

Tee To Green

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Is white the new green?

Find out at the April 26 Two-Ball
Qualifier at Centennial.



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President's Message

A Wintery Mix of Information

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ell, we've gone from one of the hottest, driest summers on record to one of the coldest, snowiest winters that we've had in quite some time. The big question on the minds of anyone who manages *Poa*/bentgrass greens is: Where will the ice belt be? While we know, for sure, it's going to be there, we're less certain about how to handle it. In fact, deciding if and when to remove the snow and ice from our greens has been a topic of discussion since the Winter Seminar.

Although clearing snow too early from greens can be an open dinner invitation to geese, we know that the record amount of snowfall could result in significant ice accumulations if we get that mid-winter thaw. I made the decision to plow the snow from my greens. But it's a tough call. Here's hoping whatever course of action you choose, it serves you—and your greens—well!

Winter Seminar High Points

Speaking of winter, our Winter Seminar was a huge success again this year, drawing close to 300—a full house. Kudos to Rob Alonzi and the Education Committee for putting together such a crowd-drawing program, and a special thank you to Joe Alonzi and the Westchester County Club staff for the great food and ambience. It really made for a special day.

The morning speakers presented the latest information on foliar fertilizers, fairy ring control, and aquatic weed management. Adam Moeller was a great last-minute stand-in for Dr. Hart from Rutgers, and Dave Oatis reviewed some of the important lessons learned from 2010.

I was happy to have the opportunity to introduce the MetGCSA's new executive director to the audience at the Winter Seminar. Ed Brockner was selected from a pool of very talented candidates for the position and officially began work with the MetGCSA on January 3. Ed joins us from the First Tee of New York, where he will continue to serve as director of development.

Ed received a B.A. in history from Yale University in 2001 and an M.S. in sports administration from Florida State University in 2002. He was also a consultant for the Essex County Parks Department during its \$7-million renovation of the county's three public courses.

Ed is working closely with all of the committee chairmen to learn how the association operates, and we are bringing him up to speed on our government relations efforts. Ed is an accomplished writer, with golf articles published in *The Wall Street Journal* and numerous features on course design and construction appearing in the New Jersey State Golf Association magazine.

We hope to exploit his editorial talents in our efforts to promote the MetGCSA and its members to the golfing public. Please join me in welcoming Ed, and feel free to contact him with your thoughts and ideas for improving the MetGCSA. His contact information is on our website.

Matt Ceplo eloquently awarded the John Reid Lifetime Achievement Award to the New York State Turfgrass Association, and



Bob Nielsen, CGCS
MetGCSA President

President Greg Chorvas delivered a very gracious acceptance speech. NYSTA has been supporting the turfgrass industry for more than 60 years, and the MetGCSA and its members have been highly involved with the organization, both as program attendees and active participants. Mel Lucas, John Musto, and Mike Maffei are all MetGCSA members who have served as NYSTA presidents.

The Tri-State Turf Research Foundation is another worthy organization our association and its members have been closely aligned with. John Carlone, Tri-State president and Met member, offered an informative presentation on the Tri-State's work, afterward requesting donations to support foundation-funded research at our universities. I cannot emphasize enough the importance of contributing to the foundation's work.

Funding for research has been either eliminated or severely curtailed by the GCSAA, the USGA, and many corporations. As a result, it's become extremely difficult for universities to get funding for their research. And this is not just any research. Since its inception in 1990, the Tri-State Turf Research Foundation has funded studies that target turf diseases and challenges pertinent to golf courses in our area. It's through the Tri-State that we've gained solutions to some of the most devastating turfgrass ills, like summer patch and anthracnose to name just a few. So please . . . don't let that donation request get lost on your desk!

Possible Solution to Your Dollar Spot Problems

One man who may have figured out a new way to attract funding for research is

continued on page 9

Bob Nielsen Assumes Reins as MetGCSA's New President

by Kevin Collins



MetGCSA President Bob Nielsen (left) strikes a pose with Past President Tony Girardi.

G

olf course superintendents take many different paths in finding their way into the profession, and Bob Nielsen's long and winding road to his current position at Bedford Golf & Tennis Club is a great example of this journey. "I didn't have any intention of getting into the golf business, let alone becoming president of a professional association," says Bob. However, on November 10 at the MetGCSA Annual Meeting, Bob assumed the reins as our association's 29th president, the culmination of 10 years of service on the Met's Board of Directors.

The Making of a Turfgrass Manager

Recounting how his early career goals changed and eventually steered him toward success in the turfgrass management industry, Bob explains, "When I graduated from Fox Lane High in '77, I enrolled in SUNY, Oneonta, as a physics major. But realizing, by year-end, that I had made the wrong choice, I transferred to Westchester Community College to earn an associate's degree in tax accounting. Soon after, I went on to continue my studies in accounting at Pace University." Working odd jobs to cover his tuition, Bob found himself on the crew at Bedford Golf & Tennis. It was at that point that he began to reevaluate his career intentions.

