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Tee To Green

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Weathering the Aftermath of a Harsh Winter

*“Winter bites
with its teeth or
lashes with its
tail.”*

~ Montenegrin Proverb

I

think you'll agree with me—and this Slavic proverb—that it was a tough winter this year. The first half of the winter was fairly benign: mild temps and zero snow. Then February and March hit along with frequent snowstorms and brutal cold, resulting in an extremely slow start to the 2015 golf season.

As the snow and icepack slowly melted away from our courses, and turf started to reveal itself, it became all too clear that Mother Nature and Old Man Winter had conspired against us. The carnage from their cruel scheme included a deadly combination of ice damage, snow mold, and desiccation in varying degrees to many courses—not just in our area, but throughout the entire Northeast.

When you throw in the fact that winter snow has delayed course openings by almost three weeks and directly impacted revenue streams at facilities, you know this season is off to a rocky start. But as a whole, superintendents are a resilient group of people. We can always find a way to overcome adversity and move forward.

Survival Tips

I was very fortunate to come out of this winter with minor damage. I'm one of the lucky ones this time. But I have been where some of you are now and know full well what you are going through. Here are a few things I've learned from experience:

Following significant turf loss, open and constant communication to your members and/or management is paramount. Explain what happened and how you are going to fix it. Keep them in the loop and be honest about the timing of the recovery process. Depending on your membership's preferred style of communication, reach out through blogs, websites, emails, and newsletters. If you don't keep people informed, they will be left to make their own conclusions, and unfortunately, they may not be to your benefit!

One of the most difficult aspects of the
continued on page 12



Glen Dube, CGCSA
MetGCSA President

SPECIAL NOTE TO THE MEMBERSHIP

As most of you know by now, Ed Brockner has resigned as MetGCSA executive director and is now the executive director for the First Tee of Metropolitan New York. Over the past four years, Ed has worked tirelessly to generate advertising revenue, organize countless Met events, and has been the face of our association.

I would like to thank Ed for his efforts in enhancing our association and, on behalf of the MetGCSA Board of Directors, wish him the best of luck in his new endeavor.

I would also like to thank Bob Wolverton for his three years of devoted service to the board and our association. His term on the board has ended, and Brian Chapin will fill the vacant seat as a director. Brian is the superintendent at Paramount Country Club and will be serving as the Membership Committee chairman. We are all looking forward to working with Brian and know he will make a great addition to our board. Good luck and welcome aboard!

Glen Dube, CGCSA
President

Feature

A Meeting of the Minds

*New York State Turfgrass Advocacy Day
Provides Platform for Industry Professionals
to Voice Concerns Over Legislative Issues*

by Michael Maffei, CGCS





The 16th Annual New York State Turfgrass Advocacy Day was held March 11 at the Empire State Plaza in Albany, NY, with 49 superintendents and other industry professionals eager to discuss this year's issues: Support for the Turfgrass Environmental Stewardship Fund, the Adoption of a State Definition of IPM, Repeal of the Pesticide Reporting Law, Parity for 3A, 3B Pesticide Applicator Fees, Support for the Farm Viability Institute, and Preserving Pollinators' Health.

Advocacy Day-goers made 71 legislative visits to drive home the importance of these legislative issues. Joining me in representing the MetGCSA were Blake Halderman, CGCS; Bob Nielsen, CGCS; Matt Ceplo, CGCS; Ernie Steinhofner, CGCS; Todd Apgar; Kevin Collins; David Dudones, Mike McCall, CGCS; and Glen Dube, CGCS.

The Event Kickoff

The event kicked off with an association breakfast and welcoming remarks by NYSTA President Tim Hahn.

Rick Zimmerman, an associate of The Vandervort Group and lobbyist for the New York Alliance for Environmental Concerns (NYAFEC), and Jeff Williams of the New York Farm Bureau spoke on the legislative climate in Albany and state budget issues. They also offered attendees some tips for making effective visits, noting that it was prime time to meet with legislators since they were in the midst of final budget negotiations.

Senator Thomas O'Mara, chair of the Senate Environmental Conservation Committee, addressed the group and expressed his interest in our issues. He was pleased to report that the Senate had included \$175,000 in their budget for the Turfgrass Environmental Stewardship Fund. The Senate budget also supports our issue dealing with parity on commercial pesticide applicator fees.

The Issues of the Day

Prior to the legislative visits, participants had the opportunity to hear what industry leaders had to say about each of the following issues.

Garnering Support for the Turfgrass Environmental Stewardship Fund

Greg Chorvas, Past President of the New York State Turfgrass Association

Greg spoke about the status and importance of the Turfgrass Environmental Stewardship Fund, reporting that it was our Number One issue for the day. The 2013-2014 New York State Budget included a \$150,000 appropriation to support research that provides improved turf management solutions.

Continuing research is essential in providing turf management solutions that are key in preserving and protecting environmental quality. With this in mind, NYSTA recommended that legislators **continue to fund the \$150,000 line item** in the 2015-2016 budget.

In 2014, a portion of this funding went toward supporting the next phase in the development of the BMPs for New York State Golf Courses. Bedford Golf & Tennis Club Superintendent Bob Nielsen detailed their work in building a self-assessment tool to help green industry professionals ensure that they are putting the BMPs into practice in their operations.

