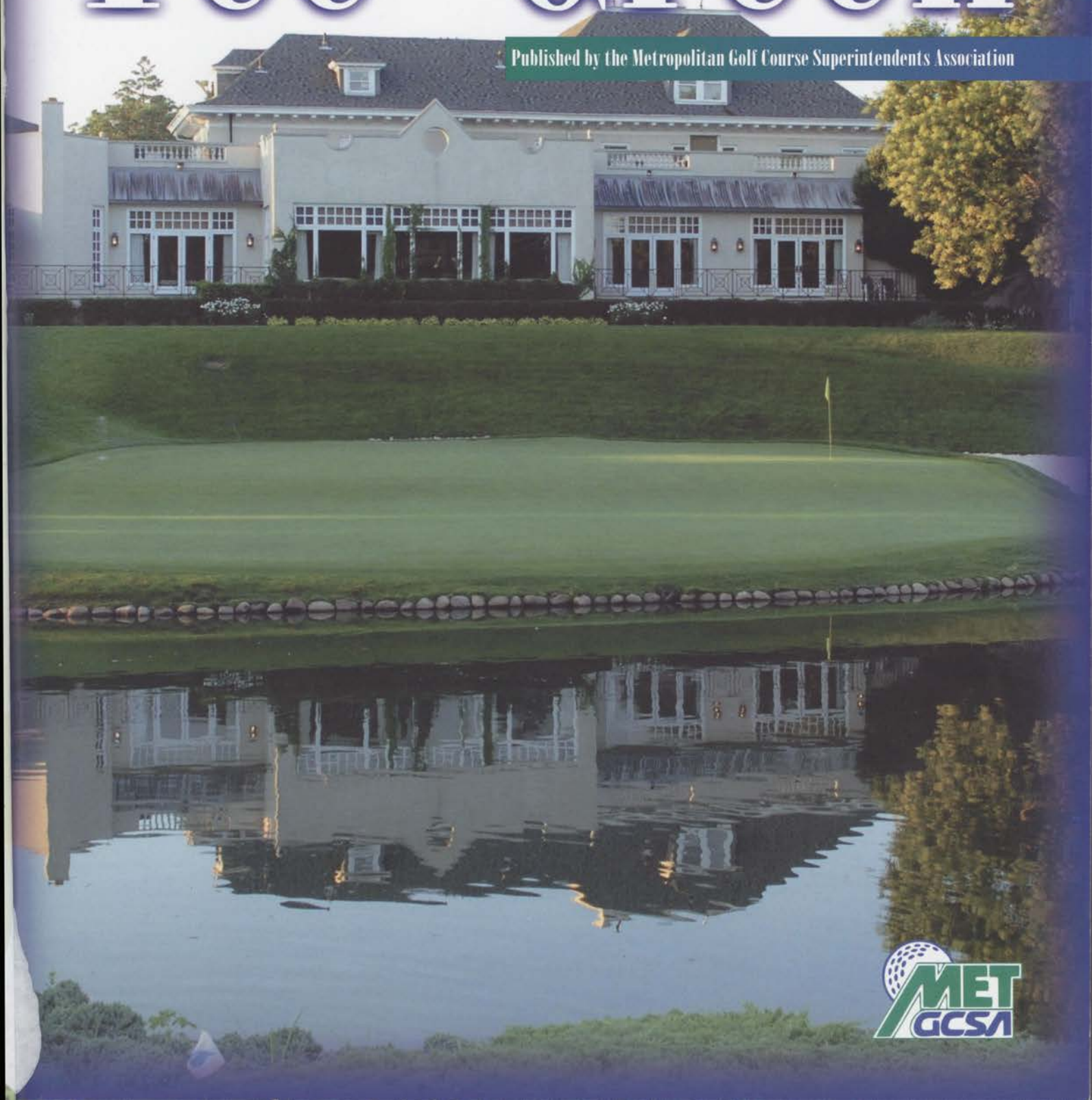


Tee To Green

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President's Message

You've Gotta Give a Little

Here we are. It's

early December, there's a blanket of nice white snow on the ground, and we haven't dormant fed, sprayed for snow mold, top-dressed greens, or even removed all the leaves from the course. And how could we? Leaves are still on the trees! The forecast isn't calling for a heat wave anytime soon, so this stuff may be here for awhile. Remember last year? We were playing golf into January. It just goes to show that Mother Nature is the one who really calls the shots.

Now my message. I touch, here, on a number of topics, but they all circle back to one common theme: "Give and you shall receive." In this case, I'm talking about giving your support to our professional organizations—and your colleagues in the profession. Offering your support pays dividends . . . Really. Read on.

Did You Fly the Coop?

Last month, we held our Annual Meeting and elections. I'd like to thank all of you for reelecting me and the entire board. It's hard to believe another year's come and gone. Guess time really does fly when you're having fun.

There is something, though, that concerns me, and that's the attendance we had at our year-end Annual Meeting, where so many issues important to the association are aired and discussed.

This past Annual Meeting was so poorly attended, it begs the question, "Where were you?" According to our By-laws, we need 20 Class A members present to have a quorum and hold a meeting that would allow us to have the elections. We just squeaked by with 21! Now, I don't really know what this means. Do you feel things with the association are going so well that they don't require your attention? Are you so busy that you just couldn't make time for the meeting? This is your association, and without you, we are running blindfolded. Your input is not only important; it is vital to the health of our association.



*Matt Ceplo, CGCSA
MetGCSA President*

Take Your Cues From Those Stagehands

As I'm sure you know, the stagehand unions have settled their strike on Broadway. The thing that struck me through this process was the stagehands' unity. I even heard them refer to one another as "brothers." No one crossed the picket lines. They stuck together. Could we learn a thing or two from these stagehands? Definitely. I think many of us get caught up in our own 150 acres. We concern ourselves with making our courses better than the other guy's, thinking little about how we can work together to benefit our profession as a whole.

