

## RETURNING AFTER 19 YEARS

# WTA Fundraiser Returns to University Ridge on Tuesday, October 7th

By Tom Schwab, O.J. Noer Turfgrass Research and Education Facility, University of Wisconsin-Madison

The WTA would be pleased to see you at this year's golf fundraiser scheduled for Tuesday, October 7th at University Ridge Golf Course in Verona. The last time the WTA Fundraiser was hosted by U Ridge was 1995. The course was fun to play then and may thrill your game even more this year with the newly renovated putting greens.

Those greens will be at their peak performance this Fall because they are hosting an NCAA championship the week before WTA. In addition to the greens, you will also enjoy the rest of the course. Extensive tree removal was undertaken to improve air movement and turf health. And many sand traps have also been renovated. Golf course superintendent Phil Davidson is excited to show off all this work that he and previous course superintendent Jerry Kershasky put into improving the course.

Tell your friends, relatives, and coworkers to come and enjoy a spectacular round of golf as this 2014 season nears the end. They will all enjoy this spectacular course, which is home to the UW Badgers.

The course sits on the terminal moraine left by the last retreating glacier and is designed to capture that natural setting. The course winds through dense Wisconsin woodlands for several holes and open rolling prairie and marshland for other holes. The trees should be in their prime fall color on Oct 7th.



The registration fee is \$125. For this you will be treated to a delicious lunch, practice range, and golf with a cart. After golf you'll enjoy hors d'oeuvres and hopefully go home with one of the valuable door prizes and/or golf awards. Many door prizes are worth more than the cost of registration. You may register as a foursome or by yourself. The event is a four-person best ball format. A registration form is included

with this newsletter and is also posted at [www.wisconsinturfgrassassociation.org](http://www.wisconsinturfgrassassociation.org). You may pay online from the website or mail in your registration.

University Ridge has given us the course for a special price. Therefore, most of your registration fee will go to promote golf turf research at your Land Grant University. Proceeds from the golf outing will be used by UW-Madison scientists to develop new techniques for managing turfgrass for the most environmental, aesthetic, and economic results.

Your participation will allow the WTA to add to the new Turfgrass Research Sustainability Fund at the UW Foundation. The need for quality turfgrass research is as important today as it has ever been. Your participation at University Ridge will help meet that need.

The golf outing isn't all about funding research, though. It is also about spending time with friends to enjoy a round of golf near the end of the season, and this golf course will not disappoint! I hope that you are able to attend the WTA Golf Fundraiser and play this truly outstanding course. You may contact Audra Anderson at 608-845-6536 or [ajander2@wisc.edu](mailto:ajander2@wisc.edu) if you have any questions. Whether it is your first WTA Golf Fundraiser or you have attended them all, we hope you won't miss this one. ■

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

# Running Smarter, Lemonade, and Fall

By Paul Huggett



### RUNNING SMARTER

I was at the Turfgrass Producers International conference in Orlando this past winter. There was a motivational speaker that I was listening to one day. Her subject was typical, "We need to surround ourselves with positive people, ask for the sale, and do things to make every day count." On the subject of getting rid of the negative in your life, I really wanted to talk to the speaker afterwards, to clarify a few

issues. But I got caught up doing more important things such as networking with peers.

My question to her would have been: "Yes it's nice to be around positive people but it's also equally important to understand differences with people that you might not agree with or who have a negative attitude." Life is a balance for me. I enjoy the good and learn from the bad, so as not to just throw away things that we don't agree with. Thus, I did garner a positive nugget from her subject that made me smile.

She also said that there are things that you can do to make you look smarter. One was to walk fast. Nobody thinks highly of the droopy shouldered and slow ambling walkers but if somebody is in a hurry with their head up and walking at a clip with a valued destination, they portray a positive image. Even if you don't know where you are going, walk or run to a destination and you never know who might follow along. I often find myself running to load a customer's truck. People ask me why I do that. My typical response is that it's my free health club. But more importantly, I am trying to convey that you are important to me as a customer and your time is valuable. I am not going to waste your time.

