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# TALKINGTURF

## NORTH CENTRAL TURFGRASS ASSOCIATION

Fall 2023

## President's Message

### By Tim Fleegel, MTI Distributing

Greetings NCTGA members,

I want to express my sincere thanks to everyone who participated in our annual scholarship golf tournament. The tournament was held on Monday September 11th at Grand Forks Country Club. It was a fantastic event and getting together to raise money for the scholarships is always a great reason to get out on the course. Thank you to our valued sponsors. Your support is the reason we can offer these scholarships and make the impact that we do.

We had a great turnout, with 46 players. It was a great mix of familiar faces, and several new ones who were excited to participate and see what the NCTGA is all about. Kudos to Collin Cannon and the entire staff at the Grand Forks Country Club. They were instrumental in making sure every aspect of the day was taken care of, from the course conditions to the post-tournament gathering.

On Tuesday, September 12th, we had the privilege of hosting a First Green event at GFCC. We welcomed 46 excited 4th grade students from

Viking Elementary in Grand Forks. We had five stations set up for the kids, covering irrigation, putting, equipment/setup, soft goods, turf species and soils. It was great seeing how engaged and excited the children were during these activities. An extra thank you is necessary for Randy Robinson from GCSAA, and Scott Griffith, a GCSAA board member, for their help and support during the First Green event. Your presence was, and always is, greatly appreciated.

Looking ahead, I'm happy to say that the 2024 NCTGA Conference and Trade Show is just around the corner. The conference is scheduled to start on Tuesday, February 27th, 2024 at the Holiday Inn in Fargo, ND. The board has been working hard to put together another outstanding conference, and we've lined up a great list of speakers, including Dr. Paul Koch, Dr. David Gardner, Jac Price, and Steve Keating. It will be another great event that you won't want to miss.



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# President's Message continued

Continued from page 1...

With the golf season winding down, I encourage you all to take a moment and reflect on your accomplishments from the past year. It's easy to lose sight of the strides we've made when we're occupied with our day-to-day lives, but these moments of reflection can be both rewarding and motivating.

As we approach the holiday season, on behalf of myself and the NCTGA board, I want to wish you a happy and healthy time with your loved ones. Happy Thanksgiving, Merry Christmas, and have a great beginning to 2024. We'll see you again in February!

Sincerely,  
Tim Fleege

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February 27th -29th, 2024

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## 2023 Scholarship Golf Tournament Recap

The 2023 NCTGA Scholarship Golf Tournament was held at the Grands Forks Country Club hosted by superintendent Collin Cannon and his staff. A solid turnout of 46 NCTGA members partook in this scholarship fundraiser. Collin and his staff had the course in exceptional condition for the event. Thank you to all the sponsors, including: lunch sponsor (MTI Distributing), afternoon sponsor (Envu), prize sponsor (MTI Distributing), proximity sponsors (NB Golf Cars, Superior Tech Products, Syngenta), and hole sponsors; without you this event could not happen! THANK YOU!!!

**First Flight Winners:** Brevin Smith and Justin Giles from Fargo CC

**Second Flight Winners:** John Westereng (Prairie West GC) and Steve Westereng

**Longest Drive:** Tim Fleegel (MTI)

**Longest Putt:** Nate Holmstrom (Forest Hills GC)

**Closest to the Pin #8:** Nate Holmstrom (Forest Hills GC)

**Closest to the Pin #16:** John Westereng (Prairie West GC)

### Steve Hamelau Par 3 Memorial Hole

**Steve M.  
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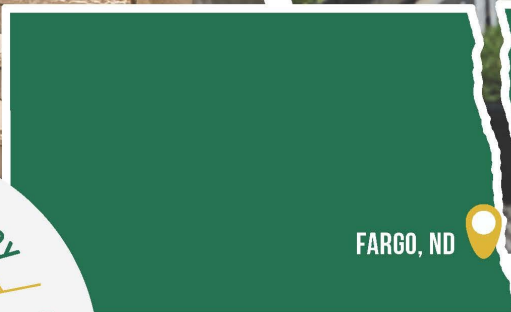
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\$150 prize for closest to the pin

At the 2023 annual conference, the NCTGA raised \$500 via the 50/50 raffle to fund a hole sponsorship in honor of our friend Steve Hamelau. This \$500 was matched by Superior Tech Products. We now have the ability to fund Steve's traditional closest to the pin sponsorship with \$100 for the next ten years. Thanks to all for making this happen!





