



WISCONSIN TURFGRASS NEWS

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SUMMER 1996

One of Our Own Attains Top Post

By Curt Winter, Barefoot Grass Lawn Service

Congratulations go to Terry Kurth, president and owner of several Barefoot Grass lawn care service franchises, for being voted to the highest post in the Professional Lawn Care Association of America (PLCAA). Terry has held several offices in the national organization since 1993. Several of the PLCAA committees that he has served on are Public Relations, Membership, and Ways and Means. He attained the full confidence of the membership this year when he was voted president, effective this November.

The members of the Wisconsin Turfgrass Association (WTA) are very proud of this appointment because Terry is past president of their organization. They are confident he will be one of PLCAA's best. He has been active in shap-

ing legislation affecting the green industry his entire professional career. His resume also includes being past president and co-founder of the Grounds Management Association of Wisconsin. He also is currently on the executive board of the Wisconsin Agri-Business Council.

Terry is a 1975 graduate of the University of Wisconsin - Madison where he earned a B.S. degree in Agronomy. He still is an active fan and booster of his beloved Badgers and happened to be president of the Mendota Gridiron Club the year we won the Rose Bowl. He also loves playing golf on Wisconsin's great golf courses. All that recreation takes second place to his favorite activity of spectating at his four children's volleyball, baseball, basketball and soccer games.



Terry Kurth president-elect of the Professional Lawn Care Association of America

We wish Terry the best in his new post. The enthusiasm he's given to the green industry so far is a good sign it will continue. We know there's not a better, more dedicated person to lead PLCAA, and we're proud he's from Wisconsin.

The Magic of Summer Field Day

By Tom Schwab, Superintendent, O.J. Noer Turfgrass Research and Education Facility

The 1996 Wisconsin Turfgrass Association Summer Field Day is almost here. The date this year is Tuesday, August 20. There will be many new and interesting investigations to hear about on the research plots. The trade show is always a huge success where you can learn about all the latest products and equipment to care for your turf.

The summer field day has always been a highlight of my summer. There is something almost magical about the weather and camaraderie at the gathering. I don't know what it is about field day that makes the weather always turn beautiful. I can only remember two out of the fifteen previous field days that had bad weather. They were the all-day

rain day at Camelot C.C. in about 1985 and the really hot one at West Madison Ag Research Station in 1992. The most memorable out of all the other field days that had nice weather are the ones in 1988, 1993, and last year. The severe drought of 1988 was broken right before summer field day that year. We received

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Low Maintenance Turfgrasses

By Amy J. Sausen, Outreach Specialist, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Low maintenance turfgrasses are becoming ever more important in the urban landscape. Many homeowners and professionals alike are beginning to scale back on irrigation, chemical and labor inputs. Some research at the University of Wisconsin-Madison has evaluated low maintenance turfgrass species.

In Wisconsin, warm-season grasses are considered low maintenance because of the short growing season. Typically, they only require one to two mowings, and one fertilizer application. Buffalograss, crested wheatgrass, and zoysiagrass have all been evaluated under a Wisconsin climate. Unfortunately, many of the warm-season grasses did not perform well under the wet summers and cold winters in Wisconsin.

Six buffalograss cultivars were evaluated for quality and winter hardiness. Only one variety, 84-315, survived its first year. It also provided high quality, even though it did not green up until mid-June and went dormant in mid-September. Clearly, the species inability to survive a Wisconsin winter involved more than extreme cold. The winter climate in Wisconsin is similar to those of its native area, the mid-western prairies. The amount of moisture the turf receives, especially in the fall, could influence the grasses ability to overwinter.

Five crested wheatgrass selections were evaluated for quality and density in 1993. Native to the Ural Mountains of Russia, the grasses had excellent winter and spring color, but were unable to compete with both annual and perennial weeds. While color ratings remained high, quality and density ratings continued to decline. It is clear that crested wheatgrass and buffalograss do not perform well under wet conditions.

Three zoysiagrass varieties were planted and evaluated beginning in 1993. Each of the cultivars responded similarly to the onset of

cool temperatures. Cultivar 8514 produced substantial stolons in its first year, and possessed the finest texture of the three selections. Interestingly, this cultivar has also been the most successful cultivar over the past three seasons.

