

**(shop)**

## Get 'round TUIT

Now is the time to tackle those little tasks that annoy you in busy times.

Do it in the offseason. Or when nature hates you ... too much snow, rain or wind. Not enough daylight. Call it deferred maintenance. Or busy work. Or "idle hands are the devil's workshop."

Whatever the size of your operation or your budget, there are things that really should get done. You'll never know how much downtime you'll avoid.

### Fuel cans

A ½-inch PVC pipe cap fits nicely on the spout of the old-style plastic fuel jugs that lost their lid. Install a small eye hook and chain to keep the new cap with the spout.

Help your fuel cans breathe. Install metal vents on your cans. Or just buy some replacements for those yellow vent hole flippers that have broken off over time. Maybe get new spouts and fittings for under \$20. Use colored zip ties to mark the kind of fuel in the can.

### Compressed air system

Drain the water from your compressor's tank. Remove the existing drain valve, install a new fitting in the tank and use a piece of air hose to position the tank drain in a convenient place that's easy to reach. Premade setups are under \$15. No more crawling under the tank to let the water out. Or, if the budget allows, get an automatic electrical/electronic drain system, often under \$50. Spray soapy water on air system connections and replace the bleeders.

### Water-resistant electrical plugs

Corroded connectors plaguing your mower and tractors? Get a waterproof automotive electrical connector kit so your machines can have the kind of moisture resistance enjoyed by cars and trucks for the last quarter century.

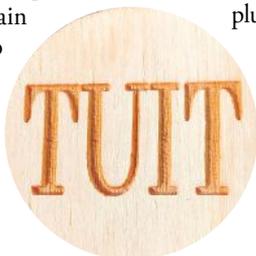


**Top:** Minimize corroded electrical connections with a kit of "watertight" connectors. It takes some patience and delicate work but saves downtime. **Photos by Scott Nesbitt**

**Above:** Leaky air system connectors are easily found with a spray of soapy water. Cut down on compressor noise and power waste by stopping the leaks.

**Left:** A retrofit metal vent makes pouring fuel easier, and color zip ties mean this is two-cycle mix.

**Inset:** A round wooden tourist trinket that urges action.



It's good work for those with patience and a gentle touch. Under \$50 buys bunches of plugs and sockets and the tools to assemble or take apart all manner of old- and new-style connections.

### Anti-seize bunches of bolts

Every steel bolt that mounts in aluminum is a service nightmare in waiting. Factories don't apply anti-seize because it's messy, costs more and slows the production line. So each trimmer, chain saw and air-cooled engine and machine in your fleet gets to enjoy electrolytic corrosion when exposed to moisture and vibration. There's a saying about an ounce of prevention and a pound of cure ... but you already heard that one.

### Check all vehicle lights

Verify that all the brake lights on all your vehicles and trailers are working. Fix the bad ones. Maybe install LED "bulbs" that tend to last longer. You'll never know about an accident that didn't happen, but you can assume this will make the world safer.

### Advocate sharpness

Old Boy Scouts will tell you sharper knives are safer. Ditto for chain saws. Teach all crew members how to sharpen things, give them proper equipment and speculate on how many injuries and accidents have been avoided.

Scott R. Nesbitt is a freelance writer and former GCSAA staff member. He lives in Cleveland, Ga.

### Professional Branding/Promoting the Profession

- Promoting the value of professional GCSAA members to employers
- Thank a Superintendent Campaign
- Increased recognition through awards, certificates and certifications

### Professional Member Community

- Member directory
- Networking opportunities
- Online resources
- GCSAA Chapter network
- Serve and grow as part of GCSAA governance

### Education/Professional Development

- Free webinars (Learning Hub)
- Certifications/Certificates: CGCS, ASCS, CTEM & EMCP
- Professional Development Opportunities
  - Melrose Leadership Academy
  - Melrose Equipment Management Experience
  - EXCEL Leadership Program
  - Envu Superintendent Grant Program
  - Women's Leadership Academy
- Scholarships
  - Par Aide Garske Grant
  - Legacy Awards funded by Grass Clippings
  - GCSAA Scholars Competition
  - Allan MacCurrach Jr. Award
  - Dr. James Watson Fellowship
  - Larry Powell Scholarship

