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For the Record -TPI Goes to Washington, D.C.

TPI's President **Chip Lain** and Executive Director, **Kirk Hunter** traveled to Washington, D.C. in early October to serve as representatives of the turfgrass sod industry and as TPI's representatives of the National Turfgrass Federation and the Greenscape Business Alliance; two of several green industry coalitions in which TPI is an active member.

They joined a number of other NTF members from various segments of the industry including golf, landscaping, irrigation, equipment and research to meet with the U.S. EPA to express concerns about the outdoor landscape specifications of the Water Sense program, specifically the 40% turfgrass limitation and landscape water budget.

During the course of the meeting they emphasized the short-sightedness of a one-size-fits-all approach to landscapes and recommended the EPA take a regional approach that limited water rather than the plants homeowners can use. They then met with key staff of several Senators and Congressman to provide helpful information and inform them on the problems associated with current Water Sense guidelines and asked them to send a letter of inquiry to EPA. As a result of their efforts, the

Chair of the House Agriculture Committee held a briefing with the EPA Water Sense staff to determine what changes would be warranted and the best course of action to take. In addition to previously submitted comments, NTF will be working to provide the Water Sense staff with additional recommendations to improve new home outdoor water use specifications.

Over the next two days, they attended the NTF Board meeting and participated in a Greenscape Business Alliance (GBA) exploratory meeting addressing a Greenscape Stewardship Initiative. Green Industry leaders included Turfgrass Producers International, Professional Landcare Network, Irrigation Association, Outdoor Power Equipment Institute, American Nursery and Landscape Association, Tree Care Industry Association and John Deere to name but a few.

The meeting was the first in a planned series that will help these organizations work collectively to have a more "Effective Influence" on greenscape legislation and regulation. Various sustainability and stewardship programs were reviewed along with industry Best Management Practices (BMP) and how such practices

might be used as a means to foster the collaboration and partnership of growers, landscapers, businesses, environmental groups, academic institutions, government organizations and other related industries.



Chip Lain and Kirk Hunter in Washington D,C,

TPI's interaction with government decision-makers and other representatives in the green industry provides a residual benefit when dealing with similar issues of concern on an international level.

No matter why you are a member of TPI, the benefits of belonging are evident through such dialogue with key decision makers. The power of our collective voices is one of the most important (intangible) benefits you receive.

Last week in May designated as "Ohio Turfgrass Week"

Ohio Senate Passes Senator Sue Morano's Turfgrass Bill



State Senator Sue Morano

The Ohio Senate voted unanimously to pass SB 51, a bill sponsored by Senator Sue Morano (D-Lorain) that calls attention to a growing industry in Ohio. SB 51 designates the last week in May as "Ohio Turfgrass Week."

"It is important for us to recognize and spread awareness about the many economic, educational and environmental benefits of this growing industry in Ohio," said Senator Morano. "Governor Strickland has urged us to develop legislation that will stimulate job growth in Ohio and SB 51 is a good step forward."

Morano went on to add, "The Turfgrass industry has an economic impact on Ohio's economy of more than \$4 billion and is responsible for helping create 68,000 jobs. Turfgrass is also a truly 'green' product that has many positive environmental effects."

Some examples of the positive aspects of Turfgrass are:

- On a block of eight average homes, front laws with Turfgrass have a cooling effect of 70 tons of air conditioning.
- Turfgrass absorbs pollutants such as carbon dioxide and sulfur dioxide and converts them to oxygen.
- Turfgrass prevents soil erosion through strategic placement in agriculture fields, filters contaminants from rainwater and reduces runoff.

In addition, Ohio has become an international leader in Turfgrass research thanks to work being done at Ohio State University.

TurfSide-UP

Meanwhile somewhere near the Rocky Mountains the expression, "**The Buck Stops Here**" takes on a whole new meaning.



A local homeowner has second thoughts when it comes to those familiar lyrics, "Oh, give me a home where the buffalo roam and the deer and the antelope play."



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A TIP OF THE HAT to Allen James of RISE for his dedicated service to our industry and the environment.

President **Allen James** of Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment® (RISE) has announced his plans to retire.

Since 1991, Allen James has been at the forefront of promoting the responsible use of pesticides and fertilizers and the valuable role these products play each day as the president of RISE. He recently announced his plans for retirement from RISE, the national trade association representing the manufacturers, formulators and distributors of pesticide and fertilizer products, effective third quarter 2010.

