

Tee & Green

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203-531-8910

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TERRIE YOUNG

Advertising Managers

BRETT CHAPIN, 203-938-9240

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Tee To Green



Brae Burn Country Club.

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President's Message

The Last Hurrah

I

t wouldn't have felt right if, in my final President's Message, I didn't talk about the weather. But I certainly didn't expect—or want—the focus to be a weather event as devastating as Hurricane Sandy has been to tri-state area golf courses and superintendents and their families.

Though countless MetGCSA and neighboring association members have been seriously affected by Hurricane Sandy and the Nor'easter that followed, those along the shore in Long Island, Connecticut, and New Jersey appear to have been the hardest hit. The winds and coastal flooding caused by these storms have wreaked havoc on countless golf courses. Senator Charles Schumer, the democratic senator from New York, has shown a serious inclination toward including golf courses in the Hurricane Sandy Disaster Relief Bill. This is the first time golf courses have been considered for disaster relief funding, and with Senator Schumer on the Finance Committee, there is a distinct possibility this may actually come to fruition. This would allow golf courses access to low-interest loans for any damage not covered by insurance. What welcome support that will be for many of the affected golf courses!

On a more personal note, I know many of you have suffered at both your homes and golf courses, and I hope and pray that some normalcy has returned to everyone's lives. Keep in mind that GCSAA has an Emergency Relief Fund available to provide financial assistance to members who suffer personal loss or medical hardship due to any natural disaster. See the GCSAA website for further details.

BMPs for Golf Courses: A Project to Be Proud Of

I have been fortunate to serve as the Met's president during a time when we've made notable strides in a number of areas, both inside and outside the association. I am extremely excited and pleased, for instance, by the lead role we've assumed in the development of the Best Management Practices for Golf Courses in New York State. For the uninitiated, these BMPs are regulations we, ourselves, establish for every imaginable golf course maintenance practice. They will be spelled out in a manual and are intended to demonstrate superintendents' environmental responsibility to state legislators. The hope is to allay legislators' concerns about our practices and ultimately fend off future legislation that threatens to impose unjust restrictions on our maintenance practices.



*Bob Nielsen, CGCS
MetGCSA President*

You have to wonder, for instance, would phosphorus have been banned for golf course use if we had in place a BMP that clearly specified a safe and reasonable application rate for golf courses?

Once completed, I believe this manual will serve to put golf in a leading role in environmental stewardship in New York State. Frank Rossi, the lead author for the manual, has said that this could be the single most important project that golf and Cornell have collaborated on to date. And he might just be right.

The Department of Environmental Conservation has seven directors that have expressed interest in reviewing and commenting on the manual. And the Department of Agriculture and Markets has also expressed interest in providing comments on the manual. The relationships being cultivated with these two departments are unprecedented in New York State and will hopefully open a two-way dialogue on future regulations.

We have a winning team on the project. Frank Rossi is working with colleagues Bob Portmess, Jennifer Grant, and Marty Petrovic to write the manual. What a lineup! Their enthusiasm for putting this manual together is extraordinary and really shows their affinity for the golf course superintendent. They understand the importance of superintendents buying into the program, and I am sure they will produce a manual we can all be proud of. The editor, Stacy Kingsbury, has the experience and knowledge to produce a brilliant outcome.

My Thanks to Our Association's Many Contributors

As I prepare for my final term on the board, I would like to thank the membership for supporting me in my role as president for the

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Feature

Brae Burn's Blake Halderman Elected MetGCSA's 31st President

by Kevin Collins



“I look forward to continuing to support the mission of our association while working with the board and membership to enhance the many programs we have in place and explore ways to strengthen and grow our organization.”

The MetGCSA was established in the late 1950s with the sole intent of “promoting the welfare of the game of golf, the science and art of golf course management, the organization and business effectiveness of the profession, and the professional image and well-being of its individual members.”

Some things never change. As Brae Burn’s Blake Halderman embarks on a two-year term as the MetGCSA’s 31st president, our association’s vision remains the same.

“I couldn’t be more excited about my term as president of the MetGCSA,” says Blake. “I look forward to continuing to support the mission of our association while working with the board and membership to enhance the many programs we have in place and explore ways to strengthen and grow our organization.”

Blake is succeeding Bedford Golf & Tennis’s Bob Nielsen who has devoted the past 10 years to serving on the association’s Board of Directors and will remain on the board for the next two years as past president. The gavel was officially passed at the November 19 Annual Meeting, which was rescheduled and relocated from Bedford Golf and Tennis to a restaurant in Rye, NY, thanks to Hurricane Sandy.

A Leader in the Making

Blake spent much of his childhood in Hughesville, PA, a quiet country town located near Williamsport, PA, home of the Little League World Series. Blake’s parents, Gene and Sandra, both worked at a local GTE/Sylvania factory that produced disposable camera flashbulbs. As camera technology evolved and the demand for this product diminished, the factory closed, leaving Gene and Sandra—and hundreds of other local residents—without jobs. With full-time employment scarce, Blake’s parents worked part-time jobs to support the family. “There were times my dad had to shoot a deer to put food on the table,” Blake recalls.

When Blake was 12, the family packed up and moved to Hillsborough, NH, where his parents were able to secure jobs at another GTE/Sylvania factory that manufactured car headlights. Blake attended high school in Hillsborough where his natural leadership

qualities began to emerge. He was class president in both his freshman and junior years and played on the school’s basketball, baseball, and soccer teams, becoming captain of all three teams his senior year.

Always full of initiative, Blake took a job, at the age of 14, cleaning the factory where his parents worked to earn a little extra pocket money. But his earning potential came to a screeching halt after just eight months on the job. Blake broke his shoulder on his dirt bike and was in a half-body cast with his arm out to the side for weeks. He was out of commission for the summer. Back on his feet in the fall, Blake wasted no time in finding another job, this time pumping gas at a local station.