Working for then Superintendent Terry Boles, a native of County Sligo in Ireland, Bob found his work at the course both enjoyable and rewarding. Boles' thick Irish brogue, while understandable to Bob and others on the crew, was indecipherable to many of Bedford's members. Bob humorously describes this linguistic divide as "two peoples separated by a common language."

For example, Bob remembers a time when he, Terry, and Bedford's green chair, Bobby Duhon (the former NY Giant's star running back), had a conversation about rebuilding the 9th green. "Terry spoke passionately for 20 minutes," recalls Bob. "After the meeting broke up, Mr. Duhon motioned for me to follow him over to the clubhouse for a chat. He needed some clarification, because he didn't understand a word Terry had said," Bob laughs.

“I’d like to bring back the camaraderie at meetings and have fewer board meetings but more productive ones....”

In 1986, Bob became Terry’s assistant and earned his certificate in turfgrass management from the UMass Winter School that same year. In 1991, Terry retired and Bob assumed his job as superintendent, forever abandoning the idea of becoming a full-time accountant. “What clinched it for me,” says Bob, “was working for a local tax accountant one warm, sunny March day. I knew, then, I wasn’t cut out for an office job.”

During Bob’s tenure as Bedford’s super, he has overseen an extensive renovation by architect Ken Dye, transforming the club’s classic course and enhancing its natural beauty. The original Devereaux Emmet layout dates all the way back to 1891, making it one of the first courses in the Met section. Bob notes, however, that while the course—which measures under 6,500 yards from the tips—is not a likely candidate for major championships, it’s both challenging and an enjoyable test for members and their guests. “It’s a solid layout with small greens that are well bunkered,” says Bob. “You won’t lose a lot of golf balls, but you do have to be accurate to score.”

This year will mark the 120th year of operation for the club, and with Bob entering his 29th year at Bedford and 20th at the helm as superintendent, he has established himself as an integral part of the club’s proud tradition.

Outside the Business

Though Bob seldom mixes business with pleasure, he did meet his wife of seven years, Carolyn, when he was out with a colleague—his buddy Haik, who also happens to be the head chef at Bedford Golf & Tennis. “Haik went over to Carolyn and her friends and asked them to sit with us,” says Bob. The rest is history.

“Carolyn is originally from South Salem, NY, and had moved down South. She was a teacher and director of a preschool in Clarksdale, MS, and was also involved with Habitat for Humanity. She had returned to the area to get her master’s, and that’s when I met her,” recounts Bob. “She never went back to Mississippi.”

Our “first lady” is one-of-a-kind. She always has a smile on her face, and it takes

quite a bit to get her down. Carolyn also is involved in artistic pursuits at their local Bedford Community Theatre, which regularly produces both dramas and musicals.

Having a little bit of both Bob and Carolyn in them, their two sons—John, 6, and Sam, 3—are, as Bob describes them, “happy from the minute they wake up till they go to bed.”

Bob’s two older sons, Bobby, 31, and Matt, 27, are a tremendous source of pride for Bob. Bobby, a Notre Dame graduate, just recently changed careers. After working as an editor of *The Met Golfer*, he recently opened a restaurant in South Lake Tahoe called MacDuff’s. A graduate of the University of Colorado, Matt has stayed a little closer to home and currently works as the development manager for Windermere Estates in Stamford, CT.

The Nielsen house is a great place to hang out, and Bob and Carolyn’s hospitality is second to none. Many Met committee meetings have been held at Bob’s kitchen table over the years, as well as a few parties.

The Met Board and Beyond

Bob’s new role as MetGCSA president coincides with another exciting development: The Met recently hired its first executive director in more than two decades, Ed Brockner, who shares his new role with his position as director of development for The First Tee.

Instrumental in the search and hire of an executive director, Bob has high hopes for the association under Ed’s direction. “I look forward to Ed becoming the Met’s face of the association in the same way the MetPGA and MGA have recognized representatives,” says Bob.

Working his way through the chairs of the Met’s Board of Directors, Bob’s accumulated years of valuable experience that will serve him well as our president. “In the 10 years I’ve been on the board,” says Bob, “I’ve served as treasurer and vice president, and I’ve chaired the Tournament, Social & Welfare, Scholarship & Research, Bylaws, and Government Relations committees.”

But Bob’s experience and knowledge extend well beyond our association. He serves as the New York representative to the

Chesapeake Bay Watershed Committee to keep tabs on the EPA’s activities there. Gathering important knowledge and experience working in cooperation with government and industry, Bob’s well equipped to handle similar situations should they arise in the Met area.

Bob is also a leader at the national level. He’s served for the past five years as the MetGCSA chapter delegate and is instrumental in selecting candidates for our national association’s Board of Directors as a member of the GCSAA Nominating Committee. Bob is also currently seeking appointment to the GCSAA Government Relations Committee.

