

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.

SHAKE HANDS WITH THE DEVIL: The Failure of Humanity in Rwanda by **L.Gen. Romeo Dallaire with Major Brent Beardsley.** This book was sent to me for Christmas by one of Cynthia's children. I was very familiar with the general Rwanda situation and as to what happened there in 1994 before reading the book. As I write this I'm on page 172 and it is Jan 12th. I'm afraid it is a book I just don't want to read.

Those members of the John Birch Society and others who fear that the UN is going to take over the U.S. of A. or the world, need to read this book. By page 172 you will realize that the UN can't even run itself, let alone the world. By this page in the book, officers Dallaire and Beardsley have not yet got to hell but they are approaching it rapidly.

Page 262, I decided to quit reading the book (Jan. 15). The slaughter had begun. One quote from page 240 I would like for you to think about; **"The extremists had taken their cue from the grim farces of Bosnia and Somalia. They knew that Western nations do not have the stomach or the will to sustain casualties in peace support operations. When confronted with casualties, as the United States was in Somalia or the Belgians in Rwanda, they will run, regardless of the consequences to the abandoned population."** Do you think the Iraqi extremists are continuing on the basis of the above lesson?

Subscription Charges: There are no more charges for subscriptions. However, I reserve the right to restrict subscribers. I have not assessed charges since summer of 2003.

FEEDBACK: I encourage you to email me what you would like to see covered. Or to comment on what I write.

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NEW MEXICO TURF RESEARCH: As recipients of my last issue of TurfComms you are aware that I spent a month in Las Cruces, N.M. this winter. While there Dr. Arden Baltensperger was kind enough to take me over to the turf research plots of Dr. Bernd Leinauer's at Fabian Garcia Research Center, N.M.S.U. Dr. Leinauer has one of those research-extension-teaching positions and does manage to get in a fair amount of research. He showed us his plots at this site one day and others on the edge of the University's golf course a second day. As I review this research you need to remember it is at a high, sunny desert location in the Southwest, plant hardiness zone 8a.

The experiment that was of most interest to me was a study of the: Efficiency and Practicality of Subsurface Irrigation Systems. The first such research I had run into was perhaps 30 or more years ago at the Delaware State Univ. This was leaky hose approach to subsurface irrigation. Then there was Dr. William Daniel's PAT System and similar approaches. It would appear that the two systems being looked at by Dr. B. Leinauer do not have some of the problems earlier systems had. He is comparing a subsurface pan system (ECS) that reminds me of the PAT system only much smaller pans; and a subsurface drip system, with a third – conventional sprinkler irrigation. These are on/in putting green turf of both the USGA and California type established in 2003.

The 2004 data found significant differences in quality and localized dry spot occurrence in favor of the subsurface irrigated treatments. "Irrigation water consumption was highest on sprinkler irrigated treatments." Subsurface irrigation not only resulted in large water savings (28 to 47%) but freedom from localized dry spots. If these results continue we will need to consider these approaches for greens, tees and athletic fields in the future.

Another experiment of interest was: Effect of Salinity Level & Irrigation Type on the Establishment Rate & Winter Survival of Turfgrasses. This experiment had 3 levels of irrigation water salinity. "The EC of the potable water treatment was 0.6-1.2 dS/m, high saline(geothermal) 3.1-5.0 dS/m, and the 50/50 blend of these 2.0-3.0 dS/m. There were two types of irrigation: Sprinkler and Subsurface drip. There were five cool season species looked at with one to two cultivars each. And five warm season species looked at with 2 to 4 cultivars each.

"High saline water significantly delayed and reduced establishment rate when compared to potable and 50/50 water for most species." Of the cool season grasses looked at (hybrid TX bluegrass, tall fescue, perennial ryegrass, alkaligrass, and Dawson *F. rubra*) the Salty cultivar of alkaligrass established best for all three water qualities. Neither the Texas bluegrass cultivars (Thermal blue & SRX2TK95) nor the Buffalograss cultivars (SWI2000 & U.C. Verde) appeared to be tolerant of saline irrigation. The two saltgrass (*Distichlis spicata*) cultivars A138 and DT16 were slow to establish.

Of the warm season grasses both cultivars of Seashore paspalum (Seadwarf and Seaspray) performed best, followed by the bermudagrasses. The researchers Johnson and Leinauer have reported 1. "no significant differences in establishment rate between

irrigation systems when using the same level of water quality for cool season grasses over the entire establishment period.” 2. salinity greatly reduces the establish rate for cool and warm season grasses.

