

# ELP?

BY JEFF FOWLER

## MIGHT BE THE KEY

you about what they think needs done as well. Consider forming a volunteer council and giving them an avenue to not only communicate with you, but with each other.

Do not let it be said that a volunteer is forever and can not be "fired." If you have outlined a job description and the mission of your organization and tried to work with a person who continues to work independently of you and others, it is your responsibility to ask them to find another organization to volunteer for. Remember you should make it a privilege to volunteer for your organization not a right.

Volunteers can be used not only to do many of the tasks that you cannot get done, but also to assist with many of the everyday tasks that need completed. For example, teach your coaches and managers to drag the infield the proper way and

tarp homeplate and the pitcher's mound every night after practice or a game. Show volunteers the correct method to repair clay in batters boxes and mounds so that they can help maintain those areas regularly.

If you follow these basic steps when working with volunteers, you will not only accomplish more work but, you will have people taking personal pride in your facility and helping in ways that you never thought possible. If people see that they will be a valuable addition and feel like their time and talents are appreciated, volunteers will become a priceless commodity around your facility. **ST**

*Jeff Fowler, a SPORTSTURF Editorial Advisory Board member, is an extension agent for Penn State, and co-owner of Grass Stains Productions. He can be reached at [jtf2@psu.edu](mailto:jtf2@psu.edu).*

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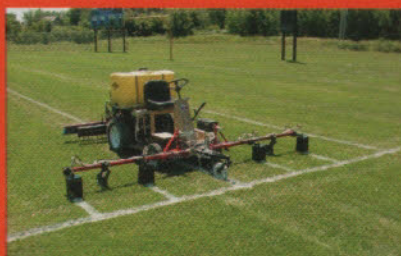
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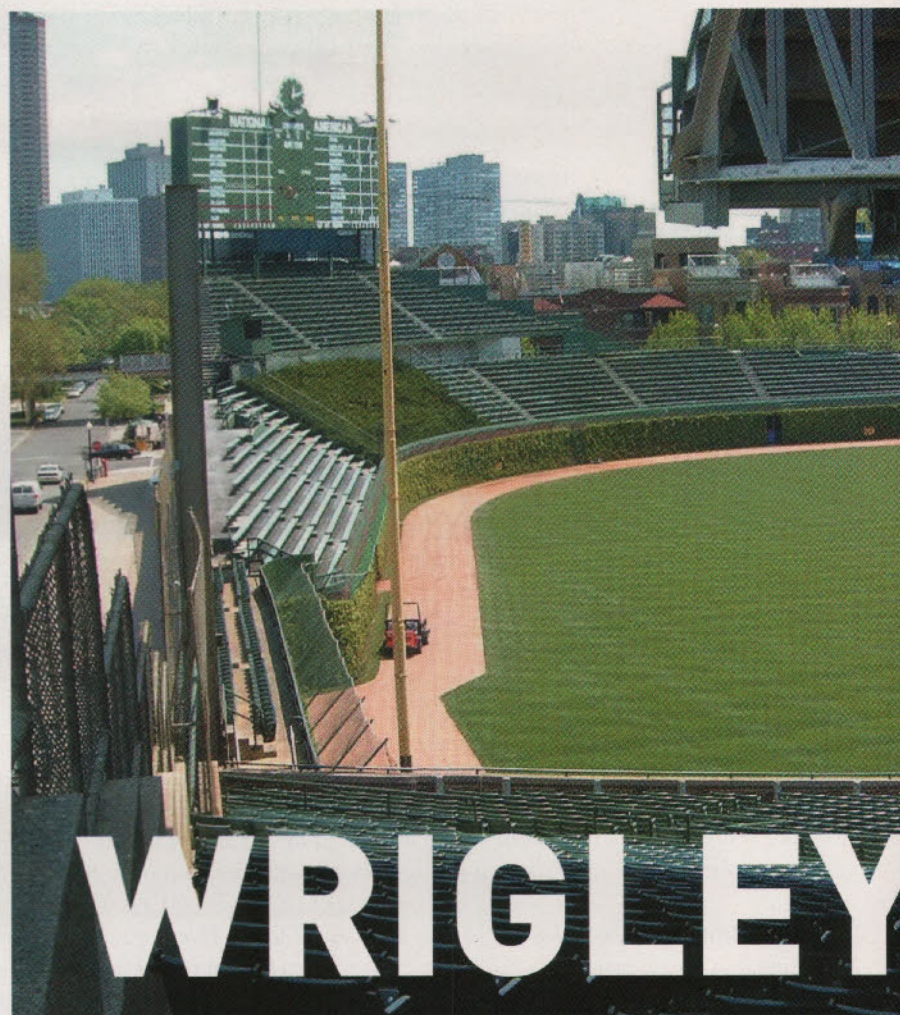
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around the grounds



