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Turfgrass Producers
International
2 East Main Street
East Dundee, IL 60118
Tel: 847/649-5555
Tel: 800/405-8873
Fax: 847/649-5678
Email:
info@TurfGrassSod.org
Website:
www.TurfGrassSod.org
Comments & Submissions:
inovak@TurfGrassSod.org



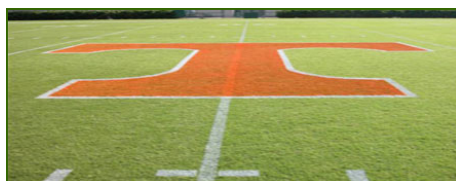
Investing in Greener, Safer Grass

University of Tennessee's Athletic Department to Support Turfgrass Research and Teaching

The University of Tennessee's leading turfgrass management research and teaching program has announced they will expand their faculty due to the generous support of one of its prime cooperators.

The UT Athletic Department has committed to fund a new faculty member in the turfgrass research and teaching program of the UT Department of Plant Sciences. The UT Athletic Department will donate a total of \$535,000 over five fiscal years to support the new research and teaching position within the program.

"The Athletic Department has long cooperated with our faculty providing opportunities for research, teaching and consulting with their various sports fields. We think this is a wonderful extension of that partnership and are very appreciative of their support," said Dr. Joseph DiPietro, UT Vice President for Agriculture, which houses the Department of Plant Sciences.



"We have had a long and great relationship with the Institute of Agriculture," said UT Athletic Director Mike Hamilton. "Our relationship has allowed turfgrass management students real laboratories for learning, and we have utilized their faculty's immense expertise in our facilities." Hamilton called the new collaboration to expand the turfgrass program a "winning proposition for everyone."

Turfgrass management pervades society – from private golf courses to public soccer fields and international sports venues like the Olympics. The turfgrass science research program at UT is geared toward useful and practical issues that impact the turfgrass industry, including field integrity which can affect safety. Research areas include golf turf, sports turf, sod production, home and commercial lawns, and turf breeding. Students who study turfgrass science have an opportunity to literally study in the field at some of the world's finest facilities, including professional baseball, football stadiums and PGA championship golf courses.

IT'S ONE THING TO FIND
SOLUTIONS
AND ANOTHER TO INVENT THEM.

TIP OF THE HAT to Marty Thiel of Graff's Turf Farms in Fort Morgan, Colorado



Marty Thiel, co-owner of Graff's Turf Farms, was the proud recipient of the prestigious Turf Professional of the Year Award at the 55th Annual Rocky Mountain Regional Turfgrass Association (RMRTA) Conference and Trade Show in Denver.

Dr. Tony Koski, Extension Turf Specialist and Colorado State University professor, presented the award to Thiel.

Starting out as a seasonal worker and working his way up to co-owner of Graff's Turf Farms, Inc., Thiel was honored for his work ethic and dedication to creating a premium product. Marty began his career in the turf business at Graff's Turf Farms in 1992, when he went to work as a general laborer hand stacking sod during the summer. After one season, Thiel was hired for full-time year-round work.

Thiel attributes much of his success in the industry to the know-how of the sports turf managers and golf superintendents who take his turfgrass and make it look even better in its new setting. This can be seen in high profile fields such as Dick's Sporting Goods Park, Invesco Field at Mile High, Coors Field, Busch Stadium, Wrigley Field and others across the nation. He maintains a unique relationship with these customers as a colleague. As one sports turf manager said, "Marty will bend over backwards to help anyone in the turf industry."

"Marty will bend over backwards to help anyone in the turf industry."

The Turf Professional of the Year Award

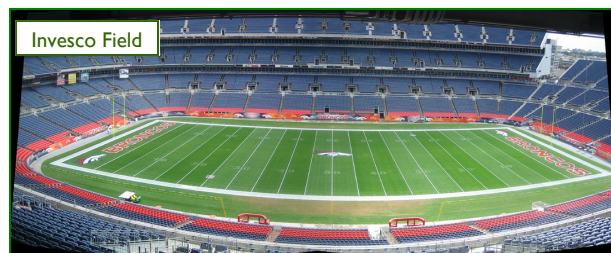
Presented to

Marty Thiel

From the Rocky Mountain Regional
Turfgrass Association



From left to right: Randy Graff, founder of Graff's Turf Farms, Marty Thiel and Rocky Mountain Regional Turfgrass Association president Grant Yaklich.



