

Tee To Green

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Tee To Green



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In this Issue

Feature

Bill Cygan Takes the Helm as MetGCSA's 38th President2

Departments

National News5

Chapter News.....6

Member News.....10

Spotlight11

Upcoming Events12

President's Message

A New Season, A New Opportunity

B

y the time you're reading this, the season will be underway for most of us. All that offseason prep is about to pay off. This winter felt like an old-school one across the region—and for some, maybe even a welcome excuse to be “snowed in.” For those deep in projects, though, the snow couldn't melt fast enough.

Education season has come and gone, highlighted by a great event at Westchester Country Club and a record-setting GCSAA Conference in Orlando. Congratulations to award winners Bob and Joe Alonzi and Jim Pavonetti. Closer to home, the MGA Green Chairman Education Series made its stop at Pelham Country Club in late March.

I've been attending this event for the past decade, and it continues to grow into a valuable opportunity for our profession. It gives superintendents a platform to communicate our challenges and needs directly to key stakeholders at our clubs. A big thank you to Kevin Kline and the MGA team for putting together such a meaningful program.

This year, I brought a longtime green committee member in place of my chairman, who couldn't attend. As always, the speaker lineup was strong, relevant, and informative. A consistent highlight of this event is the focus on current topics, with presentations from fellow MetGCSA superintendents—this year featuring Tamarack's Jeff Scott, Fenway's Rob Alonzi, and St. Andrew's Rob Milar.

At the end of the day, I received this note from the member I brought:

Hi Bill,

I just wanted to thank you again for including me today. I didn't know what to expect and was honestly fascinated. As I said to you, hearing about so many aspects of your job that go unnoticed is really eye-opening. Most members probably think you cut the grass, rake bunkers, and remove trees. I wish more members could hear and see how much more goes into your job, all to give us a beautiful course to play on.



Bill Cygan
MetGCSA President

To add some context, this is someone deeply involved at my club for over 30 years—serving on the green committee, leading women's golf, handling handicap and rules, and volunteering regularly, including with USGA events. Her perspective really stood out to me.

If someone that engaged can walk away with that kind of takeaway, it shows there's still a big opportunity for us to better educate and connect with our membership. Leveraging programs like the MGAs can only help—both in building understanding and, ultimately, making our jobs a little easier with stronger support behind us.

I'd encourage all of you to bring one or two new members to a future Green Chairman Education Series event. With regular board turnover and the influx of new members over the past several years, there's always more work to be done on that front.

Lastly, please make an effort to join us at one of our golf or social events this season. Even if it's been a while—or not the most convenient—it's always worth it to reconnect.

Bill Cygan
President

Feature

Bill Cygan Takes the Helm as MetGCSA's 38th President

by Casey Klossner



ROPOLITAN
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A

fter serving six years on the MetGCSA board, Bill Cygan, property manager of Silver Spring Country Club, was sworn in as the association's 38th president at the November Annual Meeting. During his board tenure, Bill served on both the Tournament and Education Committees and spent two years as vice president under outgoing President Mike Brunelle.

"Bill is a get-it-done guy," Mike said. "He does his homework, he's organized, and he follows through. He's exactly the kind of leader we need as we continue to dive deeper into our Standard Operating Procedures and analyze the responsibilities of our board. As a newer board member that has accelerated his climb to president, he provides a fresh new perspective on planning for the future of the association."

Bill credits much of his preparation for the role to the leaders who came before him.

"I have a great appreciation for the knowledge I gained from past presidents and board members," Bill said. He reflected especially on watching Rob Alonzi guide the association through the COVID-19 pandemic. Seeing that steady leadership, he said, reinforced his desire to stay involved and make an impact.

Onward and Upward

A theme Bill continues to emphasize — including in a recent message to members in the past *Tee to Green* — is simple: *Leave things better than you found them for the next generation.*

Drawing on his nine years at Silver Spring, Bill believes superintendents today have a broader platform within their clubs.

"As superintendents, we have an opportunity to communicate the importance of planning for the future," he said. That includes long-term project planning and internal staff development, as well as encouraging greater involvement in professional associations.

As president, one of his priorities is strengthening peer and colleague connections within the Met.



Bill Cygan reviews construction on Silver Spring's Hole #5 with greens chairman Todd Payne and golf course architect Brian Schneider.

