

■ *Number 8, Par 3, Photo by Daniel Zelazek*



THE COUNTRY CLUB OF FLORIDA IS...

The Village Green

By Joel Jackson, CGCS

When most of us think of Palm Beach County, we think of the highly urbanized coastal strip of beachfront hotels, private mansions, high-rise condos and inland waterways. If you go five miles west of U.S. Highway 1 on Golf Road in Boynton Beach, you find the suburbs, which soon give way to the Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge in another mile or so. In fact almost 90 percent of Palm Beach County is either agricultural land or wildlife management areas.

In that suburban transitional area between city and wilderness, the Country Club of Florida literally serves as the village green for Florida's incorporated Village of Golf. The 166-acre golf course is surrounded by the homes of the residents whose homes are on a continuous

perimeter road that encircle the course within the gated community. The Country Club of Florida, like so many Palm Beach County golf courses, provides vital green belt areas for the highly urbanized southeast Florida cities.

The Village of Golf and its Country Club of Florida have tried to maximize the environmentally friendliness of the golf course by active participation in the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program. CCF was designated a fully Certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Feb. 1, 1999. It has truly been a cooperative effort among residents, members, consultants and staff. The best part is that the continual "naturalizing" of the course has only served to enhance the golf experience.

JEFFREY KLONTZ



Jeff Klontz (left) inspects work progress on the waterfall project with Lloyd McCumby.

Originally from: Akron, Ohio

Family: Married to Denise Klontz, daughters Brittany 13, Karlea 11; and son Jeffrey II, 6.
Education: Ohio State Agriculture Technical Institute

Employment history: 18 years at CCF. Followed Marsh Benson who went on to Augusta National.

Professional affiliations: GCSAA, FTGA, past president of the Palm Beach GCSA including 7-8 years of board service.

Mentors and Influential People: John Rainieri,

owner of the Paradise Lake GC in Ohio, was instrumental in getting me started in the business. I worked as a caddy initially, but after critical review of my golf swing, John suggested I give up the dream of being golf pro and take up greenkeeping. John helped me see the possibilities in the business and steered me to study at OSU-ATI. I have had four holes-in-one in my golfing career, two here at CCF in 2000.

Marsh Benson at Augusta National was very influential and helped me tremendously. His dedication for quality workmanship and his drive to achieve short and long term goals was inspirational. His message was to never give up on the ideas that you have and keep pursuing them with determination. Be open minded to new and productive ideas that improve golf course operations and productivity.

I have many other friends I enjoy and I know I'll leave some out by mentioning a few, but I have to pay tribute to the fearsome foursome of Mark Henderson, Pete Brooks and Karl Schmidt. We try to play golf weekly and have an annual dinner with our spouses. I miss the company of Glen Klauk, who was my next-door neighbor at Delray Dunes and respect his talent and the excellent job he is doing at Pablo Creek in Jacksonville.

His successor is a member of the new breed of superintendents, Terry Kennelly, and he has become a good neighbor who calls often and shares his experiences. I enjoy the brotherhood of many other superintendents and we must be open minded to each other's abilities and appreciate everyone's dedication and hard work.

I would also like to include all the green chairmen I have had the privilege to work with at CCF. I am presently working with my sixth chairman and their ideas and goals are the building blocks of our programs. We have to understand that they are club members and our employers and their

agendas are assets to the club. And green chairmen in return need to understand and appreciate our concerns and support us in difficult times.

Goals: Personal - First and foremost to be actively involved as a father to raise, love and care for my children as they prepare for the world as it is today. To help them understand the values of good people and the dos and don'ts in society and to appreciate those who help you in life. Professional - Continually enhance the overall conditions here at the club through advancements in grass types, new products, technology and good sound planning to implement improvements for the best playing conditions for the members. Continue the Audubon program with the club and stress the importance of Audubon International how we can easily and positively enhance the environment with the support of the golf course. I want to continue my turfgrass education and would like to pursue GCSAA certification as soon as I get the course recertified in the ACSP program by the end of the year.

