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TPI's 2012 Summer Convention & Field Days is a Success

From its scenic location to the warmth and hospitality of everyone at Turf Mountain Sod which served as the host farm, TPI's Summer Convention and Fields Days in Asheville, North Carolina, July 31 thru August 2 was a tremendous success.

Over 500 people attended the event and most agreed that the historic Grove Park Inn was an ideal location for the Convention.

Turfgrass producers from 112 farms were on hand representing numerous countries including Australia, Canada, Chile, England, Germany, Netherlands, Norway, Scotland, Turkey and the United States.

Those in attendance had an opportunity to participate in a pre-convention Asheville Agricultural Tour that included visits to the North Carolina State University College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Mountain Horticulture Research Station, a visit to Patten Seed/Super Sod, a trip to Van Wingerden International's nursery which has over 37 acres of greenhouses and grows over 150 varieties of plants, and an opportunity to tour Apple Wedge Packers, one of the North Carolina's largest providers of apples and apple cider.

"We had a great time! A round of applause to TPI and Turf Mountain Sod for a 'job' well done."

Audrey Weekley Hutchison
Somerset Seed & Sod - Somerset, Virginia



Photo by Wade Pittillo

The entire staff of Turf Mountain extends a warm welcome to TPI.

For complete coverage see the September/October 2012 issue of **Turf News**

See more photos visit TPI's Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/TurfgrassProducersInternational>



Other activities included The Lawn Institute Memorial Golf Tournament which raised money for turfgrass research and education, a tour of the famous Biltmore Estate, a New Generation Leaders networking breakfast, and an Information & Idea Exchange session that included presentations on artificial vs. natural turfgrass playing fields, immigration, and the role TPI plays as an industry advocate.

During TPI's annual meeting **Bobby Winstead** of Winstead Turf Farms in Arlington, TN was elected President; **Bob Weerts** of Blue Valley Sod in Winnebago, MN was elected Vice President and **Duane Klundt** of Grassland, OR in Salem, Oregon was appointed Secretary-Treasurer. Newly appointed trustees included **Linda Bradley** of Turf Mountain Sod in Hendersonville, NC and **Ian True** of Trebro Manufacturing in Alliston, Ontario, Canada. **Leon Dahle** of Dahle Sod Farm in Morristown, MN agreed to serve a second term on the Board of Trustees.



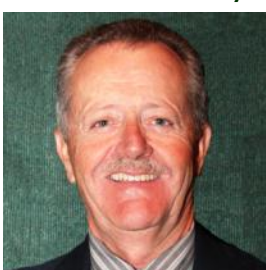
President - **Bobby Winstead**



Trustee - **Linda Bradley**



Vice President - **Bob Weerts**



Trustee - **Ian True**



Secretary-Treasurer
Duane Klundt



2nd Term Trustee
Leon Dahle

"It was a wonderful event thank you!"

Barry Green

Jonathan Green, Inc., Farmingdale, New Jersey



See more photos on TPI's Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/>





"Here, here, outstanding convention, venue and southern hospitality. Thank you!"

Andy Middleton

Canturf Lawns Pty, Ltd., Bungendore, New South Wales, AUSTRALIA





Photo series: Lynn Grooms and Jim Novak

"The Turf Town Hall was excellent!"

Ray Weekly
Chantilly Turf Farms, Chantilly, Virginia



See more photos on TPI's Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/>



Turf Mountain Sod's hospitality is only exceeded by their generosity.

All the turf harvested during TPI's Field Day was donated to Habitat for Humanity.



David and Linda Bradley of Turf Mountain Sod with Alan Stissel of Habitat for Humanity.

Everyone who attended TPI's 2012 Field Day at **Turf Mountain Sod** in Hendersonville, North Carolina unanimously agreed that the warmth, hospitality and generosity of the Pittillo and Bradley families of the host farm were something special. The family's presence and visibility was obvious not just at the farm, but during many other social and business functions throughout the week. Their enthusiasm and excitement made everyone feel as if they were a VIP.

Their hospitality was only exceeded by their generosity when it was announced that TPI and Turf Mountain Sod presented **Habitat for Humanity** with over 31,000 square feet of the turfgrass sod harvested during TPI's Field Days.



Kirk Hunter, Executive Director of TPI (center), Wayne Pittillo of Turf Mountain Sod (right) presenting harvested turfgrass to Alan Stissel, Site Facilitator of Henderson County Habitat for Humanity.

