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Tee To Green

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Tee To Green



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Golf Club

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The True Value of Association

Periodical Reading Room
DO NOT CIRCULATE

All

of us, as members of our association, are business associates who interact with each other. Interaction is a valuable tool. We learn how others conduct business. We exchange information on everything from crew strategies and labor union experiences to lessons learned from construction/renovation projects and new product trials. We discuss regulatory, permit, and licensing issues, handling risk evaluators/inspectors, and of course, the trials and tribulations of managing turf. We learn how others handle the problems that face us. And in the process, many of us build friendships that last a lifetime.

When we did the grow-in here at Centennial, I networked constantly with my peers. Some of them had already gone through what we were about to tackle. They told me what worked and what didn't. I found immediate value in my association with them. What's more, it saved me time and money.

Supporting Club Support

Most clubs in our area recognize the value of association. It's reflected in our budgets. Our expenses are generally completely covered for monthly meetings, regional/national conferences, educational seminars, university research/field days, and a variety of other mind-expanding opportunities.

Some of our predecessors, I'm sure, worked long and hard to get an "Education & Conference" line item in their budgets. It's part of our responsibility, therefore, to retain this support, and we can do that simply by using it.

Association with peers and industry events keeps us on our toes, professionally. It gives us answers to those often tough questions members or our Green Committee or club officials ask us during meetings and casual conversations. If I don't have the answer to a particular question, I know where to get it—quickly and easily—because of my association with peers and educational events.

SERIALS

MAR 21 2005

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
LIBRARIES



Will Heintz
MetGCSA President

Keep in mind, the information we provide is continually scrutinized. Phone calls are made to double-check its validity. Our credibility is either strengthened or weakened by what they find out. When you give an answer, don't wing it. Be sure it's the right one.

GCSAA continually emphasizes the importance of ongoing education—and making use of all our national association has to offer. GCSAA has built in some checks and balances to ensure superintendents continue their professional development. First, they require any superintendent seeking to attain—and maintain—CGCS or Class A status to accrue a set number of service and education credits. Then, GCSAA has also developed the Professional Development Initiative (PDI). The PDI identifies 48 competencies we need to be successful as superintendents. By way of the internet, members can evaluate their success in each of these competencies. An education plan is then developed to address any weaknesses identified.

continued on page 11

Feature

Waging War on the Hyperodes Weevil:

*New Findings
on
What Works,
and
What Doesn't*

*by Dr. Patricia J. Vittum
University of Massachusetts, Amherst*





The annual bluegrass weevil (ABW)—better known to superintendents as *Hyperodes* weevil—has been wreaking havoc on golf course turf in the metropolitan New York area for nearly 40 years. When superintendents first started noticing spring die-back of annual bluegrass on their courses, they believed *Poa annua*'s inherent weakness in summer conditions was the culprit.

But Bob O'Knefski, an extension agent on Long Island, eventually pieced together the evidence and realized there was a small insect that appeared at the same time the *Poa* began to decline. He correctly surmised that the weevil was causing the damage.

His discovery was the start of numerous studies on the weevil. Among them was research funded by the MetGCSA and led by Cornell University's Dr. Haruo Tashiro, the premier research turfgrass entomologist in the country during the '70s and '80s.

Selected by Dr. Tashiro as the Ph.D. student to conduct these studies, I became intimately familiar with the life cycle and ecology of the annual bluegrass weevil. That was in the late '70s. More recently, I've been working with Dr. Nikki Rothwell, who completed her Ph.D. in my lab, to expand some of these studies.

What follows is a look at some of our latest findings, which offer important insight into what works and what doesn't in the war against the weevil.

Understanding the Insect's Life Cycle

If you're going to win the war against the weevil, you must first understand your opponent. To start, we know that the ABW overwinters in the adult stage in relatively protected locations, such as leaf litter under trees, including white pines, or near the base of tufts of grass. In the spring, adults begin to move toward the fairways, greens, and tees. They are capable of flying but seem to prefer the walk. Females lay eggs inside leaf sheaths. The eggs hatch into tiny larvae that feed inside the stems for about 10 days and then migrate toward the crowns of the plants, where they continue feeding for another two or three weeks.

The larvae then move to the upper inch of soil, where they pupate for 7 to 10 days. New young adults emerge, mate, and the process begins all over again. Normally, damage is most severe in the metropolitan area during the first half of June. That's when large larvae are feeding aggressively. Young adults emerge in late June or early July.

In the metropolitan area, the weevils repeat this process two or three times during the remainder of the summer, so they complete three or four generations. In years with cool spring or summer temperatures, however, there may be "only" three generations. It's hard to tell because from mid-June on, there's a lot of overlap. Any superintendent who samples for ABW from mid-June through mid-September will find small larvae, medium larvae, large larvae, pupae, and adults, all at the same time.

To determine the best plan of attack against the weevil, you'll want to determine what stage most of the insects are in through careful sampling. (See box on page 5 for a tried-and-true sampling method.)

The Weevil's Path of Destruction

Nikki Rothwell found that ABW larvae will feed on some creeping bentgrass, and in fact, the numbers found in creeping bentgrass plots often were as high as they were in neighboring annual bluegrass plots. The damage, however, was almost always much more obvious in annual bluegrass.

In addition, Nikki found that larvae were evenly distributed across fairways, even in the spring. Interestingly, however, the damage was almost always more severe along the edges of fairways, greens, collars, and tees. We suspect this has something to do with the fact that there are additional stresses along the edges—particularly with the compaction that results from "clean up" passes.

