



MICHIGAN

**MICHIGAN SECTION PGA
2025 SPRING MEETING
Eagle Eye Golf Club
East Lansing, Michigan**

March 10, 2025

President Stephanie Jennings called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. She welcomed special guests Don Rea Jr, PGA of America President, Stacey Rice-Dorman, Player Engagement Consultant, Todd Smith, Career Services Consultant, Seth McGuinness, PGA of America Product Manager-Technology Team, Kelly Williams, PGA General Manager at Greenbrier CC in Lexington, Kentucky, Paula Duva-Rodriquez, Michigan State University Classical Gigline singer, Cory Cox, Mike Thiel and Brian Macrae of Pepsi, and all Past Presidents in attendance.

President Jennings read the first half of the rules of how the meeting will be conducted.

Paula Duva-Rodriquez sang a wonderful rendition of the national anthem.

Thanks to PGA National Resort & Spa and Pepsi for sponsoring the Meeting.

Don Rea, Jr. delivered the invocation and remembered deceased Michigan PGA Members Randy Tylo, Paul Haase, Dick Dewling, Ed Muir, Tom Sheldon and Fred Muller.

Motion was made and seconded to approve the October 21, 2024 Fall Meeting Minutes. Motion carried.

President's Report

President Stephanie Jennings reviewed the following:

- According to the Chinese Zodiac, we are in the year of the snake which represents many positive attributes like resilience, intelligence and even love. Your Board of Directors, Chapter leaders, Committees and Section staff are looking toward the future of our Section and making thoughtful decisions about the strength of our Membership, the status of our Game, the power of our People, and the health of our Business. All of these decisions are supported by our North Star plan that was finalized during the December Board of Director's meeting. Our goal is to stay connected with this plan each year by evaluating it based on our current situation and then updating it as needed.
- One of our main goals in this year of growth is with our Michigan PGA REACH Foundation. This is an area of our association that can make the greatest impact when it comes to supporting the growth of golf in our state. From PGA HOPE to Midnight Golf and even to a vision of future scholarships, our REACH Foundation has the greatest potential. Your Officers have established a Foundation Task Force that is aimed at creating a governance and leadership structure specifically for our Foundation. Details of this structure are still in the works, and you can expect the task force to set a governance that will be rooted in both financial strength and philanthropic intellect.
- These decisions are supported by our North Star plan that was finalized during our Board of Director's meeting in December. Our goal is to stay connected with this plan each year by evaluating it based on our current situation and then updating it as needed.

Vice President's Report

Vice President Dan Urban and Executive Director Kevin Helm reported on the two investment accounts, stating that the Section General Fund account had capital reserves of \$1,736,382 an increase of \$205,480. The Foundation account held \$114,945, marking an increase of \$11,252. Across all financial operations, net assets increased by \$278,098, bringing total assets to \$2,651,570 as of December 31, 2024. The three entities combined generated \$26,217 from operations.

Secretary's Report

Secretary Jeff Rachar shared updates on membership activity, including the introduction of new members and those who have transferred into the Michigan Section. He also recognized members who have reached significant career milestones, celebrating both Quarter Century and Half Century achievements.

Several Michigan PGA Members and facilities were honored with prestigious awards in 2024:

- Forest Akers Golf Course at Michigan State University was named one of the Top 50 Public Facilities by the Golf Range Association of America (GRAA).
- Ward Sutton, of Kent Country Club, earned the distinguished Master Club Manager (MCM) designation from the Club Management Association of America.
- Jaacob Bowden, of Golf Ventures LLC, received his fourth consecutive award from the Golf Fitness Association of America (GFAA).
- Bryan Harris, of Forest Akers at MSU, was named the GAM Club Services Representative of the Year.
- Dave Kendall, of Washtenaw Country Club, received the GAM Distinguished Service Award in recognition of his lasting contributions to the game.

Candidate's Forum

Honorary President Dean Kolstad presided over the Candidate's Forum, where Ward Sutton formally announced his candidacy for the office of Secretary. Sutton shared his vision and commitment to serving the Michigan Section, building on his long-standing leadership and involvement within the PGA.

Executive Director Report

Kevin Helm spoke of the following:

- Thanked staff, Todd, Stacey, Jeff VanPutten, officers, and committee chairs for their dedication to the membership.
- Acknowledged staff member Diane Lazaros on her 30th anniversary with the Section.
- The KitchenAid Senior PGA Championship played in late May at Harbor Shores Resort. This was the sixth time the championship has been played in Benton Harbor and marked the end of a 13-year partnership between KitchenAid and the PGA of America. Helm thanked all Section Members who have volunteered over the years, as well as Josh Doxtater and his staff.
- The other key event took place at the end of the year when Michigan played host to the 108th PGA Annual Meeting the week of November 4-8 at the Amway Grand Plaza in Grand Rapids. We are all so proud of John Lindert and the amazing job he has done leading the Association and serving the more than 30,000 PGA of America Golf Professionals.
- We are very excited to announce a new partnership with High Five Spirits on a co-branded canned cocktail! The Mulligan is a handcrafted, Michigan-made beverage featuring lemonade, iced tea, and Gypsy Vodka. This is a licensing agreement that includes co-branded packaging and will provide great exposure for the Michigan PGA brand while also celebrating Michigan golf and the Michigan spirits industry.
- An update was provided on PGA REACH Michigan program funding. In 2025, the initiative will support 14 program locations offering 34 total sessions. The projected cost to run the full slate of programs is \$160,000, with \$140,000 secured to date. However, 2025 funding is projected at only \$93,000, leaving a gap of approximately \$120,000. To address this shortfall, discussions have been held with host locations to explore cost-cutting measures. Additionally, the Birdies Fore Charity campaign will be promoted more broadly to facilities as a key fundraising avenue. Facilities are encouraged to participate and support the effort to sustain and grow these impactful programs.