Executive summaries of the BMPs were provided to all attendees and visiting legislators. In addition to focusing their discussions on the issues of the day, attendees were encouraged to present the BMP concept to legislators during each of their visits.

Adopting a State Definition of IPM

Michael Maffei, CGCS, Co-Chair, NYSTA Government Relations Committee

I reviewed the Adoption of a State Definition of IPM, stating that NYSTA believes New York State would be best served by adopting the IPM terminology recognized by the Food Quality Protection Act, the National Integrated Pest Management Network, and the Empire State Council of Agricultural Organizations. Several legislative proposals define IPM as using pesticides as a last resort. As we all know, pesticides are used as a tool in an IPM program.

NYSTA supports bills S3064 (sponsored by Senator Young) and A1186



NYSTA President Tim Hahn addresses the group during the Advocacy Day opening session.

(sponsored by Assemblywoman Gunther), which define integrated pest management as a "systematic approach to managing pests that utilizes a diversity of management options to minimize health, environmental, and economic risks and impacts. These options may include biological, cultural, physical, and chemical tools to prevent pest infestations or reduce them to acceptable levels."

Both Senator Young's and Assemblywoman Gunther's bills are currently in their respective Environmental Conservation committees.

Repeal of the Pesticide Reporting Law

Rick Zimmerman, Lobbyist, New York Alliance for Environmental Concerns

Rick explained the history of the Pesticide Reporting Law and how ineffective it has been. Industry spends \$4.75 million each year to comply with this unfunded mandate, and it has cost New York State \$2 billion since the law's creation nearly 20 years ago.

During the legislator visits, we called for the complete repeal of the law.

Parity for 3A, 3B Certified Applicator Fees

Larry Wilson, Chairman, New York Alliance for Environmental Concerns

Larry explained that currently New York State law mandates a fee of \$200 per year for class 3A and 3B classification of certified commercial pesticide applicators. (Included in this group are golf course superintendents.) By contrast, all other classifications are required to pay \$450 for a three-year period (\$150/year).



Bedford Golf & Tennis Club Superintendent Bob Nielsen introduces the next phase in the development of the New York State Best Management Practices.

NYSTA is requesting parity within the certified commercial system by lowering the annual 3A and 3B fees to \$150 per year and realigning the certification time period from one to three years.

Support for the New York Farm Viability Institute

Steve Griffen, Co-Chair, NYSTA Government Relations Committee

Steve provided an update on the New York Farm Viability Institute (NYFVI), an independent, nonprofit organization led by farmers and growers who are dedicated to strengthening the agricultural and horticultural industries in New York State. The institute ensures industry success by supporting applied research, education, information transfer, technology adoption, and market analysis to reduce practical barriers to the success of agricultural and horticultural enterprises. In the past 10 years, 178 projects have been completed, and New York has received an estimated 6 to 1 return on investment.

Legislators are being asked to support a \$2.75 million appropriation in the 2015–2016 budget.

Preserving Pollinators' Health—and the Use of the Neonicotinoid Class of Pesticides

Rick Zimmerman, Lobbyist, New York Alliance for Environmental Concerns

Rick explained that the issues facing the health of our pollinators are complex and present challenges to beekeepers, landscapers, turfgrass management professionals, farmers, and homeowners.

Rick suggested that, in visits with legislators, attendees acknowledge there are serious issues facing the health of our pollinators, and support the formation of a stakeholder task force by the Department of Agriculture & Markets to address the issue.

NYSTA also recommends that the legislature refrain from banning the neonicotinoid class of pesticides because there is no conclusive proof that these pesticides are the primary cause of pollinator health concerns.

The Legislative Visits & Wrap-Up

With the various presentations complete, attendees had the opportunity to meet with legislators and share their views and recommendations on the issues. After the legislative visits were completed, attendees returned for a luncheon and wrap-up of the morning's activities. Attendees also had the opportunity to share any feedback they received during their legislator visits with Rick Zimmerman for follow-up.

"As I have said many times, government is run by those who show up," says Rick Zimmerman, lobbyist for the New York Alliance for Environmental Concerns. "A well-informed, articulate group of advocates did 'show up' on behalf of the green industry and did a commendable job informing lawmakers about our issues and our policy recommendations. Thank you to those who were part of the NYSTA Advocacy Day. I encourage more of you to participate next year."

Your Involvement—and NYSTA Membership—Counts

If you are not a member of NYSTA, please consider joining. Your membership provides NYSTA with the resources needed to plan and implement many informative industry-related events, not the least of which is our annual Turfgrass Advocacy Day. Particularly important to preserving our livelihood, the Advocacy Day is designed to:

- Protect you and your golf course from losing the tools needed to perform your job
- Prevent any onerous new regulations from adversely affecting our industry
- Advocate for changes to—or the repeal of—laws and regulations that affect our clubs

If you would like more information on NYSTA or the New York State Turfgrass Advocacy Day, you will find it on the NYSTA website: <http://www.nysta.org>. Though you may not have been able to attend, consider visiting your Assembly member or Senator in their district offices or writing them to discuss these issues.

Please give serious consideration to attending the Turfgrass Advocacy Day in 2016. Laws and regulations affect everyone, and your input is important!

Michael Maffei, golf course superintendent at Back O' Beyond in Brewster, NY, is a past president of NYSTA and co-chair of the NYSTA Government Relations Committee.

