

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

July 6-10

Floyd Perry's Groundskeepers Management Academy, Millington, TN. (800) 227-9381.

July 16-18

Turfgrass Producers International's (TPI) Summer Convention & Field Days, Sheraton Premier, Tysons Corner/Vienna, VA. Contact TPI: (800) 405-8873, or Tom Ford: (847) 705-9898.

July 25-27

International Lawn, Garden & Power Equipment Expo, Kentucky Expo Center, Louisville, KY. Phone: (800) 558-8767, or (502) 562-1962.

August 17-21

Floyd Perry's Groundskeepers Management Academy, Bethel, CT. (800) 227-9381.

August 20

Michigan Turfgrass Field Day, Hancock Turfgrass Research Center, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI. Contact Kay Patrick: (517) 321-1660.

August 24-28

Floyd Perry's Groundskeepers Management Academy, Colonial Heights, VA. (800) 227-9381.

August 31-September 4

Floyd Perry's Groundskeepers Management Academy, Kissimmee, FL. (800) 227-9381.

September 14-18

University of California-Riverside Extension's Turfgrass Management Intensive Institute, Riverside, CA. Contact Jan Crump: (909) 787-5804 ext. 1621.

September 16-18

National Lawn and Garden Trade Show, Philadelphia, PA. Contact Liza Wylie: (203) 847-9599.

STMA MESSAGE

Sports
Turf
Managers Association



Take the Kids to a Game—It Feels Great!

As I'm writing this at the end of April, the rains have finally stopped out here in California. Field care is in full swing; the professional fields look like nothing ever happened, and the public fields are looking better every day.

I spent an evening at the Anaheim Angels' new ballpark, Edison International Field, with my two oldest daughters, Kelley and Megan. Wow! It's even more spectacular up-close than it looks on TV.

Barney Lopus and his crew are doing an excellent job, and their hard work is appreciated by all. Disney, owner of the Angels, really knows how to make the baseball experience a family affair—isn't that what it's all about?

Being out at the ball park with your kids is a super opportunity for communication—a time for telling them stories of when your dad took you out to the games (yes, you really were a kid once). It's a time for explaining what a home run is, and pointing to the ball when it's hit to the wall.

I must admit, by the end of the game seven-year-old Megan thought each fly ball was a home run, and that the greatest aspects of the game were the peanut bags being thrown to us by strangers and the candy that Dad kept supplying. In time, like kids all across America, my kids will start paying more attention to the game—and less attention to their enormous appetite for sweets.

That Angels game on that particular night, when Chuck Finley threw a shutout—his 14th, by the way, and his 1st as a blonde—reminded me again of what a privilege it is to be part of the sports turf industry. It reinforced the importance of our responsibility to provide safe and playable fields for all levels of the game.

It is my intent that we share and promote this responsibility with those organizations that have the ability to support our efforts. These organizations include the National Football League, the NFL Players Association, Major League Baseball, Major League Soccer, and the hundreds of commercial vendors that serve this industry.

I recently joined sports turf managers from all sections of the United States for three exciting days at Disney's Wide World of Sports complex as a guest of the Toro Company. I've got to tell you, Toro and Disney are doing their part to support and improve the condition of playing fields. My hat is off to both of these fine institutions for their focus on higher learning and their foresight about the future of STMA.

It's a new season for the NFL, MLB, and MLS, and for you. The STMA can be the school and resource that will help you improve your field conditions and support your team of players and groundskeepers, but we need your support and involvement in our growing organization.

Questions? Comments? Suggestions? Call me, I'm listening.

Stephen Guise, STMA President
(714) 704-0403

Potter Park Field

1997 Beam Clay Municipal Baseball Diamond of the Year

by Bob Tracinski

The first time teams come from Denver or Colorado Springs to our city of 8,000 for a game, they expect to play in a cornfield or a weed patch. That attitude takes a 180° turn when they see the field. They leave knowing La Junta's Potter Park Field is among the best-maintained fields in the United States," says Michael C. Sexton, CLP, the director of parks and recreation for the city. "Tony Madrid, our ballfield maintenance coordinator, and his crew do an unbelievably great job here. The field is in top shape, and our community takes it for granted that it will always be that way."

