

Tee to Green

South Texas Chapter
GCSAA
GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENTS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

January
2010

Walker honored

Simply being a nominee for the Sonny DuBose Memorial Superintendent of the Year Award is an honor. It is the only award bestowed by the South Texas Golf Course Superintendents Association, and it is a sign that your fellow superintendents, your managers and your peers understand the contributions you have made to the Chapter, your facility and your profession.

If being nominated is an honor, winning is, in the word of Johnny Walker, “extra special.”

Walker was recognized as the winner of the 2009 Sonny DuBose Memorial Superintendent of the Year during the STGC-SA’s Annual Awards Banquet and Ceremony, held Dec. 11 at Riverbend Country Club.

“This is the highest honor I’ve ever received,” said Walker, the golf course superintendent at Blackhorse Golf Club. “Nothing equals it.”

“I think what makes the award unique is the fact that the winner is chosen by your fellow superintendents,” Walker said. “It’s not voted on by a panel or a select group of members . . . it’s everyone, and that’s a great thing.”

Walker has been a member of the STGC-SA for 22 years and has been active in service to the organization and the profession from day one, working his way through the Board of Directors and serving as the STGC-SA’s president in 1997. He was one of the driving forces behind the Chapter’s late 1990s and early 2000s evolution into the organization it has become today.

He remains active today and has been appointed to a number of Golf Course Superintendents Association of America committees, including the Tournament Committee, the Public Relations Committee and the Conference and Show

Committee, over the past several years.

Walker was profiled in the October 2000 issue of Tee to Green in an article entitled “An Accidental Superintendent.” The title referred to the manner in which he joined the industry.

“I became a superintendent almost by accident,” said Walker. “I was studying to be a soil scientist and was planning on taking an internship. Funds for that ran out, and I needed a job. I found one at Thorntree (Country Club, in DeSoto, Texas)— I had never been on a golf course—and just loved it.”

He turned that “love” into quite a career. He graduated from Texas A&M University with a degree in agronomy in 1985, and after two years working as a research technician running the Texas A&M Turfgrass Research Field Lab for Dr. Jim Beard, he went to work as an assistant superintendent at Walden on Lake Houston Country Club. Two years later, he took his first assignment as a head superintendent, at Weston Lakes Country Club. He left Weston Lakes for similar duties at Inwood Forest Country Club in 1996, and then, in 1998, he became the golf course superintendent at ShadowHawk Golf Club. He moved one more time in 2004, staying in the Redstone Golf family for a move to Blackhorse.

“My sincere thanks to all the members of our Chapter for this honor,” said Walker. “I think it’s aptly named, considering the



Johnny Walker accepts the 2009 Sonny DuBose Memorial Superintendent of the Year award from 2008 recipient Terry Gill.



Johnny Walker

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Let me begin my inaugural address to the members of the South Texas Golf Course Superintendents Association by saying, "Thank you." I appreciate the opportunity to lead our Chapter for the next 12 months, and you have my word that I'll do my best to fulfill the responsibilities of the office in the manner established by those who have gone before.

In the words of Walt Disney, "The way to get started is to quit talking and begin doing," and that's going to be my approach. During the weeks since my election, I have spent a bit of time visiting with a number of our past leaders. The subject of those discussions has been simple . . . what can we do to reinvigorate our organization?

Like me and many of our members, those people have noticed a decline in participation in our activities. That same subject has been a focus of our last several Board of Directors meetings. I've taken the suggestions I've heard to heart and we'll be implementing some of the ideas discussed during the next several months.

In fact, we've already put two into place. The first were the two "Member/Guest" outings for our October and upcoming January meetings. To put it bluntly, we need new members. We need more members. The "Member/Guest" outings are your opportunity to help by bringing potential members and/or the people you work with to let them witness why our organization is valuable. Hopefully, some of them will join the fold and help us move into a more prosperous future.

The second is the adjustment of our meeting schedule. As you probably know by now, we've changed our schedule to allow for a January meeting (a month we've skipped in the past) and eliminated our July meeting.

The idea is that our members have more time to attend a meeting in January than in July, or at least there are fewer conflicts in January. We hope the result is a greater attendance.

That may not be the only change to our schedule. The Board will meet in January, too, and one of the items on the agenda will be additional changes.

One of those changes may simply be a reduction in the overall number of monthly meetings. Another may be a change in the content of the meetings.

