



WISCONSIN TURFGRASS NEWS

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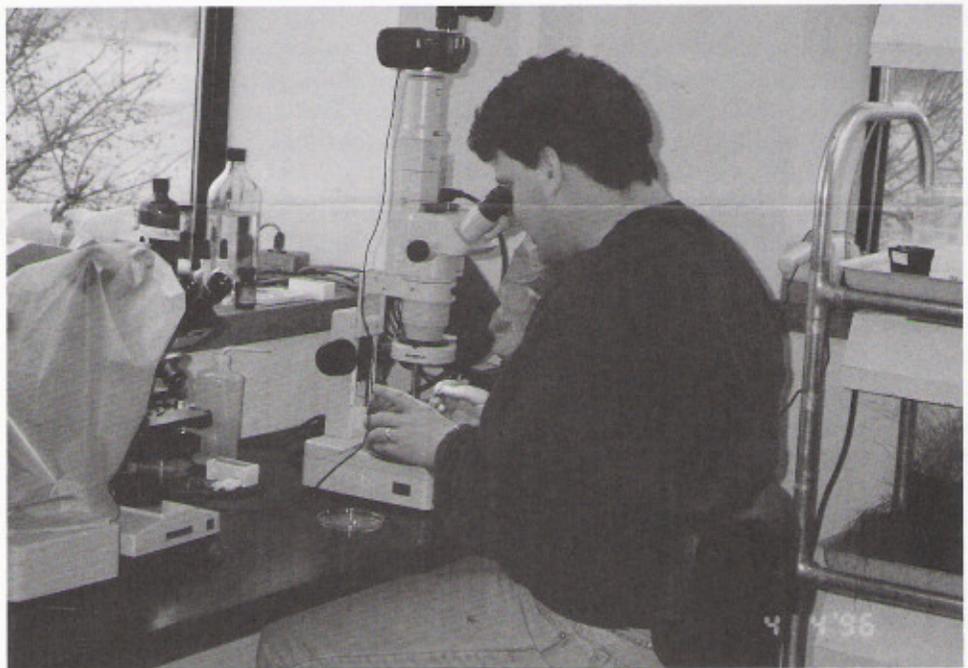


Turfgrass Disease Diagnostic Lab: Moves to the O.J. Noer Facility

By Dr. Douglas P. Maxwell; Department of Plant Pathology

We all wonder if this summer will be like the last. Let's hope not! The hot and humid summer of 1995 provided ideal conditions for the development of many turfgrass health problems. We will not soon forget last summer and the lessons it taught us. This year the Turfgrass Disease Diagnostic Lab (TDDL) will be even better prepared to serve the needs of the turfgrass industry. In 1995 the TDDL was created to provide improved service to professional turfgrass managers. Dr. Douglas P. Maxwell was asked to serve as the director; and Mr. Steve Millett, a Ph. D. graduate student in Plant Pathology and Turfgrass Science, was the diagnostician. This arrangement was necessary because Dr. Julie Meyer took a one year parental leave starting in July 1995. Mr. Millett saw many unusual turf samples last summer, and gained a greater appreciation for the difficulties turf managers face when they must maintain turfgrass under less than optimal conditions.

This year has brought another major change because, in order to continue the TDDL, substantial funding was needed from the turfgrass industry to provide partial operating costs. Through a joint partnership between the Wisconsin Turfgrass Association and the



The TDDL has been getting many samples in already this Spring; some from as far away as California. Pictured is doctoral student Steve Millett.

University of Wisconsin-Madison, a novel means of funding the TDDL for 1996 has been achieved. Approximately half of the support has been generated by offering contracts to golf course superintendents and turf related businesses, who have participated generously in past WTA fund raising efforts. On very short notice, eighteen superintendents and five companies purchased contracts or

gave donations. We hope that future efforts will broaden the base of support from the turfgrass industry. The other half of the support will come from increased user fees (\$20 per sample for homeowners and \$60 per sample for commercial samples) and from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, which will fund a half-time specialist.