REMINDER



Through a partnership with BP Business Solutions, TPI members get 4.0¢ off every gallon of gasoline and 2.0¢ for Diesel purchased at over 11,000 BP locations in the U.S.A. That means quality fuels and great savings! The BP Business Solutions MasterCard® is a multi-purpose fleet management program offering unmatched spending flexibility, the freedom to use the cards where you need fuel, detailed cost analysis, individual card controls and rebates that deliver even more benefits for business owners, managers, drivers and your bottom-line. There is a BP Business Solutions MasterCard waiting for you.

Enroll Now!

And Fill-Up on SAVINGS!



Enroll today and start getting the flexibility, freedom and control your company deserves. For more information about the program visit the "Members Only" area at www.TurfGrassSod.org, click on "TPI Business".

*Available to U.S. members only.

To download the BP Business Solutions MasterCard application go to: <http://www.turfgrasssod.org/pdfs/BPApp.pdf>

The World's First Solar Electric Hybrid Robot Lawnmower



Solar panels on top of unit.

HUSQVARNA AUTOMOWER™

Husqvarna recently introduced a new model of a robotic lawnmower named the Automower. It promises to mow lawns automatically while using solar power.

The Automower, offers solar-powered, zero-emission. The promised result is shorter lawn clippings that decompose faster and provide a natural fertilizer, improving the looks of private yards.

This innovative lawn-mowing robot uses an irregular pattern of movement, offers long battery life, and high ground speed to effectively mow all parts of the lawn, and it has an interesting way to handle obsta-

cles: if the object is rigid and at least six inches tall, like trees or fences, the mower gently bumps into it, reverses, and starts off in another direction. The unit gets its energy from the sun by using solar panels located on its upper part.

The Automower weighs less than 20 lbs and features a 4-digit pin code lock feature, which is required to operate the mower. Its blades are lightweight and out-of-reach, and when it's lifted off ground, it shuts off automatically.

It's been calculated that using Automower Solar Hybrid to cut the lawn in an average garden can save 40



hours of labor every year.

One of the biggest drawbacks is its price of £2,000 (\$2,800 US) which might deter many potential buyers.

Interested in more information visit the Automower website at:

<http://www.automower.com/>



Open Letter to the Editor - REBUTTAL To American Nurseryman

Turfgrass IS an environmentally responsible choice

Jim Plyler of Natural Landscapes Nursery in West Grove, PA made numerous statements in his rebuttal to Kris Kiser that appeared in Industry Voice (American Nurseryman, December 15, 2008) that are not only inaccurate but totally unfounded.

Mr. Plyler suggests, *"During the growing season, the weekly mowing of turfgrass generates significant amounts of carbon dioxide and other air pollutants."* He goes on to state, *"Every time the turf is mowed, the grass that is cut off sends the carbon it contained into the air and the nitrogen it contained into the groundwater at the end of the growing season."* Both of these statements are grossly misleading and untrue.

A turfgrass study conducted by Ranajit Sahu, Ph.D., an independent environmental and energy expert and University instructor, on behalf of the Outdoor Power Equipment Institute (OPEI), shows that responsibly managed lawns sequester, or store, significant amounts of carbon. In fact, healthy turfgrass can capture four to seven times more carbon from the air than is produced by the engine of today's lawnmowers.

Dr. Sahu has over seventeen years of experience in the fields of environmental, mechanical, and chemical engineering. He has taught and continues to teach numerous courses in several Southern California universities including UCLA (air pollution), UC Riverside (air pollution, process hazard analysis), and Loyola Marymount University (air pollution, risk assessment, hazardous waste management) for the past fifteen years.

His findings are based on several peer-reviewed, scientific studies and models where carbon sequestration had been measured in managed and unmanaged turfgrass.

The full report is available at www.opei.org/carbonreport.

In an unrelated study conducted by Cristina Milesi, Ph.D., a NASA research scientist, and reported in the journal of Environmental Management, it is suggested that some 40 million acres of America are covered in lawns. All told, Milesi estimates, "2 percent of the U.S. land surface that is covered in lawns could account for about 5 percent of the carbon dioxide absorbed by all plants. She also suggests that lawn areas in the U.S. could store up to 37 billion pounds of carbon.