### LEMONADE

While networking at the conference I was talking to a TPI board member, Ed Keeven, from Missouri. He told a story about his farm being under water during 2 of the last 7 years. He is an established



Dean of UW-Madison CALS accepts the first donation to the newly formed Wisconsin Turfgrass Legacy Fund from Edna Huggett. Also pictured are WTA ambassador Monroe Miller, and WTA president Paul Huggett with wife Shelley Schueller.

grower that was able to survive these disasters. But he mentioned there are about 5 years after the disaster that you have this boat anchor you slowly drag around before you get back up to speed. He must like boating not only for the metaphors, but also to "Make Lemonade from Lemons". While he was waiting for the water to recede he took a boat out on his flooded farm and carried a cup cutter. He cut out samples of several different species that they grow on his farm. Reaching over the side of the boat he cut samples from 2 to 5 feet under the surface of the water. He set those cores out on dry ground trying to figure out the survival rate of different species. The only specie that I remember him mentioning was bluegrass, and that it survived up to 24 days. Talk about fortitude and positive attitude.

### FALL

As the fall rush approaches, I hope you are able to take time to enjoy the offerings of the seasons as they change. Congratulations to Edna Huggett for being the first contributor to the Wisconsin Turfgrass Legacy Fund. Please consider donating to this endowment for lifetime funding of turfgrass research and education: The mission of the WTA. ■

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Year behind board member name, is the expiration of their current term.  
January is the month the term is up.

# The New Face in the Insect Diagnostic Lab

By Dr. Chris Williamson, Department of Entomology, University of Wisconsin-Madison

After 36 years of outstanding service as the Manager of the Insect Diagnostic Lab in the Department of Entomology at the UW-Madison, Phil Pellitteri retired this past February. After an extensive search, Phil's successor was found and we couldn't be happier. PJ Liesch became the new Manager of the Insect Diagnostic Lab on August 1, 2014. PJ grew up in Franksville, WI in Racine County and he holds a B.S. Degree in Biological Sciences from UW-Parkside, and a Masters Degree in Entomology from UW-Madison. Besides managing the lab, PJ is also involved with the Wisconsin Master Gardener Program and the First Detector Network. In addition, he is an instructor in the Wisconsin Pesticide Applicator Training Program and UW Farm and Industry Short Course programs.

The Insect Diagnostic Lab, that he now manages, was established in 1978 to identify insects and insect damaged plant material from around the state. Primary service is to the county extension offices and commercial concerns. The lab processes between 1,500-2,300 samples per year. Homeowners are encouraged to check with the local extension office for help first because many samples can be handled in a more efficient manner locally. Samples may be mailed in, sent by email (with pictures if possible), or walked in. At the present time there is no charge for the service.

In addition to the insect diagnostic services that PJ provides, he also writes a blog named "What's Crawling in the Lab?" This blog features short stories, pictures, and highlights from the UW-Madison Insect Diagnostic Lab. Topics range from the insects

most commonly diagnosed in the lab to emerging insect pests and even some unique and bizarre creatures that are submitted to the lab. The blog can be accessed via the Insect Diagnostic Lab's website at <http://labs.russell.wisc.edu/insectlab/>

PJ also regularly speaks at a number of workshops, field days, expos and other events. Visit PJ's webpage to see where he will be speaking next, or to see if he might be available to speak at your event. ■



PJ Liesch sharing his knowledge on managing insect pests in ornamental trees and shrubs at WTA summer Field Day 2014

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# The Key to Outreach...and Sales

By Dr. Paul Koch, Department of Plant Pathology, University of Wisconsin-Madison

How do you stay up-to-date with the latest and greatest product or technique in the world of turf? Do you rely solely on your intuition and research? Do you contact local colleagues? Call up your trusted salesman? Maybe even get a hold of the eggheads at the university? The world of turfgrass management is always on the move, and keeping up with the latest and greatest product or technique can be difficult. A recent article in *Plant Disease* interviewed growers about how they got their information, why they got it from those sources, and how they used that information in their operations (Sherman and Gent, 2014). Even though the article focuses on hop and mint farmers in the Pacific Northwest, much of it applies to turf.

