

FOREGROUND

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Phillip J. Rotella Golf Course



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Susan O'Dowd

Association Motto

To promote interest and good will in the Association, encourage good relations between members and the clubs they represent.... And to keep up with the current developments in turf and related work.....

Bill Smart

HVGCSA Mission Statement

The Hudson Valley Golf Course Superintendents Association exists to inform, educate and serve members within the Hudson Valley and surrounding areas.



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President's Message



What a time to take over as president of the association. I'm glad to say we have a great board and along with Susan I am confident we will prevail. We will continue to serve you and please feel free to contact any board members with any questions you have.

I have been in contact with the other NY associations. Along with Kevin Doyle of the GCSAA we have made every effort to contact our government officials and plead our position during these times. First and foremost we

have informed the importance of continued maintenance of our golf courses. We have had a good response. All of New York has understood the importance of keeping the turf maintained at this time. We just ask that everyone follows recommendations for slowing the spread of the virus. Please refer to <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/factsheets.html> for print information.

At this time, we had to cancel the April meeting at Wiltwyck and postponed May meeting at Rotella. The golf course will be closed through April 30th. To avoid a large gathering we will wait until the "stay home" has been lifted. Just like maintenance on the golf course we are going to adjust as information and circumstances change. We had a plan and are going to adapt going forward. It would be great to hold all of our meetings this year and we will continue to modify the schedule as we move forward.

Now that I have all the bureaucratic information out of the way I would like to share some personal information with everyone. I have attended HVGCSAA meetings since my days as an assistant at Beekman CC eighteen years ago. After my first meeting I thought, "This is a bunch of knuckleheads I can see myself hanging out with". I'm lucky enough to have spent all my time in the industry with the Hudson Valley. It is surreal to now be the president of this great association. I admire so many of you and appreciate all of the memories we continue to build upon. I plan on inspiring other young individuals to join our community and to carry on what you have built.

Everyone stay safe and keep in touch. Take care of those families. You old timers take care of yourselves. Looking forward to getting together with everyone soon.

Chris Kemble
McCann Memorial GC

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Hudson Valley News of Interest:

By: Kevin Collins



Dan Wilber's annual Cornhole spectacular was held on Friday, February 21st. About 35 thirsty souls made the trek to Millbrook Golf & Tennis for the event. Fourteen teams competed for the championship. Dan and his partner Eric Westervelt (Mohawk GC) ruled the day and captured the 1st place trophy. Sadly, the team of Robert "Red" Hewitt and Chad Mathieu came in last. It got a little ugly between Chad & Red before they were eliminated. During play a clearly frustrated Chad razzed Red with insults like "you couldn't hit the side of a barn with your beanbag." Incensed by Chad's comments and catcalls from other competitors deriding his abilities, Red bet anyone within earshot \$100 that if they wanted to come outside he'd show them (in lieu of a barn) that he could easily toss a beanbag and hit the maintenance facility from 33 feet (the official Cornhole distance between the platforms). The crowd followed Red outside. You could hear a pin drop as Red aimed and threw his bag. He missed the building.



Responding to the challenges presented by the Covid-19 pandemic, please note that there is a Training Webinar available on the HVGCSA Website that offers a blueprint to members on how to maintain a golf course with a skeleton crew. Our Webinar hosts are two Hudson Valley superintendents, Osiris's Mike Aube and Hudson Hills Grover Alexander, who offer up tips and shortcuts on dealing with a lack of manpower while still managing to get the job done.

These two turfgrass professionals are well versed in staff shortages as they've lived it. Grover worked an entire season at Hudson Hills by himself and Mike has never had a staff larger than 3 seasonal workers. Please tune in when you get a chance.