"Enhancing the social connections among our members is critical," Bill said. "Sharing knowledge and experience helps everyone stay relevant. It starts with getting involved and participating in events."

Massachusetts Beginnings

Bill's career began at East Mountain Country Club in Westfield, MA, where his grandfather first introduced him to the game — and to golf course work.

He started part-time picking the range and setting up golf carts before graduating to early-morning greens mowing during summer breaks. After high school, Bill enrolled at UMass.

"I loved being on the golf course in the summer, and it became clear it was something I wanted to pursue as a career."

He earned his bachelor's degree in plant and soil sciences while gaining hands-on experience through an internship at Twin Hills Country Club in Longmeadow, MA, under 40-year veteran superintendent Roy McIntosh and Matt Kowal, Roy's longtime assistant who was slated to succeed Roy as superintendent. After graduation, Bill was hired as second assistant superintendent.

"Twin Hills opened my eyes to golf course maintenance in its entirety," he said. "It taught me how to be creative with limited resources while still delivering quality conditions."

Climbing the Ladder in the Met Section

Seeking broader experience, Bill moved to the Met Section in 2007, accepting a position as senior assistant superintendent at Innis Arden Golf Club under veteran superintendent Neil Laufenberg.

“Neil involved me in everything — not just daily operations, but project planning and renovations,” Bill said. “It showed me the level of detail and resources required to maintain a course at a high level.”

He was also involved in planning and executing a new maintenance facility — an experience that would prove invaluable later in his career.

In 2012, Bill joined Winged Foot Golf Club as a West Course Superintendent under Director of Agronomy Stephen Rabi-deau. The move placed him at one of the country’s most storied clubs during the early planning stages of a 36-hole renovation.

“When I got to Winged Foot, I had no idea the U.S. Open would be returning in 2020,” Bill said. “But the scale of the renovation and the opportunity to learn from a passionate leader like Steve shaped my career.”

Bill credits both mentors for helping prepare him for his current role.

A Transformation at Silver Spring

In 2017, Bill was named property manager at Silver Spring Country Club in Ridgefield, CT. Soon after his arrival, the club began planning the construction of a new maintenance facility — a project that benefited from his prior experience.

The club later engaged Golf Course Architect Brian Schneider to lead a phased, full-course renovation of all 18 holes and practice areas. Initial efforts focused on tree work and improving conditioning before the full renovation began in fall 2024. Completion is slated for Memorial Day of this year.

Major elements of the project include a brand-new Rain Bird irrigation system and all new features on the golf course. This



Bill and family (from left to right): son, Leo; his wife, Calista; and his oldest, Francesca.

includes rebuilding all greens to USGA specs using the variable depth construction method, new bunkers with Capillary Concrete liners, new tees, and expanded fairways regrassed to bentgrass.

“The visible improvements are exciting,” Bill said. “But the infrastructure below ground will be the real game changer.”

Bill also credits his team for the project’s success, particularly Assistant Superintendents James Carlton and Jordan Hames.

“James has been instrumental, especially working with contractors,” Bill said. “Jordan brings a ‘whatever it takes’ mentality every day. It’s refreshing to work with people who care as much as I do, and I am fortunate to

have been working with them over the past nine years.”

It is, in many ways, the embodiment of Bill’s guiding principle: Leave it better than you found it.

Bill Beyond Work

Bill lives in Ridgefield with his wife, Calista, and their two children, Francesca, 6, and Leo, 4. Outside of work, he enjoys family hikes, following the New England Patriots, and riding his motorcycle through the Connecticut countryside.

Casey Klossner, co-chair of the Tee to Green Editorial Committee, is superintendent at The Tuxedo Club in Tuxedo Park, NY.

Paul Carter Assumes the Reins as 89th President of the GCSAA

Members Elect New Board of Directors at 2026 Annual Meeting

At GCSAA's February 5 Annual Meeting, Paul Carter, CGCS, who serves as director of agronomy at The Bear Trace at Harrison Bay in Harrison, TN, was elected GCSAA's 89th president. His election took place alongside the 2026 GCSAA Conference and Trade Show in Orlando, FL, and coincides with the association's upcoming centennial celebration on September 23.