### Career Resources/Work Force Development

- Coaching Services
- Staffing Solutions
- Resume Tips
- Cover Letter Tips
- Portfolios and Personal Websites
- Interviewing Tips
- Professional Presentations
- Career Videos
- Negotiating/Accepting the Job
- Sample Job Descriptions
- Sample Employment Agreement
- Equipment Management Applicant Screening Tool
- Validity Screening Solutions - a third-party background check, drug testing and compliance services company, to offer discounted services to members.
- Comp/Benefits Survey
- Developing future workforce through First Green, FFA, Project Double Eagle, JAG
- Job board

### Advocacy/Government Affairs

- Dedicated team supporting members and industry at National, State and Local levels
- Grassroots Ambassador Program
- Building relationships to protect and enhance the industry's future
- Regulatory & Environmental compliance resources

### Environmental and BMP Programs/Resources

- Environmental Resources by Topic, Golf Course Environmental Profile (GCEP), Best Management Practice (BMP) Program/Planning Guide, Environment Hub, Research Programs
- Access to GCSAA staff experts to address environmental challenges

### Field Staff

- Chapter support
- Local member support

### GCM

- Monthly magazine
- Regularly updated online content
- Digital flip book

### Professional Golf Tournament Admission

- Scan code below for details

### Conference and Trade Show

- Industry's largest annual event focusing on education, trade show and growing your network
- CTS Member Discount
  - Discounted member pricing
  - One-time free Full Pack admission for every member

### Member Savings Program

- Companies offering exclusive savings on a variety of personal and professional products: Ascent Global Logistics, AVIS Car Rental, Batteries Plus, Budget Car Rental, Columbia, Dell, Enterprise and National, Flag Assist, Golf Safety, Impact, Imperial, Lenovo, ODP Business Solutions, Unifirst, UPS & Zero Friction.

### Disaster Relief Fund

- Up to \$2,000 available to assist members as a result of a natural disaster.

### Benevolence Fund

- Up to \$2,000 available to assist members in distress

### Insurance

- Complimentary Term Life Insurance and AD&D (accidental death & dismemberment) for qualified members as part of their membership.
- Healthcare Benefits Advisory

### Retirement Resources

- Discounted retirement consulting



SCAN ME

List reflects Class A/B Membership Benefits.  
Scan here for a complete list of benefits,  
or visit [GCSAA.ORG/BESTBENEFITS](http://GCSAA.ORG/BESTBENEFITS)

# Oh, brother, what a pair

Col. John Morley Award winners  
Bob and Joe Alonzi carved out an unparalleled  
legacy in the New York metropolitan area.

Andrew Hartssock



On paper, at least, it's sometimes quite difficult to distinguish one Alonzi brother from the other.

Both big brother Bob and little Joe were born in the little Italian town of Picinisco, just southeast of Rome, and were school aged — Bob was 12, Joe, 6 — when the family came to America.

As they carved out their decades-long reputation in the golf course management industry, their careers followed a similar arc, moving up from one prestigious New York metropolitan-area course to the next.

During their legendary careers, they never lived more than a couple hours' drive from one another, and, even now, a decade-plus into retirement, they live only a zip code or two away from each other in Connecticut and snowbird to the same Florida housing development each winter.

While both made several impressive steps up the career ladder, each also became most closely associated with a (to put it conservatively) top-100-type club — Bob at Winged Foot Golf Club and Joe at Westchester Country Club. Each hosted some big-time events — Bob held the 1984 U.S. Open and 1997 PGA Championship, among others, while Joe hosted 17 PGA Tour events and a Senior PGA Championship.

During their decades of service within the MetGCSA, each Alonzi served on that chapter's board and as its president. Each earned the MetGCSA's Sherwood A. Moore Award — Bob in 1991 and Joe nine years later — and each has a golf course superintendent son who has carved out his own reputation in the crucible that is the NYC metro area.

"We're a lot alike," concedes Joe, CGCS Retired, a 50-year association member. "He's the smart one. I'm the handsome one. Of course, he'd tell you he's the smart one *and* the handsome one."

"We'll let him have whichever one makes him feel better," counters Bob, CGCS Retired, a 55-year association member.



