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Tee To Green

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Editors

ROB ALONZI
914-478-5713

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Advertising Manager
GLENN PERRY, 203-762-9484

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President's Message

Career Planning: There's a Payoff

*A*s you've probably heard by now, I've just made a move from Centennial Golf Club to Pound Ridge Golf Club. This wasn't something I did on a whim or spur of the moment. It was a career choice I made only after considerable plotting, planning, and preparation.

This is a topic that I feel is particularly timely, given our feature article this issue by Jim McLoughlin, who is in the business of providing superintendents, assistants, and other professionals in the golf industry with the guidance they need to map out productive and satisfying career paths.

For me, Jim was a kind of guiding light when I was in the throes of reevaluating my career goals and vision. In fact, I attended Jim's Strategic Career Planning Workshop at Apawamis this past December, and I found it very helpful.

I guess the point I'd like to drive home in my message this issue is just how important career planning and monitoring is—to our job security and our long-term satisfaction. Wait until you're an "unhappy camper" and the task is much more difficult. It's in our best interest to always have a plan in place and ready to go—should we need it or want it in a hurry.

Other lessons learned and words of advice . . .

About Being Ready

As Jim McLoughlin states, "There are more good superintendents than there are good jobs." Lets face it. . . We are all in a tight job market. Things are not going to happen on their own unless we plan for them and make them happen. If the "dream job" or "opportunity of a lifetime" presents itself, having a plan in place allows us to take immediate action.

Another harsh reality—and essential reason for having a career plan—is termination. I think the simplest and most effective way to address this topic is to meet it head-on. Ask yourself well before this ever happens, "What will I do if I lose my job?" By the way, all phases of job dismissal—pre-, during, and post—are covered in Jim's workshops.



Will Heintz
MetGCSA President

Team Vision

Long before my recent job change, my wife, Linda, and I discussed my career and our life together. Then, we did as Jim aptly suggests: We asked ourselves the Golden Question, "Where do we want to be in 5 to 10 years?" We identified our goals, sorted out positives and negatives, and shared a vision for our future.

Instead of feeling like we were being controlled, we began to feel that we were in control. Team vision gave us strength and helped us in dealing with the varying levels of stress during my job change.

Standing Firm

One of the most beneficial aspects of having a career plan in place is that you're confident about the goals and requirements you've set. With everything clear in your mind, you're in a much better position when interviewing for a new job—and then negotiating the details and financial agreement. When you know what you want—and need—to satisfy your career goals, you're more likely to stand firm until you get it.

continued on page 5

Where Will You Be in 5 to 10 Years?

*Former MetGCSA and GCSAA
Executive Director Jim McLoughlin
Talks About Issues That He Believes
Should Matter to Today's
Superintendent*

A

As many superintendents know, I have been writing a column for *Golf Course News* for the better part of three years. During this time, I've received a good sampling of reactions to my writings through email, phone, and personal exchanges.

While readers don't always agree with what I write, they do agree that my columns make them think. Since this is the purpose of all writing, I am pleased.

My purpose in writing this commentary is to present a summary of

the general responses I have received to the opinions I've voiced in my columns. While meaningful change will always come slowly, continued dialogue, such as this, will accelerate the learning process.



Jim McLoughlin

Personal Websites: Ride the Wave of the Future

Each year, I receive dozens of resume drafts from superintendents intending to apply for new jobs—each one asking me to scrutinize the format and content of his/her resume. First, let me say that the overall quality of resumes today is many times better than those I received some 10 years ago. In earlier years, I'd find no more than 20 to 25 solid resumes out of every 100 submitted. Today, easily, the majority of all resumes appear to be well prepared.

This, however, makes it more difficult, not easier, for superintendents to secure a new job. In the past, the few well-done resumes submitted to Search Committees would stand out—virtually assuring these applicants of an interview. This is no longer the case when a Search Committee identifies up to 60 solid resumes within a stack of 100 and is committed to interviewing no more than four to eight candidates. While a weak resume still can kill a job application, a good resume no longer opens doors like it used to.

The question, therefore, becomes: "What can an applicant do today to regain an edge within this highly competitive job application/interview market?" In my November 2004 *Golf Course News* column, I address this question directly. My recommendation: Assistants and superintendents should develop their own individual career websites.

Personal websites offer myriad ways to better present credentials while at the same time taking significant pressure off resume content and the interview process. Furthermore, contrary to naive thinking, websites can be developed with relative ease, at zero

to modest cost, and within an acceptable time frame—assuming the superintendent/assistant puts forth a legitimate and diligent effort. A Google Internet search will identify several sources that provide templates to help the inexperienced website developer.

I caution you not to delay in developing a website. In about three years' time, I would expect that about half of all job applications submitted will have applicant website addresses. This percentage will grow in the following years. If this doesn't "scare" assistants and superintendents into taking immediate action, consider that about 80 percent of available interview slots in the near future are likely to be assigned to those who have submitted an application with a personal website address. Lights out—for applicants who are on the outside looking in.

Recognizing the growing awareness of personal websites, GCSAA Past President Bruce Williams (Los Angeles CC) suggests that they will be as prevalent in a few years as business cards are today.

Despite the fact that there is clearly a very necessary benefit to be gained when developing a personal website, not many superintendents have responded yet to the challenge. I can say this with some certainty because I ask superintendents who submit

resumes for my review if they are aware of the personal website opportunity and, if so, for how long. They all say "yes" and acknowledge that they've been aware of the concept for some time.

Finally, when I ask these same superintendents how badly they want a new job, they generally answer: "It's my highest priority." At the same time, however, they admit to doing little to advance their cause through website development. This is a dangerous disconnect for those looking to advance their careers from this point on.

Enough said. It's wakeup time for superintendents and assistants aspiring to better job opportunities within a *fiercely* competitive job market. If veteran superintendents are hesitant to develop a personal website for themselves late in their careers (a mistake in itself), they should strongly encourage their assistants to take full advantage of this cutting edge, career-building initiative.

FYI: MetGCSA member Ken Benoit has developed his own personal website and has taken its application one step further: He's been using it to recruit qualified staff. Thanks, Ken, for sharing this concept.

