

OTF donates \$197,000, elects directors

COLUMBUS, Ohio — The Ohio Turfgrass Foundation (OTF) has donated \$197,000 to turfgrass research and education, and elected three trustees to its board of directors.

The \$197,000 went to OTF's 10-member Technical Advisory Committee of researchers from Ohio State University and \$20,000 for scholarships presented to students of Ohio's turfgrass programs.

Glen Pottenger, elected to his first term on the board, is a certified golf course superintendent at Sugar Valley Country Club in Bellbrook. A 1974 graduate of Agricultural Technical Institute (ATI), Pottenger has been a superintendent for 28 years.

Re-elected to the board of directors were Hank Chafin and Dr. Chuck Darrah. Hank Chafin has been a board member since

1986, and is its past president. He has been golf course superintendent at Community Golf Course, Madden Golf Course and Kittyhawk Golf Course in Dayton.

Darrah has been actively involved in the turfgrass industry since 1969. While an assistant professor of agronomy and Extension turf specialist at the University of Maryland, he served as executive secretary for the Maryland Turfgrass Association. He owns CLC LABS, which specializes in providing laboratory and consulting services to the green industry.

PVC pooch

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them to Sump. One of the items Buddy would frequently carry back was an extra 4-inch, green drainage cap that fit over a drain tile. The cap quickly became one of his favorite toys.

Following a particularly heavy rain last June, parts of the Hidden River course flooded when the drainage caps scattered around the course clogged with debris and clippings. Sump removed his shoes, rolled up his pant legs and started poking around through the water and clippings trying to find the caps. Meanwhile, Buddy splashed in the dark green liquid.

"For some reason I said 'Bud find your *drain*,' the name we'd given his cap toy," Sump said. "All of a sudden he starts looking around, paws under the water and pops out one of the drain caps."

"I thought maybe it was a fluke, that he'd just happened to step on it. So we went to another area and I said 'Hey Bud, go find a drain.' He starts sniffing around and sniffing around, paws under the water again, lifts out another drain cap and the water starts draining down the hole. He must have found 10 caps that day."

Sump knew there were other caps he'd been unable to find that had grown over with grass. "I'd take him out in dry conditions and say 'Find a cap.' He'd begin sniffing and then go from cap to cap to cap, pulling them out, something it would have taken me hours to do. On other courses, I'd sent guys out for hours at a time with a pitch fork and shovel looking for those things. Now I have a dog that can go out and find them."

To keep his PVC senses honed, Sump occasionally sends Buddy off in search of a cap, whether he needs to find one or not.

"Last week [late February] we got 15 inches of snow," Sump said. "I went out on my snowshoes and I started wondering if Buddy could find a cap through the snow. Sure enough, in 30 seconds he had his head down in a snow bank and out pops a drainage cap... If he sees one sometimes he'll go and pop it out on his own. That's the only down side. He'll bring it to you and sit there, waiting for his treat."

Last fall while blowing out his irrigation lines, Buddy helped find numerous lost quick couplers, locating the brass sprinkler heads by the scent of their small, PVC tops.

"Basically we trained Buddy by just playing with him when he was a puppy here in the shop," Sump said. "He'd be bored, I'd hide his drainage cap somewhere here in the shop and give him his treat when he located it and brought it back to me."

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