Haworth CC superintendent Tim Garceau has come up with a novel approach to dealing with the hardships of working with both a skeleton crew and no golfers since NJ banned golf as part of their "social distancing" mandate. Why show up at 5am? "How about banker's hours", Tim thought. So, Tim changed the crew's work hours to 10am-6pm. It's been a real morale booster for the crew and, for Tim, it's been a game changer. For the first time in decades Tim can sleep in, cuddle with Judy, walk the dog, do household chores, read the paper, and have a decent breakfast while watching "Fox & Friends" before heading out to work. Tim is thinking about making this permanent, even after the course opens for golf. He proposed to the GM that, moving forward, the first tee time should be noon. Tim Garceau, trend-setter!!!

At one point during the pandemic, Dutchess County even banned maintenance on golf courses. Undeterred, Links super Chris Strehl enlisted the help of the membership to do a bunker restoration with capillary concrete. This was short lived as a neighbor called the authorities and Chris and the members were arrested. It might have been a blessing in disguise as the members weren't much help anyway having spent 6 hours in the clubhouse bar before venturing out to help Chris.



No one to cut your hair during the pandemic? I have a friend that can come to your house and cut your hair while maintaining "social distancing". And look at these results. Kind of brings me back to when my dad cut my hair. We used to call him, "the butcher".





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Annual Meeting & NYSTA Trade Show



2020 HVGCSA Board: Left to right: Chris Kemble, President, Tim Walker, Vice President, Reese Was-son, Treasurer, Brian Bontemps, AF Rep, Vincent Barnaba, Director, Grover Alexander, Past President & Ben Babbage, Secretary (Missing from the photo is Evan Weymouth & Mike Aube)



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A Final Goodbye

It's with a broken heart to announce that my brother Frank O'Dowd passed away suddenly in San Jose, CA on February 3rd. He was a member and sponsor of the HVGCSA since 2016.



Frank had an extensive career in the golf industry beginning at the age of 18 right out of high school, when he was hired as a shaper by Robert Trent Jones Senior who was doing a renovation project on the Ballybunion Golf Course in Ireland. After the project ended he was invited to join the RTJ Organization in CA. Without hesitation and no fear to head out into the world, Frank had his bags packed and on a flight to the US which he spent the next nine years working on an array of courses across the world. In 1992 he decided to go out on his own and founded Intergolf, Inc., and over a span of 28 years he had designed, built or renovated 50+ golf courses in Europe - Korea - Mexico & USA and worked with such notable architects as Jack Nicklaus, Gary Player and Tom Fazio. There was no mountain of dirt or landfill (Ferry Point) Frank couldn't mold into a beautiful golf course, but he always said his most beautiful creation was his daughter Emer.

He's passing has left a huge hole in the O'Dowd clan. Our family BBQ's will never be the same without his great steaks & homemade beer.

Frank is survived by his wife Annita, daughter Emer, 4 brothers, 2 sisters, 30 nephews, nieces, grand nieces & grand nephews.

Rest in Peace Frank. Not a day goes by that I don't think of all the great times we had growing up together and wish you were still here.

Your sis, Sue



Left to Right: Georg Tsvetanski (Owner of "Thracian Cliffs Golf and Spa"), Gary Player and representatives, Frank O'Dowd

Left to Right: Frank O'Dowd, Jack Nicklaus, Jim Lipe and Nicklaus design team.



THE BIG TICKET GIS Giveaway

Criteria:

1. Must be active within the Association.
2. Must be a Class A, B, or CGCS member of the Hudson Valley and be in good standing.
3. Have not attended the GIS within the past 5 years.
4. Must submit a brief essay as to how the trip to GIS will benefit you and your facility.

Due by September 30, 2020

5. Must submit a written article outlining your experience at GIS for the Foreground Newsletter.

*Winner will be chosen by the Board of Directors.

*The chosen candidate will not be eligible for another 5 years.

Package Includes:

- ♦ Full Conference Registration
- ♦ Airfare
- ♦ 4 Nights Hotel
- ♦ 2 Educational Seminars (1 full day + 1 half day or the equivalent expense)
- ♦ \$200 spending allowance



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Spring Irrigation Pump Station Service

By: Matt Faherty

Many changes are occurring presently on the golf courses - benches, bunker rakes and even golfers are being removed! With these challenges, let us not forget the preparation of the pump station for the season.