I truly believe that if we look outside ourselves just a little bit and unite for the good of our profession and associations, both local and national, all the things we find ourselves striving for—like elevated status and greater compensation—will come our way. Well-supported associations, like unions, have power. They are what sends the bigger message to our members, guests, and golfers in general.

The GCSAA produces commercials, golf publications, and runs articles in magazines with the goal of enhancing our image and standing in the industry. Although not as powerful as a union president negotiating contracts for thousands of employees, GCSAA goes a long way in setting the tone for all of us at our own clubs. Just as the show won't go on without the work of the behind-the-scenes stagehands, we'd be hard-pressed to make great professional advances without the support of our associations.

Give your support to our associations and fellow turfgrass professionals, and they, in turn, will support you.

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Preakness Hills' John O'Keefe Receives Met's 2007 Sherwood A. Moore Award

by David Dudones

In less than a month, at the January 16 Winter Seminar, the MetGCSA will award a deserving superintendent with one of its most prestigious honors . . . its 2007 Sherwood A. Moore Award. The unanimously elected recipient is none other than John J. O'Keefe, CGCS, a past MetGCSA president and current director of golf course management at Preakness Hills Country Club in Wayne, NJ.

John will take his place on the roster of esteemed recipients as the lucky number 13. The honor began with the award's namesake, Sherwood A. Moore, in 1987 and has carried on, recognizing those who have "advanced the image, status, and reputation of the golf course superintendent. To those who know John, he fits the mold perfectly.

Yet when Awards Committee

Chair and Past MetGCSA President Will Heinz called John with the good news, he was speechless. "I had to literally sit in my office for a few minutes and compose myself enough

to call my wife, Margaret," says John. "To be a part of the fine group of past SAM winners and to have my name associated in any way with the late Sherwood Moore, is an honor."



Family time: John O'Keefe with daughters Adrienne (left) and Maureen and wife Margaret.



When you look back at John's career and what he has given back to our industry, it's no surprise that he is being compared to the likes of past SAM Award recipients Sherwood, of course, Ted Horton, Bruno Vadala, James Fulwider Sr., Bob Alonzi, Ted Jozwick, Mike Maffei, Pat Lucas, Joe Alonzi, Peter Rappoccio, Larry Pakkala, and Gary Crothers—such an honorable and dedicated group of superintendents.

And in my book, John is more than just the superintendent down the street. I'll never forget when I was preparing to take my first—and current—superintendent's job at North Jersey Country Club. . . . I asked my former boss Joe Alonzi about good guys in the area. Without hesitation, Joe said, "Get in touch with John O'Keefe. He's only a couple drivers away, and he's a great guy to know in the area. He'll give you any help you need in getting adjusted to Jersey."

That proved to be some great advice. John's helped me in numerous ways—both personally and professionally—and has become not just a valued colleague, but a trusted and good friend. I couldn't be happier about writing this piece on John and his outstanding career and commitment to the industry.

The Early Days

John grew up in the Berkshires in Lenox, MA, where he gained an appreciation for the outdoors and nature that eventually led him to his current position and career. While in high school, John worked for a landscape company, and then after graduation, turned his experience into a position as property manager for a luxury condominium complex. He was in charge of maintaining the grounds, 18-hole putting green, pool, and tennis courts, all the while admiring the work of Dick Bater, who at the time, managed Pittsfield Country Club—a golf course John would pass on his way to work each day.

"I've always enjoyed playing golf," says John, "and I was always impressed by the beauty of golf courses and what went into

maintaining them." John worked at the condo complex for three years before deciding to follow his instincts and pursue a career and formal training in turfgrass management. At 21, he enrolled in the UMass Stockbridge School of Agriculture and began his turf management education. Dr. Joe Troll, professor emeritus of plant and soil sciences at UMass (and this year's John Reid Lifetime Achievement Award winner), found a great first internship for John under Mark Fuller, who at the time was superintendent of the Longshore Club Park in Westport, CT. Mark thought so highly of John's work that he offered John the position of assistant superintendent when he graduated in 1979. John worked with Mark until 1981, when he landed his first superintendent's job at Westchester Hills Country Club in White Plains, NY.

When I told Mark Fuller, now at Connecticut Golf Club, that his former intern/assistant had won the SAM Award, he could not have been happier: "John has always had an outstanding work ethic, impeccable character, and is continuously giving back to the industry. On top of that, he is a great family man and an all-around good person. There is no one more deserving of this honor than John," says Mark.

All in the Family

Speaking of family, while working for Mark at Longshore, John married his wife, Margaret. The O'Keefe duo have been together for more than 28 years and completed their family with the addition of daughters Adrienne and Maureen while at Westchester Hills.

Adrienne, now 24, teaches third grade in Hanover Township, NJ, and Maureen, now 22, is the food and beverage coordinator and marketing and public relations manager for Green Brook Country Club in North Caldwell, NJ. Both girls graduated from Fairleigh Dickinson University and spent their formative years working at Preakness Hills.

Margaret earns her living at Preakness as well, currently working as the club's website administrator and performing a variety of administrative duties. Margaret and daughters Adrienne and Maureen are equally involved in supporting John and his career. When John first thought of running for the GCSAA board, he went to Margaret and "the girls" for their opinion. "It's your turn, Dad," his daughters told him, and with the two of them now launched into their own careers, John felt he had the freedom to get more involved on a national level.

"For a long time, any spare moments I had were devoted to my kids' activities . . . girl scouts, soccer . . . and various other family commitments. Now, with the current campaign, my time with Margaret and the girls is spent a little differently . . . in the home office—a spare bedroom, actually," says John. "With the help of my very talented family," he continues, "I've produced my brochure and other materials related to my campaign, including a website. I am very thankful for Margaret, Adrienne, and Maureen's help in this endeavor. And I can't say enough about how much I appreciate their putting up with all the time I've been away over the years, volunteering my time outside the family."