Wait Till Opportunity Knocks... and It May Be Too Late

As I was writing this article (mid-March), three MetGCSA assistants called me to ask for last-minute help in preparing to apply for



the multiple superintendent jobs that have opened unexpectedly within recent weeks. Basically, these assistants made it clear to me that they were unprepared for the task: They didn't have tight resumes, personal websites, or a strategic game plan ready to launch as fast-fleeting opportunity was knocking at their door. Consequently, each assistant was asking for *immediate* help to close his preparation gap.

Needless to say, I have been working with these assistants to maximize each of their applications. Interestingly, one just called me today—March 30—to tell me that he's just been hired as the golf course superintendent at the prominent Metedeconk National Golf Club in New Jersey and that he felt the strategic interview planning advice we had talked about landed him the job.

I am happy for his success but frustrated that he and the other two assistants I am working with hadn't attended my recent workshop on "Strategic Career Planning," which I presented at the nearby Apawamis Club this past December. In fact, only 19 out of a pool of up to 600 assistants throughout the region attended this workshop—despite a double mailing clearly indicating its consistent success at the annual GCSAA Educational Conference and at chapter locations across the country. (See the President's Message, page 1.)

Steven Cook, CGCS, MG (Oakland Hills Country Club, a regular rotating site for the U.S. Open and PGA Championships) recently sent me the following note: "Thank you for a very insightful seminar on 'Strategic Career Planning' in Atlanta. This should be a required seminar for all golf industry personnel." I encourage MetGCSA members to register for this workshop at the 2007 GCSAA Educational Conference in Anaheim.

Sadly, the "wait to the last minute" approach to career planning is not uncommon. I have seen it across the profession for more than 25 years. It's not a recent trend, but rather a long-standing cultural pattern.

No career-minded person in any profession should go more than six months without repeatedly asking the questions, "Where do I want to be careerwise in five years?" and "How do I best get there?" My observation is that no more than 25 percent of superintendents and assistants seriously consider these questions. Consequently, too often, a job applicant's only option is to scramble to respond to an opportunity when it presents itself—an approach that will rarely land an interview, never mind a job.

Vince Lombardi frequently made the point, "Only the well-prepared can take full

advantage of opportunity that unexpectedly crosses the horizon." And Ralph Waldo Emerson reminds us, "People only see what they are *prepared* to see."

Clearly, there is a consistent message being delivered through these quotes—and many others not presented here—that suggests that only the well prepared will advance in life in a manner commensurate with their ability. The "unprepared" risk living a life filled more with regret than satisfaction.

In closing, I want to again mention the importance of superintendents and assistants asking themselves—not just once, but many times over the course of their careers—where they want to be careerwise in five years and how they're going to get there. Answers will undoubtedly change—which they should. This just makes it clear that it's time to adjust the career game plan and move on.

If the task of career-planning seems at all daunting, consider the alternative: Less than fully prepared assistants and superintendents will be looking stagnated careers straight in the face for long periods of time.

Selling Yourself—and Your Employer—on Superintendent Sabbaticals

When I introduced the concept of a sabbatical leave in my July 2005 *Golf Course News* column, it caught most superintendents by surprise. Clearly, they like the concept but are slow to embrace it because (1) they fear they'd risk their job security if they were absent from their positions for a year, and (2) they're not confident that sabbatical applications would be well received by their employers.

I respectfully take issue with these sentiments because (1) jobs can be secured contractually for 1-2-3 years following the leave year, and (2) the concept of sabbatical leave should not be looked on as a "perk" or a gift of management. Thinking this way

leads to an apologetic, hat-in-hand self-image that can only discourage superintendents from applying for sabbatical leaves.

Rather, sabbatical leaves should be looked at as a necessary, *earned* opportunity to revitalize careers worn thin by a most demanding industry. Sabbatical leaves can breathe new life into a job and/or a family situation gone stale, benefiting the employer as much as the superintendent. Having said this, not every superintendent should be, or will be, eligible for sabbatical leave because this *privilege* must be earned through an extended period of quality service to the game and all employers served.

The timing of a sabbatical leave application is critical because a superintendent can apply both too early and too late in a career. The optimum window for a sabbatical leave would be when a superintendent is roughly between the ages of 40 to 55 years. Before these years, a superintendent might not have put in sufficient service, and after these years, there might not be enough time left in a career to warrant a leave. This means, obviously, that superintendents should take care not to apply too early in their careers for a sabbatical leave, but they also must guard against applying too late. My feeling is that once a few superintendents successfully apply for sabbatical leave, this will become an accepted practice throughout the industry.

Because of the need for parity, GCSAA might invite the PGA and CMAA to join with it in endorsing the sabbatical leave concept to insure the balanced future availability of a sabbatical leave program throughout the golf industry.

The Two-Thirds Majority Vote: Should It Be Voted Out?

Unfortunately, the 1983 GCSAA membership vote that established a two-thirds voting requirement to amend the association's bylaws and incorporating documents has taken GCSAA and its members hostage. I say this because this voting requirement virtually locks the GCSAA culture in time and place by making it practically impossible to initiate change—even positive change for the association's benefit. (See my November 2005 *Golf Course News* column.) What's more, GCSAA is, in all likelihood, the only one of more than 40,000 not-for-profit associations throughout the country requiring a universal two-thirds vote to amend any policy within its governing documents.

Obtaining supermajority votes is no easy task. Consider the U. S. Senate's difficulty

"The worst thing we manage in life is . . . ourselves."

—Jim McLoughlin



in obtaining the votes necessary to overcome filibusters and the federal and state legislatures' challenge in securing the votes needed to overcome vetoes. Each enjoys a less than 5-percent success rate.

In short, no consistent good can come from maintaining the two-thirds voting requirement. This is a matter of such compelling nature that it should be addressed sooner rather than later. Members should lobby to achieve approval for a less stringent, simple majority vote on general issues and to reduce the present two-thirds relocation voting requirement to a more comfortable 60 percent.

Because the supermajority vote is a non-political issue, this should not be a difficult task. The future ability of GCSAA to optimally serve its membership and to earn growing respect as a dynamic industry leader will depend on moderating this counterproductive voting requirement.

