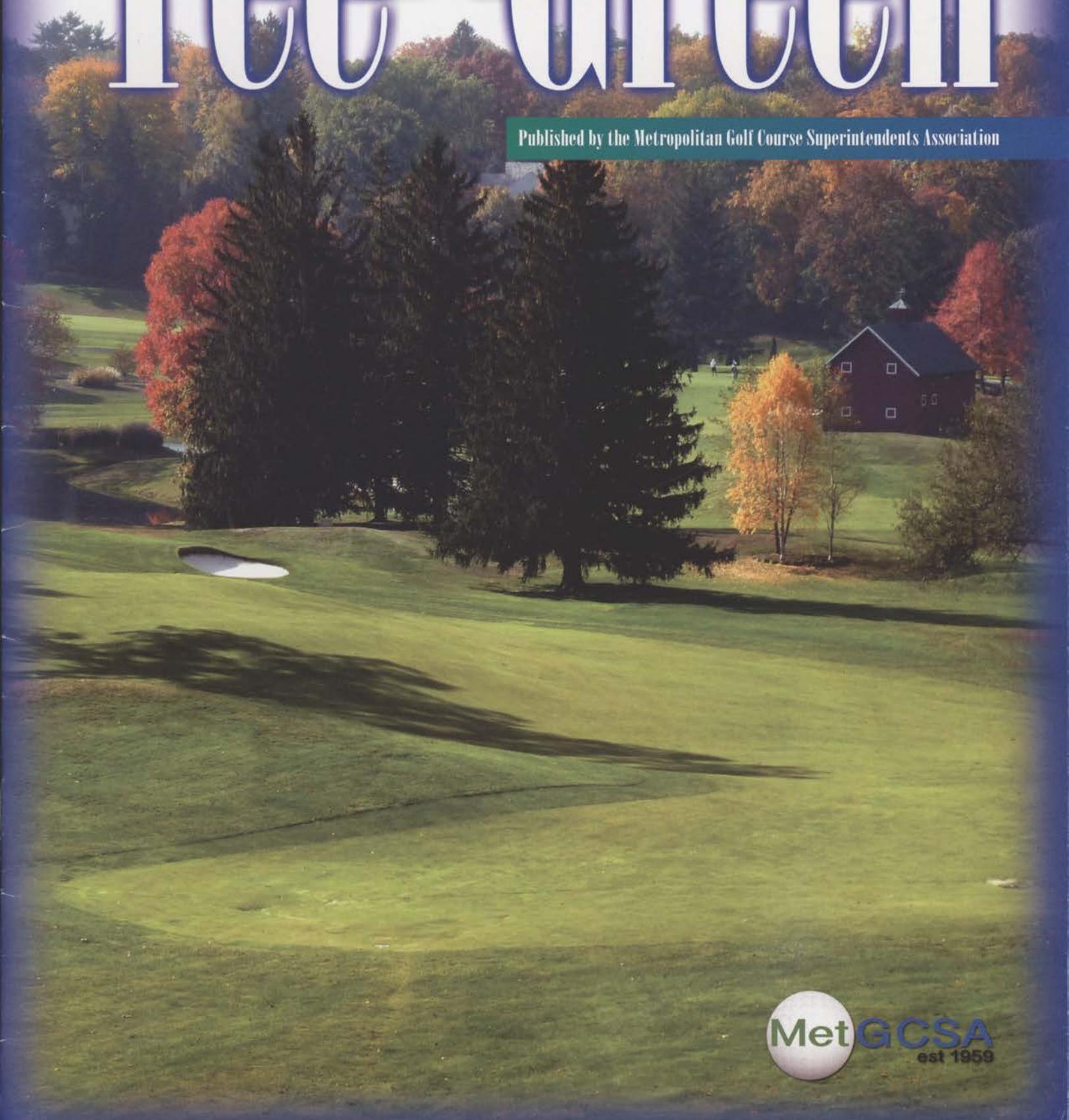


# Tee To Green



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Met **GCSA**  
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# Tee To Green



Cover:  
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## New Membership Survey

# W

ith the 2013 season and holidays behind us, it's a great time to combine a little R&R with some of the many educational opportunities available during the off-season.

In addition to our recent Winter Seminar at Westchester Country Club, where I'm sure you all benefited from the impressive lineup of informative talks, there are numerous other industry conferences and trade shows, such as the fast-approaching NYSTA Southeast Regional Conference on January 28 and 29 and the GIS in Orlando, FL, the first week in February. Stay on the lookout for your invitation to the all-new Nor'easter event during the show. Organized for the first time by the MetGCSA, it is being held at B.B. King's Blues Club on February 5. We hope you'll join us!

In March, be sure not to miss the New England Regional Turfgrass Conference and Show in Providence, RI, or the 2014 MGA/USGA Green Chairman Seminar at North Hills Country Club in Manhasset, NY. Each of these events offers important opportunities to further your education, while networking with fellow turf industry professionals from across the region—and country.

### Association Happenings

Right here at home, within our own association, we're pleased to announce the launch of the website that hosts the Best Management Practices for New York State Golf Courses project. For the uninitiated, this project is designed to spell out best management practices for every imaginable golf course maintenance practice, ultimately demonstrating superintendents' environmental awareness and responsibility and continuing our relationships with New York State governmental agencies and lawmakers.

