

Super/Pro Golf Challenge

The Super/Pro Golf Challenge is one tool available to help strengthen the relationships of the facility's key employees – which benefits the facility operations. Another opportunity it provides is to learn about your peer's successes and challenges of the season. All great reasons to be there. The date is TBA - but will be soon!

Enjoy this opportunity for a great day of golf and join us at The Club at Spurwing. Our hosts are Jesse Vincent, GCSA, Ryan Meredith, Dir. of Golf, and the host professional, Todd Binder.

Everyone is welcome to play, and we offer two flights to accommodate all teams. Hole sponsors are greatly appreciated!



Chapter Leaders Symposium

Thank you to Josh Benson, Idaho Falls (ID) Country Club, for attending the 2018 GCSAA Chapter Leaders/Executive Symposium, GCSAA, Lawrence, Kans.



The learning objectives of the program are:

- * Learn how to be a highly successful team leader for your facility and your chapter.
- * Understand how to provide a more meaningful (cont. page 18)

Lee Appointed

Congratulations to our new assistant liaison to the board of directors, Traver Lee! Lee was appointed at the spring business meeting. Lee is the assistant superintendent at Scotch Pines Golf Course, Payette, Idaho. We appreciate Lee's enthusiasm and know will be a great addition to the board!

Lee replaces Jesse Vincent - who's time served was ended soon after his appointment, due to becoming superintendent of The Club at Spurwing. We look forward to Vincent serving on the board in the future.



Allied Liaison to Board of Directors Open

Are you an allied partner interested in serving as a co-allied liaison to the Idaho GCSA Board of Directors? This position is important to the board, as it helps to offer the perspective of our diverse membership.

As a liaison, we ask you to attend the two board meetings each year that are held in conjunction with the Fall Meeting and the Spring Meeting, as well as correspond via email during board discussion throughout the year. We also encourage you to keep in touch with your fellow members so you may offer their voice during board discussion. The term is for approximately 2.5 years.

Please contact Lori or a board member by September 15 to submit your name for consideration or for more information. We would like to offer our thanks to Greg Baer, Baer Design Group, for his years of service.

2018 Melrose Leadership Academy

Congratulations to Josh Tolman, Salmon Valley, Idaho. (*peeking out back row*) for his participation in The Melrose Leadership Academy at the 2018 GIS in San Antonio. The program supports the professional development of GCSAA member superintendents by providing individuals the opportunity to attend the GIS.

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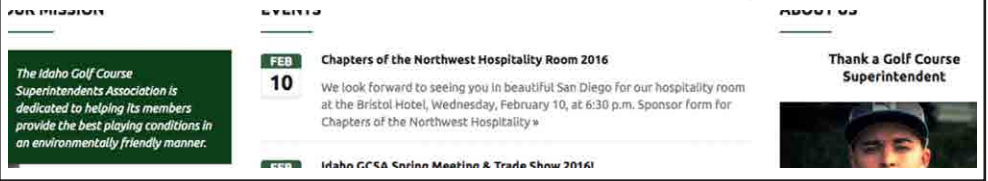
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Lori Russell, Executive Director
Grass Clippings is published
three times a year. Our newsletter is
not copyrighted, but we would

Did you know the events shown on our website homepage
are only a portion of events listed?
Click on the News/Events tab to see a larger list.



Welcome New Idaho GCSA Members!

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www.idahogcsa.org

Idaho GCSA

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*"The Idaho Golf Course Superintendents Association is
dedicated to helping its members provide the best playing
conditions in an environmentally friendly manner."*



President's Message

Gerald Flaherty, CGCS, The Valley Club, Hailey, Idaho

I'm not sure how the weather was in your area, but hopefully you had a good winter and had a chance to relax a little. The Spring Meeting & Trade Show had a good turn out and I wanted to say thank you to everyone who participated.

It's been a weird winter in Sun Valley this year. In our neck of the woods we had no snow until after January and in and early February it seemed like spring was coming fast. So, when naturally we thought we would get the season started early, overnight winter arrived with a real chip on its shoulder. We received about three feet of snow in 20 days, which delayed our early start to the year.

