

TEE TO GREEN

April 2013



The Official Publication of the South Texas Golf Course Superintendents Association



Annual Scholarship Tournament is Right Around The Corner!

* There is still time to donate products, equipment hunting and fishing trips, lunch outings and of course golf rounds! Support our association at the biggest fundraiser of the year. Just contact the office at stgcsa@stgcsa.org. Check out some of the cool items on the website and get your friends and family to bid online!

* May is the Chapter Championship at Bay Oaks. Come support host Kyle Brown, and speaker, Randy Samoff (Topic: Technology Devices).

* Make a note of the new date for the Superintendent/Pro—Member/Member Tournament at Miramont Country Club.

* We are planning a fun and new get together for August. A family night at Constellation field in Sugar Land to watch a Skeeter's game. More information on this to come!

* Mark you calendars for a new meeting in July! Bring 2 or 3 guests of your choosing. These guests do not have to be members or golf industry related people! Yes, choose some friends or family to come play at the Tournament Course at Redstone. It will be a fun day with a silent auction and prizes. There will be a lot more information on this meeting (including the cost per person) to come in the May issue of Tee To Green.

Sign up early....this one is going to fill up quick!

Meeting Schedule

April 16, 2013—Scholarship Tournament and Live Auction

High Meadow Ranch Golf Club

[Map to High Meadow Ranch GC](#)

May 13, 2013—Bay Oaks Country Club

Chapter Championship

[Map to Bay Oaks CC](#)

June 11, 2013—Supt/Pro, Member/Member Tournament

Miramont Country Club

[Map to Miramont CC](#)

July 28, 2013 (Sunday) - Member/Guest/Guest/Guest

Redstone Tournament Course

More information to come!

[Register Now for Any Meeting!](#)



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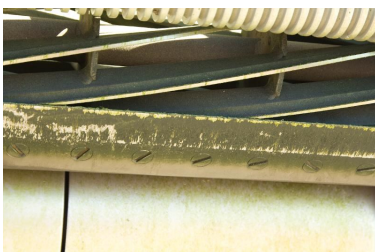
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Given the thickness of even the thinnest tournament bedknife relative to the short cutting heights of greens, the bedknife is in contact with the turf canopy as the mower moves across a green. Think of it this way. If the upper surface of the bedknife is contacting the leaf blades at the point that they are clipped, then the entire thickness of the bedknife must be plowing "through" the turf canopy below that level. This plowing creates resistance to the forward movement of the mower. We rely on the resistance being minimal or else the bedknife will, for lack of a better term, snag as it is passing through. Ever feel the mower sort of pause or chatter during a pass? That is due to the varying resistance from spot to spot between the bedknife and the turf canopy. Even if the resistance changes are too subtle for the operator to detect, they are there. Is this a problem? Yes, but the question is the magnitude of the problem. Hopefully, the problem is slight enough that it's impact on the putting quality is insignificant.

How does this happen?

1.) A deceleration of the machine (caused by increased resistance) causes the machine to rock forward thus instantaneously lowering the cutting height. Have you noticed the tendency to scalp when the deceleration is great enough for the operator to detect?

2.) The slower the mower travels, the deeper it sinks into the surface. Think of it as walking on thin ice. If you run fast, you won't fall through but if you walk, the greater downward pressure will cause the ice to brake and you take a cold bath. With higher resistance in spots, the slower the mower will travel in those spots and a lower cutting height will result. This is particularly if the drive drum even slightly breaks traction.



This bedknife has an accumulation of dried plant material and a silica material that was applied to the greens.

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Here are a couple situations that can increase the bedknife / turf-canopy resistance to very problematic levels:

- Sticky bedknives. After being used for a short time, bedknife surfaces become "polished" to a shiny and slippery condition. That is great but have you noticed how green/black residue occasionally builds up on the surfaces? This may be the residue of plant cells that have leaked from cut tissues and have dried on the metal. Or, it may be from a product that was applied to the turf. Regardless of the source, if the accumulation is thick enough, the accumulation may itself be riding on the turf surface and raising the cutting height. Or it may be sticky and increasing the resistance to forward movement and in turn causing the problems described above. Thick accumulations are usually scraped off with a putty knife and the remaining remove with a cleaner on a rag. A product like "Goof-Off" works well.