Avoiding the pump station service, because of its complexities, can be a crippling mistake. Yearly preventative maintenance can save money by avoiding costly breakdowns.

An authorized service technician can perform annual check-ups, diagnostics and preventative maintenance. A preventative checklist of pump station data may ensure that the station is ready for the spring with the records available for comparison to the prior year's operation. Are the pumps producing similar flow to past years? Motor winding insulation value and resistance can be tested (meg-ohm meter), to ensure that the motor not degrading and will determine available life.

A weekly inspection of the pump house (superintendent), to observe the pump and motor vibrations, leaks and smells that differ from the norm is recommended. An inspection of the pumping capacity of the pumps or excessive vibration on the motors may literally save your position. Keep notes and a checklist of power, performance, electrical inspection and test data. Keep the pump station clean of debris and wildlife to ensure proper cooling to extend service life. Seasonal events such as algae blooms will affect filter maintenance.

Motor and pump controls should be upgraded before they fail, technical advances in PLC's and electrical components may make upgrades a smart decision.

A list of services provided by that are performed and reported back to the superintendent includes:

- Vibration test on each pump
- Lube bearings
- Inspect and tighten any leaking joints
- Test, adjust pressure relief valves
- Change oil in wet sump motors only

Continued...page 13

Turfgrass Advocacy /NYSTA Lobby Day



Left to right: Mike McCall, Rob Stewart, Senator Sue Serino, Brian Kelly, Chris Strehl & Dan Wilber .

Our thanks goes out to the dedicated superintendents and assistants that made the trip to Albany on February 26th to let their voices be heard. This is a great opportunity to meet with local elected officials to discuss any concerns that could affect the Turfgrass and Green Industry.

Meeting Schedule

May Meeting

Phillip Rotella

May 21, 2020 - Postponed

HV Cup

The Powelton Club

June 29, 2020

Nine & Dine

Storm King

July 23, 2020

August Meeting/ NYSTA

Links at Union Vale

August 17, 2020

Blizzard Conditions Prevent Nor'easter Ski Race



Who would have thought the Nor'easter Ski Race would be the beginning of all sporting events being cancelled in 2020! Ironically enough, for the Ski Race it would be due to the weather!

This year's race scheduled for February 27th had to be cancelled due to tremendous blizzard conditions. With wind speeds gusting over 50 mph and snow coming down sideways and heavy, the Killington Mountain Race team was forced to cancel all racing activities on the mountain that day.

That, however, did not prevent the 175+ members from across the Northeast US from making the trek north to Killington for a fun day of skiing and socializing après ski style at the Wobbly Barn! Kudos to all those that made the effort and enjoyed the camaraderie! Prizes were already secured for the race, so everything was raffled off and a great time was had by all despite the weather!

As in years past, the generous support of our sponsors and folks in attendance has allowed the Nor'easter Ski Day to raise money for those in need. This year we will be formerly making donations to Jordan Keshler, Golf Course Superintendent at Barker Brook Golf Club as well as David Cameron, brother-in-law of Stephen Hicks, Superintendent and Director of Operations at Bull's Bridge Golf Club per requests from members.

Let's all work together to support each other and help each other through these interesting times and hopefully we'll see each other soon on a golf course near you!

By default, the Northeastern GCSA will retain the Nor'easter Cup and VT Cups until we race again!

Special thanks go out to our title sponsor, the Houseknecht Family and the team at MTE for their overwhelming support of the Nor'easter Ski Day!

Please also take a moment to thank the many other sponsors we have each year for their continued support of this great event! We are including this year's sponsor board to be shared with your members.

Save the date for next year's Nor'easter as well, to be held at Killington Mountain on February 25th. More information will come later in the year.

MET Team Championship Notice:

Also, please note regarding the MET Team Championship this year. With the Covid-19 situation in one way or another affecting pretty much all the associations that participate, it's too soon to know if we will be able to hold this year's event. Most clubs spring events have been cancelled and moved to the fall wherever possible, so to take up a date on a club's calendar that could generate much needed income may be a challenge this year. Let's all see how the pandemic plays out and Blake and I will report back periodically concerning the 2020 MET Team Championship.

