

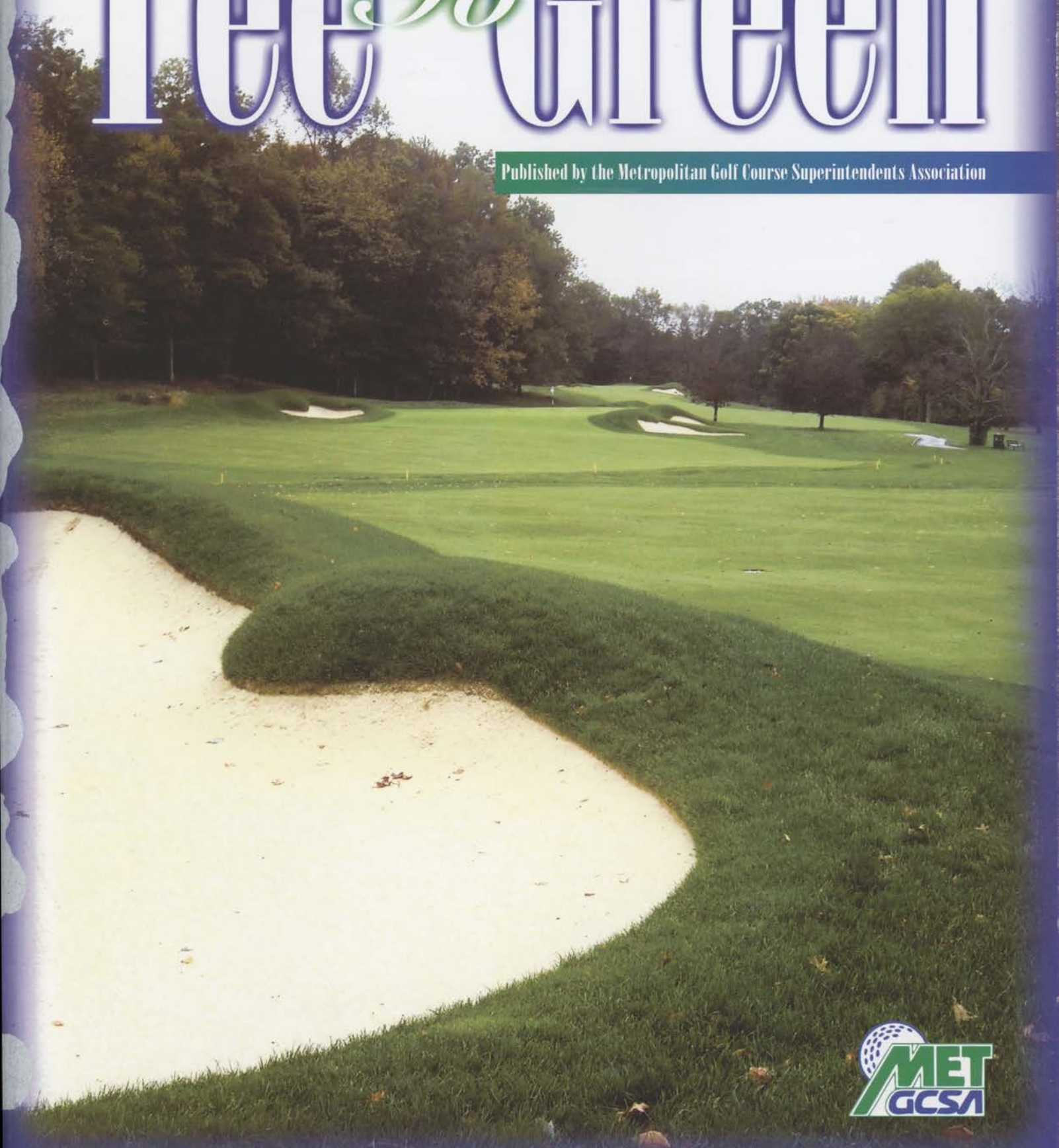
Tee To Green

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Cover: Wee Burn Country Club.

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President's Message

Time for a Pat on the Back

I'd like to start off this President's Message by emphasizing that we, as course managers, need to give ourselves a big pat on the back for navigating through a season that was challenging at best. How was it challenging? Let me count the ways.

First, we entered into the spring with a gloomy and uncertain economic forecast that required many of us to find creative ways to run our operations without sacrificing course quality.

No sooner did we rise to that challenge than we were hit with what turned out to be a rollercoaster ride of weather extremes. We went from unprecedented rainfall for much of June and July to a surprise attack of high heat, extreme humidity, and elevated dew points in August—right smack in the middle of our prime aeration time.

Many of us made the decision to maintain our mid-August greens aeration schedule, relying on the forecasted “break in the weather”—cooler nights, more reasonable daytime temps—and understanding that mid-August is traditionally the perfect time to aerate. It's the slower part of the golf season and our seasonal workers are still available to help with the labor-intensive process.

Unfortunately, this year, things didn't go as planned. The excessive heat and humidity never broke, and, as a result, our greens' more fragile *Poa annua* took a big hit. The weather extremes also left our greens more susceptible to a variety of diseases, which made them less tolerant of this unanticipated weather stress during aeration.

The end result: Many of us were forced into a defensive mode, trying to explain to our club officials what happened to our greens and why and how it really wasn't our fault. Not fun. We all work very hard to provide the best playing conditions while navigating through outing schedules, staffing and budget constraints, Mother Nature's unpredictability... and still, things happen.

I took some solace in my conversation with a local university pathologist who indicated that this was one of the toughest seasons he'd seen in years. He claimed, in fact, that he hadn't seen this many disease samples come through his lab in more than a decade.

An Opportunity to Give Back

This discussion of turf challenges brings me to my next topic: the Tri-State Turf Research Foundation. Funny how during a time when disease pressure is at a record high, contributions to the Tri-State's research efforts are at an all-time low.

