



THE NEWSLETTER

September - October 2022

of the **Golf Course Superintendents Association of New England, Inc.**

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President's Message *by Brian F. Skinner*



As the end of another season approaches, hopefully we can all take a moment to refocus on personal matters that may have been neglected during the rigorous day to day operations during a very hot and dry summer. At GCSANE we feel the same way and look forward to continuing our industry wide promotional initiative aimed at showing the value of our golf course grounds professionals. We feel our initial campaign was successful but know there is more work to do in order to get the message out loud and clear. Our efforts will be focused on utilizing social media more effectively. The emphasis will be on expanding our audience outside our inner circle while still providing information and services to our existing members as we currently do today. By expanding our audience our chances of reaching the stakeholders in the industry increase and also improve the likelihood that those stakeholders will realize our value. There will be a commitment necessary to assure this takes place but we feel it is time to move deeper into this space. Therefore, we are in the process of creating a committee and procedures dedicated to social media. If anyone has any thoughts or ideas and would like to contribute, please reach out at any time.

Additionally, we have re-engaged with our technical school contacts and have circulated our short videos produced by our friends at Toro and John Deere in a pilot program to help introduce equipment technician opportunities to students that may be unaware of the possibilities. This agenda could eventually include visits and presentations to the many vocational schools in our region. We look forward to taking a closer look at the opportunities in this area as a way to attract

potential new employees. We also intend to use these videos in ways to attract more senior professionals that may be looking for a change of employment. At the end of each video is a direct link to our job board making it easier for users to discover available opportunities on our website.

Finally, our vision and mission statement for the Association has been discussed. As a board we feel GCSANE wants to be an association that keeps its membership active and engaged. We will do this by always looking to the future to find fun, innovative, and interesting ways to support the personal growth and professional development of our members. We will work with individuals and organizations to develop sustainable programs and to provide opportunities for our members' personal growth. These would include opportunities for one another to come together to collaborate and support each other during times of stress and crisis. Coaching, mentoring and leadership training are also included in the Associations' fundamentals made available through the professional network that makes up our membership and through our industry and university partners. We will strive to evolve programs that keep our membership's professional development current and useful. Please watch for a more concise statement that defines the GCSANE mission.

As we move into the Fall and Winter seasons, we still have a few events planned that we would love to see you at so please check the website and mark your calendars. Member participation is vital to any organization and if you haven't been to an event in a while, perhaps you could find time to attend the next one!

Best Regards,

Brian Skinner
GCSANE President

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Thoughts From Your Executive Director *by Don Hearn*

This article was written by Patrick Van Vleck, CGCS, Superintendent at Unicorn Golf Course, Stoneham, MA. Patrick and his son, Jack, played in this year's Scholarship & Benevolence Tournament held at Hatherly Country Club.

In the past several years you would be hard pressed to attend an Association's event and not have the subject of meeting attendance come up. Why are you a member? What attracts you to attend meetings? As we all know, Association participation and attendance has been on a steady decline and, probably like many of you, I've had my own thoughts on the reasoning.

Over the last couple years, my son Jack has had a growing interest in golf. It started with picking up the game and evolved to him working for me part-time this past summer. Working for me resulted in him asking lots of questions. From how to play a certain golf shot to very turf related questions such as when to water, etc. My message to him was simple: in the turf industry, there is a place for everyone. This summer and fall have allowed me to take him to the U.S. Open and show him what it takes to host a major event, meet volunteers, and even meet Dave Johnson, host Superintendent, who was kind enough to take a few minutes and talk with us during such a busy time.

This past week, I had the pleasure of bringing Jack to the GCSANE Scholarship and Benevolence fund raising event at Hatherly Country Club. On our drive to the course, he asked me what the tournament was for and so I explained to him what

the benefit was about and how it helped our members and their families. During our day, he met many of my peers, sales associates, and, most importantly, friends. People such as Don Hearn, Eric Richardson, David Stowe, Greg Bennett and countless others. So, I say to all of you, thank you for the way you treated him and met him with enthusiasm as if he was one of your peers himself. During the reception, Jack got to hear the stories of the honorees and hear their families speak, as well as the students' names who are receiving scholarships this year. I know from our drive home that it left a lasting impression. What he had to say to me was short and sweet, "Dad, you guys really take care of each other and their families. Thanks for bringing me. I had fun today." To which I responded, "Yeah, I guess we do bud. And you're welcome."

With all that being said, I can now truly answer "What does GCSANE and GCSAA mean to me." Our Association, a collection of Superintendents, Assistants, Associates, and companies, in

the end, is an extended family. A family away from our own. A group that will help us with work, put our children through school, and be there for us during hardship. And so, on a day I pulled my 14-year-old from school to play golf, thank you, Jack, for taking me to school.

Patrick and Jack



This story, written by Gary Larrabee, a friend and supporter of Superintendents and a noted Golf Historian, was published in The Salem (MA) News. It tells the story of a golf club's management team and members, caring to make a family's life much better.

Reading The Greens golf column: Kernwood's small gesture creates big benefit for Selvo



By Gary Larrabee Correspondent
Sep 28, 2022

This is a story about why golf is a great game — with great people — beyond the actual playing. It's a behind-the-scenes story that occurs in one form or another at many of our courses, public and private, on the North Shore and

wherever the game is played.

The story comes from Kernwood Country Club in Salem, a club with a Donald Ross gem of a course and a membership proud of its reputation for generosity and good deeds spanning a century.

Kevin Selvo has been associated with Kernwood for 41 years as a caddy, bag room attendant, valet parker and part-time grounds worker. Over the past 25 years, the nephew of legendary Salem CC mechanic Rich Selvo has worked weekends for course superintendent John Eggleston performing course set-up such as tee

marker placement and changing the flagstick locations.

"I've always loved Kernwood, the different jobs they've allowed me to do and more recently the way John has kept me on the part-time grounds staff," Selvo said.

When Kevin and wife Jennifer, a middle school teacher in Swampscott, welcomed their second son Alex in 2001, they were thrilled to have a younger brother for their first-born, Nick. But over time Alex's doctors diagnosed him with Autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

At a point where Alex, who had previously expressed a happy-go-lucky attitude, developed aggressive behavior toward Kevin, Jennifer and his service providers by the time he reached the age of 14, his parents were at a loss. Then Kevin, an operations manager in the marketing department for Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts, thought of Kernwood, where at the time he was working weekend mornings for Eggleston doing course setup.

Thoughts *(continued)*

“We didn’t know where to turn to try and tone down Alex’s behavior issues,” he recalled. “It’s a horrible feeling when you’re scared of your own child whom you love dearly. His behavior was weighing on us terribly. I had one of those ‘eureka!’ moments and wondered if taking Alex around Kernwood with me in a golf cart might help.

