

The Reporter

From the Rocky Mountain Chapter of GCSAA
Growing Green Since 1936



Sanctuary Golf Course

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President's Message

As we welcome the cooler temperatures that the fall season brings, we also welcome the reality that our winter season is coming soon. Our members in the high country have already started to see snow on the peaks and are preparing for putting their courses to bed for the off-season. The western slope and the front range courses are still in full swing and for many of our golfers, the fall season is the highlight of the golf season.

By the time you read this, we will have finished the final golf event of our RMGCSA Golf outings this year as well. Thank you to all of our members that made it out to these events and we hope that you are getting signed up to join us in November for the Annual Conference.

We have many accomplishments to celebrate as an association this year. The BMP efforts from our membership have been outstanding and are an example to chapters across the country. For those of you who have already completed these facility guides, thank you! If you have not had time yet to adopt the state guides and begin customizing them to your facility, we trust that you will try as the seasons change and you may have time to do so! We are still pushing for 100% facility adoption in our Chapter so please let me know if you have any questions and I would be happy to help!

Another huge achievement that brought many members together in early October was the Colorado Golf Hall of Fame Gala. Two members of the RMGCSA were welcomed into the Hall – Congratulations to Rollie Cahalane and Lance Johnson and very well deserved for your contributions to the game of golf and our industry! Mitch Savage was also awarded the Distinguished Service Award from the Colorado Golf Hall of Fame for his efforts in advocating for our industry in Government and Legislative areas within our industry at both the local and national levels.

Continued page 4.

President's Message

As a membership, we should be immensely proud to see our members honored for such outstanding achievements. The Rocky Mountain GCSA has always been a strong chapter and it is because of the great individuals that make up our membership. Thank you, Mitch, Lance, and the Cahalane family for continuing to elevate our Association to the highest level.

As I finish my term as President for the RMGCSA, I am very thankful for the opportunity I have had to serve this membership. Since joining the Board of Directors, I have grown both as a Superintendent as well as in my personal life.

The respect that I have for the members of our Association caring for courses and the the industry has grown exponentially. Your care extends far beyond equipment, fertilizer, sod, and courses to the very communities that you live in. I have been extremely fortunate to see the impacts of our members firsthand! Thank you for caring about our industry and our communities so deeply, you have all been an excellent example to me!

It has been the goal for our Board to lead our Association with care for all members and to help grow our membership by creating outstanding educational opportunities, provide networking opportunities, advocate for our industry, and to help provide professional growth opportunities. Our responsibility is to you as our members and to the industry that we all serve.

I have an even deeper appreciation for our members after spending the last several years involved with our Board of Directors and I would urge you to get involved in your association. Join a committee, come to events, network with your peers – bring your ideas! I have the RMGCSA Board and our members to thank for my continued growth. Thank you to Joel Beach and Calvin Hunsinger for working on behalf of the Class C membership.

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President's Message

Thank you to Tyler Gillette for your efforts the last two years as our Class AF representative. Thank you to our Directors – Kevin Abila, Ben Getman, Kevin Malloy, Mitch Savage, and Chad Gilkison for working so hard on the committees. Thank you to Tim Davis for your contribution as our Chapter Delegate and representing the RMGCSA at the National Level. Thank you to Eric Gustafson and Gary Leeper for all your support of our board and the Association. Finally, thank you to Kevin Kallas, Jake Jacobs, and Joe Kunze for your guidance on the Executive Board.

Thank you, members of the RMGCSA for a wonderful year! It has been a pleasure, and I wish you all a great fall season and look forward to connecting with you at our conference next month!



Aaron Fankhauser, CGCS

President, The Club at Rolling Hills

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Hello, we would like to introduce everyone to our new PBE
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Please feel free to contact anyone of the above representatives for your area.
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Director's Corner

Kevin Malloy CGCS, from TPC Colorado

Well, it appears as though we have made it to the end of another growing season in Colorado.

At the end of every season, it's important to recognize your successes and failures to continue to grow as a professional. However, it is significantly more important to think about and recognize everyone who played a role in your success. There are many people to recognize your team, your family, your ownership/management structure, and vendors.



First and foremost, our team. Without them we are just one person, and I certainly can't do everything by myself. Maybe I thought I could in my younger years but as I have gotten older, the importance of empowering those around me has become evident.

From Senior Assistants, all the way down to seasonal staff members, they come in with the same goal: to help make the golf course better every day. I know personally my team's ability to always think outside the box helps us be better every single day, and as we have fostered that environment, it has taken a huge amount of mental relief off me and my assistants.

Family. Do not forget to thank your family. My wife and kids sometimes get the back seat when summer and growing season is in full swing.

