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Tee To Green

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*Tony Girardi, CGCS
MetGCSA President*

We've navigated through an unseasonably cool, wet spring and, on June 21, entered into summer, seeing little of the sun and heat typical of this time of year. Mother Nature tends to throw us at least one curveball each season. But we expect it. We're trained to manage it. It's part of our job as golf course superintendents.

What we're not trained to handle, and what I'd like to devote this message to discussing, is the never-ending stream of legislative bills that keep emerging—particularly in New York State. Many are potentially so troublesome to our industry—and our ability to do our jobs well—that on August 6, our Education Meeting will focus on this pending legislation (see Spotlight, page 12). If you've read the piece published in the last issue of *Tee to Green* on NYSTA's Advocacy Day, you have an idea of the legislative climate in Albany and NYSTA's role in supporting our industry's battle to suppress some of this unnecessary legislation.

There's Strength in Numbers

Some battles, though fought hard, are lost. Take the proposed ban on phosphorus use on golf courses in Westchester County. Even with the persistence of many superintendents and countless other industry members, phosphorus use on golf courses in Westchester County will be banned in 2011! But the purpose of this message is not to outline each and every proposed bill. Rather it's to strongly urge each and every one of you to write your state senator or legislator when we email blast a request for help.

Your voice does make a difference. Take the most recent bill designed to ban Class I and Class II pesticides: It was modified to include only school fields and playgrounds—no doubt due, in part, to the 56 letters members of our industry sent to our state assemblymen.

Working with GCSAA Senior Manager of Government Relations Chava McKeel, our national organization has set up a link that allows you to easily locate a bill and shows you step-by-step how to send a letter voicing your opposition to the bill. All you have to do is "point-'n'-click" your way through the process. The site even provides links to a variety of form letters. It's never been easier to help our industry protest ill-conceived legislation.

In Closing

Within our own association, we owe special thanks to our government relations chairman, Bob Nielsen, and within NYSTA, Mike Maffei. Both have worked tirelessly to stop unwarranted bans and restrictions. Your support, too, can go a long way in helping to preserve our industry's rights and the integrity of our golf courses. Please feel free to contact me or anyone on the board with any questions or thoughts you may have regarding proposed golf course legislation.

I hope all is well with everyone,

Tony Girardi, CGCS
President

**Current Periodicals
DO NOT CIRCULATE!**

Feature

Living the 'Good' Life

Met Members Speak Candidly About Their Not-So-by-the-Book Approaches to Leading a Healthy Life

by Greg Wojick, CGCS

I

ll bet each and every one of you has read at least one article or book on the keys to living a long and healthy life. But do you practice what the doctors are preaching? In my informal survey of our members—both young and old—I learned that not everyone lives by the book. Some, it's true, could be poster children for the American Heart Association, but others simply slide by on their good genes—or just plain hard work and discipline.

I'm one with a family medical history I'd prefer not to carry on, so I've not only made a reasonable commitment to fitness and

healthy living, I've also done my fair share of reading on the subject. I thought as a framework for our members' stories, I would share the "Eight Steps to Leading a Healthy Life" that were prescribed in a recent *Johns Hopkins Medical Letter* which I happened to catch online.

The good news in what this article had to offer is that a healthy lifestyle can actually prevent or delay many of the ill effects of aging. So here goes. But first, I want to thank all of you for sharing the many valuable lessons you've learned in seeking good health and happiness in your lives—a balance we all should be striving for.

Step #1: Get Some Exercise

If exercise could be bottled, it would be the best-selling potion at the local pharmacy. It slows the loss of muscle strength, maintains better heart and respiratory function, increases bone mass, and limits the risk of diabetes. An effective exercise routine includes endurance training—walking, jogging, cycling—and two or three strength training sessions a week. We all know this stuff, but who among us is actually putting it into practice?

Well, there are numerous guys I know, without talking to them for this article, who might be classified as fitness fanatics, just because they've run one or more 26.2-mile marathons, like The Stanwich Club's Scott Niven, Milwaukee Country Club's Pat Sisk, Chicago Golf Club's Jon Jennings, and Silver Spring Country Club's Peter Rappoccio.

And then there are a whole slew of others who go at fitness with more typical goals in mind, like Eric Morrison, the 36-year-old super at Shennecossett Golf Club in Groton, CT, and former Burning Tree assistant. "Knock on wood," says Eric, "I'm still pretty young, so I haven't experienced any serious health issues yet. But I am trying to live a healthy lifestyle so I can avoid problems down the road."

Eric and his wife, Cindy, regularly use the treadmill at their Gales Ferry home. And while Cindy teaches a fitness program for new mothers part time for Groton Parks and Recreation, Eric, a low-handicap golfer, hits the course at least once a week. "I really enjoy participating in the CAGCS Two-Ball event," says Eric.

Making fitness fun is one sure way to keep fit for life.

At 70 years old, Tony Savone seems to have found a fitness routine that works . . . despite admittedly straying off course for a bit after leaving the business. Retired at 61 years old, Tony left his long-time position as Quaker Ridge's superintendent and moved with his wife, Sandy, to Lehigh Acres, FL, right next to the second homes of several fellow Met members.

"I saw the new demands of the business coming down the pike and knew it was time to retire and take it easy. Problem is, at first, I took it a bit too easy," Tony admits.

"When I was in the business, I was always sports minded and particularly liked hockey, football, and of course, golf. When you retire," he continues, "it's easy to become a couch potato. You sit and relax, nibble a bit on a few snacks, have a glass or two of wine, and the next thing you know, the weight piles on and you get out of shape."

"Believe it or not," he says, "I keep active by mowing lawns down here, and I still love to fuss with my property. I also play golf three times a week and try to swim a bit and walk when I can."

We should all be so active.

Another of our life members still on the fitness trail is 81-year-old Chubby Autorino. Retired from Blind Brook Club in March 2000, this former superintendent is not a golfer but says he goes to the gym three times a week to "stay in very good shape." Still going strong, his routine of choice includes swimming, the treadmill, and lifting weights.

