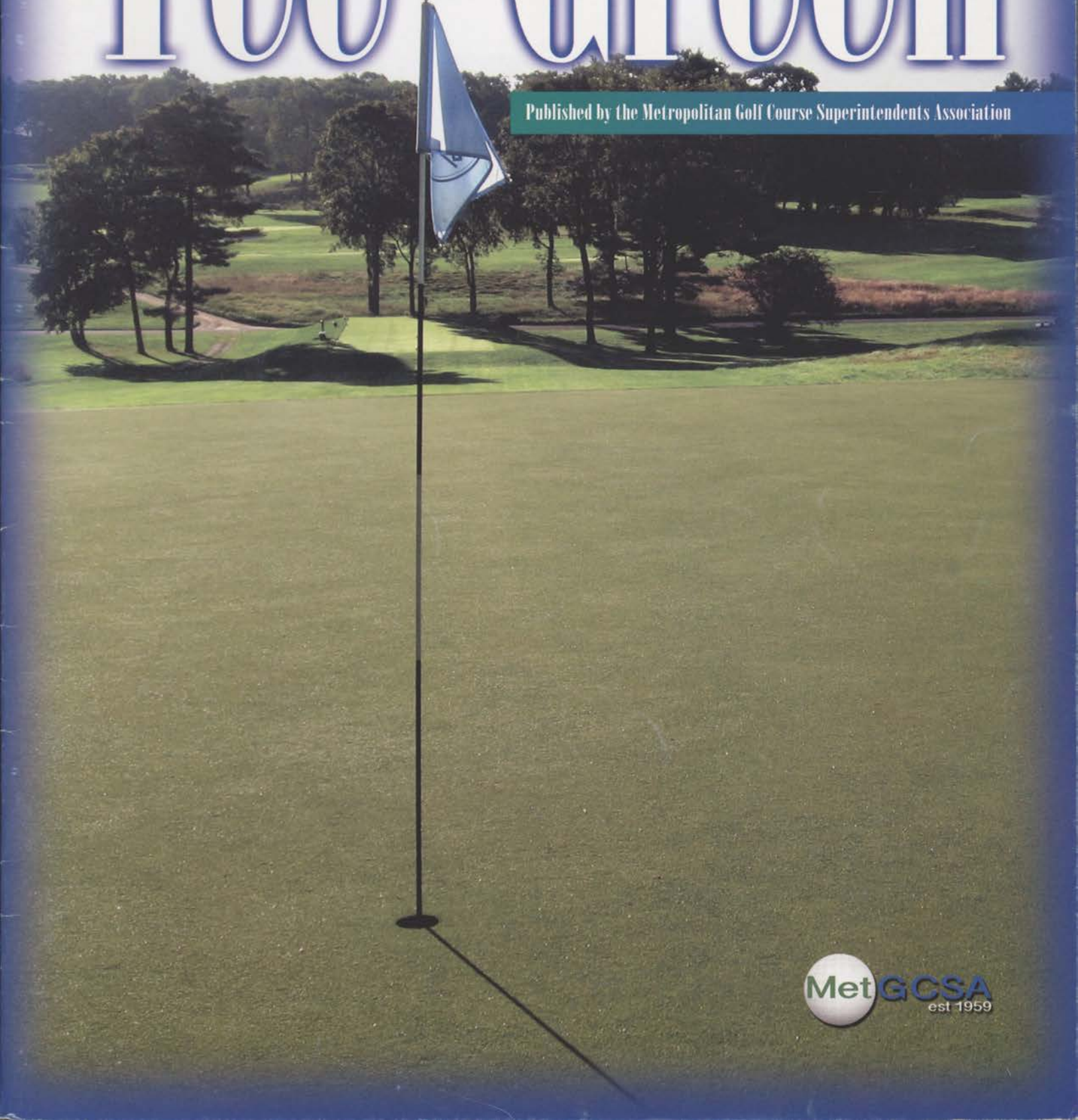


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# Tee To Green

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# Tee To Green



Cover: Meadow Brook Club.

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# President's Message

## Springing Into a Season of Events

Current Periodicals  
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pring ... *WHAT* spring?! Mother Nature has really put our agronomic skills to the test. In a mere six weeks, we went from the harshest winter that we can remember to summertime conditions. And the weather continues to throw us some curveballs. Unseasonably high temperatures, a five- to six-inch rain deficit, and a never-ending to-do list made for one dizzying start to our season. Fortunately, we've received some much-needed rain and relief from the drought. We can catch our breath and get ready for the battle ahead of us.

### The Silver Lining

One upside to the lack of early spring rain was that our season-opening golf events went off without a hitch. On April 28, we were treated to a special day at Glen Arbor Golf Club. Ken Benoit hosted the 2015 Dave Mahoney Two-Ball Championship Qualifier and did not disappoint. The course was in magnificent shape, and the staff at Glen Arbor rolled out the red carpet for us. Adding to the pleasure was the beautiful weather and the fact that the event was well attended. What more can we ask for? Thanks, Ken!

Our next event, the Superintendent/Guest Tournament, was held on May 11 at Country Club of New Canaan and hosted by Mike Roe. We were treated, once again, to a sun-soaked day and played on another immaculately conditioned golf course. Thank you, Mike, and the entire Country Club of New Canaan staff for your wonderful hospitality.

The Tournament Committee added a new twist to this year's event: The Yellow Ball. Each foursome received a yellow golf ball and had to be sure to finish the entire round with it while also shooting the lowest score. We certainly had a blast with this addition to the day and hope to try our luck at it again next year.

