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PRESIDENT'S TURF—Claus Zander

Look on the Bright Side

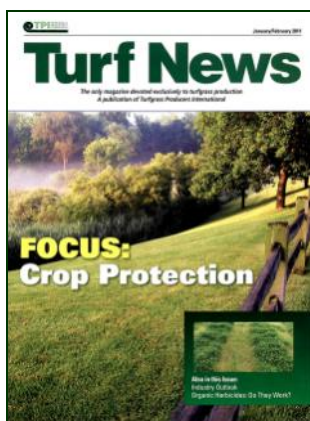
This is the time of the year when everything slows down a bit for both warm and cool season turfgrass producers. This time allows us to recharge our batteries, work on equipment maintenance and repair, and plan for the coming season.

This is also the time of the year when we try to measure the market's "optimism." We analyze our turf inventories and determine whether demand will be similar to years gone by or if it will shift. We also ask ourselves whether consumers would be willing to pay more for higher quality sod.

Overall, the outlook for 2011 has improved. If we have an optimistic attitude, hopefully it will spread to our customers and employees.

As we plan for the upcoming season(s), we should ask ourselves the following questions:

- Do we have the right level of inventory?



Turf News is the only magazine devoted exclusively to turfgrass production and is a publication of Turfgrass Producers International.



- Do we have the equipment necessary to efficiently fulfill our customers' needs?
- If sales go up by 10 percent, how will this affect us?

Looking on the bright side, the turfgrass industry is fortunate that it is a "just-in time" business. With our product's short shelf life and a focus on quick delivery, we do not face the kind of competition that other industries do from foreign countries with inexpensive labor.

Changing gears, plan to attend the TPI Midwinter Conference in Orlando, FL, Jan.31-Feb.4. We have a great agenda planned. Highlights include the launch of our "Next Generation Leaders", as well as a succession planning workshop (plan ahead and reduce the amount you "donate" to the government in taxes), and some farm-based humor from Damian Mason, our keynote speaker. Sometimes you just need to laugh!

The exhibitor registration for the Midwinter Conference is almost double that of last year and our producer registrations are growing daily. I look forward to seeing you there at another great conference. Happy New Year!

- Claus Zander, TPI President



NFL Charities provides grant to The University of Toledo to study bacteria on artificial fields.

January 10, 2011.

As featured in [The Independent Collegian](#), U. Toledo via UWIRE

By Jennifer Ison

U. Toledo's environmental science department has big plans for research involving [artificial] turf grass, which can be a breeding ground for many different types of harmful bacteria.

Last month, the NFL Charities awarded U. Toledo a \$100,000 grant to further an investigation of [artificial] turf-dwelling harmful bacteria. William Von Sigler, associate professor of environmental microbiology, heads this study with plans to identify and eliminate any threats that may live within the artificial turf systems.

The NFL Charities chose UT along with 16 other organizations to receive grants in order to further research projects that were already under way. UT was the only institution chosen to study infectious bacteria, while most others were studying concussions and their prevention.

"I'm kind of proud to be the only institution awarded who is studying bacteria. It's a feather in our caps," Sigler said. Although synthetic turf can be found on both indoor and outdoor football fields, his research involves only indoor fields. The existence of bacteria on [artificial] turf is a major problem because indoor conditions allow infectious bacteria to multiply infinitely. For example, because sunlight kills bacteria, limited exposure to sunlight can lead to more bacteria on indoor fields.

Sigler has two main goals for this research: First, he plans to search for methicillin-resistant staphylococcus aureus, or MRSA, which he refers to as the super bug. MRSA, the most common cause of staph infections, is notorious for spreading throughout football teams who use indoor facilities. Next, Sigler will do a comprehensive study of the [artificial] turf to identify all of the different bacteria present. The research will involve systematic swabbing of the artificial blades and the rubber cushioning which absorb bacteria.

Each bacterium found will be studied extensively to identify whether it is harmful to players, how long it can survive in the conditions and how rapidly the bacteria can multiply. All of these factors can determine the best way to treat the issue.



NFL Charities, funded by NFL team owners, awarded the University of Toledo a grant to study how long a certain nasty bacterium might live in artificial turf systems, the kind that use recycled material to mimic natural grass and soft dirt cushions beneath.

He hopes to find hot spots that exist on the field, such as between hash marks and near the end zone. Bacteria could be more prevalent in those areas, according to Sigler, because those are areas in which most action takes place on the field and where the most bacteria could exist.

After obtaining knowledge on bacteria patterns, new cleaning methods can be developed for the future, preventing the spread of the infectious bacteria that have been a problem in the football community.