Allen was recently honored during the RISE Annual Meeting, held with CropLife America, Sept. 25-30, 2009, in Orlando, Florida.

"Allen is an incredibly gifted leader who has done a great amount for RISE as an organization and for the industry as a whole," said Bill Culpepper, president and CEO of SePRO Corporation. "He has exceeded all expectations with the things he has accomplished since joining RISE, and his professionalism and consistent quality of work have become the trademark of the organization moving forward," added Culpepper, one of the founders of RISE and a member of the initial search committee that hired James as executive director in 1991.



Allen James announces plans to retire after 18 years of service to RISE.

Kirk Hunter, TPI's Executive Director stated, "I have had the pleasure of working with Allen James over the past eight years. Through his effective leadership, RISE has played an important role in protecting the safe use of specialty pesticides and educating leaders about their importance, and in turn, he has helped the turfgrass industry tremendously."

When Allen was named the organization's first executive director 18 years ago, RISE was a small trade association with only 12 members. Today, RISE has more than 200 member companies which account for more than 90 percent of the United States' specialty pesticide production.

We wish Allen the very best and thank him for his support to TPI throughout his career.



Imagine technology that would enable you to take accurate measurements of your own farm, a single home or an entire residential development, a sports field, a golf course or a commercial site, without ever leaving your office. Now you can with **Go iLawn**.

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You can measure anything on the photo by tracing the item with your mouse and **Go iLawn** calculates the measurements for you.

The technology can be used to estimate seeding and planting requirements, determining the turfgrass required for cost proposals, estimating irrigation needs, etc. This "at your desk" technology" reduces the need for on-site measuring and saves the expense of on-site labor, hourly truck usage, fuel cost and time.

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Turf News

Turfgrass information is only an iPhone call away

UGA turf team develops mobile turfgrass textbook as an iPhone application.

April Sorrow, news editor with the University of Georgia College of Agriculture and Environmental Services reports that some experts have introduced a new iPhone application that can help turfgrass managers diagnose and remedy turf problems.

Patrick McCullough, a turf-weed scientist with the UGA College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences came up with the idea of using iPhone applications as a means to download textbooks for turfgrass.

Originally envisioned for weed identification and herbicide recommendations, McCullough expanded the Turfgrass Management application to include all aspects of turfgrass management. With input from UGA Cooperative Extension turf specialist Clint Waltz, entomologist Will Hudson and plant pathologist Alfredo Martinez he developed a complete package of information from a library of turfgrass textbooks, complete with recommendations that's now easily accessible in the field.

Turf managers, landscape professionals, homeowners and UGA Extension county agents can essentially have a mobile textbook with pictures and information on grass species, diseases, insects and pest control. The team is currently working on a pesticide database that will allow turf managers to research uses and application rates for pesticides, herbicides and plant regulators.

"With this application, if something is new, we can add it right away. The technology will never be out of date. The weed section has over 160 species, searchable in a variety of ways. If you have a crab grass, the application will show you the various species, pictures of each, descriptions of each plant and herbicide recommendations," McCullough said.

Martinez, who answers turf disease problems daily, said the interactive tool will help managers treat problems faster. "They can make more educated selections and diagnose problems using this tool," Martinez said. "It will have an impact on the environment, too, because they can be more



Photos: By Patrick McCullough

judicious about the control they choose."

Released in August, the application has been downloaded around the world from users in Australia, South Africa, England, Canada and all across the United States.

"UGA has a possibility to make an international impact with our research and extension using this application," McCullough said. The application costs 99 cents to download from iTunes. A yearly subscription to the database is \$19.99. Revenues generated from the sale fund turfgrass research at UGA.

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FACT:

Turfgrass is big business in Georgia. The state has 520 golf courses covered in turfgrass and 1.2 million acres of home lawns. Turfgrass sod farms cover 50,000 acres, with a farmgate value of \$164 million annually.



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Turf News

Artificial turf is STRIKING OUT in Major League Baseball

Source: Associate Press Baseball writer
Ronald Blum Sep 26, 12:05 am EDT

Former professional baseball player Maury Wills remembered back 43 years ago when he became the first batter to hit on artificial turf in a major league game. Even when the green rug was novel, he didn't like it. "I'm a traditionalist," said the former Los Angeles Dodger. "I'm still an old-school guy. I believe baseball was meant to be played outdoors and be played in the daytime."

Turns out, most others think baseball is better on grass, too. The sport's turf wars are nearing an end.

