

# UPDATE

Fall 2024  
Vol. 24, No. 3

Sports Field  
Managers Association of New Jersey



P.O. Box 205, Pennsville, NJ 08070 • 856-514-3179 • [www.sfmanj.org](http://www.sfmanj.org) • e-mail: [mail@sfmanj.org](mailto:mail@sfmanj.org)

## SFMANJ FALL FIELD DAY MOUNTAIN VIEW PARK

Hosts: Rick DeLeon and Mountain View Park Staff

**OCTOBER 23, 2024**

Somerset County Park Commission  
141 Mountainview Road  
Hillsborough, NJ 08844



### See Inside For:

- SFMANJ Fall Field Day Schedule and Registration Form
- Owners Manuals
- The Importance of Your Staff
- SFMANJ's Program at NJ Green Expo
- Make Plans to Attend EXPO
- The Scoop on Dog Parks
- From Pitching to Pitch





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# Welcome! New and Renewed SFMANJ Members for 2024

Currently we have 199 new & renewed members. Sports Field Managers Association of New Jersey (SFMANJ) has generated invoices for 2024 membership dues to all current members. If you did not receive an invoice, please contact us at 856.514.3179 or download the membership form available at [www.sfmanj.org](http://www.sfmanj.org). Mail membership dues direct to SFMANJ, PO Box 205, Pennsville, NJ 08070.

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Committed to enhancing the professionalism of athletic field managers by improving the safety, playability and appearance of athletic fields at all levels through seminars, field days, publications and networking with those in the sports turf industry.

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Sports Turf Managers Association

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## SFMANJ Update is looking for authors.

Please feel free to send Brad Park, Editor,  
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## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

New and Renewed Members .....	3
2024 Board of Directors .....	3
SFMANJ Fall Field Day Schedule .....	4
What Manual?.....	5
Looking for Success? Look no Further Than - Your Staff .....	7
Begin your planning to attend Expo 2024 .....	8
Photo Recap: SFMANJ Adelpia Trade Show .....	9
Run the Lines .....	13
2024 Sports Field Managers Expo Program.....	14
My Turf Went to the Dogs - Here's the Scoop on Dog Parks.....	15
SFMANJ FALL Field Day Registration Form.....	17
2024-25 Calendar of Events.....	18
From Pitching to Pitch.....	18

*This newsletter is the official quarterly publication of the  
**Sports Field Managers Association of New Jersey.***

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*SFMANJ does not necessarily support the opinions of those reflected in the following articles.*

# SFMANJ Fall Field Day

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2024

By Brad Park

## MOUNTAIN VIEW PARK

Somerset County Parks, 141 Mountainview Road, Hillsborough, NJ 08844  
Hosts: Rick DeLeon and Mountain View Staff, Somerset County Park Commission  
Credits Anticipated

### TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

7:00 AM	Vendors May Arrive and Set-Up	
7:30 – 9:00 AM	Attendee Registration and Trade Show	
9:00 – 9:30 AM	Pass-the-Mic, Introductions, Move to Field 2	
9:30 – 10:00 AM	<u>Field 2:</u> Skin Surface Equipment Demos	
	<i>SFMANJ Vendors</i>	
10:00 AM – 11:00 AM	<u>Field 3:</u> Skin Surface Management, Game Day Prep, Irrigation, and Turf Fertilization	
	<i>Rick DeLeon and Mountain View Park Staff</i>	
11:00 AM – 11:30 AM	<u>Concession Stand:</u> Natural Turf and Painting Equipment Demos	
	<i>SFMANJ Vendors</i>	
11:30 AM – 12:00 PM	<u>Field 4:</u> Bullpen Mound Preparation	
	<i>Rick DeLeon and Mountain View Park Staff</i>	
12:00 PM – 12:30 PM	<u>Field 7:</u> Challenger Field – Goals, End-Users, and Field Maintenance	
	<i>Rick DeLeon and Mountain View Park Staff</i>	
12:30 PM – 1:00 PM	<u>Trade Show:</u> Liquid Sprayer Calibration Demo	
	<i>Rick DeLeon, Somerset County Park Commission &amp; Brad Park, Rutgers University</i>	
1:00 PM	Door Prizes, Credits, Adjourn	See Attendee Registration Form on Page 17



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# What Manual?

