

# TALK TURF

Official publication of the Wisconsin Sports Turf Managers Association

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The WSTMA Summer Field Day was Wednesday, July 28th, 2021 at Wausau West High School. It turned out to be a great day of Sports Field education.

The festivities actually began Tuesday evening at our networking event at the Hilton Garden Inn. Free food, free drinks, and a lot of turf talk and some non turf talk, led to a great opportunity for people to get to know each other. I can confidently say, some new contacts were made, turf management ideas were shared, old friends talked smart and some texas hold'em was played by using after dinner mints as poker chips. There was even a little business done. This tradition will definitely continue!

On to the day...

To begin with, we want to thank Rex Zemke and his staff at Wausau Schools as well as Eric Brown, who is in charge of the fields at Wausau West High School. Their hard work putting things together to host our event and make things go smoothly for us was very much appreciated.

Also, a big thanks goes out to Robert Stephens and his staff at the Wausau and Marathon County Parks Department. The work they put into the fields that were on the afternoon tour; Peoples Sports Complex and Athletic Park, which is home to the Wisconsin

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**Wisconsin**  
**SportsTurf**  
MANAGERS ASSOCIATION

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## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**



Another successful summer Field Day on the books!

I'd like to start by thanking Rex Zemke (Wausau School District) and his crew for their hard work in coordinating the project! Also a big thank you to Marathon County Parks for allowing us to tour their beautiful facilities! And of course, much appreciation goes out to all the WSTMA partners! None of this could happen without you!

We had a great turn out with over 80 attendees! Thank you to our excellent line-up of presenters for their expertise to help us grow more knowledgeable in the industry!

We are now beginning the planning stages for the winter event, exploring new locations in the coming weeks.

Thanks to the Timber Rattlers for allowing use of their beautiful facility for the last five years. We look forward to working with them in the future!

Many thanks to all the members of WSTMA as we continue to grow our organization as a professional group of individuals.

Thank you all and have a great rest of your summer!

Take Care,

*Josh Viet*

WSTMA President



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# HEAR YE, HEAR YE! HEAR OUR CALL TO PARTICIPATE!!

As you'll remember last issue, we had a couple of opportunities to:  
***Show off your turf management prowess!***

Tell your story or write an article that informs your counterparts in the sports field world.

**The deadline for submittal of the "Field of the Year" program is December 31st, 2021.**

You can find all the details you need to submit your Field(s) for consideration on the Website. **"C'mon, show us what ya got!"**

Also, we are looking forward to writing an article about a project your undertaking, a field maintenance process that you feel your fellow sports turf manager will find informative, or a humorous story that may have happened during your time as a turf manager, whether it was something strange or goofy you or your employees did, or some of the questionable antics of athletes or fans during a game or event. I myself have a boat load of them...

I KNOW you do too!

These will be put in the WSTMA newsletter and you will receive a prize!

We want to hear from you!!!

**Please submit materials by email to [mkrupke.wstma@gmail.com](mailto:mkrupke.wstma@gmail.com) or send by mail to WSTMA Michael Krupke N4222 Pandow Dr., Brodhead, WI 53520.**

Looking forward to hearing from you!

*Michael Krupke, Chapter Manager*

# Wisconsin Turfgrass Association

## In-Person Summer Field Day 2021

After a year with no in person turf education, WTA Summer Field Day came back to the O.J. Noer Facility! It was beginning to feel like we were not going to be granted permission to host Field Day but on July 20th there were professors, researchers, attendees and vendors on the Noer Facility property. I want to applaud the WTA Board for not giving up on the day and hanging in there while we waited for the UW-Madison College of Agricultural and Life Sciences to approve the 2021 Summer Field Day plan. While it included a few modifications from past Field Days, the most important part was fulfilled; supplying education for people live and in person at the O.J. Noer Turfgrass Educational Facility. This is what Summer Field Day is all about.

