

Tee To Green

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Tee to Green



*Sleepy Hollow
Country Club*

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President's Message

The Business of Risk Communication



In my parting message as MetGCSA president, I wouldn't miss the opportunity to thank all who have made a difference during my term as president, but I'll save that—the best—for last. First, I'd like to touch on a topic I feel is crucial to the success of today's golf course superintendent. In fact, it's a practice that has, over the years, become increasingly important to our entire industry. The topic I'm referring to is risk communication.

Risk, as we know, is the likelihood of something going wrong. Risk communication involves communicating with oth-

ers—whether it's our membership or the general public—about how best to manage any potential problems.

For our industry, *environmental* risks are first and foremost on most people's minds. Though, as professionals, we may feel confident in our ability to use turf care products with minimal or no impact to the environment (scientific research supports this feeling), others, clearly, do not. Here's where risk communication—a rational, balanced give-and-take of information—becomes essential.

Risk Communication at Its Best

Risk communication is not new to our industry. A prime example of risk communication in action was at the historic meeting at Pebble Beach Resort in 1995. Organized by Ted Horton, the GCSAA, and the environmental community, this meeting offered a forum for sharing information and then working in concert to develop policies and procedures to insure golf's environmental stewardship. It was from this meeting, in fact, that GCSAA's Environmental Institute for Golf was born.

The key, here, was that the golf industry and environmental community worked *collaboratively* to not only assess risk, but also find a mutually acceptable approach to managing it. This is risk communication at its best.

Risk communication, like many business practices, has evolved over the years. Writing in 2001 about risk communication, The Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry (SETAC) notes, "In the past, organizations making risk management

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Will Heintz
MetGCSA President

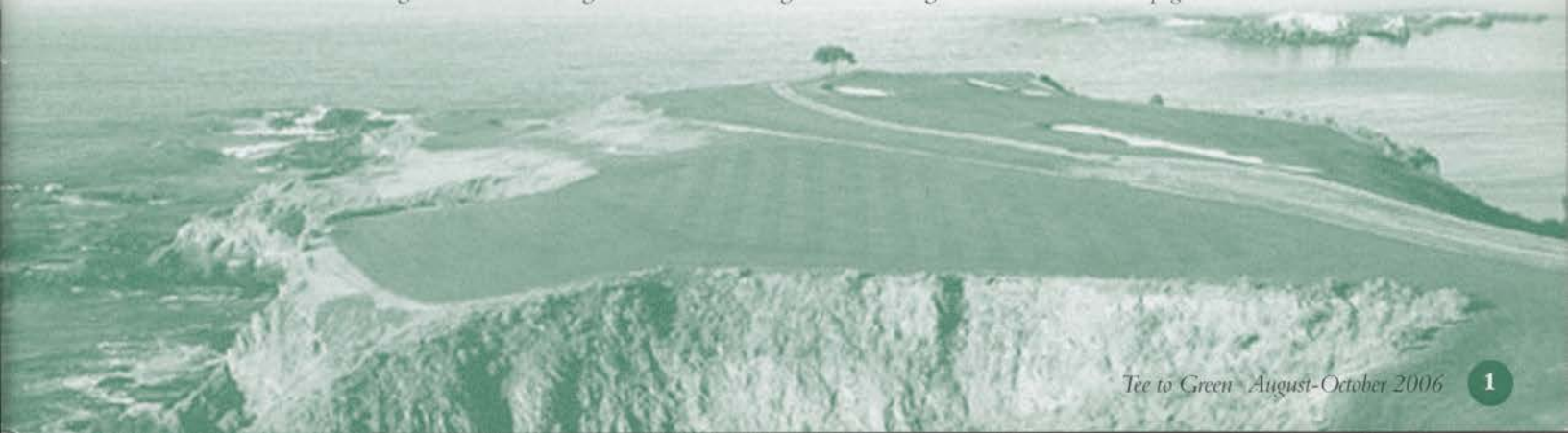
decisions usually did so unilaterally, basing decisions on internal discussions alone and then announcing their presumably well-justified, rational, and acceptable risk decisions to the public. But experience has chastened decision makers. With increasing urgency, organizations that engage in risk communication are realizing that this function cannot be conducted in a decide-announce-defend mode or on an *ad hoc* basis but must be an integral part of an organization's structure along with its risk assessment and risk management programs and procedures. Too often, organizations have painstakingly prepared a risk assessment and adopted a risk decision with great confidence and yet, when the results are released to the public, are faced with a huge backlash."

In other words, managing risk and doing it effectively, requires careful discussion and input from not only those being asked to manage the risk, but also those who are concerned or fearful of the risk factors.

Risk Communication by Example

NYSTA is a perfect example of an organization that does an excellent job at risk communication. Its Turfgrass Advocacy Day held annually in Albany, NY, for instance, invites turfgrass professionals and

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MetGCSA Recognizes Garry Crothers With the 2005 Sherwood A. Moore Award

by Ted Horton, CGCS

In an unprecedented, but highly supported move, by the Awards Committee and Met board, a former MetGCSA member and president, Garry Crothers, was selected as the 2005 recipient of the MetGCSA's prestigious Sherwood A. Moore Award.

All past recipients of the SAM Award have been current members of the association. Garry Crothers is a well-deserving exception.

Garry (left) as GCSANJ president in 1966, pictured with past president Robert Kapherr.



His name will not ring a bell for newer Met members, but among those with a long tenure, Garry Crothers is remembered as a hardworking association member and a progressive turfgrass professional. Describing Garry, Awards Committee member Bob Alonzi says, "He was always on the cutting edge of technology and environmentalism, leveraging relationships with Andy Androsko, Ralph Engle, Henry Indyk, Joe Duich, and Tom Watchke. I remember him stripping fairways with a sod cutter, a job that most of us thought was too big to undertake. He had a soft laugh, carried a satchel everywhere, and was always doing something to help our organization."

Bob, who nominated Garry, had deliberated several worthy prospects. "When it came time to select one individual for this honor," explains Bob, "I realized that I hadn't gone back far enough in time to select the most worthy candidate. I thought of the days when I first became involved with the MetGCSA and of those who truly helped make our association what it is today. In particular, Garry Crothers came to mind. In reflecting on Garry's qualifications, I couldn't help but ask myself, 'Why had he never been recognized for his contributions?'"

Well, certainly better late than never! At the Annual Dr. Joseph Troll Turf Education Fundraiser being held at Westchester Country Club on October 23, Garry will receive this well-deserved honor, reserved for those who have "advanced the professional image, status, and reputation of the golf course superintendent."

Garry is the 12th superintendent to receive this honor since 1987, the award's inaugural year. That's when Sherwood, the award's namesake, was the recipient, recognized for his dutiful and tireless contributions to the MetGCSA and the turfgrass profession.

A Pleasant Surprise

When Garry was informed of the MetGCSA's decision to bestow this honor, he was astounded. "It means so much to be

recognized by your peers," he said. "This award means more to me than any other recognition I've received. This is the Number One award in my mind, particularly because Sherwood Moore was my mentor."

Garry has never felt the need for recognition. "You don't do what you do to be held up on a pedestal. You are either a giver or a taker. You don't think about it at the time. Your gratification comes when others succeed through your assistance and efforts."

John Wistrand, now a Life AF member of the Met living in Kentucky, was one long-tenured member pleased to hear that Garry was being recognized by the Met. "It's a nice tribute to pay to Garry. He deserves this award most of all."

John got to know Garry during his days with Metro Milorganite and still holds Garry near and dear. "The biggest surprise of my life was to see Garry standing in the middle of my one-room apartment a couple of months ago. I was so pleased that he had flown all the way from Vermont to Kentucky just to say hello." That's the Garry that many of us are fortunate to know.