By Fred Castenschiold

*Editor's Note: This article was originally published when the author was working as a sales representative for Storr Tractor; he has since retired from that role*

I have been selling quality turf care equipment for over thirty years. I am still amazed how so few customers refer to their owners/operator manuals until it is too late or not at all. These manuals are a great source of information for the supervisor, operator and mechanic.

When taking in a trade on equipment, I try to always recover the original manuals from the account to pass on to the new owner. Often the condition of these manuals condition indicates that they have not been referred-to much! It is a good idea to always record the model and serial number of the equipment on the cover of the manual for quick reference when discussing the need for service or parts. It also a good idea to make sure you read and understand the operators' manual for your machine before operating or servicing it. Become familiar with all safety signs (decals) on the machine. Some manufacturers provide operator training videos which help demonstrate procedures for safe operation and daily maintenance.

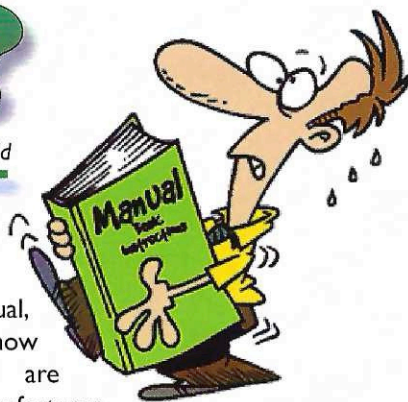
Preventative maintenance of your equipment will help you to get the most out of your investment. If you do not have a preventative maintenance program it would be good to start one soon. Sometimes we go long stretches between those rainy-day opportunities. Doing scheduled maintenance and adjustments will prolong the life of your equipment, help prevent expensive downtime and give the best possible quality of cut and performance. Experience has shown that a high percentage of problems have developed over a period of time and could have been prevented by adjustment, lubrication, or other required maintenance.

When referring to the manual, take into consideration how harsh your conditions are and remember that manufacturer recommendations for service are the minimum requirements. If we have a long dry spell and your equipment is working daily in a particularly dusty environment you may wish to consider oil and air filter changes more often.

Some of my customers have come-up with great maintenance schedules which they live by. Keeping records for each machine ensures that maintenance procedures are being performed at the proper time. These records could also help you predict parts to have on hand. By keeping blades, belts, filters, etc. on-hand, you will not be caught in a situation where important maintenance was not performed on-schedule because of a lack of parts.

Know what is contained in your manufacturer's warranty. Most warranties are two years in the commercial field. When talking to a service manager regarding a possible warranty issue you will need to refer to those model and serial numbers. Remember? ... The model and serial numbers you wrote down on the front cover of your manual!

*Fred Castenschiold was Sales Representative, Storr Tractor Company (retired) and is currently an Advisor to the SFMANJ Board of Directors.*



## **SFMANJ BOARD MEETINGS** are usually held on the **FIRST WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH** and are open to all members !

To cut down on travel and make it easier to attend, meetings are held via **ZOOM** and usually last between one and one and a half hours.