Advice: For young superintendents and newcomers to Florida, one of the hardest lessons to learn is to know intimately the turf you have inherited at your new course. You may have come from a course with new high tech turf, but you may now be dealing with some of the older grasses that don't respond well to some of the aggressive programs for the newer grass varieties you may have worked with. Make friends with an experienced veteran in the area before you stress out your course and yourself.

Memorable moments: Before Mark O'Meara won a major tournament he played at the CCF. He took the time to do a photograph with my family on the fifth hole near our maintenance shop. He was very professional and cordial and I'd like to say his visit was a good-luck omen. That year I worked at the Masters tournament and I admit I was almost as happy as Mark was when he rolled in that 20-footer on the 18th hole to win the event.

In February, the GCSAA will present the Country Club of Florida with a 2001 Chapter Environmental Stewardship Award in the private club division at the International Golf Course Conference and Show in Orlando.

Golf course superintendent Jeff Klontz put it this way, "As our environmental awareness grew by participating in the ACSP program, we learned that any time we made a change or improvement to the golf course layout and design to help drainage, playability, and golf conditions, we could just as easily enhance the course by adding native plant materials to help frame holes, fill out-of-play areas to reduce turf area, protect lake banks and provide food and cover for wildlife. Our projects are now planned with an eye to helping the golf game and the environment at the same time."

CCF is planning a renovation of the clubhouse and practice areas in the near future. To provide fill for the project, the Island Corridor Wildlife area will be expanded to create more wetland area. It is a win-win situation for the members and for area wildlife.

For Klontz, who admittedly didn't know

a grackle from a kestrel 10 years ago, the focus on the ACSP program has been a tremendous learning experience. Today his knowledge of birds is very good and his CCF wildlife photo album is proof of his education and expertise. But Klontz is a busy golf course superintendent whose primary job is to provide good golf conditions. Fortunately, CCF club members shared the ACSP vision and helped to get much of the work done on the course. This kind of teamwork and cooperation is a perfect example of the partnership required at a club to make programs successful and self-sustaining.

Perhaps one of the most critical lessons Klontz learned was to re-think his maintenance practices and take the time to see how he could accomplish the desired playing conditions and at the same time reduce inputs to the environment: in other words, walk the talk on Integrated Pest Management.

With the installation of 45 purple martin houses on the course, Klontz began to learn the feeding, nest-building, egg-hatching and fledging habits of the birds. He found that his on-course programs could have huge impacts on the birds by

adjusting the timing of his procedures. If pesticide and aquatic herbicides were applied during nest-building periods, some of the materials could be incorporated into the nests and bird houses, which could have possible negative effects on the young birds. By altering schedules and products, Klontz is able to maximize fledgling survival rates.

In general Klontz has been reducing traditional synthetic chemical applications and using more aggressive cultural practices, like more frequent aerifications, to reduce environmental impacts. He is experimenting with more biological control products to replace older products. Klontz takes the broad view of maintenance, and even simple things like improvements to the irrigation system help by making it easier to grow healthier turf which requires less chemical dependency. Another area being looked at is the turf varieties used on the golf course.

Currently CCF has very successful Tifdwarf greens that are overseeded with G-2 bentgrass in the fall. The club is looking at the possibility

continued on page 19

THE ROAD TO ACSP CERTIFICATION

THE PATH, PROJECTS AND PEOPLE

1990 - 1996 Small steps: Joined the ACSP program. We watched, asked questions, listened and learned.

Reviewed proper use of all chemicals.

Stocked golf course ponds with largemouth bass and bream.

USGA and Audubon International efforts to enhance golf course wildlife.

Purple martin houses installed - Bill Lugar.

City approves reuse water for course irrigation.

Club signs contract for IQ water.

1997 Getting serious: Established Audubon

Committee - Dr. Robert Raborn, chairman.

Members - Buzz Jaskella, Charles Hedlund,

William Fay, William Lugar, Barbara Borden,

Eugene Koch, Kate Shortz and Anne La Salle.