Dubbed "Big Daddy" by a number of the younger superintendents John traveled with

"As president of Preakness Hills, we are so glad the industry has discovered what we have known for the past 20 plus years. John is an extremely valuable asset and has exceeded expectations in everything we have asked. This is a well-deserved honor, and we are thankful for John and his family."

— Reid Fader, President of Preakness Hills Country Club

on an irrigation training trip recently, you could only wish that John could have his family marketing team do up a brochure on "how to do it right." We younger supers just starting our careers and families would like any help we could get.

Going Above and Beyond

When John moved on to Westchester Hills, it was a new adventure for him and Margaret, who weren't accustomed to the "big city" life. But it didn't take them long to settle in, as they quickly made friends at the club and with area superintendents and their families.

During that first year at Westchester Hills—in 1981—John joined the MetGCSA, marking the start of a long line of volunteer work for local chapters, industry organizations, and finally, the national.

John was elected to the MetGCSA board in 1985, chairing numerous committees, including Bylaws, Membership, Public Relations, and Scholarship & Research. His first year on the board, he even co-chaired the Communications Committee, serving as the advertising manager for the *Tee to Green*.

John later worked his way through the board chairs as secretary, vice president, and then president from 1996-'97. When John talks about his time on the Met board, he can't say enough about the close friendships he developed and the respect he had for his peers and fellow board members.

"Whether it was learning the ropes of the association under Peter Rappoccio in my first year on the board . . . or serving with Larry Pakkala, Joe Alonzi, and Tim O'Neill," says John, "I couldn't have worked with a more respected, capable group of superintendents. To this day, Earl Millet, another fellow board member, and I will get on the phone and discuss things like I'm still next-door to him at Westchester Hills—and I've been in Jersey now for 20 years. I treasured my time on the MetGCSA board—and especially the relationships I developed along

the way."

When, after five years at Westchester Hills, John was first approached about the superintendent's position at Preakness, John and Margaret had no intention of uprooting their family. They quickly recognized, however, that such a great professional opportunity was an offer they couldn't refuse.

His 20-plus years at Preakness Hills have, according to John, been nothing short of wonderful. "I want to thank the members of Preakness Hills for their support and understanding," says John, adding, "They have not only supported me in my service efforts, but they have also appreciated the pride and distinction it has brought to the club."

John's noteworthy service to the industry extends well beyond the Met. He's also been actively involved in the GCSA of New Jersey, a member of the association since 1986 and its president in 2003 and 2004.

A true believer in giving back to the profession, John has also served as president of the Tri-State Turf Research Foundation, guest lectured at Rutgers University, and served on numerous local and regional pesticide counsels. It's through those affiliations that John met his dear friend Jim McNally, a member of the Met for more than 40 years.

"John's accomplishments speak for themselves," says Jim. "He shows outstanding commitment to the industry and exemplifies to me what a professional in our business should be: capable, motivated, and always willing to share knowledge and experience with colleagues in the industry."

When you talk to John about all he's accomplished over the course of his career, he'll tell you he's most proud of his contributions to the promotion of research and scholarships. "I feel that there's no better use for our monies than to promote the growth of our industry and its professionals through research and scholarship," says John. "In working on the development of the scholarship funds for the MetGCSA and GCSANJ,

I have had the opportunity to see, firsthand, the greater good our funds can do. Our research funding has provided us with the support and answers to problems that help us on a day-to-day basis."

GCSAA Is Calling

On a national level, John has been a GCSAA member since 1979, earning CGCS status in 1987. He's served on numerous GCSAA committees, including Certification, Nominating, Career Development, Chapter Relations, and Membership. He's also served as a voting delegate and in various other volunteer capacities.

Now, with the support of five local chapters—the MetGCSA, the GCSANJ, Hudson Valley GCSA, Long Island GCSA, and the Finger Lakes GCSA—John is pursuing election to the GCSAA Board of Directors in 2008.

With his varied experience leading area chapters and organizations, John couldn't be better perched for a director position at the national level. Says Jay Mottola, executive director of the MGA: "I have worked with John for more than 20 years. Despite all the day-to-day demands of his job, John has always found time to give back to the game and to his profession. John's leadership in the Met and New Jersey chapters has been extraordinary. He is a true volunteer whose work has helped both individual superintendents and all of the local organizations. His many years of experience would make him a real asset to the GCSAA Board of Directors."

Please be sure to attend the January 16 Winter Seminar to congratulate John on his award-winning status and to wish him well on the campaign trail.

David Dudones, co-editor of the Tee to Green, is superintendent at North Jersey Country Club in Wayne, NJ.

Upcoming Events

Don't Miss These Upcoming Educational Events

CAGCS Winter Seminar

Tuesday, January 15
Hawthorne Inn
Berlin, CT

The Winter Seminar program conducted by the Connecticut Association of Golf Course Superintendents will include on its roster the following speakers and topics:

- Richard Cowles, a scientist at the Connecticut Experiment Station, will discuss ways to combat the Annual Bluegrass Weevil.
- University of Connecticut's Dr. Karl Guillard, professor of agronomy, and Dr. John Kaminski, assistant professor of turfgrass pathology, will be part of an Industry Leaders Forum.
- Dr. Nathaniel Mitkowski, assistant professor of plant pathology at the University of Rhode Island, will be discussing bacterial wilt.
- Dr. Joseph Vargas, professor of plant pathology at Michigan State University, will take the floor twice. In his first discussion, he will offer important insight into managing some of the most deadly turfgrass diseases, including dollar spot, anthracnose, summer patch, take-all patch, mad tillering disease, and Pythium blight. In his second talk, Dr. Vargas will discuss summer stress and how to manage it.

