

Tee To Green

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Cover: Glen Arbor Golf Club

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No Rest for the Weary

*Work Doesn't Stop
When the Grass Stops
Growing*

So,

what do you do all winter? A year doesn't go by without my having to share the answer to that question with board members or golfers. My short answer, of course, is that we stay very busy. When they look surprised, I go on to give them a picture of how we spend the off-season servicing the club's 50 to 60 pieces of equipment, refurbishing course accessories, pruning plantings and trees where necessary, handling snow removal from walkways and club roads, and watch-dogging greens for winter stress-related issues. The list goes on.

This is also the time of year we reflect on what we did well and what we could improve on as we map out our programs for the coming season.

The off-season has yet another important function: It allows us some much-needed time to take a vacation, as well as fine-tune our skills and industry knowledge by attending the multitude of educational seminars and programs that are offered this time of the year.

Few outside the superintendent profession realize just how much time we devote to keeping in touch with new developments in the science of managing our golf courses. It's not unlike the medical profession, really. The difference is we're dealing with diagnosing turf, not human, ills, and working to employ preventive measures to ensure the grass plant thrives, not a person. It never hurts to educate your membership, even without prompting, about the work and education that takes place during winter months—to ensure their golf course is the best that it can be throughout the year. Club newsletters are the perfect venue.

Here are the major educational events that we all should attend and certainly publicize to our green committee and the golfers at our facilities.

Must-Attend Education Events

Our Winter Seminar is the first not-to-be missed event of the year. This year's event, held as always at Westchester Country Club, had record-breaking attendance.



*Glen Dube, CGCS
MetGCSA President*

Special thanks goes out to our host, David Dudones, and the entire staff at Westchester for yet another memorable event. Rob Alonzi, along with Brett Chapin and the entire Education Committee, put together an impressive lineup of speakers. And at this year's awards luncheon, we honored Paul Dillon for his service to the golf industry as a leader of prominent area golf organizations and his efforts to spread the traditions and values associated with the game of golf. Also a talented portrait artist, Dillon presented his latest portrait of Sherwood A. Moore, which is now hanging in Golf Central for all to see. Take a look at page 6 of this issue for a recap of the day's presentations and events.

The New England Regional Turfgrass Conference, held in Providence, RI, every winter, is another excellent opportunity to keep abreast of industry trends, research, and new developments. Normally a well-attended event, this year's conference, unfortunately, saw a drop in numbers due to a blizzard that made travel to and from the city difficult.

Next in the lineup of must-attend educational opportunities is the GCSAA Golf Industry Show. Held this year from February 23-27 in San Antonio, TX, the show offered attendees a huge variety of educational options, as well as a Trade Show that is beyond compare, offering conference-goers

