

# Turf's Up in the Inland Empire



Summer 2024

## IEGCSA Fall Meeting & Trade Show will Include Presentations to Benefit Equipment Managers

Our membership is diverse and we try to offer beneficial topics to touch on the various educational needs. For example, whether you are responsible for equipment maintenance within a dual position, or you are solely an equipment manager, of special speaker interest will be Cory Phillips, Equipment Manager of Atlanta Country Club. Phillips is one of several speakers who will make this an event you will want to attend, November 20 & 21, at The Centennial. We have packed in a pretty impressive offering to benefit your facility and you can learn more about it here.

We are thrilled to have — in person — Adam Thoms, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Iowa State University. Thoms (right) was scheduled to be part of the 2020 spring conference when travel restrictions were coming into play. Between university requirements and even more importantly, their baby having RSV, Thoms participated online. His research was impactful. As Ivan Gibbs recently shared with the education committee, *“Wow, really looking forward to seeing him in person. His presentation in 2020 inspired me to make a few changes for the better.”* Thoms specializes in commercial turfgrass management. His research interests include golf; athletic field performance and safety; residential, commercial and municipal turf



**Developing a  
Toppdressing Program for  
Quality Turfgrass  
Bio Stimulants and  
What we Know**

continued page 7

## NTA TO DONATE \$55,000 TO TURFGRASS RESEARCH

Paul Ramsdell, NTA

The Northwest Turfgrass Association has announced it will continue its longstanding tradition of supporting turfgrass research again in 2024 with donations totaling \$55,000 going to five different studies being conducted at Oregon State University and Washington State University.

In the past 25 years, the NTA has provided more than \$1.5 million to various turfgrass programs and students. The NTA is able to do this because of the tremendous support it receives annually from all its friends throughout the golf community.

In addition to the \$55,000 in research grants in 2024, the NTA also plans to award later this year, two turfgrass management scholarships, each worth \$1,250.

There will be \$40,000 going to four studies being conducted at the OSU's Lewis-Brown Farm in Corvallis under the direction of Dr. Alec Kowalewski, and \$15,000 for a state-wide study being conducted by Dr. Michael Neff at WSU.

*“The NTA Board is proud to continue our mission of funding turfgrass research in the Pacific Northwest again this year,”* said Shane Hughes of Planet Turf, the president of the NTA.

These grants from the NTA are made possible via numerous  
continued page 4

## Chapters of the Northwest Hospitality Room & Hotel Block

The location and experience was fantastic the first time, so we were quick to jump on the opportunity to return to The Blind Burro for the Chapters of the Northwest Hospitality Room, February 5, 2025, in San Diego held in conjunction with the GCSAA Conference and Trade Show. This great evening with friends and colleagues is made possible by our generous sponsors in the Northwest. Our three-chapter room block in San Diego will be announced soon via email.



**Inland Empire GCSA  
Board of Directors**

**Mike Grilley, President**  
The Links

**Ivan Gibbs, Vice President**  
Leavenworth Golf Club

**Brent Austin**  
**Secretary/Treasurer**  
LaGrande Country Club

**Brandon Bubar**  
Avondale Golf Club

**Dan Frederiksen**  
The Golf Club at Black Rock

**Mitchell Larson**  
Yakima Country Club

**Shane Hughes**  
Planet Turf

**Edward Wetherell**  
Circling Raven Golf Course

**Kalman Zaranec**  
Circling Raven Golf Course

**Past President**  
**Jamie Colson**  
Sun Country Golf Course

**Available**  
**Assistant Liason**

**Inland Empire GCSA**  
Lori Russell, Executive Dir.  
P.O. Box 5003  
Missoula, MT 59806  
(406) 273-7779  
iegcsa@iegcsa.org  
iegcsa.org

# Compost...

## The Better Way to Topdress?

**Mitch Larson, Superintendent,**  
Yakima Country Club, Yakima, Wash.

When I arrived at Yakima Country Club in 2020, I soon realized that the fairways and tees had been neglected over the years. This wasn't the previous superintendent's fault, rather the membership didn't want to invest the money in maintaining them properly. I took it upon myself to make sure that year after year these areas got better, not worse. That was easier said than done, no matter what I did, the fairways and tees continued to decline. From spraying more frequently, aerifying, topdressing, verticutting, slicing, seeding, or adding soil amendments, the fairways and tees just continued to struggle. We would make progress, and they would tighten up, but when the heat came each summer the poa would smoke out, the fairways would thin and wouldn't hold water. By September each year, we would have thin or dead spots on most fairways, not enough to affect play or the membership, but enough to make me scratch my head.

