

Tee To Green

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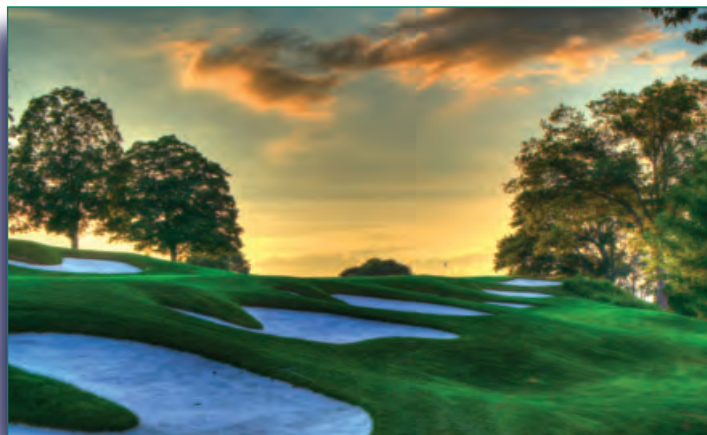
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New President Ken Benoit Is on a Mission



I

am privileged and humbled to be your newly elected president. When I think of the remarkable strides made by the many great superintendents who have served before me as MetGCSA president, I am motivated to honor their contributions by holding myself to the standards they set. We are all fortunate to be part of a group of professionals who continually strives to be at the forefront of the industry. Your professionalism and dedication are second to none, and I am truly proud to represent such a progressive and hardworking group of individuals.

In the months ahead, I look forward to working with the Board of Directors in continuing to move our association forward. In this issue's feature, I discuss the initiatives I feel most strongly about. Here's a preview.

1. Opening the Lines of Communication:

One of my top missions is to continue to improve the channel of communication and strengthen the relationships among members of the MetGCSA, MetPGA, and MetCMA. We serve the same clientele so why not join forces in meeting their needs? Representatives from each group have met several times and are making headway in finding ways to work together to reach our full potential as an industry. These groups will meet again in the spring.

2. Supporting Environmental Initiatives:

I will also continue to put effort and resources into golf-related environmental initiatives, including programs and initiatives like the MGA Arthur P. Weber Environmental Leaders in Golf Award, and the New York Golf Course Foundation (NYGCF), curators of our New York State BMPs.

The BMPs have helped to communicate our industry's environmental stewardship to legislators and regulators around the state, and I hope to leverage the confidence we've built among our policymakers to strengthen our voice in Albany when new legislation that will impact our industry is being proposed.



**Ken Benoit, CGCS
MetGCSA President**

We need, now, to reach beyond our legislators and seek an industrywide, proactive approach to communicating our environmental efforts to our friends and neighbors outside the industry who often are misinformed or unaware of our serious efforts to protect our waterways and environment.

Later this year, you will learn more about a new program being developed by the NYGCF that will allow individual facilities to develop their own set of BMPs. The program will enable superintendents to conduct a self-audit of their facilities to quantify their environmental efforts. Once this system is in place and we have concrete data to present, lawmakers, regulators, and the nongolfing public can't help but recognize our commitment to protecting our resources and environment as legitimate.

The MetGCSA will continue to donate funds for the further development of this initiative through our golf auctions program. Please consider donating a round of golf to this program so we can continue to provide the resources necessary to further these critical efforts.

3. Ensuring Every Member Has a Voice.

I will ensure that the Met board strives to consider each member, regardless of class or designation, in every decision we make. It is important to our association that every member has a voice and that the Board of Directors operates in the best interest of the association as a whole. It is also important that individual members are pleased with how we are operating. If anyone has an issue or concern, I would encourage you to contact

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Ken Benoit Assumes Reigns as MetGCSA's 34th President

by Bob Nielsen, CGCS



C

ulminating 12 years of service on the MetGCSA Board of Directors, Ken Benoit assumed the reigns as the Met's 34th president at the November Annual Meeting. Ken has been a member of the MetGCSA since 2001, joining as an assistant at Quaker Ridge. Letting no grass grow under his feet, Ken was elected to the board in 2006 and has served on the executive board for the past six years.

Well versed in the ins-and-outs of the association, Ken has chaired almost every one of the Met's committees, noting a particular fondness for his time on the Scholarship & Research Committee. "The quality of some of the applications coming from the children of Met members is truly amazing," he says. "The insight and ability many of them have to articulate ideas is well beyond their years. I truly enjoyed chairing that committee."

For the past eight years, one of Ken's major commitments has been chairing the Environmental Committee, which is responsible for helping to select the finalists for the MGA's Arthur P. Weber Environmental Leaders in Golf Award. As the winner of the award in 2010, Ken couldn't be more qualified for the task!

Over the past several years, however, the committee's responsibilities have expanded to include the weighty job of overseeing the development and promotion of the Best Management Practices for New York State Golf Courses. Ken has worked tirelessly with Cornell University's Dr. Frank Rossi and Project Manager Stacey Kingsbury to bring the BMPs to fruition.

With his significant involvement in managing and promoting various aspects of the industry, Ken is clearly prepared to assume the seat at the MetGCSA's next president.

Goals for the Association

Ken holds great confidence in the future of the MetGCSA. "A lot of credit goes to the past presidents and boards who laid the groundwork for this great association," says Ken, "but the accomplishments in recent years are just as amazing. I think the new board is excited and eager to continue the Met's great traditions and work toward maintaining, even enhancing, its status in the industry."

As president, Ken's goals are ambitious. He seeks to strengthen the relationships among superintendents, PGA professionals, and general managers. "We all serve the same clientele, but we seem to go at it from three different angles rather than as a unified front," says Ken.

