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# Tee To Green



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# President's Message

## Reflecting on a Term Well Spent



# W

ow! Two years as the Met's president have flown by, and now I am being put out to pasture with the rest of the past leaders of our great association. That means I can start using phrases like, "I remember when . . .," "In my day . . .," "These young guys just don't . . ." All told, I've served the MetGCSA for 13 years, and the crazy thing is that those years have sped by almost as fast as my last two! But then when I realize that I've dedicated more than a quarter of my life to the association, it suddenly hits me just how much time has really passed.

I have been honored to continue the family tradition of serving the turfgrass management industry. My great, great grandfather, Charles Campbell Worthington, my great grandfather Ed Worthington Sr., my grandfather Ed Worthington Jr., and finally, my mother Janet, all made noteworthy contributions to the industry. Perhaps most closely tied to the Met was my grandfather who had founded the Ed Worthington Corp., a turfgrass supply business headquartered in Saranac Lake, NY. He had begun calling on area superintendents more than 60 years ago and touted the Met as "the most professional association in the country."

In his later, more forgetful years, I was always pleased to remind him that I was in turf school and about to start an internship at Westchester Country Club. Man, I wish he could see me now. I think he would approve of the path I've taken in giving back to the industry that had been so loyal to him.

### Taking It to the Next Level

My tenure on the Board of Directors has been nothing short of rewarding, both personally and professionally. I have benefited from the numerous lifelong friendships I have made, and just as important, I have had the fortunate opportunity to work with and learn from some of the most dedicated and capable members of our association. During my time on the board, I've observed the likes of Tim Moore and Dave Mahoney, who both left us too soon, right on through to our most recent past presidents, Bob Nielsen, Blake Halderman, and Glen Dube. These men all made the decision to give more to



David Dudones  
MetGCSA President

the association than they ever expected to receive in return, and I have seen the impact their thoughtful contributions and dedication have had on our association.

Working alongside most of the current board members, it's clear that they will continue to follow suit, giving 100 percent toward building an organization that remains at the forefront of our industry. And with Ken Benoit and Rob Alonzi now at the helm, the association couldn't be in more capable hands going forward.

Also helping to bring our association to the next level was the addition, four years ago, of Mike McCall as our executive director. Mike has become what we originally imagined for the position. He is front and center at every event and now the face of our organization. I can't thank him enough for his leadership and commitment to progress day in and day out.

Two years ago, we outlined our upcoming goals for the association:

- Increase Meeting Attendance
- Increase Public Relations
- Grow Our Restricted Accounts and Membership
- Actively Promote Jobs Staying in Our Area
- Actively Recruit New Board of Director Candidates

Mike and the board have made excellent headway in many of these areas and are always looking for ways to improve. They all deserve a round of applause.

### Look at What We've Done!

Working to accomplish the goals set at the start of my presidency, we have seen several initiatives flourish under the umbrella of the newly created **Met Foundation**. For the uninitiated, the foundation is a charitable organization established by the MetGCSA to support research, scholarships, *continued on page 11*

# Renowned Broadcaster Jimmy Roberts to Receive the Met's John Reid Lifetime Achievement Award

*by Mike McCall, MetGCSA Executive Director*





# W

hen MetGCSA Immediate-Past President and Westchester Country Club Director of Grounds, David Dudones, called the 2018 winner of the prestigious John Reid Lifetime Achievement Award, he probably didn't expect the recipient to talk about his lawn.

"Anyone who knows me knows I am crazy about the appearance of my lawn," said Jimmy Roberts, the famed broadcaster, sportswriter, and now 28th recipient of the John Reid Lifetime Achievement Award. "Thanks to my long association with golf and the MetGSCA, I have a better understanding than most of what goes into growing and maintaining turfgrass at the highest standards."

On a more serious note, Roberts expressed sincere delight at being recognized by the MetGSCA for his contributions to maintaining the integrity and popularity of the game of golf. He joins such other legendary Reid recipients as Bruce Beck, Guido Cribari, Ken Venturi, Dave Anderson, and Jim Nantz.

"It was a thrill to get that call from Dave Dudones," he said. "It's an honor to receive this award for my involvement in the game that has always been such an important part of my life and career."

And what a career it's been. Over the past four decades, this White Plains native has risen through the ranks to become one of the most influential and respected sports reporters in the industry. A long-time broadcaster on NBC Sports and the Golf Channel, Roberts brings his reporting to millions of golf lovers across the United States. Anyone who watches televised golf, especially the Masters or the Olympics, knows the voice and face of Jimmy Roberts. His heart-warming approach transcends the sport through his inspirational stories of the individuals who compete. You don't need to be interested in sports to fall under the spell of Roberts' master storytelling.

Despite his celebrity, this long-time member of Westchester Country Club remains as friendly and approachable as ever. "Jimmy is one of those members who always says hello, even from a distance," says



*Arthur Ashe presents Jimmy Roberts with an Emmy well deserved.*

retired Director of Grounds of Westchester Country Club Joe Alonzi. "He would go out of his way to let you know how good the course conditions were."

## A Scorecard of Success for a "914 Guy"

Growing up in Westchester County, Roberts developed a love of golf starting at the age of 7, when he began playing at the local public courses of Maple Moor and Saxon Woods. Later, as a caddie, Roberts had access to play at the private clubs of Fenway Golf Club, Westchester Hills, and Ridgeway Country Club.

After graduating from White Plains High School, Roberts attended the University of Maryland, where he earned a Bachelor of Arts degree and, afterwards, worked as a staff reporter for the Westchester/Rockland newspapers. In 2016, he received the Metropolitan Golf Association Distinguished Service Award. The following year, he was inducted into the Westchester County Sports Hall of Fame. Upon receiving the awards, Roberts gave a shout-out to his home turf.

"I'm a 914 guy," he said, referring to his Westchester County area code. "I can't imagine myself living anywhere else."