You may be receiving a call or an email from one of our Tri-State Turf Research Foundation representatives, hoping to encourage you to contribute to the foundation's worthy research efforts. Remember,



Tony Girardi, CGCS
MetGCSA President

the Tri-State funds research pertinent to turf issues and challenges facing golf courses in our area, making that \$200 annual contribution a small price to pay for all the valuable information and insight you receive in return.

If you'd like a list of Tri-State-funded projects—past or present—feel free to contact any one of the Tri-State board members. Please be sure to show your support!

Looking for Your Input

While we're on the subject of giving, we hope you'll give us a bit of your time to respond to an upcoming survey covering a broad range of topics pertaining to our association and to your golf course operations and practices. In order to obtain accurate—and useful—averages, we need everyone's participation.

We're in the process of formatting the survey for our website so that you will be able to complete it online, quickly and easily. All who participate will receive a copy of the results.

Please Join Us

Another way you can give back to the profession, and your fellow superintendents, is by devoting a small amount of time to one of our association's many committees. This time of year our committee chairs will be looking for new faces.

Please have a look in the MetGCSA directory at our long list of committees and think about where you might enjoy serving our association.

Last, please be sure to join fellow Met members at our annual Christmas party at Ridgeway Country Club on December 12. Word has it that we've already secured a spectacular band for the evening, which is never anything short of a really great time.

I look forward to ringing in the holidays with all of you.

Tony Girardi, CGCS
President

Feature

Scott Niven to Receive the MetGCSA's 2010 Sherwood A. Moore Award

by Larry Pakkala, CGCS



A

At the January 20 Winter Seminar, the MetGCSA Awards Committee will present its prestigious 2010 Sherwood A. Moore Award to The Stanwich Club's Scott E. Niven, a turfgrass management professional who has clearly met—some might even say, exceeded—the award's criteria of “advancing the image, status, and reputation of the golf course superintendent.”

The 15th superintendent to receive this award—since it's namesake, Sherwood A. Moore, himself, did in 1987—Scott seems to fit the mold perfectly. “I can't help but think how pleased Sherwood would have been to see Scott added to the list of superintendents who have been honored in his name,” says Awards Committee Chairman Matt Ceplo. “Reading Scott's nomination form, it was clear just how instrumental his contributions and conduct have been in helping to elevate our industry and profession,” adds Matt.

A Credit to the Industry

Scott's list of credits is, indeed, noteworthy. A certified golf course superintendent since 1985, Scott has been a GCSAA member for more than 31 years, serving on six GCSAA committees—most recently chairing the Research Committee—speaking at five national conferences, and writing numerous articles for *Golf Course Management* and other industry publications, including our own *Tee to Green*.

Like many SAM Award recipients before him, Scott has been actively involved in the MetGCSA, his service instrumental in bringing our association to a level of professionalism that has earned the respect of many allied groups in the golf industry.

Serving on the MetGCSA board for 11 years, Scott moved through the chairs to president in 1988-'89. Giving back to the profession he feels has given so much to him, Scott continues to host association meetings and social events and has served on at least half of the Met's committees, still a willing and able contributor on the Communications Committee.

Scott's also willingly shared his knowledge and expertise with fellow industry professionals, giving 55 lectures over the years—not just at the national, but at regional and local industry conferences and events as well. In his 30-year tenure as a turfgrass professional, Scott hasn't stopped to rest on his laurels (the good ones never seem to). Committed to research, Scott has been a member of the USGA Research Committee and served on the board of the Tri-State Turf Research Foundation for the past eight years, currently guiding the group's efforts as president.

But then Scott has long been committed to research—for decades, in fact. Like Sherwood Moore, he has been eager to put new products to the test, from chemicals promising *Poa annua* reduction to seed varieties geared toward specific growing environments.

One of Scott's more notable trials was with the Dow product Cutless, which was launched in the early '80s to reduce *Poa* while allowing interseeding with bentgrass. He put Cutless to the test in a three-year ren-

ovation program designed to transform The Stanwich Club's *Poa* fairways to Penn Eagle bentgrass. Because of his success with the product, Dow sent Scott on a speaking tour throughout the U.S. and Japan. To this day, Dow attributes Cutless's popularity to Scott's early trials at The Stanwich Club. Using a maintenance approach to thwart annual bluegrass encroachment, Scott's been successful in maintaining a 100-percent Penn Eagle stand on his fairways.

Another of Scott's more noteworthy "research" efforts has smoothed the way for the enormous undertaking he's in the throes of right now: resodding every one of his greens with bentgrass. Forward thinking, Scott decided 15 years ago to put 25 bent varieties to the test on Stanwich soil to determine which offered the most desirable qualities. He set up 10' x 10' plots in triplicate, rating each test plot for growth habit, color, density, and dollar spot and *Poa* resistance.

The clear winners, Scott determined, were the A-1 and A-4 bentgrasses. Scott's now taken that information to the field with the resodding of his greens, which will be open for play this spring, culminating a career-long dream of having solid bent greens.

In his 26 years at The Stanwich Club, Scott has had many opportunities to showcase his talents. Dedicated to making the course the best that it can be, Scott's work no doubt played a role in the club's high rankings on *Golf Digest's* TOP 100 LIST. The course has also attracted numerous prestigious local golf events and, in 2002, its first national championship, the USGA Mid-Amateur.

All the while, Scott and the membership never stopped making improvements, but none matched the full-scale renovation project that, under the direction of world-renowned Golf Course Architect Tom Fazio, put the club on yet another of *Golf Digest's* lists: "Best New Remodel" for 2006 among golf courses in the U.S. Two years and \$5 million later, the club had removed 1,000 trees, reconstructed seven greens and every bunker, added 23 new bunkers and 20 new tees, dredged five of the course's ponds, and last but not least, installed a new irrigation system.

At the helm of this project and every other effort to provide the best in playing condi-

tions at Stanwich, Scott has earned not only high praise, but also the respect of his entire membership.