**D**uring 2002 Rathje tried a few tricks to defeat the pigeons. "First, we tried using treated corn," he says. The kernels contain a substance that is supposed to annoy the pigeons by disrupting their equilibrium. The effect, if any, was undetectable. Next, Rathje and his crew tried applying a sticky gel on the trusses to discourage landing. But, says Rathje, there were too many trusses and beams to get sufficient coverage. They tried plastic owls to bother the birds to no avail.

In spring 2003, Rathje investigated a sonic device for deterring birds manufactured by Chicago-based Bird-X, Inc. Bird-X in turn referred Rathje to a bird-deterrence consultant, Kevin Connelly, GM of Premier Pest Elimination.

"Food service and pigeon excrement don't mix," Connelly says bluntly. Health issues abound. "When 40,000 fans come to an outdoor venue and you have bird droppings, the probability rises geometrically that someone will be affected by contaminants," he says. Also, he adds, the cost of cleaning up resistive bird residue on the seats and in the stands before and after each game is considerable.

Connelly met on-site and explained the options, including installing extensive netting in Wrigley Field's vast superstructure to restrain the birds from roosting. This would require much longer than 2 weeks to install properly. Even more to the point, it would break Rathje's budget.

Rathje preferred Connelly's other proposal: installing ultrasonic devices to get the most bang for Wrigley Field's buck, and the most coverage considering the expanses to be protected. The two men worked out a plan to install seven Bird-X Ultrason X units and seven Super BirdXPeller PRO units in the trusses under the upper deck and in the lower deck corners.

The double whammy on the birds was deliberate and logical. As Bird-X president Ron Schwarcz explains, "The area to control was large enough to require several sonic units. We selected two different types of units to produce greater variety of sound. This would provide immediate results while helping prevent long-term acclimation, since birds don't like surprises and unpredictable changes."

The Ultrason X product uses ultrasonic sound waves to repel birds and other nuisance critters. The basic technology isn't new; Bird-X incorporated it into its product line 40 years ago to deter birds in enclosed areas like warehouses and





loading docks, where walls and roofs could magnify the impact of the sound. In a recent breakthrough, Ultrason X is the first device to take ultrasonic sound OUT of doors.

The second type of deterrence device, Super BirdXPeller PRO, pushes the sound much farther and is ideal for large, open areas. It works on the bird's psychological state, as Ron Schwarcz explains: "The machine incorporates the birds' own distress calls to repel the 'usual suspects'—pigeons, sparrows, starlings and other common pests. Then we added the sounds of two predators, knowing that these cries would scare all birds universally." For maximum effect, the Super BirdXPeller is programmable to produce random timing, volume and frequency.

The big day came in late May 2003. When the Bird-X units were turned on, "The birds flapped out," Rathje says.

"About 90 percent of the birds left for good," says Connelly. It wasn't a total elimination, both men agree, but it forced the bird problem to fall within an acceptable tolerance range. That was the goal,

Connelly says, noting that realistic expectations and budgetary constraints are always factors in choosing solutions for large facilities.

"We're changing the habits of an animal," Connelly says. And sometimes that involves reasonable compromise. For example, the sonic equipment at Wrigley Field is turned off during home games because it was felt that the audible portion of the sound would disturb the fans. Consequently, some pigeons return while the units are turned off. Immediately after the game, the units are turned on again, to good effect. It's a compromise that works for Wrigley Field.

From the professional's point of view, bird deterrence pays for itself rapidly in reduced clean-up costs; but, says Connelly, the benefits of bird control go far beyond economics and into intellectual values of improved aesthetics, environmental safety and positive public relations. You can't put a price on those. **ST**

This article was supplied by Bird-X Inc., [www.bird-x.com](http://www.bird-x.com).