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Feature

John O'Keefe Looks Forward to Year Ahead as GCSAA President

by Todd Apgar

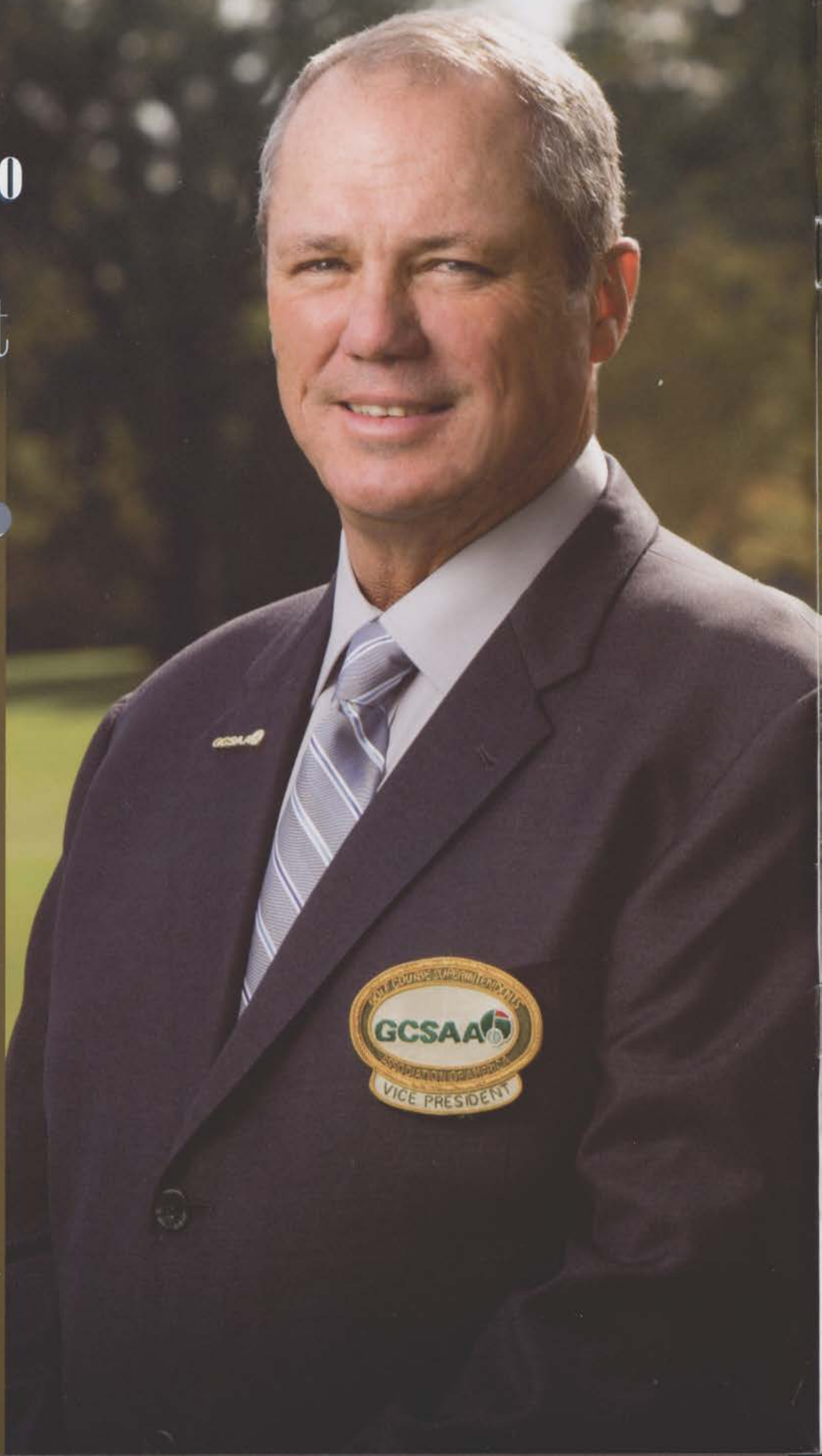
Photos by John O'Boyle



What does it take to be a successful, yet family-oriented, golf course superintendent and president of GCSAA? To find out, I sat down with John O'Keefe of Preakness Hills Country Club in Wayne, NJ, who was elected the 79th president of GCSAA at the Golf Industry Show in San Antonio, TX.

"It's all about time management and having a strong support system," said John as we sat in his office. "I have my wife, Margaret, and two daughters, Adrienne and Maureen, fully behind me, as well as my club," he said.

Prior to running for the GCSAA board in 2008, John thought it prudent to insure his club would support his move. "I met with the current club president at Preakness Hills along with the two future presidents," explained John. "Their response couldn't have been better. They were proud and excited by the prospect of my becoming actively involved with our national organization." Over the past seven years, Preakness Hills members have enjoyed keeping track of John's GCSAA activities and travels by way of the club's social media. With the support of both his family and club, John will continue to leave his stamp on the industry for many years to come.



“I think we’re starting to climb again. Clubs are beginning to spend money, doing renovation work and purchasing equipment. These are all good signs.”

The Road to GCSAA

John was born and raised in the Berkshires in Lenox, MA, where he gained an appreciation for the outdoors and nature that eventually led him to his current career. During high school, he worked for a landscape company and then spent three years as property manager for a luxury condominium complex before deciding to pursue formal training in turfgrass management.

“I was always impressed by the beauty of golf courses and what went into maintaining them,” said John. Following his passion, he enrolled in the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at UMass and began his education in golf course management. He interned at Longshore Club Park with then Superintendent Mark Fuller, who was so pleased with John’s performance that he hired him as his assistant when John graduated in 1979.

After three years with Mark, John landed his first superintendent’s position at Westchester Hills Golf Club in White Plains, NY. Then, five years later to the day, John began his tenure at Preakness Hills Country Club in 1986.

A true believer in giving back to the profession, John has been actively involved in area organizations throughout his career, serving as president of the MetGCSA (1996-97), the Tri-State Turfgrass Research Foundation (2000-01), and the GCSANJ (2003-04).

But John has given back by not just volunteering his services to industry organizations, but also by willingly sharing his knowledge and experience with many up-and-coming industry professionals over the years.

“Ten years ago, when I accepted my first superintendent’s position at North Jersey Country Club,” says Westchester Country Club’s David Dudones, “I asked my former boss, Joe Alonzi, who I should approach in the area for guidance. Without hesitation, Joe said, ‘Go see John at Preakness Hills. He’s well respected and does a great job. He will give you any help you need in getting adjusted to Jersey.’”

“John has proved to be an outstanding

mentor, both personally and professionally,” adds David. “Without John and Margaret’s guidance, I would not be where I am today. And I know many others who feel precisely the same way.

“Whether it’s continuously giving back to our industry and local communities, building relationships with members, doing whatever it takes to produce topnotch conditions, or maintaining that delicate balance between work and family, John always goes the extra mile. He is an excellent role model for all young superintendents,” says David.

Equally impressed with John’s willing and capable counsel is Preakness Hills’ general manager, James Messina. “John has been the perfect sounding board and mentor to me,” says Messina. “Obtaining the GM position at 26 years old, I had much to learn about the club world. John has been there for me every step of the way, and I could not be more thankful. He has a big-picture management style with a calming influence on his team, characteristics that I have tried to emulate as my career has progressed.

“John is the perfect individual for the presidency of GCSAA,” Messina continues, “and from all of us at Preakness Hills, we thank him for his dedicated service to his club, community, and trade.

The Climb to GCSAA President

A GCSAA member since 1979 and a certified golf course superintendent since 1987, John was appointed to the GCSAA board in 2008 after years of dedicated service on numerous GCSAA committees, including Certification, Nominating, Career Development, Chapter Relations, and Membership.

“In every one of John’s involvements with GCSAA, he was fully committed to the association—and to developing programs and policies that were for the good of the entire membership,” says Bedford Golf & Tennis Superintendent and former MetGCSA delegate Bob Nielsen. “Clearly, the majority of voting members recognized that.