ACSP resource inventory completed.

1/29/97 - over 100 members attend ACSP program meeting hosted by Shelly and John Foy.

Environmental planning projects discussed in Greens and Grounds Committees.

Pesticide applications reduced. More biological products used as replacements.

Cultural practices on the course increased - aeration, etc.

4/97 - Certified in Environmental Planning.

8/97 - Klontz consults with Kilpatrick Irrigation on pump station and pipe plans.

8/97 - Klontz participates in Kidstown Audubon program.

9/97 - Certified in Wildlife and Habitat Management.

Buzz Jaskella designed our first ACSP planting south of the 8th tee.

Dead pines left as snags for cavity nesting birds.

Osprey nest installed on the 11th hole.

34 nesting boxes for woodpeckers, yellow crested flycatchers, Carolina wrens, screech owls and blue birds installed.

Shoreline vegetation planted on the 2nd, 5th, and 11th pond banks - Lorna Tippit.

Aeration devices installed in lakes to improve water quality.

CCF's first Urban Water Bird Survey. 53 varieties of birds visited the course. - Chuck Hedlund.

Summer project - 9th tee, wetland and Oak Grove Wildlife Corridor completed. A joint project of Beautification and Audubon committees.

10/97 - New pump station and irrigation upgrade completed.

12/10/97 - Annual Wildlife Corridor Walk with 50 members.

12/30/97 - Certified in Outreach and Education.

1998 We're On a Roll: Only three more programs to complete for certification.

CCF prepares to receive IQ Water.

3/16/98 - Certified in Water Conservation.

5/98 - CCF is finally supplied with IQ Water for irrigation.

8/1/98 - Permitting approved for 14th tee project and lake bank enhancement (a joint Audubon and Beautification committee project).

South Florida WMD requires more littoral zone aquatic plants for 14th hole project. Due to fall tropical storms, original plants were submerged. Many plants have improved with falling water levels and plant mass should increase.

11/98 - Certified in Integrated Pest Management.

24 purple martin houses installed for CCF homeowners. 10 more installed on the golf course. 70 young purple

martins fledged - Ann LaSalle, Kate Shortz, Gladys Walsh and Dr. Raborn.

Many homeowners installing bird feeders.

ACSP committee educates homeowners about the ACSP Back Yard Program.

1999 The Home Stretch:

1/3/99 - Certified in Water Quality Management.

1/27/99 - Cleaned all 45 purple martin houses - Gladys Walsh.

2/1/99 - Received full ACSP certification and registered as 24th in Florida and 159th in the world.

6/1/99 - Counted all purple martins: 200 hatchlings.

Installed new purple martin house at pump house. Donated by Elliott Spafford.

Fall - Revised Audubon Island project and developed new ideas for wildlife enhancement. Ideas from Wakodahatchee Wetland on Jog Road. Buzz Jaskella helped design new ideas for visual plan for committee members to study.

2001 And Beyond: New Audubon Committee Chairman Chuck Hedlund

Protect and enhance the quality of the environment.

Educate more homeowners about the ACSP Back Yard Program.

Develop Oak Grove Wildlife Corridor with orchids - Dr. Valenti, Orchid Master. In memory of Ms. Betty O'Neil.

Support the Village with wildlife enhancement programs and butterfly garden.

Proceed with expansion of the Island Corridor according to fall 1999 revised plan.

Continue our leadership and stewardship of the land.

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continued from page 16

ty of introducing TifEagle sometime in the future. Most clubs looking at changing green's grasses are well served by growing test plots on practice greens for at least a year to make sure the grass does well in that club's location. This method has saved clubs a lot of money and heartache.

In 2001 Klontz replanted the back nine tee tops in Sea Isle 1 paspalum. So far he likes the density of the grass and its recuperative powers to heal divots more quickly than Tifway 419. Because of CCF's location and Sea Isle's cold tolerance, Klontz hopes to avoid overseeding the back nine tees. Once again turf variety selection helps to reduce environmental inputs.