Because of the increasing demands, by homeowners and commercial lawn care companies alike, for turfgrasses that will tolerate low maintenance regimes, the University of Wisconsin-Madison has converted each of its National Turfgrass Evaluation Program (NTEP) studies to a low maintenance management schedule. Beginning with the 1995 growing season, each of the studies were fertilized on an "as needed" basis, and irrigated only to prevent dormancy. Other chemical inputs, such as herbicides and fungicides, were used in a curative, rather than a preventative manner.

In June of 1995, an NTEP Perennial Ryegrass study was seeded at the O.J. Noer Research Facility, in Verona, Wisconsin. Many improvements have been made by turfgrass breeders in recent years. Among the improvements is color. Brightstar, once touted as an exceptional color performer, ranked in the top 5% in 1989, but only ranked in the top 50% in 1995. Also, several cultivars have endophyte enhancement that could increase pest tolerance genetically, thereby reducing chemical inputs.

Similar to perennial ryegrass, tall fescue cultivars have made many advancements in color, density, texture, and endophytic enhancement. Seeded in 1992, the plots have been evaluated for insect and disease incidence, color, density, quality, and texture. Tall fescue is predispositioned to drought avoidance, wear tolerance, and low maintenance. Several cultivars such as Tomahawk, SR8210, ZPS-UL and Hounddog have performed in the top 15% for several years. However, following the harsh winter of 1995-1996, questions remain about the winter hardiness of tall

fescue.

Fine leaf fescues are among the strongest performers under low maintenance. In fact, as maintenance levels increase, the fine fescues are less competitive than many other common turf species, notably Kentucky bluegrass. Improvements have been made to the hard and chewings fescue with regards to heat tolerance. Because of their slow growing habit, less mechanical inputs are required by the homeowner or commercial turf manager. The heat of 1995 resulted in a clear separation among the species. The chewings fescues accounted for half of the top 20 cultivars. Also, FO-143, a sheeps fescue, has performed well for two consecutive years.

In harmony with the National Turfgrass Evaluation Program (NTEP) regional trials have been established at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Regional trials are usually conducted in conjunction with seed producers as a means of evaluating specific cultivars throughout the nation. During the last year, all maintenance was significantly reduced to an "as needed" basis, similar to the NTEP studies.

A regional perennial ryegrass cultivar evaluation has been conducted in conjunction with Dr. Kenneth Hignight, of Advanta Seeds West. The goal was to determine persistence and visual quality of commercially available and experimental perennial ryegrass cultivars. SR4100, Brightstar and Palmer II were among the best performers of 1995. Several endophyte infected varieties also demonstrated good quality. They included Repell II, Prelude II and Palmer II.

Similar to the regional perennial ryegrass study, a regional tall fescue study has also been conducted in conjunction with Dr. Kenneth Hignight. The grasses were evaluated for persistence and quality. Turf quality in this trial was

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SMALL AG BUSINESSES NOW ELIGIBLE FOR CLEAN SWEEP

By Brian Pruksa, Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection

Agricultural pesticide users other than farmers are now eligible to participate in Ag Clean Sweep through the Very Small Quantity Generator (VSQG) Program. This program is designed to assist small generators of pesticides who cannot afford to contract a hazardous waste disposal firm on their own.



Clean Sweep staff unload chemicals from your vehicle,

The Very Small Generator Program was established in 1996. It is much like the original Farm Program established in 1990. Both programs offer a 50% subsidy on agricultural pesticides returned to Clean Sweeps. The farm program differs in that farmers qualify for free disposal of the first 200 pounds of chemicals they return.

Many businesses are eligible for the Clean Sweep VSQG Program, including cooperatives, golf courses, landscape contractors, lawn care firms, nurseries, park systems, county and township road

departments, pet groomers, right-of-way managers, and veterinarians.

This is not a comprehensive list. Most small businesses, individuals, and organizations that use agricultural pesticides are eligible. Non-eligible businesses include all those that generate over 220 pounds of hazardous waste per month. To find out if you qualify for Clean Sweep, contact your Clean Sweep county coordinator.



identify the type of chemical,

HOW TO PARTICIPATE IN AG CLEAN SWEEP

Participating in Ag Clean Sweep is easy. But you can't just drive up to your collection site with a trunk full of chemicals. You must pre-register to participate!

