

# TeeOff News

Third Quarter 2023



Copper River Country Club



# President's Message *Andy Cordova*



As I sit down to write this president's message we are entering my favorite time of the year. Even though here on the central coast we don't seasonally change very much with our weather, the events of the fall are what I enjoy most about this time of year. Sports, at least the ones that I like to watch, are in the most entertaining time of the year. Baseball is entering playoff mode, football is just getting started and golf just finished up the season but we are in a Ryder cup year so we look forward to that.

The beginning of August was the annual Tri-chapter meeting. For those that don't know, the Tri-chapter meeting is a joint meeting with the Nor-Cal GCSA, the Sierra Nevada GCSA and our chapter. We rotate between the chapters of who hosts, this year was our turn. Our board of directors brainstormed many different ideas on when and how to host the meeting this year. We decided to change things up from the norm and make the meeting more of a destination event. This is why it was, not only hosted on the Central Coast in Morro Bay, but also on a Friday. This gave out of town travelers an opportunity to bring their families and stay for the weekend. The change was a success, we had a great turnout.

On behalf of the board, I would like to thank everyone who came out to support the chapter.

Morro Bay Golf course was in exceptional shape and a big thanks goes out to Josh Heptig and Albert Nunez and their staff for their efforts in making this event successful. I would also like to thank our speakers, Paul Barr and Jeff Jenson who gave captivating presentations. As mentioned before, the meeting was a success and we look forward to the Sierra Nevada chapter hosting next year.

Our next event will be the annual charities tournament on November 6<sup>th</sup> at Copper River Country Club and host Superintendent Landon White. Come out and show your support for what always turns out to be a fun event. As always, I look forward to seeing everyone there.

*-Andy Cordova*

<b>2023</b>		<b>GCSACC</b>
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## FOURTEEN GCSAA CHAPTERS RECEIVE EDUCATION GRANTS THROUGH THE GCSAA FOUNDATION

Fourteen GCSAA-affiliated chapters have received one-time education grants from the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, administered through the GCSAA Foundation in partnership with ClubProcure (formerly known as VGM Club), a service provider in the club industry. The education grants total \$12,000 and range from \$700 to \$1,000 per grant.

“ClubProcure is proud to support the GCSAA Foundation and the GCSAA-affiliated chapters through this grant opportunity. We value the importance of quality education for each chapter, and we hope these members can further their educational development with our support,” said Mike Woltz, ClubProcure VP Business Development Agronomy.

ClubProcure has donated a total of \$27,000 this year to support the GCSAA Foundation’s mission by establishing the chapter programming grant initiative that launched, including a \$5,000 donation supporting the Larry Powell Scholarship, which was awarded to the inaugural recipient at the 2023 GCSAA Conference and Trade Show.

As part of this gift, ClubProcure has also donated \$10,000 to the Foundation’s Annual Fund. With this donation, ClubProcure is recognized as a member of the Foundation’s Platinum Tee Club and has moved into the Executive Club level of donors that have contributed between \$25,000-\$49,999 since 1987 as part of the Cumulative Giving Program.

The following chapters were awarded a Chapter Education Grant in 2023:

Central Illinois GCSA	\$700
Central Texas GCSA	\$700
Connecticut Association of GCS	\$1,000
GCSA of Arkansas	\$700
GCSA of Cape Cod	\$1,000
<b>GCSA of Central California</b>	<b>\$700</b>
GCSA of New Jersey	\$1,000
GCSA of New York	\$750
Hawaii GCSA	\$1,000
Metropolitan GCSA	\$1,000
Nebraska GCSA	\$700
San Diego GCSA	\$750
Sierra Nevada GCSA	\$1,000
Southern Nevada GCSA	\$1,000



To learn more about the new Chapter Education Grants, presented in partnership with ClubProcure, visit [www.gcsaa.org/foundation/education](http://www.gcsaa.org/foundation/education). To learn more about ClubProcure, visit [www.clubprocure.com](http://www.clubprocure.com).

## From the Field *Jeff Jensen, GCSAA Field Staff, Southwest Region*



Jeff Jensen

I hope this finds our members doing well and getting prepped for the fall golf season. I'm sure that everyone is ready for a break after another stressful and busy summer.

There is a lot going on at GCSAA right now. As you probably know, early registration for GCSAA Conference and Show in Phoenix kicked off on Sept. 12 and we are excited to return to the Arizona desert for the first time in 30 years.

