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**GCSAA**

GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENTS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

**Heart Beat**

Volume 41, No. 1

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE HEART OF AMERICA GCSA

March 2009

# JOINT MEETING WITH KGCSA

Monday, March 23, 2009



**Manhattan Country Club  
Manhattan, Kan.**

- Member Profile
- Achieving Success at Your Facility

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**GCSAA**  
GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENTS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

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# PRESIDENT'S Message

By: *Scott Johnson, CGCS*



Ready, set, go.....2009 is well underway! The ongoing national and global economic instability has created financial hardships throughout our local community and abroad. One of the few positives to our present dilemma is that the market declines of 2008 provided some forewarning and preparation time for 2009. My view of our industry outlook for this year can be summarized in two words, "guarded optimism." At my facility, a surprising number of golfers took advantage of the warm days during January and February which easily exceeded our revenue projections. So, we are off to a good start and I trust golfers are taking advantage of the nice days at your facility as well.

Our by-laws state: "the Association shall exist for the purpose of promoting the welfare of the game; the science and art of golf course management; the organizational and business effectiveness of the profession; the professional image and well-being of its individual members through the timely and efficient use of present day educational, communications and management means; and to unite golf course superintendents of this area." Since the annual meeting in November, your Board of Directors has been busy organizing committees, planning the new year and identifying opportunities, like the KC Golf Show and the Mid America Regional Council last month, to represent our profession in a positive, professional and influential manner before our community.

The year is off to a fast start and the activity calendar is being structured to insure that you, the membership, have numerous opportunities to fulfill our association's purpose, (ie. your personal and professional enrichment).

Each year we face a myriad of challenges. I'm fairly confident in saying that most of us have not faced an economic and political landscape in such turmoil or disarray as we have today throughout our country. Individually and as a band of brothers we are natural overachievers because we possess the "can do spirit" and we have each other as a support network. If you need

someone to lean on, give me or any other member a call.

Later this month in the "Little Apple," Manhattan Country Club will host the annual KSGCSA and HAGCSA joint meeting. Participants will have plenty of opportunities to lean on their driver while working out the kinks in our dormant golf swings. I hope you are able to attend.

Keep striving to be the best,  
*Scott Johnson, CGCS*

**"The year is off to a fast start and the activity calendar is being structured to insure that you, the membership, have numerous opportunities to fulfill our association's purpose, ie. your personal and professional enrichment."**

Who Will Take Home the 2009 S&R Trophy?

Mark your calendars and start forming your teams. Details forth coming.



The E-Z-GO Team takes first place in the 2008 S&R Tournament.

Monday, June 15, 2009

Oakwood Country Club  
Kansas City, Missouri

Jeffrey M. Elmer, CGCS  
Host Superintendent

**2009 S&R TOURNAMENT**



## KGCSA & HAGCSA Joint Meeting

**When:** Monday, March 23, 2009

**Where:** Manhattan CC (1530 N. 10<sup>th</sup>)

**Host:** Cliff Dipman

**Time:** 10:30 a.m. Registration  
 11:00 Lunch  
 11:30 *“GCSAA Outreach Campaign Update”* - Jeff Bollig, Director of Communications and Sandy Queen National Director, GCSAA  
*(Approved for .10 GCSAA Education Points)*  
 12:30 p.m. Golf



**Cost:** \$65.00 \$15.00 (lunch only)

**Reservations:** E-mail Christy Dipman at [cdipman@ksu.edu](mailto:cdipman@ksu.edu) or call (785) 532-6173



**Cliff Dipman** has been the golf course superintendent at Manhattan CC since 1981 and a GCSAA member for 34 years. He has also worked at Park Hills CC, Pratt, Mirror Lake, now the National in Parkville, MO, Ft. Leavenworth GC, and Lake Barton GC in Great Bend. Cliff is an active member in both the KGCSA and the Kansas Turfgrass Foundation, serving as board of director for KTF and is a past president of both organizations. He has served as chairman of the trade show at the Kansas Turfgrass Conference for many years. He is married to Christy and has a daughter, Kelsey and a stepdaughter, Cortney.



**Ryan Blew** has been the Assistant Golf Course Superintendent at Manhattan CC since 2007. He worked at Prairie Dunes CC in Hutchinson and started working at Manhattan CC in 2004 when he moved to Manhattan to attend KSU.

**Manhattan CC** is an 18-hole private club. The land was purchased in 1916 and the course was an 18-hole sand green course until it was converted to grass in 1949. Most all the greens have been converted from push-up greens to modified USGA greens. The course is on the short side but the narrow fairways and uneven lies make it a challenge to play.

Greens: Pencross, Poa, L93, and the new putting green, A4  
 Fairways: Ryegrass  
 Tees: Ryegrass (few are Zoysia)  
 Roughs: Fescues and Buffalo

**An Event Registration Form is on next page**

# JOINT MEETING with KGCSA

(2009 event is hosted by KGCSA)



**DATE:** Monday, March 23, 2009

**LOCATION:** Manhattan Country Club  
1531 N. 10<sup>th</sup>  
Manhattan, Kansas

**HOST SUPERINTENDENT:** Cliff Dipman

**SCHEDULE:** 10:30am - Registration  
11:00am - Lunch & Meeting  
12:30pm - Shotgun

**COST:** \$65 per person; \$15 for lunch only

**MEETING TOPIC:** "GCSAA Outreach Campaign Update" – Sandy Queen, CGCS, National Director, GCSAA  
Jeff Bollig, Director of Communications, GCSAA

**GCSAA Service Points:** .10 approved

**DRESS CODE:** Country Club Attire (Collared Shirts, No Jeans or Cargo Pants). Please clean your soft spikes.

**RESERVATIONS:** Mail, Fax or Email Reservation no later than **Wednesday March 18.**

---

**Yes, I/we plan to attend the Joint Meeting with KGCSA!**

Player(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Company: \_\_\_\_\_ Handicap: \_\_\_\_\_  
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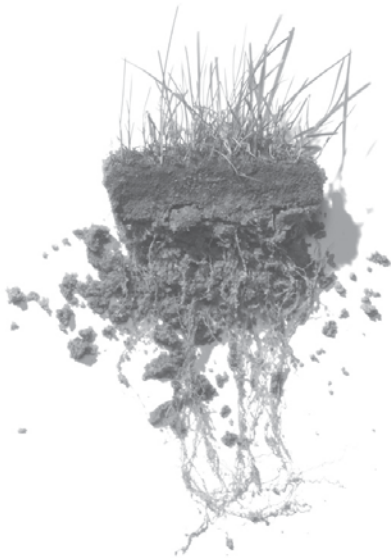
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## PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