Special Thanks to Our Sponsors

We would like to acknowledge the following sponsors who helped make this successful event possible: the Metropolitan Golf Course Superintendents Association, the Hudson Valley Golf Course Superintendents Association, the Sullivan County Challenge, the Northeastern Golf Course Superintendents Association, the Central New York Golf Course Superintendents Association, the Long Island Golf Course Superintendents Association, Helena, the Nassau Suffolk Landscape Gardeners Association, Syngenta, Bayer, PLANET, Dow AgroSciences, and RISE (Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment).

Letter to the Membership

Dear MetGCSA Members,

As most of you now know, I recently stepped down from my position as executive director of the MetGCSA to lead The First Tee of Metropolitan New York. While I am very excited for this next stage in my career, I will also greatly miss working with all of you on a daily basis. The past four years have taught me so much, and I am very proud of the many accomplishments that we have made that will serve the Met well for years to come.

When I first interviewed with the MetGCSA, I was attracted to the job because of the outstanding experiences that I had with golf course superintendents through my various positions in the golf industry. I had always enjoyed these interactions and had such an appreciation for all of the hard work those in the profession do to manage the most important aspect of the golf operation. During my tenure with the Met, my respect and admiration has only grown as I have seen firsthand the dedication and expertise with which you all carry out your work. I consider myself truly lucky to have had the opportunity to promote this message to those both outside and inside the golf community on behalf of superintendents.

I would like to thank all members of the Met for their guidance and encouragement over the past several years, in particular the presidents who I have had the pleasure of serving under and each of whom taught me a great deal: Bob Nielsen, Blake Halderman, and Glen Dube. In addition, I want to give a special thank you to Ken Benoit for his leadership in the area of environmental stewardship. Through his work—and the efforts of everyone implementing the best practices being established—our organization is at the forefront of meeting head-on one of the most pressing issues facing the industry today and in the future.

I look forward to continuing to work with the MetGCSA in my new role, and I hope to continue the tradition of the Parent-Child Event at our home course at Mosholu in the Bronx. There are many ways that the Met and The First Tee can collaborate to improve accessibility and sustainability of the game, and I thank everyone for your well wishes and support as we collaborate in doing so.

Sincerely,

Ed Brockner

MetGCSA Has a Near-Win at the Annual Nor'easter Ski Day

by Andy Drohen

For the second straight year, the host team from Vermont won the Nor'easter Cup at Killington Ski Resort in Killington, VT. This year, the MetGCSA team followed close behind claiming a second place win. Nine superintendent associations from New Jersey, New York, and all around New England competed at the third annual event on March 5, where more than 100 golf course superintendents and industry representatives, along with their families came together for a day of camaraderie, great skiing, and competition on the slopes of Vermont. This year, the race was moved to the challenging "Highline" race trail where the Killington Mountain School trains, along with Olympic racers from around the world! The home field advantage really showed on the steep black diamond trail!

Conditions were fantastic with all the snow flying around the Northeast this year. Race conditions were described as firm and fast for the two-run giant slalom race. Each team totaled their fastest four racers, and by just under 8 seconds, the team from Vermont won this year's Nor'easter Cup over the MetGCSA of New York. Vermont also successfully defended their title over the Northeastern group in the Vermont Cup, a rivalry that dates back to 1993. Apparently, the Northeastern group was working a little more than the Vermont guys this year!

The MetGCSA was the big mover of the year, narrowly beating the Northeastern group by less than half a second, proving once again Einstein's equation $E=MC^2$ does indeed hold true.

Recap of the Top Scorers at Killington

Trophies and prizes were awarded to the following "Kings and Queens of the Mountain," from—no surprise—the Vermont and Northeastern GCSAs!

Fastest Male Skier:

Jay Savage from the Vermont GCSA 25:60

Fastest Female Skier:

Barb Fahey from the Northeastern GCSA 31:30

Fastest Male Snowboarder:

Mark Finch from the Vermont GCSA 34:03

Fastest Female Snowboarder:

No racers

Here's a look at how the teams fared in the competition:

Team Scores (Fastest 4 individual times totaled)

Team	Time
1st Vermont GCSA (Winner of Nor'easter Cup and Vermont Cup)	1:46.50
2nd MetGCSA	1:54.31
3rd Northeastern GCSA	1:54.73
4th Rhode Island GCSA	2:00.58
5th GCSA Cape Cod	2:09.91
6th New Jersey GCSA	2:17.57
7th Long Island GCSA	2:49.00
8th Connecticut AGCS	DSQ – only 3 times
9th GCSA New England	DSQ – only 3 times

A Happy Ending

If the skiing and racing did not provide enough excitement for folks, then the Aprés Ski party at the Wobbly Barn proved a fine ending to a competitive day on the slopes. Support from our generous sponsors helped the folks at Killington provide great food and an open bar for a few hours after skiing. Proving this is the place to be during the winter, Killington provided highly discounted ski passes for the group through the weekend and affordable pricing on lodging.

As in years past, this event also serves as a fundraising opportunity to help support our industry members in times of need. Most recently, the Nor'easter Ski Day helped by raising donations for a fellow superintendent whose wife is battling a mysterious illness, and previously, this fundraising effort helped another superintendent who was seriously injured in a tree accident after Hurricane Sandy.