The MetGCSA's marquis golf event, our annual Invitational, was held at Century



Glen Dube, CGCSA  
MetGCSA President

Country Club on June 16. We had 28 groups—the most in 10 years—come out for the event. The golf course was in pristine condition, and the food was delicious. We owe special thanks to our superintendent host, Kevin Seibel, and the entire staff at Century for providing us with a memorable experience and spectacular day.

### What the Summer Has in Store

I was pleased to see such great attendance at our first three events. There were a lot of new faces, and some I haven't seen in a while. Let's keep that trend going.

We follow that with a return trip July 13 to Orienta Point Beach Club in Mamaroneck, NY, for *our annual Summer Social*. This adults-only event offers a great opportunity for catching up with friends and colleagues. I'm hoping the weather cooperates this year so we can take full advantage of the club's picturesque beach area and enjoy socializing by the bonfire. So put on your casual summer attire (collared shirts for men *continued on page 12*

Feature

# The Care and Feeding of Native Areas: Two Perspectives From Two Industry Veterans



In

an industry forever looking for ways to cut costs, many superintendents have entertained the idea of converting intensively managed turf to naturalized landscapes, hoping to save on fuel, fertilizer, irrigation, pesticide, and labor costs. But going natural should not be confused with letting Nature take over. Naturalized areas can demand just as much time and effort to maintain as any finely groomed turf. It's just that their success relies on a different type of plant management and a low-maintenance, but methodical approach to maintaining their aesthetic appeal and practicality. The last thing you want to do, after all, is create an overgrown no-man's land for irretrievable golf balls.

What follows are two perspectives on what it takes to create and manage native areas. In the first piece, Rockland Country Club Superintendent Matt Ceplo, who's received recognition from both the MGA and GCSAA for his environmental efforts, describes his serendipitous start in cultivating true naturalized areas on his course. In Matt's case, aesthetics were less the driving force behind his effort than establishing a welcoming habitat for the plants, insects, and animals around us.

In the next piece, John Bresnahan of Bayer Environmental Science, offers prescriptive advice on managing naturalized areas to create and maintain aesthetic interest without sacrificing playability.

If you're contemplating going natural on some part of your course or just battling to maintain an area already gone native, we're confident you'll find what you need here. And if you haven't yet made the leap, Matt and John's perspectives might just inspire you to begin an environmental effort of your own on your course.

# The Beauty of Golf Course Native Areas

*Rockland Superintendent Matt Ceplo Describes His Journey in Discovering the True Meaning of Going Natural*

**T**It was a beautiful September afternoon, not a cloud in the sky and just enough of a gentle breeze to allow the meadow grass to shimmer and sway. We had 13 girl scouts at the course that day, observing and learning about our environmental efforts and how we encourage butterflies to live on the course. The group was huddled around one of the scouts, as she gently placed an identification sticker on the wing of a Monarch butterfly that had just been caught resting on some milkweed. The I.D. number, sex of the butterfly, and location were written down on the sheet that was provided. This Monarch was about to start its annual fall migration all the way to Mexico.

When the Monarch was released, the whole troop cheered the butterfly on. "Good luck!" hollered one. "See you in Mexico!" yelled another. The butterfly took to the wind and was gone in a matter of seconds. To think such a small, fragile butterfly could make it all the way to Mexico. Observing this kind of miracle of nature is just one example of the many benefits of creating naturalized areas on your course.

## What Areas Qualify as Native?

The areas that I favor for naturalization are those that are basically out of the range of play. They're the wooded areas and their edges or out-of-bound areas or hazards. They might include pond and stream banks, even entrance roads or property boundaries—any area that's not intended for play and offers different types of habitats for plants and animals. If you hit your ball in one of these areas, odds are you won't be able to find it, let alone hit it!

Though many create naturalized areas on their courses with the hope of reducing maintenance costs, this rarely provides the savings expected. The reality: There is no such thing as a maintenance-free area. But if you concentrate on allowing natives to dominate these areas, you can realize some savings, especially if you compare these maintenance efforts with what it takes to maintain nicely manicured bluegrass lawns. In the end, no matter where you create native areas, they're not going to stay native without a fair amount of time and effort.

And sadly, we are mostly to blame for the labor-intensive nature of native areas! Because of our often-unknowing introduction of invasive plants and animals, native areas require a lot of attention to become—and remain—truly native.

Take, for instance, the wooded area to the right of our 12th hole. One day, we found a couple of spicebush butterflies flying around there. No surprise, we soon discovered that we had a whole bunch of spicebush, the main host plant for the spicebush butterfly, right there in the woods on 12. Here was an area of the course that we would just blow leaves into. Now we go into that area regularly with loppers to cut back the invasive burning bushes, bittersweet, and barberry bushes to allow the spicebushes room to flourish and grow.

## When the Native Bug Bit Me

Like most everyone in the turf business, I went to school for turf. Ecology? What was that? I started out with unirrigated, out-of-play rough areas because they were too far from the double-row system we had.

For years we mowed these areas at 2.5 inches and applied a spring preemergent, a couple of fertilizer applications, and the occasional dandelion, clover spray. If we had a typical summer, these areas would go dormant. If we had a particularly hot dry August, they would turn into dust bowls.

Hoping to save some budget dollars, we decided to let many of these areas grow in; we simply stopped mowing them. We knew we would be providing habitat but, at that point, had no idea of the opportunities that

*Dogbane (below) is a native perennial that is a great nectar source for pollinators and is the host plant for tussock moths. These moths can emit sounds that will confuse a bat's sonar and help them dodge being eaten by the bats.*



*A bumblebee, fritillary butterfly, and hairstreak butterfly (left) enjoy their perch on a milkweed plant.*

existed. The first couple of years, these areas were great stands of pure drought-tolerant grasses. After all, that's all that could survive regular mowings and no irrigation. But as time passed, other plants started colonizing these areas.