Bob has a clear vision of what he wants to accomplish over the next two years. “I’d like to bring back the camaraderie at meetings and have fewer board meetings but more productive ones,” says Bob. “I’d also like to see the educational opportunities expanded for our members. Our joint fall educational seminar has been very successful, and the Winter Seminar is an event not to be missed. Now, I’d love to see a fall seminar for our assistants, geared toward helping them deal with issues and challenges that are pertinent to their specific jobs.”

Still another of Bob’s goals is to establish stronger relationships with the Westchester County Board of Legislators and the State Senate and Assembly. “I really want to get together with the new chair of the Environment Committee, Mike Kaplowitz, and his entire committee to see what we can do to bring the MetGCSA and the Westchester County Board of Legislators closer together. Everything else, we’ll deal with as it comes,” Bob adds.

Through Bob’s experience and dedication to the MetGCSA over the past 10 years—and a strong, unified Board of Directors—he is very excited for what lies ahead for the association. “This board is pretty amazing. They’re a group of dedicated and talented individuals. Working together, I’m confident that whatever we choose to take on, we can’t help but be successful.”

Through government relations, educational opportunities, and great events, Bob’s plan for the association all come back to one important thing: making sure the MetGCSA is an organization that continues to serve its members and promote the profession in new and exciting ways.

Bob, we wish you the best of luck in continuing your great service to our association!

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.

Don't Miss These Upcoming Events!

Business Meeting PLUS The Dave Mahoney Two-Ball Championship Qualifier

Tuesday, April 26
Centennial GC, Carmel, NY
Host: Glen Dube, CGCS

Superintendent/Manager or Guest Tournament

Tuesday, May 17
CC of New Canaan
Host: Mike Reeb, CGCS

MetGCSA Invitational Tournament

Thursday, June 9
Silver Spring CC, Ridgefield, CT
Host: Peter Rappoccio, CGCS

Summer Social

Tuesday, July 26
Fenway GC, Scarsdale, NY
Host: Rob Alonzi

Family Picnic

Date TBA
Bedford Memorial Park, Bedford, NY

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

Tuesday, September 6
Fresh Meadow CC, Scarsdale, NY
Host: Joe Gardner

Superintendent/Green Chairperson Tournament

Date TBA
Mt. Kisco CC, Mt. Kisco, NY
Host: Greg Gutter

Annual Assistants Championship

Thursday, October 6
Redding CC, Redding, CT
Assistant Host: Steve Kubicki
Superintendent Host: Brett Chapin

Met Area Team Championship

Tuesday, October 25
Galloway National GC
Galloway, NJ
Host: Scott McBane

Educational Events

14th Annual New England Regional Turfgrass Conference & Show

Monday–Thursday, March 7–10, 2011
Rhode Island Convention Center
Providence, RI

As always, the 2011 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. The trade show kicks off on the 8th with a USGA session, words of wisdom from keynote speaker Mike Eruzione, the former captain of the Olympic Gold Medal Hockey Team, and a reception.

On the show floor, 400 exhibitor booths will offer the opportunity to view the latest in equipment, products, supplies, and services available to the turf industry.

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

2011 Turfgrass Advocacy – NYSTA's Lobby Day

Wednesday, March 9
The Sign of the Tree Restaurant
Empire State Plaza, Albany, NY

Lobby Day offers industry professionals the opportunity to learn about current legislation that could affect the turfgrass and green industry. Attendees also have the opportunity to discuss issues, by appointment, with local elected officials and join a government official for lunch. Be sure to join NYSTA in Albany; this is your chance to be heard!

For further information or to register, contact Jill Cyr at 518-783-1229 or at jill@nysta.org.

MGA/USGA Green Chairman Education Series

Tuesday, March 22
Wheatley Hills Golf Club
East Williston, NY

This education series is designed to help green chairmen, course officials, and superintendents make informed decisions on issues common to many area golf courses. Among the topics featured in this year's series:

- USGA Green Section Agronomist Adam Moeller will speak about the 2010 weather extremes that caused problems for many courses.
 - USGA Green Section Senior Agronomist Jim Skorulski will explore the unique challenges and pressures that superintendents and green committee members face in their jobs.
 - Rutgers University's Dr. Jim Murphy will present research on putting green management practices.
 - Director of the USGA Green Section Northeast Region David Oatis will discuss the meaning of "firm and fast" playing conditions, as well as the consequences of consistently achieving them.
 - Tri-State Turf Research Foundation President John Carlone will provide an update on the foundation's current and future work in supporting turf-saving research.
- For more information on the series or to register, contact the MGA at 914-347-4653.