Brothers Joe, left, and Bob Alonzi on the grounds at Fenway Golf Club in Scarsdale, N.Y., where each took a turn as superintendent and where Bob's son, Rob, is the current superintendent. Photos by Bennie Migliorino

As one of the few folks who had the opportunity to work for both put it: “Joe and Bob are much the same,” says Neil Laufenberg, GCSAA Class A superintendent at Innis Arden Golf Club in Greenwich, Conn., a 30-year association member and one of countless Alonzi intern/foreman/assistant proteges who went on to become successful superintendents. “But they’re very different.”

Maybe it’s a difference without a distinction, and here’s yet another example: Bob and Joe Alonzi are the winners of the 2026 Col. John Morley Award, the top honor given by GCSAA to its members. It’s the first time in the award’s history — even, prior to 2022, when it was called the Distinguished Service Award and open to non-GCSAA members and frequently was presented to multiple individuals — that it’s going to a pair of brothers. While it could be argued each has the bona fides to win the award individually, their combined body of work puts them in another league.

“Obviously, they’re both qualified,” says Jeff Scott, superintendent at Tamarack Country Club in Greenwich and 37-year association member who also worked for both Alonzis. “I sort of took it for granted they’d get it together. On the emotional side of things, those two are as close as you can get. The harassment goes back and forth, but the love and affection and dependence on one another — it’s a quiet relationship, but for all of us who know them, it’s very appropriate that they’ll get it together.”

**Below:** Bob Alonzi, right, says the two brothers “always had each other’s back.”

**Bottom:** The four superintendent Alonzis, from left: Christopher, Joe, Bob and Robert. Photo courtesy of the MetGCSA



## Bob Alonzi

### *First on course*

Big brother Bob was the first to find his way to the golf course.

As a teen, Bob Alonzi earned spending money by caddying at Tamarack CC and took an interest in the maintenance side of things. He caught the eye of then-superintendent Ted Jozwick, who steered the youngster toward an education in turfgrass management. Coincidentally, nearby Rutgers University was developing an offseason school to teach just that, and Alonzi graduated in 1961.

“At the time, there was some speculation whether I’d go to trade school or follow dad’s footsteps and be an apprentice in construction,” Alonzi says. “At that time, it wasn’t just assumed you were going to college because you came of age. I wasn’t a golfer at the time, but I enjoyed being outside. Working outdoors is what really intrigued me, and Ted Jozwick was just a wonderful gentleman. He took me under his wing and explained the possibilities. If I had just moved up to a foreman’s position, I would have been happy, but as the doors opened, I saw other opportunities.”

Drafted into the U.S. Army, Alonzi served from 1964 to ’66 before his discharge, and he returned to Tamarack as its foreman until one of those opportunities presented itself. He landed his first superintendent job at Rye (N.Y.) Golf Club in 1967.

Then it was off to Burning Tree Country Club in Greenwich, where he was superintendent from 1970-73, facilities manager from 1973-75 and general manager from 1975-78.

His next stop was Fairview CC, also in Greenwich, as superintendent from 1978-83 before he replaced another legend, Sherwood Moore, at Winged Foot in 1984.

“I wish everybody could relate to what I experienced,” Alonzi says. “You learn to appreciate what you have. My first job was with the city of Rye, N.Y. It was an opportunity that came my way because of Ted Jozwick, who was a consultant there. I was working with very minimal staff for very large usage. It was a daily-fee course. We used to get two, three, four flooded holes a few times a year.

“Dealing with that ... that’s where all the experience started. Winged Foot wasn’t my first job, but the little jobs in between put me in position to achieve what I did there.”

### Building 'The Legend'

One of those achievements came right away, in 1984, when Alonzi hosted the U.S. Open in conjunction with the retiring Moore.

"That was my first glamour position," Alonzi says. "With Sherwood retiring and me moving into a better position, that was fun."

Alonzi recalls that Winged Foot, in Mamaroneck, N.Y., with its pair of A.W. Tillinghast-designed courses that currently rank No. 13 (West Course) and No. 45 (East) on the *Golf Digest* list of top-100 U.S. courses, wasn't the type of place that encouraged one to rest on one's laurels.

"We really strived at all times to be the best of the best," he says. "You had to be on your toes at all times. That's where we started picking up clippings, coming up with solutions for faster, firmer greens. It was an ongoing chore, and at times I questioned the validity of it, but that's where we are today."

Another highlight came in 1997, when Winged Foot hosted the PGA Championship.