One of the first was milkweed. No other plant growing in the middle of a grassy area sticks out more than milkweed. So, of course, we began getting complaints that these areas looked unkempt. In the end, however, it was this unsightly plant that became the start of my ecological native management efforts, indirectly earning the membership's support for creating native areas.

Milkweed, I quickly learned, is the only plant that Monarch butterflies lay their eggs on, so I knew I needed to find a way to get the club to embrace this plant's benefits and allow it to thrive in our edges. I decided to see if I could find any caterpillars, and sure enough, after some trial and error, I found what I was looking for.

I then went out and purchased an aquarium, loaded it up with plants and caterpillars, and placed it in the ladies locker room. I figured if the ladies reacted well to this microcosm of a natural habitat, then I could expand.

The caterpillars instantly became a hit, and the aquarium became a topic of conversation. I must say, the caterpillars are pretty handsome creatures, and the metamorphosis from caterpillar to butterfly is amazing to watch. The idea that the DNA of a butterfly is the same as that of the caterpillar is remarkable to me.

We now place the aquarium in the main foyer of the clubhouse every summer. It generates interest and, more important, sparks conversation about how we maintain our edges for the environment.

## A Labor of Love

Since the introduction of milkweed, we have had numerous plants begin colonizing areas. Of course, as a turf school graduate, I

knew next to nothing about the care and feeding of native areas—or cultivating our native versus invasive species.

So the learning began. Over the past 10 years, I have done a lot of research. I've spent many hours on Google looking up plants, trying to identify them, learning their purpose. Everything native is here for a reason. It has a job to do in nature.

Take thistle, for example. I learned that there are more than 45 different native species of thistle in the United States. In general it's a great plant, but to complicate matters Canada thistle was just put on the New York invasive species list. Thistle is great for pollinators, and this plant's seeds are eaten by birds. It is especially important for finches because they make their nests in thistle. But try convincing the golf committee that the seven-foot-tall bull thistle on the eighth hole is there for finches!

Actually, it hasn't been as hard a sell as you would think. I have found it very rewarding when I explain why certain plants are allowed to grow. Once educated, most people will at least acknowledge that these edges are far from unmanaged. At Rockland, we have 130 acres, and I like to say *all* of it is managed to some degree.

## Spotting the Foreigners

Even without doing any research at all, if you *really* observe your landscape, you can pretty much pick out the plants that aren't native. Take forsythia. What layperson would ever suspect that one of the most common spring flowering shrubs in our area is *not* native? Well, surprise! This plant is actually from China.

Now, I have no problem with China, but apparently our insects do. Next time you're looking at a forsythia bush, look a little closer. You won't see a single bee or insect searching for nectar in one of the flowers! That's a sure sign that a plant is not native.

Another common spring plant, the dandelion, is also not native—though, I have seen a few sweat bees on them. Clover, on the other

hand, is obviously a native plant; it is usually teeming with bees.

In the book *Bringing Nature Home* by University of Delaware professor Doug Tallamy, I learned that there are more than 557 different kinds of caterpillars on oak trees. By contrast, there are only three species on the Ginkgo tree, which is also native to China.

In all my reading on this topic, there is one thing that all the writers and researchers seem to agree on: If we are to maintain the balance of nature and allow our native plants, insects, and animals to thrive, we should manage our properties as close to the way Nature intended.

## I've Done a 180

After delving into the ecology of our landscape, my thinking has changed 180 degrees. We shouldn't just sit back and think we are stewards of the environment because our golf courses provide open space. We should try to do more.

Take the Florida citrus industry. They have groves that span thousands of acres. They boast oxygen-producing, carbon-sequestering benefits, which is true, but of course, citrus trees are not native to Florida; they are from Valencia. Nonetheless, the citrus industry touts that they're friendly to the environment and are good neighbors, practicing sustainability, helping the water supply with groundwater recharge, holding storm water, producing oxygen, and enhancing air quality.

Sound familiar?

Are golf courses, with their bentgrass fairways, bluegrass roughs that much different? A bit. Those Florida citrus groves are designed to leave large tracts of land undeveloped for wildlife habitat and natural buffers. The citrus industry—sustainable agriculture—realizes the importance of these “native areas.” Do we?

If you asked me 15 years ago what the best way to be environmentally proactive was, I would have said, “Everyone stay off. No trespassing. Let nature take its course.” I have since come to the conclusion that that would be one of the worst things we could do. We need to manage *all* the land. If left untended, I'm afraid our lush green fairways would just become overgrown with foreign intruders—upsetting the natural balance among native plants, insects, and animals.

Take those caterpillars: They are a tremendous food source for birds and other wildlife. And nearly 20 percent of the red fox's diet consists of insects. These are just a few more of the countless examples of the delicate balance of nature, and to think, we have the power, in what we do, to play a part in seeing that this important relationship among plants, insects, and animals continues.



*A living example of the life stages of a monarch butterfly.*

# Managing Naturalized Areas

*Bayer's John Bresnahan Offers Practical tips for Keeping Weeds at Bay and Balls in Play*

Naturalized areas continue to be popular among golf course superintendents. And no wonder. They help create an aesthetically pleasing contrast to intensely managed turf while enhancing wildlife habitat. But contrary to what many believe, these areas require time and effort to establish and maintain. If left to grow at Nature's will, naturalized areas will quickly become little more than large weed patches and overgrown eyesores. The key to ensuring the success of any naturalized areas you create on your course is, in short, careful plant selection and maintenance planning and execution.

