



# The BONNIE GREENSWARD

OUR 97<sup>TH</sup> SEASON

2022 VOL. I



2021 Scholarship Recipient Ryan Foley  
with Brian Ley

## SEASON '22--WE HIT THE GROUND RUNNING, HAVEN'T LET UP

We should have known when the season kicked off at Atlantic City Country Club with a PAGCS victory over GCSANJ at War at the Shore that '22 would be one for the record books. See [page 10](#) for full coverage of this year's War At The Shore (WATS).

Not to be upstaged, the Scholarship Benefit Outing brought in nearly 100 players to celebrate the Scholarship Program. See [page 14](#) for full coverage and Turf Student Scholarship Application details—**Deadline is 9/1/2022**.

Then came the tearjerker: we presented the PAGCS' top honor, The Eberhard Steiniger Award, at the Member-Guest. See [page 12](#) for full coverage.

Think we are done with epic? Guess again. The upcoming Member-Member is the day after Labor Day at Rivercrest Golf Club and Preserve. We might have a few fun tricks up our sleeves for this!

Hives out: October 10 is the Association Golf Championship at the famous home of the KSGCC apiary and honey factory. Also mark 11/3 on your calendars for a networking and hospitality event with the PVCMA.

Cheers to an exciting 2022!



**PAGCS TOOK BACK THE WAR AT THE SHORE TROPHY  
AFTER MANY YEARS OF DEFEAT—PAGCS IS ON FIRE**

**#HEADINGTO100**

**LOGO CONTEST ANNOUNCEMENT**

Contest details to come soon!

**1C  
YEA**

## >>EVENTS

### MEMBER-MEMBER TROPHY EVENT

**Tuesday, September 6, 2022**

*Rivercrest Golf Club and Preserve:*

### PAGCS GOLF CHAMPIONSHIP

**Monday, October 10, 2022**

*Kennett Square Golf &  
Country Club*

### HAPPY HOUR WITH THE PVCMA

**Thursday, November 3, 2022**

*More info to come!*

### PAGCS HOSPITALITY EVENT IN ORLANDO

**Wednesday, February 8, 2022**

[Visit the website events tab for more!](#)

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Tim Edwards, Director  
Rivercrest Golf Club  
[tge@rivercrestgolfclub.com](mailto:tge@rivercrestgolfclub.com)

Greg Eisner, Director  
Fieldstone Golf Club  
[eisner128@gmail.com](mailto:eisner128@gmail.com)

Chris Toporski, Director  
LuLu Country Club  
[christoporski@gmail.com](mailto:christoporski@gmail.com)

Bill Corcoran, Industry Representative  
VENTRAC  
[BCorcoran@VENTRAC.com](mailto:BCorcoran@VENTRAC.com)

Michael Kachurak, Industry Representative  
Shreiner Tree Care  
[mikek@shreineretreecare.com](mailto:mikek@shreineretreecare.com)

Nick Sujkowski, Assistant Outreach  
Concord Country Club  
[nicksuj@gmail.com](mailto:nicksuj@gmail.com)

Jeff Haas, Golf Chairman  
Golf Cart Services  
[jhaas@golfcartservices.com](mailto:jhaas@golfcartservices.com)

## >> PAGCS OFFICE

Kristen Liebsch  
Executive Director  
Newsletter Editor  
484-467-5298  
[kliedsch@pagcs.org](mailto:kliedsch@pagcs.org)

## >> THE PM

Greetings to all as we are in the thick of season 2022. Golf rounds seem to be leveling off as people return to a normal life, which hopefully will give everyone more time to complete tasks. Inflation continues in the world and hopefully our affiliate members are dealing with those challenges along with the continued supply chain issues as best as can be expected.

Congratulations to all members of the Association on reclaiming the War at the Shore trophy in our annual event with the GCSANJ. I am appreciative of Darren Farrar leading the way as I was not able to attend the event due to greens aeration. Atlantic City CC always provides a great test of golf with the wind coming off the bay. [[see pg. 10 for more details](#)].

As the season picks up, Darren and Jeff Haas have prepared an excellent line up of events for the year. With May being a hectic time for all, we scheduled two events in June 2022. The Scholarship Benefit at Sandy Run and the Member-Guest at Green Valley, as course conditions in June are usually impeccable and the weather more cooperative. [[see pgs. 14](#)]. Thank you to all who attended these events—we had over 90 players at each!

Chris Walton of Coatesville and Alan Fitzgerald of Ledgerock hosted First Green events in the spring. Thank you to both members for promoting what we do. As labor and Assistant shortages continue, exposing young people to all the great things about this industry is important for a successful future for all of us. A special thank you as well to Kristen Liebsch for all that she does for us in preparing these events. Please reach out if you want to host one of these events.

Darren and I have also discussed with GAP the timing of the spring team matches. A group of industry representatives will meet this fall to determine if there is a more suitable time than spring. We recognize all of our members' frustration with the weather and spring aeration and will report back after the meeting.

Finally, in July, we returned to the family event at the Phillies. Adding a tailgate to the festivities, it was a "Phun" afternoon for everyone to get away from the course or out of the truck and enjoy camaraderie. [[coverage to come in the next issue of the newsletter](#)]

I look forward to seeing everyone at our Member-Member Trophy Tournament on 9/6 at Rivercrest. ♦

Respectfully,



## >> LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

May 25, 2022

It is with a heavy heart that I send this letter today. There are no words to say during this difficult time. Tragically, the Philadelphia golf area lost a great man on Monday afternoon. Chris Chizauskie was a Project Manager with Mottin Golf Course Renovations and a friend to many in the area. Chris aspired to one day become a golf course architect and anyone who had met Chris knew he was on his way to achieving amazing success. Anyone who met him during his work at various projects in the Philadelphia area were immediately impressed with his character, work ethic, attention to detail, and creativity. Personally, I had the pleasure of getting to know Chris as he oversaw renovation work at Concord in 2019 and 2020, he was integral to the success of those projects. Chris left us way too soon, but he did so doing what he loved.