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In order to provide easier access to the TDDL and other turfgrass management information, the TDDL moved to the O. J. Noer Turfgrass Research & Education Facility in April. The staff will include Mr. Gary Gaard, Mr. Steve Millett, and Dr. Doug Maxwell, as well as an undergraduate student, Ms. Andi Guerin, who worked in the TDDL during the summer of 1995. It is expected that in the near future a full-time research specialist/diagnostician will be hired to join the TDDL team.

The turfgrass team has set several goals for the TDDL for this year: (i) Provide commercial turfgrass professionals and homeowners with rapid, unbiased evaluations of turfgrass diseases and to then make appropriate management recommendations. (ii) Explore effective ways to disseminate information using electronic means, e.g., the World Wide Web. (iii) Research new DNA technologies for the rapid identification of pathogens currently difficult to identify.

If you have a turfgrass sample to submit, please follow these guidelines:

Collection of Sample for Diagnosis (Poor samples give no chance for diagnosis.)

A. SAMPLES:

Golf Courses:

- Use a cup cutter; sample should be two to three inches deep

- For patch symptoms, sample from edge so that plug contains both plants with symptoms and plants without.
- For evenly distributed or diffuse symptoms, take two plugs: one from area with symptoms and, if possible, one from area without symptoms.

Home Lawn or Commercial Turf Other than Golf Courses:

- Cut a 6" x 6" piece of sod with about 2" of soil.

Same as above for patch symptoms and distributed symptoms.

B. MAILING

- If soil is moist, wrap in newspaper or aluminum foil, place in cardboard box. If soil is dry, moisten slightly, wrap and pack as above.

MAIL SAMPLE EARLY IN THE WEEK, IF POSSIBLE!

Submit a written description of the problem. Keep the paper separate from the sample (put paper in a plastic bag) so it doesn't get wet, and include your name, phone, FAX, and mailing address (E-mail address if you have one.). Include in your description:

- the kind of grass and age of the planting
- location of the turf (greens, fairways, tees, lawn)
- a description of the pattern of damage and its progression over time

- date the problem was first observed
- soil conditions (soil type, drainage, etc.)
- weather conditions prior to symptom development
- recent pesticide and fertilizer applications
- a tentative diagnosis if you have one

Send samples to the TDDL:

Turfgrass Disease Diagnostic Lab
O.J. Noer Turfgrass Research & Education Facility
3101 Highway M
Verona, WI 53593-9537

We can also be reached by:

phone: 608-265-TDDL(-8335)

E-mail: TDDL@plantpath.wisc.edu

Electronic Communication: Here It Comes.

Many articles have been written about the new "super-highway for information"; but currently, turfgrass professionals have limited access to electronic information. That will change, so this year the TDDL staff will be exploring the use of the World Wide Web as a way to provide timely information. Try out the homepage for the University of Wisconsin Plant Health Services on the World Wide Web, <http://www.wisc.edu/plhealthser>, the commercial homepage for some Wisconsin golf courses, <http://www.execpc.com/~dvi>, or the homepage for the GCSAA, <http://www.gcsaa.org/gcsaa>. Check these out!

WANTED!

by Audra Anderson, WTA Administrative Assistant

We are trying to create an archive of Wisconsin Turfgrass Association (WTA) happenings to keep at the Noer Facility. What we're missing are some old WTA newsletters and research reports. If you happen to come across some of these reports during your spring cleaning, please hold them for us. The specific issues of the WTA Newsletter that we're missing are these; Summer 1986 / Spring & Summer 1987 / Winter 1989 / Winter 1990 / Spring, Summer & Fall 1991 / Fall & Winter 1992 / Spring, Summer & Fall 1993 and anything from 1985 and before. We also need Research Reports. The issues I need are 1983, 1984, and 1985. If anyone has any of these issues, please call me at the Noer Facility at 608-845-6536 or mail them to 3101 Hwy M / Verona, WI 53593

Turf Industry Mourns the Loss of A Great Person

By A Friend and Coworker: Karen Delahaut
Outreach Specialist, Departments of Agronomy and Entomology

In February, many of us lost a friend when Catherine Smejkal passed away. After a short bout with cancer, she passed away peacefully in her home surrounded by her family. Many of us will miss her bright smile and cheerful personality.