“So I asked John if I could drive Alex on a golf cart around the course at 6 a.m. in hopes that it might help his agitation. I didn’t know how this would affect Alex because of his unpredictable behavior. Most important, John allowed me to do it with Alex, wished us the best, and looked forward to hearing how it went.”

After a few dry runs, as Kevin related, “riding in the golf cart with his dad on this beautiful property called Kernwood did, in fact, have a calming effect on Alex. He loved everything about it. We called it ‘golf cart therapy.’”

This routine lasted for a couple years to the point where the Selvos felt their son had stabilized emotionally.

“It gave all of us at Kernwood a good feeling to learn about that from Kevin,” Eggelston said. “And it got better after that for Alex. The club has been delighted to play a very small role in his development.”

“I then asked John if I could just work in the evenings moving the tee markers and bring Alex along with me,” Kevin Selvo added. “John gave the OK, so I would move the tee markers and Alex would empty the trash on Friday and Saturday nights. We’ve been doing this for seven years now. The last three years Alex has been learning life skills by taking over the duties himself, with me acting as his job coach.

“Bottom line is that Alex has stabilized and we enjoy working at Kernwood, the two of us, like a team. The last couple years Alex has started asking me in April when we start our job at Kernwood, and it all started with his golf cart therapy.”

Suffice to say that word has gotten around Kernwood of the profound impact a simple act of compassion from Eggelston has had on a young man with autism.

“Everyone at Kernwood we’ve run into the last few years has expressed their support for Alex,” said Selvo. “Jennifer and I can’t thank everyone enough, from John and his staff to Frank Dully and his pro shop staff and especially to the membership for their empathy and understanding of a difficult situation. They have all contributed to the success of an intellectually disabled adult.

“I should single out members Scott Sagan and Jerry Garfield, who have gone out of their way to ask about Alex and engage with him whenever we see them on the course. All the members, in fact, have been kind and generous; an amazing blessing to our family.”

I trust you’ve heard of the E.J. Marshall Platter. If not, this was the award presented by Mike Whan, the USGA’s CEO, to Dave Johnson and his staff and volunteers during this year’s U.S. Open Championship at The Country Club. It was the first time this award was presented, and it was done during the award presentation on television for the golf world to see. In my opinion this presentation instantly elevated the status and significance of Superintendents everywhere golf is played. What does the award look like? I’ve included a photo. What does the inscription state? As follows: “The United States Golf Association recognizes David Johnson Director of Grounds, and his maintenance staff and volunteers for their commitment, expertise, and collaboration in providing an incredible golf course experience at the 2022 U.S. Open at The Country Club. Great championships are the result of great partnerships, and you have proven to be a world-class partner!”



How did the E.J. Marshall Platter award get its title? How did an attorney in Toledo, Ohio, become a pivotal figure in golf agronomy? Such is the tale of E.J. Marshall, who in 1920 was the chair of the green committee at the Inverness Club as that year’s U.S. Open drew close. He tried to locate agronomic advice when patches of dying turf appeared on the greens. After coming up empty, he approached the USGA and United States Department of Agriculture for help and later that year, the USGA formed the Green Section to provide course care expertise, which it still does today.

One hundred and two years later, the USGA presented the inaugural Marshall platter to David Johnson, director of grounds at The Country Club, during the U.S. Open Trophy ceremony. The platter, designed by Tiffany & Co., recognizes excellence in USGA partnership regarding agronomy and course preparation. It pays homage to the determination of its namesake to present a well-maintained course to the world’s best players.

Thoughts (continued)

This is a story of saying “thanks” and recognizing a couple who have provided their time and caring for others to help make the world a better place. Ted Murphy and his wife Mary have devoted 52 years of caring to help make others enjoy a better day. Ted and his brother Frank are retired members of the GCSA of New England. Ted was the Superintendent at Lexington Golf Club prior to purchasing Garrison Golf Center in Haverhill, MA. Frank was the long time Superintendent at the Country Club of Halifax.

I-495 Hildale Avenue Overpass Becomes Ted and Mary Murphy Bridge to Honor Haverhill Couple

By [Tim Coco](#) | September 6, 2022



The Hildale Avenue, Haverhill, bridge over I-495 is being named the Ted and Mary Murphy Bridge. (WHAV News and courtesy photographs.)

Ted and Mary Murphy, owners of Garrison’s Golf Center in Haverhill, are being recognized for their longtime service and dedication to the city with the Hildale Avenue bridge over Interstate 495 being named in their honor.

Gov. Charlie Baker last week signed the “Ted and Mary Murphy Bridge” legislation that worked its way quietly through the State House over the last year. The legislation was conceived by Haverhill attorney Sean P. Gleason and other members of the Penta Par 3 Golf Tournament Committee, which annually takes place at Garrison Golf.

“We’d been thinking about how great the Murphys have been over the years to us, and that’s just the tip of the iceberg as far as what they’ve done for this community. We thought it was a nice gesture and appropriate. We hope they feel how much love this community has for them,” Gleason told WHAV.

The legislation was sponsored in the Senate by Sen. Diana DiZoglio and in the House by Rep. Andy X. Vargas. The House and Senate each enacted the bill Aug. 22 and placed it before the governor. The law requires the division of highways to place and maintain “suitable markers bearing this designation in compliance with the standards of said department.”

The Murphys were toasted this past Saturday during the Penta Par 3 Golf Tournament, but, Gleason said, a formal bridge dedication ceremony is planned. Besides Gleason, committee members include Rick Wilson, Dan “Tiger” Ruth, George Riley, Ed Fenlon, Doug Cokely and Ally Ruth.

The Murphys purchased Garrison Golf Center in 1969 and made Haverhill their home. DiZoglio told WHAV she was happy to file this legislation and thanked Gleason for approaching her.

“Over the past five decades, Ted and Mary Murphy have, through their charitable endeavors and golf instruction to countless youth, left a positive and lasting impact on the Greater Haverhill community. Their belief that confidence, self-respect and happiness can all be developed through sport continues to inspire young men and women in our region,” she said.

Vargas added, “Mary and Ted Murphy are unwavering leaders in the Haverhill Community. From serving on various boards and civic groups to volunteering with their church, the Murphy’s countless hours and contributions have made Haverhill a better place for all, especially our youth...It’s no exaggeration to say that many youth, service clubs and nonprofits would not be able to achieve all that they have without the generosity of the Murphy’s. They are an exceptional couple who represent the best of Haverhill.”

Gleason noted Ted Murphy was one of the founders of Haverhill Youth Hockey in the 1970s and helped students with the Haverhill High Golf Team and Haverhill High basketball. He also is a lifetime member of the Greens Superintendents of America, former member of the Lions Club, longtime member of the Knights of Columbus and a more than 40-year member of the Professional Golf Association of America. In 1989, he received the prestigious New England Section PGA Junior Leader Award.