Almost 100 years ago, Col. John Morley, GCSAA's founder, spoke about the importance of companionship and depending on one another. He believed the GCSAA would be stronger with a shared sense of purpose. That sense of shared success continues to define the association.

Now Carter, a GCSAA member for 33 years, will carry forward Col. Morley's vision for the association. Well prepared for the role, Carter served as GCSAA's vice president in 2025 and has been a member of the board of directors since 2019. In addition to his national involvement, he is active in the Tennessee GCSA and formerly led the Tennessee Turfgrass Association as president.

Carter has overseen golf course operations at The Bear Trace at Harrison Bay since 2001 and holds a bachelor's degree in agricultural sciences from Auburn University.

Reflecting on his new role, Carter expressed both gratitude and enthusiasm,



Paul Carter, CGCS

emphasizing a collective focus for the year ahead. He noted that the centennial milestone offers a meaningful opportunity for members to honor founder Col. John Morley through active engagement in the association.

"I can't think of a better way to honor his dream than to get involved," Carter said. "This industry does not exist without the skills and knowledge and hard work of the golf course professionals and members of the GCSAA."

GCSAA Board of Directors at a Glance

President

Paul L. Carter, CGCS, superintendent at The Bear Trace at Harrison Bay in Harrison, TN

Vice President

Marc Weston, CGCS, superintendent at Indian Hill Country Club in Newington, CT

Secretary/Treasurer

Steven Hammon, CGCS, superintendent at Traverse City Country Club in Traverse City, MI

Directors

- Aaron Fankhauser, CGCS, director of agronomy at The Club at Rolling Hills in Golden, CO
- Brian Roth, CGCS, superintendent at Oquirrh Hills Golf Course in Tooele, UT
- Ryan Kraushofer, CGCS, superintendent and general manager at Westminster National Golf Course in Westminster, MD
- Gregory B. Jones, CGCS, MG, director of agronomy at Champions Run in Omaha, NE
- H. Scott Griffith, CGCS, MG, director of agronomy at the University of Georgia Golf Course in Athens, GA


Immediate Past President

T.A. Barker, CGCS, superintendent at Fore Lakes Golf Course in Taylorsville, UT

Jeff White, CGCS, director of agronomy at Indian Hills Country Club in Mission Hills, KS, retires from the board after serving the past year as president.

Highlights From the 2026 Class C Professional Development Seminar

by Austin Banzet

 On February 18, the MetGCSA hosted its annual Class C Professional Development Seminar at Harrison Meadows Country Club. The event brought together 51 attendees, primarily assistant superintendents, for a full day focused on career growth, professional awareness, and practical insight into the evolving landscape of our industry.

The seminar was made possible through the generous support of our title sponsor, Envu. Their continued investment in professional development opportunities plays an important role in strengthening the next generation of leaders within our association.

Speaker Insights

Kevin Doyle, GCSAA Northeast Regional Representative

Investing in You. Empowering Your Team

The morning kicked off with Kevin Doyle, who provided a comprehensive overview of the many programs and resources available through the national association. He highlighted educational pathways, service opportunities, advocacy initiatives, and tools designed to support both individual career advancement and team development.

At one point, Kevin jokingly offered someone in the audience \$500 to stay awake—an off-the-cuff moment that drew laughs and re-energized the room, perfectly underscoring his engaging and approachable style.

For further information, you can reach Kevin Doyle at 816-807-3103 or kdoyle@gcsaa.org.

Colin Burns CCM, Colin Burns Consulting

Standing Out From the Crowd

Following Kevin, consultant Colin Burns, CCM, led a session focused on career positioning and professional differentiation. Colin encouraged attendees to think beyond technical proficiency and consider how they present themselves in competitive hiring environments, emphasizing communication skills, leadership presence, and clearly articulating value to prospective employers.

As Colin put it, “You are telling a story...” which resonated with the audience and made them realize interviewing is more about you as a person compared to just your turf knowledge.

For further information, you can reach Colin Burns at 203-274-2107 or cburns@colinburns-consulting.com.

Panel Discussion

The afternoon concluded with a superintendent discussion panel featuring local superintendents representing a range of club management structures. The conversation centered on how ownership models, such as single owner, member-owned, corporate, and public facilities influence decision making, expectations, and career trajectory. The panel consisted of Glen Arbor’s Joe Gikis, Trump National-Bedminster’s Robert Wagner, Knollwood’s Scott Olson, Trump National-Westchester’s Daniel Coughlin, Westchester

CC’s David Dudones, and Hudson Hills’ Grover Alexander.