For further information, call CAGCS at 203-387-0810.

MetGCSA Winter Seminar

Wednesday, January 16
Westchester Country Club
Rye, NY

Plan now for our upcoming Winter Seminar, which in addition to our customary lineup of speakers will include a host of exhibitor booths and the presentation of both the Sherwood A. Moore and John Reid Lifetime Achievement awards.

This year's roster of speakers will include Dr. John Kaminski from The University of Connecticut, Dr. Frank Rossi from Cornell, Dr. Joseph Vargas from Michigan State University, and Karen Plumley of Cleary Chemical to talk about the Food Quality Protection Act's impact on pesticide use restrictions.

NYSTA Southeast Regional Conference

Tuesday – Wednesday, February 26 – 27
Holiday Inn Suffern
Suffern, NY

Geared toward landscape and turfgrass professionals, this conference will include a trade show and a variety of sessions on topics related to golf turf, lawn and landscape, and sports turf. The educational programming will kick off on the 26th with a seminar titled "Destructive Turfgrass Insects: Biology, Diagnosis and Control." Dr. Daniel Potter, professor of entomology at the University of Kentucky, will offer cutting-edge information on managing turf insect pests using new reduced-risk insecticides in conjunction with IPM and agronomic tactics.

On the 27th, the educational opportunities will continue with an early bird session at 6:30 a.m., in which the USGA's Dr. James Baird will discuss the future of turfgrass insect management. At the 8:30 general session, Cornell's Dr. Daniel Peck will cover the status of European Crane Flies in turfgrass of the Northeast. Attendees will also receive updates on current legislative and regulatory issues.

Throughout the day, golf turf professionals will also have the opportunity to learn about advances in soil testing interpretation; dealing with such nuisance pests as mound-building ants, earthworms, and wasps; annual bluegrass weevil control, and more.

To obtain a conference brochure and registration forms, call NYSTA at 800-873-8873 or 518-783-1229, or visit their website at www.nysta.org.

NYSTA's Annual Lobby Day: Turfgrass Advocacy 2008

Wednesday, February 13
Empire State Plaza Concourse
Albany, NY

NYSTA extends this complimentary offer to all green industry professionals. Lobby day offers a priority issue briefing session to inform you about current legislation that could affect the turfgrass and green industry, legislative appointments with your local elected officials, and a luncheon with a legislator. Join NYSTA in Albany and have a chance to be heard.

Please contact Jill Cyr for more information at jill@nysta.org or 518-783-1229. Registration deadline is Friday, January 26!

The 11th Annual New England Regional Turfgrass Conference & Show

Monday – Thursday, March 3 – 6
Rhode Island Convention Center
Providence, RI

This year's annual conference and show's educational sessions will bring you cutting-edge turfgrass management tactics and techniques, as well as the opportunity to fine-tune your proficiency in PowerPoint and Excel and in handling financial issues and situations common to the job of superintendent. Opening on the 4th is the three-day trade show, offering easy access to the latest in equipment, products, and supplies offered by more than 400 exhibitors.

Call the NERTF Office at 401-841-5490 for further information, or visit their website at www.nertf.org/show/.


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GCSAA 2008 Education Conference and Show

A Convention You Can't Afford to Miss

The 2008 GCSAA Education Conference and Golf Industry Show will run January 28 to February 2 in Orlando, FL. Like last year, superintendents will be joined at the upcoming Golf Industry Show by members of the National Golf Course Owners Association (NGCOA) and the Club Managers Association of America (CMAA).

This year's show is expected to attract more than 25,000 golf industry professionals and will feature approximately 1,100 exhibitors sprawled over more than 300,000 square feet of exhibit space.

The GIS Main Events

The show's emphasis this coming year is teamwork. Events and sessions will focus on helping us become better, more informed team players. There's an actual Team Day planned on Friday, February 1. It will kick off at 8:30 a.m. with the Golf Industry Show General Session. Master storyteller Doug Keeley will present the highly acclaimed program, *The Mark of a Leader*, which offers a treasure chest of inspiring stories about the world's greatest leaders and brands, and the principles that have made them successful. Those who attend will be inspired to think about their role and priorities as a leader, and come away with clear ways to improve their leadership skills and their "team's" performance. This program has gained acclaim from some of the world's most prestigious organizations, companies, and associations for the powerful and positive impact it has on audiences lives and businesses.

Following the General Session will be two concurrent sessions: one presented by the USGA Green Section about enhancing facility and professional growth and one presented by Rob Morton from the Disney Institute about service excellence to enhance the entire golf experience.

There will be no competing seminars scheduled that afternoon as golf course, facility, and club management teams are encouraged to walk the trade show floor together

and visit each of the Solution Centers, including the Team Solutions Center, which will feature TrackTime Driving Schools' Pit Crew Challenge.

Education Conference Highlights

Along with the Golf Industry Show, GCSAA, NGCOA and CMAA will be presenting their annual education conferences.

Our Education Conference, the largest in the turfgrass management industry, will begin January 28 and run through to the end of the show on February 2. This year, 21 new seminars will be offered, in addition to the more than 100 traditional offerings.

The Education Conference will hold its not-to-be-missed Opening Session on Thursday, January 31 starting at 9 a.m. Highlighting the event will be the presentation of the 2008 Old Tom Morris Award to World Golf Hall of Fame member Greg Norman. Known affectionately as "The Shark," Norman will also deliver a must-see keynote address to attendees.

One of the most dominating players on the world golf scene, Norman has used his acumen, energy, and amazing people skills to diversify his success through his position as CEO of Great White Shark Enterprises. He has gained acclaim through his interests, including course design, golf development, turf production, merchandising, and licensing. An advocate of the golf course superintendent and the golf course as an environmental asset, he has served as chair of the Environmental Institute for Golf since 2003.