As for the clippings, if left on the lawn to decompose, they actually return the carbon to the soil. Carbon does not dissipate into the atmosphere but rather increases the organic matter content of the soil.

Mr. Plyler suggests, *"Turfgrass areas in our landscapes generate the greatest amount of stormwater runoff, as turf is ineffective in retaining and providing for the infiltration of stormwater."* Here again, Mr. Plyler's statement is a contradiction to scientific research on this very issue.

In a study conducted by Dr. Thomas L. Watschke, Pennsylvania State University titled, *"The Environmental Benefits of Turfgrass and Their Impact on the Greenhouse Effect"*, the following is stated:

"A thick, healthy turfgrass can help reduce runoff losses from the vegetated portion of a developed watershed to almost nothing. Turfgrasses also are frequently used in storm water retention areas to slow the rate of flow of runoff to allow soil infiltration."

"Turfgrass should be included in any legislative solution to the greenhouse effect. It is important to recognize and repeatedly emphasize that the establishment of turfgrass areas can be accomplished instantly through the use of sod. Because of that fact, the maximum environmental benefits of turfgrasses can be realized without delay."

In *"Evaluation of Natural and Man-Made Erosion Control Materials,"* a study conducted by E.C. Krenisky; M.J. Carroll; R. H. Hill; and J.M. Krouse, Department of Natural Resource Sciences and Landscape Architecture, University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland and published in Crop Science Society of America, Crop Science, Vol. 38, No. 4, July-August, 1998, to examine and quantify the effectiveness of erosion control materials and measure runoff on two natural and four man-made materials the following was reported:

- "Turfgrass sod was the only material that delayed the start of runoff and greatly decreased the total runoff volume."
- "Turfgrass sod consistently had the lowest runoff rates."
- "Sod-covered areas absorb rainfall droplet energy and greatly reduce the velocity of runoff flow at the soil surface, thus little soil loss occurs."

cont'd on page 5



REBUTTAL- cont'd from page 4

- “Turfgrass sod was found to offer superior performance when compared to straw (the other natural material) in all three erosion control categories.”

Dr. James B. Beard, Professor Emeritus, Texas A & M University, the world's leading authority on turfgrasses and turfgrass science, stated the following in his presentation before the Council of Agricultural Sciences and Technology in January, 2006 titled, *“Integrated Multiple Factor Consideration in Low-Precipitation Landscape Approaches”*:

“Essentially, the turfgrass biomass functions like a sponge that traps water and increases ground water recharge. Grass areas can be designed with surface contours to reduce storm-water runoff, thereby minimizing the need for costly mechanical water-control structures in urban areas.”

In Dr. Beard's 1994 report, *“The Role of Turfgrasses in Environmental Protection and Their Benefits to Humans”*, he wrote:

“One of the key mechanisms by which turfgrasses preserve water is their superior capability to trap and hold runoff, resulting in more water infiltrating and filtering through the soil-turfgrass ecosystem.”

Mr. Plyler also states, *“Water-soluble fertilizers that are applied over vast areas of turf eventually end up in the groundwater or local streams.”* While this statement is attention getting it too doesn't hold up to scientific research. In the November 15, 2006 issue of “Turfgrass and Environmental Research Online, the USGA offered an article entitled *“Impact of Prairie and Turf Buffer Strips on Golf Course Fairway Runoff*

and Leachate” authored by Dr. John Stier and Dr. Wayne Kussow, University of Wisconsin – Madison in which they concluded: “Our study is important because it shows that in real-world situations, at least where slope is minimal, runoff from golf course fairways was less than 5% of the rainfall over a two-year period of abundant rainfall. Phosphorus and nitrogen contamination of runoff and leachate water from golf course fairways was similar to natural background levels reported for non-fertilized native prairies and was not affected by buffer strip type or size.”