Because we had no snow early this winter, the soil had a good opportunity this year to freeze. Our frost layer was up to 20 inches thick. A week before Easter we still have plenty of snow on the ground and in the mountains - and then we received an inch of rain. Due to the frozen soil and snow in the mountains, the rain and snow melt had nowhere to go but down to the valley... as in The Valley Club.

The Valley Club's driving range usually handles the run-off well, with a drain that transports the water to the lakes. This year, the water far exceeded the lakes and driving range capacity. The driving range topped off with 12 feet of water, which then made its way through the course. As the water made its way through the course, it found its way to a few homes and our pump house. Needless to say, starting the season with a flooded pump house can't be a good thing. As I write this article, we continue to remove the mud that settled into the pump house and hopefully we will have the panels repaired before we need to irrigate.

Other than the minor weather set back, it has been a good winter and we are looking forward to a good year. I am hoping everyone will make a good effort to attend the Super/Pro this year at The Club at Spurwing on September 17. It is always difficult to get away, but it's a good time to take a small break from your course and talk with some other superintendents. I hope everyone has a good season.



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A Change in Goose Management Practices is Long Overdue

**Joe Aholt, Superintendent, and Aaron Gross, Grounds Crew
Hillcrest Country Club, Boise, Idaho**

Canada geese have become a problem for golf course maintenance crews everywhere across the United States. Those of us in the field know that all too well. Annually, golf course superintendents and maintenance crews alike spend hours attempting to keep Canada geese off their golf courses. What is rather unfortunate about the relationship between golf courses and Canada Geese is that a golf course is a goose's ideal habitat. Aside from mass expanses of grass to eat, grass at the golf course is cut particularly short, which provides them with a safe habitat free from predators and visual obstructions, as well as water features providing them with sanctuary. More or less, golf courses or other open spaces with grass and water features for roosting, basically invite geese to their property. What is even more unfortunate is that the Canada goose problem is becoming more widespread every day. From the Boise Greenbelt, to public parks, to businesses in the city, any swath of grass in a public space has become a safe haven for the Canada goose.

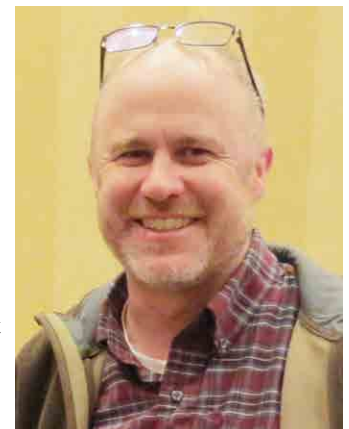
Unfortunately, the relationship between golf courses and Canada Geese has been a long-standing problem. Numerous management practices have been implemented in the past with only limited success: coyote decoys, swan decoys, dead goose decoys, bitter grape extract applied to turf, noise makers, and goose lights. We have found the following to be the most effective in keeping Canada Geese off the golf course temporarily: green laser pointers in low light or dark, trained dogs, paintball guns, and fences to keep goslings off the property. Golf courses out of city limits may not face the same problems. Hunting is allowed outside of city limits during the appropriate season, obviously the most effective deterrent. Unfortunately, this is not an option for any goose haven located within city limits.

While this problem is ongoing, so is our knowledge of these birds and their lifestyle habits. We know that, during the winter months, there is a population boom in the Boise city limits. Based on observation from bird marking by the Idaho Department of Fish and Game, we know that many migratory geese move into

the city during the fall and winter months. The city provides them with a refuge; constant human interaction becomes the norm and they become less and less timid around people. The geese that nest within the conterminous United States in the months of March, April, May, June, July or August are collectively referred to as "resident" Canada geese. While these birds nest here, many of them still go on molt migration that take them to Canada and back each year. The more we continue to learn about these birds, the better our knowledge will be in attempts to manage their population.