Once regarded as magic carpets that would eliminate bad hops and minimize rainouts, artificial surfaces are going the way of the dead ball and complete games.

When the Minnesota Twins open Target Field in April 2010 just two non-grass fields will remain in the major leagues: the Rogers Centre in Toronto and Tropicana Field in St. Petersburg, FL. That's down from a high of 10 artificial surfaces, in 1977-78 and again from 1982-94.

While colleges and high schools actually are installing more artificial fields—to accommodate multiple sports—artificial turf is unloved by Major League Baseball.

"Baseball in the Metrodome is an unnatural act," Atlanta Braves president John Schuerholz said.

Next season will have just 162 games on artificial turf, the fewest since 1969.

"I'm personally very happy that they're gone," baseball commissioner Bud Selig said. "I understood the need for artificial turf, particularly in multipurpose stadiums. But I think the players are better off and I think that the game is better, so I'm happy."

Players who still spend a majority of their games on artificial turf say they can feel it.

Tampa Bay Rays manager Joe Maddon makes sure to give All-Star outfielder Carl Crawford days off when he has a lot of consecutive games on turf. "I got away with it when I was 21. I'm a little older now - I'm almost 30, and it becomes tougher," Crawford said. "It definitely takes a toll on your body when you have to play 81 games on it. And we're in a division where you play another nine games on the road. That means you're playing more games on it than you are on natural grass. Basically, you play the best you can with it, but it's not easy."

Gold Glove first baseman Keith Hernandez says grounders "bounced like a SuperBall." But that wasn't the biggest problem: His ankles aren't good to this day because of the turf at Busch Stadium in St. Louis, his home field from 1974-83. He would soak his feet in buckets of water while the Cardinals batted.

Artificial turf dying in MLB

Only two teams will not play on grass in 2010

BY RONALD BLUM
AP BASEBALL WRITER

Maury Wills remembered back 43 years to that April night when he became the first batter to hit on artificial turf in a major league game. Even when the green rug was novel, he didn't like it. "I'm a traditionalist," said the Los Angeles Dodgers speedster, who opened that night at Houston's Astrodome with a single off Hall of Famer Robin Roberts.

"I'm still an old-school guy. I believe baseball was meant to be played outdoors and be played in the daytime."

Turns out, most others think baseball is better on grass, too. The sport's turf wars are nearing an end.

Once regarded as magic carpets that would eliminate bad hops and minimize rainouts, artificial surfaces are going the way of the dead ball and complete games.

After the Minnesota Twins play their Metrodome finale on Oct. 4 and open Target Field next April 12, just two non-grass fields will remain in the major leagues:

"I'm personally very happy that they're gone. I understood the need for artificial turf, particularly in multipurpose stadiums. But I think the players are better off and I think that the game is better, so I'm happy."

COMMISSIONER BUD SELIG

the Rogers Centre in Toronto and Tropicana Field in St. Petersburg, Fla.

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Players who still spend a majority of their games on turf say they can feel it.

"On day games the thermometer would read 148 off the turf," he recalled. "I remember Reggie Smith, when we got him from Boston, was out in right field in a day game in St. Louis in July or August and it's 100 degrees, and he had rubber cleats, and he had to call time out. They had melted. If I wore the metal spikes, it would have me branded under the soles on my feet on a real hot day, from the metal, it would sunburn my heel and the balls of my feet. I remember and I would go, 'Why are my feet on fire?'"

Los Angeles outfielder Torii Hunter, who spent nine seasons at the Metrodome, said the artificial turf was "like running in sand" and hurt his hamstrings, lower back, knees and calf muscles.

Hunter, who left the artificial turf of the Metrodome for Anaheim's grass after the 2007 season, can't wait until it's all gone. While there's still artificial turf, his body pays the price. "During the season, you feel it after your first couple games," he said. "It takes me like a month and a half to really get over some of the soreness that you have after the season."

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The Memorial Carving depicts Confederate President Jefferson Davis, General Robert E. Lee and Lt. General Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson.



Stone Mountain Park plans restoration project for famed Memorial Lawn

Submitted by Stone Mountain Park

STONE MOUNTAIN Georgia— As part of its ongoing commitment to preserve Georgia's natural treasures and to create a great place for families to enjoy the great outdoors together, Stone Mountain Park (SMP), in conjunction with the Stone Mountain Memorial Association (SMMA), is starting work on a year-long, \$3.5 million restoration project for the Memorial Lawn. The work begins now and is expected to last through summer 2010.