It was Blake’s next job, however, that lured him into the turfgrass management industry: a position on the crew of the nearby nine-hole Angus Lea Golf Course. His older sister, Renae, who was working at Angus Lea at the time, was responsible for Blake’s introduction into the business—and to the Nivens. “The club was owned by Scott Niven’s dad, Russ Niven,” explains Blake. “And then by Scott’s brother, Curt. It was a great experience working for both of them.”

For most of Blake’s tenure there, the crew consisted of three workers: Blake, Toby (Russ’s grandson), and Blake’s good friend (till this day), Mitchel Wilkens. No surprise, it wasn’t long before Blake stepped forward to assume a leadership role at the club. The way the story goes, shortly after Blake started at Angus Lea—still just 17—the existing crew leader went on to college, leaving Blake and his two coworkers to fend for themselves. “I remember all of us just looking at each other that first morning, wondering who was going to make the day’s schedule,” says Blake, who quickly took the initiative to go ask Russ Niven what he wanted them to do for the day. “Russ looked at me and said, ‘That is exactly what I was waiting for. I wanted to see who was going to step up and take charge of the crew.’ It was at Angus Lea that I got my first true taste of organizing a crew,” says Blake. “And it was exciting for me to see, firsthand, just how closely management skills are tied to producing a beautiful golf course.”

Blake was hooked. “Between my interest in sports, my love of the outdoors, and my passion for managing people and processes,” says Blake, “I felt I’d found a perfect career in golf course management.”

After graduating high school, Blake enrolled in the turf program at the University of Rhode Island, encouraged by Scott to attend his alma mater.

A Budding Turfgrass Manager

Blake made the most of his college years. For one semester, he courageously decided to give two sports teams a go that didn’t exist for him when he was in high school: the football and golf teams. He found employment at the school’s athletic field house—as a supervisor, of course!—and also joined a fraternity on campus with friend, and now superintendent at Sebonack Golf Club, Garrett Bodington. Both lived together in the frat house for two years as Blake served as vice president.

Blake continued to work at Angus Lea during his summer breaks until his sophomore year when he interned with Scott at The Stanwich Club, completing the Niven trifecta.

Broadening his scope beyond the Niven clan, Blake interned next at Muirfield Village Golf Club, home of “The Memorial Tournament” in Dublin, OH, sharing the experience with fellow intern and URI classmate and good friend, Centennial Superintendent Glen Dube.

After graduation, in May 1995, Blake set his sights on the Metropolitan New York area, landing his first and only assistant’s position at Woodway Country Club in Darien, CT. Blake spent two-and-a-half years working for Woodway’s then Superintendent Larry Pakkala, who he touts as not only an incomparable mentor, but also a close friend and confidant.

In reflecting on his experience at both Stanwich and Woodway, Blake offers high praise to the two superintendents who offered him superb training grounds: “I know there are a lot of great superintendents in the area, but I am so grateful to have worked for Scott and Larry,” says Blake. “I couldn’t

have asked for better mentors, both professionally and personally. They've not only shown me the ins and outs of golf course management, but also the value of being part of our great association. They understood—and have demonstrated to me—just how much it means to provide guidance and support to those who work for us and just how important it is that we all work together to ensure our profession continues to be strong for the next generation.”

It's only fitting, then, that during Blake's tenure at Woodway, Larry encouraged him to run for Class C rep on the Met board, a position Blake secured in 1996 and held for two years.

In October of 1997, at just 24, Blake left Woodway for his first superintendent's position at Minisceongo Golf Club in Pomona, NY, moving on to Trump National in Briarcliff, just three years later, when Blake was enticed with a course grow-in.

“I just couldn't turn down the opportunity to be part of the experience of building an entire golf course from scratch while working with the highly regarded father-and-son design team of Jim and Tommy Fazio. And then, of course, spending many days with Mr. Trump was an interesting experience, as well,” says Blake with a smile.

The course was completed in a year-and-a-half and opened for play July 28, 2002. But Blake sat tight for just-the-right next move. “My goal was to do the grow-in and get my GCSAA certification as soon as possible so my resume would be ready for the job that was a perfect fit for me and my family,” says Blake.

Things went according to plan. In October of 2004, Brae Burn Country Club became Blake's next—and now longest-tenured—superintendent's position.

“I could not ask for a better membership and staff to work with,” says Blake of the position he's held, happily, for the past eight years. “The membership has supported many projects over the years that have continually enhanced the playability of the course. My staff has certainly been key to my success. They understand we are here to make the golf course as pleasurable as we can for our current members and as inviting as possible to prospective members. It makes me proud to know we are all in this together.

“I'm also extremely proud to have had great assistants over the years,” says Blake. “My current guys, Dave Peterson and Justin Morey, are doing a fabulous job.”

Like Larry and Scott, Blake takes great pride in grooming his assistants for future success, both professionally and personally. In total, Blake has had eight assistants move on to superintendent jobs.

“I believe that if you have aspirations of leading the association one day, it pays to be as well rounded as possible.”

Industry Involvement

After settling in at Brae Burn, Blake re-joined the MetGCSA Board of Directors in 2004, gaining valuable experience and association knowledge by serving on or chairing eight of the Met's committees: the Tournament, Scholarship & Research, Bylaws, Club Relations, Advertising, Government Relations, Environmental, and Tri-State Research committees.

Blake also continues to be actively involved with the Met Area Team Championship, which he, and fellow member Andy Drohen, worked long and hard to resurrect in 2005. As a result of their combined efforts and dedication, it is now a must-attend event for area associations that normally draws a waiting list.