Ken's first step in initiating this goal was to get together with longtime friend and prior GlenArbor colleague, Brian Crowell, who serves as PGA pro of the prestigious Silo Ridge Country Club. They gathered a group of superintendents, PGA professionals, and general managers, who all met to discuss how the associations might work together to achieve both individual association goals, as well as common goals. With plans set for future meetings, we know that this will be the start of a more cohesive working relationship among these groups of professionals.

Ken also plans to further our environmental initiatives, focusing, in particular, on the BMPs. Ken's involvement in this initiative is second to none. He is working on a new initiative that will enable the New York State BMPs to be adapted by individual golf courses to better reflect the facility's specific needs and operations.

In addition, Ken is working to make sure that the MetGCSA represents every member of the association. The Battle of the Bridges Tournament and the Class C Professional Development Day are part of that initiative, and he plans to build on the success of those events. In fact, Ken has charged our Class AF Rep Todd Apgar with putting together a committee that can develop ways to ensure all AF members are represented and know that they are a vital part of our association. It is our AF members, after all, who represent the companies that advertise in our various publications and fund many of our programs.

The Met's Road Ahead

While the MetGCSA continues to be one of the premier chapters in the country, Ken acknowledges that our association faces its share of challenges, just like other organizations in the industry. "Member involvement at meetings," he points out, "continues to be a challenge that has no easy answer. Of course, the weather we had last year put a damper on event participation. Getting away for even a day was challenging for many," acknowledges Ken.

Ken is looking at the fact that most of the northern New York State GCSA chapters—the Western, Finger Lakes, Central, and Northeastern associations—are currently discussing the possibility of becoming a unified association. This could possibly leave the HVGCSA, MetGCSA, and LIGCSA as



the only unaffiliated associations in New York State. Determining how the Met would fit into this equation could be a challenge.

"There are certainly opportunities for a united state association, as seen in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Michigan," says Ken. "But the concern would be to ensure that the Met retains its own identity going forward. We will be watching our neighbors to the north to see how they manage their unification."

Ken is also keeping his eye on the political climate in New York State, which has had a significant impact on the association. "With both houses and the executive branch controlled by Democrats, there have been a number of new laws proposed to ban various products and limit the amount of nitrogen contained in a bag of fertilizer on Long Island," says Ken. "We will have to demonstrate the value of the BMPs we have put in place and educate the new lawmakers on what they are and how they are used to protect the environment."

Making Tracks to the Met

Ken was born and raised in Marysville, MI, located just north of Detroit. He graduated from the University of Detroit in 1990 with a degree in marketing. After working five years as a regional manager for an environmental services company and spending 75 percent of his time on the road, Ken decided it was time for a change. At the suggestion of a friend, he shifted his focus to turfgrass management and completed a two-year turf degree at Michigan State University while working on the crew at Walnut Creek Country Club outside of Detroit.

In 1997, Ken interned at Congressional Country Club in D.C. during the Men's U.S. Open with superintendent guru Paul

Ken Benoit speeds past his competitors in the 2017 Tour de France amateur race in the French Alps.

Latshaw. Then after graduating in the fall of 1997, when Latshaw was splitting his time between Congressional and Riviera Country Club in Los Angeles, he offered Ken an assistant's position at Riviera. After helping to groom the course for the 1998 Senior U.S. Open, Ken decided to broaden his experience and accepted a construction superintendent position with McDonald & Sons in Jessup, MD. "They were renovating Olympia Fields for the U.S. Open, and I signed on as a construction superintendent," says Ken. A year-and-a-half later, after traveling the country building and renovating golf courses, Ken realized that he wanted to get back to turf.

Ken's next and final stop before GlenArbor was Quaker Ridge Country Club, where he worked as an assistant for then Superintendent Steve Renzetti, learning the subtleties of maintaining turf in Westchester County. After a year-and-a-half at Quaker, the posting for GlenArbor appeared and Ken seized the opportunity. He credits Steve for his encouragement and assistance in securing that position. "Steve played an integral part in my getting the job—at the beginning of July, no less," says Ken. "For that, I will be forever grateful."

An environmentalist through and through, Ken not only managed the course transformation at GlenArbor, but also instituted numerous environmental initiatives during his tenure there, including a program to help rebuild the Eastern bluebird population that garnered GlenArbor the "North American Bluebird Society Award." It was his environmental efforts at GlenArbor that also earned the club the MGA's prestigious 2010 Arthur P. Weber Environmental Leaders in Golf Award. More re-



Ken and Melodee Benoit strike a happy pose at the 2018 Michigan State/Penn State football game played at Beaver Stadium. (MSU won with a last-second touchdown!)

cently, Ken was awarded the Friend of the Green Industry Award from NYSTA for his involvement in the BMP project.

But just as much of an honor to Ken is his recent invitation from Penn State's Turfgrass Management Class of 2019 to deliver the commencement address to this year's graduating turf students. Ken is well known and admired by Penn State turf students, so it's no surprise that he was their top choice. He has been an annual guest speaker at the turf school over the past 10 years, offering his expertise on topics ranging from turf management to professional development.

Nathan Wattier, one of the Class of 2019 students who also had interned for Ken, had nothing but high praise for his skill as a superintendent and mentor: "He opened our class's eyes to the different opportunities the turf industry has to offer," says Wattier. "He was full of wisdom and practical advice, and he has a unique ability to inspire, which has had a significant impact on all of us here at the turf school. We all agreed that Ken would make a wonderful speaker at our commencement, and what better way for us to honor his dedication to the industry?"

The Best Kind of Partnership

Ken's position at Riviera not only laid the groundwork for his future professionally, but also led to the formation of "the partnership of a lifetime." Ken met his wife, Melodee, at a Dodgers baseball game while working in LA. The couple was engaged in 1999 and married in 2000. "Melodee has been the single most important influence in my career," says Ken. "We have a true partnership. She has been every bit as responsible for our success."

The two worked together at GlenArbor for nearly 18 years; Ken as superintendent, Melodee as administrative assistant, horticulturalist, environmental liaison, and a host of other titles. Ken adds with a smile, "The owner of GlenArbor told me constantly how lucky I was to marry so far up the ladder."