By Bill Irving, Director

The Public Relations Committee again took advantage of the opportunity to attend the Kansas City Golf Show this year and had an outstanding time. By investing a little time in setting up a vendor booth, we had an excellent chance to meet a variety of golfers face-to-face and put out the message of what we, as superintendents and assistant superintendents, do to care for all of the golf courses that they have the privilege of playing. This year we also had a great opportunity to pair up with the manufacturer of the GreenFix ball-mark repair tool which gave us another opportunity to educate the golfing public about the correct way to repair the craters that they leave on our putting surfaces! Special thanks goes to Danny Edwards of GreenFix Golf for his generosity in donating 500 repair tools for us to hand out during the show.

Besides the ball-mark repair tools, Richard Shumate of Van Wall Equipment and Tom Brown of TPEC provided equipment to show a little more about what we do on the golf course. The equipment was another great tool to use to talk with golfers about what we do and the seats also served as a comfy alternative the plastic chairs we had to sit on!

Upcoming opportunities that we are working on for the Public Relations Committee include the 610 radio spot, assisting as volunteers for the Futures Tour event at Leawood South and the Nationwide Tour stop at Lionsgate. We, as a committee, thank you in advance for your help when called on to assist in promoting the Heart of America Chapter and look forward to a very successful 2009 season.

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## ACHIEVING SUCCESS AT YOUR FACILITY

By Brad Gray, Immediate Past President

Let's all face it; we have a pretty neat job. We have the opportunity to work outdoors improving the playing conditions that several golfers enjoy on a daily basis. Personally, I look forward to completing the tasks that lay ahead. The tasks range in all varieties but all of those duties share a common thread. That thread is striving to provide the best possible playing conditions while being a good steward of not only the land but of our employer's funds. On the other hand, most of us are experiencing something we only heard about during history class in terms of the economy.

The uniqueness of the economy is the fact that it is affecting all levels of golf facilities. The old adage, "More with Less", is being used as much as the famed term, "Bailout". In general, most superintendents pride themselves in providing good playing conditions at a financially efficient level. In an essence, superintendents have created their own enemy when striving for excellence. The practices implemented to achieve perfection will most likely be scaled back to a degree in order to offset the struggling economy. Is the pursuit of perfection personally driven or expected? Much of the undue stress is self induced because too many times superintendents are unaware of expectations. Green is good; brown is bad type of mentality. More times than not, courses are judged on aesthetic appearance versus playability. Let's face it; job security has an impact on decisions when managing the golf course. If the state of our country does not improve, we will all have to re-evaluate our turf management programs, perhaps already. The standard of maintenance was most likely established in previous years and it will be a challenge to provide those same standards for 2009. However, we will all step up to the challenge and provide innovative solutions for a desirable product.

Constant communication will aid in achieving customer satisfaction. On more than one occasion I have expressed that the Turf Team will do whatever is necessary during the economic downturn; however, there must be buy-in from the golfing consumer. A commitment from the golfing clientele is essential in order to maintain a positive attitude in achieving success for the facility. That positive attitude will foster a relationship for the long term. Sacrifices will be inevitable but a profound leadership role is essential until the tide has settled. I wish everyone the best of luck this growing season and remember that our peers as well as the HAGCSA are great resources. No matter which golf course or individual, everyone encounters the same issues within the golf course superintendent profession.

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## BACK ON THE TRACKS

### By Tony Bertels

Back in 1994 I worked at Loch Lloyd. Every morning I would commute from Olathe via the narrow, lonely, rolling 2-lane road of 151st Street, east through OP and Leawood, across the one lane bridge that spanned the Blue River and out to the *House that Nels built*. During that year and into the next, I watched a new course being born in the flood plain of the Negro Creek, a meandering tributary south of the road at Mission.

Designed by Dr. Michael Hurdzan of Columbus, Ohio, Leawood's IRONHORSE opened for play and many accolades in 1995. It would be one of many higher end daily fee golf courses to open in a 10-year span across the Metro. The course racked up many local and national honors and became a favorite among the golfing community.

### Retrospective

In 1995, Pete Spratlin, the current Superintendent at IRONHORSE, lived the happy-go-lucky bachelor life in Sarasota, Florida. Fresh out of Auburn, where he earned his degree in Agronomy with a minor in Business (he also has a degree in Finance and a minor in Agronomy from his earlier days at Texas A&M), Pete worked for Environmental Care, a world-wide conglomerate, as a regional agronomist.

"I was their troubleshooter," explains Spratlin. "I visited and helped with their problem properties from Tampa west to Palm Beach and everything south. I even went to properties in the Caribbean from time-to-time." Pete was experiencing the fruits of his labor that really began back in the hills of Texas.

"I grew up on a horse ranch," confides Pete, with the exception of a few year stint in downtown Houston when his parents divorced. "Other than that short time in the city, I grew up with my father in a small Texas town about 50 miles south of College Station." He has worked on golf courses in some capacity since he was eleven, almost without interruption. When it came time to go off to college, Pete chose the logical route and enrolled at Texas A&M. "I majored in Business Finance and minored in Agronomy in an attempt to keep my GPA up!" he confesses, explaining that the curriculum was more to his taste and certainly easier.

Pete found himself under the tutelage of Dr. James Beard, the renowned turf guru and mentor. "He was the first to tell me that I could actually make a living doing

what I loved most." Beard explained to his student that he would be just one of a million Business degrees in the job market. "I took that to heart and decided to do an internship the summer before my senior year and really test the water."



