

**KIDS COLOURING CONTEST**

**BiE**

Bowen Island Times Editions

**\$1,460,148**

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**view from aBroad**

Islander Andrea Bastion on her Ghana experience

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Year	Series 1 (Blue)	Series 2 (Orange)
2005	53	83
2006	62	65
2007	36	81
2008	26	43

**the state of real estate on Bowen**

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**faction friction**

brings Bowen Island to the world stage

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# Faction friction

Brings Bowen to the world stage

by Tim Rhodes



Turf Field ALL LINED UP - the lines are actually permanent white turf and not chalked lines photo by Christine Walker

Had it not been for opposition to the installation of artificial turf, Bowen would perhaps not have what it now does: the safest and most environmentally responsible synthetic grass field available today. Both sides in the Turf Wars should have felt vindicated at the end of the public information meeting.

**Christine Walker, Community Services Manager**, provided a brief overview of the project which started in the autumn of 2007 and will be completed this week. All those presenting on behalf of the project praised the efforts of volunteers, whose contribution of labour and materials went a long way to keeping the project on budget. The labour and materials provided for supply and install of conduit (to provide for future lighting) significantly offset the cost of the artificial turf.

**Florrie Levine, Project Manager**, elaborated on the construction process, noting that in addition to building the field, most of the excavated material was disposed of on-site at snake field which was then leveled and re-seeded and lawn basins were added to the natural grass field to assist in drainage. Five turf products were considered and Limonta Sport "Geo Turf" was chosen. It fit the budget, met the civil engineering requirements, met Council's requirements for environmental stewardship, and is

designed to maximize performance for athletics and safety as a playground.

Walker introduced Domenic Carapella, Managing Director of Geo Turf USA. Carapella flew in from New York for the day to answer the public's questions and to mark "the first installation of its kind in Canada." Bowen's small field is equivalent to what is being used on the world stage and is FIFA 2 certified (the Federation Internationale de Football Association recommendation

*"When I first came [to the school], for the first three years [the playground] was sand, gravel—and the injuries were on a day-to-day basis. Some days I would see between 40 to 50 students. Since the installation of the Geo Safe Play turf, the incidence of children coming to nurse's office with injuries has decreased 70 percent."*

**Christine Mabardy-Higgins, School Nurse, International School of Boston**

for artificial turf designed specifically to mirror the playing characteristics of professional football.) Carapella told the audience that the Geo Turf product is the highest performing, safest, and most environmentally responsible product available, partly

because the company's roots are in Italy where soccer is a passion and where they must operate within strict environmental controls have been in force in Europe for years. The company has been producing artificial turf since 1981 and has 17,000 installations in 70 countries. Bowen's is first installation of this product in Canada;

Infill-Pro Geo, is a combination of fibre from the outside of the coconut and recycled cork material (left over after punching out wine bottle corks). The coconut fibre helps cool the turf with an evaporative effect and the high tannin content in cork naturally resists the growth of mold,

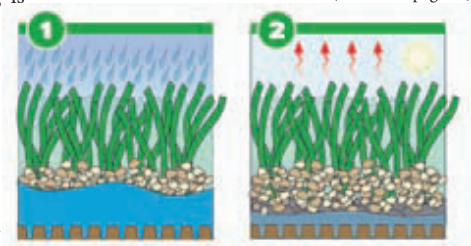
*"If Bowen Island has to have a plastic field inflicted upon us, then yours is probably the lesser evil."*

audience member

bacteria, and fungus. There is nothing in the infill or sub-base (essentially different grades of rock) that is harmful to the environment; in fact it acts as a natural filter and outflow is sometimes cleaner than the source and water can be returned directly back into environment. Geo Turf is 60 degrees cooler than traditional rubber crumb turf systems, contains no lead or hazardous materials, and all components are 100% recyclable. Bowen Council's strict requirements were challenging enough for Carapella to suggest that "if [an artificial turf supplier] can make it on Bowen Island, they can make it anywhere."

Carapella's answers to questions from the audience provided more detailed information:

- it is not necessary to water down Geo Turf to keep it cool because of evaporative effect of the coconut fibre in the infill which absorbs humidity that later evaporates out during the hottest part of the day;
- no chemicals are required to clean the turf: remove solids (animal droppings, refuse), hose off, sweep, and groom when necessary (sweeping reduces need for grooming);
- the turf drains vertically and can absorb up to 14" of rain per hour;
- the turf fibre is 100% polyethylene, primary backing is polyethylene, and 30% of the backing is manufactured from soybean.
- Geo Turf was not provided at a promotional price, the product was never beyond the budget; this is not a trial installation, and the product is under full warranty;
- the 8 year warranty is based on use as a professional practice field (50 hours per week). The Bowen installation should have at least a 10 year lifespan, at which time only the turf is replaced, not the sub-base. After about 3 years it may be necessary to top-up the infill with an amount usually equivalent to about 5% of original quantity;
- there is no firm data on off-gassing; however, Geo Turf has been certified by numerous European agencies, tested for heavy metals and volatiles by CDC (Centre for Disease Control), and exceeds all requirements for California (some of the most stringent environmental safeguards in the USA);
- Gmax is a measurement of impact absorption. Asphalt has a Gmax of 1000, 200 and above can cause head injury, natural grass has a Gmax of 60 – 100, the product used on Bowen has a Gmax of 83. The system is guaranteed never to exceed a Gmax of 145 during its lifetime and typically remains constant within 20% of the Gmax measured at installation;
- there is no need to clean or sterilize shoes. MRSA Staph is killed by heat and UV radiation and because grass is cooler than artificial turf, MRSA Staph tends to live an hour longer on grass. (continued page 17)