"On the second day of the PGA, a hurricane came through," Alonzi says. "We worked through the night to remove the trees that impeded the ability to play the tournament. We had over 100 people running around the place so it would be playable at 8 o'clock in the morning. Those are the things you wish you didn't have to experience but that made a big impact. We were able to come through with flying colors, and it was nice to be a part of history. I remember as (winner) Davis Love sank his last putt, a rainbow came up over the east side of the golf course."

Alonzi, who by then had acquired the nickname "The Legend," left Winged Foot in 1999 to become superintendent at Fenway Golf Club in Scarsdale, N.Y., before retiring from there in 2011. His successor, who is still there, was his son, GCSAA Class A superintendent Robert B. Alonzi, a 33-year association member.

"You know, I used to stress to young people coming through the system, just work hard and strive for the best, and opportunities will come your way," Bob Alonzi says. "I got all my positions by virtue of people seeking me out because of the good conditions I was providing at my existing golf course. I always left with good recommendations from whoever I was working with."

And here's a fun father-son story, as recalled by Jeff Scott, who acknowledges it's a "full-circle" conclusion that he's superintendent at Tamarack, the place where the brothers Alonzi first crossed (cart) paths with the profession.



"Just **work hard** and strive for the best, and **opportunities** will come **your way**."

— Bob Alonzi

"Bob was here when all the trees were planted," says Scott, who initially intended to become an arborist before Bob helped steer him into turfgrass. "He was here in the 60s, when the trend, unfortunately, was to take some really great golf courses designed by guys like Seth Raynor — we're Charlie Banks here — and plant trees. Bob was told to plant an evergreen, a spruce tree or a white pine, every 50 feet between the fairways. The joke is, when I came here in 1997, Bob's son, Robert Jr., was my first assistant. His son basically cut down every tree his father planted."

### Joe Alonzi

*'I really didn't like being indoors'*

Like his big brother, Joe Alonzi fell into golf at Tamarack CC.

"Both our parents worked, and we needed a place for me to be in the summer," Joe Alonzi says. "I was too much for my grandmother to handle, so I was made to go caddy. I'd go in the morning with Bob. I'd walk up to the caddy yard when he'd work on the grounds crew. Eventu-

Joe (second from left) and Bob (right) receiving a UMass Alumni Turf Group award. Photo courtesy of Mike McCall



ally, I did the same thing he did, worked on the grounds crew. I enjoyed caddying, but I really enjoyed working on the crew.”

The Alonzis’ parents, however, suggested Joe pursue “something else” for a career, so he enrolled at and graduated from the RCA Institute of Technology in 1971 with a degree in electrical engineering while still working summers at Tamarack. Joe went to work at Norden Industries, a division of United Aircraft in Norwalk, Conn., where he worked on the radar system for the F-111 jet.

“I really didn’t like being indoors,” he says. “I was in a little cubicle with a computer. I didn’t even have a window. It was tough.”

Yearning to return to an outside job, Joe fortunately had an in — big brother Bob by that time was superintendent at Burning Tree CC, and Bob hired his little brother.

Bob also “encouraged” Joe to pursue a turf-

grass education if he were to choose to follow a similar path.

“He wasn’t easy to work for,” Joe says of his brother. “It took me a while to train him.”

Joe graduated from the Rutgers turfgrass program in 1973. A year later, he was hired as head superintendent at the Huntington Crescent Club in Huntington, N.Y. That post on Long Island put Joe a good 60 miles away from Bob — the farthest apart they’d ever be.

“I think moving to Long Island helped me. I wasn’t in his shadow as much,” Joe Alonzi says. “They called me ‘The Brother of the Legend.’ I never felt bad in any way coming up under his shadow, but I think it helped moving up here.”

#### *Together again*

The gulf narrowed considerably, when, on Jan. 1, 1984, both brothers moved — Bob to



Winged Foot, Joe from Huntington Crescent to Fenway. The two courses lie about 2 miles apart.

“Our relationship got even better at that point,” Joe says. “We’d see each other all the time. We’d share equipment and talk nearly every day.”

After eight years at Fenway, another Tillinghast creation, Joe Alonzi left for Westchester Country Club just a few miles down the road. Westchester was an entirely different beast, featuring 45 holes of golf, tennis courts, a beach, barbershop, hotel.

