

Front Nine News

A publication of the Northwestern Pennsylvania Golf Course
Superintendents Association, Inc.
Volume 21, Issue 2 - April 2018

**April Golf, Dinner,
& Business Meeting**
Thursday, April 26, 2018
Stoughton Acres Golf Course
Host - Van Smith

Meeting Agenda:
11:00 am - 12:00 pm Tee Times
4:30 pm - 5:00 pm Social Time
5:00 pm Dinner
Business Meeting following dinner

**Carts: No charge for carts
(Thank you Van Smith!)**

**Meeting Fee: \$25
(payable to NWPGCSA)
Cash, checks or credit cards
accepted**

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NWPGCSA, Inc. 2018 Meeting Schedule

Sunday, January 28th
Ladies Day Party
Venango Valley Inn & GC
Venango, PA
Host: Durbin Loreno

Thursday, April 26th
Golf, Dinner,
& Business Meeting
Stoughton Acres Golf Course
Butler, PA
Host: Van Smith

Thursday, June 14th
Golf & Dinner Meeting
Lake View Country Club
Host: Gordon Seliga

August - date tba
Possible Social Event
Riverboat Cruise on
Conneaut Lake

September—date tba
Golf, Dinner, & Annual Mtg.
Lawrence Park Golf Club
Harbor Creek, PA
Host: Nick Kunik

April Golf, Dinner, & Business Meeting At Stoughton Acres Golf Course Thursday, April 26, 2018 (Cover photo is Hole #6)

ABOUT THE HOST SUPERINTENDENT:

Van and his wife, Jeanne, have owned and operated Stoughton Acres Golf Course since it opened in 1964. They are long time “empty nesters” having raised two daughters, Sally and Deb, and a son, Doug, while learning the golf course business. Now they have 5 grandsons and 2 granddaughters ranging in age from 9 to 21 that have all spent lots of quality time at the golf course. Van has always been involved in sports. Before he graduated from what was then Slippery Rock State College, Van lettered in baseball and football for the Rock. Now he enjoys watching his grandchildren play various sports, and he rarely misses a Grove City High School Boys Basketball game since his son-in-law has been coaching them to the playoffs the past several years.

ABOUT THE COURSE:

The total yardage for Stoughton Acres Golf Course is 6,142 with a par of 71. According to Van, “our course is the product of almost 60 years of the labor of love. In 1959, a newly married 22-year old couple had an opportunity to attempt to build a golf course on a 190 acre farm that belonged to my wife’s grandfather. At the time, I was teaching school making \$3,600/year. The first 9 opened in 1964 and the back in 1973. I hope you enjoy the day as much as my wife and I enjoy having you here.”

DIRECTIONS:

The address to plug into your GPS is 904 Sunset Drive, Butler, PA 16001. The course is located a short distance off of Route 8, north of Butler, and behind the Pioneer Drive In.

RESERVATIONS are requested by Monday, April 23rd in order to plan for the meal, but we will take reservations up until the time of the meeting. Please call Julie Powell at (724) 421-7588 to make your reservation and golf pairings.