We just finished picking 40 applicants for the inaugural Women's Leadership Academy that will be held Nov. 7-9 in Lawrence, KS. The academy is focused on providing women in the turfgrass industry with education, mentoring and networking enabling participants to unleash their potential, empower their future and become inspirational leaders. The 2 1/2-day event (with Past PGA President Suzy Whaley as the keynote speaker) will guide participants from all walks of the industry and various years of professional experience on a path of discovery aimed at breaking down barriers and producing a spark to inspire women to be successful leaders. We had nearly 90 applicants apply for the academy in the first year.

The First Green Program continues to be a slam dunk. At the time of this article, 74 field trips have been held with various schools and youth groups throughout the country including many in the Northern California region. Retired Metropolitan Golf Club Superintendent Gary Ingram, CGCS, and Morton Golf Superintendent Muhammad Ali have spearheaded many of these trips across the region and the program continues to provide STEM learning opportunities as well as an introduction to the golf maintenance profession and the game of golf in general. For more information on the program, visit the website at [www.thefirstgreen.org](http://www.thefirstgreen.org).


Lastly, our Best Management Practices adoption process continues to move forward. BMPs offer guidelines for superintendents to manage their facilities in an efficient and environmentally sustainable manner. BMP manuals document all of the science-based practices and professional course management that many people need to see including policymakers and the media. The guides are available in a digital format and can be customized to fit the needs of any facility. It's free of charge and a great way to promote sustainable efforts at your facility. More information is available at <https://www.gcsaa.org/environment/bmp-planning-guide/best-management-practices>.

Thank you for your continued support of GCSAA and if you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me at [jjensen@gcsaa.org](mailto:jjensen@gcsaa.org) and follow me on Twitter @GCSAA\_SW for industry updates. Have a great fall season and hope to see everyone at upcoming events.



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## Superintendent Profile

### Josh Heptig– Written By Dean Kinney

For this edition of our Golf Course Superintendent profile, we spoke to Josh Heptig, Director of Golf Course Operations for San Luis Obispo County.

**Question: Where did you grow up and give us introduction to The Heptig's.**

Answer: I was born in Kansas and both sets of grandparents were farmers at some point (dairy, hogs, and row crops on my mom's side and chickens and row crops on my dad's side). I spent most of my life in rural Winfield, Kansas (pop. 12,000) and began working as a cart kid at the local muni golf course when I was 17 and soon thereafter began to play. My addiction to golf has remained strong ever since. As a student at Kansas State, I spilled a beer on a cute German blonde girl and luckily she said "yes" when I proposed to her a couple of years later. Christiane and I will celebrate our 19-year anniversary this year and she is an Agribusiness professor at Cal Poly focusing on the use of economics to help reduce obesity through pricing, subsidization, food labeling, and marketing/advertising, etc. We have two great girls Celine (16) and Julia (14). We all love living on the Central Coast!

**Question: What is your educational background and your introduction to the golf market:**

Answer: I attended Kansas State University in Manhattan, Kansas (I bleed purple and my purple attire that I wear drives my wife nuts). I started majoring in Veterinary Medicine to become an exotic animal veterinarian. During my 4th year in college I switched from studying the animal kingdom to the plant kingdom to follow my passion for golf and graduated with a degree in Golf Course Management. I worked my first internship at Wichita Country Club for superintendent Brian White and got to know Head Pro Cary Cozby who had just left Southern Hills Country Club in Tulsa, Oklahoma to take his first Head Pro position at Wichita CC. Cary introduced me to John Szklinski at Southern Hills CC and that following year, I was a student intern at Southern Hills for the 2001 US Open. California is the 5th State in which I have managed golf courses. I have worked for privately owned public courses, private country clubs, and municipal courses. I have never worked for a golf management company.

**Question: Describe your current position with the County of San Luis Obispo:**

Answer: My current job description as golf superintendent with SLO County is not what it seems as my job no longer involves the daily management of caring for the turf at our golf courses. That job belongs to Albert Nunes and our turf teams. They do a tremendous job! My job is more of the pseudo owner or GM for the County. My day entails a lot of screen time in the office and/or window time traveling from course to course and meeting to meeting. I oversee the financial budgets, personnel tasks, capital expenditures, and rarely get involved in the agronomic side of the business unless asked to do so. But some of my best days are when I get to be involved in those endeavors. My job requires me to create, oversee, and manage contracts for the restaurant and pro shop operations of our golf courses, as well as, create the business and marketing plans to help grow the game of golf. Being a public advocate for the game of golf is one of my favorite tasks. Ultimately my job is to create experiences for the public by providing the tools and resources for our staff to do their job effectively.