GCSAA members, who have had little prior knowledge of—or interest in—the present associationwide voting requirements, have been caught by surprise as they digest this information now for the first time. Early member reaction to this issue indicates both continued apathy (a minority position) and a growing member interest (the majority position) to amend the governing documents to eliminate the universal two-thirds voting requirement.

If superintendents care about their future careers, GCSAA itself, and their profession, they should move—with respectful impatience—to have the association amend its present voting policies.

Proxy and Chapter Block Voting Policies: Are They in the Members' Best Interest?

It's clear: The present proxy and block-voting policies are counterproductive to GCSAA's welfare. (See my November 2005 *Golf Course News* column.) First, it's wrong that when members fail to vote personally in an association election their votes default to their chapters as proxy votes. Also, it is

wrong when chapters block-manage the defaulted proxy votes within the national GCSAA election process.

The prime concerns here are that:

- Members are presented with what appears to be a viable reason not to vote.
- Politics governs the electoral process to the point where the priority of identifying and electing the best candidates gets lost in the shuffle. In other words, chapter politics, not individual voting members, have become the determining factor throughout the GCSAA election process—a situation that was never intended by the association's founding fathers.
- The process discourages many of the better-qualified members from running for the GCSAA board.

The resolve? The GCSAA electoral process should be returned to the membership by adopting the "one man, one vote" principle. Members should be given the opportunity to cast their individual votes and send them directly (electronically) to GCSAA as opposed to the current, too frequent practice of defaulting to block voting at annual meetings through their chapters. To protect against serious policy change without significant membership input, it should be established that no membership vote on any issue would become official unless more than 50 percent of all members eligible to vote do so.

It is worth noting that federal, state, and local election laws do not allow for block or proxy voting. America was built on the time-honored "one man, one vote" concept. GCSAA, its membership, and the profession pay a severe price every time this voting practice is bypassed. It's time for GCSAA chapters to respect this democratic process and allow members to assume a primary role in national association elections—not unlike the role states assume in the national presidential primary process.

Final Note

I encourage readers (especially those aspiring to run for chapter and GCSAA boards of directors) to review the *Golf Course News* columns referenced throughout this commentary to further enhance their understanding of the key issues facing GCSAA, its chapters, and its membership. All columns referenced can be found at the *Golf Course News* website, www.golfcoursenews.com, through the "magazine" and "McLoughlin" links.

Jim McLoughlin, a past recipient of the MetGCSA's John Reid Lifetime Achievement Award, is currently the sole principal of his own golf course development company, TMG Golf. Website address: www.TMGgolfcounsel.com.

President's Message continued from page 1

That's Life

The worst thing you can do for your career is get bogged down in a situation gone bad. Maybe those carrots your employer had dangled in front of you during negotiations never materialized, or after a time, they withered, dried, and blew away—never to be seen again. My outlook on that: "That's life."

I work to focus on the positive. I brush those dusty carrots aside and forge ahead. Keeping a positive attitude works well on all fronts: *in* the job market, *on* the job, and at home.

Steer Clear of Energy Drains

Every once in a while you have people in your life who don't share—or support—your goals and dreams. For those of you in that situation, Mark Twain had some apt advice:

"KEEP AWAY FROM PEOPLE WHO TRY TO BELITTLE YOUR AMBITIONS. SMALL PEOPLE ALWAYS DO THAT, BUT THE REALLY GREAT MAKE YOU FEEL THAT YOU, TOO, CAN BECOME GREAT."

Just what the doctor ordered!

Best Regards,

Will Heintz
President

Green Industry Members Unite at

by Michael Maffei, CGCS

If you ever wished you could walk straight in to your legislator's office and discuss your feelings about legislation affecting your job as a golf course superintendent, then you should make it a point to attend NYSTA's Turfgrass Advocacy Day.

One of the highlights of this event—now in its 6th year—is that attendees are able to meet, one-on-one, with state legislators representing their home districts to discuss regulatory issues and concerns related to their industry. At this year's event, held at the Empire State Plaza in Albany, NY, on February 1, there were 50 legislative meetings spread among the 57 green industry professionals and educators attending the event.

All those who attended felt that their time was well spent and were grateful to have had the opportunity to spend quality time communicating directly with their legislators. One advocacy day participant was so pleased with the day's activities that he wrote: "I have attended either four or five of your Turfgrass Advocacy Days and this year's was the best. I felt a real sense of everyone being on the same page. My goal for next year is to bring at least two people who never attended."

The "sense of everyone being on the same page" is no accident. The day before the Turfgrass Advocacy Day event, key chapter representatives from associations throughout the state were invited to attend a Focus Group Meeting with NYSTA leaders. The intent was to review the government and regulatory issues important to both groups and then prepare to address legislators as a united front with a single voice.

Roster of Speakers

Just as valuable was the special lineup of speakers. This year, the event kicked off with a presentation over breakfast from Lee Telega, senior extension associate with Cornell University and Jeff Williams, legislative director with the New York Farm Bureau. Their topic, "Legislative Climate and Budget Issues," covered appropriations



Long Island GCSA President John Carlone (left), who is also a member and past president of the MetGCSA, listens with Hudson Valley GCSA President George Pierpoint IV (right) and other green industry leaders at NYSTA's 2006 Turfgrass Advocacy Day.

pertinent to the green industry, including Community IPM, the New York Farm Viability Institute, and funding for the Invasive Species Task Force. They also reviewed the impact that the upcoming elections will have on the budget process.

Following their talk, I had the opportunity to present the results of the New York Turfgrass Survey. If there's one thing I've appreciated as president of NYSTA, it's how chapter members have collaborated with our organization in conducting—and completing—this survey.

The goal of the survey was to document the amount of turfgrass acreage in New York and the economic value of turf, turf production, services, and expenditures. A letter signed by nine chapter presidents was mailed to hundreds of golf course superintendents in New York State urging them to complete the survey. As a result, the golf industry was properly documented, and it was determined that golf courses represent the second largest sector in turf maintenance expenses—second only to private residences. In the end, the New York Turfgrass Survey concluded

that turf maintenance expenses, based on data taken in 2003, contributed more than \$5 billion to the economy.

