

Tee To Green

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Co-Editors

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

Managing Editor

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WORTH ANDREWS STEVEN McGLONE
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Designer

TERRIE YOUNG

Advertising Manager

DAN ROGERS, 914-400-5918

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President's Message

What a Term It Has Been—Thanks to All of You!

A

s Tony Girardi said to me when I was elected president, "Enjoy your time as president; it will be over before you know it." Tony was right. It seems like just yesterday when I was writing my first President's Message, and here I am writing my last!

I have enjoyed my term on the board and am honored to have served as MetGCSA president for the past two years. I have many people to thank for helping make my time as president so enjoyable.

Mike McCall, MetGCSA executive director, continues to exceed our expectations. He is forward-thinking, bringing new ideas and initiatives to the Met and quickly became the face of our organization, appearing front and center at every event. Thank you, Mike, for your leadership, commitment, and just as important, your friendship.

Second, I'd like to thank Susan O'Dowd, the MetGCSA's executive secretary. Susan continues to run the day-to-day operations, and despite the challenges presented by Covid and working from home, she hasn't missed a beat. Thank you, Susan, for your continued hard work, diligence, and for keeping everything moving smoothly.

Pandora Wojick, our *Tee to Green* managing editor, is the glue that keeps the *Tee to Green* together and moving forward. She has a knack for getting the content in a timely fashion and keeping deadlines met. Pandora, thank you for your continued dedication and focus. You and the *Tee to Green*, like a fine wine, continue to get better with age.

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

- Promoting the MetGCSA members for local jobs
- Continuing to strengthen the relationships between allied associations
- Supporting environmental initiatives
- Improving meeting attendance



Rob Alonzi
MetGCSA President

Thanks to the Met Board of Directors and association committee members, we have made excellent headway in many of these areas and are always on the lookout for ways to improve. The board and committee members have sacrificed their personal time to help sustain and enhance our association and most certainly deserve a round of applause for their achievements over the past two years. Thank you one and all!

I wish our new MetGCSA president, Brett Chapin, and the board the best of luck this year, and I look forward to serving the association as your past president.

Best wishes to all for a Happy and Healthy 2022!

Rob Alonzi
President

Professional Golfer and All-Around Class Act Peter Jacobsen to Receive the 2022 MetGCSA John Reid Lifetime Achievement Award

by Mike McCall, CGCS

W

hy would Peter Jacobsen, a guy from the Pacific Northwest, even be considered for a Metropolitan New York award? According to Scott Niven, MetGCSA Awards Committee member and property manager of The Stanwich Club (where Peter frequently plays when in the area), the better question might be why in the world *wouldn't* he be considered?

"When you look at how much he has accomplished and how he reflects the virtues of MetGCSA golf course superintendents, the decision was easy," Scott said. "Peter Jacobsen is a class act who we are honored to name as the 2022 John Reid Lifetime Achievement Award winner." Named for the "Father of American Golf," the John Reid Lifetime Achievement Award has honored such industry luminaries as Jim Nantz, Dave Anderson, Jimmy Roberts, Bruce Beck, Ken Venturi, and Guido Cribari.

This isn't the first time Peter has been recognized by golf course superintendents for his contributions to the game of golf. In 2012, the GCSAA named him the winner of the Old Tom Morris Award, which is presented to an individual who, through a lifetime commitment to the game of golf, has helped mold the welfare of the game in the manner and style exemplified by Old Tom Morris, the longtime superintendent at St. Andrews in Scotland until his death in 1908. As GCSAA CEO Rhett Evans put it, "Peter isn't just a great guy and a major positive influence in the world of golf, he is—and always has been—a great advocate for golf course superintendents. Having met many of the MetGCSA members over the past several years, it is no surprise to me that their chapter would see Peter as someone more than deserving of their highest honor."

Roots in the Northwest—and Golf

Born in Portland, OR, Peter is the son of Barbara and Erling Jacobsen, who taught their children—Peter and his siblings Paul, David, and Susan—how to play golf at a young age. When they got old enough to do so, Peter and David spent their summers working at their hometown course, Waverly Country Club. Over the years, the two boys

Peter Jacobsen celebrating with good friend Arnold Palmer.



worked in virtually every area of the club. During high school, both graduated to the golf course maintenance staff where the mornings were early and the work more demanding than picking range balls. Peter loved it.

"The one thing that still turns me on is that smell of freshly cut grass in the morning," he says. "It always makes me think about golf, want to play golf, and just get out there to enjoy and appreciate being on a golf course."

After a couple of summers of mowing greens, raking bunkers, repairing irrigation leaks, and all of the other tasks that go into preparing and maintaining a golf course, Peter worked on finetuning his swing and playing skills.

The hard work paid off. Peter went on to the University of Oregon to play for the Ducks, where he was named an All-American and his team won two conference championships.

"I had an absolute blast," he said of his experience at UO, "but didn't really have any plans for turning pro." Instead, Peter's initial career intentions were to become a lawyer.

But given his success at the collegiate level and his lack of funds for law school, he thought he should give the PGA tour a shot. He also faced a dilemma that no collegiate athlete would face today: He was named to the first USA vs. Japan team match, scheduled to take place in Tokyo during finals week of his senior year. Peter pleaded with University administrators and teachers to allow him to take the finals early or when he returned. The reply was a "really sharp no."