Here are a few of the essentials in creating a pleasing and sustainable native area on your course.

## Plant Selection and Maintenance Planning

Selecting the proper plantings is Job #1. After all, the types of indigenous or non-native plants you choose for your naturalized areas will have a significant impact on maintenance needs. For instance:

- *Monostands or mixes* consisting of fescues, lovegrass, bluestems, broomsedge, wheatgrass, Indiangrass, and others can provide a clean contrast to playable turf and require minimal maintenance. They are great for sloped areas prone to erosion, and some varieties even have natural weed defenses.
- *Native flowers and wildflowers* add color to a course but require more care to ensure seasonal blooms and growth succession over invasive, aggressive weeds. When grown from seed, wildflowers may take up to three years to provide the impact desired. Some of the most popular choices for golf courses include cosmos, yarrow, baby's breath, black-eyed Susan, primrose, poppy, and Shasta daisy.

Controlling weeds in a naturalized area inhabited by wildflowers can be challenging. Herbicides meant to knock down broadleaf weeds may also kill wildflowers—which are categorized as broadleaf species. That means these wildflower areas may require hand-weeding and spot-spraying to manage the broadleaf weeds.

Weedy grasses, however, can be controlled with selective herbicides. If planting wildflowers, you should consider the size of the planting area realizing that these areas will require some hand-weeding to achieve the full benefits.

## Prepping an Area to Go Natural

Establishing strong, healthy plants is key for weed management in naturalized areas. When beginning a new area, use a nonselective chemical treatment to eliminate weeds and then lightly till. Then use a low seed rate per acre to avoid thick stands of vegetation. Be sure to time seeding with seasonal rains to minimize the need for irrigation. *With new areas, it is important to communicate progress to members, because plants may take years to develop and achieve the desired effect.*

One way to avoid waiting for the area to develop is to use established plants if available. Plant them in the fall to make the most of favorable soil temperatures and decreased weed pressure. You could also cut costs by building an out-of-sight nursery to grow native varieties until they're ready for planting.

Mature plants should be spaced apart so players have room to walk in and play a missed shot back onto a fairway. A number of grass options—including lovegrass, fescues, broomsedge, and bluestem—work well in these areas.

## Promoting Healthy, Playable Growth

To sustain the integrity and playability of the course landscape, you'll want to include seasonal thinning, trimming, mowing, and spraying of naturalized areas in your routine maintenance schedule.

Preemergent herbicides should be the pillar of any naturalized area maintenance plan. Most preemergent herbicides labeled for golf course use evolved from crop applications, which typically control tall and unsightly weeds commonly found in naturalized areas. These include grassy weeds such as barnyardgrass, foxtail, johnsongrass, panicum, and witchgrass, as well as broadleaf weeds like spurge, lambsquarter, pigweed, and smartweed. Since most pre-

*Good Idea:  
Label the  
indigenous grasses  
and flowers to both  
educate players  
and help remind  
maintenance crews  
which plants are  
intentional.*



emergent herbicides affect only the roots of germinating weed seeds, they are generally labeled for use on mature grasses with a well-established root system.

Using herbicides to preventively control weeds will be the most cost-effective strategy. If you can prevent outbreaks with one product application, you'll save yourself the time and expense of applying multiple products on multiple weed varieties. Check your product labels—particularly the ornamental sections—carefully to determine plant tolerance before making applications. It never hurts, however, to test the product on a small area before applying it to a larger one.

More specifically, it's a good idea to:

- Apply herbicides annually as part of your routine maintenance. Other strategies such as mowing and thinning the vegetation will promote healthy growth and keep the area playable.
- Mow naturalized areas twice a year, once in the spring to provide for a clean, fresh growing season and again in the fall before plants go dormant. Thinning the vegetation

will also promote healthy growth and keep the area playable.

- Apply a preemergent herbicide spring and fall to control weeds.
- Consider getting a permit for a controlled burn of an area that has been established for a few years. Scheduling an annual burn during the early spring months will encourage hearty growth and renew soil.
- Apply a preemergent herbicide once new growth appears to prevent grassy and broadleaf weeds from invading the area.
- Use postemergent broadleaf herbicides, which are effective on naturalized grass areas.

Eliminate unsightly grassy weeds using one of several postemergent grass herbicides. Study product labels closely to determine if your stand will tolerate the herbicide.

Naturalized areas on golf courses continue to be a developing trend. And when created and managed methodically, naturalized areas can give superintendents a visually appealing contrast to the manicured playing areas, while enhancing the environment.

## New Members

Please join us in welcoming the following new MetGCSA members:

- **Tanner Collins**, Class C, Silver Spring Country Club, Ridgefield, CT
- **Kathy Conard**, Class AF, Turf Diagnostics, Inc., Briarcliff Manor, NY
- **Peter Jacobson**, Class AF, BASF Corporation, West Dennis, MA
- **Casey Sheehy**, Class C, Silver Spring Country Club, Ridgefield, CT
- **Paul Thompson**, Class C, Centennial Golf Club, Carmel, NY

## In Sympathy

We would like to offer our sincere condolences to SUNY Delhi's **Dominic Morales** and his family. Dom's wife, Susan, passed away May 15 at 63. In Sue's honor, donations may be made to the Morales Family Scholarship Fund. Checks should be made payable to The Delhi College Foundation. Please note on check The Morales Family Scholarship Fund, and mail to the College Foundation, 454 Delhi Drive, Delhi, NY 13753.

