



The BONNIE GREENSWARD

OUR 99TH SEASON

VOL 24-4

STRONG TO THE FINISH

The PAGCS closed out Season 2024, our 99th, with awards, recognitions and stellar golf at key venues. The September Member-Guest at Lookaway gave us a chance to honor Lookaway's retiring Superintendent Dave Renk. Just a month later, we went all out and crowned the PAGCS Champions as well as presented our highest honor to the esteemed Matt Shaffer.

Please read on for full coverage and results.

BITTERSWEET

What better place to show off the Association than Lookaway Golf Club. Held September 30, our Member-Guest welcomed a sold-out field of players for a better ball of partners.

And a bit bittersweet as we honored Dave Renk in advance of his retirement. Dave served as the only superintendent at Lookaway from its earliest days of inception, hand picked from Pine Valley to be the grow-in super at Lookaway. Dave was presented with gifts and speeches from colleagues and friends.

Dave would go on to be presented with a lifetime PAGCS membership at his official retirement party in October. Excerpts of the letter are below.

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Philadelphia Association of Golf Course Superintendents, congratulations on your retirement after 27 years at Lookaway Golf Club. During your tenure, you were the model Superintendent who PAGCS members could aspire to be through your professionalism, commitment to the environment, and promotion of camaraderie and networking.

When called upon, you were always willing to host a meeting.... Your development and mentoring of aspiring Superintendents helped to better the Philadelphia golf community through their promotion to other clubs in the area.

While you will be sorely missed in the area, your retirement is much deserved, and we are excited for you and your family as you begin your next chapter in South Carolina...

Continued on page 21



Poof--just like that the 2024 season, including one of the driest falls in recent memory, came to a close. See page 21 for more meeting coverage.

>> UPCOMING EVENTS

HALF DAY WINTER EDUCATION

Wednesday, January 15, 2025

Llanerch Country Club

7:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

[Click Here](#)

SOCIAL: JOINT WITH GCSANJ

Wednesday, February 5, 2025

The Deck, San Diego, CA

7 – 10 p.m.

Registration Opens in January

2025 PREVIEW: MARK YOUR CALENDARS

WAR AT THE SHORE

Tuesday, April 22

Seaview Bay Course

SCHOLARSHIP BENEFIT OUTING

Monday, June 30

Green Valley Country Club

GOLF CHAMPIONSHIP & BUSINESS MEETING

Monday, October 20 or 27

Whitemarsh Valley Country Club

REGIONAL EVENTS

NOR' EASTER SKI DAY

Wednesday, February 26, 2025

Pico Mountain, Killington, VT

more details on page 35

[Visit the website events tab for more!](#)

#HEADINGTO100 - PAGE 17

As we head to our centennial in 2025, the 100th committee has been hard at work.

Please share your history: pagcs1925@gmail.com



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>> THE PM

Dear PAGCS Members,

2024, it has been a year. If you are trying to sell your membership or ownership on a replacement irrigation, it's been easy. If you are trying to sell a bunker renovation, not as much.

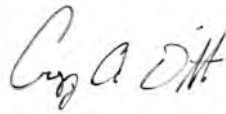
As we sit here in late fall, many people I have spoken with have called this one of the top three most challenging years in their career. It got hot in early June and stayed hot. Other than a few passing showers, it was dry and prolonged into the fall. I am sure most got sick of pulling a hose late into the year.

As we begin to prepare for 2025, we have a few great events planned to help you improve your course, yourself, or your company, as well as network with peers in the industry. Our 4th annual education event is January 15, and for those attending the national conference in San Diego, please reserve Wednesday evening for our 3rd annual social event with the GCSANJ. Keep your eyes on the website and your email inbox.

I would like to thank Darren Farrar for his service to the PAGCS Board. Darren worked alongside Jeff Haas on the Golf Committee, setting up a great annual golf calendar for our members and guests to enjoy. This was no easy task as all our clubs are seeing record outings. Each year, Darren was able to solidify great events at premier facilities. Our membership is grateful for Darren's service to the industry. Josh Saunders of Lancaster CC will take over his spot as Co-Golf Chair.

The upcoming Centennial year, 2025, will be my 4th and final year serving as President. This tenure wouldn't be possible without a dedicated group of volunteer board members. Pat Michener will remain as vice president for 2025 and transition into the President role next fall at our 100th anniversary celebration. Tim Edwards will remain Treasurer and Nick Lubold has agreed to become Secretary. With our new additions of directors and affiliates to our board, I feel comfortable the Association is in great hands for the next decade plus.

Respectfully,



President, Philadelphia Association of Golf Course Superintendents



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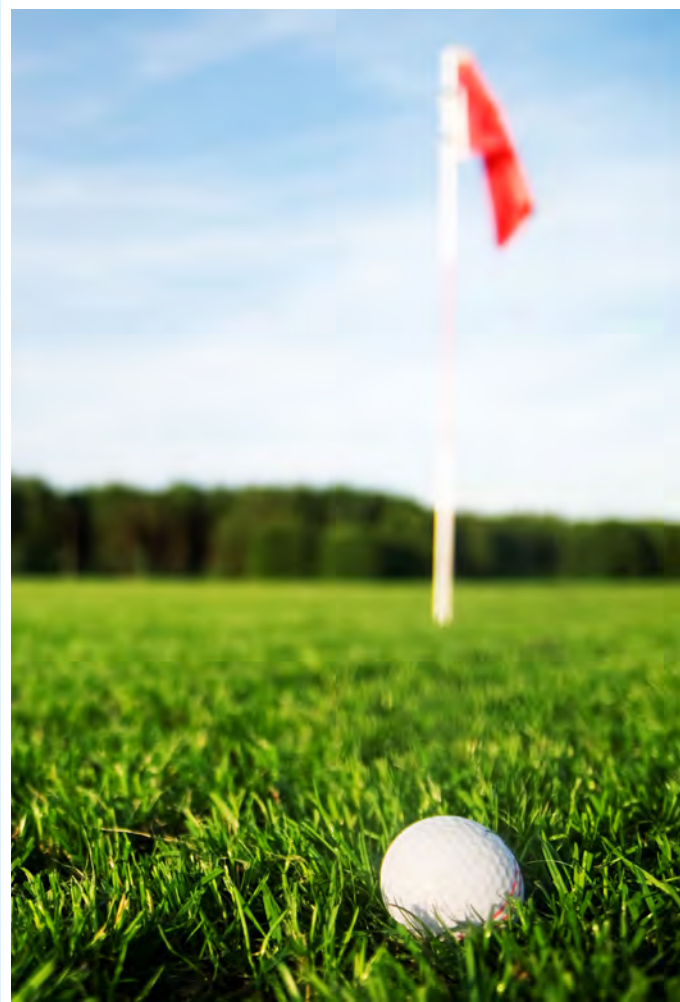
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GREATER PHILADELPHIA CELEBRATES GRAND OPENING OF THE MICHAEL J. BROWN LEARNING CENTER