“It’s one of the largest golf complexes in the Northeast,” Alonzi says. “Especially at tournament time, my days ran into night. My night ran into day. I’d just get a room and sleep there for a couple of weeks at a time. You had to be committed. And it didn’t really matter whether it was a big tournament or not. The members didn’t care if we had 45 holes or 18 holes or nine holes.”

After toiling at WCC through those 17 PGA Tour events and the Senior PGA Championship, Joe Alonzi retired in 2015. His replacement: David Dudones, a 27-year association member who still is the GCSAA Class A director of golf and grounds there.

Dudones was among the countless turfgrass pros working for one Alonzi brother who would volunteer to work for the other at tournament time. Dudones, for instance, worked with Bob for a couple of weeks during the PGA Championship.

“I’d have six to eight interns a year,” Joe Alonzi recalls. “Every Sunday morning, we’d work 5-9, then at 9 I’d have all the interns meet in the office and discuss whatever happened during the week, good, bad and indifferent. That was always a successful hour and a half. I remember one Sunday morning, I asked them what they wanted out of

An elevated view of the A.W. Tillinghast-designed Fenway Golf Club. Photo by Bennie Miglioriono

their careers. One guy looked me straight in the face and said, 'I want your job.'"

That guy: Dudones.

"I remember Joe said, 'Well, get the best education you can and get some good placements,'" Dudones says. "I decided to go to grad school after my undergrad, and he hired me back as an assistant."

After landing his first head superintendent job at North Jersey Country Club in 2005, Dudones replaced Alonzi at Westchester in 2015.

"Big shoes to fill," Dudones says. "But you know, both of them are great to bounce things off of. What's impressive to me is to see the longevity they had at clubs at the level they were at. It's easy to get spit out by some of these clubs, but the fact that both of them did what they did for so long at such high-level clubs, you almost scratch your head. It's unbelievable the ability these guys had to adapt to ever-increasing standards and, more importantly, to deal with people and make connections with everyone from president of the club to the general manager to the lowest-level greenkeeper and not burn any bridges."

"Joe and Bob in a lot of ways were the godfathers of that area," adds Jared Viarengo, CGCS,

director of grounds and club operations at Applebrook Golf Club in Malvern, Pa., and 31-year association member who interned and worked for Bob at Winged Foot and volunteered at tournament time for Joe at WCC. "It's a prominent area when it comes to budgets and golf courses and expectations. You factor in the New York area in general ... those people, they can be tough customers. To be at the top of your game for that many years as they did, it's saying a lot. I think like a lot of guys, working with them was like winning the lottery. I was so honored to be able to work with them."

"Both of them are extremely helpful and dedicated to the profession on every single level," adds Tamarack CC's Scott. "For those of us who were fortunate enough to have worked with them, or even just one of them, and there are quite a few of us, I think we all owe a big part of our success to them."

### Brotherly love

The Col. John Morley Award, named after the man who nearly 100 years ago started the organization that became GCSAA, is presented annually to "an individual/group (singular award) who has made an outstanding contribution to the advancement of the golf course superintendent's profession. The contribution must be significant in both substance and duration, and may be, or have been, regional in nature."

Though the Alonzis made their name exclusively in the NYC metro area, their reach goes far beyond that. Their superintendent tree reaches across the country and even beyond, into international borders.

How many folks worked with or for an Alonzi and eventually made a career in golf course management?

"Way too many to count," Joe Alonzi says. "I'm so proud of all those superintendents out there who worked for me at one point or another. I take that as one of my greatest contributions to the industry. That's how I've tried to give back to the industry, whether they learned from me how to do it right or how not to do it. That's great, as long as they learned something from me."

"Hopefully, my legacy will be that I was just a guy who had great opportunities," counters Bob. "I shared everything I experienced. I tried to contribute to research. I think we're all just one big family. This is the best profession in the world, and we're all working toward a goal of perfection. It's not achievable, but you're always striving for

Fenway's finest:  
From left, Joe, Robert Jr. and  
Bob Alonzi. Photo courtesy  
of the MetGCSA

"I'm so proud of all those superintendents out there who **worked for me** at one point or another."

— Joe Alonzi





Joe Alonzi left Fenway for Westchester Country Club, while Bob retired from there before the club hired Bob's son as superintendent. **Photo by Bennie Miglioriono**

it. I just tried to be approachable. I value the hundreds of friends I made in the industry. There's a lot of unity there, and we all share."