"So, I had to choose between this incredible opportunity and taking the finals," Peter said. "Much to the shock of my parents, I chose Tokyo. I never did complete my degree."

A Very Good Year

In 1976, Peter qualified for the PGA tour on his very first attempt. That alone would have made the Bicentennial year memorable, but it was also the year he married his wife, Jan. She joined him on the tour, and together, they visited the New York area for the first time.



Peter Jacobsen singing lead vocals for Jake Trout and the Flounders.



The golf course design team of Peter Jacobsen and Jim Hardy.

"We had not done a lot of traveling at that point in our lives and were blown away with how much we fell in love with Westchester and the Metro New York area," Peter recalls. Even after years of traveling around the country on tour, New York remained a favorite. "In fact," he said with a laugh, "We eventually ended up buying a little condo up in Armonk to be near our kids, so we spend a lot of time there, living out that initial dream of when we first visited the Metro New York area."

A few of the courses that Peter says impacted him most as a young pro are Westchester Country Club, Winged Foot, Quaker Ridge, Sleepy Hollow, and Stanwich. Today, as a member of Sleepy Hollow and with lots of friends in the business, Peter can get around and experience all of the other great golf courses in the area, including more recently built courses like Purchase and Hudson National.

"As a Northwest guy who has spent so much time in the Northeast, I see a lot of similarities with the grasses and with the maintenance practices and operations of the courses. In my opinion, there are more great golf courses in excellent condition in the tri-state area than anywhere in the country. You can probably drive a 25-mile radius and find a great golf course every mile. That's what I love about the Westchester area."

One of his most memorable experiences at a New York Met course took place during the 1982 Manufacturers Hanover Westchester Classic at the Westchester Country Club. Peter was playing in the third round and was tied with Tom Kite for second place coming into the 54th hole. Bob Gilder, the third player in the group, hit

his second shot using a 3-wood on the Par 5 18th.

"I distinctly remember walking up the fairway when he hit that shot," Peter recalled. "I turned to my caddie, Mike Cowan (Fluff), and said, 'Wow, that looks pretty good—that could go in.' And it did!" A double eagle is rarer than a hole-in-one. That shot is memorialized with a plaque on the spot from where Gilder hit the shot. Peter ended up coming in third place that week but says he will never forget that moment on one of his favorite courses.

Along with the love of the game that becomes so obvious when Peter recalls his experiences of the life of a professional golfer is his deep love and commitment to his family. As with his golf stories, his family stories reflect his famous sense of humor. One of his favorites is about the 1980 Buick Open in Flint, MI. As he was preparing for the trip, Jan, who'd just given birth to their daughter Amy three weeks earlier, said, "I need to fly out there and be with you."

Peter's reaction, he recalls with self-deprecation, was not as supportive as his wife's.

"Are you kidding?" he asked. "Amy is going to cry, and I'm not going to get any sleep. I need to play and make some money." Undeterred, Jan flew out with their infant daughter. Back then, most hotels did not have cribs, so the young couple made do by modifying one of the dresser drawers into a makeshift crib. Peter went on to win his first professional tournament. The following week, Peter came in second.

"Don't ever complain about the kids coming on tour," Jan said.

From that point on, all of the kids (Amy, Kristen, and Mick) traveled on tour with their parents until they were old enough to

start school. They then moved back to Portland to continue raising their children.

Peter ended up winning seven times on the PGA tour, with two of those wins occurring at nearby TPC River Highlands in Hartford, CT. In 2003, Peter notched his second Hartford win and was named the PGA Tour Comeback Player of the Year. Additionally, he was a member of two Ryder Cup teams and the winner of the 2004 U.S. Senior Open and 2005 Senior Players Championship. As the world soon learned, though, golf was not the only pursuit Peter excelled in.

On to the Broadcast Booth

Most athletes who go into broadcasting start thinking about making the transition after their career is completed. Not Peter. He had an interest in broadcasting when he was in his 20s. He fondly recalls his days as an analyst for the made-for-TV show, "Skins Game," working with the likes of Nicklaus, Palmer, Player, Trevino, and other golf greats. Not only did he cover great golfers, but he also worked alongside one of the great broadcasting legends, Vin Scully.

As he got older and faced a string of injuries, he leveraged this broadcasting experience by transitioning into a full-time gig as a golf analyst for NBC, paired with another golfing great, Johnny Miller. Johnny had a reputation for calling it as he saw it, and at times, his commentary could be hard on the players. Peter took a different approach.

"I think you broadcast the way you play golf," he said. "I had to be positive, and I had to look at a bad shot as an opportunity to make a great save. Some players look at a bad

shot and berate themselves and beat themselves up, which then motivates them to hit a great recovery. That didn't work for me. I always motivated myself by being my best friend out there. I had to be positive and support myself emotionally. So when a player hits a bad shot, I try to consider all the factors that went into that. For me, golf is a perfect game, but not a game of 'perfect.'"

That positive outlook and supportive approach can be heard in his voice when calling a golf shot on television by taking into account a player's circumstances, thought process, and strategy.

Getting Into the Design Game

As if he wasn't busy enough, Peter entered the golf course design business with his friend and swing coach, Jim Hardy, in 1992, starting with the Oregon Golf Club. The club quickly won accolades as the best new private course in Oregon; it was nominated as the "Best New Private Club in America" by *Golf Digest* and was included in the "Top 100 Modern Golf Courses" by *LINKS* magazine. The club was also tapped to host the 1994 NCAA Women's Final.

