

Dale Kuehner Gets FGCSA Distinguished Service Award

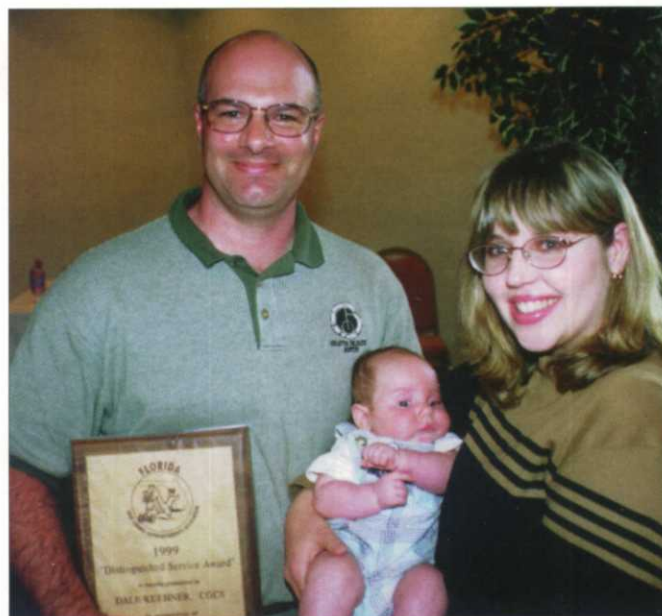
Dale Kuehner, CGCS accepted the 1999 FGCSA Distinguished Service Award at a ceremony held at his own Colony West Country Club Oct. 8. Members of the South Florida GCSA and other FGCSA members were in attendance participating in the SFGCSA's Benefit for Children tournament held annually at Colony West.

This event provided the perfect opportunity for the FGCSA and the South Florida chapter to show its appreciation for all the extra efforts Kuehner has contributed to our associations. He had the opportunity to offer a sincere and emotional acceptance speech at his club, with his family, friends and co-workers present.

Ten years ago Kuehner was invited to join the SFGCSA board of directors. His first illustrious position was the shirt salesman for the SFGCSA chapter. The shirt salesman board appointment is a testing position where the current board members evaluate the patience, perseverance and abilities of the board rookies as they drag the 80-pound shirt boxes from meeting site to meeting site, often selling only one shirt per month. The board members figure that if the new inductee doesn't carp and complain during this 12 months of torture, they just might be able to serve a more valuable role in the future.

After Kuehner's dazzling performance as a shirt salesman (six shirts in six months), he advanced through the SFGCSA board positions of chairman of meeting sites, education, etc. Ray Hansen was president of the SFGCSA about this time and was also serving on the Florida GCSA board. He asked Kuehner to assume the role of external vice president for South Florida. When Dale started attending the state board meetings he quickly became involved in many of the FGCSA committees including research, certification and the biannual membership budget survey.

As Dale expressed his desire to continue his volunteer service in our association, Mark Jarrell, CGCS and Kevin Downing, CGCS asked Dale to serve as FGCSA secretary/treasurer in 1994. Each year the immediate past president is in charge of the nominating committee and consults with current



Dale Kuehner's pride in being named winner of the 1999 FGCSA Distinguished Service Award is surpassed only by the birth of his son Ian. Dale's wife Cindy and Ian were on hand to watch Dale receive the award at the South Florida Missing & Exploited Children's Tournament. Photo by Steve Pearson.

board members and other past presidents to discuss potential candidates from the external vice presidents who appear to be the most active and productive.

Also during this time, Ray Hansen was serving as the Florida voting delegate to the GCSAA and had indicated he would like to step down from this role. Kuehner stepped forward and volunteered to represent the FGCSA at the national level. He is one of the few individuals who has attended all seven of the GCSAA chapter delegates meetings now held annually in September at headquarters in Lawrence, Kan.

Now with exposure to national issues and activities Dale became involved in GCSAA committee service. He is currently serving on the membership standards resource group and the professional development initiative. The responsibilities for these committees include four visits to Kansas each year, and a requirement to become very familiar with all the material sent by GCSAA

Dale's Supporters and Mentors

Merl Smith: Toro representative in Pittsburgh. Helped Dale with many technical problems when he worked up North. Taught Dale about turf diseases and convinced him to attend Penn State. Introduced Dale to Tom Fox, golf course superintendent.

Tom Fox: Golf course superintendent. Also pushed Dale into Penn State. Convinced Dale to take his career seriously, and involved Dale in all aspects of golf course maintenance.

Edward Rack: Dale's grandfather. Owned Seven Springs C.C. in Elizabeth, Pa. During Dale's early years (18-24), he would argue with his grandfather about wanting to do things his way. Now Dale realizes grandfather was usually correct most of the time.

