

Mt. San Antonio College dedicates field to Dr. Kent “Doc” Kurtz

MT. SAN ANTONIO COLLEGE, Walnut, CA hosted a field dedication ceremony March 24 in honor of the late Dr. Kent W. Kurtz. The beautiful, sunny day was fitting for honoring a legend in the sports turf and golf industries.

Over the past few months the students of Mt. SAC worked hard to build a learning laboratory that is comprised of a small stadium, now known as Dr. Kent W. Kurtz Memorial Stadium, with regular field features that can and will be used for training young men and women on baseball field construction and maintenance. How fitting that such a living laboratory should be named after Dr. Kurtz.

Kent Kurtz was a major influence in sports turf and golf turf for many decades. His influence extended way beyond southern California and he was sought after for many consultations on soccer fields, horse racing tracks, baseball diamonds, and football fields around the world.

During his time at Cal Poly Pomona, Dr. Kurtz trained many young men and women that are now managers of major sports venues all over America. His students included Brian Scott, professor of horticulture and Agricultural Sciences Department chairman at Mt. SAC and the genesis of the field construction and dedication. Brian has always considered Dr. Kurtz his major mentor. Many of the students from Mt. SAC matriculated to the program at Cal Poly Pomona to eventually study under Dr. Kurtz.

The day of the dedication began with a won-

derful family style barbeque that was enjoyed by all the attendees. Many stories about Dr. Kurtz prevailed during the warm-up to the main event. Dr. Kurtz's family and friends came from near and far to share their many remembrances of a great man.

In his role as Master of Ceremonies for the day, Brian spoke of the many contributions that “Doc” had made to the industry over a long career. He added some personal anecdotes which included a bit of a stubborn streak that “Doc” had and his methodology for getting everyone to chip in and get the job and projects done whether they liked it or not! Brian also shared a story about “Doc” having to make a presentation away from campus and sending his lecture in on a tape recorder so the students would not miss a beat. Brian indicated that Dr. Kurtz was well networked and always found jobs for his many students in a variety of venues in golf and sports turf. “Dr. Kurtz was a giver that influenced many lives and all in a positive way!” he said.

Dr. Kurtz's brother and son also addressed the crowd of 40+ with anecdotes of a lifelong Chicago Cubs fan. Dr. Kurtz had a wonderful 35 years at Cal Poly Pomona and many years in the industry before that working in the seed and chemical business dating back to days with Upjohn back in Illinois and Michigan. While Dr. Kurtz was an unassuming gentleman he will be remembered as a legend and icon in the industry.

Steve Wightman, turf manager for San Diego's Qualcomm Stadium, remarked on the years when Dr. Kurtz was the first Executive Director of STMA. Steve said “STMA would not have survived without Dr. Kurtz, who kept it afloat in the early years.”

Emails were read from dear friend John Souter in England with his many memories of work and travels with Dr. Kurtz. Paul Cushing also sent his regards and gave praise for the many golf turf guys that learned from “Doc” over the years. A couple of those former golf students were in attendance, including Richard Ray and Dave Zahrte.

Richard said, “The dedication was a moment for reflection. As I reflected on the past, Dr. Kurtz, a friend, mentor, and educator had a huge influence on my success not only professionally but also personally. It was not what he taught, but how to implement the knowledge gained to be successful. Dr. Kurtz had a passion for the turf industry and passed that on to his students.”

While some could not attend the ceremony they shared their thoughts. Mike Schiller told me that “Doc” was the #1 Cubs fan in the world. “He was a one in a million individual who loved the industry and trained many great people,” Mike said. “I was blessed to have him in our home many times and I was lucky enough to be his flunky and work on many STMA projects together. I miss the old guy!”

That seemed to be a common theme from many who were “coerced” into working on committees and projects with Dr. Kurtz. Good leaders certainly know how to get others involved and bring out their unknown skills. Dr. Kurtz apparently was an expert at that!

One of the finest speeches of the day came from Dr. Kurtz's daughter, Heather (see below). The crowd was moved by all the speakers but especially by Heather's comments.