GlenArbor Superintendent Ken Benoit, chair of the MetGCSA's Environmental



*Blake Halderman, CGCS  
MetGCSA President*

Committee, has been working diligently with committee members for the past two years to bring this project to fruition. Also involved in the process are six other golf course superintendent associations from New York State, a team from Cornell University, and several key contributors from across the state.

Last, but not least, the board has decided that it is time to once again survey our membership to gain important insight into how we might continue to enhance our association and to share useful information about our operations, budgets, and compensation packages. We are planning to post the survey on the web for ease of use, and we are doing our best to keep it as brief as possible. I hope everyone will take the time to complete the survey. The more people who participate, the more useful the information will be to our operations and club management. We look forward to your feedback.

On behalf of the board, I wish you all a happy, healthy, and prosperous New Year! It was truly nice celebrating the start of the holiday season with fellow Met members at our Annual Christmas Party December 7. The new venue—Avalon Hall in New Rochelle, NY—offered beautiful nighttime views of Manhattan and a festive atmosphere for our season-ending social event. But I don't have to tell you what a great evening it was; the photos on pages 10 and 11 tell all!

Before we know it, the trees will be budding and the grass will be growing, so be sure to use your downtime to catch up on lost time with family and friends this off-season.

**Blake Halderman, CGCS  
President**

Feature

**Steve Mona  
Receives the  
MetGCSA's Highest  
Honor: The John  
Reid Lifetime  
Achievement Award**

*by Tim O'Neill, CGCS*

*Steve Mona plays about 25 rounds a year because of his busy schedule, but he still manages to maintain a 10 handicap. (Photo courtesy of the World Golf Foundation)*





The MetGCSA is pleased to award Stephen F. Mona, former GCSAA CEO and current CEO of the World Golf Foundation, its coveted 2014 John Reid Lifetime Achievement Award.

Presented this year at the MetGCSA's January 15 Winter Seminar, this annual honor is reserved for individuals who have demonstrated a "knowledge of and commitment to the game of golf and the science of golf course management." Steve, who has earned the distinction of Certified Association Executive (CAE), is the Met's 24th Reid Award recipient since its inception in 1986, and in the words of MetGCSA Awards Committee Chair Bob Nielsen, "he is a perfect choice given his long and distinguished career in the golf industry. Steve should be applauded," says Bob, "not only for his many contributions to the golf industry, but also for the major role he has played in advancing the professional status of the golf course superintendent. I can't think of a more deserving Reid Award recipient."

### **Mona's Rise to Industry Leader**

Steve Mona has worked long and hard to achieve his present status in the golf industry, which includes among many other distinctions being ranked as one of the industry's "Most Powerful People in Golf," an accolade he has received every year since 1999.

Steve started on the road to success in 1980 at the Northern California Golf Association (NCGA), where he was hired as tournament director. "I had just graduated college, and this was a great opportunity for me to work for the largest regional golf association in the country," says Mona.

From there, he became assistant manager of Media Relations for the USGA in January 1982. That meant saying goodbye to Pebble Beach, CA, where the NCGA is headquartered, and moving closer to his New York roots—to Far Hills, NJ, where the USGA is based. "I made this move primarily because I was eager to work on the national level and for the governing body of golf in the U.S.," explains Mona.

Remembering Steve then, and knowing Steve now, Dave Oatis, director of the USGA Green Section's Northeast Region and prior

Reid Award recipient, describes him as "an honest broker of information who has always boldly tackled difficult issues. Steve has many skills," continues Oatis, "but he is especially adept at facilitating. He has a unique ability to bring the right people together to address challenging issues and to brainstorm and develop the best outcome for golf and for the industry. Steve is honest, hardworking, a supporter of golf, a supporter

of the USGA, and a supporter of golf course superintendents everywhere."

Eager, again, to expand his experience in the industry, Steve left the USGA in June 1983 for the position of executive director of the Georgia State Golf Association (GSGA) in Atlanta. "I spent 10 1/2 years at the GSGA and worked very closely with many golf course superintendents, including Randy Nichols, who was presi-

*"While the number of individuals who play golf sounds impressive at more than 25 million, golf is still often perceived as simply a recreational pursuit for a small number of people. Our objective is to change that perception and show people that the golf industry is considerably sized and makes a substantial contribution to our country's economy."*



dent of the GCSAA in 1993," notes Steve. "This led to my becoming CEO of GCSAA in November 1993, where I spent 14 wonderful years."

The sentiment is mutual for all who had the fortunate opportunity to work with Steve Mona during his tenure. Preakness Hills' John O'Keefe, who is currently GCSAA treasurer, was one of the many: "Steve inspired me from the first time I met him while serving on the GCSAA Certification Committee," says John. "His enthusiasm for the industry was unlike any I had ever seen. It was contagious. What's more, he is a true advocate of the game and an ardent supporter of all who have made golf a profession in one way or another. To put it simply, he gets us. Associations speak of mission statements. Steve is a walking, talking mission statement for the golf course superintendent."

In March 2008, Steve assumed his current role as CEO of the World Golf Foundation, where he continues to do important work on behalf of golf. In addition to being responsible for the foundation's overall management, Steve oversees the organization's industry relationships and ongoing global focus.