Roberts began his career in sports as a writer and producer for ABC Sports. After eight years at ABC, working behind the scenes with the likes of iconic broadcaster Howard Cosell, he parlayed that experience into more visible roles, starting in 1988 at

ESPN. His assignments as a SportsCenter correspondent included the World Series, NBA Finals, heavyweight championship bouts, Super Bowl, and the 1992 and 1994 Winter Olympics. He was a regular contributor and co-ordinator of ESPN's *Outside the Lines* series.

As Tiger Woods entered the arena and changed the game of golf, Roberts earned a coveted spot as ESPN's Golf Correspondent. An exclusive interview after Tiger's 1997 Masters win propelled Roberts onto the main stage. He's never looked back.

Roberts joined NBC Sports in May 2000, quickly gaining even more recognition and fame as an essayist and reporter on NBC and the Golf Channel's coverage of the PGA Tour and other high-profile golf events, including the Ryder Cup. He's a veteran of 17 Olympic games and has racked up, to date, a total of 13 Emmys for his work.

## A Bet With President Bush

Covering professional golfers for more than 30 years can lead to quite a few good stories, and few people can tell as many as Jimmy Roberts can—*true* stories, anyway. One of his favorites involves the late President George H.W. Bush. The story goes that in response to a request for a few minutes of the president's time to discuss the history of presidential golf, then President Bush—famous for his fast-paced game—suggested that Roberts join him in Kennebunkport, ME, to play a round.



*A day to remember at Kennebunkport: Jimmy Roberts plays a round with President Bush.*

Flabbergasted, Roberts nervously accepted. Just prior to the start of the round, President Bush insisted that they play for a \$1. Roberts agreed and, to his amazement, played the round of his life, shooting his lowest score ever to that point.

The president made good on his bet by giving Roberts a dollar. Roberts really wanted to get the dollar bill signed but couldn't bring himself to make the request. Shortly afterward, the president got word of Roberts' wish, so the commander-in-chief ordered Roberts to mail him the dollar, which the president signed and returned to Roberts.

"I don't have many mementos around my house, but I do have hanging proudly in my home a collage that includes the photograph with President Bush, the signed dollar bill, the scorecard from that day, and a handwritten note about the day from the president on his personal stationary. I will always treasure them," Roberts said. "He was such an amazing man and extremely gracious. It was the most memorable experience of my life."

## Slumps and Mentors

Roberts' love of golf has no doubt been fueled by the inspirational people and stories he has encountered over the years. He decided to write these stories down for prosperity and as inspiration for others. In 2009, his book, *Breaking the Slump: How Great Players Survived Their Darkest Moments in Golf—and What You Can Learn From Them*, was published by HarperCollins. The book

*"I think the golf course superintendent and golf pro are the most significant people at the club . . . Without them, we are all just talentless fools wandering on ruined ground."*

highlights some of the greatest golfers of our time and the struggles and frustrations they conquered to get to the top.

"When I started this book, I thought it was going to be about golf, but it turned out to be a book about how successful people deal with adversity," he says. "I learned a great deal by talking with people like Arnold Palmer, Tom Watson, Jack Nicklaus, President Bush, Dottie Pepper, and all the others I interviewed. What I learned is that we are all going to struggle, including me. The trick is how we deal with it."

How has Roberts dealt with the ups and downs that anyone in his field experiences? He credits several mentors he has worked with over the years, most notably Howard Cosell. But when pressed to name someone slightly less well-known, Roberts didn't hesitate: the late Judd Rose of ABC News. Roberts says Rose was a brilliant and talented storyteller. "He was really something special and had a great influence on my life."

Unfortunately, Rose passed away far too early from a brain tumor. Fortunately for us, though, the gift of storytelling lives on in the words of Jimmy Roberts.

## Proudest Work

You might think that in a career as storied as Roberts', he might cite his best work as having something to do with the Masters or the Olympics. This is not the case. The work he says he is most proud of is a show he created five years ago for the Golf Channel's, *In Play with Jimmy Roberts*. In an episode of *Golf Vistas From Behind Bars*, Roberts documented the story of Valentino Dixon, a convicted murderer serving a 30-year sentence at the notorious Attica prison in upstate New York.

According to the story, Dixon had been an aspiring artist before getting caught up in the drug-dealing scene. One day, the prison's warden showed Dixon a picture of Augusta National's 12th hole and asked him to sketch it. Dixon did so, and then began to pass his time drawing imaginary and famous golf holes from around the world. Eventually, despite never having held a golf club or even walked on a real golf course, Dixon became



*Jimmy Roberts broadcasting the stories of golf.*

an exceptional golf course artist. However, the real story is that Dixon claimed he was innocent from Day 1, and the episode made a case that he very well might be.

After a new Buffalo, New York District Attorney came into office, Dixon's case was thoroughly revisited, including Dixon's interview with Roberts. Eventually, Dixon's conviction was vacated and on September 19, 2018, after 27 years of wrongful incarceration, Valentino Dixon walked out of prison a free man.

"Of all of the things I have done in my life, that was far and away the most meaningful," Roberts says.

Dixon's story—"27 Years: The Exoneration of Valentino Dixon"—aired on December 11, 2018 on the Golf Channel.

## Not About to Slow Down

At 61, Roberts is at the height of his career and shows no signs of slowing down. He serves as the voice of Masters.com, works as a part-time studio host and golf correspondent for NBC Sports, covers telecasts for the Golf Channel, and stars in *In Play with Jimmy Roberts*, where he shares incredible stories from inside the game. He is also the featured back-page columnist for *The Met Golfer* magazine.

How does he find the time to do all this? "I'm still trying," he says. "It's the biggest challenge I have. But I have been incredibly fortunate that I can do what I really like to do. When you love what you do, you tend to do more."

In the midst of building a notable career, Roberts also carved out time to build a family. He lives in the New York area with his wife, Sandra, and their three sons.

## A Friend and Advocate for the Game...and the Superintendent

Few people know the game of golf—and what goes into it—as well as Jimmy Roberts does. Fewer still are as eager to support and recognize the people who make it happen.