First Tee – Greater Philadelphia celebrated the Grand Opening of the new Michael J. Brown Learning Center at Walnut Lane Golf Club. Back in April, the clubhouse at Walnut Lane began a major 3.3 million dollar renovation. The event was a success, drawing families, community leaders, and supporters to celebrate the addition of this transformative space to the Greater Philadelphia area. pa.gov/fertilizer or contact Denise Uzupis at duzupis@pa.gov.

The new facility represents First Tee – Greater Philadelphia’s commitment to fostering youth development and building character in a supportive environment. Complete with a classroom and two indoor golf simulators, the learning center will allow us to provide year-round access to our programs that emphasize the development of life skills.

“This new learning center will transform our ability to teach our programs in a



safe and welcoming environment as we continue to reach more youth in Greater Philadelphia,” said Board President, Michael Brown. “Let’s continue to work together to change the lives of kids, one swing at a time.”

Guests enjoyed celebratory festivities including tours of the building, a ribbon-cutting ceremony, and a program featuring the following speakers:

- Board President and building honoree – Michael J. Brown
- CEO – William Hyndman, V
- Board Member – Mike Quick

- Director of Golf, Walnut Lane Golf Club – Kyle Spaulding
- Global Leadership Academy Founder & CEO and First Tee – Greater Philadelphia Board Member – Dr. Naomi Johnson Booker
- Participant – Antonella Ferrer
- 6abc Action News Anchor – Matt O’Donnell
- Councilman Curtis Jones
- Blair Christian Academy Executive Administrator – Kia DeBrady

If you haven’t already, come visit us at the new Michael J. Brown Learning Center at Walnut Lane Golf Club, located at 800 Walnut Lane, Philadelphia, PA 19128. Enjoy a round of golf, learn about our programs, and take a look around the brand new, Game Changing facility! ♦

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Pretty Fun To Do What We Do

-meet the other Tim Kelly

Your Why: Family!

Education: Delaware Valley University

Career history: Interned at Saucon Valley CC, Assistant at Manasquan River GC & Aronimink GC, and Superintendent at Exmoor CC (Chicago)

Favorite on-the-job story/funny/miracle: Jersey Shore summers at MRGC. Specifically, Tuesday nights at Leggett's and Thursdays at Parker House. Wednesday and Friday mornings not as much fun. Sorry Morrow.

Hobbies: Golf, music, travel, concerts, perpetual heartbreak from Philadelphia sports

Family/pets: Daughter: Rose (2), Wife: Christin (undisclosed), German Shepard: Ripley (10)

Current Course/Career updates: Huntingdon Valley CC – glad to be back home in Philly.

What is best & worst in this industry: **Best** – Camaraderie and support from peers/friends.

Worst – Every job has its downsides. Pretty fun to do what we do! ♦



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CHAINSAW SAFETY

by Nick Sujkowski, PAGCS Assistant Representative to the Board

In November of 2023, Shreiner Tree Care hosted a sold out chainsaw safety event for assistant superintendents. The event was so popular that the Assistant Superintendent Committee, headed by Nick Sujkowski, arranged for a repeat to accommodate those who missed the first event.

Fast forward to October, and Shreiner Tree Care once again opened its doors to a full house and covered everything from basic chainsaw operations through proper limb removal techniques. The event concluded with practical field demonstrations, lunch and roundtable discussions.

Additional Topics Covered Included:

- Chainsaw Sharpening and Maintenance
- Safe Work Operations
- Personal Protective Equipment [PPE]
- Safe Tree Felling Techniques

In addition to Nick, the Association is grateful to Board Member Mike Kachurak of Shreiner Tree Care for making this event possible and complimentary to all attendees. ♦



ASSISTANT'S CORNER

Got any cool projects or stories to share in 2024? We want to hear from you!
Contact Nick: nicksuj@gmail.com

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Here are a few PAGCS memories from many years ago. I've been around the Association most of my life. As a child, I remember my dad, David Linde, regularly playing golf with his fellow superintendents at a meeting and often coming home with some kind of trophy or other gifts that he won.

He served as PAGCS Treasurer for many years. For a few years, we attended the annual Association family picnic at a place called The Barn. We always had to stay until the absolute end because Dad had to pay the bill since he was Treasurer. We played softball and basketball against the other superintendents and their families.

There was always a raffle and one of my brothers won a television! Later in life, as I studied turf management and was hired by DelVal to run their turf program, the superintendents I met as a kid were very supportive of me and were part of my professional network: Paul Carman, Ed Roynan, John Segui, Tony Gustaitis, Joe Owsik, Henry Wetzel, John Canavan, Scott Anderson, Warren Savani were some of the members that I remember from my childhood.

-Dr. Doug Linde

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FIDANZA RECEIVES GRAU AWARD

Our own “Dr. Mike” recently received the Fred V. Grau Turfgrass Science Award from the Crop Science Society of America. He was recognized at an awards luncheon during their annual conference on November 11, 2024, in San Antonio, TX.

According to the award guidelines, The Fred V. Grau Turfgrass Science Award recognizes significant career contributions in turfgrass science during the most recent 15 years. The award is based on the following criteria:

1. Significance and originality of basic and/or applied research;
2. Teaching ability and effectiveness;
3. Planning and implementation of extension programs;
4. Development and implementation of significant industrial programs;
5. Administrative ability and effectiveness;
6. Total impact of contributions on turfgrass science, nationally and internationally.