On the horizon is a possible regrassing project for the fairways. The current composition is a mixture of Tifway 419 and other bermuda off-types. That project is too far away for a specific grass type to be selected yet, but no doubt CCF will consider which turf will best meet the expectations of the golfers and minimize environmental impacts.

Another key environmental input is the reclaimed water used to irrigate the golf course. Klontz has some concerns over the long term effect of reclaimed water on the course soil chemistry which could affect water percolation and nutrient uptake.

While upgrading the pump station and irrigation control system to help deliver water more efficiently, Klontz is experimenting with an ESP electrolysis system that reportedly alters the electric charge of the water molecules, enabling water to be more efficient in the soil. The system, originally developed for sanitation use in the meat-packing industry, has been used sparingly in golf course irrigation applications.

Says Klontz, "We have had the unit installed for six months and subsequent soil reports indicate at least a 90-degree turn in sodium and bicarbonate values. I am taking the long-range view on this tool. I will need to see an overall reduction in water, fertilizer and chemical usage to be totally convinced. But because it is a simple, natural process that can potentially have a huge impact on our budget and the environment; I'm willing to give it a try."

Continued on page 22.

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COUNTRY CLUB OF FLORIDA



Country Club of Florida maintenance staff. Photo by Joel Jackson.

Location: Village of Golf

Ownership: Member owned

Playing policy: Private

18 Holes: Gold Tees 6,746 yards, Par: 72,
Course/Slope Ratings: Gold 72.6/134, Blue
71.0/131, White 67.8/122, Silver 64.8/112

Designed by: Robert Bruce Harris. Opened in
1957. Redesignated by Arthur Hills in 1986 with ren-
ovation by Wadsworth Construction, Inc. Audubon,
tee and range improvements by Steve Hamilton,
Hamilton Grading and Sod Farm.

Management: Club President William Marx;
Green Chairman William Rodawig; Audubon
Chairman Chuck Hedlund; Club Manager Scott
Bragg; Golf Professional John Fleming; Golf
Course Superintendent Jeff Klontz.

Major Renovations/Ongoing Projects: Complete
course renovation in 1986 moving 250,000 cubic
yards of soil to create contours and mounding.
Greens rebuilt to USGA specs with 2-inch choker
layer. The course was replanted with Tifway 419
fairways, Tifgreen 328 tees and Tifdwarf greens. In
2001 we replanted the back nine tees with Sea Isle 1
paspalum and plan to do the front nine next year.
We are also in the process of updating our irrigation
control system with Rainbird Cirrus.

Total acreage under maintenance: 166 acres.

Greens: Average size: 5700 sq.ft. Total 3.5 acres.

Turf type: Tifdwarf base with G2 bentgrass main-
tained all year. Height of cut: .110-.156 inch. Green
speed goal is 10.0 on the stimp meter.

Overseeding: G2 bentgrass @ 4-6 lbs/1,000 sq.ft.

Tees: 3 acres. Front 9 in Tifway 419 Bermuda.
HOC: .250-.500 inch. Overseeding: Mix of 12 lbs.
rye and 7 lbs. Poa annua. Back 9 in Sea Isle 1
Paspalum. No overseeding. HOC: Same.

Fairways: 40 acres of Tifway 419 Bermuda with
off types. HOC: .350-.500". Overseeding: None.

Roughs: 35 acres of Tifway 419 & Ormond
Bermuda. HOC: .625 - 1.0". Overseeding: None.

Bunkers: 58 bunkers with GA 26 sand, all hand
raked. Fairway bunkers raked with Smithco with
tournament rake and brush.

Waterways/Lakes: 11 shallow lakes covering 10
acres. Installed bottom lake diffusers and aeration
fountains to help dissolved oxygen content.

Irrigation: Water source - effluent stored in a 1-acre
lake. Equipment: Flowtronex pump station 1600
gpm from two 75 hp pumps and a small PM pump.

