring of 2012 Aspen Corporation was selected by the Country Club of Buffalo (NY) and Forse Design, Inc. to join their team on a journey to restore a truly classic Donald Ross golf course. In the fall of 2012 and into the spring of 2013, our Aspen team worked tirelessly with CCB and Forse Design to implement plans that had been painstakingly developed by true professionals and dedicated club members.

Aspen is now proud to announce that the collective efforts of this team have been recognized by *Golf Inc.* Magazine as it's **Best In Show** during this year's world wide Renovation of the Year competition.

You can read more about CCB and the competition itself here: http://www.golfincmagazinemonthlydigital.com/golfincmagazinemonthly/summer_2014#pg35



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Turfgrass Students Win VSGA Scholarships

Forty-three high school seniors and three graduate school students were among the 46 scholars honored as the VSGA-VIP Scholarship Foundation announced its 2014 scholarship award recipients May 6 at VSGA Day at Richmond Country Club.

The VSGA-VIP Scholarship Foundation provides scholarships to Virginia high school students who are interested in golf and who attend colleges and universities within the commonwealth.

This year's grants totaled \$101,000, with \$4,500 going to three students pursuing degrees in turfgrass management at Virginia Tech.

Since being launched in 1985, the program has now distributed more than \$1.95 million in its 30 years. A portion of each VSGA VIP Card sale helps fund the VSGA-VIP Scholarship Foundation.

"The VSGA-VIP Scholarship Foundation joins in congratulating a special group of students who have excelled both academically, as well as outside the classroom and share an interest in golf," said VSGA-VIP Scholarship Foundation president Michael Millen.

Turfgrass Student Honorees

Adam Boyd of Christiansburg, Va. (\$1,500) – First year master's student in Crop and Soil Environmental Science at Virginia Tech ... Program is based heavily on research involving biosolids and other similar organic amendments ... Overall purpose of his research is to explore and understand the impact of organic amendments on poor quality soil ... Since graduating from Virginia Tech in 2005, he has worked at different golf courses on the East Coast as a golf course superintendent and assistant golf course superintendent, including at Auburn Hills Golf Club in Riner, Va. ... Beginning in the summer and through his first semester of graduate school, he maintained a wage position through the Department of Crop and Soil Environmental Science ... Has a goal of earning Ph.D. in Crop and Soil Environmental Science.

Sandeep Rana of Blacksburg, Va. (\$1,500) – Studies center around working on selective control of annual bluegrass (*Poa annua*) and roughstalk bluegrass with PoaCure in creeping bentgrass and Kentucky bluegrass fairways ... The



VSGA Turfgrass Award Recipients from left Chantel Wilson, Sandeep Rana, Adam Boyd and Dr. Erik Ervin

research looks to the future and is an effort to expand our current weed control knowledge ... Analyzing the factors that influence golf putt trajectory, such as annual bluegrass and other surface imperfections ... Evaluating how Kentucky bluegrass cultivars respond to high rates of methiozolin needed to control annual bluegrass and roughstalk bluegrass ... Notes that the presence of annual bluegrass on creeping bentgrass putting greens can significantly deteriorate the uniformity of the greens resulting in less uniform ball rolls and inconsistent putts ... Indicates that the success of the research will not only help provide effective annual and roughstalk bluegrass control options for Kentucky bluegrass turf maintained at higher heights of cut, but also may steer cultivar choices toward those of highest tolerance to methiozolin ... Graduated from the University of Arkansas with an M.S. in Department of Crop, Soil, and Environmental Sciences and a major in Weed Science.

Chantel Wilson of Blacksburg, Va. (\$1,500) – A second-year Ph.D. student in the Crop and Soil Environmental Sciences department at Virginia Tech ... A graduate research assistant at Virginia Tech in the Department of Crop and Soil Environmental Sciences ... Former graduate research assistant at the

University of Wisconsin's Department of Plant Pathology and a past biological science aid / laboratory technician at the United States Department of Agriculture ... Worked as a study technician at Covance Laboratories ... Earned her M.S. in Plant Pathology from the University of Wisconsin and a B.A. in Biology from Hood College in Frederick, Md. (cum laude) ... Has authored and published numerous articles and abstracts ... Earned the Virginia Tech Training in Human Subjects Protection certificate ... A past teaching assistant for Water Quality and Turfgrass Management at Virginia Tech ... Goal is to teach environmental science at the college level while participating in turfgrass research and extension.