## Taking GCSAA to New Heights

For Met members, Steve Mona didn't become a household name until he assumed the role of GCSAA's CEO. It was then that I, and many others who had the opportunity to work with Steve, became his greatest supporters.

Having served for seven years on the GCSAA Board of Directors with Steve, I saw just how spot-on he was in understanding issues and creating action plans for success. He has razor-sharp focus and thinks well on his feet. He is highly organized, always follows up as promised, and is clearly driven to succeed. Yet, at the same time, Steve's a guy with no ego, respectful of others, and exceedingly approachable. He's a guy you want to have on your team no matter what's at stake. I've learned more from my association with Steve than I can tell you, and we remain close friends today.

Some of the most significant advances at GCSAA occurred during Steve Mona's 14-year tenure as CEO. Membership increased from 13,000 to 21,000, and revenues grew from \$12 to \$20 million. As impressive as these results are, Mona cites among his proudest achievements the improved recognition and stature of the golf course superintendent. "Not surprisingly, the compensation and job opportunities of the golf course superintendent increased at that time as well," he notes.

Also high on Mona's list of proud accom-



plishments is the Golf Industry Show (GIS). Mona initiated the creation of the GIS, bringing together numerous organizations in golf for one show.

"I was particularly pleased," says Mona, "to be able to present an industry trade show that represents the significant aspects of a golf operation, from ownership and feasibility and design to construction and operations." Joining GCSAA was the Club Managers Association, the Architects, Builders, Owners, and the USGA.

In speaking about GCSAA's key milestones, Mona is quick to credit others for his success. "I don't look at any of the strides made during my tenure as my achievements," says Mona. "Rather, I look at them as the work of many. Nothing of any significance took place, after all, without the full support and effort of the GCSAA board, executive team, staff, and members."

Among Mona's other lasting initiatives:

- **The formal affiliation of chapters:** Mona was convinced that chapters would be stronger with a formal relationship with GCSAA, and, in turn, GCSAA would be stronger with chapters. One of Mona's favor-

ite sayings, "the rising tide raises all boats," was often used when describing how his strategy to strengthen chapters would, at the same time, raise the superintendents standing in the world of golf.

- **The formation of the Environmental Institute for Golf (EIFG):** Mona spearheaded the formation of the EIFG, formerly known as the GCSAA Scholarship and Research Foundation. Convinced that the entire golf community needed to be involved in environmental issues to make golf sustainable, he directed fundraising efforts and worked to enlist the support of such industry well-knowns as Greg Norman, Herb Kohler, Jaime Patino, Jerry Pate, and Mike Hurdzan.

- **Restructuring of the GCSAA governance system:** Always a proponent of measuring success, Mona, in 2004, oversaw the total restructuring of the GCSAA governance system. Expectations for GCSAA staff were clearly documented and specific indicators of success were identified. A scorecard system of measurable goals was created for Mona and the entire staff. A yearly review identified where expectations

*“I got up every morning during my GCSAA tenure,”  
recounts Mona, “thinking about three things:  
First, how was I going to make the professional life of the  
golf course superintendent better that day?  
Second, how was I going to elevate the brand of the  
GCSAA and the GCSAA member that day?  
And third, how was I going to lead a staff of 120 people to  
move us closer to accomplishing those two goals that day?  
I’d like to think we made some progress in all these areas during that time.”*

were—and were not—met. In the end, it led to open communications between the board and staff and clear expectations for the future.

• **Encouraging a new focus on the facility:** Mona was a proponent of superintendents working to develop strong, cooperative relationships with their general managers and golf professionals. He would say, “By helping GCSAA members contribute substantially to their facility’s success, we help them improve the opportunities for their own success—greater job security and opportunity, higher potential compensation and recognition for the job they do.” To Mona, it was that simple.

• **The development of membership standards and revamping of the education program:** In an effort to bring meaning and substance to the Class A member, Mona spearheaded the creation of a program that combined education and service credits to validate Class A membership in the marketplace. Mona was all about equipping the superintendent with the tools and the know-how to be successful.

## Working Wonders at the World Golf Foundation

Although Mona’s official GCSAA role has ended, he continues to support our association through his leadership and involvement in such industry organizations and initiatives as The First Tee, the World Golf Hall of Fame, Golf 20/20, We Are Golf, and National Golf Day.

This past April, when Mona and fellow leaders from around the country took part in National Golf Day, Bob Nielsen was there to see Mona and the We Are Golf coalition in action. As the MetGCSA’s Government Relations chair and advocate for New York State golf course superintendents at the Turfgrass Advocacy Day held in Albany each year, Bob couldn’t say enough about Mona’s industry support.

“Steve Mona has always known the importance of advocacy in our industry,” says Bob, “and his allegiance to golf course superintendents has not waned since his departure as CEO of the GCSAA. In his



*“Collaboration in the golf industry is as great as it has been in the 34 years I’ve been in the golf industry,” Mona says.*

new role as the head of the World Golf Foundation, he has helped to elevate National Golf Day to a level that is recognized by almost every senator and congressman in Washington, and he’s provided a model for our efforts on the local and state levels. Steve Mona has always been, and continues to be, a true friend of the superintendent.”

From his World Golf Foundation office at St. Augustine’s World Golf Village in Florida, Steve Mona oversees three industry organizations that he strongly believes positively impact lives through the game of golf.

