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GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENTS ASSOCIATION



## 38th Annual Scholarship & Research Tournament

By Richard Lombardi



The Scholarship and Research Committee sponsored another successful event with the 38th Annual Scholarship & Research Tournament held at Potowomut Golf Club on September 21st.

Organizing this event requires dedication and hard work of the committee members and staff early in the year to achieve rewarding results. Recognition goes out to the entire S&R Committee. We would also like to thank the volunteers that helped out on the day of the tournament which are Bill Coulter, Joan Fandetti, Brian Giblin, Michelle Maltais, Alicia Pearson, and Gary Sykes. The committee also extends a special thank you to Julie Heston for her assistance, dedication and strong administrative support.

To our annual sponsors, who play a key role in the tournament's success, the committee extends its gratitude. Please see the full list of sponsors for this event on the following pages.

Special recognition is also extended to Peter Fish and the entire team at Potowomut Golf Club. The superb conditions of the course and the facility along with excellent service provided by the entire staff from start to finish greatly contributed to the day's success.

In closing, the unconditional support and efforts of all participants will allow the Scholarship & Research Tournament to remain a key event representing the RIGCSA's strong commitment to educational enhancement.

Sincerely,

**Richard Lombardi, Chairman**  
*Scholarship and Research Committee*

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## President's Message



Hello everyone,

I've heard a few complaints lately about my messages being way too long so I will attempt to be brief. I would really like to thank everyone that hosted meetings this year and just as much thank all that attended. We visited some familiar places as well as some we haven't seen in a long time.

Happy holidays to all and think snowy thoughts.

**John Lombardi**  
RIGCSA President

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# RIGCSA 38th Annual Scholarship & Research Tournament Sponsors

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# 2021 MET Area Team Championships

## The Philadelphia AGCS wins 2021 Met Area Team Championship at Saratoga National Golf Club

After taking a year off due to the Covid-19 pandemic and with some familiar faces back on the team, the Philadelphia AGCS won the 2021 MET Team Championship at Saratoga National Golf Club in Saratoga, NY! This is their fifth title in the past 16 years, shooting a combined score of 4 under, 282! In a tight battle at the top, Philadelphia won by 4 strokes over the defending champions from Connecticut. Great play by all 8 team members helped propel Philadelphia to the top, led by the lowest best-ball gross score of the day of a 3 under 69 by Jeff Haas and John Gosselin. They had a well-balanced team with Rich Sweeney and Jon Urbanski firing the 5th lowest Net score of the day at 67. Philadelphia rounded out the winning team with scores of 74 gross from Darren Farrar and Chet Walsh and an even par 72 from Greg D'Antonio and Nick Lubold.

Fall foliage was peaking at just the right time for host superintendent Joe Lucas. Joe was on hand competing for the newly formed GCSA of New York and had the Roger Rulewich gem in tip top shape after a brutally rainy year. Joe grew in Saratoga National 20 years ago and has kept the challenging layout in the best courses of New York ever since with fantastic greens and tee to green conditioning!

Defending champion Connecticut made a good run at Philadelphia, but in the end the title came down to the difficult par 5 sixth, where a best ball of 9 caused some unfortunate heartache! It's believed the unnamed team is sending a case of beer to their other teammates for retribution. In third place the team from the Pocono group edged out New Jersey by just 2 strokes.

Once again after a challenging pandemic, the Met Area Team Championship was made possible by our 7 major sponsors who continue to step up to make this one of the best events across North America! Please join me in thanking Allied Nutrients, BASF, Bayer, Ocean Organics, Plant Food, Syngenta and Toro as they continue to support this fantastic event.

The Met Area Team Championship continues to raise money each year to help those in our industry going through difficult times. Over the past 10 years we have raised over \$10,000 and have supported superintendents, industry representatives and their families in times of need. After the last event held, we donated \$1,000 to the Tyler Reeb Trust and \$1,000 to the Scott Wiiki Memorial Scholarship Fund and also made a donation to PA PGA professional Justin Riegel who was tragically killed in a violent storm. Thank you to all who support these efforts with the 50/50 raffles! If you know of anyone in need, please let us know.

