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Tee To Green



Siwanoy Country Club

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A Return to Normalcy



W

hat a year it's been! But thankfully, it seems we've turned the corner and are making great strides toward a more normal existence—particularly on the golf course. A relatively warm and dry spring has smoothed the way for completion of winter projects, and it's allowed us to finish course preparations and open early to member play. Contrast this with last year, when our season began with a cool, wet spring and, worse, labor restrictions and the accompanying minimum maintenance standards.

Finally a Full Calendar of Events

This year, we also are fortunate to return to our association's traditional roster of golf, education, and social events, which kicked off with the Dave Mahoney Two-Ball Qualifier at Rye Golf Club on April 26. Rye is a fun course to play, and Chip Lafferty had the course in top form, as always! (See page 13 for more.)

We'll continue the season with a great lineup of courses for this year's golf events. The Superintendent/Guest will be hosted by Steven McGlone and Siwanoy Golf Club on June 7; Brett Scales and Hudson National will host this year's Invitational Tournament; and the Nine & Dine will be hosted by Andrew Agnew of Mount Kisco Country Club. Last but not least, the Poa/Met Championship/Met Team Qualifier will be hosted by Kevin Seibel and Century Country Club.

I hope everyone is as excited as I am for this year's golf calendar. I look forward to seeing all of you in person, out on the course.

I am also looking forward to the return of our annual social events. One event that you should be sure to put on your calendar is our always-popular Summer Social. It will be held July 12 at the seaside Orienta Beach Club in Mamaroneck, NY. This is a great opportunity to finally meet and greet friends old and new.

The Education Committee has also been hard at work. All-new this year was the Spring Webinar held April 28. Rutgers' Dr. Albrecht Koppenhöfer discussed the biology and ecology of the annual bluegrass weevil



Rob Alonzi
MetGCSA President

and its integrated management, including monitoring methods and management with synthetic and biorational insecticides and cultural controls. He also reviewed insecticide resistance and its management.

The Fall Educational Seminar will once again be held at The Patterson Club in November, and the Winter Seminar will return to Westchester Country Club on January 12, 2022.

Why Support Foursomes 4 the Foundation

Executive Director Mike McCall has been working hard on generating participation in our association's Foursomes 4 the Foundation. I am happy to report that, to-date, we are ahead of expectations.

The funds generated are a critical source of revenue for the MetGCSA Foundation, which supports turfgrass research at such regional institutions as Rutgers, UMass, Penn State, URI, Cornell, and UConn. In addition, these funds will allow the foundation to continue financial support for the New York Golf Course Foundation to ensure the continued progression of the Best
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Feature

Pollinators: Creating a Place They Can Call Home

by Matt Ceplo, CGCS



t's spring. My favorite time of year. It's when Mother Nature announces to all living things to wake up, and among those living things are hibernating bees, wasps, and other insects, which break their winter dormancy in search of food.

Years ago, I would have rushed to eradicate the many plants some consider weeds. Today, I pause. But why, you might ask. Well, in my commitment to encourage wildlife—and now pollinators—on the golf course, I have learned a lot about the plight of our pollinating insects, without which our food

supply could be in jeopardy (more on that in a bit!). These special organisms that have evolved through eons of time emerge at the precise time that native plants are in bloom. The problem is that we have almost eliminated all the natives!

At Rockland, we're dedicated to protecting our native species. This time of year, our native trees and shrubs take center stage. Some of our spring buffets include cherry trees, serviceberry, lupine, witch hazel, and Oregon grape holly, just to name a few. In general, perennials are slower to wake but

will provide a major food source for the rest of the season. We have made a conscious effort to use native plants that will feed our pollinators and others for the entire year.

So the challenge for all of us, as superintendents and owners of our own properties, is to think how we can expand this movement to show, educate, and encourage others to do the same. We have to keep in mind that a property can be beautiful with areas dedicated to providing our pollinators with a food source throughout the spring, summer, and fall.



Established meadow left of our 14 fairway showcasing late summer Indian grass, switchgrass, golden rod, and milkweed in bloom.



In this meadow area during late spring to early summer, Ohio spiderwort steals the show with milkweed, bee balm, Indian grass, big bluestem, and little bluestem ready to take over in a few weeks.

Not convinced? What follows is some of the research behind the plight of our pollinators and my own experience in creating areas for the care and feeding of these essential creatures. I hope what you read here will convince you of the importance of implementing a pollinator-friendly habitat on your course!

Making Life Difficult for Pollinators

Why is the need for pollinators so pressing? As I mentioned, without them, our food supply could be in great danger. You see, by carrying pollen from one flower to another, bees, butterflies, birds, and other pollinators facilitate and improve the production of many of the micro-nutrient-rich fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, and oils we eat. In fact, close to 75 percent of the world's crops that produce fruits and seeds for human consumption depend, at least in part, on pollinators for sustained production, yield, and quality. Put another way, one in every three bites of food we eat can be directly related to pollinators.

Unfortunately, we've made a mess of things, and now we need to make a commitment to turn things around . . . or else. Consider these startling statistics. . . . In 1900, 60 percent of us lived in rural areas around the country. By 1950, 36 percent, by 2000, 17.4 percent, and of the 300 million residents in the U.S., 83 percent now live in cities or the suburbs. That means 83 percent of American's don't see and, therefore, don't realize, care, or worry about the fact that we are losing species at an unsustainable rate.

And that's just the half of it. We have paved more than 43,480 square miles in blacktop, an area five-and-a-half times the size of New Jersey. It's not just our suburban areas and cities that have been stripped of natives. Think of rural farmlands. There are 83.4 million acres planted in soybeans, 14.5 million in cotton, and 90 million in corn. All of these have displaced natives and RoundUp-resistant corn has had huge impacts.

Here's more bad news (if you're a pollinator): Christina Milesi, a well-known researcher and author of *Urbanization, Land Cover Change*, has estimated that we have

converted between 32 and 40 million acres into suburban lawns. To put it into perspective, that's eight times the size of New Jersey dedicated to alien grass, which offers zero food for pollinators.

Don't get me wrong, we make our living by preparing the land for the greatest sport known to mankind, and until someone comes up with a better alternative, our grasses are the best surface to hit a golf ball or kick a soccer ball or field a baseball, etc. It's just not very good for pollinators.

Pollination Problems Can Be Solved

So what can we do about this issue? When it comes down to it, golf courses are in a perfect spot for a radical transformation in the way we maintain developed landscapes. We have acres of out-of-play areas that can be transformed into native gourmet buffet tables for pollinators. And who better to accomplish this than golf course superintendents!