The farmers interviewed in the article were split on where they got their information and how much they trusted it. Most farmers got at least some information from crop consultants, and many felt that it was highly trustworthy. However, others recognized a potential problem, with one stating, "You have the guys selling you the chemicals, telling you about the new chemicals. They do a very, very good job, and I value their opinion highly. It's just that that conflict is always there." The conflict he speaks of is the fact that no matter the information provided, they still are looking to sell you something, which may bias the information they provide. You might think we don't have crop consultants in turf, but I would argue that your soft goods sales representatives act in a very similar manner to crop consultants (who are often selling goods along with their services) in the agriculture market.

Many farmers also got a portion of their information from university specialists (i.e. university extension agents), with mixed reviews on how valuable the information was to them. Farmers interviewed stated that the local university hop specialist, "is out in the fields on a regular basis... so he knows what's going on. He is able to communicate really well with all growers." However another farmer stated, "I have worked with a researcher from one of the state institutions that is very, very good with beneficial insects, but does not have any type of appreciation for the real world at all." Whether it's hop farming in the Pacific Northwest or turfgrass in the Midwest,

university specialists are more effective when they can relate to growers. Those specialists that fail to get out and understand the problems turf managers are facing will not be able to provide them with reliable information to help them address those problems.

So what is the connection between effective sales representatives and university specialists in their ability to connect and provide information the growers will accept? In my mind, and this is clearly supported in the *Plant Disease* article, it is trust. If you trust your sales representative to provide you unbiased information about your problems and not just try and sell you something, you will be more apt to heed his or her advice. The same can be said of the university specialist - if that person understands your problems and is out in the field and on the phone with growers, you are more likely to trust his or her judgment and accept the information he or she provides.

Fortunately in Wisconsin we are blessed with excellent sales representatives who understand that providing trustworthy information may not always lead to a sale at the time, but it can lead to acceptance and increased sales later. Though biased, I also feel we have a turf team here at the University of Wisconsin that by and large appreciates the problems turf managers face, whether it be by some combination of getting out in the field, talking on the phone, or responding to emails. This is the primary reason I continuously ask for your candid feedback, your ideas, and your needs. This information provides us with critical knowledge about the issues confronting managers in the field, and allows us to develop research and extension efforts that address those ideas and needs. If you have any feedback or ideas, I encourage you to always contact me at 608-262-6531 or plkoch@wisc.edu and let me know what's on your mind.

## References:


Sherman, J., Gent, D. H. 2014. Concepts of sustainability, motivations for pest management approaches, and implications for communicating change. *Plant Disease* 98(8): 1024 – 1035. ■



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# Variation in Traffic and Wear Tolerance among Kentucky Bluegrass Varieties

By Dr. Doug Soldat, Department of Soil Science, University of Wisconsin-Madison

If you attended Field Day this summer, you had the opportunity to observe the results of Wisconsin's National Turfgrass Evaluation Program (NTEP) trial for Kentucky bluegrass. This massive study contains 164 different varieties of Kentucky bluegrass which are maintained at 2.25 inches, irrigated regularly, and fertilized twice per year each time with 1 lb of nitrogen per thousand square feet. In addition, each of the 164 entries are tested under trafficked and non-trafficked conditions. The UW trafficker (shown below) is a tow-behind unit of two axels loaded with wheels on top of which sits 1000 pounds. The trafficked plots get bulldozed six times a week with this beast, creating a substantial amount of wear and compaction stress. Because traffic and compaction is a constant battle for sports turf managers, the results of this trial should help out a great deal when it comes to choosing a grass for an area where soil compaction and wear stress is a challenge.