"Our goal is to make it easier and more enjoyable for guests to view the historical mountain and it's carving. In the park's original master plan, the lawn was designed as a spot to contemplate 'The Rock' including its natural and man-made beauty. As was in the plan, we are working to restore the best scenic vistas for the millions of visitors who come each year," said Gerald Rakestraw, vice president and general manager, SMP.



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The green, green grass of home . . . but where's home?

Sheri Doguet of Bladerunner Farms in Poteet, Texas is just one of the many people who has sent us the photo on the far right of a soldier using scissors to trim grass on a tiny plot of turf.

Background:

Although this photo has been circulating on the internet for several years, who and where the soldier is has been a mystery. The soldier (never acknowledged by name) has been identified on various web sites as an Australian, a Canadian or an American. Some sites suggest the photo was taken in Afghanistan, Kuwait, near a small village in Iraq, or at a camp outside of Baghdad. One source suggested the photo was taken at an unidentified training camp somewhere in the Carolinas.

So who is this celebrity soldier, where did he come from and where was the photo actually taken?

Mystery solved:

National Public Radio (NPR) identified the soldier as: "U.S. Army Warrant Officer Brook Turner seen trimming

grass with scissors in a camp north of Baghdad in July 2004. NPR states, "He missed the green of his native Oregon. His wife sent him grass seed, but ants ate it. Undeterred, he acquired sod."

Confirmation:

"This is my wonderful husband, Brook Turner of Stayton, Ore., battalion maintenance officer for Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 25th Aviation. He



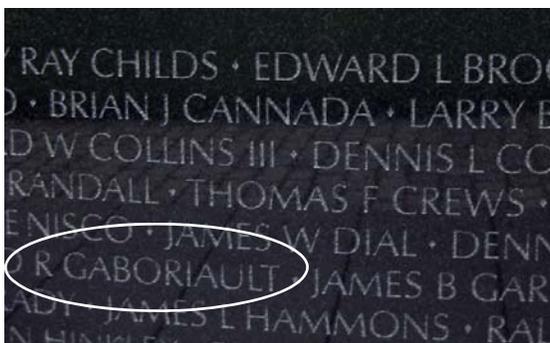
deployed out of Schofield Barracks in January 2004. The photo above shows him cutting grass that he planted in his "back yard" so he could have a little bit of home with him in Iraq. - Kimberly Turner

Mystery behind the soldier caring for his home turf is finally solved.



Much More Than a Name on a Wall

One solitary name on the Vietnam Memorial brings back memories for one reader



The above photo (enlarged) appeared in last month's newsletter in a story regarding funding to restore the lawn at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C.

Reader's response:

"The article on the Vietnam Memorial (Oct. 2009 issue) was particularly shocking as one of the names on the wall, Sanford R. Gaboriault was in my tank company in Vietnam in 1966-67. He was a Staff Sgt. in the 1st platoon and I was a Platoon Leader in 2nd platoon of B Co. 1/69th Armor. He went back for a 2nd tour in 1968 and died east of the Mang Yang Pass when his platoon was overrun by North Vietnamese Army."

Dr. Jack Hall

Virginia Polytechnic Institute

Side Note: There are over 58,000 names on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. This photo only identifies seven with clarity. We sincerely thank Dr. Hall for sharing such a personal recollection, and in so doing, honoring the memory of Staff Sgt. Gaboriault.

Three years and over **ONE MILLION** dollars later this artificial turf field is falling apart at the seams.



Based on a report by **Rhiannon Meyers**
Galveston County – The Daily News
Published September 16, 2009

School district officials at Henry Winston Memorial Stadium in Friendswood, Texas have a problem. They claim the artificial turf at Friendswood's high school football stadium is coming apart at the seams

Three years ago, the district spent a little more than \$1 million to replace the turf and track and claim the artificial turf was never properly installed, resulting in more than 300 repairs in the past three years.

FieldTurf Tarkett representatives declined to comment about the district's complaints. Officials with Dallas-based RS Global who were hired to install the turf could not be reached for comment.

According to a story featured in the Galveston County – The Daily News, Athletic Director Steve Van Meter, said the company hired unqualified day laborers "off the street" to lay the artificial turf and that crews did the "shabby installation" in a rush.

When installing artificial turf, crews first spread out a layer of crushed rock and then cover that layer with carpet-like rolls of artificial turf. The turf was attached to a "nailer board," a hard surface that is usually flush with the track encircling the field.