Given this finding, we believe most golf courses can concentrate on treating the perimeters of fairways, greens, and tees when targeting the first generation of weevils. From early July on, however, you have second and subsequent generations of weevil at work, so damage tends to occur throughout the fairways. That means your treatments must cover broader areas.

How Well Does Your Turf Take It?

Turf's tolerance levels vary depending on local conditions. In general, the more annual bluegrass there is in a given area, the lower your turf's tolerance level will be. When there are fewer agronomic stresses, like in the spring, tolerance levels will be a little higher—even in the annual bluegrass.

As a general rule of thumb, we consider the maximum number of ABW larvae your turf can tolerate to be about 30 to 80 larvae per square foot for the first generation (damage in June), and between 10 and 40 larvae per square foot for activity in July and August.

Taking Control: Management Strategies Old and New

Since the 1970s, the traditional recommendation for weevil control has been to apply a nonmobile insecticide to vulnerable areas between *Forsythia* full bloom and dogwood full bloom. For metropolitan-area golf courses, that's usually between the third week of April and the middle of May.

Over the years, the materials of choice have included chlorpyrifos (Dursban™), isofenphos (Oftanol™), which is no longer labeled for use on turf, or one of the



Weevil Sampling:
Use a cup cutter or a smaller corer to collect turf samples. Then place the cores in a saline solution to draw out the insects.

pyrethroids. The most common pyrethroids currently used to control ABW include bifenthrin (Talstar™), cyfluthrin (Tempo™), lambda-cyhalothrin (Battle™, Scimitar™), or deltamethrin (Deltagard™). These applications should be watered in lightly—just one or two passes of the irrigation head—to wash the material off the blades and into the thatch.

Here's what's been uncovered more recently about controlling ABW from first generation and beyond.

- **For first-generation control:** Dr. Paul Heller of Penn State University and I each have conducted field studies over the years that have shown that applications of Dursban™ or a pyrethroid are usually more effective if they are made closer to dogwood full bloom. At the very least, we suggest that applications not be made until *Forsythia* bushes are half green, half gold. That is, wait until some of the leaves start to bud. These applications often provide excellent control of the first generation of ABW.

- **When the ABW larvae have grown to medium or large size and the telltale wilt is apparent:** At this point, the nonmobile materials will not work fast enough. But all is not lost. Field trials over the past two years have confirmed that trichlorfon (Dylox™) will reduce larval populations significantly compared to the untreated control plots. Levels of control have ranged from 75 to 98 percent. In general, the greater control occurs when applications are made before

larvae reach their fifth and largest instar. But even if you get only 50- to 70-percent control (if the larvae are already quite large), this may be enough to reduce the population below your turf's tolerance level.

Important note: Apparently, Bayer Crop Science is working to add the annual bluegrass weevil to the label of their Dylox™ products. But until this change is finalized, superintendents in states like New York, which require both the pest *and* the site to appear on the label, cannot legally use Dylox™ to treat ABW populations. Those states that require only the site to be listed on the label, could go ahead and give Dylox™ a try. It's always best, however, to check with your state officials before using the product.

- **If most of the insects are in the pupa stage:** When the weevil is in this stage of development, patience is key. You need to wait a week or two to allow the pupae to complete their development and emerge as adults. It's at this stage that they're most susceptible to the nonmobile insecticides, such as Dursban™ or a pyrethroid.

- **If sampling shows that most of the insects are adults:** Treat as soon as possible with a nonmobile insecticide. Keep in mind, all applications should be watered in lightly.

- **Is there merit in mixing with Merit™?** For several years, superintendents have used imidacloprid (Merit™) in a tank mix with a pyrethroid to control ABW. The combina-

tion has proved effective, but on closer scrutiny of the field data, it becomes apparent that the control is provided mostly by the pyrethroid. Occasionally, we see a reduction in larval populations with Merit™ alone, but not very often. In most cases, I recommend that superintendents save their Merit™, and use it later in the season against white grubs.

Having said this, there is a new combination product that's recently received federal registration. This product, Allectus™, provides a granular combination of Merit™ and Talstar™. We were not able to test the product for the spring generation of ABW in 2004, but we did conduct a test later in the year. We applied the product at four different rates on June 15 and returned on July 9 to collect samples.

The lowest rate tested—1.15 lbs. product per 1,000 square feet—provided 81 percent control of the larvae, and the three higher rates provided at least 90 percent control. We are quite excited by these results, because it appears the combination may extend the period of effectiveness. Note, however, that we do have only one season of data on this product, so the official jury is still out.

Another holdup: Each state must approve the registration before it can be used legally. The current guess is that Allectus™ will not be available in New York in 2005, though other states may have the product available sooner. Also note that so far we have only one season of data on this product.

- **New product, very new chemistry:** There's a new product on the horizon from DuPont known as E2Y45. It's been tested as an experimental compound for a couple years and shows great promise. We tested it against first-generation ABW larvae in 2004 and found that applications made in late April or mid-May provided 90 percent control or better. Applications made in late May were not as effective, so apparently it is a slightly slower acting compound than, say, Dylox™. Keep your eye on this one. DuPont is hoping to receive federal registration for this product "shortly."



Annual Bluegrass Weevils at Work: ABW damage often is more severe along the edges of fairways, tees, and collars in the spring.

Nontraditional Strategies for Weevil Control

Many superintendents are under pressure to reduce their reliance on pesticides. Therefore, we have been investigating a range of products that are not traditional insecticides. The results have sometimes been inconsistent, but we believe we see some encouraging signs. Here's what we looked at.