Other university studies have shown:

NITROGEN - Nitrogen losses from surface runoff in a well-established turf were insignificant...even with a 10% slope and frequent intense rainfall. Source: Erickson et al., Crop Science, 2005 and 2008

Thirty percent of applied nitrogen was leached from a mixed-species mulched ornamental planting. In contrast, very little applied nitrogen (less than 2%) was leached from a mature Saint Augustine-grass sod. Source: Erickson et al., Crop Science, 2005 and 2008

PHOSPHOROUS - Nutrient losses via surface runoff were similar between a non-fertilized prairie and a fertilized turf – fertilizer was either an insignificant source of phosphorous in runoff or turf has less inherent phosphorous losses from natural sources than prairie (1). Greater phosphorous leaching occurred from a mixed-species landscape than from established turf (2). Source: (1) Steinke et al., Crop Science, 2007 (2) Erickson et al., Crop Science, 2005

WATER QUALITY - Water in a stream was cleaner when it left a golf course in both North Carolina and Indiana than when it entered the property. Source: Reicher, 2000; Ruffy et al., 2007

BUFFERING - A University of Florida study indicates the importance of management practices rather than plant species for reducing nitrogen leaching from residential land use. Source: Erickson et al., Crop Science, 2005 and 2008

The many environmental benefits of turfgrass are far too numerous to address in this rebuttal to Mr. Plyler's comments but we offer the following; all of which are validated with scientific support.

- Soil Erosion Control
- Storm Water Runoff Reduction
- Groundwater Recharge & Filtration
- Organic Pollutant Decomposition
- Soil Restoration
- Carbon Retention & Storage
- Natural Cooling Effect
- Oxygen Production
- Air Pollution Reduction & Filtration
- Dust Suppression/Capture
- Reduced Pest & Allergy Related Problems
- Physical & Mental Health
- Relief from Stress
- Human Productivity
- Noise Abatement
- Glare Reduction
- Heat Dissipation
- Increased Property Value
- Complements Landscaping
- Quality of Life
- Crime Control
- Fire Barrier
- Recreation & Social Harmony
- Community Pride
- Outdoor Activity
- Spectator Entertainment

cont'd on page 6

TurfSide-UP



HELLO THERE!

Some sports fans have been known to paint their faces and bodies in their team's colors to show support. Many fans create posters or banners to proclaim their loyalty to a given team; adorn their heads with silly hats, helmets or other head gear, or wave pennants and flap towels to show support. But this fellow . . . this fellow is either very, very shy . . . in charge of the ground crew . . . or he prefers to watch sports incognito.

WARNING DO NOT ATTEMPT THIS AT HOME



American
Nurseryman

Dr. Thomas L. Watschke of Pennsylvania State University wrote in *Golf Course Management* February/1990

"The strategic use of turfgrass is the most sensible and economically feasible approach to countering the greenhouse effect in urban areas."

Mr. Plyler's rebuttal was targeted at Kris Kiser, vice president of public relations for the Outdoor Power Equipment Institute for stating, "Turfgrass isn't just a 'cosmetic decision', but an environmentally responsible choice in most areas of

the country." Mr. Plyler goes on to conclude his rebuttal with as he put it, "apologies to Kris Kiser" and states, "it is very important that the nursery industry makes no claims that planting and maintaining turfgrass is good for the environment." With apologies to Jim Plyler . . . it is very important that the nursery industry does make claims that planting and maintaining turfgrass is good for the environment. Why? Because it's true!

Kirk Hunter

Executive Director

Turfgrass Producers International

Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program

The Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) provides financial assistance to producers of non-insurable crops when disaster conditions occur. NAP crops are agricultural commodities for which catastrophic (CAT) or buy-up level of crop insurance is not available. NAP crops includes crops grown for food, crops grown for livestock consumption, crops grown for fiber or in a controlled environment, honey, Christmas trees, ornamental nursery, turfgrass sod, aquaculture etc.

Due to changes in regulations in the new Farm Bill, producers must purchase crop insurance or NAP coverage on all crops of economic significance (this includes hay and pasture crops) in order to be eligible for any future disaster program payments, if the county is declared to be eligible to conduct a disaster sign-up. The service fee is \$250 per crop, not to exceed \$750 per county or \$1875 for production in multiple counties.

Limited resource producers may request a waiver of service fees.

