The Turf Academic Program: Where Are We From, and Where Are We Going?

Submitted By – Dr. Xi Xiong, University of Missouri

Nearly a hundred years ago, a group of Philadelphia “greenkeepers”, nowadays golf course superintendents, marched into the university officials’ office at the Pennsylvania State College, and expressed their needs for helping with turf-related issues, and desire for training future employees in this newly emerging industry. As a result, Dr. Fred V. Grau was hired in 1935 as the first full time extension turfgrass specialist in the United States.

(continued on page six)
Hello MVGCSA members and welcome to another edition of the Gateway Green. Thanks to all the people that put it out and the hard work put in to get it done. They don’t get enough credit. It looks like winter is over and time to get cracking on the multiple projects most of us have to do. Now all we need is employees to do those jobs. I think staffing golf courses now and in the future will be a challenge especially when it seems other closely related sectors are paying well. I’m sure the employee challenge will be a problem until we are all 6 feet under.

Football, March Madness and hockey are all over so that means it’s all about the Cardinals for the foreseeable future. Took a short trip to Oaklawn Park to watch some horse racing a few weeks back, it’s located in Hot Springs, Arkansas and if you ever get a chance to go, do it. By the way, a nice casino is in the same building as the horse track. Also enjoyed going to San Diego for GIS in February. We could have it there every year.

That place has everything you want for a nice getaway: gas lamp district, ocean, food, booze, convention center and all easily walkable. The Hospitality Night was a huge success and thanks to all that showed up and spent some time talking and enjoying each other’s company. One of the great things MVGCSA puts on during the year.

Thanks to Tim Burch and his staff for hosting the Opening Golf Event at St. Louis Country Club a couple of weeks back. It filled up fast just like it does every year. Hope everybody had a good time and keep checking our website for things in the future. Along with the other events on the calendar, we will be having a night at Top Golf on August 15th to kick back and hit some balls. If anybody needs to sign up a new member get a hold of a Board Member or Chuck, so they can enjoy any future events.

Everything seems to be running smoothly and I am happy where we stand financially. Thanks to all ASP contributors, you all make a world of difference to our organization. If you didn’t get into ASP this year there are many more events coming up that you can contribute to. Call Chuck if you want to get involved.

Matt Czernacki at St. Peters Golf Club recently lost their maintenance building and all of their equipment due to a fire. If anybody can spare a few things and help him out the next couple of months please reach out to him, it would be greatly appreciated.

Have a great summer and I will be talking to you soon.

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Two epic events unfolding across the Mississippi Valley this Spring… the Blues and floods. By the time this edition of the Double G makes it to your mailbox, hopefully the flooding has passed and the parade down Market has been scheduled. I always appreciate perspective so I delved into the Gateway Green archives to look up what was happening in 1993 during the Great Flood with the MVGCSA. Here is a peek of what was going on some 26 years ago:

- Robb Dillinger was President of the MVGCSA while working at Spencer T. Olin as Superintendent. I like Robb’s opening remarks in his President’s message, “As we are approaching the middle of June it is somewhat apparent that there is something very erratic going on in the atmosphere, creating very abnormal weather patterns for us in the Midwest.” President Schaff could not have said it any better! I believe Robb is down near Bonita Springs, Florida in supply sales now.
- Don Zanzie was the Editor of the Gateway Green. Don works at Turf Solutions Group in Peoria, Illinois. Always a special place in my heart for guys who have swung this battle axe. Little known fact… Mike Carron was the Assistant Editor and there was a three person committee, including a college professor, that helped publish the Double G. (Note to self – look into Assistant Editor and renegotiate my contract with the MVGCSA Board.)
- Lee Redman was at Sunset Country Club, Wes Mathany Sr. was at St. Albans, Steve Velsor was still at Lockhaven and Joe Herzog was still at Columbia Country Club.
- The MVTA was in existence with Bob Deardeuff as President and Dr. Dave Minner was doing research at Mizzou.
- Banner did not have the Maxx, the EPA had just granted an experimental use permit for a product called Manage from Monsanto, Outdoor was in business and Kent Pobanz was selling Astron Plus.
- Greenbriar Hills had a brand new maintenance facility, Bunton walking Greensmowers were for sale, the Toro Hydroject was introduced, Pendimethalin was advertised and Lesco was still Lesco.
- Mark Moriarity was low gross, Mike Carron was long drive and Jerry Keeven looks exactly the same.
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Meanwhile, educational programs geared towards this “greenkeeping” vocation were first designed and offered at the University of Massachusetts in 1927, followed by Rutgers University, Penn State University, and Michigan State University shortly thereafter between late 1920s to early 1930s. Since then, more universities throughout the country recognized the needs and started academic programs in turfgrass science.

