

Grab Bag

Is poor seed the real problem?

There are more than a dozen reasons for a new stand of turfgrass seed to not establish properly, according to Jim Freilich of the Scotts Co., Gervais, Ore.:

- ▶ poor soil preparation;
- ▶ inadequate renovation procedures;
- ▶ weed seed sources nearby;
- ▶ native plant population;
- ▶ mulch contaminants;
- ▶ topsoil contaminants;
- ▶ herbicide residual;
- ▶ no fertilizer applications;
- ▶ insufficient moisture/irrigation;
- ▶ old seed or improperly-stored seed;
- ▶ wrong planting time;
- ▶ improper selection of seed mix;
- ▶ disease and insect damage; and
- ▶ shade too dense.

Postage-stamp park

Once upon a time, tiny Waldo Park in Salem, Ore., could stake a claim as being the world's smallest city park, per *Ripley's Believe It or Not*. That and the title of "Littlest Redwood Park in the World" are now history, but the 2400-sq. ft. plot of land is still notable for the history that remains: a 124-year-old redwood tree, planted by William Waldo four generations ago. Salem Parks field supervisor Darrell Belcher claims the corner on which the park sits "is kind of a sacred place." Low-maintenance ivy is used as a groundcover, but "the tree controls the street there," says Belcher. Thanks to park maintenance operator Gary Robb for the information.



'Houston, we have dirt!'

Dr. Douglas W. Ming of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration leads the work on development of synthetic soil using zeolites, a common group of minerals found across the western U.S. According to a NASA report, the soil could provide a precise timed release of plant nutrients to provide years-long fertility with low run-off potential. Ivy planted in the soil has lived for more than two years on a diet of nothing but deionized water.

Plain talk from the doctor:



"People call it 'summer bentgrass decline' because they're afraid to say summer bentgrass d-d-death!"

—DR. JOE VARGAS
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

Gaining on Jack Benny

Median age of superintendents who are members of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America is somewhere between 35 and 39 years, according to the association.

Breakdown of ages:	40-44 years = 2169 members
20-24 years = 261 members	45-49 years = 1271 members
25-29 years = 1340 members	50-54 years = 712 members
30-34 years = 2071 members	54-59 years = 520 members
35-39 years = 2314 members	60-64 years = 403 members
	65-69 years = 275 members
	70-74 years = 175 members
	75-79 years = 146 members
	80-84 years = 81 members
	85-89 years = 38 members
	90+ years = 14 members

Grab Bag is a new LM department that features brief observations and prognostications throughout the green industry. If you have an unusual photo or comment you'd like to share with us, please send it in...