



# GREEN SECTION RECORD

August 30, 2012 -- Volume 50, Number 18



**Stanley J. Zontek**  
**1949 – 2012**

On the morning of August 28, 2012, the USGA lost one of our own with the passing of Stanley J. Zontek. Stanley's loss will be felt by many more than his USGA family. His life was devoted to the game of golf and the improvement of golf courses throughout the world. He was tireless in his efforts to help golf course superintendents make the most of the resources at hand, whether it was the small, family golf course or the greatest of championship venues. It is impossible to calculate the impact Stanley had through his 41 years of visiting courses, writing articles, speaking at conferences and making friends all over the world.



**Stanley joined the USGA in 1971. At the time of his death he was the**

Stanley's introduction to his chosen profession was through his father who was a golf course superintendent. In the late 1950's, Dr. Burt Musser, Penn State University, visited Stan's father while he was installing the first 'Pennncross' bentgrass putting green in West Virginia. This visit piqued Stan's interest in turfgrass science. He started his golf course career raking bunkers for \$1.10 per hour. After high school, he enrolled at Penn State where he developed a love for agronomy that only grew stronger throughout his professional career.

Stanley joined the USGA in 1971 and quickly found his calling. Stan and the USGA Green Section soon proved to be a perfect match with the shared goal of serving the game of golf through the dissemination of sound agronomic advice. Stan never wavered in his commitment to this goal or in his efforts to help others be successful.

**USGA's most tenured employee with 41 years of service.**

He started his USGA career as an agronomist in the Northeastern Region and he was named director of the region in 1976. He moved to the North Central Region in 1980 before becoming the director of the Mid-Atlantic Region in 1985. He trained many USGA agronomists and it was always an experience to spend a week or two "traveling with Stanley." The topics went well beyond agronomy, but you came away from your time with a much better appreciation of the industry.

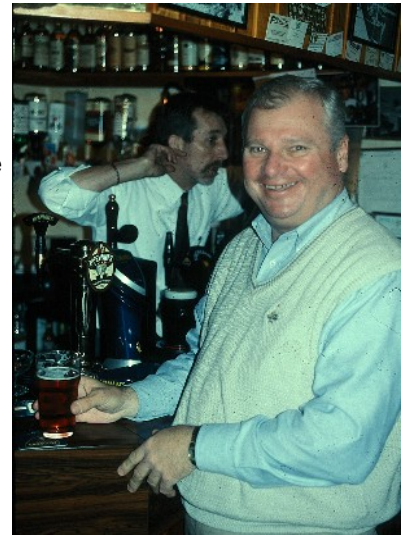


**Proud of his Penn State degree, Stanley was honored to be recognized by the Crop and Soil Sciences Department as an "Outstanding Alumni" in 2007.**

Many organizations have recognized Stanley's contributions through various well-deserved awards, including the 1997 GCBA Don A. Rossi Award, the 2006 GCSAA Distinguished Service Award, and the 2007 Penn State University Crop and Soil Sciences Outstanding Alumni Award. Stan was extremely proud of his degree from Penn State and was one of the university's greatest ambassadors. Although he went out of his way to help all young turf professionals, he had a special place in his heart for "Penn Staters."

Not surprisingly, during his four decades of working in golf, Stan authored an extraordinary number of Turf Advisory Service visit reports, presentations, and [articles on every aspect of golf course maintenance](#).

Dr. Kimberly Erusha, managing director of the USGA Green Section, captured Stan's approach to life and his work. "Stanley often said that this was a people business and it was about building relationships. He lived by that sentiment, and did it very well. He willingly shared his passion, expertise and experience with people from around the world. For that, all of us who love the game are better for it."



**International travel was one of Stanley's hobbies. He was a favorite speaker at international turfgrass conferences. His love for the finer things in life made it easy for him to make friends all over the world.**

To read more about Stanley's career, visit the [USGA website](#).

The family has chosen a private burial in Cape May, New Jersey. Donations in Stanley's memory may be made to the following organizations:

**[American Diabetes Association](#)**

Stanley J. Zontek Memoriam  
PO Box 11454  
Alexandria, VA 22312  
1 (800) 232-3472  
[www.diabetes.org](http://www.diabetes.org)

**[PA Turf Research Innovation Fund](#)**

Penn State University  
c/o PA Turf Research Innovation Fund  
240 Agricultural Administration Building  
University Park, PA 16802

**[The Turfgrass Information Center \(home of the USGA Turfgrass Information File\)](#)**

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