

# KOPPLIN KUEBLER & WALLACE

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## **GENERAL MANAGER/CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER PROFILE: BIG CANYON COUNTRY CLUB NEWPORT BEACH, CA**

### **THE GENERAL MANAGER/CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER OPPORTUNITY AT BIG CANYON COUNTRY CLUB**

Universally considered one of the finest clubs in America, Big Canyon Country Club is in one of the most desirable geographic areas in the country. Big Canyon provides exceptional amenities and has enjoyed tremendous stability and leadership over the past 25 years from its retiring General Manager/Chief Operating Officer (GM/COO) and has engaged only two in this role for the past 40 years. For this active, family-centric, year-round operation, continuing the high engagement with members and staff, and the consistent focus on innovation and on-going evolution to excellence will be of primary importance to the success of the new GM/COO as he/she comes into an organization of high-performance and satisfaction.

Candidates with impeccable credentials, career tracking and natural “gravitas” will find the role at Big Canyon to be a ‘pinnacle of one’s career’ opportunity that rarely comes available in this premier area.

[Click here to view a brief video about this opportunity.](#)

### **ABOUT BIG CANYON COUNTRY CLUB AND COMMUNITY**

The quintessential California seaside town of Newport Beach is home to Big Canyon Country Club (Big Canyon or BCCC). The original golf course designed by Robert Muir Graves was opened in 1971 and the clubhouse one year later. In 1998 the course underwent a renovation led by John Harbottle III, a disciple of Pete Dye and a new 19,000 sq.ft. turf center opened in 2019. In 2006 the clubhouse was razed, reopening in 2009 with an extraordinary 70,000 sq. ft. clubhouse complex that includes multiple dining and meeting areas, fitness/wellness and event space, along with beautiful aquatics and racquets spaces. The Club has a strong history of commitment to continuous improvement and the addition of a Pilates studio, four pickleball courts, childcare area and a \$4M renovation of the bar and casual dining areas are the most recent projects.

Today Big Canyon offers a full slate of member activities and amenities that include golf and golf instruction, family events, a la carte and banquet dining, childcare, Cotillion and summer camp, fitness and group exercise, spa services and hair salon, aquatics including swim team, tennis and pickleball in addition to a car wash and vehicle charging stations. The Club’s comprehensive wine program has become a signature element and the Club is fortunate to have a talented staff dedicated to the food and beverage amenity, which is tremendously active and supported.

In its 50+ year history, the Club has hosted sixteen state and regional championships, as well as numerous USGA events including U.S. Open Qualifiers, the 2000 U.S. Women’s Mid-Amateur Championship, and the 2014 U.S. Senior Amateur Championship. The 2022 California Amateur is being held at Big Canyon in June.

The Club has a long history of commitment to support its member and staff experiences along with a strong organizational chart, necessary HR and Communications support, administration, etc.

The camaraderie that exists amongst the members, their high level of support of the Club, and the dedication of the many member volunteers in a vibrant committee system contribute to the exceptional environment found at Big Canyon.

### **BIG CANYON COUNTRY CLUB BY THE NUMBERS:**

- Approximately 1,015 memberships in various categories with an extensive waiting list.
- Initiation fee floats - recent average full membership sale price - \$300,000

- Annual dues for Full Membership - \$19,680
- No Annual F&B Minimum - \$85 monthly advanced dining charge
- Approximately 38,000 rounds of golf with no outings
- Gross Revenues of approximately \$26.0 Million
- Annual Dues Revenue of approximately \$16 Million
- F&B Volume – approximately \$7.1 Million with most of that from ala carte dining
- Gross Payroll – approximately \$12.0 Million/Taxes & Benefits \$3.3 Million
- Employees: Full-time Annual – 200, Summer - 275
- Average age of membership – 64
- There are a total of 10 Board Members, each serving three-year terms (potential for 4<sup>th</sup> year as president)
- There are 15 standing committees including: Finance, Golf Activities, Green, House, Legal and Insurance, Long Range Planning, Membership, Recreation, Scholarship, Slope and Boundary, Tournament, and Traditions. Sub-committees include Wine, Junior & Youth Activities, and Art
- The Club uses Clubessential for its accounting and POS
- The Club is organized as a 501(C)(7) Corporation
- The Club has in place a long-term capital plan and reserve schedule as well as a long as a property wide facilities master plan.