“I have no doubt,” Bob continues, “that GCSAA members can’t help but benefit from John’s leadership as our association’s president.”

When John began his term as a director seven years ago, the association was riding high, having had a recent surge in membership and a hugely successful Golf Industry Show. In the years since, a struggling economy brought with it a series of challenges. Membership dropped nearly 4 percent and budget dollars shrank by more than 30 percent. Adjustments had to be made in how the association operated, though great care was taken to maintain the same high level of services and programs that members were accustomed to.

As John embarks on his term as president, he is pleased that the economy is making a comeback and that the industry is showing positive signs of recovery. Looking ahead to a bright future, GCSAA has established a new set of goals and objectives.

“My goal is to represent the membership the best I can,” says John. “We will be focusing on technology, insuring that we continue to stay ahead of the curve with all of our media outlets including our website, webcasts and webinars, computer apps, and our social media presence. Also on our plate is continuing, and possibly expanding, the field staff program, increasing our advocacy efforts, continuing to develop education relevant to the market, and increasing revenue,” John explained, noting that the goals and objectives were part of GCSAA’s Strategic Vision for 2020. As part of the association’s advocacy efforts, John said he would like to have someone working out of Washington, D.C., to expand the industry’s level of representation—budget permitting, of course.

Beyond that, John hopes that during his one-year term in office the membership standards initiative introduced to the GCSAA delegates at their meeting last October is finalized or at least comes close to a resolution. He also is looking forward to adding a membership classification for equipment managers.

In general, John sees a revival in golf. “I think we’re starting to climb again. Clubs are beginning to spend money, doing renovation work and purchasing equipment. These are all good signs,” he says.



Back, left to right: Maureen (O'Keefe) & Tom Sharples, Dale Huettnermoser & Adrienne O'Keefe. Front, left to right: Margaret & John O'Keefe with grandson John Thomas (J.T.) Sharples.

A Balancing Act

Though clearly immersed in his career and industry, John has managed to maintain a healthy balance between work and family. Married for 36 years, Margaret and John began their life together when he was an assistant at Longshore. They completed their family with the addition of daughters Adrienne and Maureen while he was working at Westchester Hills. When John had begun pursuing a position on the board with GCSAA, his children were college graduates with successful careers of their own. Margaret had carved her own niche at Preakness, as food and beverage administrator and later as membership & marketing director. Though John felt the time was right to become more involved in a national position, he went to Margaret and "the girls" for their opinion. "It's your turn, Dad," his daughters told him.

"When the kids were young, any spare moments I had were devoted to their activities and various other family commitments," said John. "When I first ran for the board, we spent our time a little differently—working together to produce my campaign materials and website. I've been so grateful for their help and support."

Whether it be local board service or working his way through the past seven years on the GCSAA board, one thing has always been apparent to John: "I could have never done it without Margaret," he said. "She is my rock. . . . We are a team. I turn to her for so many things, and she is always there for me."

Now, with the birth of his first grandson, 7-month-old J.T.—yes, the "J" stands for John—he admits that he feels that old pull to spend time at home. "With the travel commitment this position requires, I won't get to see my grandson as much as I would like to," laments John.

Despite the rigors of his schedule, John does carve out time for family. And he hasn't lost his passion for travel, deep-sea fishing, and, of course, playing a good round of golf.

A Labor of Love

When I asked John how he feels about his career, he said, "I have loved every minute of it!" In addition to the enjoying the rigors of day-to-day turf management at the club, John's professional affiliations have afforded him not just personal satisfaction, but also the opportunity to develop friendships and bonds that he will treasure the rest of his life. "I can't say enough," said John, "about the close friendships and the respect I've developed for my peers and fellow board members—locally and nationally, working with GCSAA."

John's friend network is ever-expanding as his travel increases. In his trips to Canada, England, China, or wherever else in the world his GCSAA commitments take him, John always feels welcome and is pleased to see so much industry involvement worldwide.

When asked what advice he would like to give to anyone considering getting involved in GCSAA service, John responded with a call to action. "I have only this year and next on the board of GCSAA," said John. "Once my term on the board is done, we will no longer have a representative from the Northeast. So let this be my call to action to all of you who have enjoyed serving your association or would like to explore serving. I am happy to help any of you who would like to take this next step in your career. I guarantee you that it will be a worthwhile and highly rewarding experience, both professionally and personally."

Todd Appar, a member of the Tee to Green Editorial Committee, is a sales representative with Metro Turf Specialists in Brookfield, CT.



From left to right: Bob Wolverton of Century CC; Mike Brunelle, CGCS, of Upper Montclair CC; Secretary Rob Alonzi of Fenway GC; Treasurer Ken Benoit, CGCS, of Glen Arbor GC; President Glen Dube, CGCS, of Centennial GC; Past President Blake Halderman, CGCS, of Brae Burn CC; Steven McGlone of Siwanoy CC; Class AF Rep Bobby Steinman, CGCS, of Pocono Turf; Vice President David Dudones of Westchester CC; Brett Chapin of Redding CC; Jim Pavonetti, CGCS, of Fairview CC; Class C Rep Dave Parson of The Apawamis Club; Executive Director Ed Brockner; Doug Drugo of Wee Burn CC.

At-a-Glance Guide to Your MetGCSA Committee Chairs

Below is a list of each of the MetGCSA's 2015 committee chairs, including their phone numbers and emails. Please feel free to contact any of them with questions, comments, or helpful suggestions.