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(above left) Southern Methodist University, Dallas, TX  
(above right) PIAA AAA State Championship game at HersheyPark Stadium, Hershey, PA

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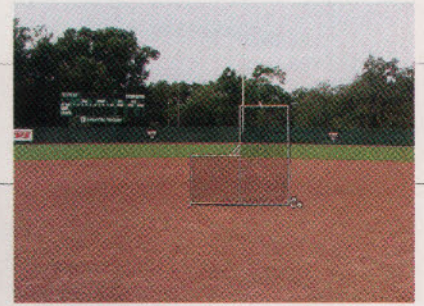
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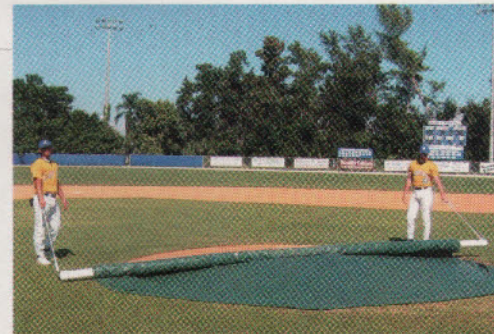
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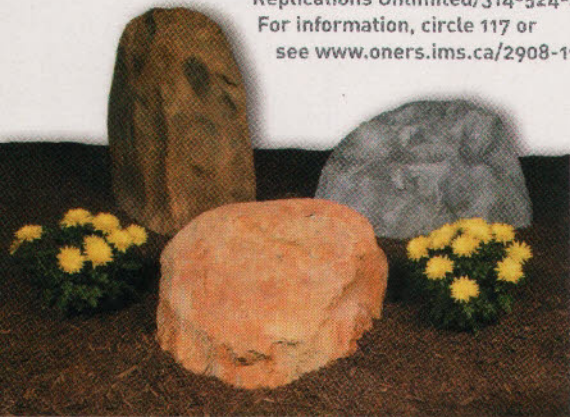
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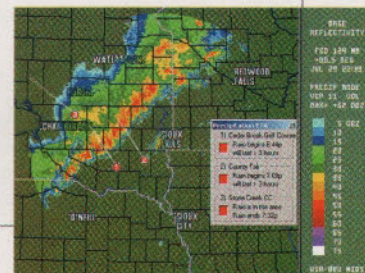
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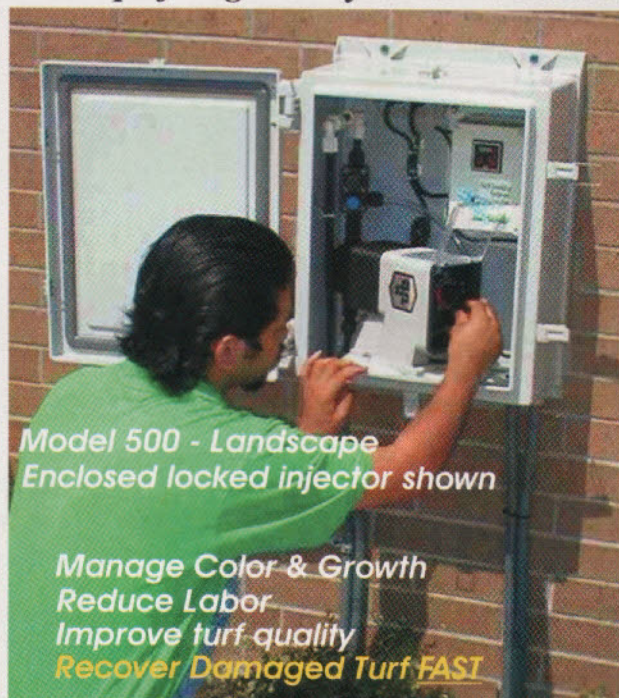
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# SAFE moves forward