The event has raised thousands of dollars so far, and this year, we are pleased to have



Andy Drohen announces the Nor'easter Ski Day awards.

increased that number by more than \$1,000 again. Fortunately, right now, we do not know of anyone in our industry who needs immediate help. If you want to send us a message recommending someone in need, please do so to any of the board members. Otherwise our plan is to start a savings account for future needs.

We are all fortunate to be associated with such great folks, and we encourage all of you to join us next year as we continue to use the event as a means to help our own. Thanks to all who donated so generously, and special thanks to Augie Young of Sipcam, Wes Bishop of Reliable Racing, Scott Watelet from Northern Ski Works, and Larry Kelly and Craig Cochran from 5-Star, who all generously donated to our raffle!

Thank You to Our Sponsors

The Nor'easter Ski Day was made great because of the overwhelming support of its sponsors! We would like to thank the following companies for their help in making this event a huge success:

Gold Sponsors: BASF, Jacobsen, MTE Turf Equipment, Sipcam Advan, Syngenta.

Silver Sponsors: GenNext, Aquatrols, Koch Fertilizer, Nufarm, Sportscapes Unlimited, Winfield, Club Car and Country Club Enterprises, Northeast Golf & Turf Supply, New England Specialty Soils, Toro, Grassland Equipment, and Harrell's.

Bronze Sponsors: Atlantic Golf & Turf, Bayer, Five Star, Valley Green, FMC, Reliable Racing, Saratoga Sod Farm, Putnam Pipe, Westchester Turf, and The Northeastern GCSA.

This is fast-becoming a "can't miss" event, so be sure to watch for dates for 2016 and bring the family! Hope to see you next winter on the slopes!

Andy Drohen, a member of the Tee to Green Editorial Committee, is the Northeast Sr. Territory Manager with Koch Agronomic Services.

Update Your Calendar With These Upcoming MetGCSA and Industry Events

Superintendent/Guest Tournament

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

MetGCSA Invitational Tournament

Tuesday, June 16
Century Country Club
Purchase, NY
Host: Kevin Seibel, CGCS

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

Tuesday, October 13
Meadow Brook Club
Jericho, NY
Host: John Carlone, CGCS

Nine and Dine Event

Wednesday, September 23
Silvermine Golf Club
Norwalk, CT
Host: Larry Pakkala, CGCS

Assistants Championship

Tuesday, October 6
Brae Burn Country Club
Purchase, NY
Assistant Host: Dave Peterson

Met Area Team Championship

Tuesday, October 20
Quaker Ridge Golf Club
Scarsdale, NY
Host: Tom Ashfield

Educational Events

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.

Turf & Grounds Exposition

Tuesday – Wednesday, November 17 – 18
Rochester Riverside Convention Center
Rochester, NY

The Turf & Grounds Exposition offers an excellent opportunity to network while remaining current on the latest research and trends in turfgrass management. As always, the expo will feature key speakers from all segments of the green industry, as well as a comprehensive trade show with more than 100 exhibitors.

For further information, call the show office at 800-873-8873 or 518-783-1229, or visit the website at www.nysta.org.

40th Annual New Jersey Green Expo Turf and Landscape Conference

Tuesday – Thursday, December 8 – 10
The Borgata Hotel Casino and Spa
Atlantic City, NY

The New Jersey Green Expo offers a comprehensive educational program providing cutting-edge applications and tactics to guarantee green industry professionals' success on the job. Offering one of the largest trade shows in the tri-state area, the expo also provides attendees with the opportunity to view the latest and greatest products and services on the market.

For further information, call 973-812-6467 or visit www.njturfgrass.org.

New Members

Please join us in welcoming the following new MetGCSA members:

- **Jarad Luknicki**, Class C, Metropolis Country Club, White Plains, NY
- **Michael Moglia**, Class C, St. Andrew's Golf Club, Hastings-on-Hudson, NY

Members on the Move

- **Brian Gallagher** is the new superintendent at Sprain Lake Golf Course (Westchester County Golf Course/Parks) in Yonkers, NY. Previous position: superintendent at Putnam County Golf Course in Mahopac, NY.
- **Greg Rotter** is a new assistant superintendent at The Stanwich Club in Greenwich, CT. Previous position: assistant superintendent at Redding Country Club in Redding, CT.

Members Retired

Wishing all the best to recently retired superintendents:

- **Mike Reeb** of The Country Club of New Canaan in New Canaan, CT
- **Michael Barton** of Burning Tree Country Club in Greenwich, CT

Birth

Congratulations to **Scott Blough**, superintendent at Nassau Country Club, and his wife, Sarah, on the birth of their daughter, Amelia Jade Blough, who was 6 lbs. 12 ozs. and born on March 7.



Met Golfers Take to the Links in San Antonio

by Doug Drugo

The weather went from sunburns to frostbite, but this year's GCSAA Golf Championships at the GIS show in San Antonio, TX, provided great fun and camaraderie for all who participated.

The Met area was represented by nearly two dozen members, and the group did a pretty fine job leaving its mark on the competition. Here are the highlights.

The National Championship

Matt Cowan, the superintendent at the Crenshaw Cliffside Course at Barton Creek Resort in Austin, TX, survived a field of 87 fellow competitors to win his first National Championship at Cordillera Ranch Golf Club in Boerne, TX.

