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MRTF Board Suffers Loss of President-Elect, Mike Dunk

(Ashley Ryan Breed, ashbreed@purdue.edu)



Mike Dunk (right) pictured with his wife, Angie, and their son, Cannon.

Michael (Mike) J. Dunk was the MRTF President-Elect and a dedicated MRTF board member since 2021. Unfortunately, we lost Mike on July 19, 2023. He left behind his wife, Angie, son Cannon, and stepson, Austin. Mike had not been on the board long, but he was active. Some of Mike's recent accomplishments within the MRTF include, but are not limited to, creating and championing the "Chip-In Program" to include public and private golf courses in the MRTF's fundraising efforts and helping to acquire the donation of a pesticide storage building that was installed at the W.H. Daniel Turfgrass Center at Purdue University in 2023. Mike also hosted numerous Purdue class field trips and allowed the Purdue turf students to use his course for their capstone projects both at the Trophy Club and at Coyote Crossing Golf Club. We appreciated everything Mike did for the foundation, the Purdue

Turf Program, and the turfgrass industry. Recently, the MRTF included Mike's family in our Golf Day fundraising efforts and we were able to raise support for his family. Mike's at-large position on the board will be refilled and his President-Elect position was filled by MRTF Vice President, Blain Poole, who is slated to become the newest President of the board in January 2024.

R.I.P. Mike, you will be missed!

Purdue Turf and Landscape Field Day - A Great Day for All

(Aaron J Patton, ajpatton@purdue.edu)



On Tuesday, July 18, 2023 the Purdue Turf Program, the Purdue Green Industry Working Group and the Midwest Regional Turf Foundation successfully hosted the Purdue Turf and Landscape Field Day. The weather was fantastic - after a few 7 am sprinkles - and the education, food, and exhibitors were top notch!

The Purdue Turf and Landscape Field Day is the largest field day hosted by the Purdue College of Agriculture and Indiana's largest Green Industry field day. This was now our tenth year combining both turf and landscape at our event. Specialists from four different departments in the College of Agriculture shared with Green Industry professionals their research findings, recommendations, as well as advice on troubleshooting problems.



It was a great opportunity for those attending to receive education, research updates, product updates and also a great opportunity to network with their colleagues and exhibitors in the Green Industry. The field day featured 35 exhibitors representing companies from around the region ranging the gamut from equipment, seed, fertilizers, pesticides, landscape plants, hardscape and more. The 455 attendees were mostly from Indiana and all its surrounding states but many national representatives were also there from various companies to learn more about Purdue's latest green industry research.

Attendees came from a variety of backgrounds including business owners, managers and staff of wholesale and retail nurseries, landscape management firms, greenhouse growers, golf course superintendents and staff, lawn care companies, grounds maintenance departments, landscape design and installation firms, garden centers, consulting firms, educational institutions, suppliers and more! This year's field day provided three morning research tours and four afternoon tours including a popular weed identification and control tour, discussion and demonstration of using UAVs, a walking tour on turfgrass health tips, and a tour of the Purdue Arboretum.



Sixteen different speakers were at the field day including Purdue faculty/staff from Botany and Plant Pathology, Entomology, Horticulture and Landscape Architecture, and Forestry and Natural Resources. This year's field day was once again a success and continues to be a leading provider of information and education among the Midwest turf professionals and the Green Industry. Mark your calendars for next year's Turf and Landscape Field Day, July 16, 2024.

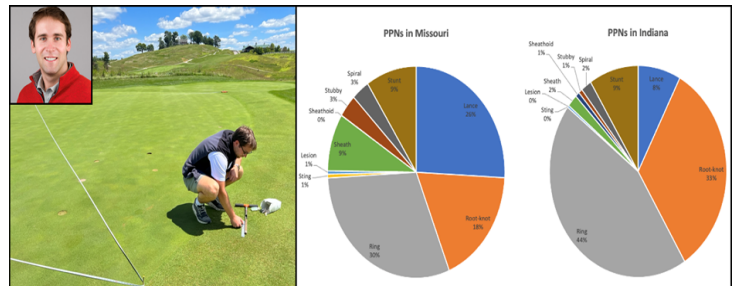
Thank you all for coming!



Research Spotlight: Purdue Turfgrass Pathology Update (Fall 2023)

(Lee Miller)

Nematology: The Purdue Turfgrass Pathology Program recently graduated Asa McCurdy, M.S. following his research scouring the state last year to assess nematode populations on golf putting greens. Asa sampled 10 golf courses throughout Indiana to continue his previous research sampling from 10 courses in Missouri/KC. To our knowledge, this is the first broad systematic nematode survey on golf putting greens throughout this region. While more plant parasitic nematodes were found in Indiana, the distribution was quite different. Root-knot nematodes were discovered in significantly higher numbers in Indiana than in Missouri, while Missouri had approximately three times as many lance nematodes as found in Indiana. Nematode populations may vary considerably among sites, but this broad snapshot may indicate that the more problematic lance nematode may not be as widely distributed throughout Indiana.