**Pete Spratlin & Eric Trimble of Ironhorse GC**

Spratlin interned at Bent Brook GC, a new tract still under construction in Birmingham, Alabama. They liked him so well that after graduation, Pete was invited back to Bent Brook after it opened as the Assistant Superintendent. Leaving the Texas hills behind, Spratlin enrolled at Auburn, this time intent on a major in Agronomy. "Of course, I was on the fast track due to my degrees at A&M." Earning his *reverse* degrees, Auburn enticed Pete to enroll in grad school and work in their turf research department. "I was only 6 hours shy of my Masters when the opportunity with Environmental Care came about. The money was the main reason!"

Pete enjoyed his time in Florida and his duties as a regional agronomist. He was making a name for himself. Evergreen Alliance, an up and coming management company, persuaded Spratlin to come on board, and in 1996 he returned to Texas, this time to the Dallas-Ft. Worth area. "I became their troubleshooter too," explains Pete, who also saw time at Eagle Mountain CC and Iron Horse GC in Ft. Worth. He remained in Texas, troubleshooting for EAGL for the next 2 years.

In August of 1998, Pete got that fateful call. He was given the choice of two assignments; Go down to El Paso to a struggling property that he had already visited or go north to Kansas City to a newer facility that was having major troubles with their greens. "The El Paso job was not very appealing. I had been there and didn't like the prospects. Having never been to Kansas, I figured I would give it a shot."

**Continued on page 18**



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### Trouble in Paradise

IRONHORSE was in trouble. Season after season the California-style, sand-based greens with their Crenshaw bent grass struggled to make it during the heat of the season. By August of 1998, fourteen of eighteen greens had gone way south. EAGL decided to make a change and Pete was brought in. "It was alarming," recalls Pete. He and the remaining staff spent the fall reseeding and bringing the greens back on line. It was by no means the end to the problem.

This was Spratlin's first foray in the transition zone. He understands those challenges but admits, "It seems like most everywhere I've grown grass, someone was trying to grow a variety or on a medium that didn't belong in that zone. Bent grass in Alabama, Bent grass in south or central Texas or Fescues in Florida (they don't like salt!). There are problems everywhere." Even with the inherent problems with the greens at IRONHORSE, Spratlin was able to do something his predecessors could not; Keep the greens alive and respectable through the worst of the season year after year.

As time went by, Pete fell in love with the area and resisted opportunities to move on. He wanted to stay. "People in the Midwest are incredibly nice! I was tired of moving around so often. It was very hard to maintain a relationship," confesses Pete when reflecting on his days of travel. "Besides all of that, I had a feeling that IRONHORSE had enough agronomic issues that would keep me from ever becoming bored – and I was right! It is also one of the best layouts of any golf course I've ever worked on."

Once the decision was made to stay, Pete soon found the girl of his dreams in Kit, his wife of almost 8 years. Together, they are raising a gaggle of little Spratlins; a son, Ryan, 6 yrs old, and two daughters, Shea, 4 yrs old and Cara, 3 yrs old. The family resides in Leawood, about 5 minutes from the golf course. Pete is now happily well-grounded! Ask Pete what he likes least about our crazy job and he'll tell you, "When my kids are still asleep when I leave for work and often going to bed when I get home."

As the years at IRONHORSE flew by, Pete did everything in his power to keep the greens healthy and strong. "I really don't have an issue with a straight sand-based green. The initial lack of organics in the medium is soon replaced with a plant biomass." He struggled keeping some areas adequately hydrated while other areas never drained well. (*More on that subject later.*) Another ongoing issue with the course was Negro Creek, the water course that wrapped through the heart of the property. The majority of the property is flood plain and the creek flows through 16 of the 18 holes. Flooding was part of the business, especially with the advent of new streets and thousands of roofs built in the area since initial construction. Bank erosion and failing bridge abutments were becoming an issue. "We would no sooner get the mess from one flood cleaned up when the next one would come through!" The City determined that a flood control and bank stabilization project was the only solution. They would have to shut the course down to accomplish it. Pete fought to convince them that rebuilding the greens should be accomplished simultaneously since the course was to be closed, killing two birds with one stone. They concurred.

### A Difficult Rebirth

IRONHORSE shut its doors the beginning of 2007 to begin the project. Also at this time, Spratlin was asked by the City to leave Orion, the management company which he and his partners, Matt Roberts and Shane Gardner had begun several years ago. Orion would continue to run the golf operation up front upon reopening, but Pete would become an employee of Leawood and handle the maintenance-side in house. With such a large project, they wanted a comfort level that he would not become distracted with other properties and concerns. "All in all, it was a pretty good transition," admits Pete. "Less pay, but better benefits. I am also required to spend much of my time in countless meetings. It is much more of an administrative



Typical flooding experienced on Negro Creek

Member Profile

position and I rarely get to work with my guys anymore.”

The new working arrangement also had a few pratfalls, especially with the public’s perception of the completed project and its scope. “There was a communication disconnect between the management company, the engineers and City staff...and me. *Officially*, the term renovation was only used for the creek – which was accurate. But in marketing material, it was referred to as a course renovation, i.e. *won’t it be great when you come back* standpoint. This backfired drastically when players returned to a renovated creek and a golf course that had been used as a haul road. Although we were going to be able to rebuild the greens, this was in no way a renovation of the golf course. Unfortunately, everyone referring to it as a course renovation, when in essence it was a creek renovation that happened to be taking place on the golf course, lent to a perception issue! The majority of the golf course was basically serving as a haul road for the *creek* renovation.

The greens project actually extended the haul roads out further onto the golf course.” Pete saw this as problem #1.

Problem #2 compounded Problem #1. The company contracted by the City for the creek project had never done this type of work on or around a golf course before. “They were completely unaware of the complexities of golf course irrigation or the need to keep it intact during the summer months of a greens grow-in. The necessity of signal wires, power wires, common wires, operational satellites or intact valves were beyond their comprehension!” recalls Pete, the veins in his neck straining his shirt collar. “They thought I was insane when referring to grass as turf or even talking about specific varieties of seed. Despite the specifications attached to their contract, everything that they were required to place back to grade and re-grass was seeded in annual rye.” Pete was beside himself. “When they first attempted to seed using an 8” spacing, no-till drill, they finally admitted that they simply did not understand what I meant by a *stand of turf!* There is more, but it is making my blood boil again and my doctor says it’s bad for me.” Needless to say, the creek project did not go as smoothly as planned and the project impacted the entire course more than it should have. *Chill out Pete!*



Ironhorse back on track



New drainage going in at Ironhorse (old muck below)

The greens rebuild went much smoother. “It all came together relatively well,” said Pete. “Especially once we got the sub-contractor to

read the plans! Todd Clark, owner of CE Golf Design was the architect for the greens portion of the project. He was great to work with.” During deconstruction of the old greens, many of Pete’s suspicions about the greens shortcomings were realized. The subsurface drainage in all of the greens was all but locked up. “The bottoms of the greens wells were like rotting sewage and the depths of the sand growing mediums varied from 6” up to 32” on almost every green.” It was no wonder why lack of moisture in some areas and too much in others was such a problem. The new greens were built to USGA specifications and seeded to Dominant Plus bent grass. “This decision was backed by the USGA Agronomist whose reasoning I agreed with,” answers Pete when asked about his choice of cultivars. “His thoughts were the A varieties would not perform well at IRONHORSE.”