Sigler has enlisted the help of his friend and colleague Ron Turko of the department of agronomy and environmental sciences at Purdue University. "We will be doing 75 percent of the work at UT and the rest will be done at Purdue," Sigler said.

Other universities have committed to helping Sigler in his research such as Bowling Green State University and the University of Nebraska along with Purdue. They have volunteered their indoor practice facilities to test if the results will be similar at different locations. Sigler is still waiting on confirmation from other universities and some NFL teams such as the Indianapolis Colts and the Detroit Lions.

Sigler believes this research stood out to the NFL Charities because it is a timely issue. Teams are struggling with controlling these bacteria, and it is imperative that players are as healthy as possible. Sigler and Turko are experts in this type of research and they have a solid track record together. "We can get things done and do the job," Sigler said.

The secret to success may be as simple as just LISTENING.

In talking to turfgrass producers and suppliers who deal with sports field managers on a regular basis it becomes very clear that they all have one thing in common, the ability to communicate clearly, respond accordingly, but most of all, they know how to listen.



When we spoke to James Graff, co-owner/operations manager of Graff's Turf Farms in Fort Morgan, Colorado about what it takes to serve the needs of professional grounds keepers at major sports stadiums he had a great deal to offer. The conversation was for an article that was featured in Athletic Turf News/Landscape Management late last year. At the time we were looking for a brief statement or two on the subject, but Graff provided us with a great deal more than space would allow.



James Graff of Graff's Turf Farms,
Fort Morgan, Colorado.

Like those often good scenes from a motion picture that end up on the editing room floor because of time, or in this case space restrictions, some of Graff's comments had to be omitted from the article.

We thought it might be worthwhile to revisit that conversation and share a few of his additional thoughts with our readers.

When we asked Graff what it takes to serve the needs of professional sports field managers and groundskeepers he offered the following comment:

"We do a good number of professional sports stadiums and when it comes to working with sports field supervisors and managers the most important thing we can do as a supplier is maintain year-round communication. It's crucial, especially when you have issues such as normal maintenance and

repairs, plus the consequences of additional traffic that often results from bringing in other venues that generate revenue."

"As a producer you have to be aware of the playing surface and you have to make sure you have the turfgrass available should their schedule demand it or the unexpected arise. You really have to know their schedule, their planned activities and their replacement requirements under normal circumstances, etc. All this information is important and it allows us to do a better job and give the customer a better product."

"Replacement, repairs, revenue from other activities that generate plenty of traffic on their playing surface all come into play so you need to have turfgrass available to meet their playing schedule and unrelated sports field activities."

"After season renovation, normal schedule demands, turf replacement requirements, they are all factors for consideration. How long will a field last under normal conditions? What are their budget limitations? What are their plans? All of this information is substantial if you want to be responsive to the need of the customer. And the most important thing we can do . . . is listen."

So does Graff Turf Farms really listen? You be the judge. The following are just a few of the major sports projects they have handled:

Invesco Field at Mile High and Coors Field Denver, CO, Folson Field, Boulder, CO, Dick's Sporting Goods Park, Commerce City, CO, Dove Valley, Englewood, CO, Kauffman Field, Kansas City, MO, Wrigley Field, Chicago, IL, Notre Dame Stadium, South Bend, IN, Busch Stadium, St. Louis, MO, Haymarket Park, Lincoln, NE, Infinity Park, Glendale, CO, Dehler Park, Billings, MT, Soldier Field, Chicago, IL, and Target Field, Minneapolis, MN to name but a few.

SEND US YOUR STORY

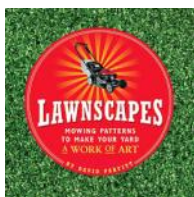
TPI members are encouraged to send ideas, stories and photos to the TPI E-Newsletter so we can share them with our readers. If you have a story you would like to share please contact Jim Novak - jnovak@TurfGrassSod.org.

TurfSide-UP

Better yet... Make that Sunnyside-UP

David Parfitt is an artist; not just any sort of an artist mind you, but a self described sculptor and visual artist who specializes in site-specific sculpture and public art projects.

Based in Brighton, England, Parfitt's activities include the design, production and project management of a range of forms unlimited by materials including lawns.



In fact, Parfitt wrote a successful book on lawn art titled "Lawns: Mowing Patterns To Make Your Yard a Work of Art" that was published by Quirk Books, in the USA.



How good is Parfitt's art? Good enough to have been commissioned by the Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS) to reproduce their logo for the CBS Sunday Morning Show.

