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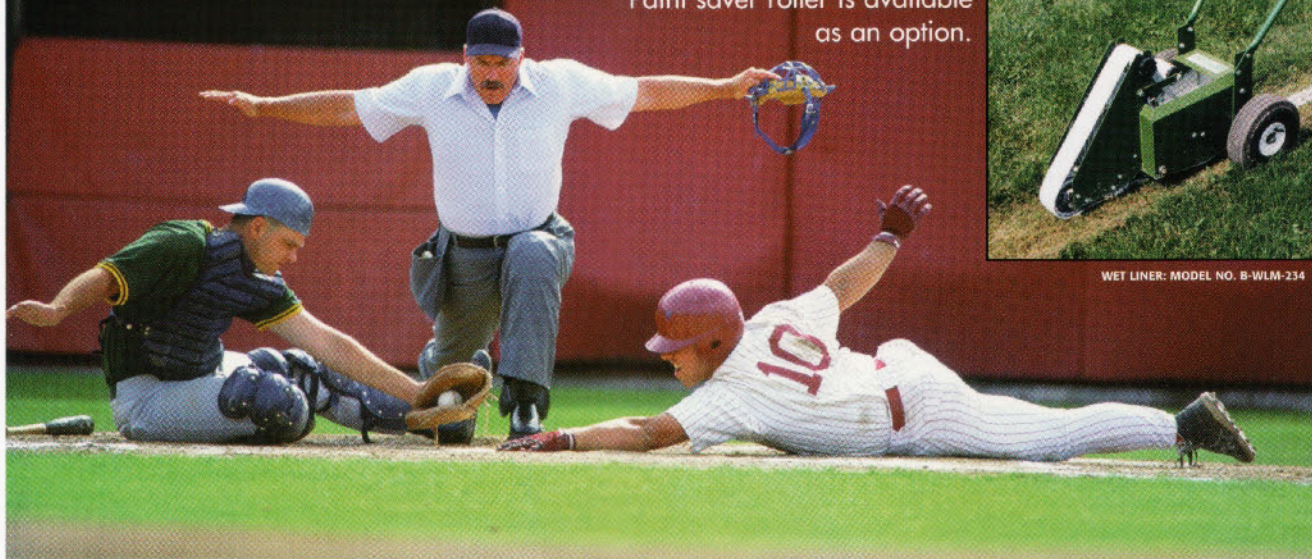
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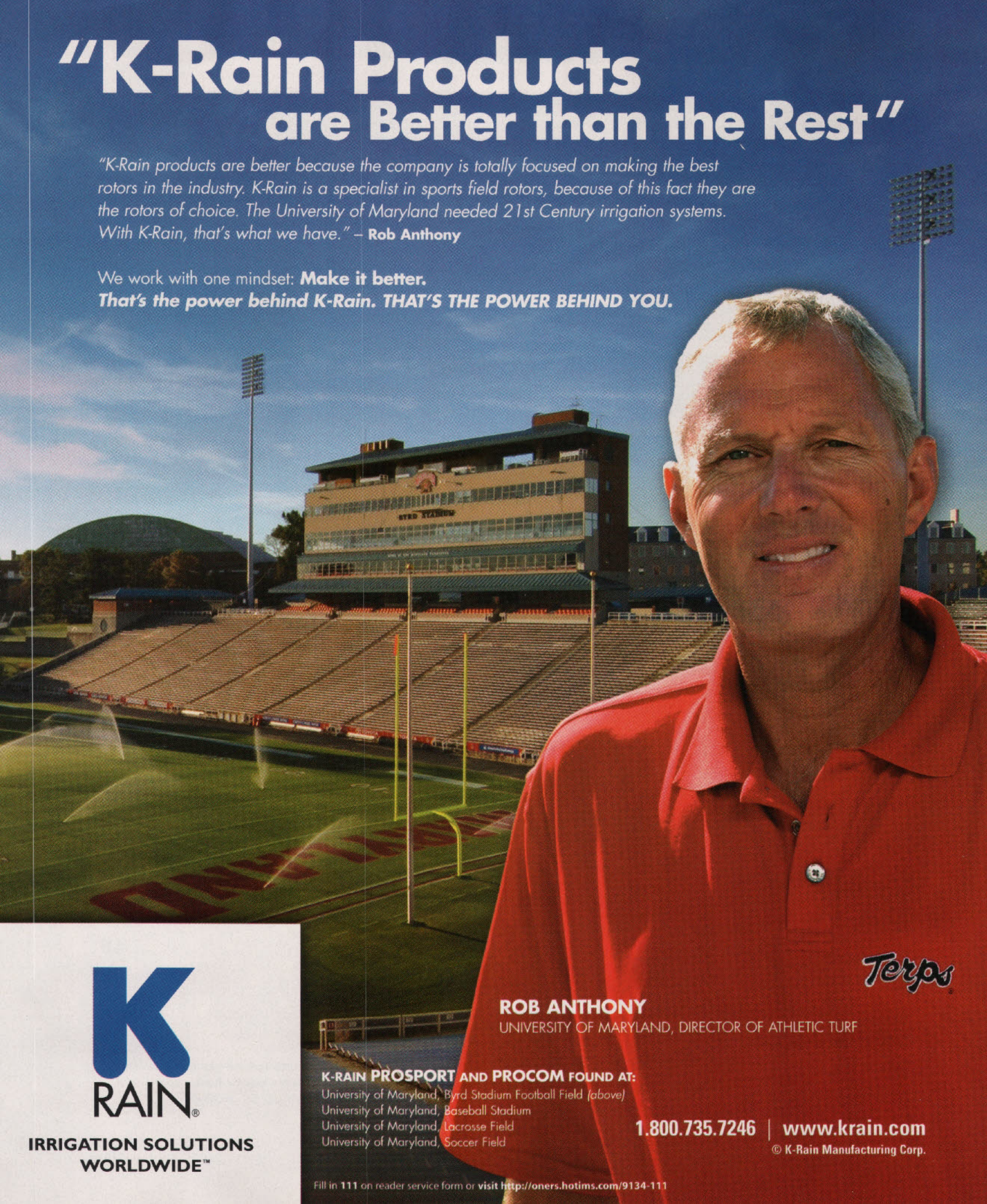
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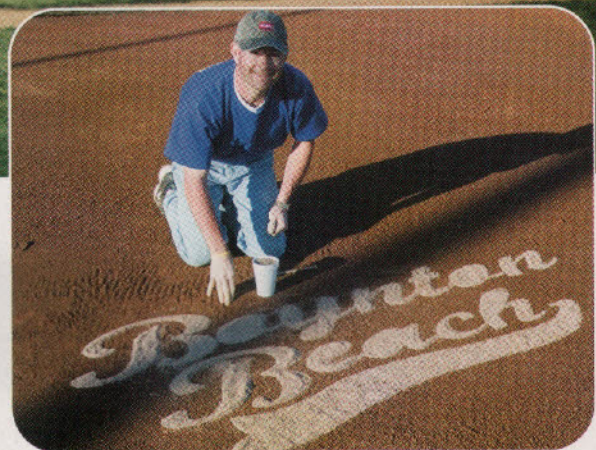
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On the cover: The Sports Turf Managers Association's Founders Awards are the highest honors sports field professionals can receive.