IRONHORSE opened for play in the middle of July 2008. Pete recalls a difficult rebirth. “It was a nightmare! In hindsight, it should have been done very differently.” Heavy rains and raging torrents through the just completed creek project carried away fresh sod and tender seedlings. Scars from the haul roads were yet to heal. Weed grass infestations in young stands of turf were tough to control due to the flooding, temperatures and time of year.

Continued on page 22

*The Archives*

**Editor's Note:** While looking through a few old back-issues of the HEARTBEAT, I stumbled upon an article by Chet Mendenhall written 25 years ago, at the age of 89, just before he moved into retirement in Arizona. I found his perspective and historical knowledge about our profession fascinating. I wonder if they will be digging up any of my jewels in 25 years!

## WHAT HAS G.C.S.A.A. DONE FOR YOU?

Now that the golf season is coming to a close, it is time to sit down and reflect on the past season, and to start preparing to attend the 1985 GCSAA National Conference and Show

To answer the question: What has the GCSAA done for you? We need first to take a look back at the problems of the greenkeeper prior to 1927. Most of the greenkeepers had grown up on the farm where they had gathered knowledge of plant growth which could be applied to golf course management. There were few publications related to turf maintenance available to the greenkeeper.

The USGA Greens Section was publishing a monthly bulletin pertaining to golf course maintenance. This bulletin only went to the Greens chairman of members clubs. At some clubs the Greens chairman would pass the bulletins on to the greenkeeper. At most clubs, the Greens chairman would keep them for his own information.

There was little or no research being done at any state college. The USGA was doing some research in connection with the US Department of Agriculture at the Arlington Research area. In 1917, Drs. Piper and Oakley, who were connected to the research work at Arlington, published a book related to golf course maintenance. The information in this book, again, went out to all clubs who were members of the USGA. Very few greenkeepers ever heard about this book. I don't intend to sound critical of the USGA. They were the one group attempting to help improve golf course maintenance. So it was only natural that any information they gathered would go to clubs that were members of the USGA.

Very few chemicals were available to the greenkeepers for disease or insect control. The main source of fertilizer was barn yard manure and sulphate ammonia.

In 1927 a small group of greenkeepers met in Chicago and formed an organization to be known as The National Greenkeepers Association of America. This group thought it best that they publish their own magazine, 'The National Greenkeeper' as a means of distributing information among members. Another idea was pursued, a once a year conference and equipment show where members from all parts of the country could meet. About this time two young sports writers, Joe and Herb Graffis, decided to start publishing a new magazine, 'Golfdom' which would cover the golf club management. Other magazines soon followed covering turf maintenance. The USGA Greens Section joined hands with the greenkeepers in promoting turf research at many state colleges.

Now that we have reviewed the past, let us take a look at today's Greenkeepers. You are now no longer a greenkeeper. The name has been changed to a Golf Course Superintendent. You probably have a college degree in turf management. You can attend local meetings with your fellow Superintendents and exchange ideas. There are research plots at a college near by that you can visit and have some input along with your fellow Superintendents. You are considered a professional in golf course management and respected by your club. Each year you can attend the GCSAA golf tournament, the conference and show. There you have the privilege of visiting other Superintendents from other parts of the US and other countries.

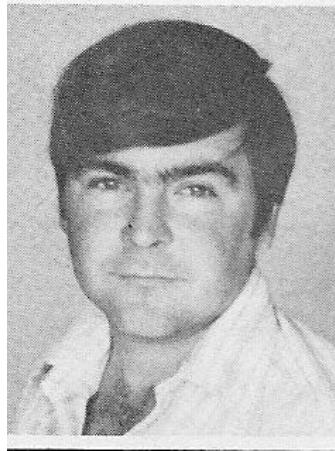
GCSAA has helped you become a professional in your field whether you are a member or not.

I hope to see you at the 56th GCSAA Conference and Show in Washington, D.C.

Sincerely,  
Chet Mendenhall



Terry Patrick Swazey Rodenburg - circa 1982



Sandy Queen, poster boy for Glamour Shots! - circ 1982



Who is that handsome devil? Stan George, of course! - circa 1983




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Supt., Bob Eichenberg; Jim Brink; Terry Rodenburg; Mike Lazar.

What's that on top of Lazar's head? Nice tank top, Michael - circa 1982




Nels Lindgren, CGCS, visits with Chet Mendenhall.


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Wow! The 3 Stooges of the chemical world - circa 1985



-Duane Patton, CGCS ♥

Jack Fry, a four-year turf student at Kansas State University, receives a GCSAA scholarship from Duane Patton.

*Member Profile*

The greens had actually come in pretty well, but were scoured in a few places by frequent pump failures during the night watering cycles. It all added to the misery. "Several things happened that made us look very bad, whether they were controllable or not."

**Introspective**

Through all of this, Pete has remained... Pete. This is a very good thing. A lesser man might have succumbed to the pressure and thrown up his hands in defeat. He not only had to contend with the trials discussed above, but he did it while breaking in an entirely new crew with the exception of two key guys. Many of us depend on a Latino workforce. Due to the maintenance operation falling under the City's umbrella, Pete lost this valuable resource. "It's a disaster for any Superintendent to lose an entire, trained, loyal staff all at once. It is a tall order to rebuild a viable staff from scratch while still in full maintenance operation. At best, any crew takes a couple of seasons to become adept at golf course maintenance, much less be considered veterans."