Continued page 8.

Director's Corner

Doing this job would be impossible without support in your personal life, and as you move into the slower season, prioritize those relationships. I think about my daughter who just turned 8, and it is amazing how fast time moves, you only have so much time with them so make the most of that time.

Finally, vendors. I learned from dad, who was a superintendent, the importance of vendors. It is important to view them as more coworkers than just salespeople. By fostering these relationships, you both get the most out of each other. Over the years, many of these relationships have turned into friendships and mutual care and respect. So, as you close another season, and they essentially start theirs with EOPs, keep this in mind. This is a two-way relationship, and you may not want to think about 2026. This is their job, and we could not do our job effectively without them doing their job.

As we get closer to snow and dormant turf, take this time to appreciate all of those that support you through the ups and downs. Next year is coming to us and you set up your 2026 season by making sure your support system is working well!

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Superintendent Spotlight

Overview: An interview with Dane Bennett from The Sonnenalp Club



Describe Your Facility?

The Sonnenalp Club is located in Edwards, Colorado about 15 minutes west of Vail Mountain. The club features an 18-hole championship course co-designed by Jay Morrish and Bob Cupp as well as a world class fitness center, tennis, pickleball, and swimming. We have a young, active membership and excellent views of Vail & Beaver Creek Mountain.

What's the biggest challenge you face at your facility?

The biggest challenge we face is the proximity and quantity of homes that surround the golf course. We are located in a busy neighborhood and the course sees a great deal of “non-golf” traffic throughout the offseason. This has led to several challenges, including ice damage and dog piles.

What's the most unexpected part of being a superintendent for you?

The most unexpected thing I've found myself doing as a superintendent is probably pulling a rotten beaver carcass out of our ditch headgate.

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Superintendent Spotlight

What Makes Your Facility Unique?

We have a great seasonal staff with many years of experience and diverse backgrounds. They were very well trained prior to my arrival and have been extremely helpful in helping me get adjusted in my first year. Our two assistant superintendents, Ryan Davis and Will Marlowe, as well as our equipment manager, Colter Jaramillo, are talented leaders who have my full trust.

How many years have you worked in golf and how did you get started in the industry?

I started working in golf course maintenance as a high school sophomore about 26 years ago at Dub's Dread in Kansas City, Kansas. My superintendent at the time encouraged me to study Golf Course Management at Kansas State University, where I completed internships at Red Sky in Wolcott, Colorado, and Tuhaye in Park City, Utah. After graduating, I accepted a position as a second assistant at Red Sky, where I eventually became the superintendent of the Norman Course for eight and a half years. In August 2024, I took on the role of superintendent at the Sonnenalp Club.

What's the most rewarding part of being a superintendent for you?

The most rewarding aspect of being a superintendent, for me, is witnessing our members take pride in showcasing our club to their guests. The Vail Valley is a tight-knit community that boasts great golf and an excellent network of superintendents who regularly communicate and are always willing to lend a helping hand whenever possible.

Favorite Restaurant? Post Oak BBQ in Denver & Moe's BBQ in Eagle.

What's your favorite tool in your cart?

My cell phone. It is so useful for making irrigation adjustments, setting up the job board, communicating with staff and much more.

Favorite sports team? Kansas City Chiefs!

Celebrating Excellence in Colorado Golf

Eric Gustafson, RMGCSA Past President

The Colorado golf community will celebrate its finest this coming year as the 2025 Colorado Golf Hall of Fame Induction Class is announced – and the Rocky Mountain Golf Course Superintendents Association (RMGCSA) has every reason to take pride.

This year's class includes two longtime superintendents – Rollie Cahalane and Lance Johnson – whose careers have shaped the standards of golf course management across the state. In addition, Mitch Savage, CGCS, has been selected to receive the Distinguished Service Award for his leadership and advocacy on behalf of Colorado's golf industry.

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Celebrating Excellence in Colorado Golf

HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES WITH SUPERINTENDENT ROOTS

Rollie Cahalane (Posthumous Induction)

A pioneer in Colorado turfgrass management, Rollie Cahalane began his career in the early 1970s and went on to serve as superintendent at Columbine Country Club and The Club at Inverness.

Known for his meticulous attention to detail and his commitment to mentoring the next generation, Rollie was instrumental in elevating course conditioning standards in Colorado.

He was also deeply involved with RMGCSA, serving in leadership roles and helping build a stronger professional network for superintendents statewide. His influence lives on through his sons – Kevin, Dave, and Craig Cahalane – all respected superintendents in their own right.

