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MELANIE STANTON Appointed Executive Director of Turfgrass Producers International

By Jim Novak

Bob Weerts, President of TPI has announced that Melanie Stanton has accepted the position of Executive Director of TPI effective January 13, 2014.

Melanie comes to TPI from the American Society of Plastic Surgeons in Arlington Heights, Illinois where she served as Accreditation Manager. While at ASPS, she secured an unprecedented six-year accreditation which allowed the Society to more efficiently allocate staff resources to other projects. Melanie's previous experience also includes securing outside funding for programs and working with groups to develop and implement flexible long-term planning that helped impact public policy.

Earlier in her career, Melanie enjoyed success with The Sherwood Group in Northbrook, Illinois. Her progressive career with The Sherwood Group began as an Administrative Director before being promoted to Account Executive. She also previously served as Meeting Manager for ACCESS Medical Group in Arlington Heights, Illinois. Melanie holds a Bachelor of Science degree from Northwestern University.

In making his announcement, Bob Weerts stated, "We are pleased to welcome Melanie to the TPI team and we believe her management, association experience and customer service capabilities will assist TPI with accelerated growth, strategic direction and effective membership communications in the immediate future. Melanie will be introduced to TPI members at TPI's 2014 International Education Conference and Field Day in Orlando, Florida, February 24-27, 2014."



"I am delighted to be coming on board with TPI and excited about implementing the immediate and long-term goals that I shared with the board members. I had an opportunity to visit the East Dundee office and meet the rest of the TPI team. They deserve accolades for the work they've done without an Executive Director these past months. I am committed to ensuring we fulfill the needs of all TPI members around the world and I will be doing everything in my power to offer the resources and support that our members can use to promote their farms, their businesses and to provide new tangible member benefits."

- Melanie Stanton



President Bob Weerts extends a warm welcome to TPI's new Executive Director Melanie Stanton.



The TPI staff (Geri Hannah, Veronica Iwanski and Jim Novak) met with Melanie Stanton when she made a get-acquainted visit to the TPI office with Bob Weerts in late December.

Environmental Protection Agency RETRACTS SYNTHETIC TURF SAFETY ASSURANCES

New Agency Posting Stresses Uncertainty amid Wide Range of Chemical Exposures

PEER Press Release: Dec 23, 2013
Contact: Kirsten Stade (202) 265-7337

Washington, DC — The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has stepped back from prior safety assurances about artificial turf in response to an administrative complaint filed by Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility (PEER). The agency has posted new cautions concerning unexplored chemical exposure to more than 30 compounds found in synthetic shredded tire turf, including arsenic, lead, cobalt, mercury and trichloroethylene.

On March 21st, PEER issued a retraction demand to EPA that a 2009 study and press release expressing a “Low Level of Concern” about synthetic turf was based on flawed and limited science, in violation of federal information quality standards. In an initial response to the PEER complaint dated December 16, 2013, EPA Acting Assistant Administrator for Research and Development Lek Kadeli ordered the press release summarizing the study to be prominently stamped with a notice that it was “outdated” with a link to a new posting stressing the need for “future studies” to enable “more comprehensive conclusions.”

“We are gratified that EPA has taken this small and grudging step toward a more responsible position reflecting synthetic turf exposure risks,” stated PEER Executive Director Jeff Ruch, noting industry claims that approximately 4,500 synthetic turf fields have been installed across the U.S., each sitting atop in-fill consisting of between 20,000 and 40,000 shredded tires. “EPA now admits that it has no idea about the extent of chemical exposure to children and athletes playing on these surfaces.”

The sole study on artificial turf that EPA conducted was back in 2009 when it took air and surface samples from three athletic fields and from one playground. The testing looked only at one chemical on brand new fields without levels of activity typical on a field or playground and ignored the role of heat in chemical release.

EPA has refused to retract the study but now states that the study was “very limited” and provides no basis “to extend the results beyond the four study sites”.

The PEER complaint was filed under the Data Quality Act which requires information distributed by federal agencies be complete, objective and reliable. While EPA guidelines suggest the agency should respond to these complaints for correction within 90 days, in this case EPA took nearly nine months. PEER has the option to appeal this decision and seek full retraction of the now discounted study.

Back in 2009, EPA’s own Office of Inspector General took it to task for endorsing reuse of industrial materials such as coal ash and shredded tires without conducting any credible risk assessments of those practices. While EPA promised to address this criticism, documents obtained under the Freedom of Information Act by PEER indicate that no reportable progress has been made.