**BIG CANYON COUNTRY CLUB WEB SITE:** [www.bigcanyoncc.org](http://www.bigcanyoncc.org)

### **BIG CANYON COUNTRY CLUB GENERAL MANAGER/CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER POSITION OVERVIEW**

The GM/COO at BCCC has full responsibility for all operations of the Club, effectively managing all resources, both operating and capital budgets and reporting to the President and Board. He/She is expected to be the embodiment of an “exceptional member-centric experience,” setting a clear “tone at the top” in his/her natural behavior and style, be representative of modern management best service and member experience practices, and always composed while promoting an exceedingly positive, engaging, responsive and highly competent service culture in all operations. Above all, he/she must have a “strong and clearly evident passion for Big Canyon!”

The GM/COO is expected to be an interactive “thought partner” with the Board and Committees, working closely with both groups as they collectively make decisions and set “vision and strategic direction” for the long-term well-being of the Club and membership. Of critical importance is driving the strategic thinking of Big Canyon and possessing a strong competency in process management; being a visionary and having the skills to design, articulate and execute approved plans is essential. Also being able, when necessary, to have candid, gentle, respectful and thoughtful discussions with members regarding member expectations and conduct is critically important.

The successful new GM/COO at BCCC must possess especially strong skills in “mentoring” and “holding accountable” senior staff and a group of meaningfully engaged and well-regarded employees who are looking for that type of leadership as well. Being especially adept at building relationships---from the dish machine operator to the Club President and all in between---is a style that has been in place at BCCC for years and is expected to continue while also balancing a “culture of innovation with developed traditions.”

Ultimately, where Big Canyon is at present, a successful new leader in the GM/COO role “must have the courage to do nothing,” being capable of recognizing where members and staff are happy and what might need incremental, not radical change or improvement. BCCC is comprised of a group of ladies and gentlemen who have who appreciate the respect and appreciation they are provided by the members; this is an attribute and “culture” led thoughtfully by the GM/COO. All of this needs to be done with a sincere, integrity-filled style, recognizing the need to be the “face” of BCCC both internally and in the external greater Newport Beach community.

Key attributes, characteristics and style of the successful new leader include:

- The GM/COO must be a “hands on” interactive leader who directly monitors the operation and mentors the staff throughout each day; someone who recognizes and embodies the intimate details necessary for consistency and high levels of satisfaction in all operations and amenities. A honed ability to set clearly defined goals and

objectives, hold people accountable for results in a performance management system without being viewed as a micromanager while doing so.

- The GM/COO must possess a personality that is genuine, likable, positive and upbeat and one that projects attractive qualities that puts people at ease. Honesty, humility, straightforwardness, integrity, accountability, leadership and dedication. The GM/COO should be able to inspire and motivate others, earn the respect of the members and employees as well as the community (both internal and external) at large.
- The GM/COO will be generous with their time for others, sharing their experience, knowledge of the club and hospitality profession. Being a thoughtful and active listener as part of a very well developed communication skill is critical. Verbal as well as strong writing communication skills are necessary.
- The GM/COO must be a true leader who can work closely with other leaders in a team concept, supporting and learning from each other.
- The GM/COO should be “confident yet humble and an astute listener with a bias for action.” He or she must also have the ability to engage in a meaningful fashion with both the members and the employees (beyond the board) to execute on day to day operations and ensure the long-term strategy is attained and is actively involved in creating it.
- The GM/COO must be confident in their abilities yet possessing natural humility in his/her interactions with others; naturally outgoing, conversant, respectful, and diplomatic, but able to say “no” when appropriate without alienating members or staff while doing so.
- Possess the natural “art of seeing something....” and then either executing a plan to improve, add, eliminate or rally for whatever it is; essentially being naturally “aware” and “proactive.”
- Being creative, innovative and mission oriented; anticipating how the Club continues to evolve is important, as is being actively ‘networked’ in the industry to the point of being on the forefront of trends in clubs and economic cycles.