“This honor reflects Rollie’s dedication, humility, and pride in the craft. His legacy is visible on every green he cared for and every superintendent he inspired.”

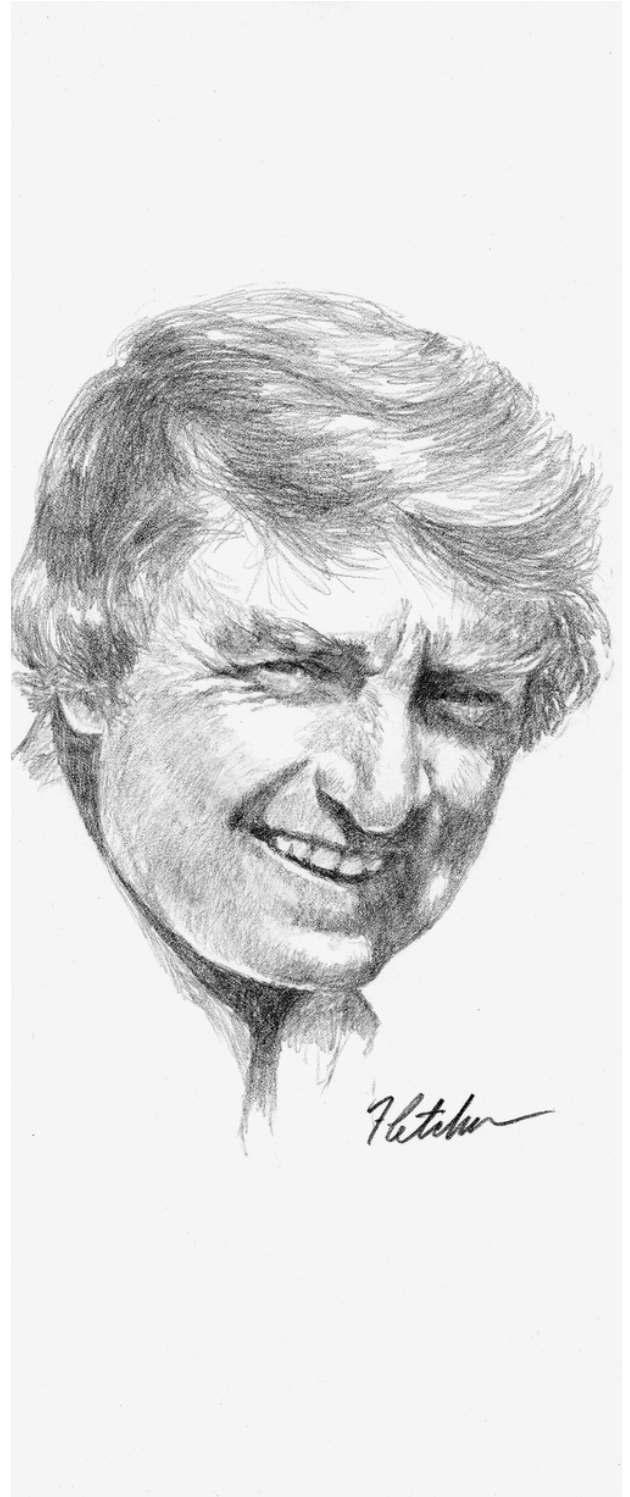
Lance Johnson, CGCS

For more than three decades, Lance Johnson has exemplified what it means to lead both on and off the golf course.

As the Golf Operations Manager for the City of Westminster, Lance has overseen Legacy Ridge and Walnut Creek Golf Preserve, transforming them into premier public golf destinations recognized for sustainability, playability, and tournament-level conditions.

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Celebrating Excellence in Colorado Golf



Continued page 14.