The clubhouse at Stoughton Acres GC



2018 Officers & Directors

President

Michael L. Bochert
Venango Valley Inn & GC

Vice President

Kyle J. Woodfield
Whispering Woods Golf Club

Secretary/Treasurer

Bradley Chutz
PG Lawn Care

Directors

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Lawrence Park Golf Club

Justin V. Sudo
The Kahkwa Club of Erie

Thomas T. Davies, CGCS
OakTree Country Club

Commercial Director

Michael Zedreck

Executive Secretary/ Newsletter Editor

Julie Powell
(724) 421-7588
nwpgcsa@zoominternet.net
www.nwpgcsa.com



Mike Bochert
NWPGCSA President
Supt., Venango Valley Inn & GC

President's Message

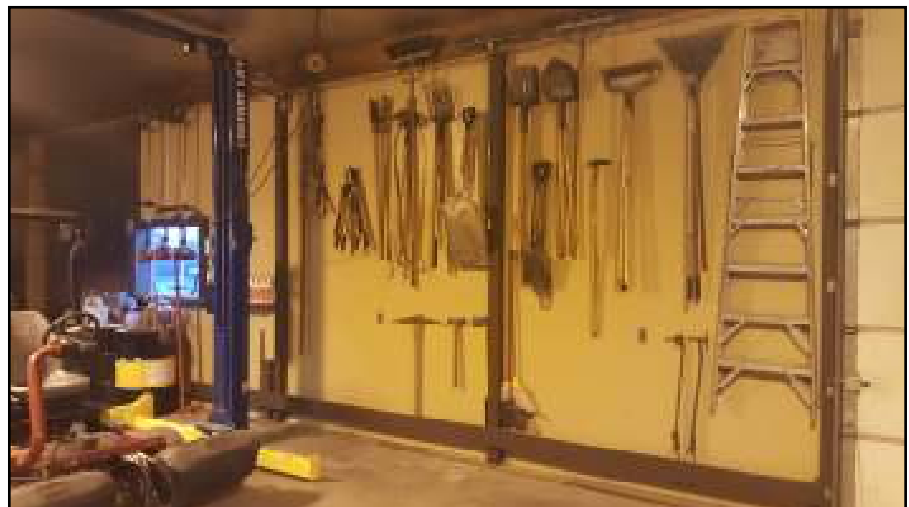
Chilly greetings to everybody!

Now that April is here, it's time to turn the temps up and kick winter to the curb. After a major teaser in February and a little cash register foreplay, Mother Nature decided to blue ball us back into winter. She gave us the cold shoulder with record snows for the month of March and has yet to really show us any cuddling in April. This appears to be the last week of cool temperatures with signs pointing to a slight warm up the following week. It shouldn't be too long now until we are back into the swing of things. Hold tight while she realizes the error of her ways and rewards us with some beautiful spring lovin'.

Winter time can be brutal on a person's mind. Cabin fever sets in and you start talking to the walls. Take "The Shining" effect and put it to good use. Find things that truly drive you crazy around the shop during the summer months and find the motivation to fix them. Straighten up, pitch the junk that has been building up for years, and reorganize the place for a more efficient and safe operations perspective. I spent the month of March insulating the shop which also gave me the opportunity for a fresh start and reorganization of our tools and equipment. The end result turned out to be very rewarding for both myself and Todd. Things are stored in more efficient places, and they are much safer to access. Years of build-up have been removed, and it feels like new in here. It may be too late to take on a good pitch and clean, but keep this in mind next winter when you start to go a little Jack Nicholson in February and March.

Wishing you all a great 2018! May the winds blow warm, and the humidity stay low. Hope to see many of you at our meetings this year.

Sincerely,
Michael Bochert



The finished product at Venango Valley

Thank You to Our Commercial Members!

Our Gold Patrons



Our Silver Patrons

BASF
Walker Supply Inc.

Our Bronze Patrons

E-Z-GO, A Textron Company
Harrell's
Hodges Rash Company, Inc.
Irrigation Technical Service Co.
Keystone Turf Products
Select Source
Syngenta
Weaver Golf & Turf Solutions
Yamaha/Nuttall Golf Cars, Inc.

Our New Members

Andrew Slayman

Class D
Shearer Equipment

George Sperry, III

Class C
Lawrence Park Golf Club

Bob Bauer

Class D
SiteOne Landscape Supply & Golf

Welcome to NWPGCSA!

All the contact information for these new members will appear in our 2018 Membership Directory.

Our Heartfelt Sympathy to . . .
. . . the family and friends of Barry Grote, who passed away February 19, 2018. Many of you will remember Barry as a salesman for Scotts and then Allegheny Lawn Products. He was also very active in the Pennsylvania Turfgrass Council, even serving as President for one term.
. . . the family and friends of Jim Keller, who passed away on March 25, 2018. Jim was the Golf Sales Manager for Shearer Equipment and a strong supporter of NWPGCSA.
. . . Julie Powell on the passing of her mother, Verna Mahan, on March 12, 2018. (I would like to thank all of you at NWPGCSA for the beautiful flowers and all the cards, emails, and expressions of sympathy.)