Steve Griffen, co-owner of Saratoga Sod Farm and NYSTA past president, was up next, presenting the objectives of the New York Farm Viability Institute, which is an important and exciting initiative to strengthen New York's agricultural, food, and green industries. He also discussed NYSTA's effort to pass a \$175,000 appropriation in the New York State budget for the Turfgrass Environmental Stewardship Fund. The money would allow grant requests to be made directly to industry representatives who could then prioritize research and education efforts. I'm pleased to report these initiatives were recently passed into law. The 2006 New York State budget includes \$175,000 for the "services and expenses of the Turfgrass Environmental Stewardship Fund" and \$5 million for the New York Farm Viability Institute!

Steve's presentation was followed by Chris Revere, a lobbyist for the New York Alliance for Environmental Concerns. He reviewed

The **Turf Connection**

64 BARNABAS ROAD SUITE 5 NEWTOWN CONNECTICUT 06470



Phoenix
ENVIRONMENTAL CARE

Main Office:
Karan Bamberg
Office 203-426-7055
Fax 203-426-2078
Karan@theturfconnect.com



POLYON

Joe Stahl
203-209-6951
Joestahl3@theturfconnect.com



Bayer



Jeff Stahl
203-858-4136
pondconnecton1@aol.com

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NYSTA's Turfgrass Advocacy Day

the status of legislation regarding the restricted use of certain pesticides for commercial lawn application, golf course application, and residential application for ornamental purposes or turf pest control. The New York State Assembly has referred this bill to the Department of Environmental Conservation. Chris also discussed NYSTA's support of the principles of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) as a way to help green industry professionals keep their pesticide use in check. At the same time, however, the organization does insist that environmental legislation and regulation be based on sound science.

Next in the lineup was Larry Wilson, owner of Lawrence Landscape Design and chairman of the New York Alliance for Environmental Concerns. He discussed the role of the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance (CVSA) with regard to safety inspections for trucks that transport turf-related products—e.g., sod and fertilizers—to green industry operations. He lobbied to have local enforcement agencies that are not certified by CVSA to be required to issue and honor the safety inspection decal of the CVSA and prevent undue delay and hardship to drivers and vehicle owners.

After this talk, Chris Revere offered help-

ful advice on "How to Be Effective Citizen Advocates," which reviewed productive strategies for communicating with your legislator. He reviewed how to represent your organization, the importance of being prepared and leaving supporting documents, how to be a good listener, connecting with legislators who side with your issues, and making a good impression.

The group then broke for their legislative appointments and reconvened for lunch, where they heard from Senator Catharine Young, who expressed support for the Turfgrass Environmental Stewardship Fund and the New York Farm Viability Institute initiatives.

According to George Pierpoint IV, president of the Hudson Valley GCSA, his attendance at NYSTA's Turfgrass Advocacy Day 2006 was the best six hours he'd ever spent for the industry. "I had the opportunity to meet directly with the people who make the laws and decisions that affect us," says George about his time well spent.

In the End

We received a lot of positive feedback from attendees this year. I strongly urge New York State GCSA members to attend this extraor-

dinary event. According to Will Heintz, president of the MetGCSA, "NYSTA's all-important Focus Group Meeting and Turfgrass Advocacy Day will have long-lasting, positive effects on the future of the turfgrass industry in New York State. I commend their leadership and staff for their tremendous efforts and urge all green industry members to participate."

All who attended Turfgrass Advocacy Day 2006 felt privileged to have had the opportunity to work with legislators toward the goal of educating lawmakers and achieving sound environmental policies.

For more information on Turfgrass Advocacy Day 2006—or to link to the Lobby Day Issue Papers—you can log on to www.nysta.org.

Michael Maffei, president of NYSTA, is superintendent of Back O' Beyond, Inc., in Brewster, NY.

The New York State Turfgrass Association is composed of 1,800 green industry professionals who have joined together to share technology, promote environmental stewardship, support education, advance research, and disseminate research findings. For more information, please call Denise Lewis, Public Relations Coordinator, 518-783-1229.



Green industry leaders listen as NYSTA President Mike Maffei presents the results of the New York State Turfgrass Survey to Advocacy Day attendees.



Chris Revere, lobbyist for the New York Alliance for Environmental Concerns, presents the status of legislation regarding restricted use of pesticides.

The Lineup of 2006 MetGCSA Board Members



The November 9 MetGCSA Annual Meeting ended with the following members elected to the board: Pictured left to right: Glen Dube, CGCS, of Centennial GC; Tom Leahy, CGCS, of Sleepy Hollow CC; Vice President Matt Ceplo, CGCS, of Rockland CC; Glenn Perry, CGCS, of Rolling Hills CC; President Will Heintz of Pound Ridge GC; Treasurer Bob Nielsen, CGCS, of Bedford Golf & Tennis Club; Dave Moffett of Trump National GC/NY; Blake Halderman, CGCS, of Brae Burn CC; Secretary Tony Girardi, CGCS, of Rockrimmon CC; Past President Tim Moore of Knollwood CC; Chuck Denny of Salem GC; Rob Alonzi of St. Andrew's GC. Not pictured is Kevin Collins of Aquatrols, Inc.

Committee Chairmen at Your Service

We've provided a list—with phone numbers—of each of the MetGCSA's committee chairs. Please feel free to contact any of them with questions, comments, or helpful suggestions.

Awards Committee

Tim Moore, Knollwood CC
914-592-7829

Bylaws Committee

Matt Ceplo, CGCS, Rockland CC
845-359-5346

Club Relations Committee

Joe Alonzi, CGCS, Westchester CC
914-798-5361
Glenn Perry, CGCS, Rolling Hills CC
203-762-9484
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Glenn Perry, CGCS, Rolling Hills CC
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Education Committee

Glen Dube, CGCS, Centennial GC
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Government Relations Committee

Glen Dube, CGCS (CT), Centennial GC
845-279-8960
Tony Girardi, CGCS (WaterWise Council)
Rockrimmon CC
914-764-5010
Tom Leahy, CGCS (NY)
Sleepy Hollow CC
914-941-8281
Will Heintz, Pound Ridge GC
914-552-2085

Long-range Planning & Steering Committee

Tim Moore, Knollwood CC
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Membership Committee

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MetGCSA Merchandise Committee

Dave Moffett, Trump National GC/NY
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Scholarship & Research Committee