Control system: Rainbird Maxi V converting to
Cirrus system. Rainbird 16 & 24 station clocks

Heads: Toro 690s and 780s. Plan to convert large
690 heads on tees to smaller specialized tee sprin-
klers. Fertilization/injection: Inject gypsum, 0-0-22
KMS, liquid fertilizers and Maxi-Green to help bal-
ance soils and nutrition.

Total staff including superintendent: 16 full time
and 1 part time. Average weekly budgeted hours.
Straight time 40 hours. Overtime 4 hours year
round.

Leadership: assistant superintendent, Leonardo
Flores; head mechanic, Lloyd McCumby; reel tech-
nician, Antonio Flores; pest control technician,
Euclid Reid; irrigation technician, Ernesto Juarez.

Special circumstances: Hurricane Irene bombarded
the course with 25 inches in two days. We sustained
damage to the pump house, greens submerged for
five days and some fairways under water for eight
days, which pointed out shortcomings in our 40-
year-old drainage infrastructure for the course.

Working with the City Village of Golf we agreed on
future modifications which are 75% complete and
working well.

Communications: Contribute articles to the club
newsletter on course conditions and projects. Our
new Club Manager Scott Bragg wanted us to build a

better team network, so this year we have been
meeting monthly and we have improved our inter-
nal communications tremendously. I would recom-
mend this for every club. This group consists of
the golf pro, comptroller and course superintend-
ent. The membership recognizes this as an asset
for improving club functions.

Cultural/Fertility programs: Deep tine aerifica-
tion 2 times per year on greens, tees and fairways.
Top dressing of greens bi-weekly in season and
following summer aerifications. Basic fertility pro-
gram includes annually 8 lbs of N/M on fairways
and roughs with slow release Nutralene or
MESOP and 12 lbs of K/M. The Bentgrass greens
are given more light but frequent applications of
potassium nitrate, MKP and Coron @ .1lb of N
per application so we don't over stimulate the put-
ting surface.

IPM Program: We have a large purple martin
population on the course and they were a large
part of our interest in the Audubon program plus
the fact that it works. We diligently monitor the
nesting and hatching of fledglings and time our
pesticide applications to avoid unnecessary expo-
sure to these birds which are sensitive to pesti-
cides. However, proper nest box location and
maintenance are also critical as well in having a
healthy and thriving purple martin population. We
have established a wildlife corridor and wetland
which we only rogue-out once a year. We plant a
variety of native shrubs in the natural area and
around the course that provide food and cover.

Equipment Inventory: Greens - 18-inch
Jacobsen walk mowers 7x/week; Tees - 26-inch
Jacobsen walk mowers 4x/week; Fairways - John
Deere 363s5 and Toro 5200s 3-4x/week; Roughs -
Toro hydraulic 7-gang pull-behind unit; John
Deere trim mower and tee and green complexes.



Old Glory snaps in the breeze of approaching storm over the 9th green on the 438-yard, par-4 hole.
Photo by Daniel Zelazek.

continued from page 19

For the record, there have been many anecdotal reports of success for those who have installed the ESP units on their courses. It takes perseverance and commitment to monitor and document the results over time to establish proof of performance. In the meantime, Klontz continues to inject gypsum, 0-0-22 KMS, liquid fertilizers and Maxi-Greens to keep up necessary soil nutrient levels.

For all his belief and commitment to the Audubon program, Klontz had a reality check for those who undertake to naturalize their golf courses. Klontz said, "I don't care what anyone says about natural areas, there's no such thing as 'no maintenance.' There is some cost involved at some point in time - from clearing and installation to the level of maintenance mandated by your club. Some folks are willing to let these areas go 'natural' and that means some weeds are going to get in there. Generally, I'd say members don't want to see a prominent area that's not tended to in some way, so there's going to be ongoing labor and maybe some herbicide costs."

"People need to realize it is a different kind of investment. They are investing in wildlife preservation, water conservation and water quality, course beautification, fewer chemicals and less fertilizer use, but it does still take dollars to control

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STAFF RECOGNITION

Overall loyalty, longevity and low turnover are hallmarks of the Country Club of Florida staff. Thomas Mikel has been with CCF for more than 20 years. Great continuity within the staff has helped produce consistent high quality playing conditions. This performance is appreciated and respected by the club membership. At the end of the season our employees are identified and congratulated at the annual meeting, and presented with 5-, 10-, 15- and 20-year service pins.