The Path to Superintendence

Interestingly, Garry took an agricultural route to the profession. "I had always wanted to be a farmer," says Garry, explaining that, as a child, he idolized an uncle who was a grain farmer in Pennsylvania. After graduating high school, he enrolled in Penn State University, earning a B.S. in Agronomy (with a specialization in forage crops) in 1955. He worked on a farm for the first time, having helped his father in his plumb-

ing and heating business since he was 12. The following fall, he returned to school for another year to pursue an additional degree in Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology. He graduated in 1956, ready for a career in farm management—or so he thought.

Along came the call from Uncle Sam, and Garry found himself enlisted in the U.S. Army as Private. He was stationed in Europe for 18 months. During that time, he developed a love for travel, which more than likely accounts for Garry's success abroad during the last few years of superintending. To this day, Garry trots around the globe each winter to visit his many friends and professional associates.

With his military obligations behind him, Garry returned to explore the field of farm management. But his spirits were quickly dashed. "After several interviews," says Garry, "I realized I needed a lot more experience."

A bit disheartened, Garry went to work for a cousin, who had started a small construction company. But it didn't take his aunt long to see that Garry was not happy driving a truck; she suggested that he talk to a neighbor, Tony Mascaro. Little did Garry know, at the time, that Tony and his brother, Tom Mascaro, were soon to become icons in the turfgrass industry. Both Mascaros are credited with inventing the modern-day aerifier and had a number of turfgrass equipment inventions under the brand names of "West Point" and "Hahn."

After talking with Tony about the turfgrass management field for three hours in his barn filled with inventions, Garry knew he'd found the right profession. "It was the Golden Egg of my life," says Garry.

Knowing just about everyone in the industry, Tony suggested Garry contact none other than Sherwood Moore. In 1959, Garry became one of Sherwood's first trainees at Winged Foot Golf Club.

Talking to Sherwood several months before he passed away, he spoke of Garry as "steady, reliable, and easygoing." Reflecting on Garry's tenure with him, Sherwood said, "I can still see Garry sitting on a tractor pulling the Mascaro West Point triplex aerifiers round and round in circles for days to repair the damage caused by the 1959 U.S. Men's Open Championship. We, of course, needed good soil-to-seed contact to get germination, and Garry had the patience to get it done."

Golf Course in 1960, right next door to Sherwood's old stomping ground, Holly-wood Golf Club in New Jersey.

During his years in the Garden State, Garry served on the NJGCSA board, edited the chapter's newsletter, and ultimately, followed in Sherwood's footsteps, becoming the organization's president.

Garry was clearly pleased with his shift in careers. Describing his high regard for the profession, he says, "You are as close to owning your own business as you can get without the financial responsibilities. You are the boss of your domain; you get to call the shots. A club hires you for your expertise. Once you have established yourself at the club, you can obtain the highest level of

tions and improved relationships between the two Metropolitan New York area associations. As part of this effort, he hosted a joint meeting with the Met and New Jersey associations.

Putting his talents to work outside our organization, Garry participated on the original steering committee that founded the Tri-State Turf Research Foundation. And he was one of two superintendents invited to represent the Westchester County Golf Course Management teams in Local 32E Union negotiations. Prior to that, superintendents were not consulted during contract negotiations and simply accepted the results, like them or not.

Add to Garry's list of credits that he was

When asked how he would like to be remembered by his colleagues, Garry suggested, "as a good superintendent, one who tried to help young people to develop themselves."

Training with Sherwood convinced Garry to supplement his five years of agricultural studies with the 8-week turfgrass management course at the UMass Winter School. There, Garry became one of Dr. Joe Troll's first students and also developed a relationship that persists to this day with another of his instructors, Geoffrey Cornish, golf course architect.

Making His Mark in the Industry

After two years under Sherwood's watchful eye, Garry was well-prepared for his first superintendent's job. He was, in those days, one of the very few in the business to graduate from college.

He accepted the head position at Deal

respect. No one else has the information that you possess. It doesn't get much better than that!"

In 1968, Garry moved to the Met area, accepting a superintendent's position at The Apawamis Club in Rye, NY, where he hosted the annual U.S. Seniors Association Championship, as well as a Curtis Cup.

Garry joined the MetGCSA and continued to give to his profession as an active member. He was coeditor of the *Tee to Green*, guiding its growth from hand-cranked mimeographs to a printed publication. He served on the Met board—several years as a director, a year as treasurer, and then two years as president, in 1975 and '76. He employed his New Jersey connections to serve as a catalyst for better communica-

tion. The first superintendent to earn CGCS status in Metropolitan New York area, and it's a status he's maintained for 33 years. Many older superintendents were granted CGCS status under a "grandfather clause," when GCSAA certification was first established. Garry did it the old-fashioned way: He earned it, enduring a six-hour exam! "When others were 'poo-pooing' certification," says Garry, "I remembered Sherwood's advice: 'Never stop learning if you want to be the best!'"

A New Beginning

Garry left the MetGCSA in 1978 to pursue a dream of owning a Vermont ski hill and sports shop. As luck would have it, however,

Garry at the Bintan Lagoon Resort, Indonesia, with his assistant superintendent, Rico Banardus.



the weather during the first two winters didn't cooperate, and the hill received unusually low snowfall. This was before all hills had snow-making capabilities, so Garry's dreams were thwarted—to the benefit of the turf industry. To supplement his income, Garry fell back on his old profession of golf course superintendent.

He accepted a position at Montague Golf Club in Randolph, VT, and over the course of the next 10 years, became steeped in the Vermont GCSA, eventually taking on the role of association president.

During that period, Garry also worked for Northfield and Montpelier and then signed on with Sherman Hollow, a destination resort course that was still seeking its permit for construction. Garry worked long and hard—three years to be exact—to get the project started, even going so far as to meet with the EPA in Washington, D.C. Despite his efforts and the tireless work of the developers, Sherman Hollow never made it off the drawing board. It was at that point that Garry decided to hit the road with his golf course expertise.

First stop, Japan. Interestingly, Garry became the first individual in that country to have the title "superintendent." Says Garry about his experience, "It was a difficult assignment to be the only American on the project, but it was a learning experience I'll never forget."

After two years in Japan, Garry returned to the U.S. He worked in '91 and '92 at a Maryland golf course for the Fairways Group where I was vice president at the time.

It didn't take long, however, for the overseas travel bug to bite him again. In 1994, Garry took off to Indonesia, where he was fondly referred to as the "candy man" by his Indonesian friends and associates because, once a week, he would bring pieces of candy for everyone on his staff. That, by the way, was no small order since, on an 18-hole golf course in Indonesia, it was customary for the maintenance operation to have 140 employees.

While there, he trained superintendents at three different resorts and brought numerous superintendents and even a turf professor to the GCSAA conference and show, exposing them, for the first time, to this educational event.

Locally, he helped to start the Indonesian Golf Course Superintendents Association. "To see this association take off was very rewarding," says Garry. "I just told them to follow the GCSAA bylaws, and they took it and ran." Garry served on the association board for six years as vice chairman. "As a foreigner," explains Garry, "you couldn't be president." Garry still carries his membership card #3 and makes a return trip to Asia each winter. "Going back is like 'old home week' for me," he says.

Garry has contributed immensely to the growth and education of superintendents in Japan, Indonesia, and Micronesia. And although never one to "toot his own horn," Garry's work overseas has, without doubt, helped to grow the prestige and status of GCSAA and its chapters at home and throughout the world.

A Body in Motion Tends to Stay in Motion

Garry has returned to Vermont where he can see his daughter, Sherrie, and her husband on a regular basis. Sherrie is the service manager of Huntley Boat Yards in Portsmouth, RI. Her husband, Paul, manages large sailing vessels for Ted Hood, who designs yachts, including the America's Cup. Both Sherrie and Paul have their captain's license.

