

PEOPLE

Grau left his heart to the green industry

CHEVERLY, Md. — Dr. Fred Grau closed all of his letters with, "Sincerely yours, for better turf."

In a life devoted to the research and development of improved turf species, his accomplishments and discoveries were many.

Grau, 88, died here Dec. 1, 1990 of congestive heart failure.

Born in Bennington, Neb., Grau earned his Ph.D. from the University of Maryland in 1935. In Pennsylvania, he was the nation's first extension turf specialist.

Perhaps Grau's most enduring accomplishment—and what he himself called "the discovery of a lifetime"—was finding crownvetch along Rt. 222 in Berks County, Pa. Grau later remembered standing at a fork in the road, wondering which way to turn.

"I turned right, and discovered a cinder-and-shale pile covered with beautiful pink blossoms. That was the crownvetch industry in its infancy. Had I turned left, I would never have stumbled upon it."

Grau and his first wife Anne developed and promoted Penngift Crownvetch. Today, it's Pennsylvania's official beautification and conservation plant, and is used along roadsides worldwide.

A time of discovery

Grau's timely presence during the most important period in turf science history cannot be overstated.

His contemporaries in the early 1930s included O.J. Noer, H.B. Musser and Lawrence Dickenson. Grau was considered to be the last remaining research giant from among the earliest turf industry pioneers.

Grau's enthusiasm for Alta and Kentucky-31 led to the later development of the fine leaf tall fescues. In 1950, he played an active role in the research and release of Merion Kentucky bluegrass and Meyer zoysiagrass.

Grau and Musser collaborated to develop Penn-cross bentgrass in 1950-51.

Friend to students

As director of the USGA Green Section, Grau established fellowships that enabled more than a few research students to earn advanced degrees.

Dr. James Watson—for whom Grau obtained a grant in 1946 for Ph.D. studies at Penn State—said that Grau never lost interest in his work.

"He was dedicated to the improvement of turfgrass throughout his adult life," said Watson, "and he continually sought new avenues to enhance the practical and scientific aspects of the industry. No question about it, he loved the industry."

Designed equipment

Grau also found ways to improve turf equipment. In 1938, he and Dr. C.N. Keyser built the first hydro-seeder for use on the



FRED V. GRAU
1902-1990

Pennsylvania turnpike.

As a consultant to West Point Products in Pennsylvania, Grau worked with Tom Mascaro to develop and patent the "Aerifier," a spoon-type turf cultivator.

"He was the most knowledgeable man I ever met in my whole life," recalled Mascaro. "He was a brilliant speaker and lecturer who could inspire many people."

Grau and retired superintendent Eb Steinecker were friends for 60 years. Steinecker visited Grau the day before he died.

"He could hardly talk, he had such a bad cold," said Steinecker. "So I said, 'Let me do the talking for once.' He said, 'Let's keep in touch; I have so much to tell you...' He was always clicking."

continued on page 13

Superintendents to honor three

LAWRENCE, Kans. - Dr. Noel Jackson, Dr. Eliot Roberts and W. Bruce Matthews will be honored by the GCSAA next month with 1991 Distinguished Service Awards.

Jackson is plant pathologist at the University of Rhode Island; Roberts executive director of The Lawn Institute and Matthews a course architect.

The trio will be presented its awards at the opening session of the 62nd International Golf Course Conference and Show in Las Vegas, Nev., Feb. 5-12.

Jackson's research work

and fungicide evaluations have contributed a wealth of information on turf patch diseases. Roberts, who is retiring soon, has spent 28 years as a turf management teacher, researcher and administrators. Matthews has been a member of the GCSAA for 56 years.

Many of the 40 educational sessions scheduled at the conference will stress the superintendent's environmental protector role.

New for this year's conference is an in-depth Environmental Management Program (EMP) developed by the GCSAA that allows

superintendents an opportunity to gain specialized instruction in environmental areas.

Three EMP seminars will be initiated this year: "Protection of Water Resources," "Scouting, Sampling and Monitoring Golf Course Pests" and "Underground Storage Tank Selection and Installation."

More than 13,000 turf professionals are expected to attend the show, the biggest in the turf and landscape industry. For more information on attending, call (800) 472-7878 or (913) 841-2240. □



Dr. Noel Jackson

GOLF

California ranks first among states ripe for development

JUPITER, Fla. — More Californians may be teeing up the little pill, based on a recent National Golf Foundation survey which shows that state offers the most opportunity for golf course development.

Nine California counties are mentioned as being ripe for development, out of a 50-county/20-state total.

"This list is only a beginning, not a conclusion," says NGF President Joe Beditz, "but it names the first places I'd look to invest my own money in the golf course business."

Next in line after California are Florida, Georgia

and Virginia, each with five counties listed.

According to the NGF, the list reflects expanded methods of identifying more exactly where courses are likely to be needed, based on income and age demographics, population density, growth and migration patterns. Those factors were compared with golf supply—existing facilities or those in planning or under construction.

Rick Norton, in charge of NGF Consulting, says opportunity is one thing, actual development another.

"Actual investment decisions," notes Norton,

"would require additional study of specific market conditions, site constraints, environmental permitting, land costs, availability of financing and other potential limiting factors." □



Dr. Eliot Roberts

GOVERNMENT

Legislators admit turfgrass benefits

WASHINGTON — Congress has finally admitted that turfgrass is beneficial to the environment.