Thanks again to all our sponsors, Joe Lucas and his entire staff, and all the folks at Saratoga National GC for another successful championship! A special thank you to our local GCSAA representative Kevin Doyle for help with registration and our resident photographer Shaun Barry for the great photos that can be found at <https://flic.kr/s/aHsmWY1oRS> We look forward to seeing everyone next year, so stay tuned for announcements over the winter! Note: Please save the date for the Nor'easter Ski Day at Killington Mountain on February 15th, 2022!!



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# 2021 MET Area Team Championships

## 2021 MET Area Team Championships

Saratoga National GC

Par 72 (288)

October 12th, 2021

<u>Team Scores</u>	Par 288 (Ties broken by lowest gross scores ( ), then net)	<u>Score</u>
1 <sup>st</sup>	<b>Philadelphia AGCS</b>	282
2 <sup>nd</sup>	<b>Connecticut AGCS</b>	286
3 <sup>rd</sup>	<b>Pocono Turfgrass Association</b>	291
4 <sup>th</sup>	<b>GCSA of New Jersey</b>	293
5 <sup>th</sup>	<b>METGCSA</b>	295
6 <sup>th</sup>	<b>GCSA of Cape Cod</b>	298
7 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Long Island GCSA</b> (72)	300
8 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Eastern Shore AGCS</b> (80)	300
9 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Northeastern GCSA</b>	308
10 <sup>th</sup>	<b>GCSA of New York</b> (74)	309
11 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Hudson Valley GCSA</b> (83)	309
12 <sup>th</sup>	<b>GCSA of New England</b> (75)	320
13 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Rhode Island GCSA</b> (82)	320
14 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Mid-Atlantic AGCS</b>	WD

### Skill Events

Closest to the pin hole #5, sponsored by Ocean Organics

**Steve Whipple** 8'-2"- Hudson Valley GCSA

Closest to the pin hole #7, sponsored by Bayer

**Jason Meersman** 1'-6" – METGCSA

Closest to the pin hole #12, sponsored by Toro

**Mike Hermanson** 14'-3" - GCSA of New England

Closest to the pin hole #15, sponsored by Plant Food

**Jeff Haas** 4'-2" – Philadelphia AGCS

### Long Drive

Hole # 6: Sponsors Division sponsored by Allied Nutrients      **Andrew Stillwell** – BASF Group

Hole # 14: Gross Division sponsored by BASF    **Rene Vadeboncoeur** – GCSA of Cape Cod

Hole # 16: Net Division sponsored by Syngenta      **Neil Lajennesse** – Connecticut AGCS

### Low Gross Team

**Jeff Haas & John Gosselin** from Philadelphia AGCS Score of 69

### Sponsorship Team Winner

**Joe Perry & Andrew Stilwell** from BASF Group      Score of 67

### Skins

Net	<b>Mike Hermanson</b> Eagle on 12	Gross	<b>Sean Cain</b>	Birdie on 6
	<b>Mark Nichols</b> Eagle on 17		<b>Chet Walsh</b>	Birdie on 12
	<b>Josh Kopera</b> Eagle on 18		<b>Jeff Haas</b>	Birdie on 17
	<b>Steve Smith</b> Double Eagle on 13		<b>Ryan Emerich</b>	Birdie on 18
	<b>Jim Favreau</b> Eagle on 5			
	<b>Nick Burchard</b> Eagle on 7			

# New England Regional Turfgrass Conference and Show....



## Setting and Staying the Course

The New England Regional Turfgrass Conference and Show was set on course back in March of 1998. For some of us that doesn't seem too long ago, but if you do the math, 2022 will be our 25<sup>th</sup> event! At that time, we were very concerned with the amount of support we would get from the industry. That first year, it felt that support was strong, but you are never certain until the seats are filled, and the booths were setup if it was all going to happen the way we were hoping. Fortunately, all went well and just like that we are remembering the years that have gone by. In 1998, we had retired Hall of Fame pitcher Jim Palmer of the Baltimore Orioles as a keynote speaker. As a teenager, I never wanted Jim to pitch against the Sox. He seemed unhittable with his big kick and usually went into the late innings at the Sox's expense. I had to arrange his visit and I had to call him to arrange a meeting place the day of the event. I called and spoke to Mrs. Palmer who told me how excited Jim was to be coming to a turf conference. She filled me in about Jim's pursuit of the perfect lawn and that he spent endless hours working on it! He did a great job speaking to our audience and spending time on the show floor. He wanted to stop in every booth to see what they were selling and pick up as many tips as he could while he was with us. I became a new fan and really enjoyed the time with him. The rest of the show went as nearly as good as the time spent with Jim. Our new turfgrass endeavor was launched successfully and the challenge was to keep it going in a good direction, with great quality and value for everyone who attended. We feel we continue to stay that course!

