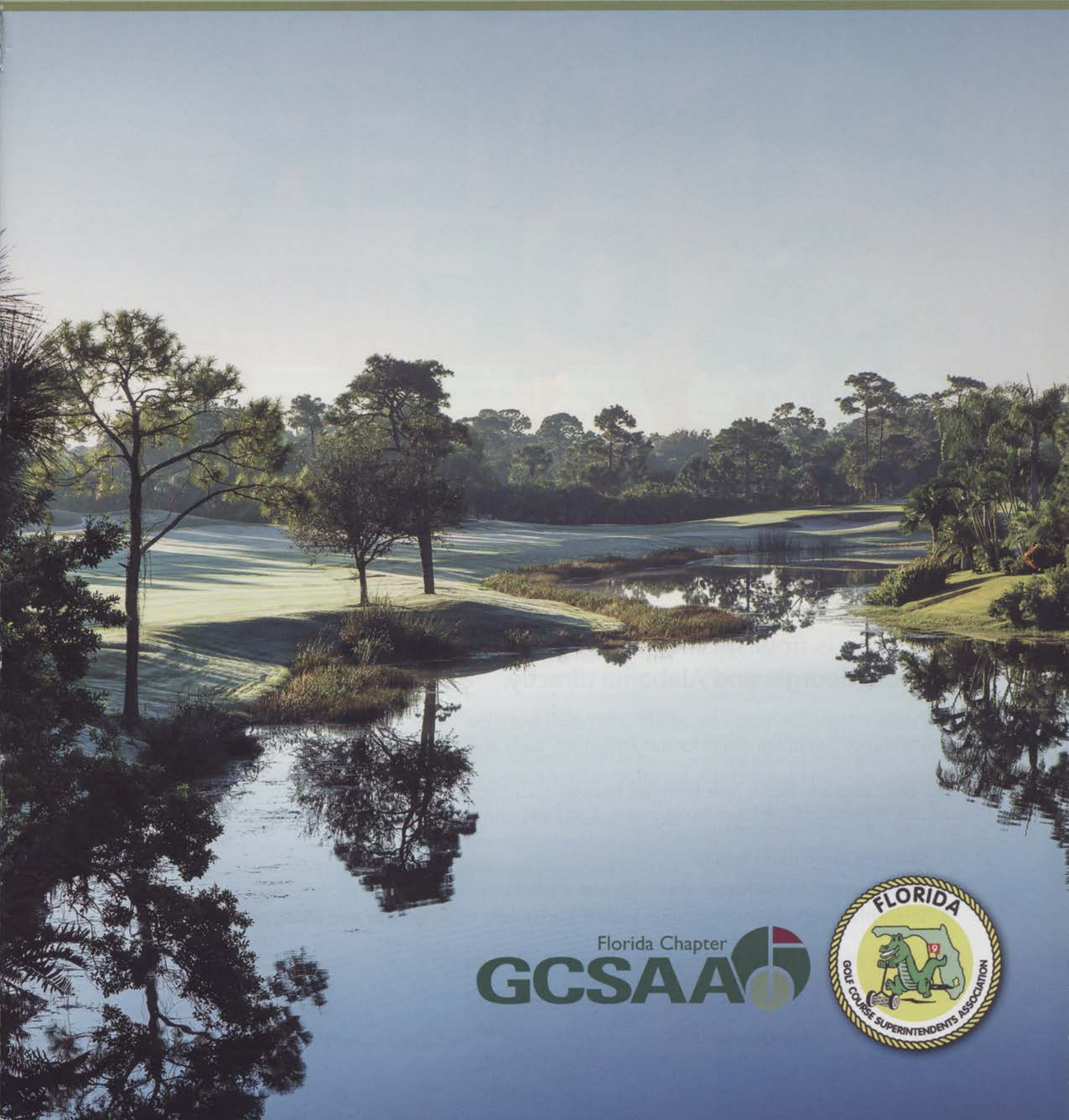


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Winter 2015

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ON THE COVER: 6th hole Golden Marsh Course, Harbour Ridge Yacht & Country Club, Palm City. Photo by Nile Young.

FOREWORDS

Putting the "Work" into Networking!

I was speaking with a colleague recently about our careers over the last 15 years or so. What struck me about the conversation was the influence our mentors — and the people they introduced us to — had on our careers. I was very fortunate in my career to catch the last 10 years of the golf boom that spawned 10 to 20 new golf courses a year in southwest Florida. It seemed like every time I turned around, a new golf course development was opening up. The boom allowed for a fast-track pace in my career, but I would never have been able to make it without the wisdom and knowledge I gained from my previous bosses and the networking time they allowed for me to develop professionally and personally.

Fast forward to 2014 where there are more courses closing than opening and a "fast track" pace for a turf person just starting out is almost impossible. Now that I'm on the side of the desk that faces the door, I often wonder how I can help my assistant to develop and grow like I was able to do. The answer is allowing him to build his own professional network. Just as it is the responsibility of the superintendent to develop the people in his department to be better employees, I feel it is also the responsibility of the superintendent to develop his or her assistants to one day become superintendents.

I know it is sometimes tough to let the assistant go to local superintendent meetings and be away from the course. It is even harder most of the time to let the assistant attend national events. Despite all that, if we superintendents are going to fulfill our responsibilities to our assistants, it all



Bill Davidson, CGCS

starts with membership to the local FGCSA chapter. Then require the assistants to **go to the local meetings** as part of their on-the-job training and education.

When I was a young assistant, I wanted to get to know the "big guns" of the area. It wasn't an easy task, I was barely legal drinking age and these guys were veterans in the turf business and almost twice my age. Without my local chapter events, there was no way I was going to be able to meet these guys and talk shop with them. One time I even called the golf event organizer and asked to be paired within or as close to a foursome of the "big timers" as possible. The point is that I wanted to develop my professional network and possibly be able to learn something from of the best in the business.

For all of you assistants, I highly encourage you to actively seek to expand your network of colleagues that you can call on. In my career I've learned one absolute, "it's not a matter of *if* you're going to need help, it's a matter of *when*!" Everyone needs a strong network of people he or she can call on at a moment's notice.

For all you "veterans" out there, do you remember how hard it was to get your professional network established and then be open and receptive to the new guys? I challenge everyone to make a new contact at the next local meeting, expand your network, and share your own war stories. You "young guns" will love this part of networking!



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SPOTLIGHT

Chapter Round Up

2014 ended on a positive note with the final surge of traditional chapter fall events, which yielded generous donations to worthy charities and programs and deserving recognition for some of our outstanding members. Skillful (or lucky) golfers also claimed their prizes and for the rest of us, well, wait until next year!

North Florida

The North Florida Fall Classic at the Amelia Island Plantation Resort: Meetings and festivities were held at the Omni Hotel on the beach and the "Crash" Hall Cup golf tournament was played on the Marsh Course



Jack Harrell III, right, presented Gary Morgan, with Turfgrass/Residex, the 2014 Butch Singo Award, for outstanding professionalism and character in the industry. The award was given at the NFGCSA Fall Classic this past October at the Omni Hotel on Amelia Island. Photo by Joel Jackson.



Central Florida legend and longtime FGCSA Golf Chairman, Joe Ondo, CGCS (left) received the 2014 Crash Hall Champion's Cup from Jack Harrell III, golf chairman at the NFGCSA Fall Classic. Photo by Joel Jackson.

across the street. There were two familiar names winning awards at the Fall Classic: Gary Morgan was recognized as the 2014 Butch Singo Award winner for outstanding professional service to the Florida Golf Industry and Joe Ondo, CGCS won the golf tournament and qualified for one of the five spots on Florida Team at the 30th GCSAA Golf Championship in San Antonio in February.

South Florida

A week after the Fall Classic, The SFGCSA celebrated the 30th anniversary of the annual Missing and Exploited Children at the Fort Lauderdale Country Club. According to Nancy McBride, executive director, National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, this fundraising event supporting the Florida Regional Office of the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children has raised approximately \$550,000 for the M&E. In honor of the 30th anniversary, the chapter presented McBride with a check for \$30,000 at the October 24th event.



From left: Roly Molina, SFGCSA President, Bryan Singleton M&E Committee, M&E Executive Director Nancy McBride and M&E Chairman Joe Pantaleo with \$30,000 donation check.



Brian MacCurrach, left, with John Gallagher from The Polo Club or Boca Raton who won the Bayer Power Pak auction at the M&E tournament with a bid of \$6500. Photo by Joel Jackson.

Everglades

The parade of annual events continues into November, as the EGCSA once again was a major sponsor the CREW Stanley Hole Golf Tournament, which raises funds for environmental education projects for CREW, which stands for the Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed.

Brenda Brooks, executive director of the Crew Land & Water Trust reviewed some of the history of the event after the Nov. 7 tournament at the Old Corkscrew Golf Club, "Our golf tournament fund raising events began in 2001," she said. "And the EGCSA came on board in 2002 and have been there every year except 2005-2007, when we didn't hold a tournament. The Everglades Chapter has been responsible for helping to raise \$96,868. This year's event raised \$7,717. I can't thank the EGCSA for the continued support over all these years."



Winners of the CREW Tournament at the Old Corkscrew GC. The Glase Golf Team from the left: Tim Maxwell, Jim Glase, Jeff Glase and Jimmy Glase. Photo by Joel Jackson.

GCSAA Honors the FGCSA with Two Awards

The FGCSA is honored to have received a \$2,500 Golf BMP Grant presented by the EIFG (Environmental Institute for Golf). This grant money will be used to update our Golf BMP Manual and testing literature.