Dr. Mike has been a professor of plant and soil science at Penn State’s Berks Campus since 2000. He teaches many undergraduate and graduate-level courses, conducts research on fairy ring and turfgrass disease management, soil surfactants, biostimulants, and many other topics on golf courses and at “Valentine East”, and actively engages in outreach events for the turfgrass industry. He frequently lectures at the University of Padova in Italy, as



well as visits with his “famiglia” in Abruzzo, Italy. He can be seen on Twitter (@Mike Fidanza) visiting Momma Fidanza and eating homemade pasta fagioli. He has five children (two sets of twins!), and his wife is a high school Spanish teacher.

In his acceptance speech, Dr. Mike said: “This is truly an honor to receive this recognition, and very meaningful because it is named after Dr. Grau. He was the first turfgrass extension specialist at Penn State, and in fact the entire USA. He was also responsible for establishing the Turfgrass Science Division within the Crop Science Society of America. Also, and perhaps more importantly, my master’s advisor - Dr. Don Waddington, and my Ph.D. advisor - Dr. Peter Dernoeden, both received this award, and therefore I am again honored to continue their legacy.

I am also so very grateful for so many people in the turfgrass industry that have supported me and were so very encouraging throughout my career.”

Dr. Mike joins Drs. Waddington, Turgeon, and Watschke as the only Penn State professors to receive this award:

1987 James R. Watson *	2000 Richard E. Schmidt *	2013 No Award
1988 James B. Beard	2001 Wayne W. Hanna	2014 Lambert B. McCarty
1989 Jack J. Murray	2002 Alfred J. Turgeon *	2015 Michael D. Richardson
1990 C. Reed Funk	2003 Paul E. Rieke	2016 Bruce B. Clarke
1991 Glen W. Burton	2004 T. Karl Danneberger	2017 S. Bruce Martin
1992 Robert C. Shearman	2005 A. Douglas Brede	2018 Kevin N. Morris
1993 Donald V. Waddington *	2006 Arden A. Baltensperger	2019 James A. Murphy
1994 William A. Meyer	2007 Peter H. Dernoeden	2020 John Clinton Stier
1995 B.J. Johnson	2008 Roch E. Gaussoin	2021 Elizabeth A. Guertal
1996 Terrance P. Riordan	2009 Thomas L. Watschke *	2022 Grady L. Miller
1997 Keith J. Karnok	2010 Milton C. Engelke	2023 Bernhard Leinauer
1998 A.J. Powell, Jr.	2011 Jack D. Fry	2024 Michael A. Fidanza *
1999 Nick E. Christians	2012 Leah A. Brilman	

*Graduate student and/or faculty member of Penn State. ♦

THE FRED V. GRAU TURFGRASS SCIENCE AWARD

(originally written by Peter H. Dernoeden;

source: <http://archive.lib.msu.edu/tic/monos/171620.pdf>)

The "Turfgrass Science Award" was first awarded in 1987 by the C-5 Division of the Crop Science Society of America (CSSA) and was named in honor of Dr. Fred V. Grau. Donald V. Waddington was Chair of C-5 at the time the award was presented and accepted by CSSA in 1986. The award was proposed by John F. Shoulders and John R. Watson (C-5 "Award and Professional Advancement Committee") during the 1985 business meeting of the C-5 Division (Robert N. Carrow presiding). The committee recommended that the new award be named the Fred V. Grau Award and that it be established to recognize significant career accomplishments to Turfgrass Science. The proposed award was brought forward by the C-5 Chair (D.V. Waddington) to CSSA in 1986 (James B. Beard presiding CSSA President). At the time the executive committee of CSSA had a policy that awards not be named for an individual or company. Furthermore, J. Beard wanted to establish additional awards specific to those members not eligible for existing CSSA awards. Hence, J. Beard initiated contacts with the Seed Science and Turfgrass Science divisions concerning the possibility for these subject related areas to also develop awards. The CSSA Board changed the policy at the 1986 meeting so that names of individuals could be used for memorial or honorary awards. A major criterion for the Fred V. Grau Award stipulated that candidates be evaluated on their most recent 15 years of activity to ensure persons with a sustained record of achievement would be awarded. An honorarium was established and funds for the award were solicited by D. V. Waddington from state and regional turfgrass councils, associations and similar organizations.

Dr. Grau was born and raised on a farm in Jefferson, Douglas County, Nebraska and graduated from the Nebraska State College (now the University of

Nebraska - Lincoln) in 1931. Dr. Franklin D. Keim, a professor at UNL who taught turfgrass culture and inspired a number of students to enter the field, received a \$300.00 grant from the United States Golf Association (USGA) to evaluate the effects of various fertilizers on turf. Fred Grau was hired to care for the plots and maintain the records. This experience, as well as a greenkeeping job he had to earn money to pay for college, were the stepping stones to his turfgrass career. After graduation from UNL, he was hired by Dr. John Monteith, Jr., Director of the USGA Green Section, to care for the turf research plots at the Arlington Turf Gardens, now the site of the Pentagon. During that time the USGA Green Section had a research relationship with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The USGA and USDA agreed to formally collaborate in 1920. The purpose was to conduct scientific research to improve turf for golf courses. The relationship ended around 1956.