SAVE These 2015 DATES

Jan. 27 VGCSA Annual Meeting
Fredericksburg CC

Jan. 26-29 VTC Conference
Fredericksburg Expo Center

Feb. 21-26 GCSAA Conference &
Golf Industry Show
San Antonio, TX

Feb. 25 VGCSA-MAAGCS-ESAGCS
Social Event, Westin Riverwalk,
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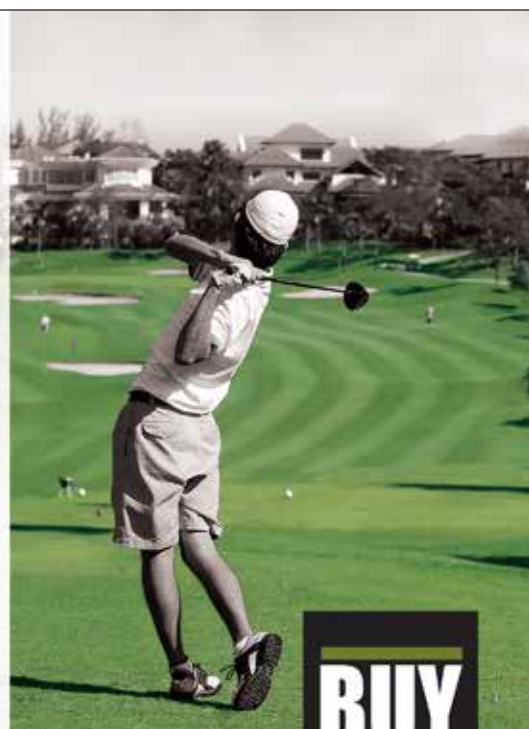


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VGCSA Honors Three with Buy Sod Scholarships

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 SM members in good standing of the Virginia Golf Course Superintendents Association are eligible for the program. The program is based on sales to customers in Virginia. John Robertson is the Golf and Athletic Sales Manager for Buy Sod.

This year the Selection Committee has named **Jordan Cochran** of Martinsville, VA, **Jacob Whitfield** of Haymarket, VA and **Layne Zirkle** of Amherst, VA as the 2014 recipients.

Ms. Cochran is the daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Michael Cochran. Mike is superintendent

at Bassett Country Club. Jordan plans to attend Lenoir-Rhyne University and major in biology, with an eye toward becoming a veterinarian.

Mr. Whitfield is the son of Mr. & Mrs. Rich Sereno, GWGCSA member at Oak Creek Golf Club in Upper Marlboro, MD. Jacob plans to attend Old Dominion University and enter the NROTC program, where he hope to be commissioned as a Lieutenant in the US Marine Corps.

Mr. Zirkle is the son of Mr. & Mrs. Michael Zirkle. Mike is the superintendent at Winton Country Club. Layne plans to attend Emory & Henry University, after completing high school with a 3.9 GPA, while simultaneously attending community college and achieving an Advanced Honors diploma. He had not announced a course of study at press time.



Jordan Cochran



Jacob Whitfield



Layne Zirkle



WE ARE GOLF Visits Capitol Hill for National Golf Day *Industry Leaders Showcase Game's Economic, Charitable, Environmental, Fitness Benefits*

WE ARE GOLF – a coalition of the game's leading associations and industry partners – visited Capitol Hill on May 21 for the seventh annual National Golf Day to showcase golf's nearly \$70 billion economy, \$4 billion annual charitable impact, environmental value to local communities and fitness benefits.

Golf's leaders met with Members of Congress throughout the day to share stories about the game's almost 15,000 diverse, small businesses, which employ more than two million people and provide \$55.6 billion in annual wage income. In addition, industry executives discussed golf courses' positive influences on ecology, tax revenues and tourism. They even explained how walking 18 holes can burn 2,000 calories.