In addition, the FGCSA has been selected as the winner of the 2015 GCSAA Government Relations Award.

This award was due in large part to our devoted BMP and Government Relations Committees. Congratulations! As superintendents, your value as an environmental steward is undeniable. As local fertilizer ordinances and restrictions begin appearing in local and state legislation, your participation in this program only solidifies the value of your profession. We are currently scheduling our certification classes for 2015. Our goal is to have 50 percent of our members certified by 2015. If you have not participated in this program, I encourage you to do so. Please check the website, www.floridagcsa.com/BMP for future dates.



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NEWS RELEASES

The Florida Golf Course Superintendents Association names new executive director.



For more information, contact:
Jennifer Bryan
(772) 214-5335;
Email: fgcsa@comcast.net

The Florida Golf Course Superintendents Association has promoted Jennifer Bryan to executive director, effective Aug. 1.

Bryan served as the FGCSA association manager since October 2007 and was instrumental in modernizing

communications, website development, administrative efficiencies, event planning, association long-range planning, and promoting the Golf Best Management Practices (BMP) Certification program which was developed in cooperation with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, USGA Green Section and the University of Florida.

She has a bachelor of science degree in psychology from Florida State University with a minor in communications,

served as the executive coordinator, Customer Vision Center for Lanier Worldwide, Inc. and program director for the YMCA, and is certified in member services and program planning management.

Bryan's duties will include: continuation of administrative and financial activities, education, publication management, promoting Industry partnerships and ad sales, coordinating FGCSA events, and facilitating the Golf BMP Certification Program.

In her new role, Bryan will be more involved internally in the program development of local chapter and member services: including support, focus on government relations, media and public relations, membership growth and retention initiatives, and partnering with allied associations on issues of common interest.

Bryan will be replacing Joel Jackson, who retired from the position in 2013. Jackson has been retained by the FGCSA as editor for the association's quarterly magazine, *The Florida Green*.

The FGCSA consists of 11 regional chapters statewide with more than 850 golf course superintendent and assistant superintendent members.

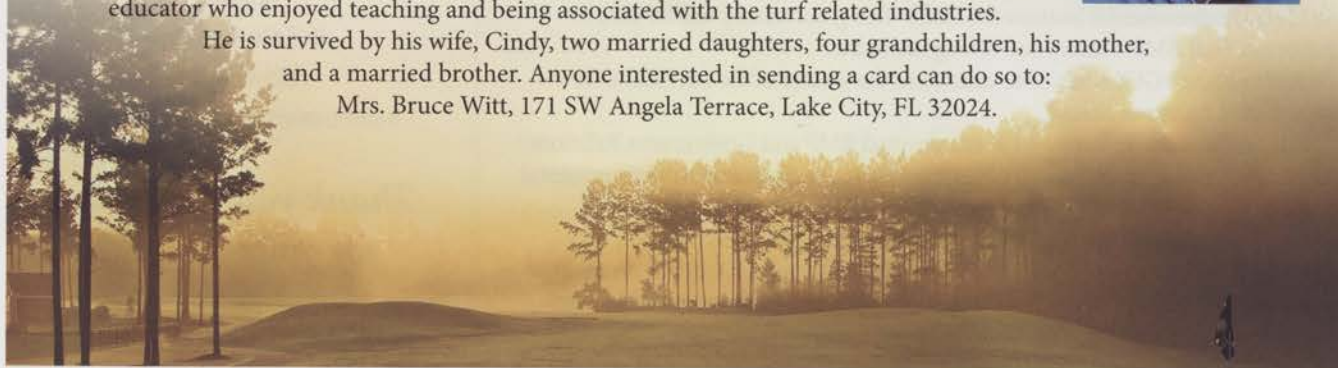
IN MEMORIAM

Bruce Witt, long time turf educator at Florida Gateway College in Lake City, Florida, died from melanoma cancer on November, 17, 2014.

Bruce taught in the Golf Course Operations and Landscape Technology programs at Florida Gateway College (formerly Lake City Community College) for 27 years. Bruce was 63 years old. Besides the golf and landscape industries, Bruce was very interested in sports turf management, and he taught many students who are now very successful golf course superintendents, landscape managers, and sports turf managers. He was a dedicated educator who enjoyed teaching and being associated with the turf related industries.

He is survived by his wife, Cindy, two married daughters, four grandchildren, his mother, and a married brother. Anyone interested in sending a card can do so to:

Mrs. Bruce Witt, 171 SW Angela Terrace, Lake City, FL 32024.



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*Special thanks to the host club,
Ft. Lauderdale Country Club, and to
superintendent Todd Ingram for
an outstanding job.*



#18 South Course, Ft. Lauderdale Country Club.
Photo by Joel Jackson.

UF/IFAS Announces Joan Dusky's Retirement

Editor's Note: From a "Friends of IFAS" email from Jack M. Payne, Senior Vice President of Agriculture and Natural Resources for the University of Florida. Most of us in the FGCSA who knew Joan met her when she worked as the director of the South Florida UF/IFAS Research Center in Ft. Lauderdale. She continued her administrative role within IFAS until her retirement. I

recently learned from Chris Moran, Special Assistant for IFAS Communications that Joan is an avid golfer and plans to play lots of that in her retirement.

"Joan Dusky Retires: A legend leaves IFAS today.

When Joan Dusky began working for IFAS, Jimmy Carter was president.

It was a time when agriculture was still very much a man's world. She was one of only three female members of the Weed Science Society of America. When she showed up in Belle Glade, the office staff organized a betting pool on how long she'd last. No one bet longer than two years.

Among the stories people told at a reception in her honor this week was one about how she arrived in Brazil with an otherwise all-male Ag delegation – but their luggage didn't. And for the next week, she survived just like the guys, washing garments in the sink each night and letting them dry overnight.

When farmers' overzealous applications of fertilizer or fungicides destroyed her field trials, she was sometimes prone to burst forth with what Tom Obreza euphemistically called Dusky's "expressions of exasperation."

She entered the administrative ranks, and in her final job as associate dean of Extension and agricultural programs leader, she could raise the blood pressure of one of her employees with an email that stated simply: "Call me."

And when anyone questioned whether she could handle a situation, she had a signature reply: "Remember, I kill plants for



From the left: Jack Payne, Senior Vice President for Agriculture and Natural Resources, Joan Dusky and Nick Place, Dean for Extension.

a living."

She worked hard, very hard. Last year, she spent 70 nights away from home, hopscotching across the state because she knew that was the best way to get a read on what our stakeholders needed from us so she could work on solutions. Those 70 nights don't even include the daytrips. She was out more than she was in McCarty Hall.

What really came across at the reception

was how much Joan cared – for agriculture, for farmers, for colleagues, for IFAS. Several of us departed from the roast format to tell her publicly that we love her.

So many of us learned so much from her, and that's why more than 200 people from Escambia to Homestead came to Gainesville to see her off. True to form, when she was given the microphone, she imparted simple truths instead of talking about herself. She told us that one of the most important things we can do is learn something every day: That we need to remind ourselves that we're not in control and that you need to give 100 percent all the time.

She did that as a college softball player. She joked about playing third base and shortstop for schools that weren't exactly athletic powerhouses. But as I said at the Extension Professional Associations of Florida conference this summer and again this week, Joan has always been big-league to us.

The final lesson she offered her farewell remarks was that when people come to you with a problem, they don't necessarily care about your answer – or even if you have an answer. They want to know that you really care about their situation.

She demonstrated that last point by example. To remind herself, she kept a quote from Frank Lloyd Wright tacked over her desk: "The heart is the chief feature of a functioning mind." We'll miss her mind and the decades of experience that fill it. But we'll miss her heart even more.

Happy retirement, Joan."

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**For more information contact
Jennifer Bryan at 800-732-6053 or visit us on the web at
www.FloridaGCSA.com/BMP**



Harbour Ridge Y&CC

The 1st hole on the River Ridge Course is a 380-yard, par 4 from the Black & Blue tees. Photo by Nile Young.

Harbour Ridge Yacht and Country Club is a private gated community on the banks of North Fork of the St. Lucie River in Palm City. Resident boat owners can set sail or motor from the (North, Middle or South) Docks six miles down the river to the Atlantic Ocean, roughly a 30-minute cruise. Besides boating, residents also enjoy fishing, kayaking and other water sports on the river. All of the houses and condominiums within each of the community's 28 villages offer

stunning views over water, golf or the natural beauty of the Florida landscape.

For the golfing residents, the Golden Marsh and River Ridge courses offer scenic views and challenging tests of golf skills. We will be talking about the courses and superintendent Tim Cann, CGCS; but first a little background on some of the unique features of the property.

Since the property borders the river, there is a determined focus on

environmental stewardship that includes a 25-acre bald eagle preserve, nature trails, 92 acres of lakes and 32 acres of wet prairies and basin marshes and 70 acres of Baygall wetlands. Baygall is a specific type of evergreen-forested wetland containing sweet bay, loblolly bay, and swamp bay and magnolia trees. The understory vegetation contains wax myrtle, gall berry, fetterbush and other plants.

According to Cann, the wetlands have



Tim Cann, CGCS (left), Mike Salerno, club manager (center) and Rob Dawk, head golf professional. Photo submitted by Harbour Ridge.

been systematically cleared of invasive plant material; native plant material such as golden canna, pickerelweed, common arrowhead, blue flag iris, cordgrass, soft rush, swamp lily, leather fern and sawgrass have been added to improve the water-management practices and water flow through the extensive wetland system. The wetlands are marked "Environmental Area – Do Not Enter!"