Awards Committee

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bhalderman@braeburncc.org
914-946-1074 / Cell 914-469-1987

Bylaws Committee

David Dudones, Westchester CC
daviddudones@netscape.net
914-967-6000 / Cell 914-417-0415

Club Relations Committee

Blake Halderman, CGCS, Brae Burn CC
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Communications Committee

Jim Pavonetti, CGCS (Tee to Green)
Fairview CC
pavonettij@yahoo.com
203-531-8910 / Cell 203-223-5403

Mike Brunelle, CGCS (Advertising)

Upper Montclair CC
mbrunelle@uppermontclaircc.com
973-777-6710 / Cell 973-417-8199

Steven McGlone (Website)

Siwanoy CC
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Education Committee

Brett Chapin, Redding CC
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Environmental Committee

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Jim Pavonetti, CGCS, Fairview CC
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Government Relations Committee

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Investment Committee

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914-967-6000 / Cell 973-417-0415

Long-Range Planning & Steering Committee

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Membership Committee

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Scholarship & Research Committee

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Blake Halderman, CGCS (Tri-State)
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Social & Welfare Committee

Bob Wolverton, Century CC
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Tournament Committee

Doug Drugo, Wee Burn Country Club
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203-656-3843 / Cell 203-339-1493

Many Thanks to Our Outgoing Board Members



MetGCSA President Glen Dube (center) presents plaques honoring outgoing board members' service to the association. From left to right: Class AF Rep Kevin Collins of Aquatrols, Past President Bob Nielsen of Bedford Golf & Tennis, Director Tony Hooks of Due Process Stable, and Class C Rep George Chavez of Pelham CC.



MetGCSA President Glen Dube (left) presents outgoing President Blake Halderman with a plaque commemorating his years of service as president.

MetGCSA Winter Seminar Offers Something for Everyone

by Jim Pavonetti, CGCS

The 2015 MetGCSA Winter Seminar was another in a long line of huge successes, drawing more than 300 industry professionals to the Westchester Country Club on January 14.

Education Chair Rob Alonzi, along with Brett Chapin and the entire Education Committee, put together a great lineup of speakers who offered cutting edge information and research that will help superintendents achieve success at their own facilities in the coming season.

In addition to the presenters, a lobby full of vendors offered a wealth of knowledge and information about new and proven products. We would like to express our gratitude for our vendors' continued support at this event, as well as throughout the growing season. You'll find their names and numbers listed on page 8.

We would also like to extend a sincere thank you to host Superintendent David Dudones and the entire Westchester Country Club staff for doing such a superb job—once again—in making this a thoroughly enjoyable experience for all who attended.

And now, the high points of the day's presentations.

Paints, Pigments, and Plant Health

One of the growing trends over the past few years has been to use pigments, which promise plant health benefits, as stand-alone products or as additives in fungicide products.

Dr. Paul Giordano from Bayer Crop Science discussed several of these products, describing their effects and relative benefits. The take-home on pigments is that while they protect the plant by reducing certain ultraviolet rays, the darker color they create increases canopy temperatures. In most cases, however, the benefit of blocking the ultraviolet rays outweighs the increase in canopy temperatures.

Other benefits of using pigments: They create a better color appearance and can, in some cases, be used for earlier spring green-up.



Practical Fairy Ring Management for Cool-Season Turf

Shifting gears, Dr. Giordano spoke on a second topic: fairy ring management.

More than 40 different species of fungi are responsible for causing this disease, which makes it nearly impossible to control 100 percent of the time. Making matters worse is that fairy ring can crop up in different levels in the turf profile, from the surface to the thatch to several inches down into the soil.

Dr. Giordano discussed cultural control methods, such as reducing thatch and organic matter by aerating and topdressing, and maintaining adequate moisture levels with timely irrigation cycles and wetting agent applications.

For chemical control options, Dr. Giordano suggests applying a DMI fungicide at a two inch depth when soil temperatures reach 55 to 60 degrees for five days. He also emphasized avoiding plant growth regulators one week before and one week after this application to achieve optimum results in preventing the disease.

Curatively, Heritage, Prostar, and Insignia looked like the best options. Dr. Giordano stressed the importance of identifying where the fungus is in the profile to ensure that the fungicide is watered in enough to reach that location and achieve the best results. This can be done by taking a cup-cutter sample and placing it in a plastic bag overnight to observe where the mycelium forms in the profile.

Reid Award presenter Scott Niven (left) and MetGCSA President Glen Dube with John Reid Lifetime Achievement Award winner Paul Dillon.

For more information, Dr. Giordano can be reached at 519-767-3876 or at paul.giordano@bayer.com.

Growth Regulators and How Growing-Degree-Day Measurement Affects Timing of Application

Dr. Bill Kreuser from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln took the podium next to share his thoughts on PGR programs and how using growing degree days (GDDs) to time applications can be more accurate and effective in keeping the turf under regulation than simply "calendar scheduling."

His models show that, for Primo Maxx use, measuring 200 GDDs (base 0° C) for applications keep the turf under regulation. This means applications can be as far apart as two to three weeks when cool temperatures persist and as little as five to seven days apart during warm periods. The warmer the temperature, the quicker the PGR will dissipate.

Trimmit and Cutless follow similar procedures, with the GDD timing falling in the 250 to 300 range, depending on the application rates.