In 2008, Blake joined the Met's Executive Board as treasurer, a position he held for two years before becoming vice president in 2010. Notes Blake, “I believe that if you have aspirations of leading the association one day, it pays to be as well rounded as possible. That means sitting on a variety of our committees, understanding the finances, getting to know the lawmakers in the area, and engaging in, at least on a small scale, some speaking engagements so you're at ease with speaking before the membership at meetings and even educational events.

“I feel my time on the board has greatly benefited my skills as a golf course superintendent,” continues Blake. “Being actively involved has helped me to keep my finger on the pulse of association and industry news and trends. It has been, and continues

to be, a mind-expanding experience. I look forward to serving the MetGCSA as your president.”

Blake's Fan Club

Among Blake's biggest, though behind-the-scenes, supporters are his family, starting with his wife of 14 years, Kristen. Blake and Kristen met in high school and quickly became inseparable. Blake was a year behind Kristen in school, so when Blake was a high school senior, Kristen was a freshman attending Plymouth State College.

Kristen transferred to URI the following year to join her guy. While Blake was working at Woodway, Kristen was working toward her master's degree at the University of Maine to become a dietician. The two married in 1998 and have two children: Emma, 10, and Brendan, 7, who keep Blake and Kristen more than busy throughout the year with the many sporting, club, and outdoor activities they're involved in.

We wish you the best of luck in your term as president, Blake, and in your ongoing service to our association!

Kevin Collins, a member of the Tee to Green Editorial Committee, is Mid-Atlantic and Northeast territory manager for Aquatrols Corp. of America and the owner/president of DryJet Northeast/TurfPounders.

Past President Bob Nielsen (left) strikes a pose with the MetGCSA's new president, Blake Halderman.



President's Message continued from page 1

past two years. The support from the Board of Directors, past presidents, and the general membership has been extremely gratifying. I have received far more from this association than I have given, and I truly appreciate all who have contributed to the success of our truly great organization. I'd like to take this opportunity to name some of them....

- Another exciting development coincided with my election as MetGCSA president: We hired our first executive director in more than two decades, Ed Brockner. Ed has been a wonderful addition to the association and has certainly helped to make my job as president much easier.

- Our executive secretary, Ineke Pierpoint, has been with the association for more than 20 years, and we all appreciate her service and dedication to our group.

- In Pandora's service as *Tee to Green's* managing editor, she has been able to work magic on any article to improve it; while our publication's designer, Terrie Young, makes the pages of *Tee to Green* look great and flow easily. Our magazine is the quality it is because of their efforts.

- The Board of Directors has worked tirelessly these past two years to improve the programs that have existed, to introduce new programs, and to plan for the future of our association by exploring ways to make

our organization better and stronger. I am happy to be able to serve for two more years as past president to support their efforts.

- And finally, I would like to thank the superintendents who have hosted meetings and events. Their efforts have helped to solidify the professionalism and camaraderie that our organization was built on.

My Formula for Making a Difference

As my last hurrah, I'd like to offer a few simple steps individual members can take to make a significant difference in our association. For instance...

- I would like to encourage anyone who has not hosted a meeting to consider doing so. The rewards are well worth the effort.

- Serve on a committee. Our association can only be as good as you make it.

- Most important: Attend our association events! The golf meetings, seminars, and social events all offer you an opportunity to learn, improve, and build the kind of camaraderie that may actually benefit you one day.

Golf meetings give you the opportunity to see what your counterparts are doing at their courses and to talk to others to see what problems are popping up in the area. Our seminars offer the latest in research and technology, and the social events offer an important opportunity to socialize with fel-

low members away from the daily grind. What's more, your spouses will learn that they're not the only ones who have husbands for only four or five months a year!

Final Note

I want to wish Blake and the new board continued success. Join me in welcoming new board members Tony Hooks of Richmond County Country Club; Bob Wolverton of Edgewood Country Club; George Chavez of Pelham Country Club as our Class C rep; and Kevin Collins of Aquatrols, Inc., as our Class AF rep. These guys make great additions to the board.

I also want to thank outgoing board members for their service these past two years: Sean Cain of Sunningdale, Mike Cook of The Care of Trees, Doug Vanderlee of Westchester Country Club, and Past President Tony Girardi of Rockrimmon. Tony's board service over the past 16 years—and especially his help and guidance over the past two—are truly appreciated. I look forward to the opportunity to work with the new board in serving the membership during my term as past president.

I wish you all the best for a wonderful holiday season with family and friends.

Bob Nielsen, CGCS
President

Upcoming Events

**SANTA WANTS
YOU
TO HAVE A HAPPY
HOLIDAY SEASON!**



Mark Your Calendars!

Educational Events

CAGCS Winter Seminar

Tuesday, January 15, 2013
Mystic Marriott, Mystic, CT

MetGCSA Winter Seminar

Wednesday, January 16, 2013
Westchester Country Club, Rye, NY

Southeast Regional Conference

Tuesday – Wednesday, January 22 - 23
Ramada Inn, Fishkill, NY

Join fellow professionals for two days of education and trade show shopping. For further information, log on to www.nysta.org or call 518-783-1229.

16th Annual New England Regional Turfgrass Conference and Show

Monday – Thursday, March 4 - 7
Rhode Island Convention Center
Providence, RI

For the 16th consecutive year, the conference and show provides turfgrass professionals from all areas of the industry the opportunity to see the newest products, sup-

plies, services, and equipment available while joining turfgrass professionals for informative educational sessions, pesticide recertification credits, and endless networking opportunities.

For further information, log on to www.NERTE.org or TurfShow.com or call 401-841-5490.

2013 Turfgrass Advocacy - NYSTA's Lobby Day

Wednesday, March 13
Empire State Plaza, Albany, NY

NYSTA welcomes all green industry professionals to attend this event. Lobby Day offers the opportunity to attend a priority issue briefing session on current legislation that could affect the turfgrass and green industry, as well as a chance to meet with your local elected officials, and later discuss issues over lunch with a government official.