I appreciate these men sharing their experiences and giving us young assistants insight into how to navigate our careers forward.

Many Thanks!

We extend our appreciation to Harrison Meadows Country Club for hosting and to Envu for their sponsorship and continued support of the MetGCSA. The Class C Professional Development Seminar remains an important platform for developing future leaders within our association. Looking forward to seeing everyone at our next event!

Austin Banzet, the Met’s Class C representative and a member of the Tee to Green Editorial Committee, is an assistant superintendent at Sleepy Hollow Country Club in Scarborough, NY.

MetGCSA Scholarship Applications Now Available

Application forms for the 2026 MetGCSA Scholarship Awards are available on the Met website, www.metgcsa.org, or through MetGCSA Executive Secretary Susan O’Dowd at 914-909-4843 or sodowd@mgagolf.org.

Any Class A, Life A, Life A/AF, B, C, Life C, AF, Life AF, or EM 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 Dave Peterson at Silvermine Golf Club. You can reach him by calling 845-521-6736 or by sending an email to depturf@gmail.com.

The Scholarship Committee will select recipients based on leadership, maturity, scholastic capabilities, activities, and commitment to a chosen career. **All applications MUST be mailed and RECEIVED by end of business day on Friday, June 5. Emailed applications will not be accepted!**

Scholarships will be awarded at the Parent/Child Scholarship Tournament. Be sure to watch our calendar of events in the *Tee to Green* or on our association website for the date of the event.

Meet Your 2026 MetGCSA Board



From left to right: Past President Mike Brunelle of Upper Montclair CC; Class AF Rep Brian Bontemps of Noble Turf; (back) Robert Schipper of Canoe Brook CC; Treasurer Stephen Rabideau of Winged Foot GC; (back) Chip Lafferty of Rye GC; Vice President Dave Peterson of Silvermine GC; President Bill Cygan of Silver Spring CC; (back) Secretary Joe Gikis of GlenArbor GC; Casey Klossner of The Tuxedo Club; (back) Scott Olson of Knollwood CC; Kevin Seibel of Century CC.

Board members missing from the photo are Class C Rep Austin Banzet of Sleepy Hollow CC and Mike McCall, MetGCSA Executive Director.

Your Go-To Committee Contacts

We've provided a list of each of the MetGCSA's 2026 committee chairs, including their phone numbers and emails. Please feel free to contact any of them with questions, comments, or helpful suggestions.

Awards Committee

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973-417-8199

Bylaws Committee

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854-521-6736

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Mike Brunelle, CGCS
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Communications Committee

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Rye GC
superintendent@ryegolfclub.com
914-760-3331

Casey Klossner (Tee to Green)

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cklossner@thetuxedoclub.org
914-563-5873

Kevin Seibel, CGCS (Advertising)

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kseibel@optonline.net
914-384-1191

Brian Bontemps (Advertising)

Noble Turf
brianbontemps@nobleturf.com
845-239-7959

Casey Klossner (Website)

The Tuxedo Club
cklossner@thetuxedoclub.org
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Rob Schipper, CGCS (Website)

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Education Committee

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914-400-9329

Steve Wickstrom

Burning Tree CC
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Environmental Committee

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Government Relations Committee

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Class C Representative

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Class AF Representative

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Winter Seminar Delivers Education, Insight, and Well-Deserved Recognition

by Chip Lafferty

The MetGCSA held its annual Winter Seminar and Awards Luncheon on January 14 at Westchester Country Club, where David Dudones and the club once again set the standard for hospitality. From seamless room adjustments to outstanding food and service, the day reflected the professionalism we strive for in our own operations. Thank you to Dave and the entire Westchester staff for hosting one of our premier events of the year.

The program featured a strong lineup of speakers addressing research, technology, regulation, and advocacy—topics that directly impact our daily work. The day also provided an opportunity to recognize two individuals whose contributions exemplify excellence and service.

Cornell Research Update

Carl Schimenti & Chase Skrubis – Cornell University

Carl Schimenti and Chase Skrubis of Cornell University opened the seminar with a research update and year-in-review. Working closely with Dr. Frank Rossi, their recent work has focused on the impact of golf footwear on putting green performance.