Turf Mountain also delivered and assisted local volunteers in the installation of more than 40 Big Rolls of turf to nearby Shuey Knolls, a 70-unit Habitat for Humanity housing development in Hendersonville. Habitat for Humanity anticipates the development will be completed in 2013 with 70 homes developed on 60 acres.

The generosity of Fred, Myrtle and Wayne Pittillo, and that of David and Linda Bradley of Turf Mountain Sod didn't stop there, they also elected not to charge exhibitors for harvested or damaged turf during the field day demonstrations.



Photos: Jim Novak and Lynn Grooms

An Olympian Task -

Converting a sports stadium into a scenic rural landscape



County Turf of Scunthorpe, Lincolnshire, England provided the turf for the Opening Ceremonies at the 2012 London Games. All turf for the 2012 games had to meet TGA (Turfgrass Growers Association) specs according to TPI member Hugh Dampney who is also the TGA Chairman. TGA is comprised



of some 60 companies (including affiliates), collectively responsible for producing approximately 70 percent of the cultivated turf grown in the British Isles. Many of these companies are also members of TPI.

Photos courtesy of London 2012

TPI Member had a personal connection with the 2012 London Games

Hugh Dampney of ECO Turf in Christchurch, England had an opportunity to attend the games and watch his niece Zara compete in London.



Zara Dampney

Hugh Dampney seldom misses a TPI event but he couldn't attend TPI's Summer Convention & Field Days in Asheville, NC this year because he had a more pressing commitment - the opportunity to see his niece, Zara Dampney represent Great Britain in Beach Volleyball at London 2012.

Hugh shared the following thoughts with the TPI staff:

"Trust you all are having a great start to the convention. Missing you all and the sunshine terribly. What a nervous time it is watching a family member compete."

Zara had her first match yesterday and promptly managed to lose the first 4 points. The fear of a catastrophe was palpable across the whole family. Fortunately the power of thought of my brother and sister-in-law managed to make her see sense and she and her partner won in three enthralling sets having lost the first one and being behind in most of the third except when it mattered, at the end.

We have until tomorrow to calm my brother down a bit (he is more worked up than his daughter) before the next match. The players get training in how to cope with the pressure of playing in the Olympics I think that it should be extended to the families of first time competitors!



Zara Dampney seen on the right and her Beach Volleyball partner Shauna Mullin have competed together since 2009. They are ranked 37th in the world and finished second at the Continental Cup tournament in Ukraine last June.

The atmosphere in and around the stadium is fantastic and to see people mobbing Zara as she emerged after the game and asking to have photos taken with her is great.

It is a wonderful experience to go to London to watch them and very proud to be able to say we had a family member performing in the Olympics."

UPDATE: Although Zara and Shauna lost to Russia and did not make it to the medal round they certainly heightened awareness of the sport in Great Britain.



TPI participates in European Turfgrass Society Conference in Norway

TPI had a visible presence in Kristiansand, Norway for the 3rd European Turfgrass Society (ETS) Conference, June 24-26.

The Turfgrass Research Group of the Norwegian Institute for Agricultural and Environmental Research (Bioforsk), a leading center for high-quality and sustainable turfgrass management in cold-temperate and semi-arctic climates hosted the Conference which was sponsored by Turfgrass Producers International (TPI), Barenbrug, Everris, Aquatrols, Compo, Deutsche Rasengesellschaft, Prodana, Syngenta and Top Green.

The theme of the Conference "**Quality turf and efficient utilization of resources**" was attended by 130 turfgrass industry representatives from 21 countries. The U.S. was represented by 16 states including TPI's Executive Director Kirk Hunter who had an opportunity to do a presentation on Turfgrass Producer International and address the role TPI plays in promoting the benefits of natural turfgrass on behalf of turfgrass producers worldwide. During his presentation Hunter also addressed TPI's commitment to advocacy and serving as a research and marketing source for turfgrass producers and industry-related suppliers, manufacturers and associations.

The two-day conference was broken into nine sessions that featured over 30 oral presentations and nearly 50 brief poster presentations from researchers in 19 countries. Subject varied but primarily focused on the environmental and economical aspects of turfgrass management and the numerous challenges faced by turfgrass managers.