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## 2023 Scholarship Golf Tournament

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# 39th Annual Conference and Trade Show

Join us for the 39th Annual NCTGA Conference and Trade Show from February 27th - 29th, 2024 at the Holiday Inn in Fargo, ND

[Register Here](#)

## Schedule at a Glance

### Tuesday, February 27th

8:00am - 3:00pm: Vendor Setup

11:00am - 12:00pm: Registration and Networking

12:00pm - 12:30pm: President's Message (Tim Fleege, MTI Distributing)

12:30pm - 1:00pm: State of the Industry (Randy Robinson, GCSAA)

1:00pm - 2:00pm: Managing Nuisance Wildlife Around Your Turf and Landscape (Dr. John Loegering, UMN-Crookston)

2:00pm - 3:00pm: Communicating with customers about pesticides (Dr. David Gardner, OSU)

3:00pm - 4:00pm: Management of Turfgrass in Shade (Dr. David Gardner, OSU)

4:00pm - 7:00pm: Trade Show/Social

### Wednesday, February 28th

7:00am - 8:00am: Registration and Networking

8:00am - 9:00am: Vendor Seminars (in trade show, open to all vendors)

8:00am - 11:30am: Trade Show

11:30am - 12:15pm: NCTGA Annual Meeting

12:15pm - 1:00pm: Lunch

### Wednesday, February 28th cont'd

1:00pm - 2:00pm: Developing a Weed Resistance Management Program (Dr. David Gardner, OSU)  
*concurrent*

1:00pm - 2:00pm: Managing Turf Diseases in Sports Fields and Lawns (Dr. Paul Koch, UW-Madison)  
*concurrent*

2:00pm - 3:00pm: Managing Turf Diseases on Golf Courses (Dr. Paul Koch, UW-Madison) *concurrent*

2:00pm - 3:00pm: Tree Management for Parks and Urban Sites (Joe Zeleznik, NDSU) *concurrent*

3:00pm - 4:00pm: Cradle to the Grave— Taking Care of Equipment (Chad Braun, Town and Country)

4:00 - 5:00pm: Tree Selection for North Dakota (Joe Zeleznik, NDSU)

5:00pm - 7:00pm: Social/Silent Auction/Raffle

### Thursday, February 29th

7:00am - 7:30am: Registration and Networking

7:30am - 8:30am: Electrical Troubleshooting (Jac Price, MTI Distributing)

8:30am - 9:00am: Equipment Q&A (Jac Price, Chad Braun)

10:00am - 11:30am: Leadership Lessons (Steve Keating, The Toro Co.)

12:00pm - 3:00pm: NCTGA Board Meeting

## 2024 NCTGA Vendor Sponsorship Levels

The NCTGA Board will continue with the same vendor sponsorship levels for 2024. The goal is to simplify sponsorships and allow more opportunities for NCTGA to promote our vendors. Newsletter advertisements will begin with the spring issue of our newsletter, and vendors will have the option to pay in the 2023 or 2024 fiscal year. The NCTGA will work with you on a case by case basis if you would like to modify your sponsorship level to one that doesn't fit the sponsorships outlined below.

### Sponsorship Levels

**Platinum (\$2,500):** includes 4 conference booths, 4 conference attendees and memberships, full page newsletter ad, large logo on website, platinum sponsorship advertised at conference and in publications

**Gold (\$2,000):** includes 3 conference booths, 3 conference attendees and memberships, 1/2 page newsletter ad, medium logo on website, gold sponsorship advertised at conference and in publications

**Silver (\$1,000):** 2 conference booths, 2 conference attendees and memberships, 1/3 page newsletter ad, small logo on website, silver level sponsorship advertised at conference and in publications

**Bronze (\$500):** 1 conference booth, 1 conference attendee and membership

If you have questions on structuring of sponsorship levels or if you would like to modify your sponsorship, please reach out to Sam Bauer (612-205-4428, [info.nctga@gmail.com](mailto:info.nctga@gmail.com)) or a NCTGA Board Member.

Thank you to all vendors for your continued support of the NCTGA!