“I think the golf course superintendent and golf pro are the most significant people at the club,” he says. And then he adds, in classic Roberts-ese, “Without them, we are all just talentless fools wandering on ruined ground.”

Roberts’ appreciation of the hard work involved no doubt stems from his hands-on experience since he was a “914 kid” playing all those courses in Westchester. “Golf course superintendents enhance the enjoyment of playing golf,” he says. “I don’t want to mention any names, but when you play a course managed by a rock-star superintendent, you can’t help but notice the difference they make.”

The admiration is definitely mutual.

“As a talented journalist and story teller, Roberts has done an incredible job of bringing golf to viewers around the world,” says Rhett Evans, CEO of the GCSAA. “He is a friend of the sport, the industry, and all those who work in golf, including superintendents who do so much for the game. His love for the game is obvious, and he is a wonderful ambassador for everyone involved in it.”

“Jimmy Roberts truly cares about the game and has invested uncounted hours and his voice to promote all that is good about golf. He continues to take a personal interest, particularly in the role golf courses play in the community—as green spaces, recreational assets, employers, and as leaders in environmental sustainability,” says Mike Davis, CEO of the USGA.

“The USGA has appreciated his advocacy, and for championing the many people who work on golf courses every day through his decades of storytelling. He has a gift for creating a unique sense of place on every golf course he sees and a unique connection with every person in golf he meets—and the game is better for it.”

Congratulations to the 2018 winner of the John Reid Lifetime Achievement Award, Mr. Jimmy Roberts—golfer, writer, reporter, broadcaster, friend.

*Mike McCall, CGCS, is the executive director of the MetGCSA and managing member of the McCall Management Group, LLC.*

## Upcoming Events

### Educational and Social Events

#### **NYSTA Southeast Regional Conference**

*Tuesday – Wednesday, January 29 – 30*  
Resorts World Catskills, Monticello, NY

For further information, contact the NYSTA office at 518-783-1229 or visit [www.nysta.org](http://www.nysta.org).

#### **GCSAA Golf Championships**

*Saturday – Monday, February 2 – 4*  
San Diego, CA

The GCSAA Golf Championships offer the opportunity to play San Diego-area golf courses while competing in four different tournaments over three days: the National Championship, Golf Classic, Four-Ball, and Scramble, as well as a chapter competition and fun contests.

#### **GCSAA Education Conference & Golf Course Industry Show**

*Monday – Thursday, February 4 – 7*  
San Diego Conference Center  
San Diego, CA

Don’t miss this year’s GCSAA Golf Industry Show and Education Conference with an incomparable lineup of seminars and educational sessions, as well as one the industry’s most comprehensive trade shows.

For details on the conference’s educational offerings and trade show, log onto [www.golfindustryshow.com](http://www.golfindustryshow.com).

#### **Nor’easter Event**

*Wednesday, February 6*  
Florent Restaurant and Lounge  
San Diego, CA  
6:30 to 9:00

Hosted again this year by the MetGCSA and eight other associations, the event will include an open bar, appetizers, and food stations. Stop by and enjoy an evening of camaraderie.

#### **2019 Turfgrass Advocacy Day – NYSTA’S Lobby Day**

*Tuesday, February 12*  
Empire State Plaza, Albany, NY

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.

For further information, contact the NYSTA office at 518-783-1229 or visit [www.nysta.org](http://www.nysta.org).

#### **Class C Professional Development Seminar**

*Wednesday, February 20*  
Sleepy Hollow Country Club  
Scarborough, NY

Join fellow Class C members for this outstanding educational event offering highly informative talks and a panel discussion with seasoned superintendents that promises to make for a career-enhancing day.

#### **2018 Nor’easter Ski Day**

*Thursday, February 28*  
Killington Ski Resort, Killington, VT

Don’t miss this multi-association, family fun event on the Killington slopes. Information about lodging and registration can be found on the Vermont superintendent’s website at [vtgcsa.com](http://vtgcsa.com). Lodging is likely to fill up fast, so please be sure to call in for housing as soon as possible.

For further information, contact Andy Drohen at [andy.drohen@kochind.com](mailto:andy.drohen@kochind.com).

#### **2019 New England Regional Turfgrass Foundation Conference & Show**

*Tuesday – Thursday, March 5 – 7*  
Providence Rhode Island Convention Center, Providence, RI

For the 22nd consecutive year, the conference and show will provide turfgrass professionals from all areas of the industry the opportunity to see the newest products, supplies, services, and equipment available while offering a host of informative educational sessions, pesticide recertification credits, and endless networking opportunities.

Watch for details on [www.NERTF.org](http://www.NERTF.org), or call 401-848-0004 for further information.

#### **2019 MGA Green Chairman Seminar & Arthur P. Weber MGA Club Environmental Leaders in Golf Award Luncheon**

*Tuesday, March 12*  
Willow Ridge Country Club, Harrison, NY

The annual Green Chairman Education series is tailored for club superintendents, professionals, green chairmen, and club officials, and discusses current issues and trends that are emerging for courses in the Met Area. A highlight of the meeting is the presentation of the Arthur P. Weber MGA Club Environmental Leaders in Golf Award.



## GCSANJ Assistants Claim First Place in Battle of the Bridges Tourney

by Dave Peterson



*Congratulations to the winning team from the GCSA of New Jersey!*

In its third year, the 2018 Battle of the Bridges Assistants Championship was a rubber match of sorts. Year one of the tournament saw MetGCSA assistants claim an easy victory at Upper Montclair. In year two, New Jersey assistants brought a small, but powerful team to Paramount Country Club and left with the cup.

Who would prevail in year three?

The day started as so many late October days do, with a chill in the air and a noticeable breeze. Extra jackets were pulled out of cars and golf bags. Luckily, the winds stayed light, the sun came out, and Preakness Hills Country Club provided enough food and drink to keep everyone warm and limber.