While on the subject of water management and conservation, Cann said, "Harbour Ridge is Golf Course BMP certified. We have a regional water management partnership with the South Florida Water Management District. The property is a water-storage site for their C-23 canal water, which eventually flows

to the St. Lucie River. The canal water is pumped onto our property and works its way through our wetland network. This natural cleaning process removes excess nutrients from the water before it discharges back into the river."

There is a long list of amenities and services for the residents of Harbour Ridge, making it a very desirable place to live. They include Housekeeping Department, on-site Grounds Maintenance Department which provides full-service landscaping, Home Repair Department, Onsite Water Treatment facility providing safe fresh water, tennis, Boating (three boat docks), waterfront activities, Sport Club Pavilion dining, Artisans Club, Fitness Center, and a one-acre Dog Park.

The amenities, attention to details, proactive environmental stewardship and teamwork have garnered praise and awards such as:

- Audubon International: "Certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuaries"
- Green Golf Community, 'Steward Level,' by GolfCourseHome® 2008
- Florida Association of Realtors Environmental "Envy Award"
- Aurora Award for Residential Development
- Flexible Architecture for Multiple Environments (FAME) Awards for Overall Development and Architecture
- Florida Department of Environmental Protection's "Clean Marina Award for Excellence"
- Florida Nursery Growers and Landscape Architects (FNLGA) Landscape Award for Excellence

The person coordinating the operations and administration of all these departments and activities is Tim Cann, CGCS, director of greens and grounds maintenance. Cann oversees a staff of 93 employees, and is quick to point out that the operation is a total team effort. He gives praise and recognition to his team leaders. You can see their names and responsibilities on the Course Fact page elsewhere in this story.

Cann is from Wallingford, CT and began his association with golf at the age of 16 as a caddie at the Pilgrims Harbour course in his hometown. The next year he worked a stint on the golf maintenance crew and he was hooked! His Florida career began in 1978 in Gainesville at the Turkey Creek course and he worked around the state either on the crew or during OJT from Florida Gateway College (then Lake City Community College) and after graduation in 1984. He then gained experience at a few more courses as an assistant and then head superintendent. His path led him to Harbour Ridge in 1992.

While Cann was building up his career credentials, Harbour Ridge was being built. The project started in 1981 with the purchase of the land. The Golden Marsh Course was designed by Joe Lee and opened in 1984, and the River Ridge Course by Pete and P.B. Dye opened in 1987. Thirty years later, the courses have been or are currently in a program to re-grass with some of the newer varieties of bermudagrass like TifEagle on the greens and Celebration in the fairways. See the Course Fact Page for the specific projects and time line for each course which also include bunker, cart path and irrigation renovations.

The blending of the residential villages and the extensive natural environment sites on the property was quite fascinating as I toured the property with Cann back in November. He said, "We have a wetland area called 'The Rookery,' which serves as a roost for nearly 1200 wading and water birds every evening. It is a sight to behold watching these different species fly in to spend the night in safety at this location."

SUPERINTENDENT FACTS



Cutline: Tim Cann and his assistants: From the Left: (Front Row) Paul Lira, Ali Carey, Dan Yates, Tim Cann, Efrain Tzul and Diego Tahay. Back Row: Justin Allison, Scott Moussou, Don Moore and Chris Borregard.

Meet Tim Cann, CGCS

Originally from: Wallingford, CT

Education: 2001: Associates degree in Criminal Justice, Holyoke Community College, Holyoke, MA; 2005: Certification in Turfgrass Management from the U. of Georgia, Athens, GA

Employment history: Crew Member: 1973 The Farms CC, Wallingford, CT; 1978 Pilgrims Harbour Country Club, Wallingford and 1980 Turkey G&CC, Gainesville. OJT while in Turf School: 1982 Quail Ridge CC, Boynton Beach, FL and 1983 Fiddlesticks CC, Ft. Myers. 1984, Assistant Superintendent, River Wilderness G&CC, Parrish. 1986 Superintendent, Imperial Lakes GC, Palmetto; 1988 Superintendent, The Reserve Golf and Racquet Club, Port St. Lucie; 1992 – Present, Director of Golf & Grounds Maintenance Harbour Ridge Yacht & Country Club, Palm City.

Professional affiliations/awards: President of the Treasure Coast GCSA; CGCS Member of the GCSAA, FGCSA and FTGA; Golf BMP Certified, FGCSA President's Award for Lifetime Service.

Personal philosophy of work: Never say, "It can't be done." Be a company employee. Look after your employer all the time. After what you consider having a bad day, the next morning's ride through the golf course will readjust your attitude and remind you of why you chose this profession.

Hobbies and Interests: Golf, skiing, snowboarding, snowshoeing, ice hockey and all-grain home beer brewing.

View from the teeing area on No. 11 River Ridge showing how the golf course flows around extensive wetlands. Photo by Nile Young.



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#18 Marsh Course, Amelia Island Plantation

Tim's very busy schedule involved a meeting with club and community leaders during my visit, which gave me a chance to chat with Dan Yates and Justin Allison, the assistant superintendents in charge of the Golden Marsh and River Ridge courses. They both graduated with Associate degrees in Golf Course Operations from the Indian River State College (IRSC). Both gentlemen are originally from the Treasure Coast region. Dan hails from Ft. Pierce and Justin is from Vero Beach.

Yates hadn't done anything related to golf until he was 22 years old and a friend got him into the game and he got hooked. From there it was on to IRSC and his degree. He worked as an assistant-in-training at the Fairwinds GC in Ft. Pierce and as an assistant superintendent at the Pikewood National GC in Morgantown, WV. He moved back to Florida and worked two years at the Jupiter Hills GC in Tequesta before coming to Harbour Ridge in June of this year.

Allison worked on the Grand Harbor GC in Vero Beach from 2008 to 2014, during which time he went to IRSC and got his degree in Golf Operations in 2012. In May of this year he took the assistant's job on the River Ridge course at Harbour Ridge. Contrary to Yates, Justin has been involved in golf for a long time. In fact one of his personal highlights is scoring a hole-in-one at the Clewiston GC when he was 14 years old.

Both gentlemen cite the guidance and mentorship of Mike Platt, instructor at IRSC as critical to their growth and understanding of the business. They also offer up lists of other mentors in the business and friends too long to list here as being positive influences in the lives and professional development. That list also includes the many longtime crew members here at Harbour Ridge, which substantiates Cann's philosophy of teamwork and unity.

Yates wants to capitalize on his experiences of working on two

Golf Digest Top 100 courses in his career to someday become a superintendent and provide as high-level course playing conditions as possible. He wants to help people understand the golf maintenance field and teach people about the ins and outs of what we do. He said, "It's a great feeling when you can "watch the light bulb come on" for someone new.

Allison definitely wants to continue his education in agronomy and, on a more lighthearted scale, he would like to achieve a 400-pound squat thrust, catch a bonefish someday and break 80 on the golf course.

Both gentlemen like to fish, but they diverge on other activities. Yates likes family time, do-it-yourself projects at home and watching good movies. Meanwhile, Allison is out whacking the golf ball around or checking to see if the surf's up!

Meanwhile, back to the central theme to the Harbour Ridge story. The trust and confidence Tim and his staff have earned over the years is one of the best top-to-bottom organizations I've had the pleasure to cover. If you look at the course facts page under key employees you will see many people have been here for a long time. That longevity speaks to the positive atmosphere and teamwork of the organization.

While riding through the courses with Tim, members would ask about progress of various projects from the course renovations progress to the seasonal mulching of the property-wide ornamental beds taking place in all the villages. One of the key items on Tim's agenda was preparing for the annual fall meeting of committees and residents to update them on the projects scheduled for Harbour Ridge.

Harbour Ridge with all its amenities, activities and friendly atmosphere certainly stands out as a pretty nice place to live and work.



The green on the No.14 River Ridge is well-bunkered and adjacent to one of the 32 protected wetlands. Photo by Nile Young.

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HARBOUR RIDGE YACHT AND COUNTRY CLUB



Harbour Ridge Y&CC Golf and Grounds Department. Photo by Nile Young.

Golden Marsh (GM): 18 holes; 6607 yards; Par 72; Course 7 Slope Ratings: 72.9 & 142
River Ridge (RR): 18 holes; 6668 yards, Par 72, Course & Slope Ratings: 73.5 & 150

Location: Palm City Florida. Ownership: Private equity club. 695 members. Playing Policy: Private. Average # of rounds per year per course: 28,000
Designed by: Golden Marsh (GM) by Joe Lee. Opened: 1984. River Ridge (RR) by Pete and P.B. Dye. Opened: 1987

Management Team: Club Manager Michael Salerno GM; Club President: Bill Lichtenberger; Green Chairman: Herb Heuchert; Head Golf Professional: Rob Dauk; Tennis Professional: Paul Bradshaw; Peter Cavitt CFO and Tim Cann: Director of Golf and Grounds Maintenance

Major Renovations/Ongoing Projects: 2011-North Practice tee expansion with TifGrand turf. 2013-South Practice tee expansion with Tiff Grand turf and short-game practice green construction. Golden Marsh: 2013-Bunker reconstruction with G Angle sand. 2014 - New Forward tee construction per "Tee it forward" concept. Asphalt cart path rehabilitation project. 2017 - No-Till Celebration Turfgrass wall-to-wall, new irrigation system, tee renovations, new green construction, drainage improvements. River Ridge: 2015: No-Till Celebration re-grassing project. Renovate irrigation system: HDPE irrigation pipe w/Toro infinity heads, satellite controllers. Add G-Angle sand to bunkers. Reconstruct lake bulkheads and rehabilitate cart-paths.

