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September 2011

TPI Members Feel Nature's Fury



Aerial photo illustrates how the storm left many Pine Island farm fields in ruins. PHOTO: Tom Bushey-Times Herald Record

The east coast of the U.S. is still reeling from the aftermath of Hurricane Irene. As high winds and heavy rains hit the eastern U.S. and moved up the coast state after state felt its impact. It is estimated the economic losses will exceed \$10 billion.

In the end it was flooding that did the most devastation in areas of Vermont, Connecticut, New Jersey and New York.

Although New York City fared better than some expected, heavy rains resulted in record flooding in other parts of the state and total damage is expected to exceed one billion dollars in New York state alone. An estimated 600 homes were destroyed, 150 major highways were disrupted and farms in the state suffered an estimated \$45 million in damage.

Among those farms impacted by record floods were Pine Island Turf Nursery and DeBuck's Sod Farms of NY. The farms are owned and operated by Chip Lain and Leonard DeBuck respectively and are both located in Pine Island, New York.



Canoeist paddle past DeBuck's Sod Farm which is submerged under six feet of water.

PHOTO: Dominick Fiorille, Times Herald-Record / AP

How bad was the flooding in and around Pine Island? Chip Lain estimates that his farm and the DeBuck's farm were covered with more than six feet of flood water and they looked more like a vast lake rather than hundreds of acres of turf.

Our thoughts and prayers go to all TPI members along the east coast, their friends and families, and the many other families who have been devastated by this natural disaster.



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: jnovak@TurfGrassSod.org

New Turfgrass Herbicide Recalled



The miracles of science™

Imprelis® herbicide

DuPont has voluntarily suspended sale of Imprelis® herbicide, and will soon be conducting a product return and refund program. For more information, [click here](#).

DuPont was ordered by the Environmental Protection Agency on Thursday, August 11, 2011 to stop selling and recall its Imprelis herbicide, following thousands of complaints that the treatment kills trees.

Imperils herbicide (active ingredient aminocyclopyrachlor) is now being recalled by the E.I. duPont de Nemours and Company because of damage and death to nontarget trees. Homeowners, landscape and pest control professionals are also being warned not to compost grass clippings from Imprelis-treated lawns.

Imprelis herbicide received conditional registration from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in October 2010 as safe for use in residential, industrial, and institutional lawns and on golf courses to control broadleaf weeds. But applications adjacent to white pine, Norway spruce, and other evergreen trees have caused twisting and curling of new growth, which progressed to the browning and death of affected of trees.

Reuters news journalist Jonathan Stempel's reported that the order came after the EPA began getting reports from state agencies of damage to evergreens linked to Imprelis back in June. DuPont had marketed Imperils to control weeds in recreational areas such as golf courses and commercial properties such as sod farms.

According to the agency, DuPont has submitted more than 7,000 reports of damage or death to select trees as well as test data confirming a link between Imprelis and tree damage.

The U.S. EPA issued a 'stop sale' order for Imprelis (EPA Registration Number 352-793) effective August 11, 2011. This involves cease sale, use, and removal of the product. DuPont is planning a product return and refund program.

The EPA provides more information on their [website](#). DuPont has set up a hotline number [866-796-4783] and [website](#) for Imprelis.



Imprelis herbicide damage to conifers (evergreens) following turfgrass application.



Needle twisting to conifer following Imprelis herbicide application.



Damaged conifer leader following Imprelis herbicide application.

Photos: Laura Jesse—Horticulture & Home Pest News, Iowa State University Extension, Departments of Entomology, Horticulture and Plant Pathology.

A well deserved TIP OF THE HAT to TPI Member Laurie Griffen



Laurie Griffen of Saratoga Sod Farm.



Laurie Griffen and her husband Steve have a winning partnership.

Our congratulations to TPI Member **Laurie K. Griffen**, who was recently elected to a 4-year seat on the Farm Credit East Board.

Laurie, along with her husband Steve, own Saratoga Sod Farm, Inc., a 550-600 acre turfgrass farm in Stillwater, NY. The Griffen's market and deliver their own product within a 200-mile radius. The Griffen family has been farming in Saratoga County for more than 200 years spanning seven generations.

