



New York Chapter
GCSAA

- Introducing Ron Stepanek
- President's Message
- Superintendent Spotlight
- Touching Grass highlight



READING THE GREEN

2024 WINTER EDITION

President's Message



As I sit at my computer writing my first Presidents message for The GCSANY newsletter, I can't help to think where the time has went. December and January are done and gone and although it's early February, between a family vacation and not enough days skiing, this month already feels over. Soon enough it will be March 20th and I'll start wondering, "Are we ready for April 1st and the 2024 golf season?", and we'll all be back at the grind.

This is an exciting time for the GCSANY. We recently hired Ron Stepanek as our executive director. Ron brings us a wealth of knowledge and experience in the golf industry to lead our association. He has some exciting ideas for the association, and I can't wait till we start implementing them.

The GCSANY is growing. We have a talented and dedicated group of board members working hard for you. As the association starts on its new course forward, we can't forget about today and what we need to do. As the 2024 season approaches take some time for yourself and your family. Get your pesticide credits to avoid any problems with the DEC. File your state pesticide and water reports and pay your dues for your GCSANY membership.

I would like to thank the GCSANY membership for entrusting me to lead the association for the next 2 years. I would also like to thank our Partners, without your continued support the GCSANY would not be the association we are today.

Good luck to all and I hope everyone has a successful 2024 season.

Joseph Lucas
President GCSANY

TORO

Irrigation Products

FULL LINE OF
ELECTRIC SOLUTIONS

ProCore® 648s

The new gold standard of greens aeration.

SAFETY. QUALITY. CAPABILITY.

The VENTRAC 4520 maximizes value
with impeccable results.



Gary Hughes - Sales Rep. (Buffalo)
ghughes@grasslandcorp.com
716-570-2267 (cell)

Brent Lewis - Sales Rep. (Rochester)
blewis@grasslandcorp.com
585-694-9948 (cell)

Brett Belden - Sales Rep. (Albany)
bbelden@grasslandcorp.com
518-857-9870 (cell)

Keith Pierce - Sales Rep. (Southern Tier)
kpierce@grasslandcorp.com
607-481-0809 (cell)

Ian MacArthur - Sales Rep. (Syracuse)
imacarthur@grasslandcorp.com
315-374-8444 (cell)

Chris Pogge - Sales Rep. (Hudson)
cpogge@grasslandcorp.com
518-857-0197 (cell)

Jeff Joedicke - Irrigation Manager (Eastern NY & VT)
jjoedicke@grasslandcorp.com
838-218-8569 (cell)

Sal Sgroi - Pump Irrigation Tech, Sales & Service (WNY)
salsgroi@grasslandcorp.com
716-818-4329 (cell)



GRASSLANDCORP.COM
518-785-5841 (LATHAM)
315-457-0181 (LIVERPOOL)

Board of Directors



Joe Lucas
Saratoga National
President



Mike Tollner
Bellevue C.C.
Vice President



John Hoyle, CGCS
Corning C.C.
Secretary



Nevin Hess
Midvale C.C.
Treasurer



Andy Eick
Mohawk G.C.



Nick Perrucci
Teugega C.C.



Martin Ward
Sodus Bay Heights G.C.



Thad Thompson
Terry Hills G.C.



Dave Gentner
Thousand Islands C.C.



Scott Howard
Attica G.C.



Scott Wheeler
FTO
Special Director



Steve Kurta
Tuscarora G.C.
Past President



Ron Stepanek,
Executive Director, GCSANY

Meet Ron Stepanek

Hello GCSANY Members, Partners and Friends,

Thanks to so many of you for the warm welcome into the Chapter. For many reasons I am thrilled to have this opportunity to serve as your Executive Director! At the forefront is how impressed I am with current and past leadership for setting a bold vision and achieving so much in such a short period of time. I also applaud this vision as I am certain this is in the best interest of Golf Course Superintendents, as well as the golf industry, throughout New York.

It's been a bit of a whirlwind start. My first official duty was traveling to Phoenix for the GCSAA Conference. No doubt, this was the perfect way for me to begin, i.e. a lot of very productive business and education during the day, followed by getting introduced to the GCSANY community socially in the evenings.