The nailer board anchors the turf to the field. Crews then cut out pieces of the turf and glued down slices of colored turf for logos, hash marks and yard lines.

Although glue was commonly used three years ago, crews now often stitch the pieces of carpet together, Van Meter said.

Finally, crews spread layers of rubber pellets across the turf to give the field traction.

The workers improperly installed the nailer board, leaving a dangerous drop of up to eight inches between the field and the track, Van Meter said. The company has since corrected that problem.

Van Meter also said crews used either the wrong glue or cheap glue, which has since failed. Dangling pieces of turf that have come unglued create trip hazards, Van Meter said.

RS Global has replaced scores of patches of unglued turf, creating a haphazard, uneven look to the field, Van Meter said.

Although RS Global has agreed to repair any and all problems, Superintendent Trish Hanks said. "We've been



Photo by Kevin M. Cox

Friendswood football players practice on the artificial turf at Henry Winston Stadium. Athletic Director, Steve Van Meter, estimates more than 400 repairs have been made to the artificial FieldTurf surface since it was installed during the summer of 2006.

patient long enough, and we've been acting in good faith with this company in attempting to resolve and correct the poor installation and poor workmanship. We're not satisfied at this time with their offers."

To read Rhiannon Meyers' article in its entirety go to:

<http://galvestondailynews.com/story.lasso?wcd=144119>



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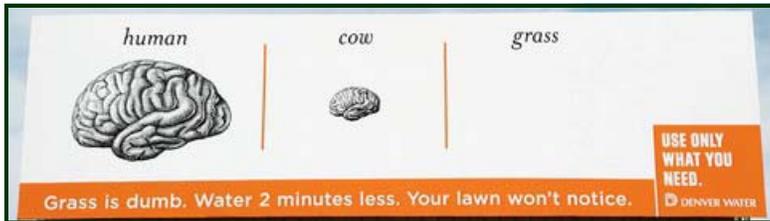
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Turf News

An intelligent response to a “dumb” campaign

Dr. Tony Koski of Colorado State University is to be commended on the following letter he wrote to Denver Water in response to their recent summer ad campaign.



To: Marie Bassett
 Director of Public Affairs
 Denver Water

Dear Ms. Bassett,

As a member of the larger Colorado turf and green industry, I am writing this in response to you “Grass is Dumb” water conservation media program. As an industry, we find this ad campaign to be both non-factual and somewhat insulting to the professionals who maintain turfgrass and those scientists who conduct turf research. Further, we would contend that the “message” (that we all can use a little less water in everything we do - which we all encourage and can agree upon) is lost in the cuteness of the ads - and that people will entirely miss the point of the ad campaign.

First, the “grass is dumb” slogan anthropomorphizes plants. A bluegrass plant doesn’t have a brain (as one of your ads DOES correctly suggest), thus it can be neither intelligent nor “dumb”. However, the processes by which bluegrass responds to drought stress are so complex that they are still not fully understood by scientists. The drying of soil as a result of drought (or lack of irrigation) stimulates a whole series of physiological responses in the bluegrass plant (or any drought resistant plant, for that matter) that cause it to slow down

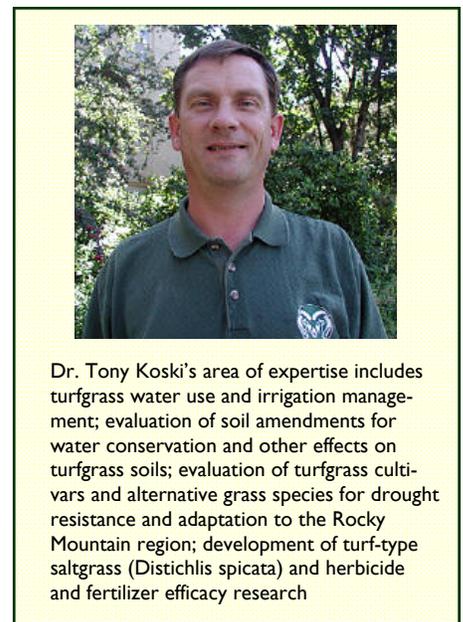
metabolically and use less water. This is why less frequent irrigation (or applying less water every time you do irrigate) DOES reduce the plant’s water use rate. The plant is not dumbly aware that water is less available, but responds - in a very complex way - to soil drying.