We can start by tolerating some of our early-season bloomers. No, not in areas of play, but rather in buffer strips well out-of-



A meadow area left of our first green featuring bee balm, helianthus, butterfly weed, Joe-pye weed, golden rod, asters, and panicum.

play. You know, the areas you blow those leaves into every fall. This simple step offers a great start for enhancing the habitat for our pollinators. Golfers need to know that we, as superintendents, are creating natural environments so the birds, bees, and butterflies, and other forms of nature can live—and in turn, help us live vibrant and healthy lives.

I started my mission to create a pollinator-friendly environment about 25 years ago. It hasn't always been easy. I made my fair share of mistakes. But there are some simple things you can do to welcome pollinators on your course. Here are a few tips:

1. Identify an area where you can encourage pollinators. Select a site on your golf course that will be visible to members but is out of the way of traffic or mishit golf balls. When selecting an area, think big! I'm talking acres, not square feet. After all, studies have shown that if we take 50 percent of the land for us, we will lose 50 percent of species that originally inhabited the area!

Keep in mind that insects need to drink. Selecting a site with at least a spot of water will help. Most caterpillars can get their water from the leaves they are eating, but butterflies will drink from wet soil; it's called puddling in the butterfly world.

Another thing to consider is whether or not the site will be up-close-and-personal—around a tee or in a nearby wood line, for instance—or viewed at a distance. This will influence your plant selection and maintenance. Let's face it, what's beautiful to a pollinator is not necessarily loved by golfers who are generally still of the mindset that even out-of-play areas must look manicured.

Milkweed, for instance, is one of those plants that is lovely from a pollinator's perspective but unsightly to the golfing public. Other weedy plants that attract pollinators but should be grown out-of-sight or viewed only at a distance can be found online or in a source I've used a lot called *The Xerces Society's Guide to Attracting Native Pollinators*.

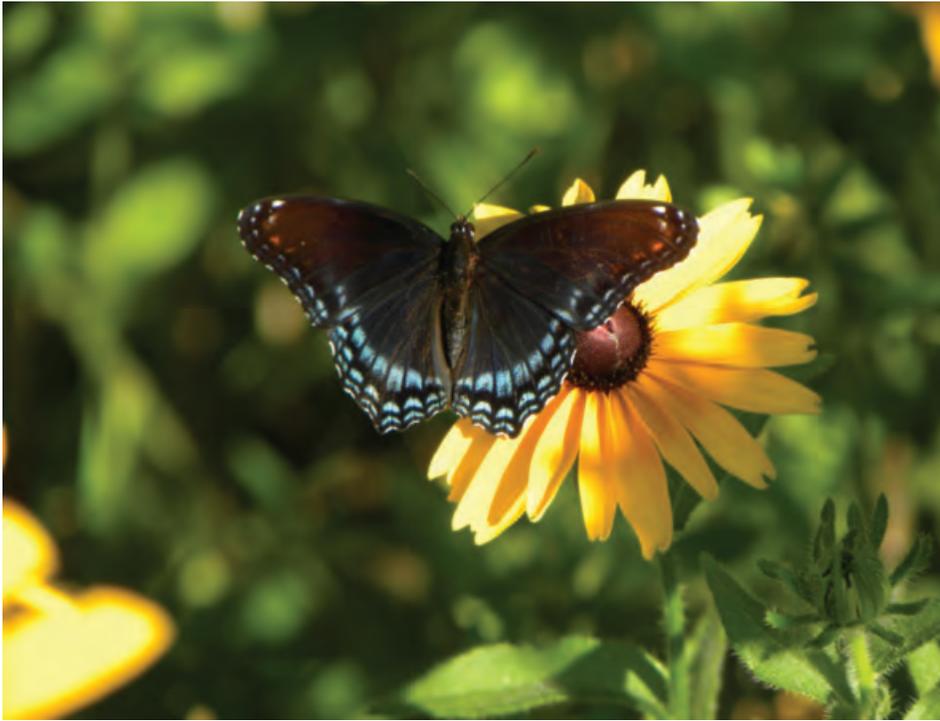
2. Select your seed. Select seed that will match your site. Does it get at least 6 to 8

hours of sun? Is it relatively dry? And don't overlook pH. It's an important factor for some plants.

If the area is not too large, you may want to try plugs rather than seed. It's a little costly but can jumpstart the process. Most important, however, is that you know what you're doing in seed selection.

It's difficult to be an expert, and here's where I failed on at least one occasion with my plant selections. A good friend of mine and an expert in this subject is Mark Brownlee, owner of a company called Archwild in Pennsylvania.

After touring our native areas, he was impressed with the many things I did right, but as we approached our 17th hole, he pointed out that we had planted the wrong ecotype of *Sorghastrum nutans* or Indian-grass. It was a Midwestern ecotype, which is not accustomed to all the rain we get in the Northeast. Mark spotted it instantly because it had grown too high. Unfortunately, it is in an area where we did not want it to grow that tall. To this day, I still get remarks that it looks overgrown.



*One of our prettiest butterflies, the red-spotted purple butterfly, whose host plants are mainly cherries such as black cherry (*Prunus serotina*), birches (*Betula*), willows (*Salix*), and poplars (*Populus*).*

I'm sharing this story to emphasize the importance of reaching out for help from the experts before making your final plant selections. Don't be afraid to ask your seed supplier for some guidance.

3. Prepare the area for seeding. You will have to start by eliminating plant competition and removing any unwanted shrubs, trees, or plants. This is, by far, the most important step and will save you years of battling undesirable plants.

It may take a full season to prep your area depending on what is growing there now. A nonselective herbicide like RoundUp can be used, but keep in mind that it may turn your area brown. You could, instead, start your prep with mowing the area down and keeping it mowed to help control some of the unwanted weeds while keeping the area a more eye-appealing green. Then, a month before planting, you can apply your RoundUp, spraying a couple of applications about two weeks apart. Whatever you do, be sure not to rototill! That will do little more than bring up the weed seeds you were trying to eliminate.

Timing your seeding for late summer–fall is generally better than spring because of weeds, but also because many of the forbs need to go through a cold period (stratification) before they will germinate.

When it comes time to seed, I have always had luck with broadcasting it across the area. To encourage an even application, we mix our seed with a cement mixer and combine it with dry topdressing sand.

When you purchase your seed, it should tell you how much to use, usually by pounds

per acre. We use a lot of mixes. Most recently, we purchased a native pollinator mix without grasses. There are mixes with grasses, but for our area, the grass would have grown too tall, so we decided to add some lower-growing species separately.