Contact Jill Cyr for further information or to register at 518-783-1229 or jill@nysta.org. You can also register online at www.nysta.org.

Keys Issues Up for Debate at 2012 Chapter Delegates Meeting

by Bob Nielsen, CGCS

From October 5 – 7, I was one of 79 chapter representatives to meet with the GCSAA board and officials in Kansas City, MO, to learn more about association initiatives and to provide feedback on governance, programs and services, and issues regarding the game and business of golf. We also heard from candidates running for GCSAA national leadership positions.

The Mission of the Delegates Meeting

In addition to providing GCSAA board candidates with the opportunity to establish themselves and launch their campaign, the Chapter Delegates meeting serves as a forum for our national association to understand more fully the needs of the membership and to communicate the policies and direction of GCSAA.

GCSAA President Sandy Queen noted that prior chapter delegate feedback helped formulate the new conference and show schedule, implement free GCSAA webcasts, and restructure the Annual Meeting. Discussion this year will be used to “tweak” certain aspects of the Rounds 4 Research program (see page 7), study the GCSAA Chapter Affiliation Agreement, and help the board of directors and staff prioritize programs and services.

Chapter needs and the economic climate vary so widely throughout the country that this meeting allows representatives from every area to discuss the individual issues of their chapter, as well as learn what’s going on throughout the country.

Chapter Affiliation Agreement Deliberated

One of the most lively discussions had to do with the GCSAA Chapter Affiliation Agreement, specifically the conformity of the Class A membership classification between GCSAA and chapters. Ultimately, the board of directors opted to extend the current affiliation agreement to give the association and chapters an additional year to collect information on the dual membership status and to do further study on the issue of Class A uniformity.

The extension was also granted to give the association time to analyze the report of the Membership Standards Advisory Group (MSAG). For the past nine months, this independent panel of members, co-chaired by Country Club of Darien’s Tim O’Neill, has been studying the impact of the Professional Development Initiative (PDI) that resulted in the creation of membership standards. The MSAG presented to the delegates its findings that the PDI had been successful with increased advocacy with policymakers, the creation of the IPM requirement, expanded education opportunities that were accessible and affordable, and improved playing conditions. It did note that the faltering economy and the cost and time necessary to effect change through a public relations campaign worked against the program.

Recommendations focused on membership conformity, simplifying membership classifications, and strengthening the requirements for Class A status and items to help market it.

Dues Increase Up for Vote

The association presented a proposed dues increase that will be voted on at the Annual Meeting in February in San Diego, CA. The vote will be to increase dues \$25 for Class A and SM members and \$15 for Class C members, making annual dues \$365 and \$185, respectively. The increase for Class A/SM members is a combination of a \$15 increase based on the Consumer Price Index and another \$10 to compensate for GCSAA’s group life insurance premium being doubled by the provider.

It’s too bad all Met members couldn’t have been there to witness and better understand just how much we get for our GCSAA membership dues. And we are all the more fortunate to have the support of Chava McKeel, director of public policy, who has steered us through numerous government relations issues and projects on national, state, and local levels. For instance, she’s provided guidance with the PCNB activities, New York State’s work to establish Best Management Practices for Golf Courses,

and then, locally, the phosphorous ban in Westchester County. These are just several instances in which we’ve benefited from GCSAA support.

Bettering the Bottom Line

GCSAA Chief Executive Officer Rhett Evans shared the association’s Invest-Recover-Grow strategy that has shaped the association’s budgeting philosophy for the past two years. He described how funds have been invested in new programs, such as field staff, Rounds 4 Research, web technology, advocacy, and other areas to better serve members. Giving time to allow these programs to gain traction will ultimately help stabilize association operations.

Evans indicated that staff will present a balanced budget to the board in December but will pull some funds from the association’s reserve just as it has done in the past. Among the new items in the budget:

- Additional technology resources.
 - Funds to fill remaining field staff openings in the Mid-Atlantic and the Southeast regions.
 - Headquarters facility improvements: The facility improvement plan, announced earlier this fall, focuses on necessary structural repairs and enhancing the efficiency of the building. In all, expenses for the project are expected to be approximately \$1.9 million.
- “We are by no means out of the woods when it comes to our financial challenges,” Evans told us. “Golf has had some struggles. But I believe we have been prudent in what we have done to weather the storm and are positioned for continued success.”

Putting Our Best Foot Forward

Among the more popular presentations were those that demonstrated how GCSAA resources were being used to advocate on behalf of members. Staff outlined the various government relations activities and the importance of members meeting with federal, state, and local lawmakers to be heard on policy decisions. Various examples of GCSAA media placements on television, in print, on the web, and on the radio were shared as well.

Off-Season Notes

by Kevin Doyle, GCSAA Field Staff – Northeast Region

Evans pointed out that National Golf Foundation studies continue to place a premium on GCSAA members for their role in driving golfer satisfaction and facility success. He said that reaching out to key influencers—e.g., employers, avid golfers, and policymakers—to emphasize the need for a Class A GCSAA superintendent at their facilities will continue to be a priority for the association.

Candidates for the GCSAA Board

This year was no different than many others, with a group of well-qualified candidates running for office.

Pat Finlen, CGCS, of The Olympic Club in San Francisco, CA, and Keith Ihms, CGCS, of the Country Club of Little Rock in Arkansas will run unopposed for the offices of president and vice president.

Our own John O'Keefe, CGCS, of Preakness Hills Country Club in Wayne, NJ, will be vying for the position of secretary/treasurer against Peter Grass, CGCS, of Hilands Golf Club in Billings, MT.

The loser of that race will join incumbent Darren Davis from Olde Florida Golf Club in Naples, FL, as well as John Fulling Jr., CGCS, of Kalamazoo Country Club in Kalamazoo, MI; Mark Jordan, CGCS, of Westfield Group Country Club in Westfield Center, OH; and John Walker of Blackhorse Golf Club in Cypress, TX, in the race for three director positions.