A New Chapter

Ken's professional and personal success have been marked by his drive and willingness to seek new challenges: his career shift from marketing to turfgrass management, job shifts that took him from one coast to the other, and personal pursuits that have found him front and center as a lead guitarist in two rock bands (at the same time no less) and now a devoted cyclist and fierce competitor, who's won several races. His cycling recently took him to France to race on one leg of the prestigious Tour de France.

This past December, after 18 years as superintendent at GlenArbor Country Club, Ken and Melodee came to the realization that yet another professional change was in order. It took careful thought and consideration. "I didn't want to destroy the partnership I had formed with the club's owner over those 18 years," says Ken. "Yet Melodee and I felt compelled to look for our next challenge. It was important to be out in front. Not everyone would make the same decision—not everyone is in the same position as we are to make that decision—but no matter what we pursue next, the relationship with the owner of GlenArbor is paramount and will remain a big part of our life."

Onward and Upward

While Ken isn't afraid to initiate change, there's one area where he is unwavering and that's in his dedication to superintendents and their profession. His resolution to further the strides our association has made over the years couldn't be more focused. The determination to further the BMPs, to ensure all membership classes are represented, and to unite the professional associations in working toward common goals are ambitious and worthwhile pursuits.

The MetGCSA will, no doubt, be in capable hands for the next two years. We wish you every success, Ken, in your term as president!

Bob Nielsen, a member of the Tee to Green Editorial Committee, is superintendent at Bedford Golf & Tennis Club in Bedford, NY.

President's Message continued from page 1

me or any member of the board to discuss it. Our email addresses and cell phone numbers are listed in the directory, and we will respond to all messages in a timely manner. We are here to serve you.

4. Boosting Member Participation.

Focusing on improving member participation will be a high priority for the board. This has been a topic of discussion for a number of years. It's important that our membership understands and embraces the fact that our association's success is dependent on the participation and dedication of its members. You get what you give.

Though I recognize it might not be possible for you to come to every event, consider picking three events to attend from the nine offered, and you'll be helping the association tremendously.

If participating in our events seems like more trouble than it's worth, just think for a moment how you would feel if there were no MetGCSA. No group of industry professionals to provide the support and camaraderie we all need in the thick of a tiring, if not challenging, season. I believe most of you would feel a bit like a ship without a sail, like something important was missing. So I urge you to participate, and help us keep the association vibrant now and into the future, for generations of MetGCSA members to come.

All Within Reach

I believe the goals we've established are attainable and provide a worthy focus for the future of the association. Let's start with our goal of "Boosting Member Participation" by signing up as soon as possible for the Dave Mahoney Two-Ball Qualifier on April 29 at Trump National - Westchester. This event always promises a good time.

I hope to see you at other future MetGCSA events, where we can discuss the ups-and-downs of the season, the latest and greatest technology, or just offer each other some much-needed support. And please remember, if you have any questions, concerns, or comments, the MetGCSA board is only an email or phone call away.

Here's to a great 2019 season—and to more active participation in the MetGCSA.

Ken Benoit, CGCS
MetGCSA President

Lucky Six Take Home Prizes in Annual Bill Caputi Scholarship Raffle

This year's Annual Bill Caputi Scholarship Raffle, awarded at the January 16 Winter Seminar, raised an admirable sum for the Met's Scholarship Fund and awarded \$4,000 in cash prizes to six 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 \$2,000-grand-prize winner, **Jamie Thomaselli** of Beacon, NY. The ticket was sold by Dan Coughlin, superintendent at Trump National Golf Club ~ Westchester in Briarcliff, NY.

The other lucky ticketholders were:

\$750 Second Prize Winner

Todd Apgar, Metro Turf Specialists. Todd bought the winning ticket from himself!

\$500 Third Prize Winner

Jim Pavonetti, Fairview Country Club.



Jim bought the winning ticket from himself!

\$250 Prize Winners

- **Michele Jakuba**, Lagrangeville, NY. Her ticket was sold by Trump ~ Westchester Superintendent Dan Coughlin.
- **Steve Loughran**, Rock Ridge Country Club. Steve bought the winning ticket from himself!
- **Joe Omboni**, Putnam Valley, NY. His ticket was sold by The Care of Trees' Mike Cook.

Members on the Move

- **Aaron Crouse** is the new superintendent at Westchester Hills Golf Club in White Plains, NY. Previous position: West Course superintendent at Westchester Country Club in Rye, NY.
- **Joe Gikis** is the new superintendent at GlenArbor Golf Club in Bedford Hills, NY. Previous position: Assistant director of golf and grounds at Westchester Country Club in Rye, NY.
- **Vinny Barnaba** is the new superintendent at the Powelton Club in Newburgh, NY. Previous position: Assistant superintendent at Westchester Country Club in Rye, NY.
- **Jamie Kapes** is a new consultative representative at Noble Turf in Chesapeake, VA. Previous position: Property manager at Woodway Country Club in Darien, CT.
- **Wes Mackie** is the new superintendent at Pine Orchard Yacht & Country Club in Branford, CT. Previous position: Assistant superintendent at The Stanwich Club in Greenwich, CT.
- **Scott Olson** is the new superintendent

at Knollwood Country Club in Elmsford, NY. Previous position: Superintendent at Hampshire Country Club in Mamaroneck, NY.

- **Ken Welzien** is a warehouse and logistics manager at Metro Turf Specialists in Brookfield, CT. Previous position: Assistant superintendent at Silver Spring Country Club in Ridgefield, CT.
- **Evan Weymouth** is the new superintendent at Patriot Hills Golf Club in Stony Point, NY. Previous position: Assistant superintendent at Sleepy Hollow Country Club in Scarborough, NY.
- **Andrew White** is the new superintendent at Riverton Country Club in Cinnaminson, NJ. Previous position: South Course superintendent at Westchester Country Club in Rye, NY.

