



Green is the Color

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

The theme of this year's Turfgrass and Greenscape EXPO, "Going Green", was just what the industry wanted to hear. Going green is a very popular catch phrase these days, but it's a philosophy that the green industry has always believed in. Attendance increased by nearly 70 people this year, reflecting how much interest there is in the philosophy. There were 271 attendees that walked through the doors as compared to only 202 last year, and that doesn't include the 91 commercial members representing 34 companies in the trade show. They all came to hear the wonderful roster of speakers booked for this year's show.

There were three tracks of education provided which offered education for everyone in the turfgrass management profession. The three tracks were golf turf, sports and grounds turf, and landscape turf. Many attendees roamed between the different tracks to hear talks that most interested them. For instance, there were many golf turf managers in the landscape section when Dr. Fred Whitford from the University of Illinois gave his presentation "The Five Minute Drill to Handling a Pesticide Spill", and several lawn care providers were in the sports turf section when Dr. Chris Williamson gave his talk on strategies for white grub control.

The general session was likewise very interesting when Rick Fletcher from Cleary Chemical and Dr. Jennifer Grant from Cornell University presented. Rick shed vast insight into the efforts and costs it takes to develop new pesticides in today's regulatory environment. Jennifer presented her



Rick Fletcher from Cleary Chemical addressing the crowded general session.



Superintendents Jerry Kershasky and Brian Ferrie, with golf course architects Bob Lohmann and Dr. Mike Hurdzan discuss modern environmental golf course design.

research from the Bethpage Experiment of reducing pesticides for putting green management. Bethpage is a golf course in the New York State Parks System that investigated going pesticide free as one of the variables. Her data has helped the state parks reduce pesticide use while still maintaining acceptable quality. One especially interesting note from Dr. Grant's presentation came from a survey of golf course user's attitudes towards pesticide use: 35% wanted the best quality turf no



Dr. Fred Whitford from the University of Illinois gave a very lively, hands-on, and informative presentation about handling a pesticide spill.

2008 Wisconsin Turfgrass and Greenscape EXPO Research and Scholarship Recipients

Scholarship Donor	Recipient	Amount
David Mergatroyd Memorial Scholarship	Bill Kreuser	\$500
WTA Scholarship	Brendan Dolan	\$600
WTA Scholarship	Brad Williams	\$600
WTA Scholarship	Brad DeBels	\$600
WTA Scholarship	Patrick Bastron	\$600
WGCSA/ James R. Love Scholarship	Shane Griffith	\$1,500
Spring Valley Turf Products Scholarship	Kevin Schneider	\$600
Bayer Environmental Turf Scholarship	Bill Kreuser	\$1,000
National Seed/ Egon Herrmann Turf Scholarship	Brad DeBels	\$1,000

Research Donors	Recipient	Amount
Stevens Point CC	WTA	\$600
Bull's Eye CC	WTA	\$435
Westmoor CC	Distinguished Graduate Fellowship	\$2,400

matter what, 54% wanted reasonable quality with judicious use of pesticides, 4% wanted minimum pesticide use regardless of what happens to the turf, and 2% said no pesticides should be used. The majority in the survey said reasonable quality and pesticide use is best, which indicates most citizens are reasonable about pesticide use.


Dr. Bruce Branham from the University of Illinois gave a thought provoking presentation on environmentally sound nitrogen fertilization. His research showed when a lawn matures it doesn't need as much fertility, as long as clippings are being returned. He also presented a case for natural organic fertilizer being more sustainable than synthetic fertilizers because it takes less carbon to produce and usually doesn't have to be transported as far which additionally reduces carbon use.

Several roundtable discussions grabbed the interest of attendees. The sports turf section had three different turf specialists from school districts and universities discuss managing people. The golf turf section had two world renowned golf course architects, Mike Hurdzan and Bob Lohmann, and two golf course superintendents, Jerry Kershasky and Brian Ferrie, discuss complementing the environment in new construction and renovations of golf courses. A lawn care roundtable provided different perspectives of what a

healthy lawn means from the view of a traditional lawn care provider and two organic service providers.

Other interesting talks were given by Deb Hauser from the Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association, Raechal Volkening of the Milwaukee Brewers and Volkening Consulting, Karol Huenerberg from Mercy Health Systems, Dr. John Clark from the University of Massachusetts and so many more including the turf team from the UW-Madison of Drs. Stier, Williamson, Soldat, and Koch.

Complementing the interesting educational presentations was the informative table-top trade show. Thirty four companies filled the hall and were ready to inform attendees about every machine, service, or supply that could be used to manage turf in a green friendly way. The list of all the exhibitors and contact information is listed on page 44. Mentioned above are the names of the scholarship recipients that were given out during the general session. We hope all these students continue to find new and better ways to continue making environmental stewardship a priority for the green industry and turf management.

This year's EXPO presented so many ideas for attendees to enhance their environmental stewardship. The industry is very good with environmental action now, but the future looks even 'Greener'. 

NOTES FROM THE NOER FACILITY