If you would like to attend, call the office at

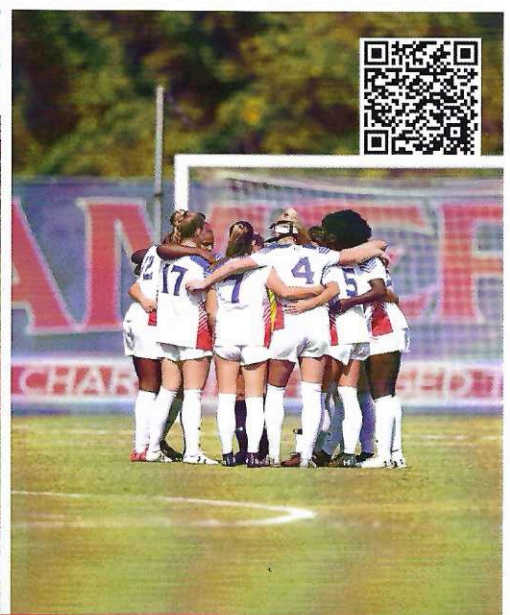
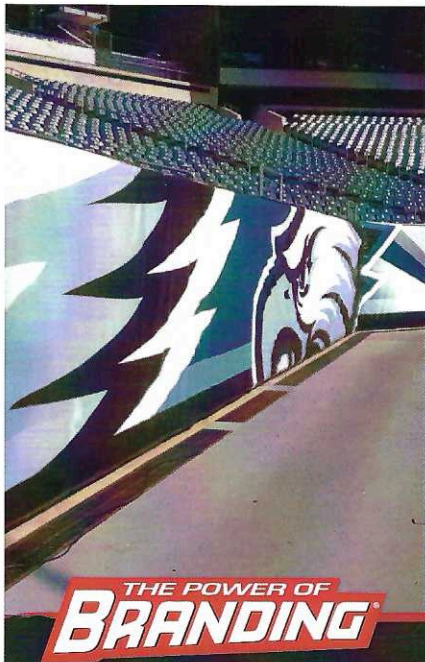
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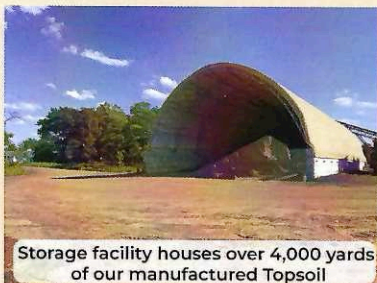
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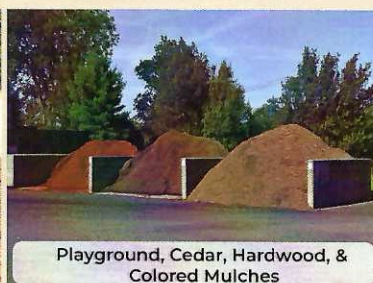
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# Looking for success? Look no further than ... YOUR STAFF\*



Your staff has a significant impact on your success. The work that they do is a direct reflection on you, your ability to train, to motivate and to lead. Reaching the goals of your facility is only possible through good management of your people and their continued development. To make sure you are fully embracing the talents of your staff, use these simple techniques.

## Top 10 Strategies to Engage Your Staff

### 1. Seek input and listen.

Your staff is a great resource for ideas and improvements. Asking for their opinions and solutions to problems, truly listening to them, and implementing as appropriate, strengthens their commitment to you and to their job. Involving your staff in decision making builds loyalty and improves retention.

### 2. Set expectations.

Clearly and consistently set expectations for each employee through jointly written performance objectives. Good performance can't happen if they do not understand what you expect. Reinforce your expectations verbally.

### 3. Provide continuous feedback.

Praise accomplishments, large and small, and for those projects that weren't as successful, use them as learning experiences to find out what could have been done differently. Don't wait until the end of the year at performance time to express dissatisfaction.

### 4. Show appreciation.

Just say "thank you!" When you reward and acknowledge good behaviors, you get more of the same. Publicly acknowledge your staff for doing a good job, and look for other ways to reward their efforts. According to a Harris Poll, the top three satisfaction drivers for employees are control over their work; the opportunity to use their talents and skills; and recognition and appreciation.

### 5. Be accessible.

By being visible and available, you send the message that you are part of the team and are ready to support their efforts to get the job done.

### 6. Train, Train, Train.

Training in the correct procedures and equipment use is critical to getting the job done right, but also for health and safety reasons. The continuous upgrading of skills also provides employees with the means for promotion. Consider training opportunities in areas outside of their core responsibilities, such as in writing skills, public speaking, customer service, business management, etc. You and your facility will reap many benefits from improving their "softer" skills.