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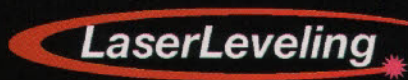
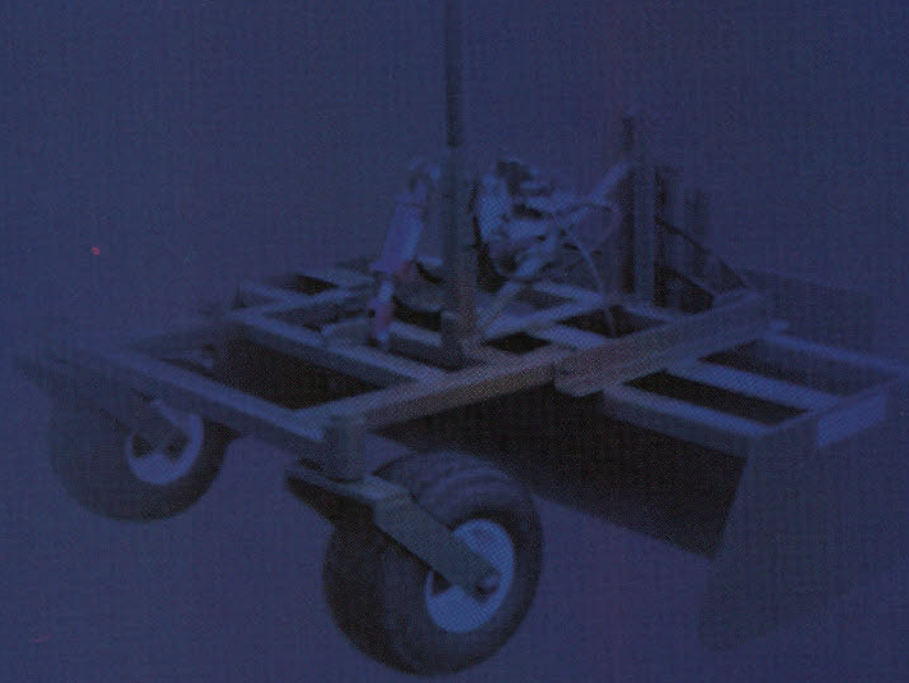