I am now back in the office and excited to get things rolling. As I do, you might like to be aware of my professional style and personal mission that I will:

- Passionately uphold our GCSANY mission and strive to achieve our vision
- Proactively provide the best member and customer service possible
- Develop sincere relationships and earn trust throughout our community
- Ensure the GCSANY is positioned and respected as a valued resource
- Serve as an “ambassador” for the GCSANY as well as our members and the profession

Along these lines, I am committed to being visible, approachable and supportive, to include attending events (in all regions of our Chapter) and visiting with as many of you as possible. So, if you see me out in the field, please be sure to say hello. Plus, always feel free to call or send me a message if I ever can be of assistance.

I am very fortunate to be in this position and look forward to working with you for years to come!

Ron Stepanek
Executive Director
Ron.stepanek@gcsaofny.org
716-471-1535

Ron Stepanek - BIO

PGA Life Member Ron Stepanek has been fortunate to spend his entire career in the golf industry. In fact, very few can match his diverse golf industry experiences working at the local, regional and national levels, as well as all type of golf facilities, prominent golf organizations and management companies.

His professional golf-administration career started here in New York in 1993, as he was the 1st Full Time Executive Director for the Central New York PGA. After building a strong operational foundation, he moved on in 1997 to a similar role with the Southern Ohio PGA. In addition to driving incredible success and growth, especially in terms of increasing sponsorship support every year, he was the founder of a state-wide golf coalition called “Play Golf Ohio” with efforts dedicated to grow participation in the game.

Recognizing his leadership efforts and focus on growing this game, in 2005 PGA promoted him to Director of Industry Development. While employed by the PGA, he was actually responsible for overseeing Play Golf America, an industry-wide collaborative campaign. During this time he worked closely with the USGA, NGCOA, LPGA, GCSAA , First Tee, NGF and many other leading organizations. Some of his more prominent initiatives included Tee It Forward, Get Golf Ready and the PGA Jr. Golf League.

After being a product of a mass re-organization at the PGA in 2013, he would soon become a Regional Vice President and General Manager for Spirit Golf Management based out of the Philadelphia market. In addition being the lead executive administrator for Spirit Golf, he was a hands-on general manager over 2 facilities, and collaborated on signing several new golf course partners.

In 2019 he accepted a Business Development Executive role with BrightView Golf Maintenance. Over the next 5 years he led all of BrightView by generating a 54% growth across the Northeast as well as becoming National Sales Leader. Through this position he also gained a much deeper understanding of the golf course maintenance profession as he worked closely with Golf Course Superintendents across the country.

Over the years he has been selected for numerous awards and honors including Central New York PGA Golf Professional of the Year, Southern Ohio PGA Hall of Fame “Legacy”, and the Water-Oak Circle of Sports (CT) Hall of Fame – Gold Ring Honoree.

While his experiences are diverse and successes proven, Stepanek feels administrative leadership is his greatest skill, especially working with smaller organizations with visions to grow, and being able to make direct connections with grass-roots members. Along these lines, former PGA of America CEO Joe Steranka would often recognize Stepanek as the best administrator working for the PGA of America.

EWING
OUTDOOR SUPPLY

The Best Conditions Require The Right Partners

Your Exclusive Rain Bird® Golf Supplier



RAIN BIRD

ClearWater
Water Recycling Systems
A Division of Acumatica North America

ADS
Advanced Drainage Systems, Inc.

GroundWorx

CapillaryFlow

MAGNATION
WATER TECHNOLOGIES - MADE IN USA

Underhill

TACIT
GOLF COMPANY
www.tacitgolf.com U.S.A.

Upstate NY Market
Dan Guggi
Golf Account Manager
dguggi@ewingos.com
716.391.7431



snap the QR code
to Get more info

796124



Your *full-service* turf management partner

Helena is your full-service turf management partner and offers a wide range of innovative products, course mapping and nutrient analysis. Helena also provides a complete line of granular fertilizers, liquid nutritionals, bio-stimulants, wetting agents, herbicides, adjuvants and more.

Contact your local Helena representative or visit HelenaProfessional.com to learn more.