For reasons that are not recorded, but obviously related to a desire to further his career, Grau enrolled at the University of Maryland (Maryland Agricultural College prior to 1926) to pursue an advanced degree. His Master of Science (1933) thesis was titled "The Use of Chemicals In the Control of Turf Weeds." He initiated his research with about 20 chemicals and evaluated them in the greenhouse and on lawns around the University of Maryland campus. Once he narrowed down the list of candidate herbicides he conducted studies at the Bannockburn Golf Course in Glen Echo, MD; East Potomac Golf Course in DC and the Arlington Turf Gardens in VA. Most of his studies were conducted on Kentucky bluegrass, the predominant species in the DC area at that time. Some studies were performed in mixed German bent, colonial bentgrass and bermudagrass. He remained an employ-



Dr. Fred V. Grau

ee of the Green Section at this time and was supervised by Dr. John Monteith, Jr. of the USGA and Professor Jacob Metzger at the University of Maryland. He stated in his MS thesis that the five most important weeds of putting greens included crabgrass, chickweeds, dandelion, plantains and white clover. He estimated that weed control in greens, which was performed by handpicking, to cost about \$1000 annually and this figure would include weeding areas immediately surrounding the clubhouse. He reported that "plantains, chickweeds, white clover, pennywort and knotweed have succumbed to the soluble compounds of arsenic." "Of the chemicals used sodium chlorate has most effectively controlled crabgrass and milk purslane." He found in his weed control experiments that live steam and dry heat from an asphalt heater were "nonselective and impracticable." Sodium chlorate caused slight turf injury and he estimated that the material would cost about ten dollars an acre. Although no mention of grubs in his thesis, he did say at a later time that he found that lead arsenate was

Continued on next page

effective in controlling crabgrass and grubs and noted that the plots were still free of crabgrass and grubs when the bulldozers arrived to build the Pentagon in 1942 (GCM, January 1985). Due to the immense financial hardship of the depression, the Green Section eliminated many jobs, including his. Professor Jacob Metzger, Chair of the Department of Agronomy at the University of Maryland "rescued him" by finding funds for him to conduct a survey of Maryland pastures. His dissertation was titled "Factors Affecting Pasture Quality – An Inventory of Soils, Vegetation, and Management of Maryland Permanent Pastures." He received his Ph.D. in 1935 and was hired in the same year to be the first Extension Turfgrass Specialist at the Pennsylvania State College (now Pennsylvania State University). The position was evenly split between turf and forages. As an Extension Agronomist, he traveled throughout Pennsylvania. It was on one of these Extension trips in Berks County in 1935 that he discovered what was to become known as 'Penngift' crownvetch. In 1953, Penngift was formally released by Dr. Grau and Professor Musser at Penn State and in 1987 it was named the "Beautification and Conservation Plant" by the State of Pennsylvania. Today, Penngift can be found growing along thousands of miles of Pennsylvania and Maryland highways, stabilizing soil while providing the beauty of its purple summer flowers. During World War II, Dr. Grau entered the Air Force, where he helped establish grass airfields under the guidance of

Professor Musser, who also was working with the Air Force at this time. In 1945, he was hired to be Director of the USGA Green Section in Beltsville, MD and moved to College Park.

During Dr. Grau's tenure as Director of the Green Section (1945 to 1953), the American Society of Agronomy (ASA) recognized turf as a legitimate agricultural entity and established the C-5 Division after an aggressive letter writing campaign that he initiated (ASA's Crop Section became CSSA in 1955). Dr. Grau served as the first C-5 Chair and chaired a separate ASA Turfgrass Committee from 1946 to 1955, which served as a clearinghouse for turfgrass research information. The recognition provided by a Turfgrass Division in ASA gave agricultural experiment stations (state and federally funded research units at land grant institutions) the impetus to establish turfgrass-oriented research and educational programs within agricultural universities. This led to a rapid increase in the number turfgrass science programs at American Universities. It also was during this period when he played an important role in the release of 'Merion' Kentucky bluegrass, 'Meyer' zoysiagrass, and U-3 bermudagrass. He left the USGA in February 1953 and became a consultant to golf courses and several business including West Point Products (producers of aerifiers and other turf machinery) and Hercules Powder Company (Nitroform fertilizer, including Power Blue and Blue Chip). He also operated Grasslyn, the

family business for growing Penngift crownvetch. Dr. Grau was a founding member of the Pennsylvania Turfgrass Council in 1955 and served as Executive Director from 1968 to 1975 and Executive Secretary from 1976 to 1981. Dr. Grau also was a founding member of the Musser International Turfgrass Foundation in 1969, serving as President for 20 years. Among his many awards were the USGA Green Section Award (1969) and the GCSAA Distinguished Service Award (1954 and 1975). He died in 1990 at the age of 88. His legacy was summarized by Mr. Tom Mascaro (GCM, January 1991), who stated "He has left us in body but not spirit. He will continue to be with us in our lives, and in the lives of future generations. He was a man of vision – and a man of our future." ♦

REFERENCES AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Information provided by Mr. Jim Snow, Director of the USGA Green Section; Dr. Don Waddington, Professor Emeritus, Penn State University; and Dr. James B. Beard, Professor Emeritus, Texas A&M University is gratefully acknowledged. Most of the information in this story was obtained from articles and letters written by Dr. Grau and published in *Golf Course Superintendent* (September/October 1976); *Golf Course Management* (January 1985); and from "...And A Remembrance" written by Mr. Tom Mascaro (*Golf Course Management*, January 1991).



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HOW TO OVERCOME CAREER UNCERTAINTY

<https://tylerbloomconsulting.com/blog/>

Career transitions can evoke a swirl of emotions, especially for those in the golf course superintendent industry.

The feeling of being at a career crossroads arises from a variety of circumstances ranging from uncertainty with current status, lack of upward mobility, personal and family obligations, and at times the mounting pressures or instability of finances. Alternatively, the allure of new challenges and growth offer career reflection points bringing significant self-doubt, anxiety and indecision.

I not only personally dealt with this, but see numerous professionals struggling with this decision and their overall career satisfaction. I empathize when at the proverbial fork in the road. With the benefit of hindsight and through our own research and better informed decision making, here are some thoughts for you.

According to our 2024 Golf Course Superintendent Employment Trend Study, 60% of today's golf course superintendents are still excited about being a "Turfheads".

Given golf's recent boom and forecasted growth, I envision today's top talent will continue to be pursued for their capabilities, accomplishments and visionary leadership. Salaries are increasing at rapid speed to the tune of 20-30% in many of our recruitment projects. It's notable that this is probably the best employment market for golf course superintendents ever.

However, golf course superintendents need to weigh the risks of each choice and the impact on their long-term personal and professional goals.