The golf started heating up as well with New Jersey assistants managing, in the end, to pull out a repeat performance and assume first place in the Assistants Championship once again!

What follows is a recap of the final scores, as well as the top wins of the day:

### Battle of the Bridges Final Score (Top 5 Net and Gross Scores Combined)

GCSANJ ~ 539  
MetGCSA ~ 566

### Contest Winners

#### Longest Drive

#5 Mike Drowne, Wee Burn CC  
#10 Craig Halma, Silver Spring CC

#### Closest to the Pin

#8	Wes D'Angelo	10' 1"
	CC of New Canaan	
#18	Greg Coughlin	2' 10"
	Sleepy Hollow CC	

#### Low Gross ~ GCSANJ

76 RJ Blanchard, TPC Jasna

#### Low Gross ~ MetGCSA

80 Craig Halma, Silver Spring CC

#### Low Net ~ GCSANJ

72	Freddy Carmona, Stanton Ridge
	(won in a match of cards)
72	Josh DeSalvia, Glen Ridge CC

#### Low Net ~ MetGCSA

65 Brad Brown, Stanwich Club

### Kudos to Preakness Hills

Despite a historically tough year, conditions at Preakness Hills couldn't have been better—a testament to the hard work of assistants Tony Espe, Miguel Ortega, and Kyle Cross. A big thank you to John O'Keefe and the entire Preakness Hills staff for providing such a great day for the assistants. A great time was had by all!

*Dave Peterson is the superintendent at Silvermine Golf Club in Norwalk, CT.*

## MetGCSA Triumphs at Hamilton Farm

by Andy Drohen

In what could possibly be the first time in the history of the championship, the MetGCSA claimed first place in the Met Area Team Championship at Hamilton Farm Golf Club in Gladstone, NJ. The championships continue to be highly competitive, and this year was no different. The MetGCSA, led by the low gross team of Steve Rabideau and Sean Cain, narrowly defeated the defending champions from Connecticut by two strokes!

Hamilton Farm's director of golf and grounds, Jason Harrison, hosted this year's championship, and despite the nonstop rain all season long, he and his team had the golf course in fantastic shape. The greens were smooth and slick, which proved to be challenging to many competitors this year.

Located just 50 miles outside of New York City, Hamilton Farm is one of the premier courses in New Jersey. It was designed by famed environmental architects Michael Hurdzan and Dana Fry and was sculpted into the rolling terrain of central New Jersey. Hamilton Farm has some beautiful vistas and architecturally stunning looks shaped by the bunkering of Fry. The 6th hole was recently selected by *Golf Digest* as part of the best 18 holes around the New York area!

Rabideau and Cain teamed with Steve Loughran and Tom Ashfield on the Gross side and Steve McGlone, Dave Conrad, Josh Haugh, and Blake Halderman joined forces on the Net side. All four groups provided solid performances for the MetGCSA, breaking 80 in every pairing with McGlone and Conrad shooting 2 under on the Net side.

### The Complete Results

What follows is a list of the team and proximity winners. Congratulations to one and all!

#### Team Scores (Par 288)

1st / 296	MetGCSA
2nd / 298	Connecticut AGCS
3rd / 301	GCSA of New Jersey
4th / 303	Long Island GCSA
5th / 304	Philadelphia AGCS
6th / 308	GCSA of Cape Cod
7th / 316	Central New York GCSA
8th / 317	Pocono Turfgrass Association



9th / 319 Hudson Valley GCSA  
 10th / 321 Northeastern GCSA  
 11th / 324 GCSA of New England  
 12th / 329 Eastern Shore AGCS  
 13th / 376 Mid-Atlantic AGCS

### Closest to the Pin

#3 / 4' 10" Tom Height  
*Pocono TA*  
 (Sponsored by Toro)  
 #7 / 1' 0" Ryan Howard  
*Eastern Shore AGCS*  
 (Sponsored by Syngenta)  
 #12 / 3' 7" Tom Height  
*Pocono TA*  
 Sponsored by Koch Turf & Orn.)  
 #17 / 7' 6" Tom Kaplun  
*Long Island GCSA*  
 (Sponsored by Bayer)

### Longest Drive

#9 / Luke Knutson  
 Gross Div. *Long Island GCSA*  
 (Sponsored by The Care of Trees)  
 #14 / Nick Waldner  
 Net Div. *Hamilton Farm GC*  
 (Sponsored by Ocean Organics)  
 #18 / Tom Currie  
 Sponsors *Bayer*  
 Div. (Sponsored by BASF)



*Congratulations to the winning Met Area Team Championship team from the MetGCSA (left to right): Ken Benoit, Glen Dube, David Dudones, Steve Loughran, Sean Cain, Steve Rabideau, Josh Haugh, David Conrad, Tom Ashfield, Steven McGlone.*

### Low Gross Team Winners

73 Steve Rabideau & Sean Cain  
*MetGCSA*

### Sponsorship Team Winners

70 Scott Anderson & Joe Scioscia  
*Hamilton Farm Golf Course*

### Two-Man Team High Score

Net / 83 Mike O'Neil & Joe Lucas  
*Northeastern GCSA*  
 Net / 83 Todd Cowning & Chris Fronczek  
*Eastern Shore AGCS*

Gross / 123 Ryan Kraushofer & Josh Furlman  
*Mid-Atlantic AGCS*

### Competing for a Cause

The Met Area Team Championship continues to raise money each year to help those in our industry going through difficult times. Over the past eight years, we have raised more than \$10,000 and have supported superintendents and industry representatives and their families in times of need. Last year, we donated \$1,500 to the South Texas GCSA to help families affected by Hurricane Harvey. Thank you to all who support these efforts with the 50/50 raffles! If you know of anyone in need, please let us know.

### Final Note

Thanks again to all our sponsors, Jason Harrison and his entire staff, and all the folks at Hamilton Farm Golf Club for another successful championship. A special thank you to our local GCSAA representative, Kevin Doyle, for help with registration and GCSA of New Jersey member Shaun Barry for the great photos as usual! We look forward to seeing everyone next year, so stay tuned for announcements over the winter!