- Dry turf surface. When greens are mowed first thing in the morning, the surface is usually damp with dew. This water is a superb lubricant for reducing resistance. However, if the greens are mowed later in the day or if they haven't been watered for several days, the surface may lack the water lubricant. Again, the resulting increased resistance will cause the problems mentioned above. In that case, Superintendents may instruct the operators to dust the greens with water just prior to mowing. This has the added benefit making the mower lines easier to follow.

- Heavy grain. If grain is uncontrolled, the mower will encounter much heavier resistance in one particular direction. More is to come on this topic in the near future. Hint - try brushing.

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 Eric Williford, Asst. Supt. Whispering Pines GC - Daniel Baker, Acct. Exec. PTP
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Get to Know Appointed Board Member, Eric Bauer

Without a doubt, outside of work faith and family come first. I was fortunate to be raised by two wonderful parents who raised 6 children. My parents instilled in me at a very early age that nothing comes easy and you have to work hard and prove yourself every day. I always had a strong desire to accomplish great things throughout my career. I have always wanted to be around individuals that take pride in their work and aspire to be nothing but the best. I have always been persistent in pursuing my dreams and goals in life and career. My wife Katherine for 17 years is a beautiful person that puts the needs of other first, without her loving support I would not be where I am today. We are truly blessed to have two wonderful boys Reid 13 and Andrew 10. They are truly my passion outside of work. When I am not at work we are usually busy with sports and sending time as a family. I was born in the Mid-West a suburb south of Chicago Joliet, Illinois. And at an early age I developed a passion for the golf business working on a golf course at the age of 15. Once I realized that I could pursue a career in turf grass management there was no turning back. In 1993, I graduated from Michigan State University's Turf grass Management Program and worked exclusively at Jack Nicklaus Signature Courses during my career including "The Yard" at the Nicklaus' estate. Other courses include Shoal Creek Golf Club, Alabama, The Challenge at Manele, Hawaii, and Spring Creek Ranch, Tennessee where I completed my first grow-in. I have has been a part of Carlton Woods since the beginning in 2000. One of my most gratifying moments in my career is the completion of construction and grow- in of both the Nicklaus and Fazio courses and helping make Carlton Woods one of the premier facilities is the State of Texas. All this was possible because of supporting mentors, members, owners and staff over the past years 17 years. I enjoy developing great young aspiring superintendents, staff and most importantly, interacting with our members on a daily basis. Now I am at a point in my career that I feel I should be giving back to the profession that has been so good to me and my family. I hope to share my work experiences and get to know many of the great superintendents in the Houston area. Sharing ideas and experiences with other superintendents is the great thing about our business. I look forward to working with the other STGSA Board members and continue the job that all the other STGSA members have done before me in serving our association.

Yours Truly,

Eric



~Quote of the Month~

Golf is so popular simply because it is the best game in the world at which to be bad.

~A.A. Milne

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President's Message

By: Sean Wilson, CGCS



This is great time of the year. We are slowly but surely getting rid of the cold weather and preparing the course for the season. This is also the time for the Shell Houston Open, for which Randy Samoff and his crew had the course in spectacular shape once again. They really represent the South Texas GCSA well. Of course everyone is looking forward to the Masters, (I know I am) nothing like hearing those "A tradition like no other" commercials to get you fired up about the upcoming season.

Communication has made its way to the forefront of our jobs. It's been a long time since we just grew grass, being out in front of the members, talking about course conditions and explaining what we do and why is one of the most important aspects of our jobs. We are "tweeting", blogging and are active on facebook. I know my members have really liked the blog I do and look forward to seeing new posts. I know I was hesitant to start the blog, thinking it was difficult and took up a lot of time. But, it has been really easy and very beneficial.

In keeping with the communication theme, the STGCSA set up a booth at the Shell Houston Open to promote the Environmental Institute for Golf's Rounds 4 Research program. Members Cody Spivey, Johnny Walker, myself and our South Central GCSAA field representative Brian Cloud worked the booth and talked with all who stopped by about the program, getting email addresses so we can send a reminder of the auction dates. Randy Samoff helped out by getting the HGA to let us have the booth space and promote our industry.