Sign-up deadlines vary according to each particular crop. Producers who wish to secure loss protection coverage for most hay and pasture crops should file a Form CCC-471, Application for Coverage and pay the administrative coverage fees before the February 15, 2009 sign-up deadline. Producers who report NAP crop acreage on an FSA-578 crop report are responsible for reporting production for all 2008 crops selected on the CCC-471 by March 31, 2009. Actual farm production will be used to establish farm yields and calculate loss thresholds. Purchasing CAT or NAP coverage would satisfy linkage requirements for any future disaster programs.

For additional information

http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_File/cdpqlty08.pdf

Lead found in Artificial Turf at 2 Prep Stadiums

"We've jumped into something without properly understanding it."



DANNY ROBBINS Associated Press Writer

Fields in two of the state's best-known high school stadiums in Texas, including the one made famous by the book and movie "Friday Night Lights," have lead levels far exceeding the Environmental Protection Agency's standard for soil, according to independent tests done within the last month.

The results, obtained by The Associated Press, are the first public indication that Texas' prized high school stadiums have become part of the national controversy over whether artificial turf contains unsafe levels of lead.

Testing commissioned by the Ector County school district on the turf at Odessa's Ratliff Stadium found lead at roughly 14 times the EPA standard. Similar testing by the Birdville school district in the Fort Worth suburb of North Richland Hills discovered a lead level nearly 10 times the EPA standard at that district's stadium, the Fine Arts/Athletics Complex.

Ratliff Stadium, which has a capacity of 19,500, has become part of Texas football lore and national popular culture as the home of the Permian Panthers, winners of six state championships and the team profiled in "Friday Night Lights." The Birdville stadium is also well known in the state, with a seating capacity of 12,000.

Lead was found at roughly 14 times the EPA standard in one school and 10 times the EPA standard in another.

Both stadiums have the same brand of turf, a product called AstroPlay. The high lead levels were found in a secondary layer of nylon fiber at the base of the fields called the "root zone."

Neither test found significant lead levels in the uppermost fibers, the portion of the field that athletes are in contact with most often. However, testing at the Birdville stadium also found about twice the EPA limit for lead in drinking water in the runoff from the field, an indication that the lead is being released into the environment.

Winifred Hamilton
Director of Environmental Health
Baylor College of Medicine
Houston, Texas

"Our opinion is that AstroPlay turf could pose a human health risk," wrote Michael T. Abel, project manager at the Lubbock lab that conducted the test.

Elsewhere in the country, school officials have closed facilities that showed lead levels far lower than those measured at the two Texas stadiums.

The Beverly Hills, Calif., school district recently closed an elementary school playground with AstroPlay after discovering that the lead in its "root zone" was more than twice the EPA standard. The playground has been removed as hazardous waste and will be replaced, said Jim Fahey, director of maintenance and operations for the district.

"We're not burying our head in the sand," said Joe Loerwald, athletic director for the Round Rock school district outside Austin, which has an AstroPlay field. "But, at the same time, we don't see it as a prevalent problem."

The fact that so few of the state's school districts have tested their turf for lead is worrisome, said Winifred Hamilton, director of environmental health at the Baylor College of Medicine in Houston. "It seems to me that we've jumped into something without properly understanding it," she said.



Office of the Governor
Rick Perry

Texas Governor Appoints TPI Member Mayfield McCraw to the Red River Authority of Texas

Governor Rick Perry has appointed **Mayfield McCraw** of Telephone, Texas to the Red River Authority of Texas Board of Directors. The board oversees the conservation, preservation and development of water resources in the Red River Basin.

McCraw is owner and manager of Hope Plantation Turf and McCraw Materials.

In addition to being a member of Turfgrass Producers International, he is also a member of Turf Grass Producers of Texas, the American Soybean Association and the Sam Rayburn Independent School District Board of Directors. He attended Texas A&M University Commerce.

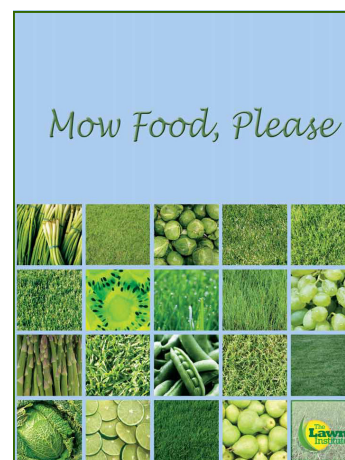


News from The Lawn Institute

Clyde Lavender of A. Duda & Sons (Belle Glade, FL) was the winner of a "Mow Food, Please" cookbook at the 2009 Florida Sod Growers Cooperative (FSGC) Annual Meeting. The book was donated by The Lawn Institute to FSGC as a way of reciprocating for the continuing support they have extended to TPI and The Lawn Institute over the years.