The 36-hole event was shortened to a single round when severe winter weather forced the cancellation of the final round.

But that didn't affect Tony Hooks. It took just one hole on the first day of play to WOW the Championship Flight contenders. Hailing from Due Process Stable in Colts Neck, NJ, Tony aced the Par 3, 4th hole at Cordillera Ranch. As Tony describes it, "I hit an Irish links-style 5-iron from 171 yards." Not only did the hole-in-one afford Tony the opportunity to pick up the tab after golf, it sent Mr. Hooks off into the sunset on a brand-new Toro MDX Workman. Tony's win will be talked about for years!

The Golf Classic

Jim Swiatlowski of Montammy Golf Club slammed the door on the Senior II Gross Division of the Golf Classic, taking First Place in the event with 53 points. Jim's 53 points earned him the distinction of having the second highest point total from all divisions in the Golf Classic. Great job, Jim!

In the Classic II Gross Division, Justin Miller of Wee Burn Country Club placed Sixth with 42 points. Mike Brunelle of the Upper Montclair Country Club was the local medal winner in the Classic III Gross Division with 34 points. Mike missed First Place in his flight by a mere two points. Division III is yours next year, Mikey!

Folks, hold on to your wine glass, Bob

Nielsen of Bedford Golf & Tennis finished one shot off the lead behind a three-way tie for First Place in the Net IV Division. Way to go, Bob!

The Four-Ball

Jim Swiatlowski was at it again with his trusty partner David Dudones of Westchester Country Club in the Four-Ball event. Team Swiatlowski / Dudones were this year's Division II Gross and Net winners. Jim and Dave shot a 4-over-par 75, netting a 6-under-par 65. Great playing, guys! Tim O'Neill of Country Club of Darien and his partner from San Diego, Mark Warren of Taylor Made, were not far behind in the Division II Gross bracket, finishing two strokes back with a 6-over-par 77.

Division III of the Four-Ball competition was well represented by the Met. The team of Tyler Otero of North Jersey Country Club and Jeremy Batz of Trump National Golf Club - Colts Neck placed Second in the Gross Division with a 2-over-par 74 while the team of Kevin Seibel of Century Country Club and Doug Drugo of Wee Burn Country Club placed Third in the Gross Division with a 3-over-par 75.

The real story of Division III lies in the Net winners, Otero and Batz. Tyler and Jeremy's 2-over-par 74 netted a whopping 19-under-par 53. Awesome job, guys! You are definitely on the competition committee's radar in San Diego!

See You Next Year in San Diego!

Congratulations to all who participated in this year's golf championships. This annual preconference golf event offers a great opportunity to not only play some of the country's best courses, but also to meet superintendents from across the U.S. and around the world! Next year, the GCSAA Golf Championships will be held in San Diego, CA. I hope to see you all there!

Doug Drugo, chair of the Tournament Committee, is superintendent at Wee Burn Country Club in Darien, CT.

2015 MGA Green Chairman Industry Strides and Envy

Darrell Marcinek of Neshanic Valley Golf Course Hosts

by Matt Ceplo, CGCS



The MGA Foundation hosted this year's Green Chairman Education Series at Alpine Country Club in Demarest, NJ, on March 24. Drawing a full house that included superintendents, professionals, green chairmen, and club officials, the meeting focused on a variety of industry topics and trends in golf course management.

Among the impressive panel of industry professionals were two speakers from the USGA Green Section. Northeast Region Director and past Reid Award winner David Oatis spoke about the importance of cultivating a good relationship between superintendents and their green committee; and Northeast Region Agronomist Adam Moeller spoke about the impact of trees and their location on a course's slope rating and course handicap.

As the MetGCSA's Environmental Committee Chair, Ken Benoit shared news on the New York State Best Management Practices program, explaining its focus on promoting golf course management practices that protect and enhance our natural resources.

I had the pleasure of giving a quick Tri-State Turf Research Foundation update on projects the foundation is funding and how they benefit courses throughout the Met area. To those of you who have contributed, "thank you"! If you haven't already joined

in Education Series Highlights Environmental Stewardship

ponsored With Arthur P Weber MGA Club Environmental Leaders in Golf Award



MetGCSA Environmental Chair Ken Benoit of GlenArbor Golf Club (left) and MGA board member Philip Fabrizio of Knickerbocker Golf Club (right) present the Arthur P. Weber MGA Club Environmental Leaders in Golf Award to Darrell Marcinek of Neshanic Valley Golf Course.

our valued list of contributors, there's no time like *now*!

Last but not least was Brad Klein of *Golfweek Magazine*. He gave an interesting and informative review of the state of the golf business, offering his thoughts on how clubs and courses might stay ahead of the game in a competitive market.

Met Member Recognized for Environmental Efforts

One of the highlights of the meeting was the presentation of the 2015 Arthur P. Weber MGA Club Environmental Leaders in Golf Award to Neshanic Valley Golf Course in Neshanic Station, NJ. Presenting the award was GlenArbor Superintendent and MetGCSA Environmental Chair Ken Benoit.

Congratulations to Met member and director of golf operations Darrell Marcinek, CGCS, who is at the helm of this award-winning golf course. This was a very special meeting for me because Darrell had worked with me as an assistant at Rockland Country Club. I would like to think I showed him a thing or two, but the reality was Darrell probably helped me more than I helped him! It was a privilege to have had Darrell on our staff. We certainly are very proud of what he has accomplished, both professionally and personally.