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A Florida Little League field that undergoes a professional “makeover” following hurricane damage may not always be news but it is when ABC’s “Extreme Makeover: Home Edition” airs an episode featuring just such a renovation (the show aired March 23).

The show typically renovates homes, but producers decided to devote the post-hurricane segments to community projects after receiving numerous requests for help. Among them was a plea from parents and players from the Boynton Beach, FL Little League.

Boyd Montgomery, CSFM, who works for Toro, saw a newspaper article on how the program was thinking of helping out Boynton Beach. “The next week I contacted Hector Turf, our distributor in Florida. Chris Fordney, Hector’s sports field & grounds rep, directed me to Duane Cyr,” says Montgomery. “Duane, another salesman, lives in the community and has had three generations of his family play on the field. We talked and decided to contact the show.”

Montgomery also reached out to Charlie Vestel from Profile Products, and his distributor asked a local sports field construction company, Sports Turf One and president Dell Haverland, to be general contractor.

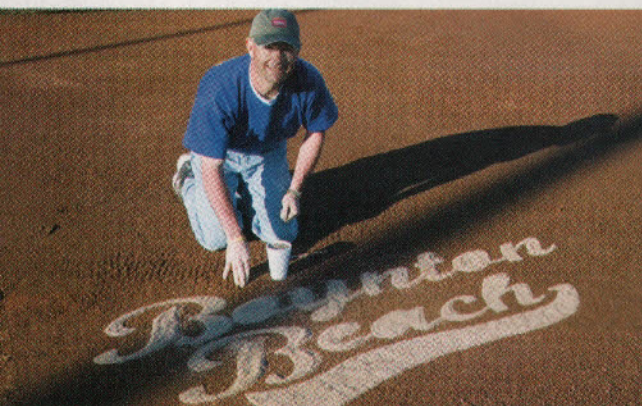
“Joe Limburg from Hector Turf asked us if we would be interested in

helping. Of course we jumped at the opportunity,” says Bill Gillan, senior project manager for Sports Turf One and lead on the project. “At that point we were contacted by the show and the ball really got rolling.

“We started procuring materials and contractors about five weeks prior to start up. We had used our yard and shop as a staging area for all needed equipment and materials. Companies and vendors from all over the country were sending tools and materials for the whole project which we stored and inventoried,” Gillan says.

“We supplied 28 of our own crew and the equipment to completely re-do the East Boynton Little League game field, and we also renovated two smaller fields, just because,” says Gillan. “We scheduled all trades (down to the 1/2 hour) and made sure all materials were available when needed. This was no small task as the project included all new fencing, irrigation, batting tunnels, bleachers, dugouts, landscaping, new concession building, etc.”

continued on page 29



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President's Message

An association of involvement

STMA's committees are in full swing, working hard on behalf of the association. I am pleased to report that STMA has more volunteers involved in committee service than ever before in the history of the association.

Like most associations, our volunteers assist staff by providing ideas and direction for association projects and services. Unlike other associations, the STMA committee members actually spearhead projects, do research, and help staff be more effective by providing additional "manpower." Our committees have already logged more than 40 hours in conference calls this year as they work on STMA business and help to extend staff resources.