"As a lifelong golfer, I've been pleased to participate in National Golf Day with the good folks at WE ARE GOLF on their visit here to Capitol Hill today," says Congressman Jim Clyburn (D-SC). "Golf is a great game, and I appreciate the opportunity to discuss expanding diversity in all aspects of the game."

Organizations participating included the Club Managers Association of America, Golf Course Superintendents



VGCSA's David Norman meets with Jack Nicklaus on National Golf Day

Association of America, Ladies Professional Golf Association (LPGA), National Golf Course Owners Association, PGA of America (PGA), PGA TOUR, United States Golf Association, United States Golf Manufacturers Council, World Golf Foundation and others.

National Golf Day featured a day-long exhibit in the Cannon Caucus Room with live lessons for Members of Congress and staff from 2012 PGA Teacher of the Year Michael Breed, host of "The Golf Fix" on Golf Channel, and LPGA Professional Dana Rader. Special exhibits and activities included a "Closest to the Pin"

contest utilizing an aboutGolf simulator; state-of-the-art swing analysis from GolfTEC; Birdie Ball, the latest at-home training technology; and a Republican vs. Democrat "Putting Challenge."

"Today, we stood together in D.C. to represent the two million men and women whose livelihood depends on the golf industry," says Steve Mona, CEO of World Golf Foundation and administrator of WE ARE GOLF. "Our unified voice helps Congressional Members better understand the profound influence golf has on the American economy."

About WE ARE GOLF

WE ARE GOLF, created in 2010, is an industry coalition that communicates the economic, charitable and environmental impact of golf, as well the health and wellness benefits of the game and the affordability and accessibility of golf, to Members of Congress, the Executive Branch and regulatory agencies. The goal of WE ARE GOLF is to ensure that laws and regulations that impact the golf industry are equitable and appropriate to an industry that generates nearly \$70 billion in economic impact annually, employs close to two million Americans and generates nearly \$4 billion in charitable giving each year. For more information, please visit www.wearegolf.org.



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USGA Green Section
Virginia Turfgrass Council

End of an Era – *Flannagan Stepping Down This Summer*

From caddie to bag boy, to course construction worker to superintendent, Frank Flannagan has spent most of his life in a love affair with his work at Belmont Golf Course in Henrico County, formerly Hermitage Country Club. “I’m hanging it up, and I enjoyed my stay,” he said simply, in explaining his coming retirement.

Most folks that know Flannagan know him to be a man of tireless dedication who has committed his efforts to further the industry and the profession.

Flannagan was born in Abingdon, VA, but his family moved to Richmond in the Lakeside area when he was 14. This was 1964, and the reputation of nearby Hermitage Country Club was still buoyed by the PGA Championship held there 15 years prior. Flannagan got an opportunity to caddie and earn \$3 a bag – he worked hard and sometimes did two doubles to pocket \$12! Who knew that 50 years later, he would STILL be at the same club, surviving many changes including the sale of the club to Henrico County.

Flannagan’s mentor in the early days was Jim Reynolds, the man who wore two hats – pro and superintendent. He respected Reynolds who was well-liked by members. One day Reynolds asked this young caddie if he could help out in the bag room. Flannagan accepted the offer, and he looked after the club’s 28 golf carts every summer through high school. The club also gave him a junior membership, and he enjoyed playing the course he knew so well.

Flannagan’s love for the game was embellished in his decision to attend Turf School at Virginia Tech. He had studied agriculture in high school, and the program was a five-month “short course.” Part of his assignment was to draw an irrigation system, and he hunkered down and cranked out the project on a cold day.

Following school, Flannagan went to work on the course at Botetourt Country Club in Troutsville, near Roanoke. Then came a call from his mentor, Mr. Reynolds. Hermitage bartered its other course (Ethelwood – now “The Crossings”) plus \$50,000 to the Luck family, in return for 450 acres in Goochland County to build a multi-course club—Reynolds needed Flannagan to be the construction foreman. When 27 holes opened in 1973, Reynolds focused on golf operations and Ken Giedd was brought in as superintendent, overseeing both campuses. Giedd asked Flannagan to take charge of the original Hilliard Road club, thus starting a 41 year run. It was 1977 when Hermitage sold its Hilliard Road

facility to Henrico County. Suddenly, Flannagan was a county employee.