There are 20 different species in the mix we chose, and only one is an annual. The rate for seeding is 4 to 8 lbs. per acre. We just weigh out the appropriate amount and mix it with our dry topdressing sand and spread the product in the area. We get about 3,000 sq. ft. from our hand rotary spreaders so the math is easy. You would use about 6.5 ozs. of seed mix per hopper for the 4- to 8-lb.-per-acre mix.

It is very important to add a cover crop when you seed. Grain oats have worked well for us. They germinate quickly and stabilize the soil. Do not use annual rye; because our winters have become warmer, it may not die off.

4. Maintaining your seeded area. I'm not going to kid you; getting these areas established could be the hardest part. It takes time and patience. If you have irrigation great; if not, you are at the mercy of Mother Nature. But not to worry; a little water is all you need. These plants thrive out in nature all the time, so let Mother Nature perform her magic.

The only plant that will germinate fast is the grain oat. It's wise to get that going so you don't get complaints about barren soil, and it has the added benefit of preventing soil erosion. Once the oats are established, you are going to mow your area for at least one or two seasons at a height of seven inches. The area will look like rough thanks

to the grain oats, and it will be tidy. The seven-inch cut height will allow light to penetrate, giving all those perennials a season to develop roots.

After mowing for a full season, you can look at what you have, and let it continue to grow—unless weeds have begun to take over. Then you may find it useful to mow to keep the weeds at bay. Just be sure to time your mowings so that you don't leave a lot of clippings that could smother young seedlings.

Give yourself at least three to five years for your pollinator meadow to fully develop. But be prepared. Your meadow will change over time. If black-eyed Susan's are in your seed mix, they are quick to develop but aren't strong enough to compete long-term with other tougher plants. I remember adding wild Senna to one of our mixes because it's the host plant for the clouded sulfur butterfly. I kept looking for it, but nothing appeared until year four when I noticed a few had germinated. These areas will constantly be changing until the strongest plants become established. Patience and persistence is key here.

Throughout the life of your pollinator meadow, one of your biggest challenges will be controlling weeds, especially the invasive ones like mugwort, porcelain berry, Japanese knotweed, and mile-a-minute vines. Mowing the first few seasons certainly helps, but to fully control undesirables in your meadow, you have no choice but to spot spray. It will take training staff to recognize the difference between a mugwort seedling and the desirable lupine or bee balm seedlings. When spot spraying with a backpack sprayer, I suggest using a little blue tracker dye, so the applicator can keep track of what is done and what is left to be done.

The hard part is establishing your pollinator meadow. Once there, I guarantee you will find these areas require far less maintenance. We have a few older areas and we mow them once a year, preferably in late spring. Once mowed and clean, a quick walk-through with a hand sprayer to control invasives does the trick. The maintenance is done.

The Do's and Don'ts of Creating a Pollinator Garden

Conduct a plant inventory.

No Mulch.

No pesticides.

Native plants—flowers for each season.

Remember pollen plays a role as well as nectar.

Remove invasives, remove invasives, remove invasives.

Plants and Practices to Attract Pollinators

Don't neglect your wooded areas or the edges of the property. Doug Tallamy, a well-known ecologist, entomologist from University of Delaware, notes that trees play an important role in attracting and nurturing pollinators. In fact, trees in the Fagales order, such as oaks, beech, and hickory, can attract some 521 different species of butterfly and moth caterpillars. Other great trees are Redbuds, Dogwoods, Tulips, Willows, and Apples.

How many Black cherry trees have we cut down? Those gnarly, half-dead-looking trees are also home to many pollinators. The flowers provide nectar, and it's the host plant for one of the most beautiful butterflies in our area, the red-spotted purple. It is also host to one of the most famous caterpillars, our woolly bear, which has a reputation for being able to forecast the coming winter weather. Lore has it that if their rusty band is wide, then it will be a mild winter. The more black there is, the more severe the winter.

I've come to realize that if a plant is a true native, it probably benefits some kind of insect or bird.

If your site is located near a good-sized water feature like a pond, add American lotus to the mix. It's the host plant for 31 species of moth and butterfly caterpillars and bumble bees love it.

Feed your pollinators all season long. Be sure to plan your garden so that pollinators never go hungry. While trees and shrubs keep pollinators well fed in the spring, perennial plants will do the job the rest of the year. Some of the plants that bloom mid-summer are milkweed, mountain mint, bee-balm, and cone flowers. As the season progresses, make sure to have some golden rod, asters, New York iron weed, and Helianthus. This is far from a complete list, but it does give some plant ideas to get your meadow up-and-running.

Avoid planting cultivars. They are just flat out not as attractive to pollinators as natives. It's sometimes possible to identify a plant by its name. For instance, you're probably better off planting an Eastern red oak than a Norway maple or an American Elm rather

than a Siberian elm. Norway? Siberian? They just plain sound non-native!

Partner with a pollinator program. There are numerous organizations and programs out there that provide support for anyone interested in creating pollinator-friendly habitats. Among them are:

- **Monarchs in the Rough.** Sponsored by Audubon International, this program promotes the creation of new habitat for monarch butterflies on golf courses.

- **Monarch Waystations Program.** Sponsored by MonarchWatch.org, this program provides resources necessary for monarchs to produce successive generations and sustain their migration.

- **Pollinator Pathway project.** This project is organized by volunteers from town conservation organizations working together to establish pollinator-friendly habitat and food sources for bees, butterflies, hummingbirds, and other pollinating insects and wildlife along a series of continuous corridors.

- **Syngenta's Operation Pollinator.** This is a global Syngenta initiative that helps restore pollinators on golf courses and other landscapes by creating essential habitats.

All of these are great partners. They can—and will—provide a wealth of information and support in your work to create a pollinator meadow on your course.

Finally . . .

If this seems like more trouble than it's worth, keep in mind that attracting beneficial insects to your golf course is easier than you think. We have so many resources at our fingertips that adding pollinator-friendly plantings to the environment takes little additional effort. Get a few members involved and let them know what you are doing. Point out that a well-planned pollinator meadow will be a beautiful, site-enhancing feature that provides important refuge for beneficial, pollinating insect species—and benefits us, in return.

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

President's Message continued from page 1

Management Practices for New York State Golf Courses. Last but not least, funds generated by Foursomes 4 the Foundation allow the MetGCSA to provide college scholarships for members and members' children.

Please consider participating in Foursomes 4 the Foundation if you haven't already. Thank you to all of the clubs and superintendents who continue to support this very important endeavor.