Birth

Congratulations to Fisher & Son's **Mike Weber** and his wife, Samantha, on the birth of their daughter, Michaela Rae Weber. She was born on February 25, 8 lbs. 6 ozs.

Bob Nielsen Honored With GCSAA's Excellence in Government Affairs

Let's hear a round of applause for Bedford Golf & Tennis Club's Bob Nielsen. Bob was recognized February 5 at the 2019 Golf Industry Show in San Diego with the 2019 Excellence in Government Affairs Award from GCSAA for his passion and hard work in advocating for the golf course management profession.

Anyone involved with the MetGCSA is well aware of Bob's many contributions to our association and profession as a whole.

A 28-year member of GCSAA, Bob was elected president of the Met in 2010, when one of his primary goals was to establish stronger relationships with the local Westchester County Board of Legislators, as well as the New York State Senate and Assembly.

Regionally, Bob served as New York's representative for the Chesapeake Bay watershed committee. Through GCSAA's Grassroots Ambassador program, which pairs superintendents with members of Congress, Bob has had the opportunity to discuss issues pertaining to the golf industry with Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer.

Bob was a driving force behind the creation of the Best Management Practices (BMPs) for New York State Golf Courses, which were released in 2014. In 2017, Bob spearheaded the process of transitioning the New York BMP committee into the New York State Golf Course Foundation, and he serves as the group's treasurer.

In addition to serving as a grassroots ambassador, Nielsen has been involved with GCSAA on a national level as a chapter delegate and as a member of the association's Government Affairs Committee, Nominating Committee, Research Proposal Review Committee, BMP Task Group, and Environmental Awards Task Group. Currently, he serves on the inaugural board of the GCSAA Political Action Committee, which launched in 2017.

"As an association, we are so fortunate to have an engaged member like Bob, who is a true servant to his superintendent peers and the industry," says Rhett Evans, GCSAA CEO. "I thank him for his efforts and congratulate him on this honor, which he has earned for his tireless dedication."

Winter Seminar Touches on More Than Just Turf

by Chip Lafferty

On January 16, Westchester Country Club was kind enough to, once again, host the MetGCSA's annual Winter Seminar. This venue is a welcome tradition for our association and always instrumental in the success of this ever-popular educational event.

Hats off to MetGCSA Past President and Westchester Country Club Superintendent David Dudones and the entire club staff for rolling out the red carpet for our annual event.

A full 262 fellow golf industry professionals attended, eager to keep pace with the latest trends in turfgrass management. And 29 exhibitor booths provided that added value that makes this annual event worthwhile. We'd like to extend a special thank you to the commercial members who participated. You'll find their names and numbers listed on page 8.

We would also like to thank Education Committee Chair Mike Brunelle and his committee for their hard work in organizing a superb educational session chock-full of information that was both interesting and highly pertinent to our profession.

What follows is a quick recap of the speakers' advice-to-remember, along with their contact information. All are ready and willing to help.

Best Management Practices for Annual Bluegrass Weevil (ABW) Control

Dr. Benjamin McGraw, a highly regarded professor and researcher at Penn State University, offered insight into the varied and often inconsistent practices of ABW control. He noted the importance of timing, as well as the choice of control products. He also discussed how to choose the proper product at the proper time to attain the most successful control. When targeting adults during peak adult activity, for instance, you would want to use Dursban or a pyrethroid. When going after larvae when larvae activity is at its peak, a better choice would be Ferenice or Match Point.

The scene of the Winter Seminar Awards Luncheon at Westchester Country Club.



The caveat here is the lack of residual control from products that were believed to have a long residual effect that would allow the superintendent more flexibility in timing. It is suspected, however, that this issue is due to the excessive rainfall and record-high temperatures we had this past season.

Dr. McGraw's take home message: Because of the reported lack of residual control, scouting, gathering any and all information from outside sources like Syngenta's WeevilTrak, and counting GDDs appears to be the best bet to attain control of this pesky turfgrass predator.

For further information, Dr. McGraw can be reached at bam53@psu.edu or at 814-865-1138.

The Trials of Turf Management in 2018

While ABW seems to be a problem that just doesn't go away, Steve McDonald of Turf-

grass Solutions shared the many other hard-to-combat turfgrass challenges superintendents faced in 2018.

McDonald travels the U.S. getting a bird's eye view of the turf wars superintendents are waging across the country. He presented a slide show of the various forms of damage we were faced with this past year—everything from mechanical damage to wet wilt, scald, and insect and fungal pests. Basically, his point was that no one escaped without some form of damage in 2018.

Last year was peculiar. The spring started out cold, then rebounded only for superintendents to notice slow-growing turf that was most likely stunted by cold-temp injury in early January. Warmer temps eventually rolled in, allowing the turf to rebound nicely in early June, only to go into a short drought stress period that was followed by rain—and lots of it. Overall, this was not a good combination for successful turf management.

McDonald's take-home message: Document



Penn State's Dr. Benjamin McGraw discusses new insight into ABW control.



Turfgrass Solutions' Steve McDonald shares his observations on last season's series of unfortunate turf challenges.



Awards Committee Chair David Dudones presents the John Reid Lifetime Achievement Award to Jimmy Roberts, renowned sportswriter and broadcaster on NBC Sports and the Golf Channel.

the areas that were most troublesome when conditions weren't ideal, noting in particular, what made matters worse during those challenging periods. Would those areas profit from added drainage, tree work, extra aeration to remove excess thatch? Whatever you discover, now is the time to come up with—and implement—a plan to avoid future problems the next time Mother Nature throws us a curveball.

For additional information, contact Steve McDonald at info@turfgrassdiseasesolutions.com or at 610-633-1878.

Does Your Topdressing Size Really Matter?