According to the 1990 Farm Bill, "tree plantings and groundcovers such as turfgrass sod can aid in reducing carbon dioxide emissions, mitigating the heat island effect, and reducing energy consumption..."

The American Sod Producers Association believes its own lobbying efforts were instrumental in the statement.

"ASPAs successful efforts in providing direct scientific evidence to demonstrate that turfgrass can be

as effective as trees in environmental improvement programs will continue," the organization says.

"There exists very solid science," says ASPA executive director Doug Fender, "to support the environmental benefits of turf. We gave information based on studies by Tom Watschke, Harry Niemczyk, Marty Petrovic and James Beard."

Fender said congressmen complimented ASPA for "turning lights on in people's minds."

The Farm Bill provides nearly \$21 million for urban and community tree and turf planting and improvements in fiscal 1991. □



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GOLF

Brede devises speed formula for sloped golf course greens

POST FALLS, Idaho — Dr. Doug Brede of Jacklin Seed Co. has apparently devised an accurate formula for easily computing stimp-meter ratings for sloped golf course greens.

"The mathematical equation takes out the effect of the slope without being complicated," Brede tells LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT. "It's a very simple formula that a golf course superintendent can use with a calculator that allows him to read particular spots of a green."

In the November/December issue of USGA Green Section *Record*, Brede reveals the formula. Step one is to take two stimp-meter readings, one up the slope (S_u) and one down the slope (S_d). Here is the formula:

$$\frac{2 \times S_u \times S_d}{S_u + S_d}$$

The USGA likes the idea.



Dr. Doug Brede

"We plan to do a major rewrite of the stimp-meter instruction brochure this January," says USGA Green Section director Jim Snow. "It's the first major rewrite since the stimp-meter was introduced some 13 years ago. We plan to incorporate this new formula into the revised stimp-meter recommendations." □

EVENTS

JANUARY

21-23: Michigan Turfgrass Conference, Clarion Hotel, Lansing, Mich. Contact: Michael Saffel, 584G Plant & Soil Science Bldg., Michigan State University, E. Lansing, MI 48824; (517) 353-9022.

22-24: Inland Northwest Turf & Landscape Conference and Trade Show. Contact: Jones & Associates, Park Center, Suite 200, N. 908 Howard St., Spokane, WA 99201-2261; (509) 327-5904.

23-24: Northern California Turf & Landscape Exposition, Santa Clara Convention Center. Contact: 425 Oak St., Brentwood, CA 94513; (415) 516-0146.

23-25: American Sod Producers Assn. Midwinter Conference and Exposition, San Antonio (Tex.)

Hyatt Regency. Contact: ASPA 1855-A Hicks Rd., Rolling Meadows, IL 60008; (708) 705-9898.

31: Southern California Spring Horticultural Trade Show, Los Angeles County Fairgrounds. Contact: Richard Staples, 3136 Root Ave., Carmichael, CA 95608; (916) 488-6434.

FEBRUARY

5-12: International Golf Course Conference, Las Vegas (Nev.) Convention Center. Contact: GCSAA, 1617 St. Andrews Dr., Lawrence, KS 66047-7878; (913) 841-2240 or (800) 472-7878.

14: Connecticut Turf and Landscape Conference, Hartford (Conn.) Civic Center. Contact: Elizabeth Maisano, P.O. Box 876, Bethel, CT 06801; (203) 791-8615. □



'Sincerely yours, for better turf...'

GRAU from page 11

In 1968, Grau organized the Musser International Turfgrass Foundation to develop qualified leaders in turfgrass science and promote safer sports turf. The National Sports Turf Council followed in 1986.

Stricken by polio in later years, Grau's pace was slowed. However, his enthusiasm in turf research remained vibrant.

Grau was a prolific and opinionated writer. Whether in his "Musings" and "Gleanings" columns, "Grau's Q&A" (which he wrote for 30 years for *Golf-dom* magazine) or his informal, handwritten notes, Grau provided his fellow turf professionals with direct, honest observations.

A memorial service was held on Dec. 8.

—Terry McIver □

LETTERS

Remembering Fred Grau

To the editor:

In the summer of 1986, as the managing editor of *LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT*, I traveled to Fred Grau's home in Maryland to talk turf. When he opened the door, I saw a large, elderly man with failing eyesight, sitting on a cart that seemed almost an extension of himself.

He looked up with a big smile and asked, "What would you like for breakfast?" But before I could answer, he took out the eggs (farm fresh, brown ones) and began scrambling. The eggs...and my mind. Fred, after all, was always coming up with new ideas and inventions, though he's best known for crown-vetch.

My first image of him as "elderly" was completely wrong. He was perhaps the most youthful, energetic person I have ever met.

I followed Fred down the street as he whizzed ahead on his cart, eagerly telling

me about his neighbors with the brown lawn. Later we had homemade ice cream at the University of Maryland's dairy farm. The ice cream tasted rich that steamy day. But the richest experience was just getting to know Fred Grau.

He sent me home with stacks of his writing, and ideas on improving the safety of athletic fields and—most importantly—educating field managers.

Although I saw Fred many other times at trade shows, it is that day I remember most. The athletic turf articles were published with a special thanks to Fred. And the editorial I wrote then, about injured athletes, was called "Images of Grief."

"Grief" is a word Fred would give little credence. So when remembering Fred Grau, remember instead the images of life.

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JANUARY 1991/LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT 13