Equipped with a BS degree in recreation and a BA in education, Sexton came to the city 13 years ago as recreation supervisor. As he explains it, he was "kind of thrown into the director's position shortly after that."

Madrid joined the city staff as a part-timer shortly before Sexton was hired and worked his way up to his current position. Mutual respect allows them to function well as a team, along with La Junta Recreation Coordinator Richard Sandoval. They share a straightforward style and always strive for the highest standards.

History

Land for the park was donated to the city in 1920, and construction of a football field soon followed. Sexton says,

"Between that period and into the early 1950s, the facility was turned into rodeo grounds and leased by the American Legion for kids' rodeos.

"In 1954, Potter Park was selected as the site for a new municipal swimming pool. The rodeo grounds were moved to the city's Industrial Park, and the land not needed for the pool

replaced the existing snow fence in the mid-1960s. Upgrades in 1984 brought construction of a new backstop, dugouts, restrooms, a concession stand, an announcer's booth, and an automated irrigation system.

According to Sexton, "In 1988, the outfield was extended, a 10-foot high chain-link outfield fence constructed; the existing light poles relocated; and sodium halogen lights installed. In 1989, infield reconstruction to combat the poor drainage of our native-clay soil included installation of a four-inch layer of masonry-type sand topped with bluegrass sod. The infield irrigation system was replaced in 1991. In 1992, a batting cage 75-feet long, 24-feet wide, and 12-feet high was installed behind the first-base dugout. Another batting cage was built along the third-base line in 1993."

Field use

Potter Park Field is used from mid-February to at least mid-November. The Otero Junior College Rattlers and the La Junta High School Tigers hold practices and home games there in the spring. A week after their seasons end, youth baseball leagues take over for the summer. The field gets another three-week break in the fall before the Junior College team starts again. Because spring practices begin as soon as the snow clears, the only real lull comes in December.



La Junta Potter Park Field: 1997 Beam Clay Municipal Baseball Diamond of the Year.

Courtesy: City of La Junta

was converted into what is now known as La Junta Potter Park Field."

The original playing surface consisted of shale that had been dumped over the existing soil. In 1955, topsoil was brought in and the infield and outfield areas were seeded. A five-foot high chain-link fence around the outfield

Sexton says, "Potter Park Field frequently hosts the Colorado State High School District Playoff games for 4A, 3A, 2A, and 1A classifications. It has also been the site of numerous Babe Ruth Summer Baseball state and regional tournaments, and such special events as Fourth of July fireworks shows and donkey-baseball games. It's not unusual for both the Tigers and the Rattlers to hold double-headers on the same day. I think Tony lists the field as his home address for most of the year."

Field maintenance

Each member of the five-person, full-time staff has an area of specialization. Madrid focuses on the athletic facilities, but notes that cooperation is terrific and everyone pitches in willingly wherever needed. He explains, "I've had a five-person, part-time crew of ballfield maintenance workers from early March to mid-September. With the new field under construction, we've moved Mike Romero, a part-timer since 1992, to a full-time position as my right-hand man."

"Our day starts at 7:00 am, and goes until the work is done. When high school and junior college baseball are both active in the spring, we'll start at Potter Park Field. Our field maintenance schedule works around the coaches' scheduling. During the summer, typically we'll spend a couple hours at the coed-adult softball fields, a couple hours at the junior college softball field, and at least an hour at the two tee-ball fields before lunch."

"Next we'll groom the field used by the 8- to 10-year-olds. We won't get to Potter Field until after 2:00 pm, to put in another two to three hours of grooming, even without a night game. We do keep someone on-site all during

tournaments. Constant communication with all the field-user groups is one of the most important parts of this job."

The Recreation Department operating budget coordinates maintenance expenditures, and the City Council and City Manager approve capital improvements. Much of the work done to the athletic facilities has been financed through funding from the Colorado Lottery and through grants provided by the Lottery's Great Outdoors Colorado program. The grant applications require evidence of community support through funding and 'in-kind' assistance, which has been provided by the city, county, and field users.