- **Spinosad:** Known as Conserve™, this product is labeled for use against various caterpillars in turf. We've tested it for the past four years on the ABW using several rates of application. And we've been frustrated by some inconsistencies in the results. We did manage to see relatively consistent results, however, at the 1.2-fluid-ounce-per-1,000-square-foot rate. In 1999, it provided 100 percent control (applied on April 20); in 2000, we had 95 percent control (applied on May 9); in 2001, there was 98 percent control (applied on April 26), and in 2003, we saw 96 percent control (applied June 3). We consider these results to be very promising.

There are, of course, several cautions to note: First, Conserve™ is not labeled for use on the ABW, so in New York, it would not be legal to apply it. Second, the outcome of the product is not reliable; there have been several inconsistencies in effectiveness at other application rates. Therefore, we cannot wholeheartedly recommend this product until we can explain some of these inconsistencies.

- **Bacillus thuringiensis var. tenebrionis:** This compound is available for use on vegetables in a product called Novador™. We conducted trials in 2002 and 2003 and found that the product provided about 60 percent control in most cases. All trials were conducted when larvae were already present.

This is a lower level of performance than some superintendents would like to see, but if we can demonstrate that the product is consistent, it may be an option in some situations.

- **Entomopathogenic nematodes:** We've looked at several types of nematodes over the years and have found them to be very inconsistent, with control ranging from 0 to 85 percent. There are several logistical factors that may account for the inconsistency, but until we have a better understanding of what the nematodes "need," they're not likely to provide much relief.

End Note: *Even though some commercial products have been mentioned in this article, this does not imply endorsement by the author or the University of Massachusetts.*

If you have any questions about Dr. Vittum's trials, feel free to contact her at the Division of Entomology, 104 Agricultural Engineering Building, 250 Natural Resources Road, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA 01003. Email: pvittum@ent.umass.edu. Telephone: 413-545-0268.

You might also check the UMass Turf Team website—www.umassturf.org—throughout the growing season. That's where you'll find weekly updates posted on a variety of pest and agronomic issues.

Weevil Sampling Made Easy

Nancy Consolie, formerly a technician in Mike Villani's laboratory at the Geneva Experiment Station (part of Cornell University), refined a sampling technique that we've found highly effective in diagnosing weevil problems.

1. Collect a sample of turf, including the crowns and upper half-inch of soil. Remember that a standard cup cutter plug, with a 4.25-inch diameter core, is almost exactly 0.1 square foot. We often use a corer that cuts samples that are about 1.9 inches in diameter. It takes 50.8 such cores to make a square foot.
 2. Subdivide the sample into pieces that are no more than an inch on a side and place them in a bowl.
 3. Submerge the samples in a salty solution. The "recipe" we use is about 2/3 cup of table salt in a quart of lukewarm water.
 4. Stir the mixture a couple of times. Every stage, except eggs, will float to the surface of the salty water, often within 5 or 10 minutes. Just to be sure, allow the mixture to stand for 45 minutes.
- This technique will help you determine the stage of the insect you're dealing with, which will, in turn, aid you in selecting an effective control strategy.

Another Snowy Start to Our Winter Seminar

by David Dudones



Team Lippman at your service



Sleepy Hollow's Tom Leahy with a take-home message



Met members Peter & Herb Waterous—super & seminar speaker



Winter Seminar sessions command a full house

For the second year running, a late-night snow hampered travel to the Annual Winter Seminar held at Westchester Country Club on January 12. The hot coffee and smooth registration process provided some ease for the large turnout of superintendents, assistants, and vendors. Once the caffeinated group took their seats, MetGCSA President Will Heintz gave a gracious welcome, thanking Joe Alonzi and the rest of the Westchester staff for once again hosting this event. Session Chairman Glen Dube addressed some last-minute details before introducing the first speaker, Dr. Rex Bastian from the Care of Trees.

Tree Management

Dr. Bastian's presentation, *Shade Tree Risk Assessment and Management for Your Golf Course*, emphasized the importance of creating a formal tree risk management policy for your course. He outlined five steps to a successful program that took participants through establishing an action plan, marshaling and then managing the appropriate resources, and finally reviewing and updating the program annually. "All trees have risk," he told participants. "We can't eliminate the risk, but it can be managed with a sound reduction strategy." The take-home message: Vigilance is key to protecting your members from harm and your club from costly legal action.

The second presentation also revolved around the timely issue of tree management. Former Met area superintendent Herb Waterous, now of ArborCom Technologies, discussed the importance of *Developing a Golf Course Shade Management Program*. He provided numerous case studies demonstrating ArborCom's computerized shade mapping program at work. The 3D shadow patterns mapped throughout the day and year provided excellent information, showing a direct correlation between areas that were shaded most of the day and weak turf. Herb explained how pruning can help increase sunlight to the playing surface but does not truly solve the problem. Nor does artificial lighting. Even

in severe cases where grow lights were brought onto the playing surface, they replicated only 25 percent of direct sunlight, proving there is no substitute for the real thing.

In addition to identifying current candidates for removal, the program can be used to project how a tree will grow and affect sunlight penetration in years to come. Whether a tree is an issue today or 20 years into the future, ArborCom's program adds credibility to the tree removal recommendations you make for your course.