As the ceremony drew to a close there was the ceremonial first pitch of dozens of wiffle balls to open this field officially. Dr. Kurtz's grandson announced to all “PLAY BALL!”

While Dr. Kurtz left us in 2006 he will live forever in the memories of many. The dedication of the field and stadium is a monument to his energy and drive in the world of golf and sports turf. The gathering of family and friends was just as “Doc” would have liked it. He would have loved the CUBS logo in centerfield and a bit of the fanfare regarding his background. Quite a nice tribute to a wonderful man that is gone but not forgotten. ■

Bruce Williams, CGCS, consults in the golf industry and is executive director of the California Turf and Landscape Foundation. He is a Past President of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America.





given a pinch runner and a pinch hitter, let's face it, he still would have made a better umpire!

"Despite his lack of play, this field is a very fitting tribute because dad was crazy about sports, almost any sport really. Ninety-nine percent of the time when I would walk into his home office, he had some match, game, or tournament on the TV or radio though most of the time he wasn't even watching the competition, because he was so engrossed in something academic or industry related, but it was on nonetheless because it was a crucial piece of his world. It was the background that made everything else right—sports were simply part of who he was—they were a companion, hobby, passion and medium for his artistry.

"This field is also fitting because sports and their required turf were a link to his students. As an educator myself, I know that watching students grow, being in a position to positively impact their lives, and celebrating their successes are the greatest rewards a teacher can hope for. Educating, guiding, and enjoying his students was an enormous part of dad's life, a hugely happy and satisfying part of dad's life. He lived and breathed his commitment to his students; it was imperative to him that they all learn, try hard and ultimately, land sustainable careers, and he dedicated his life to the success of his kids, his university and the elaborate network of organizations, and friends that united them all. It was Dad's personal mission to educate students thoroughly and thus send capable applicants out into an industry he adored. It was his expectation that as his alumni grew and were promoted in the field, that they would remember where they came from, and continuously look back, grab the hands of new students and pull them up, assuring that they too had a chance at success.

"With the dedication of this field, Dad has been given the greatest reward a teacher can receive—the ultimate confirmation that he made a difference in the lives of his students, and that because of his many efforts and their hard work, they learned and are successful and happy. To have a ball field, built for students, by some of Dad's best former students, affirms that his efforts were worthy and that the legacy of his mission is alive and well, despite his absence. To all who have come today to honor their educator and friend, thank you for all you have given back to my father by way of each other.

"Again, on behalf of my entire family, thank you to all who made this event possible, and to everyone who has come today. Gathering at a ball field with friends deeply loved, but seldom seen, eating burgers, and sharing stories about Dad are such incredible and unexpected gifts and we are so grateful. Todd and I are especially thankful for this chance to share with our children the life of their grandfather. Dad dreamt of being a grandpa and knowing what an amazing one he would have been can sometimes be a heavy reality to shoulder. Because of this event, and the stories you share with us today, Amelie and Skyler will have a deeper and more thorough understanding of who their grandpa was. While he can not be seen playing wiffle ball with them today, nor thank you in words, Brian, for all you have done, nor express his love and appreciation to all who have come to honor and remember him, there is no doubt in mind that he is present, smiling, laughing, critiquing the field and getting ready to shout out 'play ball!'" ■

Ceremony comments from Dr. Kurtz' daughter

"GREETINGS, EVERYONE. For those of you who don't know me, I am Heather, Kent's daughter and I am joined today by my husband Steven, our daughter Amelie, my brother Todd and his son Skyler, and dad's brother Kerry, our uncle Kerry. I know I speak for my entire family when I say how touched we are that this is happening; we are grateful for the opportunity to celebrate Dad with all of you today and want to thank MT SAC for allowing this field to be built.

"A huge thanks also, to Brian Scott and his students for your vision, hard work and loving tribute to my father and to the countless contributors who helped make this field, and this celebration possible. Together you have bestowed a great honor on a deserving man; if he were here today he would be jovial, yet humble, emotional, yet definitely sassy, but mostly, he would be deeply happy and so proud.