Officially Flannagan took the reins as the county’s golf course superintendent in 1978. He remembers having to water the course by hand and hose – three maintenance workers worked four hours each day on just that one task.

By 1981, the county realized that their course needed renovation. They reclassified the course as an “enterprise” entity, which allowed them to save the money the course made instead of dumping it directly into county coffers. This move allowed Flannagan to construct an irrigation system and pond, which was finally complete in 1986. During the next two years, they installed cart paths. They then rebuilt the old bath house and added a pro shop and snack bar. The widening of Hilliard Road forced them to narrow the fairway of the first hole and relocate the tee—it became an even tougher start, with the second shot having to carry a creek.

Other improvements followed, including the relocation of #18 tee and #9 green and the addition of a tunnel under Hilliard Road. Other tweaks were applied to the original Tillinghast design, continuing into the 1990s. In 1998, Flannagan ironically moved his office into the old bag room, where he worked as a boy. In 2000, he was asked to head another project to rebuild several greens. In 2001, a new two-story maintenance facility opened.

It was 2005 when Tropical Storm Gaston hit, and the first green flooded, along with the adjacent trailer park. Afterwards Flannagan found a heating oil tank sitting in the middle of #1 green. The green on #2 was completely washed away. The storm convinced the county that it was prudent to move the green to the other side of the creek, turning one of the hardest starting holes in Virginia into a rather simple one, quite short. In the years since, Flannagan reports that his work became routine, with



“Old” Hermitage CC Hole #1 – looking back from the green

no new projects as the country moved through the recession in the past six years.

“It has been an honor to be superintendent at the course that hosted Virginia’s only major championship,” said Flannagan. “All the greats came through here: Hogan, Snead, Demaret and Johnny Palmer. We also hosted The Valentine Invitational until 1974,” (when the event moved to Hermitage’s Goochland location).

As a servant to the industry, Flannagan began his hallmark of “giving back” in 1997. “I blame it on Rick Viancour (Golden Horseshoe GC). He got me on the Old Dominion board.” By 2001, Flannagan had risen to President and he worked with the likes of Peter McDonough, Mark Silva, Jeff Holliday and Steve Geller. They held a meeting at The Country Club of Virginia and set the stage for improved education for members. They also began the discussion of forming a state organization (note: VGCSA was formed in 1999).

In 2003 Viancour recruited Flannagan to take over the Legislative Chair for the Virginia Turfgrass Council. In 2006 he started working his way through the chairs. His VTC Presidency came in 2012-13. “VTC is trying to educate ALL turf professionals (including landscape and sport turf personnel). It is very important that golf course superintendents stay on top of things in the education and government relations arenas. Water usage, pesticides, and storm water management are important issues.”

Flannagan’s life philosophy is to serve people, and he has enjoyed his run. It puts a smile on his face when someone has enjoyed a fun day on a well-conditioned golf course. He took the good advice of Giedd, who always said to work hard and spend an extra hour planning for the next day.

Flannagan is married to Joan, a special education teacher and they have a daughter, Katie, who recently graduated with her Master’s degree in Public Administration at Liberty University.

“Would I do it again?” Flannagan asked rhetorically. “Probably so! But maybe with a few changes, knowing what I know now...,” he added.

The industry can bid a fond farewell to a good friend, who did things the right way and left a lasting impression on our industry in Virginia.



Frank Flannagan

Status of BMP Adoption by Virginia Golf Courses

Chantel Wilson, MS. Primary Investigators: Erik Ervin, PhD, and Stephen Schoenholtz, PhD.

Virginia Tech researchers have been collecting information for a study entitled: *Effect of Golf Course Turfgrass Management on Water Quality of Non-tidal Streams in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed*. The overall goal of this project is to quantify the effect of golf course turf management on water quality of local streams, and to determine the proportion of nitrogen contributed to Chesapeake Bay tributaries at baseflow (non-storm) conditions. Our investigation seeks to clarify whether changes in water quality are occurring in association with turf management and to what extent. This project may allow for refinement of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Model used to construct the Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load limits and may help to properly inform future regulatory directions for water quality legislation protecting the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries.