At its peak, nearly all land-grant universities throughout the 50 states of the US offered 2-year and/or 4-year curricula in turfgrass science with a typical 2+ full-time faculty members working with turf exclusively in each program. Among the three missions of teaching, research, and extension for land-grant universities, turf faculty members either take on a teaching/research or extension/research role like the model we have at the University of Missouri. A few university faculty have a 3-way split appointment in all the mission areas.

Along with the steady growth of the economy after World War II, the turf industry in the US has boomed, growing from $4 billion total expenditures in 1974 to $45 billion in 1993, and to a more recent figure between $60 and $65 billion in 2005. For the turfgrass academic programs in the land-grant universities, this fast growth translated to an exponential expansion of student enrollment. Taking a neighboring state university as an example, their peak student enrollment numbers in both 4-year and 2-year programs were above 200 in 2011, clearly showing a lag effect from the economic recession that happened in 2008. Beginning in 2008, we have heard of golf course closures, or positions being eliminated. As a direct result of this economic downturn, all of the university turf programs witnessed a sharp decline in student enrollment nationwide.

Still taking the same neighboring state university as an example, their enrollment has dropped about 75% since 2011. In the last couple of years, we are glad to see that the economy has finally turned around and now it is as strong as previously; however, unfortunately for some reason, this has not impacted the student enrollment in turf programs in the land-grant universities across the US. Taking another neighboring state university as an example, their turf program has dropped to minimum, and as of now, its academic program in turfgrass science has been totally eliminated. Faculty members are continuing their research and extension activities in the turf area as their positions are protected by tenure, while the overall impact to the industry is inevitably impaired. This trend is not an exception, as we are watching other land-grant universities in our region struggling with extremely low student enrollment numbers in turf, raising doubts about the sustainability of those programs.

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Common Sense
Submitted By – Chris Rapp, Bellerive Country Club

In other news, we had another successful technicians meeting on April 23rd. We gathered at Norwood Hills and would like to thank Mike Null, Steve Wright, and the rest of the staff for their hospitality. We had a great discussion on Aftercut Appearance (ACA) and Quality of Cut (QOC). Erik Parker from Erb Turf put together an excellent power point on the topic and took the lead of an awesome group discussion.

In today’s world the metrics of things are becoming more complex. This is definitely true for golf course turf aftercut appearance. The old bar/screw gauge for measuring height of cut (HOC) has been replaced by a gauge with a dial indicator that measures accuracy to the thousandth (.001) of an inch. Today’s mowers have many adjustments that can effect QOC and ACA which makes them very versatile but can also be a challenge to achieve consistency.

We talked about communication with the rest of the staff on ACA and QOC and it’s importance in identifying and resolving issues. We talked about how vital it is to put eyes on the turf not only to identify issues but to appreciate our role in the finished product. Big takeaways were understanding the difference between the bench HOC and the actual HOC and the factors that can affect their relationship. Another was gaining an understanding of frequency of clip and how it relates to any particular desired HOC. We talked about turf conditions and how they can affect cut quality. We also spent some time talking about initial cutting unit selection and set up followed by changing the degrees of aggressiveness to address changing turf conditions. We also focused on the importance of set up consistency between cutting units on an individual machine along with consistency between machines, particularly on those being used side by side on the same green, tee or fairway.

Finally, we looked at some common ACA issues and discussed causes and cures. Everything from step cut to straggler to washboarding. We took a look at some of the tools that are at our disposal to analyze and meter ACA and QOC. Mike Null took us up to one of their practice greens where we looked through a turf scope and checked out a prism gauge. The green looked great by the way, clean cut tissue and had to look real hard to find a straggler.

This is an important topic to be sure. It’s where the rubber meets the road. ACA and QOC are the culmination of the entire teams work and one of the most important things our careers are metered on. With that thought in mind I will propose that we have a group meeting/discussion sometime… superintendents, assistant superintendents, technicians… the whole dadgum family. Input anyone?