16th Annual Rutgers Turfgrass Research Golf Classic

Monday, May 2
Fiddler's Elbow CC, Far Hills, NJ

Join Dr. Bruce Clarke and Dr. Bill Meyer for this annual fundraiser and a day of golf, education, and fun. Your participation in this annual fundraiser helps continue turfgrass research and breeding programs at Rutgers University's Center for Turfgrass Science.

For further information, call 973-812-6467 or log on to www.njturfgrass.org.

UMass Turf Research Field Day

Wednesday, June 15 (8:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.)
UMass Joseph Troll Turf Research Center
South Deerfield, MA

The field day will focus on the wide range of research projects that university faculty, staff, and graduate students currently have underway at the research center and at other locations. Among the studies you'll see: the biology and integrated management of turf-damaging insects, short- and long-term weed management, pesticide exposure, fertility and drought management

For further information, contact the UMass Extension Turf Program office at 508-892-0382 or by email at fieldday@umassturf.org.

Meet Your 2011 MetGCSA Board Members



From left to right: Class C Rep Doug Vanderlee of Westchester CC; Treasurer David Dudones of North Jersey CC; Rob Alonzi of Fenway GC; Vice President Blake Halderman, CGCS, of Brae Burn CC; Secretary Glen Dube, CGCS, of Centennial GC; Sean Cain, CGCS, of Sunningdale CC; Class AF Rep Mike Cook of The Care of Trees; Jim Pavonetti of Fairview CC; Brett Chapin of Redding CC; President Bob Nielsen, CGCS, of Bedford Golf & Tennis; Paul Gonzalez, CGCS, of The Whippoorwill Club; Ken Benoit, CGCS, of GlenArbor GC; Past President Tony Girardi, CGCS, of Rockrimmon CC.

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2011 Winter Seminar Chock-full of Turf-Saving Tips

by Paul Grabbe

The 2011 MetGCSA Winter Seminar was another in a long line of huge successes, drawing 290-plus industry professionals to the Westchester Country Club for a day of education and camaraderie. Even with heavy rains outside and a growing concern about icy conditions among attendees inside, spirits were not dampened.

Education Chair Rob Alonzi and his committee put together another great lineup of presenters who provided new and relevant information that will give us all a leg up in handling turf challenges in the future.

In addition to the presenters, a lobby full of vendors offered a wealth of knowledge and information about new and proven products, as well as the wisdom of their experience. We would like to express our gratitude for our vendors' continued support at this event, as well as throughout the growing season. You'll find their names and numbers listed on page 9.

We would also like to extend a sincere thank you to host Superintendent Joe Alonzi and the entire Westchester Country Club staff for doing such a superb job—once again—in making this a thoroughly enjoyable experience for all who attended.

And now, the high points of the day's presentations.

Getting the Most Out of Your Foliar Fertility Program

Dr. Michael Richardson from the University of Arkansas kicked things off with his presentation on how to make the most of your foliar fertility program. The information was based on 10 to 12 years of study and discussed why and how to use foliar fertility, as well as what we can do to maximize its benefits.

Today, 60 to 70 percent of annual nutrition is delivered through foliar applications. Superintendents are drawn to this method of fertilization because it's proved to be an easier, more accurate—and even environmentally friendly—option for bringing nutrients to the grass plant.



Awards Committee Chair Matt Ceplo (left) presents the John Reid Lifetime Achievement Award to NYSTA. There to accept the honor was NYSTA's executive director, Beth Seme; director, Mike Maffei; and president, Greg Chorvas.

Foliar feeding is:

- **Easy** because any water-soluble fertilizer can be used and tank mixed in conjunction with a fungicide program, eliminating the need for separate fertility and fungicide applications throughout the growing season.
- **More accurate** than granular applications because it offers the operator greater control over the speed, swath, and flow rate of the equipment being used, as well as the ability to more clearly identify treated areas from untreated areas.
- **An environmentally friendly option** because the rapid uptake of nutrients through foliar feeding results in a drastically reduced loss of nitrogen from volatilization or leaching. Interestingly, despite the fact that foliar feeding rates are very low, the uptake is very rapid, with the bulk of absorption occurring within the first one to four hours after application.

Foliar fertilization is also attractive to superintendents because:

- Many engineered foliar fertilizers contain secondary benefits, such as bio-stimulants and micronutrients.
- The lower rates associated with foliar programs greatly reduce the risk of serious damage to the turf in the event of operator error, equipment malfunction, or the unforeseen development of unfavorable weather conditions.

- The increased frequency of applications offers the ability to address the needs of the plant on a more timely basis, allowing for more consistent plant growth throughout the season and, ultimately, greater consistency in playing conditions.

Although a solid foliar program has significant benefits, Dr. Richardson offered a few words to the wise.

He explained that once nutrients have been absorbed into the plant, they can then be moved either up through the xylem or down through the phloem. The phloem, however, is a system of living cells that requires loading and unloading to move nutrients down through the plant. It is for this reason that some nutrients have very limited mobility and, therefore, are available only locally. Dr. Richardson mentioned calcium as an example of a nutrient that, if applied as a foliar application, would not reach the roots of the plant.