New Poa Control

After a short coffee break and Dr. Vittum's New Annual Bluegrass Weevil Control Strategies presentation (featured on pages 2-5), Rutgers University's Dr. Steve Hart discussed *Velocity Herbicide for Poa Control*. Velocity 80WP (not registered in New York and California) has been found effective in reducing *Poa* populations on fairway-height grass. Dr. Hart explained the importance of timing in both application and interseeding. The most effective applications were observed in the summer months when temperatures were above 80 degrees. The *Poa* was severely damaged after two treatments, three weeks apart, while the bentgrass showed only a slight yellowing. Spring and fall treatments were found to be very detrimental to the bentgrass without affecting the *Poa*. Without certain masking techniques, be prepared to explain significant injury to your bentgrass if Velocity is applied under cool temperatures.

Dr. Hart has seen the most success interseeding fairways with bentgrass two to three weeks after the last Velocity treatment. Closing words to the wise: Velocity is not labeled for use on greens, and it should not be tank-mixed with anything.

Bentgrass Selection

After an impressive gourmet lunch and a trade show visit, the afternoon session began with a presentation on *Selecting the Right Bentgrass* from Dr. Stacy Bonos of Rutgers University. Dr. Bonos began with an in-

sightful lesson about the history of bentgrass and how the first selected seeded variety—Penncross—was developed. The long process of collection based on density, disease resistance, color, hardiness, texture, and many other factors continues today in an attempt to meet the ever-changing demands of the industry.

Dr. Bonos had promising information on many new cultivars, which will make deciding on a bentgrass for your course all the more challenging. When selecting a variety, you'll want to think about the factors most important to your club. Dr. Bonos pointed out, for instance, that if your operating budget is low, you might opt for a variety that's most resistant to dollar spot. For higher-end clubs, texture and density might be more important to allow for faster green speeds. In the end, Dr. Bonos emphasized that there is no one perfect variety for every situation, and that is why the selection process continues.

Phosphite Fertilization

The last speaker of the day was Rick Fletcher of the Cleary Chemical Corporation, who spoke to a full house about *Phosphite Fertilization: Is It Right for You?* Mr. Fletcher's presentation was something new for most of the audience, judging by how many people's hands remained down when he polled the audience for their knowledge of PO_3 and its importance.

After some basic chemistry on the role phosphorus plays in plant health—from respiration to meristematic growth to antifungal defenses—the discussion turned to highlighting the differences between the widely used PO_4 and PO_3 . PO_4 (phosphate) is highly immobile in the soil and is not foliarly available, while PO_3 (phosphite) will move rapidly into the canopy.

Rick Fletcher summarized the advantage to using PO_3 over PO_4 products: PO_3 is rapidly available to the plant. PO_4 availability to the plant is hampered by low temperatures, poor oxygen levels in the soil, and higher pH levels, which cause the PO_4 to bind with calcium and make it unavailable to the plant. At the end, Rick reminded us that, although soil tests may show an adequate level of phosphorus in the soil, that doesn't mean it will be available to the plant when needed. PO_3 is a more immediate solution to increasing phosphorus levels benefiting the plant.

For a more in-depth look at this presentation, please call up our website at www.metgcsa.org.

Dave Dudones is superintendent at North Jersey Country Club in Wayne, NJ.

Special Thanks to Our Winter Seminar Exhibitors

We'd like to thank all the vendors who participated in this year's Winter Seminar. As a show of appreciation, we're listing the exhibitors here, along with their areas of specialty and phone numbers.

When the opportunity arises, we hope you'll show these contractors and suppliers the same support they've shown us during our Winter Seminar—and throughout the year.

A. G. Enterprises

Rick Gordon
Uniforms & Work Apparel
201-488-1276

Al Preston's Garage

Gary Shashinka
Massey Ferguson Tractors
203-924-1747

Almstead Tree & Shrubs

Michael Mathew
For All Your Tree Care Needs
914-576-0193

AT Sales

Owen Regan
Sod & Organic Fertilizers
401-686-8066

Atlantic Irrigation Specialties, Inc.

Tim Marcoux
Irrigation Specialists
914-686-0008

Bayer Environmental Science

Dave Sylvester
Plant Protectants
860-841-3173

Central Irrigation Supply, Inc.

George Gorton
Irrigation Specialists
914-347-5656

DeLea Sod Farms, Inc.

Vince Sharkey
Sod & Topdressing
631-368-8022

DP Golf Associates, Inc.

Lance Authelat
Aerial Mapping
516-361-9898

Earth Works, Inc.

Carl Wallace
For All Your Aerifying Needs
860-558-6968

E/T Equipment Co.

Bruce Pye
Golf Course Equipment Sales
914-271-6126

Grass Roots, Inc.

Ken Kubik
Golf Course Supplies
973-361-5943

Greenacres Company

Dave Pijnenburg
Irrigation Contractor
203-748-0558

Grigg Brothers

Vince Van Meter
Liquid Fertilizers
208-673-6340

Harrells Turf Specialty

Joe Stahl
Golf Course Supplies
203-209-6951

Koonz Sprinkler Supply

Barbara Koonz
Irrigation & Floratine Sales
973-379-9314

Lesco, Inc.

Charlie Siemers
Golf Course Supplies
914-755-4798

Metro Turf Specialists

Scott Apgar
Golf Course Supplies
203-748-GOLF (4653)

Mid-Hudson DryJect

Jack Neely
Dry Injection Aeration
845-235-5484

Plant Food Company, Inc.

Tom Weinert
Liquid Fertilizers
914-262-0111

Precision Labs

Nick Eberhard
Wetting Agents, Adjuvant, & Spray
Pattern Indicators
201-401-5257

Terre Company of NJ, Inc.