### 7. Empower your staff.

Give them as much information as possible about what and why, and allow them to make decisions appropriate to their work.

### 8. Provide a safe and comfortable working environment.

Don't expect employees to use outdated or faulty equipment. With anxieties at an all time high regarding increased terrorist activity, make sure you have emergency procedures in place to protect the workforce in the event of an attack, and ensure that every employee is aware of these procedures.

### 9. Treat with respect.

Respect and accept each person as an important member of the team.

### 10. Inspire your staff.

Be a coach and a cheerleader. Be sure your boss knows about the good work they do. When you help them succeed, you succeed.

*\*This article is compliments of Sports Turf Managers Association (STMA), Lawrence, KS.*

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# Begin your planning to attend **EXPO 2024** December 10-12, 2024.

By Brad Park

**It's time to begin planning your trip to Expo 2024. The New Jersey Green Expo will return to The Borgata in Atlantic City, NJ during December 10-12, 2024.**

*Editor's Note: This article was adapted from materials developed by Chris Carson, Expo Education Chair; and Sports Turf Managers Association (STMA)*

## **A few highlights of what's planned for Expo 2024:**

**Credits, Credits, Credits...** New Jersey DEP Pesticide Credits (and other states) are anticipated as well as New Jersey ProFACT Fertilizer Credits.

**Education...** A comprehensive Educational Program will focus on Sports Fields, Lawn and Landscapes, and Golf disciplines. Local, national, and internationally known industry and university leaders will be presenting important information that you can use to make your operation better.

**Trade Show...** One of the largest trade show events in the region, Expo proudly presents many of the best vendors and suppliers of services. Discuss your specific management issues with the best companies our industry has to offer.

**Fellowship...** Many opportunities exist to meet old friends and to make new ones. Whether on the trade show floor, or in the hallways between sessions, or in the many formal social opportunities, or in

the informal social get-togethers, the three days at Expo offer you a great opportunity to learn what others are doing in our business in a relaxed atmosphere. Many attendees have told us that these informal discussions are highlights of the conference!

**One-on-one** discussion opportunities with industry leaders... Including the many Faculty at Rutgers University and at other top-notch Universities. Rutgers Professors and more will be there to answer your management questions.

**Another year at The Borgata ...** The Borgata is the premier Hotel/Casino in Atlantic City and Expo will be returning to The Borgata for 2024!

**The Expo mission statement:** The NJ Green Expo is a science based conference and trade show that provides education, business, fellowship, and environmental stewardship opportunities in partnership with the Center for Turfgrass Science at Rutgers University.

*Continued on Page 17*

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# Photo Recap

Photos by Debbie Savard

## SFMANJ Trade Show at the Lawn, Landscape, and Sports Turf Field Day Wednesday, July 31, 2024



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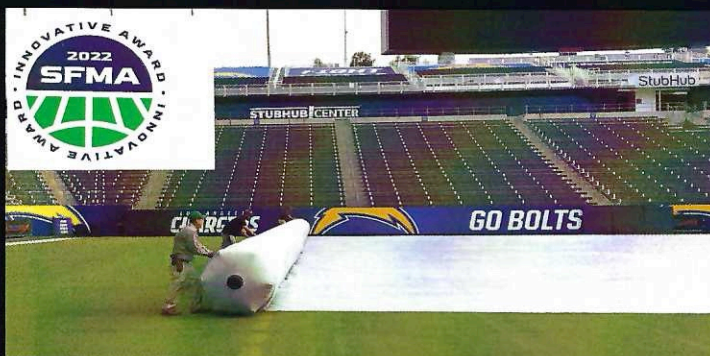
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Continued from page 6