**10th Annual Ladies Day Party
Venango Valley Inn & GC
January 28, 2018**

The weather cooperated and a good time was had by all who attended what is typically our most popular event of the year! Kim Loreno and her staff at Venango Valley Inn provided their usual delicious food and beverages. Our attendance at this event has been declining each year with this year being our lowest yet. The good news is that all the ladies had a really good chance at winning a door prize this year. The bad news is we may need to rethink this meeting. Feel free to contact any board member if you have any suggestions on the best time and format to hold a social event for our ladies.

A huge thank you goes out to the following commercial members who so generously donated the wonderful door prizes:

Shearer Golf—Fossil watch and purse

E. H. Griffith, Inc.—Vera Bradley gift basket

Syngenta—Michael Kors purse and Bluetooth speaker

E-Z-GO, Cushman Utility Vehicles—Designer sunglasses, case, and cleaning kit

Weaver Golf & Turf Solutions—Instant Pot variable cooker

Hodges Rash Company—Harry & David gift basket with cheese slate

ArmsTurf Products—D. M. Boyd—Coach purse with matching coin purse

Fairmount Sports & Recreation—Vera Bradley overnight bag with matching accessories

Yamaha/Nuttall Golf Cars, Inc.—Air Fryer

SiteOne Landscape Supply & Golf—Harry & David soup gift basket

Select Source—Boxes of chocolates for every lady in attendance



L to R: Janice Gack, Cindy & Joe Giardina, Terry Gwinn, Heidi & Rob Goring



Each lady received a box of these chocolates compliments of Mike Blatt from Select Source



Just a few of the beautiful door prizes donated by our commercial members



A really nice pic of Rusty and Helen Tracy

Ladies Day Party



golf industry show

My Report from the Golf Industry Show By Julie Powell



As always, my experience at the Golf Industry Show was both rewarding and informative. The venue this year was the beautiful Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center right along the Riverwalk in San Antonio, Texas. A big plus to holding the GIS in San Antonio is that everything is within walking distance, even the historic Alamo. There is no need for the fleet of shuttle buses required in Orlando or San Diego. The weather wasn't the warmest, but most of my time was spent indoors anyway.

The GIS was held from February 3rd-8th this year, but my main reason for being there was the Chapter Executives Session held on Tuesday, February 6th. Steve Randall, Director of Chapter Outreach, welcomed all in attendance and asked us to introduce ourselves. He then called on the field service reps from the areas hardest hit by tragic forces of nature last year:

- ◆ Johnny Walker (yes, that's really his name) from the South Central Region reported on the devastating effects from Hurricane Harvey that flooded between 300,000—400,000 homes in the Houston area. As far as the golf courses were concerned, many re-opened in 5—8 days, but there are still 3 courses that haven't opened in the Houston area, and a few more are waiting for their clubhouses to be bulldozed and rebuilt.
- ◆ Ralph Dain from the Florida Region reported that the GCSAA Outreach Effort to aid area golf courses in the aftermath of Hurricane Irma was a very emotional one. He personally witnessed the human element that goes with helping out fellow golf course superintendents in need.

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Turf Reserve, LLC offering inventory clearance pricing for Turf-Tec International Mascaro Profile Samplers



Most of you know I have a small business (established 2006) distributing for I-MOL, VinylGuard, and Turf-Tec. Well, I over-ordered these profilers, and I'm offering special pricing while supplies last:

Turf-Tec Catalog price: \$210

My inventory clearance price: \$150 (+ tax)

Call Julie Powell at (724) 421-7588 if interested

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- ◆ Jeff Jensen from the South West Region reported on how the 2.5 million acres destroyed by wildfires affected the golf courses in California. Approximately 180,000 people in Santa Rosa were left homeless when the entire city was burnt to the ground. Fountaingrove Golf Club in Santa Rosa was part of the path of destruction and lost their clubhouse, maintenance facilities, and all of its maintenance vehicles. The surrounding homes were all left in ashes. With some help from GCSAA and Toro who donated brand new equipment, Fountaingrove GC is back in business. Jeff also noted The Valley Club of Montecito was totally destroyed by mudslides caused by the wildfires followed by torrential rains. It will be at least a year before that club can reopen.