And finally, I will be travelling to GCSAA headquarters in a few weeks to be part of an Equipment Managers task group. Our focus this time will be education for next years national event. As many of you know, education is near and dear to my heart. There are many proposals. Nearly all of them are peer lead sessions and seminars. My favorite kind. We will sort through them and fine tune the content. Since GCSAA created...
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The Boat
Submitted By – Jack Palmer

The story begins with Mick Nutt and Tom Roper. Mick and Tom grew up in two Inuit villages not far apart. Mick was about ten years older than Tom. It just so happens that they both decide to become Golf Course Superintendents. They also, by chance, decide to attend the same university to learn their craft and end up in the same city plying their craft. They don’t know each other at this point, but by chance discover they both like to hang out at the same watering hole. This chance meeting leads to a lifelong friendship between the two.

Tom moved quickly through the ranks, starting as an assistant at the “It” club, where other country clubs looked to snatch an up and coming superintendent. After a couple of steps, he ended up at Oak Western, one of the city’s top hooty tooty clubs. Mick had moved through the ranks more slowly. An assistant for eight years, then built and ran a daily fee for eight years. Mick was struggling to get back to a country club when North Heights Country Club took a chance on him. North Heights is a very good club, maybe a little more “blue collar” and was led by an old school no-nonsense general manager.

Tom had been well established at Oak Western for several years when North Heights decided to hire Micky as Tom likes to call him. Mick started in the fall, sometime during that first winter Tom was looking for a boat to do a small project on one of Oak Western’s lakes. Mick just happened to have one and borrowed it to Tom.

The crew at Oak Western was tight knit and was known to have a little bit of fun. Several times that winter after heavy rains they attempted to navigate the North Heights boat down a swollen creek that ran through the course to a local tavern using shovels as paddles. Each attempt ended with a sunken craft.

Spring was nearing, and Mick had heard of these attempts and was starting to get worried. Plus, he knew he needed the boat to get out into his own lakes soon. He started calling Tom, “hey, I need my boat back”. “Ok, I’ll get it back to you” was always Tom's reply. Weeks would pass and the boat was not brought back. Yet Mick would hear of another attempt to navigate the creek. This went on for weeks.

Finally, Mick knew he needed his boat, and he was going to have to go get it. Instead of just driving over to Oak Western and picking up the boat, Mick hatched a plan. Mick had done some stints on Oak Western’s crew during summers when he was in college, so he knew the layout of the Oak Western campus well. So, on April 19, Mick drove over to Oak Western to drop in and say hi to Tom. The real reason Mick went was to discover the location of the boat. It was in one of the lower buildings, just inside a garage door, sitting on top of a pull behind spreader.

On the morning of April 20, Mick told one of his assistants to run over to the drug store and buy three pairs of women’s knee length nylon stockings. Five crew members were to drive the truck to Oak Western. Once at the entry to their long entry drive, they would stop and put the nylons on over their heads. Four members were to get into the bed of the truck where they had loaded a heavy metal desk. The desk drawers had been filled with the clean-up from the dog kennel at North Heights. The desk was also adorned with derogatory slogans the North Heights crew had come up with toward Oak Western. Mick had drawn a map for his guys so they could cruise into the Oak Western compound, grab the boat, leave the desk in place of the boat, and cruise right out.

The North Heights crew was ready, nylons over their heads, and laughing so hard they had tears in their eyes. James, Micks lead assistant was driving the truck and having a hard time trying to see through his tears.

Into the compound and building they went, cruising past two stunned Oak Western guys. The boat was right where Mick had drawn on the map. Out jumped the crew exchanging the desk for the boat. Back into the truck and they were off, a matter of just seconds. Heading out past the two stunned Oak Western guys who hadn’t moved a muscle. The robbers and boat were gone.

Carl, longtime irrigation tech on Tom’s crew at various courses, just sat there with his cigarette hanging off his lower lip, mouth agape. Another of Tom’s crew Jimmy, had a radio on him. He called, “Tom, you got your ears on”? “Yeah, what’s up?” was the reply. “Uhhh, five guys wearing masks just stole the boat” said Jimmy in a stunned drawn out voice. “What!” was the reply on the other end of the radio.

Several of the lead crew members having heard the broadcast, now gathered at the site of the desk, and began to hatch their own plan.

(continued on page twenty-two)
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Although the weather has been somewhat suspect, the attendance and support at our first two MVGCSA events for 2019 has been nothing but stellar. Superintendent Mike Null and his staff at Norwood Hills CC hosted a great Opener for the Assistant’s on the East Course. In attendance was a wide array of Assistant Superintendents from most areas courses. A big thanks to Superintendents Mike Null, Jim Bucher, Zach Ellison, Assistant Supt Andrew Snider and ET Steve Wright. Also a big hand of gratitude to the sponsors for this event; Advanced Turf Solutions, GreensPro and Supreme Turf Products.

