

Tee to Green

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President's Message

Reflecting on the Year Past

Thank
You

I

blinked and my time as MetGCSA president has come and gone. I have enjoyed my term on the board and am honored to have served as MetGCSA president for the past year. I have many people to thank for helping make my time at the helm so enjoyable.

First and foremost, I'd like to thank Dave Dudones for his hard work and dedication. Having fulfilled his role as immediate past president, Dave is leaving the board he has served on since 2006. He's been a tremendous ambassador for our association and has arrived at every board meeting fully prepared to discuss the issues openly and honestly, offering his opinions with the utmost diplomacy. In the process, he helped foster the type of environment that encouraged fellow board members to share their thoughts, regardless of how controversial they might be. Most of us have spent enough time in a boardroom to appreciate a board member who is as tactful and diplomatic as Dave has been. Dave and I arrived on the board at the same time, and it has been my pleasure to serve beside him.

Second, I'd like to thank the MetGCSA staff. Susan O'Dowd continues to run the day-to-day operations with the same enthusiasm she had when she first started. Our association has grown tremendously, mostly behind the scenes, through Susan's hard work and diligence. Thank you, Susan!

Our executive director, Mike McCall, has far exceeded our initial expectations for the position. He has been a continuous force of energy on the board and has succeeded in leading our organization into the future with forward-thinking ideas and initiatives. Thank you, Mike!

Though the *Tee To Green* is by no means a one-person job, Pandora Wojick is THE straw that stirs that drink. I want to thank Pandora for all of her meticulous and focused work. She has been kicking ass with our *Tee To Green* since 1989 and shows no sign of relenting.

I want to thank all of the association members who have sacrificed some of their time to help sustain—and enhance—our association. Whether serving on the board as



**Ken Benoit, CGCSA
MetGCSA President**

a director or an AF or Class C representative, these guys all deserve a thank you.

Last, I want to thank all of the members who help keep this association viable by recognizing the importance of attending events. Without your participation, our association could not survive. Thank you one and all!

Welcome Rob Alonzi!

I want to congratulate and welcome Rob Alonzi as our new president. Rob comes from a prominent family whose fingerprints are all over this association. In fact, Rob and Bob Alonzi are the first father and son in our association's history to serve as president. I know Rob is eager to take on this challenge, and he will, no doubt, do a great job. I am very excited to watch him lead our association to even greater heights.

Proud Achievement

When I agreed to serve on the board 13 years ago, I had no thought of rising through the chairs to president. My only goal was to give it my all during my term as a director. Among my proudest achievements on the MetGCSA board was conceiving of and creating the Environmental Committee. Chairing the Environmental Committee allowed me to play a key role in developing the statewide BMP initiative from the ground up. Most golf industry professionals believe that adopting Best Management Practices is nothing short of essential to our industry's future. My hope is that my fellow MetGCSA members *all* recognize the importance of preserving and protecting water quality and the role BMPs will play in helping golf reach a sustainable future. If you don't already recognize water

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Feature

USGA's Dr. Kimberly Erusha to Receive the 2020 John Reid Lifetime Achievement Award

by Matt Ceplo, CGCS





Among the accolades Dr. Kimberly Erusha so richly deserves upon her retirement this year is the 2020 John Reid Lifetime Achievement Award, named for the man many golf historians call, “The Father of American Golf.”

In recognition of her many accomplishments and contributions during her 29 years with the USGA and nine years as Green Section managing director, Kimberly joins a distinguished roster of honorees, including fellow USGA employees Jim Snow, Kimberly’s predecessor, and David Oatis, retired Northeast Region director. Other recipients of this prestigious honor, first awarded in 1986, include journalists, researchers, sports broadcasters, and golf course architects who over the course of their careers have made significant contributions to the image and integrity of the game of golf and golf course superintendents.

This year’s award will be presented at the Met’s Winter Seminar on January 15. According to Awards Committee Chair David Dudones, Kimberly’s selection for the award was nothing short of unanimous.

“All members of the Awards Committee thought it would be the perfect time to present the award to Kim upon her retirement,” he said. “Having grown up with my mother in the business, I think it is very important to highlight the great work being done by women in the industry, and Kim has led the way for others to follow!”

When informed of the award, Kimberly reacted in a typically modest fashion. “I’m honored to be recognized by a group I have respected for many years as professional and courteous promoters of the game of golf,” she said. “The superintendents go about their business, get the job done, and then step back to let golfers enjoy the game. They are the unsung heroes of the industry.”