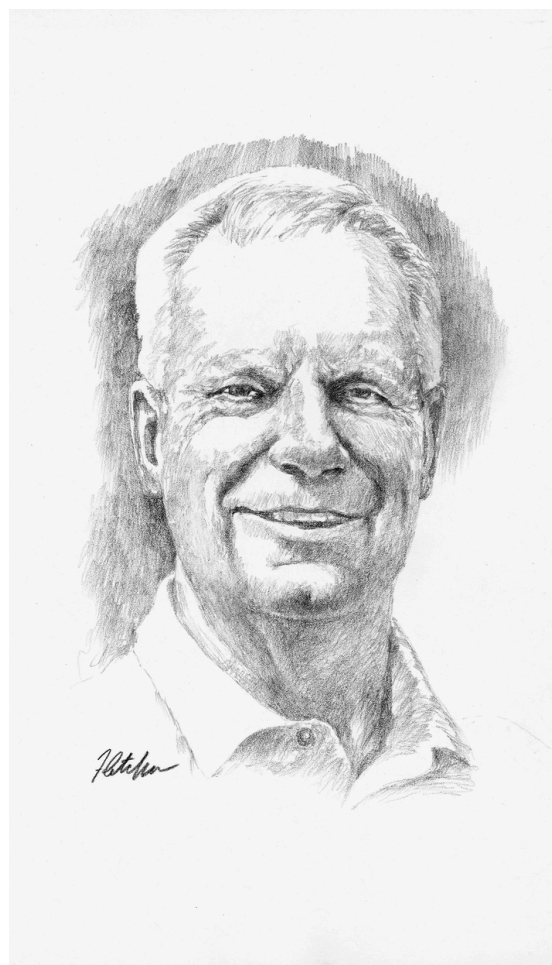
Celebrating Excellence in Colorado Golf

Under his direction, these facilities have hosted numerous USGA qualifiers, Colorado Opens, and AJGA events – each serving as a showcase of the superintendent’s craft.

Beyond his day-to-day responsibilities, Lance has been an active leader in the profession. He has served as President of RMGCSA, chaired the Rocky Mountain Environmental Golf Institute (RMEGI), and played a key role in developing the Colorado Golf Industry Best Management Practices (BMP) Guide released in 2019.

“This honor reflects not only Lance’s personal dedication but the collective progress of superintendents across Colorado who continue to raise the bar for course management and environmental care.”

Continued page 15.



Celebrating Excellence in Colorado Golf

MITCH SAVAGE RECEIVES DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

In addition to this year's inductees, the Colorado Golf Hall of Fame will honor Mitch Savage, CGCS with its Distinguished Service Award – recognizing his outstanding leadership and advocacy for the game and its professionals.

As Director of Agronomy at CommonGround Golf Course, Mitch has been a vocal advocate for the golf industry in state legislative and regulatory matters.

He recently earned the GCSAA's Excellence in Government Affairs Award for his ongoing efforts to protect and promote the game at the state level. From water use and pesticide legislation to environmental stewardship and industry communication, Mitch has become a leading voice ensuring golf remains sustainable and respected in Colorado.

“Mitch's work goes beyond turf. He represents every superintendent who believes in speaking up for our industry, our environment, and our future.”

WHY THESE HONORS MATTER

This year's Hall of Fame class and award recipients remind us that superintendents are builders of legacy – shaping not just the playing fields of golf, but the policies, partnerships, and professional standards that sustain the game. From Rollie's generational influence to Lance's operational excellence and Mitch's advocacy leadership, their achievements reflect the full scope of what it means to be a golf course superintendent in Colorado today.

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Celebrating Excellence in Colorado Golf

CONGRATULATIONS FROM RMGCSA

The RMGCSA proudly congratulates Rollie Cahalane, Lance Johnson, and Mitch Savage for their well-deserved recognition. Their dedication, professionalism, and vision continue to inspire our entire membership and strengthen the impact of superintendents throughout Colorado and beyond.

The following links have more information to get about the event as well as the recording.

<https://www.coloradogolfhalloffame.org/news/their-time-to-shine-notes-and-quotes-as-colorado-golf-hall-of-fame-inducts-its-52nd-class-tom-apple-rollie-cahalane-lance-johnson-jon-lindstrom-and-robert-polk/>

2025 Colorado Golf Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kdfcapElvXc>

Individual speeches can be found on the home page of RMGCSA.org website

Thank you to E.J. Carr for taking photos.



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How can I donate?

Please click the links below!

What to donate?

- Sports related items: game tickets, uniforms, signed memorabilia (hockey stick, football, baseball, etc.)
- Golf shop items: golf balls & golf clubs, shirts, jackets, golf certificates
- Other items: spirits, outdoor gear, tools, other certificates or vouchers

Want to make a tax-deductible monetary donation instead?

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[Donation Online Link](#)

Best Tournament Ever – Hosted by The Sanctuary Golf Course

What a day! The 2025 RMGCSA “Best Tournament Ever” lived up to its name, bringing together 132 golfers for a spectacular day at The Sanctuary Golf Course. With perfect weather, great camaraderie, and a truly world-class venue, this year’s event was one to remember.

A huge thank you to Helena for their generous sponsorship, and special appreciation to Dave Hare and Rudy Zupetz (PGA Professional) from The Sanctuary for hosting our members and ensuring every detail was perfect.

