

Tee To Green

September/October/November 2019
VOLUME 50 NUMBER 5

Published by the Metropolitan Golf Course Superintendents Association



Board of Directors



President

KEN BENOIT, CGCS
Class A

Vice President

ROBERT B. ALONZI JR.
Fenway Golf Club

Treasurer

BRETT CHAPIN
Redding Country Club

Secretary

MICHAEL BRUNELLE, CGCS
Upper Montclair Country Club

Past President

DAVID DUDONES
Westchester Country Club

Directors

DANIEL COUGHLIN
Trump National Golf Club-Westchester

CHARLES LAFFERTY
Rye Golf Club

STEVEN LOUGHRAN
Rock Ridge Country Club

DANIEL ROGERS
Wykagyl Country Club

JESSE SHANNON, CGCS
Manhattan Woods Golf Club

STEPHEN WICKSTROM
Burning Tree Country Club

Class "C" Rep

ANDREW BAXTER
Fairview Country Club

Class "AF" Rep

TODD APGAR
Metro Turf Specialists

Executive Director

MIKE McCALL, CGCS

Executive Secretary

SUSAN O'DOWD

Tee to Green Staff

Co-Editors

CHIP LAFFERTY DAN ROGERS
914-760-3331 914-400-5918

Managing Editor

PANDORA C. WOJICK

Editorial Committee

WORTH ANDREWS STEVEN McGLONE
TODD APGAR ANTHONY MINNITI
MATT CEPLO BOB NIELSEN
KEVIN COLLINS SCOTT NIVEN
ANDY DROHEN JIM PAVONETTI
GREG WOJICK

Designer

TERRIE YOUNG

Advertising Manager

DAN ROGERS, 914-400-5918

TEE TO GREEN is published bimonthly by the Metropolitan Golf Course Superintendents Association
49 Knollwood Road, Elmsford, NY 10523-2819
914-347-4653, FAX: 914-347-3437, METGCSA.ORG
Copyright © 2019

Tee to Green



Cover: Arcola
Country Club

In this Issue

Feature

- Laboring Over Labor**2
Industry Professionals Offer Strategies for Success in Managing the Labor Crisis on their Course

Departments

- Member News**6
Upcoming Events7
Chapter News.....8
Scorecard.....9
Spotlight10

President's Message

Managing Expectations: Our Own and Others'

H

ere we are at the end of another golf season. I always considered this to be an important time of year to reflect on the season, reviewing my programs and capturing the lessons buried within my successes and failures. Hopefully, you consider this season a success. But even if that is the case, you no doubt had a combination of successes and failures throughout the year.

Whether your failures are course- or staff-related, even the most lauded superintendents have to learn to cope with the occasional disappointment or failure. Because we're trained to continually look for the bad, ugly, or broken on our courses, oftentimes, it can be difficult to let go of our failures. It's human that negative feelings linger longer than positive feelings. The most successful people, however, are those who are able to turn the negative into valuable opportunities to learn and grow.

Another factor that can complicate our perspective is that we are generally exposed to openly negative criticism from golfers and coworkers who may not realize their comments are often more destructive than constructive. Because our decisions have a direct impact on the enjoyment of golfers' experiences, we are judged by all who play our course.

Superintendents, not unlike professional sports figures, are expected to have thick skin while others, usually not qualified to render an informed opinion, criticize our abilities. Is it fair? You bet. We all know how this business operates; therefore, going into the game knowing this, makes it fair. That doesn't mean we have to like it, but we do have to expect it and steel ourselves to not only accept it, but also find productive ways to think about it and manage it. Not an easy task but one well worth the effort.

Where We Get Into Trouble

While successful people recognize that setting high expectations for themselves pushes them toward greatness, what many fail to realize—particularly in the golf course industry—is that we, in a sense, are potentially setting ourselves up for failure. Once the bar is set high, that becomes the norm for those around us, and they begin to set their



*Ken Benoit, CGCS
MetGCSA President*

own expectations, usually raising the bar ever higher. The higher the bar, the more noticeable any shortfall. And before we know it, the door is flung wide open for critical comments to be made about our work. This is fine, if we handle that criticism properly.

It's easy to assume the person delivering the criticism is attacking our commitment to excellence, but it's in these situations that we have to take great care not to let the negative comments snowball into frustration that leads us to behave or respond inappropriately. We have to accept this as part of our business. Criticism, no matter how unjust or irritating we feel it is, comes with the territory.

If someone, for instance, were to remark that something needs to be corrected on the course that you already have on your to-do list, your impulse might be to take a defensive stance because you want to make sure the person delivering the criticism doesn't believe your expectations aren't as high as theirs. But rather than reply dismissively by saying something like, "It's on my list," you would be better served to politely accept the comment and inform the person of your plan to address the concern as soon as possible.

To process any critical remarks in an unemotional manner, it helps to listen closely to the words being said and decipher the message. While our tendency is to take criticism personally, that emotion impedes our ability to truly understand the intent of the criticism and respond appropriately.

Rethinking Goals and Expectations

Whether you're a superintendent or another type of industry professional, learning how to manage criticism and failure, whether big or small, is essential to having a long and gratifying career.

continued on page 7



Laboring Over Labor

Industry Professionals Offer Strategies for Success in Managing the Labor Crisis on their Course

by Mike McCall, CGCS



The labor crunch facing golf courses today couldn't be more obvious. Just look at the rosters of most regional or national trade conferences: They all seem to have a seminar promising answers to the industry's labor woes. And conversations at local meetings are often dominated by the labor pains most every superintendent is facing. Whether it's finding qualified assistants or just hourly workers, superintendents out there seem to be having a tough time hiring, and then retaining, employees.

I wish I could tell you there was a magic bullet to fix our burgeoning labor shortages. But there isn't and there likely won't be if we don't begin to think outside the box. A Labor Survey conducted by GCSAA in 2018 paints a rather gloomy picture. Apparently, in 2012, just 19 percent of survey respondents described the job market as bad; in 2018, a full 63 percent reported labor challenges, finding it more difficult over the past two years to hire and retain employees.

The problem isn't unique to our area. It seems to be prevalent at golf courses large and small across the country and due, no doubt in part, to a downward trend in turf school enrollment. But there's also another damning factor: a decline in the country's blue-collar workers. According to a December 2018 analysis by The Conference Board, a nonprofit organization that studies the business climate in the U.S., white-collar workers have surpassed blue-collar workers creating a labor shortage, not only in our industry, but in others as well. And the Conference Board predicts that these shortages will continue.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics data demonstrates a similar reality, noting young workers are increasingly educated and disinterested in unskilled labor jobs, and major worker shortages are forecasted especially for seasonal and less-skilled positions. Significant labor shortages will make it difficult for many golf facilities to fill both their permanent and temporary/seasonal labor needs.

So what can we do to manage our labor crisis? Speaking with a variety of industry professionals and organizations, one thing becomes clear: We must adapt. Our thoughts about our labor force and our turf manage-



ment practices have to change if our maintenance operations are to remain productive. What follows is the collective wisdom of those who have pondered alternatives to this seemingly unfixable problem. In them, I think you'll see there just might be hope for the future.

Creative Solutions to Staffing

With the difficulty in recruiting and retaining reliable workers, some courses have found success in hiring from among the aging work population. Though these individuals may not want to heft a Weed Eater all day, they're more than likely pleased to perform mowing, divot repair, course setup, and other less strenuous course maintenance duties. Similarly, retired superintendents and golf industry veterans make great additions to the maintenance team, having been accustomed to the work schedule and maintenance practices and routines.