"The Stanwich Club's 400-plus members are proud to bring their guests to a golf course that Scott has so meticulously maintained year after year. We've been unbelievably lucky to have him, and I am proud to call him a personal friend," says Stanwich Club Green Chairman and Past President Steve Green, who not only hired Scott in 1983, but has also worked closely with him through many of Stanwich's improvement projects.

"Over the years," Green continues, "Scott has transformed the reputation of the Stanwich golf course from not only one of the most challenging tracks in the Metropolitan region, but also one that has consistently been rated among the best-conditioned courses in the area and throughout the U.S.

"Beyond that, and more importantly," adds Green, "Scott has been the consummate gentleman in all his dealings with his staff, our membership, our vendors, and his peers. I can't say enough about the respect he commands, the importance people place on his opinions, and the stature that he has developed over those years. Scott has been a tremendous ambassador for The Stanwich Club and superintendents everywhere."

Among the many other Stanwich Club members singing Scott's praises is the well-known CBS sports commentator and superintendent advocate Jim Nantz. "Scott has raised the bar in his profession," says Nantz. "We at Stanwich are lucky to have him sculpting our course. I have long admired how he handles long-term planning with a deft skill to get immediate results. He's an artist, a genius, and a visionary."

An Award-Winner in the Making

Scott, you might say, was born to be a superintendent. When he was 7, his father, a Class A PGA professional, moved the family to Claremont, NH, where he accepted a position as superintendent/club manager/pro at the Claremont Country Club.

Both Scott and his brother, Curt, worked

alongside their father at Claremont and then at Angus Lea Golf and Tennis Club in Hillsborough, NH, which his father purchased when Scott was 12. Working there summers through high school and then college, Scott ended up pursuing a degree in turfgrass management from the University of Rhode Island—though he did spend a year at UNH before making the shift to URI and fully committing to his fate as a turfgrass manager.

After completing his B.S. in 1976, Scott moved to the Met area to accept an assistant's position at Greenwich Country Club under then superintendent Paul Caswell. After three years there, he landed his first superintendent's job at St. Andrew's Golf Club in Hastings-on-Hudson, NY. Scott left two years later to accept the superintendent's position at Siwanoy Country Club in Bronxville, NY, his last stop before Stanwich. In his tenure at Stanwich, Scott has built more than just a career; he's also built a family. Married for 25 years, he and his wife, Dana, have raised their two children, Nicholas and Heather, on Stanwich grounds. Though both are college students—Nick's attending Iona College and Heather is a freshman at University of Delaware—and Dana is equally busy with her long-time career as a global accounts executive with Hertz, they still put a priority on family time. Avid skiers and sports enthusiasts, they continue to enjoy family getaways, often traveling to far-flung ski destinations from the Swiss Alps to British Columbia.

The key, Scott feels, to juggling the demands of family and work, is staying in top physical condition with good diet and regular exercise. Every five years, he sets his sights on a marathon to keep himself motivated. To date, he's run four New York Marathons.

On his speaking tour for Dow, Scott Niven (left) joins the president of Japan's golf course superintendents association and Dow's Tom Perkins.



Family time: Scott Niven (right to left) with daughter, Heather, wife, Dana, and son, Nicholas.

A Testament to His Success

But then Scott continually strives to achieve the best in whatever he's involved in. The word mediocrity is not in his vocabulary.

Few know this better than the numerous assistants and interns who have worked with Scott at Stanwich over the years and moved on to top superintendent positions of their own. Among them are John Carlone of The Meadow Brook Club, Glenn Perry of Rolling Hills Country Club, Rob Gianpetro of Bulls Bridge Golf Club, Sean Cain of Sunningdale Country Club, Blake Halderman of Brae Burn Country Club, Grover Alexander of Hudson Hills Golf Course, and Jason Booth of Country Club of New Haven.

Reflecting on his experience as one of Scott's first assistant's at Stanwich, in the early to mid-'80s, John Carlone says, "As a wet-behind-the-ears graduate of URI, I was like a sponge, soaking up all the knowledge I

could in my first position out of college. The best way I can portray the effect working for Scott has had on my career is to say that some of my golf course management practices to this day are simply variations of what I learned while working with Scott at Stanwich."

To Scott, helping shape the careers of his staff members is one of the more rewarding aspects of a superintendent's job—which, by the way, he's quick to point out is a job he's more than happy to have chosen.

"I've always considered myself lucky to have found a career that is not only challenging, but also immensely rewarding," says Scott. "There are few things better than being able to see, every day, the results of your efforts by producing a beautiful course."

If there's one thing, however, that Scott's been less than pleased with, it's that superintendents have never seemed to receive the respect they deserve for the important and difficult job they do in managing their golf courses.

"Finally, though," says Scott, "I think the tables have begun to turn. It helps, of course, to have people like CBS Sports Commentator Jim Nantz recognizing superintendents' skill and indispensable contributions to the game of golf on national TV.

"I have always tried," continues Scott, "to do my part in promoting a positive image for the golf course superintendent, so I couldn't be more proud to receive this award and have my name associated with the great Sherwood Moore—the epitome of professionalism—and all the other SAM Award recipients, who to me, represent the pillars of our industry here in the Met area. My sincerest thanks to the MetGCSA for this honor."

The pleasure, Scott, is all ours.

Larry Pakkala, a past Sherwood A. Moore Award recipient and longtime friend of Scott's, is a Territory Sales Manager with Plant Food Company, Inc., in Cranbury, NJ.

Chapter Delegates Hear Tales of a Tough Economy and More

by Bob Nielsen, CGCS

I was one of 90 GCSAA chapter delegates to attend the association's 2009 Chapter Delegates Meeting, which convened in Lawrence, KS, and Kansas City, MO. I spent October 9 through 11 representing the MetGCSA's views of the industry and our national organization and participating in a wide range of discussions, including the state of the golf economy, association governance, golf's relationship with the environment, and membership growth and retention.

