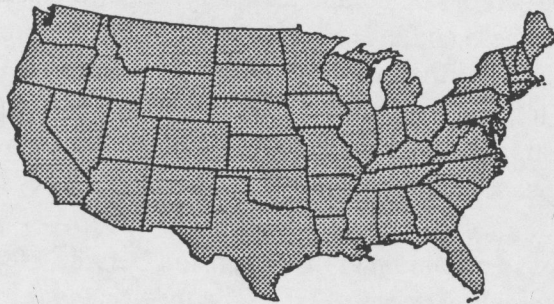


# TurfComms



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**PURPOSE:** To pass on what we learn willingly and happily to others in the profession so as to improve turf conditions around the country.

**JANE:** I will always remember her but, no longer will we interact, an activity you don't realize how much you miss until it happens. Jane died December 28th from the various effects of ovarian cancer. She leaves behind a very sad husband, four children, their spouses, eight grandchildren, and many dearly loved friends. Jane was first a mother to all and then a teacher. She had a positive affect on many of the students and fellow teachers she encountered.

**SCOTLAND:** I promised Jane shortly before she died that I'd go to Scotland this year with my brother. So if you have any suggestions about what I should see besides St. Andrew's Old Course while there drop me a line, or e-mail.

**SKIN CANCER:** Hopefully you are well aware that if of light complexion you are very prone to skin cancer if you spend too much time in the sun. Last Spring my dermatologist strongly recommended to me that I undergo treatment to reduce the large amount of pre-cancerous skin areas on my face. I postponed that till December because of the resulting adverse effect on my appearance which the treatment would produce; and the fact that exposure to sun during treatment is not overly desirable. As I write the first copy of this material I am 12 days into the treatment and look like I had facial leprosy. The treatment consists of putting on a fluorouracil containing cream morning and night for 14 days. It is not painful but somewhat irritating and

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**TURFCOMMS** is published at unpredictable intervals by the editor and publisher:

Douglas T. Hawes, Ph.D.  
Certified Professional Agronomist  
Specializing in Golf Course  
Maintenance Consulting

2408 Roundrock Trail  
Plano, Texas 75075  
(972) 867-0176  
Fax (972) 519-9263  
e-mail: dhawes@dallas.net

Subscription cost is \$15. Send checks to Doug Hawes at the above address.

your skin becomes somewhat sensitive to touch. *ADDENDUM: The last two or three days and for two or three days after treatment stops areas with lots of precancer conditions hurt like a bad sunburn. Then 7 to 10 days after treatment stops your face peels and within a week returns to normal..*

My mother who is fairer skinned than I and 23 years older underwent the treatment last year. She has spent much less time in the sun than I. However, I feel I have spent much less time in the sun than most forty year old superintendents. Beware! Wear a hat! Consider sun blocks! And if fair skinned see a dermatologist some time soon. Don't wait for cancer to develop.

**FORSYTHIA:** When I was in Maryland the Extension Service used to recommend putting on preemerge herbicides for crabgrass control when the forsythia was in bloom. On my morning walk December 28th I went by a forsythia in bloom. This is one of the few forsythia I see in this area. To see this plant blooming in the middle of winter is not unusual. Yet, December is several months too early to apply preemerges even in Greater Dallas. Therefore remember as you move around the country from one state to another that some of the old rule-of-thumbs should be left behind.

**LEAF BLOWERS:** One of my daughters sent me an article by Adrian Higgins of the Washington Post on the harm caused by these devices. The writer notes that the high velocity wind created by these devices can result in windburn on needled and broadleaf evergreen trees and shrubs. Also newly planted ground covers and new turf seedlings can be pulled from the soil. Also too many leaves blown under azaleas and other shrubs may smother lower branches and create an temporary organic mulch that results in the lower branches rooting into it to the detriment of long term survival.

**DEER:** These comments on deterring deer are written in BIRDS & BLOOMS Feb/Mar. 2000 issue by a Minnesotan with suggestions also from readers in GA, Conn., Iowa, Wash., and Wisc. I'm listing here only the ones that might work in a golf course situation or I haven't heard before.

1. Black polypropylene netting - a light weight nearly invisible barrier that can be strung using electrical conduit for post.
2. Sprays for plant protection:
  - A. 2 tablespoons of Tabasco sauce/gal. with spreader-sticker.
  - B. 12 to 18 eggs blended/5 gal.
3. Dust for plant protection: 1/2 oz. of black pepper in flour and dust the leaves.
4. Aluminum pie plates hanging on limbs, well maybe the members would object, but how about 3 inch circles of shiny aluminum.
5. A motion detector to activate a light bulb and radio. Only four seconds appears to be enough on time.
6. White plastic bags tied to branches of susceptible trees. (members will like that!)
7. Wind chimes in branches of susceptible trees.
8. Chicken wire laid underneath the susceptible trees, mowing might be a problem unless carefully pegged.

The best strategy is to keep mixing up your deterrent approach so as to keep one step ahead of the deer's learning curve.



The article also has a list of plants that deer don't usually eat. But your local Extension Service can probably be of more help in that department.

Deer are very bad in portions of the East Coast yet I have never seen one within a mile of my mother's South Dartmouth, MA home. And I have yet to see one in Plano. Probably both areas are too urbanized.