To quote Architect Jim Nagle who had the privilege of working closely with Chris, "There is a certain beauty to this industry and that is the people. A tragedy like this is when the golf industry puts the work aside and recognizes the importance of the relationships and friendships built over the years." As an association I ask all of you reading this to do just that and keep Chris' family in your thoughts and prayers. I also ask that you keep Doug Mottin, Brett Nagy and their entire team in your thoughts and lend support to Josh Saunders and his team at Lancaster. Chris sadly cannot be replaced but the healing of those who loved him and knew him will be a long process. With the support of all of you in our association, we can comfort those who were close to him and affected by this tragedy in their healing process.

Memorial Services have not yet been announced but we will communicate them at the appropriate time.

Greg D'Antonio  
President  
PAGCS

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**John Slade**  
@jbslade33

A fantastic picture taken today by Assistant Superintendent, Don Holgersen. @LaurelCreekCC, @AudubonIntl



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# >> BOARD MEMBER PROFILE

## #MEETYOURBOARD

### WHO:

Chris Toporski, director

### CAREER:

Chris is currently the golf course superintendent at Lulu Country Club and working on renovating the bunkers and building a long-term plan to improve the historic Lulu Country Club.

Chris started off as a general laborer at Saucon Valley. He then enrolled in the Rutgers two-year Golf Turf Management Program after being part of the 2009 U.S. Women's Open grounds crew team.

After his time at Saucon, Chris worked at some notable clubs in the Philadelphia region, including Huntingdon Valley and Sunnysbrook. He also made a year trip to Hilton Head to gain experience at May River Golf Club.

### PERSONAL:

Chris grew up outside of Reading, PA, learning to golf from his grandfather. He did so on the golf courses managed by his uncles in northwestern Pennsylvania. Chris is married to Sarah Toporski, his wife of nine years and has two little boys: Eric (6) and newest addition, Ryan. Outside of work, Chris enjoys time running, playing baseball with Eric, cooking and spending as much time with his wonderful wife.



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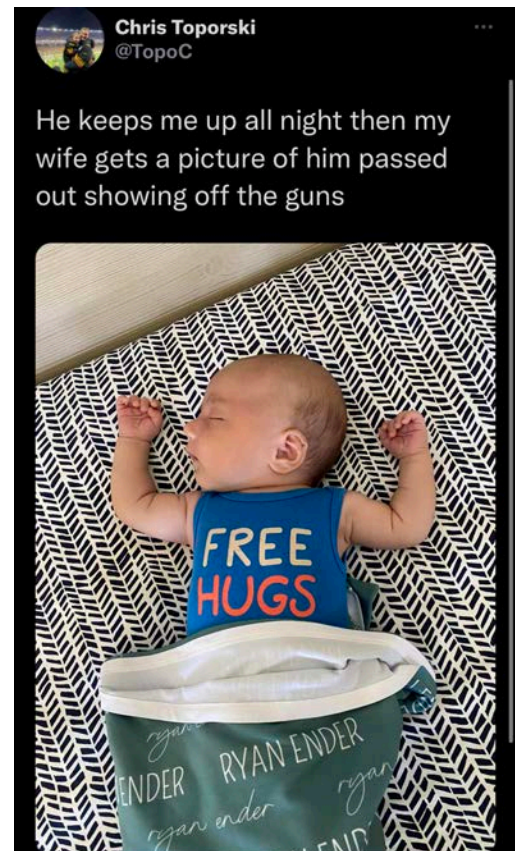
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## >> ASSISTANT'S CORNER

### ASSISTANT EDUCATION SERIES CONTINUES

by Nick Sujkowski, PAGCS Assistant Representative to the Board

Returning to Flynn's Roots: the long awaited Concord restoration

Many of you have asked me to do a piece about the work we have done at Concord, and I have always responded "maybe when we are finished." While the improvement projects on the golf course are never finished, the master plan started in 2011 by Superintendent Greg D'antonio is now completed.

This plan has ranged from minor adjustments to mowing lines on fairways and greens to full-scale overhauls of entire holes. The portion of the plan that included major changes to holes 14 through 18 began in the spring of 2019. The impetus for this project was to bring the course back to a more "William Flynn-esque" design and eliminate some of the changes made in the 1970s. While Concord will never get back to its original design due to land restrictions, Jim Nagle of Forse Design Inc. has made sure to do his very best to emulate Flynn's style with the land provided.

This plan was accepted by the membership with the stipulation that all work would be done in the offseason and there would be no assessment to them. Doing projects of this scale with no assessment to the membership called for doing the bulk of the work in-house. The experience of doing this magnitude of work in-house has been invaluable to me and to our staff, who are now very experienced in sodding, irrigation construction, drainage, bunker liner installation as well as tree and cart path removal.

The first leg of the plan that was started in 2019 began with the total reconstruction of hole 14. Previously, hole 14 was a blemish on Concord's reputation: it was a 570 yard par 5 that consisted of a blind second shot

and a 90 degree dogleg right that resulted in many lost balls. In order to rectify this, Nagle designed a more softened dogleg right par 4 that went slightly uphill into an area that was previously wooded to the right of the old fairway. The layout of the new 14th hole has been a great improvement to the course and the stellar green complex is one of my favorites on property.



14 and 15 before CCC

The second portion of this project was to create a new short par 3 which would help vary our par 3 distances. The new 15th hole takes its inspiration from the famed 11th at Shinnecock Hills, which is aptly named "the shortest par 5 in golf."

In Spring of 2021, we embarked on making improvements to the 17th and 18th holes. This project consisted of removing declining Ash trees that were previously guarding the edge of the fairway and would reject shots that were only slightly off target. These trees were then replaced with new strategically placed bunkers built with Flynn's style in mind.

