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The **FLORIDA**
Green

FALL 2016



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We're Setting the Stage For Future Success

by Ricky Reeves



Ricky Reeves, Miami Beach Golf Club, Miami Beach

It is an honor to serve as president of the Florida GCSA. I had no idea this is where I would eventually find myself when I first stepped forward to serve on my local board in 2005. But here I am, sitting among some of the smartest people I have ever been around. The way some questions are asked and the way they are answered is very impressive and always revealing. It is truly an honor to serve with these fantastic people. On the basis of my own experience I encourage everyone to consider getting involved with their local board. You may enjoy it.

The Florida GCSA has made tremendous strides enhancing the benefits the association offers. But unless you're a member you may not know what has been done. For example, you may not be reading all the great articles that are inside the Florida Green - unless you are borrowing one from a member perhaps.

I admit I was skeptical at first about what a new-look Florida Green was going to bring. Change is not often taken too comfortably by anyone; it takes time to adjust to new surroundings, a new assistant, a new mechanic or a new job. In order to get the best out of any new circumstances, you have to be prepared to adapt to the change. So I put my own skepticism on hold and took the new magazine at face value and I'm glad I did. I think the new layout of the Florida Green is absolutely a change for the better.

I'm sure others do as well and hopefully word is getting around among non-members too that it's not just the magazine that the association is taking forward. We are making great strides on the legislative front, with our BMP program, a new website and so much more. It is one of my hopes during my term as president that we will build our membership numbers because more people see the value the association brings to the profession.

Another value the association delivers is collaborating with researchers to get answers to issues we confront as superintendents in this part of the world. There are several new research trials being carried out over the next three years that you can read about in this issue. The Florida GCSA is always looking for research ideas. If you have one don't be afraid to let your local board members know about it.

There are also several awards that the Florida GCSA presents to worthy members that are nominated by their peers. These include the Distinguished Service Award, the Marie Roberts Award and the President's Award. I'm sure there is someone in your chapter that deserves one of these awards. To learn more about the criteria and the nomination process you can check your membership directory, visit www.floridagcsa.com or get in touch with a local board member.

I hope everyone's summer projects went off without a hitch. (Yeah, right!) This summer was a trying one, it started off dry - like, 'Oh no, another drought' - then it turned quickly in some areas to very wet. That probably delayed sod deliveries, sand deliveries and fertilization thus delaying projects.

Here in Miami Beach, we had our fair share of the summer blues. Although we don't get the rains that the courses to the west got, but still I did hear plenty of: 'Will this ever stop?' I don't know about you but, I'm ready for summer to be over and the fall season to take over.

I hope that everyone and their families fared well while Hurricane Matthew passed by. Preparation is the key to success whether it is having what you need to board up your windows for a storm, prepping for painting your house or preparing your budget for the upcoming year. The better you prep the easier the task ahead will be. We're doing all we can at the Florida GCSA to make sure we are ready for both the challenges and the opportunities ahead.

I wish all of you a successful winter season. ■



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**With special thanks to superintendents Rob Uzar and Shane Rice and everyone
at Eastpointe Country Club for hosting another wonderful event.**

Help Us Determine the Research That is Most Valuable to You



Jennifer Bryan

The mission of the Florida GCSA is to promote the golf course management profession and to unify golf course superintendents in Florida. One of the ways we advance the profession and the interests of our members is through research. Research leads to knowledge which in turn generates informed decisions and outcomes that our members can be proud of.

We have a long history of producing excellent turfgrass research in Florida and that tradition continues today. We are blessed to have some very sharp minds peering into microscopes on behalf of superintendents. The fact these researchers are so good at what they do gives us a high degree of confidence every time we commit funding to their projects.

But one of the challenges we face as an association representing the golf course maintenance profession from Tallahassee to Miami, is, well, the fact that we represent the profession from Tallahassee to Miami. There is a wide variety of growing conditions from one end of the state to the other and, at all points in between, there is a similarly wide variety in course budgets and golfer expectations. What is considered extremely important at one facility might not necessarily be the same priority at another.

Therefore, finding one research project that addresses a need for every superintendent is not always easy. There is next to nothing in golf course maintenance where a "one size fits all" approach is going to work. Instead, what we try and do at the Florida GCSA is fund a variety of research projects with the goal of finding the most relevant answers with the widest reaching benefits.

To that end, it is critical that our members make us aware of their needs. The more input we receive the more likely we can produce research really that matters. Historically, most research proposals come from the researchers themselves. Our research committee then has the job of vetting various proposals and making recommendations to the board of directors which has the final say. This works well but we think the system can work better.

What we would like to see is more superintendent-driven research. That is, more projects called for by superintendents and carried out by the researchers. Getting that ball rolling is as easy as a call or an email to someone on the board at your local chapter or the state chapter. There is no need to draft some formal submission that will take up time you don't have to spare. If there's an issue that you think needs research, simply let us know.