Though without a Trade Show in 2021, it does seem like a long time since we had been together in 2020. We were lucky we were able to get in and out of Providence the way we did. If you remember 2020, our show just closed as the first cases of Covid were being reported in RI. We knew it was coming, but no one knew it would still be a concern 2 years later. Soon after finishing up the 2021 virtual conference, our board had committed to planning a face-to-face conference in Providence if it was to be permitted. So far, things are holding together, and it looks good for March, as long as the city would also reopen. There were more questions than answers to be found at first. Remember, 8 months ago, the convention center was still set up as a pandemic overflow hospital, but the threat never grew large enough to utilize the facility. The convention center hospital was dismantled in the spring and then the

facility was converted back for its original use. This was the biggest item on our punch list! The next question was concerning the city's hotels and restaurants. Most hotels were closed since April 2020, their staff laid-off and it was not known when they would be back online. The reports are good that the hotels are starting to come back online. Many with major staff changes, but they will be open! Restaurants have mostly recovered, but some have not reopened and won't be. Here is a bit of good news, Rhode Island's 1<sup>st</sup> "110 Grill Providence" is open and is located almost right in front of the convention center across the street! That is a great sign that things are getting better every day in Providence. Our plans are in place, and we continue to be putting together a great 25<sup>th</sup> event!

So, where do we stand? Our show manager (David Rosenberg) reports that support is strong for booth space on the show floor, and we are actively putting together another, what will be, a great trade show! There are some that are still under company restriction not to participate in trade shows. That is too bad, and we will miss their presence, but a large majority are signing up enthusiastically! Education is coming along strong! We have a large group that are planning presentations in 2022. Drs. Frank Rossi, Stan Kostka,

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## Turfgrass (continued)

Beth Guertal, Scott Ebdon, John Inguagiato and Mike Hurdzan are just some that are planning to be with us for seminars and sessions with many more presenters. In 2022, we have a Grass Court Tennis seminar and a “new” Cemeteries Management seminar being tried this year. We have great Equipment Managers sessions both Wednesday and Thursday along with Golf, Sports Turf & Grounds and Lawn Care & Landscape sessions planned. We are trying our best to cover all the needs of the turfgrass industry. That was our hope, that all turfgrass industry professionals would find a reason to attend. We continue to stay that course since 1998!

What is to come? By now, if you are on our mailing list you should have received a postcard about the show. If you haven't, then go to our website and send an email to me with your address. In December, we hope to get our brochure out in the mail to everyone with registration forms. Our website is [www.nertf.org](http://www.nertf.org). From that website in December, you should be able to register for the show. We are hoping to have registration open by December 15. Around that time, we suggest you register for hotel rooms if you plan on staying in Providence. 2021 has been a real challenge, and we are hoping that virtual shows are behind us and that we will be fortu-

nate to be back at the convention center in just 110 days or so! That doesn't sound very far away! That is the course we have set, and we plan to stay that course right through March of 2022!

See you all in Providence, March 8-10, 2022!

**Gary Sykes, Executive Director**

New England Regional Turfgrass Foundation, Inc.

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## October 25, 2021, Superintendent/Assistant Tournament Newport Country Club



Photos by Michelle Maltais

## September 27, 2021, Individual Championship Newport National Golf Club



## September 21, 2021, Scholarship and Research Tournament Potowomut Golf Club



Photos by Michelle Maltais

## September 14, 2021 - Sunset Sail on the Adirondack II in Newport



Photos by Tom Hoffler

# Kevin's GCSAA Corner By Kevin Doyle, GCSAA Northeast Field Rep.



visit reminded me the that the oldest marketing strategy may still be a very effective method. While word of mouth may work for some, would it work for you?

