



PURDY FAMILY

It was a 'Purdy' good experiment...

OVIEDO — Dew may not be dew, but doing the work to find out why turned out to be worthwhile for the 12-year-old son and namesake of Duda Sod's general manager of North Florida sod farms and foliage.

Lloyd — “everybody calls me ‘D’” — Purdy III, a sixth-grader at Oviedo's Jackson Heights Elementary School, won first place in botany for his grade level at the Seminole County Science Fair with a project based on the article in the Fall 1988 issue of *The Florida Green*, “Dew is Not Dew” by Tom Mascaro.

“When my dad brought the article home, I thought it was kind of interesting,” said “D.” “I mean, I

Lloyd “D” Purdy accepts the first-place trophy for sixth-grade botany projects in the Seminole County Science Fair. Purdy's project was based on an article in The Florida Green.

wondered what the stuff was if it wasn't dew. So I just sort of duplicated the experiments in Mr. Mascaro's article.

“And they came out just like he said they would.”

“This is about the fourth year he's done Science Fair projects — all the kids have to do them every year — but this is the first time he really got interested,” said the elder Purdy. “I think it's because the results weren't predictable and he was able to teach others something they didn't already know.”

The project was based on three liquids — dew collected off the windshield of the family car, tap water and exudate gathered quite laboriously from the grounds at Tusawilla GC in nearby Winter Springs.

“That's the only part that wasn't always fun,” said the youngster. “Some of those mornings, it got

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'One of the neat things is that he kept working with the experiment right up through the time he took it to the state Science fair' **-Sixth-grade science teacher**

pretty cold."

"D" proved that exudate, the liquid found on turfgrass in the morning that most people call "dew," differs significantly from real "dew," condensate formed by the overnight contact between moist air and cold objects. Among other things, he showed that exudate grows mold much faster than either of the other liquids.

"One of the neat things is that he kept working with the experiment, right up through the time he took it to the state Science Fair in West Palm Beach," said Catherine Elder, Purdy's sixth-grade science teacher. The soft-spoken youngster, who

plays trumpet in the school band, takes piano lessons and is on the soccer team, also wrote to Mascaro, thanking him for providing the foundation for the prize-winning project.

Purdy did not win any major prizes at the state level, but he was competing in the middle school category with seventh and eighth graders.

"He used excellent scientific method," said Donna Poniatowski, a science teacher at Oviedo High School and Seminole County's Science Fair coordinator. She ac-



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"D" won a portfolio from the University of Florida at the state-level Science Fair in West Palm Beach.

companied Purdy to the state contest. "It was an excellent project but there were 400 other entries at his level and two-thirds of them were older than he."



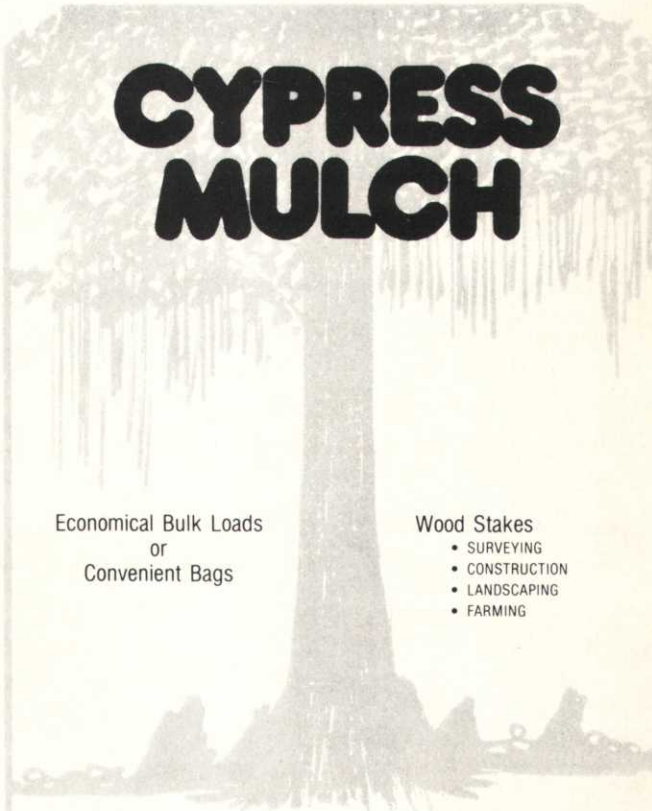
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The youngster did get a portfolio from the University of Florida for developing a significant project in agriculture.

Is there a budding turf scientist in the Purdy family?

"I fully expect to have Dr. Purdy come back and visit me some day," said Elder, his sixth-grade teacher. "But frankly, I don't think he'll be in agriculture."

"No, I think I want to be an engineer and maybe work in space," said Purdy.

"But I am thinking about continuing the exudate experiment for next year's Science Fair. Or I might do some work with photosynthesis."

Rain Bird founder loses cancer battle

GLENDORA, Calif. — Mary Elizabeth LaFetra, former president of Rain Bird

Sprinkler Corp., died of cancer March 27 at age 79.

She founded the company with her husband Clement, who died in 1963, and served as its president from 1951 to 1976. LaFetra's son Anthony became president in 1977, the year she retired as chairman of the board

Well known for her numerous philanthropic activities, LaFetra served on the board of directors for many local and national organizations. She was elected president of the LaVerne College board of trustees in 1971, a position she retained until



Mary E LaFetra

1982.

Following her retirement, she fulfilled a lifelong wish to complete her own college education and in 1982, at the age of 73, she

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