You can find contact details for our current board members on page three of this magazine or you can simply call or email me with a few details of your research suggestion and I can get the right person to contact you to talk it over. Our goal is to generate the research that really matters to members and their facilities. We want to hear from you.

Inside this issue of your magazine, you will find more information on the kinds of research we are currently funding on your behalf. Some of the diversity I talked about earlier in this column is clearly reflected in the range of projects you will see listed.

Your state board and association are working hard to grow the range and quality of services we provide to you. But if there is one area where we need your support to that end it is research. You already do a wonderful job helping to generate funding. Now let's make sure we are putting those dollars where they can do the most good for the most of you. Please, give us a call. ■

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Robert A. "Bob" Drake

Longtime Florida golf course superintendent Robert A. "Bob" Drake died at Riverview Hospital in Noblesville, IN on October 7 following an extended illness. He was 60 years old.

Drake began his career as a golf course superintendent at Deer Creek Golf and Country Club in Deerfield Beach. He was also the golf course superintendent of Boca-Delray Golf Course, Delray Beach, which he constructed and managed, as well as Stonebridge Golf and Country Club in Boca Raton, which hosted the LPGA Mazda Classic during his tenure as superintendent.

Drake also constructed and maintained the Weston Hills Golf and Country Club in Fort Lauderdale, which hosted the PGA Honda Classic during his time as superintendent. He was also superintendent at Golf Hammock in Sebring and also at Kiawah Island Golf Club in South Carolina. He also consulted on the rebuilt Campo de Golf Playa Grande, in the Dominican Republic, for the Robert Trent Jones company, as well as, a golf course in Taiwan. He was also involved as a consultant on several other golf course projects in Florida.

Drake was born November 1, 1955, in Okinawa, Japan to the late Dr. Marion "Bud" Drake and Caroline (Jones) Drake. He graduated from Elwood High School, IN in 1974. He attended Purdue University and transferred to Lake City Community

College in Florida, where he earned his degree in agronomy and turf management.

He is survived by his mother, Caroline Drake of Noblesville, IN, mother of his two sons, Kristy Preston Guttuso of FL, two sons, Thomas (Julie) Drake of Sebring, and Matthew Drake of Noblesville, IN, two sisters, Jeanne Jones of Fishers, IN and Julie (Larry) Weaver of Elwood, IN, brother, Greg (Patty) Drake of Kokomo, IN, and grandchildren, Cameron, Jayla, Preston, and Kaylee all of Sebring.

In lieu of flowers memorial contributions may be made to the Margaret Drake Almack Scholarship fund through the funeral home.

Omer Gerold "Jerry" Edds

Members and friends of the Palm Beach GCSA mourn the death of member and industry contributor Jerry Edds. Omer Gerold "Jerry" Edds of Lake Worth, died September 1. He was 67. Edds was the owner of Jerry's Turf Products. He is survived by his wife, Jo-Ann; children, Sheryl Kremer (Mike) of Sumter, SC, Sheila Halle of Port St. Lucie, FL and Brian Halle of Boynton Beach, FL; one brother; two sisters; and 12 grandchildren. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions can be made to St. Jude Cancer Research, 501 St. Jude Place, Memphis, TN 38105.



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Florida GCSA research committee chair John Curran accepts a \$5,000 check from the Calusa GCSA's Mark Thomas.



Jim Mendenhall from Squamata Reptiles explains snake behavior to Calusa GCSA members.

At press time the Calusa GCSA was looking forward to our third annual Golf for the Children Classic at The Verandah Club on December 9. The goal is to raise enough money to provide Christmas for 30 local kids in need. We supply gifts, food and cheer to four group homes with kids ranging from eight to 18 years of age. Thanks to Jake Wentz for serving as our host.

Our most recent event was our yellow ball tournament at Magnolia Landing. This was a revival of a fun format that we haven't played for a couple of years. Each foursome gets one yellow ball that rotates through the group hole by hole. The team score is the lowest ball plus the yellow ball score. There is enough water at Magnolia Landing that only one team managed to play all 18 without losing their yellow ball.

Fortunately our speaker on the day didn't lose anything that he brought with him. Jim Mendenhall from Squamata Reptiles gave a great talk and live demonstration with some of the snakes and animals we sometimes encounter on the golf course.

Thanks to Charlie Riger as our host superintendent for the event. The course was in fantastic shape on a gorgeous day.

Mid-September we had our pro-superintendent-supplier-and one other event at West Bay Club with Tyler Casey as our host. This event seeks to promote good relations between superintendents and other departments at their club by giving folks face time on the golf course in a fun environment.

Shortly before that we fell short in our efforts to get our hands on the Spainhour trophy in our annual challenge against the Everglades GCSA. Brad Caporini hosted a great event with great conditions despite some rain late in the day.