Byron Johnson
Golf Course Supplies
973-473-3393

The Care of Trees

Mike Cook
Entire Tree Care Company
914-345-8733

Turf Products Corporation

Rick Schock
Golf Course Equipment
800-243-4355

Verdicon

Gerald Fountain
Golf Course Supplies
732-296-8448

Westchester Tractor Inc.

George Risley
Golf Course Equipment
914-232-7746

Westchester Turf Supply, Inc.

Bob Lippman
Golf Course Supplies
845-621-5067

Wilfred MacDonald, Inc.

Glenn Gallion
Golf Course Equipment
888-831-0891

Scholarship Raffle a Success



The 2004 Annual Bill Caputi Scholarship Raffle, held at the December 4 MetGCSA Christmas party at The Canyon Club, not only raised a sizable sum for the Met's Scholarship Fund, but also awarded \$4,500 in cash prizes to 18 lucky ticket holders.

The raffle is the prime source of the scholarship awards we distribute to deserving Met member dependents each year. In 2004, we awarded \$11,050 to 11 students.

Many thanks to all who contributed to this worthwhile fundraiser, and congratulations to our \$1,000-grand-prize winner, **Joe Stahl** of Harrells Turf Specialty.

The other prize winners were:

\$500 Winners

Doug Belmont, Monroe Country Club
Les Kennedy, Blind Brook Club
Ted Valentine, outside contributor

\$250 Winners

David Allen, friend of Woodway's
Larry Pakkala
Tim Benedict, Woodmere Club
Peter Rappoccio, Silver Spring CC
John Ruzsbatzky, CC of Farmington

\$100 Winners

Ted Cirocci, outside contributor
Neal Hill, friend of Larry Pakkala's
Gary Mathis, Steven Willand, Inc.
Beth Moore, wife of Knollwood's
Tim Moore
Curt Niven, brother of Stanwich's
Scott Niven
John O'Keefe, Preakness Hills CC
Lauren & Christina Pakkala, daughters
of Woodway's Larry Pakkala
John Ruzsbatzky, CC of Farmington
Peter Schmidt, The Care of Trees
Bobby Welch, Rock Ridge CC

Info Alert

Don't delay in calling for your 2005 MetGCSA Scholarship Award application! Any Class A, AL, B, C, AF, or AFL member of the MetGCSA or a dependent of a member is eligible to win. But the deadline for submissions is fast approaching. **All applications should be RECEIVED by Friday, April 1.**

Application forms are available through MetGCSA Executive Secretary Ineke Pierpoint at 914-347-4653. If you have

any questions about the application process, feel free to contact S & R Chairman Matt Ceplo of Rockland Country Club at 845-359-5346.

The Scholarship & Research Committee will select recipients based on leadership, maturity, scholastic capabilities, activities, and commitment to a chosen career.

Scholarships will be awarded at an upcoming Met meeting. We'll keep you posted on the time and place.

Members on the Move

Dave Dudones, formerly an assistant superintendent at Westchester Country Club in Rye, NY, has accepted the superintendent's position at North Jersey Country Club in Wayne, NJ.

Mike Samol, formerly assistant superintendent at Trump National Golf Club in Briarcliff Manor, NY, has accepted the superintendent's position at Trump.

Congratulations

Tim Powers, superintendent of Crystal Springs Golf Course in Burlingame, CA, has received the GCSA of Northern California's prestigious Turfgrass Excellence Award in the Public Category. This award is presented to a superintendent member whose facility is maintained at a standard that reflects consistent, high-quality playing conditions, while displaying exceptional agronomic and management skills. Congratulations, Tim, for a job exceptionally well done!

In Sympathy

We want to offer our sincere condolences to:

Owen Regan of AT Sales. Owen's mother, Helen Regan, passed away December 31.

Bob and Allison Ranum, whose 21-year-old son, Christopher, passed away January 17. Bob is the superintendent at Atlantic Golf Club in Bridgehampton NY.

Jim Calladio of E/T Equipment Co. Jim's father passed away January 18.

Well Wishes

We'd like to send well wishes to Mrs. Moran, **Greg Moran's** mother. Greg is with Lesco, Inc.

Births

Congratulations to Bedford Golf & Tennis Club Superintendent **Bob Nielsen** and his wife, Carolyn, on the birth of their son, John Charles Nielsen, on January 20.

All Was Aglow at the MetGCSA Christmas Party



*Glen & Erica
Dube*

*The Pakkala Family:
Christina & Lauren,
Carole & Larry*



*Bob & Carolyn
Nielsen*



*Earl Millett, Tony &
Lucille Grasso, Mark &
Mary Pat Millett, Donna
Millett*



*Dennis & Cindy Flynn,
Peter & Birdie Rappaccio,
Joe & Judy Alonzi, Anne &
Mike Maffei*



*Mike & Lisa Cook,
Toni & Scott Ferguson,
Tim & Beth Moore,
John & Jackie Ferruccio,
Jon & Jaime Ferruccio*

The Canyon Club

2004

*Dana & Scott
Niven*



Think Spring

by Debbie Haigh

There's no time like the present to think about spring plantings on your course. While some area clubs have the resources to create and maintain extensive gardens, there are still a fair number whose budgets are limited. The good news is that it is possible to create impressive-looking gardens without taxing your maintenance budget—or staff. Debbie Haigh of Valley View Wholesale Greenhouses has worked with numerous area supers to help them develop simple, yet elegant flowerbeds for their course, using what she refers to as “tried and true” annuals.

Here, Debbie describes five of her personal favorites—for their beauty and, moreover, their ease of maintenance.