If you missed the day, things were a little different. The vendor area was moved closer to the building, keeping the trade show close to the daily announcements and the food, creating a space to meet and greet friends and customers created a positive feeling. Morning coffee and donuts were served by Gaylord Catering staff instead of helping yourself. A few people liked being served and a few others felt it curbed their donut intake, since the guy handing out the donuts was possibly counting the number of donuts they ate! Gone was the tent, tables and chairs for lunch. Hopefully they will return next year. There were chairs positioned around the property, but most

people headed for the shade. It was a hot day. Our standard lunch buffet was not part of the approval, so the Gaylord staff served the food in a bag that was had everything you needed for a delicious lunch.

Although it was not as nice as the buffet, it met our needs. As the day ended, I told a few people I hope this is the last interruption from Covid-19 for future Summer Field Day's.

The key Summer Field Day element is not about tents, donuts, and lunch, it is about research, which the professors did not disappoint. Dr. Soldat was short staffed, but you would have never known. Dr.



Koch, is fresh off the birth of his second son, did his customary great job. Dr. Koch might have been enjoying a few hours of newborn free time.

As the attendees moved around the property making stops at the various plots the discussion was lively and questions were plentiful. Everyone I talked to missed hearing from and visiting with Dr's. Soldat and Koch last year. They enjoyed Virtual Field Day and Happy Hour with the Docs, but nothing replaces in-person discussion with the professors, researchers, friends, and colleagues.

### TOPICS:

- Efficacy of Organic Options for Crabgrass Control
- Glyphosate Equivalents Using Burn-Down Products
- Identification and Management of Necrotic Ring Spot and Summer Patch
- Planting Clover in Lawns
- Fine Fescues
- New Bentgrass Varieties for Fairways and Greens
- PGR's, Mowing Height and N Fertility
- Wetting Agent Evaluations
- Nitrogen Rates on the Microbiome
- Controlling Dollar Spot with Cultural Practices
- Smith-Kerns Dollar Spot Model Upper Limit

Attendance was down from years past, 168. That

[www.wstma.org](http://www.wstma.org)

could be lingering effects of Covid-19, a busy summer, labor shortage or other factors. One thing that did not disappoint was the support from our vendors. We had more vendors this year than in 2018 or 2019. The WTA is fortunate to have such loyal vendor backing. We are hoping next year we can get our attendance numbers back in the upper 200's to make our vendors dedication to the WTA a better value.

From the Noer perspective I was concerned about Summer Field Day. I have not been able to find someone to hire for my last Noer position. The one person I have for the season accepted the job but had a vacation planned for Summer Field Day week, so he was gone. My remaining summer staffer works two jobs, which requires him to leave the Noer Facility at 11:30 each day. I was worried about setting up everything on Monday and getting everything taken down Tuesday. Dr.'s Koch and Soldat said they would get their staffs to help. Late Monday morning the rental company called with an issue and the table and chairs would be very late and would not arrive until mid-afternoon. This meant the student help would be gone. Within ten minutes of sending both staffs home

the chairs arrived. I was in for a very long afternoon.

Then Dr. Soldat and Kurt Hockemeyer came to my aid and we set-up all the table and chairs together. Tuesday take-down I had received commitments from the WTA Board to help take-down. Tuesday after lunch Kurt sent his two staff members to help me. A little later Plant Pathology's downtown staff also pitched in to help. By the time the tours were completed around 3:00 all the table and chairs were stacked waiting for pick-up. A huge THANK YOU to Dr. Soldat and the entire Plant Pathology staff!

Audra and I have gone through the registrations and are already making plans to make sure some of those regulars we count on are well informed for next year. With our wrap-up we will be identifying the numbers from each area of turfgrass management to help the WTA marketing committee focus their efforts next year.

If you missed the day, you missed alot! Thank you to those that attended, and we look forward to seeing many of you at Nakoma Country Club in Madison on Monday October 4th for the WTA Fall Golf Classic.

## PLAN AHEAD & **SAVE NOW** 2021 EARLY ORDER PROGRAM

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# MIRACLE LEAGUE OF DANE COUNTY



One thing I have always appreciated about the WSTMA is that it is a very generous organization. Whether it's providing educational opportunities, funding research and scholarships, or helping communities that can't afford to maintain or restore a sports facility, WSTMA isn't afraid to step up.

The past year was a difficult one for many sports teams. Many teams didn't play at all last summer. I was hoping we could find a project where WSTMA could help kids get back on the playing field. As luck would have it, I happened to see a story on the news about an organization called Dane County Miracle League.