**Question: What were the classes that you loved and disliked?**

Answer: My favorite classes in college were Organismic Biology and Anatomy (cadaver class) and my least favorite was Organic Chemistry, particularly the labs. I have never been so ready to drink a beer than after that 5-hour lab every Friday afternoon.

**Question: What is your favorite time of day and why?**

Answer: I am a night owl and love the hours between 9 PM and 11 PM. I am notorious for sending staff emails and golf course newsletters after midnight as well.

**Question: If you were not in the golf business, what would you be doing?**

Answer: I would be a zoo veterinary assistant or a Chiropractor. I love animals and nearly every chiropractor I have known plays golf A LOT!

**Question: What do you enjoy doing in your downtime from work?**

Answer: Anything outside. I enjoy running, hiking, biking, and camping. I also love taking care of our landscaping at home (it is my therapy). I am also a movie nut. My first movie experience that I can remember was watching The Return of the Jedi 4 times in a row at the theater.

**TEE-OFF News***Vendor Profile**David Avila*

David Avila is the Territory Manager for Harrell's LLC, servicing golf, landscape, and municipalities in the Central Coast and Valley. David began his journey in the golf/landscape industry 7 years ago and continues to grow his knowledge to better support his clients in his territory.

David was born and raised in Santa Barbara. While growing up in Santa Barbara, David's father self-started a landscaping business to support his family. As the only boy in the family, David would assist and help his father with his business. Through this experience, David grew his passion for working outdoors, with people, and growing his knowledge of plants. From his father seeing his work, his father would uplift and praise the work he would do for the landscaping business. Sooner or later, David's passion for plants grew and he knew he wanted to pursue a career in this field. However, before setting off to college, David enrolled in an Automotive ROP (Regional Occupation Program) in high school. While enrolled in this program, he quickly fell in love with the automotive industry. He then went on to get his Automotive Service and Technology associate degree in 2011 from the Santa Barbara Community College. While working on his degree in Automotive, he became a technician at Bowman's Auto Repair in Santa Barbara. He worked as an Automotive Technician for 3 years, all while still pursuing his career in the agriculture industry.

Even though he knew he could make a career of being an automotive technician, he knew he couldn't settle for less. He soon realized that working in an automotive shop all day was not going to fulfill him. So, he continued his educational journey at Santa Barbara City College, with a focus on Horticulture, and then transferred to Cal Poly Pomona to gain specialized knowledge on horticulture/turfgrass. While at Cal Poly Pomona, he gained extensive experience in the golf/landscape field. David worked at the school Turf and Irrigation Center. At this center, he focused on helping grad students manage research plots by monitoring irrigation, mowing, and evaluating clippings from the plots. He also managed the par 3 at the Turf and Irrigation center by managing the tee, fairway and green. David also got to travel with the turf team competing in Turf Bowl and National Association of Landscape Professionals. One of his most humbling and unforgettable experiences was in the summer of 2015. In the summer of 2015, he interned at Round Hill Club in Greenwich, Connecticut where he was able to truly appreciate the dedication and learn the responsibilities of working on a golf course. He was able to learn the difficulties of being a superintendent, and the great work that comes with working alongside the golf course crew.

Through David's background in automotive and horticulture/turf, he has been able to add a unique twist to his territory management skills. His attention to detail and technical skills have aided him to further help his clients beyond product knowledge but solution support. His intertwined passions for the automotive industry and golf/landscape, pushes him to continue learning and growing in both industries. Even in his downtime, David can't stay away from the greens. David enjoys playing golf, traveling to national parks in his self-converted camper van with his wife, and playing accordion with his band on the weekends.



David Avila

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# TRI- CHAPTER WRAP-UP

## Morro Bay GC

Central Cal. GCSA hosted a very successful Tri- Chapter event at Morro Bay GC in August. Hosts Josh Heptig and Joel Clay made for a very memorable day and did their best to treat everyone like part of the family. There were members in attendance from all three chapters, and the Central Chapter was able to take home the cup this year.

Speakers at the event included Paul Barr, from SLOCC, discussing the 5year+ remodel they did on his course and Jeff Jensen giving an update from the GCSA.

Due to the Friday tournament, the Central Cal chapter encouraged those in attendance to bring their families and play some Top Tracer golf Friday evening. That was attended by a few groups and everyone had a fun evening with perfect weather. If you have never attended the Tri Chapter, the Sierra Nevada Chapter will be hosting it in 2024 and encourage all of you to attend.



