

Assistants Meet at O.J. Noer for Fall Round Up

By Brett Grams, WGCSA Chapter Manager

Engaged, professional, and inquisitive... That is how I would describe the attendees of this year's Inaugural Assistants Fall Round Up.

I am happy to report that the newly formed Class C Committee is working hard at trying to serve the Assistant Members of our association. The assistants met October 25th at the OJ Noer Research Center. The education portion of the meeting was presented by Dr. Jim Kerns. He gave a one hour presentation on the history of fungicides. This presentation was a good review of how the majority of fungicides in use today came into existence.

The advances of research and development of technology driven by WWII played a pivotal role of many of the products that we still use today. Dr. Kerns pointed out some pivotal points in the evolution of the fungicides we used including the creation of the first systemic fungicides introduced in the 1950's. He also explained that when golf began to be watched on television and especially color television in the 1960's the demand for disease free turf became even more intensified.

Today's fungicide offerings have evolved into safer and more effective products but the impact of cost per treatment is now more important than ever. The future of fungicides for golf turf will continue to evolve as the cost of meeting regulatory approval and getting a product from R and D to the market are substantial. As these costs continue to rise it will continue to impact how many products will be brought to market or even

remain available in the coming years.

After the presentation the group was able to tour the rest of the OJ Noer facility including the Turf Diagnostic Lab, the equipment storage area, the new pesticide storage and mixing building and the research plots. Dr. Kerns was kind enough to explain the various trials that are conducted on the multiple plots.

Research projects of all kinds are always being conducted at the facility. Plots range from USGA type constructed greens grown on sand based rootzones and maintained at greens height to native soil plots growing turf at rough height. Shade studies, wear tolerance, nutrient runoff, NTEP trials, private studies for companies, as well as research funded by the WGCSA are just some of things taking place at this time. As so many things are going on during the annual field day each July I liked having the time to see the facility at a much slower time of the year.

All of us who attended learned a little more about what goes on behind the scenes at the facility. Thanks to a dedicated staff and a highly qualified group of researchers and the strong backing of the turf industry in Wisconsin the OJ Noer Facility has become and will continue to be one of the leading turfgrass research facilities in the country if not the world.

Lunch was provided compliments of Nicholas Strain of Barenbrug who took time out of his busy schedule to cook brats on the grill for lunch. The casual atmosphere, good food, and great conversation were a great way to end the morning education. After lunch the majority of the attendees went next door to play 9 holes of golf at the University Ridge Golf Course. The golf event was coordinated by host Superintendent Aron Hogden. I was not able to play in the golf event but Class C Committee Co-Chair Kevin Knoblauch reported the course was in great condition and very nice to play.

Currently the Class C Committee is planning for the annual Assistants Meeting held on February 13th at Whispering Springs Golf Course in Fond du Lac. Please be on the lookout for more information as it develops.

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EDUCATIONAL SPEAKER:

DR. JIM KERNS

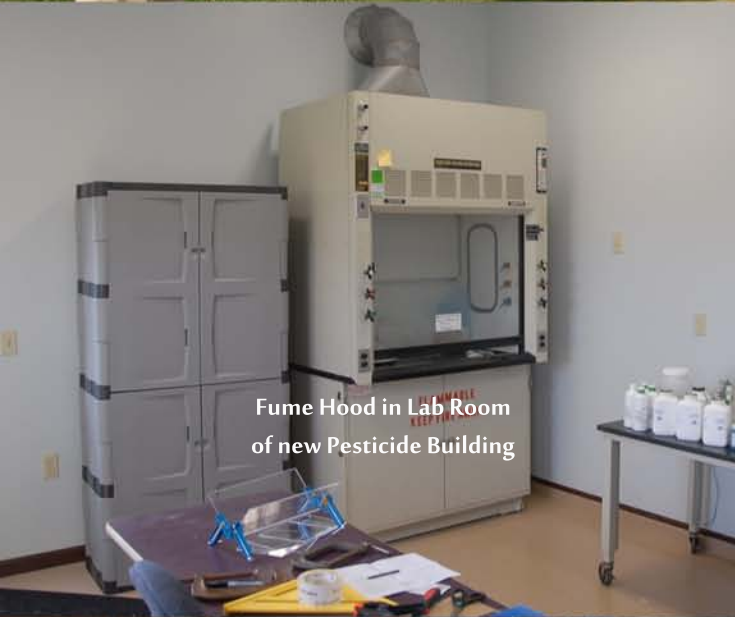
10/25/11 ASSISTANT FALL WRAP UP

TOPIC:

HISTORY OF FUNGICIDES



Dr. Kerns explaining some of the research being conducted at the OJ Noer Research Facility



Fume Hood in Lab Room of new Pesticide Building



Jake Schneider (L) is ready to eat lunch which was courtesy of Nick Strain (R).



Shop talk...



Interior of mixing bay in new Pesticide Building