

## **YARN #37 [May/June 2013]**

### **GCSAA and its important to the industry**

The middle of February of this year 2013 I was invited to be a participant in an educational seminar that was put on for golf course superintendents in the central Pennsylvania area. The educational seminar was the winter educational meeting of the CPGCSA [“Central Pennsylvania Golf Course Superintendents Association”] there were seven sessions conducted by seven professional speakers whose areas of expertise and sessions covered:

1. Soil Physical Properties
2. Soil Chemical Properties
3. Reel Technology [Mowers]
4. U.S. Open preparations / The Olympic Club
5. Golf Safety Regulations
6. Sustainable Water Issues
7. Tournament Preparations

The attendance was good and the sessions extremely educational. I always learn something from the other speakers when I am part of such a seminar and this seminar was no exception.

The session that was on the U.S. Open preparations was an eye opener to say the least. The session was conducted by Mr. Pat Finlen, CGCS and Director of Golf at the Olympic Club. Mr. Finlen is also the current President of the GCSAA [Golf Course Superintendents of America Association]. During Mr. Finlen’s session there were many questions which were answered, however one of the answers and the discussion that followed was to me mind blowing. The answer that I am referring to was that only 52% of the golf courses in America have a representative that is a member of the GCSAA.

#### ***How is this possible when the GCSAA is our greatest source of information?***

The one seminar with seven sessions that took place at the CPGCSA seminar in February was worth thousands in regards to what the attendees were able to take back to their facilities. This one day of seminar sessions was just a very tiny micro-chip in regards to all of the educational seminars that are available through the GCSAA. Once a year the GCSAA has a massive GIS [Golf Industry Show] with hundreds of educational sessions and hundreds of exhibitors. This year 2013 the show was held in San Diego and there were 517 exhibitors spread out over 172,900sq.ft.

*The annual cost to be a member of the GCSAA is \$365 for superintendents and \$185 for assistant superintendents.*

When I asked those superintendents that were in attendance at the CPGCSA winter educational meeting, and that were not members of GCSAA why they were not members, the answer without exception, was that the club refused to pay for the membership. I find it very difficult to believe that a golf club would decide not to invest \$365/\$550 in our industries major source of information and education.

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