The Scholarship Tournament is fast approaching and we need teams signed up and we need a lot of items for the auction. This tournament is the main reason we are able to give out close to \$20,000 annually in scholarships. Come be a part of this great event and help us keep that tradition going.

Hope to see everyone April 16th at High Meadow Ranch!

M. Sean Wilson, CGCS



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March 18, 2013 – Walden on Lake Houston

Golf Results and Proximity Results

Gross

- 1st**—Kevin Borowski/Braeden Riley : 61
- 2nd**—Scott Terry/Sean Wilson: 68 Scorecard Payoff
- 3rd**—Doug Browne/Harry Yewens: 68

Net

- 1st**—Alan Hess/Kevin Royse: 63 Scorecard Payoff
- 2nd**—Kent Knowles/Bill Haefling: 63
- 3rd**—Charles Joachim/Debi Burton: 63 Scorecard Payoff

OTHER SCORES (Click here for a full list of scores)

GROSS

- 69 Pat Johnston/Phillip Littlefield
- Alan Hess/Kevin Royse
- Kent Knowles/Bill Haefling
- 70 Walt Wilson/Chris Lineberger
- 71 Bill Abetz/Randall Orr
- Stan Ludwig/Carl Tolbert
- 72 Bryce Carins/Jackie Mostyn
- 73 Mark Haven/Bobby Holt
- 74 Kody Key/Cody Spivey
- Bob Cook/John Freeman

GROSS cont.

- 75 Kevin Brown/Kevin Graft
- Ed Schultheis/Gary Mostyn
- Kelly Morgan/Courtney White
- 76 Jack Hargrove/Walt Albright
- Todd Stephens/Pat Neuendorff

NET

- 59 Kevin Borowski/Braeden Riley
- 64 Pat Johnston/Phillip Littlefield
- Brent Ratcliff/Chris Mrosko
- 65 Scott Terry/Sean Wilson
- Lee Gravett/Sherry Orr
- Kevin Brown/Kevin Graft
- Jack Hargrove/Walt Albright

NEW cont.

- 66 Pat Neuendorff/Todd Stephens
- Doug Browne/Harry Yewens
- Bill Abetz/Randall Orr
- 67 Gary Hargrove/Carol Haefling
- Willy Plowman/Bill Taylor
- Stan Ludwig/Carl Tolbert
- Bryce Carins/Jackie Mostyn
- Mark Haven/Bobby Holt
- Kody Key/Cody Spivey

Long Drive

- Hole #13-0-13.9 hcp**
- Phillip Littlefield
- Hole #2—14 and up hcp**
- Chris Lineberger
- Closest to Hole**
- Hole #15-0-13.0 hcp**
- Alan Hess
- Hole #4 - 14 and up hcp**
- Ed Schultheis



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The bunker dilemma

Presented by the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America

Nearly everyone who plays golf knows that bunkers are supposed to be hazards. That's how the Rules of Golf, define them--"A bunker is a hazard consisting of a prepared area of ground, often a hollow, from which turf or soil has been removed or replaced with sand or the like."

For golfers, the object should be to avoid them. But for golf course superintendents, the subject of bunker maintenance is often a subject that falls under the category of "Hazardous Duty." In fact, that's the title of a seminar offered by the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America. Taught by Robert M. Randquist, GCSAA board member and Certified Golf Course Superintendent at Boca Rio Golf Club in Boca Raton, Fla., the course helps GCSAA superintendents understand the complex and often contentious subject. According to Randquist, the difficulty of bunker maintenance begins with the fact that both golfers and golf course superintendents exhibit a wide variation in how they look at bunkers.

At one extreme you hear, "A bunker is a hazard, I shouldn't have hit the ball here." Or, "Golf is like life, it's not supposed to be fair."

At the other extreme there are those who think, "I can't believe how unfair this bunker is. Even the best golfer in the world couldn't get on the green from here."