About 90% of the entries in the trial are experimental and are not commercially available, while the other 10% can usually be found for purchase. However, the best performing experimental grasses in this trial have a good chance of being selected for commercial release and may become available in the near future. To keep things simple, I've only presented the results from the commercially available grasses in the trial. The table shows two numbers next to the name of each variety. The first is the relative traffic rating – a positive number indicates the grass responded favorably to traffic and compaction while a negative number indicates the opposite. The second number is the overall average quality of the grass (trafficked and non-trafficked). For example, America had an average turfgrass quality of 3.9 (which includes the trafficked and non-trafficked plots) and a + 1.0 change in quality with traffic. That means that the trafficked America had an average quality of 4.3, and only a 3.3 when non-trafficked. This tells me that America is a decent selection for an area under consistent compaction and wear, while being a relatively poor choice for a non-trafficked, low maintenance area. Conversely, Award has an average quality of 4.4, but has -0.6 in column 1 (or 4.7 quality score without traffic and 4.1 with traffic). This tells me that Award is a good choice for a low maintenance area with low traffic, but a mediocre choice for a frequently used field. Rush, Thermal Blue, and Barduke appear to do equally well in both trafficked and non-trafficked situations because all have average quality of 4.0 to 4.2 with changes of less than 0.1 units

under traffic. The top performing variety under traffic was Blue Note (5.0), while the top performer under no traffic was Award (4.7). I hope this hasn't been too confusing, and I encourage you to attend Field Day next year and have a look for yourself. Nothing beats seeing the results with your own eyes! In the meantime, feel free to contact me with any questions or set up a time to visit the plots. ■

Bluegrass Variety	Change in Turfgrass Quality when Traffic Applied	Average Turfgrass Quality (1-9, 9=best)
America	+1.0 A-G*	3.9 H-S
Arrowhead	+0.8 A-I	4.0 G-Q
Midnight	+0.6 A-J	4.3 C-L
Blue Note	+0.4 A-K	4.8 A-D
Rush	+0.1 B-L	4.4 B-K
Thermal Blue	0.0 B-L	4.2 C-M
Barduke	-0.1 B-L	4.2 C-M
Nu Chicago	-0.1 B-L	4.0 G-Q
Skye	-0.1 B-L	4.2 C-M
Avid	-0.3 D-L	4.0 G-Q
Sudden Impact	-0.3 D-L	3.3 Q-V
Cabernet	-0.3 D-L	4.2 C-M
Award	-0.6 F-L	4.4 B-K
Shamrock	-0.7 G-L	4.1 F-P
Kenblue	-0.7 G-L	3.8 I-S
Blackjack	-0.8 G-L	3.7 K-U
Empire	-0.9 G-L	3.4 P-V
Baron	-1.0 H-L	3.9 H-S

\* Column means followed by similar letters are not statistically different

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# WTA Fall Golf Outing

By Bruce Schweiger, Manager TDL, University of Wisconsin-Madison

As we all know the WTA Fall Golf Outing is fast approaching on October 7th at University Ridge. Two years ago Jerry Kershasky was in charge of the gas and re-grass project. Since his departure Phil Davidson has continued the improvements of the course. This will be a great opportunity to see the results of all their hard work and what you can expect after a project of this type. I have been very fortunate to have seen the course for the last 20 or so years. The course design is fantastic but air movement on the back nine in the trees was anything but acceptable. Over the years, heavy play has decreased options for some cultural practices, and the greens had become very *Poa annua* infested (Figure 1). Jerry Kershasky took over the Superintendent position August of 2012 and was thrust into the gas and re-grass project at University Ridge.



Figure 1: *Poa annua* infestation on #1 green. This photograph was taken the spring of 2011.

Jerry made some quick assessments of the conditions of the greens and began the process of trying to remedy some of his concern for the future success of the project. A few of the problems that were identified were the lack of air movement on the back nine, drainage issue due to many sand dams, low spots in greens, and soil profile issues with two different sand types in the root zone.

In preparation for the gassing project the crew removed as many sand dams as possible to improve surface drainage. The greens were re-measured to try to return them to the original size and shape. There was not sufficient budget to remove all the mix on the newly reclaimed putting surface area so Jerry began a very aggressive aerification process. The aerification was a combination of Dry Ject and conventional aerification. I would like to tell you how many times these re-grassed areas have been aerified but I am afraid to ask.

As you can see from the picture the results are amazing. As with all re-grassing projects it is never gas, seed, and all the problems go away. Sure there have been a few issues but the combination of Phil and Jerry's work has made these minimal. The one thing I can attest to is that when an issue does arise both of these men meet them head on and solve those issues before they become a real problem.