Meet the Candidates

We also had the opportunity to meet with candidates for president, vice president, secretary/treasurer, and two open director positions. A shortened version of the candidate presentations will be available on GCSAATV for all to see in the near future.

James Fitzroy of Wollaston Recreational Facility/Presidents Golf Club in North Quincy, MA, is running unopposed for president; as is Bob Randquist, CGCS, at Boca Rio Golf Club in Boca Raton, FL, for vice president.

Current directors Sandy Queen, CGCS, of City of Overland Park, KS, and Pat Finlen, CGCS, of The Olympic Club in San Francisco, CA, are opposing each other for secretary/treasurer. Both of their two-year director terms expire this year.

Should Pat Finlen lose in his attempt for secretary/treasurer, he will run off the floor for a director's position at the Annual Meeting.

Four candidates are vying for two open director positions: Bob Farren, CGCS, of Pinehurst (NC) Resort; Todd Lupkes, CGCS, of Palouse Ridge Golf Course in Pullman, WA; Bill Maynard, CGCS, of Milburn Golf and Country Club in Shawnee, KS; and Mike Wooten, CGCS, of Cedar Ridge Country Club in Broken Arrow, OK.

This is a very strong slate of candidates who will, no doubt, provide great leadership in the coming years.

Financially Speaking

All the delegates heard a state-of-the-association presentation from GCSAA Chief Exec-

utive Officer Mark Woodard, CGCS. He admitted GCSAA has been challenged financially, attributing it to a decline in industry advertising, trade show space, and conference and show attendance. He did say, however, that GCSAA is in a better position than many associations because of its healthy financial reserve, a supportive industry, a loyal membership, and no long-term debt.

Woodard also said the association's solid footing is buoyed by its participation in numerous allied association initiatives and by the importance owners and influential golfers place on the golf course superintendent.

I found it interesting, however, that the net income of the last show in Orlando was a little over \$5 million, while the GIS in San Diego is budgeted to net approximately \$1.5 million. And you thought things were tough at your course!

Sustaining the Game of Golf

We were also updated on the work of GCSAA and The Environmental Institute for Golf in sustaining the game. Chief among the efforts is the Golf Course Environmental Profile. GCSAA Director of Environmental Programs Greg Lyman explained that the nutrient survey results would be released in early December, building on the land use and water use/conservation reports issued over the past two years.

Lyman noted that the data from the surveys has been crucial in working with lawmakers, media, and allied golf associations in detailing golf's environmental footprint. Lyman also discussed the importance of the development of the new superintendent competencies, which will include an element of environmental management.

Perhaps the highlight of the meeting was a presentation on sustainability by University of Kansas Professor of Journalism and Mass Communications Simran Sethi. An internationally respected authority on sustainability and contributor to the NBC Nightly News, Oprah Winfrey Show, and Planet Green Channel, Sethi spoke about sustainability with a focus on the triple bottom line: people, planet, and profit. She applauded GCSAA, its members, and The Institute for their commitment to transparency and con-

tinuous improvement in managing facilities.

"It's a challenge for you, and I realize that," Sethi said. "You have to serve your employers, and you are pressured by golfers for perfection. You must have patience in this effort. Communications will be important. You will have to demonstrate why a change of behavior is important. Use the tools out there that are available to help. I think what the association and you are doing is wonderful. As long as the association and you are committed to transparency and continuous improvement, then you can be successful against detractors."

I described Simran to the MetGCSA board as an environmentalist who uses common sense and science rather than scare tactics. She was truly an amazing speaker who recognizes that we all must coexist. While we must all find better ways to produce the product, we still must produce the product.

Other Discussions

- *GCSAA governance issues, including voting procedures, dual membership, and the chapter affiliation agreement, which will be renewed December 31.* Dual membership is a major issue in other parts of the country, especially in areas with limited budgets. The Ethics Committee completed its triennial review of Board Policies and found them to be in order.

- *Efforts by GCSAA to manage its expenses and generate new revenues.* With revenues down, the staff at GCSAA has been reduced by about 20 percent with more cuts expected. As you may have seen on the website, the staff is taking a furlough for the first three days of Thanksgiving week and during Christmas week. Despite these financial constraints, the sentiment was not to raise member dues in 2010. The board will approve the association budget in December.

- *GCSAA advocacy efforts with lawmakers, media, and other audiences.* Chava McKeel and Carrie Riordan continue to assist chapters with their government relations efforts. Unfortunately, budget cuts have made it next to impossible to track local laws. As a result, their efforts will be concentrated on state and national laws.

Continued on page 12



The LI and Met GCSAs Score Big at Meadow Brook

by Mark Chant, Colonial Springs Golf Club

On Monday, September 28, the Met and Long Island GCSAs convened at The Meadow Brook Club in Jericho, NY, for three special events: NYSTA's annual fundraiser, the Poa Annual; the Met Area Team Championship Qualifier; and the Superintendent Championship.

If you missed this triple-header, you missed out on an opportunity to play a championship-worthy course. Our host, John Carlone, and his staff did a wonderful job preparing the golf course for the event. The fast greens, coupled with high winds, made for an extremely challenging round of golf—reminding most of us why we don't play golf professionally.

Many thanks to the entire Meadow Brook staff—from clubhouse to golf and grounds—for laying the groundwork for an extra-special day.

And congratulations to low-gross winners Blake Halderman, who played for the Met, and John Paquette, with Long Island.