In addition to growing and harvesting sod, they provide installation services as well as sales of seed and fertilizer to assist their customers across the Northeast. Saratoga Sod grows roughly 400 acres of soybeans as part of the crop rotation.

Laurie holds a bachelor's degree from Cornell University and also is a graduate of LEAD NY Class V (a two-year agricultural leadership program), and she currently serves

as President of the Board of Directors. Laurie has also served for many years on the Greenwich Farm Credit East Customer Service Council and is a past member of the Nominating Committee, including chairing it. She also serves on the Town of Saratoga Planning Board, Schuyler Park Committee (co-chair); Northeast Golf Course Superintendents Association Board of Directors; New York State Turfgrass Association Adirondack Conference and Trade Show (co-chair), and the New York State Ag Experiment Station Advisory Committee/Council.

Laurie runs the day-to-day finances and customer relations side of the business; her husband Steve focuses on the production side. But when it comes to marketing responsibilities, it's a joint family affair.

Our thanks to Karen Murphy, Editor, Farm Credit East for permission to reprint Laurie's photos first featured in Farm Credit East's Financial Partner magazine, Fall 2009.

Laurie offered the following thoughts regarding her election and her commitment to agriculture:

"My election to the Board of Farm Credit East provides me with the opportunity to give back to an industry and cooperative that has served my business, family and industry well. It also has given me the opportunity to be a voice for and to support a vital part of our agricultural infrastructure. My perspective as a sod producer, coupled with my dairy industry background, enables me to provide valuable perspectives on issues and challenges facing our industry."

"In today's economy I think Farm Credit East is critically important because it is a vital source of capital for agricultural producers throughout the Northeast. Over 60% of the credit extended to farmers in the six state region (NY, NJ, MA, CT, RI, NH) comes from Farm Credit East. I believe it is critical for agricultural producers to have a lender who understands their business and is willing to work with them."

"I think the biggest contribution I can make to the Board is to be an active listener and a strong voice in support of maintaining a sound financial cooperative that is strongly

committed to agriculture, not only for today, but for future generations."

"As I look to the future I think our biggest challenge is to continue to adapt and change effectively as needed to meet the changing needs of our producer members. With significant market volatility, we need a strong farmer-owner financial cooperative such as Farm Credit East that works with producers in good and bad economic times."

"Although I have only begun my four year term I am already impressed by the work of my fellow Board members to analyze the financial, credit and other information and ask in-depth questions aimed at making sure our organization remains strong. The level of detailed information is amazing and the diversity of the Board allows for wide ranging discussions and sound decisions. I am also impressed by the talent, knowledge, experience and dedication of Farm Credit East's management team and staff. They too are keys to our success."

- Laurie Griffen

A KID'S POINT OF VIEW

If a youngster wanted to offer you some business advice would you bother to listen? The folks at Aces Ballpark in Reno, Nevada did and now they are saving tens of thousands of gallons of water annually!

Some environmentalists seem to think that the natural grass that covers sports stadiums and baseball parks requires too much water to maintain. Seldom do they think about all the environmental benefits of natural turfgrass. But what if sports field managers and groundskeepers could recommend a way for management to substantially reduce water consumption at their facility? Better yet, what if landscapers and landscape architects could offer a simple suggestion to their clients that would save them a considerable amount of water; would that score a few points with their customers?

Let's face it, water conservation is a hot topic and anything we can do to conserve water would benefit both the environment and the bottom line; at least that was the conclusion of a grade school youngster who began a campaign that made some key decision-makers take notice.

The story began in 2009 when Stacy Perez took her then seven-year old son Mason to see the Reno Aces at the new Aces Ballpark in Reno, Nevada. The Reno Aces is the Triple-A team for the Arizona Diamondbacks.

After enjoying a hotdog Mason asked his mom if he could go to the restroom to wash his hands, so off they went. When Mason turned on the water he told his mom that the water was coming out so fast that he couldn't keep his hands under the tap. She turned the nozzle to decrease the flow and Mason finished washing up. You would think the story would be the end there, but it didn't, not for the inquisitive seven-year old.

Mason began to wonder; what if there was less water pressure? How much water could they save? How much water could everyone save if faucets in kitchens and bathrooms had less pressure but could still do the job? Mason's preoccupation with water pressure became the basis for a school science project. He began to measure the water flow at his house, his grandmother's house and a friend's house. Using a bucket and a stop watch he began to measure the flow of water and determined that the savings was between 4 to 23 percent.

