



March, 2003, Issue 11  
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### **PRESIDENTS REPORT:**

With recent world events it is clear we live in sad and uncertain times. Much of what we do seems to pale into insignificance in the light of such weighty world events. However, the fact that our industry endeavours to improve people's way of life and the environment they live in is a positive endeavour, one that should not be discounted. A focus on those things in life that are of value to us is comforting and worthwhile.

The Vic\Tas regional committee met recently to draft a business plan for the upcoming year. We hope to share this simple blueprint with the membership and would encourage feedback or suggestions as to the direction. The initial draft has been proposed on the basis of the feedback gained from the national conference the National organizations business plan and those things we deemed achievable from a volunteer committee.

Nationally further initiatives will roll out through the year in continuous education, advocacy and membership development. However, we have focussed on some key

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initiatives that we believe are achievable and are targeted to both the region and chapter members. The draft of the business plan will be distributed to the regional membership through the e-mail distribution list. For those of you who are not contactable electronically copies can be obtained by request from myself at Banyule City Council, PO Box 51 Ivanhoe 3079 or ring 9457 9927.

In other activities undertaken lately a focus on reward and recognition for the excellent work carried out in this industry is an element that is both growing and pleasing. Recently presentations were held for the Parks Victoria Kookaburra awards focusing on initiatives and developments within that organization and at the end of March the Fleming Nurseries Student design competition will be held culminating in a presentation to the winner by the Premier Steve Bracks of the Don Fleming Student Award.

These activities further strengthen awards such as the Sport and Recreation Victoria excellence awards and our own state and national PLA awards which will once again be hotly contested later this year. Keep your projects and nominations in mind.

On the advocacy front we have approached the State Government to rethink some issues in funding provision in its minor facilities grants in SRV. The level of project size funded in this category needs to be urgently reviewed. We have made protestations to be involved in any review of this program.

We have also been in meetings with the key municipal insurer Civic Mutual Plus on the issue of ground hardness and have tried to gain some direction from them in relation to our liabilities as ground owners and managers. Consequently a clarification of their stance has been issued. They also now have contact details for the responsible officers in local authorities for the parks and Leisure areas rather than just the risk.

Our best wishes to all for the rest of the year and remember if you know anyone you feel may benefit from membership please refer them to the web site or national office for membership information. Each member can play their part in strengthening this organization by helping spread the word and making it grow.

There are a lot of people who are working in the field who have not had the opportunity to be exposed to the great network of people PLA provides. I'd ask you all, if possible to help them gain access to an important industry resource.

This could be people new to the field, sole operators, people stuck in the middle of a structure who may not have access to information or even those that feel they are too busy to share their knowledge.

A membership is a minimal contribution back to the strengthening of the industry that supports us. We may not all be able to work actively at the development of broader industry goals. However, we should be able to at least encourage the people we know to engage. This then grows the base of knowledge and opportunity available to all.

Peter Utri  
Victorian President

### **PICSAR (Participation in Community Sport and Active Recreation)**

PLA Vic/Tas region is currently represented on this project. The aim of the project is to increase participation in community sport and active recreation for The VicHealth targeted population groups (i.e.: youth, older adults, CALD, indigenous and women) The role of the working party is to:

- To provide advice on the general direction of the project
- To provide specific advice on the project
- To attend meetings
- To provide on-going advice if needed in between meetings
- To ensure that the project outcomes will be useful and relevant in achieving the aim.

A report if due to be presented to VicHealth by the end of April, 2003. For further information contact Lisa Whitehouse on 9262 6426.

### **Major Events In Melbourne Seminar**

The Eastern Chapter of PLA in partnership with the Melbourne Sports Network is holding a seminar Major Events In Melbourne on Thursday the 10 April, 2003 at the MCG. Speakers include Sarah Clements from the Australian Tennis Open, Bruce Barnard from the Australian Grand Prix Corporation, Peter Stewart from the 2006 Commonwealth Games, Rachel Dacy and Graham Porteous from the City of Melbourne and Trevor Dohnt from the M.C.C. For more information or a seminar brochure contact Kevin O'Byrne on 9685 8705 of the PLA National Office on 5444 1763.