Not bad for a first effort.

The course also became the host site for six years to one of Peter's charitable endeavors, the Fred Meyer Challenge, which raised more than \$15 million for charitable causes over 16 years. Peter and Jim Hardy's company, Jacobsen Hardy Golf Course Design, has designed 12 additional golf courses and has several others in the design or under-construction phase.

Peter says he loves the artistry that goes into designing a golf course. "I take the work seriously and we are very proud of our work. We don't design in a room that's in a building in another city. We go and walk the site and work the land."

Asked if his approach to design matched his strategy to an approach shot, Peter said, "Every piece of land is different. The most important thing is to avoid getting in the way of each property and the features that make it unique. Contrary to what others try to do to promote their 'brand,' I've always felt that one of the attributes of our work is that you cannot tell who the architect is. There's nothing consistent about our courses because the land is so different." When all is said and done, Peter looks to ensure that his courses are playable and fun.

A key player in the design process, Peter says, is the golf course superintendent. "Working with the superintendent closely is probably the most important aspect of golf course design," he says. "It's a symphony of the architect, superintendent, and builder all



Peter and his wife, Jan, along with their three children, (left to right) Kristen, Amy, and Mick.

working in concert." As he creates his designs, Peter keeps in mind that while he and his team are going to be involved in the project for only 12 to 18 months, it is the golf course superintendent who will be faced with the subsequent grow-in and daily maintenance for years afterward.

A Rock Star in More Than Golf

"When you're on the PGA tour, you can do the 'golf thing' for only so many hours each day," Peter says. "A lot of the pros were into fishing and hunting, but that just wasn't my thing—music was."

Music was Peter's thing since the age of 10 or 11 when his parents bought him a guitar. He took a few lessons but just didn't like them, so he bought himself a book and taught himself to play chords. Things progressed from there—right up to the PGA tour.

"I found out that guys like Payne Stewart, Marc Lye, and John Daly all play guitar. We would get together and mess around," Peter explains. "We were also fortunate to play golf with a lot of Rock & Roll Hall-of-Famers like Glenn Frey, Stephen Stills, Graham Nash, Huey Lewis, and Alice Cooper. Believe it or not, we started playing with them for fun in concerts and at golf tournaments."

Marc, Payne, and Peter decided to put a little group together, "Jake Trout and the Flounders," with Peter as lead singer, "even though I can't sing," he said, laughing. The three of them would rewrite the words to all those artists' famous songs, replacing them with golf lyrics. "We had a blast and even managed to record two albums."

Sadly, after the untimely and tragic death of their dear friend, Payne Stewart, Marc and Peter decided "that was it" for the band. Peter eventually formed another band named "Jake Trout and the Ballwashers" and featured Peter's daughter, Amy, in a few of the songs. If you're a Johnny Miller fan (and who isn't?), check out the song *I Think I'm Going to Miss Johnny Miller* on YouTube. Peter wrote it for Johnny's retirement.

Whether it's playing golf, writing or singing music, helping charitable causes, being in the broadcast booth, designing golf courses, or acting in movies (*Tin Cup* and *Dead Solid Perfect*), Peter credits golf with enriching his life. "It is just the opportunities within the game that intrigue me, so I always jumped at the chance to do them."

What Matters Most

Peter has been married to Jan for 45 years now, and they are incredibly proud of their children. Their daughter Amy is proof positive that starting out in a dresser drawer can lead to success if you have a loving mother and father. Amy, a Syracuse grad, now works with Peter at his sports marketing firm, Peter Jacobsen Sports. Their other daughter Kristen is a New York University graduate and now a neurologist in the Westchester area. Son Mick, an alum of Florida Gulf Coast University, is an attorney working in Cincinnati.

Peter still keeps a busy schedule playing in Pro-Ams and charity events, designing golf courses, broadcasting, and managing his sports marketing business with Amy. Just this past month, Peter played in the Ernie Els Pro-Am to raise money for the Els for Autism Foundation and Gary Koch's event benefiting the First Tee and returning veterans.

"It's fun to be able to play in these charity events and benefit so many causes all around the country," he says.

Fellow NBC colleague and 2019 John Reid Award winner Jimmy Roberts said it best, describing Peter as, "... simply one of the kindest, happiest people I've ever met. In an industry that isn't always kind, he is relentlessly supportive of the people in his orbit. His accomplishments as a player—which are considerable—speak for themselves, but it is his personality and commitment to always doing the right thing that makes him a Hall-of-Famer.

In 2013, Peter received the Payne Stewart Award, named after his dear friend. This honor is presented annually by the PGA Tour to a professional golfer who best exemplifies the values of character, charity, and sportsmanship. It is these traits and his devotion to the game of golf and family that are among the most prominent reasons for Peter Jacobsen's selection as the winner of the 2022 MetGCSA John Reid Lifetime Achievement Award.

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

Stephen Rabideau Recognized With the 2021 Distinguished Member Award

by Chip Lafferty

As 2021 comes to a close, one of our favorite times of year gets even better as we take great pleasure in recognizing those who have made a significant impact on our association and industry. One of our awards, the Distinguished Member Award, is being presented to Winged Foot's Director of Golf Courses Stephen Rabideau.