Golf course superintendents were asked to consider completing a short online survey to help assess the management and adoption of Best Management Practices (BMPs) on golf courses in Virginia, even if they were located outside of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. A total of 70 complete responses were received. Figure 1 contains the adoption rate of selected golf course BMPs for optimal turfgrass growth, nutrient management, and water quality protection as recommended in the Environmental Best Management Practices for Virginia's Golf Courses handbook (VGCSA, 2012). Many golf courses are using BMPs and most of the BMPs have an adoption rate of 50% or higher (21 of 32 listed below). Our water quality studies on seven golf courses in the Chesapeake Bay watershed suggest that no significant degradation of local streams appears to be occurring as a result of golf course management. The water quality status of these golf courses may be explained in part by the widespread adoption rate of several BMPs as found in the survey.

Most golf courses (54%) routinely test the water quality of their irrigation ponds, while only 21% routinely test the water quality of streams running through or adjacent to their golf courses. Seventeen percent of courses did not have any streams present on their courses. Water testing of streams flowing out of the course is particularly important since these waters may connect to Chesapeake Bay tributaries

or other watersheds. The majority of golf courses are annually fertilizing their greens with 3.0-3.9 lbs N/M, tees and fairways at 2.0-2.9 lbs N/M, and rough at 0-1.9 lbs N/M. These are within the Virginia Nutrient Management Standards and Criteria which recommend annual fertilization rates of 3-6 lbs N/M for greens, 2-5 lbs N/M for tees, 2-4 lbs N/M for cool season fairways, 3-4.5 lbs N/M for warm season fairways (fairway fertilization rate depends on the intensity of management) and 1-3 lbs N/M for roughs. (VADCR, 2014). Only 36% of courses currently have a Nutrient Management Plan (NMP) in use. The Commonwealth of Virginia is mandating the development of NMPs for all golf courses by 2017.

Overall, the management of golf courses in Virginia appears to be environmentally focused and many BMPs are being used to grow high quality turfgrass while protecting natural resources. Furthermore, 30% of golf courses surveyed are currently members of the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Golf, and 58% of courses either plan to obtain certification, or are considering doing so. As the deadline for the mandated NMPs near, we expect the adoption rate of BMPs to increase. Nutrient Management Plans will highlight the risk areas that are specific to individual golf courses, and will allow superintendents to make more targeted, effective BMP implementation when needed.



Figure 1. Adoption rate of selected golf course Best Management Practices for optimal turfgrass growth, nutrient management, and water quality protection.

Citations:

VGCSA. 2012. Environmental Best Management Practices for Virginia's Golf Courses. Virginia Golf Course Superintendents Association. <http://www.vgcsa.org/sites/images/373/VirginiaBMP.pdf>

Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation. 2014. Virginia Nutrient Management Standards and Criteria. VADCR Division of Soil and Water Conservation. <http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/documents/StandardsandCriteria.pdf>

Effect of Golf Course Turfgrass Management on Water Quality of Streams in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed

Chantel Wilson, Stephen Schoenholtz, Ph.D., and Erik Ervin, Ph.D., Virginia Tech

Introduction

The Chesapeake Bay has a history of eutrophication problems caused by nutrient enrichment of waters. Major declines in fish and shellfish populations have been observed as a result of dead zones caused by eutrophication and oxygen depletion in the Bay.

Hundreds of golf courses are located in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. No published studies have investigated the connection between golf course turfgrass management and nutrient deposition or attenuation in Virginia streams. Golf courses are perceived to be a significant contributor to water pollution since high-quality turfgrass must be maintained with fertilizers, pesticides, and irrigation.

The goal of this project is to quantify effects of golf course turfgrass management on stream water quality by comparing areas upstream (INs) and downstream (OUTs) of managed areas. Data will be compared to the EPA metrics for Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Loads for nitrogen and phosphorus to help clarify if future regulation of water quality is warranted for golf course management.

Data for fourteen seasons (3 years) at seven courses in the James River Basin within the Chesapeake Bay Watershed have been collected. These courses include The Foundry Golf Club (Supt. Scott Mauldin), Keswick Golf Club (Supt. Peter McDonough), Kinloch Golf Club (Supt. Trevor Hedgepeth),

Glenmore Country Club (Supt. Kevin Fortune), and all three courses part of the Country Club of Virginia (Director of Golf Maintenance, Christian Sain) including the James River course, the Westhampton course, and the Tuckahoe Creek course. Data collection at one course (Keswick) was suspended following complete renovation as of Winter 2012.