The “unsung heroes” who have worked with Kimberly don’t hesitate to sing her praises. “Kim didn’t take any guff from anyone,” says Dave Oatis, retired Northeast Region director. “She fought fights for Green Section staff and for superintendents around the world . . . most we will never know about. She never shrank from challenge or conflict and always did what was



Dr. Kimberly Erusha at the 2012 U.S. Open, hosted by the Olympic Golf Club in California.

best for the game and the industry. A better friend and supporter we will never have.”

Bringing the Information Age to Golf

Kimberly began her tenure in the industry as a technical writer for the USGA. She has been instrumental in developing and promoting online resources, especially the Turfgrass Information File (TGIF), a Michigan State University database containing more than a quarter million records useful to our industry’s professionals. She also has been a force in disseminating useful information to superintendents around the world to help them enhance conditions on their golf courses. As the Green Section managing director, one of Kimberly’s responsibilities included overseeing the USGA Turfgrass and Environmental Research Program. The largest turfgrass research program in the world, the program has distributed more than \$40 million to universities nationwide. Her other duties included managing the USGA course consulting service, which provides direct assistance to golf facilities throughout the country, as well as guidance in preparing courses for the various USGA championships.

“Whenever I was helping set up a course for a championship, I always knew who the go-to person was,” she said. “The superintendent.”

But Kimberly didn’t just sit back and let the superintendent—or Green Section agronomists—carry the weight, as Patrick Gross, regional director of the USGA Green

Section’s West Region, notes. “After becoming the managing director of the Green Section, Kim wanted to know more about what the agronomists did at championships, especially the U.S. Open,” he said. “She didn’t just want to drive around in a cart and observe; she wanted to be a hands-on part of the Green Section team. She got up at 3 a.m. to take Stimpmeter and Tru-Firm readings in the early morning and late evening to truly see what it was like. She did this several times. Now that’s dedication.”

As if this alone wasn’t time-consuming enough, Kimberly was responsible for overseeing the many multimedia outlets that target organizations like the MetGCSA, course officials, environmental organizations, regulatory officials, and, of course, anyone who enjoys the game of golf.

A Lifelong Love of the Outdoors... and Golf

Kimberly’s interest in and passion for golf started at a young age. She was born and raised in the small town of Walford, IA, near Cedar Rapids. Her father was a banker and her mom had her hands full raising Kim and her three sisters and three brothers. She was always in love with the outdoors, going on fishing trips with her dad or working in their large yard and garden. That’s where Kimberly got her appreciation for the outdoors, nature, and a love for the game.

“While working, I didn’t have as much time to play golf as I would have liked, but I particularly love the challenge of competi-



Former Northeast Region Director David Oatis and Dr. Kimberly Erusha paying a visit to a New Jersey sand quarry when the USGA recommendations for putting green construction were being revised.

tion with my sisters and brothers,” she says. “I strive to keep holding my own, and hopefully one-up them once in a while.”

While studying horticulture at Iowa State University, Kimberly met two people who would influence the rest of her life. First was her future husband, John Kunnert, a 6' 6" forward for the Iowa State Cyclones basketball team. The second was her undergraduate advisor, none other than Dr. Nick Christians, renowned for his research and work in turfgrass management and physiology.

After graduation, Kimberly went to work for a lawncare company in Des Moines and gained valuable hands-on experience. She was quick to grab an opportunity when she took a position at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln to work on an IPM program run by Dr. Robert Shearman. She soon started grad school, taking advantage of the opportunity for full-time employees to take classes for one dollar per credit. Studying and learning from some of the best turf minds in the business, Kimberly eventually earned both a master's and a doctorate in turfgrass management. Soon after obtaining her Ph.D., she accepted a position with the USGA.

Breaking Through the 'Green Ceiling'

When Kimberly began her career in the industry, there were far fewer opportunities for women than there are today. She is quick to point out, however, that the USGA Green Section has, in many ways, been ahead of the times. In 1943, Dr. Fanny-Fern Davis was named the acting director and held that position for a few years until she left to care for an ailing father. Before that, another prominent member of the USGA was Gertrude A. Farley. She was one of the Green Section's first secretaries. She started with the Cleveland golf district and was the first woman to write a book called *Golf Course Commonsense*. Kimberly is the second woman to manage the Green Section.

“I've seen more opportunities open up for women over the years,” she says. “For example, more women are serving on green committees and even as chairs of those committees.”

Kimberly is a tireless advocate for this type of inclusion and the game of golf itself. She is quick to jump behind a podium and speak at local and national seminars. She was a presenter at the Women in Golf event sponsored by Bayer this past summer. And at the 2017 U.S. Open at Erin Hills, she starred in a commercial. She was shown swinging away while singing the praises of golf course superintendents as great environmental stewards.

“It was fun,” she said, “but I don't think an acting career is in my future.”

Hollywood's loss is golf's gain.

