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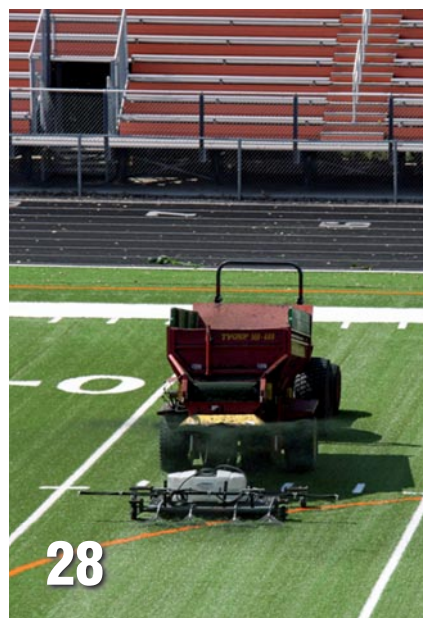
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Page 38: Sports Turf Manager Marc C. Moran, a horticulture/turfgrass science instructor currently working on his Master's degree, led a group effort at Atlee High School, Mechanicsville, VA to win the 2009 STMA High School/Parks Softball Field of the Year Award.



12



28

In this issue

DECEMBER 2010 | VOLUME 26 / NUMBER 12

FEATURES

Facilities & Operations

- 8** Large scale field painting: doing more with less
- 12** Raising a family in the sportsturf industry
- 16** Taking the anxiety out of making presentations
- 18** 10 tips for better crew training
- 20** What facility managers need to know about artificial turf
- 24** So you want to write a newsletter article...
- 28** Not all synthetic infill material is the same

Field Science

- 30** Update on turfgrass varieties for 2011

Tools & Equipment

- 34** Is a propane-fueled mower in your future?



- 36** New products recently introduced

Field of the Year

- 38** Atlee High School, Mechanicsville, VA wins the 2009 STMA Schools/Parks Softball Field of the Year Award

DEPARTMENTS

- 6** From the Sidelines
- 7** STMA President's Message
- 17** John Mascaro's Photo Quiz
- 41** STMA Chapter News
- 43** Ask a CSFM
- 44** Marketplace/Chapter Contacts
- 45** Advertisers' Index
- 46** Q&A



On the cover: Most of the work is done by students for the Field of the Year Award-winning School/Park Softball field at Atlee High School, Mechanicsville, VA. Marc Moran, an instructor at the school, runs the program

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From the Sidelines



Eric Schroder
Editor

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Grau gems now on file at Michigan State

Dr. Fred V. Grau might be called the Meriwether Lewis of turfgrass research and education. Dr. Grau, who died at 88 in 1990, earned his PhD at Maryland in 1935 and went west to Penn State as the first turfgrass extension specialist working in the United States.

Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, Grau advocated for high quality athletic turfs to reduce sports-related injuries. In 1959 he became executive secretary of the Pennsylvania Turfgrass Council and helped to create a financial base from which to support all types of turfgrass research through grants. Grau was also principally involved with the Musser International Turfgrass Foundation, another organization created to raise funds for turf research and fellowships.

The Turfgrass Information Center at Michigan State (<http://tic.msu.edu>) recently received a major donation of materials from Dr. Grau's family, including extension materials, reprints, and other publications, as well as unique content such as correspondence, manuscripts, images, and records dealing with the turfgrass industry beginning in the mid-20th century.

Born on a farm in Bennington, NE Grau graduated from the University of Nebraska in 1931. As Grau studied for his master's degree at Maryland he became a research assistant for the USGA's Green Section and eventually served as its director between 1945 and 1953. During and after that time, he actively promoted several new varieties of turfgrasses, including "Meyer" zoysiagrass, "Merion" Kentucky bluegrass and "U-3" bermudagrass.