During this past winter I began to think outside of the box and figure out if there was a different solution to my struggles. I knew that our fairways and tees were built on top of clay with some areas having large rocks only a few inches below the surface. We had been injecting WaterSOLV over the past four years to help with water infiltration and water hold-

ing capacity, while helping break down those hard soils. The WaterSOLV helped but hasn't helped to the point where it eliminates layering or black layer, so I was back to the drawing board. That is when I saw the post on the WWGCSA for their Spring Meeting. They had a speaker coming who was going to talk about the advantages of topdressing fairways and tees with Turf Grade Compost.

I was blown away by what this speaker was talking about, how he had gone from clay and sand-based fairways with layering issues to thick, lush, beautiful fairways in only five years (has now been doing it for 20+ years). He showed the data and pictures that almost looked too good to be true. After only five years he had absolutely no layering, water infiltration was through the roof, water holding capacity was extremely high, nutrients in the profile were holding steady, fairways were firm and smooth, minimal wilt, and they looked lush with no imperfections. He then did a side-by-side comparison of a fairway that had been topdressed solely with sand on one side and the other with compost. Both areas had been watered the same, had been sprayed/fertilized the same, and mowed the same. They took moisture and firmness readings and both the moisture and the firmness were greater on the compost side. The compost side looked lush and green while the sand-based side looked thin, wilted, and off-green. The

Page 2



superintendent then asked his assistant to throw a golf ball against the sand-based side as hard as he could, it bounced about a foot off the ground, he did the same on the compost side and the golf ball bounced four-five feet in the air...I was sold.

I took this information back to my greens committee and they were 100% on board with doing a test on our worst fairway (Hole #1). We overseeded the fairway first followed by ½" of screened compost. It has been only two months since the application and the #1 fairway is our best fairway on property. Thin areas filled in, fairy ring has begun to check out, water holding capacity is better than any other fairway, water infiltration is higher, thatch layer is minimal, and the compost has already worked itself two+ inches into the profile. It is now July 15 and our #1 fairway has almost no wilt on the entire fairway and is lush and green. We have also used compost in our divot mix, topdressed thin areas in other fairways and rough, seeded and topdressed tees with divots that wouldn't heal, thin bunker banks, and stump holes. All the other areas have flourished and filled in extremely fast. The membership is blown away and has given me the green light to begin the process of topdressing all fairways and tees with compost for the next five+ years.

Our plan for this next coming year is to Verticut our fairways and tees this fall followed by ¾" solid tines next spring, overseed, and topdress with screened compost on all fairways, tees, and immediate rough on property. If we can get our worst fairway on property to look this good only two+ months in, the possibilities are endless for the rest of our property. Since college, sand has been widely regarded as one of the best tools for superintendents to help reduce thatch, remove layering, break down black layer, build a better profile, and smooth out playing surfaces. But as I type this newsletter, I don't plan to ever purchase sand again to use in our fairways, tees, or roughs and sand will only be purchased to topdress our greens.

I hope this article has opened your eyes to new ideas and if you have any questions please don't hesitate to reach out with questions or comments.  
[m.larson@yakimacountryclub.org](mailto:m.larson@yakimacountryclub.org).





# A FUNGICIDE COLLECTION DESIGNED TO PERFORM

Fall marks the perfect time to protect from approaching damage caused by winter disease. Our line of granular fungicides is designed to perform, offering both curative and preventative solutions for winter diseases when you need them most.

## VersaGard<sup>®</sup>

VersaGard Fungicide G adds a vital weapon to your arsenal, helping to combat a variety of summer and winter diseases, including anthracnose, brown patch, dollar spot, red thread, snow mold, and more.

## Signify<sup>®</sup> DG

Signify DG provides broad-spectrum disease prevention and suppression, including brown patch, snow mold, and pythium diseases and more. Signify DG features our easy-to-apply, dispersing granule (DG) formulation.