- Session I: Turfgrass species and varieties for the future
- Session II: Turfgrass biomass production and carbon sequestration
- Session III: Turfgrass winter diseases
- Session IV: Sustainable turfgrass water management
- Session V: Turfgrass fertilization for quality turf and environment friendliness
- Session VI: Turfgrass root zones and thatch control
- Session VII: Turfgrass and society
- Session VIII: Turfgrass overseeding and weed control
- Session IX: Control of turfgrass diseases

The conference also included a tour of the Bioforsk Turfgrass Research Center in Landvik, Norway, where delegates visited field trials and learned about ongoing research projects.



Kirk Hunter provide ETS Conference attendees with an overview of TPI and its role in supporting turfgrass producers in Europe and worldwide.

While at the conference Hunter met with several TPI members and also had the opportunity to visit the farms of Johnny and Aud Toril Trandem in Dilling, Norway; and Jakob and Maria Aarsvoll in Sandnes, Norway. The Aarsvoll's and Trandem's kindly provided lodging to Hunter during his trip.



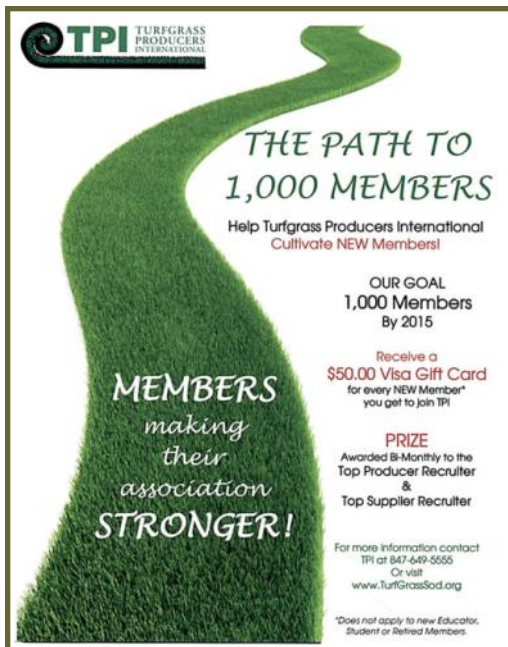
Jakob Aarsvoll of Grasrota AS provided Hunter with an opportunity to see the sedum they grow for greenroof projects.



A visit to **Johnny Trandem's** Ostfold Gress AS operation in Dilling, Norway provided a chance to see his operation, equipment and farming techniques.

The Right Path for a Bright Future

Members making their association stronger!



Turfgrass Producers International has set a goal to cultivate new membership and reach a targeted goal of 1,000 members by 2015, and with your help we can do it!

If you know fellow turfgrass producers or local suppliers who can benefit from all that TPI has to offer why not encourage them to become a member.

In addition to helping grow you association. You will also receive a \$50.00 Visa Gift Card for every new member* you bring into TPI.

Plus, there's a bi-monthly prize to the Top Producer Recruiter and Top Supplier Recruiter! It's a win-win situation for everyone.

For more information call TPI at 847-649-5555 visit www.TurfGrassSod.org.

*Does not apply to new Educator, Student or Retired Members.



In the February 2009 issue of the TPI E-Newsletter we presented a commentary regarding the condition of the National Mall in Washington DC. - - "It's Time We Care for America's Front Lawn".

Thanks to the efforts of many people we're glad to report that a great deal of work has been completed and more is planned in the near future.

The following is an abridged letter from Chip Akridge, Chairman, Trust of the National Mall reporting its progress.

Five years ago, when the Trust for the National Mall held its first Benefit Luncheon, we could only imagine a day when we would have a campaign leader of national stature, multi-million dollar benefit events, a complete National Mall Plan and the country's top architects involved in a National Mall Design Competition.

Today, the Trust for the National Mall is closer than ever to realizing its mission of restoring and improving the National Mall for present and future generations. We've come a long way, and we couldn't have done it without you.

Over the past five years, our supporters have contributed nearly \$10 million to our efforts. This year's Luncheon, our biggest event, featured former First Lady Laura Bush, honorary chair of the Campaign to Restore the National Mall, as the keynote speaker. Her leadership will help ensure the National Mall remains as a "vibrant legacy for our grandchildren and our great grandchildren."