Making a Difference— for the Planet

Even as she neared her official retirement, Kimberly remained busy prepping for and hosting major golf events, like the U.S. Open, and managing, along with Dr. Michael Kenna, more than a million dollars annually in turfgrass research grants. And she continued her work with the USGA

Green Section, working on a GPS tool that provides data on which parts of the course need a greater investment of money, time, and attention. The goal: to provide information that will help speed play, which has become a key priority among golfers and a major factor in promoting the game.

Perhaps the most important projects are those focused on assessing and minimizing the environmental impact golf has on this planet.

“In the 1990s when golf was facing scrutiny about environmental issues, Kimberly participated in meetings and gave presentations on USGA research and education efforts on golf's environmental impact,” notes the USGA's Patrick Gross. “These often included diverse groups of people who were not friendly to golf. Kimberly gained the respect of many of these groups and opened up dialog with the organizations that the golf industry didn't have before.”

A good example of Kimberly's perseverance and effectiveness in working with others toward ambitious goals is the “Golf's Use of Water” initiative. This symposium was organized in Dallas by Kimberly and Jim Moore, then USGA director of Green Section Education and Outreach. It brought together scientists, practitioners, and regulators to discuss what was a very sensitive topic at the time.

“Her leadership was absolutely remarkable,” says Gross. “She was never afraid to think big, but always made sure that whatever the Green Section produced was factual and accurate. No platitudes or grandiose statements that could not be backed up.”

The symposium turned out to be a landmark moment for the Green Section. The water initiative added tremendous credibility to the Green Section and the USGA. Water is the future of the game, and the USGA has developed an innovative, web-based water conservation tool that everyone should take a look at. By strongly endorsing, promoting, and providing the science-based



Dr. Kimberly Erusha and retired USGA Green Section Managing Director Jim Snow at Bandon Dunes Golf Resort in Oregon shortly before Kim assumes the role of Green Section managing director.

BMPs, the USGA demonstrates its commitment to the environment and the future. The USGA also has provided key funding of the GCSAA's First Green program and Audubon International's Monarchs in the Rough, both major programs that showcase golf as an environmental leader.

Dr. Kimberly Erusha has embraced and promoted these and a wide range of initiatives that promote the art, science, and welfare of the game of golf and golf course management. She embodies the organizational and business skills that project and promote the image and well-being of superintendents all over the country, if not the world, through her timely and efficient use of present-day educational, communication, and management methods.

With deep admiration and gratitude, we are proud to award the John Reid Lifetime Achievement Award to Dr. Kimberly Erusha.

Matt Ceplo, a member of the Tee to Green Editorial Committee, is superintendent at Rockland Country Club in Sparkill, NY.

The John Reid Behind the John Reid Lifetime Achievement Award

John Reid is considered the "Father of American Golf" by many golf historians. It all began when John Reid, a Scottish-born businessman in Yonkers, gathered some friends at a cow pasture. They played a three-hole improvised course, but their game was actually cut short because of a blizzard. When the ground thawed in April, John and three others secured 30 acres and laid out a six-hole course. Later that year, on November 14, 1888, they officially formed St. Andrew's Golf Club of Yonkers. John Reid was elected the club's first president. John was a highly accomplished golfer, finishing 10th in the 1895 U.S. Open.

One of the MetGCSA's most prestigious awards, the John Reid Lifetime Achievement Award is an honor the association reserves for individuals, like John Reid, who have "demonstrated a knowledge of, and commitment to, the game of golf and the science of golf." Dr. Kimberly Erusha has been an avid supporter of not only the golf industry, but also the profession of golf course superintendent. We are pleased to present Dr. Erusha with the 2020 Reid Award.

Upcoming Events

Southeast Regional Conference

Tuesday – Wednesday, January 21 – 22
Resorts World Catskills
Monticello, NY

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

GCSAA Golf Championships

Saturday – Monday, January 25 – 27
Orlando, FL

The GCSAA Golf Championships offer the opportunity to play Orlando-area golf courses while competing in four different tournaments over three days: National Championship, Golf Classic, Four-Ball and Scramble, as well as a chapter competition and fun contests. You can choose to play one, two, or all three days.

GCSAA Education Conference & Golf Course Industry Show

Monday – Thursday, January 27 – 30
Orange County Convention Center
Orlando, FL

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

For details on the conference's educational offerings and trade show, log onto www.golfindustryshow.com.

Nor'easter Event

Wednesday, January 29
Lafayette's Music Room
Pointe Orlando, FL
6:30 to 9:00

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

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.

2020 Nor'easter Ski Day

Thursday, February 27
Killington Ski Resort
Killington, VT

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

For further information, contact Andy Drohen at andy.drohen@kochind.com.