Aerial view of the devastation at Fountaingrove Golf Club

Next up on the agenda was GCSAA CEO, Rhett Evans, who always gives an upbeat and interesting association briefing. Rhett referred to the 2017 Member Needs Assessment and noted that the education budget has remained the same. Local chapter education is still the most desirable place to receive education according to the survey. The most sought after education issues include labor, employee, and staff issues at the top with water issues, equipment options, budgeting, greens care, disease suppression, irrigation, and technology in descending order of popularity. Rhett reported there are currently 17,530 GCSAA members, 1,251 of them being Certified Golf Course Superintendents, 5,283 being Class A, and 3,045 being Class B. The goal of GCSAA is to have 20,000 members by 2020, and if this goal is not met, the voice of the golf course superintendent will get quieter when it comes to government legislation.



Chase Rogan (left) speaking with a few of the chapter executives

The speaker who generated the most questions was Nathan Breen, who is the new legal counsel for GCSAA from Hutton & Howe, Ltd. He gave a brief synopsis of the most common concerns regarding chapter management:

- ◆ Associations are governed by state law and that state's corresponding laws for non-profits.
- ◆ Board discussions are confidential so they should not appear in minutes, but board actions should be made public.
- ◆ Each chapter needs to be incorporated to protect officers and directors from being personally liable.
- ◆ Helping a member keep their job or agreeing not to apply for another member's job could be viewed as antitrust violations. The chapter's Code of Ethics should not state that you can't go after another member's job.



Kristen Liebsch, chapter executive from the Philadelphia Association of Golf Course Superintendents sporting her Philadelphia Eagles lanyard since they had (finally) just won the Super Bowl. Kristen and I befriended each other from many years of attending Chapter Events at Golf Industry Shows

As you can imagine, Nathan's last point drew plenty of questions as most of the Chapter Executives in attendance agreed that protecting their member's jobs is part of their job. Nathan's point was just don't have anything in writing. For example, if a club manager calls about posting a job opening for a superintendent at a course who's current superintendent is a

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member, you can contact the member to make sure he or she is aware of the job posting, but do it by phone, not by email or text.

Another interesting presentation came from Luke Cella, CGCS, from the Wee One Foundation. Luke is also the Executive Director of the Midwest Association of Golf Course Superintendents. In case you never heard of the Wee One Foundation, their website, www.weeone.org, states their origin and mission as follows:

"In 1985, four friends traveled to Scotland on a golf trip. The caddies were making wagers as these golfers stood on the tee. One caddie declared, "My money's on the wee one!" The "wee one", Wayne Otto, CGCS, our dear friend and colleague, passed away October 21, 2004 losing his battle to cancer. Wayne dedicated his life to the betterment of the golf maintenance profession he loved and the individuals who shared his passion.

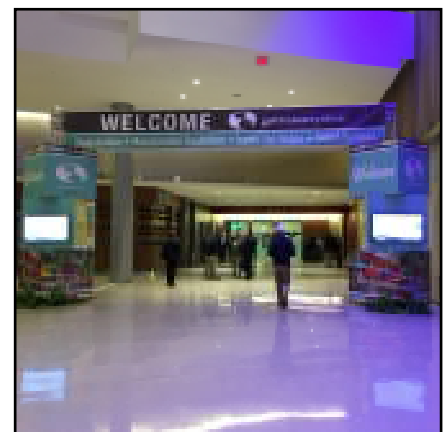
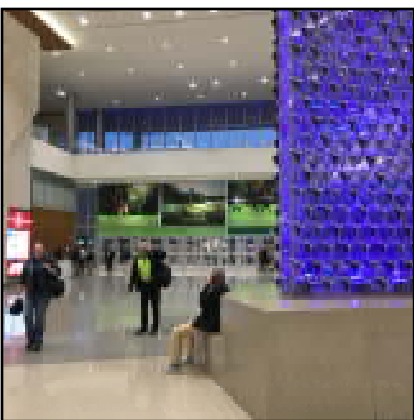
The Wee One Foundation was developed as a tribute to Wayne to assist golf course management professionals (or their dependents) who incur overwhelming expenses due to medical hardship without comprehensive insurance or adequate financial resources. Through the Foundation's work, Wayne's legacy will never be forgotten."