"I have to admit that when I first heard that it was a wiffle ball field, I giggled. If you knew anything about my dad, you likely knew that he was more of a spectator when it came to sports, than an active participant. In his younger years he ran track, but with age, his back problems and that incredibly round belly, he wasn't exactly sporty even if

STMA expands member benefits by adding Plant Management Network

STMA has added Plant Management Network (PMN) as a benefit of membership. Access to all that PMN offers is now available to the entire STMA membership, at no additional charge. This online network offers applied, science-based resources for agricultural and horticultural professionals including those who work with turfgrass. PMN is jointly managed by the American Society of Agronomy, American Phytopathological Society, and Crop Science Society of America, and has partnerships with more than 80 organizations including STMA, universities, other nonprofits, and agribusinesses.

STMA members have access to PMN's many turfgrass and turf-inclusive resources, which include:

- Applied Turfgrass Science
- Plant Disease Management Reports
- Arthropod Management Tests
- The PMN Image Database
- PMN's Plant Science Database
- PMN's Partner Extension Search

All of the resources above are relevant to turf managers.

This month we will feature *Applied Turfgrass Science* (ATS) and highlight specific examples of how it can benefit sports turf managers. ATS seeks to serve the turfgrass profession by providing timely and relevant research information in an easily accessible format. It is a multidisciplinary science-based journal covering all aspects of turfgrass management that is both

peer-reviewed and fully citable. The peer review process is rigorous and has an average acceptance rate of 58% over the past 3 years. This means that ATS meets the scientific standard of other quality agricultural journals, while at the same time serving the end-user.

Noted below are three examples of articles recently added to ATS that will help members



with their field management programs. A link to PMN appears on STMA's members-only page so that you can access the full article and all of the resources that PMN offers.

Heavy Sand and Crumb Rubber Topdressing Improves Kentucky Bluegrass Wear Tolerance.

Sand topdressing and crumb rubber can be used to improve native soil athletic field playability. However, there is a wide range in the physical properties, price, and availability of these materials. The objective of this field research was to evaluate the effects of various topdressing materials on the autumn wear tolerance and surface stability of a well established Kentucky bluegrass stand. (Read more by logging onto STMA.org Members-Only.)

By: Alexander R. Kowalewski, Abraham

Baldwin Agricultural College, and Jeff C. Dunne, John N. Rogers III, and James R. Crum, Michigan State University

Bermudagrass Cultivars Differ in Their Summer Traffic Tolerance and Ability to Maintain Green Turf Coverage Under Fall Traffic.

Bermudagrass is one of the most widely used turfgrass species for golf courses and sports fields in the southern United States and in the transitional climatic zone. Continuous trafficking from play or equipment can reduce bermudagrass coverage and turf quality. This study evaluated 42 bermudagrass cultivars

for their response to traffic. (Read more by logging onto STMA.org Members-Only.)

By Jon M. Trappe, Aaron J. Patton, Purdue University; and Michael D. Richardson, University of Arkansas

Salinity Tolerance of Cool-Season Turfgrass Cultivars Under Field Conditions.

In order to utilize effluent or wastewater as irrigation on turfgrass sites it will require the identification of cool-season turfgrass cultivars with increased salinity tolerance. Evaluation of current cultivars and experimental selections for salinity tolerance is an important first step in making information available to turfgrass managers. (Read more by logging onto STMA.org Members-Only.)

By Matthew J. Koch and Stacy A. Bonos, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey ■

Getting Revved Up for Daytona Beach

By STMA Staff

IN JANUARY 2013, the 24th Annual STMA Conference and Exhibition will be in Daytona Beach, FL for the first time. The majority of the events will be at the Ocean Center, 400 feet from the Atlantic Ocean, and at the headquarters hotel, the Hilton Daytona Beach Oceanfront Resort, which is adjacent to the convention center and directly on the beach. The 744-guestroom resort is part of a \$1 billion entertainment district called the Ocean Walk Village, and the resort itself boasts seven restaurants and lounges, is just minutes from Daytona International Airport and many other attractions in the area, including the entertainment district at the Ocean Walk Shoppes.