2019 New England Regional Turfgrass Foundation Conference & Show

Tuesday – Thursday, March 3 – 5
Providence Rhode Island Convention Center
Providence, RI

For the 23rd consecutive year, the conference and show will provide turfgrass professionals from all areas of the industry the opportunity to see the newest products, supplies, services, and equipment available while offering a host of informative educational sessions, pesticide recertification credits, and endless networking opportunities.

Watch for details on www.NERTF.org, or call 401-848-0004 for further information.

2020 MGA Green Chairman Seminar & Arthur P. Weber MGA Club Environmental Leaders in Golf Award Luncheon

Thursday, March 19
Garden City Country Club
Garden City, NY

The annual Green Chairman Education series is tailored for club superintendents, professionals, green chairmen, and club officials, and discusses current issues and trends that are emerging for courses in the Met Area. A highlight of the meeting is the presentation of the Arthur P. Weber MGA Club Environmental Leaders in Golf Award, which recognizes an MGA member club that demonstrates environmental leadership through their efforts in golf course maintenance, construction, education, and research.

Chapter Delegate Brett Chapin Attends 2019 Delegates Meeting

by Brett Chapin

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

For the sixth consecutive year, I represented our association at the GCSAA Chapter Delegates Meeting. I joined the GCSAA Board of Directors, 2020 board candidates, and 83 other delegates representing 89 of GCSAA's 99 affiliated chapters for two consecutive days of meetings. We convened at the Hilton Kansas City Airport Hotel and GCSAA Headquarters on October 28 and 29.

The GCSAA made the most of our time together, holding meetings into the early evening on the first day and from sunup to sundown on the second. While many of the delegates had attended before, there were many first-timers traveling to GCSAA Headquarters and rubbing shoulders with staff who work behind the scenes of the organization.

The meeting opened with Rafael Barajas, GCSAA president, and Rhett Evans, GCSAA CEO welcoming the group, introducing key staff members of the GCSAA, and providing an update on membership, the health of the organization, and many of the goals and topics for discussion during our meeting. What follows are the key points GCSAA shared.

The State of Our National Organization

CEO Rhett Evans briefed us on the state of GCSAA. GCSAA is in a strong financial position with investments totaling \$7.7 million and an operating budget of \$18 million. The Environmental Institute for Golf (EIFG), which fosters sustainability by providing funding for research grants, education programs and awareness of golf's environmental efforts, has \$9.9 million in reserves. Evans also shared a few of the specifics on GCSAA's financial health:

How GCSAA is funded . . .

- 48% industry support
- 25% member dues
- 18% user fees

How GCSAA spends its money . . .

GCSAA is a not-for-profit: Revenue is used to support programs and services that benefit GCSAA members.

- 32% education; advocacy and environmental programs
- 29% Golf Industry Show
- 10% member and chapter services

State BMP Implementation and Facility Adoption

The delegates received an update on GCSAA's goal to have BMPs implemented by 2020 in all 50 states. Mark Johnson, associate director of environmental programs, thanked the chapters that have been working diligently on making this goal a reality. At the meeting, 21 states had a best management plan in place, while 17 states were near completion, and the remaining 12 states planned to have a program up-and-running by 2020. Johnson advised that facility adoption workshops have begun. Chapters can request grants to help offset the costs of this important next step.

On the Golf Industry Show

COO Robert Randquist, CGCS, shared information regarding the 2020 Golf In-

dustry Show, including the layout of the trade show floor, the fact that 50 percent of seminars offered at the 2020 educational session are new, and 23 of the sessions will be free.

GCSAA Political Action Committee (GCSAAPAC) Fundraising

Kevin P. Sunderman, GCSAAPAC board chairman, briefed the delegates on a few of the fundraising initiatives the GCSAAPAC has undertaken in the past year. Sunderman announced that the GCSAAPAC would sponsor a raffle during the meeting to help reach the goal of \$15,000 raised in 2019.

For the uninitiated, GCSAAPAC is a political action committee to support members of Congress who support GCSAA's priority issues, which are approved biennially by the GCSAA Board of Directors to focus the association's policy work. Through personal and financial member investments, GCSAAPAC seeks to provide a direct means to petition the government for the long-term viability of golf facilities. GCSAAPAC is a critical tool to help the association realize its aspiration to be recognized as the global leader in golf course management.

Chapter Outreach Updates

John Fulling, CGCS, chairman of the Affiliation Agreement Task Group, and Steve Randall, director of chapter outreach, covered updates around the GCSAA Affiliation Agreement, Chapter Assessment Survey, and outreach activities.