	Carrier	Active Ingredients	SGN Size	Packaging
<b>VersaGard<sup>®</sup></b>	EcoGranule™	Chlorothalonil, Propiconazole, Fludioxonil	125	30 lbs
<b>Signify<sup>®</sup> DG</b>	DG Pro <sup>®</sup>	Azoxystrobin, Propiconazole	100	40 lbs
<b>Prophecy<sup>®</sup> DG</b>	DG Pro <sup>®</sup>	Propiconazole	100	25 lbs, 40 lbs
<b>Fungicide X</b>	Pulp Carrier	Iprodione	75	40 lbs
<b>23-3-5 + Fungicide VIII</b>	Fertilizer Granules	Iprodione, Thiophanate	100	40 lbs



### WILBUR-ELLIS SPECIALISTS

**Brent Radford**  
Spokane, WA  
509-994-4735

**Andrei Omel**  
Pasco, WA  
509-545-9329

**Drew Rountree**  
Walla Walla, WA  
509-301-6105

### THE ANDERSONS TERRITORY MANAGER

**Ed Price, CGCS**  
509-981-9077

[AndersonsPro.com](http://AndersonsPro.com)



©2024 The Andersons, Inc. All rights reserved. EcoGranule is a trademark of The Andersons, Inc. DG Pro, Prophecy, Signify, and VersaGard are registered trademarks of The Andersons, Inc. B24

# “Now that it’s over, I can say it was fun to do something out of the ordinary.”

Mike Grilley, The Links, Post Falls, Idaho



Hello! I hope this quick article finds everyone well and enjoying their summer. What a busy time we are in right now with this heat wave. I try not to complain about it as fall is coming sooner than I’d like.

I had an irrigation wiring issue I just resolved not long ago that took me way too long to figure out. It is amazing to me how those little critters can find and chew through our wires that are sometimes three feet deep. My friend, Nick Newman, came out and used his equipment to help me locate the area in question. During the process, I purchased wire tracing and locating equipment for the golf course. Soon after fixing that issue, I lost power to six controllers and got to use the equipment myself. Nick made it look easy — where I took a bit longer to figure it out. But I eventually found and fixed another break, then another one. While I learned a new skill, the timing wasn’t great for the controllers to not work. I relied heavily on my crew — to which

I owe a huge THANKS!! They all stepped up and the golfers didn’t realize with what we were dealing.

I can say that during the couple weeks of issues I was tired and stressed. But now that it’s over, I can say it was fun to do something out of the ordinary. I know we all deal with stresses in our jobs, but I’m hoping everyone can see the light at the end of the tunnel.

I missed the golf outing at Desert Aire and I hope all who attended had a great time. It was my intention to attend, and I’m disappointed I wasn’t able to. I want to take this moment to thank our sponsors and James and Shawn for hosting — I heard the golf course was in great shape! Enjoy the rest of the season and I look forward to seeing all of you soon!

## NTA continued from page 1

and generous donations to the NTA from clubs and individuals throughout the Northwest. Washington Golf is the largest contributor with its \$19,953.75 donation in 2024.

There are four private clubs in the Seattle area that support the NTA with annual donations and the NTA is working with OSU on a campaign to increase the number of clubs supporting the NTA in this fashion.

More information on assisting the NTA in its research efforts is available by contacting Paul Ramsdell, at [mpsparks90@aol.com](mailto:mpsparks90@aol.com) or 253-219-8360.

Here is the breakdown of donations from the NTA in 2024 as voted on by the Board of Directors after recommendations from the Research Committee:

**Evaluation of the application of gibberellic acid for turf restoration and early green-up on turf trials throughout Washington state** Washington State University \$15,000.00

**Influence of nitrogen rate on growing degree-day models for plant growth regulators reapplication interval on annual bluegrass putting greens** Oregon State University \$12,500.00

**Long-term effects of topdressing and cultivation practices on an annual bluegrass putting greens** Oregon State University \$10,000.00

**Effects of equipment traffic on turfgrass during frost conditions** Oregon State University \$10,000.00

**Understanding Pacific Northwest turfgrass plant-parasitic nematode communities to improve management strategies** USDA-ARS and Oregon State University. \$7,500.00

**College scholarships.** Two \$1,250.00 scholarships \$2,500.00

**BAER DESIGN GROUP, LLC**

**Greg Baer**  
Principal Landscape Architect  
Irrigation Consultant

10027 N. Palisades Wy.  
Boise, ID 83714  
Ph. 208.859.1980  
[greg@baerdg.com](mailto:greg@baerdg.com)  
[www.baerdg.com](http://www.baerdg.com)

**HELENA**  
People...Products...Knowledge...

**Chris Concienne 509-795-9175**  
[conciennec@helenachemical.com](mailto:conciennec@helenachemical.com)

**One Source For Your Entire Course.**

New ideas, real working solutions, and time management that puts YOU back in the driver’s seat. At Horizon, we make your job a little easier.