Some of our key dedicated employees:

Leonardo Flores is the assistant superintendent and has been Jeff's right-hand man for 18 years. His work ethic and golf course construction skills have been evident in every project undertaken at the club.

Antonio Flores has been with CCF for 16 years and for the last eight years he has served as the assistant mechanic in charge of preparing our mowers. He is an outstanding master of his trade. Euclid Reid has been our licensed pesticide applicator for 12 years and has also been employed at CCF for 16 years.

Lloyd McCumby is not merely a

"jack" but a "master" of all trades. He has been the head mechanic for six years and his multi-talented skills, including carpentry, have been a tremendous asset to the club.

Lloyd is a true professional and is

well respected by the membership and staff alike.

The message from the whole staff is that they have a team atmosphere dedicated to quality and they are proud to be employed at the County Club of Florida.



Assistant Superintendent Leonardo Flores stands in one of the bunkers he helped to rebuild and restore to original design. Photo by Joel Jackson.



Building waterfalls is just one of many skills that falls under Head Mechanic Lloyd McCumby's multi-faceted job description. Photo by Joel Jackson.

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View from the elevated 10th tee on this 437 yard, par 4 hole. Photo by Daniel Zelazek.



The 351-yard 14th hole borders one of the 11 lakes on the golf course. Photo by Daniel Zelazek.

weeds and maintain bird houses and feeding stations, or replenish pine straw and mulch.”

Klontz’s environmental approach to managing CCF came from his deep desire to make the world a better place to live. He has tackled the challenge to modify his practices and implement sound programs with enthusiasm and inspiration from his family, club members and staff. His attitude is best summarized by his comments at the recognition ceremony held to commemorate the full ACSP certification of CCF.

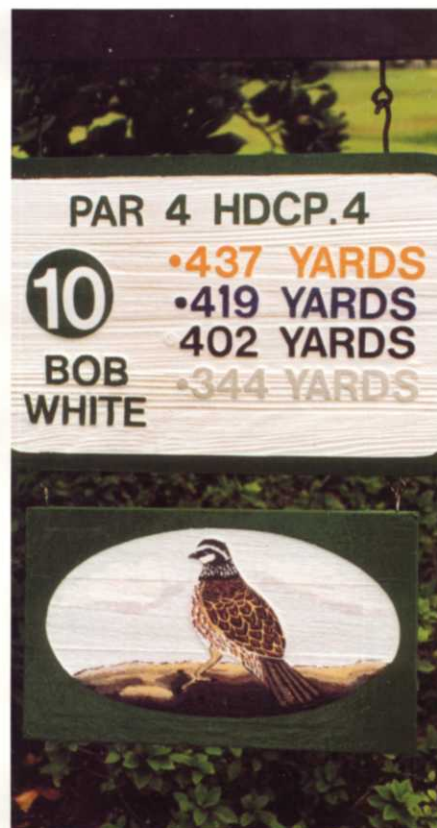
“At the County Club of Florida, it has always been our goal to provide the best possible course conditioning and quality for our members. Participation in the Audubon program has allowed us to further expand management of the entire site and enhance the environmental qualities of the property. The Country Club of Florida believes in the Audubon program. We have made sure that our programs uphold the Audubon standards and also enhance The Village environment. Our members are proud of the efforts that have been under way to enhance the golf course wildlife.”



Flowers, fruits and berries attract birds and butterflies to the natural areas.



The Oak Grove Wildlife corridor has a mulched path for members and residents to use to commune with nature.



All the holes at CCF are named after birds. The tee signs are laser cut redwood taken from original James J. Audubon paintings.



One of 45 purple martin houses on the course. This one is in the Island Wildlife Corridor, a man made wetland and natural area. Photos by Joel Jackson.