The regular season opener for MVGCSA was hosted April 22nd by Tim Burch and the staff at St. Louis CC. The Association enjoyed another sell-out Opener again this year with a full field in attendance. Thanks Tim and thanks to your Assistant’s Matt Horton and Alan Zelko for a great day on the links. And not only did we enjoy a full field on the course, we also had a tremendous response from our Affiliates with sponsoring this always popular Opener for MVGCSA. A big thanks to Advanced Turf Solutions, Erb Turf Equipment, Keven Brothers Sod, Midwest Turf Contractors Inc, MTI Distributing, Supreme Turf Products, Syngenta and Turfwerks! Also, a big shout out again to Wes Kleffner and Jimmy Johnson for pulling in the Bayer BBQ wagon to feed the masses. We truly appreciate the support of all our Affiliates for these MVGCSA events!

In Association office related news, all MVGCSA members should have recently received their annual dues invoices for the 2019-20 fiscal year. If you have not received your invoice as of this issue of the Gateway Green, please drop me a note and I will correct your address I have on file. Also remember, any member can update their personal info by simply clicking on their profile at the top of the MVGCSA home page after logging in.

One other quick note, while perusing the home page of our website at www.mvgcsa.com, check out the new listing of website sponsors for the 2019-20 season. Their logos are all displayed at the top of our homepage and with a simple click right on their logo, you will be taken directly to their home page site where you can review all the products and information available from any and all of these top notch, turf related companies. Certainly worth the click! Give it a try.

While at our website, check out the upcoming events slated for the 2019 golf season. We again have some fantastic venues for our events and we are sure to have a good time no matter what Mother Nature may throw at us this season. Come join us! You’ll be glad you did.
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Greeting turfheads, would it be too much to tag this page as the, “I got the Zoysia/Patch/Winter Kill Blues?” And as we go into another golf season in the Mississippi Valley, we are reminded that Mother Nature can be so cruel. The one sure thing about the “transition zone”, is changeable weather. This spring it’s raining every day and cold, last year was dry as a bone and temps in the 90’s. It is May and the high temperature today was 50 degrees; and I heard the meteorologist mention that last year’s high temperature for this date was 89. Wow, that is hard to believe, a 39-degree difference same date, one year apart.

This is one of those springs that begs the question, is zoysia the right turf to grow? Let’s face it, it is a bit of a conundrum. In some of the better years zoysia grows for 5.5 months, and this year it looks like about a 3.5 to 4-month growth season.

The only saving grace as we watch our zoysia do nothing until June, is July and August. I have talked to many Superintendents in the area and as far west as KC, and almost all tell me they have seen some zoysia winter kill and they are going to have to re-sod the dead spots. The other issue affecting zoysia is the ever present zoysia patch, with this year producing almost epidemic levels on courses across the region.

As we all fight to keep our courses looking as good as possible, it is evident how much our weather can disrupt our plans, course conditions, and even budgets. The weather was a factor at this years GCSAA Golf Industry Show out in usually sunny and warm San Diego. For the 2nd year in a row the February weather conditions for the GCSAA Golf Tournament and some of the field trip seminars were also cold and wet.

I just wanted to give a short recap of the Annual Meeting out in San Diego; Congrats to the newly elected GCSAA President, Rafael Barajas, CGCS. I first met Rafael in 2010 at the Delegate conference, it was his first time running for the board that year and he had some innovative ideas for our Association. He is a great ambassador for Golf, and he has certainly paid his dues in the business and with his years on the Board. Overall, this 2019 GCSAA Board of Directors represents Florida, Michigan, Ohio, Kansas, Utah, and Tennessee.

I think one drawback to the Annual Meeting was the approval of yet another dues increase for Class A, B, and C members. I understand the need for the Association to be strong financially, but, Class A and B membership is now at $400.

My one last note from the GCSAA Annual Meeting is a positive one. It is with much gratification for me to congratulate St. Albans CC, Director of GCO, Bill Maynard, CGCS, on his retirement from the GCSAA Board. Bill received the white sport coat that is traditionally awarded to past presidents as they exit the board. In his address to the meeting he emphasized a call to help and impact people in a positive way through our association. I think that is a great message for all of us.