Closest to the Pin Winners

- #5 – Billy LaFleur – Red Hawk Ridge
- #6 – Ed Rockett – Lone Tree
- #10 – Aaron Fankhauser, CGCS – The Club at Rolling Hills
- #14 – Michael Wade

Tournament Results (Stableford Scoring)

1.1st Place – +49

- Daniel Wood – Pinehurst
- Jonah Landry – Pinehurst
- Ryan McKeon – Pinehurst
- Lucas Davis

2.2nd Place – +47

- Dan McCann – Aquatrols
- Tim Davis – Legacy Ridge
- Kenny Troutman – Wilbur Ellis
- Joe the Pro Carlton (HM) – Legacy Ridge

Continued page 20.

Best Tournament Ever – Hosted by The Sanctuary Golf Course

3.3rd Place – +45

- Garrett Marsh – City Park
- Michael Melka – Simplot
- Chet Wilmes – Springhill Golf Course
- Xaiver Suazo – Cherry Hills CC

4.Last Place – +24

- Travis Abitz – LL Johnson
- Ryan Davis – Hiwan
- Ben Getman – Denver CC
- Marty Savage – Heritage Eagle Bend

Thank you to everyone who came out to make this one of the best RMGCSA tournaments yet.

The combination of competitive play, laughter, and friendship made it an unforgettable day.

We’re already looking forward to next year’s event!

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Best Tournament Ever – Hosted by The Sanctuary Golf Course



Continued page 22.

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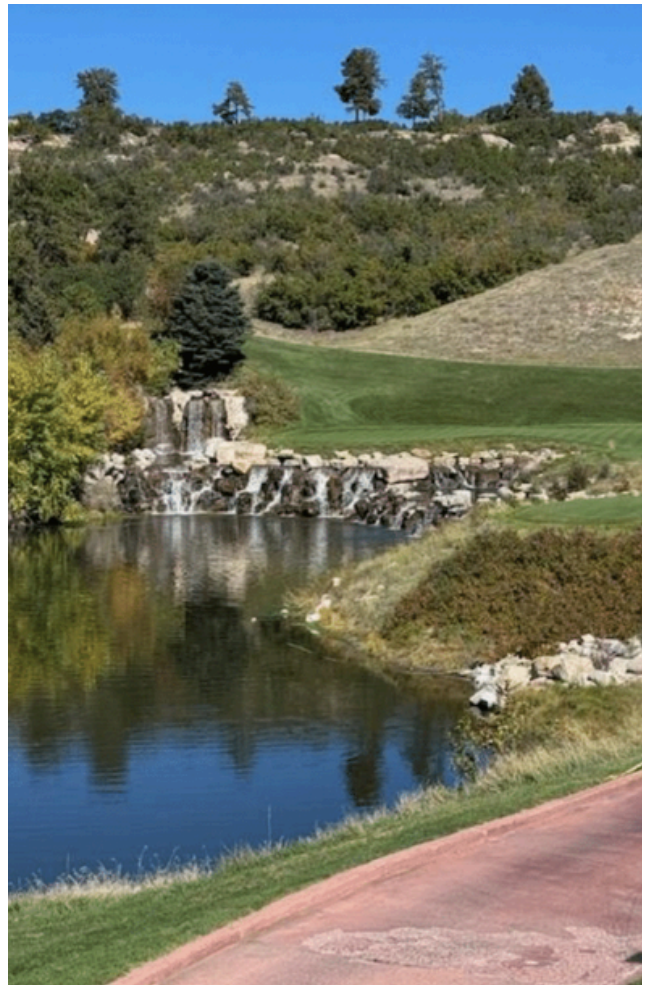


Continued page 23.

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Background photo of The Club at Rolling Hills

Affiliate Angle

Overview: An interview with Pete Lambrecht of JPL Landscapes, LLC

What is your current affiliate company and your position? How long have you been in this position?

My current company is JPL Landscapes LLC, where I serve as the Owner. I established and have been operating in this position for three years.

Where are you based out of, and what territory do you cover?

JPL Landscapes is based in Sterling, Colorado. We cover an extensive territory, primarily focusing on all of Colorado but also servicing parts of Nebraska, Wyoming, and Kansas.



What are the responsibilities of your company to our industry, and how is your company involved with RMGCSA?

JPL Landscapes specializes in providing large-scale aeration services for golf courses and sports fields. Our core responsibility is to support superintendents in maintaining the highest quality, healthiest turf by ensuring deep, effective soil conditioning. I joined the RMGCSA because of a lifelong passion for the game of golf and a dedication to the preservation and development of the outdoors. We view our involvement as crucial to staying connected with the unique challenges and needs of our clients.

Continued page 26.

Affiliate Angle

What might we be surprised to know about your company?