Head Ballfield Maintenance Coordinator Tony Madrid and his team intend to maintain the standard of excellence that won them the prestigious Beam Clay Award.

Courtesy: City of La Junta

Sexton notes that upgrades to all athletic facilities are made with long-term maintenance efficiency in mind. For example, a warning track of crusher fines installed in 1995 was replaced in 1997 with a more workable red clay mixture. The city also installed a red, poured-mat material in the paths leading from each dugout to the batter's box, in the coaches' boxes, and in the transition area from the home-plate dirt to the grass. The purchase of a utility tractor with groomer, scarifier, painter, and dry liner attachments has allowed Madrid to do more in less time.

Madrid follows an intensive maintenance program to keep the field in shape despite all this activity. He says, "Daily care of the basepath, batter's box, and mound pay off in the long run. Those are areas I care for myself."

"Mowing times and height-of-cut are adjusted to accommodate changing weather conditions, turf growth,

In-Season Maintenance Plan

Daily schedule:

- Clear infield grass edges
- Inspect batting cage nets
- Repair pitching mound and batter's box
- Drag and groom infield skinned area
- Drag warning track

As needed:

- Weed control
- Irrigation system inspection

Fertilization:

- Every six weeks from mid-Feb. to end of active growth period
- 20-20-10 formula and alternating 2% or 7% iron

Aeration:

- Core aeration every six weeks preceding fertilization
- Cores removed from infield; dragged into outfield
- Topdressing with same sand as infield, mixed with compost produced in-house or with straight sand

Irrigation:

- Infield system: 27 Toro Super 700 series heads
- Outfield system: 43 Toro 2001 heads
- Scheduling contingent on weather and field use:
 - 10- to 15-minute intervals three times a week
 - 15-20 minute intervals four or five times a week
 - 25-45 minute intervals seven days a week
- Additional irrigation of grass edges with hand-held hose as needed
- System inspected, repairs made, and water turned on in Feb.

Other:

- Re-sod any worn areas of infield in June, July, Aug., and Sept.
- Overseed outfield in Oct. or Nov.
- Sod cutter cleans infield edges in Oct. or Nov.

and stress of play. The bluegrass infield is mowed with two 21-inch, walk-behind rotary mowers as frequently as every other day. The bermudagrass outfield is mowed at least twice a week with a 72-inch, ride-on rotary mower."

Madrid explains that the coaches and players take pride in the field and do their part to keep it in top condition: "Following the last game of the night, they'll broom-off grass edges, hit the high spots in the skinned area with the rakes, water lightly, and put



Groundskeeper Michael Romero prepares Potter Park Field for an afternoon doubleheader.

Courtesy: City of La Junta

the tarps on the batter's box and the mound. It gives us all a head start the next day."

Sexton adds, "Our goals with the city council and administration are to put forward the positive image of La Junta. Earning the award for Potter Park Field is part of our department's contribution to that. Now that we've achieved that standard, our new goal will be to never fall below it." □

Bob Tracinski is manager of public relations for the John Deere Company in Raleigh, N.C. He also serves as public relations co-chair for the national Sports Turf Managers Association.

The Beam Clay Baseball Diamond of the Year Awards are sponsored by the STMA, sportsTURF Magazine, and Beam Clay. This is the 12th year the awards have been presented. Each year, four Major League groundskeepers serve as judges. This year's judges were: Tom Farrell of the Toronto Blue Jays (AL-East), Barney Lopas of the Anaheim Angels (AL-West), Ralph Frangipani of the Philadelphia Phillies (NL-East), and Eric Hansen of the Los Angeles Dodgers (NL-West).

Q: What do all of these teams have in common?

