

# Top 12 Reasons

to Attend the Reinders 21st Green Industry Conference

12. "Catch the Wave" and compete for the longest ride on the surfboard simulator.
11. Enjoy a delicious luau lunch included with your registration.
10. See all of the latest equipment and product innovations.
9. Enjoy the tropical "Hawaiian" atmosphere.
8. Free refreshments and door prize drawings each afternoon.
7. Earn GCSAA and STMA certification credits.
6. Visit with more than 80 leading suppliers and manufacturers.
5. Enter to win the show grand prize.
4. Hot homemade donuts each morning - a Reinders tradition.
3. Take advantage of show specials to save money.
2. Network with fellow green industry professionals from the Midwest.
1. Choose from more than 35 educational seminars to enhance your knowledge and skills.



## Catch the Wave

## Reinders

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## ABOUT THE COVER

WGCSA President  
Chad Harrington as drawn by  
Ryan Fisher

*"What good is the warmth of summer,  
without the cold of winter to give it  
sweetness."*

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summer.

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## THE GRASS ROOTS

is the bi-monthly publication of the Wisconsin Golf Course Superintendents Association. No part of the THE GRASS ROOTS may be used without the expressed written permission of the editor.

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Front Row: Chad Harrington, Colin Seaburg, Jim Van Herwynen, Jon Canavan. Back Row: Brett Grams, Jeff Millies, Jeff Barlow, Josh LePine, Jake Schneider, Scott Bushman, Kevin Knudtson. (Not pictured Steve Wasser.)

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## The Gavel Passes

By Chad Harrington, Golf Course Superintendent, Autumn Ridge Golf Course

It is hard for me to believe that the day has come for me to sit down and write my first "President's Message" for the Grass Roots. It seems like it was yesterday that David Brandenburg asked if I would volunteer as a Director of our association. What an honor and privilege it was to be asked to serve the WGCSA, even though I will admit I was nervous about it. The thought of serving on a board consisting of individuals that I have looked up to in our profession seemed a bit overwhelming, but the leadership and camaraderie of the board of directors made it a very welcoming experience.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all of you that have given me the opportunity to become 42nd President of the WGCSA. With the long tradition of leadership this association has possessed, the tracks have been laid for a successful future that I aim to continue. I would like to thank a few of our members that have had a significant impact on my time as a board member of

the association and have been able to propel the WGCSA through very difficult times. Past Mike Lyons, Dustin Riley, Brian Zimmerman, and Jeff Millies have served our association with exemplary leadership and vision. I can't thank you enough for your efforts and friendship. You have all made being a member of the WGCSA board very educational and enjoyable experience.


Executive Director Brett Grams has also been a key organizational force of the WGCSA over the past few years, and I would like to thank Brett for everything he has done for our association. Brett's work with our Industry Partner Program has given us the chance to host great events and educational opportunities and we look forward to a great time of networking at the GIS Hospitality room in San Diego. I would also like to welcome our newest board members Josh LePine, Kevin Knudson, and Jeff Barlow along with Vendor Liaison Steve Wasser. I look forward to working with all of you over the next two

years.

Turf research has always been part of the mission of the WGCSA. The induction of the PAR4Research Auction has given us the resource for funding many turf research projects in our state. This funding is only possible if the Auction has items to sell to raise the funds. Please be proactive in asking the owner, general manager, or whoever is responsible for donation requests at your facility, for rounds of golf to benefit turf grass research in Wisconsin. This is an extremely important imitative and we need everyone's help. Thank you to members who have participated in the past and we look forward to even more in 2013. Let's make it the largest PAR4Reaserch effort yet.

I remember, roughly twenty years ago, sitting in an interview for an Assistant Superintendent position with the owner and superintendent of the facility. I couldn't get past the fact that the owner of the Golf Course kept referring to the Superintendent as "My Super." I think it was the word "My" that had me bothered. I couldn't help but wonder what type of team work would be exhibited with this type of leadership. Our association is no different than any of our respective clubs in regard to working together. That single comment of "My Super" has fueled my opinion of leadership for the past twenty years. We all play a key role in the success of an association and without teamwork it will be difficult to move forward. The point I am trying to make is that communication and working together as an association will keep us on our current path of success we have been traveling.

It has a goal to work with the WGCSA and other allied associations in our state to help promote the game of golf within Wisconsin and share the importance of the superintendent within the game. We have been given a solid foundation from the many individuals within our association who have carried our torch so proudly.

Thank you for the privilege to serve the WGCSA and I look forward to working with all of you. 



Past President Jeff Millies accepts the presidents plaque from President Chad Harrington.



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## Year End Highlights

By **Brett Grams**, Chapter Manager, Wisconsin Golf Course Superintendents Association

I would like to wish all members of the WGCSA a belated Happy New Year! I was fortunate to spend the holidays with family and friends. Even though recent years weather has extended the length of the golf season December snows and weather marked a definite end to golf here in WI. I hope this allowed you to enjoy some time away from your operations and you were able to be with those you love during the holidays as well.