On the course, Norman's 66 career wins—including 20 on the PGA Tour and two British Open titles—earned him induction into the hall of fame in 2001. He was the dominant player from the mid-1980s to the mid-1990s, ranking as the top player in golf for 331 weeks. He has 29 top-10 finishes in major championships.

The Opening Session will also include the presentation of GCSAA's Distinguished Service Awards and various other honors for those who have achieved success in their careers.

Annual Meeting Marks Changing of the Guard

Another not-to-be-missed event is the Annual Meeting, held February 1 from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. A full slate of candidates will be vying for GCSAA Board of Director slots. Voting members are being asked to elect three officers and two directors. The following candidates will appear on the ballot:

For President

David S. Downing II, CGCS, vice president of operations and construction for the Signature Golf Group in Myrtle Beach, SC

For Vice President

Mark D. Kuhns, CGCS, director of grounds at Baltusrol Golf Club in Springfield, NJ

For Secretary/Treasurer

- James R. Fitzroy, CGCS, director/superintendent of Wollaston Recreational Facility/Presidents Golf Club in North Quincy, MA

- Robert M. Randquist, CGCS, director of golf course and grounds at Boca Rio Golf Club in Boca Raton, FL

For Director (electing two)

- Patrick R. Finlen, CGCS, director of golf course maintenance operations at The Olympic Club in San Francisco, CA
- John J. O'Keefe, CGCS, director of golf course management at Preakness Hills Country Club in Wayne, NJ
- Sanford G. Queen, CGCS, manager of golf operations for the City of Overland Park, KS

Sean A. Hoolehan, CGCS, golf course superintendent at Wildhorse Resort & Casino on the Umatilla Indian Reservation in Pendleton, OR, is retiring from the board of directors after serving the past year as immediate past president.

Ricky D. Heine, CGCS, general manager and director of grounds at The Golf Club Star Ranch in Austin, TX, will serve on the board for one more year as immediate past president. And Keith A. Ihms, golf course superintendent at the Country Club of Little Rock in Little Rock, AR, is entering into the second year of his term as director.

Haven't Registered Yet?

If you haven't registered for the GCSAA Education Conference and Golf Industry Show, you can still catch the Advance Fee rate if you send in your registration form by January 14. You can do it online at www.golfindustryshow.com or by mailing or faxing your form to GCSAA.

President's Message continued from page 1

Speaking of Offering Support...

The reason we held our Annual Meeting at Mosholu was to initiate a relationship with the First Tee Program. Barry McLaughlin, the executive director, spoke about the program, which teaches children of all ages and backgrounds not just about golf, but about real-life, core values.

Superintendent Erik Feldman has done an outstanding job at Mosholu. It's a nine-hole facility that has undergone major renovations. Did you know, for instance, that Erik has rebuilt all the greens to USGA specs? As with anything the MGA has gotten involved in, it is a class act. Nonetheless, because the First Tee Program is nonprofit, Erik and Mosholu would profit from donations of used golf course equipment. Give Erik a call if you think you have equipment or supplies he could use.

In the future, we hope to participate in a golf event to promote our profession and let the First Tee kids know that if they wanted to pursue a career in golf course management, we could help. If you want to learn more, check out the web page at www.TheFirstTeeMetNY.org.

Building Research Into the Budget

Last week, the MetGCSA sponsored a GCSAA educational seminar. Rutgers' Dr. Bruce Clarke did a nice job reviewing the latest turf disease research. Some of the best turf research in the country is being conducted in our own backyards through funding provided by the Tri-State Turf Research Foundation.

So here is my next sales pitch. You should have received a notice from the Tri-State Turf Research Foundation asking for your support—a tax-deductible donation of \$200 is all they're asking for. It's critical that you

respond. Without your financial support, research projects like Dr. Clarke's won't happen. The Tri-State supports research that targets problems specific to our area, research that we will profit from directly. If you haven't already, please factor this contribution into your annual budget. It's such a small price to pay for the valuable benefits you'll receive in return.

Taking a Proactive Stance

You also should have received an application for an environmental award given out by the MGA. Please make an effort to fill out the form. Even if you feel the award is beyond your reach, take a look at it. You might want to use the application's criteria as a framework for developing an environmental plan for your course. Many of today's issues revolve around the environment. Right now, Westchester is in the throes of a battle against a phosphorus ban. And if I'm not mistaken, Long Island is being forced to comply with a ban on all fertilizer applications at certain times of the year. We, as an industry, need to be proactive on the environmental front. At the very least, we need to act responsibly to avoid attracting the kind of attention that results in severe regulations on the pesticides and nutrients essential to our success on the golf course.

Enough Said

My last word to the wise: Use the coming months to relax, spend time with friends and family, and enjoy the holiday season. Happy New Year, and the best of health to all of you and your families.

Matt Ceplo
President



No Sparks Flew at the 2007 GCSAA Chapter Delegates Meeting

by Bob Nielsen, CGCS

I was one of 98 GCSAA chapter delegates to attend the association's 2007 Chapter Delegates Meeting at GCSAA headquarters in Lawrence, KS. I spent October 12 through 14 discussing GCSAA's long-term vision and goals and representing the MetGCSA's views of the industry and our national organization.

There were a variety of topics discussed, though this meeting was less volatile than many previous meetings. The main concern of most of the delegates was the replacement of Steve Mona. Steve has been the CEO for 14 years and has led the GCSAA to become one of the foremost organizations in golf. He resigned to take the new position of CEO of the World Golf Foundation, though he has agreed to remain with the association for up to six months until a suitable replacement is secured.

Steve will be sorely missed. We can only hope that a new successor with similar vision and commitment will be able to bring the GCSAA even further to the forefront of golf organizations.

