



Ontario Turf Industry News

OPA ANNOUNCES NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, KATERINA JORDAN A KEY ADDITION TO U OF G TURF RESEARCH TEAM

John Howard Steps Down From OPA

It is with a mixture of happiness and sadness that the Ontario Parks Association announces the resignation of John Howard as Executive Director.

After five and one-half years of dedicated service and hard work, John has accepted a position as Superintendent of Parks with the City of Owen Sound. This is a wonderful opportunity for John to return to his roots in parks maintenance and we couldn't be happier for him and his family.

John has accomplished a great deal during his time with OPA and the board and membership have all benefited from his contribution. Just like our organization, the City of Owen Sound will prosper immediately from John's experience, commitment to hard work and contacts throughout the green industry.

Please join us in congratulating John on his new post, which he began on February 13. The OPA Board of Directors has some rather large shoes to fill as a result of John's departure so we ask for your patience during this period of time.

OPA Welcomes Eric Trogdon

The Board of Directors of the Ontario Parks Association is pleased to announce the appointment of Eric Trogdon as Executive Director of the Association.

Eric lives in Dundas, Ontario and has over 25 years of experience in parks and recreation and has extensive experience in education, law enforcement and working with public and private sector organizations both in Canada and the United States. Eric looks forward to meeting and working with you in the future.

Please join us in welcoming Eric to the Ontario Parks Association. Eric can be reached at 905-864-6182 or by email at opa@opassoc.on.ca.

Editor's Note: Congratulations to both John and Eric from all of us at the STA!

Generous Donation Made to OTRF

The Ontario Turfgrass Research Foundation wishes to acknowledge the generous contribution of \$10,000 made by the Green Horizon Group of Farms and the Schiedel Family. Green Horizon has been producing quality sod for over 30 years. The OTRF has initiated an aggressive fund raising campaign supporting the two new turfgrass faculty members hired by the University of Guelph. Dr. Eric Lyons and Dr. Katerina Jordan join Dr. Tom Hsiang taking the Guelph Turfgrass Research Institute to the forefront of Canadian turfgrass research. We invite all industry representatives to support this cause. For more information, email Research Director c.almack@sympatico.ca.

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Introducing Katerina Jordan at U of G

I am a newly appointed faculty member in the Department of Plant Agriculture at the University of Guelph and am writing to introduce myself and give you an idea of what I am hoping to accomplish for the Ontario turfgrass industry. I am originally from the United States



and was born in Maryland where I attended both undergraduate and graduate school for my master's degree. Although I was trained as an agricultural plant pathologist both in school and at the United States Department of Agriculture, I have had an interest in turfgrass and turf management for over a decade. I recently attended the University of Rhode Island, where I completed my doctorate research on plant-parasitic nematodes on golf course greens turf. I am an avid golfer and enjoy sports of all kinds and like the idea of being able to combine my career with my personal interests. Most importantly, I am fascinated with the performance that today's turfgrass cultivars are able to give turfgrass managers, and am excited about researching management methods of these resilient plants.

One of the major problems I see for turf managers today is maintaining turfgrass at the especially high level necessary to meet the increasing demands of the end users. Without an excessive reliance on chemical inputs, it is often difficult to meet these needs while keeping turf alive. My research focus in Guelph will be to develop and test turfgrass management methods aimed at reducing chemical inputs while maintaining high quality turf. With the proper combination of targeted breeding and a willingness to focus on cultural practices for pest reduction and general maintenance, I believe that it is possible to reduce the total amount of chemical inputs on turf. This would eventually lead to cost reduction for turf maintenance, and would reduce any negative environmental impacts that managing turf may have. My specific plan of action is to look at a variety of organic amendments

and potential biological controls to improve overall plant and soil health, and to evaluate different turfgrass species and cultivars than those principally used today. My graduate student, John Watson, will be conducting a study on establishment and management of velvet bentgrass beginning this spring.

My second priority is to continue some of my nematode research on turfgrass in Ontario. The results I obtained in New England lead me to believe that plant-parasitic nematodes may be more problematic on highly maintained turf than might be expected in this area, especially considering the similarity in climate between the two regions. Understanding the potential threats that lie beneath the soil's surface may allow turfgrass managers to more effectively manage their turf. Specifically, I hope to evaluate potential threats from nematodes through extensive soil surveys throughout the province and to assess various factors that may influence population levels of plant-parasitic nematodes. I am also interested in evaluating various cultural and biological control measures aimed at decreasing both nematode population levels and the symptoms they can cause on highly maintained turfgrasses.

Finally, I will be overseeing the Turfgrass Diagnostic Clinic housed at the Guelph Turfgrass Institute. Working with Erica Gunn, the technician who has been operating the clinic, I hope to continue the excellent service that has been offered to superintendents and other turf managers in the past while making some improvements that will hopefully better serve the industry. We are adding nematode screening to our list of services in the hope that we may be able to answer some questions when fungal diseases are not the cause of visible symptoms. We will have specific instructions for submitting samples for nematode counts on the website this coming spring. We are also going to include management program recommendations for your specific problem at the time of diagnosis, making sure to include a combination of cultural and chemical methods that are available for treatment of your turf. Finally, if we are unable to determine the cause of your problems in the lab, I will do my best to make myself available for on-site visits to evaluate ongoing is-

suues you may have. We hope that these improvements will help us at the GTI better serve your needs as we enter the 2006 season.

Ultimately, my goal in this position is to aid the turfgrass industry in solving whatever problems arise with each season. There is no doubt that being a turfgrass manager is never a boring job, as once you think you have one problem solved, another one is sure to pop up. Weather, wear and the demands of the end users all affect how turf will thrive through a growing season. As each of these parameters is extremely dynamic, it is difficult to predict what problems will be encountered each year. That combined with increased pressure to reduce chemical inputs makes the job of a golf, sports or sod turf manager extremely challenging.

In order to best address the needs of the turfgrass industry in Ontario, it is important to talk to the people who are directly involved. Therefore I plan to try to meet or at least speak with as many of the turfgrass managers in the area as possible before really starting my research program. I hope that those of you reading this article will be willing to share your concerns with me and that together we can work to make your lives just a little bit easier. I have included my contact information below and welcome your calls or visits should you have a problem that needs to be addressed.

Before I close, I would like to thank the department of Plant Agriculture for their commitment to turfgrass research by supporting my position and my technician Alex Porter. I would also like to express my great appreciation to the OGSA (Ontario Golf Superintendents' Association) and the OTRF (Ontario Turfgrass Research Foundation) for providing me with research funding in the form of start-up monies.

I look forward to meeting with many of you and to continuing to foster the positive relationship that already exists between the University of Guelph turf program and the Ontario turfgrass industry. I can be reached at 519-824-4120 (x 56615) or at kjordan@uoguelph.ca, and have an office on the Guelph campus in 1237 Bovey Building. ♦

— *Green is Beautiful*, February, 2006