They are:

• **The First Tee:** This program has grown from nothing in 1997 to arguably the world’s preeminent youth development program, using golf as a platform to teach life skills. “We expect to reach 10 million young people between 2012 and 2017,” says Mona, noting the organization’s remarkable growth given that it didn’t exist in the early part of 1997.

• **The World Golf Hall of Fame:** Mona describes this as the centerpiece of the World Golf Village, a 6,300-acre community, including two golf courses, a hotel, con-

vention center, timeshares, residences, and a retail center in St. Augustine, FL. Notes Mona, “As Gary Player, our global ambassador, says, ‘If you love golf, you have to go.’”

• **Golf 20/20:** This is an industry coalition that unites the golf industry behind initiatives designed to grow interest and participation in the game of golf. Today, it helps to oversee three important industry initiatives:

1. *Get Golf Ready*, the industry’s adult player development program.

2. *We Are Golf*, the industry’s government relations initiative.

3. *Image of the Game*, the industry’s public and media-relations effort.

“Our goal,” says Mona, “is to increase participation in the game from 25.7 million to 30 million between 2013 and 2017 and to increase rounds from 461 million to 550 million during that same period of time. If we achieve those goals, the entire industry will benefit.”

Knowing Steve Mona, there’s no doubt the World Golf Foundation will achieve those goals—and more.

## Growing the Game: The Role of the Superintendent

Though Mona and the World Golf Foundation are hard at work growing the game of golf, he feels strongly that golf course superintendents have a role to play, as well, in the game’s ongoing growth and prosperity.

In true Mona fashion, he offers three suggestions (Mona is famous for three-item lists) for ways superintendents can become involved in promoting the game on a local level: First, he recommends ensuring that the facility at which you are employed is either offering or has considered the key growth of the game initiatives: Get Golf Ready, Tee it Forward, PGA Junior League Golf, and The First Tee.

Second, he suggests making sure that the setup and maintenance standards (height of rough, width of fairways, speed of greens, etc.) are conducive to an enjoyable experience for all skill levels, particularly novice and inexperienced players.

“I realize,” says Mona, “that facility own-

*“One of the things that impressed me most about Steve Mona was his ability to remember names. When I first met Steve at a meeting in New York, he was briefly introduced to me and my wife, along with about 50 other people. Six months later, he came up to us at the show in Orlando as though he had known us forever. Steve has a remarkable ability—a gift, really—to make everyone feel welcome and at ease.”*

— Bob Nielsen, Bedford Golf & Tennis

ership ultimately sets these standards, but I believe the golf course superintendent can influence them more than anyone else at a facility.”

And third, Mona emphasizes that superintendents view themselves as part of the management team of their golf facility and, as such, partly responsible for both the top line and bottom line at that facility. “In doing this,” says Mona, “the golf course superintendent will naturally become involved in efforts to increase membership, participation, etc. I can’t emphasize enough how important this mindset is to the golf course management profession.”

### **Accolades and Awards**

Not surprisingly, Mona’s many talents and energies have been tapped over the course of his 30-plus-year career by an impressive number of groups both in and out of the golf industry. Among his appointments or elections:

- President of the International Association of Golf Administrators (1990)
- President of the Georgia Society of Association Executives (1993)
- President of the Kansas City Society of Association Executives (2000)
- Chairman of the Lawrence (KS) Business/Education Partnership (1997 – 1998)
- World Golf Hall of Fame Advisory Board (1998 – 2007)
- Golf 20/20 Executive Board (1999 – 2007)
- National Golf Foundation Board of Directors (1999 – 2009), secretary/treasurer (2005 – 2009)
- National Minority Golf Foundation Board of Directors (2000 – 2001)
- Lawrence (KS) Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors (2002 – 2004)
- The Environmental Institute for Golf Board of Trustees (2003 – 2008)
- American Society of Association Executives Board of Directors (2004 – 2007)
- United Missouri Bank Advisory Board (2004 – 2007)
- LPGA Commissioner’s Advisory Council (2006 – 2007)

His background includes relationships with the turfgrass industry as well. He was a director of the Georgia Turfgrass Association from 1988 to 1993, a trustee of its Foundation Trust from 1990 to 1993, and also a member of the advisory committee for Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College’s Turfgrass Management Program from 1989 to 1993.

Mona’s exploits have not gone without notice. In 2008, he was inducted into the Tri-Valley (San Francisco Bay area) Sports Hall of Fame. The International Association of Golf Administrators (IAGA) named him their 2008 Distinguished Service Award recipient. And in 1997, the Kansas City Society of Association Executives named Mona Association Executive of the Year.

Mona was not just recognized once as one of the “Most Powerful People in Golf.” The fall 2013 issue of *Golf Inc.*, marked his thirteenth consecutive year for this honor. And in 1999 when *Golf Digest* listed Mona as one of the golf industry’s “Most Powerful People in Golf,” only one person younger than Mona, Tiger Woods at No. 2, was ranked higher at the time.

Steve Mona can now add to his impressive list of awards, the MetGCSA’s most coveted honor, the 2014 John Reid Lifetime Achievement. Just as John Reid, the namesake of our association’s distinguished service award, played a significant role in bringing golf to America more than a 125 years ago, Steve Mona has played—and continues to play—a leading part in ensuring the game and golf industry thrives well into the future. John Reid would have been proud.