Matt Ceplo, CGCS, Rockland CC
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Tri-State Turf Research Subcommittee

Matt Ceplo, CGCS, Rockland CC
845-359-5346
Tony Girardi, CGCS, Rockrimmon CC
914-764-5010
Bob Nielsen, CGCS, Bedford Golf & Tennis Club
914-234-3779

Social & Welfare Committee

Tom Leahy, CGCS, Sleepy Hollow CC
914-941-8281
Bob Nielsen, CGCS, Bedford Golf & Tennis Club
914-234-3779

Special Events Committee

Glen Dube, CGCS, Centennial GC
845-279-8960
Kevin Collins, Aquatrols, Inc.
845-225-1761

Tournament Committee

Chuck Denny, Salem GC
914-669-5959
Blake Halderman, CGCS, Brae Burn CC
914-946-1074

Website Committee

Tony Girardi, CGCS, Rockrimmon CC
914-764-5010

Looking Good at *The Journal News* Golf Show

*O*n March 18 and 19, the MetGCSA had the opportunity to "strut its stuff" at *The Journal News* Golf Show. Held at the Westchester County Center in White Plains, NY, this event offers companies and organizations—both in and outside of the golf industry—a chance to market their goods and services to the public. There were at least 45 booths and more than 2,500 visitors who viewed everything from laser-guided putting devices to recycled golf balls.

This is the second year the Met has secured a booth to showcase the role of the superintendent and to educate the public on how the work we do on our golf courses enhances, rather than detracts from, the environment. We offered rules books, complements of the USGA; issues of the *Tee to Green*; and literature from Audubon International and the GCSAA. The GCSAA also offered a number of crowd-pleasing promotional items, such as ballmark repair tools, pens, and CDs with an environmental twist.



Salem Golf Club's Chuck Denny (seated) and Gerald Fountain of United Horticultural Supply help man the booth at this year's Golf Show.

New to the show this year was a "Let's Talk Golf" speakers area sponsored by *The Journal News*. Visitors at this booth heard area pros, architects, and USGA officials offer their perspectives on the upcoming U.S. Open at Winged Foot. This was also the booth to visit to get your rules questions answered and to get your swing, grip, and body balance analyzed. I was even on hand for a short period of time to talk about home lawn care.

Special Thanks

I want to thank the following people who helped run the booth and field attendees' long list of questions: Bob Nielsen (Bedford Golf & Tennis), Glen Dube (Centennial), Blake Halderman (Brae Burn), Dave Moffett (Trump National), Chuck Denny (Salem), Gerald Fountain (United Horticultural Supply), and my daughter, Megan.

I'd also like to thank Janet Slaterly and Shelly Howard from the GCSAA for the pamphlets, pens, and CDs; Dave Oatis and Kimberly Erusha from the USGA for all the information they sent us; Joellen Zeh from Audubon International for providing us with a variety of handouts; and last but not least, Kevin Collins from Aquatrols for allowing us to borrow his display boards so we could hang our posters for everyone to see.

Matt Ceplo is vice president of the MetGCSA and superintendent at Rockland Country Club in Sparkill, NY.

Special Thanks to One and ALL of Our 2006 Winter Seminar Exhibitors

Here it is. The *complete* list of 2006 Winter Seminar Exhibitors. We apologize for last issue's blundered listing, which stopped short at the Qs in our alphabetical lineup! Your names may not have appeared in our initial listing, but your support for our association is certainly not forgotten. We thank you—one and all this time—for participating in our Winter Seminar.

Here, for all our members to see, is a complete exhibitor listing, including areas of specialty and phone numbers. As always, we encourage everyone to show these contractors and suppliers the same support they've shown us during our Winter Seminar—and throughout the year.

A. G. Enterprises

Rick Gordon
Uniforms & Work Apparel
201-488-1276

Aquatrols Corp. of America

Kevin Collins
Innovative Products for Effective
Resource Management
609-841-2077

Atlantic Irrigation Specialties, Inc.

Tim Marcoux
Irrigation Specialists
914-686-0008

Bayer Environmental Science

Dave Sylvester
Plant Protectants
860-841-3173

DryJect Northeast/Turfpounders

Eric Booth
21st Century Aeration
570-656-2194

Earth Works, Inc.

Carl Wallace
For All Your Aerifying Needs
860-558-6968

E/T Equipment Co.

Bruce Pye
Golf Course Equipment Sales
914-271-6126

Grass Roots, Inc.

Ken Kubik
Golf Course Supplies
973-361-5943

Grass Roots Weather

Herb Stevens
Weather Forecasting Strictly
for Superintendents
401-965-6156

Holliston Sand Co.

Bob Chalifour
Golf Course Sands, Root Zone
Mixes, Bunker Sands
860-908-7414

Metro Turf Specialists

Scott Tretera
Golf Course Supplies
203-748-GOLF (4653)

Montco/Surfside Products

Bob Oechsle
Surfside - Pellets - ZAP!
800-401-0411

Phoenix Environmental

Owen Towne
Plant Protectants
229-245-8845

Plant Food Company, Inc.

Tom Weinert
Liquid Fertilizers
914-262-0111

Precision Labs

Nick Eberhard
Wetting Agents, Adjuvant, &
Spray Pattern Indicators
201-401-5257

Quali Pro Products

Allan Yust
Plant Protectants
206-255-9635

Steven Willand, Inc.

Gary Mathis
Golf Course Supplies
203-775-5757

Storr Tractor Company

Mike Pastori
Golf Course Equipment and
Supplies
908-722-9830

Syngenta Professional Products

Dennis DeSanctis
Plant Protectants
732-580-5514

Terre Company of NJ, Inc.

Byron Johnson
Golf Course Supplies
973-473-3393

The Care of Trees

John Grant
Entire Tree Care Company
914-490-5550

True Organics

Robert Saunders
Organic Fertilizer
203-323-5445

Tuckahoe Turf Farms, Inc.

Paul Deubel
Quality Sod
800-243-7582

Turf & Pond Connection

Joe Stahl
Specializing in Biological Aquatic
Controls
203-209-6951

U.A.P. Professional Products

Gerald Fountain
Golf Course Supplies
732-296-8448

Westchester Tractor Inc.