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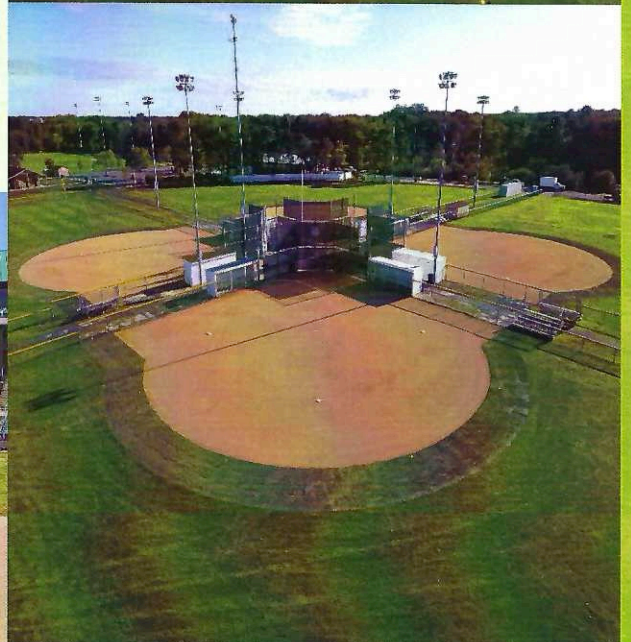
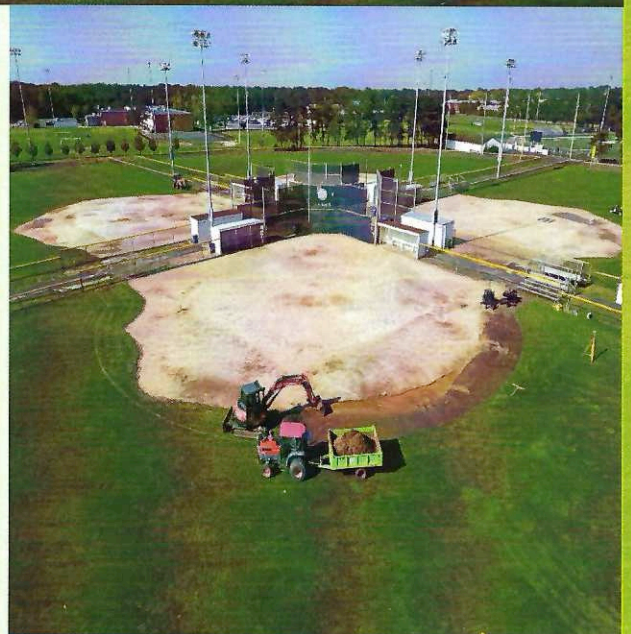
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As we look forward to a great 2024 season, let us know if we can assist you in any way.

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# Run the Lines



By Bernard Luongo

*Editor's note: This article was originally published in SFMANJ Update when the author was a sports field manager at a New Jersey Board of Education; he has since retired from that role.*

When I was a young man many sports seasons ago our household had a subscription to Readers Digest. While there was many a good serious article with excellent content there was also small columns about humor in life. One that always caught my attention was the Humor in Uniform column. Now there is a serious profession with dedicated people, a lot of training, in charge of a lot of territory, and they wear a uniform. Sound familiar? Now, if they can find humor in what they do, what do we have? Now, don't get the wrong impression, I don't want to turn our newsletter into an Alfred E. Newman Mad Magazine rag. But, I know we have better stuff than that.

We as professional Turfmeisters have stories to tell. Heck, it happens several times a day. One that I know we all share and I liken it to the running of the bulls in Spain. It is what I like to call the running of the lines. Whether it's lacrosse in the spring, or field hockey or soccer in the fall, the rallying cry that is heard at the start of every practice throughout the state is RUN THE LINES. Like the bulls in Spain, don't get in their way. They don't stop. Even on the hardwood floor in the winter time. RUN THE LINES. I am beginning to wonder with all the running of the lines that coaches in previous lives must have been fishing captains. If you are a new Turfmeister and never witnessed this phenomenon of nature you are in for a treat. This event would make any 5th grade geometry teacher proud. A herd, running in unison, following a parallel line and cutting the most perfect 90-degree angle on a beautiful green plane. Now folks, if that is not geometry, I don't know what is.