# NORTH CENTRAL TURFGRASS ASSOCIATION AND NORTH DAKOTA GOLF ASSOCIATION

## 2023 TURFGRASS STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS

DEADLINE: JANUARY 15<sup>TH</sup>, 2024

The North Central Turfgrass Association (NCTGA) and North Dakota Golf Association (NDGA) continue to offer scholarships to qualified student applicants in golf course/turfgrass management studies. This year we are offering two \$1,000 scholarships. The NCTGA scholarship is open to any qualified turfgrass student applicant enrolled in at least his/her second year of turfgrass/agronomy/horticulture studies. The NDGA scholarship is also open to a qualified turfgrass student in his/her second year but is restricted to residents of North Dakota.

These awards will be administered and voted upon by the NCTGA Board of Directors Scholarship Committee. Recipients of these scholarships will be given his/her award at the NCTGA Annual Conference and Trade Show, February 27<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> at the Holiday Inn in Fargo, ND.

Please include the following with your application:

- Name, email, phone, school address, home address, Major, GPA, anticipated graduation date, advisor
- Resume
- Statement of Future Professional Goals (ex: where do you see yourself five to ten years from now?)
- One letter of recommendation from employer or professor (can be sent separately)

Applications and reference letters must be postmarked by January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024. Electronic submissions can be emailed to: Sam Bauer, NCTGA Executive Director: [info.nctga@gmail.com](mailto:info.nctga@gmail.com)

Mailed documents can be sent to:

North Central Turfgrass Association

P.O. Box 10823

Fargo, ND 58106

Phone: 612-205-4428



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# NORTH CENTRAL TURFGRASS ASSOCIATION

## 2023 LEGACY SCHOLARSHIP

DEADLINE: JANUARY 15<sup>TH</sup>, 2024

The North Central Turfgrass Association (NCTGA) is offering one \$500 Legacy scholarship to a child of a current NCTGA member in good standing. The child must be currently enrolled in his/her senior year of high school or an undergraduate college program. Funds for this scholarship are generated at the Annual Scholarship Golf Fundraiser hosted by the NCTGA in the fall every year.

The scholarship recipient will be selected by an unbiased committee of academic professionals. The recipient of this scholarship will be given his/her award at the NCTGA Annual Conference and Trade Show, February 27<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> at the Holiday Inn in Fargo, ND. Parent members of the NCTGA can also accept the award on behalf of their child.

Applications for the Legacy scholarship must be completed by the student. To be eligible for this scholarship, all items listed below must be post-marked or emailed by the January 15<sup>th</sup> deadline.

- Name, email, phone, school address, home address, Major (or anticipated Major), GPA, extracurricular activities, anticipated graduation date, advisor
- NCTGA parent member's name, organization, and years as a NCTGA member
- Statement of Future Professional Goals (ex: where do you see yourself five to ten years from now?)
- Letter of Recommendation from advisor, professor, or employer
- Resume

Electronic submissions can be emailed to:

Sam Bauer, NCTGA Executive Director: [info.nctga@gmail.com](mailto:info.nctga@gmail.com)

Mailed documents can be sent to:

North Central Turfgrass Association

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## Two Great Weeks in North Dakota

By Randy Robinson, GCSAA

When it comes to running a GCSAA First Green Event, North Dakota is no slouch. In fact, y'all are getting good at it. It was my pleasure to experience this in back-to-back weeks in September. This time, I didn't come alone. I was accompanied by GCSAA Board Director Scott Griffith, CGCS. Scott made the trip all the way from Georgia. I have seven states in my region, and North Dakota was the only one that had a board outreach visit, so that was, to say it plainly, really cool.

We started our trip (Day 1 – September 11) at Grand Forks Country Club with a shop tour of Superintendent Collin Cannon's new shop. Collin gave us a tour and a brief history of the building. From there we had the opportunity to play the Country Club for the fall NCTGA Scholarship Tournament. The event was well attended, the weather was perfect, and the golf course was in great shape. Thank you, Collin, for the hospitality and for allowing us to enjoy your facility.



On Day 2, we got to participate in one of my favorite events, no matter where I go. The very next day after the scholarship tournament, Grand Forks Country Club held the second-ever First Green Event. Collin, Cammi, and Sam took the lead on this and put together multiple stations for roughly 50 students from a local elementary school. It never gets old seeing the smiles on the children's faces as they learn about equipment, soils, irrigation, and fertility. Like every school, the teachers ALWAYS want to come back and do it again next year. After that, Mr. Griffith and I made a few stops at local golf courses to say hello and see how they were doing.