Town Hall Forum

PGA of America President Don Rea, Jr., along with Michigan PGA President Jennings and Executive Director Kevin Helm. Topics included PGA REACH, PGA Coach, PGA Golf Club's vision is to create a financially sustainable model for the properties that also serves as a physical representation of the PGA of America's core values, and the Roll Back. PGA remains opposed to any change that may potentially lessen the enjoyment of the game for recreational golfers or diminish the unprecedented momentum the game is enjoying.

Tournament Report

Secretary Jeff Rachar announced the Section's upcoming transition from BlueGolf to Golf Genius tournament software. This change aims to enhance both administrative efficiency and player experience.

A slide presentation demonstrated how to download and start using the Golf Genius mobile app, encouraging all members and participants to familiarize themselves with the platform before the 2025 tournament season begins.

Additionally, the 2025 Evermore Pro Am was highlighted as a huge success, with efforts underway to secure the venue for the 2026 event.

Special Awards

Chair Jeremy Lathwell stated the Special Awards Committee met in January and interviewed some amazing candidates. Jeremy thanked committee members and staff member Madi Guilmette.

The following are the 2025 Special Awards winners:

Assistant Professional of the Year-Ryan Bayer
Bill Strausbaugh-Dave Kendall
Golf Executive of the Year-Josh Richter
Golf Professional of the Year-Glenn Pulice
Merchandiser of the Year-Private-Wally Sierakowski
Merchandiser of the Year -Public-Wes Blevins
Merchandiser of the Year -Resort-Jackson Davison
Patriot Award-George Bowman
Player Development-Kelly Plaisier
Professional Development-Jimmy Wisinski
Teacher & Coach of the Year- Jimmy Wisinski
Youth Player Development-Raquel Bryant
Distinguished Service Award-Dave Kendall

All will be formally celebrated at the President's Dinner in the fall.

Career Consultant Report

Career Services Consultant Todd Smith talked about the following going into 2025:

- Continue to conduct workshops with Level 1 Associates to assist them in moving forward.
- Nurture relationships with PGM program and Ferris State University.
- Provide support and counseling for PGA members, PGA sections and employers.
- As of this writing, Nationally 75% of members have completed the compensation profile/updated, Michigan is at 65%.

Player Engagement Consultant

Stacey Rice-Dorman reviewed a slide presentation, highlighting the following:

- Recognition of Michigan's 2024 PGA Jr. League #GameChanger Award winners: Doug Temple for managing the largest PGA Jr. League program, along with Tobias Edgett, Dean Marks, Kevin McKinley, Kelly Kuhlman, Alex Parry, and Tiffany Simons for their outstanding contributions.
- Reminder that all PGA Jr. League coaches must register by March 21st to participate in the upcoming season.
- Overview of the 2025 team kit and its new features.
- Announcement that PGA Family Golf will be held at Whistling Straits and Blackwolf Run on August 30-31.
- Promotion of PGA.Coach, which offers an opportunity to earn 14 PDRs.

AI in Action: Transforming Efficiency for PGA Members

Seth McGuinness, PGA's Project Manager, and Kelly Williams, PGA, gave an engaging session showcasing the power of artificial intelligence tailored specifically for PGA Members.

Packed with real-world examples and demos, they spoke about practical AI tools ranging from chat assistants to innovative applications that can help streamline tasks, increase efficiency, and give the member back valuable time to spend with your customers or family.

PGA REACH Michigan

President Jennings highlighted the tremendous success of the third annual Charity Hockey Game, held on February 16 at Munn Ice Arena in East Lansing. A video recap highlighted the event, which raised over \$65,000 in support of PGA REACH Michigan initiatives.

Special thanks were extended to all participating PGA professionals and members of the Detroit Red Wings Alumni. President Jennings also recognized George Bowman and Dean Kolstad for their outstanding efforts in organizing and delivering another memorable event.

Additionally, Growth of the Game Chair Kelly Kuhlman, staff member Madison Maurier, Joe Simpson, Doug Temple, and PGA WORKS Fellow Hayley Guilinger shared updates on the ongoing impact of PGA REACH Michigan. They emphasized the continued success of programs like PGA HOPE and the PGA Jr. League, reinforcing the organization's mission to positively affect lives through the game of golf.

Grant POY Awards

Growth of the Game Committee Chair Kelly Kuhlman also took a moment to recognize outstanding contributions to player development. JT Aude was honored as the Adult Player Grant Program of the Year recipient, and Lynn Janson received recognition as the Junior Player Grant Program of the Year recipient. Both individuals led exceptional programs and are highly deserving of their awards. Their success has made them eligible for additional grant funding in 2025, further supporting their efforts to grow the game.

Michigan PGA Mentoring Program

Chair Ward Sutton addressed the PGA's mentorship initiative and shared upcoming plans for member engagement within the Section. As part of the effort to foster professional growth and support, any member who completes a minimum of 10 hours of active mentoring will receive 150 points toward deferred compensation.

Registered Apprenticeship through MGCA

Corey Crowell promoted The Michigan Golf Course Association (MGCA), in coordination with the Michigan Department of Labor & Economic Opportunity and U.S. Department of Labor, the Golf Course Maintenance Technician Apprenticeship Program.

The MGCA established the Registered Apprenticeship Golf Course Maintenance Technician Program in 2022. The innovative program enables Registered Apprentices to further their agronomy education, work alongside field experts to gain on-the-job learning, and gain a national credential.

New Business

None submitted.

Old Business

None submitted.

Meeting concluded at 3:05PM.