

FOREGROUND

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McCann Memorial Golf Course

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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.



McCann Memorial GC

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President's Message



The finish line is finally coming into view. Summer is beginning to wind down—*maybe*—though given our recent autumn history, we won't count our chickens just yet. Either way, the shorter days are a welcome change, and I hope everyone has had a successful season so far.

The Hudson Valley GCSA was proud to sponsor the **NYSTA Challenge** held in August at **The Monster Golf Club**, hosted by Tony Steppich. A sincere thank you to NYSTA for their continued efforts in advancing the turfgrass industry through robust educational programs and political advocacy. Our industry thrives through the collaborative efforts of organizations and associations working together.

Our **September meeting** will be held on **Tuesday, September 16th** at **McCann Memorial Golf Course**. I have no doubt Chris Kemble will have the course in excellent condition for what promises to be a very enjoyable day. This meeting also serves as our **MET Team Qualifier**, with the **MET Team Championship** scheduled for **October 20th** at **Tamarack Country Club**—a day that's sure to be both fun and competitive.

I look forward to seeing everyone at our final meetings of 2025 as we push for a strong finish to another successful golf season.

Reese Wasson

President, HVGCSA

Get Well Wishes



The HVGCSA sends our heartfelt prayers and best wishes for a speedy recovery to our good buddy Dan Wilber of Millbrook Golf & Tennis Club. May each day bring renewed strength and brighter moments ahead.

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HVGCSA September Meeting & Met Team Qualifier

Hosted by Chris Kemble at McCann Memorial Golf Course

Tuesday, September 16th

The HVGCSA's next golf meeting will be held at McCann Memorial Golf Course in Poughkeepsie, NY on Tuesday, September 16th. Our host, Chris Kemble, is only the 3rd superintendent to hold the reins at McCann since the course opened in 1973. His predecessors, long time HVGCSA members Paul Buccellato and the late John Adriance, were well-loved and respected by their peers. It's a strong legacy that Chris continues.

The Golf Course: If you are wondering how the golf course got its name, wonder no further. James J. McCann was a local Poughkeepsie businessman who left a sizable estate to various charities upon his death to do good works. One of his wishes was for the construction of a municipal golf course. His wish was granted and the city of Poughkeepsie donated land for the project and construction began in 1969.

McCann was designed by architect William Mitchell and is noted for its large greens and narrow fairways. Mitchell left his mark in the Hudson Valley and Long Island, designing Tarry Brae, Putnam National, Otterkill, Woodcrest Club, and Pine Hollow to name a few. McCann was completed and scheduled to open in 1971 when, just prior to the grand opening, a tropical storm pounded the area and totally washed out a large part of the golf course. Repairs took more than a year to complete and the full 18-hole layout opened in 1973.



The McCann Foundation was set up to underwrite the course if it slipped into the red. McCann-Caven Golf Courses Inc. was created in 1975 as a regulatory body to oversee the proper operation of the course. Greens fees

for local residents are lower than for non-residents and to this day the course has not cost the taxpayers of Poughkeepsie a dime.

The course plays 6524 yards from the tips and par is 72. The par 3's on the course are not overly long and all of the par-5's are reachable in two for the big hitters, none measuring more than 471 yards from the white tees.

About Chris:



Chris began his golf maintenance career in 2000 working on the crew at Beekman CC. With Superintendent Bobby Steinman's encouragement, Chris developed a true fondness for his chosen profession. "Bobby influenced me to stay in the industry,"

Chris recalled, "he taught me about the maintenance and operation of the golf course and took me to a lot of HVGCSA meetings. Bobby's innate skill as an agronomist was a huge help, he's one of the best." Bobby is currently working at McCann as Chris' assistant.

In 2006, Chris completed his 2-year degree at Rutgers University and became Bob's assistant. Chris remained at Beekman until the next important opportunity beckoned. In 2008 Chris decided to move on and took a position at Westchester CC for working for Joe Alonzi. "Joe taught me what it was like to operate in a private higher level golf environment. I learned about paying attention to the smallest details and budgets and the logistics of such a large operation. I gained a lot of valuable experience working for Joe".

In 2009, Chris was hired as the superintendent of Southern Dutchess GC in Beacon, NY. Chris fondly recalls, "I loved the work at Southern Dutchess because it was so hands-on. I had a really small crew. The membership was great and made me feel very welcome and secure. The members themselves would pitch in and help with projects and aeration. It was a real "blue collar" club."