The Affiliation Agreement Task Group met in April to review the Affiliation Agreement, which was created to ensure the golf course superintendent profession, and its respective associations, are adequately represented in the golf course industry. The task group recommended, and the GCSAA Board approved, five changes to the agreement. The most notable of these changes involved the GCSAA promotional materials and logo. All chapters who accept the GCSAA chapter logo grant monies are required to change their logos and abide by

the GCSAA brand and style guide. Affiliation Agreements were due on December 31. The GCSAA Assessment Survey launched November 15 and was due on December 31. This survey is conducted every three years and is used to benchmark chapter activities in 10 competency areas. It offers members the opportunity to share their goals for the organization and guides the GCSAA in future decision making.

Advocacy and Environmental Initiatives Focus Group

GCSAA staff highlighted initiatives underway to help address environmental concerns and ways GCSAA is advocating on behalf of its members. An explanation of these initiatives is covered in the latest issue of *GCM* magazine. The majority of the session was spent listening to feedback from the delegates as they shared their perspectives regarding these topics.

Professional Development and Career Opportunities Focus Group

Qualified labor continues to be a challenge impacting the membership. In the Professional Development and Career Opportunities focus group, a few of GCSAA's programs and initiatives that can be used to train and develop staff were shared, including assistant and equipment manager certificate programs, outreach efforts with high school students and members of the National FFA Organization, an intracurricular student organization for those interested in agriculture and leadership.

Town Hall Sessions

The GCSAA Board of Directors and delegates participated in two town hall sessions. The first session, facilitated by GCSAA Vice President John Fulling, provided insight into serving on the GCSAA Board of Directors. The second session was an open format town hall that was facilitated by GCSAA President Rafael Barajas and allowed delegates the opportunity to ask a variety of questions.

Code of Ethics

The Federal Trade Commission's antitrust laws prohibit associations from limiting competition among members. GCSAA has revised its code of ethics to comply with federal law. Expect to hear more in-depth information on this topic after the Met BOD has reviewed the changes made by the GCSAA. These changes will alter the by-

laws of our organization and will be reviewed after the 2020 GCSAA Annual Meeting.

Meet the Candidates

Once the business portion of the meeting concluded, we had the opportunity to listen to presentations from candidates running for national office. After the presentations, we were able to meet and greet the candidates in small breakout sessions to learn more about their platforms and philosophies. The 2020 GCSAA slate of board candidates are:

For President

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

For Vice President

Mark F. Jordan, CGCS, Westfield Group Country Club, Westfield Center, OH

For Secretary/Treasurer

- Kevin P. Breen, CGCS, La Rinconada Country Club, Monte Sereno, CA
- Kevin P. Sunderman, Isla Del Sol Yacht and Country Club, St. Petersburg, FL

For Director (electing 3 directors)

- Zachary Bauer, Valley Country Club, Centennial, CO
- Douglas D. Dykstra, CGCS, White Mountain Country Club, Pinetop, AZ
- Glenn M. Matthews, CGCS, Visalia Country Club, Visalia, CA

Kevin Breen and Kevin Sunderman are at the end of their two-year terms as directors. The unsuccessful secretary/treasurer candidate will need to be nominated from the floor to run for a director position.

Welcoming Questions or Comments

The Chapter Delegate's Meeting was, as always, fast-paced and chockfull of pertinent information. What I have noticed over the past several years is that GCSAA has succeeded in continually improving its communication to its membership. I look forward to representing the association at the 2020 GCSAA Annual Meeting in Orlando. In the meantime, I welcome any questions you might have on any one of the topics covered at this year's Delegates Meeting. You can reach me at 203-885-3109 or at green@redningcc.org.

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

President's Message continued from page 1

as being the commodity in the world, hopefully the rest of us can pull you into the fight before it's too late. Participation is the only way to influence the destiny of our industry.

Time to Reflect

After resigning from my position as golf course superintendent earlier this year, I gained a new perspective on time. While in the past, I would treat it as a limitless commodity, I now cherish it. It was not long ago when I would find myself wishing days away. In the heat of summer, I would think, "...if it were only September, I could beat Mother Nature at her own game." And as fall progressed, "...if it were only November, I could blow out the irrigation system." And with winter on the horizon, "...if it were only February, Melodee and I could take a vacation."

It was a cycle I repeated for many years. Now, however, I find myself with the complete opposite perspective, wishing for time to move a little slower, and what I've learned is that time is the most valuable commodity we have. Having died at an early age, I think of all of the things my father missed out on because he simply ran out of time.