He then went to three businesses in the area including the Reno Aces Ballpark. His tests showed a savings of 6 to 25 percent at the very various testing sites.



When Mason, accompanied by his mom, went to talk to Rick Parr, the Reno Aces General Manager, and later to David Avila the Vice President of Operations, they were captivated by his enthusiasm and interested in what he had to say. His suggestions on water pressure and cost savings had their attention.

Mason's idea was implemented in all restrooms and locker rooms. The park also installed special monitors on the Aces' field irrigation system and slight changes in its stadium cleanup process, the result — an estimated savings in water usage that exceeded 20 percent.

As of this writing Mason has presented his idea to other businesses including Michonne Ascuaga, the chief executive officer of John Ascuaga's Nugget (hotel & Casino) in Sparks, Nevada and representatives of the Truckee Meadows Water Authority (TMWA).

Mason's water conservation results have shown that by turning the water-supply valves only halfway on under bathroom and kitchen sinks various businesses could realize substantial savings.

Now ten-years old, Mason has been invited to meet with the plumbers, custodians and maintenance people at the Washoe County School District to talk to them about turning down their water valves to reduce pressure. "You know how teachers have kind of been losing their jobs?" Mason told the Reno Gazette-Journal. "If we turned down every valve at every school we have in the Washoe County School District, with all that money we can save, we can save at least one teacher's job."

Imagine the tremendous amount of money and water that could be saved if sports stadiums, ballparks, golf courses, businesses and homeowners throughout the country implemented Mason's idea. We don't know if Mason has received any scholarship funding as a result of his cost-saving suggestion, but we would like to think he will. He certainly deserves it.

- Jim Novak

Park District temporarily lifts pesticide ban until they can . . . Weed Out the Problem

HIGHLAND PARK NEWS

BY CHARLES BERMAN—August 19, 2011

Highland Park, IL - Park District of Highland Park commissioners modified its turf management policies last week by allowing its grounds keepers to again deploy chemical pesticides and herbicides on its playing fields this fall.

Four years ago, the district banned such practices when it launched an Integrated Pest Management program. The progressive move was praised as a model among parks organizations leading a natural lawn-care movement.

The turf-maintenance principles shifted from pesticides to organic, health-conscience techniques, including intensified irrigation, aeration, mowing, over-seeding and other cultural practices to keep the turf in good condition.

Corn gluten meal, which is billed as a natural substitute for synthetic herbicides, was tested in Highland Park, but district officials reported odor problems and limited success. Restaurant-grade vinegar also has been sprayed and determined to be a better alternative to pesticides in some cases.

On Aug. 18, however, park officials reported that the program has likely contributed to the worst field conditions the district has seen in more than a decade.

Ted Baker, the district's director of park operations, said dandelions, clover and other invasive weeds have overrun several district parks. The weeds reportedly represent more than 60 percent of ground coverage at Larry Fink Field and two other parks.



Officials added that the issue has recently become one of the district's most significant sources of complaints, with comments pouring in from general park users and athletic program representatives.

"The fields are getting worse every year," Park District Commissioner Cal Bernstein said. "I think something needs to be done to reverse the trend."

Bernstein described firsthand a difference between current field conditions to what they were four years ago, when the district won awards for its turf health and playability. "I think we need to do something different than we are doing now," he added. "Our fields are deteriorating."

The district will continue to use aspects of the Integrated Pest Management program, but commissioners provided the official go-ahead for grounds crews to apply one round of the previously banned pesticides or herbicides at the three most problematic parks.

Baker said the organic alternatives are still important, but added that the district is at a point where chemicals are needed to complement it in some areas.

"We aren't abandoning (Integrated Pest Management)," he told commissioners.

Signs will be placed around the fields when the chemicals are applied, officials pledged, and progress will be monitored before an official modified turf-management policy will be considered.



Syngenta Unveils EcoMeasures™



The new Brand Name for its Turf Carbon Calculator Tool

Syngenta's EcoMeasures™ is a proprietary tool to help golf courses document and analyze inputs to reduce their overall carbon footprint.