Bill Ross
(315) 521-3301
RossW@HelenaAgri.com

Jon Cuny
(724) 602-1510
CunyJ@HelenaAgri.com

Louis Bettencourt
(978) 580-8166
BettencourtL@HelenaAgri.com



HelenaProfessional.com Important: Always read and follow label instructions. Some products may not be registered for sale or use in all states and countries. Please check with your Helena representative to ensure registration status. Helena and RX360 are registered trademarks of Helena Holding Company. © 2024 Helena Holding Company. HPG0124P

Superintendent Spotlight

By Mike Tollner

As GCSANY begins its 5th year, there is much to be excited about for the organization's future. We recently hired a new executive director, Ron Stepanek, and we have a new president who was elected last December at our Annual Meeting. I had the opportunity to sit down with our new president, Joe Lucas of Saratoga National Golf Club, and Joe was eager to share his vision for the coming year and his tenure as president of the association. Joe has been an active member of the board of directors of GCSANY since the merger in 2020, and I have been fortunate to get to know him over the past few years. However, this was a terrific opportunity for me to learn more about him on a personal level, and I am glad to share that with the membership. Joe has been involved with the GCSANY since its inception and was brought into the conversation about merging associations back in 2016 when he was the president of the Northeastern GCSA. He has remained an integral part of the association since that time.

Originally from the small town of Ogdensburg in northwest New Jersey, like many of us, Joe's career began as a summer job while he was in college. Joe was studying Marketing and Finance at Wilkes University in Wilkes Barre, PA. At that time, Joe was planning to follow the path of many who grew up in Sussex County. Get a degree and work in Manhattan, either for a marketing company or on Wall Street. A career in the golf industry was not something he considered much at that time, but he quickly moved up the ranks of the construction crew at Crystal Springs Golf Club in Hamburg, NJ. Joe spent his first summer there mostly picking rocks, but by the time he was ready to head back to school, he was already running a backhoe, working on irrigation, and seeding in the greens. When he returned in the summer of 1992, the golf course was brand new and rated by Golf Digest as one of the top 25 new courses in America. Joe quickly transitioned from construction into maintenance, learning to walk mow greens and tees, rake bunkers, and change cups, among other things. After two summers at Crystal Springs, Joe accepted a job as the 2nd assistant at Upper Montclair Country Club. During this time, he began to seriously consider a career in the industry. In 1993, Joe enrolled in Rutgers University's Professional Golf Course Turf School. He would complete the program that winter and continued working for superintendent Red Dickison at Upper Montclair for two more years, all the while learning the skills necessary to succeed under great leadership. After three seasons at Upper Montclair, Joe became the assistant at Shore Oaks (now known as Eagle Oaks) Golf and Country Club in Farmingdale, NJ, where he spent two years before heading further down the shore to become the assistant at Galloway National Golf Club. Galloway National is widely recognized as one of the best private clubs in the state and considered one of Tom Fazio's best designs. It is also known to be reminiscent of Pinehurst, and another well-known club just up the Atlantic City Expressway, Pine Valley, because of its location in the Pine Barrens section of New Jersey, and the amount of exposed sand, all things that Fazio took into consideration during the build.

Spotlight cont'd.

Joe spent four seasons at Galloway, but at this point in his life, he had set a clear goal for himself to become a superintendent by the time he turned 30. As it turned out, he missed his goal by just two days! Joe turned 30 years old on June 2nd and was offered the job as the construction superintendent at Saratoga National on June 4th. An exciting new project was about to begin on the over 400-acre property, and due to the time he spent working at Crystal Springs, he was a perfect fit for Saratoga National. Working closely with architect Roger Rulewich and his team, Joe has been involved in every phase of Saratoga National's existence, an impressive feat to say the least. During the course's construction, Joe had many critical decisions to make that would ultimately impact the golf course for many years. For example, the soils were not great in much of the rough, so instead of risking these areas staying thin or washing out during heavy rain, Joe convinced the owner that they should sod all the rough, to ensure better stability, and a better playing surface when the course opened. They would go on to sod approximately 85 acres of bluegrass during the project, another impressive feat! Joe seeded the greens with A4 bentgrass, while the tees and fairways were seeded with a combination of imperial, south shore, and putter bent.