Parfitt's lawn drawing uses the same technique that makes stripes appear after mowing the lawn. The whole process of drawing the CBS logo was filmed and used for a lawn art feature for the CBS Sunday Morning Show, the sequence also appeared for the show's opening titles.

How exactly does it work? Directional mowing makes the patterns. Parfitt states the act of cutting makes absolutely no difference - it's the flattening that matters. "The part of the mower that makes the most noticeable stripes is the roller. A roller by itself makes as good a stripe as a mower," he said.

Most lawns are fairly large expanses, Parfitt pointed out, so a machine is a good way of covering large areas. "For absolute control and precision perhaps the best tool is a broom, but to do a whole lawn with a broom would be similar to cutting the grass with toenail clippers; save it for the detail.

When asked by reporter Joan Brunskill of Associated Press if his lawn is perfect Parfitt replied, "My lawn at home is currently an experiment in breeding dandelions. Parts of it are overgrown, concealing odd bits of discarded carved stone, a whale, a mermaid, Queen Victoria's head, a trident that I found in a Greek temple, and, best of all, the fluffy toys that my cat Pablo insists on stealing from neighbors' houses and hiding in the grass."



When it comes to having a sunny outlook on lawn art, sculptor/artist David Parfitt has a way of seeing the sunny side.



VANMAC European Field Day is a SUCCESS!

When the VANMAC Field Day was held in Luxemburg last October over 100 turfgrass producers and some 350 attendees from throughout Europe participated in the event.

Vanmac and Trilo hosted the event which took place on the farm of Van der Sluis Rollrasen in Limpach-Sanem.

The full day schedule included a market with suppliers, a static show of featured equipment and an afternoon of in-field demonstrations by major manufacturers that included companies like Brouwer, Darion, Kesmac, Kommtek, Magnum, Progressive, Schwab and Trebro.

"We were glad to participate in the Vanmac Field Day for several reasons; it provided us with an opportunity to meet most of the major turfgrass producers from across Europe, gain insight on the needs of the industry and develop strong relationships with potential new customers. It was very enlightening for the attendees as they were given a first hand look at the latest turfgrass machinery and new production techniques. Rollrasen Van de Sluis of Luxembourg were excellent hosts and worked hard at making the day informative and enjoyable for everyone"

Ian True - National Sales Manager, Trebro Manufacturing



Photo courtesy of Ian True

TPI Board Trustee **Johnny Trandum** (right) of Ostfold Gress AS, Dilling, Norway with **Mark Southcoat** of Trebro UK in the static equipment display area prior to in-field demonstrations.



Over 350 attendees had an opportunity to view in-field demonstrations that included seeders, mowers, harvesters, sod cutters, installers, rollers, etc.



Trebro's Ian True (left) and Tim Merrell of The Grass Group, UK's premier turf and ground care equipment supplier.



Static display area provided attendees with an opportunity to view a wide variety of equipment and talk to supplier and manufacturer representatives.



Attendees get a close-up look at numerous pieces of equipment in full operation.

To see more photos visit: <http://www.vanmacfieldday.com/>

Above photos courtesy of Vanmac.

Filed under — “What were they thinking?”

If you build it they will come . . . but you might have to turn some of them away.

New track cost \$2.6 million but it seems some track-and-field competitors won't be allowed to practice or play on it!



HAMMER THROW— OFF LIMITS



JAVELIN THROW— OFF LIMITS



DISCUS THROW and **SHOT PUT** probably wouldn't be allowed either if they were part of the program.

“Artificial field can't even host all the events of the sport for which it was built.”

The following words appeared in the *Daily Utah Chronicle*, (November 11, 2010), the daily at the University of Utah, under the title “**New track falls short of needs**,” written by Kelsey Price. She was a high school track-and-field competitor.

You would think, after 28 years of going without a track of its own, the U (University of Utah) would take every measure possible to ensure the newest campus facility met all the needs of athletic teams on campus.

However, as nice as it will be not to have the track team compete at a high school venue, the new McCarthy Family Track & Field falls terribly short of the basic expectations for a college track venue.

Utah's newly-christened track just cannot measure up to other venues in the state.

The first poor choice of the U regarding the design of the new track was the decision to install AstroTurf. Although it's impossible to deny that the maintenance of a natural grass field is more cumbersome than turf, artificial grass simply isn't suited for field events.

The hammer throw can't be done on the artificial grass without extreme wear and tear on the [artificial] turf. Unlike natural grass fields, [artificial] turf cannot handle the surface displacement caused by hammer throw and javelin.