Following in Chubby's footsteps is 55-year-old Les Kennedy, who took over as

An eight-year study of 13,000 people also showed that people who walked 30 minutes daily had a significantly reduced chance of premature death compared with those who rarely exercised, reports the American Council on Exercise.



Blind Brook's super when Chubby retired. An on-again-off-again exerciser, Les describes his "split schedule" exercise routine: "In the summer, I don't do any formal exercise. In the off-season, though, I'll use my elliptical trainer pretty regularly to get back in shape."

A close friend of Les's, Country Club of Darien Superintendent and past MetGCSA and GCSAA president Tim O'Neill, confesses to being a sporadic exerciser. "I'd like to work out more often but don't have the time. Fortunately, managing the golf course and the property renovation projects keep me active most all day long," says Tim, adding, "I guess I've been blessed with good genes that allow me to keep my weight under control, and then, too, my wife takes extra care to make sure I eat in a healthy way."

Step #2: Don't Smoke

For all you smokers out there, you'll be glad to know it's never too late to quit. We're all aware that nonsmokers have lower risk of stroke, cancer, and emphysema, but did you know that just five years after you quit smoking, your risk of heart disease becomes the same as any nonsmoker? So even if you're a long-term smoker, don't think you've sabotaged your chance for healthy living. It's never too late to kick the habit.

Chubby Autorino is one who did—and with great success: "My wife and I both quit in 1971," he says, "after smoking for many years."

For some, however, the urge to smoke outweighs the will to quit. After managing to stop smoking cigars, Tony Savone recently started again, lamenting, "I know they aren't the best for you, but I just like to have a cigar now and then."

Step #3: Eat a Healthy Diet

Yes, it's true. Regular consumption of fruits and vegetables cuts the risk of colorectal cancer in half and reduces the risk of heart disease and diabetes. Switching to a low-fat diet can reduce total cholesterol and lower blood pressure too.

Many of the members we surveyed claim to put thought into what they put into their mouths. Some are prodded by their significant others or spouses, others by a medical condition. Here are their stories.

Earl Millett, 52, is a past president of the Met and Ridgeway Country Club's superintendent for 29 years. Recently diagnosed with diabetes, Earl's had to take stock of his health. "It started with excessive thirst, frequent nighttime urination, and fatigue. That's when I knew I had to go to the doctor."

Always active, playing hockey and golf, swimming, fishing, Earl's recent health concern has forced him to watch what he eats. "One of the toughest things is having to all but eliminate carbohydrates since they turn directly to sugar in the bloodstream," he says. "Keeping my weight down is another daily battle. Getting old is a bitch!"

Eric and Cindy Morrison have taken a proactive approach to good health by not only keeping fit, but also eating a healthy diet. Eric does admit, however, to indulging now and then in anything and everything he wants.

Also a self-admitted splurger is 33-year-old John Mills, Nantucket Golf Club's veteran assistant superintendent. "I'm really interested in eating healthy food," he says, but my girlfriend, Calista, and I will splurge on some great wine and a gourmet meal from time to time."

Shaken by his battle with lung cancer, 40-year-old Pelham Country Club Superintendent Jeff Wentworth knows all too well that good health shouldn't be taken for granted. Though his habits weren't shameful before his diagnosis (ironically, he didn't smoke), they're now what some would consider picture-perfect.

"I work with a nutritionist and listen carefully to what he recommends," says Jeff. "I hardly drink any alcohol now, and I eat more fruits and vegetables, solely organic. I eat less red meat, but when I do, that's organic too. Basically," continues Jeff, "I'm on what could be described as a modified Mediterranean diet (see sidebar on page 4), which research has shown lowers the risk of both heart disease and cancer."

Though Jeff is quick to point out that Sloan Kettering did not link his cancer to chemical exposure on the job, he has a heightened awareness of his surroundings. "I pay attention to secondhand smoke, sun



Mediterranean Diet: A Heart-Healthy Eating Plan

According to the Mayo Clinic, a Mediterranean diet—modeled after the traditional cooking style of countries bordering the Mediterranean Sea—is thought to reduce your risk of heart disease. Supporting this theory is a 2007 study conducted in the United States which found that both men and women who consumed a Mediterranean diet lowered their risk of death from not only heart disease, but also cancer.

So what are the key components of this wonder diet?

- Eating generous amounts of fruits and vegetables
- Consuming healthy fats, such as olive oil and canola oil
- Using herbs and spices instead of salt to flavor foods
- Eating small portions of nuts
- Consuming very little red meat
- Eating fish or shellfish at least twice a week
- Drinking red wine, in moderation, when it doesn't interfere with other health restrictions

exposure, and other contaminants around me," he admits.

"I was lucky," says Jeff. "I went to the doctor after several months of pain in my chest. Not attributing the problem to cancer—since early phases of lung cancer typically don't give you any pain—the doctor decided at the last moment to send me for a chest x-ray. That's when she found a golf-ball-sized tumor. Long story short, I had surgery to remove the tumor and 12 lymph nodes—two of which were cancerous—had

16 weeks of chemo, and now take one chemo pill each day. But here I am one year later, cancer free. I play golf and carry on with few worries. Thankfully, I caught it in time.

"If there's one piece of advice I could give everyone in the business, I'd have to say that being tough, being macho and not going to the doctor or considering alternative health practices is just not worth the risk. Had I not taken myself to the doctor, changed my lifestyle, would I be here now to tell this story? Maybe not."

Step #4: Drink Enough Water

Hydration? How important is proper hydration? Don't underestimate the trouble you can get into if you become severely dehydrated. Just like the turf on your golf course, you can't survive—your organs just can't function—without the proper amount of fluids in your body. It's not hard to get dehydrated. All it takes is an illness or strenuous activity to deplete your body of the water it needs. Experts recommend drinking six to eight glasses of clear fluids daily—and that's under normal circumstances.

Jim Calhoun, 69, Hall of Fame head basketball coach at UConn, was recently rushed to the hospital suffering from dehydration after biking a dozen miles of a 50-mile charity bike event. He passed out, fell from his bike, and cracked several ribs. He's expected to fully recover.