The "*Mow Food, Please*" cookbook features recipes for delicious main dishes, desserts and everything in-between.

To order copies of this great book and help support turfgrass research, contact Veronica Iwanski at viwanski@TurfGrassSod.org or you can order the cookbook on-line by visiting <http://www.thelawninstitute.org/education/?c=186390>



WHEN YOU TAKE CARE OF YOUR LAWN AND LANDSCAPE . . . IT RETURNS THE FAVOR

Project EverGreen's Efforts Heighten Awareness Among Consumers



Creating and managing a lawn and landscape not only looks good, it reduces energy costs, cleans the air, provides a place to play and more. Project EverGreen is hard at work in Akron, Ohio helping the community better understand just how much trees, shrubs and grass impact our lives - economically, environmentally and socially.

A major shift in consumer awareness about the value of green spaces is the primary finding of an independent survey conducted for Project EverGreen in Akron.

From April through September, Project EverGreen blanketed the city with positive messages about the importance of

responsibly managing green spaces. Street teams passed out educational literature, seed packets and green space IQ quizzes at more than sixty public events. Hundreds of yard signs and posters covered city parks and bus signs and billboards dotted the city. From sponsorship of a minor league baseball game to signage at a major amphitheater, consumers were provided with messages about green that resonated with the public.

"The numbers tell a very positive story," says Den Gardner, executive director of Project EverGreen. In a survey with a significantly higher response than normally seen, Akron consumers revealed their priorities. For example, in answer to the question, "How important are these bene-

fits of a healthy lawn and well-planned trees and shrubs to you?" consumers rank economic reasons first (84 percent "increasing home value"), lifestyle enjoyment second (81 percent" contributing to a more enjoyable lifestyle"), and environmental priorities third (61 percent" contributing to a healthier environment)."

Project EverGreen's focus is consumer awareness about the environmental, economic and lifestyle benefits of green spaces," Gardner adds. "Fulfilling our new mission statement: 'To preserve and enhance green space in our communities for today and future generations,' is our highest priority as we enter the new year and our two EverGreen Zone initiatives."

STEPPING INTO THE LION'S DEN!



When *The Lawn Institute* received a phone call requesting a representative agree to participate in an upcoming episode of **Penn & Teller's Bull...!** regarding America's obsession with lawns, there was a serious discussion about the pros and cons of appearing or not appearing on such a controversial show.

Now entering its sixth season on Showtime, the program has received 11 Emmy nominations and has been the recipient of the Writers Guild Award for Outstanding Comedy/Variety Series.

In each episode, noted magicians Penn and Teller debunk a chosen misconception such as psychics, end-of-the-world zealots, secondhand smoke, ESP and fad diets. The show is noted for tackling the frauds and fakes behind such topics as talking to the dead, alien abductions and bottled water.

Sometimes their objective is not to completely dismiss the topic at hand but to decry certain aspects of the topic that they believe to be pernicious, misleading, unnecessary, or overemphasized. They set out to expose claims that, they say, exploit, deceive and mislead the public. Showtime states, "Penn & Teller are pit bulls for the truth, poised to tear down these myths in the most jaw-dropping fashion possible with their trademark wit and off-center comic sensibilities."

Kirk Hunter, executive director of *The Lawn Institute* and program director Rusty Stachlewitz, both agreed there was a need to have a representative on the program who could articulate the benefits of lawns, and if necessary, debunk any outrageous claims and/or misinformation by other interviewees who might present invalid or unfounded opposing points of view.

One concern expressed by Hunter, "If a knowledgeable spokesperson of the green industry wasn't represented, what if any recourse would *The Lawn Institute* have if misleading or biased misinformation was presented. At the same time, what might the perception be on the part of the viewer if the spokesperson defending lawns came across as argumentative, uniformed or overly defensive?

Hunter went on to state, "Our decision to participate or not participate on the show wasn't an easy one. On one hand the show is very adult in nature, the hosts are often controversial, their humor can be biting and many people find the language offensive. On the other hand, Showtime reaches 13 million subscribers and Penn & Teller have over one million loyal viewers.