George Risley
Golf Course Equipment
914-232-7746

Westchester Turf Supply, Inc.

Bob Lippman
Golf Course Supplies
845-621-5067

Wilfred MacDonald, Inc.

Glenn Gallion
Golf Course Equipment
888-831-0891

Upcoming Events

2006 Met Calendar of Events Update

Our 2006 Meeting and Social Calendar has just one opening: the Family Picnic. Stay on the lookout for a date and time for this always-fun event. Now that this calendar is just about complete, it's time to start looking

to the following year. It's not too early to contact our meeting and social chairs to volunteer your club for an event in 2007. Contact either of our Tournament Committee co-chairs: Blake Halderman at 914-946-

1074 or Chuck Denny at 914-669-5959. Our Social & Welfare Committee co-chairs are Tom Leahy (914-941-8281) and Bob Nielsen (914-234-3779). Both are available to discuss any upcoming social events.

Family Picnic

Date & Site OPEN

MetGCSA Invitational Tournament

Tuesday, May 30

Glen Arbor GC, Bedford Hills, NY

Host: Ken Benoit, CGCS

Education Meeting

Wednesday, July 19

Sunningdale CC

Sean Cain, CGCS

Poa Annual Tournament

(run with Connecticut Association)

Monday, July 31

Salem GC, North Salem, NY

Host: Chuck Denny

Summer Social

Tuesday, August 8

Old Oaks CC, Purchase, NY

Host: Mark Millett

MetGCSA Championship and Met Area Team Championship Qualifier

Tuesday, September 5

Hudson National GC

Croton-on-Hudson, NY

Host: Chris Smith, CGCS

Met Area Team Championship

Tuesday, October 3

Fishers Island Club, Fishers Island, NY

Host: Don Beck

Annual Assistants Tournament

Thursday, October 12

Seawane Club, Hewlett Harbor, NY

Host: Brett Chapin

Superintendent/Green Chairman Tournament

Tuesday, October 30

Sleepy Hollow CC, 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 CC, Mount Kisco, NY

Host: Fred Scheyhing, CGCS

Educational Events

Turfgrass Management ShortCUTTS: A New Seminar Series From the Cornell Turfgrass Team

Tuesday, June 13, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Local Cornell Cooperative Ext. Offices
In Westchester County, Valhalla; on Long Island, Riverhead

This seminar series is based on Cornell's ShortCUTT weekly updates, which focus on how to manage problems turfgrass professionals are seeing in the field. At this session, you will have the opportunity to chat with Cornell's Turfgrass Team about a variety of timely topics and turf-related issues. Turf Team members are Marty Petrovic, Dan Peck, Leslie Weston, Karen Snover-Clift, Jennifer Grant, Joann Gruttadaurio, and Frank Rossi.

For more information or to reserve your place (attendance is limited to 25 per site), contact Joann Gruttadaurio at jgl17@cornell.edu or 607-255-1792.

General information will be posted on the following website: <http://www.hort.cornell.edu/instruction/short/specialturf-series.htm>

UMass Turf Research Field Day

Wednesday, June 21

UMass Joseph Troll Turf Research Center
South Deerfield, MA

The Field Day will focus on the research currently taking place at the Turf Research Facility as well as on research being conducted at other locations by University of Massachusetts Turf Program faculty, staff, and graduate students. Research Field Day participants will have the opportunity to meet and speak with UMass staff and to view projects underway. Turf research includes studies on the biology and integrated management of turf-damaging insects, short- and long-term weed management, pesticide exposure, fertility, drought management, as well as a range of National Turfgrass Evaluation Program fine turf variety trials. The Field Day will also feature vendor displays and demonstrations. Pesticide recertification contact hours will be available for all New England states.

For further information, contact the

UMass Turf Program office at 508-892-0382 or visit fieldday@umassturf.org. You can also view the UMass Conferences & Workshops website at www.umassturf.org/education/conferences_workshops.html.

The Rutgers Golf & Fine Turf Field Day

Thursday, August 3

Horticultural Farm II, North Brunswick, NJ
Registration for the field day activities runs from 7:30 to 9 a.m. Tours are run from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. followed by lunch from 1 to 2 p.m. For further information, contact Michelle Rickard at 215-757-6582 or visit www.njturfgrass.org.

University of Rhode Island Turfgrass Field Day

Wednesday, August 23

Skogley Memorial Research Center
Kingston, RI

The field day will offer the traditional vendor displays, demonstrations, and field tours of research in progress. Watch for details.

GlenArbor: A 'Site' to See at the Upcoming Invitational

When Ken Benoit hosted our 2005 Business Meeting at GlenArbor Golf Club, he promised Met members a return trip—at a time they could actually play the course. Well, here's the moment everyone's been waiting for: the Met's Invitational Tournament. True to his word, Ken is hosting our ever-popular annual event May 30, offering many Met members the opportunity for their first look at the club's impressive new facility located in scenic Bedford Hills, NY.

GlenArbor's super since 2001, Ken has ushered in—and "GM"ed—numerous course and facility improvements. The makeover started with changing the club's name from Lakeover National to GlenArbor. From there, the owners gave the go-ahead to build a brand-new clubhouse and renovate the entire golf course, which now boasts a Gary Player signature design. Also near completion is the construction of a 4000-square-foot staff house, which Ken says will be home to 16 employees.

The most recent addition, and the one that Ken seems understandably most proud of, is the addition of a five-acre short-game area, complete with bunkers, tees, and seven new USGA greens.

"I have not seen anything like this in the Northeast," says Ken, who notes that the area is carefully designed to accommodate lessons, practice, and actual play. "It's divided into two main areas," he explains. "There's the Legends Center, which includes three greens: the Walter Hagen, the Bobby Jones, and the Gene Sarazen. All of these greens were designed for multiple shots, but each one is geared toward highlighting a specific area of the short game that the green's namesake was considered a master at executing. Then there's the Gary Player Center, which has four greens, complete with bunkers and five tees that go around the perimeter of the area. The fourth green is for lessons only," Ken continues. "It's got a perfectly level putting surface so players can work on their putting stroke and a nearby retvetted bunker for fine-tuning those bunker shots."

Ken has nothing but praise for the owners' initiative. "A project like this shows the owners' total commitment to the membership," says Ken.