Meadow Brook Superintendent John Carlone didn't set out to hire a former superintendent back in 2013, but having his own labor challenges in 2012, a lightbulb went off and he called longtime superintendent John McPike of Rockville Links Country Club who had recently left his position. They agreed on a mutually beneficial arrangement, and John McPike has been at Meadow Brook ever since.

"John has been a huge asset for me," says John Carlone. "He has that attention to detail and sense of urgency that you just can't teach. He arrives early to get everything set up so the crew is out the door in under five minutes as opposed to what used to be a good 15 minutes or so, and he's also

fantastic in training and guiding the young staff. I can't say enough about John and the decision to bring him onboard in 2013."

But hiring one former superintendent has not solved all of Meadow Brook's labor challenges. Though he has a total allocation of 24 positions, John could fill only 18 this past year. "I've raised my pay rates to try to be competitive. The problem I see is that laborers can find less taxing work for the same rate of pay," bemoans John.

David Dudones, director of grounds at Westchester Country Club, is another superintendent who went to the well of alumni superintendents and, four years ago, hired former Metropolis Country Club Super Tony Grasso. Westchester was looking for someone with horticultural expertise and Tony fit the bill.

"Westchester is a very large property with many ornamental areas throughout that require a tremendous amount of maintenance," explains David. "In addition to his horticultural skills, Tony's previous personnel management skills as a superintendent have paid huge dividends. Having him on staff has been a homerun for me."

It pays to extend your search beyond the traditional outlets. I recently read about a superintendent, for instance, who made his way into a high school's guidance office and spoke to them about his interest in hiring students who were motivated and hardworking but perhaps not college bound. While the counselors had no knowledge of the career opportunities in turfgrass management, they were pleased to be able to pass along the information to suitable candidates.

Yet another approach to attacking your labor shortage is to consider making golf course work appeal to a broader audience by implementing more flexible work schedules. As USGA Northeast Agronomist Paul Jacobs suggests in the Green Section Record article, "Labor: Suggestions for Solutions," superintendents might try hiring part-time employees and allowing them to work the hours and days that work best for them. The traditional model, he noted, requires employees to show up early in the morning, a schedule that doesn't appeal to everyone. So why not consider adding a later work shift to the daily work schedule? As Jacobs points out, it just may increase the number of potential candidates to hire.

Sidestepping the Assistant Shortage

While attracting golf course laborers is no easy task, in recent years, it's been even more challenging securing qualified assistant superintendents. It doesn't seem that long ago that turf schools were churning out desirable candidates and Met area superintendents had their pick of the litter.

No more. In fact, that oversupply of assistants combined with a recession, a declining number of golf facilities, and little movement among the superintendent ranks, left a bottleneck of assistants waiting for head golf course superintendent positions. With what looked like a bleak future for aspiring assistants resulted in a 10-year-plus decline in turf school enrollment.

"Unfortunately," says Penn State University's Dr. John Kaminski, "because of the declining numbers, several turfgrass programs have gone away or combined with horticulture programs. And while turf school enrollment has begun to increase with 100 percent of turf school grads finding jobs with the promise of higher pay, we are nowhere near equilibrium for assistant positions."

But there is another reality that may well be driving the younger generation of students—the millennials—away from our industry, and that's a work philosophy that puts a high priority on a work-life balance that our industry finds hard to support.

MetGCSA President Ken Benoit recognizes the disconnect between our industry's long-held belief system and what the new breed of worker is striving to find in a career. He offers a call to action: "While these youth have put a premium on work-life balance," says Ken, "we have subscribed to personal sacrifice to meet industry demands. But times are changing rapidly. Whether our industry buys into the importance of work-life balance or not, we have to address this issue or risk losing talented, career-oriented youth to industries that have figured out how to adapt their standards to align with younger generations' values."

According to Andrew Baxter, assistant superintendent at Fairview Country Club, millennials offer a great opportunity to propel our golf course operations into the future. "Sure, they do have more interests outside the job," he acknowledges, "but we would be foolish not to do whatever it takes to attract and retain employees from this generation. After all, most millennials are smart, tech savvy, and good communicators and decision makers," he says. "They are so connected to what's going on in the world today, I'm confident they will be the ones to help grow our operations and industry."

But while millennials undoubtedly have what it takes to help drive our industry forward, this new breed of assistant may have their sights set on a different career path. Traditionally, assistants would accept a position seeking to move on to a superintendent's slot. Increasingly, however, those striving for that work-life balance aren't necessarily aspiring to assume the role and responsibility of head honcho of a golf course operation. More now than in previ-



ous generations, many turfgrass majors are happy to simply manage the turf.

Though this shift in work ethic and career goals may be foreign to baby boomer superintendents, it's time we recognize the potential in creating a place in our operations for this new breed of turf professional, a place that resides, perhaps, somewhere between the assistant striving to move ahead and the superintendent. This could be a position where an educated turf professional could work hard, have job security, but remain free of the ultimate burden of the entire operation.

Dr. Kaminski couldn't agree more: "I think there should be a niche in the industry for people who don't want to necessarily deal with the duties of being a superintendent, but would prefer to stay as somewhat of an assistant. This probably means changing the titles or creating new ones, but most importantly, I think they need to be better compensated and not expected to work 90 hours a week."

John Shaw of Valley Brook Country Club in southern Pittsburgh has one such employee, Tom, a longtime first assistant who has been with the club for 31 years and is content to remain right where he is. "Tom has a business degree from the University of Pittsburgh but could just never bring himself to leave Valley Brook," says John. "It's great for me because I don't have to keep scrambling to find another assistant in a tight market every time one moves on."

John also employs a second assistant, Max, who he does expect will move into a superintendent's position of his own one day.

However we find it best to approach the assistant positions on our courses, our end goal should be to make the job of assistant superintendent desirable enough to entice more students to pursue a career in turfgrass management once again.

Rethinking Golf Course Design

While jumping through hoops to attract employees is well and good, what happens when it doesn't yield the staffing outcome you were hoping for? And then, too, even if you suddenly have potential employees knocking at your door, for many, hiring additional staff can present another obstacle: budget constraints.

With payroll on average comprising approximately 65 percent of MetGCSA golf course maintenance budgets, staff additions can be a costly proposition, and now, superintendents wanting to fill their staffing voids find themselves up against the ropes.

The USGA's Paul Jacobs has presented a solution: Again, turning to his Green Section Record article "Labor: Suggestions

for Solutions," he offers practical measures for reducing maintenance requirements in nonessential areas of the golf course, in other words, outside of putting greens, tees, and fairways. Jacobs suggests such things as removing intermediate rough, eliminating flowerbeds, reducing the number of course accessories, developing low-maintenance areas that are only mowed one to two times per year, and utilizing the Aussie method of bunker raking. And the list goes on.

In 2015, when Westchester Country Club was performing a renovation project on the West Course, David Dudones suggested to his membership that they reduce and, in some cases, eliminate, many of the accessories on the tee boxes, such as ball washers, benches, and flowerbeds in order to declutter the golf course and reduce the amount of labor required to maintain these areas.

This simple paradigm shift saved more than 700 hours of morning labor and reduced the number of materials and labor hours required to refurbish these accessories. This savings did not result in a reduction in staffing, but rather a reallocation of labor resources, which allowed more to get accomplished on key areas of the course in less time and without having to hire additional staff.

But while these kinds of measures are a start, they're only the low-hanging fruit. What about taking it up a notch, looking beyond the simple work reduction strategies to a course's overall design and how it affects labor requirements?

There are, of course, some golf courses that are not going to change their architecture to save a few bucks, even a few thousand. It just wouldn't be the same golf course, and in the Met section, history and integrity of the game are paramount. In fact, many clubs are renovating to restore the integrity of their original designs, especially their green complexes, where much of the intensive manual labor comes into play.

