

The BONNIE GREENSWARD

OUR 99[™] SEASON VOL 24-1

ASSOCIATION AWARDS MOST EVER IN SCHOLARSHIP DOLLARS

-New Addition: Legacy Scholarship

After a year that produced no Turf Student Scholarships, the PAGCS is excited to announce that one each of the PAGCS, Frank I. Shuman, and George E. Ley Scholarships were awarded in 2023. You can read more about the TURF recipients on page 4.

As exciting as that news is, 2023 also brought the addition of the PAGCS

Legacy Scholarship program. Between both programs, the Association awarded \$16,500 in scholarship monies in 2023.

Be sure to join us on June 3 as we meet and recognize these honorees at the 2024 Scholarship Benefit and Outing at Sandy Run!

Continued on page 4



by Henry Wetzel

Editor's Note: One theme that stands out as the PAGCS plans for its centennial in 2025 is the family and friends connections that seem to bind us all so uniquely. We will continue to explore this over the coming years. Enjoy a first of many.



I was elected to the PAGCS Board of Directors in 1979 and served until 2009. I was the Membership Chairman for my first three years and handed a briefcase which had blank membership applications.

When I went through the membership applications, I had a pleasant surprise: My Dad's name was printed on the applications as the Membership Chairman. I didn't know Dad had been the membership chairman. Dad was an active, proud member of the PAGCS. I can still see Dad on the phone calling local PAGCS Members trying to form a carpool for meetings. Dad didn't play golf, but always attended the evening dinner and program. He usually had one or two members with him in the car pool.

Continued on page 10

#HEADINGTO100

As we head to our centennial in 2025, the 100th committee has been hard at work. Please share your history: pagcs1925@gmail.com



>> 2024 EVENTS

SEASON KICKOFF

March 5 • 2-5 p.m Victory Brewing Downington 2-5 p.m

WAR AT THE SHORE

April 23

Galloway National
Shotgun: Noon [Tentative]

MEMBER-MEMBER

May 13

French Creek Golf Club
Shotgun: 12:30 [tentative]

SCHOLARSHIP OUTING AND BENEFIT

June 3

Sandy Run Golf Club Shotgun: 11 a.m. [tentative]

PHRIENDS & PHAMILY AT THE PHILLIES

August 28

4:05 start v. Houston
Tailgate details to come

MEMBER-GUEST

September 30

Lookaway Golf Club Shotgun: TBD

GOLF CHAMPIONSHIP AND BUSINESS MEETING

October 28

Manufacturer's Golf & Country Club Shotgun: TBD

HOLIDAY SEASON KICKOFF EVENT

TRD

Visit the website events tab for more!

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>>THE PM

A FEW ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dear PAGCS Members,

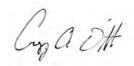
It is hard to believe we are in the year 2024, with a fourth year of post covid boom. Most clubs and facilities are still thriving. Equipment production seems to be slowly catching up, labor issues have "improved," course renovations continue, and hopefully we can all ride this wave for the next few years.

The year ahead is another busy one for the PAGCS. Jeff Haas and Darren Farrar are finalizing another great golf calendar, and we continue to improve our quality and quantity of non-golf social and education events. If you were able to attend our joint event with GCSANJ in Phoenix or the education event in December, you can attest to this. Be sure to join us for the Season Kickoff Celebration in March!



I hope the remainder of winter provides everyone time away from work to spend time with family and friends. While there is no off season around here anymore, don't forget to spend time on important things in life.

Respectfully,



President, Philadelphia Association of Golf Course Superintendents

PAGCS MEMBER SURVEY COMPLETE:
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MEET THE TURF RECIPIENTS

Joseph Lofland, 2023 Frank Shuman Scholar

Schreyer Honors College at PSU

College of Agricultural Sciences

Bachelor of Science in Turfgrass Science and Environmental Resource Management, Expected graduation: 5/26

"Once I got to Penn State last fall, I immediately started working at the Joseph Valentine Turfgrass Research Center. At that point in time, most of my experience was only in residential and commercial turf. I wanted to expand my knowledge bank on the management of other types of turf. Continuing with that, I reached out to Steve Bigelow at Rolling Green Golf Club to do a summer internship with him. I wanted to learn more about the day-to-day maintenance of a golf course than I already knew from prior experience in the turf industry."

Robert Meredith, George E. Ley Scholar

Delaware Valley University Graduation: May 2024

Major: Bachelor of Science Turf Management

GPA: 3.8

"As well as working during the school year at Lookaway, I have had summer internships at Pikewood National, Pine Valley Golf Club and this past summer with McDonald & Sons, where I gained practical experience with golf course construction. Each experience has been different and with job work experience, my enjoyment of working outside on a golf course has only grown.

I am a four-year member of the Delaware Valley University Golf Team. ... This year I am the captain of the team, and I am hopeful the team can make a run at a team championship in May. ... Dr. Douglas Linde, is my Turf Management Professor and golf coach at Delaware

Valley University ... He has given me the opportunity to attend golf industry conferences such as the New England Regional Turfgrass Conference, in Providence Rhode Island and New Jersey Green Expo, in Atlantic City. Most recently, I attended a Phillies baseball game with Dr. Linde and another student. It was at this event I met Kristen Liebsch, who encouraged me to apply for this scholarship. "

Mat Zimmerman, PAGCS Scholar Penn State World Campus

"Since enrolling at Penn State, I have actively pursued opportunities to enhance my practical skills and knowledge as an Assistant in Training (AIT) at Bidermann Golf Course. The combination of my academic pursuits and hands-on experience has allowed me to deepen my understanding of golf course management and develop a strong foundation for a successful career as a golf course superintendent.

During my time as an AIT, I have taken strides to expand my expertise. I am proud to have obtained my Delaware Pesticide license, which demonstrates my commitment to upholding the highest standards of environmental stewardship and safety in golf course maintenance. Additionally, I have had the opportunity to perform spray applications that further refine my technical skills and understanding of turf management practices.