It's No Wonder

Obviously, the admiration goes both ways. When GlenArbor's owners were looking for a superintendent, they had no problem recognizing the fact that Ken's experience was not your run-of-the-mill.

A native of Michigan, Ken graduated from University of Detroit with a degree in marketing and began his professional life as the manager of a large sales territory. Soon disillusioned with the corporate world, a friend suggested a career in golf course management. "I wanted something that would combine my love for golf with the outdoors," says Ken. "This seemed perfect."

Knowing he'd have to take a step back to move forward, Ken accepted a position on the crew of Walnut Creek Country Club outside of Detroit and enrolled in the two-year turfgrass management program at Michigan State University.

After graduating, he landed a job at the Riviera Country Club in Los Angeles, CA. As an assistant to Paul Latshaw, he helped groom the course for the 1998 Senior U.S. Open.

In 1999, Ken went to work for McDonald & Sons Golf Course Builders in Maryland as a construction superintendent. While there, he logged in two new course constructions and a renovation at Olympia Fields.

His next and final stop before GlenArbor—a year at Quaker Ridge as Steve Renzetti's assistant—gave him insight into the subtleties of maintaining turf in Westchester County.

A True Environmentalist

But Ken's work at GlenArbor has gone well beyond maintaining turf. In addition to managing the club's numerous construction projects—on both buildings and grounds—Ken's also been asked to invest considerable time in environmental concerns on the course.

"High on the owners' list of priorities is preserving—and enhancing—the environment," explains Ken, who has gained deserved recognition for the bluebird program he instituted four years ago on the course.

"We began by placing about 25 bluebird boxes throughout the course," explains Ken. "We monitored them weekly for the number

Ken Benoit, CGCS

and health of the birds, and the box conditions. We figured if we weren't doing the right things—environmentally—then these native birds would tell us."

And apparently, they have. In the first year, the nests produced 87 fledglings; right now, Ken says they're up to 405. "We have not lost one bird to chemical poisoning," says Ken.

The program has gained so much momentum, that Ken's been asked to install at least 100 bluebird boxes at various members' homes. "It's to the point," says Ken, "that at club functions, members talk to us only about bluebirds, and I'm thinking, 'Hey, what about my greens?'"

Bluebirds will always be an extra-special interest to Ken—and his wife of five-and-a-half years, Melodee, who in addition to being Ken's administrative assistant and horticulturist, is happy to take care of the bluebird box monitoring and data collection.

Ken's other environmental pursuits include his IPM-based pesticide program and the planting of numerous naturalized areas, trees, and shrubs throughout the course. Ken's also happy to report that the quality of the water in GlenArbor's ponds actually exceeds New York State drinking water quality standards!

Life on the Edge

For fun, Ken enjoys volunteering at major tournaments. "I've helped prepare five courses for majors, including three U.S. Opens, The Masters, a Senior Open, and now I plan to go to Winged Foot and help out Eric Greytok at the Open. But best of all," continues Ken, "I'm one of 50 who've been selected to help out at the Ryder Cup in September at K Club outside Dublin, Ireland."

Then, ahem, there's Ken's other passion ... for living dangerously. At least that's how it appears, considering he's training for a climb to the summit of Alaska's Mt. Denali, the highest peak in North America. Ken's training ends in May 2007, when he will cut himself off from civilization for a full three weeks, as he makes his way up and down the 20,300-foot mountain.

Guess we can't count on you as a meeting host next spring, but we'll sure look forward to our visit this May 30 for the Invitational.

Historic Wykagyl Country Club and Mike Scott Host Two-Ball Qualifier

by Kevin Collins

On May 9, Superintendent Mike Scott and Wykagyl Country Club hosted the season's first golf meeting, the MetGCSA Two-Ball Qualifier. Mike signed on with Wykagyl in January 2003—a relative newcomer to an older course with a long and interesting history.

The club came into being in 1898, not as Wykagyl, but rather the Pelham Country Club, a nine-hole course located in Pelham Manor, NY. In 1904, after the club lost its lease, it bought land in New Rochelle—where it exists today.

Club member Lawrence Van Etten designed the original course, which was completed in 1905. After World War I, however, members hired famed architect Donald Ross to tweak the front nine. One of his more notable changes was on the 8th hole, a 440-yard par 4, where he created the sharp dogleg that brought the now-famous oak into play, obscuring the left side of the green.

The “new and improved” Wykagyl opened for play in 1920.

By the end of the decade, the club had contracted for yet another redesign—this time prompted by the construction of an adjacent apartment building. Brought in for the job was none other than A.W. Tillinghast. His more notable course changes included reversing the direction of the dogleg on 17, and shortening the yardage on the 18th, both par 4s.

In the '70s and '80s, Wykagyl played host to numerous PGA tournaments. By 1990, it became a permanent PGA tour stop. In fact, the Sybase Classic will be held this year a week after our meeting.

No rest for the weary: Right after the Sybase, Wykagyl will enter into a major renovation project that will include new irrigation and tees, two new greens, bunker renovation, and extensive drainage work. If all goes according to plan, the project should be completed by November—before the snow flies.

First Impressions

I first met Mike Scott at Winged Foot in March of 2001. Paul Latshaw Sr. had just retired, and Mike was holding down the fort before moving on to his first superintendent's job at The Ridge at Backbrook.

I would have to call my first encounter with Mike a life-altering experience. Though up until that point we had never had a conversation, Mike proceeded to comment about my weight, the size of my head, and numerous other physical imperfections. At the time, I saw Mike as a combination of Don Rickles, Napoleon Dynamite, and “Triumph,” the insult dog.

Not long after, a colleague assured me that Mike only does that kind of thing to the people he likes. Whew, what a relief! Mike and I became fast friends and still are today ... despite the ongoing insults.

Launching Into the Business

Mike joined the Army two weeks after his 18th birthday. “My parents couldn't afford to pay for college,” Mike explains, “so I joined the military and used the GI Bill and Army college fund money once I got out.” And as it turns out, Mike's military experience did teach him a thing or two. “I learned a lot about people in those three short years,” says Mike, who was stationed in Germany his entire tour of duty. “My Army experience helped me develop my style of leadership. I look at every season as a war, each day is a battle. When I drive my cart home at night, I ask myself, ‘Did we win, lose, or draw?’”