### **Benefits Research**

The main report and associated annotated bibliography on "The Health Benefits of Interacting with Nature" prepared by Deakin University's Faculty of Health and Behavioural Science for the International Park Strategic Partners Group are now available on:

[http://www.hbs.deakin.edu.au/HealthSci/Research/Health\\_Policy/pv\\_report1.pdf](http://www.hbs.deakin.edu.au/HealthSci/Research/Health_Policy/pv_report1.pdf)  
[http://www.hbs.deakin.edu.au/HealthSci/Research/Health\\_Policy/pv\\_report1.pdf](http://www.hbs.deakin.edu.au/HealthSci/Research/Health_Policy/pv_report1.pdf)  
[http://www.hbs.deakin.edu.au/HealthSci/Research/Health\\_Policy/pv\\_ann\\_biblio1.pdf](http://www.hbs.deakin.edu.au/HealthSci/Research/Health_Policy/pv_ann_biblio1.pdf)  
[http://www.hbs.deakin.edu.au/HealthSci/Research/Health\\_Policy/pv\\_ann\\_biblio1.pdf](http://www.hbs.deakin.edu.au/HealthSci/Research/Health_Policy/pv_ann_biblio1.pdf)

These were the major topic of presentation and discussion at last year's PLA National Conference. Recent research undertaken on "The Benefits of Parks and Recreation" for PLA Vic/Tas through a grant from SRV by SGL Consulting is at a

final draft stage and should be released shortly.

### **4th International Ranger Federation World Congress**

This triennial event for rangers working in protected areas management is being hosted by the Victorian Rangers Association and will be held at the end of March at Wilsons Promontory National Park. It is expected to attract some 250 delegates, including a number from developing countries for whom sponsorship has been obtained, with over 40 countries being represented. The Governor of Victoria and feature leading environmentalist Dr Bob Brown as the keynote speaker will open the Congress.

### **Seminar on Sports Turf Management -Benefits & detriments of soil micro-organisms**

To be held at the Burnley Campus, The University of Melbourne, 500 Yarra Boulevard, Richmond Vic 3121 on April 9 2003. Registration fee of \$80.00 to include morning and afternoon teas, light lunch and proceedings. Speakers include Professor Brian Holl, University of British Columbia on beneficial turf/soil microbial interactions, Terry Woodcock, Director, Sports Turf Consultants (Australia) on detrimental turf/soil microbial interactions, Dr John Hunt, Agrimm Technologies Pty.Ltd., New Zealand on Soil microbes and integrated pest management in turf, John Neylan, AGCSA Tech Manager, on natural organics and microbes in turf management, David Nickson, Ecogrow on the use of nematodes

in integrated pest management and Martin Mebalds, Institute of Horticultural Development on turfgrass-endophyte partnerships. Further information and registration form from Dr David Aldous on [daldous@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:daldous@unimelb.edu.au) or fax (03) 92506885.

## 7<sup>th</sup> National School in Park Management

Applications are now being taken to register for the 7<sup>th</sup> National School in Park Management, which will be held at The Queen's College, The University of Melbourne over the 20-25 July 2003. Developed in partnership with the University of Melbourne, Parks Victoria, and the City of Melbourne, and supported by Parks and Leisure Australia, the School developed both a national and international standing in the park and recreation industry as a challenging and interactive program. This year's theme is around water conservation, conservation, and the use of triple bottom line reporting as well as other core business and management areas in parks and recreation. Further information from Dr David Aldous on [daldous@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:daldous@unimelb.edu.au)

## Visiting Scientist -2003

Professor Brian Holl, The University of British Columbia, is visiting the University of Melbourne-Burnley Campus for a three-month period that commenced February 10 2003. Professor Holl has interests in soil microbial communities in agricultural and horticultural systems. Whilst at Burnley he will be working with Assoc. Prof. David Aldous, Uni of Melbourne, and John Neylan AGCSA, investigating the effects of organic

amendments on microbial activity in sand based turfgrass greens.

## Newsletter dates for 2003

Information for inclusion in the 2003 South-eastern Regional newsletter needs to be with the co-ordinator (David Aldous) by the end of the following dates, March 14, May 16, August 15 and November 14, so that the four issues can be prepared and circulated to Vic/Tas members.

## SOUTHEASTERN AUSTRALIAN REGIONAL COUNCIL MEMBERS

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