*Andy Drohen, Met Area Team Championship Co-Chair and a member of the Tee to Green Editorial Committee, is a senior regional sales manager with Koch Agronomic Services in Granville, MA.*

### A Thank You to Our Sponsors

Year after year, the Met Area Team Championship is made possible by our seven major sponsors who continue to lend a hand in making this one of the best events across North America! Please join me in thanking BASF, Bayer, The Care of Trees, Koch Turf & Ornamental, Ocean Organics, Syngenta, and Toro as they continue to support this wonderful event.

*Andy Drohen, event co-chair.*



# Chapter Delegates Brought Up-to-Speed on GCSAA's Plans for the Future

by Brett Chapin

## Delegates From Across the Country Convene at GCSAA Headquarters for 2018 Chapter Delegates Meeting

In November, I represented our association at the GCSAA Chapter Delegates Meeting in Kansas City, MO, and at GCSAA Headquarters in Lawrence, KS. It was a pleasure to join 89 fellow delegates from 91 chapters across the country in sharing both the successes and trials we've experienced within our local associations. In addition, GCSAA staff and Board of Directors brought us up-to-speed on the organization's current initiatives and proposed changes that we will be voting on at the GCSAA Annual Meeting in San Diego in February.

This year's group of delegates was actively involved in discussions that took place on the dues increase, membership retention and growth, and the requirements to become a GCSAA board member.

The meeting opened with welcoming remarks from GCSAA CEO Rhett Evans. Evans briefed delegates—30 of them new to the meeting this year—on the state of GCSAA. The organization currently has more than 18,000 members, 97 affiliated chapters, and two affiliated international chapters.

Membership, Evans emphasized, is paramount to the advancement of the profession and vitality of the game. He reviewed GCSAA's total and professional membership trends from 2008 through the present day.

The good news, he noted, is that total and professional membership is trending upwards. When there are more members to collectively participate in programs and initiatives, it helps the profession and industry succeed. Having a louder voice is vital with our advocacy efforts and having more hands to assist with key initiatives or board service provides benefits at all levels: national, local, and individual. There is strength in numbers.

Last but not least Evans discussed how GCSAA is working to develop programs and services for equipment managers and assistant superintendents. These programs and services, he told us, are aimed at strengthening the golf course management team. GCSAA is increasing its efforts with students as well, all with the intention of building for the future.

Other presentations on key initiatives included:

### Rounds 4 Research Auction

The delegates celebrated the success of the top five-chapter fundraisers in the 2018 Rounds 4 Research Auction. Overall, the auction brought in \$312,239 and saw a 24-percent increase in rounds donated and a 21-percent increase in the number of rounds sold. We heard from several delegates who outlined what made their chapter successful. Organization and having a Rounds 4 Research Committee to spearhead the initiative in their chapter were cited as important.

The 2019 auction will be held from April 29 through May 5. Chapters just need to recruit the rounds to donate; EIFG will handle the rest of the program. Call or email Mischia Wright, EIFG associate director, at 800-472-7878 or mwright@gcsaa.org for assistance.

The MetGCSA participates in the Rounds 4 Research Auction, as well as hosting the "Foursomes for Foundation" Initiative. Please speak with Mike McCall for additional information or to donate a round for 2019.

### State BMP Implementation

Delegates were updated on GCSAA's mission to have all 50 states with a BMP in

place by 2020. Mark Johnson, associate director of environmental programs thanked all the chapters that have been working diligently on making this goal a reality. There are currently:

- 10 states with a BMP in place
- 10 states that will finish up in 2018
- 20 states that have told GCSAA they will finish up in 2019
- 10 states that anticipate being on board by 2020

Johnson advised that the second phase of the BMP project is facility adoption. Regional and state workshops will start in 2019 to assist chapters in training superintendents on how to write their facility BMP plan. GCSAA asked all of us to encourage our chapter leaders to complete BMP programs this winter.

The MetGCSA has been recognized as one of the founding BMP members, even creating our own plan before the GCSAA created their BMP initiative.

### Chapter Outreach/Field Staff Initiatives

GCSAA strives to support its affiliated chapters and assist in their success through the personalized support provided by field staff. Steve Randall, director of chapter outreach, gave a brief overview of the Field Staff program and highlighted several new initiatives. Field Staff live and work in one of the nine regions that cover the United States and Ontario, Canada.

Kevin Doyle, our field staff rep who covers the Northeast, was introduced to the delegates and thanked for his hard work on our behalf. Kevin is a regular at our events; if you have not spoken with Kevin, take a minute to introduce yourself.

### Equipment Manager Task Group Update

Kevin Sunderman, vice chair of the Equipment Manager Task Group, briefed us on current and future initiatives. GCSAA offers education specifically for equipment managers at the Golf Industry Show. There are EM live and on-demand webinars, as well as the popular Five-Minute Fix videos. GCSAA has tools and templates on the website for equipment managers. The Turf



Equipment Technician Certificate Program (TETCP) has two levels. Future initiatives include EM First Green curriculum, EM self-assessment tool, and an EM certification program.

### **Candidate Road Map to Board Service**

The Nominating Committee recently completed work on a Candidate Road Map to Board Service. The road map, will be available on GCSAA's website and will provide information for anyone interested in running for the GCSAA Board of Directors. Suggested experience for candidates includes chapter board of director service and GCSAA committee involvement.

### **Board Policy Oversight Task Group (BPOTG)**

The BPOTG was created to act as an independent task group that meets every three years to address various issues related to GCSAA support of board service. The standard operating procedures document that outlines all the support received by the Board of Directors was shared with the delegates via their GCSAA Delegates Meeting notebook. It is also on the GCSAA website. The 2018 BPOTG offered several recommendations that were shared with the delegates. The GCSAA Board of Directors will consider these recommendations at their next meeting.