Leaving a role might bring challenges and a renewed sense of career passion, but as I've personally experienced, the same problems you dealt with in your current role will carry with you to the next facility, role or golf course in a short time. Same circus, same characters, different location.

DEVELOP A PERSONAL STRATEGIC PLAN

Speaking on personal experience, developing a personal strategic plan to map out your goals over ten years ahead gives you the freedom to dream big, unbound by current limitations.

Consider spending time self-reflecting on your current role. Have you really given yourself the space to appreciate your existing circumstances? Consider some of the following questions:

- How do my past achievements and challenges align with the person I want to become?
- How often do I celebrate my achievements, no matter how small?

- How do I balance working toward long-term goals with enjoying the process along the way?
- Is the environment providing a safe, healthy space for myself and stability for my family?
- Have I consistently been rewarded, recognized and challenged?

You'll begin to see patterns, notice recurring themes, and uncover what truly matters to you. When you celebrate each achievement along the way, you acknowledge your progress and reinforce the commitment to your dreams.

Looking back, I did not take moments to appreciate growth in my own personal career journey, as well as the steps I took. I ruminated on things out of my control, projected circumstances that weren't based on facts, but worst case scenarios. It became a distraction to focusing on what I could control, and all the good things happening personally and professionally.

I find many professionals create a narrative in their head about why they need to move on to greener pastures thinking the external environment is going to generate happiness, balance and success. Often it is addressing the internal litigator that will change your attitude, altitude and career satisfaction.

If you think the club or organization down the street with the shiny newness doesn't have the 10-percent group of naysayers, limited resources, governance problems, and a whole lot of other baggage; think again!

Some considerations to increase your satisfaction with your current role:

- Don't let the profession define happiness, find outside interests and hobbies.
- Build relationships within your team, delegate and lead by example to promote a positive work culture.
- Develop soft skills including adaptability, handling constructive criticism, and emotional intelligence.
- Conduct salary reviews to address lingering pay gaps.
- Be willing to adapt to change and accept that some things are out of your control.
- Set realistic goals and work towards achieving them; take initiative in your daily role and relationships.
- Seek out professional development opportunities in areas that impact your personal growth, as well as overall business.

Continued on next page

If you're in need of further insight and best practices, set up a FREE Talent Strategy Call with our team.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Tyler Bloom is the founder of Tyler Bloom Consulting. A former golf course superintendent and turf professional, Tyler's love of all things golf began at the age of six when he stepped onto the course for the first time.

Tyler has an Executive Certificate in Talent Acquisition from Cornell University and a degree in Turfgrass Science from Penn State University. With 20 years of experience in the golf and turfgrass industry, Tyler has worked directly with reputable club leaders at some of the most prestigious clubs to place over 300 professionals in executive and management level positions throughout the United States. ♦



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20 The Bonnie Greensward | Issue 24-4

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AFFILIATE DIVISION

Gross

1. Jeff Haas (75)
2. Nick Adams (76)

Net

1. Tom Currie (73)
2. Ryan Sharp (75)

HOW MUCH CAN WE PACK IN ONE DAY?

Never a disappointment, Manufacturer's Golf & Country Club provided just the right challenge to test members at the 2024 Golf Championship. Mannies also served as a spectacular venue to present

our highest honor, the Eberhard Steiniger Award, to Matt Shaffer. And in the midst of it all, the PAGCS held an election vote to secure Association leadership through 2025. [see next issue for more information on the 2025 Board of Directors]

HISTORY

The Eb Steiniger Award is presented to an individual in the turfgrass profession who exemplifies the spirit of Eberhard Steiniger, CGCS. Eb Steiniger, who passed away in 2002, served as PAGCS president in 1966 and 1967. He dedicated his life to the game of golf by advancing the profession of golf course superintendent. His innovative research, mentoring of future superintendents, and professional involvement locally and nationally have made him a legend in the profession. [See pg 22 For a list of recipients]

EXCERPTS FROM MATT SHAFFER'S AWARD LETTER

... There are many words attributed to your career and life in the industry of golf turf management, and one that stands out is "mentor." As the 2023 Eb Steiniger recipient, Jerred Golden, said in his nomination letter: [Matt's] mentorship of freshly minted graduates to seasoned veterans has him the respect and gratitude of scores of turf professionals.



Then there is the word "innovative." As your mentee Scott Bordner said: he grew grass boldly and wasn't shy about it.

As a proud Penn State Alum., with deep PA roots, no one exemplifies the PAGCS more than you—the word "thriftiness" comes up. PSU professor Dr. Mike wrote in his nomination letter:... and economic scrutiny are no doubt attributed to his upbringing and farm background in Blair County, Pennsylvania.

We think this sums it up: the Eb Steiniger Award: ... is Matt to the T. [excerpted from Robert Smith's nomination letter]

**NEXT BONNIE
NEWSLETTER DEADLINE
FRIDAY, JANUARY 3, 2025**



EB STEINIGER AWARD HISTORY

This award is presented to an individual in the turfgrass profession who exemplifies the spirit of Eberhard Steiniger, CGCS. Eb Steiniger, who passed away in 2002, served as PAGCS president in 1966 and 1967. He dedicated his life to the game of golf by advancing the profession of golf course superintendent. His innovative research, mentoring of future superintendents, and professional involvement locally and nationally have made him a legend in the profession.

This prestigious award was last presented in 2019 to George E. Ley.

All of the awardees listed here represent the "best of the best" in the golf turf management industry.