Mike's first job in the industry was at Newark Country Club in Newark, DE. Mike reminisces, “I mowed greens my first day, with lots of skips and scalps by the time I was finished. Remembering the early days of my career helps me keep my patience when I'm training a new employee or when someone makes a mistake or breaks a piece of equipment.”

Mike Scott

Life's Work

Mike knew that he found his life's work after graduating from Penn State in 1995. “The passion kicked in when I started working at Oak Hill for Joe Hahn. It was the year they hosted the Ryder Cup. It hadn't rained for three months and we were working with a single-row irrigation system. I learned how to drag hose that summer, pulling edges of fairways. The crew consisted of only 15 guys. We worked our butts off.”

Despite the hard labor, by the time the tournament finally arrived, Mike was hooked. “I remember hearing the roar of the crowd when Corey Pavin chipped in on the 18th hole to win a match. I knew, then, exactly what I wanted to do with the rest of my career.”

After Oak Hill came stints at Merion, Winged Foot, The Ridge at Backbrook, and in January of 2003, Wykagyl. What Mike learned at these top 100 clubs and from the people he met on his journey have left a permanent impression on him.

“Joe Hahn is like a father figure to a lot of guys. He's a true professional and a family man all in one,” says Mike. Pointing next to Paul Latshaw, he says, “I learned more from working with Paul than I did from any other superintendent. We worked sun up to sun down almost every day from March to October, and we had fun doing it. Jeff Corcoran and Kevin Seibel are two other guys I have a lot of respect for. They both pushed me to be better every day we worked together.”

Mike puts a high priority on mentoring his people. “It is the single greatest responsibility I have to this industry,” he says. “My goal for the turf guys who work for me is to teach them everything I know and properly prepare them for the future. I want these guys to grow while they work here, not only to become good superintendents, but also better people.”



Wykagyl Country Club



A Wife's Perspective

Mike and his wife, Louise, met soon after he finished his Army tour of duty. They married in 1996 and have three beautiful children: 6-year-old Mason, 5-year-old Maya, and 2-year-old Merritt. Balancing family life and a sometimes 80-hour workweek is a tough task, and Louise and Mike work hard at it. "Louise is the single most important person in my life. She keeps me grounded when I feel invincible; she picks me up when I'm down. Without her I don't think I'd be standing here today," says Mike.

Louise remembers how tough an adjustment it was early in their marriage trying to understand the demands of Mike's job. "It was with Paul Latshaw at Merion that I had my first real glimpse into the life of a top 100 golf course superintendent," she says. "Mike came home one summer night at 10, and I began the interrogation: 'Where were you? Out drinking with the guys? Are you cheating on me?'"

"When Mike told me he was at work, I thought, 'Does he really expect me to

believe he was working in the dark?!' Mike then told me that Paul had them turn on the lights of the Gator so they could see the greens to topdress. I let the explanation settle for a minute and then responded, 'Is Paul insane?' Then I asked Mike, 'Are you insane?' Over yet another jar of Ragu and pasta, he said, 'Louise, hang in there. When I'm a golf course superintendent . . .'"

Mike's career has uprooted the family five times in the past 10 years, and Louise was pregnant for three of those moves. "Our marriage has definitely been tested but has emerged stronger as we faced the challenges of the industry together."

They say behind every successful man is a woman. And Louise has certainly been there for Mike. Says Louise, "I will continue to support Mike and his career because I believe in him, 100 percent."

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

Members on the Move

Glen Dube is the new superintendent at Centennial Golf Club in Carmel, NY. Previous position: Superintendent, Oak Hills Park Golf Course, Norwalk, CT.

Will Heintz is the new superintendent at Pound Ridge Golf Club in Pound Ridge, NY. Previous position: Superintendent, Centennial Golf Club, Carmel, NY.

Ryan Oliver is the new superintendent at Metedeconk National Golf Club in Jackson, NJ. Previous position: Assistant superintendent, The Bridge Golf Club, Sag Harbor, NY.

Shannon Slevin is the new superintendent at Pine Orchard Golf & Yacht Club in Branford, CT. Previous position: Assistant superintendent, Golf Club at Oxford Greens, Oxford, CT.

Birth

Congratulations to Edison Club Superintendent **Jim Pavonetti** and his wife, Renee, on the birth of their daughter, Sophia Louise, on March 17.

In Sympathy

We regret to announce the loss of two longtime MetGCSA members:

Roger King, an honorary member of the Met since 1971 who was living with his wife, Louise, in Port Chester, NY. Roger passed away in January.

Londy Casterella, a member of the Met since 1970 who had retired as superintendent of Doral Arrowwood in Rye Brook, NY, in 1997. A Life A member, Londy was living with his wife, Grace, in Cape Coral, FL. He passed away April 5.

Patron Directory

Patrons listed on this page are supporting our association. You are encouraged to support them.

- Al Preston's**
Gary Shashinka
810 Howe Avenue
Shelton, CT 06484
203-924-1747
- Aquatrols Corp. of America**
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1273 Imperial Way
Paulsboro, NJ 08066
609-841-2077
- Argento & Sons, Inc.**
Louis Argento
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White Plains, NY 10607
914-949-1152
- Atlantic Irrigation Specialties, Inc.**
Ray Beaudry
111 Lafayette Avenue
N. White Plains, NY 10603
914-686-0008
- Blue Ridge Peat Farms**
Gene Evans
133 Peat Moss Road
White Haven, PA 18661
570-443-9596
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South Salem, NY 10590
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- Harrell's Turf Specialty**
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Somerville, NJ 08876
800-526-3802, FAX 908-722-9847
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Liquid ~ Granular ~ Pellets ~
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Dave Wallace: 401-789-8177
- The Care of Trees**
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Ken Clear, CT: 203-847-1855
- The Pond Connection**
Jeff Stahl
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- The Roger Rulewich Group**
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Scott Wosleger, Yamaha Golf Cars, &
Utility Vehicles: 860-306-6400
- Valley View Wholesale Greenhouses**
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- Westchester Tractor Inc.**
John Apple
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Goldens Bridge, NY 10526
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