Views From the Top

Still at the helm, Steve Mona updated us on a variety of programs and services that the association offers its members. He indicated that the GCSAA staff has as its focus "Members Matter Most." That mantra, he explained, is supported with three global initiatives:

- increasing membership
- marketing its members
- attracting additional resources to enhance member programs and services

Steve also left us with three key points regarding the future of GCSAA and its members. He said "image is important" as it relates to members representing their profession and facility in a positive manner. He went on to say, "inclusion is preferable to exclusion" as the association grows its membership base and works with others to advance itself and the game. Finally, he encouraged members to promote the fact that being a golf course superintendent is a profession, not just an occupation.



Contenders for the Board

Delegates had the opportunity to meet and greet GCSAA board candidates. David Downing from the Carolinas will be running for GCSAA president and Mark Kuhns from Baltusrol will be running for vice president. Jim Fitzroy from New England and Bob Randquist from Florida will be vying for the secretary/treasurer position. All four of these gentlemen have served on the GCSAA board for several years and are going to be excellent leaders of the association.

Our own John O'Keefe will have a tough battle against incumbents Sandy Queen from Kansas and Pat Finlen from California for the two open board positions. There will be a vacancy created upon the election of the secretary/treasurer, so an appointment to the board will be made by the president for the remainder of the lucky electee's term. We all want to wish John good luck in his quest!

Building a Name for Ourselves

Next, we heard a presentation outlining GCSAA's significant investment in communicating the value of both GCSAA and its members to avid golfers and employers. This campaign continues to be a primary focus of the board and seems to have gone a long way toward positively affecting the attitudes and perceptions that avid golfers and em-

ployers have toward GCSAA and golf course superintendents.

For example, a recent National Golf Foundation survey revealed that name recognition of GCSAA was second only to the USGA as a leading golf organization and that golfers feel the golf course superintendent, more than any other golf facility employee, is responsible for their enjoyment of the game.

The GCSAA logo has been adopted by 24 chapters to try to capitalize on our national association's growing name recognition. I would not, however, be looking for the MetGCSA to change its logo in the near future.

Enhancing Chapter Relations

On the heels of that discussion was a presentation by GCSAA Past President Tim O'Neill. Just when we thought Tim might be able to take a little break from his duties on the national level, he has been appointed chairperson of the Chapter Relations Committee. He explained the committee's focus on enhancing the relationship between GCSAA and the chapters, describing how the committee will be taking a comprehensive, long-term look at how the two entities work together, as well as how GCSAA might better serve shared members' needs.

Tim and his committee have been given long-term appointments to develop recommendations that they will present to the delegates sometime in the future. One year as past president and he is right back at it!

Establishing a Dues Strategy

The discussion of dues, which began at last year's delegates meeting, continued this year with the GCSAA Board of Directors supporting a dues increase based on the Consumer Price Index. This will mean an increase of \$20 for Classes A and SM, and \$10 for Class C members. Delegates all seemed to agree that smaller, but more frequent dues increases are more easily absorbed by clubs and less likely to result in a decline in membership. Larger increases in the past have resulted in significant drops in membership.

GCSAA members will vote on the increase at the 2008 Annual Meeting with a simple majority required to pass.

Volunteer Selection Clarified

Committee volunteer selection was also clarified at this year's meeting. The selection process can be frustrating for individuals who have never volunteered before. There can be many more volunteers than positions for certain committees, and some committees require such a significant commitment of time and effort that board members often lean toward candidates with proven track records at the chapter level.

We are always looking for volunteers on our own chapter committees and would be more than happy to assist any of our members who would like to move on to national committees.

Making the Most of Member Feedback

We heard about another "guiding light" for association programs and services, and that's feedback gleaned from various member surveys. This feedback provides GCSAA leaders and staff with both a measure of the association's performance and a roadmap for the future. Among the surveys we discussed at the meeting:

Member Needs Assessment: This survey indicated that, by and large, GCSAA needs to better communicate the availability of pro-

grams and services and the successes that have been achieved on behalf of its members. Members did seem to see GCSAA as being valuable in providing a variety of programs and services that chapters cannot, but many were not aware of all that GCSAA has to offer.

Compensation and Benefits Report: This report showed that salaries and benefits have been going up since 1993. Certified members average higher salaries than noncertifieds. Class A members average higher salaries than Class SM. In most cases, however, the increases have exceeded the rate of inflation—a credit to both the GCSAA and its members!

By the way, member superintendents who responded to this survey are entitled to a free copy of the report. Those members who did not complete the survey can purchase the report for \$100. Nonmembers can receive a copy for \$400. Membership does have its benefits!

Golf Course Environmental Profile Project: The information compiled from this survey will be vital to developing programs and services that advance environmental stewardship at our golf facilities. It will also help us better address the concerns of legislators/regulators, media, the environmental community, allied associations, and more.

The first three phases of this project are complete and should be published in a scientific journal by the time you read this.

Funded in part by the EPA, the next phase will be coming to you in early January 2008. This is going to be a more in-depth survey that will require a little more time to complete, but your participation is critical. It's designed to show how golf courses use various pesticides and fertilizers—responsibly. GCSAA is committed to helping us with our environmental issues, but they can't be effective without our support.

Final Note

This was my third year attending the Chapter Delegates meeting, and I cannot overstate the dedication I see from the GCSAA Board of Directors and the staff. Their commitment to serving the membership is truly remarkable. The resources they make available to chapters and individual members is unending. The website has been redesigned, and if you haven't visited it recently, I urge you to see all that it has to offer. There is a link from the MetGCSA website, which also has a new format and great information. The research GCSAA supports, the legislative matters they deal with, and the information they have on salaries and benefits is available to each member. I suggest we all take advantage of it.

In addition to being the MetGCSA's Chapter Delegate, Bob Nielsen is our association's treasurer and superintendent at Bedford Golf & Tennis Club in Bedford, NY.