“By blindly promoting so-called ‘beneficial’ reuse of tire crumbs and other toxic industrial wastes, EPA has shirked its public health duties,” Ruch added, “EPA claims that minimizing chemical exposures to children is one of its top priorities yet through its slow-walking of synthetic turf studies, children on playgrounds and sports fields across the country are left to serve as human guinea pigs.”

Meanwhile in response to another PEER complaint, the Consumer Product Safety Commission has ordered an enforcement review of marketing of artificial turf products for children because the agency has found lead levels in artificial sports fields above statutory limits in children’s products. Significantly, there is no safe lead exposure level for children.



Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility (PEER) is a national non-profit alliance of local, state and federal scientists, law enforcement officers, land managers and other professionals dedicated to upholding environmental laws and values.



Where in the world is TPI represented? EVERYWHERE!

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



Bethel Farms

Arcadia, Ft. Pierce and Sumterville, Florida
Newton, Georgia USA

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



"We focus on doing our job well and anticipating trends and our customers have come to appreciate that." Bethel currently operates farms shipping to 14 south-eastern and mid-western states. The addition of new locations will further increase the company's reach into Texas.

Bethel Farms (Sumterville location) is the Host Farm for TPI's 2014 International Conference & Field Day. With three primary locations, Bethel Farms is one of the leading growers and suppliers of premium sod and grass plugs in the United States.

TPI's Field Day at this year's conference is a great opportunity to see live equipment demonstrations including harvesters, mowers, tractors, forklifts, tillers, installers and cultivators. Be sure to join us at Bethel Farms on Wednesday, February 26, 2014.

From its beginnings as a small cattle and poultry operation in Central Florida in 1958, the company has blossomed to become one of Florida's leading agriculture companies; producing cattle, citrus, sod and grass plugs. At its numerous locations, Bethel Farms currently employs over 100 people, on over 4,000 acres of farmland, stretching throughout the South-eastern U.S.

Bethel Farms is committed to improving America's outdoor experience by growing vibrant, healthy lawns where friends and families can relax and unwind. From major theme parks and municipalities, to golf courses and backyard lawns, Bethel Farms has helped beautify homes and communities.

Don't Miss Out!

Orlando

TPI 2014 INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION CONFERENCE & FIELD DAY
ORLANDO, FLORIDA | FEBRUARY 24-27, 2014

Haven't been able to get away from your farm in July for a field day? Come to Orlando in February and experience a TPI Field Day! This year's conference offers an exciting new opportunity to attend a Field Day and see live equipment demos from the industry's leading equipment manufacturers. Don't miss this great opportunity hosted by Bethel Farms!

TPI FIELD DAY
Wednesday, February 26th

BETHEL F.A.R.M.S

1280 E C 470 Sumterville, FL 33585
www.bethelfarms.com

"We're constantly searching for new ways to solve old problems," states Will Nugent, Bethel Farm's President. "It's part of our overall strategy of servicing customers, even when some of those needs have yet to emerge. It's this forward thinking and problem-solving capability that produce loyal, long-term clients."

**A proud Member of
Turfgrass Producers International**



TurfSide-UP



January's record sub-zero temperatures numbed the U.S. but some folks looked to the brighter side.

"Well . . . At least I won't have to mow my lawn today!"



HOME CONSTRUCTION HIGHEST IN FIVE YEARS



By Jim Novak

As turfgrass producers look to the year ahead there might be some good news on the horizon. Despite higher mortgage rates, the U.S. Department of Commerce has reported that U.S. builders broke ground on homes at the fastest pace in more than five years. The news comes as strong evidence that the recovery of housing construction is accelerating.

In November, developers began construction on houses and apartments at a seasonally-adjusted annual rate of 1.09 million. That's 23 percent more than October's pace of 889,000 and the fastest since February 2008, just a few months after the recession began.

The Commerce Department reports that the housing market has been improving steadily since early last year, but construction had leveled off this summer after first reaching a one million annual pace in March. November's surge comes as mortgage rates remain roughly a percentage point higher than they were in the spring. Each home built creates an average of three jobs for a year and generates about \$90,000 in tax revenue, according to National Association of Home Builders' statistics.

PLAN TO JOIN US THIS SUMMER IN PHILLY!