The Miracle League is a national organization that helps communities build an inclusive baseball field for children with physical and/or cognitive disabilities. These kids would have no chance of playing on traditional sports teams. The Dane County field was going to be built in Cottage Grove and would give hundreds of disabled kids a chance to play baseball. This would not be a typical project, because the field has rubberized turf so children with wheelchairs, walkers, or difficulty walking can experience the game with the help of "buddies" (volunteers who help each child hit, throw, field, and score a run). I was still hopeful that there was some way the WSTMA could help.

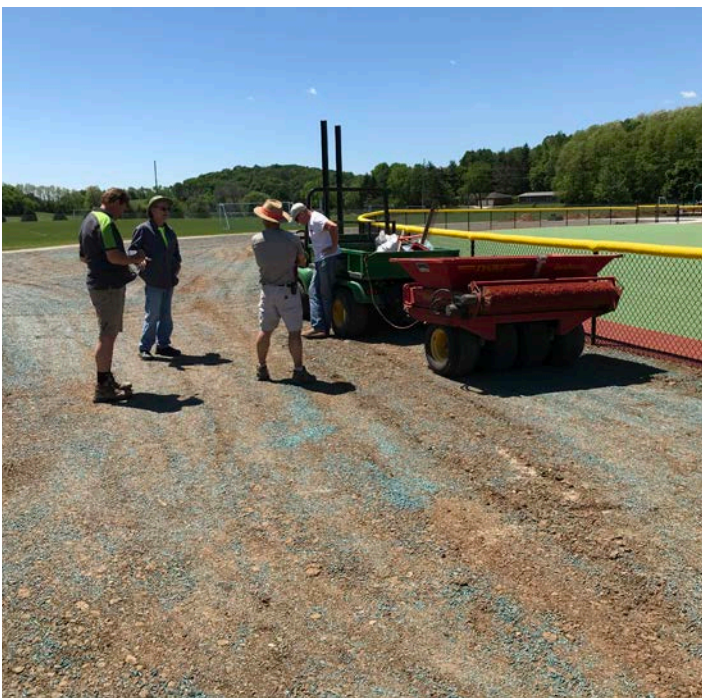
With the Board of Directors' permission, I contacted Bill Schultz, the executive director of the Miracle League of Dane County. Bill is disabled himself, and was not able to play organized baseball as a youth. He told me about the project and the fund-raising effort needed to complete it. While I knew we could help financially, I wondered if there was more we could do as an organization. Then Bill told me they were looking for someone to donate landscaping services to restore the turf area disturbed during construction. The Board was glad to volunteer its services to get this project done.

Construction began in the fall of 2020 and was finished in the spring of 2021. Josh Viet and Midwest Athletic Fields donated crew time and equipment to do the bulk of the landscaping. Though the scope of the project was a little larger than we had imagined, Josh and his crew never flinched. He even brought in bobcat operator extraordinaire Eric Ogden to help. The WSTMA donated the seed, fertilizer and mulch. Board members Mike Miller, Ron Novinska, Mike Krupke and I helped with the seeding, fertilizing, mulching and cleanup. I would personally like to thank everyone that made this project possible!

The Dane County Miracle Field opened at Bakken Park in Cottage Grove on June 15, 2021. Our membership

should be proud of the contributions we were able to make to allow handicapped youth to play baseball! The WSTMA was happy to volunteer time, materials and to help complete this very worthy project.

For photos of the field and info on the Miracle League of Dane County, check out their website at [www.danecountymiracleleague.org/](http://www.danecountymiracleleague.org/).





Woodchucks Baseball team, was spectacular.

Most importantly, thanks to our Vendors for supporting the WSTMA and our members! Reinders, Midwest Athletic Fields, Insight FS, Advanced Turf, Traqology, DHD Turf and Tree, Site One, JW Turf, Beacon, Kafka, Hunter, Waupaca Sand & Solutions and Horst Distributing all shared their products and services. Our other partners who couldn't make it due to other responsibilities reached out and sent best wishes to us all for a great day.

Our presenters for the day gave us exactly the relevant, thought provoking turf management information we knew that they would.