Acreage under maintenance: GM: 100 acres. RR: 80 acres. Total property acres: 885. None of the turfgrass areas on the courses is overseeded.

Greens: Turf Type: Both courses have TifEagle greens and average 5,200 sq. ft. for a total of 5.5 acres. Green speed goals: 10+. **Tees:** Turf Type: GM: TifWay II. RR: TifSport. Total area: 5.0 acres. **Fairways:** Turf Type: GM: Tifway II. RR: TifSport. Total acres each course: 20 acres. **Roughs:** GM: TifWay II. RR: Tifway 419. Total acres each course: 40 acres.

Bunkers: Number of bunkers: GM: 73. RR: 73 + 7 sandy waste areas. Sand type: GM: G-Angle. RR: GA 26 and G-Angle. Machine-raked with Toro Sand Pros. Waste or Native areas/beds: Number or Area in Acres: GM: None. RR: 7 waste bunkers covering 10 acres of native sand maintained by raking with Toro Sand Pros.

Waterways/Lakes/Ponds: There are a total of 28 lakes covering 92 acres. There are a total of 32 Wet Prairie, Basin Marshes and Bay Gall wetlands covering 70 acres. How maintained? Care for our lakes and wetlands have been in-house since development. Tom Soles is our licensed manager who has worked for Harbour Ridge for 24 years. **Irrigation:** Water Source: C-23 canal and wells. **Equipment:** PSI Pump Station. **Control System:** Rainbird Cirrus and Toro heads-Hydraulic. **Fertigation system:** Yes. Heads and spacing: GM: 582. RR: 786. Spacing: 75-100 feet. **Watering restrictions:** Follow SFWMD permit.

Water Management/Conservation practices: Golf Course BMP Certified, We have a partnership with SFWMD. Harbour Ridge is a water storage site of C-23 canal water, which discharges into the St. Lucie River.

Staff: Total 93 Grounds, Building and Golf Course staff members: Golf only: 19 on seach course.

Director of Greens and Grounds Maintenance: Tim Cann

Assistant Superintendents: Dan Yates, Golden Marsh and Justin Allison, River Ridge
Foremen: GM: Diego Tahay & Chris Borregard. RR: Effain Tzul & Paul Lira
Equipment Technicians: Don Moore Senior Equipment Technician, Wilson Majia Assistant Equipment Tech
Pest Control Manger: Jonathan Pratt, CPCO
Grounds Maintenance Pest control Manager
Irrigation Technician: Scott Moussou
Golf and Grounds Maintenance Administrative Assistant: Ali Carey

Others you may wish to recognize:

Golf Maintenance Department. Years of service: 30: Paul Lira and Charlie Meckel; Phil Baker (28); Rolando Perez (20); Diego Tahay (17); Wilson Mejia (16); Renne Pacheco (16); 15 years: Julio Diaz, Henry Jean, Rigoberto Sapon and Julio Mateo. **Grounds Maintenance Department. Years of service:** Sandy Larsen (29); Jose Cotto (28), Tom Soles (24); Vidal Hernandez (24); Bill Jodun (20); Judy Meckel (19); Herman Morales (17); Francisco Hernandez (16); Montejo Gaspar (15); Jeff Gibson (15).

Communications/meetings: (Crew, Club Management, Committees and Members). Monthly Manager Leadership meeting
Bimonthly Executive Committee meetings
Bimonthly employee meetings
Weekly Grounds Maintenance coordination meetings
Monthly Green Committee meeting - 10 members

Top: The Golden Marsh 15th hole is a 524-yard, Par 5 bordering one of the 28 lakes on property. Photo by Nile Young.

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GCSAA Certification Update: Recertified CGCS

Congratulations to David H. Robinson, CGCS of Marriott Golf and a Central Florida GCSA member for recertifying his CGCS status.

GCSAA News

Melrose Leadership Academy will send 17 superintendents to Golf Industry Show Program for Golf Course Superintendents Association of America members based on financial need, volunteerism and desire to advance career. It was established in 2012 by Ken Melrose, retired CEO and chairman of the board of The Toro Co., and is supported by a \$1 million gift to the EIFG from The Kendrick B. Melrose Family Foundation. Attending from Florida will be Superintendent Rick A. Jacobs, Mirror Lakes Golf Club, Lehigh Acres.

Online Certificate in Horticulture from Florida Gateway College (formerly Lake City Community College) has developed an 18 credit all online Certificate in Horticulture that was developed to educate people working in the golf and landscape industries who like what they are doing, but who need some professional plant science education. The six 3-credit courses are:

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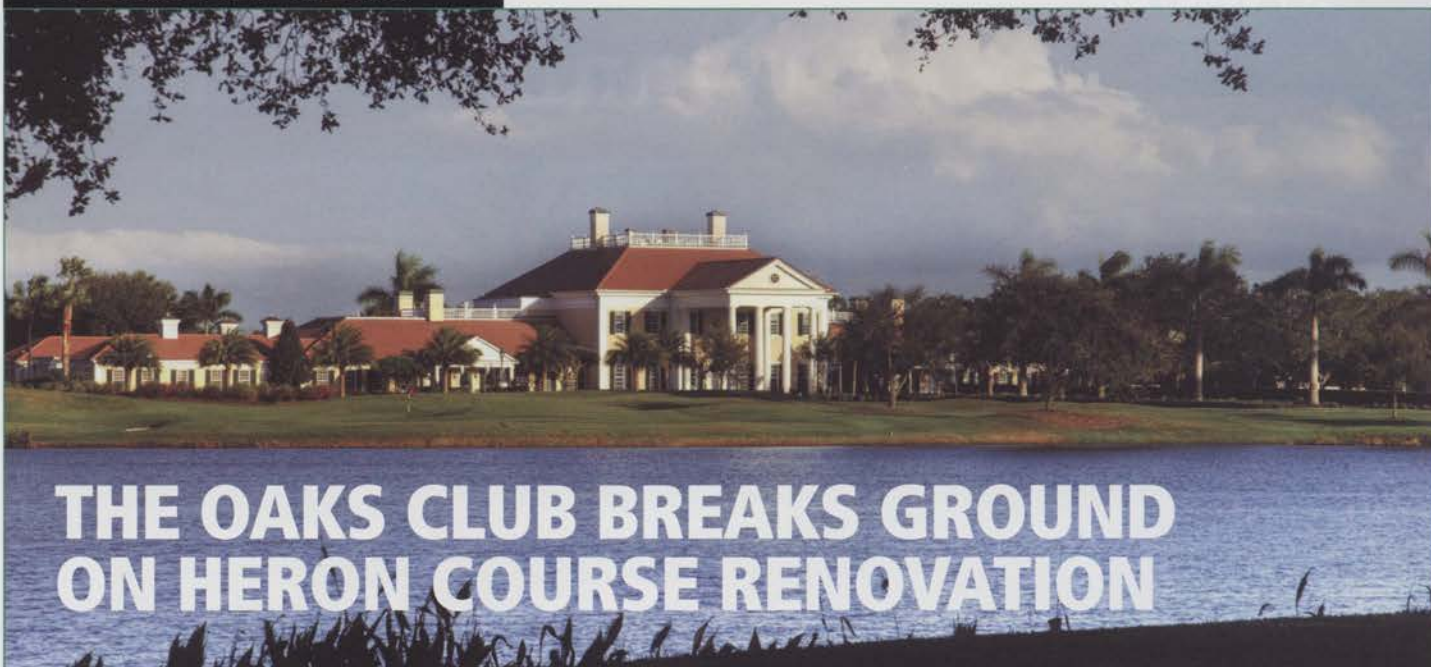
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THE OAKS CLUB BREAKS GROUND ON HERON COURSE RENOVATION

By Sally Sportsman, Director of Media and Public Relations, Fry/Straka. Global Golf Design

Osprey – The Oaks Club today broke ground on the renovation of its Heron Course, a yearlong project that will create a memorable new golfing experience for members and guests.

“This environmentally friendly renovation project is another step forward for our award-winning private club as we celebrate our Pearl anniversary in 2014,” said General Manager Jeff Hartigan. “Our golf amenities and social activities have helped make The Oaks Club one of the Gulf Coast’s leading private residential communities for the past 30 years.”

Course architect Jason Straka, of Fry/Straka Global Golf Course Design, said the renovations are designed to enhance playability and improve irrigation and drainage of the Heron Course. Designed on behalf of Hurdzan/Fry Environmental Golf Design. The new Heron Course will be 6,705 yards, slightly longer than the current 6,695 yards.

“The revitalized course will have new contours, better bunkers, interesting greens complexes, and a new teeing system that will accommodate all skill levels of players,” Straka said. Some interesting strategic changes include the 6th hole, which will feature a split fairway, and hole No. 10, which has been designed to be a “drivable” par 4. Certain unsightly views will be hidden, too. As an example, golfers will no longer be able to see into the practice range while playing the 18th hole.

Noting that the club’s Eagle Course will remain open for play throughout the Heron renovation, Nick Kerns, director of greens and grounds, said soil and water conservation features are being incorporated into the project. “The old soil from the greens will be reused to build the new tees, and the old cart paths will be crushed and reused as a base for the new paths,” he said. “The new greens will be constructed to meet the U.S. Golf Association’s standards for water conservation.”

The Oaks Club is a private country club community developed on more than 1,000 acres situated on the east and west sides of U.S. 41 in Osprey, 12 miles south of downtown Sarasota. It was recently awarded the prestigious Distinguished Gold Club of the World award, a program conducted by *BoardRoom* magazine, one of the most respected trade publications serving private clubs. Club amenities include the Heron and Eagle championship

golf courses, a 40,000-square-foot, Georgian-style clubhouse with three restaurants, 12 Har-Tru tennis courts, pool complex, croquet, guest lodge and an active social calendar.