Over a five-year period (2019–2023), the team evaluated more than 50 different golf shoes, studying the effects of various spike designs on putting surface quality. The findings were enlightening. While spike design does influence wear, according to the researchers, the person walking across the surface had the greatest impact. Turf species also proved more influential than originally thought.

Specifically, *Poa annua* demonstrated greater tolerance to traffic damage compared to bentgrass, largely due to its bunch-type growth habit versus the horizontal, creeping nature of bentgrass. While the conclusions were not revolutionary, they provided valuable data to support what many superintendents observe in the field.

Schimenti and Skrubis also shared insights from their work surrounding the recent Ryder Cup at Bethpage Black

Course. Amid public criticism regarding “slow greens,” research data demonstrated that perception did not align with reality.

For further information, you can reach Carl Schimenti at css223@cornell.edu and Chase Skrubis at cs2467@cornell.edu.

Robotics on the Course

Dr. Scott McElroy – Auburn University

Dr. Scott McElroy of Auburn University presented on the rapid evolution of robotic mowing technology. With extensive experience in research, sales, and service of robotic equipment, Dr. McElroy offered a practical perspective.

The takeaway was clear: Robotic mowers are no longer a future concept; they are already a viable tool. Advancements in GPS positioning, cutting head precision, and programming capabilities now allow robots to manage even lower heights of cut with consistency and accuracy.

For many facilities, the question is no longer *if* robotics will play a role, but *where* they can enhance efficiency, labor allocation, and overall course management. The technology is here, and it continues to improve.

For further information, Dr. Scott McElroy can be reached at 334-844-3992 or jsm0010@auburn.edu.

Awards Luncheon: Honoring Commitment and Impact

Following the morning sessions, members enjoyed an outstanding lunch as two well-deserving individuals were recognized.

Distinguished Member Award – Mike Cook

Mike Cook received the Distinguished Member Award in recognition of his dedicated service to the association. Through multiple board roles and, notably, his leadership and commitment to the Scholarship Committee, Mike has helped shape one of the MetGCSA's most meaningful initiatives.

His careful review of applications for the Bill Caputi Scholarship Award and his dedi-

cation to fairness, integrity, and excellence have strengthened the program immeasurably. The Scholarship Committee's reputation today reflects Mike's steady leadership and commitment to doing the job the right way. Thank you, Mike, for your service to the MetGCSA and its members.

John Reid Lifetime Achievement Award – Boomer Esiason

The John Reid Lifetime Achievement Award was presented to Boomer Esiason. While his accomplishments on the football field are well known, his impact off the field is even more meaningful.

Through decades of charitable golf initiatives, Boomer has helped raise millions of dollars for the game and for causes close to his heart—most notably the Boomer Esiason Foundation. Inspired by his son Gunnar, the foundation has played a significant role in advancing research, improving therapies, and elevating awareness for those living with cystic fibrosis.

Boomer brought his trademark energy and humor to the luncheon, engaging the crowd and making the presentation as memorable as the honor itself. His lifelong commitment to giving back—and his continued support of golf and the superintendents who care for it—make him a truly deserving recipient of the Met's coveted Reid Award.

Once the award presentations concluded, the educational program resumed.

Understanding the EPA

Edward Messina, Esq. – U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Edward Messina of the United States Environmental Protection Agency provided valuable insight into the structure and function of the agency, particularly within the Office of Pesticide Programs.

He outlined the extensive time, research, and financial investment required to register a pesticide, emphasizing the rigorous evaluation process designed to protect nontarget organisms, applicators, and the public. His presentation reinforced an important point: regulatory agencies play a critical role in

ensuring products are both effective and safe when used according to label directions. For superintendents, understanding this process helps make clear both product availability and regulatory changes.

For further information, Edward Messina can be reached at 202-566-1260 or at messina.edward@epa.gov.

Government Affairs & ESA Compliance

Chava McKeel – GCSAA

Chava McKeel, director of government affairs for the GCSAA, concluded the program with an update on federal and state advocacy efforts.

A major focus was the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and new pesticide labeling requirements that will appear this season. These updates require applicators to consider endangered species protection in sensitive areas when applying certain products.