**A**t the STMA Annual Meeting in San Diego, CA, on January 24, 2004, SAFE Chair, Mike Schiller, CSFM, reported on the SAFE Board of Trustees. He noted the Board consists of three STMA Board Members, three representatives of SAFE major contributors, three individuals in other sports turf related positions, and Executive Director, Steve Trusty. The 2003 Board consisted of Boyd Montgomery, CSFM; Dr. Tony Koski, and Monty Montague from the STMA Board; Tom Lynn of Jacobsen; Mike Scaletta of John Deere, and Dale Getz, CSFM, of the Toro Company, representing SAFE contributors; and Bob Curry of Covermaster, and Greg Petry of the Waukegan Park District, as well as himself, from the other group, and Trusty. Leaving the Board in January, at the end of their three-year terms of service were Monty Montague and Tom Lynn. Dr. Koski, who had completed his term on the STMA Board, was no longer eligible as an STMA Board representative, so was also leaving the SAFE Board. Chair Schiller thanked them for their service to SAFE.

Schiller said, "On behalf of SAFE, myself, and the other SAFE Nominating Committee members: STMA nominating Committee Chair Murray Cook, STMA President Bob Campbell, CSFM, and STMA Executive Director Steve Trusty, I place the following individuals into nomination to the SAFE Board of Trustees to be voted on by the corporate member, STMA: George Trivett, CSFM, and Lance Tibbetts, as representatives from the STMA Board, Trivett to be voted upon for a three-year term, and Tibbetts to be appointed to fulfill the remaining year of the three-year term in the position vacated by Koski, and Joe Zvanut of Jacobsen as a representative of the contributors for a three-year term, and Mike Schiller, CSFM, for another three year term as a representative in the 'other' category." Schiller called for a motion to accept the SAFE Board of Trustees as put forward and asked that they be elected by acclamation. Eric Adkins so moved. Monty Montague seconded the motion. The motion carried.

As the first action of the 2004 Board, Schiller noted that SAFE will accept any donation and urged all to get involved in giving. The major thrust for 2004 will be seeking greater funding for sports specific research, finalizing the research criteria and beginning assessment of research projects for funding.

Schiller reported that SAFE was off to a good start in 2004 and accepted a \$500 donation to SAFE presented by Darian Daily on behalf of the Ohio Chapter.

He thanked Jacobsen for their funding of the SAFE Golf Tournament, held in conjunction with the STMA annual conference, for the last three years. He reported that this year's participants had a great time playing the beautiful La Costa course and the 2004 Tournament netted over \$11,000 for SAFE.

He also reported that, in the area of scholarships, SAFE is doing well. Toro has established scholarships at the undergraduate and graduate levels in the name of Dr. Jim Watson. The silent and live auction and raffle funding have gone to the scholarship fund as well. He thanked Florida Chapter President and award-winning auctioneer, Tom Curran, for all his efforts and noted that the live auction raised \$3,600 and the silent auction \$4,200. He also thanked George Toma who willingly gave the shirt off his back for SAFE during the live Auction.

Schiller noted that funding for SAFE will help support research for better science, technology and equipment. And it will support the education and training of sports turf managers and aspiring sports turf managers. Most importantly, your donation will help provide the best sports surfaces for all levels of play.

A safe, playable field is the strong foundation of any game. Working together, we can build the SAFE Foundation into a strong resource for sports turf managers around the world. Contact Steve Trusty (Steve@st.omhcox-mail.com) for information on making contributions to — or receiving research endorsements from — the SAFE Foundation.



# STMA honors cream of the crop in San Diego

## Ken Mrock

Ken Mrock, Head Groundskeeper for the Chicago Bears, was presented the 2003 Harry C. Gill Memorial Award, essentially the Sports Turf Managers Association's "Man of the Year" award. Mrock also serves as a consultant for the Chicago Park District on the field management of Soldier Field, and to Olivet Nazarene University, the preseason-training facility for the Bears.

This Award was named for Harry Gill, STMA's second president, who served in that capacity from 1982-1983. His commitment to the sports turf industry and his support of the goals and standards on which STMA is based are legendary. The Gill Award denotes an individual's long-time service and commitment to STMA and those same goals and standards.