With such a wide range of opinions and expectations about bunkers place in the game, and how they should be maintained, Randquist says it's vitally important that golf course superintendents, green committees, private owners, supervisors and tournament governing bodies discuss the issue. Arriving at a consensus regarding playing conditions for the course's bunkers is important, but it is equally important that they determine if the golf facility has the financial ability to provide those conditions on a regular basis.

The kinds of questions that must be answered include:

Should a golfer ever have a buried lie in a bunker?

Should a golf ball always roll back to the flat portion of the bunker?

Is it possible to define the difference between a "fair" bunker and an unfair one?

How often should golfers be able to get the ball out of a greenside bunker and into the hole in two shots?

How often should golfers be able to hit a shot from a fairway bunker onto the green?

Should a golfer ever have to play a shot from underneath or against the lip of a bunker?

Should the sand surface be smooth or furrowed?

Do the bunkers provide equal hazard to low and high handicap players?

The answers to these questions make it possible for the golf course superintendent to define the expected difficulty of the course's bunkers, establish a plan for bunker maintenance that will deliver that level of difficulty and develop a budget for that level of maintenance.

GCSAA golf course superintendents are accustomed to creating these kinds of plans, and balancing the desires of golfers with the available labor and equipment assets. But golfers are often unaware of how many factors affect the condition of bunkers.

Randquist says the primary factors influencing the decisions golf course superintendents make regarding bunker maintenance include: type and depth of sand in bunkers; raking, grooming and edging methods; and, of course, bunker maintenance costs and budget.

The technical aspects of sand selection include everything from particle size and particle shape to crusting potential, infiltration rate, color, and even measuring firmness with a penetrometer. Management of all these factors to produce the desired bunker playing conditions is primarily the superintendent's responsibility.

So, too, are the decisions about raking and grooming methods. Over the years, these have ranged from almost no grooming in the earliest days of the game, to the infamous furrowing rakes employed at Oakmont Country Club, to the modern power bunker rakes that can dramatically reduce the amount of time it takes to rake a bunker.

But if golfers want the kind of bunker conditions they see on television at championship venues they need to understand that getting there comes with a substantial cost.

That kind of maintenance demands a commitment of manpower that most courses simply aren't able to muster. Although there are many factors that influence the cost of bunker maintenance, Randquist says that many golf facilities commit as much as 15 to 25 percent of their golf course labor hours to bunker maintenance.

In preparation for a golf championship, it is not uncommon to have a bunker maintenance crew of 10 to 20 people working full time for two to three weeks prior to and during the event. Achieving "tournament" conditions may include packing the sand, adjusting depths, removing debris and stones, controlling moisture content, adding amendments to the sand, and hand raking—all of which are extremely labor intensive.

If a golf course sets a standard of providing those conditions on an every-day basis, labor costs for bunker maintenance alone can be \$300,000 to \$350,000 a year. For golf courses with annual maintenance budgets under \$1 million such a commitment is obviously out of the question.

Randquist says that golfers are often surprised to learn how much strain bunkers can put on a golf course maintenance budget, but once they are aware of the balance between labor costs and bunker playing conditions they alter their expectations.

Despite a trend in recent years to maintain bunkers in a manner that provides a relatively low degree of difficulty, bunkers are still hazards. When golfers express a desire to have them be less of a hazard, they need to understand that achieving that standard comes with a significant cost.

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Starting in 2013, if you win money at a golf event, the money must be picked up within two meetings after the prize was won or the money will be donated to the scholarship fund. This change is due to the tournament committee having to keep up with winnings for extended periods of time, sometimes over a year. Winners are posted online within a few days of the event so you can determine if you have prizes waiting for you well before the next event.