Each committee chair has developed the committee's "charges" for the year—the items and activities that need to be completed for the association to achieve its overall goals. I encourage you to look at the list of our committees in this issue (page 41) and to be thinking about where you can make a difference in future years.

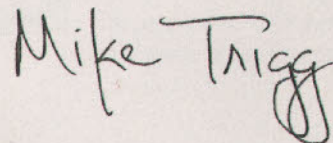
Being a committee volunteer has its personal and professional rewards, too. Committing time, energy, and talents can bring self-satisfaction, potential learning of new skills, networking opportunities, and camaraderie. Being involved in committee service can help prepare you for additional leadership roles within your organization, your local chapter, and the STMA.

The association is committed to continuing to involve as many volunteers as possible to help it achieve its mission and goals. We are reengineering our committee processes to offer even more opportunities for volunteerism. Look for information about this new committee process in the fall.

Although our committees are set for this year, there are other ways you can be of service to STMA. Are you interested in board service? In this issue is a Call for Nominations that allows you to nominate an involved member or yourself for board service. Our Nominating Committee, chaired by Bob Campbell, CSFM, is currently seeking input from members for its Slate of Candidates to be presented to the membership in early winter as part of the annual election.

Do you know a member who should be considered for a Founders Award? You will find much information about the 2005 winners in this issue as well as a form to nominate someone for these prestigious tributes. The Founders Awards are STMA's highest honors, and you are encouraged to nominate a deserving member. The Awards are presented during the STMA annual conference's Awards Banquet and are kept secret until the winners are announced at that time. It is a very exciting and much anticipated event.

I am privileged to work with so many dedicated volunteers, and I thank all of you for your continued support of STMA.



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STMA Founder Awards recognize best of the best

By Eric Schroder

Bob Christofferson, Seattle Mariners

Bob Christofferson still occasionally does what his wife of 25 years, Cyndy, has always said, that he couldn't get in the car in Tacoma without "driving by the field." Of course for many years that field was Cheney Stadium in Tacoma, WA. These days the drive between home and "the field" (Safeco Park in Seattle) is longer yet Bob sometimes still makes it. "That field is my baby," he says. "Now I live an hour away, but I still sometimes drive by the ballpark, just as I did many, many times in Tacoma years ago."

Christofferson received the Harry C. Gill Memorial Award from STMA last winter, the highest honor the 25-year-old organization bestows. Harry C. Gill was a leader and founder of STMA, and for many years the groundskeeper at old County Stadium in Milwaukee. It is his spirit of sharing information with peers that still rings true for STMA members today.

"My first job in turf was at the AAA level in Tacoma. My dad was on the game-day crew at Cheney Stadium since 1950, so I hung around there a lot as a youngster. When I got older I helped out, I can remember there was no rain tarp so we'd dry the field by loading sand into wheelbarrows over and over," says Christofferson.

But he went to college to be a teacher, all the while working in different capacities at the