Congratulations Are in Order

I would like to personally congratulate Tim O'Neill on his recent retirement from the Country Club of Darien after 40 years as a golf course superintendent. Tim is known as a consummate professional who served as the president of the MetGCSA, GCSAA, and was a founding member of the Tri-State Turf Research Foundation. (More to come in an upcoming issue.) We wish all the best to Tim in the next chapter in his life.

Be There!

With a series of great events planned for the season after a year hiatus in our gatherings, I am hoping to see record participation in 2021. No matter what the venue, meetings are always great opportunities to catch up with old friends, meet new people, and on occasion, talk a little turf with peers. I'll look forward to seeing you all during the season.

Here's to a happy and healthy 2021 season!

Rob Alonzi
MetGCSA President

MetGCSA Winter Seminar a Virtual Success

by Chip Lafferty

With all the Covid restrictions, our ability to have educational events and meetings has been severely limited. However, thanks to NYSTA and Matt Leverich of Playbooks for Golf, we were able to host an abbreviated—but well-received—version of our annual Winter Seminar, free of cost to our MetGCSA members. Our seminar speaker, Dr. Frank Rossi, once again, outdid himself, making our virtual event interesting and a pleasure to attend. The subject matter focused mainly on the effects Covid has had on the golf industry, noting the challenges that arose from golf being one of the few outlets for public enjoyment.

The Downside of Increased Traffic

As Dr. Rossi pointed out, this meant a dramatic increase in traffic and rounds at virtually every golf facility in the country. With some courses experiencing as high as a 30 percent increase in rounds, turf challenges surfaced that were rarely if ever seen before.

Walk-on and walk-off areas on greens and tees started to show stress, along with fairway choke points around bunkers and trees. Superintendents were pressed to be more vigilant than ever about traffic flow, addressing high-traffic areas before they suffered extreme wear-and-tear, particularly with the advent of single-rider carts. Many courses had to add to their fleet of golf carts to keep up with the demand! It also became essential to think not only about where the pins are on the greens, but also how people will access greens and tees and then alternate pin placements frequently to avoid excessive wear.

Tee time intervals were extended to 12 and even 15 minutes to allow for social distancing, primarily around the first tee area. This had the added benefit of making the rounds much more enjoyable for the golfers who were able to play a less crowded course, often in less time.

Turf-Saving Cultivation Techniques

Dr. Rossi also covered cultivation techniques to help ease compaction and stress without adversely impacting the putting surface. Among them were:

- Increasing nitrogen, although not popular, can be very effective in maintaining a sufficient growth rate where wear is occurring.
- Venting greens every couple of weeks with a needle tine, Hydroject, or PlanetAir.
- Paying close attention to watering to avoid over- or underwatering.
- Hand watering late into the afternoon due to the number of golfers throughout the entire day.

- Limiting turf stress by installing ropes or using GPS for cart control zones

Matt Leverich did a wonderful job as our event's MC, keeping the seminar on schedule and the audience engaged. Matt also introduced each of our sponsors, noting each company's area of expertise. While the event, by all accounts, was a success, I look forward to our traditional Winter Seminar gathering resuming next year!

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

MetGCSA Scholarship Award Applications Ready and Waiting!

Application forms for the 2021 MetGCSA Scholarship Awards are available on the Met website, www.metgcsa.org, or through MetGCSA Executive Secretary Susan O'Dowd at sodowd@mgagolf.org or 914-909-4843.

Any Class A, Life A, Life A/AF, B, C, Life C, AF, or Life AF member of the MetGCSA or a dependent of a member is eligible to win. Applicants must be enrolled in a short course or in an associate's, bachelor's, master's, or Ph.D. program.

If you have any questions about the application process, please feel free to contact Scholarship Chairman Brett Chapin at Redding Country Club. You can reach him by calling 203-885-3109 or by sending an email to green@reddingcc.org.

The Scholarship Committee will select recipients based on leadership, maturity, scholastic capabilities, activities, and commitment to a chosen career. **All applications MUST be RECEIVED by end of business day on Monday, June 10.** Emailed applications will not be accepted!

We are hoping we can continue to award the scholarships at the Annual Parent/Child Scholarship Tournament at Mosholu Golf Course in the Bronx. More details on this event will be shared as they become available.

MetGCSA Committee Chairs at Your Service

We have provided a list of each of the MetGCSA's 2021 committee chairs, including their phone numbers and emails. Please feel free to contact any of them with questions, comments, or helpful suggestions.

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Advocacy Day Webinar Gives Voice to Legislative Issues

by Michael Maffei, CGCS

As we all know, the global pandemic has affected the way the world conducts business, and the New York State Legislature is no different. The Capitol has been closed to visitors for the past year. Even lobbyists who spend many hours traveling the halls and visiting legislators are now forced to make their “visits” via Zoom calls.

NYSTA realized early on that our traditional, in-person Advocacy Day would not be possible, and we would need another avenue to communicate our issues and concerns to legislators. Top of mind were:

- Funding for the Turfgrass Environmental Stewardship Fund (TESF)
- Bans on such pesticides as neonicotinoids and glyphosate
- The importance of IPM and an IPM definition that allows chemicals as part of an overall strategy to control pests

Webinar at Work

In discussing how to best voice our issues, it became obvious that conducting Advocacy Day via Zoom calls would present logistical challenges. NYSTA decided, instead, to send an open invitation to legislators and green industry professionals to attend a 1.25-hour briefing session webinar. Held on February 24, the briefing session attracted approximately 100 industry professionals, including 13 legislators.

The briefing covered:

- The economic impact of the turf industry in New York
- The environmental benefits of turfgrass
- The importance of the Turfgrass Environmental Stewardship Fund
- How Covid-19 affected business, especially the golf sector
- The role of pesticides in Integrated Pest Management

Economic and Environmental Benefits of Turfgrass Management

Setting the stage for the program were North Hempstead Superintendent Tom Kaplun, co-chair of NYSTA's government relations committee, and Saratoga Sod Farm's Steve and Laurie Giffen, who offered a well-crafted explanation of the economic and environmental benefits of turfgrass. Steve pointed out how precision agriculture, new technologies, and best management practices are helping mitigate climate change.

Seeking Support for the Turfgrass Environmental Stewardship Fund

West Point Golf Course Superintendent Steve Whipple, president of NYSTA, provided an overview of the importance of the Turfgrass Environmental Stewardship Fund and the continued \$150,000 commitment from the state. Ken Benoit, representing the New York Golf Course Foundation, showed the impact that TEF has had on the development, continued updating, and enhancements to the Best Management Practices for New York State Golf Courses.