Dr. Joe Duich: Penn State University. Convinced Dale to work with his family and not strike out on his own. Dale's patience paid off when the family purchases Colony West.

Ray Hansen and Paul Crawford: Assisted Dale in his development through his roles in the SFGCSA, FGCSA and GCSAA.



Why Young Superintendents Should Get Involved

1. This will force them to meet other superintendents and develop relationships.
2. The interactions with other superintendents will be a tremendous learning experience in picking up many tips, ideas and problem solutions.
3. Association responsibilities will force you to grow and develop in many areas, particularly in public speaking and running meetings.
4. Get the big picture of the industry. There's more to it than growing turf on the greens.
5. Develop a support group of peers you can turn to for turf problems, vendor information or job search support if you lose your position.
6. No matter how good you think you are, sometime you will need to turn to someone for support or advice.
7. Our associations need volunteers. Many have done it before you. Now it's your turn!

so you can provide input and make comments and adjustments to the program. Kuehner's service to our

association and to the industry has been supported by his wife Cindy, his family and his assistant superinten-

dent, Gary Chaney. Kuehner's commitments result in many days away from the property and his family, including his six-month-old son, Ian. What motivates him to continue to be so involved, even after 10 years of dedicated service?

At the local, state and national levels, the driving force for Kuehner appears to be the camaraderie and support he receives from his fellow superintendents. He once referred to the "good old days" when the South Florida board consisted of Ron Wright, CGCS (now in Mobile, Ala.), Mark Richard, CGCS (now in Ft. Walton Beach), Al Ross, CGCS, Bill McKee, Steve Kuhn, Ed Miller, Bill Entwistle, Jr., Joe Panteleo, Jim Lindsay, CGCS

(now in South Carolina), Kelly Cragin, and yours truly.

During our board meetings or over dinner after a monthly chapter meeting, the secrets of growing quality turfgrass, the challenges of balancing careers and families, and the current events of the month were discussed with laughter and understanding that can only be shared by those who have a common career.

Fast forward to last October. Kuehner was overwhelmed and shocked when he was presented the Distinguished Service Award. He felt that the DSA was reserved for people at the end of their careers.

With only 10 years of board service to date, Kuehner is hoping to

13th Annual SFGCSA Exposition and IFAS Turfgrass Field Day

**March 16, 2000
Fort Lauderdale R.E.C.**

Equipment Demonstrations by leading South Florida Equipment Dealers
Booth Area for Supplier Displays
Lunch under the Big Top
Education by turf faculty from all University of Florida campuses
CEUs will be available

Mechanics • Spray Techs • Irrigation Techs

***NOTE:** This year's event will include special Concurrent Sessions for Mechanics, Spray Techs and irrigation Techs provided by the turf equipment companies sponsoring the Equipment Demonstration. Discounted admission will be offered to all golf courses whose crew members accompany their superintendents at the Exposition. Call the FGCSA office at 1-800-732-6053 for registraion information.*

continue to lend his support to the FGCSA. He had a hard time describing his emotions about winning the award. He is a quiet person who enjoys working behind the scenes, and out of the limelight. His involvement at all levels forced him to become a better speaker, and to be more comfortable when addressing large groups. But his actions speak louder than words!

Kuehner's service and support of his associations will continue, but the birth of his son has him enjoying the special feelings of fatherhood. He says he has adapted well to the schedule changes that come with parenthood, and he describes Ian's easy going

disposition with much love, affection and wonderment.

Kuehner used to get excited about a new Rain Bird irrigation program to play with; now it's Ian's photo on his computer screen saver. Dad can't quit smiling about the tours Ian takes with him on the golf course and Cindy's dressing Ian up in little reindeer antlers for the holidays. It's going to be a special holiday season in the Kuehner household this year!

Dale, thank you for your many years of support and energy you have dedicated to the local, state, and national superintendent associations. If the rest of us could make a commitment that was 10 percent of yours, we would have more

volunteers than we could possibly use. Thanks, Dale, and congratulations!

*BOB KLITZ, CGCS
General Manager
Orangebrook G.C.*

EVERGLADES GCSA

Dale Walters Recognized with President's Award.

Dale Walters is an Ohio buckeye who took root in Florida 24 years ago.

As a 12-year-old lad in Dayton, Ohio, Dale somehow made the connection between his youthful lawn mowing jobs and his growing love of golf. When college time rolled around, he enrolled in Ohio State, but transferred into the Lake City Community College Golf

1999 FGCSA President's Award Winners

- Paul Hickman
- Dave Hollar
- Steve Pearson
- Al Ross
- Dale Walters

Course Operations program to finish his training since Ohio State did not have a similar program at the time. He graduated from Lake City in 1975.

Nearing graduation at Lake City, Walters saw an article in *Golf Digest* magazine talking about the John's Island Club putting in another 18 holes. He took a

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