At age 73, Garry is far from retiring. In

fact, he worked the past three seasons at Montague Golf Club, enjoying the opportunity to redesign, build, and grow in nine new greens on a shoestring budget, and he did it, in his words, "with the help of a fantastic staff of men" who have retired from a variety of professions. "It is so rewarding to work with next to nothing and to produce miracles," says Garry of his success at Montague.

When asked how he would like to be remembered by his colleagues, Garry suggested, "As a good superintendent, one who tried to help young people to develop themselves." He's always tried to educate the community about our profession. As an active member of the Rotary Club since 1970, he's proud to note that he hasn't missed a meeting in 35 years. "I feel the Rotary is an excellent opportunity to tie the business of golf course management into the local business environment," says Garry.

On a personal note, Garry and I have been friends for more than 40 years. Garry's friendship, loyalty, and resourcefulness have always been a source of inspiration and support for me. I am thrilled that he is being honored as a recipient of the MetGCSA's Sherwood A. Moore Award. Sherwood has meant so much to both of us throughout our careers.

Ted Horton of THC-Ted Horton Consulting in Canyon Lake, CA, and a past MetGCSA president and Sherwood A. Moore Award winner, is now a national consulting superintendent to Valley Crest Golf Maintenance properties, executive director of the California Golf Course Owners Association, and consultant to several municipal properties in the Los Angeles and San Diego area.

Congratulations to Our 2006 Scholarship Recipients

by Matt Ceplo, CGCS, MetGCSA Vice President



At the July Education Meeting held at Sunningdale Country Club, the Scholarship & Research Committee awarded a total of \$10,600 in scholarships to 10 members' sons and daughters. It was a privilege to have met such outstanding young men and women. Through their applications, they demonstrated precisely what the Met is all about: excellence, commitment, desire, and responsibility.

Like last year, the judging was difficult. All the applications were outstanding. I take my hat off to my fellow Scholarship & Research Committee members who devoted a good deal of time and energy to processing and evaluating the applications. The winning candidates, as always, were selected based on maturity, academic history, ambition, extra-curricular activities, and effort exhibited in completing their application.

Please join me in congratulating this year's scholarship recipients—and their proud parents.

Ryan Beaudry, son of Karen and Ray Beaudry of Atlantic Irrigation, has begun his junior year at Manhattanville College with a double major in International Management and Finance and a minor in French.

Alison Ceplo, daughter of Jasmine and Matt Ceplo, superintendent of Rockland Country Club, has begun her freshman year

at The Fashion Institute of Technology in New York City.

Jayne Donovan, daughter of Julie and Shawn Donovan of Turf Products Corporation/CT, is attending the University of Connecticut School of Medicine. She is studying to become a physician.

Katelin Flynn, daughter of Cindy and A Life member Dennis Flynn, is in her junior year at the University of Colorado at Boulder, majoring in Mass Communications and Journalism.

Katherine Kennedy, daughter of Mary Jo and Les Kennedy, superintendent of the Blind Brook Club, is in her senior year at Northeastern University and is pursuing a B.S. in Business Administration.

William Kunkel, son of Eileen and Gerry Kunkel, superintendent of Pine Hollow Country Club, is in his freshman year at the Michigan State University.

Jessica Mahoney, daughter of Catherine and Dave Mahoney, superintendent of Siwanoy Country Club, is a sophomore at Cortland College enrolled in Communications Studies with a concentration in Public Relations and Advertising.

Five scholarship winners appeared with their parents to accept their scholarship awards (from left to right): John O'Keefe of Preakness Hills CC and daughter Maureen, Ernie Steinhof of Metro Turf Specialists and son Timothy, Dave and Catherine Mahoney flanking daughter Jessica, Shawn Donovan of Turf Products Corp./CT and daughter Jayne, Ray Beaudry of Atlantic Irrigation and son Ryan, Gerry Kunkel of Pine Hollow CC standing behind son William.

Kevin Moore, son of Glenn Moore of Glenmore Landscape Services, is in his junior year at Providence College with a major in Public and Community Service and a minor in Spanish.

Maureen O'Keefe, daughter of Margaret and John O'Keefe, superintendent of Preakness Hills Country Club, is in her junior year at Fairleigh Dickinson University enrolled in the Hotel/Restaurant & Tourism Management program.

Timothy Steinhof, son of Mary and Ernie Steinhof of Metro Turf Specialists, is in his freshman year at New York State University at Oneonta majoring in Environmental Science and Earth Science.

In addition to congratulating our recipients, I'd like to recognize those past boards who had the foresight to initiate our Scholarship Fund, which has grown over the years thanks to our Annual Bill Caputi Scholarship Raffle at Christmas, the 50/50s at our monthly meetings, and last but not least, a portion of our dues.

Please remember to support the scholarship raffle again this Christmas. It is one of the major income-generators for our Scholarship Fund. Wouldn't it be great to raise enough money to fund even more scholarships for our membership's deserving sons and daughters?

Matt Ceplo, chairman of the Scholarship and Research Committee, is superintendent at Rockland Country Club in Sparkill, NY.

Chapter News

Met Members Rock-n'-Roll at the Summer Social

Members on the Move

George Pierpoint IV is the new superintendent at Harbor Pines Golf Club in Egg Harbor Township, NJ. Previous position: Superintendent, Orange County Golf Club, Middletown, NY.

New Members

Please join the board in welcoming the following new members:

- **Tyler Casey**, Class C, The Seawane Club, Hewlett Harbor, NY
- **William Bartels**, Class AS, Tanto Irrigation, Elmsford, NY
- **George Corgan**, Class AS, Steven Willand, Brookfield, CT
- **David Mihailides**, Class AS, DGM Systems LLC, Forster, RI

Well Wishes

We are continuing our well wishes to **Bob Tosh**, who was a longtime Connecticut GCSA member and good friend to many MetGCSA members. Bob, superintendent at Rockrimmon Country Club before retiring, is now fighting some serious health issues and would certainly appreciate cards or notes from his old friends. Bob's address is 112 Apple Hill Road, Sunapee, NH 03782.

In Sympathy

We regret to announce that on August 12, **Terry Mulligan**, a MetGCSA member for 35 years, passed away. Terry worked for numerous area clubs—Pelham, Rolling Hills, Heritage Village, Aspetuck Valley, and Silver Spring, among them—before retiring from the industry several years ago. Our sincere condolences to Al's wife, Joan, and his family.

Jennifer
Alonzi and
Neil
Laufenberg



Rob and Ann
Marie Alonzi



If

you missed the MetGCSA Summer Social at Old Oaks Country Club on August 8, you missed a great time. The food, music, weather, and, better still, the camaraderie made this event so worth attending, and it was a welcome break from the challenges of the season.

Special thanks to Mark Millett and the staff at Old Oaks for their hospitality and for making this an evening to remember.

If you missed the Summer Social, not to worry. There's another opportunity—fast-approaching—to kick back with fellow Met members and their spouses: the December 2 Christmas Party at Mount Kisco Country Club. Start planning now for this always special event. See you there!

Bob Alonzi with
daughter-in-
law Ann
Marie



Kim Alonzi
and Jon
McConville



Tom and
Paula Weinert



Mimi and Jeff
Wentworth



Brett Chapin Hosts 2006 Assistants Tournament

by Dave Moffett

On October 12, MetGCSA Class C members converged at the Seawane Club in Hewlett Harbor, NY, to play in the ever-popular Annual Assistants Tournament, hosted this year by MetGCSA member Brett Chapin, Seawane's first assistant since 2002. Also instrumental in the planning and event prep-work was Second Assistant Tyler Casey. A graduate of Michigan State, Tyler is in his second full year at the club and a brand-new member of the Met.