We also knew there was a good possibility the show would air whether or not we chose to participate. After serious consideration we made the decision to get involved so as to provide our input in the event there were unfounded opposing points of view regarding the many benefits of lawns."

Following a series of conversations with the show's producer, Hunter and Stachlewitz agreed to participate in a taped interview segment during which time they addressed the many benefits of lawns that are often overlooked or taken for granted.

As a courtesy to The Lawn Institute, Ed Lee of Summit Seed in Manteno, Illinois agreed to have the video segments taped at their facility because of its close proximity to Chicago and the background setting it provided.

Whether or not the show will ever air, or if Hunter and Stachlewitz's comments will appear on the show is not known; such decisions are at the discretion of the producer, but at the very least an effort was made to address the often overlooked and numerous benefits of the American lawn.

In the event the show is produced the airdate will appear in a future issue of the TPI E-Newsletter.



Kirk Hunter (left) talking to director Tim Rogan prior to his on-camera interview.



Rusty Stachlewitz on TV monitor during the taping of his interview segment.

TPI COMMENTARY

It's Time We Care for America's Front Lawn

The National Mall in Washington D.C.



Aerial view of the National Mall reveals the urgent need for repair and renovation of turfgrass and the surrounding area.

The recently proposed economic stimulus package had originally included \$200 million to fix the National Mall in Washington, D.C. At issue was the question as to whether or not spending \$200 million to repair and renovate the Mall, including \$21 million for the installation of turfgrass sod and turfgrass-related expenditures, made sense. Unfortunately these funds were excluded from the proposed package. That is regrettable for a variety of reasons.

Our National Mall represents America's Front Lawn. It is the number one tourist attraction in Washington D.C. and serves as the venue for a variety of annual gatherings.

The sprawling lands of the National Mall & Memorial Parks include the Mall and the public promenade that includes:

- o Jefferson Memorial
- o Korean War Veterans Memorial
- o Lincoln Memorial
- o Roosevelt Memorial
- o Vietnam Veterans Memorial
- o Washington Monument
- o World War II Memorial

These unique tourist sites not only serve to welcome visitors to Washington DC., they also serve as a passageway into the history of our nation and our National Mall is no less than an inviting front lawn to our Nation's Capitol. According to a study released by Destination DC, the official convention and tourism corporation for Washington, D.C., the District has welcomed over 16 million visitors including 1.2 million international travelers and 15 million domestic visitors from across the nation. Some estimates suggest the number of annual visitors exceeds 25 million.

These millions of visitors helped to boost tourism spending to \$5.54 billion in 2007 and generated nearly \$600 million in tax revenue for the District alone. Washington D.C. remains the eighth most popular destination for international travelers. The dollars generated by travel and tourism in Washington D.C. has also benefited DC residents, who saved almost \$2,400 in tax dollars per household.

The benefits of repairing and renovating the National Mall go far beyond the way in which it would generate tourism and leave a lasting and positive impression to all visitors, it also reflects our optimistic resolve. Such an undertaking would create the type of stimulus that would not only have a positive effect on our economy but our pride as a nation.



The above photo taken by a first time visitor to the National Mall in Washington D.C. carried the caption, "I wasn't expecting a golf course but this was pitiful."

The proposed \$200 million would have funded numerous upgrades including but not limited to refurbishing and adding some venues, food service areas, recreation rentals, public restrooms, park furniture, improvements in pedestrian and vehicular access and address the restoration needs of the Jefferson Memorial which is currently sinking.

The equipment, tools, skilled labor and man hours required to undertake this challenge would have had a positive effect on the economy. It would have created and preserved American jobs and support American families while reflecting our government's investment in our national infrastructure that holds the promise of laying a lasting foundation of our nation's pride and commitment to expanded business growth.

A large portion of monies would have reflected wages paid to laborers, contractors, sub-contractors and suppliers of goods and materials. Money would have been placed into circulation, people would have been off unemployment, spending, paying taxes and investing.

Funds allocated for National Mall renovation would have included \$21 million for the preparation, installation and post-care installation of turfgrass sod.