On this, the brothers agree: Neither would have gotten as far or lasted as long without the other.

"Because we're brothers, because for a lot of time our golf courses were less than 5 miles apart, we shared a lot of things," Bob says. "Not just at tournament time. We were always sharing ideas, comparing notes.

"Two heads are better than one, and we always had each other's back."

### Retired, but not really

The Alonzis are more than a decade into retirement, but they're not completely out of the industry.

"After about three months into retirement, my wife, Judy, sat me down and said, 'You've got to do something,'" says Joe, whose son, Christopher, is superintendent at the Summit Club at Armonk in Armonk, N.Y. "She said, 'We've been married 40 years. In all those years, you've always been a golf course superintendent. You never took summer vacation. You were always at the club working. Now you want breakfast, lunch and dinner. It doesn't work that way.' I guess I was annoying her."

So Joe Alonzi worked to build Biltmore Turf Industries (it comes from a serendipitous phone call from his lawyer who needed a name for the fledgling business; Joe, driving by Westchester CC, which is on Biltmore Avenue, suggested the moniker), a low-key supplier of bedknives, tires and batteries — "Just the stuff superintendents need," Joe says. "It keeps me busy. It keeps me in the loop. I still see all the guys. It's how I get to play golf at all these places."

Some of that golf involves his big brother, who, at 83, still attends local and chapter educational offerings and remains current on his pesticide license.

The Brothers Alonzi play together three or so times a week when they're home, as much as three times a week when they're in Florida.

Joe, Bob grudgingly admits, is the better player.

"Probably. He's younger and stronger, so he hits the ball a lot farther," Bob says. "The stroke system does work. I've moved up to the forward tees. He's in the middle tees, so he's catching up in a way.

"That's the only rivalry we have, is golf."

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Andrew Hartsock (ahartsock@gcsaa.org) is *GCM's* editor-in-chief.

# PUTTING ON QUITE A SHOW

The celebration countdown is on for the 2026 GCSAA Conference and Trade Show in Orlando, where the association is doing it in style during its 100th year of existence.

*GCM staff*



Orange County Convention Center welcomes the GCSAA Conference and Trade Show, Feb. 2-5. Photo courtesy of Orlando County Convention Center

This will be the 12th GCSAA Conference and Trade Show in Orlando.

But make no mistake: The euphoria at this one will be unlike anything from the previous 11 in the Sunshine State.

GCSAA is taking the GCSAA Conference and Trade Show to an unprecedented level.

There are a great many reasons why.

As GCSAA celebrates its 100th Anniversary in 2026, the GCSAA Conference and Trade Show is introducing some new wrinkles at the association's marquee event, which is scheduled Feb. 2-5 at the Orange County Convention Center and surrounding area.

## Centennial Celebration

Mark your calendar for Tuesday, Feb. 3, 6:30 to 9 p.m. Supported by industry partners, Centennial Celebration will commemorate 100 years of GCSAA at ICON Park in Orlando (8374 International Drive), a premier open-air entertainment destination.

Highlights will include:

- Dining, featuring 10-plus restaurants that offer a variety of cuisines to suit every taste.

- Entertainment: Live music, a DJ, dueling pianos and more throughout the evening.
- The atmosphere: ICON Park's 20-acre setting provides the perfect backdrop for networking, connecting with peers and celebrating a century of leadership in golf course management.

- Purpose and connection: Honor GCSAA's past, present and future with members, partners and industry supporters. Foster meaningful connections in a fun, celebratory environment. Recognize the growth, achievements and impact of GCSAA and its members.

"We're thrilled to bring together so many of our members, partners and the people who have helped build the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America into what it is today," says GCSAA CEO Rhett Evans. "The celebration at ICON Park will be an unforgettable evening — filled with energy, connection and reflection. With live music, great food and vibrant venues, the night will bring the GCSAA story to life. It's a chance to honor the people, progress and passion that have defined our association for a century — and to look boldly toward the next 100 years."

## Centennial Experience, museum style

The theme of the museum is “Celebrating 100 Years of Keeping the Game on Course,” honoring the vision of Col. John Morley and the small group of pioneers who planted the seeds of a profession a century ago and tell the compelling stories of GCSAA members’ past and present. The Centennial Experience will be open Wednesday, Feb. 4, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Thursday, Feb. 5, from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. The location is on the trade show floor, booths 2373 and 2361.