Mary Murphy served as Haverhill High cheerleader advisor from

Thoughts *(continued)*

1978 to 1985; established the Haverhill Boys Basketball and Golf Team Booster Clubs in 1978 and later served as president of both; served on St. Joseph's School and St. Joseph's Church committees, including serving as an officer of the school's Parent-Teacher's Organization and as chairwoman of the school's Christmas bazaar; member of the Haverhill Parks and Recreation Commission and Haverhill YMCA board member.

The couple has also hosted and cosponsored the Haverhill Gazette Santa Fund Hole-In-One Contest and provided space for the Haverhill Kiwanis Club's annual Thanksgiving Turkey Drop. They received the 1984 Liberty Bell Award from the Haverhill Bar Association and, in 1999, were named the Greater Haverhill Chamber of Commerce Outstanding Business Persons of the Year. They received the Greater Haverhill Chamber of Commerce Community Leadership Award in 2003. In 2008, they also received the Yankee Clipper Council Boy Scouts of America's Distinguished Citizens Award.

"Walking into the Garrison is like walking into your house. Everyone feels at home," Gleason added.



Community Celebrates Ted and Mary Murphy and Dedication of the Bridge Named in Their Honor

October 13, 2022



The New England PGA dedicated their new headquarters building, located at The Haven Country Club, August 10, 2022. Executive Director, Mike Higgins and the staff of the NEPGA made everyone feel welcome. They were very proud of their accomplishment and for the first time in 106 years the NEPGA has a headquarters building of their own. I spoke with a few of the NEPGA members and the pride of calling this building their own was evident. After the dedication we enjoyed a wonderful dinner and presentations by New England Section and National speakers. Though the headquarters is on a new site, it's almost like going home for Mike Higgins who grew up at The Haven Country Club. Mike lives in Shrewsbury, played his home matches for the Shrewsbury High golf team at The Haven CC, then known as Mount Pleasant CC, and worked at the club in the bag room and picked the range for former head pro **Art Harris** for six years while he was in high school and college. We wish Mike and his team good luck, and continued success in the future.

TARTAN FARMS

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Thoughts (continued)



The August meeting was held at Shaker Hills Country Club, August 17 where Brian Daigneau is the superintendent. While there, I noticed this framed, professionally created list of the various species of wildlife that have been seen on the course. I hadn't seen this type of graphic display before. If you're interested in creating a similar display I suggest you contact Brian to find out the specifics of how this was produced.

This is the day when all retired members are invited to attend the event as guests of the Association. For some, it's a time to catch up and see those they haven't seen in a while. It was good to see them having a nice time. We always talk about the way "it used to be" and how much the profession and industry have changed over the years.



Retirees attending the Shaker Hills event.

Front row from left: Ed Eardley, Wayne Zoppo, Ron Kirkman, Frank Murphy, Ted Murphy.

Rear from left: Dennis Friel, Mike Nagle, Dick Zepp, Dick Duggan, Mike Hermanson, Tom Ackley, Bob Healey, Artie Miller, Don Hearn. Missing: Jim Fitzroy



From left: John Ponti, Brian Daigneau, our host; Garrett Whitney, Mike Sampson

The day at Shaker Hills was a pleasant one and made better by the hospitality of General Manager/Head Golf Professional, Andy Jordan; Director of Food and Beverage, Crystal Navaroli; and our host Superintendent, Brian Daigneau. Brian and his team arranged for good weather and a scenic layout in great condition.



From left: Mike Wall, Rich Caughey, Joe Costa, Shaun Murray

This year's Scholarship and Benevolence Tournament was played at Hatherly Country Club, October 3. With the assistance of Rich Caughey, Superintendent, we were welcomed by a friendly club with very helpful staff to work with. The well-conditioned course was made possible by the accomplished and outstanding team of turf maintenance professionals of the Hatherly staff. The golf shop staff led by Chip Jpohnson the club's Golf Professional, the clubhouse staff led by Clubhouse Manager, Joe Ferrari and the food and after golf presentations prepared by Executive Chef, Jeff Heyl were impressive.

One of the highlights of this event is honoring members who are no longer with us. This year Bert Frederick and Ken Mooradian were honored, and family members were present to be part of the

Thoughts *(continued)*



*Tim Mooradian, left
and David Stowe*



*Greg Frederick, left
and David Stowe*

ceremony. Bert's son Greg, and Ken's son Tim were presented crystal vases by David Stowe, Chairman of the Scholarship and Benevolence Committee.

What follows is part of the stories of Bert and Ken.

Bert Frederick

Bert was an Army veteran serving from 1963 to 1965. He obtained a degree in Turf Management from the University of Massachusetts and went on to spend more than thirty years as the Golf Course Superintendent of Vesper Country Club in Tyngsborough, MA. He dedicated his life to the golf course industry and was known for his strong work ethic and his desire for perfection. He was a long-time member of the Golf Course Superintendent's Association of New England and of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America. Bert was well known for the cultivation of "Vesper Velvet Bentgrass." Upon his retirement from Vesper, he continued to consult and share his expertise in the development of golf courses across New England. Throughout his career, Bert built many lifelong friendships whom he remained close with until his passing.

Bert passed away July 4, 2019.

Ken Mooradian

Ken was a 50-year Member of the Association. He graduated from the University of Massachusetts with a Turf Management degree. Upon graduation from Stockbridge he became the Superintendent at Winnesucket Golf Club (now New England Country Club). In 1970 he left Winnesucket to become the Superintendent at Hopedale Country Club where he remained to 1987. From 1987 to 2012 he was a sales representative for Varney Brothers Concrete in Bellingham, MA. He became the long-time Green Chairman at Hopedale and his zest for the position and his love for the game

never faded. He frequently reminded us that Hopedale was always a course that the GCSA of New England could count on to be available for our meetings. Upon his passing the main entrance to Hopedale Country Club was named Ken Mooradian Way.

Ken passed away December 29, 2021



*from left, Rob Parsons, Ben Bouchard,
Harris Schnare, Jeremy Cox*

The September meeting was held at Sky Meadow Country Club in Nashua, NH, September 20. It was the first time we have had an event there and it was an outstanding treat to play. All who played were overflowing with praise for the superb turf conditions and the layout. The terrain offered views of the New Hampshire mountains and as far away as the City of Boston. Superintendent Ben Bouchard should be proud of what he's accomplished during his time at the club. Rob Parsons, owner of Sky Meadow, welcomed everyone to the club and made many friends with his hospitality and friendliness. Our thanks also to Rich Ingraham, Golf Professional, for taking care of the pairings and the many details of the event; Lynn McGowan and Lindsey Casler for handling the logistics of the meeting and food service. Special thanks to Ben Bouchard for his help obtaining the course for the day and to Rob Parsons for providing the opportunity to play the course.