What we want to do is present our members with better educational opportunities that focus on a wider range of topics. One of the goals will be to insure that every meeting offers educational points to those who attend. Another is to include topics that provide a well-rounded variety of subjects. That, in some cases, may mean a full day of education rather than the hour or so we've offered in the past.

To make those things happen, I've asked our Board members to work earlier to that we may be able to secure quality presentations and inform you about them in advance.

We're going to work to make sure you receive your newsletters at least a couple of weeks prior to the meetings and that our web site contains as much advance information as possible. Attending our functions takes planning, and we're hoping earlier notification will help our members plan to attend.

There will be other changes and additions, too, but the central idea remains the same . . . we need member participation and vendor support to make our Chapter work. And we need that participation from more members and more vendors. If we need to restructure our dues requirements to create that situation, that's what we'll do.

Having said those things, let me be clear . . . the STGCSA is *not* in trouble. However, it's not difficult to look too far down the road and see the day when it could get into trouble if we don't take steps now to refresh our members' (and prospective members') interest in being part of our Chapter.

We need to restore the feelings of family and allegiance within our organization. If you have any thoughts about this matter, I urge you to make your voice heard.

Call me or any of our Board members or officers now, and let us know what you think. We are your leaders, and we want to know where you want us to go.



Willy Plowman



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Willy Plowman

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— Willy Plowman

Jeff Rickard passes

Long time STGCSA member Jeff Rickard passed away in late October. Rickard, who had worked in the golf course maintenance industry since 1971 and in southeast Texas since 1979, was living in the Sacramento, Calif., area at the time of his death.

Rickard spent much of his time in the Houston area working at Raveneaux Country Club, joining the staff in 1989 and working his way up from shop foreman to golf course superintendent. He left Raveneaux in 2007 and was working for Tommy St. Romain at Turf Specialties, Inc., when he was struck with congestive heart failure, a condition that forced his move to California, where he lived with his brother until the time of his passing.

"Jeff loved golf and horse racing," said Richard Kane, Rickard's close friend and fellow STGCSA member. "He was a good man."

Our sympathies to Jeff's friends and family.

Turfgrass course coming up

The 6th Annual Turfgrass Ecology and Management Short Course will be held at the College Station Conference Center, adjacent to the Texas A&M University Campus, on Feb. 1-5, 2010.

This turfgrass management continuing education program is designed to provide basic and practical information to new professional turfgrass managers, as well as to provide experienced turf managers the opportunity to review and update their knowledge.

The registration deadline is January 15, 2010.

Complete details about the event can be accessed through keywords and course date at <http://agrifilevents.tamu.edu/> or directly at

<http://agrifilevents.tamu.edu/events/details.cfm?id=428>

Pest Management seminar set for January

The Texas Agri-Life Extension Service—Harris County Office will conduct its 2010 Pest Management for Golf and Sport Turf Systems seminar on Jan. 14, 2010, at its office in west Houston (3033 Bear Creek Dr., Houston, TX 77084).

Co-sponsored by the South Texas Golf Course Superintendents Association, the meeting will begin with registration, coffee and donuts at 8 a.m. and will run through approximately 3 p.m.

Payment for the seminar may be made by credit card by calling 281-494-0094 or by visiting the "Pest Management for Golf and Sport Turf Systems" link at www.stgcsa.org.

For additional information, please contact Dr. Anthony Camerino (281-855-5600, awcamerino@ag.tamu.edu).

Membership Moves

There are three new names on the STGCSA roster this month. Joining the "cause" are *Carter Hindes*, golf course superintendent at Golfcrest Country Club, *Chris Ulrich*, assistant superintendent at Lochinvar Golf Club, and *Jorge Covarruias*, mechanic at The Woodlands Country Club.

January Meeting Member/Guest

Tuesday, January 26, 2010

Stephen F. Austin Golf Club
1130 Park Rd., San Felipe, TX 77473
Host Superintendent — Doug Browne

Bud White, Director of the Mid-Continent Region of the USGA Green Section, will be the speaker, and he'll address the issue of "The Business and Education Sides of Your Job."

Members will receive .1 CEUs for attending. Bring your supervisor or a potential new member. Qualified guests may attend the meeting and lunch, and play golf . . . FREE!