Formerly called the Turf Carbon Calculator, EcoMeasures™ is a turf carbon calculator designed to evaluate the cumulative amount of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases released into the earth's atmosphere during a golf course's normal daily operations. In addition to helping golf course superintendents reduce their overall carbon footprint, EcoMeasures™ will also lead to the more efficient use of energy, water and other resources, which will help to maximize profitability.

EcoMeasures™ is currently part of a joint effort between Syngenta and Marriott Golf and is being tested on 12 of Marriott Golf's courses. In addition, Shawn Potter, head of marketing for Syngenta Turf & Landscape recently commented,



“Over the past year, Syngenta has worked in collaboration with more than 40 courses on the EcoMeasures™ tool. The objective is to get wide geographic coverage, and to enable courses to compare their EcoMeasures™ values to courses in similar geographies. Syngenta has not decided whether it will provide EcoMeasures™ for general use or, in the event it decides to do so, whether it will charge a fee for the service. To date, Syngenta is utilizing its strong field presence in the golf industry to help gather information and develop the tool. It will be important to understand key leanings from the golf industry before considering options for other markets.”

For more information contact Syngenta directly at 1-866-796-4368.

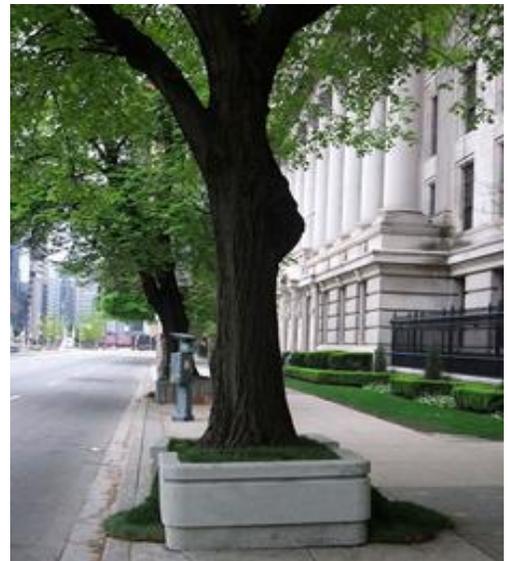
Thinking Outside the Box

TORONTO, CANADA -

Outside the Planter Boxes was a project conceived and organized by Sean Martindale. The challenge, take neglected city tree planter boxes that line Toronto's busy streets and create something artistic. The planters selected were generally made of concrete and in need of repair. Many were cracked or missing large chunks.

All told, more than 30 planter interventions were created by a group of 17 Toronto based artists, designers, gardeners and urbanites within a 24-hour period between Saturday, May 20th and Sunday, May 21st, 2011.

Artist/Organizer [Sean Martindale](#) created the first piece (shown below) that was appropriately titled, “Grass Spills”.



Planter box intervention designed by Sean Martindale, photo courtesy of the artist.

Follow-up to last month's cover story — "TURFGRASS tops the Leader Board at the 93rd PGA Championship in Georgia"

Atlanta Athletic Club: Super Hero Turf

Senior Travel Editor Matt Ginella – Golf Digest.com - August 22, 2011



Matt Ginella Senior Travel Editor of Golf Digest.com, echoed our comments in last month newsletter regarding the turf at this year's PGA Championship. The following is an abridged recap of his comments:

"What I really liked was the attention turfgrass received all week at this year's PGA Championship at the Atlanta Athletic Club's Highland Course in Johns Creek, Georgia. In newspapers and internet, on CBS and the Golf Channel, even on the PGA Tour satellite radio network commentators were generally lauding the perfection of the putting surfaces, fairways and even the rough.

"They not only described its playing characteristics, they listed the three types, as if a mantra: Champion Ultradwarf Bermudagrass greens, Diamond Zoysiagrass fairways, Tifton 10 Bermudagrass rough. When was the last time you heard a commentator call a grass by its correct name? When was the last time you heard any commentator say anything about grass, except maybe that it's too deep?"

"Kudos to Ken Mangum, (AAC's Director of Golf Courses and Grounds) who came up with the perfect prescription of grasses for a Southern venue championship set-up and his staff and volunteers for grooming the Highlands Course to perfection every single morning of the PGA.

"As far as I'm concerned, Atlanta Athletic Club has set a new standard for major championship conditioning. It didn't just raise the bar. It is the bar."