Glen Dube's 33-year-old brother, Paul, was sadly not as fortunate. "He decided to run in a 10K race," says Glen, superintendent of Centennial Golf Club. "The morning of the race his allergies bothered him, so he took some Claritin-D. He also took Motrin to curb the ache in his shoulder. He drank very little water the night before or that day and raced hard. He was fit and maintained an

New cases of skin cancer are on the rise in the United States with more than 1 million cases of basal cell and squamous cell carcinoma and 60,000 cases of malignant melanoma expected to occur annually.

appropriate weight, but shortly after the finish, his blood pressure sank to zero. His kidneys and liver and pancreas were severely damaged. He fought hard to live," continues Glen, "but his organs continued to fail."

Although he suffered from a bit of a perfect storm of conditions, the one that appeared to push him over the edge was the dehydration. Our thoughts and prayers go out to Glen and Paul's family.

Step #5: Avoid Excessive Sun Exposure

Overexposure to sunlight has long been linked to one of the most prevalent of all cancers: skin cancer. While the best course of prevention is to steer clear of the sun, for many, like golf course superintendents, this is next to impossible. More realistic—whether you're working or playing on the links—is to cover up and use sunscreen with at least a 15 SPF rating.

There are three main forms of skin cancer: basal cell, squamous cell, and the most virulent of skin cancers, malignant melanoma.

This is the form of cancer that 71-year-old life member (and father to Westchester Hills' Peter Waterous) Herb Waterous first sought help for 20 years ago as superintendent at Scarsdale Golf Club. "I'm convinced I wouldn't be here today if my wife hadn't nagged me to go to the doctor," says Herb. "She spotted the crusty black lesion hidden beneath my beard that was, in fact, a malignant melanoma." Just 1.1 millimeters in size, Herb had the lesion removed, along with his parotid gland—a small salivary gland that lies just over the cheekbone—and 39 lymph nodes. "They were all negative, fortunately, meaning the cancer hadn't spread." Since then Herb has returned regularly to Sloan Kettering for follow-up checks, and even now travels to New York from his Rotonda West, FL, home.

Herb went about 13 years free of melanoma—and then seven years ago had a recurrence. This time, a nodule appeared on his hand. He had it removed. "Removing the cancer is the only effective treatment for

The majority of the body is made up of water, with up to 75 percent of the body's weight due to H₂O.



melanoma," says Herb, who cautions everyone to have their skin examined by a doctor once a year. "It can appear in places you least expect . . . under a toenail, in your mouth, scalp, and even where the sun don't shine," says Herb, emphasizing, "Early detection is key."

After speaking to Herb a while, he told me that six months ago doctors discovered a small nodule on his lung. Now 11 millimeters in size, Herb will be undergoing surgery to have it removed. Let's all wish Herb well . . . and heed his words to the wise.

Step #6: Reduce Stress

It's a known fact: Stress and anxiety impair our immune system, leaving us more susceptible to illness. Exercise, of course, has been shown to help reduce stress . . . as long as the activity you choose isn't in itself stressful. After all, if you're trying to win a golf tournament or outperform your best lap time at the pool or track, you're probably not truly destressing. What's more, if you lose or don't measure up, you'll only add to your stress, not relieve it.

Better choices might be yoga, tai chi, or meditation. Herb Waterous not only exercises every day—walking or swimming in his Florida pool—he also meditates 30 minutes and practices tai chi, a kind of moving meditation, all of which carry the reward of great stress relief . . . and with it better health.

Talking to Metropolis Country Club's Tony Grasso, I asked more about his wife (and sister of Montclair's Greg Vadala), Lucille, than I did about him. Lucille, as some may know, won a tough battle against cancer. "She was definitely not one you'd suspect would be victimized by the disease," says Tony. "She's lived a very clean and healthy life . . . no drinking, smoking, and

hardly even ever swearing!"

So why her? "I don't question why I was given this journey," says Lucille. "I have a stronger faith now than ever that there's a higher power watching over me. But I do attribute my cancer largely to stress.

"When you internalize things, anger or other negative feelings," explains Lucille, "they manifest themselves in your body. I don't keep it in anymore. I don't want to."

So now, according to Tony, Lucille holds nothing back. "After beating the disease, she shed her meek disposition. She swears like a truck driver and takes no prisoners," Tony says with a chuckle.

Lucille, by the way, didn't argue with Tony's assessment. "I try to make each day as good as it can be. I try to smile and make other people happy. But when something hits me the wrong way, I don't hold back," she says, understanding more clearly than ever the meaning of the old adage, "Life's too short."

Creating balance . . . that's how others fend off stress. "I think all of us in this business have been overworked and burned out from time to time," says Nantucket Assistant John Mills. "It's the nature of the business, so how you handle it is key. I work hard at creating a balance.

"My three concerns are, first, the people I care deeply about; second, my job; and third, myself. When I can give adequate time to all three, I feel my best mentally, says John, adding, "Keeping fit is one of the things I do for myself. I like to rotate around from fishing to surfing to working on cars to golfing to playing with my dogs to lifting weights. My girlfriend, Calista, is my fitness partner, which helps keep me on track."

For 48-year-old Scott Schukraft, reducing stress meant making a slight shift in his career path. Superintendent-turned-GM at Huntsville Country Club in Pennsylvania, Scott began to feel his job as superintendent was bringing more stress than pleasure. "I got very complacent after a period of years," he admitted. "I began simply going through the motions and knew I had to do something to change my deteriorating attitude before it affected my job performance. I reached out to Jim McLoughlin for some heart-to-heart advice before I finally accepted the position as GM and director of property and grounds here at the club," says Scott, adding, "After almost seven years in this job, I've come to love it. I manage only four employees and have all the right personnel in place. I have no regrets."