Outside of work, Mona, 56, is the consummate family man. He lives in Ponte Vedra Beach, FL, with his wife, Cyndi. They have three children—Kin, Stephen, and Meredith—and five grandchildren—Lincoln, Mia, Cooper, Pace, and Micaela—with another on the way in February.

*Tim O’Neill, former president of GCSAA, is superintendent of Country Club of Darien in Darien, CT.*

# Steve Mona Offers Aspiring Superintendents His 'Three' Cents



Here, World Golf Foundation CEO Steve Mona offers three pieces of advice (if you haven't noticed, he thinks in threes) for aspiring golf course superintendents. His words to the wise:

1. Develop what I call "towering competency." Put another way, become the best professional you possibly can be, both technically and from a communications and management standpoint. Becoming a lifelong learner is an important part of this mindset.

2. Find two mentors: one to advise you on your career, the other to help you with your personal life. While you can't neatly separate the two, they require different approaches at different times, and in my view, one person can't serve in both roles. The role of the golf course superintendent can be lonely at times, and you need someone you can trust as a confidant.

3. Join and become an active participant in both your local chapter and in GCSAA. You will have the opportunity to meet and learn from the giants in your profession, to serve in leadership roles you otherwise wouldn't, and later in your career, to give back yourself. Golf course superintendents are the most caring, genuine, helpful group of people I know and are always willing to share their knowledge and experience with others. All you have to do is ask.

## Upcoming Events

# Educational Opportunities

### **Southeast Regional Conference**

*Tuesday – Wednesday, January 28 – 29*  
Ramada Inn, Fishkill, NY

Join fellow professionals for two days of education and trade show shopping. For further information, call 518-783-1229 or go to [www.nysta.org](http://www.nysta.org).

### **17th Annual New England Regional Turfgrass Conference and Show**

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

For the 17th consecutive year, the conference and show provides turfgrass professionals from all areas of the industry the opportunity to see the newest products, supplies, services, and equipment available while joining turfgrass professionals for informative educational sessions, pesticide recertification credits, and endless networking opportunities. Enjoy this year's keynote speaker, David Mellor, director of grounds for the Boston Red Sox, as he shares his experience inside the ropes of this year's World Series victory and Red Sox season.

For further details, call 401-841-5490 or log on to [TurfShow.com](http://TurfShow.com) or [www.NERTF.org](http://www.NERTF.org).

### **NYSTA 2014 Turfgrass Advocacy Day**

*Wednesday, March 12*  
Empire State Plaza  
Albany, NY

NYSTA welcomes all green industry professionals to attend this event. The

Turfgrass Advocacy Day offers the opportunity to attend a priority issue briefing session on current legislation that could affect the turfgrass and green industry, as well as a chance to meet with your local elected officials, and later discuss issues over lunch with a government official.

Contact Jill Cyr for further details or to register at [jill@nysta.org](mailto:jill@nysta.org) or 518-783-1229. You can also register online at [www.nysta.org](http://www.nysta.org).

### **2014 MGA/USGA Green Chairman Education Series & Arthur P. Weber MGA Club Environmental Leaders in Golf Award Luncheon**

*Thursday, March 20*  
North Hills Country Club  
Manhasset, NY

The Metropolitan Golf Association Foundation, in conjunction with the United States Golf Association Green Section, has put together another informative program in its ongoing Green Chairman Education Series. An impressive roster of presenters from the USGA's Green Section and the golf industry will address a variety of turfgrass-related issues. Each of the presentations will be followed by a question-and-answer session.

The day will conclude with the seventh annual Arthur P. Weber MGA Club Environmental Leaders in Golf Award Luncheon.

For further information, please contact Kevin Kline at [kkline@mgagolf.org](mailto:kkline@mgagolf.org) or 914-347-4653.

## Connecticut Takes Home the Met Area Team Championship Trophy

by Andy Drohen, Met Area Team Championship Co-Chair

Many thanks to everyone who made it to this year's Met Area Team Championship September 30 at Mountain Ridge Country Club in New Jersey. For the past 33 years, this season-ending golf tournament has brought together superintendents from the upper Mid-Atlantic region to Western Pennsylvania and throughout the entire Northeast for a little camaraderie, networking, and bragging rights for one year. This year we had 13 associations competing with a total field of 120 players.

We would like to thank the Mountain Ridge clubhouse and golf shop staff, who went above and beyond to make sure our day was a success. We also would like to extend an extra-special thank you to Cliff Moore and his staff for having the course in spectacular shape for the day. The players are still talking about the picture-perfect conditions and the exceptional layout.

### On the Links

As always, we had some stiff competition out there, but in the end, the team from Connecticut took the lead, winning by a margin of 13 strokes! Congratulations to the CAGCS team of John Parmelee of Indian Springs Golf Club, Les Kennedy of Blind Brook Club, Mike Dukette of Harrell's, Eric DeStefano of Twin Hills Country Club, Kevin Collins of The Tradition Golf Club at Wallingford, Eric Euell of Steven Willand, Jim Calladio of LaCorte Equipment, and Greg Moore of Saturated Solutions.

The MetGCSA team, consisting of Pelham's Jeff Wentworth/Due Process Stable's Tony Hooks (79) and Quaker's Tom Ashfield/Plant Food's Tom Weinert (81) in the Gross Division and North Jersey's David Dudones/Westchester's Joe Alonzi (71) and Mount Kisco's Greg Gutter and Brae Burn's Blake Halderman (68) in the Net Division, slipped from Second to Third Place this year with a 299—just behind the Central New York GCSA, which took Second Place with a 296.

