



*Editor's Note: I received this great letter from Jim Latham. I could not possible summarize and share the news he tells. So I am opening my mail to you, simply because so many wonder how Jim and Lois are doing. This guy wrote great articles for THE GRASS ROOTS for years, and he writes a great letter, too! Drop them a line, won't you?*

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Dear Munro,

The other day Lois and I were recycling some CD disks in our Yankee pickup (Chevy Blazer) and a couple of new things replaced those enclosed. Since we don't play the indoor equipment very much, we thought you might get more use out of them than we would, especially after reading your piece on Scotland in THE GRASS ROOTS. Hopefully, any remembrance purchases you have made do not include these productions.

Well, it got summer up there! It was cooler here but it was just as uncomfortable, since the Gulf supplied us with enough humidity and lack of air movement to really steam things up. But that's normal and no one complained too much. We finally got summer down here a few days ago. Yesterday we took our ailing computer to the hospital in Waco where it was 104, but the 20 mph wind helped. By the time we got home at 6:30 p.m., it had cooled down to 101. Nighttimes are about 80. Like winter in Wisconsin, we try to stay inside as much as possible.

Now I know why there are so many Baptists in this part of the world. The experts on heat stress tell us to use plenty of salt on food and take in a lot of fluids. BUT the fluids should not contain caffeine or alcohol (even beer) because they are diuretic and the water loss is from the wrong place. Drinking plain water gets boring.

Lawn mowing becomes a real chore when it's hot and I'm doubly glad that our small house is on a small lot. I just wish that I had gone ahead with my original plan to plant buffalograss. Zoysia is NOT a low labor-input grass, using a rotary mower. I'm STILL pushing my self-propelled rig through all 3 of the Engelke experimentals, even those our G.C. Superintendent brought a 3-plex verticut over a couple of weeks ago. Had to empty the baskets after about 40 feet of run. Couldn't tell anything had been done. Maybe the growth is due to the 40 - 50 lbs. of Milorganite I applied at planting last September. Not even Noer would claim that kind of residual. Anyhow, we have joined the elite by becoming a 2-car, 2-mower family by investing a bundle on a used reel type, and then put down \$30 for a pint of Image to get rid of the nutgrass that grows an inch a day.

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Almost forgot to tell you that I took my first shot at a snake yesterday. Missed. It was looking out from under the concrete pad for our A/C unit and I aimed a bit too wide. What kind of snake? A Snake snake. That was enough for Ms. L.

I'm enjoying the travel with the USGA Research Committee to monitor the projects being funded in this round of grants. Some of these things are deeeeeep. A whole lot more hi-tech than I could imagine. This basic research will set the foundation for a lot more practical stuff in the future.

A special subcommittee on mixes for and management of greens met one day last week at the DFW airport to go over 38 preproposals for new research on grow-in and post grow-in problems. I'm glad to say that one from the UW-Madison was accepted and Dr. K. will be asked to submit a full proposal for consideration by the entire committee in November. The major problem with Wayne's project was an estimate of cost. We OK up to \$20,000 per year for up to 5 years, so he needs additional support from OJN, WGCSA, and others to do the whole thing, but some items can be pruned and finessed and some items must be changed in the final form.

All 10 of us liked it so the important phase has been passed. Twenty were dismissed during the day-long evaluation process. This new round of research will (hopefully) answer questions on particle shapes, calcium content in sands, organic and inorganic amendments, microbiological (good and bad) activity, what happens during grow-in and afterward, and how to avoid some of the problems associated with the push to open greens too soon. Wouldn't it be nice to tell people that planting in September and playing in May was a dumb deal AND be able to prove it?

I had hoped to be able to make the UW-Madison Field Day, but the date conflicts with monitoring visits to A&M and Miss. State. I'm sure you and a few henchmen can keep Rossi, et al in line, though.

I guess I'll shut this down and watch it rain. That bodes for a real steamer today, so I can get back to the Green Section history project.

Please give our regards to the troops.

Sincerely,

Jim & Lois