Contact your local Golf Representative to learn how we can help you today.  
Nick Newman..... 208-929-2522

**Your Local Horizon Stores:**  
Hayden, ID      Spokane, WA  
208-762-3399      509-467-6601

**Horizon**  
800-PVC-TURF  
[HorizonOnline.com](http://HorizonOnline.com)





# Engaging with Washington FFA

## David Phipps, GCSAA NW Region Representative

As highlighted in the spring issue of the IEGCSA newsletter, GCSAA's efforts to engage with the FFA have gained significant momentum. Recently, the FFA announced the introduction of a turfgrass management Career Development Event (CDE) at their national conference in 2026.

Recognizing the potential impact of this initiative on the future turfgrass labor pool, we have prioritized building relationships and preparing for the Inland Empire GCSA booth at the May Washington FFA State Conference held at Washington State University in Pullman.

We are pleased to report that the booth was a resounding success. On May 9-10, along with Mike Bednar and industry representatives Dan Salois and Chrissie Segars, Ph.D., of PBI Gordon, I engaged with students about careers in turfgrass management. The response was overwhelmingly positive, with many students expressing newfound interest in the field. Teachers were equally enthusiastic, welcoming the idea of the 2026 CDE as a gateway to introduce turfgrass management to their students.

Building on the success at the Washington State FFA Conference, GCSAA's Leann Cooper and I attended the Washington Association of Agricultural Educators Conference in Shelton in June. Many of the teachers who attended the State FFA Conference were present. We provided a short one-hour workshop and followed up the next day with a hands-on tour of Salish Cliffs Golf Course. Superintendent Bob Pearsall played a crucial role in the field day, showcasing the equipment used in daily operations.

This interaction proved impactful, resulting in inquiries from high schools in Warden and Pasco the following week.

By the time you read this newsletter, I will have also attended the Idaho Science Teaching Association Conference in Coeur d'Alene. Last year in Boise, I hosted a teacher field trip at Hillcrest Country Club. This year, Jeff Gullikson, CGCS, and I will be at Coeur d'Alene Public Golf Course with Brendan Soika, conducting First Green labs for seven students and 35 teachers. This event aims to raise awareness of First Green and stimulate increased activity.

Engaging with these students early in their educational journey holds promise for developing high school job seekers with proficiency in turfgrass management. The FFA has the potential to significantly prepare students for our profession, whether they enter the workforce directly or pursue higher education, equipping them with a solid foundation to become valuable assets in the industry.

Initiatives like First Green demonstrate the importance of building relationships with local schools. Connecting with agricultural and elementary school teachers can raise awareness about the turfgrass industry and inspire the next generation of superintendents.

Looking ahead, let's continue nurturing these partnerships and investing in educational outreach efforts. Together, we can cultivate a skilled workforce that meets the needs of the turfgrass industry while championing sustainability and innovation in Washington and beyond. The Inland Empire region of my territory is gaining attention and stands to benefit greatly. We now encourage members to step up and get involved. Please feel free to reach out to me personally—I would be delighted to help you connect with a teacher.




<b>Nathan Cox</b> Owner Sport Turf & Golf Sales 509.750.1614	<b>Tracy Young</b> Office Manager Residential Commercial Sales 509.350.0707	<b>Martin Gallardo</b> Operation Manager 509.989.2200
--	---	--

Premium sand based sports turf  
[www.desertgreenturf.com](http://www.desertgreenturf.com)




**Richard Strautman**  
President

4651 Ann Court  
Bellingham, WA 98229

☎ : 3603057619  
✉ : [stretch@floratinenw.com](mailto:stretch@floratinenw.com)  
[www.floratinenw.com](http://www.floratinenw.com)



It has been a season of several First Green Events in the Inland Empire region!

Hayden Country Club event, hosted by Jeremich Farmer:



**2024 Inland Empire GCSA  
Fall Meeting & Trade Show,  
November 20 & 21**

Ultimate Gold  
Trade Show Sponsors!



**PACIFIC**  
GOLF & TURF

Event Sponsor:

Available



Whether you're looking for turf equipment or irrigation solutions, let us help determine what best suits your needs. See our website to view all of our product lines.