Step #7: Limit Alcohol Consumption

Our ability to metabolize alcohol diminishes with age, so the effects are more pronounced as we grow older. Still, drinking one glass of wine or spirits a day has been recommended

One-Minute Stress Reliever

Here's a stress-reliever you can put to use whenever you have a moment alone—sitting at your desk, on the Cushman out on the course, even in the bathroom. Close your eyes; take a deep breath, drawing the air in through your nose; and hold your breath to the count of three. Then slowly, but deliberately, exhale through pursed lips. Be sure you're breathing into your belly, as well as your chest. Do 10 repetitions several times a day.

This technique is especially useful to practice in the middle of a stressful situation—like a bumpy plane ride—or just before an anticipated stressful situation, such as a confrontation with an employee or a green committee meeting.



and may provide some cardiovascular benefit. But do we all have just one?

North Shore Country Club Superintendent John Streeter not only doesn't have "just one," he doesn't have any. In fact, he's a 28-month sober alcoholic, who's worked very hard to turn his life around.

When I called to speak to him for this article, there was some hesitation. Then he admitted, "I wasn't sure I could talk openly here about my disease. But then I decided if it could help even one person who's in a situation like I was, it would be worth it."

John talked about joining AA and the 12-step program that has become his lifeline to staying sober. He told me about how he inherited the disease, and more sobering, about how it ruined a large portion of his life.

"I finally realized how bad the disease had become," says John, "when my friends wanted almost nothing to do with me. John Carlone threw a hard-ass wakeup call my way, and I can't thank him enough. He's a terrific guy who's been a real friend," says John.

The disease brought on secondary health



It's been estimated that more than 90 percent of health problems that bring people into the doctor's office are stress-related.

issues, like diabetes, high cholesterol, high blood pressure . . . and a deep depression. "I get professional help," says John, "take anti-anxiety meds, and go to AA meetings several times a week. I'm determined to live a different life from my drinking days. Sure, I was the life of the party, doing it up big each and every time. I didn't drink every day, but when I did, I didn't stop until I blacked out. I've had lots of apologizing to do these last couple of years," John confesses.

"I consider myself very lucky even though I did lose my long-time marriage to Pauline," says John, explaining, "I never got arrested, in an accident, or lost my job. My memory, though, many times consisted only of my huge credit card receipts. Unfortunately, I had to hit rock bottom before I reached out for help. I'm so thankful I did."

A hard and admirable journey. Certainly, a lesson for all of us.

Step #8: Cultivate Satisfying Relationships

Medical journals say it. And so, interestingly, did most of the members I talked to. In short, positive social interaction makes for a happier, healthier—and perhaps even longer—life.

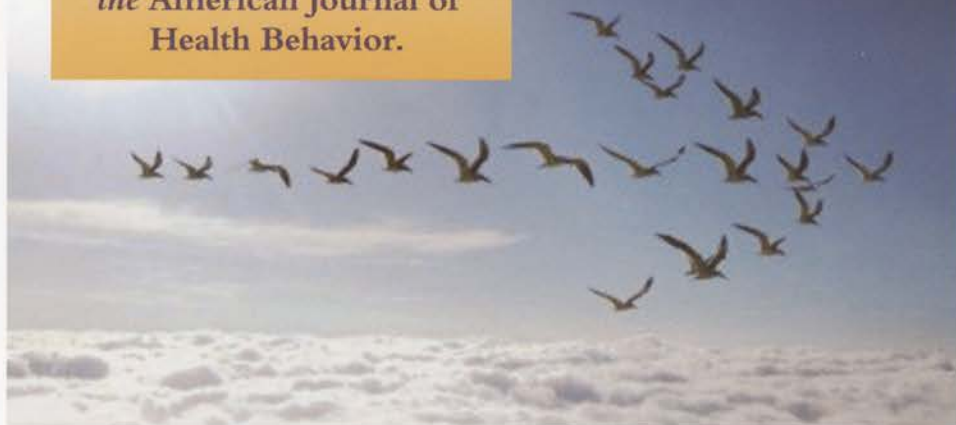
But don't let me tell you. Here it is straight from our members' mouths:

"I attribute part of my good health to staying involved with organizations and getting together with longtime friends," says Chubby Autorino. "I deliver meals for people through the Meals on Wheels program. I'm also an active member of the Old Timer's Association of Larchmont/Mamaroneck, the Lions Club, and the Knights of Columbus. But what I really enjoy," continues Chubby, "is the once-a-month-or-so get-togethers with 'the guys': Dom Di-Marzo (super at Pleasantville CC), Fred Schehying (retired from Mt. Kisco), Domenick Italiano (super at Doral Arrowwood), and before he died, Dom Richichi (Dar Par Sales). We enjoy a meal and just shoot the breeze," says Chubby.

Tony Savone attributes staying healthy to strong family ties. "I've been blessed with a fantastic family life," he says. "And my wife, Sandy, who stays active running the Community Watch program in our area, takes good care of me."

Herb Waterous derives great personal satisfaction and a sense of well-being from his volunteer work at the Venice, FL, high school, where he counsels children whose lives are affected by family or friends who

From volunteering to joining a club, communal activities are good for your physical and mental health, according to a study published in the March/April 2004 issue of the American Journal of Health Behavior.



are alcoholics. "One in four children in Venice are affected by alcoholism," says Herb, who has, himself, been a longtime Al-Anon member.

"I consider friendship and camaraderie a real component of good health," says Les Kennedy, who other than a bout with gout has been free of major health problems. "I feel fortunate to be married to my best friend, Mary Jo. My other best friend, who was the best man in my wedding almost three decades ago, Tim O'Neill, is just 15 miles from Blind Brook. We often get together to mull over our golf course experiences and commiserate. He and I are living a dream that we had as kids . . . that of being superintendents some day. We muse that our story is kind of similar to that of Jim Nance and Fred Couples. They had a dream of both being at the Masters together . . . and they were, with Jim Nance as announcer and Fred as champion. Like us, a dream come true."