When most people play University Ridge for the first time after the project, the tree removal is the most talked about aspect. I had taken a few pictures of the before and after views from the course but I think you need to see these views live and in person. This is just another reason to make your plans to come play in the WTA Golf Outing on October 7th. For those of you that might be considering a project like this at your facility, I would encourage you to come see the result in person and bring along three members. There is no better way to introduce a project like this then to see it in person.

There will be all the key people from University Ridge there that day for you and your members to ask all kinds of questions. Even if this may be a pipe dream for some of you, I still encourage you to come enjoy the day and am sure you will pick up a few good ideas about what you might be able to do in small doses to help improve the property that you manage.

Lastly remember Tom Schwab does a great job of organizing this event and everyone leaves with a prize. On that note we are always looking for door prize donations.

See you on October 7th for a great day of fun and education! ■



Picture of the #1 green taken this summer

# Perfect Field Day / Perfect Summer

By Tom Schwab, O.J. Noer Turfgrass Research and Education Facility, University of Wisconsin-Madison

This has to be the most perfect summer for growing grass with moderate temperatures, adequate soil moisture, and low disease pressure for most areas of Wisconsin. The grass has stayed green all summer and golfers have been happy. It was also a great summer for the annual WTA Summer Field Day. Large crowds descended on the OJ Noer Facility for the big educational event put on by the UW-Madison turf professors, students, and staff on July 29th. There were 221 attendees, 35 more than last year, and 59 vendor representatives working 28 booths at this year's show.

It's hard to know why so many more showed up this year but I'm guessing attendees heard about the great education being offered and realized they couldn't afford to miss the event. They were not disappointed. Education came in the form of six general presentations in the morning followed by a trade show. Six golf turf presentations and a sports turf meeting were featured in the afternoon.

In the morning general turf presentations, Dr. Doug Soldat presented information on how to select grass seed to get the best results for given expectations. He said you get what you pay for when buying from reputable seed dealers. But he warned that when buying seed on the internet, you may get terrible seed that is very expensive. He also talked about how to read a seed label, and how to choose the best variety for different uses.

Another presentation was by the newly hired UW Extension entomologist PJ Liesch. PJ talked about tree and shrub ornamental applications. Many attendees commented that it was nice to have education beyond turfgrass, because they all deal with more than turf in their daily activities.

Turf Diagnostic Lab manager Bruce Schweiger gave a great presentation on fertilizer spreader and speed calibrations. In addition to putting down the correct amount of nutrition, he talked about the economics of what misapplications cost. He also talked about several common mistakes applicators make that can be bad for the turfgrass and environment. One lawn care attendee mentioned that he will have his employees recalibrate their ride-on units more often because of what they learned from Bruce.

Factors affecting weed control was another important subject that attendees enjoyed. Scott Gilbertson from Reinders and Jeff Schmidt from PBI Gordon presented good information about weed life cycle, application timing, product formulation, environmental factors, and application equipment that all affect weed control results.

Great information was also shared by Dr. Paul Koch and Dr. Chris Williamson on rust management for homelawns and Japanese beetle life cycle and control. All the morning sessions were top notch and that led up to another form of education with the ever popular trade show.

*Continued on page 8*



Field Day from the clouds

This year, representatives from 28 companies helped attendees with commercial questions. Exhibitors had information on seed, chemicals, equipment, nutrition, putting green materials, irrigation supplies, and more. Please note the list of the Field Day Exhibitors, listed on right, and show them your support for helping bring Summer Field Day and all its education to you every year.