Tim Gagnon's presentation "Field Compaction Testing/Aeration Options for Relieving Compaction" gave us a look at how to judge when and how to aerate fields using data from compaction testing equipment, weather, field usage and more. We all know the importance of aeration to our fields. This gave attendees a little more knowledge to be successful with this process. Also included in the presentation was demonstrations of three different types of aerators and the unique results and how to use them to your advantage.

Next up, Dr. Doug Soldat, University of Wisconsin – Madison, spoke on "Plant Growth Regulators and Their Use on Sports Turf." The WSTMA funded a trial at the Noer Turf Research Center beginning in June of 2020 regarding PGR's on sports turf and the effects of traffic on those areas. Dr. Soldat recreated a much smaller version of this trial at Wausau West High School for our Field Day. Very interesting results. I heard many attendees speak to how the PGR results they saw would

be a great addition to their sports turf management program. Thank you Dr. Soldat for your research on sports turf. This is extremely valuable research. You can find results of this trial from the Noer Facility on our website in video form and hard copy.

Josh Viet next presented "Frazee Mowing as a Turf Management Option." He spoke of Frazee mowing as a way to manage thatch, annual bluegrass, seed introduction and much more. Four different passes with the Frazee mower, a week apart, were done on the property and the results were analyzed. While Frazee mowing may be in its infancy in the Midwest, the ability to manage the aforementioned issues will certainly become more widespread in coming years. Great introduction to it at Field Day.

Last of the morning presentations was "Mound Resurfacing Workshop" by Brad Essary of Profile/Turf Surface. Brad gave upbeat instructions on the process of resurfacing a pitcher's mound with the emphasis on setup and making sure field measurements are in sync before even opening a bag of clay. This wasn't about using bricks and excavating but starting at the proper



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point and resurfacing with clay. He focused on the organizations that do this (schools, parks & rec, youth organizations, college and professionals) and making sure they were successful using each of their unique management capabilities.

During the morning, Advanced Turf, Traqnology and Reinders all did equipment demonstrations. There was a big focus and lots of interest on robotic field painting demonstrations. I'm confident this is the wave of the future in our industry.

After lunch, there was a tour of the Wausau and Marathon County sports complexes. Athletic Park, which is home to the Wisconsin Woodchucks baseball team and Peoples Sports Complex. Robert Stephens, operations manager showed the ins and outs of managing these facilities by him and his staff. Great examples of sports turf management at its finest! We were thrilled at how the day turned out and want to send out a huge THANK YOU to our attendees. We hope you went away with some useful information to apply to your Sports Field maintenance programs. All in all, lots of great education, new ideas, good conversation, food, and fun. Who in our industry doesn't like looking at equipment?

The Board is currently planning our Winter Education Conference so look for more info coming soon!





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# Best Management Practices for Sports Fields

The National STMA has developed the Best Management Practices for the Sports Turf Industry. Best Management Practices for the Sports Field Manager: A Professional Guide for Sports Field Management serves as a comprehensive compilation of environmental best practices for STMA members and non-members, equipping them with the tools and resources to document solid environmental practices for legislators, regulators, employers and community constituents. Although members have been following excellent practices, this program validates those and positions the Sports Field Manager as a strong steward of the environment, which will aid in educating decision makers.

Spanning more than 100 pages, the guide includes twelve unique sections:

- Planning, Design, and Construction
- Turfgrass Establishment
- Cultural Practices: Mowing
- Cultural Practices: Nutrient Management
- Cultural Practices: Irrigation
- Cultural Practices: Cultivation and Surface Management
- Cultural Practices: Integrated Pest Management
- Pesticide Management
- Sustainable Landscaping
- Synthetic Turf
- Maintenance Operations
- Emergency Preparedness

A link to the document can be found on the WSTMA website at [wstma.org](http://wstma.org).

The National BMP document is also being provided as a customizable template that can be edited to fit the needs for a specific region, state, or facility. STMA provides this template so that it can be customized for individuals and/or groups in need of the document. Maintaining the integrity of the document is important as subject matter experts from academia and the sports field management profession have contributed factual and

accurate information that is required to be maintained. Therefore, only select areas of the document allow for customization.

This customizable document can also be found on the WSTMA website.

