

RHODE ISLAND SURE 'n' TURF

GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENTS ASSOCIATION



25th Anniversary Conference and Show!



On March 8, the New England Regional Turfgrass Conference and Show will open for the 25th time! We have had two whoopses, but overall it has been an incredible run since 1998....in 2015, we had a heck of a snow storm right in the middle of the show that basically closed us down, and in 2021 we had Covid-19 that forced us to go virtual with some success. So, here we sit, waiting to see if the new Omicron variant will have an effect in March. As it stands right now we have a green light, full steam ahead plan preparing for our historic meeting March 8-10, 2022. We have had a great response with most exhibitors planning on supporting the show. The feelings are that Exhibitors are anxious to get back to the business of supporting the industry and communicating with their customers as we approach a new growing season. Even with all the multimedia that is out there, a trade show atmosphere is still the preferred way for vendors and buyers to come together. We hope you are planning on being there!

We have also had a rush on early online registration with many people already registered even before our brochure has made it through the mail to potential attendees. All the information is on our website, and with our new registration system, it never has been easier to sign up for the show. Our goal each year is to have the best education program available in the industry. Education is #1. This year will be no different than other years, with 42 of the best speakers in the industry giving presentations over the three days! You can't afford to miss this year's education program!

Needless to say, we are all anxious to get back to our yearly show. We want to continue to do our best for the industry. The foundation currently is reviewing research proposals for 2022 and beyond. We remain being focused on turfgrass research that can help courses in New England! There will be challenges at the show, we just don't know to what extent we will have to deal with them. Right now, you might know that we have a mask mandate for the convention center. This means we must wear them while we are indoors within the convention center. We hope by March this restriction will be relaxed, but we won't know this until we get to the end of February. As I mentioned, some exhibitors are opting to not come and it is expected that some individuals may feel the same way. Whatever the case, the foundation is committed to having another successful conference and show. The risks are much lower than they would have been a year ago. Many are vaccinated, Omicron is not as nearly as a threat that Covid-19 was, the convention center has this state of the art hospital grade ventilation system installed when it was a overflow facility for Covid and finally as a group we have adjusted our personal habits that are so important in keeping people safe. Hand sterilization, better hygiene, social awareness and being used to wearing quality masks. These things are all important and manageable for us to all have and make the 25th Annual Turfgrass Conference and Show another great success!

See you all in March!

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President's Message



Happy New Year everyone, I'll be honest, Julie's been waiting patiently for me to get this in for over a week, but I've got nothing. I mean what is there to talk about in the middle of January? It's dark and cold, so we got that going for us. Seriously though, I hope everyone had wonderful holidays and I look forward to seeing many of you next week at Potowomut Golf Club.

Stay warm.

John Lombardi
RIGCSA President

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RIGCSA Holiday Networking Meeting at O'Brien's Pub

Winners of the "Ugly Holiday Sweater" Contest



Kelley and Chris Coen



Matt and Kim Emond



Photos by Michelle Maltais

RIGCSA Holiday Networking Meeting at O'Brien's Pub



Photos by Michelle Maltais

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Kevin's GCSAA Corner By Kevin Doyle, GCSAA Northeast Field Rep.



One talking point that has been a lead topic at every site visit I can remember is labor. In the early years it would typically revolve around the quality of the crew. Now of course, discussion leans more towards volume, are you able to find enough labor. There are forward thinking people undertaking creative ways to solve those issues, and enterprising individuals blazing trails to assist others. One recent site

visit reminded me that the oldest marketing strategy may still be a very effective method. While word of mouth may work for some, would it work for you?

I was delighted to hear Chris Johnson at Bellport CC tell me that his labor was in good shape. For this to occur on the south coast of Long Island was truly surprising to me. I know so many superintendents on the Island struggle to find labor. Johnson explained to me that a 2020 hire had recommended employment at the club to a family member. She was brought on this year and was a great fit! Word of mouth working at its best, but is it really that easy?

So, let's say one of your employees approached me and wanted me to work at your facility. What do you think they would say? They could be your biggest sales staff. Good pay, engaging work, flexible hours when needed, and being a wonderful place to work? That would pique my interest.

Now if I approached a friend of mine, one of your employees, and asked if they are hiring. I didn't receive the afore mentioned information, instead I got the opposite. Pay is ok, no flexibility to handle personal items, some people are nice but all I do is string trim and rake bunkers.

If you have tried to utilize current employees to fill out your staff, they may indeed have already given you a heads-up about your operation. If it worked, you may have found a great mix of the items employees are looking for. If your word-of-mouth initiative wasn't successful, understanding why could help grow your crew/business.

This area of Surf 'n' Turf has expanded on employee feedback before. The staff performing daily tasks are often the best resources for ideas to maximize efficiency. We have highlighted off-season strategic planning and how building a plan with the entire staff can build ownership in those new-inovative ideas. Consider utilizing your best possible sales staff, your current employees, to ensure your facility and employment opportunities are the best they could possibly be. If your employees are seeking to bring friends or loved ones to your team, you know you have built an employee package

and inclusive culture that everyone at the facility can be proud of.

GCSAA Resources and Deadlines you Get Cool Stuff from your Association Already

Get started on Facility BMP Manuals

Once your state BMP manual is available through GCSAA's BMP Planning Guide and Template you can easily create a facility BMP manual for your facility. Access is easy with your GCSAA website member log-in using the link immediately below, then select the facility BMP icon and go. Webinars are available to assist you with this easy to use tool.