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North Jersey Team Takes Home Invitational Trophy

The Whippoorwill Club hosted our 2007 Invitational, and though the date was pushed back a few times before holding fast to October 29, those who played will say that it was well worth the wait.

Under normal circumstances, the tourney would have been canceled after the second failed attempt, but The Whippoorwill Club was dead-set on holding the event—fortunately for us. Their persistence was motivated by good reason: They were intent on giving their departing superintendent, Chuck Martineau, a nice sendoff and their new superintendent, Paul Gonzalez, a big welcome. As most of you know, Chuck retired from the club after many years of dedicated service, and Paul took over as superintendent this year.

The Whippoorwill Club put on a fantastic show of food, fall color, and fun golf. But the highlight of the day was listening to Chuck deliver a heartfelt speech. He thanked all of his past green chairmen and club presidents—and all of the people he worked with over the years.

Near the end of his speech, he noted that he was still under contract by the club as a consultant for golf-course-related matters, but chuckling, he added that after witnessing what was accomplished on the course this year, he learned a few tricks from Paul. Great

job Paul and Chuck and everyone else who helped make this year's Invitational such a great event.

Congratulations to North Jersey Country Club. They took home the first place trophy after a match of cards with the host club, revealing the two strokes received by their high handicapper on the hole made all the difference. Way to go!

Here's how the rest of the competitors fared:

Low Net Winners

- 128 North Jersey Country Club
(won in a match of cards)
- 128 The Whippoorwill Club

Low Gross Winners

- 143 Brae Burn Country Club
- 147 Redding Country Club

Closest to the Pin

- #11 John Reese, *The Whippoorwill Club* 5' 8"
- #17 Bob Westenberg, *GlenArbor GC* 12' 6"
- #8 Paul Alexander, *Brea Burn CC* 45'
- #4 Bob DeMarco, *The Powelton Club* 2"

Longest Drive (On Hole #18)

- Pat Ortland, *The Powelton Club*
 - Jim Wahl, *The Whippoorwill Club*
 - Ken Benoit, *GlenArbor GC*
- Ken Benoit, CGCS

A Picture-Perfect Super/Green Chair Tourney at Tuxedo

This year's Superintendent/Green Chairperson event was contested October 9 at the picturesque Tuxedo Club. We had a good turnout despite the dubious weather forecast, and the course was in fantastic shape thanks to Tim Garceau and his staff.

The tourney was dominated by the GlenArbor team, who won both the Gross and Net divisions. Being humble competitors, however, they forfeited the Gross Division, allowing the second place Brae Burn team to collect the first place prize. (Even when they finish second, which is rare, they get a first place prize. . . . Way to go, Blake!)

If you've never played this club, you should put it on the top of your list. With rock outcroppings and forested mountains serving as a backdrop, it's a picture-perfect venue for a fall golf event. Great job, Tim and the rest of the Tuxedo Club staff, and many thanks to the entire club for being such wonderful hosts.

Here's the complete rundown on the tournament results:

Net Winners

- 59 Ken Benoit/Morgan Gregory
GlenArbor GC
- 63 Dick Neufeld/Todd Raisch
Plant Food Co./Ridgewood CC
- 67 Greg Moran/George Corgan
Matrix Turf Solutions/Steven Willand

Gross Winners

- 71 Blake Halderman/Ken Auerbach
Brae Burn CC
- 74 Tom Ashfield/Tom Weinert
Quaker Ridge GC/Plant Food Co.
- 75 Mike Cook/Jon Barlok
The Care of Trees/Turf Products Corp.

Longest Drive

- #7 Tom Ashfield, Superintendent
Quaker Ridge GC
- #13 Ira Rothbaum, Green Chairperson
Montammy CC

Closest to the Pin

- #6 Jeff Cox, Green Chairperson 24'
Bedford Golf & Tennis Club
 - #17 Mike Romita, Green Chairperson 9' 3"
Pelham CC
 - #3 Trapper Van Dunk, Superintendent 6'
LeeWood CC
 - #15 Jeff Wentworth, Superintendent 4' 4"
Pelham CC
- Ken Benoit, CGCS



The winning North Jersey Country Club team strikes a pose with their Invitational Trophy (from left to right): George Mammola, president; David Dudones, superintendent; Keith Grassing, assistant pro; Erv Allaghi, green chairman.

2007 Met Area Team Championship Proves a True Test of Golf

The 2007 Met Area Team Championship was held on October 22 at the course now known as the "people's course"—the Bethpage State Park Black Course. Bethpage Black is a true test of golf, and it makes no bones about it. On the first tee, golfers are greeted by a sign reading, "For expert players only." It's no surprise, then, that Bethpage Black hosted the 2002 U.S. Open and will again be hosting the event in 2009.

This year, Bethpage's Superintendent Craig Currier and Director David Catalano did a fabulous job with the Met Area Team Championship. We can't thank them enough for their generosity and the support they showed our profession.

It was particularly interesting to see just how good the U.S. Open pros really are. Craig had us play the U.S. Open Sunday pins, and then he placed a "Tiger Flag" on the spot where Tiger Woods' ball had landed on the final Sunday of the Open. Tiger didn't hit a driver off every tee, and he played the course 400 yards longer than we did. Still, it was almost impossible to reach his flags. Those guys are amazing!

The MetGCSA, on the other hand, was not so amazing. We were just average, finishing in the middle of the pack. The team of Jeff Wentworth, Matt Ceplo, Blake Halderman, Mark Chant, Grover Alexander, Dave Dudones, Tony Hooks, and Guy Gurney finished 6th out of 14th, which was nine shots off the Champion Team—the Connecticut AGCS—who also had the low gross winner of the event: Mike Dukette with a score of 76.