I am most tempted just to humor myself to prove a point (sometimes explaining to coaches in layman terms the consequences of 'running the lines' just doesn't sink in). So maybe a visual is worth a thousand words. Sometime this fall, after the players have been running the lines for two weeks, I am going to extend the perimeter line by 50 feet (geometry again), sit back and watch them run the lines. If the experiment goes to plan they will run right off the grid. I wonder if they run out of line if the ones out front will stop and all the others will run into them. It would be quite a sight. I will let you know how it turns out in the next issue. Keep on turfing.

*Bernard Luongo is a retired sports field manager at a New Jersey Board of Education; and a member of the SFMANJ Board of Directors.*

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# New Jersey Green Expo Turf & Landscape Conference

December 10-12, 2024  
The Borgata, Atlantic City, NJ  
2024 Sports Field Managers Expo Program

## TUESDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2024

### Afternoon session

- 1:00 - 1:30 PM New Jersey School IPM Update  
*Spencer Kerkhof, NJ Dep. of Environmental Protection*
- 1:30 - 2:00 PM Operations at MetLife Stadium and preparation for World Cup Soccer  
*Tyler Morris, CSFM, MetLife Stadium*
- 2:00 - 2:30 PM Reducing turfgrass disease pressure at schools using cultural practices  
*Buckley, Rutgers University*
- 2:30 - 3:00 PM SFMANJ Annual Business Meeting
- 3:00 - 4:00 PM Granular fertilizers and pesticide applications at schools and municipalities: Particle size and calibration considerations  
*Brad Jakubowski, Penn State University*
- 4:00 - 8:00 PM Trade Show

## WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2024

### Morning session

- 8:00 - 8:30 AM Early bird sports field managers: Precision pesticide use and operating in compliance with NJ School IPM  
*Zack Holm, Central Park Conservancy*
- 8:30 - 9:00 AM Sports field and grounds: The year in review  
*Brad Park, Rutgers University*
- 9:00 - 10:00 AM Dealing with wet sports fields from playability to diseases  
*Dr. Doug Linde, Delaware Valley University*
- 10:00 - 11:00 AM How to use weather data to time pesticide and fertilizer applications  
*Brad Jakubowski, Penn State University*
- 11:00 - 11:30 AM Fielding Excellence: Embracing the Challenges of Sports Field Maintenance  
*Miguel DeJesus, Passaic County Parks Department*
- 11:30 - 2:30 PM Trade Show

### Afternoon session

- 2:30 - 3:00 PM Implications for school sports field managers: Fungicides and the microbiome  
*Dr. Ming-Yi Chou, Rutgers University*
- 3:00 - 4:00 PM Conventional and non-conventional strategies for white grub control at schools and municipalities  
*Dr. Ben McGraw, Penn State University*
- 4:00 - 4:30 PM Cool-season turfgrass options to reduce disease and insect issues on school and municipal sports fields  
*Dr. Stacy Bonos, Rutgers University*
- 4:30 - 5:00 PM Synthetic turf: Working with vendor partners to fulfill municipal needs  
*Virgil Caputo, Township of Monroe, NJ*

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# MY TURF WENT TO THE DOGS

## - Here's the Scoop on Dog Parks

By Jeff Cramer



As grounds managers, we often receive requests for special projects. When our township governing body requested, we plan, construct and maintain a "dog park" (off-leash area for dogs) I realized there were many new challenges – not the least was care of the turf.

When I announced the project to my staff, most, if not all, were concerned with the impact of pet waste on staff and equipment. Shortly after the opening of the park we realized that the pet waste was the least of our maintenance problems. Long-term care of the park's turf was our major battle.

Here are some suggestions you may want to consider before installing a dog park:

### FACILITY DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

- Visit other existing sites to determine impact on your maintenance program. Don't reinvent the wheel if you don't need to. You can see what is best for you by reviewing what works and doesn't work for other dog parks. Our facility was a one-acre site.
- Choose better quality fencing materials to provide a safe environment for dogs and to reduce maintenance. Use largest wire core and thickest fabric coating, install a bottom tension wire and use heavier grade posts and rails.
- Install a double-gated user entrance where owners can unleash their pets.
- Plan an equipment service gate of sufficient size for your turf equipment.
- If a water source is available, install a freeze-proof hydrant convenient to the facility.
- Do not plant trees or shrubs – they won't survive!
- Other things to consider: sitting benches, bulletin board, shade canopy, port-a-johns.