Next up at the podium was Dr. James Murphy of Rutgers University. He described the challenges that superintendents face when attempting to apply the proper quantity of sand topdressing, especially during the season, without damaging cutting units and affecting putting quality from sand left on the surface. We all know the benefits of sand topdressing, i.e., smoother putting surfaces, firmer surfaces, disease tolerance, thatch management, and traffic tolerance, but with modern greens management, featuring lower heights of cut and growth regulators, it's a challenge to work sand into the canopy, particularly in-season when there's not much canopy to work with!

In the last several years, some superintendents have resorted to applying finer topdressing (.5 mm with no coarse or very coarse particles) that does not necessarily meet USGA specifications. The question is, will using the finer topdressing have a detrimental effect, long-term, on the green profiles after years of practicing this trend?

Research at Rutgers has indicated, so far, that the practice of using finer sands for in-season dustings and using traditional USGA spec sand for filling in aeration holes, has not shown any detrimental effects, but the research is still ongoing.

Dr. Murphy's take-home message: Because

this practice allows superintendents to apply enough sand during the season with regular light topdressings, additional benefits include improved drainage, lower summer soil temperatures, and firmer/drier surfaces, all of which can contribute to summer stress relief and disease resistance.

For additional information, Dr. Murphy can be reached at murphy@aesop.rutgers.edu or at 848-932-6326.

An Award-Winning Lunch

After the morning sessions adjourned, the awards luncheon began, and the MetGCSA presented one of its most prestigious honors, the John Reid Lifetime Achievement Award, to Jimmy Roberts, famed sportswriter and longtime broadcaster on NBC Sports and the Golf Channel.

Westchester Country Club Superintendent David Dudones introduced Roberts, who the MetGCSA's Awards Committee selected for his contributions to the game of golf and his support and recognition of the people who make it happen. Few people know the game of golf and what goes into it as well as Jimmy Roberts, and the admiration is definitely mutual.

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

Delivering his acceptance speech, Roberts made mention of his appreciation for the hard work of golf course superintendents and their foresight to see the bigger picture through the work of the MetGCSA Foundation and the Best Management Practices for New York State Golf Courses. "I have to say," says Roberts, "to be here with all of you is a little bit like a boy scout who gets to go to lunch with some navy seals."

After joking about time he spent with a homeowner in Buffalo discussing the quality of his lawn, Roberts shared several

accounts of his past experience, concluding with high praise for the golf course superintendent and industry as a whole:

"Golf courses are beautiful, powerful places. They're transformative places, and all of that is because of people like you and the great work that you do. That's especially understood by a man who has a beautiful lawn, and it's particularly understood by a man who might not have one yet. But I'm still always going to try and get there.

"Thank you for honoring me today," Roberts continues. "Nobody appreciates the great work you do more than I do. You are really the reason that so many people are able to enjoy such a great game."

For more on Jimmy Roberts, please see the November/December 2018 issue of the *Tee to Green*.

Rules of Golf Changes for 2019

The afternoon session opened with the USGA's David Staebler, who was there to inform us on changes to the Rules of Golf that have taken effect as of January 1 of this year. Most of the changes are to make it simpler to follow the rules and speed up the amount of time it takes to complete a round of golf. His focus was on the rules that are expected to have the most significant impact on the game.

He explained, for instance, the changes to lateral and regular water hazards that should help speed up play, and for many of us marking the course for weekend warriors, it could make our lives a touch easier.

The interesting change is how out-of-bounds (OB) is being handled. There are a couple of options besides the once mandatory "stroke and distance." You can now assume or guess where the ball came to rest in the OB area, not where it crossed the margin. That means that once you determine where your ball came to rest, you can take it on a radius, no closer to the hole, and drop it in the fairway with a two-stroke penalty.

Yes, this should speed up play, but trying to figure out where the ball came to rest without actually finding it leaves some room for interpretation. It seems the intent of this was to simplify certain rules to more closely resemble the relaxed rules we play in a friendly pickup match.

I would urge everyone to learn as much as possible about the rule changes so we become a well-informed resource for club staff and golfers.

For further information on modifications to the Rules of Golf, David Staebler can be reached at 908-326-1971 or at dstaebler@usga.org.

Current Topics in Pesticide Regulation Affecting the Golf Industry

The afternoon session wrapped up with three speakers: Patrick McCain from Syngenta, Rick Fletcher from Nufarm, and Michael Lee from the GCSAA. They offered informative talks on changes in the pesticide market due to government, environmental, and market impacts. They covered everything from how pesticides are approved to when and why they're banned from the market.

They ended with the controversial discussion on the fate of Glyphosate, Chlorpyrifos, and Neonicotinoids and how to manage without these products, as well as what will take their place. They discussed the highly publicized case where the San Francisco-Bay-area school groundskeeper sued Bayer and Monsanto, claiming he developed terminal Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma after years of applying Roundup on the school's grounds. The case ended with the groundskeeper being awarded \$298 million in damages. Rick Fletcher spoke about the amount of testing that Roundup and Dursban have undergone over the years. Each and every time they come up for a review, both are rated as low-risk pesticides with a very legitimate use.

The take-home message: Our industry will continue to be plagued by uninformed activists who will do whatever it takes to ban pesticide use, not based on scientific fact, but rather purely on emotion.

I have to update my MSDS station this winter, and I am going to have to find the ones for coffee, pepper, salt, and sugar, and then list everything we have in that book on toxicity. The funny thing is, the four products I just listed are more toxic to humans than any of the products we use. Perhaps it should be brought to the public's attention that they may just be working to ban the wrong products!

For additional information, feel free to contact Rick Fletcher at 856-296-0422 or at rick.fletcher@nufarm.com; Patrick McCain at Patrick.mccain@syngenta.com, or Michael Lee at mlee@gcsaa.org.