Our deepest sympathy to Old Oaks Assistant **Jason Anderson** whose brother, Paul Thomas Anderson, passed away suddenly on May 21 at age 41. Paul is survived by his wife, Sheri, and three children, Zachary, Isabella, and Giovanni.

We also regret to announce the passing of **Dr. Joseph Troll** on June 14. Dr. Troll was well known in the Met area as a "pioneer of modern turfgrass research," for his efforts in running industry conferences and many fundraising efforts. He earned his master's degree and doctorate at UMass where he taught turf management for 40 years. A native of New Jersey and resident of Hadley, MA, for 51 years, Dr. Troll passed away peacefully in Florida, where he and his wife, Lonnie, of more than 70 years had made their home.

Our deepest sympathy to Lonnie and family. If you wish to extend your condolences to Lonnie, please send them to: 16720 SE 78 Lillywood Court, The Villages, FL 32162.

*Something to Consider:  
Monitor the amount of wildlife living  
in the naturalized area. If animals or  
insects have become pests to players,  
decrease the amount of food- and  
shelter-giving plants.*



## Upcoming Events

# Must-Attend MetGCSA and Industry Events!

## The List Is Growing!

### Summer Social

Monday, July 13  
Orienta Beach Club  
Mamaroneck, NY

Enjoy the company of colleagues and a delicious lobster clambake dinner at this picturesque venue overlooking the Long Island Sound. Visit [metgcsa.org](http://metgcsa.org) for further details!

### Family Picnic

Wednesday, July 22  
Bedford Village Memorial Park  
Bedford, NY

Join fellow members for a BBQ, swimming, bouncy castle, and fun and games for the whole family. Visit [metgcsa.org](http://metgcsa.org) for details!

### Scholarship & Parent/Child Tournament

Tuesday, August 4  
Mosholu Golf Course  
Bronx, NY  
Host: Dave Moffett  
Watch for details!

### 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 Hosts: Dave Peterson and Bobby Jewett

### 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

### Met Area Team Championship

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

## Educational Events

### The 2015 UMass Turf Research Field Day

Wednesday, July 15  
UMass Joseph Troll Turf Research Center  
South Deerfield, MA

For more information about this event, visit <http://ag.umass.edu/events/fieldday15>.

### 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](http://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](http://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, NJ

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](http://www.njturfgrass.org).

### MetGCSA Winter Seminar

Wednesday, January 13, 2016  
Westchester Country Club  
Rye, NY

Assistant Host: David Dudones



## GCSAA Reveals Proposed Update to Member Standards

With input gathered from the Chapter Delegates Meeting held in the fall of last year, as well as ongoing feedback from constituents, the GCSAA Board of Directors has revised the proposal for Member Standards. Here's a look at the outcome:

- **The Superintendent Member (SM) classification** will be renamed Class B. By eliminating the SM classification and replacing it with a Class B designation, it is thought that the use of Class A, Class B, and Class C as our three professional classifications of membership will be more clearly understood by employers and influential golfers.

- **A new, more inclusive definition of Class A** has been crafted that will allow individuals to maintain Class A status when they no longer hold a golf course superintendent job, but have secured employment within the golf industry, as long as the ongoing requirements continue to be fulfilled.

- **The proposed model for Class A eligibility** continues to be based on a sliding scale of formal education, superintendent years of experience, and continuing education. The scale is based on a combined formula of 20 points, with a set point value assigned to your level of formal education and a variable combination of continuing education and experience. Service points will no longer be a component of eligibility.

- **Class A renewal** continues to require a total of 5 points over a five-year period.

However, they have been enhanced to include a minimum of 3.0 education points rather than the current minimum of 2.0 education points. Service points for renewal will now be focused on golf-centric activities. These include everything from serving on your Chapter or GCSAA Board of Directors to speaking at a regional or national conference or participating in environmental advocacy activities.

Possessing a pesticide license or passing the GCSAA IPM Exam will continue to be a requirement of eligibility and renewal. The GCSAA IPM Exam fee will be eliminated.

- **Superintendent Members who were "grandfathered"** in 2003 will now need to fulfill the enhanced requirements within a specified time period to maintain their Class A status.

"The proposed changes to both the eligibility and renewal requirements," explains GCSAA President John O'Keefe, "further demonstrate that education and experience are fundamental to achieving Class A status and enhance the value of Class A status now and in the future."

### The Next Step

The plan is to finalize the proposal with chapter delegates' input at the 2015 Chapter Delegates Meeting this fall. The final proposal will be presented for a membership vote at the 2016 Golf Industry Show in San Diego.

If anyone has any questions regarding the proposed Membership Standards, feel free to contact GCSAA directly. You can also check [gcsaa.org](http://gcsaa.org) for any updates.

*"The proposed changes to both the eligibility and renewal requirements," explains GCSAA President John O'Keefe, "further demonstrate that education and experience are fundamental to achieving Class A status and enhance the value of Class A status now and in the future."*

## Met Golf Event Competition at Season-Opening Event

by Doug Drugo

Despite the tough winter and a slow spring, we have had overwhelming participation in our season-opening golf events: The David Mahoney Two-Ball Qualifier and the Superintendent/Guest Tournament. The Met Tournament Committee would like to thank everyone for taking time out of their hectic schedules to support our events. Check our calendar on page 7, and please plan to attend the meetings planned for the balance of the season!

Here's a look at the top wins in our first two events. . . .