If you have any questions about guest qualifications, please call Mark Haven at 979-862-8403

Additional details are available within the "Upcoming Events" section of the Chapter web site (www.stgcsa.org). Please call Mark Haven if you have questions about the eligibility of your guest.

Please RSVP by January 22 by calling Marian Takushi at 281-494-0094, by e-mail at stgcsa@windstream.net or through the direct link on the "Upcoming Events" page of www.stgcsa.org.

Registration: 8:30 a.m. Lunch: 11:30-12:30

Golf: After Lunch Cost: \$55

REMINDER:

You must arrive by 9:45 a.m. to play golf

Directions: Go west from Katy on I-10. Take Exit 723, San Felipe and turn right on FM 1458. Go 2 miles to Park Rd. 38, turn left, go 1 mile, turn right at the club entrance.

Coming Up!

19th Annual
STGCSA Scholarship Tournament

March 9
High Meadow Ranch Golf Club

Start Planning Now!

Please contact Marian Takushi if you are considering a tournament sponsorship or the donation of items for the Scholarship Auction.

Embark gains re-accreditation

Embark Tree & Landscape Services has been recently re-accredited in accordance with Tree Care Company Accreditation standards put forth by the Tree Care Industry Association (TCIA).

Accredited tree care companies must re-apply every three years so that their practices can be reviewed and the continuation of best business practices can be verified.

TCIA Accreditation is a voluntary evaluation process evaluating that ensures professional practices and standards are met by all employees.

To achieve business Accreditation, businesses undergo an extensive review of professional practices aimed at safeguarding consumers. Areas reviews include consumer satisfaction, best business practices, formal employee training, compliance with industry standards, adherence to safety and quality standards, and insurance coverage

As a measure of protection to consumers, businesses undergo renewal check-ups annually. The annual renewal ensures that the company continues to employ trained professionals, is still properly insured and has a good safety and consumer satisfaction rating.

The 3-year Re-Accreditation achievement demonstrates that Embark Tree & Landscape Services has undergone an extensive review of practices as well as a site visit, and continues to adhere to all accreditation standards.

Congratulations all around

While there is only one Sonny Dubose Memorial Superintendent of the Year honoree annually, six STGCSEA members were nominated for the 2009 award.

In addition to Johnny Walker, those nominated were: David Gray, golf course superintendent at Raven Nest Golf Club; Gary Rodgers, CGCS, golf course superintendent at Wedgewood Golf Club; Randy Samoff, golf course superintendent at Redstone Golf Club; Mike Sargent, golf course superintendent at Columbia Lakes Resort; Sean Wilson, CGCS, golf course superintendent at The Club at Falcon Point.

Each of the nominees is to be congratulated for the respect they enjoy from their peers and from the people for whom they work.

JOHNNY WALKER

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qualities Sonny DuBose demonstrated throughout his career, and I appreciate what the award means."

The Sonny DuBose Memorial Superintendent of the Year Award was created by the STGCSEA in 2008 to honor the memory of L.W. "Sonny" DuBose, who passed away on Dec. 11, 2007, and to recognize significant achievements and contributions by an STGCSEA member on an annual basis. DuBose was one of the founding members of the STGCSEA, which was chartered in 1958.



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BULLETIN BOARD

Spray Technician/Assistant Superintendent Trainee Needed

University of Texas Golf Club — Austin
Please send resume to: Rich Cope
The University of Texas Golf Club
3100 University Club Drive, Austin, TX 78732
E-mail: rich.cope@utgolfclub.com

Assistant Superintendent Wanted

Walden on Lake Conroe Country Club
Please contact: Larry Finke
13301 Walden Rd., Montgomery, TX 77356
Phone: 936-582.6363 • Fax: 936-582.6017
Email: lfinke@waldengolf.com

Golf Course Superintendent Needed

Cypress Lakes Golf Club
Please send resume to: Ryan Roach, Director of Agronomy
Plum Creek Golf Club/ Cypress Lakes Golf Club
P.O. Box 1089, Kyle, TX 78640
FAX: (512) 262-6010 • E-Mail: ryan.pcgcc@verizon.net

Assistant Superintendent Position Available

Barton Creek Country Club — Austin
Please send resume to:
Malika K. Ashley, PHR, Human Resources Manager
Barton Creek Resort & Club
8218 Barton Club Dr., Austin, TX 78735
E-mail: malika.ashley@bartoncreek.com • FAX: 512-329-4014