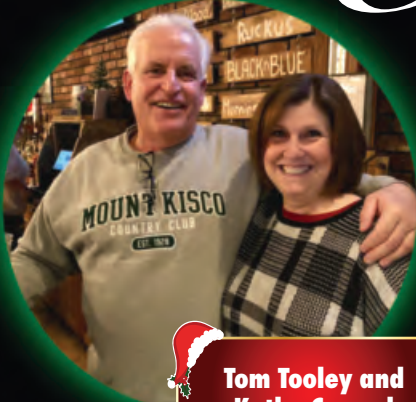
What I discovered, after removing myself from the intensity of being a superintendent, is that you can't control time, but you can control how you choose to spend it. So now I cherish every day and don't wish to go back or forward, but rather stay in the present.

My parting wish for all as we enter a new year is that we take a moment to reflect on how we spend our time—and more important, how we *want* to spend our time. There's a stark consequence to time ill spent: We risk missing vital opportunities to do what is truly meaningful to us, our families, and our lives. So take a moment during the downtime of winter to reflect on how you want to spend your time. You won't regret it!

Happy New Year, and all the best to each and every one of you!

Ken Benoit, CGCS
President

MetGCSA Holiday Party 2019



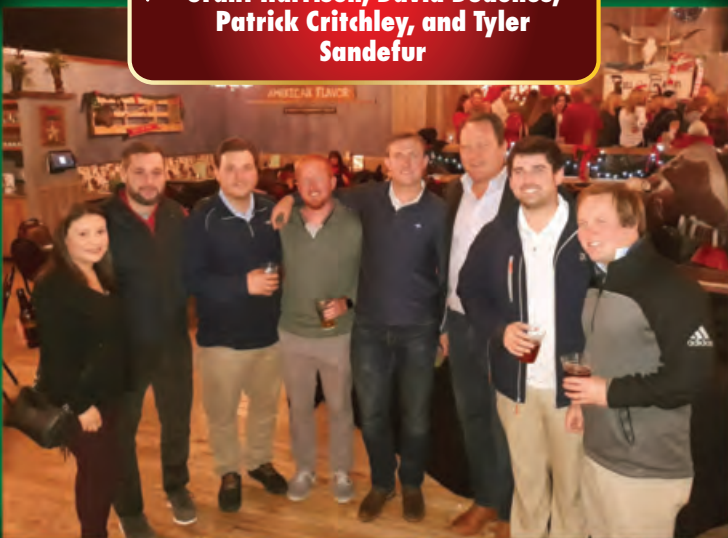
**Tom Tooley and
Kathy Conard**



**Tony Girardi, Jeff Thrasher,
Brian Mahoney, and Bob
Nielsen**



**Alan Jeffrey, Alex Harris,
and Scott Olson**



**Melissa and Aaron Crouse,
Trevor Bendig, Ryan Jentzen,
Grant Harrison, David Dudones,
Patrick Critchley, and Tyler
Sandefur**



**Colleen and
Drew Agnew**





 **Steve Loughran, Mike Maffei, and Paul Thompson**



 **Todd Apgar, Glen Dube, Evan Weymouth, and Andrew Baxter**



 **Keith and Liane Kohlasch**



 **Blake Halderman and Mike Weber**



 **Chris Gaffney, Brian Mahoney, Kevin Kline, Millie Burt, and Kira Provenzano**



 **Mike Weber, Paul Ramina, and Rob Saunders**



MetGCSA Takes Third Place in 2019 Met Area Team Championship at Morris County Golf Club

by Andy Drohen



MetGCSA and Hudson Valley reps in a foursome at the Met Area Team Championship. From left to right: Joe Gikis, David Dudones, Blake Halderman, and Tim Garceau.

This year's Met Area Team Championship ended with the MetGCSA placing third, losing its prior year first-place lead to the team from Connecticut AGCS. A formidable competitor, Connecticut has won the championship five times in the past 15 years and dominated this year's event by 13 strokes with a well-balanced team. Kevin Collins and Eric Morrison led all Net teams with a score of 66, and the team of Mike Dukette and Eric DeStefano were just one off the low gross score at 72. Overall the eight-person team was just +3 with Jason Dowgiewicz and Andrew Hannah at 75 gross and Jay Popko and Tim Nadeau at 70 net, rounding out the Connecticut champions.

Host Superintendent Jon Heywood and his team had Morris County in pristine condition with everyone praising the recent renovation work they had done on the

course. A Seth Raynor gem, Morris County was founded in 1894 and was one of the early members of the USGA and the first club in New Jersey to host a national championship.

While Connecticut seemingly ran away with this year's championship, the battle for second was extremely close. The defending team from the MetGCSA came in third, losing in a match of cards to second place New England, and Long Island finished just one shot back in fourth place. It just goes to show you, every shot counts out there!