The Daytona Beach area is only an hour's

drive to the greater Orlando area and its attractions, as well as an hour from St. Augustine and the Kennedy Space Center. Daytona International Airport is serviced daily by both Delta and US Airways, but Orlando International Airport is only an hour away and Jacksonville is nearby as well, providing easy access from anywhere in the US.

Daytona Beach is part of the Orlando-Deltona-Daytona Beach Combined Statistical Area, which is the 17th largest CSA in the U.S. with more than 2.2 million residents. The average high in January is 68 degrees, which is warm enough to take in 23 miles of beach within the city limits, 11 miles of which is drivable.

Speaking of driving, most people associate

the area with automobiles and racing. Daytona Beach is home to NASCAR's world headquarters and Daytona International Speedway, the 2.5-mile super-speedway, which is less than 5 miles from the hotel and convention center. It certainly lives up to its billing as the "World Center of Racing" as it is involved in some type of high-speed activity every day for more than four months of the year [DASH HERE] from NASCAR Sprint Cup Series stock cars (Daytona 500 and Coke Zero 400 Powered by Coca-Cola) to sports cars (Rolex 24 At Daytona) to motorcycles (Daytona 200 By Honda) and go-carts (World Karting Association). Daytona International Speedway tours are available daily, but STMA will be host-

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Mid-American Regional Conference taking shape

REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN for upcoming Mid-American Regional Conference, June 26-27 in Cincinnati, OH. Hosted by STMA with the support of several chapters including the Ohio (host), Illinois, Pennsylvania, Kentucky, Michigan, Tennessee Valley, and Virginia chapters, the educational event is a must-attend for anyone who deals with athletic turf.

CEUs from GCSAA, NRPA, NIAAA, ASBA, PLANET, IA, ONLA, and ASLA will be offered and Pesticide Recertification Credits will be offered for the states of Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia.

See the chart for more information on registration rates for the event and ticket prices. Registration will include all education, entrance to the exhibition and most meals. The group will also be taking in a night at the ballpark, watching the Reds take on the Milwaukee Brewers Wednesday night, for an additional fee.

Online registration is open, and there are discounts for registering online. STMA has also negotiated an \$80 rate at the Millennium Hotel in downtown Cincinnati, within walking distance of the events, stadiums and nightlife. Keep checking www.STMA.org and your email inbox for the most up to date information regarding the event.

STMA would like to thank Fairmount Sports+Recreation, Hunter Industries, Oakwood Sod Farm, Pioneer Manufacturing, Turface Athletics, TurfTime Equipment and World Class Athletic Surfaces for sponsoring this event. Without the support of these companies, STMA would not be able to provide the high-quality educational opportunities our members enjoy.

Put June 26-27 on your schedule and start talking to your employer about attending this incredible educational opportunity. If you have any questions, please contact STMA at 800.323.3875 or STMAInfo@STMA.org. ■

Who you are	Your rate	Cost to join us at the Reds game (optional). All ticket orders must be received by June 15.	Your Total	Last Day to Receive this Rate
Individual STMA or Chapter Member Registering Online	\$95.00	\$14.00	\$109.00	6/15/2012
Individual STMA or Chapter Member Registering via Mail/Fax	\$105.00	\$14.00	\$119.00	6/15/2012
Individual Non-Member Registering Online	\$115.00	\$14.00	\$129.00	6/15/2012
Individual Non-Member Registering via Mail/Fax	\$125.00	\$14.00	\$139.00	6/15/2012
Any Person or Persons Registering On-Site	\$149.00	Reds tickets not available to any on-site registrants. Tickets in our section may be available for purchase through the Reds Ticket Office for \$22 apiece. Seats in STMA group not guaranteed	\$149.00	On-Site
Any two or more people registering at the same time (contact STMA for instructions on how to obtain group pricing)	\$75.00	\$14.00	\$89.00	6/15/2012

STMA Affiliated Chapters Contact Information

Sports Turf Managers Association of Arizona:
Chris Walsh cwalsh@scottsdaleaz.gov

Colorado Sports Turf Managers Association:
www.cstma.org.