### Dave Mahoney Two-Ball Qualifier

The 2015 Dave Mahoney Two-Ball Qualifier was hosted by Ken Benoit at Glen Arbor Golf Club. As always, Ken had the golf course in pristine condition and, more impressively, dialed up a perfect day of weather. This year's Two-Ball event had 36 groups vying for 32 positions, so this was indeed a true qualifying event. After the dust settled and a great day of golf was had by all, flight seeding fell into place.

Here are the top three finishers in the First and Second flights:

#### First Flight

- #1 Sean Cain, *Sunningdale CC*  
Steve Rabideau, *Winged Foot GC*  
(Past Champs)
- #2 Matt Topazio, *New York CC*  
Dave Lippman, *Westchester Turf Supply*
- #3 Matt Ceplo, *Rockland CC*  
Jim Swiatlowski, *Montammy GC*

# ors Have a Ball

## Second Flight

- #1 Ken Benoit, *GlenArbor GC*  
Greg Gutter, *The Care of Trees*  
(Past Champs & 2015 Low Net)
- #2 Matt Neus, *Knollwood CC*  
Jeff Houde, *Tom Irwin*
- #3 Nick Lerner, *Bonnie Briar CC*  
Kevin Collins, *Aquatrols*

Sean Cain and Steve Rabideau are the reigning First Flight Champs from 2014's Two-Ball season and will hold on to their top seed for at least one more year. The team of Matt Topazio/Dave Lippman had a strong day at GlenArbor, posting the low net round for 2015's First Flight. Team Ceplo/Swiatlowski was not far behind, and judging by the way Jim tore through the field at the GIS Tournament in San Antonio, this duo is going to be a tough defeat in this year's Two-Ball Championship.

The Second Flight saw the team of Ken Benoit and Greg Gutter picking up right where they left off in 2014 as last year's Second Flight Champs. They also claimed this year's Second Flight Low Net at GlenArbor. Great job Ken and Greg, but don't get too comfortable in that top spot. Flight II has a few ringers who are looking to knock you off your perch!

Please visit [www.metgcsa.org](http://www.metgcsa.org) to view all the matches in the Two-Ball bracket, and good luck to all of those who made match play!

**Reminder:** For those playing in the Two-Ball, please remember that the winning team from each match is required to report its score to Larry Pakkala at [lpakkala@optonline.net](mailto:lpakkala@optonline.net). If you have a story to share about your match along with any photos, please send those along too, and we'll run them with the results in the *Tee to Green!*

## Match Due Dates

First-round, Sweet 16 matches should have been completed by June 30. Players should be sure to complete the balance of their matches by the following dates:

**Elite 8:** August 8

**Final 4 ~ Semi's:** September 5

**Finals:** October 3

## Superintendent/Guest Tournament

This year's Superintendent/Guest event was held at Country Club of New Canaan and hosted by new Superintendent Mike Roe. Mike had the golf course dialed-in nicely for the day, and the recently completed course construction looked and played terrifically. The format for the day was switched from a Two-Person Best Ball to Four-Person Best Ball of group with a weighted Yellow Ball game.

**So what is the Yellow Ball Format?** It's a Four-Person Best Ball Net event with a yellow

ball rotating through the foursome. Each team member plays the yellow ball individually on their respective holes and posts their net score per hole. The goal is to finish the 18-hole event without losing the yellow ball. If the yellow ball is lost, your team is out of the competition.

The results of the day provided some strong net and gross scores, but the only ones that mattered were the yellow-ball totals. After some minor triage was performed to mend wounds sustained in teams' yellow ball searches, the team of Mike Roe (New Canaan CC), Dave McCaffrey (Metropolis CC), Justin Miller (Wee Burn CC), and Doug Drugo (Wee Burn CC) came out on top.

## Special Thanks

The Tournament Committee would like to extend a special thank you to Ken Benoit and GlenArbor, as well as Mike Roe and New Canaan for supporting our association and hosting the first two events of the year. Thank you, again, for all who participated in the Two-Ball and Superintendent/Guest tournaments. We look forward to seeing you at the remaining events of the 2015 season.

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

# Nine and Dine at the Mine

*Host Superintendent Larry Pakkala Welcomes the Return of the Nine and Dine to Silvermine*

The MetGCSA's annual Nine and Dine Event is making a return trip September 23 to the Silvermine Golf Club in Norwalk, CT. Our superintendent host, Larry Pakkala, has once again secured this wonderful venue for our popular, season-ending event where all are invited to come out and enjoy an evening of friendly competition. Assistants, mechanics, crew members, and guests are all welcome. Prizes will be awarded on all three nines if there is a full field of players.

### About the Course . . .

**Design:** Silvermine Golf Club is a 90-acre, 27-hole course located in Norwalk, CT. Founded in 1959, Silvermine was designed by the club's owner, John Warner, and built with the help of his two sons, Jack and Bill Warner. The club started as a nine-hole course and was later expanded to its current 27 holes.

The original course, now known as the Pro Shop nine, offers unrestricted, relatively rapid play, and is ideal for families, beginners, and junior golfers. The 18-hole course, with several doglegs, small, elevated greens, and numerous water hazards, demands mastery of a wide range of golfing skills.

In 2005, the course's bunkers, tees, and several greens were restored. Now, the club is working with Golf Course Architects Mark Mungeam and Tim Gerrish to complete a long-range plan that includes a series of bunker, tee, and green renovations.

**Word to the Wise:** Don't be fooled by the scorecard, which makes the course appear on the short side. Though it's a par 70 from the men's tees and measures just 5,900 yards, the course's narrow, tree-lined fairways and small, challenging greens, make scoring difficult. You will find, in fact, that it plays as tough as courses measuring much longer.