Dr. Kreuser stressed the importance of keeping the turf under regulation. When turf comes out of regulation, he cautioned, all benefits of the PGR are lost and the

rebound growth is worse than if no PGR were applied at all. The take home message: Maintain suppression or don't use PGRs at all.

For more information, Dr. Kreuser can be reached at wkreuser2@unl.edu or at 402-472-1869.

Recent Advances in Understanding Bacterial Etiolation of Creeping Bentgrass Putting Greens

Dr. Bruce Clarke of Rutgers University spoke about bacterial etiolation on creeping bentgrass. A relatively new phenomenon, this has become a growing problem in our area with few concrete answers.

Superintendents have formed their own theories about the cause of this syndrome, questioning whether PGR use and bio-stimulant use might be to blame.

Dr. Clarke's findings have shown, however, that bio-stimulants do not cause or increase the effects of this syndrome. PGR use, on the other hand, may play a partial role. There seem to be two types of bacteria involved with etiolation. Dr. Clarke's findings say that Primo and other PGRs do not *cause* either of them, but Primo seemed to increase the symptoms in the summer, while actually *reducing* the symptoms in the spring and fall.

Chemical control options, so far, have been unreliable. Daconil Action, Chipco Signature, and Junction have, in some cases, reduced symptoms while, in other cases, have had no effect or have actually increased the symptoms.

Cultural control recommendations include reducing shade and improving air movement on the turf. And when the symptoms are present, Dr. Clarke recommends steering clear of any aeration practices until the symptoms subside.

Obviously, there is still much to be learned about etiolation. For further infor-



mation, Dr. Clarke can be reached at 848-932-6295 or at clarke@aesop.rutgers.edu.

Awards Luncheon

As always, there was a break in the action as seminar-goers convened for the Awards Luncheon, which in addition to a delicious meal, included the presentation of our coveted John Reid Lifetime Achievement Award.

Presenting the award to our 25th Reid Award recipient, Paul Dillon, was The Stanwich Club's Scott Niven who noted Dillon's many contributions to the world of golf. A supporter of the golf course superintendent and industry, Dillon has made his mark as a beloved golf coach, formidable foe on the course, and an accomplished artist, who for the past 30 years has painted oil portraits of countless Met-area tournament champions and numerous golf greats.

In addition to adorning the walls of such clubs as Winged Foot, Westchester, and Baltusrol, examples of Dillon's work hang in the Metropolitan Golf Association (MGA)

Glenn Moore, son of the late Sherwood A. Moore, strikes a pose with portrait artist and Reid Award Winner Paul Dillon.

building, an organization he served for nearly 25 years.

At the luncheon, Dillon presented his latest portrait of another golf great: the MetGCSA's own Sherwood A. Moore. This special portrait will join other of Dillon's works of art in the MGA building. You can read more about Paul Dillon in the *Tee to Green's* December 2014 issue at metgcsa.org.

Putting Surface Management Research at Cornell University

After lunch, Dr. Frank Rossi provided an update on the research he is conducting on putting green management, which was funded, in part, by the Tri-State Turf Research Foundation.

Dr. Rossi reviewed his studies of mower setup, rolling, fertility, brushing, and PGR use, describing how each practice can affect putting surface performance while minimizing plant stress.

He has also been focusing on measuring friction loss along the surface, which directly affects ball roll (speed). With daily mowing, grass will naturally grow more laterally than upright. Dr. Rossi has been working on revisiting brushing on a regular basis to force the turf to have a more upright growth habit, thereby reducing surface friction and resulting in "faster" green speeds.

He also found that rolling has a greater effect on ball roll than reducing mowing height and double-cutting. His take-home message: Roll more or with a heavier roller if you'd like to achieve faster speeds.

For a more in-depth report on Dr. Rossi's research, check out the latest issue of the



MetGCSA Winter Seminar attracts more than 300 green industry professionals.

Special Thanks to Our 2015 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 contact information.

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
Staff Uniforms
201-488-1276
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Aquatrols, Inc.

Kevin Collins
Soil & Water Quality Management
Solutions
609-841-2077
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Atlantic Golf & Turf

John Garcia
Fertilizers & Premium Grass Seed
203-996-6267
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BASF

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Chemical Company
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Bayer Environmental Science

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Consulting, Career Development
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The Care of Trees

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Tri-State Turf Research Foundation's publication, *Foundation News*, which can be found on the website, www.tristateturf.org. Dr. Rossi can also be reached at 607-255-1629 or at fsr3@cornell.edu.

Understanding the Landscape and Value of Voluntary Environmental Programs in Golf Course Management

The final topic covered the voluntary environmental programs available to golf course superintendents to help us document and promote environmental accomplishments in our operations.

Speaking on the importance of participating in these programs were a panel of dedicated environmentalists: Dr. Kevin Fletcher, president and CEO of e-par USA, Inc.; Douglas Bechtel, executive director of Audubon International; Tim Connolly of TPC Jasna Polana; and our own Matt Ceplo of Rockland Country Club.

Though the great majority of golf course superintendents have adopted environmentally friendly programs and practices, it is vital that we document and promote these practices for golfers and the general public. Many people outside the industry look at golf courses as a source of pollution and a threat to the health and welfare of their community. Environmental programs, such as the ones e-par USA and Audubon International offer, provide superintendents with a vehicle for promoting the positive impact of golf courses on the environment and our communities.