With that said, if renovation work is tied to anything other than historic preservation, then maintenance, and how it relates to payroll dollars, should be right up there in the discussion. At the very least, golf course superintendents have a duty to inform club leaders of the ongoing maintenance costs, i.e., how much it will cost or add annually to maintain whatever changes or additions they are proposing.

Labor requirements were a topic of discussion at Westchester Country Club when its South Course was preparing to undergo renovations. Making the plans all the more intricate was the club's desire to maintain the historic integrity of the course while

accommodating the needs of today's longer hitters.

The solution was a win-win, with both David and the board pleased with the outcome. Bunkers were not only repositioned for the heavy hitters, but also reduced in number from 67 to 42. That meant far less bunker raking, edging, and hand/fly mowing. Additionally, during the renovation, 30 acres of native areas were added.

After last year's fall seminar, we all are aware that native areas are not maintenance-free, but in Westchester's case, they require considerably less maintenance than trying to keep unirrigated, out-of-play rough areas looking respectable using roller basins, spraying for weeds and grubs, overseeding, and mowing throughout the spring and fall.

Labor-Saving Technology

With the combination of tighter budgets and the difficulty in finding and retaining qualified staff, some golf course superintendents are trending toward another option for relieving labor and budget woes: utilizing new technology.

Dave Oatis, former USGA agronomist and director of the Northeast Region, has certainly seen his share of new technology implemented over the years. With labor in short supply, everything from sophisticated irrigation control software to robotic mowers, are helping superintendents conserve both critical resources and labor.

"Computer-assisted irrigation systems were among the first innovations, replacing labor-intensive and inefficient methods of irrigating our courses," says Dave. "Moisture meters have revolutionized how superintendents irrigate greens, reducing labor and improving efficiency. Their use has also led to improved turfgrass health and playability."

"More impressive, now, is the advent of GPS-guided sprayers and robotic mowers. With the GPS-controlled sprayers alone," he continues, "I'm seeing courses save upwards of 10 percent in materials. That's money that can be reallocated—perhaps to paying higher wages to staff who will have to operate and maintain this advanced equipment," he says.

Dr. Kaminski also believes technology will significantly change the way we do business—and in more ways than one. "There are many courses adopting the new technology from autonomous mowers to drones," he notes. "This trend is only going to expand, and once we get good mowers for larger areas like fairways, it's going to be a game changer. It will not only influence labor issues, but offer other benefits as well. I could see, perhaps, a reduction in diseases, improved turf quality, and a whole host of

other things we can't, at this point, predict."

Though pest infestations have traditionally begun in the East before spreading to the West, technological advances have typically started in the West before coming East. The first course in the country to use solely robotic mowers, for instance, was Presidio Golf Club, a hilly public course in the heart of San Francisco. The superintendent there uses five robotic mowers to cut and roll his greens without any human intervention. And he is more than pleased with the results. The other hidden benefit to robotic mowers: They're quiet. So that means they not only help to reduce labor costs, but also allow facilities to operate their mowers during the early morning hours without violating area noise ordinances. Interestingly, the facility also boasts a huge improvement in course conditioning since the robots were put to work. Apparently, instead of hurrying to mow an area before players arrived, workers are now able to devote their attention to making sure other aspects of the course are in tiptop shape.

John Shaw of Valley Brook in southern Pittsburgh is among the early adopters of robotic mowers in the East and has been using the Cub Cadet greens mowers on his 27-hole course for six seasons and just entered into a new lease. He would never go back.

"The robotic mowers provide a better cut than I have ever seen in the industry," he says, noting that it's the labor solutions that these mowers provide that appeal to him most. "The mowers have allowed me to hire a new kind of worker," adds John. "No longer do I need someone physically capable of walk-mowing four to five greens, and better still, I don't have to endure three weeks of crooked lines, skips, gouged collars while the employee is in training. I can hire anyone who is willing to get up early and work, and in my case," says John, "that has often meant retired workers."

As is the case with Westchester's labor-saving initiatives, the robotic mowers have not translated into a reduction in staff, but rather in a completely different and more efficient way of doing business.

"Dividing responsibility for the 28 greens," says John Shaw, "one staff member is assigned one robotic mower to maintain the same four green complexes. This goes beyond operating the mower to repairing ball marks, changing hole locations, raking greenside bunkers, whipping dew/sand off collars, and any other tasks that may be assigned. On Thursdays, those staff members also trim all the bunker complexes. This system," he adds, "provides significant accountability and a sense of ownership for each green complex."



"Very few of our clients have reduced staffing by utilizing our robotic greens mowers, but virtually all of them have been able to more efficiently redeploy their labor force to improve the overall quality of the golfing experience without increasing total costs."

— Tony Whelan of Cub Cadet

Tony Whelan of Cub Cadet confirmed that, while robotic greens mowers may not reduce staff, they make for a more efficient operation: "Very few of our clients have reduced staffing by utilizing our robotic greens mowers, but virtually all of them have been able to more efficiently redeploy their labor force to improve the overall quality of the golfing experience without increasing total costs."

Though in its infancy in the Met area, robotic greens mowers seem to be the wave of the future. As with any new technology, cost will be an issue for many courses, and that will determine how quickly the robots, in particular, gain in popularity. One manufacturer of robotic mowers claims that golf facilities should receive a return on their investment in less than three years.

While new technology is never cheap to purchase, we all have to look beyond the initial cost and think about how it will, ultimately, result in a reduction in labor or other operational costs. One day, virtually every piece of equipment that someone can drive may be operated autonomously.

Adapting to the Times

With labor shortages continuing to challenge golf courses across the country, it's clear that we must expand our vision of the ideal employee, work environment, schedule, and we are going to have to embrace technology. We must reach beyond the nor-

mal outlets for job candidates, opening our doors to everyone from retired superintendents to millennials; from the turf-school educated to unskilled, but motivated laborers. And we must be willing to afford our workers more flexibility in their schedules along with competitive wages. The old saying, "You get what you pay for," might well apply here. The more desirable job seekers will go, first, to where the money is.

But even with the best of efforts, our staffing numbers often fall short of what we expect. In fact, I don't recall speaking to one superintendent—well, maybe one—who has more members on their crew today than they did 10 years ago.

What this means is that courses may very well be looking at higher-paid and skilled, though smaller, workforces to achieve the exceptional conditions that Met-area superintendents have become accustomed to providing.

If there's one bit of good news here, it's that this challenge is not some unknown pathogen or insect that will require years of research to determine a curative regimen or the development of a new product to remedy. It just requires hard work, creativity, and adaptability, all of which golf course superintendents do best.

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

Member News

Fun for All at the Met Family Picnic

by Chip Lafferty

*O*n August 14, more than 70 MetGCSA members and their families convened at Bedford Village Memorial Park for our annual Family Picnic. One of the best events the Met hosts, it gives us all a chance to take a breather and enjoy what we work so hard for . . . our families.

The kids were kept more-than-busy throughout the afternoon with the numerous fun-filled activities that our social chair, Brett Chapin and his committee, had planned. Not one, but two bouncy castles kept the kids red-faced and eager for refreshments, while others enjoyed a good game of softball or the park's swimming pool and playground.

The highlight of the afternoon, however, was the ever-popular piñata event! This year, picnic-goers were able to take a crack at two different piñatas: one displaying a Yankees logo and another with a Red Sox emblem. Both were chock-full of candy and gave the crowd a chance to take their aggression out on their rival team!