Fill Out Your Proxy Forms!

Chapter delegates will convene on February 7 at 2:30 p.m. for the association's Annual Meeting in San Diego, CA, held in conjunction with the GCSAA Education Conference and Golf Industry Show.

As a reminder, unless you plan to cast your own vote at the Annual Meeting, please be sure to fill out a proxy form so that your vote can count at the election!

In addition to being the MetGCSAA's Chapter Delegate, Bob Nielsen is our association's past president and superintendent at Bedford Golf & Tennis Club in Bedford, NY.

First, I would like to thank the Met Team Championship committee for allowing me to help out with this year's event. The opportunity to network with so many chapters in my region was truly outstanding. I had discussions regarding the New York State BMP initiative, Rounds 4 Research, and Cape Cod's chapter outreach day all in one place. The event did not disappoint either. Kudos to event organizers Blake Halderman and Andy Drohen, Scott Niven and his crew, and the entire staff at The Stanwich Club for a great event and a memorable day!

Now, as temperatures begin to cool down in the Northeast, the season for educational conferences, shows, and events begins to heat up. Here are a few reminders worth adding to your off-season to-do list:

Heads Up on Housing for the Education Conference & Golf Industry Show

Don't delay in booking your housing for the Education Conference & Golf Industry Show being held in San Diego, CA, February 4–8. You have until December 17 for advance registration savings.

As always, this event will offer a wide range of educational opportunities and the chance to preview some of the most innovative products on the market today. There will be 60 new additions to the show floor and 25 new seminars. You'll find more information on www.gcsaa.org/conference.

Is the New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission on Your Radar?

If it isn't, it should be. For the uninitiated, the NEIWPCC describes itself as "a leader in forming strong bonds between the New England and New York State environmental agencies and is unique in its ability to bring diverse interest groups together, create forums for collaboration, and educate with innovative products. For over six decades, the commission has managed interstate water conflicts by means of sound science, information, coordination, and adaptation."

For more on the NEIWPCC, log on to www.neiwpcc.org/aboutus.

So why should the NEIWPCC be on your radar? In the spring, this organization began "The Northeast Voluntary Turf Fertilizer Initiative," by holding stakeholder meetings to gather information regarding fertilizer

issues. Their goal is to develop a voluntary plan for reducing nonpoint-source pollution of waterways by fertilizers. In late May, manufacturers of both synthetic and organic fertilizers met with the commission to discuss their concerns. There's talk that sometime this fall, end user stakeholders, such as landscapers and golf course superintendents, will have an opportunity to address the commission. GCSAA is strongly considering a meeting of chapter members from around the region to develop a united message to bring forward when our opportunity comes.

Rounds 4 Research Gaining Ground

Rounds 4 Research is an innovative program administered by GCSAA's Environmental Institute for Golf that's aimed at helping affiliated chapters as well as local turfgrass foundations and other industry partners, to generate funds for research. Golf facilities donate rounds of golf for two or four, "stay and play" packages, or other items that can be auctioned off online to generate funds for turfgrass research. The EIFG then distributes monies back to the participating organizations to fund research in their local areas.

More than \$6,000 dollars was raised in the first auction that will benefit the donating chapters. Another auction is currently under way, with more than 60 rounds of golf up for bid. To learn more about the facilities and the program, visit www.rounds4research.com.

Last Note

There is a great lineup of webinars coming up: Great education and GCSAA CEUs in the comfort of your office. How can you go wrong? They are also archived for viewing at a later date. Among some of the more recent and upcoming webinars you might want to check out:

- Dec. 13: *Tips and Tricks for Building a Personal Website*
- Dec. 19: *Dollar Spot Resistance and Management Strategies*
- Jan. 10: *Bolster Turf's Ability to Use Natural Defenses Against Stress*
- Jan. 15: *Dealing With Moss on Putting Greens*
- Jan. 23: *Cost Benefits of Today's Solar Systems*

Thank you, and as always, please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of any assistance. You can reach me at 816-807-3103 or at kdoyle@gcsaa.org.

Scorecard

Super/Green Chair Event at Purchase

by Ed Brockner, Executive Director

Met members and their green chairs or guests were treated to an outstanding day hosted by Bob Miller at Golf Club of Purchase on October 9. The course was in fabulous shape and yielded some great scores for our winning teams.

In the Superintendent/Green Chair Division, Blake Halderman and Michael Barasch from Brae Burn won the Net with a 61, while Matt Severino and Chris Connolly from Scarsdale shot a Gross 71.

The team of Grover Alexander (Hudson Hills) and Jim Calladio (LaCorte) won the net in the Member/Guest Division with a 64 while Aquatrols' Kevin Collins and partner Tony Vos, who had the closest to pin as well, took down the Gross prize with a 71.

Thank you to everyone at Purchase, especially Director of Golf Carl Alexander and General Manager Caryn Epstein, for helping to make our event special.

Here are the full results:

Superintendent/Green Chairperson Division

Net Winner

61 Blake Halderman/Michael Barasch
Brae Burn Country Club

Gross Winner

71 Matt Severino/Chris Connolly
Scarsdale Country Club

Member/Guest Division

Net Winner

64 Grover Alexander/Jim Calladio
Hudson Hills Golf Course/LaCorte Equipment

Gross Winner

71 Kevin Collins/Tony Vos
Aquatrols, Inc./Guest

MetGCSA Makes Repeat Performance in Met Area Team Championship

by Blake Halderman and Andy Drohen, Met Area Team Championship Co-Chairs

In true championship fashion, the Met Area Team Championship competition was held this year on October 18 at The Stanwich Club in Greenwich, CT. Now in its 32nd year, this season-ending golf tournament brings together superintendents from the upper Mid-Atlantic region to Western Pennsylvania and throughout the entire Northeast for a little camaraderie, networking, and bragging rights for one year.