### PET WASTE CONTROL

- Post user rules and pet waste regulations at several locations.
- Install several self-serve pet waste clean-up mitten dispensers with covered and lined waste cans along the inner perimeter.
- Solicit park users to help enforce self clean-up by owners. This provided excellent results for our facility. Additional enforcement by park rangers if available. This includes pet license enforcement, control of aggressive animals, etc.

### TURF MAINTENANCE

- Locate the facility in a well-drained area.
- Our facility consisted of primarily Kentucky 31 tall fescue – tall fescues provide the best wear tolerance.
- Soil compaction, both the four-legged and two-legged kind, was the biggest problem, not pet waste. Aerate several times per season to help maintain a viable turf.
- Raise cutting height to 3" – 3 ½".
- Conduct soil tests to determine soil phosphorous (P), potassium (K), magnesium (Mg), calcium (Ca) and liming needs. Apply slow-release nitrogen (N) sources to provide 3-5 lbs Nitrogen per year.
- Remove all sod at the entrance gate and replace with #10 cinders compacted over ¾" clean gravel – the turf will never survive here.
- Use a nonselective herbicide beneath the fence line. Keep the park closed during application until herbicide has dried.

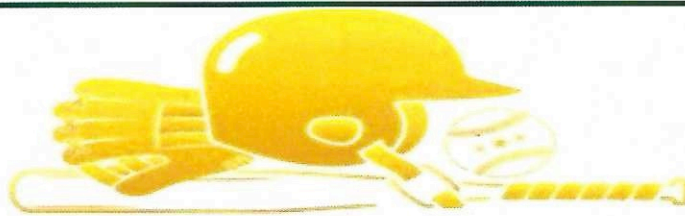
*Jeff Cramer is a past member of the SFMANJ Board of Directors*



Hope to see you at  
**SFMANJ's Fall Field Day**  
on October 23 at  
**Mountain View Park**  
in Hillsborough NJ.

See registration on page 17  
Schedule on page 4





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# Begin your planning to attend Expo 2024

Continued from page 8

How can you convince your employer to send you? Continuing education and industry connections are crucial to your success and the success of your sports fields. Here are some suggestions to help your employer understand how your attendance at Expo 2024 can add value to the overall operation of your facility.

## Educate yourself on the Conference and Exhibition

Provide your employer an overview of the size and scope of Expo 2024 and a copy of the education agenda. This edition of SFMANJ Update provides the Sports Field Managers Program for Expo 2024.

Pinpoint specific sessions you plan to attend, and tie their relevance to your sports facility. It is anticipated that tough-to-acquire New Jersey DEP Category 13 credits will be awarded for attendance during Sports Field Managers sessions in 2024.

Highlight the trade show and cite suppliers and equipment manufacturers you plan to meet. Discuss the networking opportunities you will have with peers who share challenges similar to the ones you have.

Explain how innovations in products, new research, and cutting edge management techniques continually change, and why it is important to stay abreast of those changes.

Reinforce how the success of your sports fields ultimately depends upon the continued professional development of you and your staff.

## Know the Cost

Make a case for efficient and effective use of your facility's training dollars. By attending Expo 2024, you will be exposed to the most relevant education and technology in one place, making it the most effective use of training dollars.

Research travel times and hotel costs. While Atlantic City is feasible day trip from almost anywhere in New Jersey, the New Jersey Turfgrass Association does its part to negotiate reasonable room rates at The Borgata to make staying a night reasonable. Expo 2024 will feature online registration at [www.njturfgrass.org](http://www.njturfgrass.org)

## Have an Action Plan

Develop a plan for how operations will continue in your absence. Make sure you are accessible by phone (please turn off or set on vibrate during sessions!!!!) to address any concerns that might arise in your absence.