On our last day, we both had flights home around 1 p.m., and we decided that it was a great opportunity to stop in and visit with NDSU turf students about GCSAA and what we offer them as students and then as professionals. We had a few students swing through and they had some great questions for us. Overall, it was a very successful trip, and I can't thank the NCTGA board and members for always welcoming me to town.

Not to be outdone, the following week, on September 18, the Superintendent of The Links of North Dakota, Gustavo Rodriguez held his own First Green Program. Gustavo has had a goal of hosting one of these events since, well since I've known him. He hit the ground running, lining up a school on short notice and putting together a great day for students.

Continued on page 14...



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## Two Great Weeks in North Dakota

Continued from page 12...

As many of you know, Ray, ND isn't just right down the road for most of you. That being said, I had the opportunity to work the event on the soil station. Love tapping back into my agronomy roots every once in a while. Cammi Campbell also made the trek from Minot to volunteer. Following that we were able to play the Links and had great conversations about the industry and I learned all about the do's and don'ts in the Bakken. Amazing facility, if you haven't seen it, I highly recommend it. Thank you, Gustavo, for your passion and for embracing such an important program to me and the GCSAA.



The amount of respect I have for all of you in the NCTGA continues to grow with every visit I have and believe me, I can't wait to get back up there for the conference. Let's just try to keep the snow to a minimum this time ;) If you are a GCSAA member and have any needs, concerns, comments, or just want to talk, please reach out. If you are interested in hosting a First Green event, I encourage you to reach out to Cammi, Collin, or Gustavo and ask questions. You can also go to [www.thefirstgreen.org](http://www.thefirstgreen.org) to read for yourself how, with your help, we are impacting the lives of children everywhere in hopes of securing the future of the industry.

Be well everyone and cheers!



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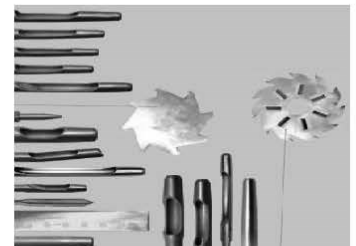
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Jan. 25, 2024 Hosted Training	<b>Bismarck</b> , Burleigh County Extension -4H Bldg 3715 E Bismarck Expressway	Registration 8 a.m. Training 8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.	1/16/2024		
	<b>Fargo</b> , NDSU Loftsgard Hall Room 380	Registration 8 a.m. Training 8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.			
	<b>Grand Forks</b> , Grand Forks County Extension 151 South 4th St Suite 302	Registration 8 a.m. Training 8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.			
	<b>Minot</b> , Ward County Extension 900 13th St SE	Registration 8 a.m. Training 8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.			
	Mar. 7, 2024 Face-to-Face	<b>Fargo</b> , NDSU, Memorial Union, Prairie Rose Rm 1401 Administration Ave.		Registration 8 a.m. Training 8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.	3/5/2024
		<b>ZOOM WEBINAR</b>		9 a.m. - 4 p.m.	
Mar. 21, 2024	On a computer at home or place of employment	8 a.m. - 3 p.m. (MT)	3/20/24 12 NOON		

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# 39th Annual Conference and Trade Show

Tuesday - Thursday, February 27th-29th, 2024



Dr. Paul Koch  
University of Wisconsin-Madison

Featured Speakers



Dr. David Gardner  
The Ohio State University



Chad Braun  
Town and Country Club



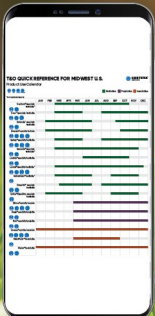
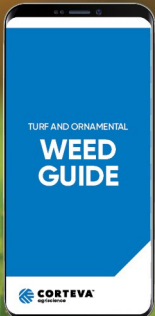
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## Topdressing as a Winter Stress Prevention Strategy

By Adam Thoms, Iowa State University

Topdressing is one of the most critical practices for quality turfgrass but is also one of the most misunderstood and abused cultural practices that turfgrass managers conduct. Frequent sand-topdressing with pure sand was first described by John Madison in 1974, who noted that a uniform sand sized 0.05-1.0 mm should be used at a rate of 3 cu. ft. per 1,000 sq. ft. every three weeks in California up to 15 times per year. The original program was designed to limit the formation of layers of thatch and root zone material trapping thatch, ensuring that water flowed through the profile. Water will flow through a root zone freely if there is a coarse material over a fine material. However, once a finer material (one in which smaller particle sizes are present in greater numbers) ends up in the profile then the finer material must be fully saturated before water can move to the next layer below which slows the whole profile.