I was delighted to hear Chris Johnson at Bellport CC tell me that his labor was in good shape. For this to occur on the south coast of Long Island was truly surprising to me. I know so many superintendents on the Island struggle to find labor. Johnson explained to me that a 2020 hire had recommended employment at the club to a family member. She was brought on this year and was a great fit! Word of mouth working at its best, but is it really that easy?

So, let's say one of your employees approached me and wanted me to work at your facility. What do you think they would say? They could be your biggest sales staff. Good pay, engaging work, flexible hours when needed, and being a wonderful place to work? That would pique my interest.

Now if I approached a friend of mine, one of your employees, and asked if they are hiring. I didn't receive the afore mentioned information, instead I got the opposite. Pay is ok, no flexibility to handle personal items, some people are nice but all I do is string trim and rake bunkers.

If you have tried to utilize current employees to fill out your staff, they may indeed have already given you a heads-up about your operation. If it worked, you may have found a great mix of the items employees are looking for. If your word-of-mouth initiative wasn't successful, understanding why could help grow your crew/business.

This area of Surf 'n' Turf has expanded on employee feedback before. The staff performing daily tasks are often the best resources for ideas to maximize efficiency. We have highlighted off-season strategic planning and how building a plan with the entire staff can build ownership in those new-innovative ideas. Consider utilizing your best possible sales staff, your current employees, to ensure your facility and employment opportunities are the best they could possibly be. If your employees are seeking to bring friends or loved ones to your team, you know you have built an employee package

**O**ne talking point that has been a lead topic at every site visit I can remember is labor. In the early years it would typically revolve around the quality of the crew. Now of course, discussion leans more towards volume, are you able to find enough labor. There are forward thinking people undertaking creative ways to solve those issues, and enterprising individuals blazing trails to assist others. One recent site

and inclusive culture that everyone at the facility can be proud of.

## GCSAA Resources and Deadlines you Get Cool Stuff from your Association Already

### Growing awareness about the positive environmental impact of golf courses

#### Why take the Water Use and Conservation Practices Survey

The Golf Course Environmental Profile, Phase III is starting up this fall with the Water Use and Conservation Practices Survey. All superintendents, including non-GCSAA members, should participate in this critical survey and to ensure that the profession and industry are well represented by all course types, budget levels and locations. *Note: individual survey responses are not disclosed nor does GCSAA sell email addresses.*

#### How to participate

Superintendents should check their email inboxes or spam filters for an email sent on GCSAA's behalf by the National Golf Foundation (NGF) for their individual access to the survey. The data from the survey will provide much-needed facts that enable GCSAA to advocate on behalf of the profession and industry to maintain the resources needed to ensure success. Without the data, we can't provide the facts behind what we say about golf's and the superintendent's professionalism and environmental stewardship. If you did not receive the email, you can still access the survey linked below.

#### Take the Survey

### Upcoming FREE webcasts:

**Today's Turf is .... Playable**

**Dec. 14 @ noon**

**Aaron J. Patton, Ph.D.**

#### Tips for Painting Your Turf

**Dec. 16 @ noon**

**Sun Roesslein, CSFM**

Again, if I can be of any assistance, please feel free to contact me.

#### Kevin Doyle

GCSAA Field Staff

[kdoyle@gcsaa.org](mailto:kdoyle@gcsaa.org)

Follow me on Twitter @GCSAA\_NE

# RIGCSA Member News

## Welcome New Members:

**Greg Pinto**, Superintendent, Agawam Hunt

**Alex Tutsch**, Assistant Superintendent, North Kingstown Golf Course

## Announcements:

Our condolences are extended to **Tom Colombo** and family on the passing of Tom's mother in October.

Our condolences are extended to the Reynolds family on the passing of retired member **Bob Reynolds**, CGCS who passed away on Friday, November 12, 2021. Bob became a member of the RIGCSA in 1983 and was the Superintendent at Newport Country Club for 30 years. He served as RIGCSA President from 1997-1998 and was also very involved with the Scholarship and Research Committee. He served as the S&R Committee Chairperson helping to organize and run the yearly Scholarship & Research Tournaments. In 2002, he was the recipient of the RIGCSA Distinguished Service Award. After Bob retired as superintendent, he and his wife Beth moved to Florida.