Pete knows where his bread is buttered. "Eric, my Assistant has been with me since 1999. My mechanic, Jeff has been here since 2000. I can't do anything without these guys. They are the best in the business." Together they are building a new staff. "We now have a good group of young guys who are learning and improving as we speak. They are well on their way to becoming golf course maintenance *lifers*."

Though completely wrapped up with IRONHORSE the last couple of years, Pete has been active in the HAGCSA. He has served on the BOD, was our Chapter Delegate and led the Heart as our President in 2002. "I learned to love the prospect of leading an organization that could do so much for our profession and aid new entrants into our field." He also realizes the importance of this network. "The fellowships and the educational opportunities enable our careers to be whatever we desire to achieve. Our associations have elevated us from blue collar to white collar professionals." When asked if he would be willing to again serve, he replied, "Yes! I've grown cold and lonely in this office and I miss you guys."

Besides Dr. Beard, Pete has a few other role models and mentors that he spoke of. Among them were Dr. Greg Coleman, Dr. Pat Cobb, Nels Lindgren, Sandy Queen, Dick Stuntz, Dave Fearis and an old, nagging Superintendent/Editor who shall remain nameless.

Pete has some advice for anyone just starting out, "Learn as much business management as you can as well as your agronomy. We are all managing large businesses in our own respect. The times ahead will require many more skills than *what fertilizers to use and when?*"

I once wrote an epic poem whose last verse went:

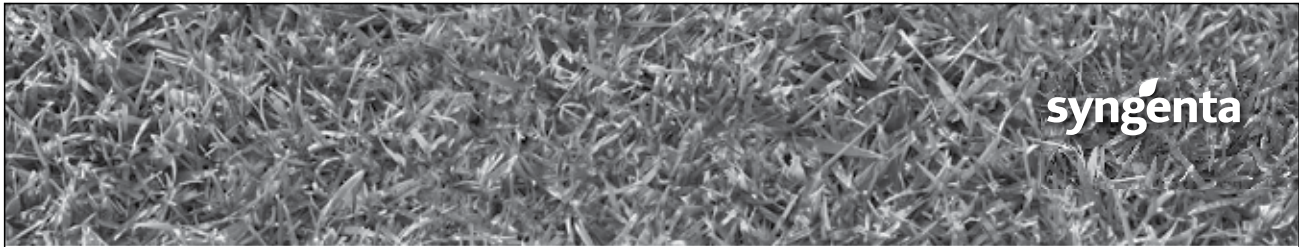
*Every dog must have its day  
And fall will finally dawn  
Then I become the master  
While the course becomes my pawn*

My friend's fall did come and by the end of it, he and his staff had righted the ship and found calmer waters. "The course is back on track and we are expecting great conditioning in 2009," reports Pete. We should expect nothing less from Mr. Spratlin!

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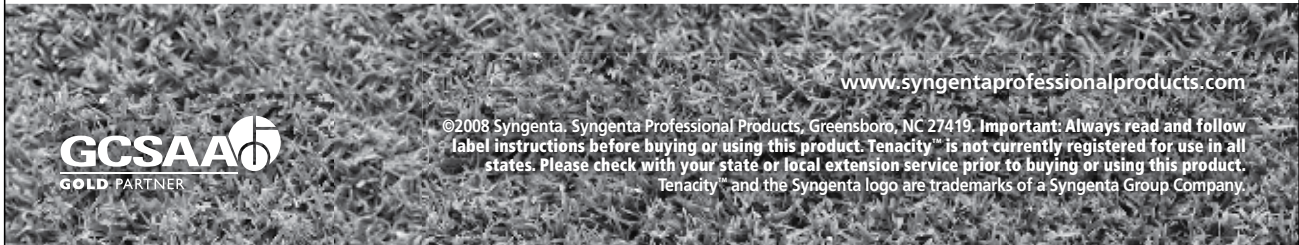
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# WHAT DRIVES YOUR DESIRE?

By Robert Wilson

**I**t was love at first sight. I was a 15 year old working as a parking lot cashier, when a brand new car pulled up to the booth. I'd never seen anything like it; it was a new model from Toyota called Celica. Approaching the legal driving age, I dreamed of owning a car. Now my dream had a form. For the next two years, I saved all my money and during that time a Celica couldn't come within my peripheral vision without my noticing it. It was the only car I wanted. I went to the showroom dozens of times to sit in it, feel it, smell it. I talked with every owner of one who passed through my parking lot. I was driven.

Unfortunately, a new one was too expensive, so I looked in the newspaper every day for a used one, but I was always more than \$1,000 short. At 17 and half years old, borrowing my parents car was painful. The desire and the peer pressure to own a car – any car – was nearly overwhelming, and my dream was wavering. My friends began suggesting cars that I could afford. Then my Dad introduced me to a car wholesaler. When I met with him, I reluctantly gave him a list of cars I thought I could afford. As we talked about them, he seemed to sense my lack of enthusiasm. He pressed me, "Are there any others you're interested in?" "Well... there's the Toyota Celica," I replied, "but I know I can't afford it." He jotted it down and said, "You let me worry about that." My eyes lit up as he asked me about colors and options. Then he drew a big circle around the word Celica. Less than a week later, he phoned me. He found one I could afford. It had a small dent in the fender which I could fix for under \$100. Cha-ching Desire satisfied.

## Desire Gets Complete Attention

When was the last time you were obsessed with something? Desire is a powerful motivator, but unlike Fear it cannot be easily triggered. Oh, sure, I can create a television ad depicting a thick juicy steak sizzling on a grill and make your mouth water. Maybe I can even get you off the couch and into your car to go get one. As a marketer, an employer, or even as a parent, I can plant the seeds of desire, but in order for it to blossom, it must develop from within. Once it takes root, Desire has the amazing ability to drive itself. When it becomes very powerful, we call it Ambition. So few people reach this level that we use the word Hunger to describe it because that is a Desire that everyone can understand.

When you observe the world's most successful people - - in business, sports, or politics - - you see that Desire takes precedence over every other aspect of their lives. As Frank Sinatra sings in *I've Got You Under My Skin*: "I'd sacrifice anything come what might." Most us have many things we are unwilling to sacrifice. Family and friends are two of the most common. Winners give their Desire complete attention, focus and energy. Michael Jordan is an excellent example; he became one of the greatest basketball players by making 2000 practice shots everyday. Are you that dedicated to your dream?