### **CPI Dues Process**

The GCSAA board makes a recommendation to the membership on changes to A, B, or C membership dues every two years based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI). The CPI increased by 4.5 percent over the past two years. This translates into a proposed \$20 dues increase for Class A/B and a \$10 increase for Class C, bringing the new dues amounts to \$400 for Class A/B and \$205 for Class C. This proposed increase will be voted on at the Annual Meeting.

### **Government Affairs Update**

We all were made aware of the myriad legislative, regulatory, and political issues facing the industry, as well as what GCSAA is doing to make sure golf's voice is heard at all levels of government, including its direct lobbying efforts on the Farm Bill, WOTUS, and H-2B. Delegates also listened to recent efforts surrounding the GCSAAPAC, Grassroots Ambassadors, and National Golf Day, which are all initiatives designed to gain an audience with our legislators and congressman.

### **Membership Retention and Growth Strategy**

GCSAA's strength in numbers would be enhanced by improving membership reten-

tion and increasing new member growth. There are approximately 7,500 (out of 15,000) golf courses without a GCSAA member. The delegates listened to several growth strategies to lure new members and a rewards program to help retain existing members. These strategies were:

- **Friends of the Golf Course Superintendent.** The Friends classification would target golfers and potential advocates. These individuals would receive limited benefits and content. Suggested dues would be \$50 to \$75. Delegates will vote on this proposed bylaws addition in February.

- **Facility Classification.** This classification is aimed at smaller-budget facilities. Suggested dues would be \$200, but this class of member would not be able to vote or hold office. Delegates will vote on this proposed bylaws addition at the Annual Meeting.

- **Rewards or Loyalty Program for Existing Members.** Incentives within this program could be crew development plans; savings on CGCS, TETCP, and ASCS; extra perks at the Golf Tournament and GIS. This program does not require a vote or change to the bylaws.

- **Incentivizing Members to Add Additional Members.** GCSAA is proposing a strategy to incentivize existing members/golf facilities to add new GCSAA members at their facility. Incentives would depend on the number of new members that were added. Delegates would be asked to vote on a proposed bylaw change that would allow the Board of Directors flexibility in creating these incentives. Class A, B, and C dues would not exceed the amount that is set by the members at the Annual Meeting.

The delegates discussed these retention and growth strategies in the large assembly and in small-group breakouts. A straw poll showed support for all four strategies. However, the Board of Directors would like to host follow-up conference calls with the delegates prior to the Annual Meeting to answer any questions and to provide additional details.

### **Meet the Candidates**

Once the business portion of the meeting concluded, we had the opportunity to listen to presentations from candidates running for national office. After the presentations, we were able to meet and greet the candidates in small breakout sessions to learn more about their platforms and philosophies.

The 2019 GCSAA slate of board candidates are:

#### **For President**

Rafael Barajas, CGCS, Boca Grove Plantation, Boca Raton, FL

#### **For Vice President**

John R. Fulling, CGCS, Kalamazoo Country Club, Kalamazoo, MI

#### **For Secretary/Treasurer**

- Kevin P. Breen, CGCS, La Rinconada Country Club, Monte Sereno, CA
- Mark F. Jordan, CGCS, Westfield Group Country Club, Westfield Center, OH

#### **For Director (electing 3 directors)**

- T.A. Barker, CGCS, Fore Lakes Golf Course, Taylorsville, UT
- Paul L. Carter, CGCS, Bear Trace at Harrison Bay, Harrison, TN
- Doug D. Dykstra, CGCS, White Mountain Country Club, Pinetop, AZ
- Jeff L. White, CGCS, Indian Hills Country Club, Prairie Village, KS

#### **Board Appointments**

- If Mark Jordan is not voted in as the secretary/treasurer, he may be nominated as a candidate for director from the floor.
- Kevin Breen is in the middle of his two-year term as director. If unsuccessful in his bid for secretary/treasurer, Breen will remain as director to finish his term.
- There are three open positions for director, with T. A. Barker, Jeff White, and Mark Jordan at the end of their terms. All three open director terms will be for two-year terms. If Kevin Breen is elected secretary/treasurer, the remaining year of his director term will be filled through the voting process.

**Reminder:** The process for electing directors changed at last year's Annual Meeting. Each director position will be voted on one at a time. Therefore, there will be separate ballots cast to fill each open director position.

### **Open for Questions or Comment**

With several of the topics prompting a lively debate, the Board of Directors will take the information gathered to their next board meeting for further discussion. I look forward to representing our association at the 2019 Golf Industry Show and welcome any questions you might have on any of the topics covered at this year's Delegates Meeting. You can reach me at [green@reddingcc.org](mailto:green@reddingcc.org) or at 203-885-3109.

*In addition to serving as the MetGCSA's chapter delegate, Brett Chapin is the newly elected MetGCSA treasurer and the golf course superintendent at Redding Country Club in Redding, CT.*

# Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Native Areas and More

by Todd Apgar

On Thursday, November 8, MetGCSA and CAGCS members were, once again, treated to the great hospitality of The Patterson Club in Fairfield, CT, for their Fall Education event. The Education Committees from both associations joined forces again this year to put together another great roster of speakers that drew superintendents and assistants from throughout Connecticut, New York, and New Jersey.

We would like to extend a sincere thank you to Patterson Club Superintendent Jason Meersman for his team's hospitality throughout the day. We would also like to thank MetGCSA Education Chairman and, now, MetGCSA Secretary Mike Brunelle and his committee for working with the Connecticut chapter to put together a fantastic lineup of speakers. With the surge in popularity of naturalized areas, the Education Committee decided to focus the seminar on a single theme: managing the challenges of developing and maintaining native areas on our golf courses.

What follows are the highlights of each presentation, which approach the topic of naturalization from related but different perspectives, adding interest for even the veteran native-area grower. If you find you'd like to delve deeper into any one of these subjects, you'll find the speaker's contact information at the end of each summary.