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High Meadow Ranch Scholarship Tournament Information

April 16, 2013
 9:30—10:00 Registration
 10:00—12:00 Live Auction/Meeting
 12:00—1:00 Lunch/Range is Open
 1:00 pm Shotgun Start
 5:30-6:30 Scoring/Awards



2012 Scholarship Tournament Photos



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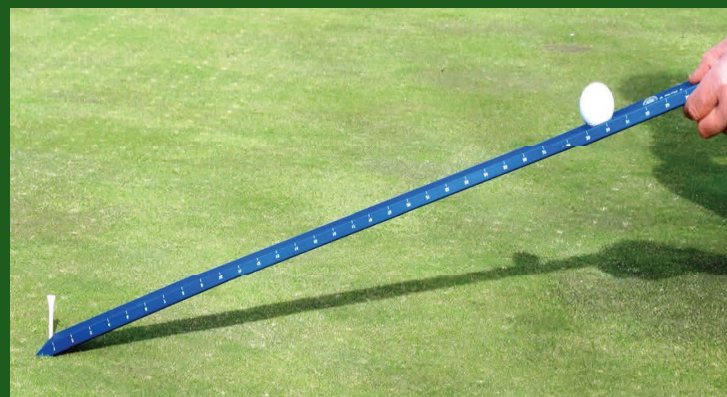
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“At the USGA, we conduct research for the good of the game,” said Steve Quintavalla, Ph.D., USGA senior research designer and creator of the new Stimpmeter. “We strive to understand all equipment used to manage or play the game, and what better way to do so than by helping to maintain better and more consistent playing surfaces for those who play and enjoy golf at every level.”

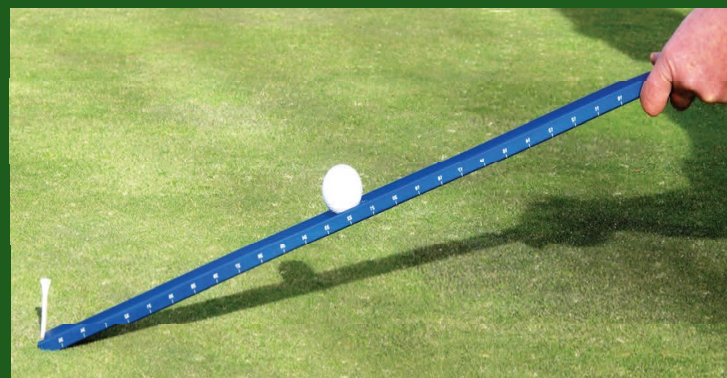
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The “1X” standard notch is the preferred method to measure green speed.



Use the “2X” alternate notch on the reverse side of the Stimpmeter when a smaller test area is needed.



March 18th Walden on Lake Houston—Host/Speaker: Superintendent, Bob Cook

“Bob Cook, Walden Supt, was our speaker and did a wonderful job presenting a talk about “communication with our members/players” and also about “water, water usage, conservation, record keeping/monitoring”, and the importance of it. He did a great job of mentioning a little about the TBAM program, and also he had 12 members from his MGA, LGA, and SMGA attend the meeting, and after each one was paired up with a different group for the golf event. A great idea that we haven’t seen before.

Thanks Bob for putting together that program and sharing with our membership. The course was in great shape, especially the greens, and overall everything ran smoothly with the lunch, meeting, and golf event.

Thanks again Bob and Walden for hosting us.

Todd Stephens, CGCS

Thank you, Clark Webb of Shemin Nurseries: “split the pot” winner at Walden on Lake Houston whom generously donated the winnings back to the scholarship fund!!



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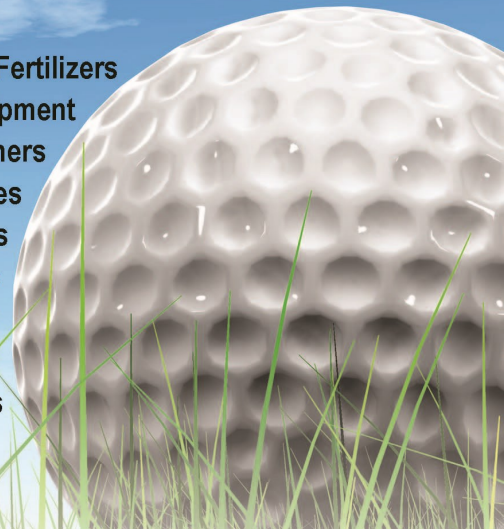
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Texas Turf Grass Association (Shirley Duble)-979.690.2201
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Get to Know STGCSA Director Steven Chernosky (Winner of the 2012 STGCSA Superintendent of the Year Award)

I grew up in Columbus, TX, where I moved to from Hempstead at the age of 11. I graduated from Columbus High School in 1998 where I played just about every sport that was available, except golf.