Thanks, Bill, for your years of giving back to the GCSAA, to your peers, and to the golf industry.
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Back in late April, Katie and I took a short trip down to Springfield, MO to visit former Bellerive alumni Jared Brewster along with his wife Jessica and daughter Avery for the weekend. Jared made the move to superintendent at Highland Springs CC last October and I wanted to visit and play some golf. After a busy Saturday of visiting the course and losing more than enough drives right, on Sunday we packed up for the fifty-minute drive to see how the pros do it at Top of the Rock.

The Legends of Golf tournament was in full swing that weekend being played at the newly built Ozark National and Par 3 Top of the Rock. The tournament features many celebrities playing alongside some of the greatest in golf history. Nicklaus, Player, Irwin, Watson, need I say more??

Top of the Rock is the only Par 3 course to host a Tour sanctioned event. This little gem sits on just 20 meticulously maintained acres. Bentgrass covered the tees, fairways and greens. Huge bunker complexes as well as many water features really made the course pop. The landscapes and views are incredible. And all of this is right in our backyard!! I couldn’t help but ask myself why haven’t I been to this before?!?!

Our day started off being shuttled in and dropped off next to the range. If you know one thing about Top of the Rock it’s probably from the news years ago when a sinkhole opened up and swallowed the practice facility. We then ventured over to the backside of the clubhouse where a small chapel sat and overlooked the beautiful Ozark valley. It was quite breezy on top to the hill which made for perfect conditions maintaining all the bent.

Katie was on a mission. Justin Timberlake and Mark Wahlberg were in town and she had to see them. We checked out a pairing sheet and off we went to the 6th tee to catch a glimpse. Upon arriving to the tee Kid Rock had the honors. Decked out in a pair of stars and stripes overalls his outfit was as ridiculous as his golf game. Next group up was Timberlake, Wahlberg, Paige Spiranc, and the legend Gary Player. The island green was a short 121 yards away and all players hit the green successfully. Next up they boarded a pontoon boat for a quick ride to the green.

The competitive atmosphere was very relaxed. It was a fun family atmosphere. Spectators were enjoying the day and excited to see the celebrities and professional golfers. We then took off on foot passing by the 9th tee heading to the 8th green. Before I knew it, caddies were walking by and I thought we had walked into the wrong area. The guys from Dude Perfect casually passed through greeting the crowd, signing autographs, taking pictures, etc. Then around the corner comes a comedian, puffing on a cigar, follow by a crowd hollering “GIT-R-DONE”. Suddenly, I’m shoulder to shoulder with Larry the Cable Guy. Caught by surprise I quickly grabbed my phone and asked if he had time for a quick picture. He replied “absolutely’ and I took what could be the 3rd or 4th selfie of my life. Man, what a cool event, these guys were here to golf but also for the fans. Shortly after that I got a fist bump from Mark Wahlberg and then heard Gary Player crack a joke about an 84-year-old man climbing these tough hills.

If you haven’t been to Branson for this event put it on your list! Johnny Morris has a good thing going down there. It’s good fun for the whole family and it’s literally in our backyard, just a short drive away. I hope to see you all there next year!!

Thanks for reading.
I started my career in 1995, attending Easton and Cannington College. In 2001 I graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Horticulture from Writtle University.

I have worked at multiple golf courses in the UK, such as Royal Norwich, De Vere Dunstan Hall, and The London Club. I did a grow-in at Aphrodite Hills Golf Resort in Cyprus, then headed to the United States as a global turfgrass intern with the Ohio State University.

I have been married to my wife, Elizabeth, since August 2004 and I have a 12-year-old son called Jamison. In our spare time we like to walk trails, bowl and my son is a very talented soccer player. He currently plays very high level select soccer over here and he represents the state of Missouri for Olympic development state soccer.

We are also extreme Six Flags theme park enthusiasts and enjoy bonding with Jamison on high speed roller coasters when I get the odd day off. We have been to six flags well over 100 times in the past six years!

My career has been pretty amazing with the privilege of learning the trade from some top course managers and superintendents from all across the world. I decided a long time ago that I was going to take my time to rise up the ranks. I wanted to learn the trade and be fully confident that I had the ability to become a golf course superintendent. In 2012 I got that opportunity at Florissant Golf Club, working for Billy Casper Golf Management. Let’s just say it was a rude awakening when that position fell on me!

Since then I have continued to grow and have become a very confident superintendent with a continued passion for the golf industry. I have had the opportunity to work in three countries and have learnt a lot from working with a diversity of people with different nationalities cultures and beliefs. I have a thirst to continue my growth in the golf industry and with a passion to continue my travels I hope I can continue to succeed, while keeping a health work-life balance.