In January of 2013, Chris moved north to become the superintendent of the McCann and College Hill golf



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2025 Scholarship Recipients

Thanks to the support of our members and the generosity of our sponsors, the HVGCSA has awarded a total of **\$67,500 in scholarships** since 2003.

Congratulations to this year's recipients! We wish you continued success and happiness in all your future endeavors.

Good luck with your studies!



Sofia Dyroff

School: St. Thomas Aquinas College

Major: Art

HVGCSA Member: Chris Dyroff, Philip Rotella GC



Carter Babbage

School: University of Buffalo

Major: Architecture & Landscape Design

HVGCSA Member: Ben Babbage, Strom King Golf Club



Payton Gurney

School: St. Joseph's University

Major: Criminal Justice

HVGCSA Member: Guy Gurney, Storr Tractor



Bea Halderman

School: University of Vermont

Major: Music

HVGCSA Member: Blake Halderman, Brae Burn Country Club



Sarah Lippman

School: Central Connecticut State University

Major: Education

HVGCSA Member: Dave Lippman, Westchester Turf Supply



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HVGCSA September Meeting Hosted by McCann...continued

courses. It's a big operation. McCann has 18 full and part time employees and College Hill has five. Jack Nesbit, Chris' assistant at College Hill, runs the crew for the nine-hole tract and does a great job. Jack is currently attending Rutgers to get his 2-year degree.

Since McCann is run by a foundation, Chris works closely with McCann-Caven President Patrick Gartland. "Patrick is committed to bring the golf courses and the facilities to another level whether it is updating the equipment or planning and funding course projects", Chris remarked, "Patrick is very supportive and has made my job much easier".

On the personal side, Chris is an avid sportsman who loves to play golf (14 handicap), hunt, and fish. Once a year in October, Chris and his family head upstate for a week of salmon fishing in Pulaski, NY.

Chris met his soulmate Renee through an acquaintance in 2006. It was a long distance relationship at first since Renee lived in Florida. In 2007, Renee moved to NY and they were married in 2009. Their union has produced three lovely young ladies, Cienna-15, Aubrey-12, and Taylor-10.

We look forward to a great turnout on September 16th. Get off the couch and come and join the fun!!

Kevin Collins
Ocean Organics



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Criteria:

1. Must be a Class A, B or C member of the Hudson Valley GCSA and be in good standing
 2. Must be active within the Association
 3. Have not attended the GCSAA Conference & Show within the past 5 years
 4. Must submit a brief essay as to how the trip will benefit you and your facility.
 5. Must submit a written article outlining your experience for the Foreground Newsletter
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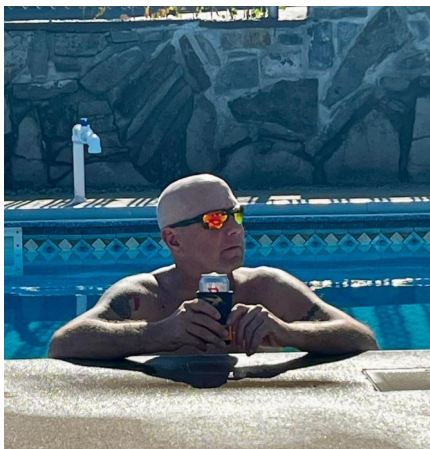
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Hudson Valley News of Interest!

By: Kevin Collins



*You're probably wondering why you haven't seen Putnam National's Jeff Newell around much this year. He's doing a stint in rehab as we speak. It's a nice facility. It has private suites, a gym, a swimming pool, and a 9-hole golf course. Jeff's been giving the golf course crew some agronomic advice. And they've been reciprocating with free Coors Lights. Jeff is seen here shotgunning a silver bullet and enjoying the pool. Jeff remarked, "I don't care if I ever get out of here, it's like heaven."



*Powelton Club's Mike Aube is fed up. He got sick of working on his wife's Mercedes so he just threw it in a dumpster. He's had enough of the ever-expanding goat population at Powelton so he plans on throwing all the course goats in the dumpster. Don't mess with Mike. You might end up in the dumpster too.



*Centennial's Glen Dube loves to fish. But fishing is almost too easy for the "Dubester". So, he has created a new sport, landmark fishing. Glen is seen here reeling in a castle on the Hudson River. "You need a decent lure and some crazy strong fishing line to landmark fish," remarked Glen, "I hear it might even be an Olympic sport in 2028."



*Leewood CC Course Dog Barkley recently celebrated a birthday. As a present, Tim let Barkley bite the Greens Chairman. Barkley ripped the Greens Chair's pants and drew blood. Next year is the Club President's turn. Well done Barkley....and Happy Birthday!!