The final portion of this project, which was just completed last month, consisted of reinstating a "Hell's Half Acre" of bunkers which was integral in the original Flynn design. A series of aerial photos shows that the bunkers were removed during



14 and 15 after CCC

## ASSISTANT'S CORNER

Got any cool projects or stories to share in 2022? We want to hear from you!  
Contact Nick: [nicksuj@gmail.com](mailto:nicksuj@gmail.com)





16before CCC

the Great Depression in order to make the course more affordable to maintain. Number 16 came with its challenges as this past winter's weather gave us difficult conditions to work in. We are very proud of the effort put forth by our team to complete this project and turn the course back to the members in time for opening day.

I would be remiss if I did not mention all the fantastic work done by Mottin Golf Course Renovations. Mottin was

integral in shaping of bunkers, greens, earthmoving, etc., and we could not have done this work without their help. We owe a great deal of gratitude to our staff, Green Committee, and membership for getting this work completed, as well as the tireless work done by Superintendent Greg D'Antonio and former and current assistant superintendents - Jake Lasco, Matt Mount and John McCauley to accomplish this overwhelming task.

After writing this article, I learned of the tragic passing of Chris Chizauskie of Mottin Golf Renovations. Chris was the project manager for the rebuild of number 15 and we worked very closely with him for over a month. He was a joy to work with each day and he had a bright future coming his way in this industry. Not only was he great at what he did but he was also a great person to spend time with and made those long days in the trenches much more enjoyable. My thoughts and prayers are with all of those affected by his passing. ♦



16after CCC

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## >> MEETINGS AND EVENTS

### TEAM PAGCS WITH THE HAT TRICK

-ANOTHER VICTORY AS WE RETAKE THE WAR AT THE SHORE TROPHY

*War at the Shore 2022: 4/20/2022, Atlantic City Country Club*

The PAGCS scored a solid victory with 244 points over GCSANJ's 212 to bring the WATS trophy back to PA for the first time since 2009. In the past year, the PAGCS has captured the MET Championship as well as GCSAA's Net Championship\*.

\*WATS was not held from 2017-2020, resuming in 2021.



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- Have been or are employed by a PAGCS member
- Letters of recommendation from both an academic advisor or professor and PAGCS member employer
- Letter of intent, resume, and academic transcript

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## ASSOCIATION AWARDS HIGHEST HONOR

NOMINATED BY SUMNER CROSS, JIM STAURING RECEIVED THE 2022 EB STEINIGER AWARD

March 8, 2022

I would like to nominate Jim Stauring, longtime PAGCS member for the 2022 Eb Steiniger award. During his years as a PAGCS member Jim served as a course superintendent under Joe Owsik at Philmont CC and was the longtime superintendent at Bensalem Township Country Club.

Jim was actively involved with the PAGCS, serving on the BOD for several terms. For many of Jim's years on the board Jim was responsible for remembrances. I believe that this is a position that is no longer active but was very important in the pre-social media days. Jim was responsible for things such as: sending condolences to members that lost a family member, sending congratulations (that sometimes included a savings bond) to members celebrating family milestones (birth of a child/wedding or special anniversaries) and welcoming new members into the association.

Jim's role as remembrances coordinator has carried over into his everyday life. While at Bensalem, Jim created a parking space reserved for former military members. He has remained in touch with retired, former board members to let them know that the friendships made while in the association also extend into the future after life as a superintendent.

Jim was never in the limelight but was always available to serve or help a new superintendent with some of the everyday situations they may not have been prepared for.

Because of his humility and willingness to serve others, I would like to nominate Jim Stauring for the 2022 Eb Steiniger award. Thank you.

Sumner Cross



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Kristen Liebrech,  
executive director,  
156 Roslyn Avenue  
Glenide, PA 19038  
484-467-5298  
kliebrech@pagcs.org

May 19, 2022

Dear Jim,

The Board of Directors of the PAGCS is proud to honor you as the 2022 Eb Steiniger Award Recipient, the Association's highest honor.

Your tenures as a leading Golf Course Superintendent, PAGCS Board Member and PAGCS Officer exemplify the spirit of the Eb Steiniger award. As you know, this award is presented to an individual in the turfgrass profession who models the spirit of Eberhard Steiniger, CGCS, who dedicated his life to the game of golf by advancing the profession of golf course superintendent.

From your start on the Board in 1992 through your tenure as Sergeant-at-Arms, you led the way in showing the membership compassion and care, particularly as the remembrances chairman.

In his nomination letter, Sumner Cross attested to this legacy: "Jim's role ... has carried over into his everyday life. While at Bensalem Country Club, Jim created a parking space reserved for former military members. He has remained in touch with retired, former board members to let them know that the friendships made while in the Association also extend into the future after life as a superintendent."

It is with great excitement that the Association prepares to honor you and your legacy on June 27<sup>th</sup>, during our Member-Guest event at Green Valley Country Club. We encourage you to invite your family and friends to the event as well.

Sincerely,

The PAGCS Board of Directors

Good Afternoon Kristen;

I just wanted to take a minute and say Thank You to you, Sumner and the PAGCS Board for honoring me with the Eb Steiniger award. As I mentioned in my speech I am VERY honored to have been considered. Also I had a GREAT experience serving on the board all those years. Met some good people and made some lifelong Friends. And a Special thanks to Green Valley CC for a Great day.

Thanks Again to everyone Jim Stauring



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## >> SCHOLARSHIP AND M&E

# THREE DECADES STRONG AND COUNTING— ASSOCIATION SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM CELEBRATES THE FUTURE OF THE INDUSTRY

The PAGCS held another successful Scholarship Benefit outing at Sandy Run Country Club on Monday, June 6. Started in the '90s, the Association's Turf Student Scholarship Program was made possible by the leadership of George E. Ley. Building on that, Frank T. Shuman added to the momentum in the 2000s with a scholarship in his father's name, Frank I. Shuman. Since then, the program has expanded to include a third scholarship in the name of the PAGCS.