Back in 2016 I decided to give the Master Greenkeeper Certificate a shot. I knew this would help me improve my abilities and reflected what I wanted to achieve in this industry. It is and will always be very important for me to learn to grow and improve in this business and in life. I believed this certificate would give me the confidence to further my career.

Curtis Tyrrell, formerly from Medinah Country Club, and Chuck Gast, from Bellerive Country Club, were the two representatives to carry out the site assessment of my facility. Although I was nervous about two hugely successful gentlemen coming to evaluate me, this was a great experience and both Chuck and Curtis have been very helpful, kind and guiding in my career since then.

The call to say I had achieved master greenkeeper status was amazing and came out of the blue. That morning we had a split 120-person tournament at 7 am and 1 pm. We were finishing off getting the course ready when the phone rang and Deb Burnett’s name came up. I won’t lie, I didn’t pass the examinations the first time and in a way, I am glad I didn’t as I was able to gain more experience. I answered the phone knowing that the morning had been a rush and was ready to hear “not this time Andy” so I said to Deb, go on give us the news. She replied, “what if it’s good news?”

Writing this I am getting choked up again, as I feel so proud to have achieved this and to be in a group with some very well known, talented fellow master greenkeepers. This is a true honour for me on a professional and personal level, as my son and wife are very proud of me. If anyone would like to know how I took the news, ask Deb Burnett at BIGGA, as she can vouch for me. I was really choked up, giddy, proud, and to be honest, my mind was all over the place!

I hold this title with pride and hope I can continue my career with passion and enthusiasm and hopefully can continue to give back to the profession that we all love.

I just want to say a big thank you to the BIGGA team for helping me through this and to Curtis Tyrrell MG and Chuck Gast for their help and continued support. 

CONGRATULATIONS ANDREW!
Miller’s Musings
Taxing but Necessary Spring Cleaning Chores
Submitted By – Dr. Lee Miller, University of Missouri

As the thermometer slowly creeps towards higher summer temperatures and persistent rains have hindered activities, some important practices may be left to prime turfgrass health during this fading spring. Most important of these is nurturing the last bastion of creeping bentgrass root growth before the summer heat hits. Below are some notes, (and probably just reminders), of the spring chores to knock off your bentgrass “honey do” list to keep the Mrs. happy.

**Clean the gutters**
Nothing is more important to putting green health than getting water in the rootzone and quickly back out. Control of Pythium root rot is nearly impossible in poorly draining greens, a lack of open pore space and root zone oxygen is lethal, and wet soils retain root shortening summer heat longer. Therefore, cleaning the gutters, which I loathe, seems analogous to this needed chore. Golfers presumably also hate cleaning the gutters since the main method on greens is aerification. Most spring core aerification has certainly passed, but with the amount of spring rains we’ve incurred, starting a venting and solid tine program earlier rather than later this season may be wise. This is particularly true on greens with high organic matter content. Routine topdressing should also be a high priority not just for firmness and speed, but also for OM dilution and air filled pore creation.

The aspect I despise the most about gutter cleaning isn’t the smell or the gunk, but it’s getting up and down off the ladder and moving it (no, I don’t sit and lean over the roof edge). Similarly, constantly checking root depth and color, soil moisture, and the color (and even smell) of the rootzone with a trusty 0.75” soil probe is the only way to move down the line and ensure the gutters are clean. Moisture meters also are a great aid and tool, but in my opinion, routinely getting the feel and appearance of your rootzone can’t be replaced. Also, don’t always stop at the root depth but sometimes really lean on the probe to get down to the gravel layer. In several instances, deeper instances of black layer or even worse an iron cement layer was discovered at the gravel-sand interface.

**Check & Clean the Basement**
In this case, the basement, which could be a deep dark hole and not a luxurious man cave, is the drainage system. Find every green outlet and make sure it is clear. Observe that water flows smoothly from the outlet during a big rain event or flushing cycle, but also perhaps test specific areas of the green by irrigating specific sections. Run irrigation on different sections of the green and get out during a rain event (or flushing cycle) and watch the water flow out. If you haven’t scoped drains in a while (a colonoscopy is a whole different chore!), consider it, as often tree roots and collapsed drains can be the cause of trouble.

Spring rains inevitably chase ants and other insects into the house, normally first in the basement. May through early summer is a great time to conduct a nematode analysis to check for these pesky critters. If you observe areas not responding to fertilizer or appearing funky, particularly in this milder spring weather, send it in to a diagnostic lab.