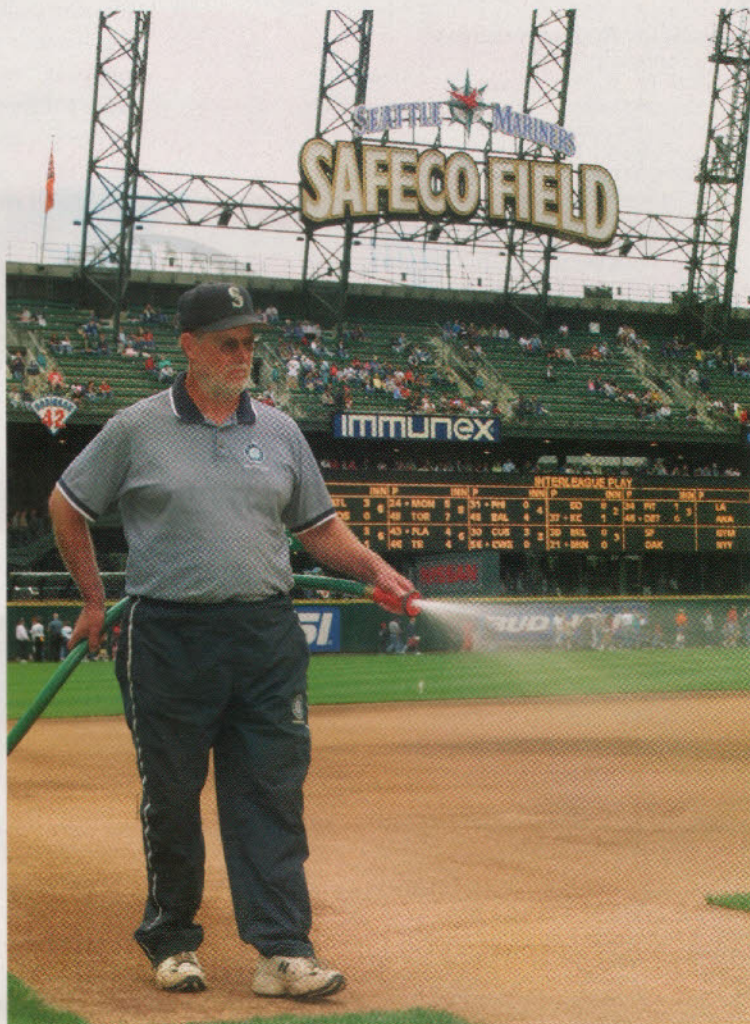


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Bob Christofferson, Harry C. Gill Memorial Award

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Tacoma stadium-ticket seller, usher, grounds crew, all around the park. He was teaching, coaching baseball, and was always on the game-day crew at Cheney Stadium.

"In 1980 the job security of teaching became an issue for me, and when the head groundskeeper in Tacoma was promoted, I became the groundskeeper there, and did it for 19 years as an employee of City of Tacoma," Christofferson says. "I had real on the job training.

"My dad worked on my crew for a few years, and I learned a lot from him as well as Scottie Ryan, my mentor. It was hard work but

fan comfort but with Pacific Northwest weather it can be tricky; we can get a short shower and then sunshine," says Christofferson. "Once we close the roof, we won't reopen it. It's a stressful decision on whether or not to close the roof; no one wants to get wet! But I have as much impact on roof closing decisions as any turf manager in major league baseball."

The toughest thing about his job is managing the extra events that are scheduled around MLB games, he says. "I've learned never to criticize other guys' fields because you never know what kind of extra event he or she might have just had to deal with," he says.

"MY FIRST GAME WAS AN INTERLEAGUE CONTEST WITH THE DODGERS. I CAME OUT OF MY OFFICE, WHICH IS BEHIND HOME PLATE, JUST BEFORE GAME TIME AND THOUGHT, 'MY GOD, THEY ARE PAYING ME TO DO THIS!'"

- BOB CHRISTOFFERSON

I was dedicated and had a lot of pride in my work."

He was one of two finalists for the first job at Safeco Field, which opened in July 1999, but didn't get the job. Less than a year later, Seattle came back to him and his knowledge of Pacific Northwest weather and conditions. He had been groundskeeper of the year the previous 2 years in the Pacific Coast League. Branch Rickey III, president of the PCL, joked he was glad Bob was leaving so someone else could win the award. His last year he led the PCL in fewest games rained out, in Tacoma no less, in the league with teams from Vegas, Phoenix, and Fresno at the time.

"I made my rep in Seattle early . . . during my second homestand, with a national TV audience, power to the roof was knocked out. We'd never rehearsed putting on the tarp but we got it on, the roof was eventually closed, and we were able to start playing again in the time frame that I had promised manager Lou Piniella," Christofferson says. "After that, they trusted me."

He and the president of the club make the decision to close the roof. "Number one goal is

"I have a veto over any event that might be scheduled for Safeco. I realize that these revenues are needed in today's world, so I rarely say 'no' because I like this job. But anyone contracting to use the field must come to me early in the process so we can talk about expectations," says Christofferson. "One year we had a professional wrestling event about one week before Opening Day and that was a great learning experience. I found out we could rig things to the roof and keep them off the grass."

Christofferson says his job is all fun. "I love being in the park, whether it's virtually by myself or with 48,000 screaming fans. My first game was an interleague contest with the Dodgers. I came out of my office, which is behind home plate, just before game time and thought, 'My god, they are paying me to do this!'"

"I have a good crew, these guys would run through a brick wall for me; we try to enjoy what we do each day, and we've got the best field we've ever had heading into the 2nd homestand of the season," he says.

"This is a great job; in fact it is not a job, it's a way of life."