Grass, he emphasized, is not designed to be fed strictly through the foliage. In fact, roots have a much greater capacity for absorption, as well as the ability to deliver less mobile nutrients to areas of need through the xylem.

So how can we use this information to achieve the greatest benefit from a foliar fertility program?

- Monitor the turf and make adjustments based on need.

- Don't try to put out too much at one time as high rates will lead to reduced uptake efficiency and possible damage.
- Know that grass doesn't discriminate between nitrogen sources, so don't be afraid to use less expensive fertilizers in order to provide consistent, cost-effective results.

Closing in on a Fairy Ring Control

At the podium next was Penn State University's Dr. Mike Fidanza, who gave us an update on the biology and control of fairy ring, noting that we have only just begun to scratch the surface of this elusive pathogen.

What we do know is that fairy ring appears in arcs or circular patterns and can be classified as Type I, II, or III. Type I is characterized by plant death; Type II presents as a dark ring of stimulated growth; and Type III shows little or no stimulation with the presence of mushrooms in a circular pattern.

Fairy ring breaks down organic matter and creates two distinct zones: a mycelium mat, which causes the soil to become hydrophobic, and a zone of stimulated growth, which results in a dark green border. It's important to note that fairy ring does not infect the plant, but rather creates hydrophobic conditions that can result in plant death. Dr. Fidanza also stated that wet and dry cycles seem to trigger the formation of fairy ring.

Prostar was the first product on the market labeled for the control of fairy ring, but there are many more products available today, with Bayleton showing promise in preventing the pathogen. In fact, Dr. Fidanza suggested that two to three applications of Bayleton in the spring could be used in the fight against fairy ring.

His recommendation for ensuring a more effective delivery of the fungicides:

- Be sure to apply the product directly on the target area.
 - Use a higher spray volume, or water the product in to insure delivery to the thatch and root surface.
- Dr. Fidanza explained that while nutrients can help mask the problem, they are not a cure. The best way to fend off this disease is through:
- Properly timed fungicide applications
 - Good fertility
 - Applying wetting agents to combat hydrophobic conditions
 - Proper cultural practices to control thatch and improve percolation and gas exchange

While proper water management and thatch control can go a long way toward limiting the impact of fairy ring, Dr. Fidanza stressed that the only way to eradicate the disease is through fumigation or physical removal.

Aquatic Vegetation and Algae Management

After a brief break and visit to the vendor booths, Dominic Meringolo, a senior environmental engineer with Aquatic Control Technology, Inc., spoke about tactics for managing aquatic vegetation and algae in ponds and lakes.

He first discussed some of the causes of undesirable aquatic vegetation and algae. Noting that while eutrophication—an accumulation of nutrients that supports increased plant growth and decay—is a natural process, it can be accelerated when pollutants find their way into a body of water, causing harmful oxygen depletion and sediment buildup.

Meringolo went on to outline biological properties and common pollutants found in lakes and ponds, as well as native and invasive plant species that can wreak havoc on the overall health of an aquatic system.

When attempting to control aquatic vegetation, Meringolo stressed that it's important to start by assessing the bodies of water and identifying clear objectives. Then, it's necessary to evaluate the various physical, mechanical, chemical, and biological control techniques to determine what will work best in your situation.

- **Physical removal** is as simple as pulling vegetation out by hand.
- **Mechanical controls** include harvesting, hydroraking, and dredging
- **Biological controls** include herbaceous insects, fish, and bio-additives.
- **Chemical controls**, which must be applied by a certified aquatic applicator, should be used with caution since some carry with them long-lasting irrigation restrictions.

Meringolo also emphasized that, just as in turf, it's important to maintain overall good health of an aquatic system through various cultural practices. He mentioned proper application of turf chemicals and the use of buffer strips as an effective way to restrict pollutants from entering aquatic environments and creating problems. Also, good aeration and the use of some bio-additives have been shown to work well in smaller sites. They have the potential to fortify the overall health of the system, thereby improving not only aesthetics on the golf course, but also the quality of the water and environment as a whole.

Awards Luncheon

Seminar-goers then broke for the Awards Luncheon, which was made all the more special, this year, with two major announcements. First, was the introduction of the MetGCSA's new executive director, Ed Brockner. (See President's Message, page 1, for a bit about Ed.) Following that was Matt

Ceplo's presentation of the John Reid Lifetime Achievement Award.

This year marked a first for the Reid Award as it was given not to an individual, but rather to a very deserving organization, the New York State Turfgrass Association. Since its inception 60 years ago, NYSTA has shown great dedication and commitment to the turfgrass industry through its advocacy and support.

We would like to extend a sincere thank you and congratulations to the hardworking individuals who make up this organization.