**Seal & Stain the Deck**
Unprotected wood decks feel the wrath of sun and rain, and in many cases bentgrass roots also just can’t get past soilborne pathogen infection without some protection. Preventive fungicide programs for fairy ring, take-all patch, summer patch, and Pythium root diseases normally begin in April and May, and for good reason. Protecting spring root development is a vital investment for sustained success in summer, when attrition in bentgrass roots naturally occurs. Aside from targeting dollar spot or other more minor foliar diseases, every systemic fungicide application should be watered in with at least 0.1”, and preferably closer to 1/8” or even a quarter inch of post application irrigation. Even watered in applications of many systemic fungicides (not contacts like Daconil or Secure), have been shown to deliver control of foliar diseases.

(continued on page twenty)
Mizzou Turfgrass & Landscape Field Day
July 30, 2019

After the spring chores are done, visit us at the MU Turfgrass Research Center in Columbia for a fun, education-filled field day, a fantastic BBQ lunch, and the fellowship of the profession. We are now on an alternate year format, so we have recharged and will deliver unique research-based information with hands-on demonstrations. In other words, the epiphany of “Show Me”.

We have eight NTEP trials on site, evaluating over 300 turfgrass cultivars and 13 different species for use in Missouri. We are investigating maintenance practices for perennial multi-species systems integrating cool and warm season turfgrass species in the same stand (i.e. “Bluemuda”). We have 15 trials evaluating products and techniques for turfgrass disease management. And it’s not just grass... the novel replacement and installation plan for the Legacy Oaks on the Francis Quadrangle, the status of the invasion of emerald ash borer, and the evaluation and maintenance of new ornamentals will also be topics of discussion. Various exhibitors will also be present.

Registration is now open and we hope you can find the time to join and support us in late July. The registration link is https://extension2.missouri.edu/events/2019-mizzou-turfgrass-and-landscape-field-day for attendees, exhibitors, and sponsors.

The Turf Academic Program
(continued from page six)

At the University of Missouri, we are proud that our turfgrass academic program can be traced back to between the late 1950s and early 1960s, although the earliest turfgrass research dated back to 1910. At Mizzou, we offer a well-balanced 4-year curricula. Although we have only two full-time faculty members working exclusively with turf, we are offering a whole array of core courses covering from botany, plant physiology, soil science, entomology, pathology and weed science, to business management, accounting and communication taught by world-class faculty members with diverse expertise. Enrollment in our program has been steady since I joined Mizzou in 2008, and our graduates have been doing well in obtaining and succeeding in their interested job areas.

As we look forward to the future, I keep asking myself these questions: do Americans need turf in the future, or will the sport of golf disappear? My answer is yes to the first question and no for the second one, and hopefully I am not alone having this viewpoint. I cannot imagine a nice-looking house without a well-maintained lawn surrounding it, I also cannot imagine people would abandon turf in any landscaped areas and playing sports on a plastic carpet. As a faculty member at Mizzou holding a teaching/research position, my job responsibility involves teaching undergraduate students and performing research in the area of turfgrass science. I do not hold an extension appointment, although I try my best to participate in extension activities. What can I do in my position to ensure our turf academic program is sustained into the future? Our research at Mizzou has gained a national reputation, and our undergraduate students have no difficulty finding an internship or permanent career position. In addition to doing my best in a day-to-day job, I would like to ask you to refer high school kids who work for you, who are interested in a career in the turfgrass industry, to our turf program at Mizzou. Our 4-year program provides strength to a student’s long-term career development, compared to a 2-year program. The best way to describe the difference between a 2-year and 4-year program was recently captured by a golf course superintendent who stated that he wished that the graduates from the 2-year program knew more about “biology” of the plant, as there is no recipe for effective turfgrass management under rapidly changing conditions.

Together, we can bring our turf programs into the future as a healthy, actively growing industry only when all aspects of the industry are healthy.
Apply early and the party’s over for pests.

A single application of Acelepryn® insecticide in April or May gives you season-long control of all key white grub species, plus excellent control of turf caterpillars, European crane fly, annual bluegrass weevil, billbugs and other key turf pests. To learn more about how to use Acelepryn for optimal control of annual bluegrass weevil, visit WeeviTrak.com.