I met Catherine in 1989 when I first began my career in integrated pest management—a relatively short period of time when compared with many of you in the industry who have known her for 15 years or more. When I first met Catherine, she was working with Dr. Gayle Worf in the Department of Plant Pathology at the University. Like you, my first introduction to her was as a turfgrass specialist. It wasn't long however, before I began to learn more about this wonderful woman and the diversity of her interests. Plant pathology and turfgrass were only one small part of her multifaceted life. What fascinated me in particular was her wealth of friends. Because of Catherine, I was able to meet many, diverse and wonderful people.

When many of us think of Catherine, we think of at least one of three things: turfgrass, gardening, or gourmet cooking. Who else, other than Catherine, would initiate a flower planting program at a turfgrass research facility? She thought flowers planted around the sign would add some color to the otherwise green landscape. Therefore, it's only appropriate that we remember Catherine with a memorial



Catherine (seated) looked so well at last year's field day that it's hard to believe she won't be there this year.

garden at the O. J. Noer Turfgrass Facility. A working committee has been created to oversee the details in planning a garden which Catherine would be proud to have as a memorial. Those of you who wish to become a part of Catherine's garden may do so with a contribution of money, plants, or other garden items. If you are interested in donating, contact Tom Schwab or Audra Anderson at the O. J. Noer Facility at (608) 845-6536 or send donation to: Catherine Garden, WTA • O.J. Noer Facility • 3101 Hwy M • Verona, WI 53593.

Catherine will be greatly missed, but hopefully, through the creation of this memorial garden, she will be remembered every time you visit the O. J. Noer Facility and spend time reflecting in her garden.

The Wisconsin Turfgrass News

is the official publication of the Wisconsin Turfgrass Association, edited by Tom Schwab.

PLCAA OFFERS NEW RESOURCE ITEMS

The Professional Lawn Care Association of America (PLCAA) maintains a resource center of training materials for industry professionals and the public. Videos, brochures and manuals cover technical topics, business management practices and consumer education.

The latest additions to PLCAA's resource center include:

- **The Handbook of Turfgrass Insect Pests**
- **Weeds of Southern Turfgrasses** (applicable to all parts of US)
- **Series of Business Publications**
 - Grounds Maintenance Contracting
 - Maximizing Profits in Mowing
 - Writing the Maintenance Specs
 - Grounds Maintenance Estimating Kit
 - Crew Leader Training Landscape & Maintenance Workers
 - Selling to Residential Customers
 - Keys to Motivating Employees
 - Selling to Commercial Customers
 - How to Improve Customer Retention
 - Pricing Your Product or Service
 - The Business Plan
 - How to Manage a Growing Business
 - How to Determine Job Costs

For more information on these new PLCAA resource items, contact PLCAA at (800) 458-3466 for details.

President's Message

By Wayne Horman

The long awaited spring has finally arrived. I can't remember a winter that lasted this long or turfgrass that looks so brown. As for our neighbors to the north, well, spring might still be a month away.

A number of changes are occurring as a new season begins here in Wisconsin. The Diagnostic Lab at the Noer Facility is getting on line. It will take some dedication getting the lab fully operational in its first year at the Noer Facility. I feel confident it will be a resounding success under the leadership of Dr. Doug Maxwell and doctoral student Steve Millett.

It appears that our goal of adding additional acreage at the

Noer Facility has come true. There are 34 acres surrounding the facility that were previously farmed. They can now become turf and urban agriculture investigations and demonstrations. This acreage will not only add new research but will also expand the area used for Summer Field Day which was rapidly outgrowing the facility. If you have any research ideas that you'd like to see done or know of any funding source for investigations, let us know.

As you may have heard, Dr. Rossi is leaving us for Cornell University. This is a wonderful opportunity for Dr. Rossi and his family to move home. However, Cornell's gain is our loss. Dr. Rossi has left an admirable lasting

impression on all of us. The enthusiasm he brought to the Wisconsin turfgrass industry could be felt in all parts of the state. His talks provided us with good information and he shared them in an interesting way. He brought creditability and awareness of our industry, to the public, through his regular spots on Wisconsin Public Radio.