Second, in spite of the fact that we still don’t totally understand drought resistance mechanisms in turfgrasses, turf breeders have been measurable increasing drought resistance in Kentucky bluegrass for 20+ years. Your ad suggesting that “grass is grass” and that “evolution” has somehow bypassed the turfgrass plant belies the efforts of these breeders (and the many millions of dollars spent annually by such companies as Scotts) to develop more drought, heat, traffic, and pest resistant cultivars of all turfgrasses.

Finally, we feel there is perhaps an underlying bias in your message against lawns and their management. I won’t bother listing the numerous environmental benefits of lawns, as well as the documented positive economic impact of the lawn, landscape, sod and allied green industries on Colorado’s economy. While it is apparent that you paid an advertising firm a good amount of money to develop this campaign, we feel it has missed the mark and portrays lawns and the industry in which we work

in a negative light. It is our hope that, in the future, you might consider working with some of our green industry professionals as you develop conservation campaigns that might be both educational and effective in doing what all of us strive for - keeping landscapes green and healthy, with less water.

Sincerely
 Dr. Tony Koski
 Extension Turf Specialist and Professor



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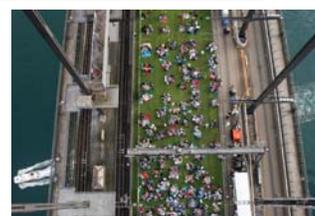
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Turf News

Sydney's Harbour Bridge rolls out natural turf and has a picnic doing it!

Rob Davey of Evergreen Turf in Pakenham, Victoria, Australia thought he'd spend part of the weekend at a picnic in Sydney. Not just any picnic mind you, but a one-of-a-kind event on Sydney's Harbour bridge. Rob wasn't alone; he was among more than six thousand Sydneysiders who had the unique pleasure of enjoying a picnic breakfast while taking in the magnificent sights from the Harbour Bridge. The bridge was closed to traffic, carpeted with natural turfgrass and transformed into an incredible picnic venue. Musicians provided entertainment as thousands ambled across the lush green grass and enjoyed the day.

It was an unusually serene sight with the Harbour Bridge not only free of bumper-to-bumper traffic, but there were also docile cows looking on and a honky-tonk piano player keeping spirits light.

At a cost of \$1 million, the inaugural breakfast on the bridge is the marquee event for Crave Sydney, a month-long festival showcasing the city's entertainment, food and art.



The Salt Lake Tribune

Written by: Maggie Wolf, a certified professional horticulturist who consults in the Salt Lake Valley.*

Biograss Sod Farm Celebrates 30 Years in Business (Utah's oldest and largest turfgrass producer)

Gardening: Sustainable landscaping with Utah turfgrass
Local grower is dedicated to improving seed quality.



Biograss CEO Warren Bell, Lance Bunderson, VP sales and research, crouch on turfgrass at their sod farm near Bluffdale., Utah. A blend of carefully selected fine fescue called BioMeadow is one of several sod types Biograss sells for more sustainable landscaping. (Photo: Maggie Wolf)

Warren Bell's Biograss Sod Farm is Utah's oldest and largest turfgrass sod farm. With a family background in education, Bell and his partners nurtured a turfgrass sod farm that cooperates with scientists working toward lawns that may be less brightly green in color, but more green environmentally.

The company sells BioBlue, an improved version of Utah's culturally correct bright green Kentucky bluegrass, as well as four other types of sod. At his farm near Bluffdale, while Bell watched his crew cut turf and stack it on pallets, he commented, "Those pallets are going to local garden centers and nurseries for fall sales."

While it's too late in the year to plant grass seed, turfgrass sod can be planted now and for several more weeks, while soil temperatures are between 65 °F (18 °C) and 32 °F (0 °C). Autumn weather is ideal for cool season turfgrass to establish roots quickly. Until true winter arrives, Biograss continues to sell, cut and supply sod for new lawns and lawn repair.

Bell considers the water-conservation movement a major influence on the turfgrass industry. More and more customers expect to buy improved sod types that require less irrigation, less pesticide and less labor input. Sustainable turfgrass varieties eventually pay for themselves by incurring fewer costs later on, the grower said.

"Some growers feel threatened by the messages telling people to use less water in their landscapes," Bell said. "But I think the xeriscape movement will have an overall positive effect for turf, because people will learn to select better varieties that don't need as much work as older varieties did."

Biograss vice president **Don Heslop** offers some remedies for Utah gardeners' worst lawn-care mistakes on the next page.