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Florida #2 Chapter (North):
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Florida #3 Chapter (Central):
407-518-2347, Scott Grace, scott@sundome.org

Gateway Chapter Sports Turf Managers Association: www.gatewaystma.org.

Georgia Sports Turf Managers Association:
www.gstma.org.

Greater L.A. Basin Chapter of the Sports Turf Managers Association:
www.stmalabasin.com.

Illinois Chapter STMA: www.ILSTMA.org.

Intermountain Chapter of the Sports Turf Managers Association: www.imstma.org.

Iowa Sports Turf Managers Association:
www.iowaturfgrass.org.

Kentucky Sports Turf Managers Association:
www.kystma.org.

Keystone Athletic Field Managers Org. (KAFMO/STMA): www.kafmo.org.

Michigan Sports Turf Managers Association (MiSTMA): www.mistma.org.

Minnesota Park and Sports Turf Managers Association: www.mpstma.org

MO-KAN Sports Turf Managers Association:
www.mokanstma.com.

Nebraska Sports Turf Managers Association:
sphillips4@unlnotes.unl.edu

New England STMA (NESTMA):
www.nestma.org.

Sports Field Managers Association of New Jersey: www.sfmnj.org.

Sports Turf Managers of New York:
www.stmony.org.

North Carolina Chapter of STMA:
www.ncsportsturf.org.

Northern California STMA:
www.norcalstma.org.

Ohio Sports Turf Managers Association (OSTMA): www.ostma.org.

Oklahoma Chapter STMA:
405-744-5729; Contact: Dr. Justin Moss

Oregon STMA Chapter:
www.oregonsportsturfmanagers.org
oregonstma@gmail.com

Ozarks STMA: www.ozarksstma.org.

Pacific Northwest Sports Turf Managers Association: www.pnwstma.org.

Southern California Chapter:
www.socalstma.com.

South Carolina Chapter of STMA:
www.scstma.org.

Tennessee Valley Sports Turf Managers Association (TVSTMA): www.tvstma.com.

Texas Sports Turf Managers Association:
www.txstma.org

Virginia Sports Turf Managers Association:
www.vstma.org.

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ing a behind the scenes tour as part of our Seminar on Wheels at the conference (additional fee will apply).

Another way to drive in Daytona Beach is from the tee. Named a "Top 15 Golfing Destination in the U.S." by *Golf Digest* and home to the LPGA headquarters, the area offers more than 30 championship golf courses nearby. These traditional "Florida" courses include some particularly challenging layouts by designers such as

For more information on the STMA Conference and Exhibition, please visit www.STMA.org/conferences.

Jack Nicklaus, Arnold Palmer, Rees Jones, Arthur Hills, Lloyd Clifton, Donald Ross and others. No matter if you are a novice or scratch golfer, you'll love the variety in our golf courses and will appreciate the magnificent layouts that offer plenty of challenging and spectacular natural beauty.

The area also offers excellent deep-sea fishing. Record size marlin and other fish are abundant in the Atlantic Ocean. Deep-sea fishing charters depart from several marinas daily. Half- and full-day trips are available and include all the bait and gear necessary to catch the "big ones." Charter boat companies take their passengers to favored fishing spots to catch red snapper, grouper and other native fish. Fresh water fishing is also popular. Other outdoor activities include canoeing, camping, sailing,

water skiing, jet skiing, surfing, paddle boarding, SCUBA diving, racquet sports, horseback riding, and of course, relaxing on the beach.

As you can see, the Daytona Beach area offers easy access, a tremendous amount of activities for families and groups, natural beauty and all the entertainment, shopping and nightlife you've come to expect from an STMA Conference destination. The Association is looking forward to making Daytona a fantastic event for you, your staff and possibly your family. See you next January.

For more information on the STMA Conference and Exhibition, please visit www.STMA.org/conferences.

For more information on Daytona Beach, please visit its Convention and Visitors Bureau website at www.daytonabeach.com. ■