Oakland A's
Arizona Diamondbacks
University of Texas Longhorns
San Diego Chargers
University of Southern California Trojans
California Angels
Arizona State University Sun Devils
San Francisco 49'ers
San Diego State University Aztecs
San Francisco Giants
San Diego Padres
Los Angeles Dodgers
Oakland Raiders
Arizona Cardinals

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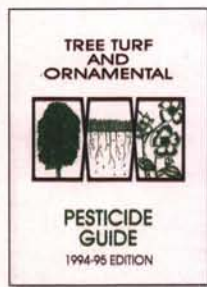
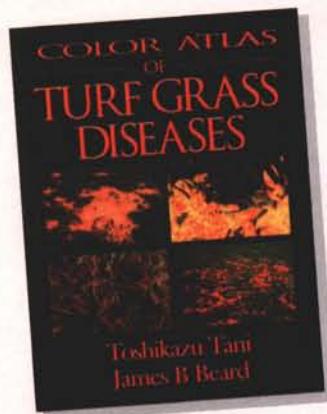
CONTROLLING TURFGRASS PESTS

Controlling Turfgrass Pests, 2nd edition, by T. W. Fermanian, M. C. Shurtleff, R. Randall, H. T. Wilkinson, and P.L. Nixon. This book concentrates on the diagnosis, fundamental biology, and control of turfgrass weeds. Demonstrates how to identify turfgrass pests, when and why they occur, the damage that may take place, the life cycles of the pest, plus culture, chemical and other management strategies designed to keep pest damage to a minimum. 720 pp. **4031 \$85.00**

Management of Turfgrass Diseases

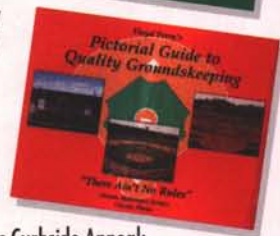
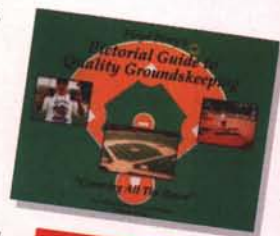
Management of Turfgrass Diseases, 2nd edition, by Joseph M. Vargas, Jr. Completely revised and updated to provide the latest information on maintaining a healthy turf and identifying turf diseases. covers cultural, genetic, biological and chemical approaches to turf management and provides practical solutions to everyday problems. Fungal, bacterial and viral diseases; black layer disease; and diseases caused by nematodes are addressed for all major grasses. Tips on irrigation, fertilization, and grass culture w. 72 full-page photos and more than 100 figures. 320 pgs. **4016 \$67.00**

Color Atlas of Turfgrass Diseases on Golf Courses, by Dr. Toshikazu Tani and Contributing Author, Dr. James B. Beard. Presents over 350 high-quality color photographs of all the major turfgrass diseases that occur on both warm and cool season grasses and is international in scope. The standard color guide to disease diagnosis and pathogen identification for golf course superintendents and turfgrass practitioners. Maps are included to assist in disease identification by providing geographical locations where each disease/pathogen is likely to occur. It also provides color photos of step-by-step guidance on diagnostic techniques for laboratory analysis which can be used by practitioners. 140 pages. **4005 \$79.95**



Tree, Turf, and Ornamental Pesticide Guide, W.T. Tomson. This is one of the few references today designed as a guideline to pesticide usage in the specialized ornamental field. It lists the major ornamentals grown either in the home or garden, in nurseries, in greenhouses, or in commercial production with a cross reference as to what pesticide may be used on them. Insecticides, herbicides, fungicides, and growth regulators are listed along with what each will control. This is a valuable tool for PCO's, nurserymen, greenhouse operators, grounds superintendents, turf specialists, etc. 200 pgs. **4127 \$18.50**

Pictorial Guides to Quality Groundskeeping Book I and Book II, by Floyd Perry. The only textbooks on the market for the grounds supervisor, athletic coach, little league volunteer, or baseball purist. Over 500 photos in each text with many in color. Book One, "Covering All The Bases" (100 pgs) covers Mound and Home Plate Repair; Edging, Dragging, Lip Reduction; Water Removal; Homemade Equipment and Tricks of the Trade. Book Two, "There Ain't No Rules", (108 pgs.) covers Football, Soccer, Softball, Little League, Minor League, College and High School Facilities. Also covers Curbside Appeal; Tricks of the Trade, New Ideas for Easy Maintenance; Professional Research from Higher Learning Centers and much more. **4008—Book I, 4009—Book II \$36.60 ea. or 2 bk set—4022 \$69.90**



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Coping with

Summer Heat

by Tom Curran and Bill Murphy

Coping with summer heat can be a constant balancing act. There's no single turf maintenance program that acts as a cure-all when temperatures rise. Variables come into play at the point of turf variety selection and continue through the fine-tuning of the maintenance program.