**2022 application deadline is 9/1/2022**

Requirements:

- Current Turf student of an accredited turf/agronomy program not graduating before 8/30/21
- Have been or are employed by a PAGCS member
- Letters of recommendation from both an academic advisor or professor and PAGCS member employer
- Letter of intent, resume, and academic transcript

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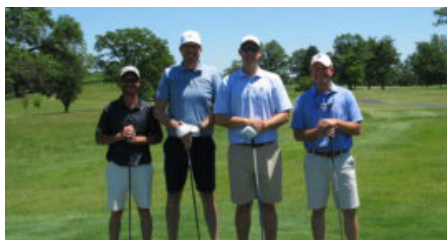
**2022 Outing Golf Results [Four-person Scramble]**

Top three:

A. Wager, L. Hess, C. Martin, J. Przystup  
B. Helcoski, D. Farrar, M. Barlow, D. Goehler  
M. Molchan, N. Tristani, B. Hager, P. Donato



2021 Scholarship Recipient Ryan Foley with Brian Ley





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\*Survey of 255 golf course superintendents conducted via TechValidate in Sept. 2021.

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## TEAM SLICK AND A TRICK

In *Belts, Bedknives, Bolts* we feature the backbone of golf course maintenance operations—the Equipment Managers and relevant content. This category of Association membership is growing rapidly and includes some of the most dynamic individuals in the PAGCS.

Recent and ongoing tournaments in our region have further highlighted the critical role these professionals play in the success of every golf course operations team.



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## WE HAVE A VILLAGE!

Once again, Coatesville Country Club hosted another First Green event for a large group of 4th graders on Monday, May 9. Coming together as a team, PAGCS members along with the alliance [GAP, PGA Section, etc.] helped Superintendent Chris Walton pull off a field trip for over 130 students plus their teachers and chaperones.

Thank you, everyone!

[Click here](#) to view more photos.



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### THE CUMRU ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BIRD TEAM

The Bird Team was made up of eight 3rd grade students selected by their teachers. Our group met twice a six-day cycle for 30 minutes. [Click HERE](#) to enjoy a more about the program and the efforts by



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(973) 670-7139  
[briang@nobleurf.com](mailto:briang@nobleurf.com)

Michael Linkewich  
(267) 688-8900  
[link@nobleurf.com](mailto:link@nobleurf.com)

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(610) 349-9519  
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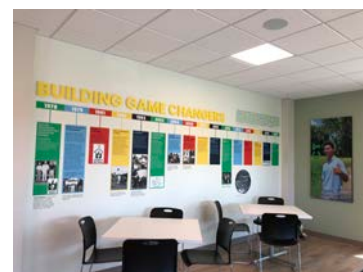




**First Tee — Greater Philadelphia’s** two favorite Joe’s volunteered during the PGA Works Collegiate Championship at both Union League Liberty Hill and The Union League Golf Club at Torresdale.

**Joe Alvare** from Walnut Lane Golf Club traveled down Henry Ave to Union League Liberty Hill and said the following: “It was a great experience for me to volunteer for the PGA Works Collegiate Championship. Not only did I have the privilege of maintaining a spectacular golf course designed by Gary Player, but I also had the honor of working with leading industry professionals such as representatives, golf course superintendents, assistant superintendents, and a tremendous staff. Being a part of the tournament preparations and working with knowledgeable people, some I knew and some I did not, was both a learning experience and inspiring at the same time.”

**Joe Diacovo** hopped just across the street from John F. Byrne Golf Club to The Union League Golf Club at Torresdale and said, “I had a great experience volunteering for the PGA Works Collegiate Championship. It was my first time working in that kind of environment for a tournament and I was very impressed with the professionalism of the home course staff. I would highly recommend anyone in a golf maintenance department volunteer for tournament preparations. It was fun, interesting, and an all around great experience.”





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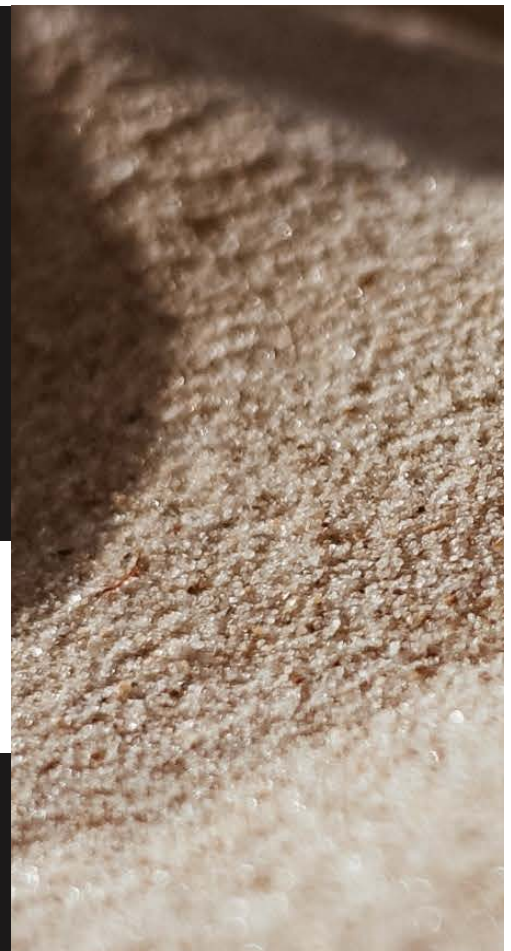
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## A VETERANS VOICE: JULY 20, 1970

This is the day our plane landed at McGuire Air Force Base in New Jersey with a load of happy Army Vietnam Veterans returning home. When I hear the saying, "There is no place like home," I think of all those happy vets.

Mom and Dad Repsher, wife Linda and then six-day-old young Henry drove right out onto the tarmac to the plane to pick me up. If not for the draft, I would not have spent my three years after high school graduation in the Army. However, I learned discipline and respect for our country. We sure could use that today.


—Henry Wetzel

[Henry is a former PAGCS Board Member, serving a total of 30 consecutive years, 27 of them as Secretary. He was awarded the 2012 Eb Steiniger Award.]