As the picnic-goers carried on with the activities, Crafty Cue was operating the grill, preparing an assortment of all-you-can-eat hotdogs, hamburgers, and ribs, not to mention an array of delicious sides. My mouth is watering just thinking about it!

Many thanks, again, to our Social & Welfare Committee for planning yet another outstanding Family Picnic event. Though it's called a "family" picnic, this is far from a family-only event. If you enjoy leaving the daily grind behind and spending quality time with industry colleagues and friends, you won't want to miss our annual Family Picnic. I hope to see one-and-all of you next summer at this truly great event.

Chip Lafferty, co-chair of the Communications Committee, is the superintendent at Rye Golf Club in Rye, NY.



Upcoming Events

MetGCSA Christmas Party

Friday, December 13
3–6 p.m.

Bull and Barrel
Brew Pub
Brewster, NY



tics to guarantee green industry professionals' success on the job. Offering one of the largest trade shows in the tri-state area, the expo also provides attendees with the opportunity to view the latest and greatest products and services on the market.

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

New Members

Please join us in welcoming the following new MetGCSA members:

- **Michael Dachowski**, Class A, Shelter Island Golf Club, Charlestown, RI.
- **Ed Grant**, Class AF, K & J Tree Service, Hamden, CT.
- **Joseph Grasso**, Class C, Rolling Hills Country Club, Wilton, CT.
- **Brett Scales**, Class A, Hudson National Golf Club, Croton-on-Hudson, NY.



Births

Congratulations to:

- **Scott Olson**, superintendent of Knollwood Country Club in Elmsford, NY, and his wife, Brook Hanna, on the birth of their daughter, Sloan Elise. She was born August 22, 7 lbs., 15 ozs.
- **Bill Cygan**, superintendent of Silver Spring Country Club in Ridgefield, CT, and his wife, Callie, on the birth of their daughter, Francesca Ande. She was born on October 6, 6 lbs., 13 ozs.

Well Wishes

George Pierpoint IV, superintendent of Harbor Pines Golf Club in Egg Harbor Township, NJ, had a serious accident on the job. While his injuries are not life-threatening, George does have a long recovery ahead of him. Please join us in wishing George well on his road to recovery.

Regional Events

NYSTA Long Island Regional Conference

Thursday, December 5

Radisson Hotel Hauppauge-Long Island
Hauppauge, NY

The Long Island Regional Conference offers a variety of educational sessions with leading turfgrass educators and industry professionals. For further information, visit www.nysta.org or contact the NYSTA office at 518-783-1229.

2019 GREEN EXPO Conference and Trade Show

Tuesday – Thursday, December 10 – 12

The Borgata Hotel
Atlantic City, NJ

The New Jersey Green Expo offers a comprehensive educational program providing cutting-edge applications and tac-

MetGCSA Winter Seminar

Wednesday, January 15, 2020

Westchester Country Club
Rye, NY

Host: David Dudones

2020 Turfgrass Advocacy – NYSTA'S Lobby Day

Wednesday, February 26

Empire State Plaza, Albany Room
Albany, NY

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

For further information, contact the NYSTA office at 518-783-1229, or visit www.nysta.org.

President's Message continued from page 1

Most important, in my mind, is taking care when setting goals and expectations for ourselves. Are we setting ourselves up for failure with unrealistically high expectations? Are others then feeling entitled to raise the bar that much higher, causing further frustration when we struggle to meet their demands and sometimes miss the mark? If you find yourself nodding your head, then it might be time to consider the dynamic that the standards you have set for yourself has created between you and the people who play your course. Then accept that it's those elevated expectations that influence their behavior toward your work.

Despite how it may feel at times, most people don't complain just to complain. In fact, 100 percent of the time complaints are founded in an *expectation* not being met. For example, if I leave home and expect an easy drive to my destination because the traffic report says so, and instead I encounter heavy traffic, I get

frustrated at the traffic reporter. However, if I leave home hearing the traffic report and expecting heavy traffic, I don't have that same frustration toward the reporter because he established realistic expectations. This is a prime example of just how critical good communication is in setting realistic expectations and avoiding unnecessary criticism.

No matter how successful we are at managing others' expectations of the job we do, there will always be those who have a bone to pick about some aspect of our work. It is the nature of our job. Understanding and accepting that not only helps us to respond appropriately to critical comments and opinions, but also manage our own perception of any of our slipups or failures.

Thinking clearly, rationally, and with an open mind helps us turn the negative into a positive, and ensure a long and happy results-oriented career.

Ken Benoit
President

A Fond Farewell to Our USGA Friends Dave Oatis and Jim Skorulski

by Chip Lafferty

As those of us in the golf course industry know well, change is inevitable. And after nearly a century of helping golf facilities, the USGA has embarked on a change. Earlier this year, the organization presented a voluntary retirement incentive to more than 60 employees across the organization who were part of a pension plan that was offered to anyone who joined the USGA before 2008.

A total of 49 accepted the offer. Two of those 49 happened to be people near and dear to many MetGCSA superintendents and clubs: Dave Oatis, director of the Northeast Region, and Jim Skorulski, senior agronomist.

Both of these men have been fixtures in our association for many years, visiting us at our facilities, joining us at our Winter Seminar and Green Chairman Educational Series, as well as at many of our meetings. Their lengthy tenure has given both men unique perspectives on not only turf management, but also the art of selling key golf course improvements to even the toughest sells at a golf facility.

One of my members from our commission, who I had been explaining various aspects of golf course management to for several years, experienced a lightbulb moment when the same information I was trying to convey left the lips of God: Dave Oatis. I think what she told me afterward was that Dave makes growing grass exciting. *Exciting?* Well, I guess if I'd had better closing skills, I could have worked the magic Dave Oatis did in pushing through some of the work I'd long lobbied for.

I'm pretty certain anyone who's had the good fortune of working with Dave or Jim Skorulski knows all too well the value of the support they have provided both to us as superintendents and to our golf course operations.

The Expertise We Will Miss

Dave Oatis joined the staff as an agronomist in 1988 in the Green Section's Mid-Atlantic Region and, in 1990, assumed his current position as regional director of the USGA Greens Section's Northeast Region. He offi-



David Oatis

cially retired this fall on September 30. He came to the USGA from Rio Hondo Country Club in Downey, CA, where he had been the golf course superintendent for three years. Before that he served as an assistant at Mesa Verde Country Club in Costa Mesa, CA, for five years. He holds a B.S. in ornamental horticulture with a specialization in turfgrass management from California State Polytechnic University in Pomona.

When he was approached about joining the USGA, he couldn't resist the temptation for the "Big Time." In Dave's 30-plus years with the Green Section, he has visited more than 3,500 golf courses in both the U.S. and Canada and has coordinated the activities of four regional agronomists. More than busy, he has also authored numerous articles on turfgrass management and traveled the globe lecturing on turfgrass management.

A huge part of the Green Section's responsibility is helping out with the many national tournaments the USGA puts on every year. Dave has been involved in 25 of these events, five U.S. Opens, three Women's Opens, one Senior Open, along with, the Mid-Amateur, Walker Cups, and both the Boy's and Girl's Junior championships.

Though Dave will no longer be with the USGA, he does plan to start his own consulting firm, so his skills and expertise will still be available to those seeking his counsel and, of course, the help of an experienced closer at their club!



Jim Skorulski

Jim Skorulski started in the turf field working at several upstate New York clubs as a crew member and finally an arborist before pursuing his master's in horticulture from Cornell University.

Officially retiring from the USGA the end of June, Jim joined the Green Section in 1989, working at the USGA's New Jersey headquarters before settling in New England in the early '90s. He worked closely with superintendents and club officials to solve problems related to everything from trees to turf, making more than 3,000 site visits throughout New England and Eastern Canada.