Success requires a thorough understanding of all factors that contribute to heat stress in the field. Superior observational and diagnostic skills, and the ability to act quickly to make necessary adjustments are a must. Balancing all of these variables and doing it within a predetermined budget are part of the challenge of sports turf management. Consider the differences and similarities in the programs outlined here.

Pompano Beach, FL

Florida is hot. It may be hot and wet, hot and dry, or hot and humid, but except for the relatively mild winter period, heat constantly affects turf growth and maintenance practices.

Pompano Beach has 13 baseball/softball fields and four football/soccer/multi-use fields. Some of the baseball outfields become soccer and football fields once baseball season is over, and even during the season if

there are any unscheduled breaks in the packed field-use schedule.

Our athletic fields are basically composed of 419 bermudagrass with some common bermudagrass mixed in. This gives us a tough, dense cover that thrives on heat. Our irrigation, fertilization, aeration, and mowing practices all focus on developing strong, deep root systems that make the best use of available water and help sustain the plant during dry periods.

Population growth has drained water supplies all across Florida. Eight of our athletic fields are irrigated with effluent water. The city's golf course, which has its own staff and budget, also uses effluent water. The remaining athletic fields and other parks and recreation facilities are irrigated with city water.

The effluent water is a by-product of our sewage-purification system. Dispersing it through irrigation systems is the most efficient and cost-effective way to dispose of the water. If we weren't using it for irrigation, the effluent water would need to be dispersed elsewhere.

Our use of effluent water reduces demand on the city's potable water supply and allows us to irrigate the fields when water restrictions are in effect. During extended droughts, we



Drought conditions are common in Pompano Beach, FL. The City must battle summer heat aggressively to avoid this kind of damage to sports turf areas. *Courtesy: City of Pompano*

work with the media to explain to the public why we continue to water park and recreation areas when their own water use is limited.

Our effluent water must meet health department standards. We bring it to near potable levels and quality is monitored closely.

Effluent water provides some nutrients to the turf, but it's also high in



Effluent water helps keep Pompano's fields in shape, but during periods of extended drought, the city must allow turf to brown.

Courtesy: City of Pompano

salts. A good, sustained rain will wash the salts from the turf and flush them from the system. This generally happens frequently enough to keep the salt buildup from affecting turf health. However, the salts are hard on equipment and they react with any unprotected metal surface. We wash mowers and other maintenance equipment with the city's potable water immediately after use.

We have an annual water budget of \$365,000, and any additional irrigation costs must be absorbed by other areas of funding. This is difficult under normal operating conditions, and even harder during periods of extreme heat. To help cut costs, all of our irrigation systems are equipped with sensors that shut off the watering cycle when it rains.

Despite constant checking and frequent audits of sprinkler system coverage and efficiency, the strong and often erratic winds in our area cause uneven water coverage and result in dry patches of turf. Unfortunately, our budget and staff size prevent us from spot watering to control this.

There are also times of extended drought when it's necessary to cut irrigation to specific areas that don't use effluent water. In these cases, we must simply accept the browning of the bermudagrasses. So far our turf has been vigorous enough to snap back when natural rainfall occurs or when we are able to resume irrigation.

Humidity levels tend to remain high. They reach into the 80- and 90-percent range on many spring and fall days, and nearly every day in the summer. Levels seldom drop more than 10

to 15 percent at night, even during relatively long dry spells. There's often so much dew on the turf in the early morning that it looks as if rain has fallen.