You can read more about these programs at www.eparusa.com and www.auduboninternational.org, or you can reach Dr. Fletcher at 855-372-7872 or at kevin@eparusa.com; Tim Connolly at 609-688-2005 or at timconnolly@pgatourtpc.com; Douglas Bechtel at 518-767-9051 or at doug@auduboninternational.org; and Matt Ceplo at groundskeeper@optonline.net or 845-359-5346.

Join Us Next Year

Special thanks, again, to the Education Committee for their efforts in planning this ever-popular event, to Westchester Country Club for being such a gracious host, and to our vendors for their continued participation and support.

All this is what makes our Winter Seminar one of the most valuable educational opportunities we have available to us all year. Be sure not to miss this career-building event in 2016.

Jim Pavonetti, Tee to Green editor and chair of the Editorial Committee, is superintendent at Fairview Country Club in Greenwich, CT.

Dr. Pat Vittum Receives 2015 USGA Green Section Award

New Members

Please join us in welcoming the following new MetGCSA members:

- **Lucas Lownes**, Class A, Aspetuck Valley CC, Weston, CT
- **Britt Miller**, Class C, Woodway CC, Darien, CT
- **Michael Roe**, Class SM, CC of New Canaan, New Canaan, CT
- **Timothy Walker**, Class A, Leewood GC, Scarsdale, NY

Members on the Move

- **Michael Golden** is the new superintendent at Longshore Club Park in Westport, CT. Previous position: Assistant superintendent at The Stanwich Club in Greenwich, CT.
- **Brent Peveich** is the new superintendent at Pine Hollow CC in East Norwich, NY. Previous position: Assistant superintendent at Pine Hollow CC.
- **Ryan Segrue** is the new superintendent at Shorehaven GC in East Norwalk, CT. Previous position: superintendent at Longshore Club Park in Westport, CT.

In Sympathy

It is with deep sorrow that we inform you of the death of MetGCSA Informed member **Dr. Zhongchun "ZJ" Jiang**, who passed away unexpectedly at his Cobleskill home on January 6. A SUNY Cobleskill professor of plant science since 2003, Dr. Zhongchun is survived by his wife and two daughters. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family and friends.

We would like to congratulate MetGCSA Honorary member Dr. Pat Vittum who has been honored with the United States Golf Association's 2015 USGA Green Section Award. Presented annually, the USGA's prestigious Green Section Award recognizes individuals' distinguished service to the game of golf through their work with turfgrass.

Dr. Vittum is a highly respected researcher who has conducted significant studies on the biology and management of turfgrass insects and the effectiveness of biological-control methods. A recognized industry leader, Dr. Vittum has been a widely sought-after resource for practical information about turfgrass pests.

Dr. Vittum joined the faculty of the University of Massachusetts Amherst in 1980, becoming a professor in 2000. She currently teaches classes on the use of pesticides in the environment and turf management programs. She was recognized with the Excellence in Teaching Award by the Entomological Society of America, Eastern Branch in 2004.

Dr. Vittum's research has been published in several well-respected industry journals and publications. She is the principal author of the second edition of *Turfgrass Insects of the United States and Canada*, which is widely regarded as the leading publication



on turf entomology. She also co-authored the *Handbook of Integrated Pest Management for Golf Courses*.

"When the USGA's Dr. Erusha called to tell me about this honor, I was overwhelmed," said Dr. Vittum. "The list of previous honorees includes so many giants of the turf management world, including people from academia, USGA Green Section directors, and top-shelf golf course superintendents. I am honored and humbled to be joining their ranks as a recipient of the distinguished service award."

Dr. Vittum received the Award on February 7 at the USGA's Annual Meeting and Service Awards in New York City.

Melvin Lucas Receives 2015 Distinguished Service Award

Congratulations to longtime MetGCSA member and a GCSAA Past President Melvin B. Lucas Jr. on being selected for the GCSAA's 2015 Col. John Morley Distinguished Service Award.

The award is given to individuals who have made an outstanding, substantive, and enduring contribution to the advancement of the golf course superintendent profession. The award was renamed in 2009 in honor of Col. John Morley, GCSAA's founder and first president. He was the first to earn the Distinguished Service Award in 1932, and he received it again in 1940.

Mel was acknowledged at the 2015 Golf Industry Show in San Antonio, on Wednesday, February 25, during the Opening Session.

Mel, a retired CGCS, has been a GCSAA

member for 52 years, serving on the board of directors from 1974 – 1981 and holding the title of GCSAA president in 1980. Mel has also served as agronomy consultant for more than 60 golf course projects.

A graduate of Penn State University, where he earned his degree in turfgrass management, Mel began his career as an assistant superintendent at Piping Rock Club in Locust Valley, NY, in 1961. He continued to be associated with Piping Rock and nearby Garden City Golf Club in Garden City, NY, for most of his career, until 1985, when he took on the role of golf course architect and superintendent at Round Hill Community Golf Club in South Dartmouth, MA.

He also served the Long Island Golf Course Superintendents Association as an



executive committee member for seven years and was the association's president from 1973 – 1975. Since his retirement in 1991, he has continued to serve the golf course management profession as a consultant in both the U.S. and abroad.

Ken Benoit and GlenArbor to Host Season-Opening Two-Ball Qualifier... Again!