To show the success of the BMPs, three case studies of BMP implementations were presented:

- Bob Nielsen gave an overview of his water quality monitoring at Bedford Golf & Tennis Club.
- Luke Knutson discussed his best management practices for protecting pollinators at Rockville Links Club.
- Andrew Eick, director of facilities and agronomy at Mohawk Golf Club, showed how rolling approaches can suppress dollar spot in those areas.

The Consequences of COVID-19

Jim Hornung and Kevin Kline were charged with informing legislators about how COVID-19 and the State's regulations have impacted small business and golf in particular.

Jim Hornung, a NYSTA board member and owner of Great Lakes Athletic Fields, stressed the need for equity in State Covid guidelines and suggested a thorough thought process when forming regulations that affect both employers and employees.

Kevin Kline, director of member services for the Metropolitan Golf Association, spoke about Covid-19's impact on golf. He pointed, first, to the many positive contributions golf brings to the metropolitan area by generating charitable contributions, tax revenue, and employment opportunities, and by preserving open space.

He then noted that golf courses suffered significant loss of revenue under COVID-19 restrictions. He credited the partnership with the Metropolitan Club Managers Association, the MetGCSA, and the MetPGA for their communications throughout the pandemic with golf facilities and the Empire State Development Corporation (ESDC). That said, Kevin noted that the golf restrictions put in place by the ESDC need to be revisited to hopefully align more closely with neighboring states.

The Role of Pesticides in Integrated Pest Management

Tom Kaplun made the last presentation of the morning on the role of pesticides in Integrated Pest Management (IPM). Tom gave an overview of the principles of an

IPM program and why pesticides should be an integral part of that program. Tom's key points:

- We support a State adopted definition of Integrated Pest Management that encompasses all the elements of the IPM Institute of North America's definition for IPM—a definition driven by sustainable, science-based decision making that combines a number of tools, including chemical controls, in pest management.
- We oppose bills that would establish a definition of Integrated Pest Management for the purpose of restricting or eliminating the use of pesticides.
- We support the current regulatory framework that was instituted by the New York State Legislature for the Department of Environmental Conservation, which would allow them to review pesticides and determine if a pesticide should be registered for use in New York State. We oppose any legislation banning pesticides.

Keeping the Lines of Communication Open

Rick Zimmerman, representing the New York Alliance For Environmental Concerns, introduced two of the legislators who participated in the briefing and were invited to offer their thoughts on current legislative concerns and communication efforts among legislators and the green industry.

Senator Michelle Hinchey, chair of the Senate Agriculture and Food Committee, spoke on the importance of communicating issues with legislators and making sure the industry has the tools it needs to be successful. Senator Hinchey will be advocating for

support of programs positively impacting agriculture, including turfgrass.

Assemblywoman Carrie Woerner, a member of the Assembly Agriculture Committee, also spoke about the importance of communication and the need to find common ground and balance on issues. Communication with those who may not share common ideas is key. We need to rely, she said, on science, data, and research, and it is important to provide support to the Cornell IPM program to provide research that can help find balance on issues. Assemblywoman Woerner agreed that pesticide regulations should not be made by legislators, but rather kept in the jurisdiction of the Department of Environmental Conservation.

Further Information at Your Fingertips

Tom Kaplun provided a wrap-up and thank you to all who attended. Despite the change in Advocacy Day format, the webinar

seemed to do its part to foster an understanding and appreciation of our industry by New York State legislators.

If you were unable to attend this webinar, you can view the entire session by accessing this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=drWxk3U1gso>.

For additional information, two briefing papers prepared for Advocacy Day on the Turfgrass Environmental Stewardship Fund and Integrated Pest Management can be found on NYSTA's website, www.NYSTA.org. These briefing papers can be sent to your local State legislator or used in a personal conversation with one of them.

We hope to see all of you at our Turfgrass Advocacy Day in 2022. Laws and regulations affect everyone, and your input at this event is important!

Michael Maffei, golf course superintendent at Back O'Beyond in Brewster, NY, is a past president of NYSTA and a member of the NYSTA Government Relations Committee.

Special Thanks to Our Sponsors

We would like to acknowledge the following sponsors who supported this year's Advocacy Day webinar: Bayer Crop Science, Capital Region Golf Course Owners Association, Hudson Valley Golf Course Superintendents Association, Lawn Medic, Long Island Golf Course Superintendents Association, Metropolitan Golf Association, Metropolitan Golf Course Superintendents Association, National Association of Landscape Professionals, New York Chapter GCSAA, Northeastern Golf Course Superintendents Association, RISE, SavATree, The Scotts Miracle-Gro Company, Syngenta.

Two MetGCSA Clubs Recognized With MGA's Environmental Leaders in Golf Award

At this year's MGA Green Chairman Education Series, held online on March 24, Pelham Country Club and Superintendent Jeff Wentworth were recognized with the 2021 Arthur P. Weber Environmental Leaders in Golf Award. As the name suggests, this honor is awarded each year to an MGA member club that has demonstrated exceptional environmental stewardship through golf course maintenance, construction, education, and research.

More specifically, the winning club must meet a rigorous set of criteria in five areas: Wildlife and Habitat, Outreach and Education, IPM, Water Quality and Quantity, and Resource Conservation. Pelham is the 15th club to earn this distinguished award.

Pelham's Award-Worthy Accomplishments

Pelham's award-worthy efforts included his 2019-20 renovation of the property, which encompassed five holes and included an additional stream, a half-acre wetland, second irrigation pond, and the expansion of the old pond. This added just over an acre of surface water to the property and 20 percent to the urban watershed around the club.

The use of bentgrass cultivars during the renovation work has resulted in a 30 percent decrease in fungicide use. In addition to the renovation work, a membership-led nesting program with 10 member volunteers took place in 2020.

Also in 2020, the USGA Green Section recognized Pelham for the quality and sustainability of the course renovation. Planned for 2021 are a camp blue bird program with two more boxes, along with a bee education program for members, campers, and a local elementary school.

Stanwich Earns 2020 Recognition

The Stanwich Club and Property Manager Scott Niven were also recognized during

this year's program as the 14th recipient of the Arthur P. Weber Award. The cancellation of the Chairman Education Series didn't allow for the official presentation of the honor last spring.

At Stanwich, a number of projects have taken place with sustainability and environmental stewardship in mind. Among them is the club's utilization of 75,000 cubic yards of soil excavated during the building of the new maintenance facility to improve the club's driving range facility. Another is the installation of solar panels on the 20,000-square-foot maintenance facility. These panels now provide 45 percent of the electricity needs for the entire club.