Growing in popularity over the past several years, this event boasts such host sites as Fishers Island, Bethpage Black, Winged Foot West, The Bridge, and of course this year's host, The Stanwich Club, which players are willing to drive far and wide to enjoy. This year we had 13 associations competing with a total field of 120 players.

We would like to thank Stanwich General Manager Peter Tunley and Director of Golf Mike Summa and their staffs, who all went well above and beyond to make sure our day was a success. We also would like to extend an extra-special thank you to Scott Niven and his staff for all their hard work in creating true tournament conditions for the day. The players are still talking about the picture-perfect conditions and the fabulous layout. (We even had a nice hole-in-one thanks to a last-minute move of the pin on #13. See story page 9.). Scott is the only two-time host of the Met Area Team Championship, having hosted the event in 1985, when it was in its sixth year.

Thank you, Scott, for your continued dedication to the MetGCSA and the golf industry. We appreciate your support.

A True Test of Golf

Judging from the scores, it seems the speedy greens got the best of most players. Chet Walsh from Philadelphia AGCS did manage to shoot a respectable 76 to take Low Gross honors, but our best team score—including the Net players—was from the Hudson Valley with a 300 (12 over par). We played a Two-Man Best Ball format with half the field playing Gross and half playing at 80 percent of Net format. It was so tough out there that one of the Two-Man Gross teams couldn't break 90!

The MetGCSA team, consisting of Sean

Cain/Tony Hooks (81) and Les Kennedy/Matt Ceplo (81) in the Gross Division and Scott Niven/Ken Benoit (66) and Glen Dube/George Corgan (76) in the Net Division, pulled Second Place with a 304 for the second consecutive year—just behind our neighbors to the North, the Hudson Valley GCSA, who took home the title this year.

Placing second out of 13 teams was no small feat. We've been close to taking home the trophy. Maybe 2013 will be our year! Great playing gentlemen!

Noteworthy

If you've never participated in this championship, do yourself a favor and try to qualify for the MetGCSA team. You're guaranteed to have a great time playing golf with your peers while experiencing one of the best courses in the country.

What's more, funds raised during the championship go to a charity of the MetGCSA board's choice. This year, we were happy to send support to a fellow superintendent from Central New York GCSA who was badly injured after falling from a ladder and has been unable to work for months.

Last but not least, special thanks to our seven national sponsors—Agrium Advanced Technologies, Aquatrols, BASF, Bayer, The Care of Trees, Syngenta, and Toro—for their continuing support in making this a truly wonderful event.

The Full Picture

What follows is a list of team and proximity winners. Congratulations to one and all!

Team Scores

	(Par 288)
1st / 300	Hudson Valley GCSA
2nd / 304	MetGCSA
3rd / 305	Philadelphia AGCS
4th / 308	Central New York GCSA
5th / 313	Long Island GCSA
6th / 315	Northeastern GCSA
7th / 317	Connecticut AGCS
8th / 318	Pocono Turfgrass Association
9th / 320	GCSA of New Jersey

10th / 321 Central Penn GCSA
 11th / 324 Mid-Atlantic AGCS
 12th / 326 Rhode Island GCSA
 13th / 335 GCSA of Cape Cod

Closest to the Pin

#4 / 1' 10" Drew Cummins
 Rhode Island GCSA
 (Sponsored by Syngenta)
 #8 / 7' 0" Vinnie Barnaba
 Long Island GCSA
 (Sponsored by BASF)
 #13 / 0' 0" Kevin Doyle
 GCSAA
 (Sponsored by Aquatrols)
 #16 / 2' 7" Ian Kunesch
 GCSA of New Jersey
 (Sponsored by Toro)

Longest Drive

Net Div. Mike Warner
 Central New York GCSA
 (Sponsored by Bayer)

Gross Div. Chet Walsh
 Philadelphia AGCS
 (Sponsored by Agrium
 Advanced Technologies)
 Sponsors Div. Tom Ashfield
 Quaker Ridge Golf Club
 (Sponsored by The Care of
 Trees)

Individual Gross

76 Chet Walsh
 Philadelphia AGCS

Sponsorship Team Winners

71 Scott Tretera / Bob
 DeMarco
 Harrell's LLC

Two-Man Team High Score

Gross / 91 Jerry Noons / Mike
 Whitehead
 Rhode Island GCSA
 Net / 84 Steve Thys / Joe Goulart
 GCSA of Cape Cod

Assistants Play Old Oaks

by Ed Brockner, Executive Director

After hosting another memorable Summer Social several months before, Mark Millett and assistants Jason Anderson and Todd Stites welcomed this year's Assistants Championship to Old Oaks Country Club on October 23. There was a great turnout, despite the fact that the event had to be rescheduled due to rain, and everyone enjoyed excellent conditions and outstanding hospitality from the entire staff.

Special thanks to Bobby Heins, Nick Maselli, and Greg Callaro from the professional staff and Old Oaks' Events Coordinator Tyler Demerest for all of his help in setting up the day and outstanding reception.

There were some fine scores posted by the participants, most notably by Wee Burn's Justin Miller and David McCaffrey who led the Gross Division with a 72, followed by Blind Brook's Alex Matos and Michael Guinan with a team score of 74. Michael, by the way, was low individual with an impressive 75.

In the Net scoring, Fairview's A.J. Lewis and Scott Wiiki fired a 57 while Siwanoy's Max Lenz and Matt Neus had a 64. Justin Miller was the Longest Drive winner, and Todd Stites of Old Oaks and Matt Lenz of Siwanoy each put their tee shots on the Closest to the Pin holes within four feet.