### About Our Host . . .

**Industry Experience:** Larry's entire life has been centered in the golf business. His first position on a course was working at Philadelphia Country Club, where his brother, DJ, was superintendent at the time. Larry also gained valuable experience as the assistant superintendent at the prestigious Merion Golf Club in Ardmore, PA, and then as superintendent at Bermuda's Mid Ocean Club. Four years later, more-than-ready to leave island life, Larry returned to the States. In 1981, he took the superintendent's job at St. Andrew's Golf Club in Hastings-on-Hudson, NY, where he had the opportunity to work with Jack Nicklaus. From there, Larry moved to Woodway Country Club in Darien, CT, where he was superintendent for 25 years.

After leaving Woodway in 2008, Larry thought he would finish off his career in the golf business with a sales position with Plant Food Company. But five years later, the superintendent position opened at the Silvermine Golf Club, and Larry felt the pull to return to the profession. He has been the superintendent at Silvermine since 2013.

**Education:** Larry completed an A.S. in landscape architecture from Cerritos Junior College in Norwalk, CA, and the two-year turfgrass management program at Penn State University.

**Professional Notes:** An active participant and contributor to the turfgrass industry, Larry served as the Met's president, spending 11 years on the board and chairing or sitting on just about every committee. He's currently serving on the Tournament, Long-Range Planning & Steering, and the Awards committees.

Larry was also the founding president of the Tri-State Turf Research Foundation in 1991 and served on the first GCSAA committee responsible for establishing the GCSAA Foundation.

While superintendent of Woodway, Larry was among the first to become involved in



*Larry Pakkala, CGCS*

the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program (ACSP) and one of the first 25 clubs in the country to meet all the program's criteria, becoming a certified cooperative sanctuary in 1993.

It's work like this that led the Met to award Larry the prestigious Sherwood A. Moore Award, which honors superintendents who have contributed to "advancing the professional image, status, and reputation of the golf course superintendent."

**Family and Fun:** Larry and his wife of 40 years, Carole, live in a home they purchased just off the 13th hole at Silvermine. They have two daughters who live nearby. Christina, 39, lives with her husband and 7-year-old son, Lucas, in Norwalk, CT, and Lauren, 34, lives in Wilton, CT, and will be married in September. Larry's favorite pastimes, aside from golf: relaxing at the beach and reading.

**For More on Larry:** Please refer to our website, [www.metgcsa.org](http://www.metgcsa.org), to retrieve the archived July/August 2014 issue where his full profile last appeared.

## The MetGCSA Is Meadow Brook Bound

*Superintendent John Carlone Welcomes Tripleheader Event—the Met Championship, Met Area Team Championship Qualifier, AND the Poa Annual—to Meadow Brook*

October 13 will be a busy day at the Meadow Brook Club. Superintendent John Carlone has agreed to host not only the Met Championship and Met Area Team Championship Qualifier, but also NYSTA's Poa Annual Tournament.

Of course, Meadow Brook is no stranger to golf events. Aside from the numerous Met and other association events John has hosted in his 19-year tenure at the club, Meadow Brook has opened its doors to a large number of highly visible tournaments, starting with all of the Metropolitan Golf Association's and Met PGA's major championships. Among them: the Met Open, Met Amateur, The Ike, the Met PGA Championship, the Head Pro Championship, Assistants Championship, and the LI PGA Championship. In the early 1980s, the club also hosted the LPGA Golden Lights Championship, and then from 1987 to 2002, the Champions TOUR event with World Golf Hall of Famers Lee Trevino, Gary Player, and Raymond Floyd among the winners.

### A Club With a History

Rich in history and tradition, the Meadow Brook Hunt Club, as it's still officially known, has been through many transformations—and several locations in its 134-year history. It first opened its doors as a polo and fox-hunting club in Westbury, NY, in 1881 and eventually landed in its current location in 1955 as the golf club it is today. Architect Dick Wilson built the original 18-hole championship-style golf course, which was modified in 1967 by Wilson's protégé, Joe Lee.

Today, the course boasts several dogleg-left par 4 and par 5 holes, thick 3.5" primary rough, and beautiful, wide-open rolling terrain. But it's the large putting surfaces at Meadow Brook that earn the course its championship status. Totalling 4 acres, they average just over 7,500 square feet, with the largest being the 12,200-square-foot number one green.

"Meadow Brook is, and always has been, devoted to golf," says John. "There's no tennis, pool, or even dinner service in the clubhouse. The membership," he adds, "is made up of serious golfers, many with single-digit handicaps."

### How It All Began

As if hiring in their own image, the members at Meadow Brook recruited John—a serious golfer, in December 1996. He quickly became part of club history, as he prepped the course for the next six years—from 1997 to 2002—for the Champions TOUR Long Island Classic.

"I had always wanted to run a golf course that hosted a professional tournament, and I thoroughly enjoyed the challenge of preparing for those events," says John.

Hooked on the game of golf at age 11, John played competitively at the junior level, becoming a member of his Portsmouth, RI, high school team, which never lost a regular season match.

John continued to play golf three years into college at the University of Rhode Island, and though he toyed with the idea of becoming a touring pro, John found his way into turf management with the help of the late Dr. Skogley, then a professor in URI's Plant Science Department.

While earning his B.S. in Turf Management, John did his placement training at Westchester Country Club in Rye, NY, working for then superintendent Ted Horton. After graduating in 1983, he worked as an assistant for Scott Niven at The Stanwich Club in Greenwich, CT. Then, two-and-a-half years later, in November of 1985, John accepted his first superintendent's position at Middle Bay Country Club in Oceanside, NY, where he stayed until moving on to Meadow Brook.