A 22-year member of the MetGCSA, Stephen has displayed superior leadership skills, selflessly prepping countless assistants to move forward with their careers and most recently cheering his crew on through the ups and downs of prepping for the U.S. Open put on hold at the start of a pandemic.

Leading Through Adversity

These past two years have put everyone's skills and resilience to the test, and few know that better than Winged Foot's Stephen Rabideau.

Imagine, for a moment, preparing to host one of golf's most prestigious events for nearly a decade only to find out a pandemic has brought your all-consuming preparations to a halt less than 16 weeks before the first scheduled tee time. That was Stephen Rabideau's reality when the 2020 U.S. Open was put on hold.

At that point, it was uncertain how—and if—the event would proceed. Adding to the air of uncertainty was the pressing concern throughout the industry that golf course maintenance work might be deemed non-essential. After countless hours of preparation for this one-time event and then the threat of potentially losing their livelihood, the crew's morale took a turn for the worse.

Despite the obstacles, Stephen carried on with a positive attitude while seeking ways to keep his staff motivated. Finally helping matters was that golf course maintenance workers were, in the end, deemed essential and it was announced after a monthlong wait that the Open would, in fact, carry on at the end of September.

A brief sigh of relief was quickly replaced with concern as the maintenance challenges

became clear: Stephen and his crew would have to maintain the rough in tiptop form through the heat of the summer, and come September, there would be fewer daylight hours to complete the sizable amount of work.

The next morale buster was the agonizing decision on the number of fans that could attend the Open. With Covid being an issue, crew members who would normally have been welcome to attend with family were denied the opportunity.

"That was the toughest part for me," said Stephen. "With all the blood, sweat, and tears my staff had put into prepping for the Open, and then to have the family passes taken away, was the hardest pill for me to swallow."

In the end, despite the many challenges that hosting a tournament during Covid presented, Stephen was able to remain focused on the end objective and lead his team in providing the golfing nation with a truly outstanding week of entertainment.

Cultivating Careers

Possessing the grit and leadership skills needed to inspire his team to move forward with U.S. Open preparations in the midst

of the pandemic is only one of Stephen's award-worthy contributions to the industry.

Over the years, Stephen has given back by consistently grooming staff to enter the industry with a high level of knowledge and experience. Year after year, he has sent assistants out into the workforce ready to take on their own properties and not only succeed, but also excel with the knowledge and work ethic they learned while working for Stephen.

Among the long list of candidates he has mentored are Wes Neff, now the super at Oyster Harbors; JR LaPan, who took the reins from Tim O'Neill at Country Club of Darien; Steve Bigelow, now in the Philly area at Rolling Green; Casey Klossner at Tuxedo; Jon Heywood, the new super at Sleepy Hollow; Luke Knutson, now at Rockville Links; Bill Cygan at Silver Spring Country Club; Joe Rolstad at Fargo Country Club; Taylor Anderson, now at San Francisco Golf Club; Billy Frank at Gardner Municipal Golf Club in Massachusetts; and Ken Lochridge, now at Glen Head Country Club.

Stephen knows the importance of training all too well. His first time sitting in the super's seat was at Seawane, when his mentor became extremely ill, forcing Stephen, a recent UMass grad, to take the reins and run an operation with little experience or training. He will be the first to admit that it didn't go as smoothly as it could have. Knowing, firsthand, the pitfalls of being ill-prepared for a job, Stephen does his best to prepare his staff for the unknowns of golf course maintenance, from neighbor encounters to environmental inspections.

Stephen Rabideau is, without a doubt, the type of person this award was created for. Congratulations, Stephen, on your well-deserved honor as the MetGCSA's 2021 Distinguished Member Award recipient.

Chip Lafferty, Tee to Green Editor, is superintendent at Rye Golf Club in Rye, NY.



Fall Seminar Talks Up Trees and Innovative New Turf Management Tool

This year's Fall Seminar, held at The Patterson Club in Fairfield, CT, saw the debut of two new speakers to the MetGCSA: USGA Northeast Region Agronomist John Daniels and Michigan State University Professor Dr. Bert Cregg.

John Daniels kicked off the seminar with an overview of what he experienced in 2021 during his course care consulting visits, and he summarized various research projects the USGA has funded. In addition, John highlighted the Green Section's Deacon, an innovative golf course management tool created to help superintendents improve the golfer experience by delivering better play-

ing conditions while optimizing and prioritizing critical resource consumption.

For further information about the Deacon or USGA research, John can be contacted at jdaniels@usga.org.

While many courses in the area are focused on removing trees, this year's seminar spent the majority of the day on selecting, planting, and protecting various tree species. From the nursery to maturity, Dr. Cregg proved to be a true subject matter expert on all areas related to trees and their successful management within a variety of landscape settings.

For further information, Dr. Cregg can be contacted at cregg@msu.edu.

Michigan State's Dr. Bert Cregg (left) and USGA Northeast Region Agronomist John Daniels address Fall Seminar attendees at The Patterson Club.



2022 GCSAA Golf Championships

Saturday – Monday, February 5 – 7

Torrey Pines

San Diego, CA

The GCSAA Golf Championships offer four different events over three days. Whether you're a casual golfer looking for a good time or an intense competitor hoping to be crowned National Champion, the GCSAA Golf Championships offer something for everyone. Play one day or all three. The choice is yours.