No one would doubt Jim's expertise as an agronomist, but as a clairvoyant? Jim's talents know no bounds! Apparently, David Dudsones, now director of grounds at Westchester Country Club, was completing an internship with Jim while attending Cornell. The two toured many courses in New England and, one day, found themselves at Oak Hills Park in Norwalk, CT. The park had created a program that attracted a large number of senior golfers, so in the course of discussing the program with Oak Hills staff, Jim asked if they had purchased a defibrillation device. No sooner had the words left his mouth than Jim and Dave heard a frantic call for help. Two fairways over, someone was having a heart attack. Jim sprang into action, administering CPR. A defibrillator in situations like these can prove invaluable. Clearly, Jim can predict not only what's good

for the turf, but also the overall golf course operation!

Jim's contributions to golf facilities were made all-the-more notable through his environmental outreach and integrated pest management programs and through his efforts to guide courses in becoming more sustainable. He has given more than 500 presentations to golf course superintendents, club officials, and turf and environmental study students across the U.S., Canada, Scotland, and Sweden.

Like Dave, Jim participated in many USGA championships, including three U.S. Opens, one Women's Open, one U.S. Amateur, two Women's Amateurs, three Senior Opens, one Senior Women's Open, one Senior Men's Amateur, two Curtis Cups, one Mid-Amateur, several Junior Amateurs and public links championships. Whew! It will be hard for anyone to fill Jim's shoes with the breadth and depth of experience and knowledge his travels have offered him.

Jim is finding his recent retirement so busy, we can only hope that he will find the time to make a few cameo appearances at our events to say hello. We all would welcome a visit!

Needless to say, we are going to miss being tangent to the wealth of knowledge both Dave and Jim have shared during their lengthy tenure out in the field. We can, after all, get caught in our own little bubbles, so it has been invaluable having a different set of eyes, as well as ideas, to help us in keeping our turf programs not just on track, but cutting edge.

Both Dave and Jim are more than professionals and experts at all things grass, they are our colleagues and friends. Please join us in thanking them both for their many years of service to all of us throughout the Met area and New England. They will be sorely missed!

Who Will Serve the Northeast Region?

Though we will no longer be served by our friends Dave and Jim, the USGA will not leave us high and dry! Agronomists Elliott Dowling and Paul Jacobs will serve our region, and Adam Moeller, who directs the Green Section education and outreach program, will continue to dedicate a portion of his time to course consulting.

Chip Lafferty, co-chair of the Communications Committee, is the superintendent at Rye Golf Club in Rye, NY.

Scorecard

Bedford Golf & Tennis Hosts Successful Day of Golf and Giving

by Chip Lafferty

Beautiful weather, great company, and an even better venue made for a wonderful day at Bedford Golf & Tennis Club for the Poa Annual fundraiser, Met Championship, and Met Team Qualifier held September 10.

The golf course was immaculate, the service and food impeccable, and the atmosphere welcoming. A huge shout-out to Bob Nielsen for hosting another great event and to the staff and board of Bedford for making this event possible.

This year, the event was played as a Two-Man Best Ball, that doubled as both a qualifier for the Met Team Championship and determined the individual 2019 MetGCSA Champions.

Here are the highlights of the day's three events. . . .

The Poa Annual

More than 80 golfers played in the Poa Annual fundraising tournament with 32 tee sponsors, which raised approximately \$4,800 that will help support the New York State Turfgrass Foundation. We thank you all for your generosity. Here's a look at the winning results:

Gross Team Winners

- 72 Don Borkowski, *Westchester Tractor Guest*
- Jeff Underhill, *Westchester Tractor*
- 73 Andy Drohen, *Koch Agronomic Servs.*
- Tom Ashfield, *Quaker Ridge GC*

Net Team Winners

- 63 Scott Apgar, *Metro Turf Specialists*
- Lou Quick, *Anglebrook GC*
- 64 Brian Bontemps, *Noble Turf*
- Brent Thompson, *Silo Ridge Field Club*

Closest to the Pin

- #3 Barry McLaughlin 16'3"
- First Tee of Metro NY*
- #5 Mike Brunelle 25'6"
- Upper Montclair CC*
- #10 Mike Cook, *The Care of Trees* 5'7"
- #12 Doug Middleton 9'8"
- Ocean Organics*



Poa Annual Host (second from right) Bob Nielsen of Bedford Golf & Tennis with tournament contestants (left to right) Waccabuc Super Pat Hagan, GCSAA CEO Rhett Evans, and Class LA member Bill Perlee.

Longest Drive

#15 Zach Brooks, *Noble Turf*

Met Team Qualifier Results

Contestants competed for a position on the team representing the Met on October 8 in the Met Area Team Championship. The winners of this qualifying round were:

Gross Qualifiers

Andy Drohen, *Koch Agronomic Servs.*
Tom Ashfield, *Quaker Ridge GC*
Scott Niven, *Stanwich Club*
Steve Loughran, *Rock Ridge CC*

Net Qualifiers

Dave Moffett, *Mosholu GC*
Mike Brunelle, *Upper Montclair CC*
Joe Gikis, *Glen Arbor GC*
David Dudones, *Westchester CC*

Met Championship Outcome

It's at this event every year that the MetGCSA crowns the winner of our Met Championship. This year's battle for the title ended with Rock Ridge Country Club's Steve Loughran claiming the MetGCSA Gross Championship with an 82, while Mosholu's Dave Moffett took the Net Division with a 71.

Congratulations to the contestants who claimed the top wins. And special thanks, again, to the entire Bedford Golf & Tennis Club staff for making our day of golf and giving memorable.

Chip Lafferty, co-chair of the Communications Committee, is the superintendent at Rye Golf Club in Rye, NY.

Brae Burn Takes Home Invitational Trophy

by Steve Wickstrom



Congratulations to the team from Brae Burn on their Invitational win! From left to right: Green Chairman Mike Nissman, Superintendent Blake Halderman, Golf Professional Nick Yaun, and Golf Chairman Jon Rachlin.

Perfect weather coupled with the unmatched professionalism of the Quaker Ridge staff made for an absolutely perfect day for the September 30 MetGCSA Invitational. The first droughty stretch we experienced in 15 months made for rock-hard, fast playing conditions and some monster drives that really tested the competitors around the greens.

The crown jewel of the event is the coveted Team Low Net Best Ball of four. Superintendent Blake Halderman and his team from Brae Burn Country Club bested the competition with a Net 60. Second place, for the second year in a row, was the team from Siwanoy Country Club with a 62 after a match of cards decided the runner-up.

The team from Paramount Country Club posted a Gross 65 under very challenging conditions. The Paramount team was anchored by Pro Chris Cialo, who shot an impressive 71 to lead the field and take home the Low Gross honors.

Most Met members know the reputation of the golf course and the pristine conditions our host superintendent, Tom Ashfield, and his staff strive for on a daily basis, but they may have not experienced the first-class service Quaker's clubhouse staff provides. General Manager Bob Musich and his staff certainly pulled out all the stops to make this event special.

Many thanks to Executive Chef Rhianon Evans and her staff for putting out an outstanding spread, as well as Starter Richie

Uva and Assistant Pro Kevin Quinn for the announcements and the scorekeeping and awards.

This event wraps up the MetGCSA 2019 tournaments. We look forward to an exciting 2020 season!