During his acceptance speech, Darrell said that being selected as this year's winner was the highest honor that Neshanic Valley and the Park Commission has ever been awarded. Now, that's saying something because Neshanic Valley has also been recognized by Audubon International as a Certified Cooperative Sanctuary; in 2011, they received the Sustainable Business Award from the South Branch Watershed Association; and they have been recognized as a "River Friendly" facility by the New Jersey Water Supply Authority.

As if all that's not enough, Neshanic Valley has also been recognized for Environmental Stewardship by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection and as a Groundwater Guardian Green Site by the Groundwater Foundation. While Darrell and the Park Commission have certainly demonstrated just how good golf courses can be for the environment, they've also caught the eye of *Golfweek Magazine*, which voted Neshanic Valley the 36th Best Municipal Golf Course in the United States. Congratulations, Darrell and Neshanic!

About the Award

For the uninitiated, the Arthur P. Weber Award was established to recognize an MGA member club that has demonstrated environmental stewardship through golf course maintenance, construction, education, and research. It is named in honor of past MGA President Arthur P. Weber, who passed away in 2008. Weber wrote an Environmental Code of Conduct for golf course maintenance at his home club, Old Westbury on Long Island, nearly two decades ago that many Met Area clubs still use as a model. Weber was a longtime member of the USGA Green Section and helped found the MGA Green Committee and the Tri-State Turf Research Foundation.

Past recipients of the award include Manhattan Woods Golf Club (2014), Wee Burn Country Club (2013), Rockland Country Club (2012), the Round Hill Club (2011), GlenArbor Golf Club (2010), Westchester Country Club (2009), Sebonack Golf Club (2008), and Trump National Golf Club ~ Bedminster (2007).

If you missed this year's seminar, be sure to schedule time to attend next year. There's always an outstanding lineup of speakers, and it's a great opportunity to showcase your course's environmental efforts with an application for the Arthur P. Weber Environmental Leaders in Golf Award.

We hope to see you in 2016!

Matt Ceplo, a member of the Tee to Green Editorial Committee, is superintendent at Rockland Country Club in Sparkill, NY.

Hurry!

Due Date for Scholarship Award Applications Is Fast-Approaching

Application forms for the 2015 MetGCSA Scholarship Awards are available on the Met website, www.metgcsa.org under the About Us tab, or through MetGCSA Executive Secretary Susan O'Dowd at sodowd@mgagolf.org or 914-909-4843.

Any Class A, Life A, SM, C, Life C, AF, or Life AF member of the MetGCSA or a dependent of a member is eligible to win.

If you have any questions about the application process, please feel free to contact Scholarship Chairman David Dudones at Westchester Country Club. You can reach him by calling 914-798-5361 or by sending an email to daviddudones@netscape.net.

The Scholarship Committee will select recipients based on leadership, maturity, scholastic capabilities, activities, and commitment to a chosen career. All applications **MUST be RECEIVED by end of business day on Friday, June 5. Emailed applications will not be accepted!**

Scholarships will be awarded at an upcoming event. Watch our calendar of events in the *Tee to Green* or on our association website for the precise date and site of the event.

New Canaan's Mike Roe Set to Host the Superintendent/Guest Tournament

by Steven McGlone

After only six months as superintendent at The Country Club of New Canaan, Mike Roe finds himself knee-deep in preparations for the Superintendent/Guest Tournament on May 11.

You may have played New Canaan before, but you probably weren't aware of its rather unique design and build history, which includes the work of Willie Park Jr., Alfred Tull, and last but not least, Robert Trent Jones.

The club started back in the 1890s as The Oenoke Field Club, a social playground for Manhattan- and Brooklyn-ites. Amenities included two lawn tennis courts and a pavilion for socializing, highlighted by Saturday afternoon tea.

It didn't take long for a few of the members to propose building a golf course. With the original site too small, they leased and then purchased the 208-acre St. John farm, along with a dilapidated farmhouse that became their clubhouse.

Willie Park Jr. was engaged to lay out the first nine holes, which he did one Sunday afternoon in 1895 during his first visit to this country. The membership decided to build the course themselves. They readied the land, excavated the bunkers, and opened four holes by the summer of 1897, ultimately finishing the first nine in 1900.

It wasn't until 1947 that the second nine were built, this time designed by Alfred Tull—after a failed attempt by the members, again, to complete the last nine holes themselves. A minor renovation in the 1950s by Robert Trent Jones left the course pretty much as it appears today, some 65 years later.

Last fall, the club rebuilt the 14th hole, as well as the bunkers on the 3rd and 8th holes.

This year, the club has hired Andrew Green as the new course architect and plans to restore both par 3s on the front nine, holes 5 and 7.

The Country Club of New Canaan is a relatively short course at 6,442 yards with a par of 71; however it plays tough. With small greens, overhanging trees along fairways, and blind bunkers, accurate placement off the tee is crucial.

Mike's Path to New Canaan

A native of Easton, a sleepy town on the Chesapeake Bay in the coastal lowlands of Maryland, Mike got his first taste of turfgrass management at the nearby Easton Club where he had the opportunity to work with Superintendent Ken McFadden. His love for the game of golf and appreciation for course management fueled the fire to pursue a four-year degree in turfgrass management from Pennsylvania State University.