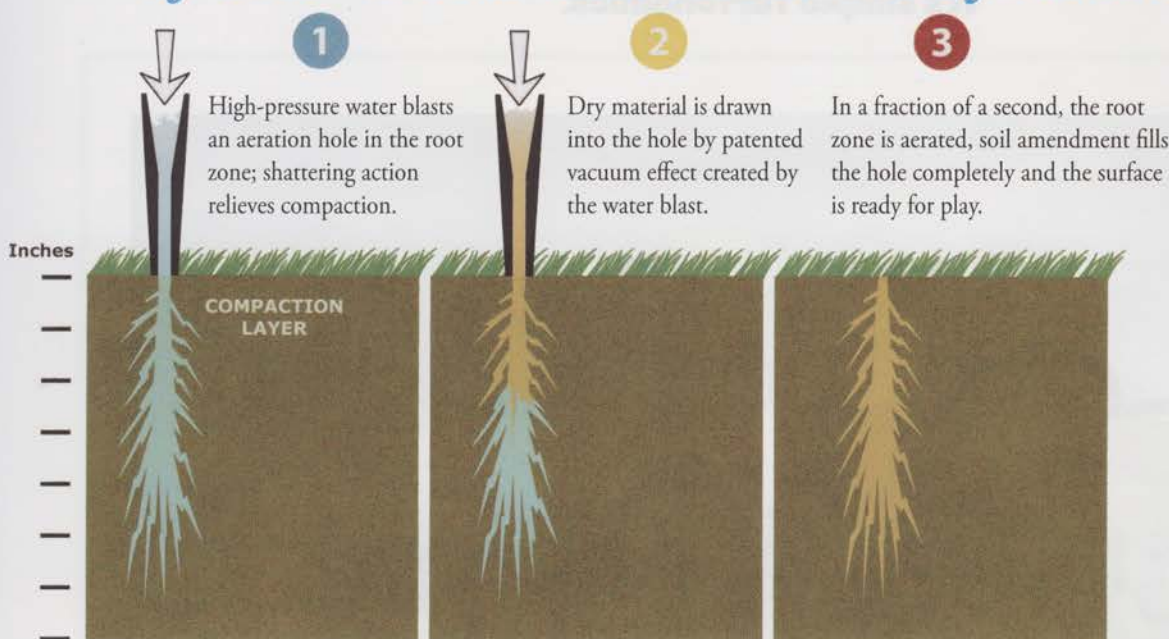
Specific details for the renovation provided by supervising course architect Jason Straka include:

- 1) 2,200 irrigation heads are being placed on the course for ultimate management control and water savings.
- 2) HDPE irrigation system is being installed to increase longevity and minimize or eliminate leaks and breakages.
- 2) Miles and miles of drainage pipe are being installed.
- 3) Celebration Bermuda, which is more shade tolerant, and drought- and disease-resistant is being planted on the tees, rough and fairways. TifEagle is being planted on the greens and TifGrand on chipping areas.
- 4) 10,500 linear feet of Geotube lake stabilization is being installed around critical lake banks.
- 5) Old greens mix was saved and is being installed on tee tops. This reduces costs and recycles materials.
- 6) Old cart paths are being removed and sent to recycling while new concrete paths and curbing are being installed.
- 7) Trees are being removed to improve turf-growing conditions, improve playability and eliminate invasive species.
- 8) Control elevations of several lakes are being lowered to increase stormwater storage volume for the golf course and surrounding development. The increased storage and lower pond elevations will help the course and surrounding development drain more efficiently too.
- 9) The golf course is being re-contoured to properly surface drain. Much of the course was too flat.
- 10) New tees are being added to offer a variety of lengths to a variety of golfer skill sets. The tees are also being enlarged to better distribute wear on the year-round club.

Editor’s Note: Course renovations have taken the lead over new course construction in recent years. We will highlight a couple of projects over the next couple of issues detailing the work being done on FGCSA members’ courses. In the next issue we will highlight the recent work done at the Rookery Marco Island.)

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The QuickFind Console intuitively helps the operator find boom and actuator switches without looking at them

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2014 FTGA Conference



Golf Agronomics continued its tradition of annually supporting the turf industry by presenting FTGA Past President Erin Wilder (center) with a \$3,000 Turf Research donation check. Presenting the check are Dale Mitchell (left) and Wesley Mitchell. Photo by Joel Jackson.



Newly elected 2014-15 FTGA Officers are (from the left): Immediate Past President Erin Wilder, President Robbie Clemenzi, Vice President John Mascaro and Secretary/Treasurer Bill Kistler. Photo by Joel Jackson.

Ralph Dain, GCSAA Field Rep for Florida speaks to a Golf BMP Certification session at the 2014 Florida Turfgrass Association (FTGA) Conference and Show last September. Photo by Joel Jackson.



Mac Carraway, FTGA Past President 2010-11 and now head of Carraway Consulting, received the 2014 Wreath of Grass Award at the 2014 FTGA Conference. Betsy McGill, executive director of the Florida Turf Producers, made the presentation. Photo by Joel Jackson.



The keynote speaker at the 2014 FTGA Conference banquet was State Senator Wilton Simpson. He strongly urged green industry members to step up and build relationships with state and local lawmakers to provide common sense and science for environmental regulations. Photo by Joel Jackson.





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Contact Brian MacCurrach at (863) 605-2388 or brian.maccurrach@bayer.com

Florida chapter earns Excellence in Government Relations Award from Golf Course Superintendents Association of America

Collaborative document for best management practices recognized as effective leadership tool by golf courses and state agencies

Contact: Craig Smith, Director, Communications and Media Relations Phone: 800-472-7878, ext. 4431 or 785-691-9197 (cell) csmith@gcsaa.org

Lawrence, Kan. (Jan. 6, 2015) -

The Florida Golf Course Superintendents Association (FGCSA) has earned the 2015 Excellence in Government Relations Award from the national association for its statewide collaboration with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to establish best management practices for golf courses. The Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) annually recognizes a chapter or superintendent for outstanding advocacy or compliance efforts in government relations.

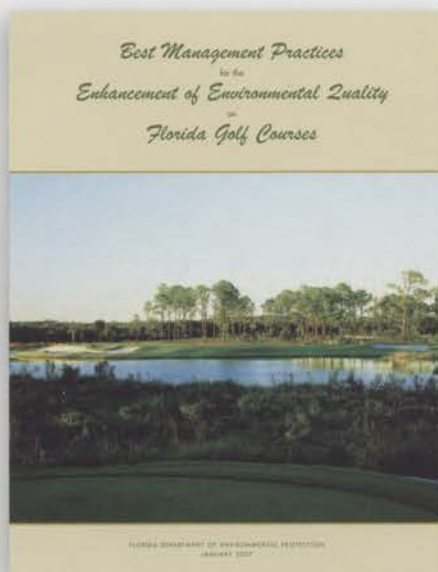
This award lauded the completion and long-term use of the publication titled *Best Management Practices for Enhancement of Environmental Quality on Florida Golf Courses*, which was first published in 2007 and has been adopted by nearly 300 of the state's more than 1,000 golf courses.

"This is a nice recognition for all the advocacy efforts on behalf of Florida golf course superintendents. What we have done can be a good foundation for a lot of other associations," said Bill Davidson, CGCS, president of the FGCSA.

The goal was to agree on attainable management practices to keep golf a profitable business in Florida while protecting state water and natural resources, according to the Clean Water Act and other state and local ordinances.

The result is a valuable document that has become an aid for all state regulatory agencies, including the Florida DEP, the Florida Department of Agriculture and the Florida Department of Community Affairs.

"The golf management industry as a whole is working toward statewide and regional best management practices so that we demonstrate environmental stewardship in all that we do," said Rhett



Evans, GCSAA chief executive officer. "Florida is clearly a leader in this regard, and we applaud their efforts."

The chapter will be formally recognized Feb. 25 at the Opening Session of the Golf Industry Show in San Antonio. The Florida chapter will also be featured in an upcoming issue of GCSAA's official monthly publication, *Golf Course Management* magazine.



Nominees were judged on how their efforts best serve the interests of the golf course superintendent profession and the golf course management industry. The GCSAA government relations committee made the selection.

The FGCSA consists of 11 local chapters and more than 1,000 individual members.

Editor's Note: It was through the cooperative efforts of the following people over a span of several years that led to the creation of this highly regarded document. Thank you Mike Thomas, FDEP Committee Chairman; Golf Industry: Design: Ken Ezell, Clifton, Ezell & Clifton; Jan Beljan, Fazio Design (at the time); David Court, FGCSA President, Geoff

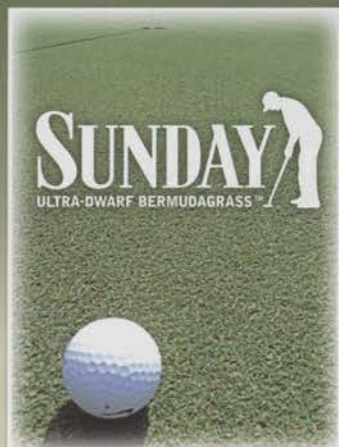
Coggan, CGCS/MG; Joel Jackson, CGCS; Greg Lyman, GCSAA; USGA's John Foy and Todd Lowe; Brad Nestor, PGA; UF/IFAS members Jerry Sartain; Bryan Unruh, Eileen Buss, Laurie Trenholm; John Cisar; Terril Nell; Green Industry Associations: Jim Spratt, FNGLA; County Governments: Kathy Meaux, Sarasota County; Bonnie Finnerman and Mark Finn, Palm Beach Co.; Amy Meese, Sarasota County. Water Management Districts: Peg McPherson and Tjerk van Veen, SFWMD; Ron Cohen, and Alison Ramoy, SFWMD; Angela Chelette, NFWMD; Other Organizations: Charles Pattison, 1000 Friends of Florida; Diana Gratwitch, Florida Association of Counties; Eric Reiter, Duda; Greg Golgowski, Harmony; Howard Jack, Joellen Zeh and Nancy Richardson, Audubon International; Jane Foos (deceased) FDACS; Rebecca O'Hara, Florida League of Cities; Richard Dedman, FDCSA; Skip Wright, FIS; Michael Eldan, MAA Task Force.