Here are the day's top winners:

Low Net Team Winners

- 60 Brae Burn Country Club
Blake Halderman, Nick Yaun, Jon Rachlin, Mike Nissman
- 62 Siwanoy Country Club
Steven McGlone, Grant Turner, James Steube, Greg Richter

Gross Team Winners

- 65 Paramount Country Club
Matt Kerens, Chris Cialo, Gerald Tobias, Lance Eagle

Individual Low Gross

- 71 Chris Cialo, *Paramount CC*

Closest to the Pin

- #5 Bob Kenney, *Leewood CC*
- #9 Jeff Bohn, *Hudson Hills CC*
- #10 Matt Kerens, *Paramount CC*
- #13 Nick Yaun, *Brae Burn CC*

Longest Drive

- #16 Tom Ashfield, *Quaker Ridge GC*

Steve Wickstrom, Tournament Committee co-chair, is superintendent at Burning Tree Country Club in Greenwich, CT.

Spotlight

2019 Assistants Championship

by Worth Andrews

On October 28, assistant superintendents gathered at Arcola Country Club in Paramus, NJ, for the Annual Assistants Championship. This tournament provides a well-deserved day off for assistants from both sides of the bridge who are eager to prove whether New Jersey GCSA or MetGCSA assistants are the better golfers. The tournament is a low gross team event, which has elicited some, let's say, healthy competition over the years.

Now known as the Battle of the Bridges, this year's tournament is the third time it has been held in New Jersey. The trophy was taken home the first year in 2016 by the Met assistants at Upper Montclair Country Club, while the New Jersey assistants took home bragging rights in 2017 at Paramount Country Club and, again, in 2018 at Preakness Hills Country Club.

After a two-year losing streak, the MetGCSA made an impressive comeback in this year's championship. Locking in the win, they were crowned the 2019 Battle of the Bridges Champions.

Many thanks to Arcola assistant superintendents Patrick O'Brien, Matthew Carmichael, and Steve Gauli and the club's veteran superintendent, Paul Dotti. The course was in fantastic shape, which set the stage for a great day of golf and friendly competition. A special thank you, as well, to Director of Tournament Operations Jeffery Marthins Jr. and Club Manager Chad Chadwell who went out of their way to make the day one to remember. See the sidebar on page 11 for a recap of the final scores, as well as the top wins of the day.

About the Site of the Championship

Arcola Country Club was established in September 1909, after purchasing the 203-acre property from farm owners, who tilled the land to produce pesticide-free crops, such as melons, corn, and potatoes. Arcola commissioned Herbert H. Barker at the rate of \$25 per day to begin laying out the course. He was a sought-after architect at the time, designing three courses in New Jersey and numerous others across the country, spanning as far west as Washington State.



Barker, it turned out, was one of three Englishmen who had a significant impact on the design of the course throughout the early years. After Barker laid down the foundation for the course, another Englishman, by the name of Willard G. Wilkinson, renovated Arcola in 1930. The last of the Englishmen to leave his mark on Arcola was none other than Robert Trent Jones Sr., who was brought in during the 1950s to redesign the course to accommodate the construction of the Garden State Parkway.

Over the years, other changes have been made, including a bunker renovation by the Jones Group in the 1990s and, in early 2010, the addition of tee boxes to lengthen the course, a job completed inhouse.

As you stepped onto the first tee, you probably noticed the expansive range complex at Arcola. The range was renovated and lengthened from 225 to 340 yards, allowing drivers to be hit with no concern. Over the past 10 years, Superintendent Paul Dotti and his assistants have also removed more than 750 trees, allowing for spectacular vistas.

A True Test of Golf

Although the course is more open than in previous decades, golfers still have to dial in their drives and irons in order to avoid getting mired in the 30 acres of fescue and the numerous bunkers throughout the course. Arcola is far from being a short course, tipping out at just over 7,300 yards with a par of 72 and an intimidating slope rating of 146. If the course length and the slope aren't daunting enough, Arcola also strives to keep green speed at the top of the range, averaging 13 on the stimp meter, which is made all the more challenging on greens that are slightly undulated and pitch back to front.

Paul and his assistants have no qualms about pushing the turf hard, whether that means holding pesticide sprays until absolutely necessary or ensuring green speeds reach the upper limits on the stimp meter. With a membership that focuses more on playing conditions than on the aesthetics of the turf, they allow the grounds crew to sacrifice turf perfection for a highly challenging round of golf.

Our hosts at Arcola Country Club (from left to right): Steve Gauli, Patrick O'Brien, Paul Dotti, and Matt Carmichael.

About Senior Assistant Host Patrick O'Brien

Patrick is Arcola's senior assistant superintendent and is in his fourth season at the club. Born in Green Township, NJ, Patrick attended Newton High School in Sussex County, then went on to Delaware Valley University, where he pursued a degree in turf management. While completing his studies, he got his first taste of golf course work at Bear Brook Golf Course in Newton, NJ, where he signed on as a crew member during the summer of 2003. After his stint at Bear Brook, Patrick took a summer position at TruGreen as a fertilizer specialist during the summer of 2005. Upon graduation from Delaware Valley in 2006, Patrick opted for a supervisory position at Gardens of the World, a local nursery in Andover, NJ.

During his six years at Gardens of the World, Patrick acquired many of the skills essential in not only maintaining commercial and residential properties, but also golf courses. "As a supervisor at Gardens of the World," explains Patrick, "I was responsible for overseeing a maintenance crew with the application of fertilizer for residential and commercial properties, the installation and upkeep of lawns, planting of trees, shrubs, and flowers, and maintaining the various pieces of equipment."

In 2012, Patrick and his wife, Erika, opted for a change of scenery and headed for Australia and a life down under.

Patrick returned to the golf course industry, taking a part-time job on the crew at Manly Golf Club, located roughly 30 minutes north of Sydney on the east coast of New South Wales. As staff moved on from Manly, Patrick moved up in the ranks, eventually assuming responsibility for spraying

MetGCSA Assistants Claim First Place!

by Andrew Baxter

In the fourth year of the Battle of the Bridges Assistants Championship, the GCSANJ and MetGCSA battled it out, once again, for the title. After a two-year losing streak to the formidable GCSANJ team, the Met blew out the competition and took home the trophy. Here's a look at the winning results:

Battle of the Bridges Final Score

(Top 7 Gross Team Scores Combined)

MetGCSA ~ 549

GCSANJ ~ 574

Individual Champions

Low Gross ~ MetGCSA

80 Charles Day, *GlenArbor GC*

Low Gross ~ GCSANJ

79 Freddy Carmona
Stanton Ridge Golf & CC

Low Net ~ MetGCSA

66 Royal Healy, *Sleepy Hollow CC*

Low Net ~ GCSANJ

69 Tim Pleskach, *Wild Turkey GC*

Contest Winners

Longest Drive

Royal Healy, *Sleepy Hollow CC*

Closest to Pin

#2 Brian Conlon, *Burning Tree CC* 7'6"

#7 Jack Meyer, *TPC Jasna Polana* 7"

#16 Charles Day, *GlenArbor GC* 1'

Andrew Baxter is an assistant superintendent at Fairview Country Club in Greenwich, CT.



The MetGCSA winning team members (from left to right): Greg Rotter of Redding CC, Luke Pittman of GlenArbor GC, Royal Healy of Sleepy Hollow CC, Andrew Baxter of Fairview CC, Greg Coughlin of Sleepy Hollow CC, Peter Charles of Pelham CC, Jesse Sutton of Pelham CC, Dave Lippman of Westchester Turf, Kevin Fasulo of Pelham CC.

and syringing greens, as well as other duties essential to the maintenance operation.

"While working on the course in Manly, I had that 'Eureka!' moment that told me I'd found the perfect career in turfgrass management."

At the end of 2015, Patrick and Erika packed their bags and returned to the States. One week after their return, Patrick assumed his current position at Arcola.