Here are the highlights of the day's events:

The Superintendent Championship

For the MetGCSA

Gross

- 80 Blake Halderman, *Brae Burn CC*
- 84 Tony Hooks, *Pelham/Split Rock GC*

Net

- 71 Ryan Oliver, *Metedeconk National GC*
- 73 Gregg Stanley, *The Bridge*

For the LIGCSA

Gross

- 80 John Paquette, *Indian Hills CC*
- 82 Dave Pughe, *Garden City GC*

Net

The Poa Annual

Gross

- 77 Andy Drohen, *Agrium Advanced Technologies*
- 78 Jim Swiatlowski, *Montammy GC*

Net

- 72 Jon Barlok, *Turf Products Corporation*
- 73 Reese Wassen, *The Hamlet Golf & CC*

Proximities

Closest to the Pin

- #9 Mike Benz, *Middle Bay CC* 18"
- #16 Kevin Collins, *Aquatrols, Inc.* 16'

Longest Drive

- #2 Chad Valkuchak, *Deepdale GC*
- #14 Ryan Oliver, *Metedeconk National GC*

MetGCSA Repeats Past Performance in Met Area Team Championship

by Mark Chant, Colonial Springs Golf Club

The MetGCSA team placed third again this year at the 2009 Met Area Team Championship, competing against 11 other superintendent associations for the championship trophy.

Contested October 5 at the impressively groomed Plainfield Country Club in Plainfield, NJ, this long-running annual competition has, for the past 29 years, marked the season's end, drawing contestants from associations from the Mid-Atlantic region to Western Pennsylvania and all throughout the Northeast.

Plainfield was very gracious in hosting the event this year and more than lived up to our expectations. Travis Pauley and his staff had the course primed for the touring pros. Unfortunately, superintendents were playing, so not many low scores were shot!

Nonetheless, everyone enjoyed the fine conditions and quality of the course.

In this event, each association is represented by an eight-man team. Each team is paired into four twosomes (two Gross, two Net). The format is a Two-Man Best Ball. At the competition's end, each team's four scores are totaled, and the association with the lowest score wins.

This year, New Jersey used the home field to its advantage, edging out by one shot the two-time defending champions from Connecticut, while the Met squeaked in ahead of Philly and Central Penn by two shots.

Representing the Met were Gross Division players Mark Chant and Matt Ceplo with a Best-Ball 79 and Jon Barlok and Tony Hooks with a 74. The Net Division players were Mark Fuller and David Dudones who shot

79 and the wily team of Les Kennedy and Tim O'Neill who came in with a Net 72.

Placing third out of 12 teams is certainly worthy of hearty congratulations. Great playing, everyone!

Many Thanks

Special thanks to our seven national sponsors—Agrium Advanced Technologies, Aquatrols, BASF, Bayer, The Care of Trees, Syngenta, and Toro—who joined our championship five years ago. Their contributions not only help support this special event, but also allow us to donate to a worthy charity. Many thanks also to Agrium's Andy Drohen for the time and effort he put into making this event such a great success.

The Results

Below is a list of teams and proximity winners. We look forward to seeing everyone at the Met Area Team Qualifier next fall as the championship is truly an event you don't want to miss.

Team Scores

	(Par 288)
1st / 294	GCSA of New Jersey
2nd / 295	Connecticut AGCS
3rd / 304	MetGCSA
T4th / 306	Philadelphia AGCS
T4th / 306	Central Penn GCSA
6th / 308	Long Island GCSA
7th / 309	Mid-Atlantic AGCS
8th / 314	GCMA of Cape Cod
T9th / 316	Pocono TGA
T9th / 316	Hudson Valley GCSA
11th / 323	Northeastern GCSA
12th / 333	Rhode Island GCSA

Closest to the Pin

Hole #3	Paul Strani	8' 2"
	<i>Toro</i> (Sponsored by Toro)	
Hole #6	Chris Strong	12' 11"
	<i>Northeastern GCSA</i> (Sponsored by BASF)	
Hole #11	Joe Herkalo	1' 8"
	<i>Mid-Atlantic AGCS</i> (Sponsored by Syngenta)	
Hole #14	Jerry Noons	3' 7"
	<i>Rhode Island GCSA</i> (Sponsored by Bayer)	

Longest Drive

Sponsors Div.	Blake Halderman
	<i>MetGCSA</i> (Sponsored by Aquatrols)
Net Div.	Les Kennedy Jr.
	<i>MetGCSA</i> (Sponsored by The Care of Trees)
Gross Div.	Chet Walsh
	<i>Philadelphia GCSA</i> (Sponsored by Agrium Advanced Tech.)

Individual Gross

81	Glen Smickly, Mid-Atlantic AGCS
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Sponsorship Team Winner

68	Dennis DeSanctis & Lee Kozsey <i>Syngenta</i>
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Two-Man Team High Score

Gross / 93	Jerry Noons & Joe Olivera <i>Rhode Island GCSA</i>
Net / 83	Nick Burchard & Jim Santoro <i>Rhode Island GCSA</i>

Two-Ball Trophy Lands in Long Island

by Larry Pakkala, CGCS, Plant Food Company

The 2009 David Mahoney Two-Ball Championship has come to a close with the Two-Ball title moving for the first time to Long Island! Congratulations to First Flight Champions Mark Chant of Colonial Springs Golf Club and Mike Benz of Middle Bay Country Club who won the final round, defeating Eric O'Neill (Towers CC) and Mike Giacini (Giacini Corp. Sand & Soil) 4 & 3 at the Rockaway Hunt Club. A well-fought match, Mark Chant pretty much sealed the fate of O'Neill and Giacini when he drained two 30-foot putts on both par 5s. Way to go, Mark.

In the second flight, the team of Dennis Granahan (Navesink CC) and Jim Schell (Stanwich Club) thoroughly dominated the team of Nick Lerner (Bonnie Briar CC) and Kevin Collins (Aquatrols, Inc.) to win the second flight championship with an 8 & 7 victory at Century Country Club. Congratulations Dennis and Jim.

As for Lerner and Collins, Nick agreed to keep Collins on the team if he continued with his golf lessons!

Congratulations to our 2009 champions.

Final Notes

I'd like to thank everyone for their timeliness in completing their matches—and without a single coin toss! Dave would have certainly been proud. A special thank you, too, to all the superintendents who made this event possible by hosting our matches at their clubs.