Picking the Right Species for Your Putting Greens

Stepping in as a pinch hitter for Dr. Hart from Rutgers was USGA Agronomist Adam Moeller. Moeller gave an informative presentation on grass species selection for putting greens.

He started things off with a trip down memory lane, highlighting the dominant species that have been used for the past 30 years and noting how the characteristics of these grasses have been improved to give us the cultivars we have today.

He stated that, as time has progressed, newer grasses were selected for high-shoot density; lower mowing heights; better heat, drought, and traffic tolerance; as well as some disease resistance. Along with the many benefits offered by these new bentgrass species is the need for more intensive management. They are prolific thatch producers that can easily become puffy, leaving the grass susceptible to scalping and other damage. Proper cultivation, topdressing, fertility, and water management are critical for healthy turf and good playing conditions.

When choosing a cultivar for your greens, Moeller stresses the importance of doing your homework because one size no longer fits all. He recommends that you:

- Know the expectations of the golfers and have a realistic idea of what the conditions will be like for meeting or exceeding those expectations.
- Look at research and field trials. NTEP performs field trials all over the country. Be sure to find results from sites that closely mimic your local climate.
- Cultivars from the chosen sites can be evaluated for characteristics such as spring green-up, summer density, heat and drought tolerance, and disease resistance.
- After selecting a few different cultivars that might perform well for your situation, use onsite testing to identify the best possible species before regrassing all of your greens.

The final part of the presentation dealt with creating proper growing conditions to ensure the success of your greens. Moeller

stressed that it is pointless to plant new-and-improved grass species without first addressing the growing environment. To ensure the optimal growing environment, Moeller recommends that superintendents:

- First, make a critical assessment of the subsurface of the green and decide if it can be regrassed or if it should be completely rebuilt. Moeller cautions against spending the time and money putting a new surface on old, heavy-clay greens. Any serious layering issues need to be addressed with aggressive modification or a new mix altogether.
- Ensure adequate drainage is in place.
- Be sure there's ample air circulation and sunlight; remove trees, if necessary.
- Modify traffic patterns and mowing practices to avoid overstressing particular areas on and around the greens.
- Ensure proper fertility and water management.

These new species of bentgrass have the ability to provide a high-quality putting surface with just-the-right growing environment, but without that, the grass will be pushed to its limits just to survive and will be unable to perform at its full potential.

Lessons Learned—the Hard Way

Finishing off the day's events was USGA Green Section Director of Agronomy Dave Oatis. He reviewed the difficulties we faced these past few seasons and offered lessons we could—and should—learn from them.

The summer of 2009 brought mostly cool temperatures with a lot of rain and then threw a few curveballs with high heat striking when we were most vulnerable.

The summer of 2010 was the polar opposite. The heat came early and remained constant throughout the summer, and while some areas were pelted with rain, others received little, offering no relief for depleted water sources and parched turf.

Oatis acknowledged that *Poa annua* fared

better in 2009, while bentgrass was stronger in 2010. He cautioned, however, that regardless of what you have on your course, when you subject your turf to intensive maintenance practices in response to high golfer expectations, you put your greens at higher risk for damage—particularly if the weather doesn't cooperate. Weather, as we well know, is always the catalyst that can make you look like a hero or an amateur.

Oatis stressed that it is critical to make an accurate assessment of the growing environment both above and below the ground. Insufficient drainage, layering, thatch accumulation, poor sunlight, and poor air circulation all need to be addressed if the grass is going to thrive.

Water management was another key issue he touched on. Too much water is much worse than too little, Oatis said, and it's important to make sure that hand-watering and syringing practices are being done properly. He also recommended using moisture sensors to determine the needs of the plant, and he suggested that irrigation systems be audited and modified, if necessary, to improve coverage and efficiency.

Sometimes grass just dies, and sometimes desperate times call for desperate measures. When the going starts to get tough, Oatis emphasized the importance of keeping close tabs on what's happening, developing a plan of action, and implementing it incrementally. If you get too aggressive and do too much all at once, you can do more harm than good, he cautioned.

He further emphasized understanding the big picture, calculating the risk vs. reward, and knowing what kind of season it is before making any decisions. Sometimes, he noted, doing nothing is the best course of action. Does it look bad and play well? Ask yourself this question before making big decisions when there are too many strikes against you.

In closing, Oatis drew on his many years of experience to offer some solid advice on

how we can better prepare ourselves to be successful when managing our operations becomes difficult and discouraging.

- Get back to basics, and focus on doing the right things to improve plant health.
- Improve the growing environment by modifying poor soils, adding drainage, and removing trees to increase sunlight and air circulation.
- Have a calendar where you can track events, such as chemical applications, major cultural practices, and important decision dates.
- Provide peak conditioning of the course when it's required, but know when to back off and allow the grass to rest and recover.
- Communicate early and often to keep the membership informed of any potential problems.
- Irrigate as precisely as possible.
- Stick to proven methods, and avoid being the first to try something new on a large scale.
- Communicate with your peers to share ideas and knowledge.