1. Wax Begonia: This is my all-time favorite annual. Wax Begonias are dependable and flexible. They can take sun or shade, and deer steer clear of them. Still, this is an underappreciated plant. It has two different leaf colors—red and bronze—but its flower colors are limited to only white, red, and pink. Despite this limitation, the Wax Begonia is a guaranteed winner that will improve the look of your gardens with little time and effort.

2. Impatiens: Everyone knows and loves Impatiens. They make gardens seem familiar, warm, and inviting. Impatiens, like Wax Begonias, will do well in sun or shade. Unlike Begonias, however, they come in a wide variety of colors: white, pink, red, lavender, orange, and more. Plant a mass of them together in a bed and they'll fill in and

look impressive. The only caveat: Deer love them too.

3. New Guinea Impatiens (NGI): NGIs are a close cousin to Impatiens. They have the same large color selection, but with darker, stronger leaves. They prefer shadier areas over full sun. Their colors are vibrant, clear, and eye-catching. I like NGIs because they are so forgiving. If they get a little dry and grow limp, just add water and they spring right back into shape. They are also easy to handle and care for. The other good news: NGIs are not high on the deer's hit list.

4. Coleus: This is one of the most underused plants. Coleus has always been thought of as a shade-only plant, but it's not. It does well in both sun and shade. Coleus will produce a flower, but it's minimal and almost irrelevant compared to the beauty of the foliage. The foliage comes in a large array of colors and unique patterns: small or large, smooth or textured, dark or bright. The selections are endless! Coleus grows like crazy and requires very little maintenance. Here's a trade secret: Deer generally do not eat plants with a square stem, and the Coleus happens to be one of those square-stemmed plants.

5. Wave Petunias: When you think of Petunias, you probably think high maintenance. Not true of the Wave Petunia. This

is a much more user-friendly plant. It spreads out rather than up, filling in a flowerbed beautifully. But better still, it's nearly self-cleaning. The only bit of maintenance these Petunias require is fertilization about once a week. Wave Petunias come in a variety of crisp colors—whites, pinks, salmons, purples, reds—that are sure to brighten up any flowerbed. Wave Petunias can be sticky to handle, but that also can work as a deterrent to deer.

Putting These Plants to Work

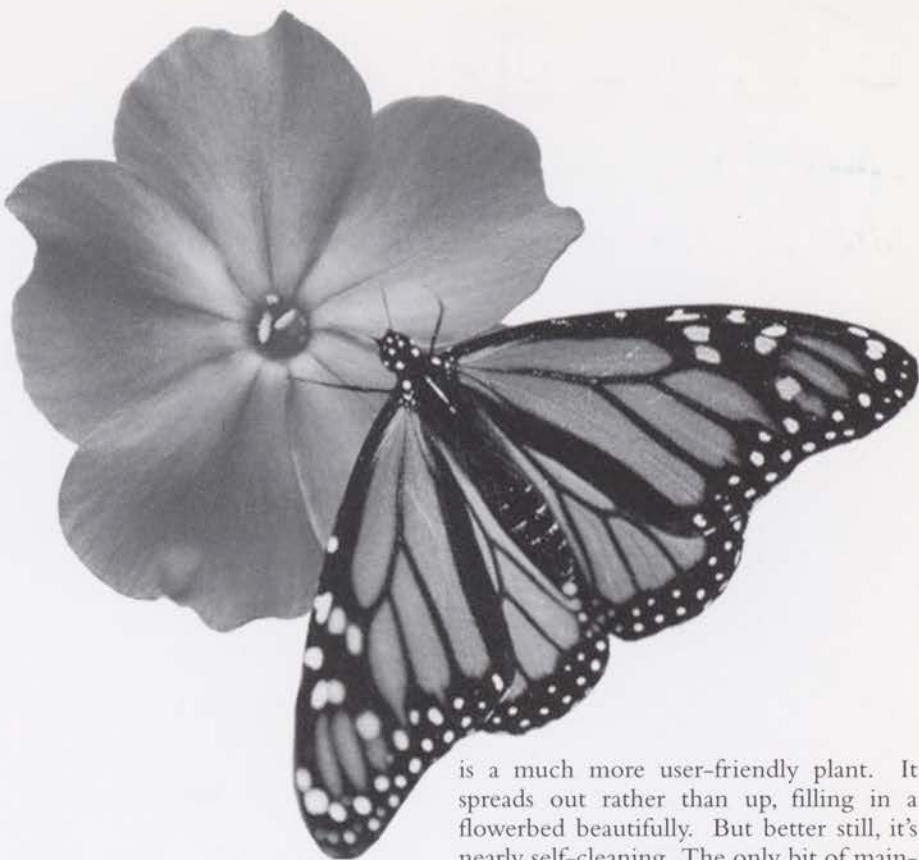
When planning your flowerbeds, think about using color patterns rather than plant variety to create visual interest. In other words, use the same plant, just alternate the color. The benefit with this tack is that the garden's maintenance needs will be consistent.

How about planting a mono-colored garden? Different plants, same color. This will provide a blast of color, not easily missed.

If you have a hankering for something unique, then why not experiment on a smaller scale? Try new and unusual plants in containers. They'll be simpler to plant and maintain, and if they don't work out, you can easily replace them without risking the aesthetics of your flowerbeds.

Again, the goal is to have spectacular gardens with easier planting and maintenance. For a more complete plant list, please refer to Valley View's website: www.vvgh.com.

Debbie Haigh is the manager at Valley View Wholesale Greenhouses in South Salem, NY.



Upcoming Events

2005 Met Calendar of Events

Sites Still Open!