Fred Byrod -1990

William H. White -1991

Joseph M. Duich -1992

Donald Waddington -1993

John C. Harper II -1994

Richard E. Valentine -1995

Charles H. Cadiz Jr., CGCS -1996

Stanley J. Zontek -1997

William Marberger -1998

John A. Segui, CGCS -1999

Frank I. Shuman -2000

Mr. Joseph H. Way -2001

Thomas L. Watschke -2004

Michael R. Smith, CGCS -2005

Edward Roynan -2006

Henry Wetzel -2012

Frank T. Shuman -2015

George E. Ley – 2019

James Stauring – 2022

Jerred Golden – 2023

Matthew G. Shaffer -2024



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First Place

Gross: Brian Kealy&David Szegda
Net: Nate Schell&Nathaniel Martin

Second Place

Gross: Jeff Haas&Keith Kimmel
Net: Charlie Koennecker&Joey Wolff

Third Place

Gross: Jeff Rice&Tom Rice
Net: Matt Paulina&Kevin Tansey

Skill Contests

Closest to Pin #2: Michael Molchan
Closest to Pin #11: Dustin Gibb
Long Drive #13: Brendan Clearkin



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2. Tim Kelly (79)

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M&E: MET TOURNAMENT



METGCSA CLAIMS VICTORY AT THE 2024 MET AREA TEAM CHAMPIONSHIPS AT WHITEMARSH VALLEY CC

Introduction: The 43rd annual MET Area Team Championships, held on October 21st at the scenic Whitemarsh Valley Country Club, concluded with an exciting victory by the MetGCSA (Metropolitan Golf Course Superintendents Association). The team secured the championship title with a strong score of 292, narrowly edging out Central Penn GCSA (294) and last year's defending champion Philadelphia AGCS (297). This year's tournament featured a competitive field of 13 teams, from Maryland to Cape Cod all vying for the prestigious title at one of the Philadelphia area's finest golf courses.

The Champions: MetGCSA In 1980 the MetGCSA started this team event at Blue Hill GC in NY and this marks only their second win in the past 20 years! The MetGCSA team showcased consistent, solid play throughout the day, finishing with a score of 292 to capture the 2024 MET Area Team Championship. Their victory came after a tense day of competition, on lightning-fast greens where every stroke counted. Despite a strong challenge from Central Penn GCSA, who finished just two strokes behind in second place, MetGCSA's steady performance by their Net teams, led by team captains Brett Chapin and Grover Alexander's 5 under par 67 and legendary Steve Rabideau and Dave Conrad's 2 under par 70 to be the key to their success.

"It's always an honor to play in such a well-organized event, and to come out on top is truly special," said the MetGCSA team co-captain Brett Chapin. "The team played fantastic golf today, and we're proud to bring home the title. Thankfully Jason Meersman's short miss didn't cost us the title, he said jokingly"

Central Penn GCSA and Philadelphia AGCS Round Out the Top Three Central Penn GCSA, who had been within striking distance of the lead all day, finished in second place with a score of 294. Despite their 65, the best Net score of the day by Jamie Dennison and Eric Kline,

they were unable to catch MetGCSA, but their performance demonstrated they're here for the long haul and determined to get their first MET Team Championship win soon! Last year's winner, the Philadelphia AGCS rounded out the top three, finishing third just 5 strokes back, with a score of 297. Their all-around solid play by the returning champions and low Gross score by host superintendent Darren Farrar and Chet Walsh ensured they remained in contention for much of the round, but they too fell just short of catching the leaders.

Notable Performances While the MetGCSA emerged as the champions, standout performances were evident across the field. The GCSA of New Jersey, who have won 3 times in the past 20 years, finished fourth with a score of 298, while GCSA of New York claimed fifth place with 299. Pocono Turfgrass Association (305) and Connecticut AGCS (308) also had strong outings, finishing within a few strokes of the top ten. Every team fought hard, making for a thrilling day of golf.

The team from the Pocono TGA led the way on the skills side taking 2 of the 4 closest to the pin contests! Jeff Koch had the best shot of the day, nearly missing a hole in one for \$20,000 on the 12th hole stopping the ball at a mere 10 inches! Duane Schell stopped one 7'-4" on the lengthy 4th hole as well!

Whitemarsh Valley Country Club: A Premier Venue The tournament was held at **Whitemarsh Valley Country Club**, a historic and prestigious golf course known for its challenging layout and beautiful scenery. Founded in 1918, the club is located in the heart of the Philadelphia suburbs and has a rich history of hosting regional events. Last year Whitemarsh hosted the Philadelphia amateur for the 16th time! The George Thomas design features a classic layout, with narrow fairways and strategically placed bunkers that test the skills of even the most seasoned golfers. Thomas only designed 3 courses in the East before moving to California. Host Darren Farrar

had the undulating greens firm and fast in this the driest of years, testing even the wily veterans at this year's championship!

"The course is in impeccable shape," said Jason Meersman from the MetGCSA team. "It's a true test of golf, and the layout required us to be strategic with every shot. It was an ideal venue for a tournament like this."

A Special Thanks to Our Sponsors: The 2024 MET Area Team Championships would not have been possible without the generous support of our sponsors. A heartfelt thank you to **Allied Nutrients, BASF, Envu, Ocean Organics, Plant Food, Syngenta, and Toro** for their continued commitment to the event and to the broader golf course management community. Your support makes it possible for us to host such a wonderful competition, and we are grateful for your partnership in promoting excellence within the industry. We also wish a speedy recovery to Kevin Collins, a perennial participant who just underwent spinal fusion surgery!

Acknowledgments: We would also like to express our sincere gratitude to **Kevin Doyle**, the GCSAA representative, for his unwavering support and involvement throughout the event. Special thanks to **Kristen Liebsch** for capturing the day's unforgettable moments through her photography, which will help preserve the memories of this special event for years to come. Photographs can be found at: <https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjBQeVr>

Finally, we would like to extend our heartfelt appreciation to **Darren Farrar**, our gracious host, for ensuring the event ran smoothly and for providing an exceptional venue in Whitemarsh Valley Country Club!

We look forward to seeing everyone next year, so stay tuned for announcements and of course, if you're no longer the contact please let me know who is! ♦

2024 MET AREA TEAM CHAMPIONSHIPS WHITEMARSH VALLEY CC

OCTOBER 21ST, 2024

TEAM SCORES Par 72 – 288 (Ties broken by lowest gross scores (), then net)

1st	METGCSA	292	8th	Hudson Valley GCSA	309
2nd	Central Penn GCSA	294	9th	GCSA of Cape Cod	310
3rd	Philadelphia AGCS	297	10th	Rhode Island GCSA	311
4th	GCSA of New Jersey	298	11th	Eastern Shore AGCS	314
5th	GCSA of New York	299	12th	Northeastern GCSA	317
6th	Pocono Turfgrass Association	305	13th	Mid-Atlantic AGCS	328
7th	Connecticut AGCS	308			

SKILL EVENTS

Closest to the pin hole #4, sponsored by BASF	Duane Schell 7'-4" - Pocono TGA
Closest to the pin hole #9, sponsored by Plant Food	Jason Meersman 3'-4" – METGCSA
Closest to the pin hole #12, sponsored by Allied Nutrients	Jeff Koch 0'-10" - Pocono TGA
Closest to the pin hole #16, sponsored by Syngenta	Tate Asselin 5'-10" – Rhode Island GCSA

LONG DRIVE

Hole # 3: Net Division sponsored by Ocean Organics	Dave Morrow – Northeastern GCSA
Hole # 11: Gross Division sponsored by Envu	Raffled due to wrong tees played
Hole # 17: Sponsors Division sponsored by Toro	Nick Middleton – Ocean Organics

LOW GROSS TEAM

Darren Farrar & Chet Walsh from Philadelphia AGCS	Score of 73
---	-------------

SPONSORSHIP TEAM WINNER

Josh Reiger & Matt Krukiel from Envu	Score of 68
--------------------------------------	-------------

SKINS – NET

Steve Rabideau	Eagle on 6
Pat McDonald	Eagle on 7
Matt Topazio	Eagle on 11
Josh Reiger	Albatross on 15

SKINS – GROSS

Jim Lanza	Birdie on 2
Derek Haley	Eagle on 5
Jeff Haas	Birdie on 14
Steve Whipple	Birdie on 15



Changes and Growth for a Partner of 33 years.

Davisson Golf was founded by Tim Davisson in 1991 and has been a strong presence in the Mid-Atlantic ever since. Instead of competing with the other companies that sell the same chemistries, Tim's business model was unique. He wanted to find niche products that helped the superintendent both agronomically and economically. Some of his earliest products were Isolite porous ceramic, and processed poultry manure fertilizer. Since then, Davisson has had a strong focus on high quality fertility products and aggregate materials for topdressing and construction. Davisson was also one of the first companies to recognize the benefits of using biological products for turf health.

During Covid, Tim decided to move to North Carolina and has recently begun an ownership transition to Brad Novotny, a former superintendent in the Baltimore area and a past customer of Davisson Golf. Brad's vision for the company is to expand outside of Golf, so the name was changed to Davisson Turf with updated marketing associated with the name change including a website currently under construction. This year was the first year Davisson Turf offered an Early Order Program for some of their best-selling products, and it was a great success! For PAGCS members, Davisson is willing to extend the EOP deadline to December 15, so reach out to set up a visit asap.

Davisson Turf is seeing significant growth in the Philadelphia area between competitive sand pricing, high quality composts, and fertilizer and phosphite products with unbeatable prices. Brad's sales territory includes Baltimore, Central PA, Philadelphia, and New Jersey, so during this time of growth, he has a lot of ground to cover, but his goal is to grow Philadelphia and NJ to a level where he can add a dedicated territory rep. Davisson has a strong presence in VA, DC, the Eastern Shore, and Baltimore, and they are excited to grow to the same strength in Philadelphia and New Jersey. Stay tuned for more big changes to the company over the next few years!

Contact

Brad Novotny

Brad@DavissonTurf.com

410-236-2069

TOTAL TURF GOLF SERVICE AND COBBS CREEK FOUNDATION: TRANSFORMING TRADITION WITH A NEW ERA OF GOLF EXCELLENCE AND COMMUNITY IMPACT

—Content Submitted by Total Turf Golf Services and Greg Hufner



Par for the course of excellence, Total Turf Golf Services and Cobbs Creek Foundation are teaming up with Gil Hanse and Jim Wagner on the restoration of the Cobbs Creek Golf Course, a 350-acre campus that is scheduled to be completed in phases over the next three years. When complete, the campus will include an 18-hole championship golf course, a new 9-hole course, a golf entertainment venue, a practice facility, a TGR Learning Lab, and a TGR Design short course. A transformative project, the Cobbs Creek Golf Campus will serve as a hub for education and golf opportunities for the Philadelphia community.

In 2022, the Cobbs Creek Foundation entered a long-term lease agreement with the City of Philadelphia to restore and revitalize the Cobbs Creek Golf Course and create a new education and community center on the site of the storied public course. The Foundation is leading the project to restore the historic course into a high-quality public space for all Philadelphians. As part of the redevelopment, the Foundation is committed to restorative sustainability of the property's landscape. The Foundation

is restoring three miles of Cobbs Creek, Indian Creek, and adjacent tributaries. The creek restoration will include new wetlands for long-term sustainability and flood-risk reduction for the campus and most importantly, the surrounding community.

Renowned golf course architects Gil Hanse and Jim Wagner, who both have strong ties to the Philadelphia community, are leading restoration work on the 18-hole Olde Course and building a new championship 9-hole course. The restored Olde Course is slated to open for play in the summer of 2026, while the new 9-hole course will open in 2027.

Total Turf Golf Services and Cobbs Creek Foundation were a natural fit for partnership due to their mutual dedication to improving community impact. Total Turf's superior service and the Cobbs Creek Foundation's educational and community initiatives make them a powerful team poised to elevate both the golf course and its surrounding community.

Total Turf is recognized for its commitment to their Core Values: Integrity, Quality, Safety, and Care. A certified Golf Course Builder since

1998, Total Turf has built a reputation for excellence, working on prestigious courses and earning multiple accolades, including Golf Inc. Renovation of the Year honors and Golf Digest's Best New Remodel awards. Known for their meticulous attention to detail and client-focused approach, Total Turf is well-equipped to handle projects efficiently and to high standards.

In support of the Cobbs Creek Golf Course renovation, Total Turf is donating \$300,000 and several sets of youth golf clubs to empower Philadelphia's young golfers. Additionally, employees have volunteered a full day to assist with the renovation, reinforcing the company's commitment to both the project and the local community.