Philadelphia
TPI SUMMER CONVENTION & FIELD DAYS
 JULY 29 - AUGUST 1, 2014

2014
 TPI Summer Convention & Field Days



Host Farm – D. Johnson Farms
 Deerfield, New Jersey



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The 2014 Dr. Henry W. Indyk Scholarship Deadline – January 17, 2014

SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITY



[Download your application today](#)
Entries must be received by
January 17, 2014

<http://www.thelawninstitute.org/pages/science/>

The Dr. Henry W. Indyk Scholarship (administered by The Lawn Institute) was established to honor a founding father of Turfgrass Producers International while demonstrating TPI's commitment to education and offering a valuable member benefit.

Up to \$10,000 in scholarship funding is made available annually by TPI through the Dr. Henry W. Indyk Scholarship. Since its inception in 2006, TPI has awarded over a dozen scholarships to assist TPI families in paying for higher education.

Any current TPI Class A Turfgrass Sod Producer or Class B Supplier/Manufacturer member in good standing is eligible to apply. Furthermore, the immediate family of a Class A or Class B member or an employee, or the employee's child is eligible to apply.

Scholarship applicants can major in any given field but must plan on attending or be attending an accredited educational facility as a full-time student to be eligible.

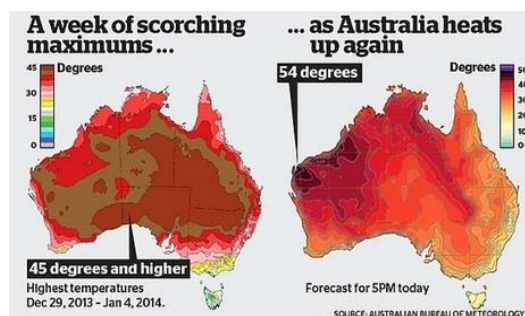
ON A MORE SERIOUS NOTE: As the U.S. freezes Australia faces **Sweltering Temperatures**

Source: NBC News/Australian Bureau of Meteorology

As TPI members in the U.S. are dealing with the bone-chilling cold, TPI members in Australia are dealing with record high temperatures.

On January 2, a record high temperature for the year was reached in Moomba, South Australia when the thermometer reached 129 degrees Fahrenheit (54 degrees Celsius). Sydney reached a high of 96 degrees Fahrenheit (35.5 Celsius).

While less extensive and prolonged than the record breaking hot spell that opened 2013, the country's Bureau of Meteorology called the latest heat wave a "highly significant" event that scorched much of the country. "A major feature of the heat wave was the very large margin by which some records were broken, particularly in northern New South Wales," the bureau said, noting exceptional heat continues in parts of the country. The bureau also confirmed last year was Australia's hottest year on record in more than a century, surpassing the previous record set in 2005 by 32.3 degrees Fahrenheit or 16 Celsius.



Source: Australian Bureau of Meteorology.

Exmouth, Western Australia saw temperatures climb to 54°C (129°F).

Olympics Chooses Zeon Zoysia for Fairways at 2016 Games

By: Jim Novak

When the game of golf returns to the Summer Olympics in Brazil in 2016, two TPI members will be rolling out the green carpet. **David Doguet** of Bladerunner Farms in Poteet, Texas who won the contract to use Texas grass to cover the golf course and TPI member **Marcello Matte**, owner of Green Grass Sod Farms of Brazil who was selected as the sod producer to grow and install the Zeon Zoysia on the course.



Dr. Frank Rossi, associate professor in the Department of Horticulture at Cornell University has confirmed that when golf returns as an Olympic sport at the 2016 Games in Rio, the grass in the fairways, roughs and tees of the new golf course built especially for the Games will be Zeon Zoysia.

The last time golf was part of the Olympic Program was at the 1904 Games in St. Louis, Missouri, U.S.A., when the United States and Canada were the only two competing countries. More than a century later, golf again will be played at the 2016 Rio Olympic Games. An indication of golf's globalization since 1904 is that in Rio, at least 30 countries are expected to be represented in both the men's and women's competitions, from all continents represented in the Olympic Games.