**GCSAA CONF. & SHOW - NEW ORLEANS - Feb. 17:** The Research Breakfast followed by the session labeled Science for the Golf Course: Making Your Job Easier was my introduction to this conference. Tee-2-Green announced at the start of this program they sponsored that they had a new program to give you the superintendent thirty cents/pound of grass seed for any of the Pen Pals your club purchases. These \$ will be available to you for recreational travel after you purchase 5000 or more pounds. The fund you thus build up will be in your name so that you may move from club to club and still accumulate into your fund the way I understand it. Check their web site for more details.

I'm not sure what you think of this but I agree with the older superintendent behind me who said "That sure sounds like **payola** to me". Now according to the GCSAA Code of Ethics I would assume your in violation of code #1 if you accept this. However, code 6 seems to allow this. I know Tee-2-Green is not alone in this practice of payola. Although I thought it in poor taste to announce it at the GCSAA meeting. But, that is part of the problem with the too-close-to industry-relationship the Association has chosen to take.

Dr. Thomas Nikolai, Michigan State U., talked on **alternative spikes**. He noted that there was less damage to putting surfaces with these products the rougher the bottom of the shoe. With the most damage caused by steel spikes on a smooth sole.

Dr. Max Terman, Tabor College, Hillsboro, KS, discussed enhancing wildlife on your course using Prairie Dunes as his model. This is my all time favorite golf course and makes a great but mostly unattainable model. He noted that ideally golf courses would serve as stepping stones between ecological areas. Ed. - Although mostly they are oases in the middle of urban sprawl.

Some of the notes I got down from his talk were: Nesting boxes must be placed according to the environmental needs of the birds you are trying to attract. i.e. wood ducks on the edge of streams and blue birds on the edge of open areas. Salamanders and other amphibians are the best indicators of an environmentally friendly area. When is the last time you found a salamander on your golf course? frog? Birds of prey are another good indicator of environmental health. Coyotes and bobcats are needed to keep the small predators (raccoons and skunks) under control. Deer can destroy the environment. The optimum habitat for most animals is round (the less edge the better) and that most animals and many birds need more of their favorite habitat than your golf course is going to be able to provide. No, he didn't say the latter but after listening to him that is what I had to conclude.

Dr. Gail Schumann, **pathologist** for U. of Mass., presented highlights from the research of other turf pathologist around the country. First, that Dr. Clarke was successfully injecting Heritage for control of **Take-all-patch**. And if I got this correct was obtaining some acceptable Dollarspot control with Companion 1 at 4 oz. combined with Heritage at 0.2 oz/M. Companion 1 is a

formulation of Bacillus subtilis. The fact this is a spore forming bacteria make it well suited for shelf life and application through sprayers or injection systems.

She mentioned next that Dr. Eric Nelson had found it very difficult to change the soil microbial population with either composts or fungicides. Also that continuous application of a biological control (fungi or bacteria) apparently does not increase its population in the soil but may result in a decrease because by applying it you may be stimulating or selecting for a competing microbe.

She then talked about a new disease, **Bentgrass dead spot**; which is caused by Ophiosphaerella agrostis. The symptoms are small circular patches with no mycelium present on leaves but, small black dots are visible. These are fruiting bodies. Best control is ConSyst & urea. Or Daconil plus 3336 at 7 day intervals see June 1999 GCSAA magazine for more details.

She noted that for the disease **Gray leafspot** that removing of clippings had resulted in a 41% decrease in the disease. That lower nitrogen rates resulted in less disease. That Primo use resulted in disease reduction, while Prograss use increased it.

Dr. Schumann noted that Dr. Jon Powell, U. of Minn., found that **anti-transpirants** reduced Dollarspot 70% when sprayed on a 14 day interval. And that Dr. Tom Hsiang got a 3 year suppression of Pink Snowmold from one application of a biological control.

Crystal Rose-Fricker was next on the program and she opened with an old but generally true axiom for the cool season grasses: "If a new cultivar can't produce a fair amount of seed it won't make it to market no matter how good it is." Ed. - What she should have added is the also old but generally true axiom for the cool season grasses is that: **good seed producers usually aren't good turf cultivars**. I'm afraid our seed growing industry has eliminated too many promising cultivars because of her axiom. They look too strongly at yield and not at the value of what is produced.

Getting off my soap box, she noted that they have developed lots of Brown patch resistance in tall fescue but this seems to result in Gray leaf spot susceptibility.

She noted that salt tolerance in **Kentucky bluegrass** results also in drought tolerance and put up a list of tolerant cultivars. I got two copied down: Northstar and Ascot.

Then it was on to the **Roundup tolerant cultivars** they have developed Aurora Gold hard fescue and Pure Gold tall fescue. No data on how well they perform.

Also two new potential turf species Combgrass, *Cynosurus cristatus*. It has good winter growth but no heat tolerance. And, Tufted Hairgrass, *Deschampsia calipitau* (sp.) (probably *D. caespitosa*) which she claimed has excellent shade tolerance. Ed. - The latter is a Western U.S. range grass tolerant of moderate salinity and alkalinity. The *C. cristatus* is a Mediterranean species that has been used there and in Europe for amenity turf mixtures.

**GCSAA Conf. & Show continued in next issue**

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