To read Matt Ginella's column as originally written go to:

<http://www.golfdigest.com/golf-courses/blogs/wheres-matty-g/2011/08/atlanta-athletic-club-super-he.html>

TurfSide-UP

When Fester Chester sent his son Nester off to college to earn a degree in Advertising and Marketing he was pretty excited. But after seeing Nester's marketing skills Fester thinks maybe Nester should have majored in something else . . . like maybe . . . Underwater Basket Weaving.





Modified Turfgrass: Safe for animals and handles troublesome insects too!

The right combination of compounds produced by a beneficial fungus could lead to grasses that require fewer pesticides and are safer for wildlife and grazing animals, according to Purdue University scientists.

Neotyphodium is a fungus called an endophyte. It lives symbiotically, feeding off many species of grasses while providing the grass with protection from insects such as black cutworm. Cutworm is most often a pest of corn, but it can also cause trouble in wheat, tobacco, some vegetable crops, and it can be problematic in turfgrasses. But Neotyphodium also can be toxic to animals based on the types of alkaloids it produces. It was once a serious concern for pasture managers.

"Now the seed industry can put these endophytes into turfgrasses and pasture grasses and not worry about potential non-target effects."

Scientists have previously eliminated alkaloid profiles that caused toxicity in livestock, meaning pasture managers could feed their livestock without making them sick. But in making the grasses safe for animals, their susceptibility to insects came into question.

"These endophytes have changed everything for farmers who let their animals graze," says Douglas Richmond, a Purdue assistant professor of turfgrass entomology and applied ecology. "But they created another potential problem."

Richmond worked with researchers in New Zealand to assemble a series of Neotyphodium endophytes that are safe for livestock consumption and tested them to see which would also act as natural insecticides. They found relatively few strains of the fungus that meet both

criteria by producing two key alkaloid toxins — N-acetyl norloline and peramine — which are a product of the fungal metabolism. The scientists determined they were effective by characterizing insect growth and survival on grasses with different alkaloid profiles. Richmond says that grasses naturally infected with the desired endophyte strains can now be propagated for commercial production.

"Both are relatively safe for mammals and other grazing wildlife," Richmond says. "Now the seed industry can put these endophytes into turfgrasses and pasture grasses and not worry about potential non-target effects."

Those endophytes also mean that farmers, golf course turf managers and even homeowners caring for their lawns could use fewer insecticides to manage their grasses.

"I think this is going to be very important for sustainability. It's going to decrease the footprint of cultured turf and pasture grasses," says Richmond, whose results were published in the [Journal of Environmental Entomology](#). "And if you like having wildlife around—having deer come up to your lawn if you live near the woods—this is a benefit because it's safe for those animals."

Richmond says he is working with a New Zealand company, AgResearch USA Ltd., that develops turfgrass varieties to include these novel endophytes for sale in the U.S. turfgrass market.

The Midwest Regional Turf Foundation, AgResearch USA Ltd. and internal Purdue Univ. funding supported the research.

Source: Purdue University - Doug Richmond - dritchmon@purdue.edu
Writer: Brian Wallheimer - bwallhei@purdue.edu



For Those Who Have Served and Sacrificed

Numerous volunteer programs across the U.S. support the men and women in the military. There are two in particular that are associated with the Green Industry that we would like to take a moment to acknowledge and express our thanks.

Project Evergreen's GreenCare for Troops



U.S. Troops serving in the Middle East show their appreciation for Project EverGreen's initiative "GreenCare for Troops."

GreenCare for Troops is a nationwide outreach program coordinated by Project EverGreen that connects local green industry professionals with the families of military men and women who are serving our country away from home. The program helps hundreds of volunteers and lawncare



companies nationwide provide free lawn and landscape services for thousands of military families. The cost to manage the program is underwritten by [Club Cadet](#) and serves as a means to acknowledge the green industry's support and appreciation for the service and sacrifice of military families.