Be There, or Be Square

With a near-record crowd of superintendents, assistants, and affiliate members, this year's Winter Seminar was a resounding success. Special thanks, again, to the Education Committee for their efforts in planning this ever-popular event, to Westchester Country Club for being such a gracious host, and to our vendors for their continued participation and support.

All this is what makes our Winter Seminar one of the most valuable educational opportunities we have available to us all year. Be sure not to miss this career-building event in 2012.

Paul Grabbe, a member of the Tee to Green Editorial Committee, is an assistant superintendent at North Jersey Country Club in Wayne, NJ.

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Special Thanks to Our 2011 Winter Seminar Exhibitors

We'd like to thank all the vendors who participated in this year's Winter Seminar. As a show of appreciation, we're listing the exhibitors here, along with their areas of specialty and contact information.

When the opportunity arises, we hope you'll show these contractors and suppliers the same support they've shown us during our Winter Seminar—and throughout the year.

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President's Message continued from page 1

Geunhwa Jung from the University of Massachusetts. Jung is doing dollar spot research by analyzing 50 dollar spot lesions from one of your golf course fairways to determine resistance of the dollar spot on your course to the benzimidazole, DMI, dicarboximide, and SDHI fungicide classes. You will then receive a report that shows the level of resistance to each fungicide class. The cost to participate in the study is \$500, which can pay for itself rather quickly once you determine the level of resistance to certain chemicals. The link to the research can be found on the MetGCSA website.

A Productive Winter

With a record amount of snow on the ground this winter, we've had ample opportunity to update the many forms most superintendents are now expected to submit every year. For me, there's been the pesticide reports and the water withdrawal reports I file with the DEC, the water quality monitoring report I submit to the Wetlands Commission for the Town of Bedford, and the Westchester County aboveground tank inspection forms I'm expected to update. I think I may have finally finished the paperwork for 2010, but it gets harder and harder to complete all the required reports. Each year, there seems to be one more form that has to be filed.

Looking at the regulations they're proposing on Long Island, it's only a matter of time before we'll have to track application rates for fertilizers and submit monthly and annual totals to one agency or another. Right now, the Wetland Commission in Bedford Village is also requesting weather data at the time of application.

While I'm on the subject of regulations, now's as good a time as any to scrutinize all aspects of your maintenance operation to be sure they comply with state, town, and local laws—as well as club requirements.

It's always a good idea to prepare your facility to withstand a surprise visit by government inspectors, as well as your membership. It sure is easier to do this work now rather than during the heat of the summer.

Hopefully, everyone will get a chance to get away with friends and family to enjoy a little R & R—before the start of the season. It certainly looks like spring is going to be a little shorter this year!

Bob Nielsen, CGCS

President

And to All... a Great Night!

at The MetGCSA Christmas Party at The Apawamis Club

Jackie & Scott Apger

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James Scoli of Westwood Organic Recycling

Scholarship Raffle's Prize Winners

The Annual Bill Caputi Scholarship Raffle, held at the December 10 Met Christmas Party at The Apawamis Club, raised an admirable sum for the Met's Scholarship Fund and awarded \$4,500 in cash prizes to 18 lucky ticket holders.

The raffle is the prime source of the scholarship awards we distribute to deserving Met member dependents each year.

Many thanks to all who contributed and also to those who sold tickets. Congratulations to our \$1,000-grand-prize winner, **George Gorton**, of Irrigation Services of Connecticut.

The other prize winners were:

\$500 Winners

Jim Favreau, Turf Links
Brian Gallagher, Brae Burn Country Club
Jeff Scott, Tamarack Country Club

\$250 Winners

George Corgan, Steven Willand
Mike Maffei, Back O'Beyond
Matt Burrows, Winged Foot Golf Club
Fred Montgomery, Syngenta Professional Products



\$100 Winners

Tim O'Neill, Country Club of Darien
Sean Cain, Sunningdale Country Club
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Bill Salinetti, National Golf Links of America
Matt Burrows, Winged Foot Golf Club

A Special Thank You to Our 2010 Social Sponsors

Helping to make our 2010 social events all the more memorable were the generous contributions of some of our valued vendors. We'd like to extend a very special thank you to:

Scott Apgar of Metro Turf Specialists
Kevin Collins of Aquatrols Inc.
Dennis Flynn of D&D Turfworks
Bob Lippman of Westchester Turf Supply, Inc.
Joe Stahl of Harrell's LLC

Our Apologies . . .

We want to thank **Westchester Turf Supply** for their contributions to the Annual Assistants Tournament, held at Pelham Country Club on October 20. Their name was inadvertently left off the list of sponsors noted in our December 2010 issue. Our apologies.