Visit this link and click on "Access the Facility BMP tool"

<https://www.gcsaa.org/environment/bmp-planning-guide>

Again, if I can be of any assistance, please feel free to contact me.

Kevin Doyle

Tom Irwin

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RIGCSA Member News

Welcome New Members

Tyler Hemingway, Assistant Superintendent,
Wanumetonomy Golf & CC

Condolences

Our condolences are extended to **Richard and Susan Lombardi** on the passing of Susan's mother, **Lucy Galasso**, on November 29, 2021.

RIGCSA Membership dues renewal statements will be emailed out after the annual meeting on January 26th per the bylaws. If you do not have an email address on file, we will mail you the dues statement. You can pay for you dues online or mail in a check to the office. Any questions, please contact Julie Heston, (401) 934-7660 or jheston@verizon.net.

Thank you to everyone that donated to our online donation drive in December. We raised \$1000 which was donated to the RI Community Food Bank and Toys for Tots.

The Rhode Island GCSA is now offering an Equipment Manager membership for \$75 for the year.

(\$112.50 to join which includes a one-time application fee)

Help grow the Equipment Manager Profession and Community in the Rhode Island and nearby areas

- You will have access to attend RIGCSA meetings, networking and educational opportunities
- Visit www.rigcsa.org for more information and to apply!

If your club or company has received an award or distinction, please send a brief description to Julie Heston jheston@verizon.net or Michelle Maltais nonquitt687@cox.net and will list in the Member News section of the Surf 'n' Turf newsletter.

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RIGCSA Member News

2022 Slate of Officers

As proposed by the RIGCSA Nominating Committee

President: **John Lombardi**

Vice President/Secretary: **Matthew Emond**

Treasurer: **Michelle Maltais**

Past President: **Michael Varkonyi**

Director: **Thomas Hoffer**

Director: **Daniel McDermott**

Director: **Patrick Meehan**

RIGCSA 2022 Meeting Schedule

March TBA:

Retiree Appreciation, Distinguished Service Award, Golf Awards

April 28:

RI Turfgrass Foundation Event, Country Club of New Bedford

April or May TBA:

Bear Cup at Franklin Country Club (joint meeting with NE and Cape)

June 27:

Member/Member, Alpine Country Club

July 18:

Rho-Cod Cup, The Bay Club

August 8:

Stress Buster, Whitinsville Golf Club

September 12:

Championship, North Kingstown Golf Course

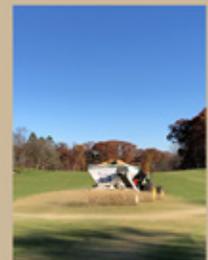
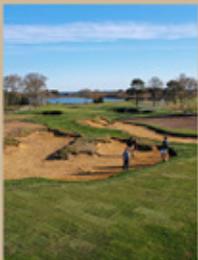
October 24:

Superintendents/Assistants, Newport Country Club

November TBA:

Jamestown Golf Course

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RIGCSA Member News



Rhode Island DEM Green Golf Course Certification Program Reminder

This is a good time of year to work on the checklist and it might even be good practice for one of your assistants to do. The numbers generated by this program help get us recognized as a group which is doing something about environmental issues and needs to be listened to.

For more information about this program and how to get started, please click on this link

Below is a list of the current courses that have completed the Green Certification Program.

- **Agawam Hunt**
- **Alpine Country Club**
- **The Aquidneck Club**
- **Button Hole Golf Course**
- **Green Valley Country Club**
- **Goddard Memorial State Park**
- **Kirkbrae Country Club**
- **The Misquamicut Club**
- **Newport Country Club**
- **Newport National Golf Club**
- **Pawtucket Country Club**
- **Point Judith Country Club**
- **Potowomut Golf Club**
- **Rhode Island Country Club**
- **Sakonnet Golf Club**
- **Shelter Harbor Golf Club**
- **Wannamoissett Country Club**
- **Wanumetonomy Golf & Country Club**
- **Weekapaug Golf Club**

From the Grill

We recently posed a question to our membership.

What is your New Year's resolution for 2022?

Rick Lawlor – Play more golf

Pat Meehan - To play more golf!

Tim Berge

Sell More

Ski more. Hopefully some of those days with my friend Drew.

Get to a Platinum medal in the ski race league.

Play more golf.

Hopefully my family and friends stay healthy.

Vincent A Iacono

Taking the Year off from resolutions due to Covid!



Save the date for the
RIGCSA Family & Friends Ski Day
Friday, March 4th from 4:00 pm – 9:30 pm
Skiing & Pizza Party in the
Spruce Mountain Suite
More details to come.

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- Show Reception • Informative Presentations
- Lunch on Thursday

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Trade Show Hours

Wed., March 9 • 9am-5pm with *Live Auction & Reception*
Thurs., March 10 • 9am-1pm

Educational Session Hours

Tues. March 8 • 8am-5pm *Several Pre-Conference Seminars including Full-Day Cemetery Management and Grass Tennis Court Management*

Wed., March 9 • 8am-11am & 1pm-4pm
Golf, Sports Turf & Grounds, Equipment Techs.

Thurs., March 10 • 8-10am & 1pm-3:30pm
Golf, Sports/Grounds, Equipment Techs and Lawn Care/Landscapes

Pre-Conference Seminars

Tues., March 8 • 8am-5pm
Call (401) 841-5490 *Visit website for details*

Sports Turf Seminar

Thurs., March 10 • 8:30am-11am *From Concept to Planning to Construction to Maintenance and Beyond!*

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