* Text has been slightly modified for non U.S. readers. - J. Novak



TPI Member featured on the DIY Network's "Disaster House"

TV show uses a demolition derby to simulate the wear and tear a lawn can go through after years and years of abuse. After the lawn received a beating they showed viewers how to remove the old lawn and replace it with new turfgrass sod.



James Graff of Graff's Turf Farms in Fort Morgan, Colorado made an appearance on the DIY Network's brand new series called "Disaster House". The show aired Tuesday, October 13th.

So how did Graff's Turf Farm and James get involved? They received a phone call from the producer of the show last May who was searching around Colorado for a turfgrass sod farm to provide some support for an upcoming episode. They

planned on calling the Denver Bronco's for a recommendation of a sod producer/installer and while trying to find contact info, they came across the website of Graff's Turf Farms and opted to call them.

Filming was done in early June. During the show James gave tips about soil preparation, proper installation and follow-up care to viewers and the show's host, Josh Temple.

If you go to <http://www.diynetwork.com/how-to/how-to-remove-old-sod-and-lay-new-sod/index.html> you can see some of the pointers that were provided to viewers.

James Graff of Graff's Turf Farm and Josh Temple, the host of DIY's Disaster House show viewers how to remove old turfgrass sod, prepare the area, install new turfgrass sod and offer a few pointers on post-installation care.

Biograss Sod Farm Celebrates 30 Years in Business (cont'd)

WORST LAWN CARE MISTAKES

Don Heslop of Biograss Sod Farms offers a list of Utah gardeners' worst lawn care mistakes -- and their remedies:



- **Watering every day** - Irrigating too often keeps soil surface moist enough for weed seed germination and fungal growth. Water less often and allow the water to penetrate soil so grass roots grow deeper.
- **Not core aerating** - Core aeration helps reduce thatch and soil compaction and allows more air to reach roots. Fall and spring are the times of year to core aerate lawns.
- **Cutting grass too short** - Especially in summer, raise the mower deck to allow grass blades to grow taller. Taller grass tends to root deeper and can go longer between irrigation.
- **Using a string trimmer as an edger** - String trimmers, when used as edgers, lead to bald edges on the lawn. When edges are bald, dirt is exposed and weeds infest.
- **Collecting and throwing away lawn clippings** - Use a mulching mower and return clippings to your lawn. Green clippings are full on nitrogen, acting as a natural fertilizer.
- **Ignoring the soil beneath the turfgrass** - You cannot grow healthy turf without healthy soil. Many new lawns fail due to poor soil preparation, especially near new construction where the soil is compacted.

As reported by: Maggie Wolf in The Sale Lake Tribune

One Benefit of Turfgrass Is Under Your Nose

According to researchers at the University of Queensland, the smell of freshly cut grass reduces stress and protects nerve cells from the damage that stress can cause.

It's likely there's one positive attribute of natural turfgrass that most of us haven't yet sniffed out; and that's the health benefits associated with the scent of freshly cut grass.

Dr. Nickolas Lavidis along with PhD students Elizabeth Butt and Ei Leen Leong of the University of Queensland's school of biomedical sciences in Brisbane, Australia set out to study the long-term effect of intermittent chronic stress in rats and mice and recently discovered something of interest.

What they discovered was that the nerve cells in a part of the brain involved in memory were smaller when their subjects (rats and mice) were placed in chronic stressful situations. But more importantly, they found that certain scents, off-set the consequences of stress on the nerve cells and in turn prevented the memory loss that was associated with chronic stress. In simplistic terms, the researchers found that nerves communicate through electrical signals. In chronically

stressed animals, fewer impulses were measured, telling researchers that stress reduced the ability of nerves to communicate in the hippocampus (nerve cells in a part of the brain involved in memory). Less communication between the nerves in this area leads to memory loss. They also discovered something else of interest; the smelling of freshly cut grass prevented this loss.

"If the same animals with chronic stress are exposed to the smell of the chemicals within cut grass, the damage that occurs to the hippocampus is prevented," Dr Lavidis said. "The structures of the nerve cells that communicate memory look exactly the same as an animal that hasn't been stressed. In effect, it prevents the damage, loss of function and loss of memory."

The researchers are unsure precisely how smelling certain odors achieves this result. One possibility is that fewer neurons are activating the sympathetic nervous system.