In addition to the team events and the low gross winner, we had hole-in-one prizes, closest to pins, and a \$50,000 putting contest that was very, very close to getting awarded. Paul Brandon of the Pocono TGA hit the back of the cup on a 50-foot putt that bounced out, just inches from taking home the 50K.

The Championship's Evolution

The Met Area Team Championship has a long history. Originated by Ed Walsh—now of Shelter Harbor Golf Club in Rhode Island—25 years ago, it initially comprised six or seven Tri-state-area associations.

Beginning in 2005, Andy Drohen of

Agrium Advance Technologies and Blake Halderman of Brae Burn Country Club joined forces to co-chair the tourney and kick it up a notch, encouraging the participation of a wider range of associations from Virginia to Ohio and on up to Maine.

So far, so good. The field of championship participants has grown each year—culminating this year in 130 players from 14 associations, as well as seven national sponsors. The upscale golf venues, no doubt, helped attract even the far-away participants. In 2005, Aronimink Golf Club near Philly hosted the event. In 2006, the tourney traveled to Fisher's Island (known as the Pebble Beach of the East), and in 2007, as we know, contestants came to Bethpage Black (see results right). Next year, Winged Foot West has agreed to host the event.

The Many Benefits of Participating

The goal of the championship is to promote networking, camaraderie, and a little friendly competition among superintendents and affiliate members from the same part of the country. The other equally important outcome of the event is donating a portion of the proceeds to worthy causes. In 2006, the MetGCSA donated \$1,500 to the "Make a Wish" Foundation, and this year, the association raised \$1,500 to help the family of Finger Lakes Region Superintendent Mark Hughes, who recently passed away from an unfortunate accident. It is our hope to keep the field strong and be able to donate to more worthy causes in the years to come.

It's All Made Possible

This event would not be possible without the clubs who have generously offered their facilities to us. Also invaluable to the event's success are our sponsors: Agrium Advanced Technologies, Aquatrols, BASF Chemical Co., Bayer Environmental Science, Syngenta Professional Products, The Care of Trees, and Toro.

All of the prizes and special events were made possible with their support. Many thanks to one and all of these great companies and their representatives.

The Results

Here's a look at how the teams and individual participants fared:

Net Winners

Connecticut AGCS	285
Philadelphia AGCS	290
GCSA of New Jersey	291
Central New York GCSA	292
GCMA of Cape Cod	292
MetGCSA	294
Long Island GCSA	304
Hudson Valley GCSA	311
Central Penn GCSA	313
GCSA of New England	314
Mid-Atlantic AGCS	318
Northeastern GCSA	319
Rhode Island GCSA	321
Pocono TGA	327

Closest to the Pin

#3 Glenn Smickley Mid-Atlantic GCSA (Sponsored by Syngenta)	5' 10"
#8 Fred Montgomery Northeastern GCSA (Sponsored by Bayer)	9' 0"
#14 Chris Mauro Connecticut AGCS (Sponsored by BASF)	1' 2"
#17 David Pughe Long Island GCSA (Sponsored by Toro)	5' 11"

Longest Drive

Net Division

Chris Mauro, Connecticut AGCS
(Sponsored by The Care of Trees)

Gross Division

Farron Stoops, Central Penn GCSA
(Sponsored by Agrium Adv. Tech.)

Putting Contest

Tom Ashfield, GCSA of New Jersey
(Sponsored by Aquatrols)

Individual Gross

76 Mike Dukette, Connecticut AGCS

Sponsorship Team Winner

68 Dennis DeSanctis/Lee Kozsey
Syngenta Professional Products

Two-Man Team High Score

Gross Division

90 Paul Brandon/Steve Chirip
Pocono TGA

Net Division

87 Russ Heller and Don Hearn
GCSA of New England
— Blake Halderman, CGCS

Member News

New Members

Please join the board in welcoming the following new members:

- **Matthew Bollatto**, Class C, The Tuxedo Club, Tuxedo Park, NY
- **Nathan Bridges**, Class C, Innis Arden Golf Club, Old Greenwich, CT
- **David Byers**, Class C, Manhattan Woods Golf Club, West Nyack, NY
- **Andrew Herold**, Class C, Centennial Golf Club, Carmel, NY
- **Anthony Hooks**, Class A, Pelham/Split Rock Golf Club, Bronx, NY
- **Jonathan Knol**, Class C, Quaker Ridge Golf Club, Scarsdale, NY
- **Robert Krouse**, Class C, The Stanwich Club, Greenwich, CT
- **Chris Kukor**, Class C, Innis Arden Golf Club, Old Greenwich, CT
- **Andrew Mallick**, Class C, Country Club of Darien, Darien, CT
- **Dick Neufeld**, Class AF, Plant Food Company, Cranbury, NJ
- **Dennis Petruzzelli**, CGCS, Class A, Putnam National Golf Club, Mahopac, NY
- **Andrew Updegrave**, Class C, The Seawane Club, Hewlett Harbor, NY

Just Married

Congratulations to **Dave Moffett**, assistant superintendent at the Round Hill Club in Greenwich, CT. He and his new wife, Valentina, were married on November 3 and are living happily ever after in Stamford, CT.

Well Wishes

Sending well wishes to:

- **John Carlone** of the Meadow Brook Club. John had surgery for a herniated disk on December 21.
- **Bill Carriere** of James Carriere & Sons. In November, Bill underwent open heart surgery and is recovering nicely.
- **Bruce Pye** of E/T Equipment Company.
- **Bobby Steinman** of Metro Turf Specialists. Bob was recently diagnosed with a severe viral infection.

In Sympathy

We would like to offer our condolences to two Met members who have recently lost a family member. Our deepest sympathy to:

- **Scott Ferguson**, superintendent of Mahopac Golf Club who lost his brother, Warren, to cancer at the end of October.
- **Roy Watters Jr.**, assistant superintendent at The Powelton Club; his father passed away in October.

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