Readers might be surprised to know that my decision to found JPL Landscapes was born directly out of over 10 years of experience working in golf course greenskeeping. This background gives us a unique perspective; we are superintendents helping superintendents. We understand the daily operational pressures and the precise timing required for effective turf maintenance.

Did you go to college? If so, where and what major did you graduate with?

I did not attend college, opting instead for on-the-job experience and building my career directly within the golf course maintenance field.

How and when did you begin working in the golf industry and what do you like most about it?

I began working in the golf industry at the age of 17 at our local course. Over the years, I've worked for multiple courses in my hometown, gaining comprehensive experience in turf management.

What I love most is the ever-changing set of challenges inherent in maintaining turfgrass and the simple joy of being outdoors. The continuous, strategic game of golf course management—dealing with weather, soil, and player expectations—is incredibly rewarding.

Tell us a little about your family, and what hobbies or activities you participate in when you are not at work?

My wife and I recently celebrated the first birthday of our daughter, Jade. When I'm not working, family is my focus. We enjoy getting out on the golf course together, spending time at the lake, and camping. Finding time for outdoor activities is a priority for us.

Continued page 27.

Affiliate Angle

What are the biggest changes you have seen in the profession since you began your career?

The most significant change I've witnessed is the evolution in the strategy and technology used to maintain high-quality turf. The focus has shifted toward more data-driven, precise, and sustainable methods, especially concerning inputs like water and nutrients.

Do you regularly attend RMGCSA meetings or events, if so why are they important?

I do not regularly attend, but I am committed to increasing my attendance. I see RMGCSA events as a vital opportunity for continuing education and peer-to-peer dialogue—it's where the industry's best practices are shared and developed.

What would you like other people to know about RMGCSA?

I would emphasize that the RMGCSA provides a highly valuable and dedicated network within a very specialized industry. It is the essential platform for professional support, knowledge exchange, and relationship building for turfgrass professionals.

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Continued page 28.

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You know a lot of people in our industry. What are they saying are the biggest obstacles to overcome for them to be successful?

Based on my conversations with superintendents, the biggest obstacles are managing rising input costs (fertilizer, fuel, chemicals) and the perennial challenge of finding and retaining good, reliable labor.

You get to see many facilities and properties. What is an interesting new or innovative practice you have seen?

I have observed a significant shift in the perception and implementation of greens rolling.

It has evolved from a supplemental task to a highly strategic, precision-based maintenance practice, often used daily to achieve specific firmness and speed targets while minimizing the need for overly aggressive cutting heights.

Annual Tournament Recap

Nate Lundy from Flatirons Golf Course

On October 14, 2025, Ed Rockett and Lone Tree Golf Club hosted the Rocky Mountain Golf Course Superintendents Association Annual Championships and Challenge Cup Finals. There were 67 contestants that competed on a day in which the weather was as perfect as it could get. The golf course was in phenomenal shape and was a true and fair test for everyone. Congrats to Kevin Malloy, CGCS from TPC Colorado on winning his first championship and putting his name on the coveted Championship trophy!

CHAMPIONSHIP

1st Gross and Class A Trophy Winner – 73 – Kevin Malloy – TPC Colorado

2nd Gross and Class AF Trophy Winner – 73 – Steven Faussett – CPS

1st Net and Class A Trophy Winner – 74 – Ed Rockett – Lone Tree Golf and Hotel

2nd Net and Class C Trophy Winner – 76 - Garrett Marsh – City Park Golf Course

1st Place Scramble – 65 – John Magnuson and Kevin Kallas – Saddle Rock Golf Course

2nd Place Scramble – 65 – Eric Day – The Pinery and Steven Culhane – The Pinery

Continued page 30.

Certification News

Congratulations to new and renewing CGCSs!

Be the first to congratulate fellow members in your chapter.

Newly Certified Members

Timothy M. Davis, CGCS

Recertified Members

Allen R. Brown, CGCS

Brett Klahr, CGCS

September 2025 CGCS Members

Annual Tournament Recap

Closest to the Pins:

3 – John Magnuson – Retired

10 -Leo Nelson

#13 – Darin Miller – Harrells

CHALLENGE FINAL:

1st Place – Garrett Marsh – City Park Golf Course

2nd Place – Patrick Cicolani – Hiwan Golf Club

3rd Place – John Magnuson

4th Place – Ed Rockett – Lone Tree Golf and Hotel

5th Place – Aaron Fankhauser, CGCS – Club at Rolling Hills

6th Place – Jeremiah Stumpff – Broken Tee

7th Place – Darin Miller – Harrells

Make sure you put this event on your calendar for next year and remember that all of our closest to the pin winners from ALL of the RMGCSA events are qualified for the Challenge Finals, which are held at the Annual Championships. Thank you to Syngenta for sponsoring this event and our association!