As part of that education, Mike accepted an internship at The Riviera Country Club in Pacific Palisades, CA, where he spent long hours on the course learning the ropes with then Superintendent Paul Ramina.

After graduating from Penn State in 2005, Mike was hired once again by Ramina—this time at Hamilton Farm Golf Club in Gladstone, NJ. Starting as an intern, it wasn't long before Mike assumed the first assistant position. After two full seasons at Hamilton Farm, Mike made the move across the Hudson to the Met area, again serving alongside Ramina at the famed Winged Foot Golf Club as superintendent of the East Course. Here, Mike experienced what it takes to run a world-class operation, witnessing firsthand how important it is for superintendents to communicate with upper management and the membership.

After five long seasons at "The Foot," Mike made the move to Connecticut, working at Wee Burn Country Club with Superintendent Doug Drugo. Mike credits Doug for giving him the extra tutelage he needed to become a successful superintendent in the Northeast.

"Doug is an all-around great superintendent," says Mike. "He is very diligent with how the course is maintained but, at the same time, stresses not to over-think things. It was also great working with two other assistants who were dedicated to the job," adds Mike, referring to Justin Miller and Dave McCaffrey, who is now the super at Metropolis.

This past September, Mike accepted the superintendent position at The Country Club of New Canaan. Helping Mike transi-



Mike Roe

tion into his new role was outgoing superintendent Mike Reeb. "Mike spent two months on the property getting me up to speed," says Mike. "He was very helpful and a class act during the transition." Assistant Joe Imperio played a major role in learning the course.

With nearly 10 years in the golf course management industry under his belt, Mike is even more enamored with the business than he was when he started. "I like the artistic nature of the job," says Mike, "as well as the problem-solving aspect. Both add challenge and interest to the job."

Family Man

Mike married his wife, Shannon, the summer of 2013. The two met while working at the Hamilton Farm Golf Club, where Shannon held multiple positions within the club while putting herself through college. They have a wonderful 18-month-old son, Jacob, and are eager to move into the club-owned house that has been recently renovated.

While not on the links, Mike shares a passion for cooking with Shannon. They enjoy time outside on the grill, as well as concocting Italian dishes in the kitchen. They also value spending quality time with their son.

When asked about the best strategy for tackling the course during the upcoming Superintendent/Guest Tournament, Mike warns contestants to watch out for the trees. "There are about 2 million of them out there," he says with a smile, "so good luck. You will need every club in your bag."

Be sure to sign up for the Superintendent/Guest Tournament and see what Mike is up to at New Canaan. Bring along your GM, chairman, owner, or guest for a day of great food, golf, and camaraderie.

Steven McGlone, a member of the Tee to Green Editorial Committee and the MetGCSA Board of Directors, is course superintendent at Siwanoy Country Club in Bronxville, NY.

Century and Seibel to Host This Year's MetGCSA Invitational

by Kevin Collins

Century Country Club and Superintendent Kevin Seibel will host this year's MetGCSA Invitational Tournament on Tuesday, June 16. The Invitational is a golf competition earning the champions bragging rights for the year. Teams are comprised of the superintendent, golf pro, club president, and the greens chair. So, rally your teammates and get ready to rumble!

The Evolution of Century

Century Country Club is in its 117th year of existence. Founded in 1898, it was originally located in the Throgs Neck section of the Bronx adjacent to Long Island Sound. Architect Tom Bendelow designed a nine-hole course that played alongside the water. In 1904, the members purchased a 100-acre site in Greenburgh, NY, where they built an 18-hole course designed by Herbert Strong along with several tennis courts and riding stables.

Having grown tired of the hilly Herbert Strong layout, the members decided to move once again in 1922, purchasing 175 acres of land on Anderson Hill Road. They hired H.S. Colt and Charles Allison to build a new course, which opened in 1924. (By the way, that Greenburgh site didn't go away. It's the current home of Metropolis Country Club!)

Finally pleased with their location and layout, members merely had the course "tweaked" by iconic golf course architects A.W. Tillinghast, Robert Trent Jones Sr., and Gil Hanse to name several—until bringing Kevin on board in 2003 to implement a John Harvey master plan for the golf course.

Now in his 13th year at the club, Kevin has overseen the installation of new crushed-stone cart paths and a new irrigation system, a full bunker reconstruction and restoration project, greens expansions, the resodding of all the greens surrounds, drainage work, a tee construction and renovation project, and, last but not least, the

installation of a complete short-game practice area for the membership.

Always with an eye toward improvement, the club has recently hired renowned architect Keith Foster to "tweak" the course once again. Right now, Kevin's not sure what Keith has in store but looks forward to anything that will make this great course even better.

The Climb to Century

Kevin grew up in Magnolia, NJ, which is about 10 minutes from downtown Philadelphia. That might explain why, before golf, his passion was with all the Philly sports teams, particularly the Eagles—a team he followed at Veterans Stadium, holding season tickets, until the Vet was demolished, a particularly sad day for Kevin.

Kevin attended Pope Paul VI High School in Haddonfield, NJ. Being a big sports guy, he played varsity baseball for the school and in the local summer leagues. Kevin's first job on a golf course began the summer of his 16th year at Woodcrest Country Club in Cherry Hill, NJ. The superintendent then was none other than current Merion Golf Club head honcho, Matt Shaffer. Kevin would work on the crew all day, then round up the golf carts and finally the flag sticks to prevent the neighborhood kids from making away with them in the wee hours of the morning.