To begin, request a pre-registration form from

AG CLEAN SWEEPS SCHEDULED FOR LATE JULY TO OCTOBER 1996

| County | Date | Clean Sweep Coordinator | Clean Sweep Location |
|------------|-------------|------------------------------|----------------------|
| Burnett | 8/22 | Rick Schneider 715-635-2197 | Siren |
| Calumet | 10/30 | Brad Bauer 414-849-1450 | Chilton |
| Clark | 9/13 & 9/14 | Ron Wiederholt 715-743-5121 | Loyal |
| Manitowoc | 10/31 | Jeff Beyer 414-683-4085 | Reedsville |
| Richland | 8/17 | Steve Kohlstedt 608-647-6148 | Richland Center |
| Sawyer | 8/21 | Russell Kiecker 715-635-3506 | Hayward Radison |
| Sauk | 9/14 | John Carroll 608-524-6515 | Baraboo |
| St. Croix | 9/21 | Jim Janke 715-684-3301 | Hammond |
| Washburn | 8/23 | Dale Cardwell 715-635-2197 | Spooner |
| Washington | 8/3 | Jim Pamperin 414-335-4399 | Slinger |
| Wood | 7/27 | Sharon Schwab 715-421-8911 | Wisconsin Rapids |



and pack those that can be incinerated into 55 gallon drums.

your Clean Sweep county coordinator. On this form, list the chemicals you will be dropping off at the Clean Sweep. Return the completed form to your county coordinator.

After your pre-registration is sent in, you will be mailed a bill and contract from Advanced Environmental Technical Services (AETS), the hazardous waste disposal firm hired to run the Clean

Sweeps. The bill will list the charges for the chemicals you are returning. Your charge for agricultural pesticides will only be 50% of their actual disposal cost. The other 50% will be paid for by the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture and your local county government. You will be charged 100% of disposal costs for other hazardous wastes you bring in.

You may also be asked to arrive at your Clean Sweep within a certain time period. This schedule is for your benefit. Without it, groups of people often arrive at Clean Sweeps simultaneously, creating long waiting lines.

Finally, Ag Clean Sweep Day arrives. You will deliver your chemicals to your Clean Sweep collection site at your appointed time. Clean Sweep staff will unload the chemicals from your vehicle. You will receive a flyer on how to pack chemicals for future Clean Sweeps and be asked to answer a brief survey. You will pay your waste disposal bill. Finally, we thank you for helping to keep your county clean and safe.

It's that easy. But don't forget, you must pre-register with your county coordinator to participate in Clean Sweep!

President's Message

By Wayne Horman

I was listening to the radio in the car the other day and the DJ was discussing the start of the National Football League pre-season camps within a few weeks. At that point in time I realized that the summer was almost half over. The weather this spring was so awful and so late in coming that it just doesn't seem fair. It will be over before you know it.

I had the opportunity to escape some of the poor weather this past winter. I was asked to call on golf course superintendents, greenkeepers of bowling greens, and athletic field managers, in Australia. Visiting with turfgrass managers in Australia is not a whole lot different than here. There are a few exceptions, however.

Australia uses the metric system, so calculating a pound of nitrogen per thousand square feet is equal to five grams of nitrogen per meter squared. Some of the

turfgrass managers use the term hectare for larger turf areas, and others still work with acres. The equipment in Australia is similar to items offered here. However, the cost is more than double what we pay.

Horticulture education is heavily influenced by technical schools in Australia. The schools provide six to eight week classes that involve a great deal of hands on training. After the classes are completed, an apprenticeship is needed to fulfill the requirements toward a degree. The biggest item missing in the turfgrass industry in Australia is continuing education. We sure take things like our Summer Field Day and the Winter Conference for granted. Educational benefits like these just do not exist there.

In other turfgrass news closer to home, Dr. Rossi's former position in horticulture has been formally posted by the University. A position at the University is posted for a period of time before formal interviews begin. We hope that the position will be filled by the Winter Conference in January.

It also appears that we will be looking to fill yet another research position in the turf industry. Dr. Julie Meyer will not be returning to the plant pathology department. Dr. Meyer had been on a one year maternity leave and recently resigned her position. Our best goes to Dr. Meyer and her family.

