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# Welcome! New and Renewed SFMANJ Members

Currently we have 157 new & renewed members. Sports Field Managers Association of New Jersey mailed invoices for 2014 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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Continued on page 6

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### MISSION STATEMENT

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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### National Organization

Sports Turf Managers Association

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

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*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.

# A Student's Perspective on the 2014 Sports Turf Managers Association Conference and Exhibition

By Lorabeth West

The Rutgers Turf Club would like to thank Rutgers University, Sports Field Managers Association of New Jersey (SFMANJ), and Sports Turf Managers Association (STMA) for making our visit to San Antonio, Texas to attend the 2014 STMA Conference and Exhibition possible. Without these organizations we would have not had the opportunity to experience the National Conference and Student Challenge that we enjoy taking part in to represent the wonderful program here at Rutgers University, as well as our home state of New Jersey.

This year, the Rutgers Turf Club sent two teams of four students to compete in the STMA student challenge, where we also attended educational sessions and the industry trade show. The conference is a great way for students interested in pursuing careers in sports turf to network and interact with many different people and factors of the industry. We believe that the STMA conference allows for wonderful student activities and networking potential. This also helps to set the stage for those



who have a chance to attend the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) conference later in the semester. As students we seize the opportunity to attend both conferences because it allows us to develop knowledge of the turfgrass industry from its multiple aspects.

Our first full day in San Antonio was a beautiful one. We were able to sign in for the convention, where we were later invited to the welcome reception, and then spent our day touring The Alamo and finding the best tacos in town. The welcome reception offered a chance for us to meet many different members of STMA in the industry, some of which were our own Rutgers alumni that are now holding positions all over the country. Many shared with us their own personal experiences of when they took part in the student challenge in their glory days of college. It was amazing to see their passion for the industry and ask them for tips on how we can better ourselves.

The following day was dedicated to educational sessions; one was specifically designed for students and the other two were specific aspects of the industry. The first session we attended was one entitled, "Creating a New Career Path," given by Abby McNeal of Wake Forest University, CSFM. Abby gave a motivating talk on how to locate a job that is right for you and how everyday aspects are keys to your success. She told us the of the positions she has

*Continued on page 7*



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# Nature: Beautiful and BEASTLY

By Bernard Luongo



As I write this article for our newsletter, we are enjoying our 13th event of the season. Some of the previous events were clippers. No, not the Yankee Clipper Joe DiMaggio; Artic clippers of the one to two inch variety. But today we get special treatment. A good old fashion Nor-Easter. What I find most difficult about snow management is that every event is different. Start time, finish time, dry powdery snow, wet heavy snow, one inch, one foot, blowing drifting snow, freezing rain, the whole gambit, and you have a very small window of opportunity to complete your tasks to try to make your properties safe for the opening of school. Very daunting to say the least.

Preparation is the best tool that you have to combat any storm. Functioning equipment works well also. Other than watching the weather every minute hoping the thing misses us, the following is how we prepare for an upcoming event.

All of our tractors and vehicles start every event with a full tank of gas or diesel. Snow blowers are all topped off along with our back pack blowers. We make sure all of our five gallon containers are full of gas and diesel in case we cannot get to our tanks at the bus lot. We mix-up four gallons of two cycle oil for our back pack blowers and our chain saws. We have many trees on our property that sometimes don't make it through the storm. As with any event equipment breaks down. If you have some parts in stock you can get that piece of equipment up and running during the same storm, which in my book is a feather in your cap and allows management know you are paying attention to your business. We stock extra shear pins and belts for all our snow blowers including shoes for

them and our large plows. We have extra pails of hydraulic fluid for our tractors and quarts of fluid for our plows. Extra chains for our chain saws just in case. Plenty of two cycle oil also. We do stock some parts for our plows, just the basics though. Extra snow shovels and spreaders in case they break or malfunction.

At Northern Burlington County School District we have eight parking lots and about four miles of sidewalks. A lot of product is spread. I always try to stay two major events ahead or four smaller events ahead of the amount of product we use. Because every event is different, make assessments of how much product you used during each event and this will help you stay ahead of the curve. There is nothing worse for your department than running out of product. Equipment failure happens during events; it is the nature of the beast and out of your control - the other is not. So be prepared. If you are paying attention to the weather and the signs around you there will be plenty of time to prepare. All you have to do now is wait for the event.

On a lighter note ... In our house hold we have a weather predicting cat. She is four for four in predicting the severity of winters. Depending on how much weight and fur she puts on tells me how bad a winter it is going to be. In early December she looked like a well fed tick. Need I say more? Pay attention to nature and her wildlife. They know better than we do. Until next time. Keep on plowing.

*Bernard Luongo is Lead Groundsperson, Northern Burlington County Regional School District, Columbus, NJ; and SFMANJ member.*

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# A Student's Perspective on the 2014 Sports Turf Managers Association Conference and Exhibition

Continued from page 4

held in the industry and what factors helped her to choose those jobs, holding education at the top of her list. I remember her mentioning that we are in a science field, and that means it is constantly changing and your employers should respect that and want to send you to these educational conferences. The group of students in the room became interactive when Abby asked questions of where we wanted to work, why, and what is important to us. It generated a group thought process that we all found inspirational and beneficial.



The next session we attended was, "Cool Season Turfgrasses for Sports Fields," given by one of our turf club advisors, Brad Park. Brad gave a very informative lecture on turfgrass selection, such as what factors to look at when making your selection, tips on seed purchasing, and providing information of cultivars from the National Turfgrass Evaluation Program (NTEP). There were many pictures in the presentation that were used as references to make the explanations seamless, including case studies, methods of sodding and seeding, and different diseases that may infect the grasses.