Andy Drohen



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Robert Stewart

Links at Union Vale



Spring Irrigation Pump Station Service.....cont'd

- Meg test on each motor
- Test and review PLC operation; make corrections and updates
- Check manual valves
- Pump packing adjusted
- Inspect, clean component filters
- Control cabinet inspection, including tightening of any connection points
- Inspection/cleaning of cooling components
- Test all fuses and circuit breakers
- Dynamic flow test
- Check amp test – all motors; examine intake screens for debris
- Hydraulic valves (including Cla-Valves), need periodic service, cleaning and adjustment

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Matt Faherty



Condolences

To the family of Allan Seebach, Jr., who passed away on April, 23. Al was a member of the HVGCSA since 1996. He worked with Stu Sharples at Blue Hill GC for many years as an assistant and took over the super's position when Stu retired.

To the family of Frank O'Dowd from Intergolf Inc., who passed away suddenly on February 3rd. Frank was a sponsor & member of the HVGCSA since 2016.

To Doug George from Waccabuc & his family on the passing of his brother & father-in-law in April.

Trip to Green Industry Show, Orlando, FL



My trip to the 2020 Green Industry Show was a great experience! I've been the executive secretary for the HVGCSA & the MetGCSA for 7 years now, and over the years the board members from both associations had offered to send me to the GIS but I didn't take them up on it till this year, and since this was my first time attending the GCSAA covered my cost for an education event and the Trade Show.

I will admit I made a rookie mistake and arrived a couple of days too early, but I took advantage of the nice weather and did some site seeing.

Tuesday: I was given a warm welcome by Leann Cooper, outgoing President Rafael Barajas, CGCS, Rhett Evans, Kevin Doyle our NE Rep and Executive Secretaries & Directors from all over the US at the Chapter Management Session. This session was packed with interactive presentations, an assistant superintendent panel and roundtable discussions highlighting initiatives and programming that have been adopted by GCSAA chapters. The one thing I learned from listening to other chapter Executives is that we all have the same issues and concerns when it comes to running a successful association. The #1 issue that was discussed at my table "meeting attendance" but unfortunately nobody at that time had a good answer on how to improve the #'s. Rhett Evans gave a great presentation on the GCSAA Updates. After the session I stopped by the EIFG Donor & Grassroots Ambassador Appreciation Reception where they were giving out awards. Peter Gorman from the Connecticut GCSA received the Excellence in Government Affairs Award.

Wednesday: I visited the Trade show and said hello to some of our sponsors and later that day I stopped by Lafayette's for the Nor'easter Social event where we had 420 members & guests from 10 Northeast Associations that attended.

I had an early flight Thursday so I didn't get to see the closing celebration.

Susan O'Dowd
Executive Secretary
HVGCSA & MetGCSA

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2020 Scholarships

Ernest Steinhofer Scholarship:

Eligibility Requirements:

Parent must be a member of the HVGCSA

Student may or may not be planning to enter a field related to golf course management.

Must be enrolled or accepted at an accredited institution of higher learning.

Winners cannot reapply for a period of one year.

[Ernest Steinhofer Application](#)

Bill Smart Scholarship:

Eligibility Requirements:

Presently involved in the golf industry.

Must be accepted to or attending an accredited Turfgrass Maintenance Program.

Recommended by Class A, B or Associate Member in good standing with the HVGCSA.

[Bill Smart Application](#)

DEADLINE: JULY 15, 2020

Any questions contact Susan

(914) 909-4843

sodowd@mgagolf.org

Congratulations to our 25 Year Pin Recipients

Kevin Collins, Ocean Organics

Red Hewitt, Dogwood Knolls GC

Thank you for all you support to the association and we hope you continue to enjoy all that the HVGCSA has to offer for another 25+ years!



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Nor'easter Social Event, Orlando, FL



GIS Trade Show