Due to the generosity of our donors, coupled with the leadership of Mrs. Bush

and U.S. Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar, there is currently more than \$100 million of restoration work completed and/or underway on the National Mall. This work includes repairing the plaza at the Jefferson Memorial, restoring the DC World War I Memorial, rebuilding the Lincoln Reflecting Pool, adding energy-efficient LED lighting on the Mall, instituting a system-wide recycling program, redesigning and deploying a new park-wide wayfinding system, and the reconstruction of the Mall's turf.

As we continue our restoration work on the Mall and implement the chosen designs over the next few years, we hope that all Americans will join us on our journey to revitalize and improve it for generations to come. Together, we can preserve home to the history, heroes and hope of America.

Sincerely,

Chip Akridge
Chairman
Trust for the National Mall

Ruffling a few feathers — A REBUTTAL

Researchers suggest that exposure to crumb rubber nanoparticles could lead to serious health issues



http://www.turfandrec.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=2986&Itemid=159

Turf & Recreation, a national publication serving the Canadian turf and grounds maintenance industry requested (unsolicited) permission to reprint a TPI E-Newsletter article (June/July 2011) written by Jim Novak regarding concern over the exposure to the tire crumb used on artificial turf fields that contains nanoparticles.

Turf & Recreation's readership includes golf course superintendents, lawn and landscape contractors, sports turf managers, municipal grounds managers and turfgrass producers.

TPI would like to thank Mike Jiggins, Editor of *Turf & Recreation* in Delhi, Ontario, Canada for re-printing this article so it could reach a far broader audience throughout Canada.

The reprint appeared in T&R's June 2012 issue and it generated a response from Darren Gill, Vice President of Global Marketing for Field Turf. It should be pointed out that Field Turf identifies themselves as "the world leader in artificial turf."

Mr. Gill's response to the article and related correspondence appear below and on the following page:

"The article is biased and many of the claims are false. You are nothing but a fear monger."

- Darren Gill, Vice President, Field Turf

Subject: Turf & Recreation Article

Friday, June 22, 2012 3:14 PM (EDT)

Jim, [Novak] Just read your recent article in Turf & Recreation magazine and wanted to express my sincere disappointment. The article is biased and many of the claims are false. You are nothing but a fear monger. You did nothing to reference the hundreds of studies which show that playing on a crumb rubber field is completely safe. You've ignored credible studies from the EPA, NJ Department of Health, and University of California-Berkeley. Read the studies and educate yourself before making such statements.

Start here:

<http://www.syntheticturfCouncil.org/displaycommon.cfm?an=1&subarticlenbr=91>

Regards,

Darren Gill

Vice President, Global Marketing



THE ULTIMATE
SURFACE EXPERIENCE

TPI's response appears on the following page:



“YOU ARE NOTHING BUT A FEAR MONGER” - cont’d

Friday, June 22, 2012 5:33 PM (CST)

Dear Darren,

Received your e-mail and as a professional courtesy I wanted to reply. To suggest that my “article is biased and many of the claims are false” is your opinion, and one which I disagree with based on the nanoparticle research I referenced. I do however respect your right to have your point of view. You should also know that I have read and reviewed numerous articles from a wide variety of sources, including the EPA, NJ Department of Health, and University of California-Berkeley; so I am aware of what you call “credible studies”. But I am somewhat surprised that you would, for whatever reason, come to the conclusion that the 19 research studies I referenced are somehow biased, false and not credible from your point of view.

You will note that I closed the article by stating:

“The aforementioned comments were based on research reports and articles from numerous health care organizations, research scientists, health care professionals and nanotechnology experts who represent a wide variety of non-biased and reputable sources. Because the subject matter is likely to stir interest and create some controversy, we have provided a partial list of numerous reference materials so readers can reach their own conclusion. — J. Novak”

Please note the last sentence – “so readers can reach their own conclusion.”

Perhaps what troubled me the most about your letter was that someone in your position would actually state in writing that I am “a fear monger” because I presented research information that doesn’t meet with your approval.

Sincerely,

Jim Novak

Public Relations Manager

Turfgrass Producers International

Friday, June 22, 2012 4:39 PM (EDT)

Is your next article going to be on how harmful pesticides are? Pesticides are banned in many (if not most) states. Artificial turf isn’t. I guess you’re a believer that the best defense is a good offense. It isn’t working. You should focus on the positives of natural grass – maybe that will work.

Darren Gill

Friday, June 22, 2012 5:03 PM (CST)

Darren,

I’m confused. I thought the issue was nanoparticle research? By the way, thank you for the compliment on my “good offense” . . . that was most kind and greatly appreciated.