Here are the full results:

Net Team Winners

57 A.J. Lewis / Scott Wiiki
 Fairview Country Club
 64 Max Lenz / Matt Neus
 Siwanoy Country Club

Gross Team Winners

72 Justin Miller / David McCaffrey, Wee
 Burn Country Club
 74 Alex Matos / Michael Guinan
 The Blind Brook Club

Closest to the Pin

#7 Max Lenz
 Siwanoy Country Club
 #16 Todd Stites
 Old Oaks Country Club

Longest Drive

#8 Justin Miller
 Wee Burn Country Club

An Ace to Remember: A Firsthand Account

by Ed Brockner, Executive Director



Championship Co-Chairs Blake Halderman (left) and Andy Drohen (right) present Kevin Doyle with his winning check.

My playing partner, Kevin Doyle, GCSAA field staff member for the Northeast Region, made his mark at the Met Area Team Championship with his first hole-in-one on Stanwich's 13th hole. With a crisp stroke of the 4-iron, the shot looked good all the way as it turned gently right to left toward the flag. After the ball disappeared over a ridge, our group thought it might have gone over the back, but those by the green quickly signaled that it had found the hole.

Word on the street is that Kevin might have Scott Niven and Blake Halderman to thank, just a little, for his winning shot.

Apparently, Scott and Blake conferred before the round about the pin location, which had been tucked back left over the bunker and then moved toward the center of the green making it an easier shot.

Well, Kevin certainly picked the right time and place for his first ace: A hole in one at this event was worth \$20,000! His excitement soon turned to concern, however, worrying that picking up the bar tab for the more than 100 players might exceed his prize winnings. But luckily, the drinks were already taken care of as part of the day's festivities! Congratulations to Kevin on this great feat!

A Fond Farewell to a Very Special Member

On November 19, the MetGCSA lost a very special member. A member who served on our board of directors, selflessly, for 16 years ... working his way through the chairs to president in 2002 and 2003 and serving on numerous association committees over the course of his 35 years as an association member.

He was the MetGCSA's longest-tenured editor of *Tee to Green*, a volunteer position most members shy away from ... even though they can share the burden, now, with an outside editor. He didn't have that advantage when he agreed to take charge of the *Tee to Green*. I know, because I was the editor hired to work with this very special member ... and very, very special person ... Tim Moore.

We started our work together when Tim was superintendent at Knollwood Country Club, where he remained for 26 years until retiring from the business in 2009.

We began, in 1989, paving the way for a new-and-improved publication. Tim was open to suggestions, feedback, and my endless phone calls. It was an exciting time for the association—and the *Tee to Green*.

Tim would ease the "pain" of our regular committee meetings by making sure to have coffee and donuts on hand for all of us. At Christmastime, invariably there'd be a knock on my door and Tim would be standing there with a large and beautiful poinsettia as a small token of his appreciation ... when I should have been showing my appreciation to him. Those are just several small, but not insignificant, memories of the kind of thoughtful individual Tim Moore was.



Tim was so passionate about the association he served that, in his passing, his family has asked that, in lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the MetGCSA's Scholarship Fund. How fitting. Tim Moore continues to give.

Tim was also a member of NYSTA, the GCSAA, and the Hudson Valley GCSA.

Tim, who passed at just 58, is survived by his wife of 34 years, Beth, and his children, Meredith and Brian. Please keep his family, who are as special as he was, in your thoughts and prayers.

I, along with the many Met members who knew him well, will miss Tim. May his soul rest in peace.

Pandora Wojick
Managing Editor
Tee to Green

GCSAA Honors Supers Certified for 25 Years

Seven MetGCSA members reach certification milestone

The GCSAA recognized a total of 44 members—seven of them from the MetGCSA—who have celebrated 25 years as certified golf course superintendents (CGCS).

"More than 25 percent of GCSAA's Class A members have achieved the highest level of recognition through the CGCS professional designation," said GCSAA President Sandy G. Queen, who has also held the CGCS designation for 25-plus years. "This program requires their demonstration of a higher set of competencies in golf course management through testing and practical application. Employers can feel confident they employ a career professional who has made a strong commitment to professional development."

Maintaining certified status requires renewal every five years after the initial date of certification. To fulfill certification renewal requirements, a candidate must participate in 150 hours of continuing education and professional development.

We would like to congratulate the following MetGCSA members honored for achieving 25 years of certification:

- Robert U. Alonzi, CGCS, Greenwich, CT
- Mark G. Fuller, CGCS, The Connecticut Golf Club, Easton, CT
- Les Kennedy Jr., CGCS, Blind Brook Club, Purchase, NY
- Timothy M. McAvoy, CGCS, Fox Hollow Golf Club, Somerville, NJ
- Lawrence J. Pakkala, CGCS, Norwalk, CT
- Dan E. Rackliffe, CGCS, Longshore Club Park, Westport, CT
- Peter Rappoccio Jr., CGCS, Silver Spring Country Club, Ridgefield, CT

Members on the Move

- **Sean Crawford** is the new superintendent at LaTourette Golf Course in Staten Island, NY. Previous position: Assistant superintendent at Pelham/Split Rock Golf Club in Bronx, NY.
- **Kenneth Lochridge** is the new superintendent at Glen Head Country Club in Glen Head, NY. Previous position: Superintendent at Muttontown Club in East Norwich, NY.
- **Ryan Oliver** is the new superintendent at Hudson National Golf Club, Croton-on-Hudson, NY. Previous position: Superintendent at Metedeconk National Golf Club, Jackson, NJ.
- **Ryan Segrue** is the new superintendent at Lake Isle Country Club in Eastchester, NY. Previous position: Assistant superintendent at The Stanwich Club in Greenwich, CT.

Just Married

Congratulations to ...

- **Bill Cygan**, assistant superintendent at Innis Arden Golf Club, on his marriage September 22 to Calista.
- **Doug Vanderlee**, assistant superintendent at Westchester Country Club, on his marriage October 13 to Elizabeth Cunningham.