Jacobsen Technician Needed

Luber Brothers, Inc. - Houston
Mechanical, electrical, hydraulic and diesel experience needed.
Please send contact: Lawan Petty
918-779-7700 or 918-812-7482
E-mail: lawanpetty@luber.com

Golf Course Superintendent Wanted

La Torretta Del Lago Resort and Spa
Please send resume to: Nicholus Munoz
E-mail: nmunoz@latorrettadellago.com

Assistant Superintendent Wanted

Beaumont Country Club
Please send resume to: Beaumont Country Club
Attn: Shane Hayes Golf Course Superintendent
5355 Pine Street Beaumont, Texas 77703
Telephone: 409-790-6923
E-mail: shanehunterhayes@yahoo.com

Golf Course Superintendent Position Open

Frisch Auf Valley Golf Club — La Grange
Please contact: Ken Berg
Telephone: 979-242-4012 • E-mail: kenberg@cvctx.com
For information packet, contact County Auditor at
Winkler County Courthouse - 432-586-3161

Opening for Pro Shop Manager and Superintendent

Winkler County Golf Course — Kermit, Texas
Please send resume to:
Jon Crain, Nueva Vista Golf Club
6101 W. Wadley, Midland, TX 79707

The STGCSA Bulletin Board is available for use by all STGCSA members. Call Steve Hunter (281-395-4927) before the 10th of each month to include your job listings, etc., in the following two issues of Tee to Green. To include your job posting on the STGCSA web site, contact Marian Takushi (stgcsa@windstream.net, 281-494-0094).

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Scholarship winners presented

One of the highlights at the STGCSA's Annual Awards Banquet and Ceremony is the formal presentation of the Chapter's Legacy Scholarships. During last month's gathering at Riverbend Country Club, 13 students were presented as recipients of 2009 scholarships.

All of the scholarships were valued at \$1,000, with the exception of the \$2,000 Legacy Memorial Scholarship (awarded this year to Lauren Drabing). The STGCSA awarded \$14,000 in scholarships this year, bringing the total to \$128,800 disbursed to 115 students since the Chapter refocused its scholarship efforts in 1999.

"We passed the \$100,000 mark in scholarship funds distributed last year," said Wade Warmes, CGCS, the chairman of the STGC-SA Scholarship Committee and the golf course superintendent at The Golf Club at Cinco Ranch. "Our leaders set some lofty goals when they reorganized our scholarship program in the late 1990s and I think all our members take pride in the fact that we've reached those goals, and we're now working toward new milestones."

"It's important to note that the program was reorganized so that we would be able to help as many deserving students as possible," said Warmes, "and that remains our mission. I know the recipients are as grateful as we are to the members and vendors who have supported that mission."

The purpose of the STGCSA Legacy Scholarship program is to offer educational aid to the dependent children of STGCSA members and affiliate members.



Several 2009 scholarship recipients were in attendance at the Chapter's Awards dinner. They were (left to right, back row: Ashley Dailey (accepting for Johnny Dailey), Shawn Freeman, Dawn Rhoden, Carli Werner and Matthew Wisdom ; (front row) Hannah Browne and Tony Cincotta. All the recipients of Legacy Scholarships are listed below

2009

STGCSA Legacy Scholarship Recipients

<i>Recipient</i>	<i>Parent-Member/Affiliation</i>
Tony Cincotta	George Cincotta, Riverbend Country Club
Johnny Dailey	John Dailey, Arbor Care, Inc.
Lauren Drabing	Dodd Drabing, Professional Turf Products
Shawn Freeman	John Freeman, Brookside Equipment
Hannah Browne	Doug Browne, Stephen F. Austin Golf Club
Nicholas Hess	Alan Hess, Augusta Pines Golf Club
Christine Poshtakohi	Pete Poshtakohi, Atascocita Country Club
Zachary Ratcliff	Brent Ratcliff, Innovative Turf Supply
Dawn Rhoden	Mike Rhoden, Willow Creek Country Club
Blair Throne	Robert Throne, Cypresswood Golf Club
Carli Werner	Tom Werner, ShadowHawk Golf Club
Matthew Wisdom	Thomas Wisdom, Simple Solutions
Justin Wood	Michael Wood, South Shore Harbour CC

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