Thoughts *(continued)*



from left: Dr. Nate Whittaker, Jeff Wentworth, Bob Ruzala



Representing the GCSA of New England at the event were from left: Peter Rappoccio, Brian Skinner, Greg Cormier and Eric Richardson



Dave Johnson, Director of Grounds expressing his appreciation to all who worked so hard to make the US Open a success.



The Alumni Turf Group (ATG) Registration Team

from left: Tom Brodeur, Don Hearn, Dave Pease, Executive Director of the ATG; Mike Hermanson, Bob Ruzala (Photo by Shaun Barry)

The 16th Dr. Joseph Troll Turfgrass Classic, organized by the UMass Alumni Turf Group, was held at the Pelham Country Club, Pelham, NY, September 12. This year's honoree was Jeff Wentworth, CGCS, Superintendent at Pelham Country Club. Jeff is a graduate of the Stockbridge School at UMass Amherst. He was recognized for his many contributions to our profession and his time spent on both local and national issues of importance to our industry. Jeff was humble in accepting the award and gave great credit to his wife, Mimi, and to his many friends in the room who have been a large part of his personal and professional life. A Norman Rockwell print was presented to Jeff by Dr. Nate Walker, Interim Dean of the College of Natural Sciences at UMass.

Volunteers who spent a week at The Country Club during the US Open were treated to a special golf event at the club, September 19 to recognize and offer a "thank you" to those who took the time and spent the energy to help make the 122nd US Open Championship a tremendous success. It was a day full of fun and reconnecting with others met during the Championship. The golf was capped off with a delicious lunch before many "good byes" were spoken.

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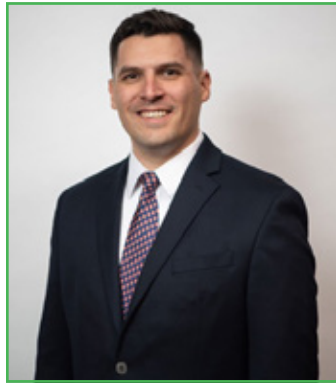
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September - October 2022



Catherine Carmignani Promoted To Assistant Executive Director of Mass Golf; Stephen Hanjack To Become Director of Marketing & Communications



Mass Golf, one of the largest state golf associations in the United States, is proud to announce a series of staff changes in the promotion of Catherine Carmignani and Stephen Hanjack.

Carmignani will assume the new role of Assistant Executive Director of Mass Golf. She becomes the first female to earn an executive staff position within the association since the merger that formed Mass Golf in 2018.

“Catherine has proven that she’s become an incredible leader for Mass Golf internally and externally,” said Jesse Menachem, Executive Director/CEO of Mass Golf. “There’s been a lot of trust built among her and our staff, our volunteer board and leadership and throughout the community.”

ONLINE: MASS GOLF STAFF DIRECTORY | MASS GOLF HOME

Carmignani, a native of Dudley, has been with Mass Golf since 2019 serving as Director of Communications & Marketing. In this new role, Carmignani will collaborate with Menachem in Mass Golf’s administration, external relations and strategic plan. In addition to overseeing the operation of First Tee Massachusetts and the Marketing & Communications Department, she will also focus on external relations and development and fundraising activities to support the organization’s charitable efforts.

“This is a natural progression of growth since our merger in 2018,” Menachem said. “Our staff has grown, and our programs and services have grown. For this role, Catherine and I will be able to split up some of the responsibilities, as she’ll be able to focus on our philanthropic endeavors and junior golf development, tying our brands together and making our community aware of the significance of Mass Golf. I’m excited for her to help champion all of these things.”

As Director of Communications & Marketing, Carmignani has been a leader in transforming the Mass Golf brand with a focus on community engagement. She helped craft the organization’s mission statement: “Advancing the game of golf in Massachusetts

by building an engaged community around the sport.”

Carmignani has also expanded longstanding partnerships with Titleist and FootJoy — both Patrons of Mass Golf — and introduced member benefits through new partnerships with Sponsors of Mass Golf, such as Delta Air Lines, KOHR Golf, Arbella Insurance Group, and Golfzon.

As part of the creation of Mass Golf’s strategic plan initiative, Carmignani has also played a key role in promoting the game for women, creating content pieces designed specifically with female golfers in mind, and producing a monthly digital newsletter — The Up & Down — that is sent to all female members of Mass Golf. She has also taken a leading role in the organization’s Equity Change Team to build a stronger culture within the association in collaboration with the organization’s Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee.

“It means the world to me to have the support of Jesse and the Board of Directors, along with our staff, as I transition into this new role,” Carmignani said. “Their confidence and shared vision in this next chapter at Mass Golf positions us for even greater success long-term. We’ve done something very special here with the brand these last few years, and I am humbled to serve alongside Jesse in our further pursuit of growth, expansion and development of Mass Golf.”

In the promotion of Carmignani, Mass Golf has also announced the promotion of Stephen Hanjack as the Director of Marketing & Communications. Hanjack has played an integral role in expanding and promoting the Mass Golf brand with targeted marketing campaigns and the growth of Mass Golf’s presence on television, radio, social media, and other media platforms. Among his many accomplishments, Hanjack led the way in getting the @PlayMassGolf account on Instagram verified, and the account has seen a 400% increase in followers since 2019. On top of introducing live streaming coverage as well as drone video and photo capabilities to the department, Hanjack has taken pride in highlighting public golf courses throughout the state.



"We're in a very fortunate position that Stephen has grown in a short period of time to be able to take on the responsibility of managing our Marketing & Communications Department," Menachem said. "He's become a recognized and trusted individual within the golf landscape and golf community. He's a reliable resource, you know what you're going to get from him, and he's become an excellent leader and guide for our staff and interns. He's brought so much to the organization, including getting us in the spotlight with recognition both regionally and nationally."

In his new role, Hanjack will assume the management of Mass Golf's Marketing & Communications strategy and direction. Hanjack will continue to produce content at Mass Golf events as well as shoot, edit and package original content that showcases the membership experience.

"I want to thank the entire leadership at Mass Golf for this tremendous opportunity," Hanjack said. "Telling the stories of our elite amateur competitors, prestigious courses, historic events, and some of our hidden public gems is a true passion of mine."

"I am honored to be given the reigns of this department and look forward to seeing where myself, [Manager of Communications] Steven Derderian, and the rest of our team can bring Mass Golf in the coming years."

With this announcement, Mass Golf will be seeking to fill the role of Assistant Director of Strategic Communications as well as introduce a new position of Marketing & Communications Coordinator

to the staff. Job postings for these positions will be made available to the public in the near future.