The researchers identified 18 chemicals found in freshly cut grass. They narrowed down the ones that might influence stress by observing which chemicals most effectively dampened the electrical signals being sent to the sympathetic nervous system in animals. The final product is a cool and fresh fragrance.

While no official human trials were conducted, Dr Lavidis had over sixty of his students voluntarily smell the fragrance. "They all reported to me the pleasantness of the smell and the positive effect it has had on them under different situations, including exam periods," Dr Lavidis said.

Turfgrass researchers scheduled to address funding for plant breeding

ASA-CSSA-SSSA International Annual Meetings

Worldwide demand for a safe and secure food supply is growing with plant breeding at the forefront of sustainability discussions; however many research programs have seen their funding decrease due to the erosion of traditional public or formula grants. Researchers are now turning to other sources for funding for their domestic and international plant breeding programs.

Stakeholders from public and private sectors of the plant breeding community will share their perspectives on the

current funding of landscape during the symposium, "Building a Strong Financial Base for Sustaining a Healthy Plant Breeding Community," as part of the 2009 Annual Meetings of the American Society of Agronomy (ASA), and Crop Science Society of America (CSSA), and Soil Science Society of America (SSSA) on November 5th in Pittsburgh, PA.

Symposium presenters will discuss successes in public-private partnerships; commercialization strategies now driving public programs; the impact of foundations in targeted support for

cultivar development; and national and global programs that may help build capacity and provide public support.

Among the scheduled speakers are **Dr. Stacy A. Bonos** and **Dr. William Meyer**, Rutgers State University, who will discuss the many innovations of the Rutgers Turfgrass Program over the last half century. The organization has continued to grow and expand. It now operates as a self-sustaining center for turfgrass research and exploration, funded through its cultivars' licensing royalties.



Readers Question Accuracy of Quote

We received a few comments from our readers regarding the following quote that appeared in last month's newsletter.

“Three hundred trout are needed to support one man for a year. The trout, in turn, must consume 90,000 frogs, that must consume 27 million grasshoppers that live off of 1,000 tons of grass.”

-- G. Tyler Miller, Jr., *American Chemist* (1971)

One reader commented:

“If at all, FROGS are a last resort food for trout. As a graduate student and avid trout fisherman for 50+ years, I dissected the stomachs of MANY a trout and have never found a frog in any of them nor have I ever heard of frogs as part of their diet. The source citation was “G. Tyler, Jr., AMERICAN CHEMIST (1971) Does that tell you something about chemists, frogs and trout?”

Dear Reader:

While we do not profess to have any knowledge about frogs, grasshoppers or trout we couldn't resist doing a little research and came across the following:

Conservation Magazine - Fall 2004 (Vol. 5, No. 4)

One of the mysteries of global amphibian decline is that many affected populations are in protected areas.

Although biologists suspect that introduced predatory fish may be the culprit in the decline of mountain frogs, there has been little evidence that the two are directly linked. Now new research shows that mountain yellow-legged frogs (*Rana muscosa*) rebound when trout are removed from lakes in California's Sierra Nevada mountain range.

“Removal of introduced trout resulted in rapid recovery of frog populations,” says Vance Vredenburg of the University of California, Berkeley, in the May 18 (2004) issue of *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*.

To test whether the trout have a direct effect on the frogs, Vredenburg

used gill nets to remove trout from five lakes. A year later, these lakes had more than 10 times as many frogs and nearly 80 times as many tadpoles as trout lakes. Three years after trout removal, these lakes had essentially the same numbers of frogs and tadpoles as fishless lakes.

To confirm that trout eat tadpoles, Vredenburg put trout into enclosures in three fishless lakes and observed the egg masses that frogs deposited there. None of the tadpoles that hatched in the trout enclosures were found alive at the end of the experiment. “Trout did not attack egg masses but struck at and consumed tadpoles as they hatched,” says Vredenburg.

This work has spurred trout removal from some California mountain lakes. “The National Park Service has eleven ongoing removal lakes in Sequoia and

Kings Canyon National Parks, and the California Department of Fish and Game — the very agency that still introduces trout in some areas — is removing trout in 21 lakes in the Inyo National Forest,” says Vredenburg.

His findings could also apply to other naturally fishless mountainous areas where trout have been introduced and frogs have declined, including areas in Australia, Costa Rica, and Spain.

“Nonnative predators such as salmonid fishes are commonly introduced into aquatic ecosystems by humans, even in ‘protected’ areas, and therefore may be an important factor in worldwide amphibian declines,” says Vredenburg.

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