Our 2005 Meeting and Social Calendar is inching toward completion. We are looking for volunteers to host a few remaining professional events and all our social events. To secure a golf meeting, don't delay in calling either of our Tournament Committee co-chairs: Tom Leahy at 914-941-8281 or Chuck Denny at 914-669-5959. To host one of our three social events, please call any one of our Social & Welfare Committee co-chairs, which again include Tom Leahy and Chuck Denny and also Bob Nielsen, who can be reached at 914-234-3779.

Business Meeting

Wednesday, March 23

Glen Arbor Golf Club, Bedford Hills, NY
Host: Ken Benoit Jr., CGCS

Two-Ball Qualifier

Monday, April 25

Trump National Golf Club
Briarcliff Manor, NY
Host: Mike Samol

Superintendent/Manager Tournament

Monday, May 16

Rolling Hills Country Club, Wilton, CT
Host: Glenn Perry, CGCS

Invitational Tournament

Tuesday, June 21

Fairview Country Club, Greenwich, CT
Host: Mike Mongon

Education Meeting

July/Date TBA

Ridgeway Country Club, White Plains, NY
Host: Earl Millett

Family Picnic

July

Date and Site OPEN

Poa Annual Tournament/First Round of Met Championship

Monday, August 15

Oak Hills Park Golf Course, Norwalk, CT
Host: Glen Dube, CGCS

Summer Social

August

Date and Site OPEN

Second Round of Met Championship

Monday, September 19

Connecticut Golf Club, Easton, CT
Host: Mark Fuller, CGCS

Superintendent/Green Chairman Tournament

Monday, October 17

Century Country Club, Purchase, NY
Host: Kevin Seibel

Annual Assistants Championship

Date & Site OPEN

Met Area Team Championship

October

Date & Site OPEN

Annual Meeting

Wednesday, November 9

St. Andrew's Golf Club
Hastings-on-Hudson, NY
Host: Rob Alonzi

MetGCSA Christmas Party

December

Date & Site OPEN

Educational Event

The 8th Annual New England Regional Turfgrass Conference & Show

Monday - Thursday, March 7 - 10

Rhode Island Convention Center
Providence, RI

The annual conference and show's educational sessions will bring you cutting edge turfgrass management tactics and techniques, while the three-day trade show will offer you easy access to the latest in equipment, products, and supplies offered by more than 400 exhibitors. Call the NERTF Office at 401-841-5490 for further information.

President's Message continued from page 1

Pick and Choose

There are so many opportunities for professional development that we can't possibly take advantage of all of them. We do, after all, have a golf course to tend to. There is a way to narrow the field. Be sure to start by checking your club calendar. You can first cross off any association or other business that conflicts with a club event that requires your presence. Then run through the list of upcoming Met and other area events—available, by the way, on our very own website: www.metgcsa.com—and pick and choose those that are most likely to benefit your professional development.

Once you've filled in your calendar with your "wish list" of events, I've found it extremely helpful to email it to your employer. Then, the day before the event, be sure to communicate to your assistant or other staff members where you might be reached in case of emergency. Let your employer know who to contact in your absence—especially if it's an extended one. A well-communicated absence goes a long way toward avoiding the perception that you're "never there."

If you ever feel hesitant about stepping away from the job on a summer day, keep in mind that all club professionals take time for professional development: club house personnel, golf and tennis professionals, chefs, and club managers. And most clubs view it as time—and even money—well spent.

With warmest regards,

Will Heintz
President

It's All Business at the March GlenArbor Meeting

by Bill Perlee

When Ken Benoit and the GlenArbor Golf Club host the MetGCSA annual Business Meeting on March 23, it will be our first look at this impressive new facility. Formerly known as Lakeover National, the club has undergone numerous changes over the past four years. There's a brand-new clubhouse and a newly renovated golf course that now boasts a Gary Player signature design. While it's always frustrating to visit a fine course like GlenArbor without our golf clubs, fear not: Ken plans on hosting our Invitational Tournament in 2006.

Unconventional Start

Ken's been GlenArbor's superintendent since 2001, dazzling the owners with his somewhat unconventional prior experience. A native of Michigan, Ken had graduated from University of Detroit with a degree in marketing and was managing a large sales territory when he decided the corporate world wasn't for him. "A friend steered me in the direction of golf course management," says Ken, who was looking for something that would combine his love for golf with the outdoors.

Knowing he'd have to take a step back to move forward along the new career path he'd chosen, Ken accepted a position on the crew of Walnut Creek Country Club outside of Detroit and enrolled in the two-year turfgrass management program at Michigan State University.

Following graduation, he landed a job at the renowned Riviera Country Club in Los Angeles, CA. Working as an assistant under Paul Latshaw, he helped groom the course for the 1998 Senior U.S. Open.

In 1999, Ken broadened his experience working for MacDonald & Sons Golf Course Builders as a construction superintendent. While with the Maryland-based company, he logged in two new course constructions and a renovation at Olympia Fields.

His next and final stop before GlenArbor—a year at Quaker Ridge as Steve Renzetti's assistant—gave him insight into the subtleties of maintaining turf in Westchester County.

At that point, Ken had the perfect mix of golf course management and construction experience required for the GlenArbor job. It was no surprise, then, that the owners selected Ken from a long list of candidates.

For the Birds

In addition to managing the course transformation at GlenArbor, Ken has focused his efforts on numerous environmental efforts. One he's gained local and national recognition for is a program to help rebuild the Eastern bluebird population, which has been declining because of loss of habitat, susceptibility to pesticides, and competition from two more aggressive imported species: the house sparrow and the European starling.