Placing third out of 13 teams was still no small feat. Great playing gentlemen!

We'd like to offer special thanks to our seven national sponsors—Agrium Advanced Technologies, Aquatrols, BASF, Bayer, The Care of Trees, Syngenta, and Toro—for their continuing support in making this a truly wonderful event. We could not have grown this event to the level it has reached without them!

### A Worthy Cause

As many of you may know, this event is more than just about golf. Each year, funds raised during the championship go to a charity of the MetGCSA board's choice. This year we were able to raise more than \$1,400 from the 50/50 and have elected to support Wendell Beakley, a golf course superintendent from New Jersey whose wife A.J. recently lost her battle with cancer. The Beakley family has incurred some enormous medical costs, so the funds will go to a very worthwhile cause. Please keep Wendell and his family in your prayers.

If you've never participated in this championship, do yourself a favor and try to qualify for the MetGCSA team. You're guaranteed to have a great time playing golf with your peers while experiencing one of the best courses in the country.

Next year, we'll be competing at Philadelphia Country Club, another great classic that you won't want to miss! See you all in 2014!

### The Complete Results

What follows is a list of team and proximity winners. Congratulations everyone!

#### Team Scores (Par 284)

1st / 283	Connecticut AGCS
2nd / 296	Central New York GCSA
3rd / 299	MetGCSA
4th / 300	Philadelphia AGCA
5th / 301	Pocono Turfgrass Association
6th / 308	GCSA of New Jersey
6th / 308	Hudson Valley GCSA

8th / 315	Northeastern GCSA
8th / 315	Central Penn GCSA
10th / 316	Mid-Atlantic AGCS
11th / 320	Rhode Island GCSA
12th / 325	Long Island GCSA
13th / 331	Eastern Shore AGCS

#### Closest to the Pin

#4 / 4' 9"	Bob Alonzi MetGCSA (Sponsored by BASF)
#7 / 3' 8"	Blake Halderman MetGCSA (Sponsored by Aquatrols)
#14 / 2' 5"	John Parmelee Connecticut AGCS (Sponsored by Toro)
#16 / 2' 5"	Matt Topazio Hudson Valley GCSA (Sponsored by Syngenta)

#### Longest Drive

Net Div.	Mike Brunelle GCSA of New Jersey (Sponsored by Bayer)
Gross Div.	Mike Dukette Connecticut AGCS (Sponsored by Agrium Adv. Tech.)
Sponsors Div.	Billy Ditchey Philadelphia AGCS (Sponsored by The Care of Trees)

#### Low Gross Team Winners

72	Mike Dukette & Eric DeStefano Connecticut AGCS
----	---------------------------------------------------

#### Sponsorship Team Winners

67	Cliff Moore & Lance Rogers
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#### Two-Man Team High Score

Gross / 90	Andy Sheehan & Ralph Meola Mid-Atlantic AGCS
Net / 83	Chris Fronczek & Todd Cowing Eastern Shore AGCS

# First-Time Winners Triumph in Dave Mahoney Two-Ball Tourney

by Larry Pakkala, CGCS

The 2013 David Mahoney Two-Ball came to an exciting close in both flights with two first-time champions. Congratulations to First Flight winners Tom Weinert of Plant Food Company and Ryan Oliver of Hudson National Golf Club and to Second Flight winners Kevin Collins of Aquatrols and Nick Lerner of Bonnie Briar Country Club. Here's a run-down on how the two matches unfolded.

## In the First Flight . . .

October 11 was the final match between Blake Halderman (Brae Burn CC) and Glen Dube (Centennial GC) against Tom Weinert (Plant Food) and Ryan Oliver (Hudson National GC). It was a beautiful fall day at Wee Burn Country Club with the course in perfect condition. The match never got too far out of hand with both teams sharing the lead at various points of the match.

It looked like Blake and Glen had the match under control at the turn, leading 2 up. Weinert and Oliver, however, were able to even it up by the 15th hole. On 16, which

is an island green surrounded on all sides by a brook, Dube and Oliver had birdie putts. Dube settled for par while Oliver holed a 10-footer to take a one-hole lead with two to play. After halving the 17th, all four boomed drives on the uphill par five 18th hole. With the tension mounting, they laid up and proceeded to chip it long to the back of the green for a treacherous downhill on very fast greens. Halderman was the closest with a 20-footer for birdie. Oliver's putting from 30 feet straight downhill rolled past by 10 feet. Halderman, with a chance to tie it up and take it to sudden death, left it 3 feet short. Oliver then sank the 10-foot uphill putt for par to seal the championship in the First Flight.

## In the Second Flight . . .

The Second Flight Two-Ball final match was contested on October 22, on the very same course, Darien's Wee Burn Country Club. The match was a hard-fought epic battle between the team of Kevin Collins (Aquatrols) and Nick "The Hip" Lerner



Hudson National's Ryan Oliver sinks the winning putt at Wee Burn Country Club.

(Bonnie Briar CC) and the Steve Loughran (Rock Ridge CC) and Brian Bontemps (Seeton Turf Warehouse) duo.

