

NEWS RELEASE:

TURFGRASS CAMPAIGN OFF TO A FLYING START

The \$1.5 million fundraising campaign for the Guelph Turfgrass Institute, announced at a news conference in Toronto recently, is off to a flying start. George M. (Mac) Frost and his wife Beth, who have owned and operated golf courses in the Toronto area since 1946, have donated \$500,000 to the campaign.

"Such money that is raised by the campaign will provide the institute with a research and information centre that will serve as a focal point for the Canadian turf industry and the public," said Ron Craig, president of the Ontario Turfgrass Research Foundation. "The new centre will provide services to alleviate some of the pressures caused in recent years by the housing boom, increased demand for open park space and more outdoor leisure activities," he said.

Frost said that the donation "is the result of a long-term involvement in turf and greens maintenance and an appreciation of the importance of ecologically sound turf research and practices." Over the years, with the help of partners and his wife, Beth, Frost developed Brookwood Golf Course, Parkview Golf Club and Spring Lakes Golf Course, which was recently sold.

Established in 1987, the Guelph Turfgrass Institute conducts research and extension activities, and supplies information on turfgrass production and management to all sectors of the industry. The centre will house world-class facilities for research and education, policy development, conferences and for public access to publications and computer-reference material. A

computer will link the facility with turfgrass centres around the world.

"Most people take healthy lawns, sports fields and city parks for granted," says Chris Hall, director of the institute. "But environmental concerns about lawn-care chemicals, frequent watering restrictions and increased use of public playground areas demonstrate the need for continued research into new varieties of turfgrass, as well as new production and management techniques."

The Institute is a joint project of the Ontario Turfgrass Research Foundation, the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food and the University of Guelph. Noting Guelph's expertise in the natural sciences and agricultural research, university president Brian Segal expresses satisfaction in "working cooperatively to enhance the turfgrass industry that is so important to our province and our country."

Bill Ingratta, OMAF's program manager for horticulture, says his ministry is pleased with the institute. "We believe we are building a centre of excellence in Canadian turfgrass education and extension."

Recent research carried out by the institute focuses on turfgrass management and renovation, weed control and growth regulation, pesticide residues, soil and nutrition and turfgrass seed production.

For more information contact Ron Craig at 416-836-0988 or Andrea Mudry Fawcett in media relations at Ext. 3839 at the University of Guelph, 519-824-4120.

WATER QUALITY Dr. Nick Christians

Conference Proceedings

Talked about water as being critical to many in the landscape industry. Major expense is the pump and the irrigation system. Poor quality water can be toxic to the soil and plant growth. Quality raises with use. Landscape industry first to be cut off with water bans, considered non-essential. Many areas spend large amounts of money to water every month.

We need to know the chemical and physical properties of soils including particle size, bulk density, porosity and infiltration rates. We need to know chemically the ratio of Phosphorus, Potash, Calcium and Magnesium. Mentioned Cation Exchange Capacity — the ability of soil to absorb cations. Cations are positively charged. The soil has to have the ability to absorb and hold a charge. Many soils require the incorporation of organic matter. Sodium sulphate and gypsum help to restore soils very slowly. Amount of sodium that will accumulate in the soil is dependant on soil type. Dr. Christians also talked about sewage effluent for watering. Costs involved are proximity of material and storage facilities. Often full of heavy metals and other contaminants such as lead, mercury, cadmium, copper and nickel. Boron can be a problem even 1-2 ppm. Turf can tolerate but trees and shrubs are affected at 355 ppm. Ensure adequate testing first and cost estimation before implementation.

Change of Address

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