Many years ago, when Joe accepted the job, he figured that he would spend a few years building the course and growing it in, and never imagined it would become the job that defined his career. However, after he began working there, he quickly realized that this place was different. Joe says that has a lot to do with the club's owner, Tom Newkirk. Joe and Tom have spent 25 years working together, and have developed, according to Joe, a "fortunate and unique relationship". Joe also said that this relationship goes further than theirs, as his assistant, mechanic, and the head golf professional at Saratoga have all also been there for nearly 25 years. That speaks volumes about the club, the business, and everyone involved.

Saratoga National is a championship layout that can play well over 7,000 yards from the back tees. It is a busy golf course, averaging about 26,000 rounds a year. During race season, the peak of summer in the Saratoga Springs area, Joe says there is an 8-week period where the course needs to be kept in member guest condition every single day, and there is rarely an open tee time.

When he is away from the course, Joe enjoys spending time with his family. He and his wife Marci have been married since 2010, and they have two children, John, 20, and Daniel, 12. The family enjoys vacations together, taking trips to Mexico, Florida and elsewhere. Joe is an avid skier and mountain biker. Joe spends most of his ski days at nearby Gore Mountain, where he tries to get at least 30 days a season on the slopes. He also enjoys playing golf in the summer, and much of he and Marci's free time is spent cheering on their boys who play football, basketball, and lacrosse.

Joe has a strong vision for the GCSANY during his term as its president. He wants to strengthen the association, while ensuring that members and partners see the value in being involved. He passionately believes that his service on the board is an important part of who he is and is an opportunity for him to give back to the industry. Joe says that GCSANY provides educational, environmental, and legislative benefits to all superintendents and industry partners. His involvement in the association at the board level has allowed him to network, meeting many new people and developing critically important relationships. According to Joe, the GCSANY encompasses a "big state, but a small business," and his goal as president is to continue bringing everyone in the industry together.

HELP GROW AND SUSTAIN YOUR ROOTS ALL SEASON LONG

Maximize Your Inputs with These Biostimulants

Harrell's Root Health Program will aid in promoting stress tolerance, root mass and length, and uniform distribution of moisture. EarthMAX®, Seaweed Extract, Amino Pro V and Mycorrhizae Pro are your best friends when it comes to root health. Contact your sales representative for details and rates.

Are you ready for year-long healthy roots?

Visit www.harrells.com or contact your sales rep today.



CHRIS MAKOWSKI
cmakowski@harrells.com
(585) 749-4598



ANTHONY CHAPMAN
achapman@harrells.com
(607) 205-2824



JIM SEAMAN
jseaman@harrells.com
(518) 365-5409



www.harrells.com | 800.282.8007
Employee-Owned



**SERVICE.
KNOWLEDGE.
EXPERIENCE.**

www.ftodistributors.com



MIKE BAMANN

Director of Sales

mike@ftodistributors.com

585-721-9342

SCOTT WHEELER

Asst. Sales Mgr. & Central NY

scott@ftodistributors.com

585-734-3474

MATT ACCARDI

Sales Rep., Western NY

matt@ftodistributors.com

845-699-1100

ANDY EICK

Sales Rep., Eastern NY

andy@ftodistributors.com

774-210-0455

JON CHARPINSKY

Sales Rep., Westchester County NY

jon@ftodistributors.com

860-756-6590

Customer Service is our First priority

Touching Grass

This short column will highlight the interests and hobbies of GCSANY members. The focus will be on what we do away from the course for ourselves, our loved ones, and our mental health. We'll be looking at what people get up to around our regions, ask three burning questions, include some pictures and hopefully a video in every issue.

Adam Engle, originally from Newberry, MI. lives in Cicero, NY where he's starting his 21st season at the helm of golf and grounds for Lakeshore Yacht and Country Club. He's been turning wooden bowls on a lathe for the last 9 years at his home. What started as a therapeutic practice turned into a way to find his center, relax, focus, and take time to decompress from daily demands. Adam sells, donates, and trades his bowls, rolling pins, and other creations to all that are interested.