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Editor’s Notes
(continued from page four)

Anywho…a little early in the year for fatigue but this Spring has taxed many of you. Tired of scarce labor, tired of pushing up bunkers, tired of getting up from the prayer position while looking at marginalized warm season turf, tired of cart restrictions, tired of having to mow your entire property in one day, tired of missing or being late on critical applications, tired of sending your staff home early, tired of rutting up turf, tired of emptying the rain gauge and tired of the mother f’ing radar…plumb tired boss. Andrew Kimball from St. Albans said this, “Every day is a chess match against Mother Nature. It’s a challenge I truly enjoy.” I like the press Andrew, hopefully the chess match is winnable the next 90 days.

Here we are back in your mailbox almost half way through 2019 and damn near 20 years past when the world was supposed to end in 2000. I will tell you who are not tired are the group of writers that have helped contribute to this magazine. Dr. Xi Xiong is running point this issue with an informative article on The Turf Academic Program at the University of Missouri. Dr. Xiong touches on the history of turf research/teaching, the height of educating turf managers at universities, the recent decline in enrollment of turf students throughout the U.S. and Mizzou’s commitment to their turf program. As a Mizzou Alumni of the Turf Program and partner with you all in our incredible industry, I agree with Xi wholeheartedly…we must encourage our youth who show interest in turf to pursue education at Mizzou and other quality universities. Speaking of Mizzou, Dr. Miller writes about Spring chores you can do to keep your bentgrass healthy throughout the Summer.

FYI - I am still tossing around the idea of renting a bus to take up to the Turfgrass & Landscape Field Day on July 30th. I need to run that by my business partners and see if we can get some sponsorship from the companies that have products being researched at South Farm. Also, congratulations to Super Andy Sprunt from Florissant Golf Club who has become only the 80th member of the BIGGA (British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association) to achieve the Master Greenkeeper certification. Check out Andy’s story on page 17.

Final thanks to Jack Palmer, Kolby Armbruster, Don Humphrey, Chris Rapp and Chuck Gast for their contributions this issue. Mike Carron, could not do this without you and your work with our advertisers, thank you. Larry Torno, Godspeed with your health and thank you for doing what you do. Advertisers, I am a little biased but I think the bang for your buck still resonates within the pages of the Gateway Green….I appreciate you marking that box and endorsing the check.

Thanks for reading,
Paul Hurst, Editor

The Boat
(continued from page ten)

On the morning of April 21, Mick addressed his crew, as he does every morning. They were told the story of how they got the boat back. Mick said that a truck would show up in their lot at some point, some day. All were instructed to lock the gates if there was an unknown vehicle within the maintenance compound.

Twenty minutes after Mick addressed his crew a pick-up truck arrived in the North Heights maintenance compound. Mick’s crew scrambled. Two of the three gates were locked immediately, but getting the third locked was an issue. The desk was returned and dropped off with the truck speeding out the one open gate. Problem was, this gate leads out onto North Heights course where the Oak Western crew was lost. The ensuing pursuit caught the truck and they were led back to the compound.

Both crews had gathered around the desk and were having a good laugh. The desk was adorned with the most magnificent artwork of a subject matter not fit for print. Sitting atop the desk was a life size gorilla wearing a spray suit proudly holding an Oak Western flag. Truly an impressive work of art. Immediately the North Heights guys began to plot about the desks return. Maybe floating it out into an Oak Western lake.

The following day, Mick attended the weekly managers meeting at his club. After the meeting the General Manager asked Mick to his office. Once in the office, the GM now seated, tossed some pictures across his desk to Mick, “What the hell is this?” he asked sternly. Turns out one of Mick’s retired rough mowers told the female horticulturist to go look at the desk, and she took pictures and turned them into HR. Mick looked at the pictures and snickered with a sly grin. He told the GM the story of getting back their boat. By now the GM also had a giant smirk on his face. “Get rid of it” he told Mick. “Done” said Mick.

The desk was crushed and in the trash in minutes, never to make its triumphant return to Oak Western CC.
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# Calendar of Events

**Tuesday, July 30th 2019**  
**Mizzou Turfgrass and Landscape Field Day**  
**MU Turfgrass Research Center**  
[www.mvgcsa.com](http://www.mvgcsa.com)

**Thursday, August 15th 2019**  
**Summer Outing**  
**Top Golf**  
[www.mvgcsa.com](http://www.mvgcsa.com)

**Monday, September 16th 2019**  
**Green Cup**  
**Meadowbrook Country Club**  
**Host – Mike Carron**  
[www.mvgcsa.com](http://www.mvgcsa.com)