For facilities that have completed Best Management Practice (BMP) plans, compliance should be manageable. Measures such as vegetative buffers around wetlands often already align with the new requirements. Still, members were encouraged to review labeling carefully and ensure protocols are in place.

McKeel emphasized that GCSAA continues to advocate on behalf of superintendents nationwide on pesticide policy, water issues, labor, and other regulatory matters that affect our profession.

For additional information, Chava McKeel can be reached at 785.832.3619 or at cmckeel@gcsaa.org.

Many Thanks

The 2026 Winter Seminar was both informative and engaging—a balance of cutting-edge research, practical tools, regulatory clarity, and well-earned recognition.

Our sincere thanks, again, to David Dudones and the entire team at Westchester Country Club for their outstanding hospitality, and to all of our speakers for delivering thoughtful and relevant presentations.

We look forward to gathering again next January as we continue advancing our profession together.

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

Special Thanks to Our 2026 Winter Seminar Exhibitors

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

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

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New Members

Please join us in welcoming the following new MetGCSA members:

- **Bryan Amaya**, Class EM, Burning Tree Country Club, Greenwich, CT
- **Austin Banzet**, Class C, Sleepy Hollow Country Club, Scarborough, NY
- **Frank Caruso**, Class C, Upper Montclair Country Club, Clifton, NJ
- **Jaak Chasse**, Class C, Waccabuc Country Club, Waccabuc, NY
- **William Frielinghaus**, Class C, Pelham Country Club, Pelham Manor, NY
- **James Gallo**, Class C, Westchester Country Club, Rye, NY
- **William Good Jr.**, Class C, Winged Foot Golf Club, Mamaroneck, NY
- **Aidan Husby**, Class C, Winged Foot Golf Club, Mamaroneck, NY
- **Kyle Laufenberg**, Class C, Innis Arden Golf Club, Old Greenwich, CT
- **Ty Leahy**, Class C, Fairview Country Club, Greenwich, CT
- **Jessica Lenihan**, Class C, The Connecticut Golf Club, Easton, CT
- **Michael McKenna**, Class C, Upper Montclair Country Club, Clifton, NJ
- **Michael Morataya**, Class C, The Connecticut Golf Club, Easton, CT
- **Frank Ortiz**, Class EM, Silver Spring Country Club, Ridgefield, CT
- **Dhenilson Pizarro**, Class C, Winged Foot Golf Club, Mamaroneck, NY
- **Pat Quinlan**, Class AF, ENVU, Westchester, HV, Northern NJ
- **Alfred Steppich**, Class A, The Monster Golf Club, Monticello, NY

Members on the Move

- **John Carlone**, CGCS, retired from his 29 years as superintendent at the Meadow Brook Club in Jericho, NY, is now regional manager at Heritage PPG covering the Northeast.
- **George Chavez**, formerly superintendent at Pelham Bay & Split Rock Golf Course in Bronx, NY, is now superintendent at Harrison Meadows Country Club in Harrison, NY.
- **Dan Rogers**, formerly superintendent at Wykagyl Country Club in New Rochelle, NY, is now vice president at Tilleli Construction in New Rochelle, NY.
- **Blair Somerville**, formerly an assistant superintendent at Round Hill Club in Greenwich, CT, is now a sales rep for Ewing Outdoor Supply in Elkridge, MD.
- **Austin Sevcik**, formerly a superintendent at Westchester Country Club in Rye, NY, is now superintendent at Ridgewood Country Club in Danbury, CT.
- **Kevin Whalen**, formerly an assistant superintendent at the Maidstone Club in East Hampton, NY, is now superintendent at The Bridgehampton Club in Bridgehampton, NY.

Retired

All the best to our two retiring members:

- **Dave Kerr**, a member of the MetGCSA since 1982, has retired after 40 years as Ridgewood Country Club's golf course superintendent.
- **John Gallagher**, a member of the MetGCSA since 1987, has retired after 40 years as Racebrook Country Club's golf course superintendent.

In Sympathy

Offering our sincere condolences to Friar's Head Superintendent **William Jones** and his family. His father, William "Bumper" Jones, passed away February 15 surrounded by his loving family. He was 93 years old.