Year after year, the Met Area Team Championship was made possible by our seven major sponsors who continue to step up to make this one of the best events across North America! Many thanks to BASF, Bayer, Koch Turf & Ornamental, Ocean Organics, Plant Food, Syngenta, and Toro as they continue to support this fantastic event.

The Met Area Team Championship continues to raise money each year to help those in our industry going through difficult times. Over the past nine years, we have raised more than \$10,000 and have supported superintendents, industry representatives, and their families in times of need. Last year, we donated \$1,000 to the Scott Wiiki Memorial Rutgers Scholarship. Scott was the superintendent at Mill Creek in Rochester, NY, and he passed suddenly at the age of 28 due to a brain aneurysm. This year, we are donating \$1,000 to the Tyler Reeb Trust for Tyler's daughter Hailey. Tyler, the son of Class LA MetGCSA member Mike Reeb, passed away unexpectedly on Monday, October 14, 2019 at his home in Richmond, VA. He was 34.

Thank you to all who support these efforts with the 50/50 raffle! If you know of anyone in need, please let us know.

Thanks again to all our sponsors, Jon Heywood and his entire staff, and all the folks at Morris County Golf Club for another successful championship! A special thank you to our local GCSAA representative, Kevin Doyle, for help with registration and Shaun Barry for the great photos! They can be found at <https://www.flickr.com/gp/185020654@N02/Z52e5G>.

We look forward to seeing everyone next year, so stay tuned for announcements over the winter!

The Complete Results

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

Team Scores (Par 280: Ties broken by lowest gross scores, then net)

- 1st / 283 Connecticut AGCS
- 2nd / 296 GCSA of New England
- 3rd / 296 MetGCSA
- 4th / 297 Long Island GCSA
- 5th / 299 GCSA of Cape Cod
- 6th / 299 Pocono Turfgrass Association
- 7th / 303 GCSA of New Jersey
- 8th / 305 Philadelphia AGCS
- 9th / 307 Central New York GCSA
- 10th / 309 Hudson Valley GCSA
- 11th / 312 Northeastern GCSA
- 12th / 334 Rhode Island GCSA



*Met Area Team Championship Host
Jon Heywood.*

Closest to the Pin

#3 / 1' 5" Steve Stephens
Philadelphia AGCS
(Sponsored by Ocean Organics)

#13 / 5' 3" Eric DeStefano
Connecticut AGCS
(Sponsored by Bayer)

#15 / 14' 6" Jason Criss
Philadelphia AGCS
(Sponsored by Toro)

#17 / 5' 9" Brian Bontemps
Morris County GC
(Sponsored by Koch T&O)

Longest Drive

#11 / Gross Div. Andrew Hannah
Connecticut AGCS
(Sponsored by Syngenta)

#11 / Net Div. Steve Aspinall
Northeastern GCSA
(Sponsored by BASF)

#11 / Sponsors Div. Matt Kerns
Plant Food
(Sponsored by Plant Food)

Low Gross Team Winners

71 Luke Knutson & Shawn O'Sullivan
Long Island GCSA

Sponsorship Team Winners

63 John Haywood & Brian Bontemps
Morris County GC

Two-Man Team High Score

Net / 88 Drew Cummins & Nick
Burchard
Rhode Island GCSA

Gross / 85 Steve Lafazia & Dan Wolf
Long Island GCSA

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

Work Smarts

In Defense of Pesticides

by Carrie M. Tackema

When it comes to pesticides, public opinion is driven largely by misinformation—or simply not enough information. Since the publishing of Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* in 1962, people have viewed pesticides with fear and disdain. And it should come as no surprise that, today, those fears are intensifying, particularly toward pesticide use on golf courses. As various media platforms perpetuate the negative bias on pesticides, many assume that the mere presence of a chemical constitutes a health threat, unaware that products under our sinks can hold similar health risks or that the products used for athlete's foot contains active ingredients similar to those in the fungicides we use on our turf!

No single study can answer every question concerning pesticides, but there are some basic facts to ponder—and share with anyone who approaches you with concerns about the pesticides you apply on your golf course. Much of what I am going to share, here, can be found on the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) website (www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/about-pesticide-registration) and can be used as a valuable reference for concerned members or residents of your community.

General Talking Points About Pesticides

People should be aware that pesticides remain under constant scrutiny and are among the most tested and regulated products for sale in the U.S. since 1910. If you're forced to defend your pesticide use, here are a few talking points. Many of them you know, but clearly those who are challenging your practices do not. They are well worth adding to your defense.

- Pesticides help to limit the damage that can be caused by insects, weeds, and plant diseases.
- All pesticide products are tested, registered, and regulated by the EPA. Under Federal Pesticide Laws, the EPA must evaluate pesticides thoroughly to ensure

that they meet federal safety standards to protect human health and the environment.