When Cottonwood High School installed an [artificial] turf field three years ago, field events could no longer take place in the field of the track. We always dreaded meets at Cottonwood, mainly because our field athletes were at a separate facility and spectators no longer had the option of watching the field events.

Likely, javelin and hammer throw events will not take place at McCarthy Family Track & Field because of the maintenance and warranty concerns of the new [artificial] turf. However, it seems strange to spend \$2.6 million on a facility that can't even host all the events of the sport for which it was built.

To read Kelsey's article in its entirety go to:

<http://www.dailyutahchronicle.com/sports/new-track-falls-short-of-needs-1.2402060>

For more news stories and research pertaining to artificial turf visit <http://www.synturf.org/contact.html>

Where in the world is
TPI represented?
EVERYWHERE!

An on-going series featuring photos and copy
from TPI member websites.

Turf Traditions
Moscow, Russia

<http://www.gazontrad.ru/>



Turf Traditions produces a high quality "premium class" rolled lawn.

We actively represent Russian production of lawns in Turfgrass Producers International.



We have a wide range of seeds gazonnykh Trav device for production and various types of lawns. Turf Traditions is an official distributor and world leader in production and breeding seed gazonnykh Trav Seed Research of Oregon. We are also the largest supplier of elite seed gazonnykh Trav from United States and Canada.



We maintain contact with world leading manufacturers, research laboratories, industry associations, as well as own industrial base, modern technologies, and employ competent personnel to serve our customers.

For our own production of rolled lawns we only use the latest, improved varieties of seeds.

Proud Member of Turfgrass Producers International



Note: Copy reflects an effort to translate original text from Russian to English. – J.N.

COMING SOON on



"Hi! I'm Natural Turfgrass."
"And I'm Artificial Turf."



Natural Turfgrass (left) and Artificial Turf (right) agree to disagree.

Photos: Jim Novak

Natural Turfgrass and Artificial Turf will be appearing in a planned series of entertaining and informative educational vignettes on *You-Tube* later this year. The first two installments of the series are entitled "**A Few Restrictions**" and "**It's Hot Out There!**"

The videos will have their premiere at TPI's 2011 Midwinter Conference in Orlando, Florida.

More information will be forthcoming in a future issue of *Turf News* magazine and next month's TPI E-Newsletter.



TPI Members have reason to be proud of the community they serve!

If you had an opportunity to attend the TPI Summer Convention and Field Day at Pine Island Turf Nursery in Pine Island, NY back in late July, you may have had an opportunity to drive through the nearby scenic Village of Warwick.

If by chance you did have such an opportunity it might not surprise you to learn that the Village was the winner of the **2010 International Communities in Bloom Award**.

The 2010 National Symposium and Awards Ceremonies, hosted by Halifax Regional Municipality was held last October in Halifax, Nova Scotia and Warwick was selected as the winner out of eight competing communities including entries from Canada and Europe.



To fully appreciate why Warwick was the recipient of such a prestigious award, (it was only the second time an American village captured the trophy), one has to consider what the judges saw and reported when they made a visit last summer and touring

the community and the surrounding area.

Warwick was judged in eight categories that included tidiness; environmental action; heritage conservation; urban forestry; landscape; **turfgrass and groundcover**; floral displays and community involvement.

Regarding turfgrass and groundcovers the judges noted: "Turfgrass sod farmers in Warwick's hamlet of Pine Island, home to the famed 10,000 acre Black Dirt Region, donated sod to cover a playing field in nearby Memorial Park. Today's improved turfgrass varieties, preferred by professional NFL teams for safety reasons and are very effective in reducing pollution.

Turfgrass traps and removes dust and dirt from the air. 2,500 square feet of lawn absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, and release enough oxygen for a family of four to breathe."

Warwick Village Mayor Michael Newhard commented, "Winning this award is a reflection on the quality we have in Warwick. It's an added incentive and it brands this community as a place where the citizens have pride in their surroundings, pay attention to details and are involved and caring. The criteria for winning the award wasn't just about flowers. On behalf of the Village Board, I thank and congratulate Warwick in Bloom and all the organizations that participated in this remarkable, historic win!!"

There are several TPI members serving the Warwick area including **Chip Lain** of Pine Island Turf Nursery, **Leonard DeBuck** of DeBuck's Sod Farms of New York (Leonard was actively involved in the competition) and **Thomas and Kevin Shuback** of Shuback Farms, Inc.



Members of Warwick in Bloom Committee returned triumphantly from Nova Scotia after Warwick was declared winner of the International Communities in Bloom Award.