Though we will greatly miss working with Dr. Rossi, this job will provide someone else the opportunity to work at a terrific institution. The Noer Facility is recognized as a first class research center. The position will attract some excellent candidates, and Frank's replacement will have a great team of professors to join up with. The position won't be filled overnight, but hopefully we'll have a person on board by EXPO.

Good growing weather to you!

Milorganite Turf Research Donation Program Initiated in 1995

The turf industry would like to thank Milorganite and the people that participated in their turf research donation program. This program was initiated in the fall of 1995. Milorganite donated \$10 for each ton of their fertilizer purchased between August and September, 1995. Milorganite's customers could pick a turf research organization of their choice to be the beneficiary of this donation. The Wisconsin Turfgrass Association was the proud selection of much of this generosity. The donation to WTA came to \$3,045 and was presented to them at EXPO 96 in January.

The WTA Board of Directors would like to thank all the participators for choosing Wisconsin and also thank Milorganite for initiating the program. A complete listing of Milorganite distributors and customers who participated in the program is noted below.

Milorganite Turfgrass Research Donation Program Participants

The Alpine, Inc.
Blackhawk Country Club
Boscobel Area Schools
Branch River C C
Bull's Eye Country Club
Chaska Golf Course
Coulee Golf & Bowl
Deer Run Country Club
Dodgeville Schools
Estabrook Homes
Farmer's Grain Supply
Fox Fire Golf Club
Golden Sands Golf Club
Grafton High School
Hayward Civic Club
Holiday Lodge Golf Course
Irish Waters Golf Course

Johnson Creek Schools
Lake Mills School Dist
Lawn Plus, Inc
Maple Bluff C C
Midway Stadium
Nakoma Golf Club
Nicolet Country Club
North Shore Country Club
Oakcrest Golf Course
Oak Ridge Golf Course
Oneida Golf & Riding Club
Oshkosh Country Club
Platteville Country Club
Prairie du Chien C C
Rainbow Ridge Golf Course
Saxer Soccer Club
South Hills Golf & C C

Spider Lake Country Club
Spooner Golf Club
Spread Eagle Golf Course
Timber Ridge Country Club
Towne Country Club
Trappers Turn Golf Course
Trout Lake Golf Course
Tumbledown Trails G C
Turf Supply Company
Two Oaks North Golf Club
UW-Whitewater
Village Green Golf Club
WCTC
West Bend C C
White Lake Country Club
Windy Acres Golf Club
Wisconsin Turf Equip

Turf School 1996

By Amy J. Sausen

Outreach Specialist, Department of Horticulture

Our rookie year of the University of Wisconsin-Madison School of Turfgrass Management has just been completed, with much success. The Turf School is a comprehensive, in-depth training in the biology, ecology and cultural management of turfgrass. Unfortunately, we could only accept the first sixty registrants. The school was held at the J. F. Friedrich Center on the UW campus from February 26 through March 1, 1996.

The Turf School students deserve much of the credit. For many, it was the first time they had sat still for many years. They came from golf courses (53%), landscape settings (22%), supplier/manufacturers (15%), and consulting firms (10%). Their levels of education varied, from a high school degree to master's degree. Several students had been working in the industry for ten or more years, while some had only recently entered the turf industry.

The school could not have taken place without the expertise of the speakers. Dan Mahr, Lecturer in the Continuing Adult Vocational Education Department, opened the program with a lecture on how to learn and how to listen. His lecture was extremely important, because many of the students had not had any formal education for several years.

Dr Wayne Kussow, Department of Soil Science, discussed turfgrass soil management, fertilization and cultivation. The research that he has done over the years on fertilizers was of great interest to the students. He also taught a hands on soils lab that taught the students to distinguish between the different soil textures and to learn the effects of compaction within a soil column.

Dr Doug Maxwell and Steve Millett, Department of Plant Pathology, taught us how to use

the internet to improve turf management practices. In another lab, we learned to identify and manage diseases of turfgrass. For many, it was the first time they had ever seen a disease under a microscope.