The Scholarship and Research Committee is looking for a host for the 2022 Scholarship and Research Tournament. Please contact Richard Lombardi if you are interested.

**RIGCSA Scholarship applications are due by December 1, 2021.** For more information, please visit <https://www.rigcsa.org/Scholarships>

The Rhode Island GCSA is now offering an Equipment Manager membership for \$75 for the year.

*(\$112.50 to join which includes a one-time application fee)*

Help grow the Equipment Manager Profession and Community in the Rhode Island and nearby areas

- You will have access to attend RIGCSA meetings, networking and educational opportunities
- Visit [www.rigcsa.org](http://www.rigcsa.org) for more information and to apply!

If your club or company has received an award or distinction, please send a brief description to Julie Heston [jheston@verizon.net](mailto:jheston@verizon.net) or Michelle Maltais [nonquitt687@cox.net](mailto:nonquitt687@cox.net) and will list in the Member News section of the Surf'n'Turf newsletter.

## RIGCSA Slate of Officers for 2022

President: **John Lombardi**

Vice President/Secretary: **Matthew Emond**

Treasurer: **Michelle Maltais**

Past President: **Michael Varkonyi**

Director: **Thomas Hoffer**

Director: **Daniel McDermott**

Director: **Patrick Meehan**

## Tournament Results

**September 27, 2021**

**Newport National Golf Club**

**Host: Simon Harootian**

**Individual Championship and New England Champs Qualifier**

### Superintendent Division:

1st Net and Superintendent Champion: **Pat Meehan** 69

2nd Net: **Matt Emond** 73

3rd Net: **Mike Dachowski** 74

4th Net: **Matt Crowther** and **Paul Jamrog** 75

1st Gross: **Shaun Marcellus** 82

2nd Gross: **Joe Felicetti** 83

### Affiliate Division:

1st Net and Affiliate Champion: **Dave Wallace** 75

2nd Net: **David Antunes** 76

3rd Net: **Dan St. Laurant** 77

4th Net: **Mike Cornicelli** 77

1st Gross: **Matt Lapinski** 75

2nd Gross: **Tom Hoffer** 82

Closest to the pin #3: **Shaun Marcellus**

Closest to the pin #4: **Matt Lapinski**

Closest to the pin #13: **Matt Crowther**

Closest to the pin #16: **Pat Meehan**

**October 25, 2021**

**Newport Country Club**

**Host: Chris Coen**

**Superintendent/Assistant Tournament with Other Division**

### Superintendent/Assistant Division

1st Gross **Shaun Marcellus & Tyler Hemingway** 68

1st Net **Matt Barratt & Nate Dee** 62

2nd Net **Bill Sansone & Ryan Babcock** 64 (matching cards)

### Affiliate and Other Division

1st Gross **Matt Lapinski & Keith Tortorella** 63

## July 12, 2021 meeting, Rho-Cod Cup Tournament, Triggs Memorial Golf Course

1st Net **Garrett Whitney & Don Carter** 62

2nd Net **Ben Petersen & Harris Schnare** 64 (matching cards)

Closest-to-pin #8 Affiliate **Alan Vadala** 6'10"

Closest-to-pin #13 Super/Asst **Jeff Tibbetts** 8'1"

### 2021 New England Superintendents Championship Results

This year's New England Superintendents Championship tournament was hosted by the GCSA of New England at Essex Country Club. Thank you to Golf Course Superintendent Eric Richardson and staff for the great course conditions and for hosting a wonderful event. Below are the tournament results for the day.

1st Gross **GCSANE** 156 pts

2nd Gross **RIGCSA** 155 pts

3rd Gross **GCSACC** 144 pts

1st Net **NHGCSA** 224 pts

2nd Net **GCSANE** 220 pts

3rd Net **RIGCSA** 216 pts

Congratulations to the 2021 Centennial Cup Winners

**Dan Golding and Matt Lapinski!**

The Championship match was played against **Matt Crowther and Gary Sykes**.

Thank you to all that participated in this year's Centennial Cup.