What is also rather unsettling is the amount of money this problem costs. With labor allocated toward daily cleanup, harassment, and any other means necessary to keep these birds away, Canada Goose management cost more and more each year. We all want to see a change, but more needs to be done. I recently sat down with Rick Ward, the Idaho Fish and Game regional wildlife manager, Jeff Knetter, the Upland Game & Migratory Game Bird Coordinator of the Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Todd Grimm of the United States Department of Agriculture and Wildlife Services, and Steve Fuchser of Real Animal Management to discuss this problem. There was no question that the Canada Goose population is increasing every year and changes need to be made. In order for this to happen, there is a need for accurate documentation from all golf courses being impacted by Canada Geese. We need evidence documenting how much Canada Geese cost you in labor hours and dollars. How many hours do you spend on clean-up and harassment daily? What are the approximate costs? By compiling data from

continued page 6 (Aholt right)



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Long Overdue

continued from page 4

many golf courses, we can use this evidence to implement change.

Canada geese are federally protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Regulations governing the issuance of permits to take, capture, kill, possess, and transport migratory birds are authorized by the Act, and issued by the USFWS. However, with Idaho Fish and Game, Department of Agriculture Wildlife Services, and U.S Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) all on board to see changes made, we are optimistic for the future. With enough evidence in hand we hope to implement the following changes: increases in egg addling programs on a much larger scale, large scale transplants, and modifications to laws pertaining to the hunting season. Technically, the season cannot go longer than 107 days in place. Currently, the season cannot run beyond the last Sunday in January. The hope would be to extend that framework end date, perhaps into February, with a 107 day season. We would also like to see an increase in bag limits. The state of Utah recently extended their hunting season framework into February and believe they have seen positive results.



For those of us being impacted by Canada Geese, there is hope, but we need your help. We will be contacting you via e-mail or phone to discuss the details of your goose problem and the costs.

I hope to give a report on the cost per each golf course at the end of the season. Below are some things to keep in mind when documenting the cost of your seasonal goose problem:

- Hours Spent Chasing
- Hours Spent for Clean Up
- #'s of Geese Seen Daily
- Cost for Cleanup, Chasing, and Deterrents for total Season.

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Melrose Leadership Academy

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The academy is open to applicants who meet the following eligibility requirements:

- * Must be a current GCSAA Class A or Class B member and GCSAA Chapter member in good standing.
- * Must be a Class A or Class B member for five or more years.
- * Class A or Class B members working for current members of the board of directors or the board of trustees, and children of GCSAA staff members shall not be eligible for the Melrose Leadership Academy.
- * Past recipients are not eligible.
- * Attendees of the Golf Industry Show in the last five years are not eligible to apply.

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Changing the Playing Field

Jim Wallace, Golf Course Superintendent, Warm Springs Golf Course, Boise, Idaho

As I play other golf courses, the standards set by the superintendents and maintenance are something I hope I stay on par with as I do my own job at Warm Springs Golf Course.

I am in my eighth year as superintendent at Warm Springs. In the beginning I took note of the thatch problem we had. I remember Kevin Hicks at a conference showing us the four-inch thatch sample he brought from Coeur D' Alene Resort Golf Course. I was saying to myself, "Yep, we have that." At another conference, a speaker from Michigan State University with a PhD in turf science pointed out that oxygen was the most important element on the golf course. We were lacking oxygen in the soil/rhizome area.

Thatch is like a sponge. When it's dry, it repels water. When it's wet, it holds water until supersaturated. These two conditions can be right next to each other, especially during the summer months



Jim Wallace shown with Gerald Flaherty and Bart Brandell (front) in 2013

when irrigation is used most. Also, the course had anaerobic conditions due to lack of oxygen. You could smell the condition when taking samples or when digging into the turf exposing the underneath conditions.

My goal was to reduce the dried out areas and supersaturated areas to get a more even playing field in regard to soil water content. Also, I hoped to change the soil chemistry so oxygen was part of the mix, in the soil air and in the soil solution. An increase in root mass and root depth would be nice.

We currently aerate all closely mowed areas with hollow tines twice a year, apply humic acid twice a year, and a surfactant three times a year. Also, referring to rates established from soil analysis, we apply calcium (dolomite) and extra potassium on all closely mowed areas. There is a lot of hand watering. We're adjusting individual sprinkler ET rates to irrigate the wet areas, and hand watering the dry areas.