Phil Pelliteri, Department of Entomology, discussed the identification and management of turfgrass and ornamental insects. The students learned to distinguish between beneficials and potentially injurious insects. Also, a display was on hand so the students could see the insects in a preserved state.

Dr. Frank Rossi, Department of Horticulture, lectured about turfgrass growth and development, and selecting species and cultivars. In two separate labs, he taught turfgrass identification and weed identification. His enthusiastic style of teaching gave students a uniquely interactive experience in the identification of turfgrasses and weeds.

Dr. Dick Straub, Department of Agriculture Engineering, lectured on pesticide application equipment and safety. He taught a calibration lab using both spot sprayers and garden tractor sprayers at the Agriculture Engineering building on campus. Dr. Straub also demonstrated the use of several different nozzles and their spray patterns, including the resulting drift.

Brian Swingle, WDATCP Program Manager for Certification and Licensing, lectured about the laws surrounding pesticide use in the state of Wisconsin. He talked about the most recent laws, and even some new laws, that we will be seeing soon.

Tom Schwab, Manager of the O.J. Noer Research Facility, taught us the principles of establishment and renovation of turfgrass. He discussed the advantages and disadvantages of seeding and sodding, along with some helpful hints to reduce weed populations in newly seeded areas.

Tom Emmerich, T. J. Emmerich Associates, taught the anatomy of an irrigation system. He provided us with some interesting anecdotes about the creation of a few laws surrounding irrigation installation. We viewed a video about a new type of irrigation that many of us may be using in the future.

The highlight of the week was the graduation ceremony and banquet on Thursday night at the Wisconsin Alumni Center. Diplomas were handed out to each of the students. Awards were also presented to several of our more participatory students.

Special thanks to the people that helped with the coordination of the school. Each was a great help with registration, assembling the binders, and assisting with the labs. They were: Audra Anderson; Henry Berg; Emily Beulow; Eric Bradley; Chris Kleinsmith; Chris Kerkman; Brad Smith; Jon Thronson; Derek VanDamm; and Tara Zabkowitz.

The camaraderie among the students was similar to that experienced by army personnel at boot camp. After spending five full days, eating, sleeping, and breathing turf, those that were left standing became good friends. It has become obvious to me that we have made life long friends. I look forward to Turf School 1997, and can only hope that it will be as much fun as Turf School 1996.

1996
Wisconsin Turfgrass
Association
SUMMER
FIELD DAY
August 20, 1996
O.J. Noer Research Facility

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

May 20	WGCSA Monthly Meeting	Kettle Hills GC
June 10	WGCSA Monthly Meeting	Baraboo GC
July 15	WGCSA Monthly Meeting	Lake Breeze GC
August 2-3	ALCA Master in Management for the Landscape Industry	Chicago
August 12	WGCSA Monthly Meeting	Foxboro GC
August 13	WNA Golf Outing	
August 14	1996 WNA Summer Field Day	Jackson, WI
August 16	Environmental Improvement Awards Program	
August 20	WTA Summer Field Day	Noer Facility-Madison
September 9	WGCSA Monthly Meeting	The Ridges GC
October 5,6	WGCSA Dinner Dance	Oshkosh CC
October 14	WGCSA Monthly Meeting	CC of Beloit
Nov 8-9	Wisconsin Turf Symposium	Milwaukee
Nov 17-21	1996 Exterior Landscape & Grounds Maintenance Conference	Cincinnati OH
Nov 17-21	PLCAA Annual Conference	Cincinnati, OH
Jan 8-10	WI Turfgrass and Greenscape Expo	Holiday Inn/Madison
Jan 16-18	Mid-AM Trade Show	Chicago
Feb 2-8	GCSAA International Conference	Las Vegas, Nevada
Feb 23-25	WLF 1997 Convention	Green Bay
March 3	WGCSA Spring Business/Education	Fond du Lac

WTA Members—If you have an important date you'd like to share with other members call 608-845-6536 or Fax 608-845-8162 and let us include it in the next calendar.

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