My enrollment at Penn State World Campus, coupled with my practical experience as an AIT, has solidified my passion for golf course management. I am invested in continually expanding my knowledge of turf science, irrigation systems, equipment maintenance, and other key areas essential to maintaining optimal course conditions."

PLEASE CHECK THE NEXT ISSUE FOR MORE ABOUT OUR LEGACY SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS!!







TEEN OPPORTUNITIES

ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIP

Does your child(ern) attend a tuition based high school? If so, they are eligible for up to a \$5,000 scholarship from the First Tee — Greater Philadelphia. Requirements include participation in the First Tee program for 2 years and are/will be in grades 9-12 in the school year of 2024-2025. Selection criteria includes level of involvement, grades and financial need. Please submit your applications by no later than March 31, 2024: https://first-tee-greater-philadelphia-academic-scholarship/



NATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Participants that are ages 14-18 and have been involved in the program for 2+ years are eligible for some really great national opportunities. All expenses are paid for these events and have been some really memorable experiences for those that have applied and been selected. I have attached the opportunity list along with the criteria/description for each. Please reach out to me (Jake Norton) directly if your child is interested in applying as they will need a code and a survey provided by the chapter. Deadlines vary but they begin in Mid-March.

PHILLY JUNIOR TOUR SCHOLARSHIP

The Philly Junior Tour offers a lot of tournaments for juniors throughout the Greater Philadelphia area. This is a great way to start playing competitive golf. Applications for the diversity scholarship are now open through March 8th. Awardees receive a membership, mentor, and seven tournaments each year until they graduate high school. Through a partnership between First Tee and the Philadelphia PGA Section, any First Tee participant that applies for the scholarship will receive a minimum of a junior tour membership and 2 tournaments covered regardless of gender, race/ethnicity, or financial means. Everyone interested in potentially playing in a tournament this summer should apply: https://form.jotform.com/240014081249143

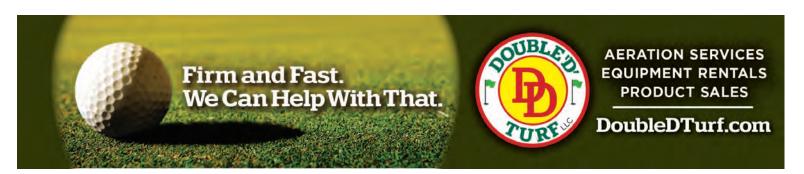


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PAGCS VOTING DELEGATE TAKES ROLE IN STRIDE

With little time to think or prepare when asked, PAGCS Director Joe Agnew said YES to the request to serve as PAGCS voting delegate in fall of 2022. With weeks to spare, he rearranged his schedule and headed to GCSAA headquarters in Lawrence, KS, to represent the Association.

Since that time, Joe has never looked back and has gained a reputation as the ideal voting delegate for both GCSAA and the PAGCS.

CAREER:

Joe got his industry start as a caddie at Torresdale Frankford Country Club, followed by a stint in the proshop for two years. He eventually gravitated to the grounds crew, advancing to second assistant.

Next up: four years as an assistant at Burlington Country Club, and finally Joe has spent the past 12 seasons as head superintendent at The Bucks Club.

EDUCATION:

In addition to a strong work experience background, Joe graduated from the Rutgers two-year program [1999].









>>UNIVERSITY PARTNERS—THE AGGIE UPDATE



DONUTS AND DEERE—A LESSON OUTSIDE THE LAB

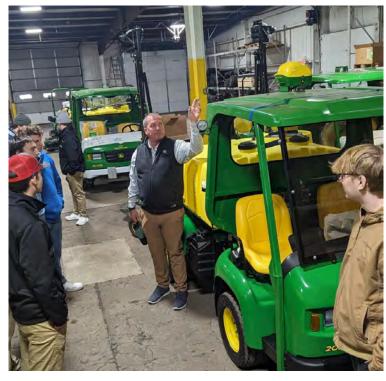
Doc Linde and seven of his Agronomy students recently took a field trip to visit Finch Turf as part of his Turf Cultural systems lab. "My goal with the trip was to show the student the equipment side of the industry," said Dr. Linde, head of the agronomy program at Delaware Valley University.

Hosted by John Deere expert Charlie Koennecker at Finch Turf's Hatfield location, the experience helped students learn what equipment distributors do in the turf industry, how the shop mechanics do their work, and included a lesson on height and quality of cut with an opportunity to let the students try it themselves.

Charlie showed how new equipment is packaged from Deere, the work the mechanics have to do to assemble it, and explained differences between buying and leasing.

Bonus, said Doc Linde: He also gave good career advice and shared his career story, which included memories of our time at Penn State in the 1990s. Charlie is very personable which made the tour enjoyable. Plus, he bought donuts for us.









SAFETY FIRST-ASSISTANT EDUCATION EVENT

by Nick Sujkowski, PAGCS Assistant Representative to the Board

Late last year, a sold out audience of Assistant Golf Course Superintendents were trained by Shreiner Tree Care in key safety operations.

Held at the Shreiner facility in King of Prussia, the half day education covered topics such as basic operation of a chainsaw, chainsaw sharpening and maintenance, safe work operations, personal protective equipment, safe tree felling techniques and proper limb removal techniques.

The event concluded with a field demonstration session aimed at team safety, followed by lunch and roundtable discussions.

The next Assistant Education Series
event will take place in Marchbe sure to check emails regularly
or reach out to Nick Sujkowski,
PAGCS Assistant Liaison
to the Board





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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>>#HEADINGTO100 — FROM A BOARD MEMBER'S PERPECTIVE

Continued from cover

When my term was up, **John Segui** asked me if I would be interested in the job as Board Secretary. Little did I know then, but I would be Secretary for the next 27 years. If you were on the Board, Association membership meetings became a long day. For many years, the Board would meet at 10 a.m., then there was lunch, golf, dinner, followed by a speaker.