The third and final lecture we attended was, "Sustainability- Player Safety- Performance Testing Are Critical and Integrated Issues for Sports Fields," given by Dr. Gerald Henry, a Rutgers alum, and one of his current graduate students at the University of Georgia, Chase Straw. This presentation was different than any we had seen before, as it was using new technology to test the sustainability on sports fields. These new technologies included global positioning systems, global information systems, and sensors, which are used to make color contour maps of sports fields. These maps visually show the troubled areas of sports fields, making it easy to see where there is too much or too little irrigation, for example. This can have a major effect on player safety, making irrigation efficiency a topic of concern. The machine they used to create the contour maps is a new piece of equipment by Toro called the PS 6000, but it is still being tested. This lecture was fascinating and raised many questions in the room, all of which helped us to better understand their methods and goals. We look forward to hearing more about their research and how it will help the industry.

Continued on page 16

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# 2014 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## NJ PARK & RECREATION ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE

March 2-5, 2014  
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## RUTGERS TURFGRASS RESEARCH GOLF CLASSIC

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## SFMANJ SPRING FIELD DAY

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## NEW JERSEY GREEN EXPO

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# SportsTurf 25TH CONFERENCE & EXHIBITION

MANAGERS ASSOCIATION January 21 - 25, 2014 San Antonio, Texas



By Debbie Savard



**Presentation at the COTs Meeting by Debbie Savard: "Fundraising Through Field Days and Newsletters"**



**SFMANJ's representation at this year's STMA Annual Convention in San Antonio, Texas. L-R: SFMANJ Board Members; Sean Connell, Brad Park, Matt Olivi, Executive Secretary; Debbie Savard, Board Members; Mike Viersma, Rich Watson, Scott Bills and Don Savard.**



**Welcome Reception on Wednesday night. L-R: Rich Watson, Ray McCauley of the New York Mets, Scott Bills and Matt Olivi**



**Don Savard's Wednesday presentation: "Establishing Pest Thresholds on School Grounds"**



**Rich Watson. Proud recipient of the STMA Dick Ericson Founders Award, given out at the Annual Awards Banquet. This award is given annually to someone who plans and executes the sports turf management of their facility, who effectively leads their team to accomplish their goals in field maintenance, and who positively impacts the sports turf industry. CONGRATULATIONS RICH!!!!!!**



**Brad Park had two presentations. Thursday: "Cool-Season Turfgrass for Sports Fields" and Friday: "Preventative, IPM and Organic Management Systems for School and Municipalities"**



**After the COTs meeting on Tuesday night. L-R: Brad Park, Debbie Savard, Don Savard, Rich Watson and Matt Olivi. Not Pictured: Scott Bills, Sean Connell and Mike Viersma**



**STMA Annual Meeting and Luncheon: L-R: Matt Olivi, Scott Bills, Mike Viersma, Rich Watson and Don Savard**



**We are all proud of Rich! L-R: Matt Olivi, Rich Watson, Debbie Savard, Scott Bills, Don Savard and Vickie Wallace, University of Connecticut**



**STMA Annual Meeting and Luncheon: L-R: Sean Connell, Andy McNitt, PhD, Penn State University and Brad Park**



**Presentation on Wednesday by Rich Watson: "Safe Playing Fields: IPM, Legislation and the Sports Turf Manager" and Thursday: "Infield Maintenance at Overbrook High School: Working with What We Have"**



**Debbie and Don Savard at Annual Awards Banquet**





# SFMANJ Names its 2013 Field of the Year

By Scott Bills, CSFM

Sports Field Managers Association of New Jersey (SFMANJ) received five applications for 2013 Field of the Year. The entrants included the Middlesex County Park Commission, the Somerset County Park Commission, Cumberland County College, the Borough of Glassboro and the Northern Burlington County School District.

The SFMANJ Board of Directors decided on a different evaluation process for 2013. As of the September 2013 board meeting there were no applicants for field of the year. The Board decided to send out a survey to member sports turf managers, in an effort to entice interest. The result was 5 full applications and one survey returned from Morris Township. The Board also decided to have different Board members meet with the applicants to physically inspect the field that was entered and interview the sports turf manager.

The following entrants were recognized at the 2013 NJ Green Expo and awarded 'Runner Up' plaques.



At Cumberland County College, G. Michael Collins submitted a field of the year application for the softball field. Board members Don Savard and Sean Connell met with Michael on campus. Both Don and

Sean were pleasantly surprised by the quality of the field and ingenuity of the turf program. Michael informed Don and Sean they were recycling the fryer oil from the cafeteria for use in the turf equipment. In addition, Michael had initiated an organic turf program. Despite only being at the college for one year, Michael has used his experience in lawn care and landscape management to make numerous improvements to the athletic fields and campus grounds.

In Columbus, NJ, Bernard Luongo, Grounds Supervisor of the Northern Burlington County School District submitted an application for the varsity soccer field. Despite having to manage 27 fields with a four man crew, Bernard continues to improve his fields. This spring, Bernard initiated a program to laser grade and reconstructed the pitcher's mound and batter's boxes on the varsity and JV baseball fields. In addition, the infield mix on the varsity baseball field was amended to provide a firmer surface that will not migrate into the grass edges. Bernard continues to follow the turf program designed for the school by Brad Park of Rutgers University, which includes cultural practices such as aeration and overseeding, plus scheduled application of nutrients required by the soil testing. Bernard strongly feels maintaining a regular mowing schedule which includes returning clippings to the soil and keeping mower blades sharp, have improved the health of the turf. Last season Bernard began using turf blankets on the stadium football field and wear areas on other



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