If you didn't join the fun this year, be sure to come out and qualify in 2010. This event continues to offer a great opportunity to enjoy the camaraderie of your fellow Met members—and to take a breather from those stressful summer months.

For a full account of the Two-Ball Championship results, go to metgcsa.org/events/two-ball.

Attention Westchester County Superintendents!

Here are a few important notes and reminders about the Westchester County Phosphorus Law:

- Since July 11, golf course superintendents have been prohibited from applying phosphorus fertilizers within 20 feet of an open body of water.
- Also be aware that no turf fertilizer of any kind may be applied to any turf area between December 1 and April 1. Dormant fertilization must be done prior to December 1.

The Government Relations Committee is working with county legislators and the Westchester County Department of Health in an attempt to get an exemption to the 20 foot buffer for greens, tees, and fairways, provided we use special nozzles and/or application equipment. We'll keep you posted on any changes in the law.

Congratulations to Our 2009 Scholarship Recipients

by Bob Nielsen, CGCS, MetGCSA Vice President

At the August 6 Education Meeting held at Tamarack Country Club, the Scholarship & Research Committee had the pleasure of awarding scholarships to eight members' sons and daughters.

Like every year, the judging was difficult. Our Scholarship & Research Committee members worked long and hard to process and evaluate the applications, which were all outstanding. As always, the winning candidates were selected based on maturity, academic history, ambition, extracurricular activities, and effort exhibited in completing their application.

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

Richard Apgar, son of Scott and Jacqueline Apgar of Metro Turf Specialists, is in his junior year at Manhattan College, majoring in economics.

Alison Ceplo, daughter of Jasmine and Matt Ceplo, superintendent of Rockland Country Club, has begun her senior year at The Fashion Institute of Technology in New York City.

Laura Donovan, daughter of Julie and Shawn Donovan of TPC in Enfield, CT, has enrolled in the doctorate program in Clinical Health Psychology at the Spalding University in Louisville, KY.

Corinne Finamore, daughter of Janet and Steve Finamore, superintendent of Alpine Country Club, has enrolled as a freshman at the University of North Carolina in Greensboro, majoring in Mathematics Education.

Andrew Joseph Hannah, first assistant superintendent at Century Country Club, is in his final semester in the Master of Business Administration program at Iona College.

Justin O'Neill, son of Jennifer and Tim O'Neill, superintendent of Country Club of Darien, is in his junior year at Brown University enrolled in the Pre-Med program.



Five of the eight scholarship winners were able to attend the Education Meeting with their parents to accept their scholarship awards. They are, from left to right: Tim O'Neill of the Country Club of Darien with his son, Justin, his wife Jennifer, and daughter, Kristin; Richard Apgar with his parents, Scott of Metro Turf Specialists and Jackie; Scholarship & Research Chairman Bob Nielsen; Alison Ceplo with her parents, Jasmine and Matt Ceplo of Rockland Country Club; Pamela Petruzzelli with son Michael and husband Dennis Petruzzelli of Putnam National Golf Club.

Kristin O'Neill, daughter of Jennifer and Tim O'Neill, is attending Connecticut College majoring in Environmental Studies.

Michael Petruzzelli, son of Pamela and Dennis Petruzzelli, superintendent of Putnam National Golf Club, is entering his sophomore year at the University of Hartford, majoring in Computer Science and Graphic Design.

In addition to congratulating our recipients, I'd like to recognize those past boards who had the foresight to initiate our Scholarship Fund, which has enabled us to assist in the ever-increasing college costs thanks to our Annual Bill Caputi Scholarship Raffle, the 50/50s at our monthly meetings, and last but not least, a portion of our dues. Finally, a special thank you needs to go out to the entire Scholarship Committee for all their

hard work reviewing and awarding each scholarship.

Please remember to support our scholarship raffle. It is the major income-generator for our Scholarship Fund.

Birth

Congratulations to Canyon Club Superintendent **Chad Anderson** and his wife, Michele, on the birth of their son, Cole Thomas, on October 1.

Well Wishes

Wishing Class LAF member **Bob Lippman Sr.** a speedy recovery after his recent surgery.

Upcoming Events



Join the Party!

Keep December 12 open for our always festive annual Christmas Party, an evening of great food, fun, and dancing.

With the year-end fast approaching, we're already scouting out sites for our 2010 meetings and social events. If you or your club is willing and able to host a meeting, 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.

MetGCSA Christmas Party

Saturday, December 12
Ridgeway Country Club
White Plains, NY
Host: Earl Millett

Educational Events

34th Annual New Jersey Green Expo Turf and Landscape Conference

Tuesday–Thursday, December 8–10
Trump Taj Mahal, Atlantic City, NJ

Log on to www.njturfgrass.org for details, or call the New Jersey Turfgrass Association at 973-812-6467.

Empire State Green Industry Show

(Formerly the NYSTA Turf and Grounds Exposition)

Tuesday–Thursday, January 12–14, 2010
Rochester Riverside Convention Center
Rochester, NY

The Empire State Green Industry Show offers an excellent opportunity to network,

obtain research updates, and visit the trade show, featuring hundreds of exhibitors. As always, key speakers representing all segments of the green industry will be featured.

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

CAGCS Winter Seminar

Tuesday, January 19, 2010
Hawthorne Inn, Berlin, CT

Join the Connecticut Association of Golf Course Superintendents for their 2010 Winter Seminar. For further information, call the CAGCS office at 203-387-0810, or watch the website at www.cagcs.com.

MetGCSA Winter Seminar

Wednesday, January 20, 2010
Westchester Country Club, Rye, NY

Plan now for our upcoming Winter Seminar, and watch for details. For further information, call our Education Chairman, Rob Alonzi, at 914-472-1467.