About the Links

The Seawane Club was established in 1927 after architect Devereux Emmet carved a links-style course off the shores of the Atlantic Ocean. The course is a challenging 6,800-yard walk that can feel like a 7,500-yard crawl on any windy Long Island day.

"The Par 4 fourth hole can make any Long Island pro think twice about his or her choice of club," says Brett. The 300-yard hole has a six-foot-deep pot bunker in the middle of the landing area, and the small green is flanked by water on the right side. "I've seen many golfers struggle for triple bogey," he adds.

Brett's Beginnings

Brett made a seemingly smooth transition into the turf business. Hailing from the small town of Washington, CT, he attended Shepaug High School (home of the Spartans), where he played varsity baseball and basketball. After school and during the summers, Brett worked at The Washington Club, a nine-hole track that became the start of his professional career.

Brett spent his first summer working in the cart barn and the next couple of summers on the maintenance crew. Following graduation, there was no deliberation about what he wanted to do: Brett enrolled in the turf-grass management program at UMass in Amherst. While pursuing his B.S. in plant and soil science, he secured three impressive internships: In 1999, he worked at The Golf Club of Purchase with Bob Miller, in 2000 at



Our Seawane Club hosts (left to right): Superintendent Brian Benedict with assistants Tyler Casey and Brett Chapin.

Apawamis with Bill Perlee, and in 2001 at Siwanoy with Dave Mahoney.

The varied experience left him well prepared. "Working for Bob, Bill, and Dave, I was exposed to all phases and aspects of golf course management. I couldn't have found better training grounds," he says.

After graduation, with degree in hand and a smile on his face, Brett accepted his first assistant's job at The Seawane Club in Long Island.

The Learning Never Ends

Brett may have completed school, but he hasn't stopped learning. From the start, Seawane became yet another training ground as Brett helped usher the club through a massive reconstruction project initiated to bring the course back to its original seaside design. Working with the project's architect, Stephen Kay, and Seawane Superintendent Brian Benedict, Brett gained experience next to none.

"This is one of the most drastic in-house renovations I have ever seen," says Brett. "We removed about 1,500 trees and then brought in massive amounts of fill to create mounding where trees had been located to protect the golfers. We added all new tee complexes, 130 new bunkers, and a state-of-the-art irrigation system.

"Working under Brian through this project," adds Brett, "has not only boosted my

skills, it's built my confidence."

But Brett wasn't the only one to profit from the experience. In 2004, Seawane was voted "Golf Club of the Year" by the New York Sports Writers Association.

Personally Speaking

During his tenure at The Seawane Club, Brett's found more than just hard work. On January 29, 2005, he married the club's food and beverage manager, Grace-Marie, holding the ceremony and reception right there at the club. Since then, they've been known as "The Seawane Couple."

Recently, Brett and Grace-Marie took a trip to California's famed Napa Valley, where he claims they spent their time doing "whatever she wanted." They both enjoy spending time with their Border Collie "Primo," and as for Brett, himself... he's a self-described red-wine-drinking, bogey-golfer sports nut, who is a diehard Red Sox/Patriots fan.

After careful consideration and planning, the conditions and pure beauty of Seawane made it the obvious place for this year's tournament. Thank you to Brett, Tyler, and Brian for hosting the 2006 MetGCSA Assistants Tournament.

Dave Moffett, the Class C representative on the MetGCSA Board of Directors, is the assistant superintendent at Trump National Golf Club in Briarcliff Manor, NY.

Brian Benedict Welcomes Assistants to Seawane

by Dave Moffett

When asked about hosting this year's Assistants Tournament, the first thing Brian said was, "Give my assistants, Brett Chapin and Tyler Casey, all the credit on this one. It's their day." Nonetheless, both Brian and his crew were excited about hosting this year's event. "Seawane is a great place to play, and we're happy to share it with our assistant members," says Brian. "There are truly 18 different holes out here, and the wind blowing can make it very challenging."

Over the past five years, Brian, Brett, and Tyler have worked together in transforming Seawane into a spectacular Long Island golf destination. "The feedback on our renovations has been very positive," says Brian. "Looking back, there are some things I would have done differently—maybe seeded more of the fescue areas—but really, I like the way it turned out."

Brian's a firm believer in putting the health of the turf plant first, and it shows in the course's fast, firm greens and thick native areas. "It's this kind of approach that's enabled me to push the envelope from time to time and have the turf perform when we need it," says Brian.

No hog of the limelight, Brian is quick to credit his assistants for their contributions to the praise-worthy conditions on the course. "They're hardworking and talented. I'm very lucky to have them."

On Brian: A Quick Take

Brian came to Seawane in November of 2000 from Century Country Club, his one and only assistant's job, where he learned the ropes from James Fulwider Jr.

Brian has both a bachelor's in management and finance from L.I.U. - C.W. Post University and an associate's in turfgrass management from UMass, Amherst, which he completed in 1995.

Now entering into his seventh year at Seawane, Brian has been through a lot: He's seen five NFL seasons, one-and-a-half Bush administrations, and about \$3.2 million in course renovations. Oh, and we can't forget to mention, his marriage to Mari and then the birth of their now 21-month-old daughter, Grace.

When asked about his future goals, Brian didn't have to give it much thought: "I just want to be a good father right now," he said.

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people from all walks of life to discuss and learn about a host of environmental issues. It's at this event that superintendents are able to join lawmakers to discuss our need to use pesticides and fertilizers and to assure them that we can—and do—use them responsibly and without harm to water quality or any other aspect of the environment.

NYSTA conferences have also proved worthy forums for risk communication. At the 2001 conference, a speaker from Cornell University's Department of Communication, Dr. Clifford Scherer, gave a lecture titled "Communicating Environmental Issues to the Public." In it, he discussed the why, when, and how of risk communication and offered food for thought in developing a risk communication plan that you, yourself, might use in your dealings with members of your club or community. Here's what he proposes you consider when formulating a risk communication plan:

Why Communicate With the Public?

- What do you want the public to know, believe, or do?
- What are the issues you face?
- Who is the public?

Why Is Communication so Difficult?

- Communication is not a simple one-way process.
- People do not change beliefs, knowledge, or behaviors easily.
- We all receive conflicting information.

Why Is Risk Communication so Painful?

- Conflicting beliefs: That something bad might happen vs. that something good might happen.
- Voluntary risks are seen as safer than involuntary risks.
- Control: Risks under personal control are more acceptable. In other words, if I were to spray chemicals on my yard that would be safer than you spraying (something) near my home.
- Morality: Risks that are taken for your own profit are less acceptable.
- Familiarity: Exotic is more risky than traditional. Natural is safer than artificial.
- Media attention: Increased attention makes risk higher.
- Memorability: Risks that are easier to visualize are perceived as less acceptable.

How Do You Improve Communication?

- Plan communication efforts.
- Prepare for the unexpected.
- Decide on a spokesperson.
- Determine how you will respond to inquiries.
- Decide what your message is to the media.
- Communicate openly.

- Know that trust and credibility are the only things you have in your favor.
- Involve the public as early as possible.
- Use experts: technical experts, process/risk communication experts.
- Be proactive. Establish a framework for dialog, early release of information about problems and potential problems, and work to build trust.
- Evaluate how your audience feels about your efforts. Did you accomplish what you wanted?

In the end, learning about risk communication can help all of us to better explain—and defend—our role as stewards of the environment. Producing constructive exchanges in discussions that have the potential for controversy is the end result of good risk communication. My hope is that my discussion, here, will springboard us, as superintendents, into better preparing ourselves to address and educate those with misperceptions about the risks associated with our industry and our practices.

Parting Thank Yous

Before I leave office, I want to offer my sincere thanks to our Met Board of Directors for the outstanding job they do in providing our membership with the educational, social, and monthly meeting events that we schedule annually. A great deal of energy and personal time are required to organize these events.