Results

No significant impairment trends of dissolved oxygen, conductivity, temperature, or pH have been observed to date for all courses. Nitrate-N was always below the 10 mg L⁻¹ EPA drinking water standard. Phosphate-P in downstream waters was below the 0.05 mg L⁻¹ EPA recommendation.

A statistical analysis of the most current data (a total of 315 samples through Winter 2014) indicates no significant differences between the IN and OUT locations at all sites for ammonium-N and phosphate-P. A weak significant increase in nitrate-N at OUT locations was measured at three streams out of twelve, but levels are low and do not pose a significant threat to local water quality. At two stream sites, the level of nitrate-N was higher in the water entering the course than at the exit location. Overall, no significant degradation of local water quality appears to be occurring at the seven golf courses studied.

Data collection will continue through Summer 2014, and a final statistical analysis will be completed afterward. Data

analysis will be completed for a single golf course receiving monthly sampling since June 2012. Blacksburg Country Club (Supt. Bill Keene) has been sampled biweekly, and will be analyzed separately from the Chesapeake Bay watershed courses. Total nitrogen samples will be compared to the Chesapeake Bay TMDL to determine the amount of nitrogen loading (if any) from golf courses.

We have begun to survey (https://virginiatech.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_0cupoaV4PvKQ6Vv) golf course superintendents for their BMP adoption/management practices as well as compiling a database of courses willing to share water quality testing results and fertilization records. Soil sampling has been completed at all current golf course sites.

I expect to complete my dissertation and begin subsequent manuscript submission to scientific journals in Fall 2015. Funding for future research on this subject should be considered for monitoring other portions of the Chesapeake Bay watershed (other than the James River watershed).

Funding: Virginia Golf Course Superintendents Association (\$20,000 from May 2012 to Apr 2014; \$8,000 from May 2014 to Apr 2015), Golf Course Superintendents Association of America/Environmental Institute for Golf (\$20,000 from May 2012 to Apr 2014; \$8,000 from May 2014 to Apr 2015), Virginia Agricultural Council (\$20,000 from July 2011 to June 2013). **Total Funding from 2011 to 2015: \$76,000**



Chantel Wilson collecting water samples.



Whitmire & Ingram Triumph in STI Tollie Quinn T'ment

In the 39th Annual STI Tollie Quinn Tournament, a new fun format was in place – a two man Captain's Choice at The Williamsburg Club. In addition, there were a lot of new contests, including a "Hit the Toro Logo" challenge, and there were tons of prizes. A whole cadre of representatives of Smith Turf & Irrigation were on hand to entertain the superintendents and assistants. But some things never change – seven time VGCSA Champion Jeff Whitmire of the host club triumphed with his Assistant Superintendent, with an almost incredible score of 57, winning by four.

Finishing in second place with a fine score of 61 was team of Eastep and Rogers, while the team of Adams and Draden were third with 65. Independence GC superintendent Dan Taylor won the "Hit the Logo" contest. The group was treated to a sunny blue sky day and a course in beautiful condition.