The Take-Home Message

Just as Mother Nature has a huge influence on the condition of your course's turf,

genes—something we're dealt at birth—play a role in how long and well we're destined to live. But as any golf course superintendent knows in doing battle with the weather, there are measures you can take to defy the odds. With a little vigilance and a lot of hard work, your turf can thrive . . . and similarly you can lead a healthy and productive life well into your golden years.

In a recent CBS Sunday Morning Show, Dave Matthews of the Dave Matthews Band was quoted saying, "Life includes death. We're all gonna die, so get on with life and stop complaining!"

Dave, in his own unique way, echoes what just about everyone I talked to seemed to imply, and that's "Do all that you can to enjoy your life . . . and the good health will follow." Now that's a tune I like.

Greg Wojick, a member of the Tee to Green Editorial Committee, is the principal in Communitool, LLC, and founder of Playbooks™ for Golf. He invites you to follow his blog at goplaybooks.com.

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Upcoming Events

2009 MetGCSA Calendar: A Few Sites to Fill

Here's a look at where our 2009 Meeting and Social Calendar is to date. If anyone is able to host a meeting or social event that does not have a site, please contact the appropriate committee chairmen. For professional events, contact either of our Tournament Committee co-chairs: Ken Benoit at 914-241-0700 or Mark Chant at 631-643-0047. Our Social & Welfare Committee co-chairs are Mark Millett (914-949-4203) and Paul Gonzalez (914-273-3755). Both are available to discuss any upcoming social events.

Education Meeting

Thursday, August 6
Tamarack Country Club
Greenwich, CT
Host: Jeff Scott, CGCS

Family Picnic

Watch for mailing!

Met Championship and Met Area Team Championship Qualifier PLUS the Poa Annual Tournament

Tuesday, September 29
The Meadow Brook Club
Jericho, NY
Host: John Carlone, CGCS

Met Area Team Championship

Monday, October 5
Rain date: Monday, October 19
Plainfield Country Club
Plainfield, NJ
Host: Travis Pauley

Superintendent/Green Chairperson Tournament

Monday, October 19
Sleepy Hollow Country Club
Scarborough, NY
Host: Tom Leahy, CGCS

Annual Assistants Championship

Tuesday, October 20
Wykagyl Country Club
New Rochelle, NY
Superintendent Host: Mike Scott
Assistant Host: Alan Bean

Annual Meeting

November
Date & Site OPEN

MetGCSA Christmas Party

December
Date & Site OPEN

Educational Events

Rutgers Turfgrass Research Field Day (Golf & Fine Turf)

Tuesday, August 4
Horticultural Farm II
New Brunswick, NJ

This year's turfgrass research field day will cover advances in disease, insect, and weed control; the latest anthracnose management strategies; traffic trials on cool-season grasses; and the evaluation of newly released products for golf courses.

For further information, call 973-812-6467 or visit www.njturfgrass.org.

The 6th Annual Dr. Joseph Troll Turf Education Fundraiser

Thursday, October 8
The Ranch
Southwick, MA

In its sixth year, this now-annual golf event is sponsored by the Alumni Turf Group (ATG) to raise funds for education and research at the University of Massachusetts.

Entry forms and additional information on this event will be available online at www.alumniturfgroup.com. Please plan to attend this worthy fundraiser, and watch for details.

Desperately Seeking Brown Patch and Brown Ring Patch Samples

Dr. Ning Zhang, a new faculty member in the Center for Turfgrass Science at Rutgers University, is requesting brown ring patch (Waitea Patch) and brown patch samples from golf courses in the tri-state area for a new research project.

The focus of this project is to gain a better understanding of the diversity of Rhizoctonia populations that attack turf in the U.S., so she needs samples from as many golf courses as possible this year.

If you notice either of these diseases on your course, please send a cup-cutter-sized plug to Dr. Ning Zhang, Assistant Professor, Dept. of Plant Biology and Pathology, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, 59 Dudley Road, Foran Hall 201, New Brunswick, NJ 08901. She would be happy to pay the shipping fee for all samples sent to her lab. You can reach her at 732-932-9375, ext. 162 or at zhang@AESOP.Rutgers.edu. Your support in this research project is greatly appreciated.

Westchester Country Club Recognized for Environmental Stewardship

by Dennis Granahan

Westchester Country Club continues its longstanding history of excellence as the 2009 recipient of the MGA Club Environmental Award. This prestigious award honors an MGA member club that has demonstrated environmental stewardship through golf course maintenance, construction, education, and research. Westchester is the third to receive this now annual honor.

Accepting the award at the March 25 MGA/USGA Green Chairmen Education Series awards luncheon was Westchester Super Joe Alonzi and Green Chairman Frank Amodio. During Joe's acceptance speech, he emphasized what an honor it was for an older club to receive the award. "The last two years," said Joe, "the award went to newly constructed clubs [Trump National-Bedminster in 2007 and Sebonack in 2008]. This is a great honor for both our club and membership. We are very proud."

And they should be. The club is a model of environmental stewardship. And that's according to the panel of judges who awarded Westchester the highest total score in six categories: water quality and quantity, education, outreach, integrated pest management, and wildlife.

Award-Winning Stewardship

"With its wooded areas, ponds, and streams, Westchester Country Club has all the makings of a wildlife habitat: food, cover, water, and space," says Joe.

"In an effort to conserve and protect this special environment, we enrolled in the



Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses (ACSP) and, in 1996, met the series of pretty rigorous criteria to become certified as an Audubon Sanctuary."

Among the "award-winning" measures Joe and his staff have taken:

- Naturalizing areas maintained to not only create wildlife refuge, but also save on labor once required to groom the areas.
- Maintaining wooded areas with diverse levels of growth, from understory plants to small trees. Dead trees inside the wood line are left standing to provide food and nesting sites.
- Adding new, primarily low-maintenance native plantings to attract butterflies, hummingbirds, and other bird species.
- Initiating an IPM program that, based on vigilant scouting, has enabled Joe to cut out one or two pesticide applications per year depending on weather.
- Enhance the quality of the courses' ponds and streams by designating some of the surrounding areas as no-spray zones and creat-

Westchester Country Club's Superintendent Joe Alonzi joins his Green Chairman, Frank Amodio of Valley View Greenhouses, in accepting the MGA Club Environmental Award.

ing a buffer to chemical runoff and erosion with taller grasses.