Scott Curtis, Jesse Ferris and Jesse Ferris,



Alec Lemay, Candy Ortega, Kevin Eppich, Landon White



Retired members Mike Cline & Bill Griffith with guest Taylor Milne



Rafa Carrillo & Family at Top Tracer, Friday night.



Bryan Rios, Pedro Hernandez, Pete Bowman, & Terry Vassey



Glen Matthews, Jim Culley & Tom Calabrese at Top Tracer Friday

**Ken Mauser**  
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## Safety Moment: Managing Stress

### Focus on What You Can Control

If the last couple of years have taught us anything, it's that life can feel out of control. And the truth is, we've never been able to control everything. The trick is to control what you can control and let go of the rest.

That's how you build resilience and start making positive changes no matter what kind of chaos is happening around you. Trying to control everything is a battle you can't win. It's a discouraging waste of energy to focus on areas where you really can't change the outcome, no matter how hard you try.

Knowing the difference between what you can and cannot control is step one.

#### *How Do You Feel in Control?*

Even if you don't recognize controlling behavior in yourself, chances are you've experienced it with others. An overbearing parent, a boss that micromanages, a partner with control issues—many people have difficulty letting go of the need to control.

This need to control has roots in fear. It's a psychological response to experiences like trauma, anxiety, inability to trust, fear of abandonment, low self-esteem, perfectionism, or sensitivity to painful emotions.

Life is filled with uncertainties. The right way to feel in control is to focus on what you can change within yourself or your environment and start taking small steps in the right direction.

When you take control of everything within your influence and let go of the rest, you'll make your life a whole lot easier.

In this way, you can take full accountability for your life without creating any extra stress.

#### *Things You Can Control*

##### **How Much Time You Spend Watching the News**

Too much exposure to negative social media or news broadcasts has a negative impact on mental health. You can't control world events, but you can control how much news you follow, the types of shows you watch, and the books that you read. Be aware of how information affects you and take breaks from social media and the news.

##### **How You React to Something Negative**

When strong emotions take over, like fear, anger, or jealousy, your decision-making skills are at their worst. It's easy to lose control and react impulsively.

Learning how to control your thoughts means learning to handle your response. You can do that by shifting from a place of reaction to a place of response.

**Reaction:** Acting impulsively based on your emotions without thinking first.

**Responding:** Taking a moment to process how you think or feel before responding.

Take a moment to process things before diving into an argument or making a fear-based decision. After you calm down, you can come back to the problem in a more creative, problem-solving frame of mind.

##### **Your Mindset**

Your mindset has a big impact on your chances of success. Changing the limited thinking that is holding you back is something you can control.

**Fixed Mindset:** People with a fixed mindset believe they are born with a fixed level of talent and intelligence. They tend to avoid challenges and situations in which they might fail.

**Stress Continued**

**Growth Mindset:** People with a growth mindset believe they have unlimited potential: they can accomplish anything through hard work, persistence, and effort.

**Silver linings** --- the act of finding positive ways that one's life has changed as a result of a traumatic or stressful event, this is also known as benefit-finding. This is a particular form of meaning-focused coping that helps people process difficult situations by changing how they make sense of the situation in their own lives or in the world around them.

**“Clean Up Your Room”**

In other words, take responsibility for your own life and do not allow the environment to dictate your behavior. When you take the time to declutter and organize your space, you are also taking control of your thoughts and emotions.

*Things You Can't Control*

**Change** --- “The Only Constant in Life Is Change.”

**The past** --- “What has happened, has happened.”

**How others treat you** --- “How people treat you is their karma; how you react is yours.”

**Other people's actions** --- You can't control what other people do, but you can control your response and who you choose to spend time with.

**Life isn't always fair** --- Don't let life make you bitter because, in the end, you'll just hold yourself back. Focus on living up to your potential and inspiring those around you to do the same.









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**2023**

**2024**

**November 6  
Charity  
Tournament  
Copper River  
CC**

**January  
Annual Meeting  
Visalia CC**

**December 2  
Holiday Event  
Windows on  
the Water**

**February  
GIS  
Phoenix, AZ.  
Jan 29– Feb 1  
California Room  
January 31**

**Spring Meeting  
Date and Location  
TBD**

**AI Glaze  
Date and Location  
TBD**

**June 10  
Montecito CC**



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