Thank you also to our *Tee to Green* managing editor, Pandora Wojick, our designer, Terrie Dunkelberger, and the entire *Tee to Green* Committee for making our newsletter one of the finest the industry has to offer.

Thank you to Ineke Pierpoint, our executive secretary, for the fine job she does in supporting our association.

Thank you to all of the superintendents who host our events.

Thank you to all of our purveyors. We greatly appreciate the high level of service you provide and your support through advertising and sponsoring our monthly meetings.

Again, thanks to all. Your efforts are greatly appreciated.

I look forward to working with everyone for the next two years—my last on the board—as past president.

Best Regards,

Will Heintz
President

Be Sure to Keep Your Head at Sleepy Hollow's Superintendent/Green Chairman Tourney

by Greg Wojick, CGCS

I thought I lost my head when I started to connect all the dots: Sleepy Hollow . . . the Headless Horseman . . . Ichabod Crane . . . October 30, the day before Halloween. Hmmm . . . sounds a bit spooky to me. I got this strange feeling I was being set up for a practical joke.

According to local tales, Sleepy Hollow "is subject to trances and visions; and frequent strange sights, music, and voices in the air. The whole neighborhood abounds with local tales, haunted spots, and twilight superstitions."

The legends of Sleepy Hollow, the valley along the Hudson River, 30 miles from New York City, are many. The most famous, of course, is the story of the "Headless Horseman"—supposedly the ghost of a Hessian soldier beheaded by a cannonball during the Revolutionary War—and the local schoolteacher, Ichabod Crane. The Horseman supposedly threw his head at Crane at the foot of the "haunted bridge" that now connects tee to green on Sleepy's third hole. Ooooo, golfers beware.

Okay, maybe you don't have to be scared off by the tales of horror at Hole #3, but if you were to ask our host superintendent, Tom Leahy, which hole might actually make you shake in your boots, he'd say Hole #8. "It's a tough hole because of the contouring of the fairway. There's a big mound in the middle (if I didn't know better, I'd think it was a buried mastodon), which requires that you place your tee shot strategically down the left-hand side."

While you're there, you'll also have the opportunity to view a major restoration project in progress. The nearly 100-year-old course is getting a facelift. Under the direction of Architect Gil Hanse, the course is being brought back to its core Raynor/MacDonald design, which according to Tom means renovating bunkers, tees, recontouring Hole #12, and installing new drainage.

"I'm very pleased with the way our course is going back to its roots," says Tom. "Even

though Tillinghast did lots of work here, and gets much of the design credit, it's Raynor/MacDonald's work that offers the most interest and a clear return to the early roots at Sleepy."

How Well Do You Know Tom?

Even those who know Tom probably don't realize that he has a degree in anthropology from Hartwick College or that he was recently elected as a board member of the Cornell Cooperative Extension for Westchester County. (Way to go, Tom.)

Tom also went on to earn a degree in turf-grass management from SUNY Delhi after realizing that he'd rather work with the living than the long gone.

Actually, Tom had a good idea what he was getting himself into when he went on to study turf. He worked throughout high school and during his Hartwick years on the maintenance crew of Woodhaven Golf Course in Oneonta, NY—the town where he was born and raised. Then, he interned under former Wykagyl superintendent, Vin Sharkey. So when he had to dig deep and decide what he really wanted to do with his life, he decided that he enjoyed the lifestyle on a golf course.

After graduating from Delhi in 1993, Tom jumped right in to an assistant's position. He worked for Joe Camberato, who in four years, prepared Tom well enough to assume the reigns as Sleepy's superintendent when he retired.

A superintendent, through and through, Tom enjoys his work and all that the profession has to offer. High on his list of pluses is the camaraderie. "I thoroughly enjoy the close ties in our profession," says Tom readily, "and I sincerely appreciate my core peers. I can grab my cell any time and commiserate, ask advice, or just vent to the guys. It makes all the tough days seem not so tough.

"Beyond that," he continues, "what's better than teaming up with peers to go golfing, to a Nascar race, on a fishing trip, or just to a



Tom Leahy, CGCS

watering hole? The camaraderie is the antidote to all that's tough about our business."

But Tom does more than just reap the benefits of the industry, he gives back as well. In addition to sitting on the board of the Cornell Cooperative Extension for Westchester County, Tom's been an active contributor—for five years—to the MetGCSCA's board of directors, offering hours of personal time to its various committees.

In the midst of his professional commitments, Tom still finds time to enjoy family life—with his wife of 10 years, Jennifer, and his two young sons, Ty, who's 7, and Ian, who's 5.

Be There . . . or Beware

Now, back to the event, the annual Superintendent/Green Chairman Tourney. I have this vision of anthropologists dusting off old, dug-up skulls.... hmmm.... October 30 could turn out to be a very strange MetGCSCA tournament.

Did they ever find the head of the Headless Horseman? Perhaps not, but one thing I'm sure we'll find on the 30th is great golfing conditions at one of the great classic golf courses in the Met area.

Greg Wojick, a member of the Tee to Green Editorial Committee, is superintendent at Greenwich Country Club in Greenwich, CT.

Upcoming Events

Three Events to Go!

*I*t's that time of year again. As we approach the end of 2006—and our long line of association events—we are looking for volunteers to host our meeting and social events for 2007.

To host a professional event, please contact either of our Tournament Committee co-chairs: Blake Halderman at 914-946-1074 or Chuck Denny at 914-669-5959. For social events, contact Tom Leahy at 914-941-8281 or Bob Nielsen at 914-234-3779, our Social & Welfare Committee co-chairs. Here's what we have for the balance of the year:

Superintendent/Green Chairman Tournament

Monday, October 30
Sleepy Hollow Country Club
Scarborough, NY
Host: Tom Leahy, CGCS

Annual Meeting

Tuesday, November 7
Bedford Golf & Tennis Club
Bedford, NY
Host: Bob Nielsen, CGCS

MetGCSA Christmas Party

Saturday, December 2
Mount Kisco Country Club
Mount Kisco, NY
Host: Fred Scheyhing, CGCS



Educational Events

3rd Annual GCSANJ Crystal Conference

Tuesday–Thursday, November 7–9
Crystal Springs Resort, Vernon, NJ
This two-day educational conference will kick off with a Four-Man Scramble Event on Opening Day.

For further information, contact Paul Dotti at 866-GCSANJ1 or edgepaul@hotmail.com. You can also watch the website as the date draws closer: <http://www.GCSANJ.org>.

Empire State Green Industry Show

(Formerly the NYSTA Turf and Grounds Exposition)

Tuesday–Thursday, November 14–16
Rochester Riverside Convention Center, Rochester, NY
The 2006 Empire State Green Industry Show offers an excellent opportunity to network, obtain research updates, and visit the trade show, which, this year, will include 300 exhibitors.

Key speakers representing all segments of the green industry will also be featured this year:

- David Oatis, Director of the USGA Green Section, Northeast Region, will review the 2006 season and the impact of the challenges faced by golf course superintendents.
- Kevin Trotta, Head Groundskeeper with the North Rockland Central School District, will give a presentation on how to manage sports turf and protect the environment.
- Daniel Gilrein, Extension Entomologist with Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County, will discuss the principles of IPM and the benefits of using organic and

reduced-risk pesticides in the landscape.

- Dr. Harvey Lang, Director of Technical Support with Fischer USA, will give tips on how to produce great-looking vegetative spring crops.

- Debbie Miller, Diagnostician/Research Associate with Davey Tree Expert Company, will give advice on how to maintain healthy trees and address common environmental and cultural problems in the landscape.

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

GCSAA Seminar: Plant Growth Regulators

Wednesday, November 29
Hampton Inn, Tarrytown, NY
This seminar will tell you all you need to know about cool-season grass regulation. It will cover the commonly used plant growth regulators (PGRs), how PGRs actually alter turfgrass growth, and the benefits and pitfalls of using PGRs.