<https://pagcs.org/2022/07/21/a-veterans-voice-july-201970/>




Henry Wetzel, with beloved dog, Bill, in June of 2000 on the course at St. Davids  
July 20, 1970



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#### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

On behalf of our Association I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate John Segui on his election as President of the G.C.S.A.A. John has worked long and hard for this great achievement and is a credit to the P.A.G.C.S. and his profession. Looking in the past it's been since 1957 that we have had a member of the P.A.G.C.S. as President of the National and we should all be very proud of John. As this new golfing season quickly approaches, your new Board will continue the effort to keep everyone informed of the ever changing complexities of our business. In the past two years as Vice President, I have seen a greater interest in attendance at our meetings. More superintendents are bringing their assistants. I hope this will continue. This year your Education Committee, under Bob Jackson, has organized a great calendar of meetings for the year. Some of our meetings will offer credits towards your Pesticide License Recertification. We hope

#### JOHN SEGUI ELECTED PRESIDENT OF GCSAA


In an unanimous vote John Segui of Waynesborough Country Club was elected President of GCSAA in Houston.

John inherits an association that is on a roll. After years of turmoil and change, GCSAA is on the right track. Its leadership making great strides into the future.

This years show was another record breaking success. A credit to the current board at GCSAA. Many thanks to out-going president Don Hearn and good luck to John in the coming year.

#### Election Results From Houston

President . . . . .	John Segui	
Vice President. . . . .	Dennis D. Lyons	3201
	Gerald L. Faubel	766
Director. . . . .	Joseph G. Baidy	1691
	Gary D. Bennett	454
	Lee C. Dieter	548
	William R. Roberts	3663
	Kenneth A. Sakai	1450
	Michael Wallace	905
	Gerald L. Faubel	3045



Caption

# #HEADINGTO100

## LOGO CONTEST ANNOUNCEMENT

Contest details to come soon!

# 1C YEA



# Golf Course Trades

## HIGHLIGHTS INDUSTRY STRENGTHS, CHALLENGES AND INITIATIVES:

--The Sustainable Golf Superintendent

After years of zero to negative growth, the golf industry appears to be legitimately re-energized. New players are taking up the game, and existing players have returned to the sport in near-record numbers for the third consecutive year. But in today's unpredictable economy, golf superintendents understandably are torn between celebrating the resurgence and holding their breath to see what will happen next.

In our 2021 article "[What Will the Golf Course Industry Look Like in 2022?](#)" we sought to forecast golf's future. One reality became immediately clear: from club memberships to green fees, the rates need to go up at many facilities. Much of the golf industry has dragged its feet, resistant to raising rates in previous years when rounds of golf were declining. In attempting to avoid giving golfers one more reason to play less, course managers failed to make justified incremental price hikes.

However, revenue deficits created by chronically underpriced services are only one twist in the Rubik's Cube conundrum that superintendents must resolve. The hard-to-tap labor force, the direction of environmental regulations, and the pros and cons of automation are only a few of the many complexities of the puzzle.

Fortunately, the randomness of a Rubik's Cube can be brought into complete alignment as long as the person solving it remains flexible to handle the twists and turns that a solution requires.

### GREEN FEE DEFICITS IN THE FACE OF INFLATION

With more golfers on the course, many facilities face an urgent need to raise rates to cover increased maintenance, labor demands, and rising fuel and equipment costs. Some golf managers hesitate to raise fees, sensitive to the burden an inflationary economy already places on consumers.

U.S. Department of Commerce data for March sparks hope for sustaining the rebound in golf. Despite inflation, consumer spending was up 1.1 percent for the month with consumers spending more on necessities, such as gas, and luxuries such as dining and vacation travel. With employers scrambling to attract or keep workers on the job, much of the U.S. workforce is benefiting from higher wages, bigger paychecks, and better benefits, helping many households weather the highest inflation the U.S. economy has experienced in decades. While this is a positive update, no one can say how long escalating inflation will continue or what its impact will ultimately be on the expendable income of golfing Americans.

### HUNTING FOR WORKERS AND REDEFINING ROLES

"A long time ago in a galaxy far, far away," young adults who enjoyed the game of golf, liked to work outdoors, and had a sincere interest in growing, nurturing, and managing beautiful environments could work their way up from a summer job at a golf course to become a golf course superintendent. Their career path typically involved earning a degree in turfgrass science, applied horticulture, or a related field, fortified by hands-on experience and professional designations such as those offered through the educational programs of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA). Climbing the ladder from the second assistant to the first assistant to the head greenskeeper, workers could look forward to a lifelong career in their chosen profession.

Now, that idealistic career path feels long ago and far away. The average worker in America has a tenure of four years with any single employer. Jobs and the skills to perform them are continually redefined. Workers don't just change careers because they've grown restless or failed to perform. They move on or are forced out because they have grown obsolete.

Golf superintendents must continually reinvent themselves in a complex society. Environmental issues are under ever-growing scrutiny by both governing agencies and the public. No one can confidently say where regulatory guidelines for the environment are headed next.

With hiring workers nearly impossible for many courses, superintendents are forced to be wildly creative and flexible in fulfilling their staffing needs. While automation can help reduce workload, the same automation that makes many aspects of the superintendent's role easier can also make that role smaller and more easily replaced by technology.

As disheartening as this checklist of challenges sounds, careers in turf management generally face fewer problematic issues than careers in many other professions. Pursuing advanced degrees and taking advantage of absolutely everything the GCSAA offers keeps superintendents and turf managers current, visible, and connected to opportunities in turfgrass and in related professions.

More than 100 universities or colleges now offer degree programs in golf course management. The GCSAA website provides an up-to-date and highly [detailed online directory of Turf Programs](#), including contact information, and academic details. Expanding

*Continued on next page*

Continued from previous page

skills and adding to credentials can help superintendents stay in front of an evolving industry.