I, like my Dad, was not a golfer, so I enjoyed my time walking around the facility and seeing how different clubs functioned. It gave me a breather from my job. In my early career days, I was going into the work seven days a week. With my new job, I wanted to make sure things were going OK.

During the Board meetings I would have a tape recorder and record the meetings. I also took some notes. After awhile I became comfortable with my "Technique." It was always fun for me to listen to the new members describe how they got started in

the golf business. I thought this requirement that the new members had to come before the Board was a great idea. Of course I had a hidden motive. How many of these new members were DelVal"AGGIES" like me?! I thought that all golf course superintendents should be "AGGIES". I found out that there were other schools that new members attended.

During my years on the Board, I got to know many of our members. Working with a lot of Association Board presidents was also fun. Some were very structured and some were very informal.

As a Board, we tried to protect our members. I remember one situation when a superintendent was employed and the club was going to replace him. The applicant didn't inform the superintendent that he applied and was hired as the new superintendent. Our president went to the new superintendent and asked him to come

before the board. Of course he did and we expressed our concern ... I always sided with the sitting superintendent when clubs wanted to replace you.

I never understood why new members joined our Association and then never were seen again. I always thought having someone to call when you had a problem was what our Association was about. I remember asking one superintendent to join. He said it was too "clickie".

I remember one new president said he was glad that I was still on the Board because I was old. At that time we had many young board members.

I am very proud of all my years on the Board ... If I would not have been on the Board, I would have missed out on meeting many of our members.

HENRY WETZEL



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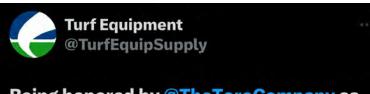
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Check This Out!

RED STARS: HONORS WORTH MENTIONING

Congratulations to PAGCS member Sam Butler, of Platinum Sponsor Turf Equipment and Supply, for this amazing national award from Toro. Sam was recognized in Phoenix at GCSAA's 2024 CTS the week of Jan. 29-Feb. 1.



Being honored by @TheToroCompany as Irrigation Rookie of the Year is a testament to @ButlerIrrigate's drive and passion is serving his customers. We are proud of Sam and this accomplishment!





Brad Helcoski @Bradhelcoski · 1d
Great day flagging with this great team!
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RED STARS: WEAR THE JACKET WITH PRIDE

The top Toro honors were presented to member Les Lear, of Turf Equipment and Supply, a PAGCS Platinum sponsor. Les took the stage in Phoenix during the GCSAA's CTS to be honored for his achievements as the top in his field.



1h · 🔞

The Commercial Green Blazer is one of the highest awards The Toro Company presents to someone who is the best in their field. It is no surprise that Les Lear has earned this award for the support and care he provides his customers. Congrats Les!





AND THE ASSOCIATION'S HIGHEST HONOR GOES TO: **JERRED GOLDEN, CGCS**

On Monday, May 8, during the PAGCS 2023 Member-Member Trophy Tournament at Coatesville Country Club, the Association proudly presented its highest honor, the Eb Steiniger Award, to Jerred Golden

About the Award

Born in Germany in 1905, Eberhard Steiniger went on to create a 96-year legacy of innovation, mentorship, and service to the industry and the U.S. Serving on every board or council the industry had to offer, he became instrumental in the invention of dozens of pieces of equipment and improved varieties of grasses all while developing Pine Valley into the world class facility it is today. [History courtesy of Jerred Golden: CLICK HERE for Jerred's full acceptance speech]

In 1990, the PAGCS decided it was time to honor the legacy of Eb Steiniger by establishing this award in his name. Since then, the award has been presented to many captains of the industry, from professors to journalists, and, of course, golf course superintendents. Honorees are chosen by the Board of Directors, based on letters submitted to the Association's Nominating Committee. CLICK **HERE** for the full list of honorees.



[Pictured: Jerred Golden, center, flanked by current and former team members at the ceremony on May 8, Coatesville Country Club]

>>MEET A MEMBER

Who: Kevin Rundstrom, Northeast Philadelphia Sales Consultant

Employer: The Aquatrols Company

Education: Rutgers University

Career: 15+ years of experience in the turf industry, including time

at both Pine Valley and St. Andrews in Scotland

Personal: lives in Clayon, NJ with girlfriend Alyssa and a GSP named Murray; avid golfer and guitar player.



HONORING LONGTIME MEMBER AND BOARD MEMBER JOE COURDUFF

I have known Joe for as long as I was a member of the PAGCS. I joined in 1976 and soon met Joe at one of our meetings. We played golf a few times.

Joe knew I was drafted into the army and had the rank of lieutenant. He would many times call me "Lieutenant." Joe was drafted twice: the Cuban Missile crisis and the Berlin Wall crisis... some guys have all the luck.

STAR STUDDED CAST

Joe and his wife Elaine, Chuck Cadiz [Editors note: another Army veteran and also served time as the super at Eagle Lodge—now Union Leage Liberty Hill] and his beloved wife Winnie, and Linda and I would go out to dinner two or three times a year. About 40 years ago, Linda and I were at the Rusty Nail in Pennsauken, NJ with family. Who walks in but Joe and Elaine. They loved to dance and they followed this band who was playing this night. I jumped up and shouted there's Joe. Of course we were a little bussed at the time.

He was a good friend and shared stories. He told me a few about my dad and the PAGCS.

"I am going to miss Joe and his always calling me Lieutenant."

-Henry Wetzel

"What a nice man. I can't believe there has ever been anyone who could have ever said anything other than that."