- Limiting use of the public water supply by upgrading the pumphouse and irrigation system, installing an elaborate system to capture and store up to 1.5 million gallons of storm water for use on the course, drilling four artesian wells that are capable of pumping 320 gallons per minute.

"The membership is supportive of our efforts," says Joe, citing their participation in early-morning bird watches as evidence of their enthusiasm. "We typically get 50 or 60 members at our 5 a.m. bird watches," he says.

Environmental Stewardship Beyond the Course

Probably one of the most environmentally friendly clubs around, Westchester sets itself apart from the many other environmental do-gooders out there with the geothermal heating system it installed nine years ago in its main clubhouse. The system is so highly efficient that the club has reduced its fuel oil consumption by 100,000 gallons per year.

Bravo, Joe and Westchester Country Club!

Dennis Granahan, a member of the Tee to Green Editorial Committee, is an assistant superintendent at the Navesink Country Club in Middletown, NJ.

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Frank Amodio

Met Loses Longtime Member, Dar Par Sales' Dom Richichi

It is with deepest sympathy and regret that we announce the death of MetGCSA member **Dominic Richichi**. Dom, fondly known among superintendents as "Booberoochi," was the founder, 30 years ago, of Dar Par Sales, a business that grew from selling work gloves out of the trunk of his car to one that supplied superintendents with just about everything and anything. Fun-loving and affable, Dom was probably best remembered as the MetGCSA's unofficial photographer, capturing the "faces" of the association at every Met function he attended. For many years, Dom also held the "esteemed" position of *Tee to Green* photographer.

Dom lived with his wife of 55 years, Pat, in the West Harrison home they bought when their two children, John and Donna, were very young. Dom passed away June 1 at the age of 79. Everyone's friend, Dom will be missed by all who knew him.

Our condolences to his family, also well-known to our association: John Richichi; Donna, whose husband is Ridgeway Superintendent Earl Millett; and of course, Dom's wife, Pat, who was always by his side at our association's social gatherings.

In Sympathy

We would like to offer our sincere condolences to Met members who have suffered the loss of a parent or close relative over the past several months. Our deepest sympathy to:

- Rockland Country Club Superintendent and Met Past President **Matt Ceplo** and his wife, **Jasmine**. Jasmine's brother, Wolf, passed away on April 10.
- Centennial Golf Club Superintendent **Glen Dube** whose brother, Paul, passed away June 25 after battling the severe effects of dehydration after running a 10K.
- Old Oaks Superintendent **Mark Millett** and his wife, **Mary Pat**. Mary Pat's father, Edward Corbiere, passed away on March 25.
- Harbor Pines Golf Club Superintendent **George Pierpoint** and his wife, **Jen**. Jen's mother, Wilma Mirko, passed away this month.
- Silver Spring Country Club Superintendent **Peter Rappoccio** whose mother, Laura Rappoccio, passed away on July 1 at 92. Memorial donations may be made to Community Based Services c/o Hawkes Close, 3 Fields Lane, North Salem, NY 10560 or to Hancock Hall c/o Recreation, 31 Staple Street, Danbury, CT 06810.
- Connecticut Golf Club Superintendent **Bob Welch**, whose father recently passed away.

Congratulations

Kudos to:


- **Christopher Smith**, superintendent at Hudson National Golf Club in Croton-on-Hudson, NY, for completing the renewal process for maintaining his status as a Certified Golf Course Superintendent (CGCS) with the GCSAA. Chris has been at Hudson National Golf Club since 2004. An 11-year GCSAA member, he initially achieved his certification in 2005.
- **Darrell Marcinek**, superintendent at Neshanic Valley Golf Course in Neshanic Station, NJ, for meeting the criteria required in qualifying the course as a certified Audubon International Cooperative Sanctuary.

New Members

Please join us in welcoming the following new MetGCSA members:

- Chase Cameron**, Country Club of Waterbury, Waterbury, CT, Class SM
- Michael Giacini**, Giacini Corp. Sand & Soil, Commack, NY, Class AF
- Alexander Lewis**, Fenway Golf Club, Scarsdale, NY, Class C
- Keith Ruppert**, GlenArbor Golf Club, Bedford Hills, NY, Class C
- Gale Stenquist**, LaCorte Equipment, Calverton, NY, Class AF
- Kenneth Welzien**, Silver Spring Country Club, Ridgefield, CT, Class C
- Tyler Wesseldyk**, Old Oaks Country Club, Purchase, NY, Class C

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Winning Results of the Dave Mahoney Two-Ball Championship Qualifier

by Ken Benoit, CGCS

We had great weather and a great turnout for the newly titled Dave Mahoney Two-Ball Championship Qualifier held on April 27 at Siwanoy Country Club. The site was selected in honor of the event's creator and now namesake, the late Dave Mahoney. Dave's successor, Steven McGlone, and his staff had the course in tremendous shape. And the Siwanoy clubhouse staff lived up to their reputation.

Many thanks to General Manager Robert Kasara, Head Pro Grant Turner, and especially the Siwanoy membership for hosting our event. Catherine Mahoney was invited to the reception and captivated the audience with stories about her and Dave, including one about how they met. It was great to see her and to know that she and her children are doing well.

For those who qualified to play in the Two-Ball, please remember to complete your matches by the following deadlines:

Match 1 ~ June 26
 Match 2 ~ July 30
 Match 3 ~ August 29
 Final ~ October 2

Also note that the winning team from each match is required to report its score to Larry Pakkala. Check the website for deadline reminders and Larry's contact information. In the meantime, here's a look at the day's golf results.

Two-Ball Qualifier Results

Here's the lineup of Two-Ball Qualifiers, along with their first-round match assignments, which are underway:

First Flight

- 1) Glen Dube/Blake Halderman
Centennial GC/Brae Burn CC
vs.
- 16) Brian Benedict/Bob Lippman Jr.
The Seawane Club/Westchester Turf Supply



Tournament Committee Co-Chair Ken Benoit presents Catherine Mahoney with a framed Tee to Green article honoring her late husband, Dave Mahoney.