It's a slow process. After five years of following this format, we are getting more uniformity of water and oxygen in the rhizome area and soil. There is more porosity and better color in the soil samples and the odor of the samples indicates a higher oxygen level. The playing conditions have changed from 20 to 30 dried out/supersaturated areas to four or five



areas, which appear for a shorter period of time and are smaller areas. Lastly, the thatch is decomposing and root mass has improved.

It has been a project of removing thatch, feeding the microbes and treating the soil. There are areas that dry up because of the soil and not the thatch. We spot aerate and top dress with zeolite, heavy enough to brush it in to fill the holes. It takes a growing season to see the results from these applications. We receive good feedback from customers, who notice a difference in playing conditions. This is good news. Also, the need for hand watering and daytime irrigation has decreased. Customers and the maintenance crew like it.

I hope this is worthwhile reading. Good luck this year.





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Spring Meeting & Trade Show Moments!

Take Home Points!

Courtesy of:

Adam Lott,

Assistant Superintendent

Whitetail Golf Club

**Trey Rogers, PhD,
Michigan State University**

▲ Layering/re-grassing/drainage on putting greens:

Decreasing root zone depth in high areas and increasing root zone depth in low areas I found to be interesting, and it makes sense. Basically, data has proven that if you have less root zone depth (8-10") above native soil in high areas, it will help them hold more moisture, thus not drying out as fast. The opposite is true for low areas. Having more root zone depth (14-16") allows low areas that are usually saturated the ability to percolate and result in overall healthier turf.

▲ Not having trees on the southeast quadrant around putting greens is key to minimizing shade issues.

▲ The photo Dr. Rogers showed of tree roots sucking moisture from the edges on a putting green prior to a renovation was

priceless. Root pruning is key!

▲ Using bentgrass seed post 2006 is recommended.

▲ First mowing on new putting greens is crucial. They need to be mowed frequently when the turf is dry.

▲ Keep up on nitrogen levels for new putting greens. Applying .25 N per 1,000 sq. ft weekly during grow-in will result in quicker established turf.

▲ Do not apply PGRs until at least one year after sodding.

Chris Carson, Echo Lake Country Club

▲ The story Chris told us about his president wanting the rough cut at 4.5" was great. Golf balls and clubs were frequently lost in the rough due to it being a "jungle." Caddies weren't even able to find balls.

▲ "You want to talk agronomy? I can talk agronomy. I can talk the talk." Having the confidence and providing support is crucial.

▲ Posting the picture of the operator not getting off his mower to move the OB stakes above the time clock - I found to be brilliant.

▲ Communicate problems immediately. Don't surprise your boss at the board meeting.

▲ Playing golf with your boss and pointing out issues and problems on the golf course can help in

getting non-budgeted items approved.

▲ You can also bring the problem to them with photos.

▲ Add supporting data in the budget process. It can help get things approved that may otherwise not be supported.

▲ Eliminate something I'm doing now.

▲ Improve something I'm doing now.

▲ Every year add something I've never done.

▲ Always hand sign letters.

Christian Schmidt, Supervisory Hydrologist, Idaho Water Science Center

▲ .11% of water used in Idaho was on golf courses (2015)

Gary Grigg, CGCS, MG

When Gary was interviewing for a position, he asked the interviewer if he had looked over his resume. The interviewer said, "I don't want to see your resume. I don't care what you've done in the past. I want to know what you're going to do for me moving forward." I found that to be a great statement.

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Take Home Points!

Courtesy of:

Kurt Richmond,
Superintendent,
Star Valley Ranch

reasoning to renovate.

- o **USGA Greens.** Modified vs Unmodified, understand the concepts of both construction types.

Water Use for Irrigation of Idaho (Golf Courses 2010-2015) (Christian Schmidt)

- Water use does not mean consumption!
- In 2015, the total water diverted for golf course irrigation in all of Idaho was .11%
- The increase of conservation on golf courses has shown a decrease in water usage, so if you have an area on your course that never gets used and you keep pumping money into it, like mowing, fertilizer and labor, it might be time to take another look, and go native!