Congratulations to Jeff, Scott, their staffs and clubs on their distinguished environmental accomplishments!

About the Green Chairman Education Series

The award presentation was the highlight of the Green Chairman Education Series, a program designed to educate club leaders and the golfing public about a wide range of issues affecting Met-area clubs and golfers. Presented in an online format, the event included presentations from a lineup of outstanding speakers.

USGA Green Section Education Director Adam Moeller shared lessons learned from the 2020 golf season and the impact that will have on courses in 2021. John Daniels, agronomist for the Northeast Section of the USGA Green Section, shared his thoughts on raising golfer awareness about how players, themselves, can help with course conditions and minimize detrimental impacts on turfgrass health. Finally, participants heard from Echo Lake Superintendent Chris Carson who highlighted some of the benefits courses realize when hosting a championship.

New Members

Please join us in welcoming the following new members:

- **Ryan Brown**, Class C, Waccabuc Country Club, Waccabuc, NY
- **Jordan Hames**, Class C, Silver Spring Country Club, Ridgefield, CT
- **Ryan Jantzen**, Class C, The Golf Club of Purchase, Purchase, NY
- **Christopher Kemble**, Class A, McCann Memorial Golf Course, Poughkeepsie, NY
- **Robert Schipper**, Class A, Canoe Brook Country Club, Summit, NJ

Members on the Move

- **Christopher Alonzi** is the new superintendent at The Summit Club in Armonk, NY. Previous position: Senior assistant superintendent at St. Andrew's Golf Club in Hastings-on-Hudson, NY.
- **Steven Bigelow** is the new superintendent at Rolling Green Golf Club in Springfield, PA. Previous position: Assistant superintendent at Winged Foot Golf Club in Mamaroneck, NY.
- **Kyle Hillegass** is the new superintendent at Knickerbocker Country Club in Tenafly, NJ. Previous position: Superintendent at Edgewood Country Club in River Vale, NJ.
- **Alan Jeffrey** is a new assistant superintendent at Country Club of Darien in Darien, CT. Previous position: Assistant superintendent at Knollwood Country Club in Elmsford, NY.
- **Keith Kohlasch** is a new rep at Turf Products Corporation in Enfield, CT. Previous position: rep with MTE Turf Equipment Solutions in West Henrietta, NY.
- **Jamison LaPan** is the new superintendent at Country Club of Darien in Darien, CT. Previous position: Superintendent of Golf Courses at Winged Foot Golf Club in Mamaroneck, NY.
- **Steven Loughran** is a new rep at McDonald & Sons Golf Course Builders headquartered in Jessup, MD. Previous position: Superintendent at Rock Ridge Country Club in Newtown, CT.
- **David Millar** is a new assistant superintendent at Paramount Country Club in New City, NY. Previous position: Assistant superintendent at Sunningdale Country Club in Scarsdale, NY.

Chip Lafferty Welcomes MetGCSA Season Opening Event

by Greg Wojick

- **Weston Neff** is the new superintendent at Oyster Harbors Club in Osterville, MA. Previous position: Assistant superintendent at Winged Foot Golf Club in Mamaroneck, NY.

Births

Congratulations to:

- Fisher & Son's **Mike Weber** and his wife, Samantha, on the birth of their baby boy, Brandt Robert Weber, on January 17
- Tuxedo Club Superintendent **Casey Klossner** and his wife, Melanie, on the birth of their twins, Peyton Celia Klossner and Ashton Richard Klossner, on April 20.

Kudos

Congratulations to Rutgers' **Dr. Jim Murphy**, who has been appointed the Ralph Geiger Endowed Chair in Turfgrass Science, a well-deserved honor, along with his recent appointment as Director of the Center for Turfgrass Science.

Dr. Murphy has been an informed member of the MetGCSA since 2002.

In Sympathy

Extending our deepest sympathy and condolences to:

- Sandwich Hollows Golf Club Superintendent **David Polidor** and family on the passing of David's father, Louis "Todd" Polidor, on February 17 in Florida. Todd was a member of the MetGCSA since 1973.

A graduate of UMass Stockbridge, his career in golf course management began in the 1960s at Pautipaug Country Club, now a Mohegan Sun-owned golf course. He spent the majority of his career at Somers Pointe Golf Club where he retired in 2011. Todd always enjoyed a good round of golf with his friends and deep-sea fishing locally and in Florida.

There will be a Memorial Service held here in New York sometime this summer.

- Centennial Golf Club Superintendent **Glen Dube** and family on the passing of Glen's father, Joseph Dube, on March 15.

After COVID-19 had put the kibosh on Rye Golf Club's ability to host the MetGCSA David Mahoney Two-Ball Championship Qualifier last year, Host Superintendent Chip Lafferty was more than pleased to welcome Met members to the season-opening event and a day of much-needed camaraderie and good fun on the golf course.

"The wind was epic, the temperature wasn't perfect, but it was a perfect day," says Chip, Rye's 19-year veteran superintendent. "The old saying, you don't know what you got till it's gone, perfectly describes our loss of events this past year. We took them for granted until we couldn't hold them," adds Chip.

In addition to the Two-Ball, the Met kicked off its golf tournament season with its first in-person board meeting since the start of COVID last year. A sign that all is returning to normal.

Revisiting Rye's Rejuvenation

What no one could deny after golfing there is that Rye Golf Club is a unique golf facility. As you saw, it boasts a more-than-century-old castle as its clubhouse, which was built in 1852 as a private residence overlooking Long Island Sound. In 1921, 40 acres of the estate were combined with the adjoining Allen Estate to form Rye Country Club. Devereux Emmet designed the course, which was later sold and renamed Rye Wood Country Club before finally becoming the Rye Golf Club we know today.

Since Met members last convened at Rye for the 2013 Two-Ball Qualifier, the club has initiated a plan to improve the micro-environments around the greens by cutting trees and installing drainage. Also, the practice putting green was rebuilt adding chipping bays complete with slopes that better reflect the slopes encountered on the course.

A nifty new alignment of the first tee was built to accommodate a new location for the starter's shack. And a 13,000-square-foot putting course and short game green were also added.

As Chip says, "a little improvement here and a little more there, and we've succeeded



Chip Lafferty

in improving the quality of the turf and the playing experience as well."

The Making of a Golfer and Golf Course Superintendent

A single-digit handicapper, Chip spent a good deal of time as a kid playing golf with family and friends. Born in Buffalo, NY, Chip's family moved to Orlando, FL, as he was entering his teen years. "I played golf just about every day through high school at Sweetwater Country Club near my home," says Chip. "I would pick up range balls in exchange for lessons."

Sweetwater was also Chip's first training ground in the science of turfgrass management. "I worked on the crew there pretty much whenever I wanted all through high school," says Chip, who had his hands in just about every aspect of course maintenance, from pulling weeds to rebuilding bunkers.

After high school and a brief stint at Georgia Southern University in Statesboro, GA, Chip returned to what he knew best: a job in golf course maintenance. He accepted a position at Sabol Pointe Country Club in Longwood, FL, where he received advice that eventually solidified his career path.

"The superintendent there told me to go to Lake City Community College and get a

Top Scores at Two-Ball Qualifier

Windy Day at Rye Golf Club Challenges the Field at the David Mahoney Two-Ball Championship Qualifier

by Bill Cygan

“Dress warm!” was the message Rye Golf Club Superintendent Chip Lafferty emailed to MetGCSA board members early the morning of the event. The Met had decided to hold its board meeting outdoors before the start of the April 26 David Mahoney Two-Ball Championship Qualifier. It was the Met’s first in-person board meeting since the Winter of 2020 and its first Two-Ball event since April of 2019!

With the sun shining, it appeared to be a picture-perfect early spring day, but the wind blew full force, chilling the air and challenging the more than 70 Two-Ball Championship qualifiers.

Rye Golf Club is situated to take advantage of spectacular views with holes routed adjacent to the Long Island Sound. The work Chip and his staff have done over the years to expose these vistas did not go unnoticed.

The wind played a major factor in scoring as the course played longer than the 6,300 yards on the scorecard. The greens and fairways were running firm and fast and the uphill holes into the wind were playing long!

Special thanks to the entire staff at Rye Golf Club for providing a wonderful event to kick off the 2021 golf calendar, and especially to Chip and his crew for providing us with a course in mid-season form.

Stay Tuned

Log on to metgcsa.org and download the MetGCSA app, where the season-long Two-Ball match brackets and round winners will be prominently featured. Just as important, be sure to contact Co-tournament Chair Steve Wickstrom at stevewickstrom@hotmail.com with all match results and any noteworthy stories about your round that we can run in an upcoming Two-Ball recap in the *Tee to Green*.

We are looking to have a very competitive Two-Ball Championship this year. Please make sure to have your GHIN up-to-date and record every eligible score! Download the My MGA app, and it will take only seconds to enter your score after your round.



Match Deadlines

In the meantime, if you are in this year’s event, note that all matches should be completed by the following dates:

First Round ~ June 21

Quarter Finals ~ August 9

Semi-Finals ~ September 13

Finals ~ October 25

Event of the Day Results

Gross Team Winners

75 Sean Cain/Bob Lippman
*Sunningdale Country Club/
Westchester Turf Supply*

75 Jason Meersman
*Patterson Club
(Jason played solo on behalf of his absent partner, Mike Dachowski of Shelter Island Country Club.)*

Net Team Winners

62 Tim Gerzabeck/Paul Ramina
Helena Agri Enterprises/BASF Corporation

68 Rob Alonzi/Scott Apgar
Fenway Golf Club/Metro Turf Specialists

Bill Cygan is a MetGCSA Tournament Committee co-chair and superintendent at Silver Spring Country Club in Ridgefield, CT.

degree in Golf Course Operations,” says Chip. But it wasn’t until he took a position at a new grow-in outside Orlando called Alaqua Country Club that his eyes finally opened to the value of formal training.

“I worked there as an irrigation tech and spray tech and eventually second assistant before recognizing that a degree from Lake City was the only way I’d ever be the ‘big boss’ one day.”

In addition to helping him land “the big one” five years after graduating, his Lake City education offered Chip the unusual opportunity to practice his trade in a far-from-run-of-the-mill location: Vierumaki, Finland, where he interned at the Finnish Sports Institute, the training ground for all of the country’s Olympians. Although the season was short, the summer hours were long since the sun never set during the month of June. An interesting training ground, Chip learned the ins and outs of managing turf in an all-new growing environment.

His second internship brought him back to the States and the Met area, where he worked with then Wykagyl Superintendent Steve Renzetti as an assistant. Chip worked for Steve for six years and then assumed the reigns as superintendent there for three years before moving on to his current position as superintendent at Rye in 2002.

Life Outside of Work

A true people person, Chip enjoys playing golf with his many friends in the MetGCSA, as well as spending time with his wife of 18 years, Clare, and their four children: Jessica, 11; Mackenzie, 10½; Travis, 9½; and Matthew, 7.

“Clare is a saint and the glue that holds our family together,” says Chip. “She and the kids are everything to me.” Another important part of the family are their dogs, Larkin and Wiki, who are Chip’s constant companions on the course.

“Rye has been a great place to work,” says Chip, even through the challenges of the pandemic.” Chip was pleased to finally share the course with fellow Met members. “Hopefully we can pick up where we left off before the pandemic hit,” he says. “Let’s all make an effort to come out and support the association at our future events.”

Greg Wójcik, a member of the Tee to Green Editorial Committee, is co-owner of Playbooks for Golf.

Siwanoy Country Club to Host Superintendent/Guest

by Chip Lafferty

June 7 marks the return of our annual Superintendent/Guest event, hosted this year by Superintendent Steven McGlone and Siwanoy Country Club. Guests will be treated to a newly renovated clubhouse and pristine course that underwent a sort of metamorphosis over the course of Steven's 13-year tenure at the club. Although the bulk of the course restoration work was completed before our last outing at Siwanoy in 2016 for the Two-Ball Qualifier, Steven will tell you their work is never done. He and his staff continue to refine the various aspects of the course to enhance the overall golfing experience.

Siwanoy's Evolution

First a nine-hole course along White Plains Road, Siwanoy built an 18-hole course in 1913 at its current site in Bronxville, NY, under the guidance of Architect Donald Ross. Over the years, numerous architects added their personal touch to the greens, tees, and bunkers. Among them were Robert Trent Jones Sr. and Arthur Hills.

Nearly a century later, on a mission to recapture the course's original Donald Ross design intent, the club began its transformation with an extensive tree removal program that cleared more than 700 trees. With a clean slate, Architect Mike DeVries was able to work his magic.

The property is now a more open landscape that can be appreciated from all angles. Steven's maintenance facility sits at the far end of the property with the club entrance located on the opposite side. By opening up the property, you can actually see from the maintenance facility clear to the 18th hole and entrance some three-quarters of a mile away.

The \$6M project was completed in six phases, with work being done in the spring and fall alternately. Amazingly, throughout the entire process, the course never closed. There was always a portion open to play, which offered members the added benefit of being able to view aspects of each phase of the construction.

Few features remain untouched: Bunkers, green surfaces, and aprons were restored; tee

length was added; cart paths rerouted; and a new irrigation system was installed. Though only two greens were completely rebuilt to USGA specs, DeVries nearly doubled the size of every green throughout the course. It is safe to say he didn't just recapture lost pins and strategy, but also created some nuances that will keep golfers interested for years to come.

A particularly challenging aspect of the project was altering some of the property's ponds and a few of the streams' natural pathways. The club had to seek the approval not only of the town, county, and state, but also the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Getting approval for these modifications was no small task, but the end result was a marvel in course restoration.

Beyond Course Construction

In addition to his highly focused commitment to his job, Steven is dedicated to doing his part to sustain the profession. An active member of the MetGCSA, Steven has served on the *Tee to Green* Editorial Committee for the past 10 years and has been a ready and willing contributor to publication content and meeting discussions. He was a past director on the board and part of the committee process that eventually made the homerun decision to hire Mike McCall as our executive director.

Though Steven is no longer on the board, he lends a helping hand where he can. Hosting this event is just one of many examples!

From Start to Siwanoy

Like many superintendents, Steven didn't set out to become a turfgrass manager. In fact, he first completed a B.S. in Geography from Ohio University with his sights set on becoming an Urban Planner. His career path took a turn, however, with the encouragement of Jim Noel, then superintendent of Lakewood Country Club in Steven's hometown of Westlake, OH. Steven had worked summers at Lakewood through high school and then college, and seeing his potential, Jim encouraged him to pursue a degree in turfgrass management at Penn State University.



Steven McGlone

Steven interned at The Country Club in Pepper Pike, OH, and then, with degree in hand, moved to the West Coast to become an assistant at Cypress Point Club in Pebble Beach, CA, where he stayed for three years.

"Looking back, those three years at Cypress were some of the best years of my professional life," recalls Steven. "A place that solid, that classic, cannot be replicated anywhere else in the world. Working for Jeff Markow was a privilege as he taught me so many little things about maintaining a golf course and being a good manager."

In March of 2007, he returned East, accepting an assistant's position with Quaker Ridge Golf Club Superintendent Tom Ashfield. By September 2008, Steven was well equipped to assume his current position as Siwanoy's golf course superintendent.

Mixing Work With Pleasure

In the midst of Steven's transition from urban planning major to Siwanoy superintendent, he met and then married his wife of 12 years, Margie. Margie and Steven live in an 1800s farmhouse on the western side of Siwanoy, with their 10-year-old son, Finley, and 7-year-old daughter, Sydney.

Enjoying nothing more than spending time with his family, Steven is more than pleased to have a staff he can count on. The newest addition, Josh Haugh, who served as superintendent of Willow Ridge for the past few years, decided to return as Steven's assistant superintendent.

"Josh is a tremendous addition to our staff," says Steven. "He was here several years ago and knows the property and the membership along with their expectations. It's bittersweet having him on board because I know I'm on borrowed time. He's sure to get back into the superintendent's seat very soon."

Josh has already hit the ground running, managing the addition to the 4th tee, ex-

Upcoming Events

Upcoming MetGCSA and Industry Events

tending the par 5 by some 15 yards, and adding a back tee on the tough short 6th.

Steven's other two assistants—Juan “Tony” Gomez and Edgar “Chivo” Bermeo—are crucial links between the plans in Steven's head and the results we see on the course. Both started as laborers and have become seasoned professionals respected by their crew.

Of course, for Steven, an added bonus to having such seasoned professionals by his side is the fact that he can squeeze in a little more time for family and, in fact, has committed to coaching his son's baseball team.

“I have to take advantage of this tremendous support so I can spend more time with my kids. If we blink, these precious moments with our kids are gone.”

In addition to quality family time, Steven enjoys woodworking and any type of project that requires thought and engineering. Most recently, Steven built water fountain containers that house an upgraded water fountain that can fill water bottles. By doing this, the club is not only saving a considerable amount of money on bottled water, but also helping the environment by reducing the number of water bottles that end up in a landfill.

“Our year one savings was \$15k,” says Steven. “Going forward, Siwanoy will save \$35k annually by not providing bottled water on the property.”

Don't Miss this Golden Opportunity!

I hope all of you will mark your calendars and grab your GM, pro, or a member of your green committee to participate in this great event. Aside from enjoying a day on the links, it is the perfect opportunity to discuss the course, our work, and our profession with a captive audience. See you all on June 7!

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

Superintendent/Guest Tournament

Monday, June 7
Siwanoy Country Club
Bronxville, NY
Host: Steven McGlone

Summer Social

Monday, July 12
Orienta Beach Club
Mamaroneck, NY

MetGCSA Invitational Tournament

Tuesday, August 10
Hudson National Golf Club
Croton-on-Hudson, NY
Host: Brett Scales

Nine & Dine

Date TBD
Mount Kisco Country Club
Mount Kisco, NY
Host: Andrew Agnew

The Poa/Met Championship/Met Team Qualifier

Tuesday, September 14
Century Country Club
Purchase, NY
Host: Kevin Seibel

MetGCSA/CAGCS Fall Seminar

Thursday, November 11
The Patterson Club
Fairfield, CT
Host: Jason Meersman

MetGCSA Winter Seminar

Wednesday, January 12
Westchester Country Club
Rye, NY
Host: David Dudones

Industry Events

2021 Rutgers Turfgrass Research Field Day: Golf & Fine Turf

Wednesday, July 28
Rutgers Horticultural Farm II
New Brunswick, NJ
Save the date, and watch for details. Call 973-812-6467 or visit www.njturfgrass.org for further information.

25th Annual Rutgers Turfgrass Research Golf Classic

Monday, August 16
Fiddler's Elbow Country Club
Bedminster, NJ
Plan now to join fellow industry professionals for this annual fundraiser and a day of golf, education, networking, and fun. Your participation helps fund research grants, student scholarships, equipment, and special projects for the Turfgrass Research,

Teaching, and Extension programs at the School of Environmental and Biological Sciences/Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey.

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

2021 GREEN EXPO Turf & Landscape Conference

Tuesday – Thursday, December 7 – 9
Borgata Hotel & Casino
Atlantic City, NJ

The New Jersey Green Expo offers a comprehensive educational program providing cutting-edge applications and tactics to guarantee green industry professionals' success on the job.

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

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