- 8) Matt Ceplo/Jim Swiatlowski
Rockland CC/Montammy GC
vs.
- 9) Tom Ashfield/Andy Drohen
Quaker Ridge GC/Agrium Advanced Technologies
- 5) Mike Giacini/Eric O'Neill
Giacini Corp./Towers CC
vs.
- 12) Bert Dickinson/Chip Lafferty
Willow Ridge CC/Rye GC
- 4) Tony Grasso/Scott Tretera
Metropolis CC/Metro Turf Specialists
vs.
- 13) Paul Dotti/Dick Neufeld
Edgewood CC/Plant Food Company
- 6) Dave Lippman/Matt Topazio
Westchester Turf Supply/New York CC
vs.
- 11) George Corgan/Matt Severino
Steven Willand, Inc./Scarsdale GC
- 3) Mike Benz/Mark Chant
Middle Bay CC/Colonial Springs GC
vs.
- 14) Grover Alexander/David Dudones
Hudson Hills GC/North Jersey CC
- 7) Bob DeMarco/Earl Millett
The Powelton Club/Ridgeway CC
vs.
- 10) Sean Cain/Stephen Rabideau
Sunningdale CC/Wheatley Hills GC
- 2) Jon Barlok/Kevin Seibel
Turf Products Corp./Century CC
vs.
- 15) Scott Niven/Larry Pakkala
The Stanwich Club/Plant Food Company

Second Flight

- 2) Dennis Granahan/Jim Schell
Navesink CC/The Stanwich Club
vs.
- 16) Bob Alonzi/Joe Alonzi
Fenway GC/Westchester CC
- 8) Tim Garceau/Ernie Steinhofner
Tuxedo Club/Metro Turf Specialists
vs.
- 9) Ken Benoit/Greg Gutter
Glen Arbor GC/Mount Kisco CC
- 5) Jeff Scott/Bobby Steinman
Tamarack CC/Metro Turf Specialists
vs.
- 12) Steven McGlone/Steven Renzetti
Siwanoy CC/Pinnacle Turf
- 4) Scott Apgar/Bill Perlee
Metro Turf Specialists/Apawamis Club
vs.
- 13) Peter Waterous/Joe Kennedy
Westchester Hills GC/Irra-Tech
- 6) Kevin Collins/Nick Lerner
Aquatrols, Inc./Bonnie Briar CC
vs.
- 11) Rob Alonzi/Mike Cook
Fenway GC/The Care of Trees

14 Super/Manager Teams Compete in Brae Burn Best-Ball Event

by Mark Chant

On Wednesday, June 3, more than 50 Met members enjoyed a great day of golf and food at Brae Burn Country Club for the Superintendent/Manager Tournament. We had a full field for this event. It was divided into two divisions: superintendent/manager teams and member/member or guest teams. Despite dodging some raindrops, everyone persevered and had a wonderful time.

Brae Burn was very gracious in hosting our event and made everyone feel welcome. Blake Halderman had the course in fantastic condition. His staff tested our golfing abilities with some challenging pin placements and slippery greens. After golf, everyone enjoyed rehashing their game over cocktails and dinner, which were served on the patio overlooking the course.

Here's a look at the day's wins. Congratulations and nice playing to all who made it into the Winner's Circle.

Superintendent/Manager Team Results

Net Team Winners

- 66 Jim Pavonetti/Tim Clinton
Fairview Country Club

- 71 Tony Hooks/Scott Huff
Pelham/Split Rock GC

Gross Team Winners

- 75 Chad Esposito/Pete Maier
Highland Golf Club
81 Mark Chant/Pete Misilewich
Centennial Golf Club

Member/Member or Guest Team Results

Net Team Winner

- 67 Jon Barlok/Mike Cook
Turf Products Corp./The Care of Trees

Gross Team Winner

- 76 Tony Grasso/Scott Tretera
Metropolis CC/Harrell's Turf Specialty

Closest to the Pin

- #2 Mike Cook, *The Care of Trees* 4' 6"
#5 Frank Benzakour, *Middle Bay CC* 9' 6"
#11 Mark Fuller, *Connecticut GC* 6' 4"
#15 John Bresnahan, *BASF Chemical* 14' 10"

Longest Drive

- #18 Chad Esposito, *Highland Golf Club*

- 3) Tony Hooks/Charlie Siemers
Pelham/Split Rock GC/John Deere Golf

vs.

- 14) Rob Alonzi/Bill Bartels
Fenway GC/Tanto Irrigation

- 7) Mike Mongon/Jeff Thrasher
Sports Turf Management Systems/
Second Nature Tree & Landscape Co.

vs.

- 10) Tom Leahy/Mark Millett
Sleepy Hollow CC/Old Oaks CC

- 2) Ken Lochridge/Mike Keohan
Muttontown Club/Brookville CC

vs.

- 15) Dennis Flynn/Peter Rappoccio
D & D Construction/Silver Spring CC

Two-Ball Event Results

Low Gross Winners

- 71 Kevin Seibel/Jon Barlok
Century CC/Turf Products Corp.

- 73 Tom Ashfield/Andy Drohen
Quaker Ridge CC/Agrium Advanced Technologies

- 74 Glen Dube/Blake Halderman
Centennial GC/Brae Burn CC

Low Net Winners

- 64 Mark Chant/Mike Benz
Colonial Springs GC/Middle Bay CC

- 64 Ken Lockridge/Mike Keohan
Muttontown Club/CC of Vermont

- 65 Tony Hooks/Charlie Siemers
Pelham/Split Rock GC/John Deere Golf

Closest to the Pin

- #3 Scott Apgar, *Metro Turf Specialists* 12"
#6 Brian Benedict, *The Seawane Club* 23"
#11 Mark Chant, *Colonial Springs GC* 5' 3"
#13 Bill Perlee, *The Apawamis Club* .001"

Longest Drive

- #5 Tom Ashfield, *Quaker Ridge GC*

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Jeff Scott to Host Education Meeting at Tamarack

by Dennis Granahan

On August 6, MetGCSA members will convene at Tamarack Country Club in Greenwich, CT—not for golf, but for a little education on the many rules and regulations currently affecting our industry. (See agenda below.)