*The USGA's Jim Skorulski discusses strategies for reducing inputs with native grasses.*

## Weed Control Strategies in Native Turfgrass Areas

In recent years, the use of native grass areas on golf courses has grown, in part because of the aesthetics these areas can bring to a golf course, but also because of their sustainability over more highly managed golf course turf. A 2017 USGA survey found that 46 percent of golf courses are increasing their native area coverage. What many superintendents are discovering, however, is that developing and managing these native or naturalized areas is both challenging and labor-intensive.

Dr. Jason Fausey, NuFarm America's director of technical services, kicked off the day's educational sessions with a discussion of the key components of building and maintaining sustainable native areas on your course. Before launching into planting a native area, Dr. Fausey emphasized the importance of carefully evaluating the area's soil type and typography and then selecting plants that will thrive in that specific area. It helps, he said, to look at what plants are currently living, and flourishing, in the surrounding area.

Also important before settling on a native area is to determine your goal for that area. For instance, do you want to establish it as a penalty area where golfers will lose a stroke? Or do you want it to be an area that they should be able to play out of?

Dr. Fausey noted that GPS technology can be helpful in answering these types of questions by aiding the superintendent in pinpointing the "hot spots" where golfers are hitting their balls. Once you've established how playable the area needs to be, you are better equipped to determine the proper layout of that area and the appropriate plantings to use.

Last but not least, Dr. Fausey discussed the importance of weed control both when establishing naturalized areas and as part of their ongoing maintenance in order to maximize their potential. Though there are plenty of new-and-improved products on the market to choose from, Dr. Fausey emphasized a complete program approach that considers the proper use of selective herbicides along with application rates and timings. In the end, Dr. Fausey's goal was to help

seminar participants maximize naturalized areas with an Integrated Pest Management approach in mind.

For further information, Dr. Fausey can be reached at [jason.fausey@nufarm.com](mailto:jason.fausey@nufarm.com) or at 419-307-7666.

## Thin Wispy Fescue Areas: A Pipe Dream or a Possibility?

Hudson National Golf Club Superintendent Ryan Oliver discussed his personal journey in managing aesthetically pleasing and resilient native areas on his course. First and foremost, preparation is key, said Ryan, who's been managing native areas at Hudson National for the past 12 years. He started by spending a good deal of time determining the best blend of seed, along with the proper fertilization program, to set himself up for success.

"You need to get the ground prepped and the seed down by August 1 and then determine your herbicide program," Ryan noted. Ryan is a strong proponent of using a granular product over a liquid application once the turf has matured enough. He feels this is a better option for getting the product where it needs to be: on the ground. In addition to selecting the proper seed and fertilization program, Ryan focuses on defining the irrigation techniques that will ensure the turf thrives. With fescue being extremely drought tolerant, he noted, you want to take care not to overwater those areas. And Ryan did go to great pains to modify his irrigation system to accommodate the needs of his native areas. Though to the golfers who enjoy these areas, they appear relatively maintenance-free, anyone who maintains them knows the labor involved—for the crew, who must pay close attention to detail, and to the superintendent, who must ensure that the maintenance of these areas is carried out according to a very specific plan.



*Nufarm America's Director of Weed Control Strategies Dr. Jason Fausey discusses weed control strategies in native turfgrass areas.*



For further information on Ryan's program, you can reach him at 914-325-5033 or at [ryanboliver@gmail.com](mailto:ryanboliver@gmail.com).

## Reducing Inputs With Native Roughs

There is great interest in golf today in developing natural roughs to reduce mowing, conserve water, reduce pesticide use, create a habitat and food for insects and wildlife, and provide a better experience for golfers.

Joining forces, the USGA's Dr. Jim Skorulski and Eco-Management's Dave Kaplow offered an overview of planting options using native grasses and other plants according to site characteristics and playability.

Both Skorulski and Kaplow emphasized looking at an area's soil type before determining any planting options. They noted that in the Met area, there are many different soil types, including everything from meadow areas, woodlands, pollinator areas, and scrubland. These areas bring with them their own challenges and demands.

Kaplow has been spending time walking the woods and wood lines, taking seed samples to see what is prospering in these areas. He is a strong advocate of allowing what is already growing to continue to grow. "These already established grasses have outcompeted the weeds," he said, "so we need to look at what they are doing to succeed and move from there."

While continuing to support the use of natural selection of grasses, Kaplow and Skorulski also presented ideas for putting into practice more natural approaches to turf and weed management. For instance, they presented the idea of using goats to eat the undesirable weeds that crop up in native areas, noting that a few clubs in the region have already used this practice successfully. Though a relatively new idea, goats seem to distinguish the good from the bad, leaving grasses alone while eradicating the tough-to-kill weeds.

For further information on this topic, Jim Skorulski can be reached at 413-283-2237 or at [jskorulski@usga.com](mailto:jskorulski@usga.com), and Dave Kaplow can be reached at 707-769-1213 or at [dave@eco-management.com](mailto:dave@eco-management.com).

## Demystifying Grass Seed Production & Native Areas

Last but not least was Adam Russell of Mountain View Seeds in Willamette, OR. Russell discussed seed production areas of the United States and how seed companies and universities work together to bring new products to market. His objective was to inform seminar goers on how to promote biodiversity while selecting the correct species needed to reduce inputs and achieve areas that are truly native.

Interestingly, Mountain View Seeds (MVS), a major grower of turf seed, focuses on Peak Plant Genetics (PPGs). In other

words, through years of studying and experimenting, MVS hopes to develop the type of qualities in seeds that will create a strong and successful stand of turf in all areas of a golf course. "We want to promote the strongest seed that will have the best chance of outcompeting weeds," Russell told the group.

Along with their own studies, MVS promotes the National Turfgrass Evaluation Program (NTEP), which is designed to develop and coordinate uniform evaluation trials of turfgrass varieties and promising selections in the U.S. and Canada. Being unbiased, these trials help to determine the highest quality seed without one specific company being favored. With the numerous seed manufacturers around the country and world, it is important to determine which cultivar is well adapted to a specific location or even a level of turf maintenance.