New Members

Please join us in welcoming the following new MetGCSA members:

- **James Amodio**, Class AF, Westwood Organic Recycling, White Plains, NY
- **Matthew Bush**, Class C, Pound Ridge Golf Club, Pound Ridge, NY
- **Matthew Derrah**, Class C, Tamarack Country Club, Greenwich, CT
- **Tim Kaija**, Class C, Scarsdale Golf Club, Hartsdale, NY
- **Jamie Kapes**, Class A, Woodway Country Club, Darien, CT
- **Stephen Kubicki**, Class C, Redding Country Club, Redding, CT
- **Michael Lashlee**, Class C, St. Andrews Golf Club, Hastings-on-Hudson, NY
- **Ryan Manion**, Class AF, OGT USA, Westport, CT
- **Justin Miller**, Class C, Wee Burn Country Club, Darien, CT
- **Dave Peterson**, Class C, Brae Burn Country Club, Purchase, NY
- **Anthony Ross**, Class C, GlenArbor Golf Club, Bedford Hills, NY
- **Adam Tompkins**, Class C, North Jersey Country Club, Wayne, NJ
- **William Tucker**, Class AF, Edward Ehrbar Inc., Yonkers, NY
- **Phillip Wohlers**, Class C, Bedford Golf & Tennis Club, Bedford, NY

Certification

Congratulations to Connecticut Club Superintendent **Mark Fuller** for completing the renewal process for maintaining his status as a Certified Golf Course Superintendent (CGCS) with GCSAA. Mark first achieved his certification in 1986.

Birth

Congratulations to Communitool's **Matt Leverich** and his wife, Leslie, on the birth of their son, Bennett Matthew, born on January 17.

Glen Dube Brings Two-Ball Qualifier Back to Centennial

by Bill Perlee

The MetGCSA 2011 tournament season kicks off on April 26 with the Dave Mahoney Two-Ball Championship Qualifier and Business Meeting at Centennial Golf Club in Carmel, NY. Glen Dube is no stranger to hosting this event. Back in 2007, just a season after accepting the superintendent position at Centennial, Glen welcomed two-ball qualifiers to the course.

Qualifying that year for the event, himself, Glen and his able two-ball partner, Blake Halderman, went on to reach the finals but, in the end, lost to the tough duo of Niven and Pakkala at Bedford Golf & Tennis. Glen vows that the outcome, this time, will be different.

The Course

The 350-acre golf course at Centennial boasts three 9-hole layouts and one of the best practice facilities anywhere. (Allowing a little warm-up time on the day of competition will be amply rewarded.)

The 27-hole club's Hudson River Valley locale provides a scenic backdrop and setting for the course, designed in 1996 by touring pro Larry Nelson. Dramatic elevation changes, beautiful vistas, and great conditioning are the trademarks of Centennial.

Glen and his crew finished a complete bunker renovation this past October and look forward to showcasing their work in April. Comprehensive, to say the least, the project involved removing the sand from

each bunker, recontouring the bottoms, installing new drainage, and adding new liners and sand. "With weather on our side, the entire project took just shy of two months, and it really changed the playability and aesthetics of the golf course," says Glen, clearly pleased with both the process and the outcome.

So what's the key to a successful game at Centennial? "Be sure to keep the ball below the hole," advises Glen. "The greens are very undulated, and downhill putts can get away from you."

Professionally Speaking

Glen's career path began in 1995 with a B.S. in turfgrass management from the University of Rhode Island. While completing his degree, he interned at Muirfield Village in Dublin, OH; TPC at River Highlands in Cromwell, CT; and the Country Club of Darien in Darien, CT. He spent three instructive years as an assistant superintendent for Peter Rappoccio at Silver Spring Country Club in Ridgefield, CT, before landing his first head job at Oak Hills Park Golf Course in Norwalk, CT.

Besides delivering excellent playing conditions and exhibiting a strong commitment to the game, Glen gives back to his profession in a generous manner. He's served on the MetGCSA Board of Directors since 2003, sitting on the Tournament, Communications, and Government Relations committees and chairing the Education



Glen Dube, CGCS

Committee and, now, the Social & Welfare Committee. Glen's also served as the association's secretary since 2006.

Family and Fun

Family life has changed for Glen and his wife, Erica, since our visit to Centennial in 2007. Their now 8-year-old daughter, Madison, became a big sister to her brother Jake, who's now 4. Both kids were extremely excited about their visit to the Magic Kingdom in Orlando after their busy Dad concluded some business at the annual trade show this winter.

Besides his passion for golf and family, Glen tries to get as much fishing in as his busy schedule permits. He hopes to sneak off to Florida again, this time with just Erica to visit friends and perhaps wet a line before another season sneaks up on him.

Good luck Glen, and thanks for hosting us this spring!

Bill Perlee, a member of the Tee to Green Editorial Committee, is superintendent at The Apawamis Club in Rye, NY.

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