A final thank you to all involved in making our Winter Seminar a success—from Westchester staff to our Education Committee, speakers, and vendors. Thank you one and all!

Chip Lafferty, co-chair of the Tee to Green Editorial Committee, is superintendent at Rye Golf Club in Rye, NY.

Special Thanks to Our 2019 Winter Seminar Exhibitors

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

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

A. Bulfamante Landscaping
Frank Gagliardi
914-636-5000
Frank@bulfamantelandscaping.com

Aquatrols, Inc.
Tom Valentine
Soil & Water Quality Management Solutions
609-841-2077
tvalentine@aquatrols.com

Atlantic Golf & Turf
John Garcia
203-996-6267
john@atlanticgolfandturf.com

Cushman | E-Z-GO
Reed Williams
Golf Course Utility Vehicles
516-662-3554
rwilliams01@textron.com

DeLea Sod Farms
Scott Geiser
High-Quality Sod & Root Zone Mixes for Golf Courses
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sgeiser@deleasod.com

DryJect North East, LLC
Steve Jordan
DryJect & Aeration Specialists
914-602-2857
Jordan781@msn.com

Executive Turf / Synergy Turf Supply
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Golf Course Supplies
203-496-0891
executiveturf@aol.com

Finch Services
George Corgan
John Deere Sales & Service
914-893-0868
gcorgan@finchinc.com

Fisher & Son
Mike Weber
Lawn Care & Landscape
347-486-0480
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Grass Roots Turf Products, Inc.
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Golf Course Supplies
973-252-6634
ryan.avery@GRTturf.com

Harrell's LLC
Scott Tretera
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914-262-8638
stretera@harrells.com

K & J Tree Service
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edward@kjtreeservice.com

Metro Turf Specialists
Todd Appgar
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Noble Turf
Brian Bontemps
Plant Protection Products
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brianbontemps@seetonturf.com

Northwestern Mutual
Financial Advisors & Investment Solutions
Joshua Weinerman
845-224-0027
joshua.weinerman@nm.com

Nufarm
Jim Santoro
Crop Protection
508-207-2094
jim.santoro@nufarm.com

Plant Food Company, Inc.
Dave Conrad
The Liquid Fertilizer Experts
800-562-1291
dconrad@plantfoodco.com

Playbooks for Golf
Golf Course Coverage System, Conditions Software Platform, Golf Course Field Guides, ezPins, Career Development
Greg Wojick: 203-219-0254
gwojick@goplaybooks.com
Matt Leverich: 913-221-8052
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Synergy Turf Supply
Tim Joyce
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631-601-5294
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Syngenta
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The Care of Trees
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The Terre Company
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Tom Irwin, Inc
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Turf Products
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860-874-2812
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Greg Moran
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westturf@comcast.net

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ggwilmac@aol.com

Meet Your 2019 MetGCSA Board



From left to right: Dan Coughlin of Trump National GC-Westchester; Class C Rep Andrew Baxter of Fairview CC; Class AF Rep Todd Apgar of Metro Turf Specialists; Secretary Mike Brunelle of Upper Montclair CC; Vice President Rob Alonzi of Fenway GC; Past President David Dudones of Westchester CC; President Ken Benoit, CGCS; Treasurer Brett Chapin of Redding CC; Steve Wickstrom of Burning Tree CC; Mike McCall, Executive Director; Chip Lafferty of Rye GC; Jesse Shannon of Manhattan Woods GC; Dan Rogers of Wykagyl CC; Steve Loughran of Rock Ridge CC.

MetGCSA Committee Chairs at Your Service

We have provided a list of each of the MetGCSA's 2019 committee chairs, including their phone numbers and emails. Please feel free to contact any of them with questions, comments, or helpful suggestions.

Awards Committee

Dave Dudones
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ddudones@wccclub.org
914-798-5360 / Cell 973-417-0415

Bylaws Committee

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Fenway GC

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Club Relations Committee

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Steve Wickstrom
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Jesse Shannon, CGCS
Manhattan Woods GC

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Government Relations Committee

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Investment Committee

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Fenway GC

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Long-Range Planning & Steering Committee

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Dan Coughlin

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Steve Loughran
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Tri-State Committee

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Class AF Representative

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Metro Turf Specialists

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203-748-GOLF / Cell 203-948-4941

Barajas Elected 83rd President of GCSAA

Members Elect New Board of Directors at 2019 Annual Meeting

Rafael Barajas, CGCS, superintendent at Boca Grove Golf & Tennis Club in Boca Raton, FL, has been elected to a one-year term as president of the GCSAA at the association's Annual Meeting held February 7 in conjunction with the Golf Industry Show in San Diego. He is the first Hispanic president in the association's history.

Barajas served as vice president of the association in 2018 and has been a member of the association's board of directors since 2011. A 33-year member of GCSAA, Barajas is also a member of the Florida GCSA, South Florida GCSA, Palm Beach GCSA, Central California GCSA, and California GCSA.

Born in Mexico, Barajas's family moved to the United States in 1978 when he was 14. Previously, he was the superintendent at Hacienda Golf Club in La Habra Heights, CA. In addition, he served as the superintendent at Palm Desert (CA) Country Club, the director of golf course maintenance at Desert Lakes Golf Club in Fort Mohave, AZ, and as a superintendent at various courses for American Golf Corp.

He has a certificate in turfgrass management from the University of California, Riverside.

"Words cannot adequately convey how honored and humbled I am to be elected the 83rd president of GCSAA," Barajas said. "I will dedicate my full attention and my uncompromising commitment to the position."