With this research available, Russell urges those hoping to create a native area to determine what they are looking for in a specific seed type—disease resistance, drought tolerance, and traffic tolerance—to make the best selection for their areas and needs.

For further information on this topic, Adam Russell can be reached at 971-718-4525 or at [arussell@mtviewseeds.com](mailto:arussell@mtviewseeds.com).

*Todd Apgar, a member of the Tee to Green Editorial Committee, is a sales representative with Metro Turf Specialists.*

### *President's Message continued from page 1*

education, and advocacy for the benefit of Met members and their clubs.

The foundation manages the scholarships we award to members' children, and it has supported research projects at seven area universities and industry organizations. In addition, the foundation has played a significant role in funding the New York State Best Management Practices Program. Working in partnership with Cornell University and superintendent associations throughout the state, this ongoing effort has produced an important resource for industry professionals and regulators, and with the foundation's continued support, the BMP program will have the opportunity to grow further.

Another initiative that has taken off under Mike's leadership is the **Foursomes 4 the Foundation** program. This initiative currently represents approximately 30 percent of the annual revenue received by the MetGCSA Foundation, and it is all through the generosity of area clubs who donate a round of golf for a foursome and then donate the proceeds to the foundation.

Last, but certainly not least, with the help of Playbooks for Golf, we have launched a

**Members App**, which can be accessed for download on our website. Put simply, this app contains everything you need to keep up-to-date with our association's business. You can view the latest news, jobs, events, the *Tee to Green* and Member Directory, and much more from any device. What's more, you can chat with other members right in the app and even post pictures to our PhotoFeed. Like texting, your chats will remain completely private. If you haven't explored this cutting-edge tool, go to the Met website to download the app and get started.

## Working Behind the Scenes

Behind the scenes, at the heart of the association, are now-seasoned veterans Susan O'Dowd, the MetGCSA's executive secretary, and Pandora Wojick, our *Tee to Green* managing editor. Susan has been a tremendous asset to our group and one of the best things to happen to the association in my 13 years on the board. Pandora is the rock that keeps our communications efforts moving forward, prodding all of us to contribute "timely" content for our communications

outlets. Thank you both for your excellent work over the years.

And I would be remiss if I didn't thank all the companies that support the MetGCSA. Your friendship and support is unwavering and adds greatly to our organization. I would like to remind our membership to please support those who support us!


So as I turn into the Archie Bunker of the group or as someone said to me the other day, "like one the guys in the balcony from the Muppets" (I thought that one was pretty good), I will always hold the highest regard for past, present, and future boards for their commitment to our association. And as with any volunteer position that takes you away from your family, I am grateful for the never-ending—and often much-needed—support from my wife, Dana, and daughters Kylie, Taylor, and Avery.

Thank you for a great ride, and I'll look forward to seeing you all at Westchester Country Club on January 16 for our Winter Seminar.

**David Dudones**  
President

## Member News

# Bucking Out the Season!



December 14, a sizable crowd of MetGCSA members and spouses gathered at the Bull and Barrel Brew Pub in Brewster, NY, for our association's annual holiday festivities. Aside from the plentiful food, drink, and

good company, party-goers were entertained by the numerous members who braved the mechanical bull. Assistant superintendents did their best to endure the bull's twists and turns, but only one emerged as winner of the Assistant Superintendent Ride-the-Mechanical Bull Contest, hanging on to the bucking beast for a full 29.57 seconds. Congratulations to Westchester Country Club Assistant Super Tyler Sandefur, who was the contest's lucky \$250 prize winner. (Tyler is pictured below with Brett Chapin, Social & Welfare Committee co-chair.)

If you weren't able to make our holiday celebration this year, please join us next year for a wonderful time with fellow members and their significant others.

### New Members

Please join us in welcoming the following new MetGCSA members:

- **Brad Brown**, Class C, The Stanwich Club, Greenwich, CT
- **Justin Carlson**, Class C, Winged Foot Golf Club, Mamaroneck, NY
- **Todd Salamone**, Class B, Long Shore Golf Course, Westport, CT

### Members on the Move

- **Bobby Jewett** is the new superintendent at Wildhorse Golf Club in Davis, CA. Previous position: Assistant superintendent at Brae Burn Country Club in Purchase, NY.
- **Dave Peterson** is the new superintendent at Silvermine Golf Club in Norwalk, CT. Previous position: Assistant superintendent at Brae Burn Country Club in Purchase, NY.
- **Tom Reyes** is the new superintendent at Salem Golf Club in North Salem, NY. Previous position: Assistant superintendent at Century Country Club in Purchase, NY.
- **Doug Snyder** is the new superintendent at Tashua Knolls Golf Course in Trumbull, CT. Previous position: Superintendent at the Milbrook Club in Greenwich, CT.

### Birth

Congratulations and best wishes to Tashua Knolls Golf Course Superintendent **Doug Snyder** and his wife, Erin, on the birth of their daughter, Deirdre McKenna, born 6 lbs., 13 ozs. on October 11.

### In Sympathy

It is with great sadness that we announce the death of **Steven Wright**, who was the superintendent at Pine Tree Golf Club in Boynton, FL, and passed away suddenly at the age of 61. Working at the national level, Steve became a mentor to many, including a number of our MetGCSA members. Rye Golf Club Superintendent and Met board member Chip Lafferty remembers Steve as "one of the good ones," noting, "Playing one round of golf with him would make you instantly lifelong friends."

Our deepest sympathy to his wife, Sheree, and three children. Donations may be made in Steve's memory to First Tee of the Palm Beaches or the National Center for Missing or Exploited Children, NCMEC Benefit Tournament by calling 561-848-1900.



# Patron Directory

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John Garcia: 203-996-6267  
john@atlanticgolfturf.com
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Paul Ramina: 908-413-2944  
paul.ramina@basf.com
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