### No Rest for the Weary

Over the past 19 years, John has had his hand in several rounds of enhancements to



*John Carlone, CGCS*

the golf course. He installed XGD subsurface drainage in all 18 greens, reconstructed and enlarged the practice tees, rebuilt and laser-leveled most of the course's tee complexes, and removed nearly 1,500 trees. In the fall of 2006, John worked with Architect Tripp Davis to reconstruct all greenside bunkers and to exchange sand and install drainage in every fairway bunker.

Beginning in August 2016, John will go at it again, working with Architect Brian Silva to complete a \$2.5-million renovation project that will close the course until the following spring. The plan includes building two new greens and reworking two more. There will be extensive upgrades to the practice facility, a new short game area, all-new bunkers constructed using Better Billy Bunker technology, and adjustments will be made to two of the holes. The finishing par 4 18th hole will be changed to a par 5, and the short par 5 12th hole will be made a par 4.

"I am very excited about the upcoming renovation project with Brian Silva," says John. "Many small adjustments will be made



that will modernize Meadow Brook. This will give the course the defense it lacks now against today's equipment and ball flight. When complete, I think you will see Meadow Brook look to host a major USGA event!"

### Giving Back

When it comes to industry contributions, John is one who has given at least as much as he's received, committing nearly three decades to serving the turfgrass management industry... as a committee member, a board member, and, ultimately, a leader of three industry organizations.

A certified golf course superintendent since 1991, John has been a GCSAA member for 34 years, serving on eight committees and numerous special tasks groups. He's also served as chapter delegate for both the MetGCSA and LIGCSA and spent two years spreading the good word about the green industry to area civic groups and schools as a member of GCSAA's Ambassador Speakers Program.

Working locally, John dedicated 17 years of service to the MetGCSA board, serving as president in 2000 and 2001. A superintendent in Long Island for the past 30 years, John also devoted nine years to the LIGCSA board, moving through the chairs to president in 2006-2008.

So thoroughly committed to the profession and the industry's professional organizations, John has also served on the Tri-State Turf Research Foundation board for the past 17 years, once again, rising through the chairs to president in 2010-2011, a role he assumed while continuing to manage the Tri-State's publication, *Foundation News*. Though John's term as past president has ended, he plans to stay involved, continuing his work as *Foundation News* editor.

John's industry contributions have not gone unnoticed. Two years ago, the MetGCSA recognized John with its most prestigious and coveted honor: the Sherwood A. Moore Award, reserved for those

who have "advanced the image, status, and reputation of the golf course superintendent."

### Time-Out

Though it might appear there's little time in his week for a personal life, John is able to set aside his goals and ambitions long enough to tend to what's really important: his relationships with family and friends.

John's been married 27 years to his wife, Leslie. They have three children. Emily 25, is newly married—on June 27, in fact!—and living in Rhode Island. She is finishing her master's degree in Applied Behavioral Analysis at Simmons College in Boston. David, 23, graduated from Hofstra University in May 2015 with a BFA in Film Production Studies. "If you want a good laugh," says John, "check out David's two YouTube channels, David-carlonefilms or Eastcoastcomedycrew. Or take a look at his senior film project 'Hungry' at [Vimeo.com/128747731](http://Vimeo.com/128747731)."

John and Leslie's youngest son, Daniel, is 20 and a sophomore at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. Recruited to play football, Daniel was forced to put that behind him after suffering a series of injuries. He is now focused on completing his degree at West Point and then serving his required five years as an Army officer.

When John's able to steal a little time for himself, he enjoys—aside from golf—group training sessions and spin classes at the gym, a quick ride on his motorcycle, searching for fine red wines, and a good cigar!

### Be Forewarned!

John has two recommendations for playing Meadow Brook: "Although we can stretch Meadow Brook to 7,300 yards, we won't do that on this day. Expect a 6,500- to 6,800-yard course. Keep your golf ball in our wide fairways. Hitting in the deep rough could mean a wedge out to the short grass. Also, hit your approach shots close to the pin. With our large greens, hitting greens in regulation could still leave you with a 100-foot putt!"

*President's Message continued from page 1*

required, but shorts and flip flops are allowed) and bring your significant other, friends, and assistants for what promises—rain or shine—to be a perfect evening away from it all!

Then we have our family fun events. First, there is *our annual Family Picnic*, which will take place again this year on July 22 at Bedford Village Memorial Park in Bedford, NY. The kids always have a blast at the Family Picnic. My son Jake loves it! This is the only time of year he gets to eat snow cones for dinner! Though designed with our kids in mind, the Family Picnic offers food, fun, and games for everyone. So please plan to break away from work and join us. It's the perfect opportunity to spend time with family and fellow members.

On August 4, Superintendent Dave Moffett will once again host the *Scholarship & Parent/Child Tournament* at Mosholu Golf Course in the Bronx. Held in honor of our deserving scholarship winners, this event is open to all Met members and their children, offering parents the unique opportunity to get out and play a nine-hole scramble with their children on a kid-friendly course. Be sure to join us for this special event.

### Last Note

While we are speaking of events, I wanted to note that Paramount Country Club's Brian Chapin, our Membership Committee chair, will be assuming responsibility for posting daily tweets on association and industry happenings. Be sure to follow Brian on our website, [www.metgcsa.org](http://www.metgcsa.org)!

Now that Manic May and June have passed, I hope everybody takes time to regroup for the upcoming summer. I look forward to seeing all of you at the Met events we have planned this summer!

**Glen Dube, CGCS**  
*President*

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