Luke noted that the main goal of the Wee One Foundation is to raise money and then give it away. Since 2004, they have gifted over \$1,000,000 in 23 states to golf course management professionals who are facing overwhelming medical expenses. There is a benevolence form on their website that is easy to complete if you know of anyone who may qualify. You can also use the website to join the Wee One Foundation. The membership fee helps to offset administration costs, but all donated funds are eventually given away.

Eric Olson, Director of Marketing for GCSAA, showed several videos that are being aired on various golf channels and can be linked to any members' websites or online publications just by contacting Eric. The videos are entitled, "5-Minute Fix", "Thank a Superintendent", and "Working For Me Stories". Shelia Finney, Senior Director of Member Programs also has a brochure available just for the asking entitled, "And Some People Get to Call This Work", and any chapter's or club's logo can be affixed to it. These productions are all provided by GCSAA in an effort to improve the image of and appreciation for golf course superintendents.

One final point that really hit home with me came from a panel of very experienced and proven Chapter Executives from four of the larger chapters. That point was the Board of Directors for any given chapter needs to have a hand in the day-to-day workings of the association to have any kind of commitment to the association. This is true no matter the number of members or the size of the budget for any given chapter. I have always felt that my job as Executive Secretary for NWPGCSA is to take care of as much of the day-to-day operations as possible so the Board members are free to simply attend board meetings and offer their input. Maybe this approach needs to be reconsidered. I do know that the best endeavors to come out of NWPGCSA did not come from me. They came from an inspired board member who saw a need, grabbed the bull by the horns, and addressed it.

I want to thank the members of NWPGCSA for sending me to the Chapter Events at the Golf Industry Show. I think you can see from this article that I always come away with some inspiring ideas and a greater appreciation for the GCSAA and all of the golf course superintendents they represent.





Mid-Atlantic Region Field Staff Report

INSTAGRAM HIGHLIGHT: WILDWOOD GOLF CLUB GREENS

by Chase Rogan | Mar 27, 2018

Tom Fisher is a five-year superintendent and the personality behind the 'Wildwood Golf Club Greens' informative-yet-entertaining Instagram account, an account appearing to have a reputation that precedes itself.

As Tom and I were attending the Pittsburgh Golf Show, we had an animated conversation with Paul Dilorenzo, Golf Professional at Williams Golf and Country Club. Paul immediately recognized the Wildwood name as a clear follower of Tom's Instagram's exploits, and gave kudos for the great pieces of communication. But not just for the appealing photographs, likewise the equally-creative hashtag game.

And that got me thinking, what goes in to a good hashtag game? Personally, I am partial to the #chlorophyll, but that's far from Tom's most original.

Here is some Instagram insight from Tom Fisher, superintendent at Wildwood Golf Club:

Q: Top three reasons for your Instagram usage?

- A:**
1. Member interaction
 2. Club promotion (beauty shots of the course)
 3. Dog promotion

Q: Have the consequent member interactions been beneficial and why?

A: Yes, they've been beneficial. I can provide easily digestible snippets of information. Project updates have been well received. Glamour shots that really capture the beauty of the course get a good bit of attention as well. People are proud to see their club showcased.

Q: What is your favorite type of photography?

A: Macro can be very interesting on the course and in nature. It will show a large portion of your audience something they've never seen. Think of combing through poa and figuring out if the oldest leaves are dying or not. Drone is great because it's so new and a "never-before-seen" view.

Q: What is your philosophy with regard to hashtagging?

A: I'll have a steady #wildwoodgolfclub in everything for branding, but use other hashtags that could create crossover appeal, and introduce somebody who would have never seen my page otherwise. It highlights what we do as superintendents.

Q: What is Abbey's (Tom's dog) best attribute?

A: Abbey's ability to break the ice when meeting/speaking with golfers.

