

What a loss it would have been for the industry had Jim Watson followed his initial

path of study: pastures and pasture management. The industry would have lost one of the people who pushed for education for superintendents at a time when few seemed interested in doing so.

Watson was finishing up his degree in agronomy at Texas A&M with a specialty in pastures and pasture management when his advisor, Joe Valentine, asked him to prepare a slide presentation so that Valentine could present it at a turfgrass conference. At the conference, Valentine introduced Watson to Fred Grau.

"I never considered turfgrass management before I met Grau," Watson says. "He talked to me a little about a fellowship in turfgrass management that Penn State was offering in conjunction with the USGA. We talked for about five to 10 minutes, and I didn't think much more about it. Later in the conference, Grau asked me to send a telegram for him. So he handed me his message, and off I went to the telegraph office.

"When I opened it to transcribe the message on to the telegraph paper, imagine my surprise when I saw my name in it, and that it was addressed to H. Bertram Musser [dean of the Penn State turfgrass program at the time]," he says, laughing. "It read, 'James Watson, accepting the USGA fellowship.' That's how I came to be involved in turfgrass management."

And a fortunate decision it was. Watson attended Penn State from 1947 to 1950 and received the school's first Ph.D. in turfgrass management. He returned to Texas A&M as an assistant professor in the department of agronomy, where he taught courses in soil and pasture management, as well as starting the turfgrass research project there. In 1952, Watson joined The Toro Co.

"I learned the importance of education from people like Grau, Musser and (O.J.) Noer," says Watson, who took semi-retirement from Toro in 1990. "I

Jim Watson

Pioneer in educating superintendents

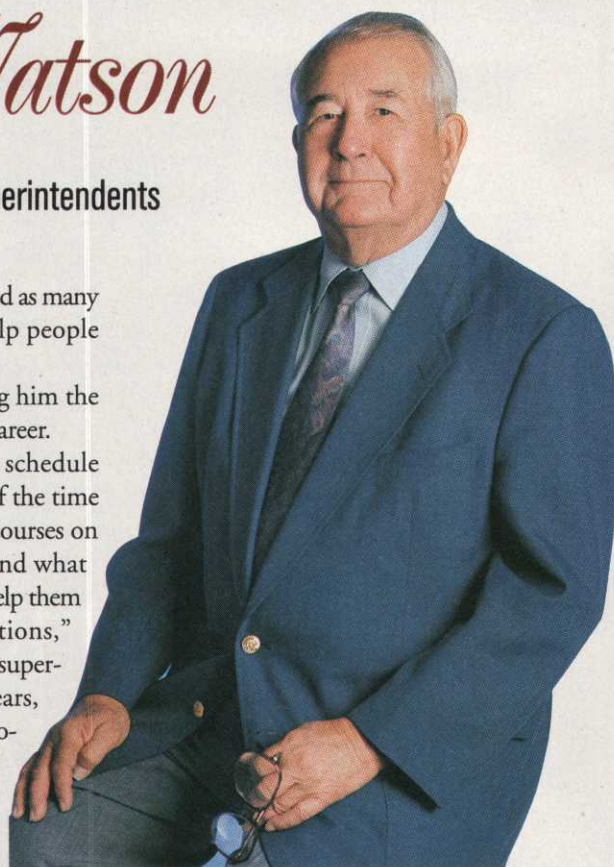
felt it was my obligation to attend as many conferences as possible to help people grow better turf."

He credits Toro with giving him the freedom to do so early in his career.

"I was able to set my own schedule back then, and I spent most of the time advising and counseling golf courses on what types of grass to grow and what management practices would help them produce ideal playing conditions," Watson says. "I've met a lot of superintendents over the last 50 years, and they're a great bunch of people. I'm glad I was able to help them."

So are the superintendents.

— Frank H. Andorka Jr., Associate Editor



John M. Schilling

Led GCSAA on impressive growth spurt in his 10-year tenure



John M. Schilling became executive director of GCSAA in 1983 and served in the position for 10 years. It was a decade of remarkable accomplishment by the organization and its members.

Schilling is remembered most for leading the phenomenal growth in the size and sophistication of the association's now huge annual conference and trade show. Another milestone, construction of GCSAA's headquarters in Lawrence, Kan., also occurred during the Schilling years. The impressive buildings overlook much of Lawrence and miles of surrounding countryside.

GCSAA