Steven McGlone, a Maverick of the Met, Hosts David Mahoney Two-Ball at Siwanoy

by Mike McCall

It's been a long winter—long enough that superintendents across the region are chomping at the bit to get back on the course and bring their properties back to life and performing at the highest level for the game we all care so deeply about.

This year, that seasonal renewal begins at Siwanoy Country Club, where Steven McGlone will host the MetGCSA's first event of the season: the David Mahoney Two-Ball Qualifier. It's a fitting stage for a tournament that Mahoney, himself, took great pride in helping to establish—an event the association so aptly named in his honor.

But if you're expecting the usual story—how Steven arrived at Siwanoy, what's changed since the association's last visit in 2016—you'll have to look elsewhere.

"That story has been told many times, and is well documented," says Steven. Instead, in the spirit of Star Trek, this spotlight aims "to boldly go where no man has gone before."

Marching to the Beat of a Different Drummer

Steven will be the first to admit that he marches to the beat of his own drum—a rhythm that may well have been set on the rocky coast of California. He's one of those golf course superintendents who didn't follow the traditional path into the profession. After earning a B.S. in geography from Ohio University, Steven was encouraged to consider turf management by a superintendent he worked for during summers in high school and college. He took that advice and enrolled in Penn State's two-year turf program.

That decision soon led him to Cypress Point Club, where he worked for the legendary—and now retired—Jeff Markow. It was here that Steven picked up a philosophy that still shapes his approach today: "If you can't get it done in eight hours, you're either doing it wrong or it can wait until tomorrow."

"I still believe that," Steven says, "even if it's not always the norm in the tri-state area. We work hard, but our days are very morning-focused, especially with the increase in play since Covid. The goal is to have condi-

tions dialed in before the first groups go out. After that, afternoons are more manageable."

"Unless it's extremely hot and dry and we're watering greens late, we're done by 2:30," he adds. "We don't stay just to be seen or to fix something minor that can wait."

We All Make Mistakes

Steven is also quick to admit he's not immune to missteps. When asked about lessons learned along the way, he points to a time when he purchased new walking greens mowers with floating heads. Based on outside advice, he and his equipment manager set the bench height to match what they had been using with heavier fixed-head mowers.

At first, everything seemed fine. But a few days later, the greens chairman called Steven over mid-round and didn't mince words: "These are the worst greens in the State of New York."

"I didn't do my research," Steven says. "I didn't do my homework. I should have known better. It was one of those painful lessons we all learn at some point."

Fortunately, the issue was easy to correct—but it's a lesson learned that has stayed with him.

Building a Team, Not Just a Staff

If Steven's management style is defined by balance, it's just as grounded in trust. Over the years, he has built a dependable, close-knit team—including a unique dynamic with multiple members of the same family on staff; two serve as assistants. The continuity has created both stability and a strong sense of cohesion.

"They're great workers and even better people," Steven says.

To address ongoing labor challenges, Steven has also taken a practical, flexible approach to hiring. Each summer, he brings in high school and college students, adjusting schedules to fit their routines rather than forcing them into a traditional 6 a.m. start. It's a simple shift, but one that has helped the operation stay fully staffed while many others struggle.

More importantly, it reflects a broader belief: People matter. "There are up to 36



Steven McGlone

people working for us," he says. "They want to feel appreciated." That mindset continues to shape how Steven leads—and how he defines success.

Family First

Away from the golf course, Steven keeps his priorities straightforward: Family comes first.

His wife, Margie, works with Disney Theatrical Group, managing domestic and international Broadway productions—a role that occasionally takes her around the world. At home, their two children, Finley and Sydney, keep the family's schedule full, with one in high school and the other in middle school.

Summers often include weekends in the Berkshires, while winters bring time on the slopes—an activity common among superintendents in the Northeast. It's an active lifestyle, but an intentional one.

"I don't live a super exciting life," Steven says. "But I'm happy with it."

That sense of contentment comes up often. Even hobbies have taken a back seat—woodworking, once a regular outlet, has given way to a different focus.

"This is the phase where it's about the kids," he says. "That's enough."

Redefining Success

Early in his career, success meant perfection—A-plus conditions every day, no exceptions. But with time and experience came a shift in perspective. Steven learned how to manage more effectively, delegate with confidence, and still deliver outstanding results—just with less stress for both himself and his staff.

Over time, his definition of success has broadened.