During his tenure at Arcola, Patrick has been Paul Dotti's righthand man and a great mentor for Matthew and Steve. "Patrick is a vital asset to my operation," says Paul. "I'm hoping Matthew and Steve follow in his footsteps, becoming great leaders themselves one day."

About Matthew Carmichael

Matthew, like many in the industry, didn't follow the typical path to turfgrass management. He earned a B.A. in English Literature at Long Island University and went on to complete a Project Management Certificate from William Paterson University's School of Continuing and Professional Education. He launched into a career as a project management professional and a position that required extensive travel, often as much as 20 weeks out of the year.

When Matthew and his wife, Nikki, decided to start a family, they realized that the travel demands of his current field weren't conducive to family life. "I wanted a career that would allow me to be there for my wife and children as much as possible," says Matthew.

He decided to put his English degree to work and became a teacher, quickly realizing that it was not the career for him. He went back to the drawing board, this time calling on connections he'd made during his time as a project manager.

"I had the opportunity to work with many superintendents as a project manager, so I became well acquainted with the field," says Matthew. "Reflecting on what I knew of the profession, I felt it would offer a good balance between work life and personal life."

He began his turf career at Newton Country Club in New Jersey where he worked as a crew member for one year. In 2017, Matthew enrolled in the two-year turf program at Rutgers at the suggestion of Superintendent Les Carpenter. He completed his internship at Crystal Springs Resort in 2018 and then made his way to Arcola Country Club, where he has worked as Paul's assistant since the spring.

"I've never looked back," says Matthew, who now has two children: 3-year-old, Juliet, and 10-month-old, Odin.

About Steve Gauli

Steve, the newest of the three assistants, started his time at Arcola Country Club this year. Steve has always had an interest in golf but knew little about career options in the industry—until working at Black Bear Golf Club in Franklin, NJ, during his high school years. After putting time in as a cart attendant at the club, Steve moved over to the grounds crew to experience another side of the business.

In 2016, after two years working on the crew, Steve decided that turfgrass management was not only a viable career, but also one he could enjoy. He accepted a position at the Ballyowen Golf Club in Hamburg, NJ, where his brother-in-law, Don Mackay, is superintendent. While at Ballyowen, Steve pursued formal education in turfgrass management, completing a two-year degree at Rutgers in 2018. Degree in hand, Steve took the position at Arcola and is looking to become a valuable asset to the Arcola team.

Superintendent Host Paul Dotti

Paul Dotti has been Arcola Country Club's superintendent since 2010 and a longtime champion of environmental stewardship over turf perfection. That said, Paul still strives to produce tournament-quality conditions day in and day out.

Daring to be different, Paul's environmental commitment has extended to applying pesticides on his fairways only as needed. "I believe the turf can tolerate a lot more stress than we think, and sometimes sticking to regimented spray programs may not be necessary, especially on fairways and tees," explains Paul. To him, the price he pays for his fairways being less-than-perfect is worth preserving the soil ecosystems.

Tournament conditions and an environmental consciousness can go hand-in-hand, and Paul is proving that. Beginning in the late 1990s, he has worked to appease both his members and the wildlife on his courses. Although it's a never-ending battle, he has managed to keep both happy. While many superintendents focus on wall-to-wall green grass, Paul can sleep at night accepting that some of his grass may be a bit discolored.

Paul began his journey in golf at a young age, working on multiple driving ranges as a teenager. But rather than pursuing a turf degree out of high school, Paul graduated college with a B.A. in Communications and had a brief foray in the world of business at Pay-Per-View. Realizing he would rather be out on the golf course than in the production room, Paul enrolled in Rutgers' two-year turf program to prepare himself for a career in turfgrass management.

After graduating, Paul accepted an assistant's position at Edgewood Country Club

in Rivervale, NJ, and just three years later, in January 1993, he was offered the superintendent's position, where his environmental push began. He had a vision for the course that would allow native grasses and wildflowers to live in harmony with the closely manicured turf. But while the benefits were crystal clear to him, convincing the membership was a far greater challenge.

Gaining support for allowing green, closely mown, and aesthetically pleasing turf to be converted back to their natural state called on every ounce of Paul's persuasive ability. After numerous meetings and hundreds of hours of work, Paul successfully returned 30 acres of Edgewood's 180-acre plot back to naturalized areas. It is not only aesthetically pleasing, but also provides invaluable habitat for wildlife in a suburbanized locale.

After 17 years at Edgewood, Paul took the superintendent's position at Arcola Country Club, which was a mere 11 miles away. In his 10 years at Arcola, Paul has made a number of changes to the grounds, including expanding vistas by removing trees and incorporating natural areas on the course. Walking down the fairways at Arcola, you would never suspect that Paul and his assistants have made only one application of Ferrence for ABWs this year.

"Although there was some minor thinning in the fairways, we lessened our chances of resistance and actually slowly increased our bentgrass populations," says Paul. Paul is quick to admit, however, that every course has different growing conditions and what's right for Arcola might not be right for the course down the road.

With the freedom his members have given him, Paul has been able to conduct test plots on roughly 10 acres of fairways in order to see how much stress the turf can handle. "If the weather gets dicey, we spray when we see problems arising," says Paul.

Shortly before the Battle of the Bridges took place, Paul and his wife, Lisa, celebrated their 20th anniversary. They have two children, Nicholas, who is 15, and Samantha, who is 13. The Dotti's currently reside in Paramus, NJ.

Paul relies greatly on his assistants to keep things running smoothly. "They are the future of our industry and they log in long hours to help accomplish our goals," says Paul, who is committed to supporting their success.

"Networking, unwinding, and enjoying themselves is what the assistants need after a long season," says Paul, who, along with his assistants, was more than pleased to provide that opportunity at this year's Battle of the Bridges.

Worth Andrews, a member of the Tee to Green Editorial Committee, is an assistant superintendent at Brae Burn Country Club in Purchase, NY