*It was a great day for the MetGCSA "First Green" event at Knollwood CC. Grover Alexander loved teaching the kids about the ins and outs of beekeeping. That is, until they stopped paying attention. An enraged Grover started to kick the beehive he brought in to educate the kids. Not a big deal. Only about six kids and two teachers got stung.



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Kevin Doyle, GCSAA Northeast Representative



The timeline to the left was shared during, and after, the 2024 GCSAA Delegates Meeting. It highlights the many programs and services that have been launched in the recent past. Notable within these offerings are many benefits to staff other than head golf course superintendents. As labor continues to be a challenge for many facilities, having programs that benefit those people critical to our operations can make a significant difference. I have written about opportunities for equipment managers, assistant superintendents, and students in the past. I'm hopeful you have urged those at your courses to take advantage of them. Yet again, GCSAA has delivered another service that should benefit your staff and there is another program with an upcoming deadline to note too.

If you have been in the industry for a while, you might recall the VHS training videos featuring a young Darren Davis! While a lot has changed over the years, the need for staff training has been desired by many superintendents. Alas, GCSAA has answered the call. GCSAA's Video Training Series is now available in the [Learning Hub](#) and features crew-based videos covering topics from cup cutting and greens mowing to bunker raking and hand watering and more. This 11-video series aims to help superintendents attract, train and retain employees. The videos are available for free on gcsaa.org exclusively for GCSAA members. In addition to the videos, a short survey follows, and an employee sign-off sheet is also provided. The videos cover the following topics:

- Crew Etiquette
- This is a Golf Course
- Walk Behind Greens Mowing
- Bunker Maintenance
- Hand Watering
- Handheld Equipment
- Safety Basics
- Greens Mowing
- Ride on Equipment
- Tee Service
- Cup Cutting

These videos are currently being translated into Spanish, with French to follow. Look for those translated offerings to begin coming out soon.

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- Past recipients are not eligible.
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HV Cup at the Links...recap

Fun was had by all on June 17th at The Links at Union Vale! Thankfully, the rain held off for most of the round, making for a great afternoon of golf. Congratulations to our HV Cup Winner - Team Links for an impressive score of 58.



Chris had the course in tremendous shape, as always, with help from his assistant Rob and the rest of the crew. The pride they take in presenting a top-tier course really shows and always makes for an enjoyable experience. Big thanks also to the clubhouse staff and Pat, the pro, for their support and hospitality.

It's certainly been a wild weather year so far - hope everyone's riding the storm okay!

Event Results:

Long Drive

Rob Stewart, The Links at Union Vale (He's a really good golfer!)

Closest to the Pin #10 - Dick Neufeld (13" 8")

2nd Place - (64)

Dave Lippman, Chris Marra & Reese Wasson

1st Place - (58)

Team Links, led by Rob Stewart
(Chris might have to work these guys a little harder!)

Thanks again to everyone who came out for a great day. And to our HV Cup sponsors - Metro Turf Specialists, Westchester Turf, Davey Tree, SiteOne, Harrell's, Tanto Irrigation, Strorr Tractor, Grass Roots and our open bar sponsor Plant Food.

Cheers,
Matt



Meeting Schedule

September 16th Met Team Qualifier

Host: Chris Kemble
McCann Memorial Golf Course

October 7th Worthington Cup

Host: Reese Wasson
Osiris Country Club

October 20th Met Team Championship

Host: Jeff Scott, CGCS
Tamarack Country Club

November 8th Tailgate Party w/MetGCSA West Point

HV Cup—The Links at Union Vale



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Wrapping Up Another Season!

What a season we have had this year. It seems this is the way every late season article goes any more... Whatever you are dealing with, know that there is probably someone else who is experiencing the same thing. As we close out the summer season over the next few weeks, my favorite part of the season comes, Fall. Fall is a great time of year. Golf slows down perhaps, recovery comes, projects get underway, and the season comes to a close. We get to review what worked and what did not work this past season and strategize for the next year. Oh, and football is back...whether you are into college or pro football, it doesn't really matter. The only thing that matters is that the Steelers fire their Coach and rebuild. And I would be amiss if I didn't mention the World Series, Go Phillies! Don't even get me started on the Nittany lions this year...

Speaking of this past season, it seemed it was very important where exactly you were located. Some had inches of rain while others had tenths of an inch of rain, all in the same storm and only miles apart. This was followed with intense dew points and record setting temperatures which set up for a very challenging season again. I am tired of saying this year has been one of the toughest that I can remember, I feel like I have said the same thing for the last 4 years at least.