The Grau materials join the O. J. Noer Memorial Turfgrass Collection at Michigan State. The Noer Collection and the James B Beard Turfgrass Library Collection form the strongest single public location of turfgrass-related content in the world. Records for items within the Grau materials have already begun to appear within Turfgrass Information File (TGIF), and originals are available for consulting use within the Turfgrass Information Center at MSU.

For a list of materials by or about Dr. Fred V. Grau as currently indexed within the TGIF database, see: <http://www.lib.msu.edu/cgi-bin/flinkbora.pl?name=grau,%20f>

More Sparty news

A press release came across my desk bragging on how many Michigan State turf grads and students worked the 2010 World Series. Greg Elliott, head groundskeeper for the Giants' AT&T Park, graduated in 2002 from the Sports and Commercial Turf Management program; another MSU graduate, Jared Knoodle, is a grounds crew member there; Steve Lord, a graduate of MSU's four-year Turfgrass Management program in the Department of Crop and Soil Sciences, is a member of the grounds crew at Rangers Ballpark in Arlington; and current student Dan Jennings traveled to Texas to help prepare for a game.

"While we've had Spartans working for World Series teams before, it's quite remarkable to have so many having such huge responsibility for this year's series," said David Gilstrap, who coordinates the two-year Sports and Commercial Turf Management program.

"It's a lifelong goal to be here," Elliott said, "and it's really pretty special."

Lord said that participating in a World Series on any level is a learning experience. That's why they brought Jennings back to Texas.

"This will be a great learning experience for him (Jennings)," Lord said. "There's much more exposure during a much larger event. Dan will get to see how everything works."

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President's Message

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Happy Holidays!

I wish you and your family a very relaxing holiday season, and one that creates great memories. As I reflect on the past year as president and with one month left in this office, I realize that I have many people to thank, about 2,500, at last report. It has been an honor and privilege serving you, the membership, and I am very grateful for the opportunity.

It is through your unfailing support of STMA, as members and as volunteers that our association continues to advance. I have had the chance to meet and talk with professionals in other industries who are members of their professional associations. My impression is that STMA is unique and stands head and shoulders above other organizations. This is because of the passion you have for the profession, your enthusiasm to share your knowledge, and your willingness to get involved.

Our volunteerism is high and continues to climb. Interest in board service was the highest we have ever had, and I'm sure you'll agree that anyone elected from the Slate of Candidates will do an outstanding job for STMA. Last spring, when the Executive Committee was placing those who volunteered for the 2010 committees, some of our committees had to swell so that we had spots for everyone who wanted to serve. This is a great problem to have! We rely on our volunteers to bring ideas for new programs and services and for better ways to serve all of you. The 2011 committee year is approaching. You'll find a committee volunteer form on line and in this issue. I encourage you to give back to your association, and I can promise you that your experience as an STMA committee volunteer will also be very rewarding for you.

STMA has much on its horizon, and we want you continue to be a part of this journey. It is very important that you renew your membership. We are in the midst of our 2011 renewal cycle, and you should have received your dues notice via the U.S. mail. You can also go online at www.STMA.org and log in to the members only side to renew. If you need help in securing funding for your membership, a quick glance through our educational resources on the members only side should provide some assistance. There are dozens of high level educational bulletins, maintenance calendars, podcasts, and webinars, with more being added frequently. I encourage you to print a few out and show your boss the high quality of information you receive from STMA. Of course, the annual conference and exhibition offers the one place that you can immerse yourself for three days in the latest information and technology available. As another benefit of membership, your conference registration fees are much lower.

I hope to see you in Austin where you can renew your spirit and continue to experience that special holiday feeling as you see old friends and make new ones.

LARGE SCALE field painting: doing more with less

The Blue Valley School District is made up of 35 schools spread over about 100 square miles. The athletic field crew is responsible for about 100 natural grass and five synthetic fields. Due to limited staff, all grounds maintenance and athletic field work is done by mobile crews. Since none of this work is site based, materials management and transportation can be challenging. Jim Wilson, Assistant Grounds Supervisor, runs the crew that is responsible for painting about 30 football and soccer fields each week, along with many other responsibilities. Mixing and transporting paint for all these fields is truly one of our most difficult challenges, or I should say it used to be.