NYSTA Southeast Regional Conference

NYSTA Southeast Regional Conference
Tuesday–Wednesday, February 23–24, 2010
Holiday Inn, 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.

For further information, contact NYSTA at 800-873-8873 or 518-783-1229, or visit their website at www.nysta.org.

13th Annual New England Regional Turfgrass Conference & Show

Monday–Wednesday, March 1–4, 2010
Rhode Island Convention Center
Providence, RI

As always, the 2010 annual conference and show's educational sessions will bring you cutting-edge turfgrass management tactics and techniques as well as a host of practical management tools.

For further information, call the NERTF show office at 401-841-0004, or visit their website at www.nertf.org/show/.

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It's All Business at Wee Burn Country Club in November

by Kevin Collins

Perched atop a hill in Darien, Connecticut's New England countryside is Wee Burn Country Club's spectacular Mediterranean-style clubhouse. The site of the MetGCSA's November 10 Annual Meeting, the 1925 Addison-Mizner-designed structure afforded members the opportunity to discuss association business amidst old-world elegance. Completely renovated in 2002 by Butler, Rogers, and Baskett, the clubhouse's dining and social areas open to large terraces overlooking the almost 85-year-old golf course, offering Met members a glimpse of the course.

Golf Digest rated the course the 4th "Best in State" for the years 1995 through 1998. Like other clubs in the competition, Wee Burn was first established more than 100 years ago in Noroton, CT. Interestingly, the club's founder, John Crimmins, stumbled on Wee Burn's original site when he and his son were out for a leisurely ride and came across two men playing golf. The men had staked out two holes in a field and were having a good old time bashing the ball around. In 1896, that field became Wee Burn's first home.

George Strath, who hailed from St. Andrews in Scotland, designed and built a six-hole course, becoming the club's first golf professional and greenskeeper. Three more holes were added during the winter of 1897 to 1898, and a small farmhouse on the property was converted into the clubhouse.

Wee Burn moved from Noroton to its current site in Darien in 1923, hiring Devereaux Emmet to design and build its 18-hole championship course, which opened for play in 1925. A premier architect in the early 20th century, Emmet gave Wee Burn a wonderful mix of long and short holes with his signature small greens and steep surrounds.

Doug Drugo Makes His Mark

Hired in 2004, our meeting host, Superintendent Doug Drugo, has worked steadily over the past five years to not only enhance the course but also the maintenance operation.

"The first project we took on," says Doug, "was the construction of our maintenance facility, which we started in the fall of '04 and finished in August of '05. Right after that, we did a bunker renovation that included adding 24 new bunkers. We also recontoured a number of the fairways to bring the club's water features more into play.

"When that was completed in '06," continues Doug, "we began a tee renovation. We rebuilt almost half of the existing tee boxes and added new tees, which lengthened the golf course by more than 250 yards, from 6,827 to 7,090."

Doug is quick to credit his great team with helping him accomplish this impressively lengthy to-do list. Along with capable assistants Josh Reiger and Justin Miller, Doug counts heavily on equipment manager Winston Grey, who Doug calls, "the best mechanic I've ever been around."

Doug's Beginnings

Born and raised in Pittsburgh, PA, Doug worked summers during high school as a landscaper. "Pittsburgh has a blue-collar mentality. Everyone works hard," says Doug to explain his deep-seated work ethic. "After high school, I attended Penn State to pursue a degree in landscape design. My good friend and classmate John Kaminski (now assistant professor of turfgrass science at Penn State) suggested that I take a look at the turf program. So I did, and I ended up graduating in 1998 with a degree in both landscape design and turfgrass management," says Doug.

Doug's first stop after college was the famed Oakmont Country Club right there in his Pittsburgh, PA, hometown. He started



Doug Drugo

working for superintendent Mark Kuhns, and then two years later, when John Zimmers took over as superintendent, Doug served on his staff as an assistant from 2000 to 2003. "Working at Oakmont was very demanding," remembers Doug. "The expectation from the membership was U.S. Open conditions every day, and they got it." John Zimmers was not only a great mentor to Doug but has remained one of his closest friends. "We talk all the time," says Doug.

Tying the Knot

Doug met his wife, Dana, in 1999 at the last Steelers game ever played at Three Rivers Stadium. "I was standing in line, and Dana and I started talking, then exchanged telephone numbers," Doug fondly remembers. "We were married in 2005."

Doug and Dana purchased a home in Rowayton, CT, where they live with their baby girl, Claire Marie, who just turned a year-and-a-half, and their boxer, Cassius, and pit bull, Godiva. "Dana is great, and she's always been very understanding about the long hours in our profession," says Doug.

When he's not at work, Doug likes nothing more than spending time with his family. A huge Steelers fan, Doug also makes sure to catch as many games as he can on his return trips to Pittsburgh.

Kevin Collins, a member of the Tee to Green Editorial Committee, is Mid-Atlantic and Northeast territory manager for Aquatrols Corp. of America and the owner/president of DryJect Northeast/TurfPounders.

Ring in the Holidays at Ridgeway

Earl Millett Brings MetGCSA's December Christmas Party to Ridgeway Country Club

by Greg Wojick, CGCS

December 12 marks the Met's Annual Christmas Party, which will be held this year at Ridgeway Country Club in White Plains, NY. Our party's host, Earl Millett, has been Ridgeway's superintendent for the past 29 years and host to at least one other past holiday event.

This year, he and the Social Committee promise a jolly good time with a band that will put the word "Paaaarty!" back into everyone's vocabulary. After this past year's economic woes and August battle with high heat and humidity, all can agree that some light-hearted revelry is appropriate. The committee urges EVERYONE to be there.

In his lengthy tenure at Ridgeway, Earl says the Pete Clark-designed course has undergone numerous enhancements. "We've done just about everything you can do to a golf course," he says. Though his party won't provide an opportunity to take in the sights, we'll be treated to an evening of pure fun in Ridgeway's elegantly updated clubhouse ballroom.