PLANET'S "Remembrance and Renewal" - Arlington National Cemetery

2011 marks the 15th anniversary of PLANET's **Renewal & Remembrance** which draws hundreds of landscape and lawn care professionals from across the country to Arlington National Cemetery to spend the day mulching, cabling and installing lightning protection for trees, pruning, planting, and liming and aerating more than 200 acres. It is the largest green industry day of service in the country - valued at more than \$250,000 as volunteers dedicate the manpower and equipment necessary to enhance the beauty of Arlington. Last year, more than 450 adults representing more than 80 companies and as many as 55 children participated in this time-honored event. Those numbers were probably surpassed during this year's July 25th event.



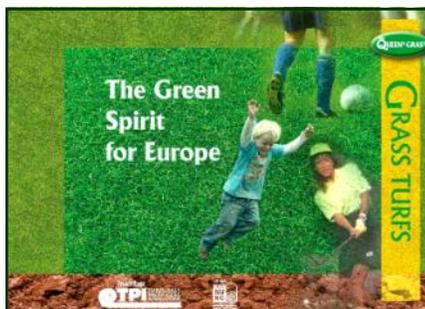
Where in the world is
TPI represented?
EVERYWHERE!

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



Borger, Netherlands

<http://www.queens-grass.nl/uk/index.php>



Queens Grass - A tradition of growth for over three decades

Thirty years ago, we started our company on one hectare under the name of Binnenhof at Lage Vuursche, in the Province of Utrecht, Netherlands.

Today, Queens Grass has over 250 hectares of adjoined growing-fields on high-lying sandy soil at our production site near Borger in the Province of Drenthe. This location provides excellent conditions for the economical growing and harvesting of high-quality, multi-purpose turfs. On sandy soil we are able to harvest and deliver at nearly

all times apart from the wintry frost periods.

Over the years, our expertise has steadily increased with the development of new products and an increase of alternative uses. There has also been an increase in the number of conditions under which our turfgrasses perform, such as the different climatic zones in Europe. There is one thing that hasn't changed over the years, Queens Grass is still a family business and reliable organization. This guarantees our com-

mitment, from the initial consultation stage up to and including the service stage. Why do garden centers, professional gardeners, developers of sports fields and golf courses opt for Queens Grass turfs? They know they can rely on consistently high quality turf and choose between the right color and density; turfgrasses that stand out with excellent treading-tolerance and remarkable resistance to disease. Moreover, they can count on prompt distribution and advice based on our knowledge and proven expertise.



We thought it would interest our readers to see how many countries have turfgrass producers who are members of TPI.

If you know of a fellow turfgrass producer, manufacturer or supplier currently serving the turfgrass industry who would benefit from all that TPI has to offer, invite them to visit our website at www.TurfGrassSod.org or have them contact Veronica Iwanski, TPI's Membership & Marketing Manager at: viwanski@TurfgrassSod.org.



“A Brighter Shade of Green: The Future of our Industry”

TPI Member looks to the future by reaching out to horticultural students.

Central Sod Farms Inc., the Midwest's Largest Sod Producer, is hosting a hands-on field day at their corporate offices on Thursday, October 6, 2011. The event will be open to area horticultural students and individuals interested in furthering their knowledge of the green industry.

Live field demonstrations will include the specialty equipment used in turfgrass production including seedbed preparation, irrigation systems, mowing, herbicide spraying, tillage and harvesting of sod.

A panel of Green Industry business leaders will give brief presentations on the future of their particular field of expertise. Featured speakers will include experts from such fields as Tree Nurseries, Landscapes Contractors, Homebuilding, Seed Companies, Equipment manufacturers and more!

Scheduled Speakers

Christy Webber – President,
Christy Webber Landscapes, Chicago, IL

Roger Fick – President
Wilson Tree Nurseries, Hampshire, IL

Christiaan Arends—Turf Product Manager
Barenbrug Seed U.S.A. Tangent, OR

Ian True - Executive Sales Manager
Trebros Manufacturing, Billings, MT

Richard Hentschel - Extension Educator
University of Illinois, Extension Office, St. Charles, IL

Barry Green III – President
Jonathan Green Seed Co., Farmingdale, NJ



The Warpinski family runs the day-to-day operations at Central Sod's farms in Illinois and Maryland (l to r): Joe (Richard Warpinski's son), Kim, Sheri, Tom, Greg, Bill (Maryland); and Richard, Ken and Chuck (Illinois) .