-Shaun Barry

Link to Joe Courduff obituary: https://obits.kirkandnicesuburban.com/obituary/joseph-courduff

Link to Chuck Cadiz obituary: https://obits.pennlive.com/us/obituaries/pennlive/name/charles-cadiz-obituary?id=9071359



>>EQUIPMENT MANAGERS/BELTS, BEDKNIVES AND BOLTS //

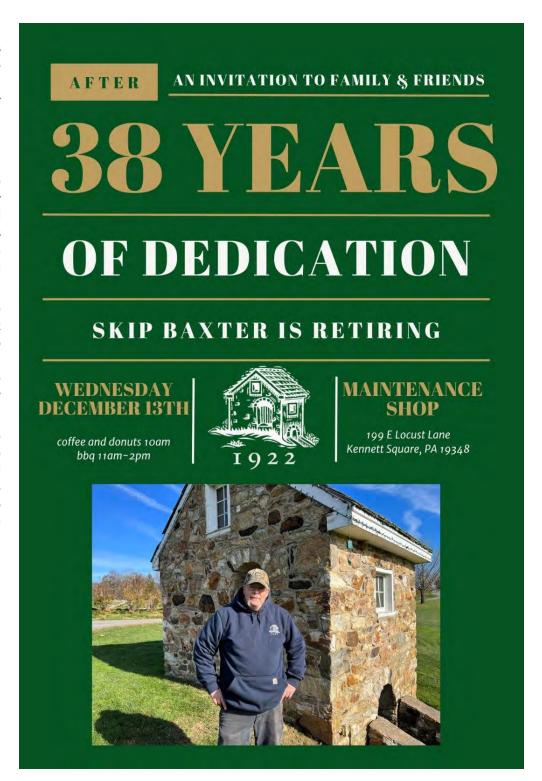
On December 13, 2023, nearly 100 KSGCC, PAGCS, and Industry members showed up throughout the afternoon to honor local industry hero and professional, Skip Baxter. With an equipment manager career that spans more than four decades, most of them at KSGCC, Skip is legendary.

Thank you, Skip!

Editor's note: We all know and value what knits together the fabric of our community as golf turf professionals and advocates. Many people from all facets of the industry weave their threads into our hearts and lives beyond the shop and course.

Our oldest two children learned the industry at KSGCC. If they could pick favorites in the shop, it would be Skip Baxter and the then beloved shop cat, Putter—a beautiful tabby the maintenance team rescued and Skip took charge of day in and day out.

Many a day, Skip would let our son explore the piles of sand, mulch, etc. outside the shop, keeping a close eye while mom and dad did their jobs. From this turf family to yours, much love, Slainte and enjoy – the Liebsch family [our apologies to Jim Elliott for picking favorites].



BELTS, BEDKNIVES & BOLTS

the BBB features content for and by our EM category members--the backbone of many successful operations. Please reach out if you would like to contribute. Contact Equipment Manager Liaison to the Board, Mike Smethurst: gr8grnz@msn.com

NEW YEAR BRINGS CHANGES TO MAJOR INDUSTRY PARTNER









AQUATROLS AND PRECISION LABORATORIES' TURF BUSINESS JOIN TO FORM THE AQUATROLS COMPANY

Aquatrols® and the turf division of Precision Laboratories™, two of the leading brands in turf management, have merged to form The Aquatrols Company. This merger brings together the most comprehensive portfolio of soil surfactant and adjuvant products in the industry.

The Aquatrols Company will continue to offer the full line of Aquatrols and Precision

Laboratories soil surfactants, as well as Precision Laboratories tank mix adjuvants, colorants and additives. VerdeLNXTM, a novel line of advanced nutrient products, will be added to the portfolio in early 2024.

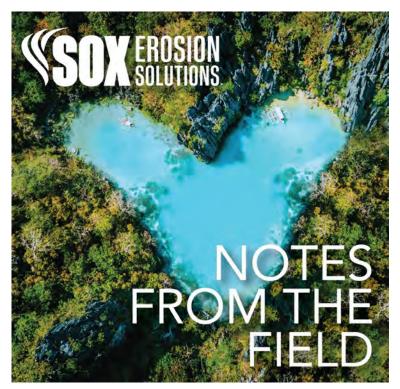
"We're excited about the opportunities this presents for our customers," says Erick Koskinen, Director of Sales.

"We have a unique opportunity to expand these industry-leading brands with our significant investment in marketing and R&D," says Casey McDonald, Director of Marketing and Portfolio Management.

The Aquatrols Company, owned by Lamberti SpA, will benefit from new state-of-the-art manufacturing and vertically integrated technology sourcing. The headquarters of the turf business will remain in Paulsboro, NJ, while manufacturing and warehousing will move to Kenosha, WI. Precision Laboratories LLC will continue to operate independently with a focus on servicing the global agriculture market.



>>PAGCS PARTNER NEWS



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WHERE'S WILLSEY?

...installing a combination of both 12 and 18 foot DredgeSOX in Melbourne, FL along side Florida Custom Aquatics. He is also using a combination of imported fill plus dredged fill materials to save time.

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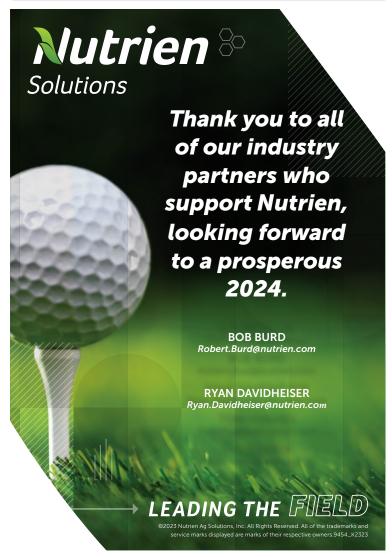
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*Survey of 255 golf course superintendents conducted via TechValidate in Sept. 2021.

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LEADING WITH AGRONOMY

Josh Henry, PhD Specialty Division Agronomist Helena Agri-Enterprises HenryJ@helenaagri.com (614) 345-8656

The concept of plant health monitoring with soil, tissue, and water sampling has been around for many years, but as an industry, we have had limited information on how best to sample or implement management decisions from the analysis results. Historically, soil samples have been taken randomly to account for variability, but in reality, this methodology results in fertilizer recommendations that do not truly represent the needs of the turf or soils. With recent advances in technology, the tools we have available as an industry have changed significantly. At Helena, we strive to improve agronomic practices with data-driven decisions using some of the most advanced technology available.