I am happy to report that the moving of the WI Golf Turf Symposium back to the first week in December appears to be a positive change. Attendance was up over the previous years. The symposium committee will be meeting shortly to finalize dates for next year along with working on topics and themes for the event. It is my personal hope that we can continue to grow this event as it is our flagship educational event of the year. The support we receive from MMSD (Milorganite) allows us to bring in speakers from around the country and to have our unique day and a half event at one of the nicest meeting


locations in WI. I challenge all members to make it a 2013 resolution to attempt to attend this year!

Although we do not have a new President in Washington we do for the WGC-SA. Please join me in welcoming Mr. Chad Harrington as our 42nd President of our Association. Thanks to the hard work and leadership of Jeff Millies and the 2012 Board of Directors our new leaders will be able to continue to focus on the future and challenges we will face this year. Our current leaders will be meeting and planning for 2013 in the coming days. If you have questions, ideas, or suggestions please seek out a board member (or myself) so your opinion can be heard.

I would also like to thank those of you that have renewed your membership for 2013. As I write this article I am happy to report that the renewal rate is well ahead of past years. Those who have not been able to renew yet please do so today. Any member that has missed the deadline PLEASE renew prior to March 1st so you

avoid the \$25.00 late fee.

Thanks to the generous support of the sponsor companies we have been able to again have a WI Hospitality event at this year's GIS in San Diego. I am currently completing the solicitation of the sponsors and hope that you join me in letting the sponsor companies know how much you appreciate their support. The support of the WI Room, Directory, Grass Roots, monthly meetings, and website by our Industry Partner companies is critical to our success. Please join me in supporting those companies that support us!

Lastly, I look forward to seeing many of you in Fond du Lac on February 25th for our annual Spring Business Meeting and Education day. Please consider making the time to attend. We have some interesting educational topics and will also be honoring six(6) members who have attained 25 Year Member Status during our brief but important business meeting. The education takes place in the morning followed by the business meeting right after lunch. 

### WGCSA MISSION STATEMENT

The Wisconsin Golf Course Superintendents Association is committed to serve each member by promoting the profession and enhancing the growth of the game of golf through education, communication and research.

### WGCSA VISION STATEMENT

The Wisconsin Golf Course Superintendents Association is dedicated to increase the value provided to its members and to the profession by:

- Enhancing the professionalism of its members by strengthening our role as a leading golf organization in the state.
- Growing and recognizing the benefits of a diverse membership throughout Wisconsin.
- Educating and promoting our members as leaders in environmental stewardship.
- Offering affordable, high value educational programs at the forefront of technology and service.
- Being key to enjoyment and the economic success of the game of golf.



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## Uncle! A 2012 TDL Year in Review

By Dr. Paul Koch, Turfgrass Diagnostic Lab Manager, O.J. Noer Turfgrass Research and Education Facility

Well that was unpleasant. They say that time heals all wounds, and as we sit comfortably in our office chairs this winter some may look back at last summer and say, “You know what, that wasn’t so bad.” Those people are weird. 2012 was a record-setter on many levels, mostly in a bad way. 2012 was the warmest year on record for Milwaukee and amongst the warmest for most of the state. Milwaukee also broke its record for most consecutive days without measurable snowfall, and snowfall across most of the state was a rarity. In addition, most of the state, especially the southern half, saw the worst drought in decades. Add in the stretched-to-the-limit budgets, and it’s a wonder we didn’t collectively throw down our hoses on July 1st and apply to business school. Let’s take a look back at the year that was, from the often distorted view of the Turfgrass Diagnostic Lab.

If the past few summers could be described as ‘St Louis summers’, then certainly the winter of 2011-2012 could be described as a ‘St Louis winter’...or maybe even an ‘Atlanta winter.’ The winter that wasn’t was initially greeted with open arms as many courses across the region opened for play for several weeks in January, bringing in some cash flow during a normally dead period. But record warm temperatures in January and February turned to ridiculous record warm temperatures in March, with highs topping 80°F for a several day stretch and feeling more like June or July. While many courses achieved their earliest opening ever, this early warm-up led to some isolated cases of intense disease activity that would have likely been much more severe and widespread if not for the main story from 2012.

The drought of 2012 will go down as one of the most severe on record, rivaling the legendary droughts of 1995 and 1988. Nearly two dozen counties in Wisconsin were designated federal disaster areas. For most in southern Wisconsin, it stopped raining in mid to late May and didn’t start up again until late July. Moisture is the driving environmental factor for most plant diseases, and the dry conditions limited the development of many turfgrass diseases such as brown patch and Pythium blight in 2012. But areas of poor irrigation coverage and high-stress areas on the collars and clean-up passes suffered badly in the prolonged drought. As a result, diagnoses of abiotic turf damage and stress-related anthracnose (Figure 1) jumped sharply in 2012 (Table 1).



