

# Grau's Answers to Turfgrass Question

If you've got a question you want Dr. Fred V. Grau to answer, please address it to Grau Q&A, Golfdom, 407 S. Dearborn, Chicago 5, Ill.



LAST month we talked about the county agent, the public benefactor who works with farmers and suburbanites. This month we shall discuss the "Subject Matter Specialist" who backs up the county agent information on his particular subject.

Each state extension service maintains

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## How the State Extension Specialist Can Help You

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at headquarters a staff of highly-trained people who are specialists in their subject. They work with and through the office of the county agent, usually at his request, to bring the latest information to interested taxpayers through meetings, the press, radio and TV, and through timely releases (bulletins, pamphlets, etc.). This program is financed by appropriated state and Federal tax funds.

The creation of a position of extension specialist usually results from requests from taxpayers. This was true in my case when, in 1935, I received my appointment at Penn State. Joe Valentine and Marshall Farnham, among others, prevailed upon a Mr. McDowell, then director of extension, for the appointment, supported by reasons to justify the expense.

Extension specialists cover virtually every phase of agriculture. Turfgrass groups are entitled to the services just as farm organizations are. Creation of the position and the scheduling of services are obtained by requests from leaders of groups to the county agent. In no case is there any charge for services.

Just what lines of work are covered by the specialists? Let us examine the possi-

bilities in some of the subjects which might be of value to turfgrass groups.

**Agronomy:** There may be specialists in hay and pasture, hybrid corn, turf. There seems to be no uniform policy. The turf man may be in agronomy or in horticulture. It varies in different states.

**Horticulture:** Specialists may be available in greenhouse work, fruits and vegetables, flowers or in trees and shrubs. The wide variety of interests in this department, together with an equally wide variety of interests among turf men, makes this an exceedingly good possibility for assistance from specialists.

**Agricultural Engineering:** Among the many services offered here are drainage of soils, operation of engines and machinery, and running grade levels.

**Forestry:** Almost all turfgrass areas have need for trees and information on how to care for them.

**Entomology:** The insect problem will be with us always, presenting new problems yearly.

**Pathology:** Diseases of grasses, shrubs and trees are among our most costly threats.

I could go on naming many other departments (accounting, business administration, public speaking) — all available for the asking at no cost. Only a few specialists know turf but that is not necessary. The important thing is that they have information that any groups need plus willingness and the ability to present it clearly.

If your group lacks speakers for meetings ask your county agent for help. One of the extension specialists from a college might be the answer. Please do not expect a new man to understand fully all your

## Satan and John Doe

Old Satan sat with face so grim  
And muttered "What'll I do with him?"  
He's sure to find this place a bore  
With the life on earth he's had before!"  
And then while shaking his horny head  
He opened his ledger and this he read:  
"John Doe — Keeper of Greens,  
A man behind the golfing scenes,  
Had sixty years of toil and strife  
Pleasing golfer, manager, pro, and wife.  
His job included keeping the greens,  
Planting new turf, repairing machines.  
Fighting diseases, insects defeat;  
Battling rain, humidity, heat.  
Fixing waterpipes that break through  
the ground,  
Changing all markers and mowing  
weeds down.  
He worked all the day — studied at  
night,  
Trained all new men in ways that were  
right.  
Knew the diseases; chemicals, too.  
Fertilized, aerified, 'til his face would  
turn blue.

Not only scholar and teacher was he,  
But an ambassador of good will — and  
publicity.  
Records he kept; watched budget allo-  
cation —  
On him depended the course reputation,  
And though heading a project whose  
value was high,  
Credit and praise went to some other  
guy.  
Gripping and moaning he got every day  
But seldom a raise in the old take-  
home pay!"  
Now here he lies, his days they are  
through —  
"Tell me," said Satan "What'n hell can  
I put him to?"  
After sitting and thinking for quite a  
while  
His face broke out in a great big smile;  
The best known hardship he could deem  
Was to send him where all was calm  
and green!

*Helen May*

problems the first time you meet with him. He will need time to become acclimated to the special needs of your group just as you needed time to become accustomed to your new job.

If your state lacks a turfgrass specialist, and you feel that there is a real need for one, ask for one. See your county agent and have him arrange an appointment with the director of extension. The first reaction usually is negative. But, when supported by an estimate of the number of taxpayers interested and a reasonable figure on the investment in turf, requests are being granted in more and more states.

### For Strong Organization

**Q.** In our part of the state we have an organization of sorts but we don't seem to be getting anywhere. Our occasional meetings lack purpose in spite of the apparent need for information on everything pertaining to growing grass. Can you suggest anything whereby we might develop an active turfgrass group? (Va.)

**A.** There are some good examples of "self help" where interested individuals sought assistance and proceeded to organize a turf-

grass association. One of the first to do this — if not the first — was the group in the Pocono Mountains who still operate the Pocono Turf Association. That was in 1935-36.

One of the more recent highly successful efforts has been the development of the Delaware Valley Turfgrass Association which embraces five counties in southeastern Pennsylvania. The way in which this group came into existence is outlined in a booklet entitled "Organizing and Conducting A Turfgrass Association" which has been sponsored by the Pennsylvania Turfgrass Council.

For further information on the subject and availability of the booklets write to Tom Mascaro, secy.-treas., Pennsylvania Turfgrass Council, West Point, Pa.

### Wants Turfgrass Literature

**Q.** I am 22 years old, have just served three years in the Army and am now working on a course. I am very happy with this type of work. I would like to go to turf school.

My stepfather is chmn. of the green committee at the course where I work. He receives GOLFDOM every month and I have been an avid reader of your articles in the Question and Answer section and also have read your "Golf is Played on Grass" in the Agricultural Yearbook.

I would appreciate any advice you may