## OTHER GOLF MANAGEMENT DIRECTIONS

Beyond the specific roles of course maintenance, golf course agronomist, greenskeeper, course superintendent or turf manager is a wide range of other golf management careers. One avenue to many of these jobs is through the apprenticeship programs and the academic classwork developed by the PGA of America.

At seventeen universities across the country, the Professional Golfers Association of America (PGA) has sanctioned a four-and-a-half-year program that, upon successful completion, earns students both a bachelor's degree and PGA membership. Job placement rates after completing these programs are high.

Degrees through these programs lead to a range of golf industry jobs, including teaching golf or club pro, running the pro shop, Director of Golf, Tournament Director or other key position at a golf facility or in the golf industry. Turf managers with diverse golf industry training position themselves for expanded employment opportunities at all stages of their professional careers.

Universities in the U.S. that participate in the PGA Golf Management Program include:

- [Ferris State University](#) in Big Rapids, Michigan
- [Mississippi State University](#) in Mississippi State, Mississippi
- [New Mexico State University](#) in Las Cruces, New Mexico
- [Penn State University](#) in University Park, Pennsylvania
- [Campbell University](#) in Buies Creek, North Carolina.

- [Coastal Carolina University](#) in Conway, South Carolina
- [Methodist University](#) in Fayetteville, North Carolina
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- [University of Idaho](#) in Moscow, Idaho
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- [University of Maryland Eastern Shore](#) in Princess Anne, Maryland

## THE SOLUTION TO A GOLF SUPERINTENDENT'S RUBIK'S CUBE

Educator and author Peter Drucker has been called the Founder of Modern Management. Five years old at the start of World War I, Drucker's life spanned wars, economic turbulence, and even the attacks of 9-11. Drucker is credited with the observation that "the best way to predict the future is to create it."

A Rubik's Cube is hard, but like achieving a long and sustainable career, it is not impossible. Navigate the twists and turns. Don't be afraid to make changes, even when doing so means you temporarily take a step backward. Stay patient and above all else, always look ahead to your next move.



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## 2022 PGA WORKS COLLEGIATE CHAMPIONSHIP



*John Canavan, head of grounds at UL Liberty Hill, was honored during the PGA Works for his 40-year tenure at the facility, one that may win the award for the most name changes under one golf course superintendent's leadership.*

Recently the PGA Works Collegiate Championship was conducted on two of the Union League of Philadelphia's golf courses, Torresdale and Liberty Hill. This championship consisted of players from over 30 HBCU (Historically Black Colleges and Universities) from across the country, with both men and women participating and with team as well as individual flights. And we must tell you, these kids are good!

This was by far and away the largest scale event that we had ever hosted at the facility, and we had the extra challenge of meeting the PGA's directive of having playing conditions as close as possible on two separate and very different golf courses.

While our staff had been working hard for months preparing for the event, it is not possible to pull off an event of this size without our peers volunteering along with support from our industry partners. The sense of brotherhood and camaraderie in our profession is an honor to be a part of and to witness.

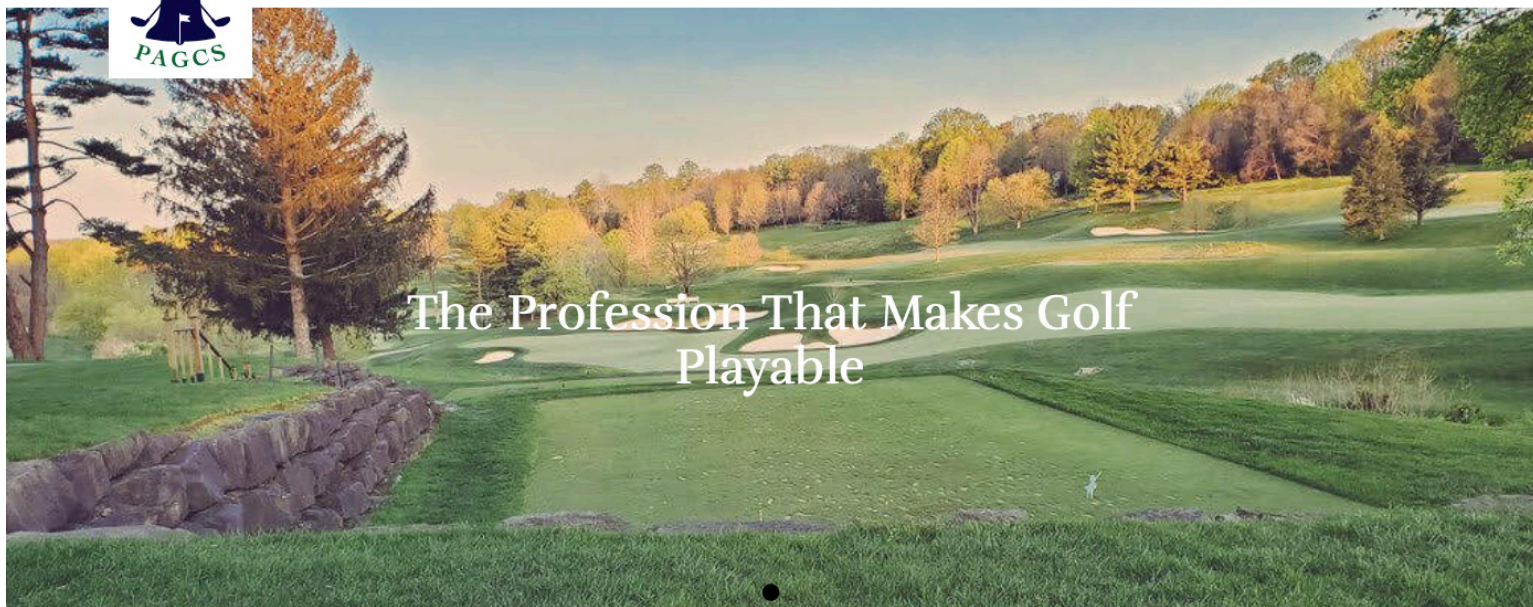
Each day of the tournament, we would have "roll call" at 5 a.m. and then again at 5 p.m. Our volunteers would eagerly accept and then go out and execute their assignments. Friendships were both forged and renewed during staff meals, that is if we are considering ice cream a meal?! The most admirable part was that they would not even wait around for an "atta boy" -- they would head right back to their day job!