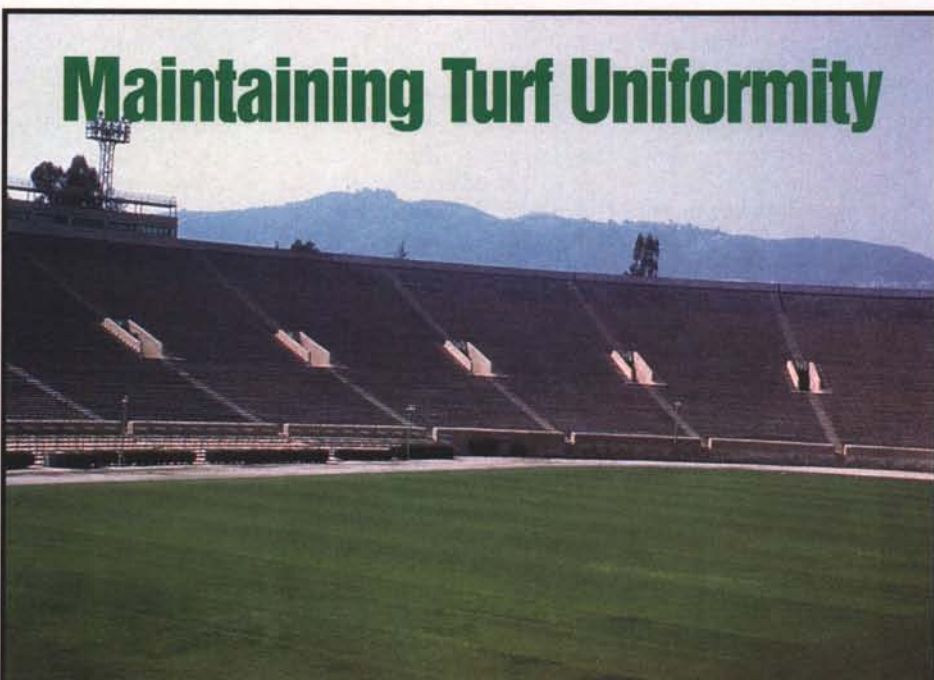
When dew is particularly heavy, we sometimes run a short syringe cycle in the morning to help wash the moisture beyond the grass blades and alleviate disease pressure. Because of the heavy usage of our green space, we apply chemical controls only as the last step

of our standard IPM procedures, and only when turf survival is threatened.

Tom Curran is grounds supervisor for the City of Pompano Beach, FL.

Scottsdale, AZ

Coping with Arizona's intense heat becomes increasingly difficult when temperatures jump from the 60°F



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range of spring into the 90s within a couple days, as they did this year. March temperatures normally stay in the mid-80s, but this year our cool-season perennial ryegrasses were just phasing out and the bermudagrass showing some active growth when the 90°F temperatures hit.

Scottsdale Stadium hosts the San Francisco Giants during spring training, so it sees heavy use between mid-January and May. Then, the local high school plays on the field until its season wraps up. A ladies professional baseball league moves in for practices in June, and for practices and games from July through September. The Arizona Fall League takes over on the first of October and plays until mid-November. We also work-in a few concerts and community events whenever the stadium schedule permits.

On our stadium field of 419 bermudagrass, we drop our mowing height, aerify, and fertilize with urea to help explode the rye. However, we have to make sure it doesn't go down too quickly because the bermudagrasses usually don't kick into the summer growth cycle until May.

Between May and July, day-time temperatures exceed 100°F and only drop to 80° or 85°F at night. Humidity is relatively non-existent. We use regular applications of balanced, slow-release fertilizer, and supplement with a variety of liquid and granular fertilizers to control the growth rate. The low humidity gives us the advantage of low disease pressure.

Monsoons flair up around the end of July and continue into August. They bring high levels of humidity and big, puffy clouds that promise rain. When the rains do come, we may get a splash of water or a downpour of 1/2 to 1 inch within an hour. Irrigation cycles must be adjusted frequently.