We generally dilute the paint 1:1 with water. Each field requires an average of two buckets of diluted turf paint. Crews used to spend many hours on Mondays mixing paint for the week. Carrying and opening five-gallon buckets of paint, pouring half the paint into an empty bucket, adding water and then mixing each one with a drill and paddle. Then the mixed buckets were sealed and carried to the trailer for transport to the field to be painted. Multiply this times 30! After arriving, the 40-pound buckets were lifted for the third time to be poured into the striper to paint the

➤ Buying paint in 55-gallon drums provided us about a 25% savings just on paint.

➤ **BROCK SMOTHERS** prepares to transfer paint from the barrel to the mix tank.



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» Jim Wilson loads a striper with diluted turf paint.

field. Handling 60 or more buckets per week is not only exhausting but it can be hazardous. There is a risk of injury to employees due to the repetitive motion and lifting. There is also risk of spillage and bucket tip over in transport.

Imagine spilling just one five-gallon bucket of paint and the time it would take to clean it up. Some of us know first hand how frustrating and time consuming that can be. Even after the painting is complete each week, there is the problem of dealing with hundreds and hundreds of empty buckets. Our paint suppliers would take some of them if we cleaned them, prepped them for shipping and paid the freight costs. Even if I specified that the paint supplier was required to take the empty buckets, we were paying more for the paint to cover this additional cost to the supplier.

Our landfill would take them only if the lids were removed and the residual paint was completely dry. It just never seemed right to send all those perfectly good buckets to the

landfill but what were we supposed to do with them? I asked some of our suppliers if they could supply our paint in 55-gallon drums. That doesn't seem like an unreasonable request when you are buying several thousand gallons of paint per year. They agreed to find a way to do this. Now we had to find a way to efficiently handle and prepare concentrated turf paint in drums.

Anytime you can reduce the overall number of containers through bulk purchasing, there must be cost savings. Buying paint in 55-gallon drums provided us about a 25% savings just on paint. Another benefit is that this is a great source for new trash cans. Have you priced commercial trash containers recently? How about \$300 and up!

We have discovered a great way to convert our ordinary 55-gallon drum bulk paint containers into durable and inexpensive trash containers. We specify that the drums used to ship our turf paints are new or re-conditioned barrels. They must be open top so we don't have to cut off the top. They

While the undiluted paint is transferring, we are adding 55 gallons of water to the mixing tank to achieve our 1:1 dilution.

still have a steel lid, but the lid is clamped on. When the lid is removed, the upper edge of the barrel is rounded, smooth and ready to hold a trash liner in place without tearing it. They must also be painted inside and out to prevent corrosion. For trash can use, we install a flat top, galvanized lid on the barrel. The lid has a 6-inch opening with a spring loaded lid to limit the size of litter going in to the barrel to that of typical hand carry items. How many times have you had to send someone out to empty a trash can prior to the scheduled dump date because someone has stuffed a large, empty cardboard box inside or one of your neighbors needed a place to put a full lawn and leaf bag? This lid prevents that from happening. The lids are padlocked to the barrel to prevent theft.

DEALING WITH 55 GALLONS OF PAINT

So, how do we deal with 55 gallon barrels of paint? We came up with the idea for a high volume, turf paint pumping system several years before the development of the bulk paint mixing system. We have been growing and maintaining bermudagrass fields in Kansas City since 1996. During the early years of our bermuda program, we were painting stadium fields green during early winter dormancy. In an effort to paint faster, we experimented with using a 15-foot boom sprayer to paint the fields. Through trial and error, we discovered that using low pressure diaphragm pumps would be the most efficient method of pumping large volumes of paint. Also, the diaphragm pump was less likely to plug up and very easy to clean and service.

For painting fields, pump capacity of 10 gallons per minute was adequate. During