The grass in the National Mall, from the Capitol building to the Lincoln Memorial is nearly gone or in very poor condition. Excessive foot traffic from millions of visitors and weekly events has taken a toll over the last three decades.

Compacted soil has become more like concrete and when it rains the resulting mud and soil erosion becomes an embarrassing visual distraction from the Mall's scenic beauty.

Replacing the turfgrass would not only have been aesthetically pleasing and practical, it would provide numerous environmental benefits that are often overlooked such as air purification, carbon sequestration, oxygen generation, temperature modification, water purification and reduced soil erosion.

At the present time the National Mall offers over 300 acres of turfgrass on which some 26 miles of pedestrian sidewalks and eight miles of bike trails invite visitors and residence alike to enjoy our Nation's Capitol.

"I wasn't expecting a golf course, but this is pitiful."

First-time visitor to Washington D.C.

The more than 9,000 trees throughout the Mall remove an estimated 492 tons of air pollution annually. The 300 acres of turfgrass sequester more than 600 tons of carbon per year and also remove pollutants from the atmosphere.

As a nation, be it through private funding or government support, we have seen the renovation and preservation of such historic sites as the Statue of Liberty, Ellis Island, the Washington Monument, Independence Hall, the Alamo and Colonial Williamsburg to name but

only a few. The historical significance of our National Mall and our Nation's Capitol, and all that they symbolize, deserve as much time and attention as the before mentioned national treasures.

The National Mall and the historical sites that surround it are showing severe signs of wear. The last major renovation effort was completed over 30 years ago. The time has come to address this need with diligence and forethought to ensure proper site preparation takes place and the end result provides a lasting and long term benefit.

The repair and renovation of the National Mall makes good sense; not just for the numerous economic and environmental reasons that have already been addressed, but to underscore our pride as a people in our national heritage and the Capitol of the United States of America. It is our hope that this undertaking will be reconsidered in the not too distant future.



As suggested in the above photo, turfgrass in the National Mall from the Capitol to the Lincoln Memorial is nearly gone or in very poor condition.

BACKSTORY - *The National Mall in Washington D.C.*

TPI was prepared to respond, but late night ruling derailed our effort.

TPI had been monitoring the stimulus plan and a provision that would have provided \$200 million (including \$21 million for turfgrass sod) to renovate the National Mall through our lobbyists. Late Tuesday evening (January 27), with the support of President Obama, the House Rules Committee stripped the appropriations bill of the \$200 million for the National Mall. In committee, they introduced an amendment that struck the language that was to be used to fund the National Mall project. The Democrats changed their position as a political play to gain Republican support for the bill.

As this was done in committee behind closed doors and late in the evening, there was nothing further TPI could do with influencing the House bill.

TPI will continue to monitor events. Although no grass-roots effort is warranted at this time, it should be noted that TPI had prepared (prior to these events) a support letter that was to be distributed if the opportunity presented itself. The TPI commentary on the previous pages (revised to past tense) is actually a modified version of the letter that had been drafted for distribution to key government decision makers.

T. Kirk Hunter
Executive Director

Congressional Neglect of the National Mall is a Travesty

"Which public space is more important to our unique democracy than the National Mall? Congressional neglect of the National Mall is a travesty."

Judy Scott Feldman
President - National Coalition to Save Our Mall

Mall advocates have long hoped for funding of a major renovation project, saying it is needed to make up for years of deep cuts in the National Park Service's maintenance budget. Unfortunately opponents of the proposal in the stimulus bill said it was excessive.

The \$200 million was not intended only to fortify the turfgrass as had been reported; much of the stimulus money was going to repair the Jefferson Memorial's sea wall, which is sinking into the Tidal Basin.

So much of the southwest sea wall is breached at high tide that a pedestrian detour has been built at one of the most popular spots of the Mall.

Unfortunately this information and other aspects of the renovation package were never reported by the news media.

White House Press Secretary Robert Gibbs defended the rebuilding package at a briefing on Tuesday (January 27) stating, "The National Mall, happens to be the most visited national park that we have. I think that you can make a very credible case, and the economic team has, that reconditioning the National Mall will create jobs -- probably through spending in small businesses."



The sea wall protecting the Jefferson Memorial from the Tidal Basin is sinking in spots and needs repair.



The Washington Monument is reflected in a pool of water on a worn turfless area of the National Mall.