ARTIFICIAL TURF - not for my grandchildren: A Feb. 5th article in Science News reporting on an original article in the Feb. 3rd New England J. of Medicine tells of football abrasions that lead to nasty infections on artificial turf. Apparently more abrasions are experienced by teams playing on artificial turf and these seem to lead to some serious infections at least for the St. Louis Rams.

H-2B cap reached! Contact your Congressman today! My grandson can't get a job and in both Plano, TX and Harlingen, TX I see lots of laborers looking for work let alone skilled white and blue collar workers in Plano. Does the turf industry really need foreigners on short term visas? The title at the start of this paragraph was from Feb. TREE CARE INDUSTRY magazine. The question I ask is for the superintendents among you.

When to Call an Arborist or Landscaper: This article is stimulated by two articles in the Feb. issue of TREE CARE INDUSTRY magazine. In my many years of working with the golf course maintenance industry I generally felt that superintendents knew when to call in an arborist and would do so as long as funds were available. Calling in a landscaper was not something the superintendents were generally very quick to do even if funds were available. And some superintendents were skilled enough in this field or kept a landscape specialist on their staff so that it was not necessary.

However, many superintendents have trouble identifying the 30 most common shrubs used in their area and the 50 most commonly used annuals and perennials used for flower beds. Now I know most golf courses don't have a lot of shrubs except in the clubhouse area and the flower beds are usually annuals. But, can you the superintendent identify the ornamental shrubs and flowers on your course? Do you have records which not only tell you the species but the cultivar of these? If not you should be hiring a landscaper either as part of the crew or as a subcontractor. Superintendents that move around the country need to be sure and have someone else take care of the ornamentals.

RAINWATER HARVESTING CONFERENCE: Edinburg, TX, Feb. 26, 2005 I thought this Extension Service sponsored conference might be of interest to you. The "Valley" like much of Texas, a fair amount of the U.S., and certainly much of the World is rapidly realizing that it is running out of water. 36 States report that they except water shortages in the next 10 years. Texas is predicting a doubling of population in the next 50 years and they are already have water shortages in much of the State.

Probably the most interesting speaker at this Conference was Billy Kniffen, an Extension Agent for Agriculture and Natural Resources. He and his wife are catching the rainwater from their house and a shed and making the water thus caught their sole water supply. They are living on 35 gallons/day/person. Their investment in water harvesting, filtration, purification, etc. is \$6000. They live in an area of West Texas where the rainfall is 9 inches/year. Although most speakers at the Conf. did not discuss rainwater harvesting for drinking purposes, in West Texas where drinking water is often full of salts rainwater is extremely great drinking water.

The emphasis at this Conf. was the use of rainwater for landscape irrigation or methods of landscaping and plant selection so as to get by without much irrigation. Also interesting to those of you that are hunters or bird watches was the use of rainwater harvesting to gather and store rainwater in the woods or other areas and then release it gradually through a pet watering device, thus creating small oases. Another interesting approach was greenhouses with gutters to large cisterns under the greenhouse. They catch the rainwater and use it for irrigation.

For more information go to: <http://texaswater.tamu.edu>

Or for drought tolerant ornamentals Texas-style <<http://uvalde.tamu.edu/ornamentals/>>

Or plant identification Texas-area <http://uvalde.tamu.edu> then click on herbarium for
Native plants of the South Texas

Or www.ircsa.org for the International Rainwater Catchment Systems Assoc.

Or www.arcsa-usa.org for the American Rainwater Catchment Systems Assoc.

Or www.ircsa.org or <www.arcsa-usa.org> or <www.tudb.state.tx.us>

THOMAS SZASZ, Ph.D. AGAIN: I just finished reading **Cruel Compassion: Psychiatric Control of Society's Unwanted** by him. This is a 1994 publication and perhaps a little out of date but I couldn't help but pick up on a little data he threw out. He wrote about the number of engineers U.S. of A. Universities and Colleges are putting out vs. the number of lawyers. And, from that, I conclude that engineers must be a lot smarter and more productive because for every engineer graduating there are 10 lawyers. From a recent news release indicating a future shortage of scientists, we better hope the scientists we put out are also 10 times smarter than lawyers.

I followed the above book with **SZASZ UNDER FIRE: The Psychiatric Abolitionist Faces His Critics**, Edited by Jeffrey A. Schaler. Dr. Schaler has set up a pro-Szasz website at www.szasz.com. This book would be one way to grasp Szasz's ideas and what his opponent psychiatrists think of them.

URANIUM, DEPLETED, FOR MUNITIONS AND ARMOR: I have been intrigued by the arguments for and against this. After all if uranium was not radioactive it should not be anything more than a heavy metal. It now appears that it may be acting as an estrogen type compound and causing an increase of breast-cancer cells in mice. See page 318 of the Nov. 13, 2004 Science News for more on this.

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