Completely renovated six years ago, the clubhouse was built in 1952—exactly 40 years after the golf course—which was enjoyed by the guests of what was once a luxury resort, the Gedney Farm Hotel. Offering much more than a golf course—with a full racquet facility, pool, bowling alley, stable, polo field, ice skating rink, and even a kennel for guests' pets—this sought-after destination fell on hard times in 1924, about the time a fire destroyed the hotel. It changed hands two times before local businessmen bought the course and formed the Ridgeway Country Club, named for the street on which it's located.

Experience Beyond the Job

Anyone who's been around the Met area for any length of time knows Ridgeway, and more notably, Earl—if not for his cynical sense of humor, for his contributions to the MetGCSA. Affiliated with the association for nearly 30 years, Earl's served on countless committees and devoted 12 years to the board, which culminated in his presidency in '98 and '99.

A firm believer in the benefits of immersing yourself in the industry, Earl's also served

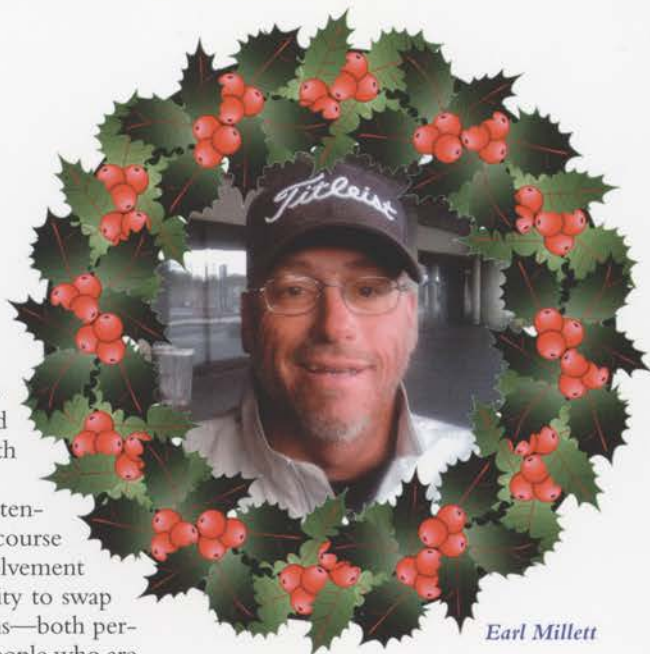
on the board of the Tri-State Turf Research Foundation and been actively involved with NYSTA.

"There's more to a superintendent's job than the club and course itself," notes Earl, adding, "Involvement offers a tremendous opportunity to swap information and share concerns—both personal and professional—with people who are in the same boat."

Earl's other form of involvement has been actually getting out and playing golf. He's competed on just about every Metropolitan New York area course that would have him—not to mention many of the most prestigious courses around the country.

Earl became involved in the industry long ago, back in Turner Falls, MA. That's where he and his superintendent brother, Mark Millett of Old Oaks Country Club, just about grew up on a nine-hole golf course, the Thomas Memorial Golf and Country Club. "I started out there pushing a mower when I was about 12," remembers Earl.

But Earl's real turf lessons began when he was persuaded by his cousin Chuck Martineau, then superintendent of The Whippoorwill Club, to come down to Armonk and learn the ropes working as a laborer on his crew. Earl worked with Chuck for three years, then in 1978, accepted the assistant's position at Fenway Golf Club, under Al Tretera, who was superintendent at the time. Earl stayed there until 1980, completing his A.S. in Turfgrass Management from UMass along the way.



Earl Millett

"I've always said that I learned how to run a crew from Chuck and how to grow grass from Al," says Earl of his years in training for his first—and present—superintendent's job at Ridgeway Country Club.

A Balancing Act

"Work is important, but so is enjoying yourself to reduce stress," says Earl, noting just how crucial it is to strike that healthy balance between work and play.

Earl enjoys spending time with his wife, Donna, of 29 years, and his son, Ian Baker, now 17. Ian, like his dad, has a passion for both hockey and fishing. Offer to fill up the gas tank on Earl's boat and you'll assure yourself of a great day of fishing and fun on Long Island Sound.

Greg Wojick, a member of the Tee to Green Editorial Committee, is the principal in Communitool, LLC, and founder of Playbooks™ for Golf.

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• *Best practices by chapters to increase effectiveness and member engagement.* Several chapters made presentations regarding the hiring of an executive director and initiating a trade show and member recruitment efforts.

• *GCSAA membership recruitment and retention activities.* The GCSAA continues to strive to improve on its 50- to 55-percent penetration rate. Obviously, this is easier said than done, given there has been little to no improvement in the past 10 to 15 years. Trying to tap into some of the more remote nine-hole or mom-and-pop operations has proved futile since many don't even employ a superintendent. Hopefully, GCSAA will eventually reach those smaller clubs that have a superintendent interested in pursuing it as a career.

• *The health of the GCSAA Education Conference and the Golf Industry Show (GIS).* The GIS has historically been a significant source of revenue for the association. As with trade shows and conferences across all industries, however, the income generated from the GCSAA conference and show is no longer what it used to be.

As a result, GCSAA is looking more critically at locations for the event, considering those that previously could not host the event and eliminating those that have the potential to discourage attendance.

New Orleans was a location that worked against attendance, despite GCSAA's substantial investment in advertising the city as new and improved. Although many (including my 1- and 3-year-old) enjoyed New Orleans, attendance was so adversely affected that the GCSAA decided to move the conference from there to Las Vegas in 2012.

What's more, the CMAA was either unable or unwilling to renegotiate its hotel contracts and has decided it will no longer be a partner in our conference and show after 2010. Both the GCSAA and CMAA, however, have vowed to continue to work together on all other issues confronting the golf industry.

Final Note

Anyone interested in viewing the presentations from the Chapter Delegates Meeting will find them on the GCSAA website.

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

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