



Bill Brown, CGCS, is CEO of Turf Republic and founder of iTurf Apps. Bill has spent 20 years on golf courses, including the last 5 years at Hartefeld National Golf Club. He's served as an officer and board of director for the Philadelphia Association of Golf Course Superintendents, as well as served on national committees. Contact him at billbrown@turfpublic.com.

WOMEN IN TURF

Andrea Li looks to inspire the industry's next generation of female superintendents.

In 1971 the first email was sent and nearly 22 years later the first instant message over AOL was delivered by Ted Leonsis to his wife. "“Don't be scared ... it is me. Love you and miss you.” These technologies opened a new way to communicate and network, and we could now exchange information with a simple click of the “send” button.

In 2006, Jack Dorsey sent the first tweet “Just setting up my twttr.” and a new revolution was born through social media. It has changed political and consumer marketing landscapes. News delivery is no longer dependent upon major broadcasting networks. Education and networking opportunities are now in your pockets.

Over the last several years social media has brought the turf industry closer, allowing us to communicate faster and grow our professional network all over the world. It has brought the industry closer in times of difficult challenges. Who could forget #whosgotmyhose? The pressure to consistently perform at the highest level demands long hours away from families and personal time. Not only have those managing the turf turned to social media for camaraderie, but the spouses of many of these individuals have, too.

This past fall Andrea Li, assistant golf course superintendent at Connaught Golf Club in Alberta, Canada turned to social media after attending the Green Start Academy, sponsored by Bayer and John Deere. Upon her return, feeling rejuvenated and inspired, Andrea began with a simple Twitter handle, @womeninturf. The community has grown to a Facebook page and

has joined the Turf Republic community. Andrea's goal is to bring together the women of the turf industry. Those with tenure and wisdom gained from their experiences and those who may just be considering the turfgrass industry. Not only women with boots on the turf, but educators and industry.

I first met Andrea a year ago as she



Assistant superintendent Andrea Li began a movement with a simple Twitter handle, @womeninturf.

was one of the first to communicate on the Turf Republic platform. I'm excited to see her group grow and the doors it will open for so many. But to really do this story justice, I'll let Andrea share with you her passion for this endeavor in her own words.

“Over the years I have attended conferences and schools, and the one thing I noticed it lacked were females. I have only met a handful of talented women in my industry and I feel like I fail at connecting with more. I created Women in Turf to provide a community for women to get connected and talk turf. This has opened up a whole different dimension of connection, not only do I get to meet new female turf managers, but finally finding a way to motivate and encourage personal and professional development with these ladies in hopes to inspire more women to grow in the turf industry is such an awesome idea! A few goals that

I would love to see with this group are to eventually have leadership sessions available geared towards the Women in Turf at conferences, at schools and host leadership development workshops. Empowering Women to become future Superintendents is going to be a challenge as there aren't many, but in time I hope to see the numbers change. I also want to

take this group to a new level of networking because social media opens up more channels and chances to network which I hope to eventually effectively impact the turf industry by promoting more women in the turf industry. There are many women who are a part of turfgrass management, from management of sports fields to soil scientist, we are all interconnected through turfgrass. Women in Turf is a community to interact with women worldwide and share

each other's passion.

“I created a Facebook page – Women in Turf and a Twitter account @WomeninTurf to create conversations. It's really simple, all you need to get connected is your own Twitter or Facebook account, hit LIKE and chime in conversation when you want to share. It's a great way to get interactive on these social media sites. I enjoy doing it. I hope to connect with you there and in the future in person. Many people still prefer face-to-face interaction, but with these social media sites we can connect with others globally instantly. The awesome part of that is I can talk to a female superintendent in the UK and at the same time one in South Africa: Both turf managers but one for a golf course and the other for a cricket pitch.

Women in Turf is Dedicated to INSPIRE Women to pursue their dreams in the turf world.” GCI