The entire Mass Golf Marketing & Communications staff, including its USGA Boatwright Interns, was on site at the 2022 U.S. Open at The Country Club

ABOUT MASS GOLF

Mass Golf is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that is dedicated to advancing golf in Massachusetts by building an engaged community around the sport.

With a community made up of over 110,000 golf enthusiasts and over 340 member clubs, Mass Golf is one of the largest state golf associations in the country. Members enjoy the benefits of handicapping, engaging golf content, course rating and scoring services along with the opportunity to compete in an array of events for golfers of all ages and abilities.

At the forefront of junior development, Mass Golf is proud to offer programming to youth in the state through [First Tee Massachusetts](#) and subsidized rounds of golf by way of [Youth on Course](#).

For more news about Mass Golf, follow along on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), and [YouTube](#).



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September - October 2022



Resources: Tools for Success *by Gary Sykes, Executive Director*



It has been a long tough summer for all turfgrass with extreme prolonged scorching temperatures and the lack of precipitation for some areas that neared historic shortages. We look toward the future optimistically, but we know each year will always have their challenges. As turfgrass managers and crews face these challenges, it is good to know that we have many resources in our corner when the unexpected blocks our path.

- **Peers**-The one great thing about being in the turfgrass industry, is that we have opportunities to make some great friendships especially geographically. No question that the best part of our industry are the people in it. Not all courses have the same resources, and so these friendships help greatly for small things like parts and fittings and sometimes even equipment and manpower sharing. With these good friend(s), we have great resources when trouble visits. Having and using them as a sounding board will help especially when we are less experienced and facing a new problem. Make friends, offer them what you can, and they will often return the favor and then some.
- **Team**-Your team is there to help you succeed! By building a qualified and dedicated team through training and education your greatest resource is right at your fingertips. They are your eyes and ears, and sometimes your back when challenges come unannounced. Make sure you share your appreciation when they make you look good!
- **Networking**-Take the opportunity to attend professional events with many individuals from outside your own immediate area. Connect with new acquaintances. Getting to know other professionals is not only healthy and expands your human connections but will make future events all that much more enjoyable when you reconnect. Social media will help you continue these acquaintances. Reconnecting with friends and mentors is a very valuable resource when needed.
- **Suppliers**-One of the greatest advancements in our industry over the last generation has been the bonds that company suppliers have made with their customers through available services. Historically, suppliers have pledged their support of purchases through to delivery. When you needed something then, you would order it, you accepted delivery, and the rest is up to you. Today, I see modern sales and purchaser's working closer together developing plans, testing, solving issues and delivering products when needed. I'd even say going above and beyond the call of duty.

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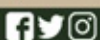


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- University- Truly a great resource we have had in the Northeast is the support we get from our Turfgrass Programs in New England. How lucky are we to have three schools, their labs, and teaching programs in New England to support our industry! They have so much covered in their area of interests and research. If you know each researcher personally, and a problem arises, we know we can approach them for answers and support. Their diversity is a great asset, as a group in New England we have the benefit that they can cover all topics expertly without hesitation. If you are looking for even more confirmation on their abilities concerning turfgrass then put on your calendar to attend a field day at UMass (2023) and UConn (2024)! It is worth the time and travel.
- Conference-Of course, my favorite piece of this resource puzzle is the fact that we have in New England a great Conference and Show each year. The conference provides the best education program we can construct with the help of industry leaders. It also provides many opportunities to network, and our large tradeshow gives you an opportunity to discuss whatever questions you may have as you plan for future purchases or research your service concerns. It provides opportunities to meet and hear professors from in and outside New England. Don't ignore the great resources that the show provides and the good experience you can create for yourself while attending.
- Family- Let's not forget the most important resource of them all. When the day's work is done, and we head home, there is nothing more refreshing or reenergizing than time spent with

loved ones. Show your appreciation, make time for them, and always remember their appreciation for you. They know you are doing the best you can with the resources you have. Their support is priceless, your support of them is as well.

We sometimes must take stock of the great resources we have in our industry. It can be hard at times to get through a season like the one we had over this summer. So, we must remember, when we have challenges, pull out some of these resources that are available, start a conversation about your frustrations, see what is working for others, use the diagnostic labs, and if the occasion arises offer your help to others. These resources are there for a reason!

Finally, just an update on the 2023 Conference and Show preparations. Here we are at the beginning of September, and as it stands, we are well along the way of putting together another great education program. Many mainstream researchers, superintendents, and professors have been lined up for our 2023 conference. Our Trade Show booth sales are also underway, and they have already begun to be collected. With 70 hours of education planned and 12 hours of trade show, we think most everyone at the show will feel that there is much opportunity to grow and enjoy the trade show experience. We have a long way to go before our next show, March 7-9, but the work goes on to make it another to be proud of!

Good luck with the rest of the growing season!

Gary Sykes, Executive Director
New England Regional Turfgrass Foundation

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In addition to the companies and donors that supported the event, our thanks go to the Hatherly Country Club for their donation of green fees and golf car fees and Rich Caughey, Superintendent at Hatherly for his help putting together many of the pieces that help make the event a success and to his Turf Team for the wonderful course conditions all enjoyed. Those at Hatherly who helped make the day a pleasant one include Chip Johnson, Golf Professional; Joe Ferrari, Clubhouse Manager; and the entire staff at the club. Their friendliness made all feel welcome.

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September - October 2022



Back to the Lab by James Poro, M.S.

Intro:

It's no secret that turf managers wear many hats. It's not uncommon for many of us to begin the day as managers but leave work having filled the shoes of the HR department, repaired a pivotal piece of machinery, discussed agronomic plans with stakeholders, guessed at the probability of that day's anticipated storm, and diagnosed some surprise turf problem. While these all fall within a day's work, I want to take a moment and focus on how the scientific method can both help resolve some turf problems and improve overall management practices.

Meeting the standards of our clientele can be an incredibly daunting task. No matter how many years of experience we have on site, or our familiarity with current practices, Mother Nature always throws a curve ball to keep things interesting. Although this often comes at the most inconvenient of times, it can serve as an opportunity in disguise. The next time you are met with a new problem to solve — or maybe an old one that needs some tinkering — I encourage you to take the time to 'revisit the laboratory' and see what decision-informing knowledge you can gain from experimentation. By having a well-organized procedure to test variables and options at your disposal, you may be able to make helpful improvements to your turf management operations.