GCSAA Board of Directors at a Glance

President

Rafael Barajas, CGCS, superintendent at Boca Grove Golf & Tennis Club in Boca Raton, FL

Vice President

John R. Fulling Jr., CGCS, grounds and facilities manager at Kalamazoo (MI) Country Club

Secretary/Treasurer

Mark F. Jordan, CGCS, natural resources leader at Westfield Group Country Club, Westfield Center, OH



Rafael Barajas, CGCS

Directors

- T.A. Barker, CGCS, superintendent at Fore Lakes Golf Course, Taylorsville, UT
- Kevin P. Breen, CGCS, superintendent at La Rinconada Country Club, Los Gatos, CA
- Paul L. Carter, CGCS, at Bear Trace at Harrison Bay in Harrison, TN.
- Kevin P. Sunderman, director of grounds at Isla Del Sol Yacht & Country Club, St. Petersburg, FL
- Jeff L. White, CGCS, superintendent at Indian Hills Country Club, Prairie Village, KS

Immediate Past President

Darren Davis, CGCS, golf course superintendent at Olde Florida Golf Club in Naples, FL

Bill Maynard, CGCS, director of golf course maintenance operations at Country Club of St. Albans, MO retires from the board after serving the past year as immediate past president.

In addition, delegates approved a dues increase and three changes to the association's bylaws.

Respectable Finishes for MetGCSA

by Bob Nielsen

And they say it never rains in Southern California! Well, this year's GCSAA Golf Championships proved that wrong. Held in San Diego, CA, in conjunction with the 2019 Golf Industry Show, the tournament was played under rainy skies, forcing contestants to stick to the cart paths during all of the tournament's three days.

Despite the less-than-desirable playing conditions, the annual golf competition drew nearly 300 players to four San Diego-area golf facilities: Torrey Pines ~ North Course—among the most challenging venue in the country—the Aviara Golf Club, Encinitas Ranch, and the La Costa ~ Champions and Legends Course. The golf events ran from February 2 – 4 and offered something for everyone, from the casual golfer to the intense competitor.

Speaking of intense competitors, the MetGCSA was represented by more than a dozen members and posted a few notable scores in this year's National Championship and Golf Classic. Here are the highlights:

In the National Championship

Though none of our players took home the National Championship trophy, we did have several MetGCSA superintendents make respectable finishes on the Champions Course. Tom Ashfield tied for 11th in the Championship Flight, finishing just out of the money but well enough to bring home a plate. Way to go, Tom!

Jason Meersman of the Patterson Club finished 20th, and Sean Cain of Sunningdale CC came in 33rd. Not bad for guys with a little bit of rust coming out of the Northeast in February!

The national champ was Steve Gilley, superintendent from Panorama Golf Club in Conroe, TX. He made his first GCSAA National Championship one to remember. Firing a two-day total of 2-over-par 176, he went wire-to-wire on Monday to win the 2019 event. Gilley captured the title by four shots over a pair of multiple GCSAA National Championship winners: Michael Stieler and Seth Strickland.

Upcoming Events

Upcoming MetGCSA and Industry Events

In the Golf Classic

More than a few Met supers made their mark on the Golf Classic. Steve Whipple of West Point GC placed 12th in the Classic I Flight, while Jeff Hemphill of Nissequogue GC and John Carlone of Meadow Brook Club finished 20th and 29th respectively in the Classic II Flight.

In the Classic III Flight, Mike Brunelle of Upper Montclair CC was the highest place finisher in the Met. He placed 3rd in the Gross Division, taking home a plate. Though Jeff Wentworth of Pelham CC didn't finish quite that high, his claim to fame was the hole-in-one he shot at Torrey Pines! Woohoo! And we can say that Rob Alonzi of Fenway GC and Bob Nielsen of Bedford Golf & Tennis finished in the top 25 Net in the Classic III Division—but we won't print the gross scores!

In the Senior II Division, Tim O'Neill of CC of Darien finished 12th, while in the AF Flight Bob Lippman of Westchester Turf came in 5th and Tom Weinert of Plant Food came in 7th. Doug Middleton of Ocean Organics also played a noteworthy round. He came in just slightly behind at 14th but was able to knock a shot to within 4'4" on the 14th hole at Aviara Golf Club. You'll have to ask him if he made the putt!

Special Thanks

We would like to send out a special thank you to the GCSAA staff for their efforts in putting this special event together and to all of the sponsors who make this event possible, especially the Toro Company for their generous partnership in being the title sponsor for the past 25 years.

Congratulations to all who participated in this year's golf championships. This annual preconference golf event offers a great opportunity to not only play some of the country's best courses, but also to network with superintendents from across the U.S. and around the world.

Next year, the GCSAA Golf Championships will be held in Orlando, FL. I hope to see you all there!

Bob Nielsen, a member of the Tee to Green Editorial Committee, is superintendent at Bedford Golf & Tennis Club in Bedford, NY.

Dave Mahoney Two-Ball Qualifier

Monday, April 29

Trump National Golf Club-Westchester
Briarcliff, NY

Host: Dan Coughlin

National Golf Day

Tuesday, April 30 – Wednesday, May 1

Capitol Hill, Washington, D.C.

Join fellow golf industry professionals in our nation's capitol to celebrate the game's \$84.1 billion economy, nearly \$4 billion annual charitable impact, and many environmental and fitness benefits.

In its 12th year, National Golf Day offers the important opportunity to meet with members of Congress, the Executive Branch, and federal agencies to discuss golf's 15,000 diverse businesses, two million jobs impacted, tax revenue creation, and tourism value.

On April 30, the day before the main event, superintendents and other golf leaders are once again invited to participate in a community service initiative on the National Mall. The project will focus on beautification, preservation, and helping the National Park Service with turf deferred maintenance. Consider coming out to lend a helping hand and to advocate on behalf of golf's interests with our country's lawmakers.

2019 Rutgers Turfgrass Research Golf Classic

Monday, May 6

Fiddler's Elbow Country Club
Bedminster, NJ

Plan now to join fellow industry professionals for this annual fundraiser and a day of golf, education, networking, and fun. Your participation helps fund research grants, student scholarships, equipment, and special projects for the Turfgrass Research, Teaching, and Extension programs at the School of Environmental and Biological Sciences/Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey. Register no later than April 15 to be part of this day!