Patron Directory

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

- ★ **A.G. Enterprises**
Rick Gordon ~ Staff Uniforms
201-488-1276 / Fax: 201-575-4140
merrick160@gmail.com
www.AGEnterprisesonline.com
- ★ **All Pro Horticulture, Inc.**
80 East Gates Avenue
Lindenhurst, NY 11757
John Seib: 631-789-6680
Fax: 631-789-5711
john@allprohort.com
- Aquatrols Corp. of America**
"The World Leader in Soil Surfactants
& Wetting Agents"
1273 Imperial Way
Paulsboro, NJ 08066
Tom Valentine: 610-299-4470
tvalentine@aquatrols.com
- ★ **Atlantic Golf & Turf**
9 Industrial Boulevard
Turner Falls, MA 01376
John Garcia: 203-996-6267
john@atlanticgolf.com
- ★ **BASF Corporation**
"We Create Chemistry"
Paul Ramina: 908-413-2944
paul.ramina@basf.com
Twitter: @pjjramina
- ★ **Bayer U.S.**
"Backed by Bayer"
Dave Sylvester: 860-841-3173
- ★ **Blue Ridge Peat Farms**
133 Peat Moss Road
White Haven, PA 18661
Gene Evans / Chuck Evans
570-443-9596 / 570-947-5888
- ★ **Carriere Materials, LLC**
U.S. Silica Topdressing & Bunker Sand,
VFB Bunker Sand & Partac
Topdressing
Bill Carriere: 914-939-4884
bc1000@verizon.net
- Club Car CT / Metropolitan NY**
72 Grays Bridge Road
Brookfield, CT 06804
Paul Schwab: 203-943-6898
Ofc: 203-740-1458
Paul_Schwab@clubcar.com
- ★ **Cushman ~ E-Z-GO**
Nick Roberto: 845-637-7641
Reed Williams: 516-662-3554
Chris Larizza: 203-605-0554
- DeLea Sod Farms**
Turf, Topdressing & Root Zone
Scott Geiser: 631-484-1211
sgeiser@deleasod.com
Dylan Wyatt: 631-796-6757
dwatt@deleasod.com
- ★ **Evergreen Organic Recycling**
1160 Mamaroneck Avenue
White Plains, NY 10605
James Amodio / Raymond Colasacco
914-949-9030
Ray@EvergreenOrganicRecycling.com
- ★ **Executive Turf / Synergy Turf & Pocono Turf Supply**
"Nano & Micro Carbon Technologies"
Ken Gentile: 203-496-0891
Tim Joyce: 631-601-5394
executiveturfproducts@gmail.com
- ★ **Finch Services Inc.**
522 Edwards Avenue
Calverton, NY 11933
George Corgan: 914-893-0868
Ofc: 631-727-8700
gcorgan@finchinc.com / www.Finchinc.com
- ★ **Fisher and Son Company**
"Servicing the Green Industry Professionals
Since 1928"
Mike Weber: 347-486-0480
mweber@fisherandson.com
- ★ **Grass Roots Turf Products, Inc.**
"Serving Turfgrass Professionals
Since 1978"
Ryan Avery / Keith Kubik / Nick Alley
Ofc: 973-252-6634
www.GRIturf.com / sales@GRIturf.com
Twitter: @GrassRootsTurf
- ★ **Harrell's LLC**
"Growing a Better World. Partners for
Success"
Scott Tretera: 914-262-8638
stretera@harrells.com
Fred Montgomery: 518-813-7814
finontgomery@harrells.com
- Helena Agri Enterprises, LLC**
"People ... Products ... Knowledge"
Tim Gerzabek: 609-221-9240
Sean Kennedy: 802-558-4009
Twitter: @TimG_Helena /
@GrnMtTurfGuy18
- K & J Tree Service**
Removal, Pruning, Planting, Stump
Removal, & Plant Healthcare
Edward Grant: 203-298-8074
Ofc: 203-722-7316 / Fax: 203-909-6506
edward@kjtreesevice.com
- LaBar Golf Renovations**
170 Mount Airy Road, Suite A1
Basking Ridge, NJ 07920
Rich LaBar: 908-502-5253
rich@labargolf.com
- ★ **Metro Turf Specialists**
"Customers, Our TOP Priority"
Scott / Matt / Rich / Todd / Ted
203-748-4653 (GOLF)
www.metroturfspecialists.com
- MTE Turf Equipment Solutions, Inc.**
115 Franklin Street Ext., Derry, NH 03038
Ben Mancuso
Ofc: 585-356-2770
bmancuso@mte.us.com
- ★ **Noble Turf**
Full-Service Agronomic Supplier
Brian Bontemps: 845-239-7959
Brian Gjelsvik: 973-670-7139
Zach Brooks: 914-309-2373
Matt Lapinski: 978-551-0093
Bill Cimochowski: 609-923-4045
- Northwestern Mutual**
Associate Wealth Management Advisor
2515 South Road
Poughkeepsie, NY 12601
Joshua Weinerman: 845-224-0027
Joseph Small: 845-224-0015
- ★ **NuFarm Americas, Inc.**
"Helping the World to Grow a Better
Tomorrow"
Bryan Bolehala: 201-874-8060
bryan.bolehala@nufarm.com
Jim Santoro: 518-207-2094
jim.santoro@nufarm.com
- Ocean Organics**
Fertilizers ~ Biostimulants ~ Surfactants
Kevin Collins: 914-621-1151
Kevin@oceanorganics.com
Twitter: @kcseweed
- PBI-Gordon Corp.**
Growth Regulators ~ Nutrients ~
Fungicides
22701 W 68th Terrace, Shawnee, KS 66226
Bill Affinito: 508-250-3821
Ofc: 816-421-4070
baffinito@pbigordon.com /
www.pbigordonturf.com
- ★ **Pinnacle Turf, Inc.**
40 Skyview Lane
New Rochelle, NY 10804
Steven Renzetti, CGCS
914-384-9227
srenzetti@verizon.net /
www.Pinnacleturf.net
- ★ **Plant Food Company, Inc.**
"The Liquid Fertilizer Experts"
Tom Weinert: 914-262-0111
Dick Neufeld: 973-945-6318
Tom Pepe: 609-751-1372
David Conrad: 914-263-3244
- ★ **Playbooks for Golf**
Mobile Coverage System,
Conditions App, Golf Course
Field Guides, ezPins, Consulting, Career
Development, Professional Search Services
Greg Wojick: 203-219-0254
Matt Leverich: 913-221-8052
www.goplaybooks.com
- SiteOne Landscape Supply**
"Stronger Together"
Chad Mathieu: 914-539-5675
cmathieu@siteone.com
- Soil Solutions, LLC**
Drill & Fill / Aerification Professionals
Anthony Decicco / John Decicco
7 Whittemore Place, Ryebrook, NY 10573
914-393-0659
soilsolutionsllc369@gmail.com
- Syngenta**
"Manufacturer of Plant Protection Products"
John Bresnahan: 413-333-9914
John.bresnahan@syngenta.com
- ★ **Tanto Irrigation, LLC**
"Golf Course Irrigation Specialists"
Steve Kubicki / Paul Guillaro
info@tantoirrigation.com
- ★ **The Care of Trees**
Mike Cook: 914-345-8733
Jeremiah Green: 914-241-8110
Ken Clear: 203-863-0900
Greg Gutter: 914-241-8110
- ★ **The Terre Company**
Full Golf Turf Supplies & Masonry
Building Supplies
Jim Calladio: 973-518-8834
jcalladio@terrecompany.com
- ★ **Tom Irwin Inc.**
"With Tom Irwin,
You're Not Alone"
13 A Street, Burlington, MA 01803
Jeff Houde: 203-731-1776
Ofc: 800-582-5959
jeff@tomirwin.com
- ★ **Turf Products LLC ~ TORO
Irrigation & Equipment**
"Servicing Our Customers
Since 1970"
Pat Cragin: 860-874-2812
Bill Conley: 860-360-0503
Shawn Donovan: 203-910-9114
Peter Hull: 860-305-2525
Jim Staszowski: 413-237-1467
- ★ **Valley Green, Inc.**
"Serving the Industry since 1990"
205 Wilson Avenue
Norwalk, CT 06854
Greg Moran: 845-901-1358
Ofc: 203-831-9748
g.moran@valleygreenusa.com
- ★ **Westchester Tractor, Inc.**
60 International Boulevard
Brewster, NY 10509
John Apple
845-278-7766
sales@wtractor.com
www.wtractor.com
- ★ **Westchester Turf Supply, Inc.**
"Proudly Serving the MetGCSA
Since 1976"
Bob Lippman: 914-447-6257
Dave Lippman: 914-447-5192
info@westchesterturf.com
- ★ **Wickes Arborists**
11 McNamara Road
Spring Valley, NY 10977
John Wickes: 914-906-3264
Ofc: 845-354-3400
Fax: 845-254-3475
john@irawickes.com
- ★ **Winfield Solutions, Inc.**
"Service, Solutions, Insight"
Rob Saunders: 203-249-5059
Jim Masone: 516-818-9852
www.winfieldpro.com
- W & B Golf Carts / Yamaha**
3391 Route 9, Hudson, NY 12534
Jason Hommel / Michael Behan
Ofc: 518-851-2266
pgagolfcar@gmail.com

Thank You to Our Major Sponsors for Their Support

Ace Sponsors



Double Eagle Sponsors