About GCSAA and the EIFG

The Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) is a leading golf organization in the United States. Its focus is on golf course management, and since 1926 GCSAA has been the top professional association for the men and women who manage golf courses in the U.S. and worldwide. From its headquarters in Lawrence, Kan., the association provides education, information and representation to nearly 18,000 members in more than 78 countries. The association's mission is to serve its members, advance their profession and enhance the enjoyment, growth and vitality of the game of golf. Visit GCSAA at www.gcsaa.org or find us on Facebook or Twitter.

The Environmental Institute for Golf is the philanthropic organization of the GCSAA. Its mission is to foster sustainability through research, awareness, education, programs and scholarships for the benefit of golf course management professionals, golf facilities and the game. Visit EIFG at www.eifg.org or find us on Facebook or Twitter.

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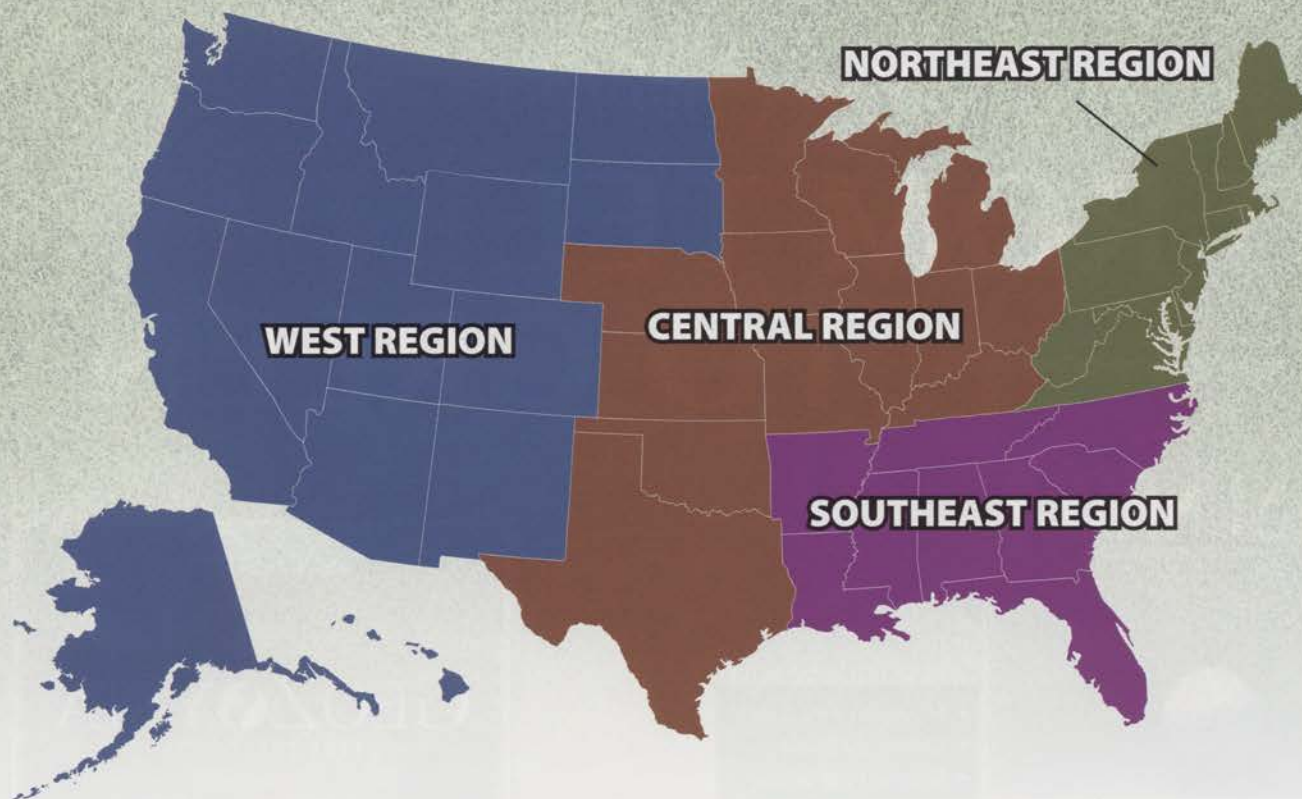


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USGA Realigns Green Section Regions

Submitted by Shelly Foy

The USGA Green Section is pleased to announce several exciting changes within the department. This realignment of duties and programs will further enhance the Green Section's service to the industry.

Darin Bevard has been promoted to the new Green Section position of Director, Championship Agronomy. He will be the lead agronomist for the U.S. Open, U.S. Women's Open, U.S. Senior Open, U.S. Amateur and U.S. Women's Amateur. In addition to his work for these specific championships, he will oversee the Green Section agronomy staff as they continue their involvement with the agronomic preparations of the other USGA championships. Darin has a wide breadth of expertise in his new role as he has been a staff agronomist in the Mid-Atlantic Region since 1996 and director of the region since 2012.

The second departmental change is the promotion of Chris Hartwiger to Director, Course Consulting Service (CCS). Chris' duties will involve overseeing the planning, direction, and execution of the USGA Course Consulting Service. He will work directly with Green Section agronomists on the development and dissemination of science-based and practical sustainable management practices solutions to help golf facilities. Chris has been an agronomist in the Southeast Region since 1995. He will continue to conduct some CCS visits in the Southeast while guiding the business plan for the overall program.

Effective December 1, 2014, the Green Section regions will be realigned, reducing the current eight regions to four, to deliver better service to our CCS customers and to improve efficiencies.

The overall changes are summarized below:

- The new Southeast Region will be a combination of the states within the current Southeast and Florida Regions and the addition of Louisiana and Arkansas. John Foy will handle the Regional Director duties with the support of agronomists Todd Lowe and Patrick O'Brien.
- The current Northeast and Mid-Atlantic Regions will combine to form the new Northeast Region. Dave Oatis will serve as the Regional Director. Elliott Dowling, Adam Moeller, and Jim Skorulski are the agronomists available to golf courses in the Northeast Region. Another agronomist position, to be based in the Glen Mills, PA office, is currently in the process to be filled.
- The current North-Central and Mid-Continent Regions will combine to form the new Central Region. Regional Director Keith Happ will be joined by John Daniels and Bob Vavrek as agronomists providing expertise to golf courses in the Central Region.
- The current Southwest and Northwest Regions will combine to form the new West Region. Pat Gross will serve as the Regional Director. Larry Gilhuly, Ty McClellan, and Brian Whitlark are agronomists in the West Region. Early in his USGA career, Ty worked as an agronomist in the Mid-Continent Region and, in recent years, focused his efforts in the Green Section's Education Program. Ty will relocate to the Southern California regional office, joining Pat Gross.

It has been nearly two decades since significant changes have been made to the Green Section regions. We look forward to continuing our history of providing excellent customer-focused consulting services to the golf facilities.

A large crowd of spectators is gathered on a grassy hillside, watching a golf tournament. In the foreground, a golfer is in a bunker, and several other people are standing on the green. A multi-story building with a balcony is visible in the background.

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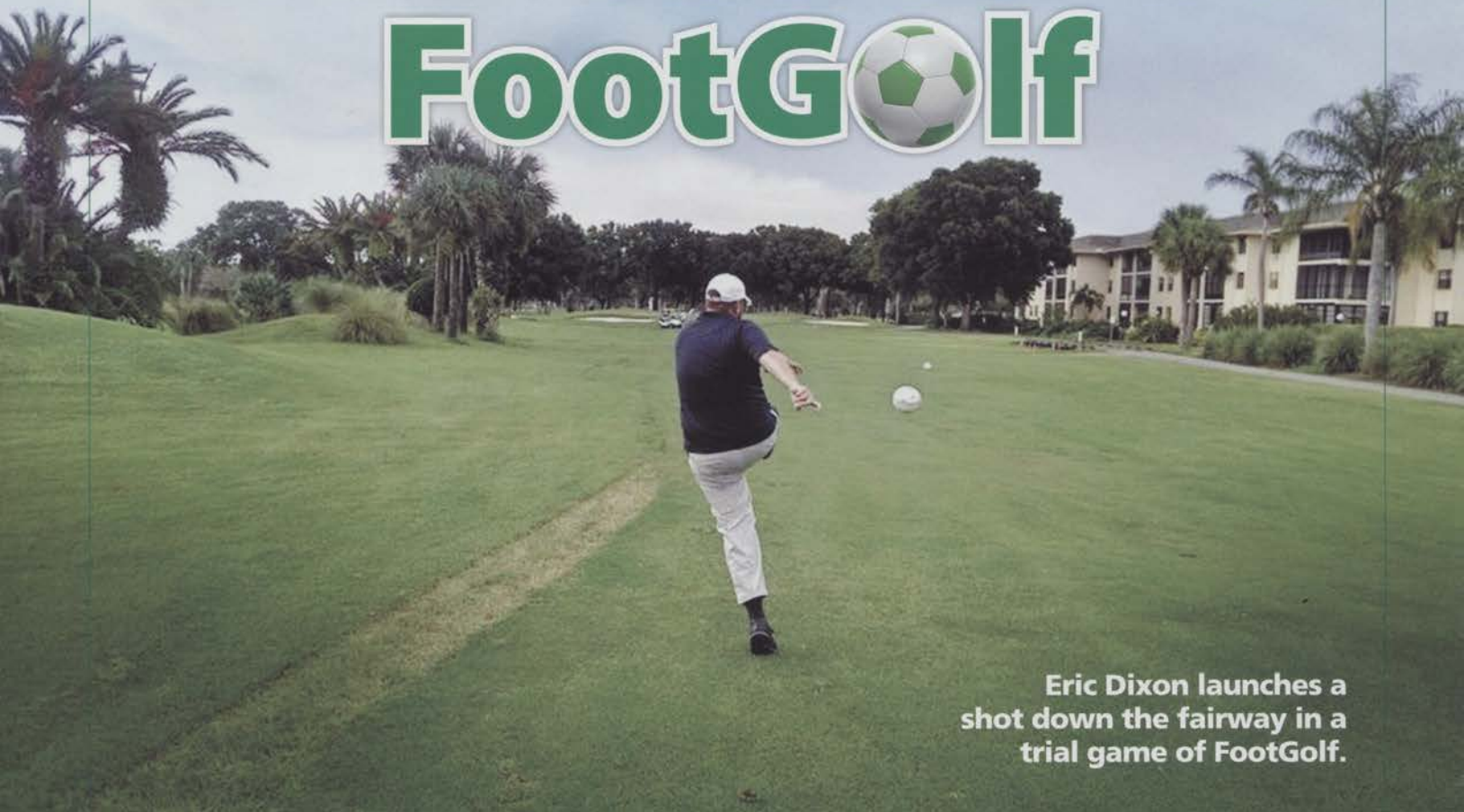
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Grow the Game: FootGolf



Eric Dixon launches a shot down the fairway in a trial game of FootGolf.

By Eric Dixon, CGCS, Chi Chi Rodriguez Golf Club

I had a chance to play FootGolf a few weeks ago, and I have to say that overall the experience was better than I anticipated. I grew up playing soccer my entire life and this seemed too good to be true. Did someone really figure out a way to incorporate my two favorite sports into one amazing game? The expectation was high and a part of me felt that I was going to be let down.

As a golf course superintendent I have read many articles talking about grow the game initiatives, and new ways to bring a younger crowd to the game we all love and make a living from, golf. I have personally installed forward sets of tees; purchased 8-inch cups for fun events, and regularly played with relaxed rules when golfing with beginners. However I was not sold on FootGolf, despite how many clubs were having success with the new sport.

I was skeptical and had my own ideas about FootGolf that seemed, in my mind, to make it almost impossible to seamlessly fuse the two sports into one. All I could think about were the headaches that would come along with course set-up, or specialized tees and greens. I was having a hard time believing from a professional standpoint that it would be worth the trouble.

Statistics show that FootGolf is growing at a rapid pace. Stories have aired on ESPN *Deportes en Espanol* and NBC Nightly News outlining the boom in the sport. There is an American FootGolf League as well as the Federation for International FootGolf, which is the FootGolf governing body. These associations set rules and promote tournaments around the world. One article I read said that the number of courses set up for FootGolf in the United

States grew from 150 to around 350 in just the last year, and is anticipated to grow to over 500 by 2015. Another claimed that one club made \$26,000 in new FootGolf revenue the first month it was available. With numbers like this and the potential to attract new people to the game of golf I decided I needed to see what all the fuss was about.

The course where I went to play FootGolf was an executive city course, and in my opinion the perfect layout for the game. The tees were basically the forward red tees or ladies tees. It had signage that indicated which tee was for FootGolf, in case someone missed the “play from the red tees to the red flags” on the specialized FootGolf scorecard. The longest hole was 217 yards, a par 5. The shortest was about 55 yards, a par 3. One hole even played over water. The specialized scorecard was

nice as it outlined the rules of FootGolf as well as some of the rules for traditional golf such as the 90-degree rule and raking the sand traps. It reminded FootGolfers to be courteous of other golfers and discussed rules for playing through.

When we checked in, soccer balls (or footballs) were available in the pro shop to use at no extra cost. The cost was \$10 to walk and \$20 to ride the course. We opted to take a golf cart, mainly to carry our supplies, but quickly realized on the first hole it was not really necessary. With only two of us playing, and not very well, our first shots went completely different directions, not very far, and we would have been better off to have walked.

The green was a small area mowed out to tee height in the rough on most holes. The flag was red to match the tee area, and the cup was a bucket 21 inches in diameter. On some holes the greens had bunkers to either side or behind them. These were bunkers already in play on the golf course. The game surprisingly played like traditional golf in regards to the hazards and set up. Next to the FootGolf greens was a top for the buckets. These lids had artificial turf on top and were used for covering the buckets when a golf tournament or special outing was taking place.

During our round I had a chance to talk to several people on the golf course including a large group of footgolfers and a few groups of traditional golfers. I was looking for feedback on the game and wanted to find out who was playing FootGolf. The large group of footgolfers were a group of guys in their mid 20's. They were playing in an eightsome, which seemed odd. I later found out this was fairly common. Each was wearing a soccer jersey, some had soccer socks, and each had brought his own soccer ball from home. They were from out of town and took the opportunity to come play FootGolf while they were visiting. In talking to them I learned they were very excited for the new game and, for most of them, it was their first time playing. They also told me that they all were golfers, as well as soccer players. I couldn't help but do the math and realized the club just made \$160 from this group alone.

The next footgolfers I encountered was a group of guys in their mid 40's. 2 were English and the others American. They were just as excited as the younger guys, and like them, it was their first time playing FootGolf. One man expressed that he couldn't wait to bring his son to play, and was teaching his son the game of golf. From these conversations I determined that this may be a great "grow-the-game" initiative after all. What better way to expose a child to the golf course, golf etiquette, and how much fun can be had than FootGolf. FootGolf is a much simpler game than traditional golf.

The last group I spoke to was a group of senior ladies who were regulars at the golf club. As expected, they had differing views on the new game and it was great to hear their opinions. FootGolf is a much faster paced game than traditional golf. Our round took an hour and forty-five minutes to play 18 holes. This was the ladies' number-one complaint. They enjoyed seeing the younger people on the golf course, and understood what it was bringing in for the club in revenue. They were not very happy with the pace of play, constantly letting

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FootGolfers play through. They also felt like FootGolfers did not follow the rules of traditional golf, although as I mentioned these were outlined on the FootGolf scorecard. Another complaint was the noise from a group like the eightsome in front of them. However at the end of the conversation they said it would not deter them from coming to the golf club and were happy to have it there.

As I have mentioned there are several things about FootGolf that will be challenges for anyone looking to incorporate this game into their golf course. I believe there is no one-size-fits-all model for how to do FootGolf, just as there is no single model for a traditional golf course. The most important difference between FootGolf and traditional golf is a fundamental difference in the two sports. Emotion! Soccer is a rowdy game and hardly a gentleman's game. In golf you are taught to be humble and respectful of your competitors. Although FootGolf is supposed to be the same, in our group – as well as other groups I watched – it is hard not to be very competitive and get excited over good shots. Yelling, hooting, and hollering are not uncommon to the game of FootGolf. This is a major concern for traditional golfers on the course.

Another critical issue is the pace of play. It takes almost half the time to play FootGolf as compared to traditional golf. This is the reason why an eightsome is not uncommon. At the course we played, FootGolf tee times were only available after noon when

most golfers had left for the day. The course was mostly vacant other than FootGolfers. Which leads to a very important question: Are FootGolfers going to drive away potential customers for traditional golf or can the two cohabit the course? I believe this answer will be different for every facility and can only be answered in time.

Some concerns from a superintendents point of view are the extra time to mow the greens, covering the holes for special golf events, and maintaining additional areas of low cut grass. Many areas that were once rough were now mowed at tee height leading to many new issues. Weed pressure was higher, insect pressure was obvious, and shade issues showed much more on the FootGolf greens than they would in the rough. This is not a playability problem for FootGolf, but the area would be unsightly for a traditional golf tournament. Also there would be an increase in budget if these areas were maintained as tees instead of rough.

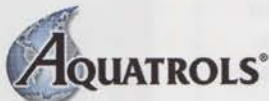
Aside from these concerns, I believe FootGolf is an excellent grow-the-game initiative, and a potential source of needed income for municipal, public, or semi-private golf clubs. The numbers don't lie. At the course I played, I talked to a manager in the cart barn, and I got a breakdown on what FootGolf has done for their club. They are averaging 130-160 FootGolf rounds per day on the weekends. Bringing in an extra \$1300 - \$2600 per day. For a course that would otherwise be empty, they are willing to take any issues that may arise for a renewed bottom line.



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FootGolf is not going to work for everyone and will not look the same at any two facilities. I believe 18 holes of FootGolf can be squeezed into nine holes at a larger facility with the addition of tee boxes. This may suit some courses better. For others, it does not seem to be worth the investment to set up a FootGolf course if numbers for traditional play are still up. There will also be the consideration of the type of golfers at the facility and whether the course is public or private. However, even if a FootGolf course would not work at your facility, I hope everyone takes the opportunity to get out and enjoy the game. This is a great family activity or an exciting way to stay in shape when walking the course. Growing the game is the most important benefit for all of us in the industry, and FootGolf seems to be very successful in that role.



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GCSAA Grassroots Ambassador Program Needs You



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

I want to make an appeal to the GCSAA members of the FGCSA. In July 2014, GCSAA launched a new program called "Grassroots Ambassadors." The concept is simple - pairing up a GCSAA member (Class A, SM, or Assistant) with a member of congress or a U.S. senator. The idea is to have our members develop meaningful relationships with their representatives so that there is a better understanding of what we do in the golf industry. We are trying to forge relationships in advance instead of waiting until we are in crisis mode over an issue such as the loss of certain chemicals, the ability to apply fertilizer, or the opportunity to irrigate as needed. If there has been dialogue between the ambassador and the representative prior to these situations, it will make it much

easier to discuss our position and forge sound, practical, and environmentally beneficial solutions. Time and again, I have heard from our representatives that we would be best served if we had a presence in their offices. The groups that come out against the golf industry are frequent visitors with them and we need to counter their doomsday messages with our own science-based and proven facts.

In the past we have been late to react or have not had any representation at the local level. Nationally through efforts like We Are Golf and National Golf Day activities, we have been able to deliver our positive message and we are having an impact. We need to continue these efforts with our representatives in their home districts and deliver a message that promotes the economic, environmental, charitable, and health and wellness benefits of golf.

In Florida we are looking for 29 ambassadors to establish relationships with our 27 congressional representatives and our two U.S. senators. To date we are about halfway there as we have ambassadors in place developing relationships with our senators and almost half of the 27 congressional representatives. This is why I am making an appeal to you in this article as well as in my travels.

We need you to help us help the golf industry. We need boots on the ground to fill the remaining positions. The benefit to the industry and the individuals who participate is immeasurable.

Rest assured we are not just throwing you out there on your own. GCSAA has training opportunities to help make you more comfortable in the role. Also, I am more than willing to participate in the visits with you. We have a strong and positive message we can report but we need individuals to help us deliver the message. It is important that the message comes from individuals who work within the districts of their representative. That is more powerful and meaningful than the message coming from someone outside the district.

I urge you to strongly consider the role of a GCSAA Grassroots Ambassador. The role you may play in protecting the way you do your job and ultimately provide for yourself or your family will be significant. Help us get out in front of issues before you find yourself without the means to conduct your business.

If the opportunity to fill one of the Grassroots Ambassador positions sounds like something you might consider, please either contact me or visit our website www.gcsaa.org and visit the Government Relations page under the Community tab on the home page. From there you will see a link to the Grassroots Ambassador program that will provide you with greater details. Be an impact individual and sign up today!!

Until next time,

Ralph Dain

GCSAA Regional Representative (FL)

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OUR ICEBERG IS MELTING



GREEN SIDE UP By JOEL JACKSON

Jim Rattigan, general manager and superintendent of the Schuylkill Country Club in Orwigsburg, PA was one of the speakers at the recent 2014 *Golfdom Magazine Summit* held at the Reunion Resort just west of Orlando this past December. The title of his presentation was "Our Iceberg is Melting: Changing and Succeeding under Any Conditions," which is also the title of a book written by John Kotter and Holger Rathgeber in 2006.

Rattigan saw great parallels

in the elements of this study of the need for golf to be adaptable to survive changes in the marketplace, including your customer base. Certainly, the headlines surrounding the current state of all facets of the golf industry are a case in point.

There have been recent forays into such revolutionary topics as the 15-inch cup and Foot Golf, which make golf purists shake their heads in disgust. Well, the purists can always find a place to play traditional golf, and I am confident that the bastions of golf history at the grand old iconic golf shrines like Augusta National, Merion, and Shinnecock Hills, etc. will live on in their traditional well-earned glory in the annals of golf.

Meanwhile, the other 80-90 percent of golf courses in the USA had better get serious about "Growing the Game" or that rate of 150 course closings per year is going to accelerate. Remember, the golf iceberg is melting and folks better do something about it or they're going to be floundering without a paddle and maybe going under.

How do you grow the game without changing the current model? Playing a round of

golf is being described by the millennial generation as too hard and too time-consuming and, sometimes, too expensive. You can buy used clubs to start out so that is the weakest of the arguments.

Then there's the issue of using a larger diameter cup on the greens. Some real serious rebels want the USGA to consider modifying the handicap system to allow for larger cups. One suggestion is to add half a stroke to the person's score when playing a larger cup. That's not likely to happen. But Rattigan revealed an interesting fact about the traditional size of the golf cup.

You have heard that the early Scots used to grab a chunk of turf not far from the hole they just finished and use it to tee up the ball. Pretty barbaric by today's standards, eh? Well, just how was the putting cup size determined? It turns out, according to Rattigan's research, that the Old Course used pieces of the building's rain gutter pipe for the holes! Not very scientific was it? It was convenient, standard and available. The Scots adapted a piece of pipe to use on the golf course.

Well, Rattigan came up with his own invention – a golf

game called Chesterfield, which is played with two cups on the green. One is the standard regulation cup and the other is an 8-inch cup. Players can opt to play either one, but must add that half a stroke to their score for the hole if they play the larger one.

Rattigan premiered the Chesterfield concept at his club during the annual Yuengling Golf Championship and Brewfest and named it after Yuengling Lord Chesterfield Ale with the permission of Richard Yuengling, president of D. G. Yuengling & Son, Inc. Players reported having fun playing the new concept and definitely noted the faster pace of play.

Doesn't that address the dilemma we find the game of golf in right now? Attracting new players, speeding up play and increasing enjoyment factor in today's hectic technoworld. There are ways for courses to try some of these new ideas and still provide a traditional golf experience for those who just want to play the grand old game.

Our iceberg is melting. You can see it shrink everyday. What are you going to do about it?

The River Ridge hole #2 runs along the banks of the St. Lucie River. Photo by Nile Young.



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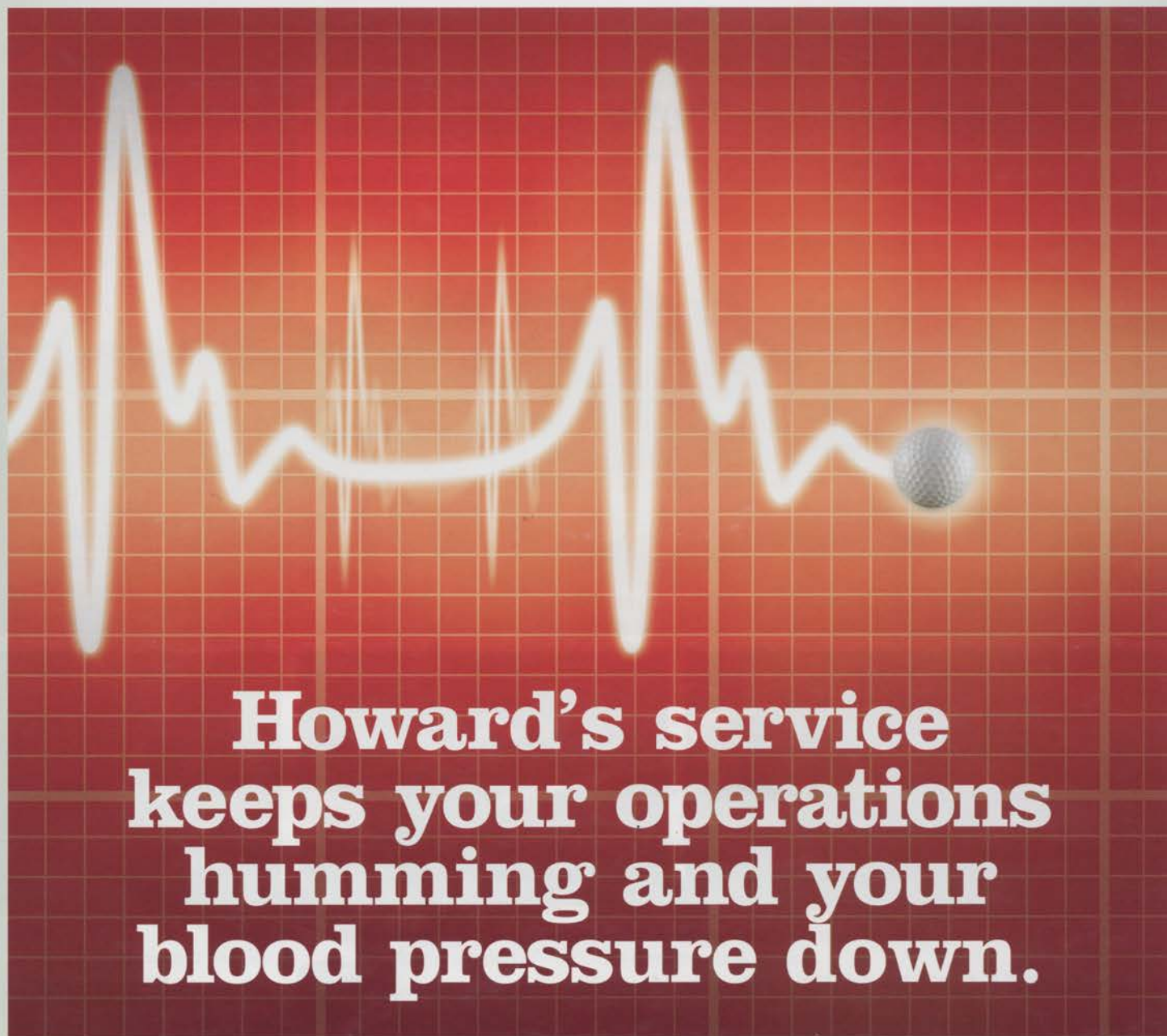
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