New Faces/New Projects: Two new students, Mariah Cashbaugh and Justice Ruwona, began their Ph.D. degree research this summer and fall, respectively. Mariah will be investigating methods of soilborne pathogen detection on golf putting greens, with the goal of tracking pathogen inoculum as it occurs seasonally through the rhizosphere. In doing so, we hope to build a foundation for a biosurveillance system that may dynamically measure pathogen inoculum and along with environmental thresholds determine the best timing and site for preventive fungicide applications. This is a long-term project with a ways to go, but if no one starts it, no one can finish.



Campus Spotlight: Field Trips & Researcher Awards

(Ashley Ryan Breed, ashbreed@purdue.edu) & (Aaron J Patton, ajpatton@purdue.edu)

Justice Ruwona is working on a more traditional applied research project evaluating interseeding methods for conversion of golf fairways to bentgrass cultivars with enhanced dollar spot resistance. Considerable breeding efforts from multiple institutions have resulted in multiple lines of creeping bentgrass cultivars with improved dollar spot resistance. These successes have not been widely due to the cost and difficulty of closing the course for renovation, and previously failed attempts to achieve conversion on golf putting greens without complete renovation.

Interseeding: On July 6, we implemented a multifactor field experiment designed to evaluate the effectiveness of interseeding three dollar spot resistant cultivars along with four different herbicide/PGR treatments, glyphosate (complete renovation), and no herbicide. Next season, we will implement a five dollar spot fungicide application threshold on half each plot and leave the other half completely up for full disease pressure. Unique to this study, we can determine the return on investment for these conversion programs by calculating the fungicide savings over time resulting from conversion to dollar spot resistant cultivars. Also unique, this field experiment is being replicated at two other locations with colleagues at the University of Wisconsin (Dr. Paul Koch) and Penn State University (Dr. John Kaminski). Also unique, we have partnered with the USDA-ARS (hoping for no government shutdown!) to analyze the conversion success with genetic molecular markers from clippings sampled from each plot. Last, but not least, we have been uniquely gifted by great partners in this research including seed suppliers DLF Pickseed, Vista Seed Partners, and Tee 2 Green, and agrochemical suppliers FMC, Syngenta, NuFarm and Poacure. A special shout out and debt of gratitude for Sam Stimmel, Bill Brown and Aqua Aid Solutions (see below). Sam didn't simply loan us a Vredo Turf-Fix interseeder for this research, but facilitated delivery and expertly operated it at all three sites (IN, WI, and PA) across a 10-day span. We greatly appreciate your efforts.



MRTF Members Host Purdue Turf Students



A special thank you to all the MRTF members who hosted field trips for Dr. Patton's senior capstone, turf course. This year we visited several sites to help students learn both how to create different agronomic programs but also many of the other challenges in managing a diverse set of turf areas. I wanted to especially thank the following MRTF members for hosting students and treating them so well during our visits. Both the students and the professor value your contributions to their education.

- Gary and Lisa Crum, Lawn Tamer, Frankfort, IN
- Josh Blackmore, Carmel Dad's Club, Carmel, IN
- Gordon Millar and Jeremy Cooper, Red Hen Turf Farm, New Carlisle, IN
- Nate Brown, The Club at Holliday Farms, Zionsville, IN
- Ryan Cummings, Elcona Country Club, Bristol, IN

Cale Bigelow and Jada Powlen Received Awards at NACTA



(June 30, 2023) Dr. **Cale Bigelow** and Dr. **Jada Powlen** were recognized at NACTA for their excellence in teaching. Cale Bigelow received the NACTA Educator Award and Jada Powlen received the Graduate Student Teacher Award. Congratulations Cale and Jada!

Upcoming MRTF Events

(Ashley Ryan Breed, ashbreed@purdue.edu)

October 30, 2023

Day of service; Abby & Libby Memorial Park, Delphi, IN

November 16-17, 2023

Turf & Landscape Seminar; Daniel Turf Center, West Lafayette, IN

December 2023

Herbicide Workshop (Virtual Class)

December 7, 2023

Herbicide Workshop; Holiday Inn Purdue, Fort Wayne, IN

December 12, 2023

Herbicide Workshop; The Fort Golf Resort, Indianapolis, IN

January 17-19, 2024

Indiana Green Expo, Indianapolis Convention Center, Indianapolis, IN

To get updates on events, please follow us on [Facebook](#) and regularly visit our website: www.mrtf.org.

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