Full disclosure: I am *not* advocating professional experimentation that may jeopardize health and safety, your job, or the environment. I am, however, promoting a well-planned process as part of a successful management strategy where appropriate. In fact, we most likely follow through on this nearly every day. I'm sure everyone reading this can relate to the successes and pitfalls of 'trial and error' in the workplace. Much like troubleshooting a mower issue or irrigation problem, a logical and planned experimental process can save time and frustration (and maybe even help us cut down on use of our favorite four-letter words). Other benefits of taking time to experiment can include improved efficiency, turf health, and cost savings via streamlined processes. Of course, our own professional growth and satisfaction rank high as well.

Experimentation 101:

Experimentation on the golf course can be as simple as changing mowing patterns or as complicated as major shifts in turf management practices. The first step is identifying a specific problem as well as your goal. It is imperative to be as specific as possible. (For example, wanting better quality turf isn't precise enough, but 'improving surface uniformity of greens' provides a more specific direction and springboard). Clear, defined goals help streamline the process, eliminate some conflicting variables, and enhance confidence in the results. Using our green firmness example, this clearer goal helps focus our efforts — such as changing frequencies of rolling and topdressing, irrigation management practices, or surfactant use, just to name a few. The clearer the goals, the more direct, efficient, and useful the process of experimentation will be.

Before beginning your experiment, the second crucial step is research. While you won't need to toil away long hours in a dimly



lit library, you do need to research information regarding your end goals. Turfgrass research has made incredible strides throughout the years thanks to dedicated university researchers and industry-focused enterprises. Readily available resources such as this publication, GCSAA (GCM), Google Scholar, and university resources can uncover great insight. Equally important, be sure to utilize your professional network (sounds like a good time to plug the UMass Turf Facebook/Instagram page, look us up!) It's likely someone reading this article is exploring the same ideas that you are. Reach out to fellow colleagues and staff; there are no shortages


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of ideas and discoveries made on a regular basis. Just keep in mind, what works for one facility may not work for yours.

The countless variables of micro-climates, equipment, frequency of play, management practices, etc. will all factor into your results. In academia the elimination of this “noise” is vital to acquiring true, discernible results. From a management perspective, teasing apart the interactions of so many variables will be nearly impossible. For example, in the case of testing options to improve the uniformity of greens, limiting variables to one or two is more than enough to consider. If testing alternative cultural management practices, be sure *not* to incorporate other variables like fertility or irrigation variations as this will be too overwhelming.

Any experiment needs an established control or baseline to reference. If you intend to test a product’s efficacy or a change in cultural practices, be sure to fully identify your standard operating conditions. If you are trying to make any changes, you’ll want to introduce only one variable at a time to most effectively compare against your normal operating conditions.

Key Considerations:

Finally, be sure to replicate your experiment (ideally in different on-site locations) and repeat the entire test if possible. After all, that ‘noise’ is bound to infiltrate your experiment. Whether it be the impacts of Mother Nature or another characteristic you hadn’t considered, replications help ensure accuracy. When it’s time to finally

evaluate your experiment, be sure to fairly and objectively analyze your data. While some data points are objective (time, material, etc.), others can be easily clouded by subjective interpretation (turf quality or appearance for example).

Complex statistical analysis and design play a major role in this process and make academic research valuable and reliable. Though we as turf practitioners may not have the formal training and resources to evaluate data at such an academic level, we can harness some of the same principals. When forming your conclusions, ask yourself what worked and what didn’t. What might account for the differences in results? Did the replications account for known and unknown variables? Were there significant differences between variables to justify further evaluation?

Ultimately, experimentation is one useful tool in the toolbox. However, like any tool, it should be utilized correctly to be effective. Remember, only experiment and operate within the boundaries of your comfort and understanding. While results may be promising, it isn’t necessarily a green light to make major changes to your management practices; it’s merely another data point to help inform your decisions.

*James Poro, M.S.
Superintendent, Joseph Troll Turf Research Center, UMass Amherst*



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September - October 2022



A look into the future: How robotic mowers may benefit your course

By [Seth Jones](#) | October 10, 2022



Photo: Robert T. Lynch Municipal GC



Photo: Mike Murphy

Mike Murphy's crew at [Robert T. Lynch Municipal GC](#) in Brookline, Mass., varies in size from day to day. At peak season, on a good day, he'll have 11 or 12 people working on the course. On a day like today, including himself, he has four-and-a-half people.

His crew is now supported by a hard-working novelty act around the clubhouse: two

robotic mowers that mow 16 to 18 hours a day. The robotic mowers are especially useful around the clubhouse because they're silent and don't detract from the serenity of the clubhouse with unwanted mower engine noise. But while they were brought to the course to go unheard, they have also stood out as an endearing duo to the golfers.

"It's become a novelty. People will just sit and watch them; it's hysterical," Murphy says. "They get really interested and ask, 'what are they doing?' and I tell them, that's a lawnmower." While the golfers have gotten a kick out of watching the random pattern of the robots, Murphy and his team enjoy the added benefits of bringing the two robots on the team.

Watch and learn

Murphy learned of the robots from a company he already did business with, Boston-area tech company [GreenSight Agronomics](#). Murphy utilizes the company's job board at Robert T. Lynch. When GreenSight started working with robotic mowers, he told the company he wanted to give them a try.

Murphy designated an area near the clubhouse as a good location for the mowers. They mow around the 18th green, around the 9th green and the practice area. They also mow about 100 yards of rough on each hole.

The obvious benefit to Murphy was his crew had one less area to mow. There were additional benefits he realized over time.

"It's basically cutting this area three times a week, and with a razor blade," Murphy says. "It's really increasing turf health. Compaction isn't an issue; it only weighs 12 to 15 pounds. There are no clippings. There's no dust blowing around. It really has been so beneficial in so many ways that it has increased the environment tenfold."

To set up the mowers, Murphy downloaded the TurfCloud app on his phone. Then he drove the mowers around the area he wanted them to mow like he would drive a remote-controlled car. He says it was similar to setting GPS limitations on a golf cart.

Once he set the boundaries, the mowers went to work. They mow for five or six hours, then take a 60- to 90-minute break to recharge. Once they've recharged, they go back out. When Murphy pulls up to work each morning, he sees the headlights of the mowers already in action.

The mower also adjusts its height of cut automatically, so it can go from cutting rough to approach height without stopping.

Sustainability factor

Jason VanBuskirk, vice president of sales and marketing for GreenSight Agronomics, says the robotic mowers — [Husqvarna's](#) 550 EPOS — were particularly welcome at Robert T. Lynch because of the environmental benefits the machines offer.

"Being a town-run golf course in a city like Brookline, they care very much about their surroundings, their environment and the

sustainability factor,” VanBuskirk says. “The carbon footprint and the sustainability factor of using a robotic mower is a big deal.”

VanBuskirk says GreenSight recently signed a reseller agreement with Husqvarna in July for the robotic mowers. Currently, the company has three golf courses using the robots, as well as Major League Baseball’s San Francisco Giants.