On the other hand, perhaps you gain more satisfaction from your hobbies than your work. In that case, you probably wish you could spend more time pursuing them instead of your job. That is because pleasure is the force that fans the flames of Desire. Marsha Sinetar in her book *Do What You Love the Money Will Follow* writes: "When you study people who are successful...it is abundantly clear that their achievements are directly related to the enjoyment they derive from their work." Are you ready to give up everything for your Desire?

*Robert Evans Wilson, Jr. is a motivational speaker and humorist. He works with companies that want to be more competitive and with people who want to think like innovators. For more information on Robert's programs please visit [www.jumpstartyourmeeting.com](http://www.jumpstartyourmeeting.com).*



# 2008 AWARD WINNERS

President, Scott Johnson, CGCS, congratulations the following award winners at the Holiday Party on December 4, 2008.

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## COMMON GROUND CONFERENCE RECAP

By Tim Nielsen, Director

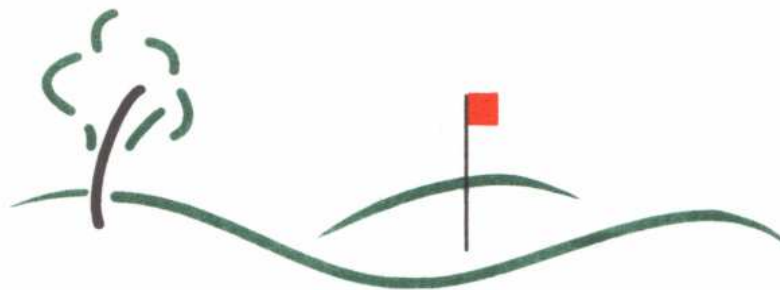
Despite a small snow storm and a tough economic climate, the 2008 Common Ground Conference once again proved to be a valuable experience for all involved. Also, a tremendous amount of support was evident from our valuable vendors who filled the trade show floor to capacity. Thank you to all the vendors who help make the conference a success. To the golf course superintendents, assistants and affiliates, thank you for attending despite the snow and your personal financial constraints. I hope to see you again for the next conference.

If you were able to attend the conference you probably noticed a new trade show floor plan and a new, innovative golf education track. Thanks go out to the Education Committee who all added valuable ideas and helped make the conference a success. Brad Gray, Josh Frandson, Loren Breedlove, Gary Breshears, Jeff White, Ty McClellan and Jeff Eldridge were all equally valuable.

With a year under my belt as the Education Director, I hope to use what I learned to help make the 2009 show better than ever. I am currently looking for new and improved ideas so don't be shy and shoot me an email about your ideas. Whether you have an education idea or a trade show idea, I am open to all suggestions. My email is: [tnielsen@drumfarmgolfclub.com](mailto:tnielsen@drumfarmgolfclub.com).

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# TOURNAMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

By Steve Wilson, CGCS, Director

The 2009 Tournament Committee has already been hard at work this year trying to provide you with a good slate of monthly meeting/tournaments that provides a little variety this year in terms of format of play and location. The Committee and the Board of Directors has made the decision to make a few changes this year to try to provide meeting opportunities to the members that are not in our busiest times of the year on our golf courses and are therefore easier to attend.

## Date Changes for 2009 Events

These changes to our meeting calendar include moving the “Past Presidents” event out of July (when most of us are concentrating on keeping our golf courses alive) and combining it with the Media Day event in May. This will allow us to honor our associations’ past presidents and also use them as ambassadors of our profession to the attending local media members. We will also make some changes to the April event. We will still host a meeting/tournament in April, but have eliminated this event as the “Membership Drive” event and replace it with the “North/South Cup.” This event will split our chapter into north and south teams geographically with I-70 as the dividing line. We will then play 2-man best ball matches pitting north teams versus south teams to determine the North/South Cup Champion. Hopefully, this will provide a fun way to play a format other than scramble and some friendly competition between the teams.

Another change in the calendar this year is to move the Vendor Appreciation shooting event into late October rather than early September when it has typically been held. This will allow us to get out of the busy greens aeration time of year and hopefully draw a better turnout to thank our vendors for all they do for our association. This will also allow the hunters in the group the chance to do a little shooting closer to the hunting season.

As you can see the Tournament Committee has been hard at work to try to come up with a HAGCSA Tournament Calendar that provide some fun and convenient opportunities to get together with our colleagues and have a good time. I would like to personally thank the 2009 Tournament Committee members for all of their time and effort to this point and throughout the year. This year’s committee includes: Paul Gunderman (Co-Chairman), Kris Nelson, Eric Bickel, Brent Stephenson, Mike Courville, Chris Finnerty, John Dixon, Alex Tucker, and Richard Shumate.

# FUNCTION FORECAST



<u>DATE</u>	<u>EVENT</u>
March 23	Joint Meeting with KGCSA
April 13	North/South Cup
May 11	Media & Past Presidents’ Event
June 15	S & R Tournament
August	Employee Tournament
October 5-6	MO Cup Challenge
November	Annual Meeting
December 4	Holiday Party

## SCHOLARSHIP & RESEARCH COMMITTEE REPORT

By Todd Bohn, Director

I hope everyone made it through the winter months and are all looking forward to the spring. I am very excited about working with the Scholarship and Research committee and this upcoming golf season. I would like to introduce everyone to the new S&R committee members: Tim Nielson, Drumm Farm Golf Course, Co-Chairman; Greg King, Kansas City Turf Supply; Brad Gray, Mission Hills CC; Scott Johnson, CGCS, Shadow Glen CC; Jeff Eldridge, CGCS, Nicklaus Golf Club at Lionsgate; Woody Moriarty, Blue Hills CC; Loren Breedlove, Kansas City CC; Jim Naudet, Leawood South CC; Gary Breshears, Kansas City Turf Supply; Doug Melchior, Overland Park Golf Course; Darin Pearson, Alvamar CC; Ryan Varns, Metcalf Ridge Golf Club; Russel Cole, RMI Golf Carts; Bill Maynard, Milburn CC; Nels Lindgren, Reinders; and host superintendent, Jeff Elmers, CGCS.