The other bonus was seeing the pride our staff members had in showing off their golf course and their efforts. During the event, we worked through frost, rain, more frost, and darkness, but we had a lot of fun and laughs. We even managed to get our Executive Director soaked the one morning, sorry Kristen!

To close, we would like to thank all of our volunteers and our vendors who supported the event.... from lending us equipment, to sponsoring meals, to making it all possible.

The Liberty Hill Turf Team





Taken during the PGA Works event at The Union League at Liberty Hill, hole #18 now graces the home page of the PAGCS website.

To have a photo of your course featured on the PAGCS website please email: [kliebsch@pagcs.org](mailto:kliebsch@pagcs.org)

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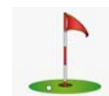
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## FOR FUN: FROM THE OTHER COAST: A WEST REGIONAL UPDATE

### IS THE JUICE WORTH THE SQUEEZE?

Cory Isom, agronomist, West Region

Uniform bentgrass greens, pure ryegrass fairways or unsullied bermudagrass tees all sound great to superintendents who are striving for that holy grail of uniform turf species on their golf course playing surfaces. However, financial and plant health costs can be high during this pursuit. As an example, keeping *Poa annua* at bay on a bentgrass green requires hand picking, expensive chemical applications, and a host of other cultural practices that can also negatively affect the desired bentgrass.

In some parts of the country there are very good reasons to fight this fight. *Poa annua* is a weaker species when it comes to stress tolerance, and it can be more susceptible to certain types of damage. However, it is always good to ask yourself if the juice is worth the squeeze when pushing for “pure” playing surfaces. If overall turf conditions are suffering because of

perennial efforts to eradicate or reduce unwanted grass populations, could those resources be better utilized by managing the mix of grasses that are clearly thriving in your specific conditions?

During USGA Course Consulting Service visits, I often reiterate that grass is better than dirt as a playing surface. If I have 100% coverage with four different species of turf that are well maintained, I’ll take that over less coverage with one species every day of the week. Too often I see weak or thin turf in key playing areas because a fight against unwanted grasses has taken a heavy toll on the desirable turf. If that sounds like your course, you might want to consider redirecting those resources toward making the best possible conditions with a mixed stand of turf. Golf is always better on grass.

This is not a wholesale recommendation to give up fighting unwanted grasses at



*Clearly, *Poa annua* is thriving in this environment despite the best efforts of the superintendent to keep it out. It might be time for a new strategy.*

your course. This is a reminder about the main goal of your maintenance operation – producing the best possible playing conditions given your climate and resources. Deciding whether to fight a particular grass or embrace a mixed stand can be a hot-button issue at many courses. If you’re looking for support in making these decisions, those of us in the USGA Green Section are happy to help. ♦



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## IN THE SPOTLIGHT

To change a putting green hole, my father uses a long cylindrical tool, a kind of giant cookie cutter. When he presses down, it cuts ...deep into the earth and brings up a perfect core of layered soil.

My father kneels beside me on the green, tracing his finger along the grass roots, which stretch and knit, impossibly... It astounds me. How can plants so tiny and delicate create such a vast empire in the soil? My dad shares my amazement, though it's not a new sight for him. He spends most of his day looking at roots, soil and miniscule blades of grass.

As a child, my family lived on a golf course ...Almost daily, [my father] would whisk my siblings and I across the course in his golf cart, quizzing us on soil hardness zones, showing us bird nests and baby turtles, or, if we were lucky, letting us run in the fairway sprinklers.



I learned from my father the language of awe—the delight of a heron skimming the surface of a golf course pond or the marvel of deciduous trees flashing their autumnal leaves like crown jewels. Nearly every day ... my father has woken up at 4am to, quite literally, watch grass grow. And every day, that tiny botanical triumph thrills him. I believe my greatest inheritance from my father is this—reverent gratitude for our natural world, unceasing joy in its overlooked gifts of dirt and water.

... living on a golf course taught me important lessons ... through play and exploration, I formed a deep relationship to the land, a reverence for my non-human neighbors.... ♦

[Anonymous, this contributor wishes to remain Anonymous—if you read this far and know the reference, email [kliebsch@pagcs.org](mailto:kliebsch@pagcs.org)]

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\*Survey of 255 golf course superintendents conducted via TechValidate in Sept. 2021.

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## NO LYIN': STRANDED SEA LION RESCUED FROM CALIFORNIA GOLF COURSE

AFTER 'VERY PREGNANT' SEA LION MAKES ITS WAY INLAND TO OMNI LA COSTA RESORT & SPA, SEAWORLD SAN DIEGO TEAM RETURNS HER AND PUP TO THE PACIFIC.

gcmonline.com July 5, 2022 | Andrew Hartsock

David Smallwood had just adjourned the daily morning meeting with his maintenance team at Omni La Costa Resort & Spa, and crew members were scattering, heading out to their appointed individual tasks, when Smallwood's radio crackled to life. The voice from the other end belonged to one of the team's irrigators, en route to hand-water greens.

"He said, 'Don't laugh. This is true. There's a sea lion over by 16 green,'" recalled Smallwood, Omni La Costa's GCSAA Class A director of agronomy and 19-year association member.<

Despite the irrigator's entreaty, Smallwood and his staff couldn't keep a straight face.

"We all looked at each other and cracked up laughing," Smallwood says. "I thought, 'This guy's crazy. It's not a sea lion.'"

He wasn't lyin'; 'twas a (sea) lion.