Dan Taylor receives a prize from Dan McGrory and Chris Basset of STI



Mike Beals receives a prize from John Crain of STI



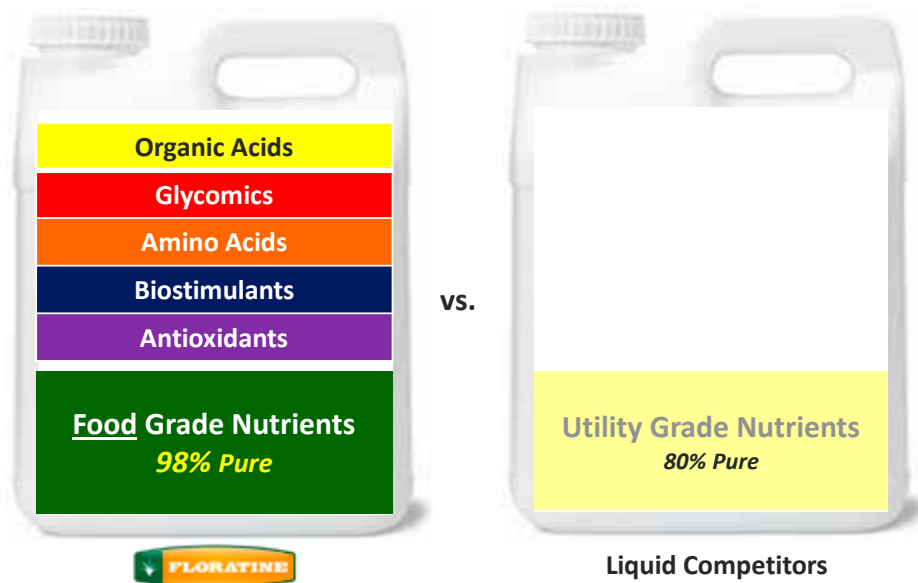
ODGCSA President Scott Mauldin Addresses the group



L-R: John Crain, Chris Bassett, Scott Mauldin, Jeff Whitmire, Scott Ingram, Matt Pound, Stan Bain, Dave Melton

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News from Local Associations

ODGCSA News

The ODGCSA held the Tollie Quinn golf outing on May 6th at The Williamsburg Club. The weather was great, the course was great, and Smith Turf and Irrigation did a fantastic job as the primary sponsor. The new format proved to be a huge success that provided fun and prizes for all skill levels.

You should have received a survey via email from the ODGCSA Board of Directors. It is important to get your

feedback so we can continue to provide the best services and programs for our members.

We look forward to seeing everyone at our next meeting in September at Spring Creek. And don't forget to sign up for the NEW VGCSA Fall Conference, coming to Richmond on October 20-21.

The Federal Club will host the Joe Saylor, then Hermitage will host the conference. There will also be a Monday

Night Football Party.

As always, the rest of our calendar can be found on the VGCSA website.



Dan Taylor
ODGCSA
External Vice President

TTA News

The TTA had a full schedule this year with events at great venues with informative speakers. We kicked off the year at James River Country Club with the professors from Virginia Tech talking about research updates and social media. Next stop was at Hell's Point on a cold rainy day with Steve Weekly from ARM talking about Aquatics. May brought the annual Dick Cake Tournament at Elizabeth Manor for a great day of golf and our Virlina Cup qualifier. Tony Gardner at Sewell's Point hosted our June meeting on another wet day, with Steve Dorer from Syngenta giving a talk on anthracnose, nematodes, summer disease, and many other topics of interest.

In July, we had family night at Harbor Park to watch the Norfolk Tides baseball team in action. This fall look for our annual meeting in the Outer Banks!! Always a great way to end the summer season.

The long, cool spring following a colder than normal winter has made warm season turf maintenance a hot topic. The ultra-dwarf greens seemed to handle the cold weather well with really no issues of winter kill for guys in this area. Bermuda fairways and roughs were slow to get going this year with limited growth until the end of May. It wasn't real pretty but money was saved on growth regulator applications with most guys not going until July this year.

This summer has been unusual as far as having heat combined with breezy conditions. I can't remember getting these kinds of high temperatures for so many days combined with 10-15 mph winds in years past. Usually hot and stagnant would be our pattern.

As the middle of summer is upon us, please take time out to be with your families; try to remember what is really important.



Rob Wilmans
Tidewater Turfgrass
Association
External Vice President

SVTA Update

It has been a strange summer in Shenandoah Valley, The weather has been wet for some and dry for others. Both conditions have caused some stress for all of us. Let's remember we are more than halfway through the summer and the cooler nights are approaching.

I would like to congratulate Ed Eagle of Ingleside Resort on qualifying for the Virlina Cup—he will represent the SVTA at Primland on October 5-7th.

The SVTA Fundraiser at Shenandoah Valley had to be rescheduled – check the VGCSA website (www.vgcsa.org) or be on the lookout for the new date.

And don't forget to sign up for the NEW VGCSA Fall Conference, coming to Richmond on October 20-21. The Federal Club will host the Joe Saylor, then Hermitage will host the conference. There will also be a Monday Night Football Party, and rooms are set up at the Hilton

Short Pump.