On behalf of the S&R committee I would like to once again congratulate this years scholarship winners; Austin Wright, Kansas State University \$2500, Shane Anderson, Metropolitan Community College \$1500, Derek Scott Branting, Kansas State University \$1000. Thanks again to all those students who applied for the scholarships. The winners of the employee awards will be announced in next months report.

One new thing I would like to do this year is to ask all Heart members for any suggestions they have towards any research ideas you would like to see done. We are in a fortunate position of having some funds saved up and would like to see if anyone had any good suggestions for research that would pertain to our area of interest. I will compile this list and get some insight from surrounding universities on if they are possible or not. If you have some ideas I would like for you to email them to me at [toddbohn@hotmail.com](mailto:toddbohn@hotmail.com) or give me a call at 816-331-3306. Please also mark your calendars and save the date for this years S&R golf tournament and auction on June 15th at Oakwood Country Club. I look forward to seeing everyone at the joint meeting on March 23rd at Manhattan Country Club.

---

## MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT

By Paul Davids, CGCS, Director

As we look forward to another challenging year in the turf industry, I want to remind everyone that membership dues have been mailed out three times. Your dues must be paid by April 30th if you want to be included in the 2009 membership roster.

I am beginning my second year as the Membership Director on the Heart Board and I am happy to announce my committee members for this year will be; Alex Tucker, Lawrence Country Club, John Sheehe, Helena Chemical Company, Tom Brown, Turf Professional Equipment Company, and Greg Jones, Indian Hills Country Club.

Three new members joined our association in January, they are; Joe Crane, Ironhorse Golf Club, Daniel Pfefer, Pfefer's Farm, and Charles Holloran, Garnett Country Club. We are always looking for individuals that are not currently members of the Heart and I invite you to pass along any contact information for individuals that may benefit by joining our association. If you know of someone please e-mail me at [pdavids@sycamoreridgegolf.com](mailto:pdavids@sycamoreridgegolf.com)

# Employee Tournament Report

By Chad Hinderliter, Special Director

I hope everyone is enjoying the winter. I know having a few months to actually take a breath have been very nice this year. As you all know it's time to start thinking about the up coming year of activities for the Heart. I want to mention, the Employee Tournament is still going to be in August, so please start thinking about who you want to send to bring the championship back to your course. Remember this is a great opportunity to reward those employees that have been working hard to make our job a success. We are still not 100% sure on the location of the event this year. So if any one has ideas please feel free to contact me, chadhinderliter@yahoo.com, or any other members on the Employee Tournament Committee.



Also, I would like to thank the Employee Tournament Committee members for volunteering to help out this year.

<b>Chad Hinderliter</b>	Lawrence Country Club	<b>Kenton Mangan</b>	Kansas Golf and Turf
<b>Ryan Hesseltine</b>	Overland Park Golf Course	<b>Matt Delventhal</b>	Meadowbrook Country Club
<b>Andy Klein</b>	Kansas City Country Club	<b>Jon Bakalar</b>	Overland Park Golf Course

We have a couple of new items we are going to be working on, so this year should be very eventful. Remember, starting thinking about who you want to send to represent your course in August for the Employee Tournament.

## GCSAA TV

Developed through a partnership with EPIC Creative, GCSAA TV at [www.gcsaa.tv](http://www.gcsaa.tv) offers professionally produced video designed to educate, enlighten and entertain. Viewers can enjoy highlights from the 2009 Golf Industry Show, an extensive archive of GCSAA footage, and current and past stories from the Superintendents' Video Magazine. New features will be added weekly, taking you behind the scenes at major tournaments and inside innovative golf operations, spotlighting the latest university research, offering first-hand tips from environmental leaders, and bringing you special features about your association.

"We see GCSAA TV as another means to communicate with a variety of key audiences," GCSAA CEO Mark J. Woodward, CGCS, said. "Golf is a visual sport and the opportunity to provide online video will allow us to tell our story more effectively. While it will be a tool to communicate with member golf course superintendents, we also see the content having value for golfers, golf facility employees, government officials at all levels, the environmental community and a host of others."



Utilizing the award-winning production services of EPIC Creative, a weekly feature will be posted online that focuses on a contemporary issue facing golf course managers. It will be supplemented by an extensive archive of footage that addresses a variety of golf course concerns. Video segments from industry will introduce products and services, and provide training for the user.

"We see the opportunity to partner with GCSAA as a means to mesh the leaders in content with our production services to benefit the golf industry," EPIC President Jim Becker said. "We will travel to every corner of the nation to provide resources that will assist the golf course management profession. There are a multitude of challenges that these talented individuals face, and it is our goal to help deliver an answer to them."

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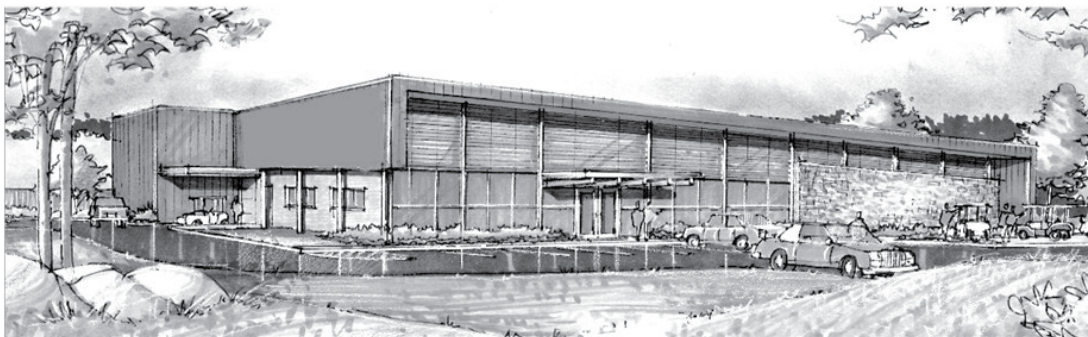
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# CHAPTER DELEGATES MEETING INFORMATION

By Bill Maynard, CGCS, Chapter Delegate Liaison



2009 GCSAA Annual Meeting held in New Orleans on February 6th.

At the annual meeting, Mark D. Kuhns, CGCS was elected president, James R. Fitzroy, CGCS was elected vice president, and Robert M. Randquist, CGCS was elected secretary/treasurer. With support from previous chapters, Sandy should win the secretary/treasurer race against our own Pat Finlen in February 2010. That scenario works well with Pat as his club would prefer Pat to wait until after the 2012 US Open to hold the office of President.