How to Rethink Your Budgeting Process to Get What You Need (Chris Carson)

- Budget is a roadmap of the year to come! It's an opportunity to explain and sell your ideas. The key is good communication with the members about course conditions. Members don't like turf grass, they like golf; learn how to explain your budget from a golfer's perspective.
- Every year I analyze my program and do three things:
 - o Eliminate something I am doing now
 - o Improve something I've always done
 - o Add something I've never done before

Putting Green Establishment and Fairway Establishment (Dr. John N. Rodgers)

- Select what cultivars best suit your establishment factors, NTEP is a good source of information. Understand seeding rates! For example 1lb of bentgrass per 1000 sq ft is equal to 44 seeds per sq in.
- Trees too close to green will suck moisture from soil profile, affecting the overall consistency of moisture. Front of green too wet, back of green too dry. Members love trees, but they love golf more. Find a way to explain why trees need to be removed from around a green complex.
- How many trees do you have that are close to the southeast quadrant of your green complex? If you have one, that is one too many! Ask yourself what turf grass and trees have in common. They both need water, sun, and nutrients. If you're a tree farmer, you remove the grass from around the tree. If you're a golf course superintendent, you remove the tree to improve the turfgrass.

Breakthrough Concepts in Putting Green Construction –Disrupting the Status Quo (Dr. John N. Rodgers)

- The first question you have to ask yourself, “Why Renovate?” Renovation is usually done to improve some issue with a green.
 - o **Push Up Greens.** They may look good on the surface, but below the surface are the issues. Understanding what makes up your soil profile will help provide the



2018 Booth at Boise Golf Show - a RECORD breaking financial success thanks to all the course donations, chairperson Travis Rose, and to Jesse Vincent and Brian Mickels who worked the booth

Improve Your Chances of Making the Step to Superintendent (Chris Carson)

- Your resume should display a proven ability to provide results.
- Research the club you're interviewing with - who is the architect, meet the golf pro, and understand their mission statement.
- It's not important what you want! It's about what they need. Don't put yourself in a position where you are going to be unhappy and negative. “Find your Happy Place.”
- Networking, Trade Shows and Volunteering are all good ways of getting to know people in your field. Every connection you make improves your chances to finding that perfect fit to your dream job.
- If you want to be a superintendent, “GO GET IT.”

Advances in the Profession over 50 years 1968 to 2018 (Gary Griggs, CGCS, MG)

- Biggest advancement in turf grass is the cultivation of turf grass varieties.
- Marvin Ferguson, Texas A&M, inventor of the USGA green, also foresaw that our industry needed more turf grass varieties.
- 40 to 50 new cultivars of turf grass have been produced since 1989. If you're not familiar with NTEP (National Turfgrass Evaluation Program), check it out. It has some value to the turf geek.
- GCSAA website came online in 1995, and it was exciting to be part of its evolution.

Turf Geeks and the Three-Legged Stool (Dr. John N. Rodgers)

- Home owners- 70% of all problems are related to mowing practices, observe the ONE-THIRD Rule!
- Grass clippings do not produce thatch and are made up of 92% water.
- If you remove grass clippings, you are also removing 2 lbs. of N per year.
- Best time to water home lawns is in the morning - minimal wind and best overall coverage.

2018 Spring Meeting & Trade Show!



Trade Show Participants:

Affordable Tire & Specialty Co.
Agpro Technologies
Amvac Environmental Products
Baer Golf Design
Ballingham Golf & Turf
Brandt Co./Grigg
C & B Operations
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RMT Equipment
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Turf Equipment & Irrigation
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Allied partners reaching Platinum Status in 2017 were honored at the 2018 Spring Meeting!



In order of pictures:

Turf Equipment & Irrigation/
 Simplot Partners/ C & B Operations
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 RMT Equipment/ Rain Bird Golf
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Now What?

Kevin Hicks, EarthWorks Coeur d'Alene, Idaho

(This article was written October, 2017, and offers a great message.)