Then there was the annual bluegrass weevils and summer patch or perhaps a little pythium...we have seen it all this year. Hopefully the resources were available and the ability to get out these critical applications were not hindered by lack of staff or the wild weather. It is very easy to see where pre-emergent herbicides were applied with the banner year for crabgrass! I thought I had the perfect stage 3 application, just to get a bunch of chewing from the abw...it goes to prove the best laid plans and scientific timing doesn't equate to perfection.

As someone much older and much wiser once told me, it's just grass. Some will not make it through the season, but it will come back. As we are known to be perfectionists, there will be bumps and bruises, and another wiser person told me, if you don't kill any grass, you weren't trying hard enough. Aerification season is either coming up or it's happening now...we got some great days ahead for it, albeit a little extra sunshine and lower dew points will require extra attention, but it could be worse.

With that, know that your peers are in the same boat. Have a great end of the season.

Tim Walker, CGCS
Leewood Golf Club

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IRRIGATION: A LOVE HATE RELATIONSHIP

Let me tell you—there's nothing quite like watching a couple of beautiful sprinklers throw water into the sunrise with just a few taps on your phone. But just as quickly, that peaceful moment can turn into chaos when a surprise geyser joins the show or a rogue river appears somewhere on the course.

I'm lucky to have a modern computer central and a pumphouse station that's only a few years old. But my sprinkler and pipe system? It's original to the course—about 35 years old. It must've been something before electricity! That aging infrastructure adds a unique kind of stress to my job.

We're in the early stages of designing a new sprinkler system, but until then, I'm constantly monitoring and making repairs. And when I say repairs... well, sometimes they're more like creative solutions. I do my best to keep things top-notch, but when parts are scarce or time is tight, you do what you have to do.

One method I swear by: drilling out pinholes near valve boxes, using a self-tapping screw with a piece of old greens mower tire, sealing it with primer and glue, and driving it in with an impact. It's like filling a cavity—and it works. I've never had one fail.

Of course, there are the big jobs too. One of the toughest was replacing a valve box service with a T fitting and brass valve—at the lowest point on the course. With frozen or missing isolation valves, I had to drain the entire system. Another memorable repair was replacing a 30' section of mainline over a stream, complete with Schedule 80 fittings, thrust blocks, and a protective shroud made from drainage pipe and sacrete.

I'd love to hear about your own irrigation repairs -whether they were clever fixes you're not too proud of or major challenges you'll never forget. Let's keep sharing ideas and learning from each other.

Feel free to call, text, or just stop me next time you see me. September's here—time for aerators and falling leaves!

JJ Kozala, GCS
Hickory Hill Golf Course



Nine & Dine @ Rotella...recap



It was a steamy afternoon on July 21st for the Nine & Dine at Rotella, but the course was in fantastic shape thanks to Chris, his assistant Scott, and the entire crew. Their pride in presenting a top-quality course really showed, and the hospitality was outstanding - from cold beverages on the course to a delicious dinner afterward.

Everyone appreciated the great value and the warm welcome. The event was filled with laughter, good golf, and great company.

Event Highlights & Winners:

Long Drive

Doug Estey – Word is, he outdrove his son all day!

Closest to the Pin

Joe Haverilla – And yes, the putt was made!

Winning Team - Format Scramble Brae Burn (29)

Led by Blake and his assistants - hope you all enjoyed the afternoon (and that your next morning didn't start at 4:00 a.m.)

50/50 Winners

- Nick a guest of Jim Biordi, Dogwood Knolls GC
- Tim Donnery from Rotella

A big thank you to Chris and everyone who helped make the afternoon such a fun and memorable one. Looking forward to seeing everyone at our upcoming meetings at McCann and Osiris!

Cheers,
Matt

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info@tantoirrigation.com

W & B Golf Carts

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Jason Hommel: 518-851-2266

Westchester Tractor, Inc.

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Brewster, NY 10509
John Apple: 845-278-7766
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HVGCSA September Meeting & Met Team Qualifier



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WESTCHESTER TURF SUPPLY



McCann Memorial Golf Course

155 Wilbur Blvd, Poughkeepsie, NY

Tuesday, September 16, 2025

Host: Chris Kemble

10:00 Registration (coffee & bagels)

11:00 Golf: Shotgun - **Format:** Stroke

****Handicap required when registering**

Lunch: On the Turn - Beverage Cart (beer & soda)

3:30 Heavy Hors D'oeuvres, Cash Bar & Awards

Fee: \$125 - Food, Golf & Prizes

\$35 - After golf reception

Dress Code: Proper Golf Attire

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