Tom Wernsman - President
Wernsman Builders, Millbrook, IL

Rusty Stachlewitz – Agronomist
Pro-Gro Solutions, East Dubuque, IL

Mark Allgaier - District Manager
John Deere, Moline, IL

The field day will be held at: Central Sod Farms Inc.
25605 W. 111th St., Plainfield, Illinois

See the full story in the September/October 2011 issue of TURF NEWS magazine.



Participate in TPI's NEW 2-Second Survey

Turfgrass Producers International is receptive to input from its members and we value your opinion. Beginning this month TPI plans to feature a monthly “2 Second Survey” on our website that will provide members with an opportunity to let us know their thoughts or opinions on assorted issues.

Thanks to current technology we can easily survey members and provide real-time results based on responses. To see this month's “2 Second Survey” question go to:

<http://www.turfgrassod.org/pages/about-tpi/>

Feeling a bit stressed? Try taking a walk in the park

Feeling a bit down bunky? Maybe you should forget that coffee break and go for a walk in the park. Take in a bit of Mother Nature. Enjoy the fresh smell of the grass; hear the leaves of trees rustling in the wind; partake in the calming tranquility of green space that makes you feel as if you're one with nature. If such a suggestion sounds like a pretty good idea, that's because it is.

The *The Wall Street Journal* reports that taking a stroll in the park "could do wonders" for your well being. In fact, some recent research shows that taking a stroll through a natural setting can boost performance and taking in the sights and sounds of nature appears to be especially beneficial for our state of mind.

Dr. Marc Berman, a post-doctoral researcher at Rotman Research Institute in Toronto, along with his colleagues have been studying whether interacting with nature can be therapeutic for people with disorders including depression and anxiety.

In research published in the journal *Psychological Science* in 2008, Berman and a team at the University of Michigan found that people improved their working memory span by about 20 percent after a 50-minute nature walk.

In a follow-up study, the researchers had participants take a break for 10 minutes in a quiet room to look at pictures of a nature scene or city street. Again, they found that cognitive performance improved after the nature break, even though it was only on paper. Although the boost wasn't as great as when participants actually took the walk among the trees, it was more effective than the city walk," says Dr. Berman.



New York's Central Park provides just what the doctor ordered — a little peace and tranquility during a hectic day.

According to Bergman, just looking at images of nature engages our so-called involuntary attention, which comes into play when our minds are inadvertently drawn to something interesting that doesn't require intense focus, like a pleasing picture or landscape feature.

Berman also shared these tips with ABC News:

- Be aware of mental fatigue, which is a signal that you should take a break.
- Take a "true break" . Don't surf the net or play on your Blackberry. If you don't have an actual park, stroll along a quiet street.
- Bring nature to you. Have pictures of nature in your office or get a plant.

SAVE THE DATE

TPI Midwinter Conference
January 30—February 3, 2012
Montelucia Resort & Spa
Scottsdale, Arizona

Monument Valley — Arizona



Our two cents worth!

Second Public Comment Period for USGBC's LEED Green Building Program

September 14th marked the deadline for the second public comment period pertaining to the US Green Building Council's proposed LEED standards. Turfgrass Producers International as well as numerous green industry organizations, companies, and other concerned parties submitted their comments on sections that were somewhat troublesome.

In particular, TPI took issue with the fact that permeable artificial turf can earn points for achieving reduced landscape watering requirements even though it contradicts LEED's goal to address Heat Island Reduction.

TPI also expressed concerns regarding the plastic and pulverized tire infill, both of which present reasonable health concerns. TPI also offered persuasive comments regarding the environmental benefits of natural turfgrass.

During the first public comment period, the USGBC reportedly collected nearly 6,000 constructive comments and recommendations on their initial draft. It is our hope that submissions to the second public comment period generate a similar response on the part of concerned parties.

SOD CALCULATOR for TPI Members

As a turfgrass sod producer you may be considering lowering or raising your prices, but you're concerned about the consequences of such a decision. How will it effect your bottom line? How much is too much and how much is too little? The TPI Sod Calculator is designed to help make your decision a little easier.

For example: How much increased sales volume would you need to make up for lost margins if you lower your prices? And if you raise your price, how much sales volume can you afford to lose to still maintain your current net profit? TPI's easy to use Sod Calculator provides the answers.

Visit the "Member's Only" section on the TPI website and go to TPI Products & Marketing Tools section. The Sod Calculator link can be found under TOOLS.