Advanced soil sampling can be achieved with soil mapping technology. One such technology uses non-invasive sensors to rapidly map out areas of similar soil properties to create management zones. These zones tend to have similar electrical conductivity (EC), cation exchange capacity (CEC), and pH. Soil samples can be taken from each zone, and geospatial software creates custom nutrient maps that account for spatial variability in soil properties. The results can then be used to make site-specific lime and fertilizer applications, and can even be used to make variable rate applications if the technology is available to you. This enables you to apply your nutrients where and when it is needed the most. This ultimately leads to increased nutrient use efficiencies and maximizes the return on investment for lime and nutrient inputs. At Helena, we offer Accupoint soil mapping and testing services.

Water analysis can be used to help determine any water treatments, buffering, or conditioning that should be done to improve spray efficacy. The main factors affecting water quality are pH, EC, hardness, carbonates, bicarbonates, iron, sodium, and solids such as clay particles. Each of these factors individually and in conjunction impact the efficacy of irrigation and spray water. If these factors are not within acceptable ranges, sprays can be rendered ineffective, and irrigation water can become detrimental to plant health. AquaLenz advanced spray water analysis can be used to identify potential limitations in your water and provide potential solutions.

Plant tissue analysis helps you monitor foliar nutrient levels throughout the season. As weather and other factors affect growth throughout the season, tissue samples can provide information as to what the plant needs nutritionally at any time. Monitoring trends in foliar nutrient values over time also allows helps you to make changes in your fertility program as needed. This enables the right fertilizers to be used in the right place at

the right time. Another benefit of tissue testing is the ability to diagnose nutritional deficiencies, toxicities, or other imbalances as they are observed. Extractor tissue sampling enables you to track trends in your foliar nutrient concentrations over time to measure the effects of your fertility program.

Frequent and consistent scouting allows you to provide timely product and management recommendations, and ultimately leads to healthier, higher quality turf. Early detection of weeds, pests, diseases, and nutritional issues is essential for making rapid management decisions and controlling problems before they get out of hand. Drones offer the capability to make maps demonstrating plant health (NDVI and other indices), greenness, density, and weed coverage. A major benefit of drone-based remote sensing is that the sensors can detect things outside the realm of what is visible to the human eye. This allows us to detect limitations in turf health and quality before visual differences appear. With Preveal, you can achieve season-long monitoring with conventional and advanced scouting techniques.

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Dr. Josh Henry is the Specialty Division Agronomist at Helena Agri-Enterprises. He holds degrees in horticultural and crop sciences with a focus on plant health management, mineral nutrition, and advanced sensors for plant health diagnostics.

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>>CAREER DEVELOPMENT

AT THE FOREFRONT OF MENTORSHIP: **PAGCS MEMBER INNOVATES**

"Turf trip of a lifetime" Courtesy of Golf Course Industry [Click HERE for Original article in its entirety]

The article is subtitled "A pair of aspiring superintendents are in the second phase of an innovative internship program. What are Will Bolin and Alex Loesch learning from the experience?"

The program, dubbed Turf Across America, is an innovative internship conceived by Bryan Stromme, vice president of agronomy at Century Golf Partners, and PAGCS member Scott Bordner, director of agronomy at the Union League of Philadelphia [photo]. The process is as much agronomy study as self-exploration.





KEVIN DRISCOLL

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GOLF CHAMPIONSHIP RESULTS

Date: October 30, 2023 Location: LuLu Country Club

DIVISION: Superintendent

GROSS

Darren Farrar, 74 Steve Stephens, 75 John Gosselin, 76

NET

Joe Liebsch, 69 Nick Lubold, 71 Doug Rae, 71*

DIVISION:

Assistant Superintendent/ Equipment Manager

GROSS

Anton Medvedev, 78 Collin Berger, 80 Chuck Brunner, 82

NET

Corey Kern, 73 Tom Boileau, 74 Anthony Giannetti, 81 Doug Rae, 71*

DIVISION: Affiliate

GROSS

Nick Tristani, 71 Rob Johnson, 73 Jeff Haas, 74

NET

Tom Currie, 67-Rich Sweeney, 68 Paul Ramina, 69

















MEMBER-MEMBER RESULTS

Date: Monday, May 8 Location: Coatesville Country Club

GROSS

1st Brad Helcoski & Darren Farrar 2nd Mike Kachurak & Nick Tristani 3rd Jeff Haas & Kevin McClellan

NET

1st Matt Wolfe & Nate Schell 2nd Jim Stauring & Sumner Cross 3rd Gene Stricker & Geoff Stricker





















MEMBER-GUEST RESULTS

Date: August 28, 2023 Location: The Union League Golf Club at Torresdale

GROSS

Darren Farrar-Dave Pfieffer, 68 P. Chet Walsh-Charles Haub, 72 MC Jeff Rice-Katrin Wolfe, 72 MC Brian Kealy-David Szegda, 73 MC

NET

Nate Schell-Nathaniel Martin, 61 Matt Paulina-Kevin Tansey, 62 MC Steve Stephens-Jon Walsh, 62 MC Nick Sujkowski-Andrew Hong, 64





















SCHOLARSHIP SCRAMBLE RESULTS

Date: June 5, 2023 Location: Sandy Run Golf Club

Randy Rider, Josh Saunders, Tom Currie, Matt Wolfe

Jeff Haas, Darren Farrar, Rich Sweeney, Alex Lennertz

Steve Rudich, Mike Linkewich, Bill Cimochowski, Troy Seeton





















>>EVENTS













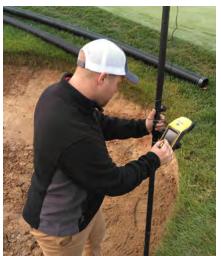




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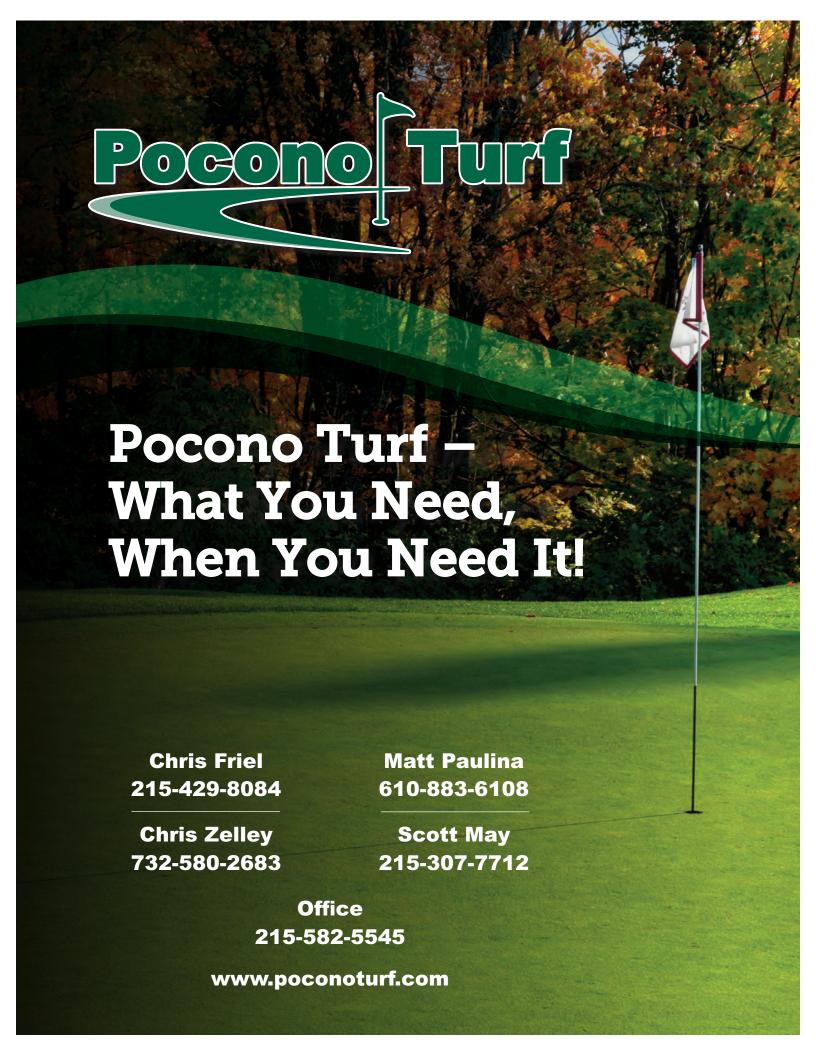
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FIVE QUESTIONS WITH MIDATLANTIC USGA EXPERT BRIAN GIETKA

Spring is just weeks away, and USGA agronomist Brian Gietka is ready to help you prepare for another busy season. Brian started with the USGA last year and will make consulting visits throughout the Mid-Atlantic region.

A 2003 graduate of the University of Maryland with a bachelor's in natural resource sciences and a concentration



in turfgrass management, Brian was an assistant superintendent at several Baltimore-area clubs before becoming the superintendent at Fountain Head Country Club in Hagerstown, Md., in 2008.

You can contact Brian at BGietka@usga.org.

Here are five questions for Brian so you can get to know him a little better.

WHAT MADE YOU WANT TO PURSUE A CAREER IN GOLF?

Growing up on the Chesapeake Bay, my first job was "pullin' pots" on my uncle's crab boat. After several summers, I was looking for something different and joined a golf course crew. I fell in love on the first day. By fall, I changed my major and that decision 20-plus years ago has taken me places I've only imagined!

HOW DID THE USGA HELP YOU WHEN YOU WERE A SUPERINTENDENT?

The USGA's CCS visits always provided a treasure trove of recommendations to elevate and/or optimize playing conditions. Being able to utilize visit reports with informed, actionable recommendations was paramount to my success as a superintendent.

Recently, utilizing the GPS Service showed rarely used bunkers, which led to their removal. The savings in maintenance quickly paid for the cost of the service.

WHAT MADE YOU WANT TO WORK FOR THE USGA?

Early on in my career, several USGA agronomists had a tremendous impact on my career, so having the opportunity to carry on that legacy is a dream come true. The USGA's research and innovation activities continue to positively shape the game, and I'm thrilled to be part of it.

WHO HAS BEEN THE MOST INFLUENTIAL IN YOUR CAREER?

I'm thankful for three mentors. Steve Potter recently retired after 40 years as superintendent at the club where I was his assistant. Dr. Peter Dernoeden was one of my professors and I may have played more golf with him than anyone else. Not only did I have the privilege of learning from visits by longtime USGA agronomist Stanley Zontek, but I was fortunate enough to spend time away from the golf course as well.

These gentlemen showed the importance of developing relationships, having an advanced knowledge of agronomics and being a champion for others.

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE SUPERINTENDENTS TO KNOW ABOUT YOU?

Having been a Mid-Atlantic superintendent for 15 years, I understand the dynamics and I'm genuinely willing to help any way possible. I look forward to serving the region's golf courses and I believe in supporting everyone to share in the greatness of the game.

https://gsshop.usga.org/contact-us

ACROSS THE COUNTRY: USGA REGIONAL UPDATES IN A SNAPSHOT

Got 18 minutes?