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Continued page 31

Annual Tournament Recap



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A photograph of a green and white Club Car utility vehicle, a four-wheeled golf cart with a cargo bed in the back and a steering wheel on the right side.

Continued page 32

Annual Tournament Recap



Equipment Manager Spotlight

Overview: An interview with Lonny Lawson at TPC Colorado



Describe Myself:

I'm a third generation Colorado Native married to my wife Laura for 33 years and have two grown daughters. As turning wrenches goes, I have been doing it for 40 years. The first piece of turf equipment I worked on would have been a 3 wheel Cushman turf truck, I have been in the golf industry for 33 years total, but have also worked in other industries turning wrenches. I have completed GCSAA's EMCP levels 1 and 2 certificates, hoping to complete my CTEM very shortly. I have been to Toro, Jacobsen, and Cushman service schools, I am also a licensed airframe and power plant mechanic.

Hobbies I enjoy fly fishing, playing golf, and riding my motorcycle.

What is your favorite turf equipment piece of all time?

My favorite piece of equipment all time would have to be a Toro 52 Groundsmaster.

What's one piece of equipment that has been what you would call a monumental innovation to golf course maintenance?

I believe that the biggest innovation to the golf industry in my time is certainly the spin grinder. It has changed quality and standards unlike anything else.

Continued page 34.

Equipment Manager Spotlight

If you could give one piece of advice to someone interested in a career in this aspect of the golf maintenance industry, what would it be?

My advice to a new mechanic would be do not get mad when everything breaks at once. Things come at you in waves and take things in stride

Energy drink or coffee?

I only drink coffee on the weekends, but I do drink Mountain Dew, if that counts as an energy drink?

What tool is absolutely essential for every golf course mechanic?

The most essential piece of equipment for an Equipment manager would be a HOC gauge, whether it is digital or analog, it is a must!

Do you spin or relief grind, or backlap?

I spin grind and backlap, but if I had a relief grinder I would be doing all 3!

Lease or own?

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Assistant Spotlight

Overview: An Interview with Brandon Abila at Todd Creek Golf Club.

My name is Brandon Abila, and I'm the Assistant Superintendent at Todd Creek Golf Club. I'm also a proud class C committee member for the RMGCSA. My journey in golf course management began at Omni Interlocken Golf Club, where I gained foundational knowledge working under one of the best in the business, Tyler Cole.



This led me to a valuable internship at the prestigious Castle Pines Golf Club. These early experiences were truly life-changing, shaping me into the professional I am today and teaching me the proper way to maintain a course to the highest standards. After completing my summer at Castle Pines, I was hired for my first Assistant role at Todd Creek Golf Club

Describe your Facility?

Todd Creek is a 7,500-yard, par-72, links-style course renowned for its challenging greens, fast fairways, and strategically placed bunkers. This unique design makes it an ideal venue for amateur tournaments and high-level women's events. However, our location within a retirement community presents its own set of challenges. From frequent resident complaints, email requests, and a high volume of cart traffic, it's unlike anything I've ever experienced.

Continued page 36.

Assistant Spotlight

What Makes Your Facility Unique?

Despite these hurdles, this year we successfully hosted Annikas Women's All-Pro Tour, which was by far the biggest event in Todd Creek's history. The tournament was a massive success, and the compliments from the players were a testament to our team's hard work. What many people don't realize is that preparing for an event of this magnitude isn't a week-long effort; it's a culmination of years of dedication.

When Superintendent Eric Phillips and I took over in 2023, the course was on the brink of closure and in desperate need of a complete overhaul. We faced a maintenance nightmare, including widespread irrigation problems, bunkers that were barely recognizable, and severely neglected equipment. The biggest lesson I learned from this extensive renovation process was that golf course maintenance is a team sport. I couldn't do it alone. Eric shared a piece of wisdom that has since become a guiding principle: "Good superintendents are hard working and can execute any job to a high standard. Great superintendents make THEIR CREW hardworking and execute any job to a high standard." Living by these words has been the key to Todd Creek's remarkable turnaround, and I'm incredibly proud of our seasonal crew members who have worked tirelessly to contribute to our shared success.

What do you do when you're not at work?

A crucial part of my success has been maintaining a healthy work-life balance. Outside of work, I enjoy golfing, lifting weights, backpacking, and following NFL football. By working a maximum of five days a week, I've been able to pursue these hobbies, which has significantly improved my enjoyment of life and, in turn, made me more productive and efficient at work. While we still have "dog days" and put in extra hours when absolutely necessary, but this approach ensures that I remain fresh and engaged. I'm looking forward to connecting with more of you and sharing our experiences!