The partnership between the Cobbs Creek Foundation, Gil Hanse & Jim Wagner, TGR Design and Total Turf is a unique collaboration rooted in excellence and community engagement. As the Cobbs Creek renovation progresses, this alliance will transform the 350-acre historic course into a premier golf destination while fostering educational and economic opportunities for the Philadelphia area. ♦



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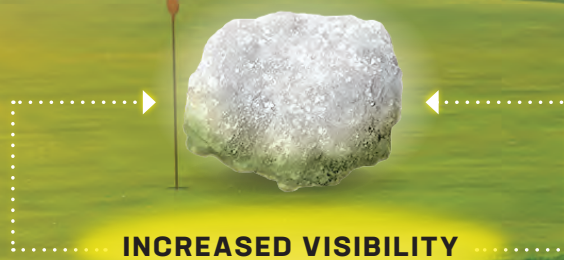
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REGIONAL UPDATES

THE IMPACTS OF GOLF CART TRAFFIC ON DORMANT BERMUDAGRASS

As courses in the West utilize improved bermudagrasses, winter overseeding may be unnecessary. But how much damage can be expected from driving carts on dormant or nearly dormant turf?

[Read West Update](#)

A TIME FOR REFLECTION

As we look back on 2024, many golf course superintendents will think about the long drought that made for a challenging end to the season. Learn what you can from this year to make next year better.

[Read Northeast Update](#)

IS REOPENING IN THE WINTER WISE?

Warm winter days can have golfers itching to play a round, but it's important to exercise caution with traffic on turf that is partially thawed because damage can easily occur.

[Read Central Update](#)

WINTER WISDOM: CARING FOR ULTRADWARF BERMUDAGRASS GREENS

Give your ultradwarf bermudagrass greens the best chance of thriving through winter's chill by using these essential winter care strategies to maintain healthy, resilient turf.

[Read Southeast Update](#)



Save the Date!

2025 will be bringing the next **Nor'Easter Ski Day**, brought to you by the Vermont GCSA and Northeastern GCSA. **This year, the groups are renting the ENTIRE MOUNTAIN!** Every attendee will be with our group. Skiing, lunch, Apres Ski....all in one place! Live entertainment and access to the newly renovated "Last Run Bar."

Planning continues to ensure the highly anticipated race for the Cup Cutter trophy is contested once again.

Housing will likely be through Killington resort, as in past years, with a transportation option still in the works.

If you love to ski, this is an event you don't want to miss! Bring family, friends, staff, or neighbors to enjoy the day on Pico. Don't ski? Come network with many of your peers and enjoy all the amenities the area has to offer.

Sponsorship opportunities will follow, and event details will be found at VtGCSA.org soon.

Thanks again to Nor'Easter Ski Day 2024 sponsors for your support.

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INAUGURAL GAP ADAPTIVE CHAMPIONSHIP SHINES AT LOOKAWAY, DOYLESTOWN



By John T. Iswalt
GAP Assistant Communications Director



A new chapter has been added to the GAP Championship history books.

In January, the Association opened the year with the goal of engaging the Adaptive Golf community. GAP Adaptive was initially created with two principle programs: No Limit Clinics, which are instructional opportunities for people with disabilities to try Adaptive Golf, and a GAP Adaptive Championship, an elite-level tournament for the finest Adaptive Golfers in the world.

The inaugural GAP Adaptive Championship serves as the culmination of the first GAP Adaptive season. The event's final round came to fruition at Doylestown Country Club on Oct. 15. Round 1 was contested Oct. 14 at nearby Lookaway Golf Club. A total of 55 Adaptive Golfers hailing from 20 states and four countries arrived at Doylestown early to warm up before the Final Round amid chilly temperatures in the 40s.

GAP crowned champions in Men's and Women's Overall categories as well as winners of 13 represented disability classifications.

The following players take home trophies for being the winners of their respective categories: Albert Bowker, Buellton, Calif. (Short Stature, men); Judi Brush, Alexandria, Va. (Below Knee, women); Amanda Cunha, Kaneohe, Hawaii (Visual, women); Ken Green, New Fairfield, Conn. (Below Knee, men); Fred Heller, Schnecksville, Pa. (Above Knee, men); Ryan Matthews of Anderson, Ind. (Arm Unassisted, men); Issa Nlareb (Multiple Limb, men); Cassandra Sengul, Manassas, Va. (Neurological, women); Tessa Trojan, St. Catharines, Ontario (Intellectual, women); Mariano Tubio, Argentina (Seated, men); Kellie Valentine, McKean, Pa. (Arm Unassisted, women); James Van Noord, Bloomfield Hills, Mich. (Neurological, men); Eli Villanueva, Fayetteville, N.C. (Arm assisted, men).

In the Men's Overall (par 72, 6,304 yards) contest, Issa Nlareb of Cameroon captured his second Adaptive Golf championship title with a Round 2 score of 1-under 72. Just six days ago, he hoisted hardware in the Texas Adaptive Golf Championship.

"I'm happy to participate in this event because I found a lot of players and that [gives] people with disabilities more view," Nlareb, 34, said. "This week my game was good. I was very solid. Every part of my game was there."

Nlareb plays in the Multiple Limb impairment category after he contracted bacterial meningitis that forced the amputation of both of his legs and several of his fingers. This year, he won the Men's Multiple Limb Amputee Division in the 2024 U.S. Adaptive Open.

Cassandra Sengul of Manassas, Va. captured her own wire-to-wire victory in the Women's Overall Division (par 72, 5,310 yards) with a Round 2 score of 95.

At Lookaway, the Drew University Women's Golf Team member carded an opening-round 81 to lead the Women's field by 13 shots. She continued her trend of steady golf and placed a premium on pars Tuesday to earn her first Adaptive Championship title.

"This week has just been incredible here in Philadelphia," Sengul, 18, said. "I love making the records and setting them. Knowing that, I hope people can break them someday, but I like to see my name first."

Sengul lives with Cerebral Palsy, a neurological disorder affecting movement and balance. She plays in the Women's Neurological impairment category. She began playing in Adaptive Golf events this past summer.

Visit www.gapadaptive.org to learn more about GAP Adaptive. ♦



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Thank you to all of our industry partners who support Nutrien, looking forward to a prosperous 2024.

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