Kevin recalls one night when he went to collect the flags but had to turn back because of a bad electrical storm. "I told Matt it was too dangerous to be out on the course," says Kevin, "so next thing I knew, he jumped in his cart and headed out himself. Of course, he came back with all the sticks, pissed off, soaking wet, and mumbling under his breath that I was a complete wimp (or something like that)." Even 27 years later, Matt still enjoys telling that story any time Kevin's name comes up.

After high school, Kevin attended Rutgers, graduating from the two-year turf



Kevin Seibel

program while working for Rick Christian at Pine Valley. It was good training. "At Pine Valley, we had to maintain perfect conditions in a tough climate all the time. There was no room for error," Kevin remembers.

Kevin's next stop was Merion Golf Club working for Paul Latshaw. After two years, Paul left for Oak Hill, and Greg Armstrong assumed Paul's position as superintendent. Kevin's responsibility at that time was as the superintendent on the West Course. Greg left after the 2001 season and, lo and behold, Matt Shaffer was hired as superintendent in 2002.

It was that year, Kevin readily admits, that gave him the training and preparation he needed for the future. "Matt moved me over to the East Course (Championship Course)," remembers Kevin, "and I became his right-hand man. I had to implement all of Matt's programs, which were very different from what I had become accustomed to at Merion.

We were trying to get the course in U.S. Open-type shape: hard, fast, dry, and lean.

We pushed the turf to the edge to maintain those conditions, and while I worried that we may have been taking it too far, the turf did survive and the membership loved it. It was a trying year—the only time in my life that I dreamt about work. But looking back, it was the best thing that ever happened to me. It completed my education.”

A year later, Kevin was hired at Century as the club's superintendent. More than pleased with his move to Century, Kevin was eager to recognize the people who have been integral to his—and the club's—success: “The general manager, Burt Ward, has been very supportive and great to work with. My former assistant, Andy Hannah (now superintendent at Shuttle Meadow in CT), was with me every step of the way and was a huge asset in getting through the construction and providing the members with a well-conditioned golf course every day. The crew has also been tremendous.”

Life Outside Century

Kevin met the love of his life, Cary, in 1996, through Cary's brother Scott, who was Kevin's partner-in-crime at Eagles home games. After a three-year romance, Cary and Kevin married in 2000. They have three

great kids—Alex, 19; Ben, 13; and Lily, 8—who keep them more than busy.

Kevin spent a number of years coaching Ben's football and baseball teams and has, as he puts it, graduated to probably the most challenging position he has ever faced in sports: “I'm coaching Lily's 3rd grade softball team this season,” he laughs.

In addition to the children, the Seibel household includes three dogs and three cats. The newest addition is a mixed-breed canine named Ice. “That dog sheds entirely too much,” says Kevin. With Cary having volunteered for a pet adoption agency, she clearly has a sweet spot for furry creatures. And I have no doubt that there will be more pets joining the fray.

Kevin handles it well: He says nothing—which is definitely the correct strategy. But the pained expression on his face tells all!

I guarantee, though, that he'll be all smiles with a good turnout for our Annual Invitational on June 16. So don't delay in securing your spot on the roster!

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 Dryject Northeast/TurfPounders.

Century has turned out some prominent golfers during its history. Ben Hogan worked at the club as an assistant professional from 1938 to 1941. Member Dick Siderowf won the 1973 and 1976 British Amateur and was a member of three Walker Cup teams. Siderowf also captured five Met Amateurs and won the Met Player of the Year Award in 1976. The course at Century has long been considered one of the finest layouts in the Met area.

President's Message continued from page 1

recovery process is how long it takes. This is the time when patience is key. As superintendents, we just want to go out and fix the problem. Unfortunately, we can't control the weather, and when it comes to winter damage, recovery efforts often get hampered by cold spring temperatures.

Members start to get impatient. You get impatient. You start thinking you can pull off some sort of agronomic wizardry to get the greens back in play sooner than expected. Then you find that your efforts might have actually set you back or hampered your recovery efforts.

I know this sounds cliché, but sometimes less is more. I learned this the hard way, and I still carry that mantra with me today.

Last, and perhaps the most important aspect of getting through this experience, is to lean on your network of colleagues and industry professionals. Don't go it alone. I have just shared my experience with you, and there are many more who have suffered turf challenges and survived. You might find solace and advice from not just fellow superintendents, but also sales reps or USGA agronomists who are out there in the field and have put an eye on what's going on at other courses; they may have some useful suggestions—maybe even something in print that you can share with doubting members and Green Committee members.

One of the many benefits of being an active member of our association is building connections with some of the best and brightest turfgrass professionals in the country. Learning from their firsthand experiences is beyond what you can find in a textbook or on Google. Please feel free to reach out to me, even if we haven't met. That's part of building your network.

Good luck to all of you in your turfgrass recovery efforts. The 2015 season has finally arrived and the busy time is upon us. I hope to see you at the Superintendent/Guest Tournament at The Country Club of New Canaan on May 11. Join fellow members for some fun and camaraderie. Looking at your damaged turf all day won't make it come back any faster!

**Glen Dube, CGCS
President**

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