Hope to see everyone at our next SVTA meeting!



Scott Cornwell
SVTA
External Vice President

VGCSA Fall Conference • Richmond • October 20-21

Monday, Oct. 20 – Joe Saylor Tournament & Monday Night Football

Tuesday, Oct. 21 – Fall Conference



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News from Local Associations

News from the GWGCSA

Wow! If this is global warming then we have nothing to worry about, at least not here in the Mid-Atlantic. Other than some extra solid time aerification of greens, this year has been a breeze for most of us around northern Virginia. The longest, coolest spring I can remember in my 17 years here and now a beautiful polar vortex bringing almost a week of cool dry weather in the middle of July. I love it when we can open the windows all day long and have to put on a jacket in the mornings during the summer. I just hope that August is not going to be the payback month for Mother Nature.

Well, we've had some great events so far this year in the Greater Washington. In April, Jeff Berg and his staff had Goose Creek in impeccable condition for our opening event which also served as our Virlina Cup qualifier. Scott Cornwell was low man, earning a chance to bring the cup back to Virginia this fall at the amazing Primland Resort. The team of Aaron Wells and Mike Owens took first

place in the blind draw format. In May we moved over to Montclair CC where Mike Owens got to show off the amazing work he's done on the course in the short time since he arrived. We had a beautiful day, making up for last year's rain shortened event. Scott Furlong and Patrick McNamara took home the honors, negotiating the narrow, tree lined, ryegrass fairways just weeks before Mike killed them to convert to ever more popular Bermuda.

Scott Hamm was the host for our June event, held at Twin Lakes Golf Course in Fairfax. A great day was had by all in this well attended event, but the best day was had by Lentz Wheeler and Dick Purple, who took the winning trophy.

Finally, the hugely popular Maintenance Open, held each year at Forest Greens Golf Club where Jeff Van Fleet and his staff work tirelessly to make this one of the best events of the year. This is the day where we pay homage to all of the hard work that our employees do throughout the year. It is a chance to

bring our staff to an event and let them enjoy an afternoon golf, food, fun and maybe a beverage or two on us. Many courses bring two teams so that as many of their workers as possible can escape for a day.

A great event was made even better for two big reasons. One, it was a cool, dry day; rather than the biting black fly infested 99 degrees and 99% humidity with no breeze that we usually have to endure. And secondly, the defending champs, Jeff and his Forest Greens boys did NOT win. Tony Blevins and his guys from Pohick Bay took the cup home. Congratulations.

We are all looking forward to our social event in August which is a great place to network and cut loose during the dog days of summer.



Shawn Gill
GWGCSA
External Vice President

VTA News

It is the middle of the summer and Mother Nature is up to her normal tricks. While the three Hs dominate the daily forecasts, feast or famine would best describe rainfall. Courses are either lush green or have taken on the "Pinehurst" aesthetic, depending on whether a storm pops up on top of you.

On May 20th we held our annual fundraiser tournament to benefit scholarships to current turf students enrolled at Virginia Tech. Superintendent Roscoe Craighead of Blue Hills Golf Club had the course in excellent condition and the weather was picture perfect. We were able to raise

approximately \$3,000 to go to a worthy cause. In June, our schedule took us to Great Oaks in Floyd for the Virlina Cup qualifier. Jim Hill of Innovative Drainage Technologies presented solutions to reclaim aging drainage. Jeff Snyder walked away with the honors of representing the Virginia team in the event this coming October at Primland.

Our next meeting is tentatively scheduled for August 14th. This will be a night at the ballpark with the Salem Red Sox. Hopefully folks will be able to bring their families and enjoy a night away from the golf course. We will follow that up with a trip to Tuscarora Golf Club in

Danville before finishing up our season at the Pete Dye River Course at Virginia Tech in Fairlawn.

It is hard to believe, but we are less than 30 days away from the start of college football season, and some guys are closer than that to aerification. With cooler nights in the near future, and some timely rains, we will be checking frost and chasing leaves before we know it.



Bill Keene
Virginia Turfgrass
Association
External Vice President

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