In the directors race, Keith A. Ihms, CGCS, and John J. O'Keefe, CGCS were re-elected as directors. The new director elected to the board this year is Peter J. Grass,

CGCS. Pete ran unopposed this year due to Bob Farren, CGCS and Jay Stein, CGCS sighting job conflicts and withdrawing their names from the election. As delegates, we all assume Bob and Jay will place their name in the hat for director in 2010.

Patrick R. Finlen, CGCS, and Sanford G. Queen, CGCS remain on the board for the last year of their two-year terms. As mentioned above, these two will run against each other for secretary/treasurer in 2010. David S. Downing, CGCS will serve an additional year as immediate past president and Ricky D. Heine, CGCS will leave the board as the outgoing past president.

This years meeting was a quick one as no new business was brought to the board from the floor. Couple that with no by-law changes or items for the delegates to vote on, the meeting went just a little over 60 minutes.

More information can be found at [gcsaa.org](http://gcsaa.org).



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I hereby make application for membership in the Heart of America Golf Course Superintendents Association and attach herewith my dues for the current year. If accepted, I agree to uphold the by-laws of this Association and subscribe to the following code of ethics. To the end that confidence and respect may be enjoyed by members of our Association, the code of ethics is promulgated and observation of its provisions required.

- Every member shall take pride in his/her work and regard it as a profession in which all members strive to maintain its good name.
- Realizing that the best asset that a member can have is thorough knowledge of his/her business, he/she shall constantly try to improve his/her knowledge and effectiveness by freely exchanging experiences and ideas with fellow members and take advantage of all opportunities for improvement.
- He/she shall endeavor to maintain courteous relations with his/her employer and his/her associates and endeavor to have his/her employees take pride in doing their work well.
- In accomplishing his/her own and the Association's best interest, observance of the following suggestions are recommended.
  - **Seeking Employment:** 1. Seek counsel of local associations when applying for a position in a new district; 2. Recommend only qualified GCSAA members; 3. Ascertain the wage scale in the district in which you are seeking employment, then uphold that talk with the person who last held or now holds the position of Golf Course Superintendent.
  - **Visiting:** 1. Present your HAGCSA or GCSAA membership card when visiting; 2. Always contact the Superintendent of the course you are visiting; 3. Honor requests for technical help from golf courses only when channeled through the Superintendent of the course making the request.

**Communication Consent:** I agree to receive notices, advertisements, announcements, brochures, and other information from Heart of America Golf Course Superintendents of America via facsimile, telephone or e-mail. I further agree that my express permission to fax, telephone or e-mail me such notices and other information will continue and have no date of expiration, unless a written request is received indicating a change in permission.

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## Desperate Times? Desperate Measures



**M**y commute home usually means exiting the interstate off-ramp close to my home. It is not uncommon to witness some down-on-his-luck, desperate soul camped out at the light, holding his tattered piece of cardboard, back pack resting close by, espousing whatever plight he was suffering through on that given day. *“Need money for bus ticket”* or *“Car broke down, trying to get home”* or *“Please help me. Can you spare some change?”* They all possess that hollow, haunting look as they silently implore the line of unfortunate commuters to cough up whatever ducats they can.

Now, I try not to let my natural tendencies toward unbridled cynicism cloud my judgment when the traffic light traps me with *said* beggar right outside my driver-side door. I’ll admit it is uncomfortable, especially when his fund raising attention falls directly upon me all because of that stupid, cell phone-yakking airhead who didn’t make the left turn quick enough to allow my escape on the yellow light! At this point, I normally search my pocket for loose change in a feeble attempt to fend off additional guilt. It is easier to just relent and allow Jerry to work the rest of his telethon victims. I remember one such instance. Reaching into my pocket produced no coinage, only a waded up \$20. *Crap!* I was not feeling *that* benevolent! Problem was, the corner bandit saw my move and was at my door ready to pluck his mark. Rolling down my window, I searched my brain for an appropriate response to this dilemma. Reading my mind, Roadside Clyde asked if I needed change. Nodding my head in disbelief, he deftly turned his body away from the line of cars behind us so as not allow the masses to witness the king size wad he produced from his ragged pocket in order to break my twenty. Peeling off 3 fives, he shoved them through my window and reached for my bill. For several seconds we both gripped opposite ends of that \$20, neither wanting to let go. I was rudely startled out of the impasse by the impatient honking of horns behind me spurred by the light that had just turned green ahead. Reluctantly giving up the tug-o-war, I slowly pulled away as I stared at the \$15 that I had exchanged for my \$20. Looking into my side mirror, I glimpsed the smug grin and insincere wave from Clyde. I drove the rest of the way home in utter disbelief at my silent impotence in playing Olathe Al’s version of the shell game. *I’m a schmuck!*

Upon reflection, I now realize that there is much that we, as Superintendents, can learn about operational funding from these guys. If your last budget exercise was anything like mine, maybe a new approach is warranted. I am currently seeking a virgin intersection, somewhere close to an upwardly mobile golfing community, where I can ply my trade. I have already scratched out a few signs on the back of empty fertilizer and seed bags. *“Mower broke down, greens getting shaggy”* or *“Need money for Pesticide License”* or *“Please help a GC Supt. Will work for plant food.”* I’ve been practicing my pathetic, down-in-the-mouth look in the mirror. I think I have it down. Now all I need to do is break out an old, frazzled, out-of style golf shirt and visor to perfect my guise. *Anybody got an old, beater backpack sprayer that I can lay at my feet in order to complete the look?*

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Tony Bertels, Editor

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## 2009 HAGCSA Schedule

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>
March 23	Joint Meeting with KGCSA
April 13	North/South Cup
May 11	Media & Past Presidents' Event
June 15	S&R Tournament
August	Employee Tournament
October 5-6	Mo. Cup Challenge
November 4	Annual Meeting
December 4	Holiday Party

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