New Member Jason Meersman Hosts Fall Seminar at The Patterson Club

by Ryan Segrue

*O*n November 28, Jason Meersman and The Patterson Club were hosts to the MetGCSA/CAGCS Fall Seminar, which offered an outstanding lineup of educational sessions (see page 12) thanks to the combined efforts of MetGCSA Education Chair Rob Alonzi of Fenway Golf Club and CAGCS Education Chair Marc Weston of Indian Hill Country Club.

All About Patterson

The Patterson Club was founded in 1929 when General Electric employees, who had a dining and social club in Bridgeport, CT, purchased the 163-acre Carlton H. Palmer property in Fairfield. The premier golf course architect of the time, Robert Trent Jones, was commissioned to design the original course, which opened in June of 1947.

The club has undergone many improvements in the past 65 years, but none more successful than the renovation of the golf course and construction of the new clubhouse, both of which opened in May of 2010. The course renovation, done by Rees Jones, involved rebuilding all tees and bunkers, as well as the addition of several new tees and bunkers. Many greens were expanded to gain new and interesting pin placements, and the putting green and greens on the sixth and eighteenth holes were entirely rebuilt. As if all that weren't enough, all greens were then regrassed with A1/A4 bentgrass during the project. Whew!

About Our Host

You might say Jason Meersman was born to be a golf course superintendent. He and his older brother, Dan, who is now director of grounds at the Philadelphia Cricket Club, grew up working for their father at the 36-hole, semi-private Pine View Golf Club in Three Rivers, MI.

With a future in the golf management industry all but assured, Jason decided to attend Michigan State University. After graduation, he moved to Maryland to perfect his craft at Caves Valley Golf Club under



Jason Meersman

the direction of Steve Glossinger. That experience served him well as he was named golf course superintendent at The Patterson Club last fall, at around the same time he and wife, Lara, welcomed their daughter, Malin. "A new job and a new baby at the same time has made for a very fast year," says Jason.

Though his year at Patterson has been all-consuming, Jason still manages to make time to explore New England with his family and rarely misses an evening walk to the Sound with his wife and daughter.

A brand-new member of the Met, Jason has wasted little time in getting involved. "I've just started to work with Brett Chapin on the Advertising Committee," he says, noting that he is looking forward to doing anything he can to help the association.

Jason is also hoping to host another meeting at the club—this time for golf, so everyone can enjoy a little more than just the clubhouse!

Ryan Segrue, a member of the Tee to Green Editorial Committee, is superintendent at Lake Isle Country Club in Eastchester, NY.

Many Thanks to Our Fall Seminar Speakers ...

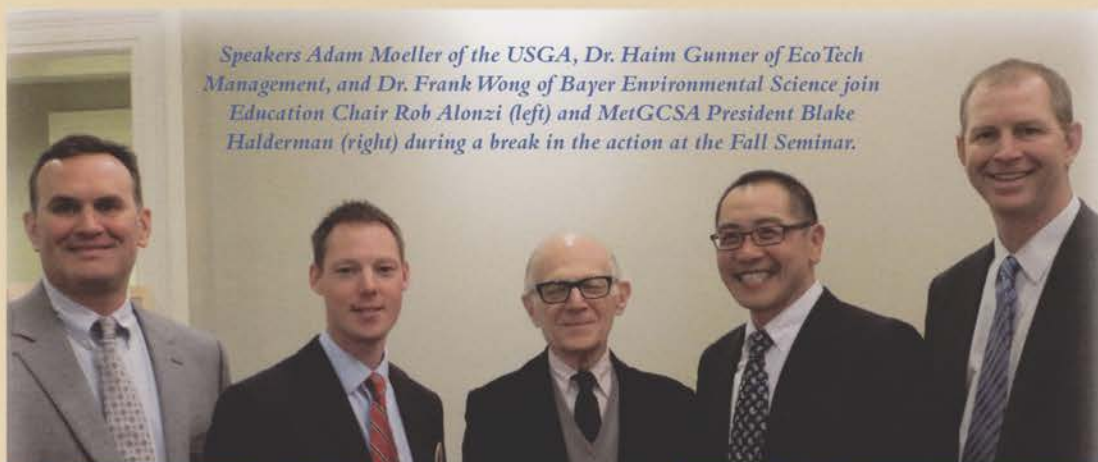
- Dr. Frank Wong of Bayer Environmental Science offered sensible practices for managing some of golf courses' most problematic diseases, including root pythium, summer turf decline, and snow mold.
- USGA Agronomist Adam Moeller reviewed what he and the other local USGA Agronomists observed in 2012 during their many site visits. He touched on everything

from aeration and topdressing, to disease problems, nematodes, the hurricane, the heat, shade management, and *Poa* and Green Killinga controls.

- Plant Food Company's Jason Dowgiewicz, M.S., discussed practical measures for managing summer stress.
- Dr. Jason Henderson of the University of Connecticut discussed what his research

over the past five years has told him about fairway topdressing application rates and sand types.

- Dr. Haim Gunner of EcoTech Management discussed the ins and outs of Ecosystem Management.
- Dr. Nathaniel Mitkowski of the University of Rhode Island offered tips and techniques for keeping bacterial wilt at bay.



Speakers Adam Moeller of the USGA, Dr. Haim Gunner of EcoTech Management, and Dr. Frank Wong of Bayer Environmental Science join Education Chair Rob Alonzi (left) and MetGCSA President Blake Halderman (right) during a break in the action at the Fall Seminar.



Bayer Environmental Science's Dr. Frank Wong offers tips and techniques for managing a host of golf course diseases.



Education Chair Rob Alonzi introduces USGA Agronomist Adam Moeller to the crowd of 100 MetGCSA and CAGCS superintendents at the Fall Seminar.



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