The course was, again, in perfect condition and the greens were lightning fast. The Collins/Lerner team was 2 up through the first five holes, but Loughran and Bontemps soon erased that lead with a slew of birdies, and after the first nine, they were 1 up. Lerner won the 10th hole to square the match, but their opponents quickly regained a 1-up lead on 11. The next three holes were halved. On the 15th, Lerner tied the match again with a 4 for 3 on the toughest par 3 on the course. It was do-or-die for Collins and Lerner. Memories of two previous finals losses haunted them. On 16, Collins parred and the team was now 1 up with 2 to play. On the par four 17th hole, Lerner was on in regulation and hit his putt about 8 feet past the hole. Collins, who was on in three, faced a tricky uphill 20-footer, which he sank for the 2 & 1 victory.

The camaraderie and sportsmanship all teams showed each other during and after the match would have made Dave Mahoney proud. It's what the Two-Ball matches are all about!

We'd like to thank all who participated, as well as the superintendents who were kind enough to host the matches at their clubs. Don't miss the opportunity this spring to come out and qualify for the 2014 Two-Ball.

Larry Pakkala, a member of the Tee to Green Editorial Committee, is the golf course superintendent at Silvermine Golf Club in Norwalk, CT.



First Flight finalists prepare to play their final round in the Dave Mahoney Two-Ball at Wee Burn Country Club. From left to right: Tom Weinert, Ryan Oliver, Glen Dube, and Blake Halderman.

## Member News

# Scholarship Raffle's Lucky Winners

The Annual Bill Caputi Scholarship Raffle, held at the December 7 MetGCSA Christmas Party at Avalon Hall in New Rochelle, NY, 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 for this worthwhile fundraiser. Congratulations to our \$1,000 grand prize winner, **Steve Rabideau**, from Winged Foot Golf Club.

The other prize winners were:

### \$500 Winners

**Tom Weinert**, Plant Food Company  
**Bobby Steinman**, Pocono Turf  
**Bill Cimochowski**, Seeton Turf Warehouse

### \$250 Winners

**Bill Cimochowski**, Seeton Turf Warehouse  
**Kevin Collins**, Aquatrols, Inc.  
**Tom Weinert**, Plant Food Company  
**Rich Apgar**, Metro Turf Specialists

### \$100 Winners

**Steve Rabideau**, Winged Foot Golf Club  
**Bill Cimochowski**, Seeton Turf Warehouse  
**Rich Apgar**, Metro Turf Specialists  
**John Sullivan**, (ticket sold by Scott Apgar of Metro Turf Specialists)  
**Les Kennedy**, Blind Brook Club  
**Tim O'Neill**, Country Club of Darien  
**Matt Nielsen**, son of Bob Nielsen of Bedford Golf & Tennis  
**John Ruzsbatzky**, Country Club of Farmington  
**Jim Biordi**, Dogwood Knolls Country Club  
**Neil Laufenberg**, Innis Arden Golf Club



GO!

The MetGCSA wishes you  
and yours health,  
happiness, and  
beautiful weather in 2014!

# ...And to



Dana Niven &  
Blake Halderman



Jasmine



Rich Apgar, Shayna Nigro,  
Todd Apgar, & Sophia Strand



Bob Nielsen &  
Matt Ceplo



Eve Gentile &  
Renee Pavonetti



Kait Case  
Dave Peter

Photos courtesy of Megan Baggott.

# all a GREAT night!

MetGCSA Holiday Party 2013



& Matt Ceplo



Kevin Collins & Ken Gentile



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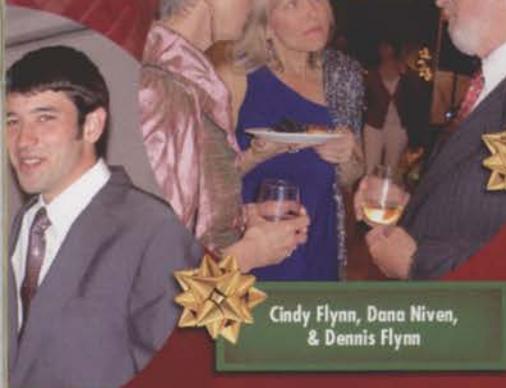
John & Rosaria Miele



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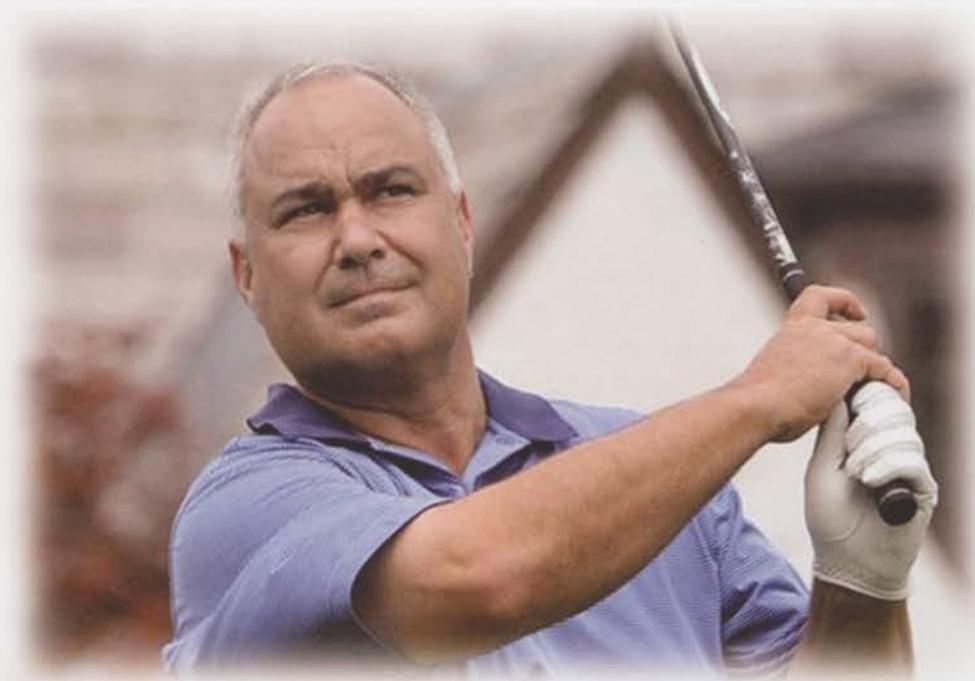
Dave Parson & Meighan Foltman