Micah Woods ponders what practices aren't worth the effort https://www.usga.org/content/usga/home-page/course-care/green-section-record/62/issue-03/18-minutes-with-dr-micah-woods-.html#

West: Do we need to know about course ratings and the handicapping system? The West seems to things so:

https://www.usga.org/content/usga/home-page/course-care/green-section-record/62/issue-03/what-superintendents-should-know-about-course-rating-and-the-han.html#

Northeast: If you made it to CTS in Phoenix, maybe you met the relatively new USGA Northeast Agronomist Brian Gietka. Here's what he has to say about the winter root zone:

https://www.usga.org/content/usga/home-page/course-care/green-section-record/62/issue-03/new-year--same-roots.html#

Southeast: There's light at the end of the Super El Niño tunnel! https://www.usga.org/content/usga/home-page/course-care/green-section-record/62/issue-03/super-el-nino--. html#returnable

Central: Can you call any sand baded green a USGA green?

https://www.usga.org/content/usga/home-page/course-care/green-section-record/62/issue-03/not-all-sand-based-greens-are-usga-greens.html#returnable





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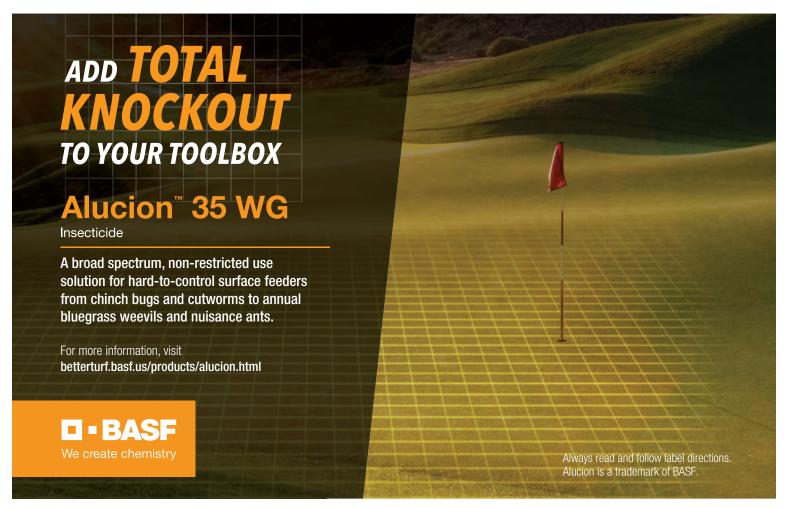




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2/19/2024

Mrs. Kristen Liebsch & The PAGCS
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Kristen & Members of the PAGCS Board,

On behalf of the Super Scratch Championship Foundation, Inc., we would like to provide receipt and recognition of your generous donation of \$2,000 as a Corporate Sponsor for the 2023 event and as a continued supporter of the foundation.

The Super Scratch Foundation is a 501c3 non-profit foundation, that annually hosts a golf event to raise money for students entering and maintaining enrollment within collegiate turfgrass programs. This contribution will help award students within turfgrass and agronomy programs scholarship money to continue their pursuit of a career within the field. The monies are distributed through the schools and go directly to the students and not the Universities as a whole. It is due to the generous support of companies like yours that we can continue our mission of growing the game and supporting the next generation of superintendents.

Along with recognition at the event and attendance, sponsors are also now recognized on our newly formed website at: www.superscratchfoundation.org, and recognition is also provided annually to the schools where students receive funds on the award letters. Students from the following schools will be receiving scholarships in 2024: Penn State, Rutgers, University of Maryland, UMass, Wisconsin-Madison & Del-Val.

If you have any questions about the scholarship, or would like more information on the charity, please let us know at the contact information below, by phone at (215)370-4991 or at info@superscratchfoundation.org.

Thank you again for your continued support,

Andrew Mason, President

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KEEPING UP TO SURVIVE-TOOLS THAT CAN HELP

by Tyler Bloom

It was great to see familiar faces at the PAGCS Winter Education at Aronimink. The last year has been an incredible journey working alongside employers locally, regionally and nationally.

What are the biggest trends and insights heading into 2024? Let's explore a few of them as the market is constantly evolving.

The market is evolving, and requires employers to evolve, often at a pace they cannot keep up with. Retirement of Baby Boomer employees, movement of rural populations to suburban/urban, growth in reliance on technology, and downstream challenges caused by COVID-19 pandemic are impacting the shortage in agriculture labor.

To attract top talent, it's important to offer competitive salaries, benefits, and opportunities for career advancement.

The PAGCS recently completed the 2024 Compensation and Benefits study.

A couple highlights that stood out to me include:

- The average golf course superintendent salary was \$153,225.81 with a tenure of 8.54 years at their current facility.
- The average increase for annual operating budgets was 5.95% for private facilities, and 6.5% for public facilities. Kudos to your membership for reinvesting into the golf course. Comparative to the last two years, assistant superintendent salaries are much more consistent across the area with little disparity as there once was.

As a whole, employers offer standard benefits from health insurance, local and national dues, but I believe some opportunities including performance bonuses, housing, tuition reimbursement and continued education opportunities such as the GCSAA National Conference would be well received from both assistant superintendents and equipment managers.

One of the more anecdotal, but very concerning issues is the tenure of 2nd Assistant Superintendents. Over fifty percent

of respondents stated their junior managers have less than two years in the position, which continues to highlight the shortage in skilled workers entering the industry.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, about 170,300 openings for grounds maintenance workers are projected each year, on average, over the decade. Many of those openings are expected to result from the need to replace workers who transfer to different occupations or exit the labor force, such as to retire.

It is no secret there is a major gap in skills, education and shortage of people entering the golf course and turfgrass profession, as well as those climbing the career ladder to management positions. Our in state institutions are continuing to see progress in enrollment, but it still does not cover the needs of employers.

In November, I spent time at the Apprenticeship PA Collaborative and Expo in Hershey to connect and network with the Apprenticeship and Training Office, discovering different on-the-job training programs, non-industry partnerships and local workforce support programs.

The usage of apprenticeship programs to recruit and retain employees, while is non-traditional to our industry, is being heavily adopted across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and is receiving significant funding to help start and launch programs.