We've got what you need to get the job done right. Contact us:

**800-585-8001**

[sales@turfstar.com](mailto:sales@turfstar.com) / [www.turfstar.com](http://www.turfstar.com)



# Fall Meeting & Trade Show continued from page 1

applications, and sustainable turf management.

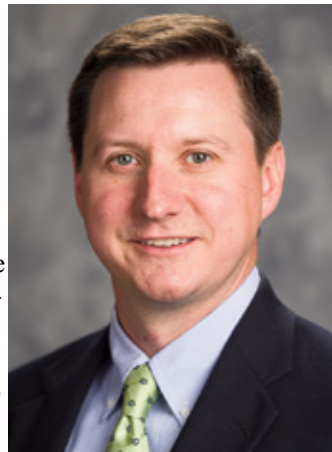
Joining us from Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, will be Bryan G. Hopkins, Ph.D., (right) who is a certified professional soil scientist with degrees in turfgrass science, soil chemistry, and plant nutrition. He has over 200 publications and has given thousands of presentations. Hopkins consults with his family's company, Sci-Scapes Inc., with a variety of golf, sports turf, and other private firms. As he explains, "Water is increasingly scarce and costly. As such, irrigation is increasingly scrutinized, especially on golf courses." Long-standing best management practices for irrigation will be reviewed, new technologies discussed, and the research results of actual golf course case studies will be revealed.



***Fertilization to Reduce Water and Pesticide Use: A Science-Based Case Study***

***Cutting Edge Water Management: Conservation and Healthy Grass***

Special to this event will be Michael Lee, Sr. Manager, (right) Government Affairs, GCSAA, offering an update on GCSAA government affairs. Lee will share the latest on laws and regulations impacting water, pesticide, and power equipment usage, and how you can get involved to help form good policy for the industry. Lee joined GCSAA in 2016 overseeing the Grassroots Ambassador program and lobbying efforts at the state and local level. Prior to joining GCSAA, he served as State Director for United States Senator Jim Inhofe in his home state of Oklahoma. Lee has a passion for public policy and golf and enjoys helping GCSAA members get involved in grassroots advocacy by connecting them with lawmakers and leaders in government.



***GCSAA Government Affairs Update***

As mentioned earlier, Cory Phillips is the equipment manager for the Atlanta Country Club. Phillips' presentations have proven to be of value to the members of the Peaks & Prairies GCSA and Idaho GCSA, and we appreciate this opportunity to bring him to the Inland Empire region. You may already be familiar with Phillips. With over 20 years' experience in the turf industry on all three brands, he is TETCP certified, co-taught several seminars and has been instrumental in the development of the GCSAA

TETCP exam. Phillips also helped create 5-Minute Fix videos, has served on the GCSAA Equipment Manager's Task Group, helps develop programs for his local chapter, and was the winner of the 2015 MVT award.



***Let's Troubleshoot Those Equipment Problems***

In addition to valuable educational offerings, you have the opportunity to expand your knowledge and seek additional expertise from our supportive allied members participating at the trade show!

The conference and show will take place in downtown Spokane, at The Centennial by Davenport Hotels, November 20-21, 2024.

**Please note the days of the week are different than last year!** The board meeting will be November 19.

***Little Bit of Everything***

The contemporary hotel, located along the Spokane River and Centennial River Trail, really has worked well for our needs the past two years. As shared before, it is important, and appreciated, that attendees reserving a hotel room stay at the property to help us meet our financial obligations.

Conference and trade show registration will be available later in August and will be found by visiting the calendar event of the website [iegcsa@iegcsa.org](mailto:iegcsa@iegcsa.org).



Jim Connolly- Distribution & International Sales  
509-951-0270  
[Jim@planeturfusa.com](mailto:Jim@planeturfusa.com)

Jared Whitaker- Alaska, Central Washington, Wyoming  
509-977-1354  
[Jared@planeturfusa.com](mailto:Jared@planeturfusa.com)

Jordan Anderson- Inland North West  
816-217-7363  
[Jordan@planeturfusa.com](mailto:Jordan@planeturfusa.com)

Aaron Stamper- Western Washington & Oregon  
509-301-4589  
[Aaron@planeturfusa.com](mailto:Aaron@planeturfusa.com)

Shane Hughes- Southeastern Washington, Eastern Oregon, Southern Idaho  
509-954-5773  
[Shane@planeturfusa.com](mailto:Shane@planeturfusa.com)



<https://planeturfusa.com>