For further information, contact our Education Chairman, Glen Dube, at 845-279-8960.

MetGCSA Winter Seminar

Wednesday, January 17, 2007
Westchester Country Club, Rye, NY
Plan now for our upcoming Winter Seminar. Here is the preliminary roster of speakers:

- University of Connecticut's Jason Henderson will discuss fairway topdressing.
- Dr. Bruce Clarke of Rutgers University will provide us with a dollar spot update.
- Dr. Kimberly Erusha of the USGA will discuss issues pertinent to area superintendents.
- Pat Jones of Flagstick LLC, founder of *Golfdom Magazine*, will talk about a variety of industry topics.
- Bill Evans, Channel 7 News meteorologist, will provide superintendents with tips and techniques for using weather forecasts to enhance job performance.

For further information, call our Education Chairman, Glen Dube, at 845-279-8960.



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The Poa Annual's Winning Scores

Hudson National Proves a True Test of Golf

On July 31, the MetGCSA held the Poa Annual at Salem Golf Club in North Salem, NY. Host Superintendent Chuck Denny and his staff had the course in magnificent shape, and a good time was had by all. Many thanks to the clubhouse staff for providing us with an exceptional menu.

The Poa Annual is run, as the name suggests, annually by the MetGCSA to raise funds for turfgrass research. This year, members of the Hudson Valley Golf Course Superintendents Association and the Connecticut Association of Golf Course Superintendents joined us in this worthy fundraising event.

Many thanks to all who participated. Your generosity will pay dividends—in turfgrass research that will, in the long run, make our jobs easier and ensure our courses thrive.

Here are the winning results:

First Low Gross

72 Dave Dudones
North Jersey Country Club
Chris Dachisen
North Jersey Country Club

First Low Net

63 Earl Millett
Ridgeway Country Club
Chuck Denny
Salem Golf Club

Longest Drive

#18 Charlie Siemers
Lesco, Inc.

Closest to the Pin

#2 Dave Neufeld,
Plant Food Company, Inc. 17' 5"

— Glen Dube, CGCS

On September 5, after a long Labor Day weekend, MetGCSA members and guests had the opportunity to participate in the Met Championship and the qualifier for the Met Area Team Championship (contested at Fishers Island Club on October 3).

The event was held at Hudson National Golf Club, which Superintendent Chris Smith had in fabulous condition, despite the wind and rain tropical storm Ernesto brought our way just days before. Many thanks to Chris and the rest of the Hudson National staff for a truly exceptional day—from start to finish.

Golfing Notables

We played an individual tournament with most finding Hudson National a true test of golf. Because this event was both the Championship and Met Area Qualifier, there were two divisions: a superintendent division (Met members only) and a Class C/affiliate/guest division.

In the Class C/affiliate/guest division . . .

Rick Gordon of A.G. Enterprises took home the Gross honors with a score of 80 followed by Jon Barlock of Turf Products Corp. with an 81.

On the Net side, we had Rick Krok of Storr Tractor Co. beating Greg Moran of Matrix Turf Solutions for first place on a match of cards with a score of 66. Third place net went to the home club assistant superintendent, Andy Bobiak, with a score of 67.

In the superintendent division . . .

The Net scores were pretty spread out, but in the Gross division, it went down to the last hole. First place net went to Lance Rogers of Colonia Country Club with a score of 66 followed by Tony Grasso of Metropolis Country Club shooting a 69. Lou Quick of Anglebrook Golf Club took home third place net with a 72.

In the Gross division, Sean Cain of Sunningdale Country Club took home the trophy as the 2006 MetGCSA Gross Champion after a match of cards with Blake Halderman of Brae Burn Country Club. Both shot 75 and were playing together, so it was a fight to the finish. Sean was up the entire day; then Blake birdied two out of three holes, taking the lead—until he made a bogey on the last hole. Sean made a great 40-foot two-putt for par, resulting in a tie situation with Sean taking home the trophy.

Congratulations to one and all.

Closest to the Pin

| | |
|-----------------------|--------|
| #2 Bruce Markowitz | 6' 7" |
| Guest | |
| #8 Chuck Martineau | 2' 7" |
| Whippoorwill Club | |
| #11 Scott Tretera | 27' 9" |
| The Turf Connection | |
| #13 Lou Quick | 5' |
| Anglebrook Golf Club | |
| #16 Greg Moran | 23' 9" |
| Matrix Turf Solutions | |

Longest Drive

#6 Ken Benoit
Glen Arbor Golf Club

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Anthony Decicco & John Decicco

2006 Two-Ball Competitors Still Slugging It Out

Met Area Team Championship Qualifiers

The following contestants qualified to represent the MetGCSA at Fishers Island (must have an 18.0 index or lower in the Net Division) against 12 other neighboring superintendent associations:

Gross Team

Sean Cain, *Sunningdale Country Club*
Blake Halderman, *Brae Burn Country Club*
Mark Millett, *Old Oaks Country Club*
Mark Chant, *Colonial Springs Golf Club*

Net Team

Tony Grasso, *Metropolis Country Club*
Dave Mahoney, *Siwanoy Country Club*
Scott Niven, *The Stanwich Club*
Matt Severino, *Scarsdale Golf Club*

Thank you, again, to everyone involved in the day, and a special thank you to the members and staff at Hudson National Golf Club!

— Blake Halderman, CGCS



Eight teams are still remaining as the Semi-Finals get underway for the 2006 MetGCSA Two-Ball Championship. There were the typical blowouts in the quarter-final round but some close ones as well.

The pairing of Niven/Pakkala vs. Cain/Wentworth in the First Flight seemed like it had the makings of a good quarter-final match, and that it did. Niven/Pakkala had their opponents on the ropes, but both double-bogeyed the last two holes in regulation and Cain/Wentworth came back to win on the second playoff hole.

To meet Cain/Wentworth in the Semi-Final round, Dube/Halderman also had their hands full, beating the veteran team of Binsse/Cancelleri by only 1 up at Whippoorwill. The other two matches were kind of sleepers, with a 4 & 3 and a 3 & 2 victory. Thank God they're playing each other.

The Second Flight brought only one back-and-forth exciting match as DeSanctis/Scott defeated Polidor/Moore 2 up to advance to the Semi-Finals. On the flip side, the team of Gonzalez/Quick (which always seems like a team to beat) made short work of Martineau/Scheyhing, defeating them 5 and 4 at Anglebrook. Maybe it was the home field advantage. They'll be facing off against the Fuller/Johnson team in the semis, which should be interesting. I'm not sure there's enough room for all those dots on one scorecard!

Here's a full report on how the Second-Round matches panned out, with a look at the lineup for the Semi-Finals.

Second-Round Match Results

First Flight

- 9) Tim Garceau/Ernie Steinhofer
defeated 4 & 3
- 1) Grover Alexander/Dave Dudones
- 4) Joe Gardner/Tom Weinert
defeated 3 & 2
- 5) Chris Alonzi/Mike Cook
- 6) Glen Dube/Blake Halderman
defeated 1 up
- 14) Eddie Binsse/Dan Cancelleri
- 15) Sean Cain/Jeff Wentworth
defeated in a 2nd playoff
- 7) Scott Niven/Larry Pakkala

Second Flight

- 8) Mark Fuller/Byron Johnson
defeated 3 & 2
- 1) Dennis Flynn/Peter Rappoccio
- 5) Paul Gonzalez/Lou Quick
defeated 5 & 4
- 4) Chuck Martineau/Fred Scheyhing
- 14) Joe Kennedy/Peter Waterous
defeated in a coin toss
- 11) Bob Nielsen/Bill Perlee
- 2) Dennis DeSanctis Jr./Mike Scott
defeated 2 up
- 10) Todd Polidor/Tim Moore

Semi-Final Match Lineup

First Flight

- 9) Tim Garceau/Ernie Steinhofer
vs.
- 4) Joe Gardner/Tom Weinert
- 6) Glen Dube/Blake Halderman
vs.
- 15) Sean Cain/Jeff Wentworth

Second Flight

- 8) Mark Fuller/Byron Johnson
vs.
- 5) Paul Gonzalez/Lou Quick
- 14) Joe Kennedy/Peter Waterous
vs.
- 2) Dennis DeSanctis Jr./Mike Scott

Good luck to all, and we hope to see you in the Finals!