**Above: Figure 1. Anthracnose, both basal rot and foliar, was widespread amongst golf course turfgrass throughout Wisconsin and the Midwest in 2012.**



**Right: Figure 2. Along with anthracnose, summer patch was the premier disease of annual bluegrass in 2012.**



# TURFGRASS DIAGNOSTIC LAB

The only disease aside from anthracnose that was diagnosed more frequently in 2012 was summer patch (Figure 2). Record springtime warmth jumpstarted the growth of the summer patch fungus earlier than normal, allowing for prolonged periods of infection and widespread incidence of the disease on annual bluegrass putting greens throughout the region. Disease severity would likely have been much worse if not for dry conditions.

One of the ongoing debates in turfgrass pathology in recent years has been the influence of bacterial infections on turf health, and numerous submissions to the TDL had notes attached that said 'suspected bacterial wilt.' Of all the suspected or potential bacterial wilt/decline submissions, bacterial streaming was not observed on a single one, including those with clear etiolation. This is not meant to say that I think bacterial decline is not a true turfgrass disease. In fact, research out of Michigan State and North Carolina State has shown that bacteria can cause decline of creeping bentgrass turf. With that said, I'm not sure how extensive the bacterial wilt phenomenon is, since we were not able to observe any bacterial streaming in any of the sample submitted to the TDL last year.

This is something we will continue to monitor in the years ahead, but AT THIS POINT I do not believe bacterial decline to be a serious issue on turfgrass in Wisconsin or even throughout much of the Midwest. The fall conditions were relatively tame with seasonal temperatures, though still quite dry for long periods. No major disease outbreaks occurred and the fall allowed many superintendents to take a deep breath and undertake any renovations delayed by the intense summer stress. Overall, the Turfgrass Diagnostic Lab continued to expand its reach across the region and country.

The 130 professional samples were amongst the largest professional samples in a given year since the diagnostic lab opened in the mid-90's. Of those submissions, over 1/3 were from outside the state of Wisconsin. Samples were submitted from such Midwest states as Minnesota, Illinois, and Ohio but also from courses in Colorado, California, Oregon, Washington, and Oregon.



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# TURFGRASS DIAGNOSTIC LAB

Increased interest from other areas of the country, especially the west, has led to requests for articles describing the TDL's services in regional turfgrass trade magazines. While the TDL remains first and foremost committed to the turfgrass managers of Wisconsin, its increasing importance to turfgrass managers across the region and country cannot be denied. With the continued extraordinary support the TDL receives from the state's turfgrass industry, I have no doubt the lab will continue to thrive for both the stakeholders within the state and those outside the state looking to us for leadership.

### Thanks to our 2012 contract members

As always, I would like to offer sincere thanks to our 2012 contract members (Table 2). Quite simply, the lab would not exist without their generous support. I am well aware that more is asked of you every year, both at your own facility and in support of the associations that work on your behalf. In addition, we at UW and the TDL in particular rely on you to make our programs viable and successful. We do this knowing that every dollar in your budget, both personal and professional, is stretched to the limit and we work hard to make sure every dollar you send our way is managed in the most efficient way possible and that in the end it will make some aspect of your job easier in the future.

UW's turfgrass program is currently in unsettled waters. The departures of Dr. Stier and Dr. Kerns means the program faces an uncertain future, but there are numerous people (both inside and outside the turfgrass industry) working tirelessly to make sure the program's future remains bright. I hope that no matter what the future holds, you will continue to support the UW and the TDL to the same degree you have in the past. If you aren't a contract member with the TDL, I urge you to join 70 of your industry colleagues and help to make the TDL the foremost center for turfgrass diagnostics in the Midwest and one of the premier turfgrass centers in the country. We can't do it without your support. For more information, please visit the TDL's website at [www.tdl.wisc.edu](http://www.tdl.wisc.edu).

## 2012 TDL Diagnoses

<u>Diagnosis</u>	<u>Professional</u>	<u>Homeowner</u>
Take All Patch	10 (6)	0 (0)
Abiotic	53 (42)	21 (25)
Microdochium Patch	1 (2)	0 (0)
Leaf Spots	3 (3)	2 (10)
Insects	0 (0)	0 (2)
Anthraxnose (foliar & basal rot)	17 (13)	0 (0)
Fair Rings	8 (3)	0 (1)
Necrotic Ring Spot	1 (1)	9 (8)
Summer Patch	15 (6)	16 (28)
Brown Patch	1 (3)	0 (0)
Brown Ring Patch	2 (3)	0 (0)
Etiolated Tiller Syndrome/ Bacterial Wilt	1 (NA)	0 (NA)
Typhula Blight	1 (1)	1 (6)
Weed ID	4 (2)	20 (15)
Dollar Spot	2 (2)	0 (0)
Pythium Foliar Blight or root rot	7 (4)	0 (1)
Other	5 (7)	1 (3)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>131 (91)</b>	<b>70 (106)</b>



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