Eight assistant golf course superintendents chosen for eighth class of EXCEL Leadership Program

By Kelsey Underwood

The EXCEL Leadership Program, which is funded by Nufarm, features two, three-day education and training sessions, a trip to the annual GCSAA Conference and Trade Show and more.

Lawrence, Kan. (Oct. 7, 2025) – Eight assistant superintendent members of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) have been chosen for the eighth class of the EXCEL Leadership Program, which is funded by Nufarm. The three-year program offers leadership training for personal, career and community/industry stewardship for assistant superintendents – the future leaders in the golf course management industry.

“GCSAA is pleased to once again provide career-enhancing professional development opportunities through the Nufarm EXCEL Leadership Program,” GCSAA CEO Rhett Evans said. “Congratulations to the members of this year’s class. Your drive and determination to advance your career and grow your network undoubtedly strengthens the association and, in turn, the turfgrass management industry.”

Continued page 38.



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Eight assistant golf course superintendents chosen for eighth class of EXCEL Leadership Program

The EXCEL Leadership Program features two, three-day education and training sessions and a trip to the annual GCSAA Conference and Trade Show.

The latest class will join the existing EXCEL cohorts at the Fall Meeting, Oct. 7-9, at PGA Headquarters in Frisco, Texas; the 2026 GCSAA Conference and Trade Show in Orlando; and the Spring Meeting in 2026, with details to be announced later.

“Nufarm is excited to welcome a new group of outstanding assistants into the EXCEL Program! Over the next three years, these future leaders will experience some of the finest professional development education in the industry. We’re proud to partner with GCSAA to provide them with this unique opportunity for growth and success,” Nufarm U.S. Golf Segment Lead Jeff Eldridge, CGCS, said.

Continued page 39



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Eight assistant golf course superintendents chosen for eighth class of EXCEL Leadership Program

The members of the 2025 EXCEL Leadership Program are:

- Juan G. Amezcua Avalos of Hop Meadow Country Club, Simsbury, Conn.
- Jordan Diede of City Park Nine Golf Course, Fort Collins, Colo.
- Clinton Edger of Common Ground Golf Course, Aurora, Colo.
- Jonathan Kaschak of Concord Country Club, West Chester, Pa.
- Cole Miedema of The Club at Kukui'ula, Koloa, Hawaii
- Elliott Pope of Frederica Golf Club, Saint Simons Island, Ga.
- Caleb Smith of Eugene Country Club, Eugene, Ore.
- Hattie Spies of Southern Hills Country Club, Tulsa, Okla.

To learn more, visit gcsaa.org/excel.

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GCSAA Applauds Colorado's Leadership in BMP Adoption

Kevin Sunderman, Chief Operating Officer

Dear Colorado Superintendents,

The Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) extends its sincere congratulations to the Rocky Mountain Golf Course Superintendents Association (RMGCSA), RMEGI, and the entire Colorado golf community for achieving outstanding progress in facility BMP adoption.

Through the "Path to 100" initiative and the use of BMP Hero, Colorado has surpassed 70% participation across all Colorado facilities, setting a national example of environmental stewardship and proactive leadership. Your collective efforts demonstrate to policymakers and regulators that golf course superintendents are deeply committed to operating in an environmentally responsible and resource-efficient manner. Colorado's results show how collaboration and innovation can elevate the industry and serve as a model for other states.

GCSAA fully supports the continued use of BMP Hero in Colorado and applauds the success generated to-date. Together, GCSAA, RMGCSA, and BMP Hero will ensure all facilities that complete their BMPs through BMP Hero receive full recognition and the appropriate member service points - without any additional requirements or duplication of effort through the GCSAA. Nationally, GCSAA continues to advance BMP initiatives and promote responsible resource management across all 50 states. While we are preparing to launch an enhanced version of the GCSAA facility BMP tool to improve functionality and ease of use, Colorado's remarkable achievement stands as proof of what can be accomplished through leadership, partnership, and commitment to stewardship.

Continued page 41.

GCSAA Applauds Colorado's Leadership in BMP Adoption

Soon there will be communication out to other states and chapters regarding GCSAA's next steps and investment in the BMP initiative but Colorado should rest assured that their past, present and future efforts pertaining to facility adoption will be supported and there will be no additional GCSAA requirements for Colorado members or facilities that have completed, or will complete, their BMPs through BMP Hero.

Sincerely,

Kevin Sunderman, Chief Operating Officer

Golf Course Superintendents Association of America

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