- Before a product can be sold or distributed in the U.S., the EPA reviews pesticide product labels to ensure clear directions are provided for effective product performance while minimizing risk to human health and the environment.
- Only after the scientific and regulatory requirements are met will the EPA grant a registration that permits a pesticide's use. This process can take years and involve numerous different tests and studies, with manufacturers investing millions of dollars in product safety and testing before a new pesticide product enters the market.

For Those Who Question Your Pesticide Practices on the Course

No one knows better than a golf course superintendent just how responsibly you use pesticides. When questioning your chemical use, few golfers stop to think about how their golf courses would look and perform without the use of pesticides. It pays to remind them:

- Pesticide products are essential tools that help preserve turfgrass, landscapes, natural areas, and playing surfaces for the game.
- Through Federal Pesticide Laws, education, Integrated Pest Management (IPM), Best Management Practices (BMPs), and sound science reinforcing the safety of pesticide products, superintendents and licensed applicators possess a high level of understanding on safe handling and proper use of these products.
- Superintendents and applicators all follow the label instructions on when and how to use pesticides being applied and to ensure that golf courses and the environment remain resilient.

Providing doubters with the facts could help them see pesticides as the valuable resource that they really are, and support golf course practitioners in their desire to provide superior playing conditions while enhancing the environment.

Carrie Tackema is senior regulatory manager with Nufarm Americas, Inc.

Fall Seminar Brings BMPs to Life

by Mike Brunelle, CGCS

As everyone worked to finish up their end-of-season projects, our education season officially got underway with the MetGCSA/CAGCS Fall Seminar. On November 7, members from both associations were, once again, treated to the great hospitality of The Patterson Club in Fairfield, CT, for the Fall Education event. We would like to thank Patterson Club Superintendent Jason Meersman for his team's hospitality throughout the day. And as Education Committee co-chair, I would also like to recognize my committee for their help in putting together a great lineup of speakers. With the intensified emphasis in recent years on BMPs, both in New York State and on the national level, the Education Committee decided to focus the seminar on a single theme: the benefits of adopting the BMPs and how to use them to our best advantage.

As government agencies are looking to protect our environment, it has made it imperative that we, as environmental stewards, lead the charge in demonstrating our commitment to the BMPs and in safeguarding our industry from ill-founded restrictions. The golf industry has already employed many of the BMPs in order to demonstrate our ability to manage our courses responsibly. The next step is to work on properly documenting the measures we are taking to give our efforts credibility.



Stacey Kingsbury discusses the newly developed Facility BMPs.



New York Golf Course Foundation President Ken Benoit reviews the genesis and value of the BMPs.

I can honestly say, as the Education Committee co-chair, I was a little concerned that seminar-goers may overdose on the BMPs, but the feedback I received since the event has been overwhelming. This is clearly the future of our industry, and to keep our industry and practices viable, we have no choice but to climb onboard with the BMP movement.

The BMP Panel

The panel of educators for our BMP workshop were second to none. Masters at keeping the audience focused and interested, the panel included Cornell's Frank Rossi and New York Golf Course Foundation President Ken Benoit, who both played a significant role in the creation of the New York State BMPs; Peter Gorman, who is currently in the driver's seat in developing the Connecticut State BMPs; and Stacey Kingsbury, who, as a project manager, has helped New York and several other states develop their own BMP programs.

Ken Benoit kicked off the seminar by giving us a bit of a historic perspective on the development of the BMPs and their importance to our industry's success going forward. Frank Rossi, piqued attendees' interest with his enthusiasm and energy for the BMP effort.

Each of the speakers focused on how we can use the BMPs as a prescriptive and practical means for achieving an environmentally responsible objective, such as preventing water pollution or reducing fertilizer and pesticide use. Many BMPs reduce storm-water volume, peak flow, and non-point source pollution through evapotranspiration, infiltration, detention, filtering, as well as biological and chemical actions. Other BMPs address opportunities to conserve water resources and enhance the environmental quality of out-of-play areas, such as providing pollinator habitat. Essentially, BMPs are a sustainable approach to providing environmental, economic, and social benefits to golf and society.

The most notable take-home message for me is just how essential it is to continue to build relationships with each other, lawmakers, government officials, and regulatory agencies and to promote advocacy in everything we do going forward. Anyone who attended the seminar would, I'm sure, agree that we all left with a fuller understanding of the BMPs and how they might benefit our day-to-day—and future—practices on the course.

Mike Brunelle, the Met's Education Committee co-chair, is the director of grounds at Upper Montclair Country Club in Clifton, NJ.



Cornell's Frank Rossi discusses the implementation of the Facility BMPs.

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