Evaporative Effect of the coconut fibre of the artificial turf

**Bowen Island Municipality**

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**Official Community Plan Update - IDEAS Forum**

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**WHAT: IDEAS Forum**

**WHO: Bowen's Volunteer Groups and Organizations**

**WHEN: October 22 at 7:00 pm mingle 7:15 start to 9:30 pm**

**WHY: A chance for Bowen's volunteer groups to share their ideas about their needs and Bowen's future with other volunteer groups and community members.**

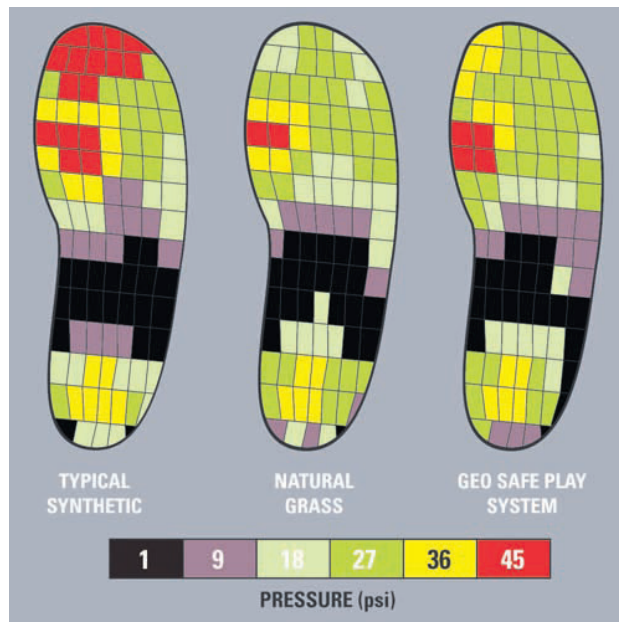
**Community members welcome.**

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BOWEN ISLAND MUNICIPALITY

## Faction friction Brings Bowen to the world stage

cont'd from pg. 3



Geo Turf is designed to eliminate "Turf Toe"

- most athletic footwear is appropriate except metal cleats which tear up any surface, including asphalt;
- the surface is designed to perform more like natural turf and all but eliminates "Turf Toe," a common injury on artificial playing fields, caused by uneven distribution of pressure on the front toe instead of solely (no pun intended) on the plantar (see image above);
- sunflower seeds and chewing gum should be banned from the field;
- white lines on field are permanent white synthetic grass.

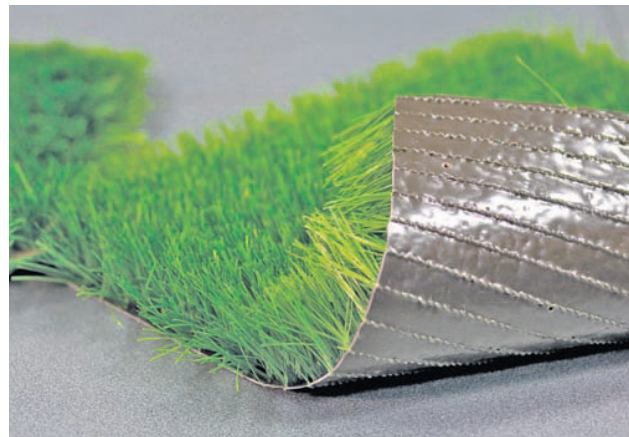
CAO Slegtenhorst thanked Carapella for coming from the big island to the small island. (There is only 2 square miles difference in area between Manhattan Island and Bowen Island, although Manhattan has a somewhat higher density.)

Mayor Turner expressed his appreciation to Carapella for the personal touch. "The field is about creating joy" and the opportunity to

have the product's attributes explained was a service to Bowen."

Additional information: the municipality has applied for a RINC (Recreation Infrastructure Canada) grant; if successful, the \$250,000 grant could perhaps provide some funding for fencing and/or lighting. Fencing is needed only to control the ball and it is anticipated that it will be no more than 4 feet tall. The project is on budget, but at this time there are no funds to replace basketball court surface.

There is a grand opening planned for October 23rd, but work on the field will be finished this week and public will have free access (when it is not booked) starting this weekend.



A section of the Geo Turf showing the backing

This field demonstrates that the frictions that so often arise between factions in our community can result in an outcome not only acceptable to most, but perhaps better than originally envisioned. This is what happened here. Now if we could just tone down the rhetoric the next time ...

**"The field is about creating joy"**

Mayor Bob Turner