— Blake Halderman, CGCS

Bob Nielsen Cooks Up a New Format for Annual Meeting

by Chip Lafferty

On November 5, the MetGCSA's Annual Meeting will be held at Bedford Golf & Tennis Club in Bedford, NY. Hoping to encourage greater participation in the business of our association, those attending this year's meeting will also have the opportunity to play the course—weather permitting—in a 9-hole scramble. The real treat, however, comes later, when meeting host Bob Nielsen swaps his turf manager's cap for a chef's hat, and takes charge of the clubhouse kitchen to rustle up a home-cooked, post-golf meal.

"While everyone's on the course, I'll be in the kitchen. I'm booting the chef out," says Bob, who it turns out, has more than just your average culinary skills. "It'll be informal. Wine and cheese, pasta . . ." he says, noting they'll dine in the locker room.

Bob's Budding Career

Bob, as you can tell, is quite at home at the club. And no wonder. He's been employed there for nearly a quarter of a century, first as a crew member, then as an assistant, and finally, as the superintendent. In fact, Bedford Golf & Tennis is Bob's one and only stop in the golf course industry.

Like many superintendents, however, a career in turfgrass management wasn't first and foremost on Bob's mind. When he graduated from Bedford high in 1977, he enrolled in SUNY, Oneonta, as a physics major. "After a year," he says, "I knew I had chosen the wrong course." He left SUNY and worked numerous day jobs while pursuing an associate's at Westchester Community College and then a bachelor's in Tax Accounting from Pace University.

In the midst of his education, Bob worked at Bedford, becoming Terry Boles' assistant in 1986 and actually earning a certificate in turfgrass management from UMass's Winter School before becoming the club's superintendent in 1991.

"I was fortunate," says Bob. "Terry retired, and I stepped into his job." By that point, Bob knew that a career as a full-time

accountant wouldn't suit him. "I realized I wasn't cut out for a job that required working in a stuffy office," says Bob.

That's not to say his efforts in pursuing an accounting degree were for naught. His skills are frequently called into action during tax season—and then, of course, he's put them to good use over the past two years as our association's treasurer.

About Bedford

Since Bob's first Met meeting in 1995, he's hosted at least three other events. As a result, many members have had the pleasure of seeing the golf course evolve over the years.

It started out in 1891 as a lawn tennis club and then, three years later, became Bedford Golf & Tennis, with the addition of a nine-hole course. In the 1920s, the club decided to beef up its golf operation and secured an additional 60 acres for a front nine, designed by Golf Course Architect Devereux Emmet.

The course remained virtually unchanged until 1998, when Architect Ken Dye was called in to renovate the course's 143 acres. "We added length, dramatic bunker complexes and green surrounds, and even some new putting surfaces," explains Bob.

Beyond Bedford

The golf course renovation is not the only positive change Bob has experienced over the years. In 2004, Bob married, and he and his new wife, Carolyn, celebrated the arrival of their son, John, 20 months ago.

Bob's other two sons—Bob and Matt—



Bob Nielsen, CGCS

have graduated from college and stationed themselves close to home. Bob Jr., his eldest, didn't follow in his father's footsteps, but he *did* stay close to the industry, working for the MGA publication, *The Met Golfer*, as an assistant editor.

Matt, Bob's second in line, recently graduated from the University of Colorado with a degree in economics and is currently working side-by-side with his dad until something "shakes loose" on the job front.

The other good thing in Bob's life, he might tell you, is his relatively new-found passion for cooking. "Trips to Napa and fine restaurants, particularly at conference time, helped peak my interest in food and wine," says Bob, who is looking forward to sharing his culinary talents with Met members next month.

So please mark your calendar for our a.m. Annual Meeting and board elections—and an afternoon of golf and good eats.

Chip Lafferty, a member of the Tee to Green Editorial Committee, is superintendent at Rye Golf Club in Rye, NY.



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Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Our Christmas Party Host—and More

by Kevin Collins

Veteran Superintendent Fred Scheyhing Can't Help but Show Met Members a Mighty Fine Time

December 2 marks the date of the MetGCSA's annual Christmas Party—and its return to Mt. Kisco Country Club, the site of numerous past association holiday celebrations. Welcoming Met members are our hosts, Superintendent Fred Scheyhing, a 40-year veteran at the club, and General Manager Hussein Ali, who was quick to note how pleased he is to again be hosting our association's Christmas party. "I hope everyone can join us in sharing some holiday cheer," says Hussein. "We'll have plenty of food and drink to celebrate the season."

Though it may seem Fred's been at Mt. Kisco forever, he was not there at the club's opening. Mt. Kisco Country Club opened its doors in 1928 as Lawrence Farms Country Club, a 6,500-yard layout designed by Tom Winton. Originally a greenskeeper, Winton came to America in 1916 to prepare Siwanoy Country Club for the inaugural PGA Championship.

At the time, the Mt. Kisco name was taken by the only other club in the area, the Mt. Kisco Golf Club. In the 1940s, however, the club ceased operations, and Lawrence Farms gladly assumed the Mt. Kisco name, with a slight modification: It became Mt. Kisco Country—rather than Golf—Club.

Interestingly, the word "kisco" is derived from the Indian word "cisqua," which in Algonquin means "muddy place." That seems to explain why Fred and his crew have had to install miles of drainage pipe to keep the fairways above water!

Early Fred

Fred's beginnings, like Mt. Kisco's, are far from run-of-the-mill. "I was born in Manhattan in 1938," Fred remembers. "My parents, Fred and Emma, were both beauticians. We lived in a cold water flat on Second

Avenue & 95th Street near the old Ruppert brewery. Our apartment was a fifth-floor walkup. I can still remember the ice man climbing those stairs every day to bring us ice for our ice box."

Fred even recounted a few episodes from his elementary school years. Among his favorite: "I went to PS#5," he says, "which was not far from where we lived. When I was 5, I remember having fire prevention week at school. I went home to the apartment, lit some candles, and put them on my toy fire truck. I rolled it into the bathroom and set the curtains on fire. The whole place almost burned down."

That was only the beginning. Fred spent the next 63 years setting the world on fire. Though his childhood years were far from picture-perfect—his parents divorced and his mother passed away before he reached his teens—he went on to play sports in his Yonkers, NY, high school, running track and attaining "All County" status in bowling.

"I wanted to play football," remembers Fred, "but my dad wouldn't let me. You needed insurance to play, and we didn't have any," he adds with a laugh.

During his Yonkers years, Fred got his first taste of golf course work. "By then, my dad had retired his scissors and was making a living as a painter and decorator," says Fred. "I worked for my dad, and I absolutely hated it. As often as I could, I would caddy at Quaker Ridge Golf Club. I loved the outdoors. Back then, the course had no irrigation—just roller-type sprinklers."

At 17, Fred enlisted in the Air Force. Stationed in Chicopee, MA, he'd work a schedule of six days on and three days off. On his off days, he'd caddy at Springfield Country Club. When he turned 18, he took a job on the club's grounds crew.

The Career Begins

"At Springfield, I lived over the maintenance building," Fred recalls. "Max Mierzwa, the super then, thought I was meant for the profession, so I enrolled in UMass and completed an associate's in 1964."