The sand-topdressing program was amended in 1981 to account for different sizes from the original recommendation that were in the range of 0.1-1.0 mm, and noted that sand availability should be accounted for when starting a frequent topdressing program. Having to change sand sources frequently will lead to changes in particle size, which could result in layering in the root zone profile. Establishing a good flow of water through the profile is critical for soils to avoid water backing up on the surface, which could result in ice formation and winter damage. Regular hollow tine aerification with the addition of sand-topdressing will allow water to continue to move into the profile. Often golf courses will debate the need to continue a sand-topdressing program especially if budgets are limiting, but the advice is generally that once a sand-topdressing program is started it should not be stopped.

Continued on page 18...



## Topdressing as a Winter Stress Prevention Strategy

Continued from page 17...

Sand topdressing is also often used before winter to help protect turfgrass plants from winter desiccation, which is the loss of water due to being exposed to dry winter winds in the absence of snow cover. Many golf courses will add a heavy sand-topdressing after the final mow and after irrigation blowout to the putting green surface to help protect the crown of the plant from winter desiccation. The sand-topdressing rates for winter putting green protection are often debated, so additional research is needed, but 3 cu. ft. per 1,000 sq. ft. is what is often used by superintendents. A WinterTurf research project led by Dr. Kevin of Michigan State University focusing on sand-topdressing for winter protection is being initiated this winter at several locations, so check back this summer to see the findings.



30-years of an excellent frequent sand-topdressing program at Des Moines Golf and County Club

### References

Madison, J.H, W.B. Davis, and J.L. Paul. 1974. An alternative method of greens management. Proc. Conf. Cal. Golf Course Superintendents Inst. P. 81-88.

Madison, J.H. 1981. Frequent sand topdressing vital tonic for greens. Golf Course. Manage. 17-20.

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## Tree Leaf Mulching Impacts on Lawn Health

By Paul Koch, PhD, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Much of the US is in the midst of beautiful fall foliage, but as those leaves fall to the ground, they can cause some serious environmental problems. A US Geological Survey study commissioned by the Clean Lakes Alliance in Madison, WI found that nearly 80% of the annual phosphorus load into Madison lakes came from tree leaves piled on the street for pickup in the fall. Mulching these tree leaves into lawns could reduce phosphorus leaching into lakes and also reduce the municipal labor costs required to pick up the curbside leaves, but the potential impact of leaving those tree leaves on lawn health in the spring is poorly understood.

As part of our USDA-funded WinterTurf research project we are investigating the impact of multiple depths of mulched and non-mulched tree leaves on turfgrass quality, snow mold development, and multiple soil health metrics such as soil respiration. The study was initiated in the fall of 2022 and is being conducted at research locations in Madison, WI and East Lansing, MI. Leaves were either mulched using a mulching lawn mower or left unmulched and piled at a depth of 2 inches (buried within the turf canopy) or at a depth of 6 inches (fully covering the turfgrass) (Figure 1).

Snow mold and turfgrass quality results were collected during the spring of 2023 and those treatments where the leaves were mulched were in excellent health, even at the deeper leaf depth, while the deeper level of unmulched leaves caused serious damage to the turf (Figure 2).

Multiple additional differences between treatments were still evident during the middle of summer. First, the plots damaged by the leaf smothering had mostly fully recovered; however, there were higher levels of weeds in these plots because there was open canopy in the spring while the turfgrass recovered from the damage. The other important aspect was that the grass in the plots with the heavier depth of leaves, both mulched and unmulched, was a darker green color for much of the summer. This is likely due to nutrient release from the greater level of organic matter present on those plots and also potentially due to higher water holding capacity in those plots due to the higher organic matter content. This study will be going on for several more years, but after just one year we're starting to get a feel for the multiple possible benefits available to the turf when tree leaves are mulched into a lawn in the fall.

*(reprinted with permission from winterturf.umn.edu)*



Figure 1. The tree leaf mulching study at the OJ Noer Turfgrass Research Facility in Madison, WI in the fall



Figure 2. The plots heavily damaged by smothering were highly visible following snow melt during the spring

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