After heavy rains shut down last year's Dave Mahoney Two-Ball Qualifier at GlenArbor Golf Club, Superintendent Ken Benoit has graciously agreed to prep the course once again for this ever-popular Met event. Mark your calendars for April 28 and keep your fingers crossed for fair weather!

GlenArbor Golf Club dates back to 1966 when the course opened as Lakeover National Golf Club, named for the former Lakeover Estate it was built on. In 1999, business partners Grant Gregory and Ken Natori purchased the course and soon after began an extensive, two-year renovation. Under the direction of architect Gary Player, three original golf holes were eliminated and three new holes were added. New bunkers and tees were created, greens were rebuilt and fairways recontoured. A beautiful "Old English Manor" style clubhouse was constructed along with a year-round practice facility and training center that quickly became the model that many area clubs followed.

GlenArbor-Bound

Ken was born and raised in the small town of Marysville, MI, about an hour north of Detroit. Though his passion for golf began long ago, Ken didn't enter into the industry until after he'd earned a marketing degree and worked as a regional manager for an environmental services company.

Disenchanted with all that the job entailed, Ken was perched for a change. A college buddy from the University of Detroit was pursuing a master's in turfgrass management, which piqued Ken's interest. "I applied to Michigan State's two-year program," says Ken, "but Trey Rogers, who ran the program, told me that he wanted me to work at a golf course for a year before accepting me into the two-year school."

Ken went to work on meeting the requirements, graduating from the Michigan State program in the fall of 1997. Ken's first internship was at Congressional Country Club with superintendent guru Paul Latchaw Sr. At the time Ken graduated,

Latchaw was splitting his time between Congressional and Riviera Country Club in Los Angeles and offered Ken an assistant's position at Riviera. In addition to gaining fine experience at an annual PGA Tour stop course, Ken also had the fortunate opportunity to meet his wife of 14 years, Melodee, shortly after arriving in California.

After a full year there, another opportunity presented itself: "I went to work for McDonald & Sons in Baltimore, MD. They were renovating Olympia Fields for the U.S. Open and I signed on as a construction superintendent," says Ken.

By April of 2000, Ken realized that he wanted to get back to a position at a golf course. He heard through the grapevine that Steve Renzetti, Quaker Ridge's superintendent at the time, was looking for an assistant. The rest is history. After a little more than a year at Quaker, the GlenArbor superintendent's position opened up, and on July 5, 2001, Ken was hired for the job.

An Environmentalist Who Makes Music

Ken has served on the MetGCSA Board of Directors since 2006, currently serving as our treasurer. Though participating in numerous committees over the years, none have been more all-encompassing than Ken's current role as Environmental Committee Chair. If you've been keeping up with the *Tee to Green*, you know that over the past three years Ken has devoted hundreds of hours developing the Best Management Practices (BMPs) for New York State Golf Courses in cooperation with Cornell University.

Ken also serves as the Chairman of the Awards Committee for the MGA's Arthur P. Weber Environmental Leaders in Golf. In 2010, GlenArbor was selected for this prestigious award. In 2004, Ken's commitment to the environment also garnered GlenArbor the "North American Bluebird Society Award." It was the only time a golf course has been awarded this honor.

A true environmentalist, Ken hosts groups



Ken Benoit, CGCS

of area school children at GlenArbor three times a year for the "GlenArbor Environmental Education Program." Melodee teaches a classroom session on the environment, followed by a kid-friendly hayride-style tour of the facility where Ken talks about nature and the environment. Says Ken, "We want to leave these kids with an understanding of the importance of working together with nature and what we can do to help protect the environment." Together, Ken and Melodee have had more than 1,000 children participate in their program.

In addition to his numerous extracurriculars, Ken finds time to play guitar in local bands. Right now, he plays lead guitar in the band *Will the Thrill*. Band members include Pound Ridge Golf Club's Will Heintz on bass and banjo, Rick Torres on drums and vocals, and Aquatrols' Kevin Collins on vocals and rhythm guitar. Ken's passion for music inspires all his band mates to work hard and stick together.

Ken and Melodee have lived, since 2001, in Bedford, NY, sharing their home with their Border Collie, Cory.

April 28 will be here before you know it, so dust off your clubs and get ready for a great time!

The History of the Two-Ball and Its Namesake, the Late Dave Mahoney

September 27, 2008 was a day many MetGCSA members would rather not remember. It was the day that Dave Mahoney, the highly regarded and long-tenured Siwanoy Country Club superintendent lost his life unexpectedly to a heart condition few knew existed.

Having served as the Met's 26th president, Dave's dedication to our association and industry was impressive. He felt the MetGCSA was "one of the best, if not *the* best" chapters in the country and worked hard during his more than decade-long tenure on the board to ensure that proved true.

Dave was adored by friends, admired by his peers, and could light up any room with his sharp wit and dry sense of humor. Anyone who had the great pleasure of hearing Dave's Tournament Award presentations or lively committee reports would have to agree he might well have had a future as a stand-up comic.

Each time he took the podium to address the association, Dave made members feel welcome. A forward thinker, Dave hosted the original Turf Blog right out of his Siwanoy office. "Dave was the original Maestro before Peter McCormick started TurfNet," says Pinnacle Turf's Steven Renzetti, a close friend of Dave's. "Dave's blog was exclusively for Met members to post questions, stories, advice, equipment, and job notices, and more. His desktop computer was the system server, the original cloud service," adds Steve.