## **KEY PRIORITIES FOR SUCCESSFUL TRANSITIONING**

The following priorities have been identified as recommended primary focus:

- Be “present” and positively approachable where needed to develop strong member and staff trust and confidence; approachability, follow up, and candid, respectful interactions are key. Being engaged and part of every operating department is critical, as is becoming the “face of BCCC!” “Every detail is important to the overall BCCC experience.”
- Develop the President, Board and Committee relationship, working to create a strong bond and communication exchange of diplomatic openness. Ensure that well-intended member volunteer involvement is appropriate and in support of the Club’s goals.
- Immerse into the Club’s financial and business plans to fully understand the Club’s history and model for success.
- Work closely with the F & B team to ensure that an appropriate foundation of success is in place in this department, both in the culinary and service execution sides of the operation. F & B operations are of great importance to the membership, and meeting members’ expectations in this area is a critical success factor.
- Immerse into the Club’s strategic plans and understand its history of amenities development, ensuring that any ‘open’ projects are completed with good success.
- Work to ensure a smooth and successful transition, using the retiring GM/COO as a key sounding board and resource. BCCC functions at a high level at present; a successful outcome will include understanding and embracing the Club’s culture, and quickly developing relationships with members and staff. Work closely and engage significantly with the Club’s key and mostly long tenured senior directors, all of whom are viewed as high achieving and quality contributors to BCCC’s success.

## **CANDIDATE QUALIFICATIONS**

Ideally, a minimum of 7 - 10 years of progressive leadership/top level general management experience in (preferably) a private member-owned country club, with significant, multi-dimensional operations, or leading resort/hospitality operations outside of the club industry in a similar dynamic, progressive and relevant operation. Leading in a strong GM/COO model and taking “ownership,” accountability and responsibility while doing so are verifiably necessary

traits and experiences. The Club will consider well-mentored AGMs, but only from similarly large scale, iconic or nationally recognized club operations.

### **EDUCATIONAL AND CERTIFICATION QUALIFICATIONS**

- A BS or BA degree (or equivalent) from an accredited college or university, preferably in business or hospitality management.
- A CCM and CCE designation or similar accreditation outside of the club industry is desirable.

### **SALARY AND BENEFITS**

Salary is open and commensurate with qualifications and experience. The Club, along with the typical senior staff benefits, offers an excellent bonus and benefit package.

### **INSTRUCTIONS ON HOW TO APPLY**

Please upload your resume and cover letter, in that order, using the link below. You should have your documents fully prepared to be attached when prompted for them during the online application process.

**Prepare a thoughtful cover letter addressed to Mr. Charles Ruck, Search Chairman and the BCCC Search Committee** and clearly articulate why you want to be considered for this position at this stage of your career and why Big Canyon and the Newport Beach area will be beneficial to you, your family, your career, and the Club if selected.

***You must apply for this role as soon as possible but no later than Friday, June 4, 2021. Candidate selections will occur mid June with first Interviews expected in late June and second interviews after Independence Day with the new GM/COO assuming his/her role in Fall 2021.***

**IMPORTANT: Save your resume and letter in the following manner:**

“Last Name, First Name - Resume” &

“Last Name, First Name - Cover Letter – Big Canyon”

(These documents MUST be in Word or PDF format)

Note: Once you complete the application process for this search, you are not able to go back in and add additional documents.

[Click here](#) to upload your resume and cover letter.

If you have any questions, please email Patty Sprankle: [patty@kkandw.com](mailto:patty@kkandw.com)

### **Lead Search Executive:**

Kurt D. Kuebler, CCM

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