Since the mowers rely on satellites, it’s important the area for the mowers have an open sky and a high point for a reference station. Once that is determined, a power source, preferably somewhere out of sight and out of mind, is needed to set up the recharging station.

VanBuskirk adds that he jokes with superintendents and mechanics that the height of cut adjustment is the easiest height adjustment they’ll ever make since it comes at the touch of a button right inside the app. Changing the blades is also easily done with a Phillips head screwdriver.

“You don’t have that heavy footprint of a bigger unit. You don’t have the wear and tear of a reel mower. These units are using a razor blade; it’s a very clean cut. The frequency of cut also adds to that because you don’t see what you see from a rough unit — a lot of clip,” VanBuskirk says. “When the rough is growing to 3 1/2 inches, you mow it down and there’s a lot of clip left behind. Now you need another man to come out with a blower. Maybe you don’t have the chance to get over there because you lack the manpower. With the robotic mower, that’s not a concern anymore.”

Justin Lawson, PGA, general manager at Robert T. Lynch, says bringing the robotic mowers to the course was a ‘no-brainer.’ “Robotics is a key element of being efficient with a scarce skilled and unskilled workforce,” Lawson says. “They also allow us to be

more environmentally friendly at the same time, which is absolutely critical at a time when climate change is a part of our everyday life. We are committed to being at the forefront of technology and how it can work for us.”

Mowers in action

Lawson calls Murphy ‘the ultimate superintendent’ and says he’s lucky to get to work with him. When it comes to the robots, he’s happy Murphy embraced them and gave them a chance. He says Murphy is a visionary who likes to lead.

Murphy says area superintendents and sales reps have been stopping by Robert T. Lynch to check out the mowers in action. He says it takes a while to sit and watch and see what the robots are capable of. His colleagues have told him they see how robotic mowers could possibly be put to use at their courses.

“Your clubhouse grounds area, you could be having a wedding in your clubhouse or something, and these things keep moving,” Murphy says. “If I hadn’t been experimenting with them already, I’d be skeptical. Could they take over (all) mowing down the line? Maybe. But they definitely have applications that are useful right now.”

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September - October 2022



Harvard University Scientists Discover What Meditation Does To Your Gut and Brain

Numerous studies have indicated the many physiological benefits of meditation, and the latest one comes from Harvard University.

An eight week study conducted by Harvard researchers at Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) determined that meditation literally rebuilds the brains grey matter in just eight weeks. It's the very first study to document that meditation produces changes over time in the brain's grey matter.

"Although the practice of meditation is associated with a sense of peacefulness and physical relaxation, practitioners have long claimed that meditation also provides cognitive and psychological benefits that persist throughout the day. This study demonstrates that changes in brain structure may underlie some of these reported improvements and that people are not just feeling better because they are spending time relaxing." - Sara Lazar of the MGH Psychiatric Neuroimaging Research Program and a Harvard Medical School Instructor in Psychology

The Study

The study involved taking magnetic resonance images (MRI) of the brain's of 16 study participants two weeks prior to participating in the study. MRI images of the participants were also taken after the study was completed.

"The analysis of MR images, which focused on areas where meditation-associated differences were seen in earlier studies, found increased grey-matter density in the hippocampus, known to be important for learning and memory, and in structures associated with self-awareness, compassion and introspection."

For the study, participants engaged in meditation practices every day for approximately 30 minutes. These practices included focusing on audio recordings for guided meditation, non-judgmental awareness of sensations, feelings and state of mind.

"It is fascinating to see the brain's plasticity and that, by practicing meditation, we can play an active role in changing the brain and can increase our well-being and quality of life. Other studies in different patient populations have shown that meditation can make significant improvements in a variety of symptoms, and we are now investigating the underlying mechanisms in the brain that facilitate this change." Britta Holzel, first author of the paper and a research fellow at MGH and Giessen University in Germany

The Gut

Researchers from Harvard have also released another study showing that meditation can have a significant impact on clinical symptoms of gastrointestinal disorders, irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) and inflammatory bowel disease (IBD). The study showed that elicitation of the relaxation response (a physical state of deep rest that changes the physical and emotional responses to stress) is a very big help.

The study comes out of the Benson-Henry Institute for Mind Body Medicine at Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) and Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center (BIDMC). This is the very first study where the use of the "relaxation response" was examined in these disorders, and the first to investigate the genomic effects of the relaxation response in individuals with any disorder. The report was published in the journal PLOS-ONE. (source)

Given the two studies cited above, and all of the other documented health benefits of meditation, this should open the door for more studies to examine the benefits of meditation for a wide range of diseases.

"Our results suggest exciting possibilities for further developing and implementing this treatment in a wider group of patients with gastrointestinal illness. Several studies have found that stress management techniques and other psychological interventions can help patients with IBS, at least in the short term; and while the evidence for IBD is less apparent, some studies have suggested potential benefits. What is novel about our study is demonstration of the impact of a mind/body intervention on the genes controlling inflammatory factors that are known to play a major role in IBD and possibly in IBS." - Brandon Kuo of the gastrointestinal unit in the MGH Department of Medicine, co-lead author of the report. (source)

For those of you who are unaware, IBS and IBD are chronic conditions that produce similar symptoms which include; abdominal pain, and changes in bowel function, like diarrhea. IBD also includes ulcerative colitis and Crohn's disease, which leads one to suffer from severe inflammation in all or part of the gastrointestinal tract. Science has shown us that stress intensifies these symptoms, which is why this study regarding meditation and these diseases holds a great deal of importance.

The relaxation response has been subject to several studies that clearly show that its regular practice (induced by meditation) directly affects physiologic factors such as oxygen consumption, heart rate, blood pressure and again, stress and anxiety. It was first described over 40 years ago by Herbert Benson, director emeritus of the Benson-Henry Institute and co-author of the paper presented in this article.

The study had 48 adult participants, with 19 of them being diagnosed with IBS and 29 with IBD. There was weekly relaxation response training, as well as in their home for 15 to 20 minutes each day.

The study enrolled 48 adult participants - 19 of whom had been diagnosed with IBS and 29 with IBD - who participated in a nine-week group program focused on stress reduction, cognitive skills, and health-enhancing behaviors. Each of the weekly sessions included relaxation response training, and participants were asked to practice relaxation response elicitation at home for 15 to 20

minutes each day. Along with aspects featured in other group programs offered at the Benson-Henry Institute, this program included a session specifically focused on gastrointestinal health.