Rossi who is a consulting agronomist on the project stated "Everything approaching the greens, 88 percent of the grassed area, will be Zeon Zoysia." The choice of Zeon Zoysia as the grass for the majority of the acreage on the golf course, approximately 88 acres of fairways and roughs, reinforces the organizing committee's desire to create a sustainable golf course. Zeon Zoysia has very low requirements for maintenance and inputs, according to David Doguet, president of Bladerunner Farms, the company that bred Zeon Zoysia. "Zeon Zoysia is very environmentally friendly. The grass needs very little water, and very low amounts of nitrogen fertilizer, while still looking and playing great. The grass will create a world-class playing surface for the Olympics, and for many years to come," Doguet said.



"TPI members David Doguet of Bladerunner Farms in the U.S. and Marcello Matte of Green Grass in Brazil are producing the grasses needed for the Olympic golf course that is underway on several different fronts. While there was initial concern about the process, currently all systems are go for delivering the course for a test event in 2015."

Frank S. Rossi, Ph.D.
Associate Professor Turfgrass Science
Dept. of Horticulture
Cornell University

THE LAWN INSTITUTE "500 CLUB"



The Lawn Institute "500 Club" is a winning way to donate to The Lawn Institute and help fund research, education and change misconceptions and misinformation about turfgrass and lawns.

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 on becoming a 500 Club member see the following page.

CONGRATULATIONS



Laurie and Steve Griffen of Saratoga Sod Farm are the first 500 Club Members of 2014.

2014 - 500 CLUB MEMBERS

Steve & Laurie Griffen – Saratoga Sod Farm, Inc.

A sincere thank you and congratulations to **Steve** and **Laurie Griffen** of Saratoga Sod Farm in Stillwater, New York for being this year's first 500 Club Members. The Griffen's have supported the 500 Club every year since its inception.

2013 - 500 CLUB MEMBERS

Steve & Laurie Griffen - Saratoga Sod Farm, Inc.
 David Doguet - Bladerunner Farms, Inc.
 Gerry Brouwer - Kesmac/Brouwer
 Ron Nixon - Heritage Turf, Inc.
 Anna Prejer - Frosvidalgras
 Ken Ensor - Quality Corporation
 Ben Copeland, Sr. - Patten Seed Co. / Super Sod
 Fred Pittillo - Turf Mountain Sod, Inc.
 Gregg Tvetene - Trebro Manufacturing

The Johnson Family - D. Johnson Farms, Inc.
 Eric Heuver - Eagle Lake Turf Farms
 Ian True - Trebro Manufacturing
 Richard Stunkard - Tulsa Grass & Sod Farms, Inc.
 Steven Dover - Bucyrus Equipment Company, Inc.
 Tobey Wagner - Sod Solutions
 The Gavranovic Family - Horizon Turf Grass, Inc.
 Will Nugent - Bethel Farms
 Bill Campbell - Fairlawn Sod Nursery Ltd (Ret'd)
 The Green Family - Jonathan Green & Sons, Inc.



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Purpose: To raise funds for education and research for the turfgrass industry.

To Qualify: Reach a monetary donation total of \$500 or more to The Lawn Institute during the current calendar year.

Recognition: The Lawn Institute polo shirt and "500 Club" pin, signage in The Lawn Institute booth and recognition in our publications.

Ways to reach your "500 Club" goal!

We put the "Fun in" Fundraiser. You can make donations at our Midwinter Conference or Summer Convention.

How it works:

Option A: Donate \$500 to The Lawn Institute

Option B: Participate in one or more of our qualified events and your donations will add up!

- Attain your 500 Club Card at the registration desk or at any qualifying Lawn Institute fundraising event.
- If you have donated to The Lawn Institute in the current calendar year prior to the current Conference/Convention those dollars will be entered onto your card.
- At each qualifying event the dollars you donate will be added to your 500 Club Card.
- When you have reached the cumulative \$500 donation, turn in your card at The Lawn Institute booth or registration desk to receive your recognition gift.
- Haven't reached your cumulative \$500 donation? We will track your contributions for you. Turn your 500 Club Card in at the registration desk or The Lawn Institute booth. If you make any additional donations within the current calendar year and reach \$500 you will join the 500 Club for that year.
- Receipts will be emailed to you for your donation(s).

Donation Examples:

Contributions mailed to The Lawn Institute will be added to your 500 Club Card.

Qualifying Frisbee toss – Participate and all monies donated will be added to your 500 Club Card.

Qualifying Bean Bag toss – Participate and all monies donated will be added to your 500 Club Card.

Sponsor a golf hole at The Lawn Institute Golf Tournament and your donation will be added to your 500 Club Card. (Primary representative will receive credit from the donation on their card.)