Following lunch and the trade show came the afternoon golf turf research tour at Noer and an offsite meeting for sports turf managers which was held at Oregon High School. The golf turf tour included education on:

- Winter Damage and Recovery in Chicagoland. Presented by Dr. Ed Nangle from the Chicago District Golf Association
- Reduced Risk Management of Dollar Spot. Presented by Dr. Paul Koch
- Water Volume and Nozzle Impact on Dollar Spot Development. Presented by Mr. Bruce Schweiger
- Dollar Spot Research Roundup. Presented by Dr. Paul Koch
- Potassium Requirements of Putting Greens. Presented by Dr. Doug Soldat
- Cooling Turf with Fans and Irrigation. Presented by Dr. Doug Soldat

Both the morning and afternoon education made it worth every penny to attend Field Day. Everyone we heard from said it was one of the best ever. All attendees left Field Day with numerous ideas to put into practice back on their own landscapes. I hope you were able to attend. And I hope this perfect weather continues through the fall. ■



Ed Nangle from Chicago Area Golf District talks about damage and recovery from a harsh winter



Phil Pellitteri, retired state Extension entomologist, was presented the Wisconsin Green Industry Federation Distinguished Service Award by WGIF executive director Brian Swingle

## 2014 WTA Summer Field Day Exhibitors

Agrium Advanced Technologies

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Bayer

Burris Equipment

Contree Sprayer & Equipment

Deer Creek Seed

DHD Turf & Tree Products

Dow AgroSciences

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GreenJacket

Heritage Seed

Horst Distributing

J W Turf

John Deere Landscapes

Pendelton Turf Supply

ProGro Solutions

ProTurf Solutions

Purple Cow Organics

Reinders

Soil Solutions

Spectrum Technologies

Spring Valley

Syngenta

The Andersons

Waupaca Sand & Solutions

More photos from WTA Summer Field Day on page 9





The trade show was lively with good information flowing from helpful exhibitors



Jeff Schmidt from PBI Gordon and Scott Gilbertson from Reinders talk about factors affecting weed control

*More photos on page 10*



Bucky is always present for WTA Field Day

Dr. Doug Soldat talking about managing soil and canopy temperatures for healthy turf



Bruce Schweiger giving a clinic on how to get more accurate spreader applications



Continued on page 11



Representatives from Soil Solutions demonstrate their air injection machine to alleviate soil compaction

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# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## 2014

Oct 4	WGCSA Couples Outing/Party .....	Wild Rock GC, WI Dells
Oct 7	<b>WTA Golf Fundraiser .....</b>	<b>University Ridge GC, Verona</b>
Oct 22-24	Green Industry and Equipment EXPO .....	Louisville, KY
Dec 3,4	Wisconsin Golf Turf Symposium.....	American Club, Kohler

## 2015

Jan 6	<b>WTA Turfgrass Research Day.....</b>	<b>Pyle Center, UW-Madison</b>
Jan 13-16	STMA Annual Conference and Exhibition .....	Denver, CO
Jan 14-16	Northern Green Expo.....	Minneapolis Convention Center, MN
Feb 13-15	WPT Garden Expo.....	Alliant Center, Madison
Feb 16-19	TPI International Education Conference and Field Day.....	San Diego, CA
Feb 21-26	GCSAA Educational Conference and Golf Industry Show.....	San Antonio, TX
Feb 25-27	iLandscape; the Illinois + Wisconsin Landscape Show .....	Schaumburg, IL
Mar 4	GCSAA Education I Conference.....	Comfort Suites, Green Bay
Mar 11,12	Reinders 22nd Green Industry Conference .....	Waukesha Expo Center, Waukesha

**WTA Members -- If you have an important date you'd like to share with other members, Call 608-845-6895 or email [tgschwab@wisc.edu](mailto:tgschwab@wisc.edu) to include it in the next calendar.**

### Contact Telephone Numbers

Green	Green Industry and Equipment EXPO .....	<a href="http://www.landcarenetwork.org">www.landcarenetwork.org</a>
NGLGCSA	Northern Great Lakes Golf Course Superintendents Assoc. ....	<a href="http://www.nglturf.org">www.nglturf.org</a>
STMA	Sports Turf Managers association Conference .....	800-323-3875
TPI	Turf Producers International .....	800-405-8873
Wee One	Wee One Foundation Golf Outing .....	630-457-7276
WGCSA	Wisconsin Golf Course Superintendents Association .....	920-643-4888
WGIF	Wisconsin Green Industry Federation .....	414-529-4705
WSPA	Wisconsin Sod Producers Association .....	262-895-6820
<b>WTA</b>	<b>Wisconsin Turfgrass Association.....</b>	<b>608-845-6536</b>