Our team has had much success assisting employers locally and nationally design and develop apprenticeship programs. In April 2024, we will receive state registration for a group sponsored program, which will have multi-county and employer reach in Pennsylvania. We anticipate this program will help connect youth, underrepresented communities, veterans and women into the golf industry.

The apprenticeship program for groundskeepers and equipment technicians offers significant benefits due to its structured, hands-on, and career-focused approach.

The program ensures systematic coverage of all necessary skills and knowledge, maintaining consistent quality standards and safety measures. Apprentices learn crucial, standardized practices in groundskeeping, essential for high-quality work and safety adherence. The program offers clear career paths, with trainees developing specialized skills while working, preparing them for advanced roles and higher earnings.

Unlike traditional degree programs, apprenticeships emphasize extensive handson training, allowing trainees to learn directly in the field and confirm their career choice. The training is tailored to the industry's specific needs, with certifications that are recognized and aid in career growth.

What are some of the benefits for the employers based on research from the U.S. DOL? • Employers gain from a credible training program that ensures well-trained staff. • The program can attract a diverse range of candidates, enhancing workplace inclusivity including a 91-percent improved pipeline of talent.

- Offering apprenticeships can improve employee loyalty, as seen in the high retention rates as seen by the U.S. DOL up to 81-percent retention rate.
- Tax credits and grants to offset onthe-job training and education in the state of Pennsylvania up to \$5,000 per apprentice.
- The U.S. Department of Labor has noted a ROI of 44.3-percent for employers who invest in Registered Apprenticeship through increased productivity, retention

Overall, this apprenticeship approach provides a comprehensive and practical training experience, beneficial for both apprentices and employers in our industry.

If you are interested in learning more about our statewide initiative, and how it can be helpful for your operation.

Tyler can be reached at tyler@tylerbloomconsulting.com.



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KENNETT SQUARE GOLF AND COUNTRY CLUB HOSTED ITS **INAUGURAL FIRST GREEN, AND LOVED IT!**

KSGCC recently hosted the entire 4th grade from Greenwood Elementary School in Kennett Consolidated School District for a field trip like no other. Thanks to a slew of KSGCC staff, along with PAGCS volunteers, students were given the opportunity to spend a few hours immersed in STEAM education[Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Math].

"First time for something like this so we had fun...lots of kids...it turned out great!" attests Skip Baxter, Kennett's recently retired equipment manager, who ran one of the tech labs [see page 16 for more about Skip's retirement celebrations].

• Stations included:

Water Conservation, Soil Science, Environmental Stewardship, Drones on Golf Courses, Golf, and Equipment.

Paul Stead, CGCS, led a lesson in beekeeping, pollinators, and environmental impact-lots of curiosity and questions stemmed from this lab. The "Drones on the Golf Course" station fascinated students with the limitless possibilities of not only drones, but tech in general. And there was no shortage of hands raised for the tech lab that showcased equipment most students, teachers and chaperones just had the first opportunity to experience.



Thank you, **team KSGCC** for your support of the industry through the First Green STEAM education program! We encourage any facility interested in hosting to reach out to the PAGCS office or GCSAA.











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>>GAP CONSTRUCTION

BROOKSIDE COUNTRY CLUB OF ALLENTOWN



By Tony Regina

Brookside Country Club of Allentown in Macungie, Pa. is investing \$7.3 million in a capital improvement project. Some \$2 million was invested in the first half of 2023 and here is a highlight of that portion of the project.

"We're executing a substantial renovation," Justin Rieth, the club's director of grounds, said. "We are renovating all the bunkers, squaring and leveling tees, expanding greens and relocating our practice green and 18th green. The driving range tees will be enlarged, leveled and combined. An artificial tee line will also be installed along the back edge. Currently, a new rock wall is being constructed at our pond on No. 18."

Jeffrey Stein is the project's architect.

It is a baptism by fire for Rieth, who started at Brookside Allentown in February. He previously served as superintendent of Northampton Valley Country Club in Richboro, Pa. for 15 years.

"I'm excited and eager to be involved in the renovations. The timing is perfect for myself due to the fact that there are significant modifications underway," Rieth, 44, of Flemington, N.J., said. "We have devised a detailed schedule for how we will accomplish the projects involved in our renovations. As long as the weather cooperates and things run smoothly, most of the work should be completed by July."

Prior to Rieth's arrival, Brookside Allentown removed approximately 250 trees from the property. All sandy structures either experienced a facelift, relocation or removal entirely, according to Ron Hertzog, 62, of





Emmaus, Pa., an assistant superintendent at Brookside Allentown of 13 years.

In addition to bunkers, the club's quarry holes — Nos. 12 and 16 — underwent surgery during the offseason.

"Both of our quarries were restored by removing overgrown trees and debris. We will continue to keep them clean so you can see the rock formations of the quarry," Rieth said. "They both are beautiful holes."

Brookside Allentown also built a new chipping green featuring two bunkers near



the driving range, which will be blended into an enlarged tee. Green extensions remain in the works; an addendum is the incorporation of 15 acres of fescue.

Come April 1, George E. Ley Company, headquartered in Glenmoore, Pa., will strip, level and square all tee boxes. George E. Ley Company offers services pertaining to irrigation systems, pump stations and golf course construction/renovation projects.

"Over the years, the greens and tees have shrunk in size. By reclaiming them, we will be able to provide more pin positions and larger teeing surfaces," Rieth said.

The relocation of Brookside Allentown's 18th green and the construction of a new practice green are on the horizon as well. The 2023 Summer Edition of GAP Magazine highlighted the club's capital improvement project in its entirety.





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Total Turf Golf Services

George E. Ley Company

<u>SiteOne</u>

Target Specialty Products

Helena

Grass Roots

Coombs Sod

Nutrien

BRONZE

Finch Turf

Windview Athletics

Double D Turf

Dryject

East Coast Sod

PBI Gordon

FMC

Corteva

KM Golf Sales

Turf Trade

Central Sod

Davisson Golf

First Turf and Ornamental

American Golf Grading

Sox Erosion