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

Rutgers Turfgrass Research Field Day (Golf & Fine Turf)

Tuesday, July 30

Horticultural Farm II
New Brunswick, NJ

Save the date, and watch for details. Call 973-812-6467 or visit www.njturfgrass.org for further information.

Golf Industry Show Draws Healthy Crowd

At this year's GCSAA Education Conference, held in conjunction with the Golf Industry Show, a total of 5,479 seminar seats were filled and thousands attended complimentary forums, sessions, and panel discussions throughout the week.

Events included a full-size replica of a maintenance facility on the trade show floor, advocacy training, and free seminars on best management practices.

A total of 11,900 attended the two-day trade show, which hosted 510 exhibitors covering more than 208,650 square feet of exhibit space at the San Diego Convention Center.

The 2020 Golf Industry Show will head to Orlando, FL, January 25-30.

Trump National-Westchester to Host the MetGCSA Dave Mahoney Two-Ball Qualifier

by Kevin Collins

Dan Coughlin is looking forward to hosting the first golf meeting of 2019, especially since it's the Two-Ball, one of the more popular meetings on the Met's yearly calendar.

This is Dan's third season as superintendent at the club. The last time Trump National-Westchester hosted a Met meeting was back in 2005, and funny enough, it was the Two-Ball. I remember the meeting well because it was crazy cold and it actually snowed. Hopefully, that won't be the case this year.

Growing Up

Dan grew up in Beacon, NY. His father, Dan, worked as a contractor and his mother, Lisa, worked as an accountant at Fishkill Correctional. (I think I met her while I was incarcerated there.) Dan loved golf and was talented enough to play on the Beacon High School varsity golf team beginning in the 7th grade! He learned a lot about golf etiquette from his high school golf coach.

"In the 11th grade, my coach bitched me out for not raking a bunker," Dan remembers, "and it was a defining moment for me. At that point, I realized that I wanted to make a career for myself working on a golf course."

A defining moment indeed!

No stranger to the green industry, Dan and his good friend, Ron Martinson, had spent their high school years running a small landscaping business. This made Dan's transition to the world of golf course management that much easier. His senior year of high school Dan pursued a job with local legend Steve Humphreys at Dutchess Country Club where he worked one season on the crew.

The Journey Begins

With no doubt about what he wanted to do and who he wanted to be, Dan made the wise decision to pursue formal training in turfgrass management. After high school, he enrolled in the two-year turf program at SUNY Delhi and graduated with an Associate's in Golf Course Management.

Dan's two internships while attending school were at Beekman Country Club and Rockaway River Country Club in New Jersey. The Rockaway gig morphed into a real job, and Dan worked his way up the food chain from intern to spray tech.

In 2007, Dan went to work for Bob Wolverton at Bayonne Country Club as an assistant. His time at Bayonne turned out to be an indispensable part of Dan's education: "Bob taught me how to push turf to the absolute limit without killing it to attain fast, hard conditions for the membership, which is how a links course should really play."

Bob left and was replaced by Vic Federico. "Vic preferred a much different greener and lush approach. Much more watering, and surprisingly, the membership loved it," says Dan. "It was a totally different approach than Bob's. I knew in the future, when I got my chance, that I had to hone my approach and find a happy medium."

Dan's next meaningful assistant's job was working for Doug Hedderick at Trump-Hudson Valley. This turned out to be his longest tenure as an assistant and where Dan completed his education.

"Doug's approach was to keep the course lush green and also attain crazy fast greens. It was the happy medium I had envisioned," says Dan. "Doug also taught me how to deal with people and what to say and not say. His advice was invaluable."

One of the great things about working in the Trump Organization is that you're going to get your shot. They promote from within. When Kevin Kopay resigned his position at Trump National-Westchester, Eric Trump called Dan and offered him the chance to interview for the position of superintendent.

"The Trump Organization gave me an amazing opportunity," says Dan, "And they've given me the tools, support, and budget to be successful. That's all you can ask for."

Family

Dan married his high school sweetheart, Heather . . . eventually. After college, Dan moved to New Jersey and they broke up and

Dan Coughlin

went their separate ways. But you never forget your first love. After four years apart, Heather relocated to New Jersey, and Dan and Heather rekindled their relationship. They've been married for three years. The happy couple resides in Newburgh, NY, and they have a 15-month-old daughter, Harper, and a baby boy due in June.

I met Heather for the first time this year at a New York Jets tailgate. Dan has this Billy Gibbons/Grizzly Adams out-of-control type of beard. I asked Heather how she liked it. She looked me right in the eyes and said, "I love his beard. I never want him to shave it off. Fear the beard." Chills ran down my spine!

Last but not Least, the Course

Trump National was the old Briar Hall Country Club in Briarcliff Manor. Briar Hall went belly-up in the late 1990s, and the Trump Organization purchased it with the intention of transforming the golf course into something special. Jim and Tommy Fazio designed the new layout, and the renovation began in 2000. The course opened for play in July of 2002.

Grow-in Superintendent Blake Halderman recalls, "It was no run-of-the-mill construction project. There were 3 million yards of earth moved to create waterfalls, winding streams, lakes, stone bridges, and ravines. One feature that's particularly notable is the manmade 110-foot waterfall on the signature par three 13th hole with a large holding pond."

Trump National is long, tight, and difficult, and it boasts one of the highest slope ratings in Westchester County. It's 7,291 yards from the tips with many forced carries over water and the ravines. Oy Vey! Get your game on for a challenging Two-Ball qualifier. And we'll see you all on April 29!

Kevin Collins, a member of the Tee to Green Editorial Committee, is NE/Mid-Atlantic Territory Manager for Ocean Organics.

Patron Directory

Patrons listed on this page are supporting our association. You are encouraged to support them.

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