Editor's Note: I'm just beginning to understand words such as "Instagram" and "Hashtagging", but for those of you who already understand them, I included this article so you may be inspired to start some hashtagging about your golf course. I'm sure it would be worthwhile to check out Tom Fisher's "Wildwood Golf Clubs Greens" Instagram account. Just don't ask me (Julie Powell) how to do it. Give our GCSAA Field Rep, Chase Rogan, a call. His number is in our directory.

Through the Green: The grass at the Masters

The famous wall-to-wall green color on display at Augusta National wouldn't be possible without improved perennial ryegrass cultivars, the first of which was released in 1967.
April 2018 Edition of GCM, by Jack Fry, Ph. D.

1967. The Beatles released "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band." Gas was 33 cents a gallon, and it cost a little more than a dollar to go to the movies. Most important, the first improved cultivar of the turfgrass species that graces the fairways, tees and roughs of Augusta National Golf Club was released.

Augusta, Ga., is in bermudagrass country — hot, humid summers and mild winters. Nevertheless, the timing of the Masters requires high-quality turf early in spring, and bermudagrass wouldn't yet be in pristine condition in northern Georgia. As such, a cool-season grass is needed. Bermudagrass is there on the property — it's just undercover. Under the cover of its cool-season counterpart, perennial ryegrass.

Horses, cattle and sheep have been reaping the benefits of perennial ryegrass for hundreds of years, as it was first used as a forage grass. Early perennial ryegrass cultivars, such as Linn, didn't produce high-quality turf. Mowing would shred the leaf blade because its vascular tissues are tough. After mowing, the torn, dried leaves of Linn would make the turf appear more white than green.

In 1967, the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station released Manhattan perennial ryegrass as the first turf-type perennial ryegrass cultivar with high quality and good mowing characteristics. This effort was the result of the hard work of renowned turfgrass breeder and Rutgers faculty member Reed Funk, Ph.D., who followed Manhattan with many more ryegrass cultivars and improved varieties of other turfgrasses as well. The textbook "Turfgrass: Science and Culture" by James Beard, Ph.D., was published in 1973 and listed seven cultivars of perennial ryegrass.

Since then, breeders have worked to develop hundreds of cultivars. The National Turfgrass Evaluation Program's most recent perennial ryegrass cultivar evaluation includes 114 entries from 29 companies. It's likely that a blend of cultivars is used across Augusta, but the quality of the surface is impeccable. The turf matches the jacket.

Perennial ryegrass, also referred to as English ryegrass in the literature, has several appealing characteristics. It's quick to germinate after seeding, and seedlings are often visible after as few as four or five days. It produces a dense turf, and the narrow leaf blade has a glossy underside. The glean of the backside of the leaf provides the obvious striping patterns so often visible at golf facilities and athletic venues.

By midsummer, perennial ryegrass in Georgia is on the decline, and the bermudagrass takes advantage of the hot, humid weather. Thus, the turf at this spring's Masters will be treated as an annual, and the next crop will be planted sometime in autumn. In more northern regions of the U.S., perennial ryegrass is used as a true perennial. In warmer, humid regions of the transition zone, a regimen of fungicides is a necessity to maintain the quality of the ryegrass throughout the summer, as it is quite susceptible to infection by fungi that cause brown patch, Pythium blight and gray leaf spot (GLS).

Gray leaf spot was once a disease most common on St. Augustinegrass lawns in the South and was of little concern to those growing perennial ryegrass. In the mid-1990s, GLS showed up on ryegrass on golf courses in the Mid-Atlantic and Midwest regions, and took out fairways and tees in a matter of days. This alone has led many golf courses that previously used perennial ryegrass to convert to creeping bentgrass, which is not disease-free by any means, but is free from the GLS plague. Turf breeders have worked to address the GLS problem, releasing several ryegrass cultivars with at least some level of tolerance to the disease.

Couple the breeders' improvements in perennial ryegrass with the latest irrigation, mowers, sprayers, fertilizer and plant protectants — along with university-trained golf course superintendents, assistants, equipment technicians and interns — and the result is what you see at Augusta National. The industry has come a long way since 1967, and the development of high-quality perennial ryegrass cultivars has helped give Augusta National the aesthetic appeal it has today.