- **Tell us about your first car:** 1979 Ford LTD. Maroon, would overheat if driven over 55 mph.
- **What advice would you give 20-year-old Adam:** Invest now and keep adding as often as possible.
- **All-time favorite birthday cake:** Triple-double chocolate with dark chocolate ganache frosting. Did I mention chocolate



[Link to video](#)



Advancing Healthy Environments for Everyone Everywhere

envuTM

Darrin Batisky; Area Sales Manager
 Upstate New York & Pennsylvania
 (317) 402-7270 – cell/text
 darrin.batisky@envu.com

MTE

EQUIPMENT SOLUTIONS, INC.



At MTE, service is our priority.

Call or visit us online today!
 1-888-708-5296

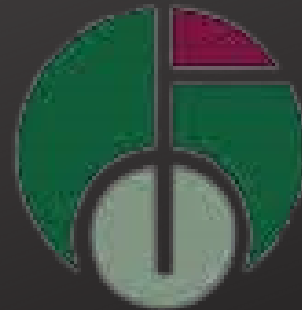
www.mteequipsolutions.com
sales@mte.us.com



Playability Matters!

| DryJect® | DryJect Injection | Core Aeration |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|
| Improved Agronomics | Y | Y |
| One Pass | Y | X |
| Instant Playability | Y | X |
| Revenue Gained | Y | X |

DryJect Upstate
 610-721-9791 | jeremy@dryject.us



New York Chapter
GCSAA



The board of directors is offering current members the opportunity to send any member of their facility to the Great Lakes School of Turfgrass Science. This a great chance to build upon your staffs current knowledge in golf course management.

The Great Lakes School of Turfgrass Science is a 12 week online program that will make any turf manager better at their job.

Use this offer to improve your skill set and add value to your professional credentials as well as become a greater asset to your employer.

With the current labor market it's getting harder to find qualified individuals to fill the rolls available on our crews.

The GCSANY has committed the monetary resources to send up to 10 individuals, current members, or a sponsored member to attend the program. First come will be first served with this offer. You'll receive a fantastic education from some of the brightest minds in the business and all from the comfort of your own home.

If you have any questions about this program please contact Executive Director, Ron Stepanek.

ron.stepanek@gcsaofny.org

<https://gku.greenkeeperapp.com/>



ANDRE & SON

COMMERCIAL TURF
SALES & SERVICE

SERVING ALL OF NEW YORK TURF PRODUCTS, SERVICES & EQUIPMENT

CONTACT US FOR A CONSULTATION

ALAN SIEGEL - CENTRAL NY
315-374-8443
asiegel@andreandson.com

GREG GAGEN - CENTRAL NY
315-317-4728
ggagen@andreandson.com

JIM BALDWIN - WESTERN NY
716-512-4711
jbaldwin@andreandson.com

DAN STANKIEWICZ - SOUTHERN TIER NY
607-765-0997
dstankiewicz@andreandson.com





We create chemistry

TRY
EASIER.

Now registered in the state of New York! The #1 DMI in the golf market: **Maxtima[®] fungicide**. Spray on any turf, in any temperature, anywhere on your course. It's one less thing to worry about during your high-demand season. Get effective disease control and peace of mind by adding this tool to your arsenal.

Ready to #TryEasier? Contact your BASF representative **Pete Jacobson** at peter.jacobson@basf.com or **919-530-9062**.

Want custom recommendations for your course? Fill out a CoursePower Diagnostic profile at betterturf.basf.us.

Always read and follow label directions.
©2021 BASF Corporation. All rights reserved.
Maxtima is a registered trademark of BASF.

Check with your state or local Extension Service for product registration in your area.

Maxtima[®]
Fungicide



New York Chapter
GCSAA



pump Irrigation Technologies, Inc.

COMPLETE GOLF COURSE SERVICE

LET US BE YOUR COMPREHENSIVE
PUMP STATION SPECIALISTS

SAL SGROI, OWNER/OPERATOR

SALSGROI@PUMPIRRIGATIONTECH.COM

716-818-4329

-COMPLETE PUMP STATION SERVICE

-YEARLY PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE PROGRAMS

-NEW INSTALLATIONS OF PUMP STATIONS

-PUMP STATION RETROFITS

-PUMP / MOTOR SERVICE AND REPAIR

-VFD SERVICE AND REPAIR

-POND FILL PUMPS / DEWATERING PUMPS

-IRRIGATION SATELLITE RETROFITS

-WIRE TRACKING / GROUND-FAULT LOCATING

-SERVICE AND REPAIR OF IRRIGATION CONTROL SYSTEMS

-ONSITE WELDING AVAILABLE

-TORO IRRIGATION SALES AND SERVICE



There are 231 ways to connect.
We'd like to suggest the most efficient way.