“Now it’s more holistic,” he says. “It’s having a great day at work, seeing the people who work for me happy, and then going home to a strong family life.”

The golf course still matters, and the standards remain high. But they’re no longer the only measure.

“I don’t judge success based on green speed or the outcome of a member-guest anymore,” he adds. “That’s expected at this point.”

In fact, some of the best results come when he takes a step back.

“Sometimes when I stay out of the way, the team does an even better job,” he says, highlighting his belief in delegation and trust.

Perspective and Legacy

Ask Steven what scares him, and his answer is immediate—and deeply human.

“Death,” he says. “I want to see my kids grow up. I want to meet my grandkids. I want to experience retirement.”

It’s not something he dwells on, but it shapes how he views both work and life. The job is important, but it isn’t everything.

“We’re managing golf courses,” he says. “It’s a great job, but it’s not life or death.”

That perspective shapes the legacy he hopes to leave behind. For Steven, it’s not just about producing excellent conditions—it’s about doing so while keeping things in balance.

“I don’t take things too seriously,” he says. “I try to keep it light.”

In an industry that often leans the other way, that mindset may stand out as much as anything he’s accomplished on the course.

Keeping It Light

Dave Mahoney, McGlone’s legendary predecessor, created the Two-Ball Tournament as a way for superintendents to step away from the day-to-day grind and enjoy the camaraderie that defines the profession.

This year’s event, set for April 27, offers the perfect opportunity to experience the conditions Steven and his team will have on display at Siwanoy, while also taking time to enjoy the game—and the conversations that come with it. It’s a chance to connect over the things that matter most: family, relationships, and, yes, turf.

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

Upcoming Events

New Year, New Events Lineup

Met Events

Dave Mahoney Two-Ball Qualifier

Monday, April 27
Siwanoy Country Club
Bronxville, NY
Host: Steven McGlone

Superintendent/Guest Tournament

Monday, June 8
The Connecticut Golf Club
Easton, CT
Host: Vincent Taylor

Parent-Child Tournament/ Scholarship Awards

Tuesday, July 28
Silvermine Golf Club
Norwalk, CT
Host: Dave Peterson

Invitational Tournament

Monday, August 3
The Tuxedo Club
Tuxedo Park, NY
Host: Casey Klossner

Nine & Dine

Tuesday, August 18
Redding Country Club
Redding, CT
Host: Brett Chapin

The Poa/Met Championship/ Met Team Qualifier

Monday, September 28
Country Club of New Canaan
New Canaan, CT
Host: Mike Roe

Industry Events

National Golf Day

Tuesday & Wednesday, May 5 & 6
Washington, DC

In its 18th year, National Golf Day offers the opportunity to meet with members of Congress to advocate on behalf of golf’s interests. Other benefits to attending: the opportunity to participate in the community service project on Tuesday, which includes beautification projects on the National Mall and Old Soldiers’ Home Golf Course. The Keynote Address, Issues Briefing, and Congressional Reception will follow on Tuesday afternoon, and Wednesday will be our opportunity to meet with members of Congress and staff to discuss the issues affecting the golf industry.

30th Rutgers Turfgrass Research Golf Classic

Wednesday, May 6
Fiddler’s Elbow Country Club
Bedminster, NJ

Plan now to join fellow industry professionals for this annual fundraiser and 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.

Inaugural New York Golf Day

Tuesday, May 12
Albany, NY

Join the Empire State Golf Alliance on May 12 in Albany to celebrate New York Golf and Governor Kathy Hochul’s designation of May 10 as New York Golf Day. Legislative resolutions will be read on the House and Senate floors recognizing golf’s economic, environmental, and community impact across the state.

This is an event well worth attending.

20th UMass Joseph Troll Turfgrass Classic

Wednesday, May 20
Bedford Golf & Tennis Club
Bedford, NY

Named after Dr. Joseph Troll, a prominent leader in the UMass Turf Program, this annual tournament is organized by the Alumni Turf Group (ATG) in support of turfgrass research and education. Bob Nielsen, CGCS, superintendent of Bedford Golf & Tennis Club, is being honored at the event for his exceptional work both at Bedford Golf & Tennis and in industry advocacy, where he has advanced environmentally responsible practices and served as a trusted voice helping bridge the golf community and government stakeholders. Be sure to attend this worthy event.

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