After 25 years as a superintendent, I recently found myself in an all too familiar position, as many of us do as we approach the age of 50...unemployed. Now what?

For starters, I took a few days to rest and clear my head. I started hiking the mountain behind my house (that I hadn't climbed in over four years). That helped get me back in mental, as well as physical shape. Next, I took full advantage of the connections I had developed over the course of my career to both let people know I was ok, and looking for work.

Free agent

After some deliberation, I decided that my professional connections on social media could really help navigate the opportunities that I may or may not know about. I declared my "free agency" on Twitter, as I've felt that platform has been extremely effective at sharing everything we deal with in the world of turf. But I could not recall anyone using it to announce they'd been fired. What the heck, worth a try, right? Putting myself out there a bit more than some would be willing? Yep. Worth the risk? You bet. Both the outpourings of support as well as several leads were almost immediate. I am so thankful I took the risk of looking like a failure in front of the turf world, as it became the first step to healing and moving on. After 14 years in a very high stress position, I needed it.

Self-assessment

Next came the tough stuff. Do I want to find another superintendent position or explore other options? The reality was that with a son in his junior year of college, another in his senior year of high school and our youngest in middle school, moving wasn't the best option. Ironically, the majority of job offers that came to me were for more sales positions than farming turf. I guess others thought I'd be good at that, even if I hadn't considered it. As I worked through that, it made me realize that if that was the path I was to follow, I'd like to do something that made a difference and help young superintendents navigate the world I'd been a part of for over a quarter century. Let's face it, the business is changing, regulations, staffing, and budgets are getting tougher to manage. I've felt for some time that we need to be moving voluntarily toward more sustainable turf management, before someone else dictates it to us. A lot of us have things to offer to the rest of the industry, we just have to crawl out of our collective caves and spread the great news of our business.

Other things that came to light those first few weeks of free agency were the realization that I had really forsaken my family, my health, my vacation time, and even my home upkeep (I quickly discovered that all of the gutters on my house were completely nonfunctioning). I needed to be removed from my "life" at the course to see that my priorities were completely screwed up. Some of us just aren't as self aware as others.

Moving forward

As I move forward, my lessons learned are as follows:

- Put yourself out there with association service, writing, blogging, and social media participation.

You never know which connection might lead you to your next job. I sure didn't.

- No matter how much criticism you endure at your job, believe in your abilities. They hired you for your expertise and knowledge. Be confident in that.

- Be open to all kinds of new opportunities. Many of us run our golf courses with an entrepreneurial mindset. Why not do the same with our career?

- Take your vacation time and work fewer hours. The course will still be there when you get back.

- We're our own worst enemies when it comes to the golf course. Give yourself some grace and stop and smell the roses once in a while.

- Focus more on the positives of the jobs, not the negatives. Developing dozens of student interns and assistants through the years and presenting very good playing conditions are something I should be very proud of.

- Constantly reinvent yourself. This came from John Chessard at Lehigh CC and couldn't be more spot on.

- Develop your network of local superintendents and friends. You're better off with them than by yourself.

Going forward, no matter what I decide to do, I know I'll have the support of my family and a great community of turf heads. Onward and upward!



Chapter Leadership Symposium continued

experience, through the engagement of members and volunteer involvement.

- * Develop a foundation to achieve chapter goals.

- * Learn the critical components successful chapters share and how to make sure these are in place in your chapter.

- * Build a professional network of peers who share best practices and innovative ideas.



Mike Kitchen, CGCS, Josh Benson, Jeremiah Farmer and duck fat fries



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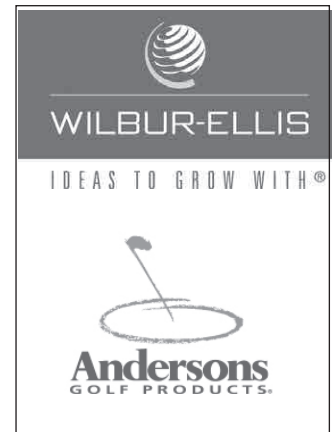
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Those who reached Platinum through their support of our chapter last year!

Thank you for reaching Platinum in 2017!



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