Mid-October is the optimum time for overseeding here, but we have to wait until a few days before Thanksgiving because of game schedules. We verticut and fertilize in September, and then begin pouring on the potassium in October and November. A 1:1 ratio of nitrogen to potassium builds up the hardness necessary to withstand our temperature extremes and the stress of heavy use. Finally, we verticut again lightly and mow to scalping levels to achieve good seed-to-soil contact for our overseeding.

We maintain a 1-inch infield turf height for practice schedules, and drop to 3/4 inch for play in mid-May. We're experimenting with the end-of-season height to retain as much color as possible during the transition from cool- to warm-season turf.

It's a continual learning curve since conditions are never quite the same from year to year.

The Giants hold spring training practices and extended-league and institutional-league play at Scottsdale's Indian School Park. The facility's 4-1/2 fields also host Little League baseball and soccer in the summer and Pop Warner football in the fall.



Scottsdale must keep its stadium in top form to host Spring Training games despite arid early season conditions.

Courtesy: City of Scottsdale

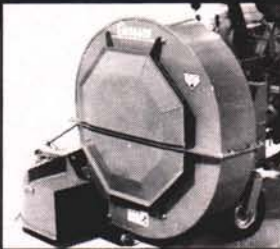
For these fields we plant 328 bermudagrass in the infields and use common bermudagrass in the outfields. We use a balanced, flexible fertilization program to minimize the wear and stress of play.

We irrigate both the stadium and practice fields with a combination of Hunter I-40 and I-25 rotor heads. Our water usage is mandated to a maximum of 160 acre feet per year, and we attempt to reduce our water use each year through astute management practices.

The next water management act is scheduled to go into effect in 2000, and we want to be prepared to handle any mandated reductions. We have water auditors on staff to monitor the irrigation systems. We've cut usage by gradually tightening irrigation-cycle times, by taking some areas out of turf, and by adopting xeriscape concepts. Over the last few years our usage rate has averaged between 144 and 147 acre feet per year. □

Bill Murphy is service area manager, community maintenance and resources, for the City of Scottsdale, AZ.

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Working with Community Groups

by Jim Puhalla

For those of us in the sports-field business, groups of fans and supporters are part of the environment. Schools have boosters and alumni organizations, and youth sports are managed in most areas by community sports associations. Sometimes these groups are just a few moms and dads with a cigar box for the treasury, but others are sophisticated organizations with six-figure budgets.

Whichever kind you encounter, learning to work successfully with these community organizations can make a big difference in the quality of your fields and the number of headaches you encounter. Now that people can't count on government spending to build or renovate their recreational facilities, these associations are raising more and more of the money that pays for sports-facility projects. If you can develop some skills for helping these local organizations raise money, the effort can be mutually beneficial.

Let's start with the assumption that most community-group members have little or no knowledge about what you do. Little league parents may or may not help maintain the fields. They may help fix the mudholes when it rains, and they know when there's a visible problem with the field, but they don't have much of a sense of what goes on between games.

Raising awareness

Community groups do raise money—they help pay for equipment, uniforms, insurance, and referees. If you work it right, they can also help raise money for field-improvement projects. But 'working it right' is largely a process of raising awareness.

First of all, it's very important to keep records of the different ways that the condition of the fields affects the sports played on them. Have someone take pictures of the field, particularly

of any problems, like standing water on the infield of a baseball diamond. Keep a record of rain-outs, special work that has to be done to allow a game to go on, and extra expenses that are incurred because of the condition of the field. If you can show your public the cost of a bad field, you can get them involved in making improvements—and in raising money to pay for them.

I would also make an effort to remind people that fields are safer when they are maintained well, and that kids play better when they have

shows the regular maintenance work that must be done, along with larger projects that will require special funding. This type of plan shows the public work that can be covered by your operating budget and work that will require their financial help. It takes a few hours to prepare a plan like this, but it makes it much easier to get help from community groups.

You can also use the original plan to report back to these groups on a regular basis, and each new year you can quickly update the plan. This can be an important step in making sure you have money for future projects.