TPI TURFGRASS PRODUCERS INTERNATIONAL
SOD CALCULATOR
Increase, Decrease, or Keep Your Price the same?

White fields are for entry, colored fields are auto computed

Farm Sales: sq/ft -or- Acres

Sales Price: sq/ft =

Cost: sq/ft =

Net Profit: sq/ft =

LOWER MY PRICE: How much in increased sales volume is needed to make up for lost margins?

Lower Sales Price: sq/ft =

Cost: sq/ft =

Net Profit: sq/ft =

Decrease in Net Profit:

Increase in sales needed for DECREASE IN PROFITS: sq/ft -or- Acres

RAISE MY PRICE: How much in sales can I afford to lose and still hold my net profit?

Raise Sales Price: sq/ft =

Cost: sq/ft =

Net Profit: sq/ft =

Increase in Net Profit:

Decrease in sales to hold ORIGINAL NET PROFIT: sq/ft -or- Acres

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Our two cents worth!

A portion of TPI's comments to the US Green Building Council's proposed LEED standards.

The following are a few excerpts of TPI postings on the USGBC LEED Standards comments section. In addition to suggesting LEED not encourage plastic turf lawns (and athletic fields) as a preferable option to natural grass, TPI also addressed the environmental benefits of natural turfgrass!

The environmental benefits of natural turfgrass are considerable and should be taken into account in any decision that will impact the proposed guidelines or recommendations by the US Green Building Council in establishing any LEED standards.

A healthy, properly maintained lawn provides substantial benefits to the environment in terms of erosion control, water purification, air purification, temperature modification, energy and cost savings, oxygen generation and carbon sequestration. Lawns also provide substantial benefits to human health in terms of recreation, increased physical activity, reduced risk of obesity and stress reduction."

On-going research over the last decade has resulted in improved turfgrass varieties that are more drought tolerant, require less water, less mowing and fewer inputs such as pesticides and fertilizers.

The recent "Benefits of Green Space – Recent Research" report focuses on the benefits of turfgrass and cites peer-reviewed, published studies as well as government and academic reports to document the objective basis of benefits of a healthy, properly maintained green space. The report summarizes the most current findings (since 2000) to ensure reliance on the most up to date research. It should also be noted that, and we quote, "the studies in this report focus on the benefits of "turfgrass" or "turf". A copy of this report can be accessed at: <http://www.ehrf.info/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/BenefitsofGreenSpace.pdf>

Overall, the data presented in the detailed report lists over 50 scientific studies from 2000 to 2010 that serve to validate the environmental benefits of turfgrass and rebuts the notion that the need for healthy, properly maintained turfgrass is only ornamental or aesthetic.

"The solution is not the restriction or suggested limitations on lawn areas. The long term solution is in educating the public and creating greater awareness of best management practices, water conservation guidelines, promoting the use of fuel efficient and environmentally friendly lawn care equipment and irrigation systems."

"It is imperative that the USGBC consider the above mentioned benefits of turfgrass lawns and consider the extensive research addressed in the "Benefits of Green Space – Recent Research" report. The strategic use of natural turfgrass is the most sensible and economically feasible approach to countering the greenhouse effect in urban areas."

- Turfgrass Producers International

National Mall Design Competition Announced



In the February 09 issue of the TPI E-Newsletter we featured a commentary entitled, "It's Time We Care for America's Front Lawn".

It was with great pleasure that we learned that The Trust for the National Mall announced the kick-off of a National Mall design competition which will be opened to established and emerging U.S. teams of landscape architects, urban designers, architects, and sustainable designers.

Trust Chairman John Ackridge said the goal of the competition was to make the National Mall, which receives 25 million visitors annually, the "best park in the world." Caroline Cunningham, President, said the Trust, which is partnering with the National Park Service and is expected to raise nearly \$350 million (half of the total budget) and is looking for the "best talent" in the world for this multi-year restoration initiative.

The Interior Department, of which the National Park Service is a part, has agreed to match any private funds raised, with the goal of bringing in a total of \$700 million for the entire Mall restoration project. There are still "critical deferred maintenance" issues — compacted soils, endangered trees, and collapsing sea walls that are being addressed or still sorely need to be.

For more information click on the image below:

