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The Florida Green

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ON THE COVER: 7th green and No. 8 island tee, Mountain Lake, Lake Wales

FOREWORDS

Recognition, Innovations at the Golf Industry Show

It was great to see all of the Florida golf industry folks in San Antonio in February, despite the weather. Seems like Texas always holds a few extra cold weeks for us whenever the Golf Industry Show blows through town. I have to hand it to the GCSAA; they have the GIS running like a well-oiled machine. I love going to "the show" as it was called when I was just getting into the business. I look forward every year to walking the trade show floor and seeing everything there is to see.

The creativity and new ideas from our industry to manage turfgrass, sometimes just blows me away. I saw some things at the show that simply made me stop and say to myself, "What a great idea!" I haven't heard officially yet but it did seem to me that the GIS is getting larger. I did notice that my twitter feed was blowing up with all the cameo selfies and the "Hey, check this out." Heck, Shawn Duffy even won a Harley Davidson motorcycle. It was a great show!

I know some of you who traveled out to Texas left on Thursday and that was the same night as the Florida reception. Which night during the GIS to hold the FGCSA reception is something that will be discussed at the next board meeting, so if you have an opinion one way or the other please let your chapter's external vice president know.

A huge "Thank You" goes out to Jennifer Bryan for organizing another fabulous event. This year I'd like to think we started a new tradition with the guitar signing. It is my hope that each year we have some sort of commemorative item that everyone signs and the FGCSA gives away as part of the



Bill Davidson, CGCS

benevolence 50/50 raffle.

Congratulations to Robin Wicker with Geoponics for winning the 50/50 drawing. Even more impressive is that Robin donated back to the benevolence his portion of the winnings. It goes without saying that no event, however small or large, would be possible without the support of all our Reception sponsors and industry partners. They are the ones who really enable the FGCSA to be as active as we are.

Speaking of being active, the FGCSA just took part in the Florida Golf Day in Tallahassee. As many of you know, the FGCSA is a founding member of the Florida Golf Alliance: an association of all industry parts in the golf business to unify our voice. I'm very pleased to say that the FGCSA is a highly respected association within the golf business and that we have a seat at the table along with the PGA and the CMAA.

Lastly I want to express my sincerest gratitude towards the GCSAA for selecting the FGCSA for this year's Excellence in Governmental Relations award. All of the hard work done by my predecessors on the Golf BMP certification program is paying dividends. Many regulators I speak with are very complimentary of the program and commend our association for being proactive. I highly encourage everyone to become certified in the Golf BMPs. There is strength in numbers and this is one number the regulators pay attention to.

FROM THE FORWARD TEES

FGCSA News and Events

By: Jennifer Bryan, FGCSA Executive Director

I finally made it home from San Antonio! Like many of you, I became all too familiar with the Dallas airport and the concept of de-icing. But after eight cancelled flights, six hours on the tarmac, and a few short hours sleep, we finally caught a flight to Jacksonville, and survived the four-hour drive down to Jensen Beach. It was a frustrating end to a fantastic week. I was very happy to be back in Florida.

The Golf Industry Show in San Antonio did not disappoint. In addition to attending a Chapter Leader Symposium with my peers, walking the trade show floor and enjoying the opening and closing sessions, I had the distinct pleasure of accepting the 2015 Excellence in Government Relations Award on behalf of the FGCSA.

This award is a tremendous honor and acknowledges the FGCSA's involvement in the collaborative effort to create the BMP Manual and the Golf BMP Certification Program.

There were many people to thank, and since not all of you were there, I would like to recognize a few of those individuals one more time: Dr. Thomas Nikolai, Dr. Mike Thomas, Matt Taylor, CGCS, Geoff Coggin, CGCS, Mark Kann, Joel Jackson, CGCS, Dr. Bryan Unruh, Greg Lyman, David Court, CGCS, Dr. Jerry Sartain, Craig Weyandt, Kevin Sunderman, Tim Hiers, John Foy, Todd Lowe, Ralph Dain, Mark Hoyer, Don Rainey, Gary Myers, CGCS, Kyle Sweet, and all of our current and past presidents and directors of the FGCSA who have helped to keep the program moving forward.

I encourage all of you to get BMP "Certified." It is a big step in our collective responsibility to demonstrate that the Florida golf course superintendent is a true environmental steward who is helping to protect Florida's environmental quality.

To end the week, the FGCSA hosted our annual reception at the Hard Rock Café at San Antonio's famous Riverwalk. This event was made possible through the support of our Industry Partners and Reception Sponsors. Many of you sponsor our event each year and I want to personally thank you. For those who attended, be sure to thank a sponsor: they really gave us a night to remember.

I want to echo Bill Davidson's congratulations to Robin Wicker for winning the Benevolent Fund raffle and the autographed Fender guitar signed by our reception attendees. Thank you, Robin, and all those who entered the raffle. Your generosity will certainly help a superintendent in need in the future.

In other news, I had the pleasure of attending the West Coast GCSA Vendor Appreciation Day in January. It was great to meet so many of you whom I only knew by name or by voice on the phone. I am looking forward to more of these events.

In February I joined Bill Davidson, David Dore-Smith, Greg Pheneger and Ralph Dain in Tallahassee for Florida Golf Day. We were able to communicate our message to lawmakers and share the results of our new Economic Impact Study. Did you know that golf's impact on the State of Florida's economy is larger



The GCSAA Excellence in Government Relations Award was presented during the Opening Session of the 2015 Golf Industry Show held in San Antonio in February. From left: GCSAA CEO Rhett Evans; FGCSA Executive Director Jennifer Bryan; FGCSA Past President and Chairman of the BMP Certification Committee Mark Kann and GCSAA President Keith Ihms, CGCS. Photo by GCSAA.

than any other industry in the state?

On March 5, the Treasure Coast GCSA hosted a Golf BMP Certification Class. We had a great turnout and 14 superintendents were certified. The BMP Committee is finalizing the BMP Class schedule for 2015, with the next session scheduled for May 20 at the Addison Reserve CC in Palm Beach. Be on the lookout for a class in the Suncoast/Calusa region in June and Naples in August. Dates will be posted on our website and our Facebook page. Be sure to like us on Face Book!

The FGCSA will host an Education Seminar on May 15 during the Poa Classic weekend in Naples. This year's speaker will be Dr. Bree Hayes. She will provide a four-hour interactive seminar on team building. You will not want to miss this. Dr. Hayes has delighted groups across the country and this fast-paced highly interactive presentation will address fundamental issues of all teams, including communication, leadership, group effectiveness and conflict. Participants can expect to gain specific skills in how to build a team, how to motivate the members therein and how to keep it on track. Be sure to reserve your room and ask for the Poa special – rooms go fast. I look forward to seeing you there.

Finally, the 2015 FGCSA Golf Championship will move to a new venue this year. The Reunion Resort just west of Orlando off I-4 will play host to both the stroke play and scramble events on the Watson Course. The FGCSA Championship is a qualifying event for the State team at the GCSAA National Championship. The other qualifying events are the TGA Championship, the Poa Annu Golf Championship, the North Florida Fall Classic and Crowfoot Open.

The FGCSA Annual Board Meeting will be held on Thursday, Aug. 13 followed by a roundtable discussion and opening night reception. Tournament play will begin at 10 a.m. on Friday, Aug. 14, concluding with lunch and the awards ceremony. Registration materials will be posted on the FGCSA website. ■

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to the following FGCSA Industry Partners and Reception Sponsors for making the reception at the Hard Rock Café, San Antonio possible!

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Chapter Round Up

FGCSA

Kicking off the New Year, our state chapter made news and received well-deserved recognition for our Golf Course BMP manual and certification programs by receiving the GCSAA's Excellence in Government Relations Award during the Opening Session at the Golf Industry Show in San Antonio. FGCSA Executive Director Jennifer Bryan and Chairman of the BMP Certification Committee Mark Kann represented the FGCSA at the award ceremony February 24. On the lighter side, there was a great turnout for the annual FGCSA GIS Reception held



In San Antonio, Robin Wicker with Geoponics Corp. (center) won the Benevolent Fund Raffle at the FGCSA GIS reception and took home the commemorative Fender guitar he's holding, that was signed by all reception attendees. FGCSA President Bill Davidson (left) and Vice President David Dore-Smith congratulated Wicker and thanked him for donating his 50/50 raffle winnings (\$1,000) back to the Benevolent Fund to help others in the industry in time of need. Photo by Joel Jackson.



FGCSA member Andy Jorgenson CGCS was a little embarrassed by the huge Syngenta posters at the GIS that recognized him and others for their professional practices. Photo by Joel Jackson.

at the Hard Rock Café on the famous San Antonio Riverwalk on Thursday evening of that week to wrap up the GIS trip.

In the government relations arena, the FGCSA delegation of President Bill

Davidson, CGCS, Vice President David Dore-Smith and Executive Director Jennifer Bryan attended the Florida Golf Day in Tallahassee in early February and took part in meetings with Florida Legislators to remind them of the Florida Golf Industry's impact of the state's economy and the improvements in environmental stewardship.

Individual FGCSA member recognition came as a surprise to Seven Rivers GCSA member Andy Jorgensen when he saw giant Syngenta posters of himself in the convention center's main hall and at the Syngenta Booth. While he was a tad embarrassed, we are very proud of Andy's recognition as a mentor to others.



Picture of the members of the Golf Florida Alliance. Vice President David Dore-Smith and FGCSA President Bill Davidson, CGCS are in the back row 2nd and 3rd for the left.



From the left: Steve Wright, CGCS received the engraved crystal bowl from host Tom Alex signifying him as the 2014 Larry Kamphaus Award winner given annually to superintendents and vendors displaying outstanding service and commitment to their profession. Photo by Joel Jackson.

also became the Central Florida chapter president before his move to the Long Cove course on Hilton Head Is., SC. During his career on Hilton Head, Wright also served as the president of the Carolinas GCSA. He and his family moved back to Florida and he has been at the Boca West CC since 2003. Wright was the 2014 president of the Palm Beach GCSA. Wright's been a member of three chapters and served three presidencies: that's a unique display of volunteerism, participation and service to our profession.

Out on the links earlier in the day, Seth Strickland won the golf tournament and qualified for the FGCSA Team and played in the 2015 GCSAA Golf Championship in San Antonio last February. The team finished in second place overall.

A month later the chapter kicked off the 2015 slate of events when Stuart Leventhal, CGCS and the Interlachen CC hosted the annual FTGA Turf Research Tournament to raise funding for turf and environmental research projects.

Local Chapters

Meanwhile, the Central Florida GCSA closed out 2014 by holding the traditionally summertime Crowfoot Open in December. Tom Alex and Lisa McDowell and the rest of the Grand Cypress team once again did a bang-up job of hosting the Larry Kamphaus Crowfoot Open event in Orlando December 19. During the presentation ceremony for the 2014 Larry Kamphaus Award, Alex recognized all the past award winners in attendance and reminded the audience of the purpose of the award: to recognize superintendents and vendors who serve the golf industry with outstanding grace, dignity and professionalism. This year's recipient was Steve Wright, CGCS of the Boca West CC.

Wright, a long-time central Florida superintendent with stints at the Sugar Mill CC, Rockledge CC, Suntree CC and Alaqua CC



Seth Strickland from the Miami Shores CC with the Crowfoot Open trophy after the Awards Luncheon at Grand Cypress in Orlando. Photo by Joel Jackson.



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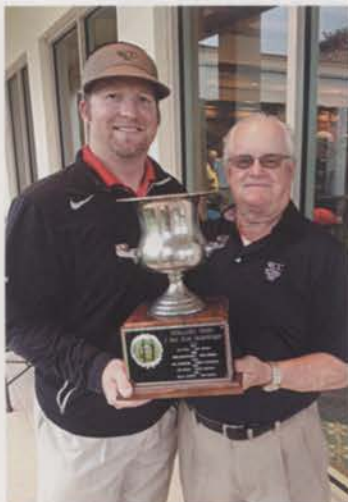
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Winners of the 2015 FTGA Research Tournament was the team from the Riviera CC in Ormond Beach. From the left: General Manager Ryan Myers and retired Superintendent/Consultant Charlie Schaeffer. Photo by Joel Jackson

GCSAA Regional Representative Ralph Dain and FTGA Executive Director Pete Snyder gave the group updates on the issues facing the turf industry. Winner of the tournament was the team of Charlie Schaeffer and Ryan Myers from the Riviera CC in Ormond Beach.

Joint Chapter Education Day

The Suncoast, West Coast and Ridge chapters joined forces to host an Education Day featuring Dr. Bryan Unruh, giving presentations on a wide variety of topics ranging from employee safety to managing turf under low light conditions. Around 50 superintendents attended the event held at the UF/IFAS Gulf Coast Research and Education Center in Wimauma.

As the PGA Tour's Spring Swing through Florida comes to an end, the FGCSA Chapter's 2015 "Major Events Swing" begins in earnest in April. We'll be here to report the results of those events in the summer issue! See you then!



Winners of the 2015 FTGA Research Tournament was the team from the Riviera CC in Ormond Beach. From the left: General Manager Ryan Myers and retired Superintendent/Consultant Charlie Schaeffer. Photo by Joel Jackson



IN MEMORIAM

Robert "Bob" Sanderson

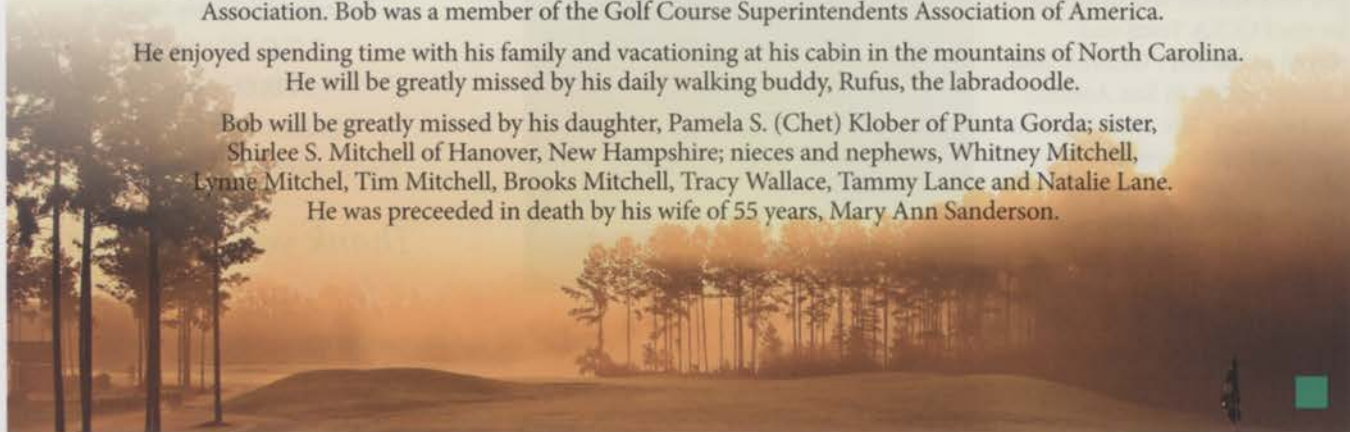
Robert "Bob" Sanderson, 87, passed away Thursday, March 19, 2015. Bob grew up in Connecticut and attended the Westminter School in Simsbury. He graduated from Hobart College in Geneva, NY. Bob served two years in the U.S. Army's Explosive Ordinance Disposal Unit during the Korean War.


His lifelong love of golf lead him to a career as a golf course superintendent. Bob moved to Port Charlotte in 1962 to work for General Development Corporation and supervise the building of the Port Charlotte Golf Course. He remained as the superintendent of the PCGC for more than 24 years. Bob then was superintendent at Del Vera Golf Course in North Fort Myers, and when he retired, was superintendent at Heron's Glen Golf Course, also in North Fort Myers.

He was a co-founder and past president of the Everglades Golf Course Superintendents Association, a co-founder of the Calusa Golf Course Superintendents Association, and a past president and director of the Florida Turf Grass Association. Bob was a member of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America.

He enjoyed spending time with his family and vacationing at his cabin in the mountains of North Carolina. He will be greatly missed by his daily walking buddy, Rufus, the labradoodle.

Bob will be greatly missed by his daughter, Pamela S. (Chet) Klober of Punta Gorda; sister, Shirlee S. Mitchell of Hanover, New Hampshire; nieces and nephews, Whitney Mitchell, Lynne Mitchel, Tim Mitchell, Brooks Mitchell, Tracy Wallace, Tammy Lance and Natalie Lane. He was preceded in death by his wife of 55 years, Mary Ann Sanderson.





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*to Lisa McDowell, Tom Alex
and the Grand Cypress Resort
for hosting our event.*



38TH ANNUAL

LARRY KAMPHAUS CROWFOOT OPEN



Return to Mountain Lake: A Century of Golf History

The title of this cover story reveals we are making a return visit to Mountain Lake. Twenty-one years ago in 1994, we did the first cover story on Mountain Lake when Steve Ciardullo was the superintendent. The club was founded in 1915 and construction began in 1916. In March next year the club will hold a centennial celebration. A brief review of the club's history is in order.

Mountain Lake is a private community north of the City of Lake Wales. It was founded by Baltimorean Frederick Ruth in 1915 and contains a golf course designed in 1916 by Seth Raynor. The property is located in the ridge country of Central Florida. With proximity to trains from the

North which would bring residents down for "The Season," Ruth assembled 3500 acres and engaged Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. to lay out 600 acres of the property for the residences and Raynor to design the golf course. This same trio also went on to design and develop Fishers Island in the 1920s. There are some notes in the archives at Mountain Lake that Ruth spoke to Donald Ross (who designed nearby Lake Wales Country Club) prior to selecting Raynor. However Raynor was chosen and Mountain Lake became the first development of its kind.

Raynor (1874 - 1926) was a prolific American golf course architect, despite

never becoming an avid golfer. He built more than 100 courses in about 20 years, his first in 1914 at age 38. His mentor and co-architect on several courses was Charles Blair Macdonald, the first great golf course architect in the United States and the creator of the National Golf Links of America.

Raynor was a contemporary of the well-known architect of that era, Donald Ross. But Raynor's credits, while perhaps fewer in Florida, are no less well known. Raynor's designs include: Shinnecock Hills in NY; the Greenbrier in West Virginia, the Dunes at Monterey and the Mid Ocean Club in Bermuda just to name a few.



The other key figure in the development of Mountain Lake was Frederick Law Olmstead, Jr. (July 24, 1870 – December 25, 1957). A little Web search revealed that Frederick Law Olmstead, Jr. was an American landscape architect who is best known for his wildlife conservation efforts. He had a lifetime commitment to national parks, and worked on projects in Acadia, the Everglades and Yosemite National Park. Olmstead Point in Yosemite and Olmstead Island at Great Falls of the Potomac River in Maryland are named after him.

His father Fredrick Olmstead, Sr. (April 26, 1822 – August 28, 1903) was an American landscape architect famous for co-designing many well-known urban parks with his senior partner Calvert Vaux, including Prospect Park and Central Park in New York City, as well as Elm Park (Worcester, Mass.), considered by many to be the first municipal park in America.

On my visit in February, I noticed that not much had changed in appearance. It was and still is a beautiful, well-groomed property and retains the look and feel of the 1900's. There is a sense of pride and duty in preserving the integrity of the original features of the total property. Only the cars

in the parking areas give away the current era.

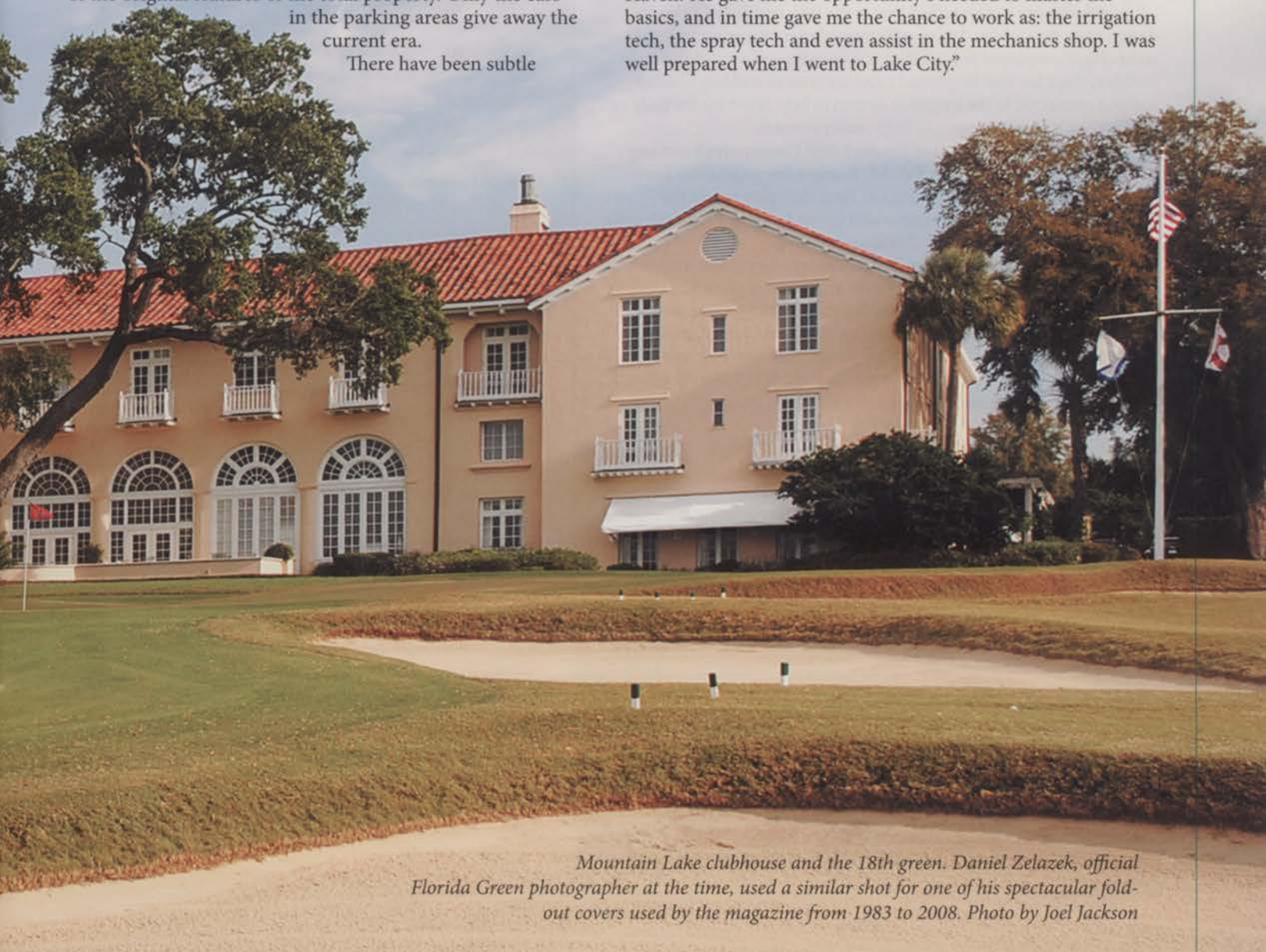
There have been subtle

changes over the years of course, such as upgrading the turfgrasses used on the course to create better playability, durability and environmental impacts like requiring less nitrogen and water. In 2002, architect Brian Silva, known for his restoration work on classic golf courses, was retained to renovate and restore some of the original Raynor design features altered during the passage of time.

Scott Scamehorn, CGCS came on board as superintendent in 2004. Scamehorn is a golfing superintendent. He was good enough to play on the Auburndale High School golf team in his youth and he wanted to be around golf for his career. He graduated from Lake City Community College in 1993 and worked at five courses before coming to Mountain Lake.

Scamehorn says, "Back in high school, a couple of good friends Kenny Orender and Mike Hummel and I talked about going to Lake City for our AA in golf operations. So to prepare, we worked on golf courses to learn how to take care of them."

"My early mentor was none other than Bobby Ellis when he was at the Lake Region Yacht and Country Club in Winter Haven! He gave me the opportunity I needed to master the basics, and in time gave me the chance to work as: the irrigation tech, the spray tech and even assist in the mechanics shop. I was well prepared when I went to Lake City."



Mountain Lake clubhouse and the 18th green. Daniel Zelazek, official Florida Green photographer at the time, used a similar shot for one of his spectacular fold-out covers used by the magazine from 1983 to 2008. Photo by Joel Jackson

Besides his passion for playing golf and growing grass, Scamehorn made time to improve his technical and professional skills by becoming a certified golf course superintendent in 2002. He also gives back to his profession by being involved with the Ridge GCSA. He is a past president of the chapter and has served on the board of directors since 2003.

As for his golfing credentials, Scamehorn has won the Ridge GCSA chapter's Jack Harrell, Sr. Invitational championship twice. He also qualified for the Florida GCSA's No.1 Team competing in the 2013 GCSAA Golf Championship by virtue of winning the 2012 Crash Hall Cup at the North Florida GCSA's Fall Classic at the Amelia Island Plantation's Marsh Course. Scamehorn admits that his game needs some work as his handicap has gone up to a 6 lately.

However, he might not have much time to work on his game this year. This summer Scamehorn will oversee the resurfacing of the greens with TifEagle Ultradwarf grass and the correction of a low, slow-draining area on the No. 9 green. They will also be correcting a shade problem on the back of the No. 7 green by slightly reshaping the hole. Also the putting green at the clubhouse will be rebuilt to reduce the severe slope to provide a more level putting surface for practicing and there will also be some changes and improvements to the practice range and teaching areas.

While the course has remained true to the look and feel of a classic design from the Golden Age of golf course design, there are modern technologies employed to keep it an eco-friendly golf course. For instance, there are four in-ground moisture sensors and two weather stations connected to the irrigation system to help fine-tune the daily run times of the irrigation system to help conserve water.

Mountain Lake is a member of the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program and Scamehorn says the club is only a few pages away from completing its certification application. Next they plan to join the Audubon Sustainable Communities and Green Lodging Programs, since there is a 39-room hotel in the clubhouse building.

Scamehorn says the club library has on display a large three-ring binder, which contains its ACSP documentation and pages of photos of wildlife on the golf course. Some of the fauna that inhabit Mountain Lake include bobcats, foxes, bald eagles, osprey, gators and pocket gophers.

Speaking of the library, Scamehorn praised the work of member Frederick Ryan who has served as the club's historian for 40 years, making sure the original documents concerning the origin of the club and subsequent changes have been preserved to enhance this historic landmark.

The Par 3, 9th hole is one of the greens slated for partial renovation to relieve a slow draining area on the putting surface. From the back tees your tee shot requires a 146-yard carry over the lake. Photo by Joel Jackson.

SUPERINTENDENT FACTS

Meet Scott Scamehorn

Originally from:
Winter Haven

Family: Divorced.
Father to one daughter
15-year-old Madelaine
and one son, 13-year-
old Jake.

Education: Member
of the Class of 1993
at the Lake City Community College now called
Florida Gateway College.

Employment history: 1993-96 assistant
superintendent, Falcon's Fire GC, Kissimmee;
1996-99 superintendent Lost Key Plantation,
Pensacola including construction and grow-in;
1999-2002 director of golf maintenance, Wild Wing
Plantation (72 holes), Myrtle Beach, SC; 2002-2004
superintendent Southern Dunes GC, Haines City;
2004 – Present superintendent Mountain Lake.

How did you get into the business? Played on the
Auburndale High School golf team. Loved golf.
Wanted a career in golf. Worked on the Lake Region
Y&CC course before attending Lake City. Bobby
Ellis was the superintendent at Lake Region and
gave me the opportunity to learn all facets of the
business.

Goals and Accomplishments. A personal goal is to
run in a 10K marathon. I'm proud to be a certified
golf course superintendent since 2002 and plan to
keep it up.

Personal philosophy of work. Advice to
prospective or new superintendents: Find site-
specific methods needed to best utilize club
resources. More importantly learn how to work with
people: they are your most important asset.

**Personal memorable moments – Good, bad,
humorous:** Most recently: Winning the 2012
North Florida Fall Classic and a spot on the FGCSA
Golf Team to play in the 2013 GCSAA Golf
Championship in San Diego. Back in late 1990's,
when I worked at the Lost Key Club in Pensacola, I
aced a par-three hole during the weekly Skins Game
Day and golf pro Heath Slocum was in my group.

**Hobbies, interests, community, church
involvement:** Fishing, hunting, golf and soccer.



Scott Scamehorn, CGCS.
Photo by Joel Jackson



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View of the par 4, 13th hole from the right rough near the fairway approach shot area. There are two bunkers guarding the left approach to the green and one to the right obscured by the palm trees. Photo by Joel Jackson.

Back to the wildlife on the course. Unfortunately those pocket gophers and sand hill cranes mentioned before can tear up the turf in sometime very visible places like the fairways and sometimes even some greens. They usually root and dig up "hot spots" where insects might be weakening the turfgrass roots.

The goal is to minimize pest infestation of course, and to that end Scamehorn employs a scouting program using "hole maps" to plot pest activity which can then be spot-treated to control the infestations. The only wall-to-wall applications are split applications of Bifenthrin or Imidacloprid in April and May to prevent mole crickets, which love to inhabit the sandy soils of central Florida.

Scott shared some good advice to veteran superintendents and those who are either new in this profession or are thinking about pursuing a career in golf-course maintenance. He said, "Time, experience and education can teach you how to adjust and match your available resources to meet the site-specific methods needed to maintain your turf. But remember, people are your most important resource. Learning how to manage and work with people is the real key to a successful operation!"

I hope you have enjoyed this return visit to Mountain Lake as much as I have. Congratulations to the members and staff at Mountain Lake for being dedicated to the preservation of this historic site from the Golden Age of Golf.

Close-up of the 4th green showing the unique bunker design often seen on the courses built back in the 1920's. Photo by Joel Jackson.

SCAMEHORN FUN FACTS

Vehicle: Ford F150

The last good movie I saw: American Sniper

I stay home to watch: College football! Go Gators!

What I've been reading: *American Gun*, biographies and autobiographies

Favorite meal: Steak and potato and with a side of lobster

Favorite performer(s): Tom Petty, AC/DC, Led Zeppelin, Lynard Skynard, Bad Company, Stevie Ray Vaughan, all classic rock

Prized possessions: My family and friends

Personal heroes: My father

I'm better than anyone else when it comes to: Foosball

If I could do it over: I'd do it exactly the same, but maybe with more hair and a bit skinnier

My fantasy is: Winning the Lotto and seeing the world by sailboat

The one thing I can't stand: People who are always late

If I could change one thing about myself: I'd put the "Pro" in procrastinate

Most humbling experience: The birth of my two children. It changes what's important in life very quickly.

The words that best describe me: Nothing stresses me out

My dream foursome would be: My dad, my brother and my son

My best fish story: Fishing with friends at Boca Grande

My most memorable golf shot: Hole-in-one at Lost Key Club in Pensacola during a skins match



Scott (right) won the very first North Florida Fall Classic Tournament in 2012. Jay McCord (left) presented the Crash Hall Cup trophy. Photo by Joel Jackson.

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MOUNTAIN LAKE GOLF COURSE



From the left: Front Row – Felipe Ventura, Jeff Glasscock, Jim Smars (kneeling), Maro Bacillo and China Duque. Middle row – Brad Quackenbush, Pablo Renauldo, Antonio Vasquez, Ramiro Coyt-Torres, Eddie Ventura, Cirilo Resendiz, Manolo Alonzo and Scott Scamehorn. Back Row – Alejandro Lopez, Bobby Russell, Eric Grubb, J.C. White, Eddie Brown, Steve Inman and David Smith. Photo by Nancy Laurie

Course Name: Mountain Lake; Number of Holes: 18; Yardage: 6,677; Par: 70; Slope & Rating: 126/70

Location: Lake Wales

Ownership: Member owned

Playing Policy: Private. Avg number of rounds per year: 11,000

Designed by: Seth Raynor in 1916. First 8 holes. Finished and opened in 1919. Documented modifications by Charles Banks, Raynor's partner in 1929.

Management Team: Club Manager John Delcamp; Club President Chuck Elfner; Green Chairman Tim Shorty; Head Golf Professional Jonathan Powell; Food & Beverage Manager Steve Welsh; Executive Chef Tom Pepka; Member Services & Historian Fredrick Ryan (40 years); Landscape Director Ray Cuzzzone; Tennis & Croquet Professional David Maloof; Golf Course Superintendent Scott Scamehorn CGCS.

Major Renovations/Ongoing Projects: 2002: renovation by Brian Silva to restore original Raynor design features. 2015: installed TifEagle Ultradwarf grass on greens and corrected some shade and drainage problem areas.

Acreage under maintenance: 140; Total property: 1,200 acres

Greens: TifEagle; Average size: 8,000 SF;

4 acres; Height of Cut: .120 - .160 inches; Overseeding None; Green speed goals: 10.5 daily

Tees: TifSport, TifGrand, TifWay 419; Acres: 2; HOC: .300 - .550 inches. We use a mix of stiff and soft broom heads on greens mowers as conditions warrant. Overseeding: Perennial Ryegrass at 600 lbs./Acre

Fairways: Tifway 419; Total acres: 36; HOC: .350 - .550; Overseeding: Perennial Ryegrass @ 400 lbs./acre

Roughs: Turf Type: Tifway 419 and bahiagrass in the outer roughs Total acres: 98; HOC: 1.5 - 2.0 inches. Overseeding: None

Bunkers: Number of bunkers: 90; Sand type: Ocala Gold; Machine raked with paddle and broom attachment. Some hand raking on slopes

Native areas/beds: 20 acres; Materials: bahiagrass mixed with native materials. Six to ten times per year, cut and trimmed using a Bush Hog mower, machetes and string trimmers.

Waterways/Lakes/Ponds: We have 4 lakes covering 28 acres. We use Estate Management Services to maintain our lakes and do selective aquatic weed removal and plant additional beneficial plants as needed.

Irrigation: Ground water pumped to a holding pond with Flowtronex pump with OSMAC

hydraulic control system; 720 heads on 80-foot spacing. Fertigation system. Restrictions: Follow annual consumptive-use permit. Management/Conservation tools: Four in-ground moisture sensors and two weather stations Use data to adjust irrigation run times daily.

Staff: Total staff including superintendent: 20; 19 Full time; 1 Part time.

Weekly budgeted hours: 780 straight time; overtime 10. Seasonal variation in labor: None

Key Staff: Brad Quackenbush, assistant superintendent; Bobby Russell, foreman; Tim Kendrick, equipment technician; Felipe Ventura, assistant technician; Joseph White, pest control technician; Antonio Vasquez, irrigation technician; Peggy Reynolds, administrative assistant; and the rest of the outstanding employees of Mountain Lake.

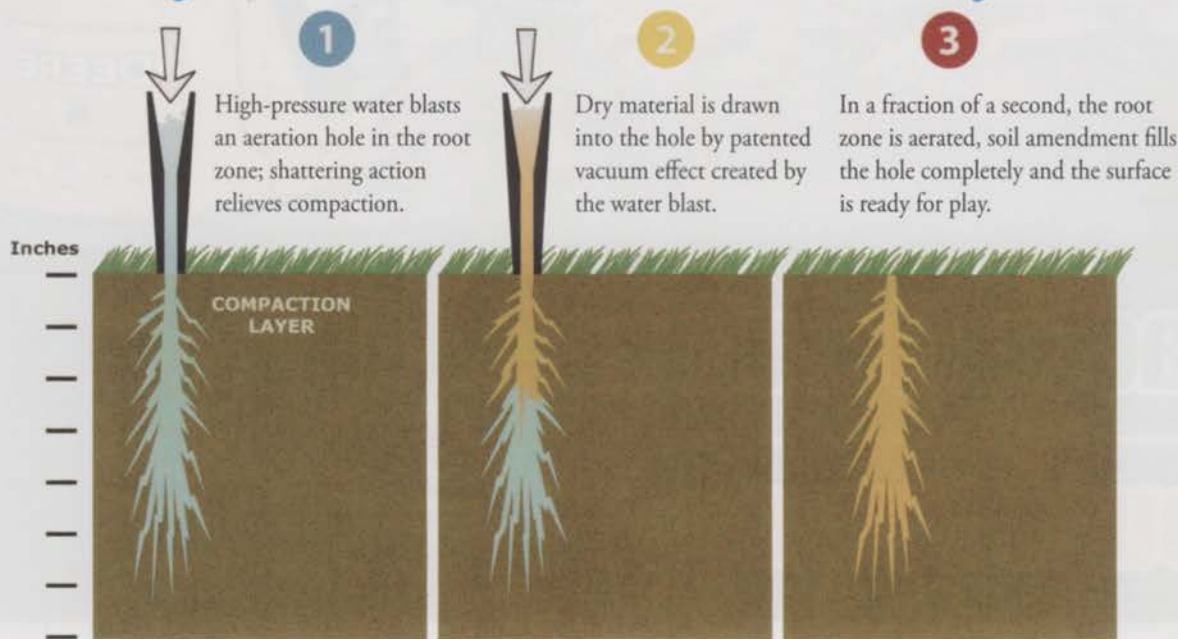
Communications/meetings: Monthly safety meetings with DVDs and testing; weekly department-head meetings; morning crew meetings to discuss daily assignments and events; quarterly Green Committee meetings.

Special Events: In April we host a four-day U.S. Senior Golf Association tournament in conjunction with Masters week. In November we host the Mountain Lake challenge, which is also a four-day pro-am event with club members and the golf professionals from their home clubs up North.

Top: View from the 4th tee showing a good example of the oak tree-lined holes prevalent on the Front 9 at Mountain Lake with another view of the bunker placement from the Golden Age of golf course design. I counted seven bunkers on this hole; the course has 90. Photo by Joel Jackson

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Contractor Services vs. In-House Projects

A combined effort of in-house personnel and contractor expertise and equipment was used to complete a bunker rebuilding project while the course was closed for other large-scale course renovations. Photo by Trent Inman.

Editor's Note: Depending on course layout, available manpower and amount of play, some superintendents hire outside contractors to execute large-scale projects like whole-course fertilizing, verticutting, aerifying or fertilizing. Other courses take care of these projects in-house with their existing crew. Here are comments from several superintendents explaining their choices.

Dan Haubein, Pelican Pointe G&CC: I'm fortunate that we have a 27-hole layout, so it is easier to close nine holes when the amount of play slows down so we can tackle the large-scale projects nine holes at a time consecutively. I'm proud to have taken several formerly contracted-out seasonal operations like aerifying, bulk fertilizing, etc. and brought them in-house and reduced operating costs. Also, we've fine-tuned the irrigation system to reduce run times and make the system more efficient environmentally and economically.

Trent Inman CGCS, Old Memorial Golf Club: In 2014, we tackled a large renovation project at Old Memorial and are using a combination of contractors and in-house staff to complete the project. The contractors are being utilized for the grassing, earthwork, and shaping. Since we are going to be closed for roughly a six-month time frame, we decided to include a major bunker renovation at the same time using mostly in-house labor.

My staff will be responsible for removing the bunker sand and installing the new drainage and sand while our contractors will be conducting any reshaping. We will also be completing much of the sod work and irrigation renovations in-house.

When we looked at the overall project and cost, I tried to identify certain tasks that my staff could complete to help keep the costs down. The potential savings will be substantial, and my staff will not only stay employed while the course is closed but they should also have a greater understanding of how things are built and thus properly maintained.

David Dore-Smith, Copper Leaf GC: Verticutting fairways, tees and roughs is done with in-house staff. We purchased two 60-inch-wide verticut units from First Products that allow us to verticut when we want to. The units were around \$9,000 each. However, with the cost of contract verticutting 18 holes of fairways approaching \$10,000 per event, the cost savings become significant over a short period. We can be less aggressive and verticut several times throughout the summer on a schedule that suits us. With the rain we have experienced this summer, this has been a great advantage rather than being locked in to a particular date.

A large crowd of spectators is gathered on a grassy hillside, watching a golfer on a green. The golfer is in the foreground, bent over, preparing a shot. Several other people, including caddies in red vests, are standing nearby. In the background, a modern building with large windows and balconies is visible, with more people watching from the upper levels.

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The Rookery Golf Club Renovation



The view from the 9th tee shows a good example of the littoral shelves, aquatic plantings and course landscaping changes made to the Rookery Bay course. Photo by Joel Jackson.

By Joel Jackson, Editor

Last December, I had the pleasure of visiting The Rookery Golf Club located just east of Marco Island in southwest Florida. I went down at the invitation of David Robinson CGCS, Senior Director of Golf Grounds for the Marriott Corporation to see the results of the recent renovation of the golf course.

The renovation served two worthwhile purposes: one was to improve the playing conditions by installing Platinum Paspalum turfgrass in the fairways and the other reason was to improve environmental sustainability by reducing the acreage of high-maintenance turf, installing shoreline buffers zones and adding nutrient filtering aquatic plants.

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While the first goal helped to equalize playing conditions with The Rookery's nearby sister course, Hammock Bay, the second goal accentuated the Marriott Corporation's recent move to have all of its golf courses become Certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuaries dedicated to environmental sustainability.

The Rookery was originally designed by Joe Lee and opened as The Golf Club at Marco in 1990. Then in 2002 the course was re-designed by Bobby Cupp, Jr. including re-grassing fairways to TifSport Bermudagrass along with an irrigation upgrade, and 40 acres of maintained turfgrass was taken out of play. It's sister course Hammock Bay, originally designed by Bruce Devlin and Robert Von Hagge, opened in 1974 and was renovated by Peter Jacobsen in 2004.

Following the renovation at Hammock Bay, golfers developed an enthusiastic preference for the playability of the new Paspalum fairways, and when The Rookery underwent renovation, the old TifSport fairways were replaced with Platinum Paspalum to help equalize playing conditions between the two courses.

Meanwhile the TifEagle bermudagrass greens on The Rookery proved to be better suited for the area for playability and maintenance reasons, so this summer Hammock Bay will re-grass its greens with TifEagle. This combination was no fluke discovery as the Marriott team visited with superintendents Steve Wright CGCS at Boca West and Jim Sprankle CGCS at the Loxahatchee Club who are successfully and happily managing that very same combination of TifEagle greens and paspalum fairways.

In the spring of 2014, The Rookery began the renovation of Rookery Bay and besides the changes already mentioned, they undertook major playability and sustainability improvements by replacing large areas of the outer roughs with bahiagrass, reworking the size and number of sand bunkers with the help of golf course architect Peter Jacobsen. They also installed extensive littoral shelves replacing turf areas that bordered many of the water hazards.

Replacing existing turfgrass with a new variety requires some dedicated procedures needed to minimize the potential contamination by remnants of the old turf's sprigs and stolons in the ground. To that end, the old fairways were sprayed three times with combination of Round Up and Fusilade herbicide, and then fumigated with methyl bromide. Then a Koro rototiller was used to rip out the remnants of the old turf layer. The Koro grinds up the clumps of dirt and sod and spits them into a trailer running alongside the machine. This operation generated lots of material and most of it was kept onsite and used to build mounded areas in the roughs.




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In addition to those land-use changes, nutrient filtering aquatic plants were installed along the lake banks and colorful landscape plantings were also planted to brighten up the scenic vistas on the course. Another aesthetic and



From the left: Assistant Superintendent Stuart Wiseley and Director of Grounds Todd Evans lead the turf maintenance team at the Marriott Rookery Bay at Marco Golf Club.

practical change was to convert all the sand traps to Better Billy Bunkers to prevent washouts and improve playability of the course as well as save numerous labor hours needed to repair washed-out bunkers so common during Florida's rainy

season, especially in Florida's southwest coastal region.

Looking at the finished product in December I only saw the "After" results, and can't really appreciate what Director of Grounds Todd Evans and Assistant Superintendent Stuart Wiseley had dealt with in the "Before" era. I can tell you that they are pleased and excited about taking care of their new and improved Rookery golf course.



The Koro rototiller in action on The Rookery's fairways during renovation. Note how deep the tiller goes to remove the old turf layer. Photo by Todd Evans.



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Live Green!

An Environmental Education and Course Improvement Program

Volunteers for the event were (from the left): Bill Kistler CGCS, Rogers Park GC; Chris Senior, Countryside CC; Eric Dixon, Chi Chi Rodriguez GC; Brian Beckner, former GCS, owner of Native Bird Boxes, Inc.; Adam Wright CGCS with Harrells, Inc.; and Ralph Dain GCSAA Florida Field Representative. Not pictured is Ron Bear with WescoTurf.

By Eric Dixon, Superintendent, Chi Chi Rodriguez Golf Club

On Saturday Oct. 25, the Chi Chi Rodriguez Golf Club in Clearwater participated in the Live Green! Environmental Education and Course Improvement Program. This program is sponsored by Toro and Audubon International, and is part of The First Tee program. The goal of the event is to introduce young golfers to environmental aspects of golf course maintenance by participating in hands-on and educational activities.

At Chi Chi's, the participants laid sod, planted parking lot medians, and built bird houses. They also listened to a Web of Life presentation which demonstrates the interaction of living things with their environment, and a superintendent seminar. They had an opportunity to view several pieces of golf-course-maintenance equipment including sprayers, fairway mowers, and triplex mowers. About 35

participants and several parents enjoyed this event and left with knowledge of the turf industry and our responsibility to the environment and our community.

The idea for this program started in 2009, when Brandon Tidwell, then working for FedEx, decided to direct some of FedEx's giving to benefit youth, golf, and the environment. FedEx already had a relationship with The First Tee. Tidwell then looked for an environmental partner, which he found in Audubon International, an environmental organization, which has been working with golf courses since 1991. The three organizations worked together to develop the FedExCup®Fore!Ever Campaign designed to conduct environmental improvement projects on golf courses that host First Tee programs shortly before FedExCup events were scheduled nearby. This program reached more than a thousand children. The

Campaign also funded the development of an environmental curriculum that can be incorporated into The First Tee's lessons and continues to provide environmental opportunities for children.

When it looked like FedEx would not be continuing support for the program, Joe O'Brien with The First Tee home office, ensured that Judson McNeil from the Toro Foundation, another longtime supporter of The First Tee, attended the last FedExCup®Fore!Ever event. She decided that this was a perfect event for Toro to support and Live Green! was born.

More stations were included and a greater emphasis on golf course management education was incorporated into the day.

Live Green! was started in 2012 and goes to seven courses per year. The program is organized by representatives from The First Tee, Audubon International,

and Toro, along with the golf course superintendent and general manager at each club. The First Tee is represented by Joe O'Brien and Laura Diaz. Audubon International is represented by Tara Pepperman and Joellen Lampman, former director of the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program (now working for Cornell University) and one of the original founders of the program. Judson McNeil represents the Toro Company. Everyone has an important role in the planning and execution of this program.

The representatives from each individual club are responsible for recruiting other superintendents to participate, recruiting volunteers, and finding First Tee participants and children from the community to come to the event. The superintendent is responsible for coming up with three hands-on projects for the event and ensuring all supplies are on site. The projects are paid through a \$3000 grant awarded by Toro.

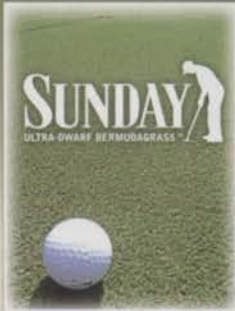
At the Chi Chi Live Green! Day, several superintendents and representatives of the golf industry came out to support the cause and help with the hands-on projects: Chris Senior GCS, Countryside Country Club; Bill Kistler CGCS, Rodgers Park Golf Club and vice president of the West Coast GCSA; Adam Wright CGCS with Harrell's; Ralph Dain, GCSAA Florida Field Representative; Brian Beckner GCS and owner of Native Bird Boxes; and Ron Bear, Wesco Turf. This event would not be successful without industry support and these gentlemen were an important part of Chi Chi's Live Green! Day.

The hands-on projects included laying St. Augustine sod around the school and pro shop, planting six medians in the parking lot, and building birdhouses. Each task had a small lesson that went along with it.


The sod project offered an opportunity to discuss turfgrass's role as a filter for pollutants and providing green spaces to prevent runoff and leaching.

The planting in the medians included a brief discussion on right plant, right


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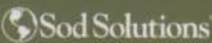


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place. The medians were planted with species that have low water and fertility requirements.

Brian Beckner of Native Bird Boxes led the final project. The kids had an opportunity to build 18 bird boxes for three different species. The lesson for this project was attracting wildlife to the golf course and the role of animals in the landscape. This also opened the discussion of the need for green spaces in the middle of urban areas, which Chi Chi's provides in the middle of Clearwater.

Beckner explained how installing bird boxes helped the environment, "These wooden bird boxes are ecologically sensitive habitats that help to provide a balance from any loss of the natural aviary environments from inevitable development or other environmental challenges." Time was taken with the children and volunteers to understand why the active approach and desire to give back. We want the younger generation to have the opportunities we have been given. Sharing wildlife is a wonderful opportunity.

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The children had the chance to help with building birdhouses from pre-cut templates for Eastern bluebirds, Carolina wrens, red-bellied woodpeckers, great crested flycatchers and Eastern screech owls. They were very diligent with their hammering, making sure each nail, panel, floor and roof structure was secure! The variety of birdhouses were selected as they are most common to our region.

At the end of the event we were able to take the children out and discuss the different settings that each bird box would be hung in. We all went out back of the lodge at Chi Chi Rodriguez Academy and hung a box for Eastern screech owls in celebration of a wonderful day of 'building our future' kind of day. The kids absolutely enjoyed their time being an active part of helping wildlife!"

The various learning stations also included a hands-on Toro presentation of equipment, a superintendent seminar, and the Web of Life lesson by Joellen Lampman.

In the Toro presentation, the participants had an opportunity to view and touch different pieces of golf turf equipment. They had a walk-mowing demonstration by Ron Bear of Wesco Turf, as well as seeing sprayers, fairway mowers, and triplex mowers.

The superintendent session was an opportunity to discuss the role of the superintendent in golf course management and environmental planning. The participants asked questions about wildlife on the course and daily maintenance issues. Ralph Dain of the



Host superintendent Eric Dixon does a cup cutting demonstration and talks about golf course maintenance routines.

GCSAA helped to discuss water-use issues and regulatory issues facing golf courses in the state. This segment also included some hands-on activities such as cup cutting and proper use of a Stimpmeter to determine green speed and consistency. Most participants and parents had never seen either job performed and were excited to help.

Joellen Lampman led an activity called the Web of Life. The children, standing in a circle, have each been given a card of a plant or insect found on the golf course. A ball of string represents the sun's energy and is passed between the children as they identify how an animal might use a plant for food or shelter or another animal

might eat it or be eaten by it. Eventually this creates a web showing how all are connected in the environment.

"The web we create represents how the energy that originates from the sun travels through all living things," concludes Lampman, "but our own energy is also a part of the web. Each of us woke up this morning and decided to use our energy to build nest boxes and plant flowers that provide shelter for wildlife. Did you know when you woke up this morning that you would be helping dragonflies? No? Well you did. Where you put your energy matters. Choose wisely!"

A big thank-you goes out to all who participated and helped to make this event a success. Toro, The First Tee, and Audubon International have come up with a unique way to educate young golfers through this program. The participants gained a lot of knowledge that many golfers are lacking. They were introduced to the golf course superintendent's role in maintaining the



Joellen Lampman (tan hat and blue shirt) leads a Web of Life demonstration with some of the children at the Chi Chi Rodriguez Golf Course in Clearwater. Photo by Eric Dixon.

golf course as well as the responsibility to make decisions regarding nature and the environment. We are all stewards of the environment and this program

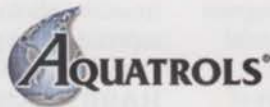
helps to provide the next generation of golfers an appreciation for golf courses in their community as beneficial green spaces. ■



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Remembering Bruce Witt

by Kyle Sweet, CGCS, Sanctuary Golf Club

Here is a collection of stories and comments from former students and others who knew Bruce.

LORIE "JOCK" ANGELLE,

Bay Landscape & Palm Service, Panama City:

I have a story about Bruce, which had a profound effect on what I do today. Bruce taught landscape design for the LCCC golf course program. He said if you render your drawings, that you would most likely get a better grade. So I rendered every design I turned in to get a better grade. Most guys did not care either way but I did. In that process I started to work on and master the technique.

ED NOTE: To "render" a design means to create a two- or three-dimensional image of what the design actually would look like.

I eventually graduated and became a golf course superintendent but never really designed any landscaping. I always had a desire to design, but had no outlet. One day I ran across a young man who was starting a lawn service business in the golf course community where I was the superintendent. I approached him with the idea of doing design work for him if he needed.He exclaimed that he didn't really need any help.

Weeks went by and low and behold he sought me out because one of his lawn service customers wanted to re-landscape his yard and needed to submit a design to the association. I met with the lawn service customer and discussed what his needs were and got busy with the design and of course rendered the design. In our original discussion he explained that he was an engineer and his son was a landscape architect (no pressure) and I said, why don't you have your son do the design? He stated that his son lived in another state and was too busy to handle the situation, but he would have his son review the design (once again no pressure). I completed the small design, which was approved by his son, and the young man completed the install.

From that point on in the next three years (in my spare time) I must have completed 600 designs all rendered and all installed. The small lawn service went from 0 to 60 in three years. You might have guessed that I am no longer a superintendent and now part owner of this lawn service which employs 70-plus people. I don't do much design work anymore, but when I do, I can assure you that it is rendered. I have yet to lose a sale from a rendered design.

You must remember that if it weren't for Bruce and the program I would not have been able to pull this off. I am forever grateful for Bruce and the program. I am a proud 1996 graduate who would be lost in the world if it were not for the true teachers of this program. FYI, I have that first design and all of the designs from class."

MATT WILLACKER, Knoxville, TN: I live in Knoxville, Tennessee, but still maintain my connections with my Florida golf roots. I think what your doing is great for Bruce's memory. We were his first class of second-year students and he was so thoughtful and willing to meet with you after class or during his free periods. He never blew you off or made you feel you were wasting his time.

JASON A. SPRANKLE, Boca Woods CC, Boca Raton: I graduated from Lake City in 1996. Bruce Witt was simply an



From left: Mike Fasy, a Lake City graduate and assistant superintendent at the Blue Tip Golf Resort, Grand Cayman Island with Bruce Witt at the Sanctuary GC. Photo by Kyle Sweet.

amazing man and instructor. Have you ever not seen him smile? Every year at the GCSAA show I would find our booth to say, "Hi" to Bruce.

One story I can share with you may be a surprising one. With only one month of school left prior to graduation, I learned Bruce had never seen the movie, "Caddy Shack." I was shocked when I found out, and he agreed to let us watch it during the last week of school. All I can remember was Bruce snickering and laughing — even being caught off guard during a couple of the scenes such as when Mrs. Smails says, "Elihu, will you come loofah my stretch marks?" We must have watched that movie 50-plus times during the three years living in Lake City.

To this day, when I come across Caddy Shack on TV, Bruce and his smile pop into my head. Bruce was a class act and will surely be missed. Just thought I would share one of my moments regarding one of the best instructors I have ever met. RIP Bruce, your smile is a beacon of light for all of us!

Laurie Bland, Miami Springs CC, Miami: I am Laurie Bland, golf course superintendent at Miami Springs Country Club. Bruce would come and visit me several times during my time at Doral. And we talked about everything, not just turf. He really was a great person who I will miss dearly. I treasure a photo of Bruce and me shortly after I received my first superintendent position on the Jim McClean Signature Course at Doral back in 2012.

HARRY SMITH, Florida Gateway College: Bruce was a quiet guy with a quick smile and a ready laugh. Bruce and John Wildmon played a wonderful game for many years to my endless amusement. They were cheap and cheaper. They challenged each other continuously to find cheap deals, the cheapest wheels and the most free meals. I and many others will miss this wonderful guy.

GLEN THOMPSON, aka "Opossum," LidoChem: Bruce taught me to be a pro. By leading through example and humility he opened my eyes and helped me grow up when I needed it most. We are not as invincible as we think we are!



Superintendent Laurie Bland with Bruce Witt at her first job at the Signature Course at Doral back in 2012. Photo submitted by Laurie Bland.

DAVID ROBINSON, Marriott International, Orlando:

It is rare to become friends with a college professors after graduation. I know Bruce was the contradiction to that norm. I feel fortunate to say Bruce was my friend and mentor. His passion for the turf industry and his dedication to his students was second to none. Bruce Witt made a major impact on a countless number of students over the years, myself included. I'll miss our times laughing about the past and our serious discussions about the future. Bruce will be missed and never forgotten but most importantly his legacy will live on.

KEN MANGUM, Atlanta Athletic Club, Johns Creek, GA:

While I was not in school while Bruce was teaching, I did see him several times while visiting Lake City or doing seminars for the senior class. I found Bruce to be a very energetic and passionate about the profession and preparing the students for the future. I talked with him many times about the changes in the industry and the game of golf. He certainly made an impact on the profession and the superintendent business. He will be missed!

ANTHONY BAUR, Saint Johns GC, Elkton:

I graduated in 2004 from LCCC in golf course operations. After meeting Mr. Witt in college I truly learned a lot from him with all that note taking. But I enjoyed the visits he made during my OJT and all of the students he visited while at the courses I've been. He never forgot a name... well, at least he remembered it in a minute or two. I liked how genuine he was: he never differed from day to day and was a great person to know. I know he's up there looking at all of his past students, friends, and family in looking out for us. You will be missed.

JUSTIN PAWLICKI, Ace Golf, Tarpon Springs:

I am an assistant superintendent with Ace Golf in Tarpon Springs. I was in the Lake City/FGC class of 2010. Mr. Witt was always there to help his students whenever they needed help or advice. Mr. Witt helped secure my first assistant's position at Old Memorial Golf Club in Tampa. Before class began one morning, he had informed me that a job posting had come into the office from Old Memorial, and he knew I was from Tampa Bay. He set it aside for me to get the first glimpse of the posting and soon enough I started my career as second assistant immediately after graduation.

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The Bruce Witt "Celebration of Life" was held Friday, December 12, at the Orange Creek Cattle Company in Wellborn. There were approximately 75 people in attendance. Photo by Kyle Sweet.

MATT TAYLOR, Roya Poinciana GC, Naples: Bruce was a true professional in our industry, something he preached to his students almost on a daily basis. He not only tried to teach his students about agronomics, he taught about how to act when you are in the business which, in my opinion, was much more important than the "Krebs Cycle" (which I have long forgotten, along with all the important steps to pass an exam). However his life lessons have stuck with me for the past 23 years. Bruce was a true friend and I will miss spending time with him over lunch during the summer, and at Ken's.

MATT DURKEE, Sawgrass CC, Ponte Vedra Beach: I am the golf course superintendent at Sawgrass Country Club in Ponte Vedra Beach. I was graduated from LCCC around 1999. I was a young kid working three part-time jobs trying to get through the Lake City program. It was in my third year when I started to really question if I could keep going. I was commuting daily from St. Augustine (over two hours) for two years.

"There was a time when my grades started to slip and my attendance became unpredictable. Privately, I was questioning whether I would finish the program and actually started to look outside of the industry for opportunities. Bruce Witt noticed the change in my attitude and brought me in for a visit after one of my classes. He took the time to ask what was going on and if he could help in any way. He helped me to realize how close I was to finishing. He helped share stories of past students who had struggled and how well they had done after they made it out of the academic portion of the "job." The unprompted, "extra" time that Bruce shared with me was what kept me driving, working, and studying. I graduated on time. I am celebrating my 10th year here at Sawgrass Country Club and have Bruce, John, BJ, and Doc to thank for it. The family atmosphere that was created by our professors is what separated the "Lake City kids" from the others whom I have worked with in the industry. We are just tougher! Ha! I'll never forget the attention and caring that Bruce showed toward me and I always looked forward to his coming by to check-in on the interns over the years. He will be missed.

DON JOHNSON, CuisinArt Golf Resort and Spa, Anguilla: I am a 1990 graduate; here are my thoughts of Bruce. I found Bruce to be a true professional with a quiet demeanor. He taught me that someone does not need to draw attention to be heard. He

challenged me to do my best at everything, during my years at LCCC and I know that this helped me to have a successful career in the golf industry. I am eternally grateful to all of the instructors in GLO department and regard myself extremely fortunate to have experienced this unique education.

NATE WATKIN, Seagate CC, Delray Beach: Attending Lake City was my second stint of college and a foundation for my future in life. I graduated from FSU in 2005 and went back to school at Lake City and graduated in 2009. I took my education, career, and relationships very seriously when I attended Lake City. I became very close with all of my professors, specifically Mr. Witt. His passion for passing on his knowledge and preparing us for the "real world" of being a golf course superintendent was very fulfilling, leaving me to crave more after each class. I never looked at him as a professor. I always felt like he was a great friend with a wealth of knowledge who enjoyed challenging up-and-coming superintendents. We are all passionate about our profession and the game of golf. I believe Mr. Witt helped instill that passion into us during our time at Lake City. All Lake City alumni will miss him. He not only made us all better golf course superintendents, but he also made us better people. We are all grateful for the legacy he has left behind and proud to call ourselves pupils of Witt.

TIM HIERS, Old Collier GC, Naples: Bruce had a rare combination of admirable traits. Humble yet intelligent, wise, attentive, engaging, thoughtful with a sense of humor, caring, compassionate, firm in his beliefs and convictions but not judgmental. He had a passion for our profession and he cared deeply for his family, country and students. I always left Bruce feeling like my time with him was spent well. His absence will leave a void in our lives and the industry but I am confident that Bruce placed his faith and eternal future in the hands of Christ. It is my belief he would want others to make the decision to step out in faith and trust the Lord.

BOBBY WEED, Golf Course Architect, Ponte Vedra Beach: Bruce will certainly be missed as I coordinated with him for many years and was always quick to take his call regarding the chance to speak at their spring semester Industry Seminar. Bruce and I were working together to figure out a way to continue the program right through this past fall. His desire and passion never

wavered for the program. I have always been amazed at the tenure of the instructors for the program at Lake City and more recently Gateway College. It is this kind of passion on behalf of all the staff and instructors that produced so many successful graduates. I already miss Bruce.

KYLE D. SWEET, The Sanctuary GC, Sanibel Island: I was lucky to have known Bruce. While a student at Lake City, Bruce provided me with the support and guidance needed to be successful in both school and in the industry. I was fortunate to have him visit for many OJT students and be involved with the Seminar class for the past 15 years. I always looked forward to spending time with Bruce and like so many others, will miss those times to talk turf, education, family or anything that came up during a lunch at Ken's BBQ. I believe he would want to be remembered for all that we do each day in this great industry in which Lake City plays a big part.



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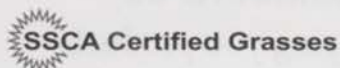
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FIELD OBSERVATIONS

Teachable Moments



By *Ralph K. Dain Jr.*,
GCSAA Regional Representative Florida

I know that we hear about growing the game of golf a lot these days and rightfully so. I also know that as recently as June of last year I wrote about The First Green as an avenue for growing the game. I am just now starting to get a few nibbles from individuals who may be interested in hosting a First Green field trip. I have yet to conduct a field trip in Florida but am hopeful that opportunity is just around the corner!

A few weeks ago I experienced a classroom interaction with my son's third grade classes at R. J. Longstreet Elementary School in Daytona Beach Shores. I have to tell you what a thrill

it was to get the students engaged in what it is that you do every day on the golf course. The students were learning about plants, and I was able to share our story and how the game of golf utilizes plants for every aspect in the enjoyment of the game. I also relayed our positive environmental contributions as stewards of the land as I emphasized the valuable green spaces golf provides as well as our ability to attract wildlife in urban surroundings.

The students asked numerous questions about the animals, insects, and flowers found on golf courses as well as a few questions pertaining to fertilizer and chemical usage. Having our robust BMP program in place helped as I conveyed that we utilize as little as possible in the way of fertilizer and pesticides as we adhere to the principles of the BMP document. That being said, the children enjoyed the photos I had of several deer, an alligator, and a few giraffes I had on a green from my time in South Africa. Most likely that is what they will remember!

Anyway, I digress. What I want to leave you with as a message is that even though the students were engaged with my presentation, I can't help but imagine how much more impactful the message would have been had they been able to be

immersed in the golf course, and touch and smell and see the entirety of what you do. I do not have personal access to a golf course anymore so I truly need someone to volunteer as a host for a First Green field trip. Based on the response I had from those third graders, I'm sure that anyone who is willing to conduct a field trip will find the event as inspiring as I did with my in-class session.

I have the links and information necessary to assist in successfully conducting a field trip. This is something I want you to seriously consider doing. I am more than willing to lend a hand in directing this on-course learning opportunity but we just need a few volunteers to step up and offer their facilities as locations. Once we receive the positive feedback that I am sure will be forthcoming, I am confident the word will spread and others will follow in implementing this program. Please consider being one of the first courses to pioneer The First Green program in Florida and feel the glow I felt after speaking with the students at R. J. Longstreet.

Until next time,

Ralph Dain
GCSAA Regional Representative (FL)
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**GREEN SIDE UP
By JOEL JACKSON**

I will definitely remember the Alamo!! I stayed across the street from that historical landmark at the Crockett Hotel during the recent GCSAA Conference in San Antonio. A busy conference schedule and the cold, rainy weather did not allow me time to take a tour of the site.

There were a lot of other things that I will remember about this GIS trip:

- The convenient walking distance to the convention

center from all the hotels for business and education and the Riverwalk for dinner.

- Meeting lots of folks in our business, many from Australia.

•Seeing and talking to at least sixteen past presidents of the Florida GCSA at our reception at the Hard Rock Café and also happy to see such a great turnout!

• Rubbing elbows with fellow magazine editors and chapter executives from chapters around the country and continuing to marvel at how they keep finding better ways to improve chapter effectiveness.

• Serving as a judge for the TurfNet Superintendent of the Year contest. Picking only one out of this group was extremely difficult. Their achievements once again reflect the amazing versatility, ingenuity, leadership and professionalism exhibited by golf course superintendents. It has been a real pleasure and honor to write about so many of Florida's high achievers over the years.

I was extremely proud to see Florida GCSA receive the 2015 Excellence in Government Relations Award at the conference. Work on

the Golf Course BMP manual began nearly a decade ago in a truly cooperative project, which resulted in statewide recognition of our stewardship efforts by regulators and many legislators. Many chapters around the country are using our BMP manual as a template to create their own region-specific BMP manuals.

Then Mark Kann, Jennifer Bryan and the FGCSA Board of Directors developed a BMP Certification Program, which is a very positive, pro-active program that helps establish superintendents' commitment to environmental stewardship. Every superintendent needs to pursue BMP certification as it will most likely be required in the very near future. Please help the FGCSA reach a goal of 50 percent of superintendents BMP certified by the end of this year.

I will remember the honoring of retiring GCSAA staff member, Penny Mitchell, who was the staff coordinator for the Certified Golf Course Superintendent certification program. I sent her an email upon learning of her retirement plans and her honest admission that she

could not attend this last GIS, because she knew it would be too emotional for her. She touched so many of our lives in a special way as so many of us sought to certify our professionalism.

I remember attending my first GIS in Washington, DC in 1985. I have only missed three since then. Favorite sites are San Francisco and San Diego, but always had great experiences no matter where the GIS was held.

I know that attending the Golf Industry Show out-of-state, can add an expense to the maintenance budget and unfortunately many clubs have yet to embrace the professional and technical education that takes place at these events and local chapter meetings. But that is no reason to avoid continuing to educate your management and members about anything you learn that helps you save money in daily operations and course conditioning. As far as the GIS is concerned, you should try to attend at least the one held in Orlando every third year. Good luck and have a great 2015!

*View of the Mountain Lake putting green with the famous Bok Tower in the background.
Photo by Joel Jackson.*



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