Mrock's relentless pursuit for safer and better sports turf has long been apparent in his work. Always seeking better techniques, he's searched the nation and the world to incorporate the most efficient, effective, and up-to-date practices and procedures into his turf management program. The results of this commitment are apparent at the Bears' training facility and at the newly renovated Soldier Field. Mrock is not only recognized for his commitment to excellence in his sports turf management program's focus on safety and playability, but also for his outreach efforts within the sports turf industry. He is a Past Board Member of both the National STMA and Midwest Chapter of STMA and was a founding member of the Midwest Chapter. He was a member of the Strategic Planning Committee and played a key role in developing the plan that STMA is now using as a guide to a higher level of professionalism. He Chaired the STMA Bylaws Review Committee in 2003 and is the Chair of the STMA Ethics Committee.

## Pam Sherratt

The 2003 Dr. William H. Daniel Award recipient was Pam Sherratt, Sports Turf Extension Specialist for The Ohio State University, and a member of SPORTSTURF's Editorial Advisory Board.

This Award was named for the late Dr. Daniel in behalf of his pioneering efforts and long-term support of STMA. The pattern he set for the partnership between the educators in this industry and the sports turf managers who incorporate the knowledge, training and research advances in practical, on-the-field applications is key to the progress that has been made, and continues to be made, in providing better and safer sports turf areas.

Sherratt has done an outstanding job of representing sports turf managers in the state of Ohio and across the US. She has produced many beneficial research papers on sports turf and has initiated many new research "sports turf specific" projects at OSU. She has served as a speaker at sports turf conferences on the national, regional and state levels, and for numerous Ohio STMA Chapter workshops and field days, sharing in-depth technical information in a format that facilitates its practical application in sports turf management. In addition, she has reached sports turf managers worldwide through the development and implementation of the internet-based Sports Notes. She has worked with OSU facility to develop sports turf specific classes within the curriculum.

## Jim Crawford

Jim Crawford, Grounds Manager for the McFarland School District of McFarland, WI, was presented the 2003 George Toma Golden Rake Award.

This Award was named for one of STMA's Founders, George Toma, whose

work with the National Football League on Super Bowl field preparation has made him one of the Association's most high-profile members. Besides being one of STMA's Founders, Toma is also a long-time STMA supporter, who has served, and continues to serve, as a mentor for many of those in the sports turf industry.

The recipient of this Award is someone who is on that quest to reach their goals and is demonstrating the "and then some" spirit which is so much a part of Toma's approach to sports turf management.

Crawford has been manager of the athletic fields in the McFarland School District for the past 20 years. He oversees a staff of four in the management and maintenance of the stadium facility, track facility, four baseball fields, two softball diamonds, three soccer fields, and four general practice areas.

Crawford takes pride in providing the athletes with safe, high quality playing areas that enhance performance. He is open to new ideas and input, from field users as well as his peers, and seeks information from a variety of sources to continually upgrade his management program. He also readily shares his expertise with others, serving as a mentor to other sports turf managers.

## Pat White

The 2003 Dick Ericson Award was presented to Pat White, Recreation Maintenance Supervisor for the Recreation Maintenance Division of the City of Hollywood, FL. The Dick Ericson Founders Award is issued to someone who is planning and executing the sports turf management of their facility and represents the ideals he established.

White began his work with the City of Hollywood in 1990, quickly moving through the ranks as laborer, groundskeeper, equipment operator, and maintenance technician before being named Recreation Maintenance Supervisor in 1998. He currently oversees the maintenance, care and preservation of approximately 114 acres of parks, which include baseball, softball, football, and soccer fields. White continually demonstrates his expertise in not only providing sound grounds maintenance practices and procedures for existing fields but also in providing input and direction for field renovation projects.

White has built his staff of 16 into a team focused on managing their program in an efficient manner. He has developed written field procedures, checklists and field evaluation forms to create a system by which this team can continually meet the goal of providing the best possible conditions for athletes of all ages and skill levels.

## Alpine Services, Inc.

Recipient of the Outstanding Commercial Affiliate Award for 2003 was Alpine Services, Inc. N. Grove Teates, Jr., company president, and Judith H. Teates, company vice president, accepted the Award.

The Award was presented to Alpine Services in recognition of the company's long-standing and continuing support of STMA. The company is a long-term advertising supporter of STMA's publications; helps support the annual Conference; is a Silver-Level Chapter Sponsor, and provides support to many of STMA's 26 affiliated Chapters. Alpine Services continues to promote professionalism within the sports turf industry through educational outreach and training programs and the participation of company personnel in local, regional and national conferences and workshops.

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