It's also important to think expansively when you're considering which groups may be able to help you and how they can support your work. Remember that there may be foundations or charitable organizations in your community that are willing to support projects like yours. If you've ever done any work with foundations, you may know the basic principle of their operating philosophy: most will not give money for regular operating budgets, but they will often consider funding capital improvements like new fields and upgrades. A recent high-profile

project to construct a playground in our community was paid for in large part through a grant from a foundation that only gives money for playgrounds.

The kind of long-range plan I've been talking about can be a big help to members of a community group who may be assigned to contact local foundations. It identifies those capital projects that fit their way of doing business.

In some cases, you can involve booster groups from other sports, or even the band. At one high school in our area, the band boosters raised money to put lights on the high school baseball field. There were just two conditions: that the band be allowed to use the field for practices one night a week,

Figure 1. Projected three-year budget.

Sports Field Budget					
See Details on Page #	Field and Description of Job	Current Budget pd by District	Three Year Plan With Support From Organization		
			1998	1999	2000
	Field: All				
2	Job: Fertilization	3,500			
	Field: Football & Soccer				
2	Job: Silt Seeding	1,750			
	Field: Baseball & Softball				
3	Job: Lip Removal & Grading	1,250			
	Field: Football Stadium Field				
4	Job: Deep Tine Aeration		1,250		
	Field: Football Stadium Field				
5	Job: Installed Irrigation System		6,000		
	Field: Baseball				
6	Job: Soil Amendment			3,500	
	Field: Baseball				
6	Job: Re-do Infield Grass				3,000
	Totals	6,500	7,250	3,500	3,000

good fields. Some football fans might get a charge out of seeing kids battle it out in the mud, but most people understand the principle that slipping and sliding around means players are off-balance and more susceptible to certain kinds of injuries. Bringing the safety issue to the attention of group members can really help get people involved.

Budgeting

Another way to increase community-group involvement is to make a budget plan for your key facilities. The most effective plans schedule at least two or three years in advance.

Figure 1 is an example of a budget plan that extends for three years. It



This football field reconstruction project was completed at about half the usual price because of community participation. Volunteers included members of the football team, who turned out to help lay the sod they would play on. *Courtesy: Jim Puhalla*

and that the field be lined as a football field. This kind of unusual arrangement allowed everybody to win.

Sometimes school teams hold games in parks, or at fields that are owned by community groups. In these cases, don't hesitate to get the school's boosters involved in helping to raise money for field improvements. If big projects need to be performed on your field, a little advance thinking about

others that use (or could use) that field can yield big dividends.

Working with volunteers

Most field managers eventually get involved in projects that use volunteer labor from community organizations. Volunteers can help with anything from raking the infield, to assisting with purchasing and other administrative tasks. Good help can slash the cost of a project, but if you're not careful, volunteer help can also be a nightmare.

If you plan to have volunteers working on a project, I advise you to call the person who handles your insurance. Ask a few questions about how volunteers are covered by your policies. If they're not covered at all, check into the cost of riders or other changes to get them covered. No matter how much volunteers may protest their commitment to the organization, a slight injury may send them scurrying to a telephone to call an attorney. If you let children help out (or minors of any age), be very careful about how they're supervised.

When you have volunteers at work, it can be tricky to direct their efforts without making them mad. People feel that if they're volunteering, they should be

allowed to do the job any way they want. The result could be messed-up contours, or dragging that does more harm than good—you can imagine the possibilities.

Tact is important. If you see a volunteer doing something the wrong way, explain what you're trying to achieve, and then tell them how you want them to do it. For example, "Bob, we need to keep that grass edge clear so water will drain off the skinned area—so let's make sure we lift the drag to keep from pulling soil into the grass."

Sometimes members of the group will volunteer to get you materials at a big discount, or to simply take care of buying them for you. When you hear that kind of offer, beware! Keep an eye on what you're getting. People who are donating things feel you should be grateful for whatever you get, and they tend to think 'dirt is dirt.'

We've had to go through entire truckloads of donated topsoil to screen out hundreds of pounds of scrap metal before we could use it. Do yourself a favor, develop the skill of gracefully saying, "That's very generous of you, but it's not really what we need." You'll thank yourself.

Continued on pg. 29

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