“Both in patients with IBS and those with IBD, participation in the mind/body program appeared to have significantly improved disease-related symptoms, anxiety, and overall quality of life, not only at the end of the study period but also three weeks later. While there were no significant changes in inflammatory markers for either group of participants, changes in expression were observed in almost 200 genes among participants with IBS and more than 1,000 genes in those with IBD. Many of the genes with altered expression are known to contribute to pathways involved with stress response and inflammation.” (source)

How To Meditate

A common misconception about meditation is that you have to sit a certain way or do something in particular to achieve the various benefits that it can provide. All you have to do is place yourself in a position that is most comfortable to you. It could be sitting cross legged, lying down in a bed, sitting on a couch etc, it's your choice.

Another common misconception about meditation is that you have to “try” to empty your mind. One important factor I enjoyed reading from the study mentioned above is that participants were engaged in “non-judgmental awareness of sensations, feelings and state of mind.” When meditating, you shouldn't try to “empty” your mind. Instead, try to let your thoughts, feelings and whatever emotions you are feeling at the time flow. Don't judge them, just let them come and go and be at peace with it.

I also believe that meditation is a state of being/mind more than anything else. I feel that one does not have to sit down for half an hour and “meditate” so to speak in order to reap the benefits of it, or to be engaged in the practice itself. One can be engaged in meditation while they are on a walk, for example, or the time they have right before they sleep. Throughout the day, one can resist judging their thoughts, letting them flow until they are no more, or just be

in a constant state of peace and self awareness. Contrary to popular belief, there is more than one way to meditate.

“You will have to understand one of the most fundamental things about meditation: that no technique leads to meditation. The old so-called techniques and the new scientific biofeedback techniques are the same as far as meditation is concerned. Meditation is not a byproduct of any technique. Meditation happens beyond mind. No technique can go beyond mind.” - Osho

Sources:

(1) <http://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2011/01/eight-weeks-to-a-better-brain/>

http://www.princeton.edu/~achaney/tmve/wiki100k/docs/Grey_matter.htm



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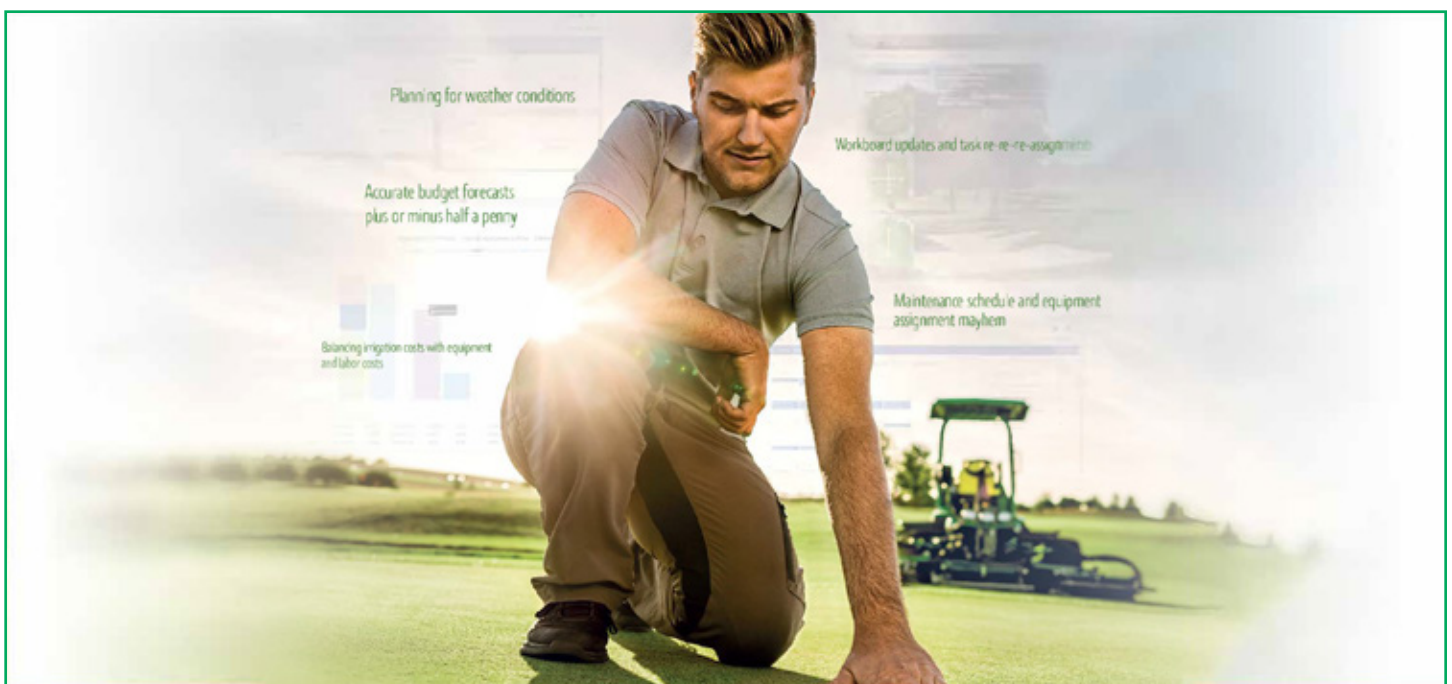
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Advocating For Local Turf Programs

by Kevin Richardson, Superintendent, Bear Hill Golf Club



When I was younger, I would volunteer at a children's camp that was specifically created for burn survivors. While I had gone through a similar experience as a child, I found it extremely important to give back in some way to something that gave a lot to me as I grew out of adolescence and into adulthood. During this same time, I started working at my first golf course in Michigan. Like many of you, this was my first real job and I've continued to do it ever since. I know a lot about golf, grass, and a myriad of other things we do as Golf Course Superintendents. But as I look back on the early years of working in this

industry – I wish I had access to a school much like Essex North Shore Agricultural and Technical School. I was recruited a few years ago to join the advisory committee for the Landscape and Turf department by a fellow superintendent (for those of you who know me, you can probably figure out who). The committee advises the 2 teachers, Jack Domoracki and Tim Graham, on the state of the industry, how to help grow the program, give advice on equipment purchases, and anything else that the program and school can benefit from.

I feel that being on this committee not only fills a void for me, but it is also something I can do to help our industry grow and foster the growth of future turf managers. Over the last handful of years, we have seen the class size grow from the low/mid tees to 20+ students in the lower classes. The classes are also beginning to be outweighed by women – by roughly 10%. As these class sizes grow, so does the need for more equipment.

At our last meeting, we were informed there was a need for a water tank/hydro-seeder. Usually, they go through the proper channels and submit a request through the school, but this takes time. I had decided right then that I would be able to get what they needed through my



connections at the club and through many of our business partners. Over the course of the next few months, I was able to raise \$4000 and purchase a 110-gallon Turbo Turf hydro seeder for the program.

Students at programs like this are the future of our industry. If we want our industry to grow, we must get students into turf programs so maybe we can find more future superintendents. We need to advocate for programs like this.

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