About that time, Fred was offered his first



Fred Scheyhing, CGCS

assistant's job at Chevy Chase Country Club in Maryland. "I worked there for about a year and a half when I read a job notice in a GCSAA publication for the superintendent's position at Mt. Kisco Country Club. I went for the interview in September of '65, and they offered me the job."

It was a different world then for golf course superintendents. "Mt. Kisco was a small family type club," remembers Fred, "with about 150 members. The Pro Shop was a shack. I had six guys on the crew making about \$1.50 an hour. There was no fairway irrigation. We used roller sprinklers with hundreds of feet of hose to water the course. Every time I had to go into the pumphouse, I thought I was going to be electrocuted."

The course, itself, was in pretty sad shape when Fred arrived. "I would say that it was about 80 percent weeds when I got there. In December of 1965, we had a manual irrigation system installed for the fairways, greens, and tees. In 1966, I began to overseed everything with Seaside bentgrass. I've continued that practice to this day," says Fred.

After 10 years at Mt. Kisco, Fred returned to Chevy Chase—this time, as superintendent. But it didn't take him long to miss the lower Hudson Valley, so when Mt. Kisco called Fred back in 1977, he gladly returned to resume his duties.

"Since '77, there have been a lot of changes for the better," says Fred. "We now have an automatic irrigation system. The club currently has 350 golf members. The clubhouse has been renovated and upgraded."

Fred is proud of the strong relationships he's managed to build with the club's GMs, green chairmen, pros, and club presidents over the years—and the obvious high regard

the club has had for him. "At what other club would you find a framed picture of the golf course superintendent hanging in the men's locker room?" says Fred, with a smile.

But more telling are the words of praise the club's current manager has for Fred. Says Hussein Ali: "It has been an honor and privilege to work with Fred. He assumed the role of superintendent some 40 years ago, as the youngest superintendent in the metropolitan area and has since become the number one player on our management team.

"In my first season as general manager, I was faced with the challenge of opening our pool for the Memorial Day Weekend festivities. The pool had never opened on time, but Fred and his crew were behind the scenes planting flowers, mowing grass, and ensuring the water systems were functioning. Although I was the hero that day, it was really Fred who made it possible. As you can imagine, Fred won my heart and my undying friendship that day and every day since.

"Despite the rain, the heat, the cold, Fred has been there to make sure our golf course is always in outstanding condition. When other area golf courses are suffering from the ravages of the weather, our course is always in the best of condition. Over the years, Fred has led numerous projects, constantly working to improve our course. He has overseen the rebuilding of tees, greens, fairways, sand traps, and directed the installation of our new irrigation system.

"Fred has earned my deepest respect, as well as that of all our members. He is viewed by everyone at the club with the highest regard for his unwavering professionalism."

Family Ties

Hussein and Mt. Kisco aren't the only ones to hold Fred in high regard. Right up there in the Freddy Fan Club is his family. He adores them, and they love him right back.

Fred met his second wife, Nancy, in 1998. "I was at Teddy's in Danbury. It was Memorial Day weekend. There were some bad storms in the area and a tornado warning. Nancy got a little spooked and decided to get out of the house."

The rest is history. Fred and Nancy got married in 1999. With this union came the benefit of combined families and lots of grandkids. "I love spending time with my grandchildren. There's Fawnie, 13; Taylor, 12; Blisse, 10; Kennedy, 10; Erica, 8; Majella, 4; and Eli who's 7."

Fred's son, Michael, followed him into the profession. "When Michael was 15, he started working for me at the club," says Fred. "He got a four-year degree from Cobleskill, worked for Mark Millett at Old Oaks for a

year, and then moved to Florida, where he's now superintendent at Venice Country Club in Venice, FL. Michael and I are the best of friends. I'm very proud of him."

Favorite Freddy Stories

With longevity—in the association and the industry—comes many friendships and, of course, lots of friendly ribbing and great times. Here are a few Freddy stories that just couldn't go untold:

My story: "'Never buy a used boat from that man,' advises Tim Marcoux. A couple of years ago, Tim and Bob Miller purchased Fred's boat when he upgraded to a new one. They paid Fred \$1,000 for their new toy. Since the purchase, they've logged about 33 minutes on the water. This spring, the boat sank before they could spend any quality time on it. It's a goner. One day soon after Tim and Bob had bought Fred's boat, I joined the three of them at our favorite watering hole. I told Fred that I had just purchased a boat from Tim and Bob. 'How much did you pay for it?' Fred asked. 'I gave 'em \$15,000,' I replied. Fred turned red and was headed to his car to get a baseball bat to give us all a good thrashing when he realized we were pulling his leg. I think we laughed all night over that one."

Longtime assistant and friend Tom Tooley has this to say: "Where do I start? Let's see, what is there to say about the oldest living teenager and a boss who is more than just a boss? Fred and I have been together for 28 years. That's longer than all my marriages put together. We must be doing something right! We work hand in hand, and I think that's why we have one of the best courses in Westchester. The younger superintendents should take note of why Fred has been so successful over the past 40-plus years. I have been very lucky to work with Fred and learn from him. When the going gets tough, Fred's always the one to tell you: 'Don't worry about it!'"

Canyon Club Superintendent and good friend Paul Gonzalez recalls a recent conversation he had with Fred: "Fred told me that he was starting to hate going to Met meetings. When I asked him why, he replied that the assistants were looking at him hoping he'd die soon so they could have his job."

Metropolis Superintendent and longtime friend Tony Grasso has many fond memories of Fred: "In 1975, Fred hired me to work for him at Mt. Kisco. A week later, he quit his job to go to Maryland and left me with Vic. My career almost ended before it got started!"

Tony has also enjoyed some of Fred's

famous utterings or, for lack of a better word, "Freddyisms," over the years: "We were traveling up to Queechie to play in a tournament. The fall colors were at their peak. Fred's comment was, 'I so enjoy the smattering of leafage.'"

About 15 years ago, as Fred's hair was slowly disappearing, he decided to start wearing a hair piece. His new alias, "Fred Rugman," was born. Tony remembers, "I went out and ordered close to 20 sweatshirts with 'Team Rugman' printed on the front. We headed up to Queechie for the annual tournament. The first night we were there, we invited Fred to eat with us. We had a huge table of superintendents, and all of them were wearing these 'Team Rugman' sweatshirts. Fred was running late and when he finally got there, it took him two hours to notice what we had on. Fred is a class guy; he is a mentor and a friend."

A close friend of Fred's over the years has been Whippoorwill Superintendent Chuck Martineau: Fred and Chuck live in the same condo complex in Florida. "Every year we have a contest to see who catches the most fish or the biggest fish. The winner gets to go in the loser's garage and take whatever he wants. The first two years, Fred won, and he took two of my favorite fishing poles as his prize. The next year I won. Fred probably thought I was going to take one of my fishing poles back. I took his grill!"

Fred, of course, has a slightly different story. He remembered this friendly competition as a golf contest and, while Fred does admit to claiming two fishing poles, he says they weren't Chuck's favorite. "He had hidden all his best fishing poles!" says Fred.

Old Oaks Superintendent and close friend, Mark Millett, had these thoughts: "Fred thinks he's still a teenager at almost 68 years old. Fred can grow grass and party with the best of 'em ... a real pro. Over the years, Fred and I have had a lot of good times, and I'm looking forward to having more good times in the future. I wish Fred all the best in his future endeavors. He is he best."

Be sure to put December 2 on your calendar. Don't miss this always-fun opportunity to build some fond memories with fellow association members at this year's MetGCSA Christmas Party. Fred, no doubt, will show us all a real good time.

Kevin Collins, a member of the Tee to Green Editorial Committee, is Northeast territory manager for Aquatrols Corp. of America.

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