Consider preparing and presenting a report on the information you learned and how you plan to put it into practice at your facility. Demonstrate how you will share the technical information learned with your staff for their continuing educational development.

## See you in Atlantic City!

Brad Park is Research & Outreach Agronomist, Rutgers University; Editor, SFMANJ Update newsletter; and a member of the SFMANJ Board of Directors.

(See full schedule on page 14)

# SFMANJ FALL FIELD DAY

October 23, 2024 • Starts at 7:30 a.m.

## Mountain View Park

141 Mountainview Road, Hillsborough, NJ 08844

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Please do not mail.  
Register by email to [mail@sfmanj.org](mailto:mail@sfmanj.org) by  
**October 18, 2024**

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Fax

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You may copy this form for other attendees

You may also register on line at  
**[www.sfmanj.org](http://www.sfmanj.org)**

**If you are a Vendor,  
and would like to participate, please call**

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for more information and/or registration form.  
or go to **[www.sfmanj.org](http://www.sfmanj.org)**

## Students, don't forget to apply for the SFMANJ Student Scholarship.

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PO Box 205, Pennsville NJ 08070 by November 30, 2024

### Please be sure to include:

Name, address, and e-mail  
Your declared major and grade point average  
Classes, seminars or field days you have attended concerning  
sports field management  
Accomplishments concerning the turf industry  
Internships, Plans for the future



# 2024 - 2025 Calendar of Events

## **SFMANJ Fall Field Day**

October 23, 2024

Mountain View Park, Somerset County Park Commission, Hillsborough, NJ

Host: Rick DeLeon and Mountain View Park Staff

856.514.3179

[www.sfmanj.org](http://www.sfmanj.org)

## **Steve Bradley Memorial Golf Classic**

Benefiting the ALS Association

October 28, 2024

Raritan Valley Country Club

(p) 443.977.9363

[andydonelson@turf-equipment.com](mailto:andydonelson@turf-equipment.com)

## **New Jersey Green Expo Turf & Landscape Conference**

December 10-12, 2024

Borgata Hotel & Casino

Atlantic City, NJ

973.812.6467

[www.njturfgrass.org](http://www.njturfgrass.org)

## **2025 Sports Field Management Association (SFMA) Conference & Exhibition**

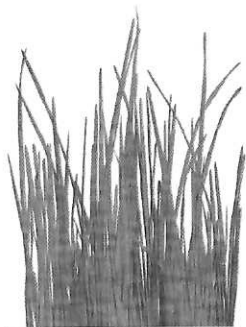
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QUESTIONS

# *From Pitching to Pitch*

By Miguel De Jesus

The diamond's dust has settled low,  
The bases packed, the gloves in tow.  
The summer sun, it fades away,  
And with it, softball's final play.

The outfield grass that felt each cleat,  
Now waits for soccer's running feet.  
The pitcher's mound, once raised with pride,  
Is leveled now, and placed aside.

The chalk lines fade, a ghostly trace,  
Of home runs past, of stolen base.  
The batters' box, a memory sweet,  
Gives way to goals, and swift athletes.

We rake the field, we tend the soil,  
Each blade of grass a part of toil.  
From foul line's edge to goalposts white,  
We craft a pitch for autumn's fight.

The softballs stored, the bats laid down,  
The batting cage, no longer around.  
But soon the nets will rise up tall,  
And soccer's call will fill the fall.

From bat to ball, from pitching to pitch,  
The seasons turn, the games do switch.  
And as we work, with steady hand,  
We keep alive this sacred land.

The players change, the sports evolve,  
But on these fields, problems we solve.  
To every sport, these grounds are true,  
They shift and mold, yet start anew.

With every season, every game,  
We shape the earth, we guard the flame.  
For come what may, through sun or storm,  
These fields remain, a constant form.

*Miguel DeJesus is Supervising Greenskeeper, County of Passaic –  
Department of Parks and Recreation*





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