At the Wisconsin Sports Turf Managers Association, we invite you to download this document and make every effort to follow its direction. Turf management practices are being widely scrutinized across Wisconsin. Being as environmentally responsible as possible is of utmost importance if we are to be able to move forward without potential Local and State legislative constraints.

The WSTMA will be looking to provide support for those who need it and will lead the way in assuring our Sports Turf Managers have the guidance they need to move forward responsibly.

Please go to our website [wstma.org](http://wstma.org) for more information.



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# Ganser Receives Service Award from Wisconsin Athletic Directors

Roger Ganser, Jefferson school district buildings and grounds manager, was recognized earlier this month with the Distinguished Service Award from the Wisconsin Athletic Directors Association.

The award is for his service during the 2019-20 school year, but due to the pandemic, the presentation was delayed until this year.

Ganser has been a custodian and maintenance worker for the School District of Jefferson for the past 25 years, and during that time he has provided vital support for the local sports programs, as an integral part of the total education program. His service to local athletics has gone above and beyond the requirements of his job, the Jefferson nomination said.

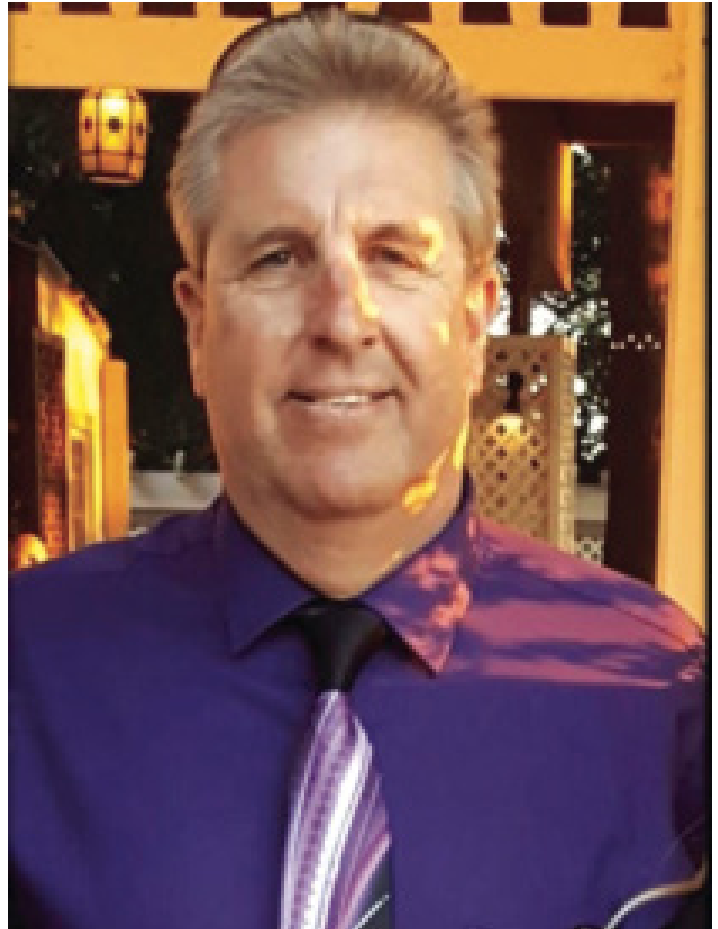
In 2019, when floods rendered the softball field unusable, he oversaw the move to a Fort Atkinson park and drove to the nearby town to prep the field. Also that same year, the Jefferson district's junior varsity baseball field saw major flooding, so just as he had for softball, Ganser traveled to an alternate location 25 away and prepped the field there.

Due to a shortage of athletic officials throughout the region, Ganser went through the training to become an umpire and volunteered his services officiating many area baseball games.

In addition, Ganser is a longtime Kiwanis Club member, contributing community service through that organization.

The Jefferson nomination form noted that Ganser lives the Kiwanis motto, which reads, "Serving the Children of the World."

For his efforts throughout his career and especially during the 2019-20 school year, Ganser earned the 2020 District WADA Distinguished Service Award.



**Roger Ganser, Jefferson School District  
Buildings and Grounds Manager**

# WSTMA SUMMER FIELD DAY PHOTOS continued



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