Dave always believed that the strength of the association hinged on its members' ability to come together and share experiences. With that in mind, 23 years ago, Dave initiated our annual Two-Ball Competition, a format inspired by the Mid-Atlantic group's

two-ball, which he learned about through his good friend Glen Smickley, the former director of golf/GM at RTJ Golf Club in Maryland.

In Dave's eyes, our monthly golf meetings were great, but all too often the same people would always play with one another. He wanted superintendents to step outside their comfort zones and expand their networks. The two-ball proved the perfect way to do that.

On April 27, 2009, just seven months

Dave always believed that the strength of the association hinged on its members' ability to come together and share experiences. With that in mind, 23 years ago, Dave initiated our annual Two-Ball Competition.

after Dave Mahoney passed away, the annual Two-Ball Qualifier was held at Siwanoy and renamed the Dave Mahoney Two-Ball Championship Qualifier in Dave's honor. What a fitting way to remember the founder of the event, and a truly special person.



Dave Mahoney, 1960 - 2008

He believed that encouraging members to play in a two-ball was a clever way to expand members' network—and draw members closer together.

President's Message continued from page 1

the chance to "kick the tires" on new equipment, research new products and services, and catch up with colleagues, old and new. One of the highlights of the conference this year was the election of past Met president John O'Keefe to the office of GCSAA president. John has led many associations throughout his career, beyond the MetGCSA. You can read all about John in our Feature article starting on page 2. We wish him the best of luck with the presidency of our national organization.

Not long after we return, there is yet another worthy educational opportunity: the annual MGA Green Chairman Education Seminar & Arthur P. Weber MGA Club Environmental Leaders in Golf Award Luncheon. This event will be held on March 24 at Alpine Country Club in Demarest, NJ. Many thanks to Steve Finamore for hosting this event, which is designed to foster a greater understanding and awareness of golf course management practices and the superintendent's roles and responsibilities in managing the operation. This is the perfect opportunity to provide your green chair and other club officials with an inside look at our daily practices and on-the-job challenges.

As in years past, the Arthur P. Weber Environmental Award will be presented to a Met-area club in recognition of their contributions to environmental preservation. Best of luck to all of the applicants!

Of course, these are only the headliner educational events; there are more regional conferences for those who might spot an additional topic of interest. I urge everyone to take advantage of these great educational opportunities and to share with your green chair and committee the crucial importance of ongoing education.

I want to wish you all the best of luck with your 2015 preparations. I know this winter has been exceptionally harsh, but enjoy what's left of it. Spring is just around the corner!

**Glen Dube, CGCS
President**

Upcoming Events

Update Your Calendar With These Upcoming MetGCSA and Industry Events

Dave Mahoney Two-Ball Championship Qualifier

Tuesday, April 28
GlenArbor Golf Club
Bedford Hills, NY
Host: Ken Benoit, CGCS

Superintendent/Guest Tournament

Monday, May 11
Country Club of New Canaan
New Canaan, CT
Host: Mike Roe

MetGCSA Invitational Tournament

June date TBA
Century Country Club
Purchase, NY
Host: Kevin Seibel, CGCS

Met Championship and Met Area Team Championship Qualifier PLUS The Poa Annual Tournament

September date TBA
Meadow Brook Club
Jericho, NY
Host: John Carlone, CGCS

Nine and Dine Event

Monday, October 5
Silvermine Golf Club
Norwalk, CT
Host: Larry Pakkala, CGCS

Educational Events

2015 MGA Green Chairman Education Seminar & Arthur P. Weber MGA Club Environmental Leaders in Golf Award Luncheon

Tuesday, March 24
Alpine Country Club
Demarest, NJ

The Metropolitan Golf Association Foundation has put together another informative program in its ongoing Green Chairman Education Seminar. An impressive roster of presenters from the USGA's Green Section and the golf industry will address a variety of turfgrass-related issues. Each of the presentations will be followed by a question-and-answer session.

The day will conclude with the eighth annual Arthur P. Weber MGA Club Environmental Leaders in Golf Award Luncheon.

Please contact Kevin Kline at 914-347-4653 or kkline@mgagolf.org for further information.

The 11th Annual Joseph Troll Turf Classic

Monday, April 20
TPC River Highlands Golf Club
Cromwell, CT

Superintendent Tom DeGrandi will host this year's UMass Alumni Turf Group fundraiser in support of turf education and research at the University of Massachusetts.

The program kicks off with a 12:30 p.m. shotgun followed by a cocktail reception, dinner, and awards ceremony, which, this year, will honor Dr. William Dest, professor emeritus at the University of Connecticut.

Please plan to attend this worthy fundraiser, and join us in honoring a Dr. Dest. Entry forms and additional information will be available online at www.alumni-turfgroup.com.

20th Annual Rutgers Turfgrass Research Golf Classic

Monday, May 4
Fiddlers Elbow Country Club
Bedminster, NJ

Plan now to join fellow industry professionals for this annual fundraiser and a day of golf, education, and fun. Your participation helps continue turfgrass research and breeding programs at Rutgers University's Center for Turfgrass Science. For further information, call 973-812-6467 or log on to www.njturfgrass.org.

Rutgers Turfgrass Research Field Day (Golf & Fine Turf)

Tuesday, July 28
Horticultural Farm II
New Brunswick, NJ

Save the date, and watch for details. Call 973-812-6467 or visit www.njturfgrass.org for further information.



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