Since 2002, he's placed bluebird boxes throughout the course, monitoring them regularly, primarily for the number and health of birds and the condition of the boxes. In the first year, the nests produced 87 fledglings. By the end of 2004, that number was up to 292.

Ken's other environmental pursuits include his IPM-based pesticide program and the planting of numerous naturalized areas, trees, and shrubs throughout the course. Bluebirds, however, will always be an extra-special interest to Ken—and his wife of four-and-a-half years, Melodee, who in addition to being Ken's administrative assistant and horticulturist, is happy to take care of the bluebird box monitoring.

While GlenArbor may be newly renovated, it doesn't mean Ken can't keep his hands busy with construction projects. The club is building three holes for teaching and practice, and there are future plans for building cottages for members and their guests.



Ken Benoit

A Real Outdoorsman

Proving his enthusiasm for the outdoors, Ken recently returned from a weekend of winter camping in the Adirondack Mountains, where he took his assistant, Jake Kellar. "It was a little cold," says Ken, "like 20 below with 50-mile-an-hour winds at the summit. I climbed Mount Marcy for the first time, so that was exciting—especially when one gentleman I met up with who was hiking with two others slipped on shear ice and slid for about 100 feet before hitting a rock outcropping that saved his life. I climbed a little more cautiously after that," Ken adds.

Ken and Melodee live in Bedford, NY. They met while Ken was working at Riviera and attending an L.A. Dodgers game. "Her hands were cold, so I gave her my gloves," says Ken. "I guess that really impressed her."

You'll be impressed too—by what you see of GlenArbor on March 23 and by what you experience at the Met's 2006 Invitational.

Bill Perlee, a member of the Tee to Green Editorial Committee, is superintendent at The Apawamis Club in Rye, NY.

New Super, New Venue for the Two-Ball Qualifier

by Eric O'Neill

Mike Samol will have barely gotten his feet wet as the new super at Trump National Golf Club when he hosts the Met's Two-Ball Qualifier on April 25.

But Mike is well prepared for the job, having spent three years as the club's assistant superintendent, under his former boss and mentor Blake Halderman.

"Blake and I have a five-year history," says Mike fondly. "He hired me as an intern in 1999 when he was at Minisceongo; then took me on as his assistant at Trump—in time for the grow-in."

The Course Takes Shape

That was February 2001—not quite a year after Donald Trump broke ground on the club's site in Briarcliff Manor, NY. Trump National, Blake himself will tell you, was no run-of-the-mill construction project. "There were 3 million yards of earth moved to create waterfalls, winding streams, lakes, stone bridges, and ravines," remembers Blake. One feature that's particularly notable is the man-made, 100-foot waterfall on the signature par three 13th hole, with a five-acre holding pond.

"I was fortunate to have Mike on board for the project," says Blake. "I couldn't have had anyone more dedicated. Mike would show up at least 45 minutes before starting time everyday," Blake remembers.

Bringing a course to life brought the business to life for Mike. "Working with Blake and Golf Course Architect Tommy Fazio was a tremendous experience," he says. "You get a great appreciation for this profession when you actually see the shaped soil turn into manicured turf or raw land turn into a great golf course," he adds.

The Business Grew on Him

Mike grew up in Grafton, OH, which is in the northeast part of the state. His first duty on a golf course was caddying at Elyria

Country Club, near his hometown. That's when he got the bug to become involved with turfgrass management. "As a caddie, I saw the grounds staff in action and wanted in," says Mike. So on his 16th birthday, he approached the golf course superintendent for a job and was hired on the spot.

"I was fortunate," says Mike. "I worked with a great group of guys. They didn't see me as some 16-year-old boy, who they could pass the petty jobs on to. Instead they treated me with respect and took every opportunity to share their knowledge and expertise with me."

After spending summers working on the grounds crew of Elyria Country Club, Mike knew the path he would take when he graduated high school. In the fall of 1997, he enrolled in the two-year Turf Management program at Ohio State University. That's when his fortunate association with Blake began—first as an intern in '99 and then as an assistant in 2001. "Working with Blake over the past five years has shown me what it takes to have a well-detailed and conditioned course," adds Mike, who says he has no regrets leaving the country life of his rural Ohio hometown behind. "I have the best of both worlds here: the country atmosphere of northern Westchester and the City only one hour away," explains Mike.

But that doesn't mean Mike's forgotten his first training ground in Ohio. In fact, his learning experience at Elyria left such an impression that Mike's adopted that same mentoring philosophy with the people he's worked with as an assistant and now as a superintendent. What's more, he encourages his staff and assistants to follow suit. "I hope someday I will inspire someone to further his or her career in the golf course management field," says Mike.

Still Time for Fun

In his spare time, which he admits isn't much in the spring and summer, he enjoys



Mike Samol

having cookouts with his friends and playing basketball, a sport he played in high school. He's also an avid baseball fan. If there's one thing he does miss about being in Ohio, it's attending the Cleveland Indians games. In the winter months, Mike enjoys snowmobiling and skiing.

Playing It Safe

"Stripe it long and straight" is Mike's advice to his fellow Met members when they try qualifying on April 25. "The course has the hardest slope rating in Westchester County," says Mike. "It's 7,291 yards long and very narrow with many forced carries over water and ravines." So be sure to take a few practice putts to fine-tune your game before the big day, and good luck!

Eric O'Neill, a member of the Tee to Green Editorial Committee, is superintendent at Towers Country Club in Floral Park, NY.

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