I hope to see all of you at the Summer Field Day on August 20th. There will be a full day of education and activities that you will not want to miss. Enjoy the rest of the summer, even if it may be a short one.

**1996 Wisconsin
Turfgrass Association
SUMMER
FIELD DAY
August 20, 1996**

**You Will Not Want To Miss It!
Call 608-845-6536 for information**

The Magic of Summer Field Day

(Continued from front page)

.75 inch of rain the day before to relieve the parched Yahara Golf Course site. My golf course went 60 days without rain that year and what a relief that change in the weather was. In the rainy year of 1993, the rains finally stopped a couple weeks before field day. My golf course that year received 16 inches of rain in the month of July 1993. It finally dried out around the time of field day. Last year's unbearable, record breaking hot and humid summer saw one day of relief in August. What day? You guessed it.

It will be hard to console turf managers from the near record cold and wet spring of 1996. There are too many lost revenues, uncompleted projects, washed out seedings, and unhappy customers. Hopefully the magic of this year's summer field day will be that it is the start of an



Professor Emeritus Gayle Worf talking about turfgrass health with superintendent Charlie Shaw.

The Wisconsin Turfgrass News

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



There was something for everyone at Field Day 1995.

Indian summer that will last to Christmas.

The weather is not the only magical thing about field day. The people in attendance are what really make the day special. Who could forget last year's ask-the-expert booth hosted by professors emeritus Bob Newman, Gayle Worf, and Chuck Koval? It's always great seeing those guys. This year the dean of the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences, Roger Wyse, will be in attendance along with university department chairpersons, cooperative extension bigwigs and agricultural research station honchos. If you have any questions

about how the college is supporting the green industry, there will be someone attending that will have the answers.

The other special people in attendance will be you. People travel far and wide to attend the field day. You'll meet old friends from Minnesota, Michigan, Illinois, Iowa and from all corners of Wisconsin. You'll make some new friends also. That's the real magic of field day.

You should have received the summer field day flier by now. Give us a call at the Noer Facility if you need more information (608-845-6536). We hope you can attend.

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exceptional, with only 15% of the cultivars failing to provide acceptable quality over the course of the season. This is due, in large, to an accidental double application of sulfur coated urea in mid-June (2# N/M). The double application of fertilizer also seemed related to an infestation of brown patch. With the exception of Titan, the commercially available cultivars had the highest brown patch incidence.

By evaluating each cultivar under a low maintenance regime, we can better predict how these cultivars will perform in a home lawn, or other low maintenance setting. It will be interesting to see how the improved cultivars fair under low maintenance.

WISCONSIN TURFGRASS ASSOCIATION FUNDRAISING GOLF TOURNAMENT

Everyone Welcome

Wausau Country Club
Monday, Sept. 30, 1996

Golf, Prizes, Dinner, Good Fellowship

Registration information will be mailed out soon. Call Audra at the O.J. Noer Turfgrass Facility for details.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

| | | |
|-----------|--|-------------------------|
| Aug 2-3 | ALCA Master in Management for the Landscape Industry | Chicago |
| Aug 7 | Golf Course Construction Tour | Whispering Springs |
| Aug 12 | WGCSA Monthly Meeting | Foxboro GC |
| Aug 13 | WNA Golf Outing | Scenic View CC |
| Aug 14 | WNA Summer Field Day | Jackson, WI |
| Aug 20 | WTA Summer Field Day | Noer Facility - Madison |
| Aug 24 | Homeowner Turf Field Day | Noer Facility - Madison |
| Sept 9 | WGCSA Monthly Meeting | The Ridges GC |
| Sept 30 | WTA Fundraiser Golf Outing | Wausau CC |
| Oct 5,6 | WGCSA Dinner Dance | Oshkosh CC |
| Oct 14 | WGCSA Monthly Meeting | CC of Beloit |
| Oct 28-29 | Wisconsin Turf Symposium | Milwaukee |
| Nov 4-8 | National Agronomy Meetings | Indianapolis |
| Nov 17-21 | 1996 Exterior Landscape & Grounds Maintenance Conference and PLCAA Annual Conference | Cincinnati, OH |
| Dec 11-13 | MTGF Annual Conference | Minneapolis |
| 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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