Jim

Note: Following our 6/22/12 e-mail to Mr. Gill we received no further communication.

NOTE: TPI contacted several of the sources Mr. Gill referenced to learn if they ever conducted any nanoparticle research. The following are a few of the responses we received:

Sheree Rusnak with the **Connecticut Department of Public Health** reported they didn’t analyze the material [no nanoparticle research], more off-gassing and what chemicals were being inhaled.

Tom Waimman with the **State of New York—Department of Health** reported they have not done any [nanoparticle] research. But he did state, “Nanoparticles are not an issue.” “I would be surprised if nanoparticles are present.” and “Rubber doesn’t wear down to that size.”

Comment: We would recommend that Mr. Waimman view—“**What’s the deal with synthetic turf particles?**”

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q2USPTy_wVM)

Juerine Sheppard with the **City of New York Parks & Recreation** wrote, “We have not conducted any research on nanoparticles in connection with synthetic turf field materials.”

A representative of the **U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission** who only identified herself as Debbie couldn’t tell if nanoparticle research was or wasn’t done. She suggested we fill out a “Freedom of Information Act” request.

Where in the world is TPI represented? EVERYWHERE!

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

Buchner-Fertigrasen
Alsbach-Hahnlein, GERMANY

<http://www.buechner-rasen.de>



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Thomas Buchner



Hartmut Buchner



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A proud Member of
Turfgrass Producers International



Buchner-Fertigrasen will be one of the five host farms to be visited during TPI's October 2013 Study Tour to Austria & Germany. Look for more information in future issues of the TPI E-Newsletter and TURF NEWS magazine.

THE LAWN INSTITUTE "500 CLUB"



Introducing a new and rewarding way to donate to The Lawn Institute - Our New 500 Club! The Lawn Institute is hard at work funding research and education efforts to change misconceptions and misinformation about turfgrass and lawns.

The Foundation needs your support to continue funding research and expand our commitment to education. Your chance to be involved is here and the time is now! With donations of \$500 or more you will receive the following recognition:

- The Lawn Institute 500 Club polo shirt
- The Lawn Institute 500 Club pin
- Recognition in our publications
- Personal recognition in The Lawn Institute booth

For more information about the 500 Club click on the 500 Club Pin.

Meet our current 2012- 500 Club Members!

Chip Lain - Pine Island Turf Nursery, Inc.
Mayfield McCraw - Hope Plantation
Ferdie Schmitt - F & W Schmitt Farms
Bobby Winstead - Winstead Turf Farms, Inc.
Leon Dahle - Dahle Sod Farm, LLC
Tobey Wagner - Sod Solutions, Inc.
Luke Janmaat - Progressive Turf Equipment, Inc.
Doug Lechliden - Laytonville Landscaping, Inc.
Steve & Laurie Griffen - Saratoga Sod Farm Inc.
Claus Zander - Zander Sod Co. Limited

Nancy Aerni - Turf Merchants, Inc.
Richard Stunkard - Tulsa Grass Sod Farms, Inc.
Gregg Tvetene - Trebro Manufacturing
Dave Dymond - H & H Sod Co., Inc.
Duane Klundt - Grassland Oregon
Steven Dover - Bucyrus Equipment Co., Inc.
Gerry Brouwer - Kesmac/Brouwer
Angel Lopez - Tamanet (USA)
Eric Brouwer - Kesmac/Brouwer
Randy Tischer - Green Velvet Sod Farms

TurfSide-UP

A little something to chew on!

What could Google and Yahoo possibly have in common with the largest house in America—The Biltmore Estate?

Google reported that the company has begun using goats instead of lawn mowers to maintain the fields of their headquarters in Mountain View, California. They reportedly got about 200 goats and a border collie to manage them. The goats took 2 weeks to trim the fields while fertilizing at the same time.

Google isn't alone when it comes to using goats, word has it that Yahoo has been using goats for several years at their headquarters too.

But it gets even better, America's largest home, the famous Biltmore Estate (also called the Vanderbilt Mansion) in Asheville, NC maintains a small herd of goats to graze on seven hilly acres on the 8000 acre estate.

Dave Hayes, the estate's natural-resource program manager reportedly said, "The \$9,000 annual price tag for the goats is about two-thirds what hired manpower would run . . . and the goats are a lot more popular."



Biltmore Estate