2022 GCSAA Conference and Show

Tuesday – Thursday February 8 – 10

San Diego Convention Center

San Diego, CA

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

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

2022 Turfgrass Advocacy – NYSTA'S Lobby Day

Thursday, February 17

This year's Lobby Day will be conducted as a virtual event. Watch for details.

If at any point you would like further information, visit www.nysta.org or contact the NYSTA office at 518-783-1229.

Nor'easter Ski Day

Thursday, February 24

Killington Ski Resort

Killington, VT

2022 New England Regional Turfgrass Foundation Conference & Show

Tuesday – Thursday, March 8 – 10

Providence Rhode Island Convention

Center

Providence, RI

In its 25th 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.

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

2022 MGA Green Chairman Seminar & Arthur P. Weber Environmental Leader Award Luncheon


Thursday, March 17

Garden City Country Club

Garden City, NY

Chapter Delegate Brett Chapin Attends 2021 Delegates Meeting

by Brett Chapin

 On October 21 and 22, GCSAA hosted its annual Chapter Delegates Meeting in Kansas City, MO. I've represented the MetGCSA for the past eight years, and after a virtual session in 2020, it was a pleasure to get together in person for the busy two-day event.

The annual event brings delegates together from GCSAA's 98 affiliated chapters to discuss initiatives, provide insight on moving the association forward, and to begin discussions on electing board members and officers at the Annual Meeting.

This year's delegates meeting had a new twist: All events took place at the KCI Airport Marriott Hotel, and only new delegates were invited to GCSAA headquarters in Lawrence, KS, where they had the opportunity to tour headquarters, learn the ins and outs of the event and how GCSAA is moving the association forward.

Met-area delegates had the opportunity to meet in person before the start of the event to enjoy some Kansas City BBQ and discuss what has been happening in our local associations.

Meeting Highlights

Highlights of the meeting included a summary of the Board Policy Oversight Task Force Group that I had the opportunity to be a part of in 2021. Every three years the GCSAA Nominating Committee is asked to do a thorough review of the Board Policies and Procedures on behalf of the membership. The findings of the group were presented by me and Nick Kerns of the Florida Golf Course Superintendents Association. Our focus was to improve the tools the board has to represent the association.

Members also heard from GCSAA President Mark Jordan and CEO Rhett Evans. Both discussed GCSAA's influence in the world of golf, facing difficult times dur-

ing a global pandemic, and the importance of the delegates to lead outward. GCSAA continues to showcase the organization and its members as the global leaders in golf course management.

Among the meeting's other high points:

Post-Pandemic Help

As chapters move out of the COVID pandemic, we're faced with new challenges and opportunities. We learned that GCSAA is prepared to help with its Board Orientation and Strategic Planning Opportunities. This is a free service to chapters that can help boards manage post-pandemic challenges and commit to the BMPs, including the facility-specific best management practices.

Water Use Survey

We also were told about the importance of completing the Water Use and Conservation Practices Survey. This will be used to compare data from the 2006 survey, and results will be shared within six months. As a bonus for completing the survey, respondents will be entered to win cash prizes.

Dues Debate

A member dues discussion also took place. GCSAA follows a dues adjustment process created in 2006 from input and approval from chapter delegates. The process is tied to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) and equates to smaller and more frequent adjustments in dues rather than infrequent, but larger adjustments. This year's proposal is the following:

- 6.6% adjustment in CPI since 2019
- \$30 adjustment for A and B (\$430) and \$15 adjustment for C (\$220) is being proposed
- Approval rate for dues adjustment votes has ranged from 87% to 96%

Issues Debated in Breakout Sessions

Delegates got together during breakout sessions, and we shared our thoughts on a variety of industry issues, including workforce and labor challenges, GCSAA professional development opportunities, and the BMPs. The discussions were engaging and thoughtful.

It was particularly interesting to find out that the labor issues affecting us in the Met area are a nationwide problem. It was also helpful to hear what other courses are doing to encourage employment. GCSAA is committed to promoting workforce opportunities with its up-to-date job board and a variety of free career services.

Town Hall Session Q&A

Wednesday's town hall session allowed delegates the chance to ask questions of the GCSAA Board. The interactive session focused on processes with the annual meeting and allowed further discussion on items covered during the two-day event.

Meet the Candidates

Once the candidate breakout sessions concluded activities, 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 to learn more about their platforms and philosophies. The 2022 GCSAA slate of board candidates are:

For President

Kevin P. Breen, CGCS, La Rinconada Country Club, Monte Sereno, CA

For Vice President

Kevin P. Sunderman, Isla Del Sol Yacht and Country Club, St. Petersburg, FL

Member News

For Secretary/Treasurer

- Jeff L. White, CGCS, Indian Hills Country Club, Mission Hills, KS
- T.A. Barker, CGCS, Fore Lakes Golf Club, Salt Lake City, UT

For Director (electing 2 directors)

- Douglas D. Dykstra, CGCS, White Mountain Country Club, Pinetop, AZ
- Steven J. Hammon, Traverse City Country Club, Traverse City, MI
- Christopher A. Reverie, Allentown Municipal Golf Course, Allentown, PA
- Marc E. Weston, CGCS, Indian Hill Country Club, Newington, CT
- Richard Wit, CGCS, Golf Club at Red Rock, Rapid City, SD

As Dykstra and Weston are at the end of their director terms, there will be two, 2-year director terms up for election. Both Barker and White are in the middle of their two-year director term and will remain on the board as a director if not elected Secretary/Treasurer. The membership will also elect a one-year director seat to fill the vacancy left by the winner of the Secretary/Treasurer race.

I look forward to representing the association at the 2022 GCSAA Annual Meeting in San Diego. The meeting will take place Thursday, February 10 from 8-10 a.m. at the San Diego Convention Center. 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 bchapin@reddingcc.com.

Brett Chapin, the MetGCSA's chapter delegate and newly elected president, is superintendent at Redding Country Club in Redding, CT.

New Members

Please join us in welcoming the following new MetGCSA members:

- **Hunter Coulthard**, Class C, Wykagyl Country Club, New Rochelle, NY
- **John Dempsey**, Class C, Westchester Country Club, Rye, NY
- **Chad Lemere**, Class C, Bonnie Briar Country Club, Larchmont, NY

Members on the Move

- **Brad Brown**, previously an assistant superintendent at The Stanwich Club, is now the superintendent at Long Shore Golf Course in Westport, CT.
- **Chase Cameron**, previously superintendent at Country Club of Waterbury in Waterbury, CT, is now part of the management team at Tanto Irrigation in Elmsford, NY.
- **Jon Heywood**, previously superintendent at Morris County Golf Club in Morristown, NJ, is now the superintendent at Sleepy Hollow Country Club in Scarborough, NY.

Retired

Wishing the following MetGCSA members all the best in their retirement:

- **Stephen Finamore**, a MetGCSA member since 1982, was superintendent at Alpine Country Club in Demarest, NJ.
- **Douglas George**, a MetGCSA member

since 1999, was superintendent at Waccabuc Country Club in Waccubuc, NY.

- **Tom Leahy**, a MetGCSA member since 1993, was superintendent at Sleepy Hollow Country Club in Scarborough, NY.

Births

Congratulations to:

- **Bill Cygan** of Silver Spring Country Club, and his wife, Callie, on the birth of their son, Romolo William. He was born on October 22, 8 lbs. 1 oz.
- **Dave Peterson** of Silvermine Golf Club, and his wife, Kait, on the birth of their son, Henry Franklin. He was born on November 11, 9 lbs. 7 ozs.
- **Aaron Crouse** of the Golf Club of Purchase, and his wife, Melissa, on the birth of their daughter, Eliza Patricia. She was born on November 19, 6 lbs. 15 ozs.

In Sympathy

It is with great sadness that we inform you of the passing of our good friend and member **Byron Johnson Jr.** on December 12. He was 72. A member of the MetGCSA since 1979, Byron had worked for many years with the Terre Company until his illness forced him to retire in 2018. He loved the MetGCSA and came to all the meetings just to say hello. He will be dearly missed by all who knew him. Our sincere condolences to his family.

MetGCSA Members Make Merry

On December 9, MetGCSA members and their family and friends gathered at Emma's Ale House in White Plains, NY, a new, more centrally located venue for our association's annual Holiday Party.

The event proved to be a great success with many new faces attending our holiday festivities and filling the dedicated bar area to capacity. Attendees were treated to courteous and attentive servers passing around an incredible selection of culinary delights and drinks.

As always, this tradition was highlighted by the camaraderie of members relaxing and sharing their year-end stories after a long and challenging season.



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

MetGCSA Places Fifth in 2021 Met Area Team Championship

by Andy Drohen

The Met Area Team Championship, back again after a year hiatus due to the Covid pandemic, was contested this year at Saratoga National Golf Club in Saratoga, NY. Host Superintendent Joe Lucas had our playing field, a Roger Rulewich gem, in tiptop shape after a brutally rainy year. Joe grew in Saratoga National 20 years ago and has kept the challenging layout in the best courses of New York ever since with fantastic greens and tee-to-green conditioning.

Taking home this year's trophy was the Philadelphia AGCS. In a tight battle at the top, Philadelphia won by four strokes over the defending champions from Connecticut.

After finishing third in the last Met Area Team Championship, the MetGCSA team came in 5th this year, 13 strokes off the lead. On paper, the MetGCSA team looked hard to beat, led by scratch golfers Jason Meersman from The Patterson Club and Sean Cain from Sunningdale. Despite falling a couple notches this year, it's been argued this year's team was certainly the best-looking association in the competition, sporting multiple '80s-style mustaches.

With Jason chirping in Sean's ear all day, Sean could not concentrate with his bad knee and couldn't get off the right side, so he was constantly missing to the left, making cart golf incredibly difficult that day. After doubling the first three holes, they settled in to shoot a 6 over par 78, and Sean went in for knee surgery shortly after.

The team of Tony Grasso and Vince Barnaba of Powelton started off 9 over on the first two holes! Fortunately, they righted the ship fast and played the last 16 holes in 3 under par for a score of 74, ham and egging the rest of the round.

Perennial star Tom Ashfield from Quaker Ridge and Mark Chant representing Harrell's helped keep the Met team in contention with the 4th best gross score of the day: an even par 72! When Mark wasn't making birdies, he was hunting rabbits with some low-running tee shots.

Dave Moffett of Mosholu and Jim Swiatlowski of Montammy posted the only red number for the Met team with a 1 under par 71 in the Net Division. Well done, guys!

Another bright spot for the Met team was a near ace by Jason Meersman on the 7th hole. Playing at 175 yards, Jason hit the hole and stopped his shot inside of 2 feet, winning himself a cool virtual reality headset, just in time for Christmas!

Special Thanks

Making the Met Area Team Championship possible are our seven major sponsors who continue to step up to make this one of the best events across North America. Please join me in thanking Allied Nutrients, BASF, Bayer, Ocean Organics, Plant Food, Syngenta, and Toro as they continue to support this fantastic event.

Many thanks, as well, to our host, Joe Lucas, and his entire staff, and all the folks at Saratoga National Golf Club for another successful championship! A special thank you as well to our local GCSAA representative, Kevin Doyle, for help with registration and our resident photographer Shaun Barry for the great photos that can be found at <https://flic.kr/s/aHsmWY1oRS>.

The Complete Results

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

Team Scores (Par 288: Ties broken by lowest gross scores, then net)

- 1st / 282 Philadelphia AGCS
- 2nd / 286 Connecticut AGCS
- 3rd / 291 Pocono Turfgrass Association
- 4th / 293 GCSA of New Jersey
- 5th / 295 MetGCSA
- 6th / 298 GCSA of Cape Cod
- 7th / 300 Long Island GCSA (72)
- 8th / 300 Eastern Shore AGCS (80)
- 9th / 308 Northeastern GCSA
- 10th / 309 GCSA of New York (74)
- 11th / 309 Hudson Valley GCSA (83)
- 12th / 320 GCSA of New England (75)
- 13th / 320 Rhode Island GCSA (82)
- 14th / WD Mid-Atlantic AGCS

Closest to the Pin

- #5 / 8' 2" Steve Whipple
Hudson Valley GCSA
(Sponsored by Ocean Organics)

- #7 / 1' 6" Jason Meersman
MetGCSA
(Sponsored by Bayer)

- #12 / 14' 3" Mike Hermanson
GCSA of New England
(Sponsored by Toro)

- #15 / 4' 2" Jeff Haas
Philadelphia AGCS
(Sponsored by Plant Food)

Longest Drive

- #6 / Sponsors Div. Andrew Stillwell
BASF Group
(Sponsored by Allied Nutrients)

- #14 / Gross Div. Rene Vadeboncoeur
GCSA of Cape Cod
(Sponsored by BASF)

- #16 / Net Div. Neil Lajennesse
Connecticut AGCS
(Sponsored by Syngenta)

Low Gross Team Winners

- 69 Jeff Haas & John Gosselin
Philadelphia AGCS

Sponsorship Team Winners

- 67 Joe Perry & Andrew Stillwell
BASF Group

Skins Net

- Eagle on 12 / Mike Hermanson
Eagle on 17 / Mark Nichols
Eagle on 18 / Josh Kopera
Double Eagle on 13 / Steve Smith
Eagle on 5 / Jim Favreau
Eagle on 7 / Nick Burchard

Gross

- Birdie on 6 / Sean Cain
Birdie on 12 / Chet Walsh
Birdie on 17 / Jeff Haas
Birdie on 18 / Ryan Emerich

Andy Drohen, Met Area Team Championship Co-Chair and a member of the Tee to Green Editorial Committee, is a regional manager with Allied Nutrients in Granville, MA.

2021 Assistants Championship Goes to GlenArbor

by Worth Andrews

On November 2, GlenArbor Golf Club, located in scenic Bedford Hills, NY, hosted the Sixth Annual Assistants Championship with great success. Known as the Battle of the Bridges, this tournament provides a much-needed and well-deserved day off for assistants from both sides of the bridge. This low gross team event showcases whether the GCSANJ or MetGCSA assistants are the more accomplished golfers.

This tournament has been an annual tradition since 2016, when it was first held at Upper Montclair Country Club and the trophy was taken home by the MetGCSA team. After a strong start for the Met assistants, the GCSANJ assistants claimed the trophy for two consecutive years, winning at Paramount Country Club in 2017 and Preakness Hills Country Club in 2018.

Met assistants came back with a vengeance and reclaimed the trophy at Arcola Country Club in 2019 and again in 2020 at Essex Fells Country Club.

After having the Battle of the Bridges three consecutive years on Jersey soil, the Assistants Championship finally made its way back to New York turf, and the MetGCSA once again triumphed with another victory!

The Site of the Competition

GlenArbor Golf Club opened in 2001 and was designed by the one and only non-American Grand Slam winner, Gary Player. Although the fairways were generous, the assistants were required to have precision and control off the tee due to the rolling terrain and well-placed bunkers. If the assistants placed their ball in the fairways, the challenge was not over, since the greens were in immaculate condition and proved to be a challenge in and of themselves.

With five par 3s and two long drive contests, the tournament had ample opportunities for the assistants to take home a prize on the course. If they weren't lucky enough to outdrive the others or stick it close on a par 3, there was still another chance after the tournament to win a gift card by landing a ball on the infamous floating island green.



Our Battle of the Bridges hosts (left to right): GlenArbor Superintendent Joe Gikis and Assistants Keith Day and Luke Pittman.

Many thanks to GlenArbor Assistant Superintendents Luke Pittman and Keith Day, who along with Superintendent Joe Gikis, ensured the course was in pristine condition for everyone to enjoy.

About Assistant Host Luke Pittman

Born and raised in Kershaw, SC, Luke is easily recognizable at any Met event by his Southern drawl. Luke's obsession with golf began after his scoutmaster placed an old set of Judy Rankins muscle backs in his hand. At just 12, he had befriended the local municipal pro and made every effort to ensure golf was part of his daily routine. His dedication has earned him an admirable five handicap.

He got his start in golf course maintenance during high school, when he took a position on the crew of a local municipality in South Carolina. It didn't take the superintendent there long to see Luke's potential, and he nudged him into the turf management school at Horry Georgetown Tech.

While pursuing his degree, Luke gathered a variety of experience working courses and tournaments at clubs from the West to the East Coast. The summer of 2016, Luke moved to Myrtle Beach and was fortunate enough to volunteer at numerous PGA events, including the 2017 Players Championship. But South Carolina couldn't hold Luke down. He was off to Durango, CO, to

work as an intern at The Glacier Club. Luke describes his time there as the best golf experience in his life.

As the summer drew to a close, Luke next set his sights on TPC Boston for the Dell Technologies Tournament. Luke knew, then, that the Northeast was the place for him, and the application process began. With an associate's degree in hand, Luke settled at GlenArbor where he has worked the past four years and is quick to say he looks forward to a long and productive future there.

About Assistant Host Keith Day

Keith began his turf management career in 1997 working on the crew at PipeStone Golf Club in Miamisburg, OH. Two years later, he accepted an assistant's position at the Country Club of the North, where he stayed until 2001. Keith's next stop was a five-year stint at Shaker Run Golf Club, where he honed his skills under the guidance of Dave Erpenbeck. Inspired to pursue formal training, Keith completed his certificate in turf management from Rutgers University and then moved on to Heatherwoode Golf Club where he paid his dues as an assistant for six years before being elevated to the superintendent's seat.

In addition to valuable experience, Keith

MetGCSA Assistants Take Home Battle of the Bridges Trophy

by Worth Andrews

earned his GCSAA certification during his 4-year tenure as Heatherwoode's superintendent.

Not letting any grass grow under his feet, Keith set his sights next on a job in the Northeast. "I was ready to take on additional professional challenges and bring a range of expertise to a new environment," says Keith.

He accepted the assistant's position at Edgewood Country Club in New Jersey, and after three seasons there, he joined the GlenArbor team in 2019.

About Superintendent Joe Gikis

Joe was born in Gardner, MA, and began his turf management career at nearby Gardner Municipal Golf Course while in high school. With his interest in turf management piqued, he pursued a formal training at UMass, interning at Pelham Country Club, Westchester Country Club, and Baltusrol Golf Club.

Upon graduation with a B.S., Joe was pleased to accept a second assistant's position at Westchester Country Club. During his 12 years there, Joe rose through the ranks to eventually become the assistant director of golf and grounds.

When the superintendent's position at GlenArbor Golf Club opened, Joe felt the time was right to manage a course of his own. He is pleased to be approaching his fourth season at GlenArbor but remembers fondly his long tenure as an assistant.

"I feel very close to the assistant group," Joe says, "so I was more than pleased to host their championship this year."

As Joe approaches another season, he has nothing but high praise for his hardworking assistant team. "I am so grateful to have two wonderful assistants who are dedicated to their craft, the success of GlenArbor, and the game of golf," he says. "I would like to thank all the assistants in the area and hope they enjoyed their day at GlenArbor Golf Club."

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

In the sixth year of the Battle of the Bridges Assistants Championship, the GCSANJ and the MetGCSA battled it out for the title.

For the third consecutive year, the Met team blew out the competition and took home the trophy. Here is a look at the winning results:

Battle of the Bridges Final Score

MetGCSA ~ 672

GCSANJ ~ 837

Contest Winners

Low Gross ~ Single

76 Luke Pittman, *GlenArbor Golf Club*

Team 1st Low Net ~ GCSANJ

57 Dylan McCanus/Anthony Neumann
*Trump National Golf Club
Bedminster*

Team 2nd Low Net ~ MetGCSA

60 Chris O'Malley/Kevin Logan
Fenway Golf Club

Closest to the Pin

#3	Luis Orellana	10' 9"
	<i>The Redding Country Club</i>	
#7	Ben Messenger	5' 10"
	<i>The Stanwich Club</i>	
#11	Hunter Rowe	3' 3"
	<i>Pelham Country Club</i>	
#14	Keith Day	11' 1"
	<i>GlenArbor Golf Club</i>	
#17	Kory Kelley,	9' 4"
	<i>TPC Jasna Polana</i>	

Longest Drive

#5 Kyle Ott, *Wee Burn Country Club*

#15 Kevin Logan, *Fenway Golf Club*

Thank You!

After another successful Battle of the Bridges Tournament, a well-deserved thank you is in order to Superintendent Joe Gikis, assistants Luke Pittman and Keith Day, GlenArbor Golf Club owner Morgan Gregory, and the wonderful staff for providing excellent golf course conditions and first-rate service.

Also a very special thanks to our title sponsor Dave Lippman from Westchester Turf Supply for sponsoring the tournament and Par 3 Island Green Contest, as well as Ryan Avery from Grass Roots for sponsoring the on-course beverages.

This year's tournament could not have been the success that it was without all who were involved, including the assistants who came to show their support for this annual tournament.

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

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