

# From the Sidelines



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## Grau gems now on file at Michigan State

**D**r. Fred V. Grau might be called the Meriwether Lewis of turfgrass research and education. Dr. Grau, who died at 88 in 1990, earned his PhD at Maryland in 1935 and went west to Penn State as the first turfgrass extension specialist working in the United States.

Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, Grau advocated for high quality athletic turfs to reduce sports-related injuries. In 1959 he became executive secretary of the Pennsylvania Turfgrass Council and helped to create a financial base from which to support all types of turfgrass research through grants. Grau was also principally involved with the Musser International Turfgrass Foundation, another organization created to raise funds for turf research and fellowships.

The Turfgrass Information Center at Michigan State (<http://tic.msu.edu>) recently received a major donation of materials from Dr. Grau's family, including extension materials, reprints, and other publications, as well as unique content such as correspondence, manuscripts, images, and records dealing with the turfgrass industry beginning in the mid-20th century.

Born on a farm in Bennington, NE Grau graduated from the University of Nebraska in 1931. As Grau studied for his master's degree at Maryland he became a research assistant for the USGA's Green Section and eventually served as its director between 1945 and 1953. During and after that time, he actively promoted several new varieties of turfgrasses, including "Meyer" zoysiagrass, "Merion" Kentucky bluegrass and "U-3" bermudagrass.

The Grau materials join the O. J. Noer Memorial Turfgrass Collection at Michigan State. The Noer Collection and the James B Beard Turfgrass Library Collection form the strongest single public location of turfgrass-related content in the world. Records for items within the Grau materials have already begun to appear within Turfgrass Information File (TGIF), and originals are available for consulting use within the Turfgrass Information Center at MSU.

For a list of materials by or about Dr. Fred V. Grau as currently indexed within the TGIF database, see: <http://www.lib.msu.edu/cgi-bin/flinkbora.pl?name=grau,%20f>

### More Sparty news

A press release came across my desk bragging on how many Michigan State turf grads and students worked the 2010 World Series. Greg Elliott, head groundskeeper for the Giants' AT&T Park, graduated in 2002 from the Sports and Commercial Turf Management program; another MSU graduate, Jared Knoodle, is a grounds crew member there; Steve Lord, a graduate of MSU's four-year Turfgrass Management program in the Department of Crop and Soil Sciences, is a member of the grounds crew at Rangers Ballpark in Arlington; and current student Dan Jennings traveled to Texas to help prepare for a game.

"While we've had Spartans working for World Series teams before, it's quite remarkable to have so many having such huge responsibility for this year's series," said David Gilstrap, who coordinates the two-year Sports and Commercial Turf Management program.

"It's a lifelong goal to be here," Elliott said, "and it's really pretty special."

Lord said that participating in a World Series on any level is a learning experience. That's why they brought Jennings back to Texas.

"This will be a great learning experience for him (Jennings)," Lord said. "There's much more exposure during a much larger event. Dan will get to see how everything works."

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