After graduating from Texas A&M in 2003, I took an assistant's job at The Deerwood Club in Kingwood, working directly under Bobby Egan. Bobby told me on my first day, "I'll give you one week to get accustomed to the golf course, and then it's all yours." I thought he was joking, but I soon found out he wasn't, and looking back now, I thank him for the trust he put into me. I learned many valuable lessons during my years at Deerwood, having the opportunity to learn from not only Bobby, but Kevin Lyles, Steve Vaughn, as well as the late Charles Faubion. During my time at Deerwood, I was part of a greens renovation, a bunker renovation, construction of a new pump station, as well as hosting Q-School numerous years.

After spending nearly 8 years at Deerwood, I had the opportunity to come work for Sterling Golf, Inc whom had recently purchased Houston National Golf Club with the intentions of constructing a new golf course. In November 2010, construction on Sterling Country Club began and the rain stopped. While trying to grow in the new golf course as well as maintain the existing 18-holes, I believe I went through every stage of craziness, but we lived through it and I still have the love for this business as I had from day 1.

One great thing about the job here at Sterling is that I get to work with my wife on a daily basis. I met Megan in my last semester at A&M, and we have been inseparable since. We were married in 2006 and have plans to start a family this year. One of our favorite golf-related memories is the trip she took with me to the US Open in 2005, where I volunteered. I was one of the lucky ones in charge of watering greens, so during the 10 days we were there; it felt like we spent about 20 minutes together. I believe this is where she really got to know the time and effort that goes into the superintendent's line of work.



Shell Houston Open Photos

South Texas promotes Rounds 4 Research at SHO



2012 Golf Course Openings & Closures Update

U.S. golf course openings remain at historic lows, as NGF recorded only 13.5 openings in 2012, compared to 154.5 golf course closures, measured in 18-hole equivalents (18HEQ). As in recent years, closures were disproportionately lower priced public facilities (68% of total closures).

According to NGF data, since the market correction in golf course supply began in 2006, there has been a cumulative net reduction of 499.5 golf courses (18HEQ), which represents a drop of 3.3% off the peak supply year of 2005. However, the cumulative decline over that period must be considered in context: even with seven consecutive years of net reduction in supply, closures represent only about 500 of 16,000 total facilities. For perspective, we opened 400 courses in a single year during the heart of the building boom. And, over the 20-year period from 1986 to 2005 the U.S. saw more than 4,500 18H-EQ golf courses open.

	OPENINGS	CLOSURES	NET CHANGE
TOTAL 2012	13.5	154.5	-141.0
Daily Fee	8.5	130.5	-122.0
Municipal	1.5	8.5	-7.0
Private	3.5	15.5	-12.0

NGF projects that golf course openings will remain at 20 or fewer per year for the foreseeable future, while annual closures are expected to continue in the 150-180 range. The gradual market correction is expected to continue with annual net reduction of supply in the 130-160 range, helping us inch gradually closer to equilibrium.

In next month's Dashboard, we will further explore the openings/closures data and golf course supply as we summarize findings from our 2013 Golf Facilities in the U.S. report. We will also review the NGF Golf Course Supply Index, which tracks the ratio of golfers to golf courses.

	18-Hole Equivalents (U.S.) - as of Dec. 31, 2012					
	OPENINGS		CLOSURES		TOTAL	
	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total
	13.5		154.5		14,671.5	
PUBLIC	10.0	74%	139.0	90%	10,696.5	73%
Daily Fee	8.5	63%	130.5	84%	8,415.0	57%
Municipal	1.5	11%	8.5	6%	2,281.5	16%
PRIVATE	3.5	26%	15.5	10%	3,975.0	27%
Real Estate	7.0	52%	34.5	22%	3,529.5	24%
Public: Fee <\$40	4.5	33%	105.5	68%	4,884.0	33%



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