Originally organized as the Port Chester Country Club in 1909, Tamarack was then a nine-hole course located on the site of the old Port Chester New York High School. Sheep, rather than equipment groomed fairways, and membership dues were just \$25 per year. That soon changed.

In 1928, when the town wanted to purchase the club's land for a new school, it picked up and moved to its current site, opening in 1929 as the 18-hole Tamarack Country Club, named after the many tamarack trees indigenous to the area.

Golf Course Architect Charles "Steam Shovel" Banks—the first to use machinery (the steam shovel, of course) to construct golf courses—designed the 6,800-plus-yard golf course with his signature oversized bunkers and greens.

Tamarack's Grand Plan

Since our 2000 Invitational, when Met members last played Tamarack, the club has completed a comprehensive master plan designed to enhance not only the course, but the overall facility.

"The membership set out to ensure the club's success for years to come," says Jeff, adding, "The plan tackled the construction of a new septic system, installation of underground utilities, and the complete demolition and reconstruction of the pool and clubhouse facilities."

On the golf course, a new irrigation system was installed, 30 new fairway bunkers were constructed, tee surfaces were expanded, and greens were enlarged to reclaim key pin locations. "The average green size is now 7,500 square feet," says Jeff, explaining that the intent of the plan was to preserve the original Charles Banks design while, at the same time, modernizing various aspects of the course to accommodate today's longer hitters and faster green speeds. But the project wouldn't have been complete, says Jeff, without the all-new hub of maintenance activity: a state-of-the-art maintenance facility.

Twists and Turns to Tamarack

When Jeff entered college in the mid-'70s, a career in turfgrass management wasn't first and foremost on his mind. "I started out at South Hampton College in Long Island as a Marine Biology major," he explains, "but after a few semesters, I decided to make a change that I'll never regret." Jeff took a hiatus from college, spending a few winters on the slopes in Vermont and Colorado. Once back home in Pawling, NY, a close friend introduced Jeff to Bob Alonzi.

The rest is history. Jeff worked from 1978 to 1979 for Bob, who was Fairview's super at the time, then headed off to UMass's turf school. While completing his two-year degree, he interned at Baltimore Country Club, returning in 1984 to Fairview. After a year there, he furthered his experience under another Alonzi, working for a short time with Joe, who was then superintendent at Fenway Golf Club.



Jeff Scott, CGCS

In November of '85, Jeff secured his first superintendent's job at Knickerbocker Country Club in Tenafly, NJ. Then he returned to New York in 1988 as superintendent at The Apawamis Club. Nine years later—in February of '97, to be exact—he accepted his current position at Tamarack.

Beyond the Golf Course

Jeff's life beyond the course is pretty much focused, he'll tell you, on his wife, Kathy, and three children: Annie, 23; Cali, 21; and Jeff, 17. "One thing I love about this profession," says Jeff, "is that even during the season I'm almost always home for dinner, and I can always be there for my kids and be a father. A lot of guys can't say that about their profession."

Among his favorite family pastimes is ski racing. "Though not all of us still race competitively, ski racing is something we've enjoyed doing together as a family," says Jeff.

Another pleasure Jeff shares with his family is road cycling. "A few years back we formed a team of family and friends that rides for MS," he says. "We do rides throughout the Northeast and get a lot of satisfaction from raising money for a good cause. It's our way of giving back." Jeff encourages anyone who enjoys road cycling to contact him if interested in MS 150 rides.

Proud to Belong

Jeff spent six years on the MetGCSA board, chairing the Social & Welfare Committee and running the Turfgrass Field Day for several years. "The Met, as well as GCSAA, are strong organizations that are dedicated to promoting education and fostering professionalism," says Jeff. "It's great to be part of organizations that provide so much support—not just professionally, but in our personal lives, as well."

Dennis Granahan, a member of the Tee to Green Editorial Committee, is an assistant superintendent at the Navesink Country Club in Middletown, NJ.

Education Meeting Topics

Life After Phosphorus

Speaker: Cornell University's Dr. A. Martin Petrovic

New Westchester County Legislation Banning Phosphorus

Speaker: MetGCSA Government Relations Rep Bob Nielsen of Bedford Golf & Tennis

Update on Pending New York State Pesticide Legislation

Speaker: NYSTA Past President Mike Maffei of Back O' Beyond

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Cell: 914-384-9227 / Fax: 914-636-2508
srenzetti@verizon.net
www.PinnacleTurf.com
 - ✦ **Plant Food Company, Inc.**
Dick Neufeld: 973-945-6318
Larry Pakkala, CGCS: 203-505-3750
Tom Weinert: 914-262-0111
 - ✦ **Soil Solutions, LLC**
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914-393-0659 / Fax: 914-939-5010
 - ✦ **Steven Willand, Inc.**
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203-775-5757
 - ✦ **Storr Tractor Company ~ Flowtronex**
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 - ✦ **Surfside Wetting Agents**
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Robert Oechsle: 800-401-0411
 - ✦ **Syngenta**
Dennis DeSanctis Jr.
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Dennis.DeSanctis@syngenta.com
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 - ✦ **Tom Irwin, Inc.**
Jeff Houde
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203-731-1776
jeff@tomirwin.com
 - ✦ **Turf Products Corporation**
Buddy Rizzio
P.O. Box 296
Mountain Lakes, NJ 07046
Office: 973-263-1234
Fax: 973-335-2491
BR826@aol.com
 - ✦ **Turf Products LLC / TORO**
Pat Cragin, Irrigation: 860-874-2812
Jon Barlok, Equipment: 860-729-2237
Main Office: 800-243-4355
 - ✦ **Westchester Tractor, Inc.**
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