Erica Dube & Michele Collins

# Andy Drohen Qualifies for USGA Mid-Am With Tom Ashfield Toting the Bag

by Larry Pakkala, CGCS



**I**'ll bet not many of you out there had any idea that we have a USGA Mid-Am qualifier in our midst. Agrium Advanced Technologies' Andy Drohen, who also is one of the key organizers of the annual Met Area Team Championship, was one of a select few who qualified to play in the national finals held at The Country Club of Birmingham in Alabama.

Andy played his qualifying round this past August at Brooklawn Country Club in Fairfield, CT. Quaker Superintendent and Two-Ball partner Tom Ashfield caddied, hoping to help Andy earn one of the seven spots in a field of 144 players going to the national finals.

Brooklawn's superintendent, Peter Bly, had the course in tiptop shape for the qualifying match, which went pretty well out of the gate with an easy par on #1. The round quickly went south, however, on the 4th tee, where Andy proceeded to hit tee-ball after tee-ball, with the official giving the "Out of

Bounds" signal in the fairway—three tee shots altogether!

That's when Tom's job got real tough, real fast! At that point, he was as close as he was going to get to the parking lot, where he could have just dropped the bag, crossed the street, and headed back to work, but he chose, instead, to take the more difficult route of talking Andy down from the ledge as they walked together down the 4th fairway.

Ultimately, Andy made a double bogey 6 on the 4th hole after finding the first ball up against the fence, but in-bounds. With Tom clubbing and reading putts the rest of the way in, the two partnered up to finish the round at one under par 70—good enough for a tie for third place and a ticket to the nationals!

Way to go, Andy, and way to go Tom. Now that's what you call teamwork!

*Larry Pakkala, a member of the Tee to Green Editorial Committee, is the golf course superintendent at Silvermine Golf Club in Norwalk, CT.*

## Members on the Move

- **Andrew Agnew** is the new superintendent at Mount Kisco Country Club in Mount Kisco, NY. Previous position: Assistant superintendent at Sleepy Hollow Country Club in Scarborough, NY.
- **Tyler Otero** is the new superintendent at North Jersey Country Club in Wayne, NJ. Previous position: Superintendent at Trump National Golf Club – Bedminster in Bedminster, NJ.

## Births

Congratulations to:

- **Ed Brockner**, MetGCSA executive director, and his wife, Laura, on the birth of their daughter, Charlotte Emma, on November 12.
- **Doug Drugo**, superintendent of Wee Burn Country Club, and his wife, Dana, on the birth of their daughter, Abigail Rose, on December 6. She was 7 lbs. 6 ozs.
- **Dave Moffett**, superintendent of Mosholu Golf Course and his wife, Valentina, on the birth of their son, Samuel David, on December 9. He was 9 lbs. 8 ozs.
- **Matt Topazio**, superintendent of New York Country Club and his wife, Alicia, on the birth of their daughter, Maya Christine, on December 16. She was 7 lbs. 9 ozs.

## New Members

Please join us in welcoming the following new MetGCSA members:

- **Todd Apgar**, Class AF, of Metro Turf Specialists in Brookfield, CT
- **Evan Bradstreet**, Class C, of Redding Country Club in Redding, CT
- **Delmar Isreal III**, Class C, of Fenway Country Club in Scarsdale, NY
- **Mackenzey Haller**, Class C, of Waccabuc Country Club in Waccabuc, NY
- **Keith Kubik**, Class AF, of Grass Roots, Inc. in Randolph, NJ
- **Anthony Minniti**, Class C, of The Creek Club in Locust Valley, NY
- **Raymond Platt**, Class C, of Hampshire Country Club in Mamaroneck, NY
- **Gregory Rotter**, Class C, of Redding Country Club in Redding, CT
- **Ryan White**, Class C, of Woodway Country Club in Darien, CT

## Congratulations

Kudos to **Jackie Apgar**, wife of Metro Turf Specialists' **Scott Apgar**, for completing the November 3 New York Marathon in 4 hours, 29 minutes, and 40 seconds—20 seconds less than her goal! Way to go Jackie! Will Scott be next?

## Well Wishes

Wishing **Nick Lerner** of Bonnie Briar Country Club a speedy recovery after his hip replacement surgery.

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