Golf Course Connectivity Solutions from John Deere.

Over the years we've learned a few things. When everything is connected, data guides efficiency and productivity. And suddenly everything is just so much more manageable.

See how...
Learn more at
explore.deere.com/golf



JOHN DEERE





2023 recipients

- Kelly Westervelt
- Anilese Kelly

Past recipients

- Madelyn George
- Carson Kelly
- Abigail Richter
- Catarina Bettencourt
- Calvin Lee
- Peter Kurta
- Ryan Lester

GCSANY has awarded over \$15,000 in scholarship since its inception as well as tuition reimbursement for Great Lakes Turf School graduates



GREENKEEPER
UNIVERSITY

- Nicholas Isele
- Renee Lantz
- Justin Chunco
- Jason Dunnewold
- Anthony Bouziden

Weaver Golf & Turf Solutions

PERFORMANCE SANDS AND TURF SUPPLIES



Robert F Goring III
Sales Manager

Cell: 814-460-5712
rob.goring@weavergolf.com
1810 Industrie Dr., PO Box 1151
Jamestown, NY 14701-1151
888-932-8370
Fax: 716-664-1165
www.weavergolf.com
@Weavergolfturf



EXCLUSIVELY AT SiteOne
LANDSCAPE SUPPLY

DO MORE WITH LESCO®

LESCO agronomic products from SiteOne® Landscape Supply are backed by 60 years of green industry knowledge. From innovative seed and enhanced efficiency fertilizers, to rigorously tested control and specialty products, to motorized equipment – LESCO exceeds expectations with every application. Do MORE with LESCO.

Explore our solutions for professionals at SiteOne.com/Lesco



Turf & Soil Diagnostics

"supporting the NYGCSA from the roots up"

Soil, Sand, Drainage Aggregate, and Amendment Testing

Physical testing services for everything from basic soil composition to demanding soil investigations.

- Putting Green and Bunker Sand Testing
- 246 Surface Organic Matter
- Drainage Evaluations
- A2LA Accredited Labs
- USGA List of Recommended Labs
- Test procedures and equipment calibrated to meet the tightest specifications
- Highly competent staff
- Accurated, detailed and informative test reports
- Local Support with International Experience



Contact us Today

Put our experienced staff and innovative testing services to work. We're ready to provide the testing and information you need for success.

Phone: 855-769-4231

Web: www.turfdiag.com

Email: lab@turfdiag.com

Turf & Soil Diagnostics - NY
35 King Street
Trumansburg, NY 14886

Turf & Soil Diagnostics - KS
613 E 1st Street
Linwood, KS 66052

TAKE ACTION FOR FIRST-CLASS PROTECTION

Action™ brand fungicides, including Heritage® Action, Daconil® Action and Secure® Action, work deep inside the plant to stimulate plant proteins and:



ENHANCE DISEASE CONTROL

by building up defense against disease and extending the length of control



IMPROVE DROUGHT TOLERANCE

by maximizing water retention to protect against drought stress



INCREASE HEAT TOLERANCE

by improving photosynthesis and energy production in extreme heat



QUICKEN RECOVERY AND ENHANCE TURF

by activating enzymes for increased energy production and photosynthesis

#EXPERIENCETHACTION AND VISIT CONDITIONPERFORMRECOVER.COM/ACTION OR CONTACT Chris Marra | christopher.marra@syngenta.com | (862) 505-4319

@SyngentaTurf

All photos are either the property of Syngenta or are used with permission.

© 2023 Syngenta. Important: Always read and follow label instructions. Some products may not be registered for sale or use in all states or counties and/or may have state-specific use requirements. Please check with your local extension service to ensure registration and proper use. Action™, Daconil®, Heritage®, the Alliance Frame, the Purpose Icon and the Syngenta logo are trademarks of a Syngenta Group Company. Secure® is a registered trademark of Ishihara Sangyo Kaisha, LTD. All other trademarks are the property of their respective third-party owners.