Pictured from L-R: Matt Lapinski, Dan Golding, Bob Barrow, Gary Sykes and Matt Crowther

## RIGCSA Holiday Networking Event

Friday, December 10, 2021 3:00 pm - 7:00 pm

O'Brien's Pub

501 Thames Street, Newport, RI

Brief Business Meeting at 3:00 pm

Appetizers and Cash Bar

### Ugly Holiday Sweater Contest!

Prizes given for the top men's and women's ugly sweater entries.

This is a free event.

Spouse/guest is welcome to attend.

RSVP by Tuesday, December 7th to Julie @  
(401) 934-7660, jheston@verizon.net or at [www.rigcsa.org](http://www.rigcsa.org)

\*Please register for this event so we can plan for food.

# URI grad student conducts bumblebee survey of Rhode Island, discovers species not seen in decade

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The results of a survey of bumblebees in Rhode Island conducted by a University of Rhode Island graduate student included one species that had not been seen in more than a decade. But it also confirmed that four other species appear to have disappeared from the state.

"There had never been a bumblebee survey of Rhode Island – or a statewide survey of any kind of bee – and there are some species in the URI historical insect collection that are no longer found in the state," said Elizabeth Varkonyi of Cranston, who led the project with URI Professor Steven Alm. "There used to be 11 species in Rhode Island, but only six of those had been seen since 2014. I wanted to get a better idea if those six were truly the only species found here now. And it turns out that we've added a seventh species to the list."

Bumblebees are important pollinators of flowers and agricultural crops. Certain crops like tomatoes, peppers and blueberries require a specific kind of pollination called buzz pollination that only a few

types of bees, including bumblebees, can do efficiently, Varkonyi said. During buzz pollination, bumblebees vibrate their flight muscles when they land on a flower, and that vibration causes the plants to release their pollen.

With the assistance of fellow URI graduate students Casey Johnson and Julia Vieira, Varkonyi trapped bumblebees at 54 sites around Rhode Island from 2019 to 2021 and surveyed 48 other sites with abundant flowers to record bumblebees and the flower species they were visiting. Of the 7,096 bumblebees she documented, just two species – the common eastern bumblebee (*Bombus impatiens*) and the brown belted bumblebee (*Bombus griseocollis*) – made up 82 percent of the total.

"*Bombus impatiens* seems to be dominant in the region, and that could be a factor contributing to our bumblebee decline – competition with this species," Varkonyi said. "A lot of farmers purchase colonies of this species to pollinate their crops, and they might carry parasites or diseases that could be spread to wild populations of other species."

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From L-R: URI graduate students Elizabeth Varkonyi and Julia Vieira collect data as part of a statewide survey of bumblebees. (Photo courtesy of Elizabeth Varkonyi)

The most notable finding in her survey was the rediscovery of a single specimen of the American bumblebee (*Bombus pensylvanicus*) in southern Rhode Island, a species being considered for endangered species status and that had not been documented in Rhode Island since 2009. Robin Baranowski, a field botany instructor at URI, was the first to spot the American bumblebee in August 2021.

"We were really only expecting to find the six species that we knew were here, so we couldn't believe it when we found that seventh species," she said.

Varkonyi also found 23 individuals of the yellow bumblebee (*Bombus fervidus*), another rare and declining species.

She did not, however, find any evidence of four other species that used to be found in the state – *Bombus affinis*, *Bombus citrinus*, *Bombus terricola*, and *Bombus ternarius*. While some of these four species are still found in nearby states, all appear to be declining. Some have shifted their ranges

northward, perhaps due to the changing climate.

"Having a higher diversity of bumblebee species is important because we found that each species has its own floral preferences," said Varkonyi, who will graduate next August and plans a career involving the management and conservation of habitat for pollinators. "Losing one species can negatively affect the flowers and crops it pollinates."

The most common plants that Varkonyi found bumblebees visiting were bee balm, common St. John's wort, yellow wild indigo and red clover. The newly rediscovered American bumblebee was found visiting bee balm, while the rare yellow bumblebee primarily visited red clover.

Varkonyi presented the results of her bumblebee survey at the annual meeting of the Entomological Society of America in Denver on Nov. 1, where her research poster won first place in the Systematics, Evolution and Biodiversity category.

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