What’s on display: artifacts and themed exhibits, showcasing GCSAA’s impact on education, advocacy, innovation, environmental stewardship and community engagement.

A history timeline wall will tell GCSAA’s history, “story by story, brick by brick,” highlighting decades of progress, challenges overcome and standards of excellence set.

Experience the legacy of GCSAA and the profession of golf course management. Discover how passion, purpose and professionalism have come together to support the game and global community. This is a one-time-only exhibit celebrating GCSAA’s past, present and future.

## More ventures, changes and what’s new

Besides the pomp and circumstance, there are other adventures and new scheduling options awaiting GCSAA Conference and Trade Show attendees.

Change of note: The Opening Session, presented in partnership with Syngenta, will be Monday, Feb. 2, from 3:15 to 5 p.m. In the past, the Opening Session was held on Wednesday morning.

Education will offer more than 100 seminars (three of them in Spanish), with over half featuring new content. And, for the first time, education is offering repeat sessions on Wednesday. In addition, there will be more than 30 Power Hours (one in Spanish), all delivering new material. The number of seminars and Power Hours is up significantly for 2026, according to Brandi Turner, senior manager, curriculum at GCSAA.



ICON Park will be the place to be the evening of Feb. 3 for Centennial Celebration to commemorate GCSAA’s 100 years. Photo courtesy of VisitOrlando

## New alert: Wellness Pavilion

Make time for what matters most: your health, your heart and your sense of purpose. Visit the Wellness Pavilion to recharge, reconnect and refocus on wellness. Whether it is checking your physical health, finding calm in a busy week or supporting a cause that inspires you, the Wellness Pavilion, located at Booth 840, is there to help you make it a priority. Offerings include free on-site health screenings. Also take advantage of complimentary, walk-in biometric screenings from the Syngenta MyWellbeing

Mobile Wellness Unit, including:

- Blood pressure.
- Cholesterol.
- Glucose.
- BMI.
- A1C.
- Skin cancer screenings.

GCSAA is proud to partner with K9s For Warriors, the nation’s largest provider of trained service dogs for veterans living with service-related trauma. Together, we honor wellness as more than physical health. It is

about connection, compassion and purpose. Stop by to meet three Warrior graduates and their service dogs, hear their stories and witness the powerful impact of healing through purpose. T

Their presence is a reminder that wellness is more than just numbers — it’s about gratitude, connection and support.

## Closing act(s)

Back-to-back closing activities are on the docket for Thursday, Feb. 5.

The Closing Session, presented in partnership with John Deere, is set for 1:15 to 2:30 p.m. It will be followed by the Closing Event Featuring Ricky Kalmon. His “The Ricky Kalmon Comedy Hypnosis Show” is a high-energy, interactive experience that will leave you laughing, inspired and amazed. Many have seen his performances on ESPN, the Hallmark Channel and more. He also has presented for professional sports teams such as the New York Yankees and Cincinnati Bengals.



A view of the 18th hole at San Geronimo Golf Course in San Geronimo, Calif. Built in the mid-1960s, the course struggled financially and was put on the market in 2017. Photo by Craig Zellers

## (reflections)

# The death of a golf course

A veteran superintendent returns to oversee the last days of his former home course.

There is an old saying, “They say that you can’t go home again.” I did when I purchased the family home in 2005. But what if you had two homes? One that you grew up in and the second being the first golf course you ever worked at and called your home course and you had the opportunity to be the superintendent?

Upon telling numerous longtime clients that I had created a part-time superintendent position for myself, they responded with laughter and shakes of the head (not the vertical “yes” shake, but the horizontal “no” type). The negative nonverbal glare was followed with questions: “Are you kidding me?” and “Are you an idiot?” My answer remained the same, and I could only smile as I answered the questions: “No and yes.” I had come home a second time to the San Geronimo Golf Course.

Beginning on April 7, 2018, I had the miraculous opportunity to oversee the San Geronimo Golf Course located in northern California, only 4 miles from my home in Fairfax. “San G.,” as we called it, was a healthy, beautiful golf course that I had called my home course since 1975. On Dec. 29, 2018, I had the ill-fated experience of watching the commencement of a golf course dying a slow death. It was only slow because it was winter in northern California, and the rising temperatures of spring and summer had yet to begin permanently sucking what moisture was left from the roots of the turf.