Smallwood and a couple of assistants headed over to the Legend Course's 16th green, where they found a solitary sea lion, just lyin' there. What made its appearance so unusual is that, while the Carlsbad, Calif., course is near the ocean, it's not exactly on it.

"It's not a call you get often," Smallwood says. "I've seen a lot of animals on the golf course, but this was my first sea lion encounter."

Technically, it was his first and second — the trespassing sea lion was, even to Smallwood's untrained eye, very obviously with pup.

"She was just hanging out, and we didn't know if she was hurt or really why she was there," he says. "When the sea lion started rolling over, we could see she was very pregnant."

Omni La Costa is just a short hike from the Pacific Ocean — roughly 3 miles, as the seagull flies. The nearest significant body of water, the Batiquitos Lagoon, abuts La Quinta property, but it would still be quite a haul for our flippered friend, baby bump or no. Smallwood speculates the previous night's high tide pushed the preppers pinniped through the lagoon and into an adjoining creek that meanders through the course.

Once it was determined she was not injured and merely in the family way, the staff kept an eye on her to keep her safe, and the call went out, first to a local Department of Fish and Wildlife, then to SeaWorld San Diego Animal Rescue. As the SeaWorld team was assessing the situation, the sea lion was living its best



*With help from SeaWorld's rescue team, a golf course superintendent in Carlsbad, Calif., helped a misguided sea lion return to her natural habitat. Photos courtesy of Omni La Costa Resort & Spa*

life, taking a dip in the creek, rolling around in the fairway and lounging near the 16th green.

"I really thought she was going to have her pups right there," Smallwood says. "It was pretty wild."

Before long, the SeaWorld Rescue team arrived.

"Omni La Costa ... they were amazing," said Jeni Smith, SeaWorld Rescue Team supervisor. "A team member escorted us onto the golf course, showed us where to go. The first thing they said was, 'Are you looking for the sea lion on hole 16?' I said, 'I hope so. I hope you don't have more than one.'"

At first, the team considered steering the sea lion toward the creek and, ultimately, the lagoon. But at low tide, there wasn't much water in the creek, so the team turned to rescue mode.

"She looked very healthy and very pregnant," Smith says. "But she looked like she was aware of her surroundings. There didn't appear to be anything neurological going on with her, but she wasn't close enough to a water source to find it on her own."

The team parked its 4X4 on the rough behind the green and, with a little encouragement, managed to corral the sea lion — "She was vocalizing the whole way, like, 'What the heck is happening?'" Smith says — in a transportation unit, which the truck drove to nearby Carlsbad State Beach.

*Continued on next page*



Continued from previous page

"We have a great relationship with the lifeguards," Smith said. "We wanted to pick a spot that's not super popular with people. The lifeguards escorted us on the beach, and we created a little pathway with trucks and another little lane so people wouldn't run in front of her. We opened the doors, and she walked onto the beach and right into the ocean."

Thus, the SeaWorld Animal Rescue Team added to its impressive total of 40,000-plus animal rescues over its 50-plus years. — even if it operates under the radar.

"I didn't realize," Smallwood says, "they did animal rescues like that."

They do, though the Omni La Costa encounter was unusual. "It's a beautiful golf course," Smith says, "but we were definitely surprised. It sounds funny: There's a sea lion on the golf course."

It is not necessarily, however, the most unusual of their sea lion rescues even this year. A male sea lion shut down a busy freeway east of downtown San Diego in January. That was his second experience beating feet, er, flippers. In November 2021, he was rescued while "walking" along Harbor Island Drive.

He rehabbed at SeaWorld for a bit before being released the second time. The sea lion, nicknamed "Freeway" for his highway high jinks, was spotted inland again, in a storm drain in Logan Heights, about a half mile from the San Diego Harbor. Had he continued up-drain, Freeway could have made it back to the same highway interchange where he was nabbed during his previous foray a-flipper.

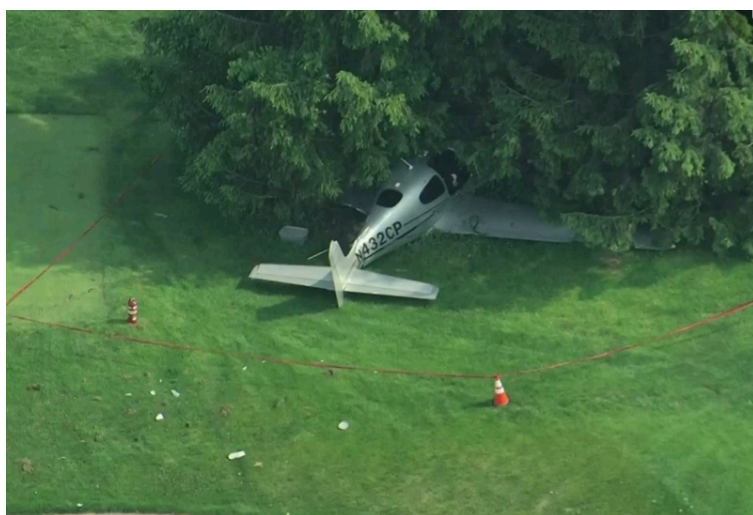


*The stranded, pregnant sea lion relaxes on Omni La Costa's green before being returned to the ocean.*

While dealing with the Omni La Costa sea lion — dare we dub her "Fairway"? — Smith couldn't help but think about Freeway.

"The joke was that she was calling (Freeway) on her shellphone," Smith cracks. "I was on his rescue team twice of his three rescues. That was peculiar. I couldn't help but think, 'Oh, my goodness, what are these sea lions doing?'" ♦

## DROP IN AND ENJOY-- things you don't SEA every day on the golf course



Locally, it was a wild, yet miraculous, ride last month over St. Davids Golf Club in Wayne. The passengers were okay, and no one on the golf course was hurt. The landing site is mere yards from the maintenance facility and Golf Course Superintendent Collin Harley confirmed that there was minimal damage to the course and turf. Regardless, a wayward sea lion or German paraglider might be preferable course companions.



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