This year we were able to give \$5,000 to the Florida GCSA in support of turfgrass research which is always a valuable cause. Speaking of the state association, remember to mark your calendars for the BMP certification class at First Coast Technical College in St. Augustine on January 19.

Happy holidays.

-Mark Jacobs, Shell Point Golf Club.

CENTRAL FLORIDA

The Central Florida GCSA welcomes three new board members. They are David Robinson with Marriot Golf, Mitch Leininger from Shingle Creek Golf Club and Ashley Ellis of E-Z-Go/Cushman. We are also pleased to welcome our new administrator Lisa McDowell.

At press time we were looking forward to several events including the 40th Larry Kamphaus Crowfoot Open at the Villas of Grand Cypress Golf Club. We were getting ready to play the New Course, which is Jack Nicklaus' tribute and homage to the famed Old Course at St. Andrews, Scotland. The course features double greens, stone bridges and walls, gorse mounds, burns and 150 pot bunkers as deep as 12 feet. This year we offered the two-man scramble and individual play for those who would like to play their own golf ball.

-Terry Stephenson, Monarch Golf Club.

SEVEN RIVERS



Andy Jorgensen and Steve Keller with some of the toys donated by members to help families in need. Photo: Jeff Clapper

The Seven Rivers GCSA has been an active bunch the past few months. We have had great attendance at each of our monthly meetings, along with some great education being provided. We would like to thank Gene Contino at Belle Glade Country Club for hosting the August meeting, Joel Fort at Rainbow's End Golf Club for hosting the September meeting and Wes Pitts at Ocala Golf Club for hosting the October meeting.

The November meeting returned once again to Juliette Falls Golf Club for the chapter's annual Toys-4-Tots fundraising drive. Superintendent Steve Keller has hosted this event for eight years now with excellent participation from industry throughout the state.

This year was no exception as attendees brought in enough toys to fill the bed of a full-size pickup truck. These toys are donated on behalf of the Seven Rivers GCSA to local charities that help families in need. The board of directors would like to thank Steve and all those in attendance for their generosity and kindness.

-Andy Jorgensen, On Top of the World.

SUNCOAST

The Suncoast GCSA enjoyed strong support for our roundtable event in Sarasota mid-November. Of 45 attendees, 32 were either superintendents or assistant superintendents. USGA Green Section agronomist Todd Lowe laid the groundwork for discussions with an

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Michel Stevens congratulates Fall Classic winner Jimmie Murphy.



#18 Marsh Course, Amelia Island Plantation

excellent presentation on what he has seen in recent months. The group then took over with some very informative back and forth.

In addition to Todd's presence, several factors contributed to the strong superintendent and assistant superintendent turnout. We believe the 2pm to 4pm time slot was very attractive because it allowed folks to put in a solid day at work and get some education without chewing into precious family time. Of course it also helped that the event was free, which never hurts, and we are grateful to our sponsors Fred Hemming with Residex and Chester Vandenberg with Dow AgroSciences for helping make that happen.

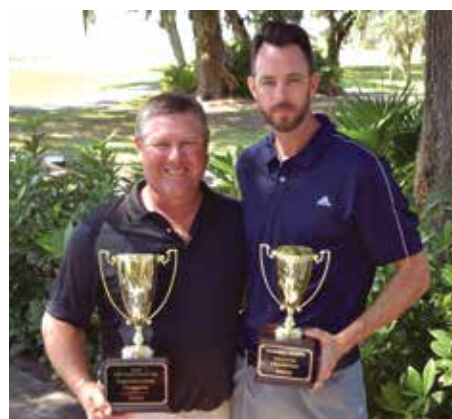
We also talked about the merits of association membership and the benefits of volunteering support. I'm pleased to say that as a result of that discussion we have two folks who will attend our next board meeting to learn more about what is involved in serving as an association director.

Mid-September we had 62 players at our pro-super-supplier tournament at Longboat Key Club. John Reilly presented excellent conditions and the staff at the club were great to work with.

At press time we were getting ready for our Cayman ball night golf event at Bird Bay Executive Golf Course to raise money for the Suncoast GCSA benevolence fund. We are grateful to Bird Bay and to our sponsors for this event including Trigon Turf Sciences, Harrell's, Residex and WescoTurf.

-Nick Kearns, The Oaks Club.

NORTH FLORIDA



Jimmie Murphy and Doug Andrade with their trophies from the Fall Classic.



Jack Harrell, III with Butch Singo award winner Brent Holmes.

The North Florida GCSA enjoyed a wonderful day for the Golfing for ALS tournament at Marsh Landing. Thanks to Tim Lyons for arranging for the golf course to be made available at no charge. Also thanks to Chris McRae with Beard

Equipment for sponsoring lunch on the day. The association raised close to \$3,900 and \$3,000 was given to Todd McKibben, from Palencia Golf Club, and his family to help in his battle with illness. The balance was donated to the Florida chapter of the ALS Association.

Congratulations to two big winners from the Fall Classic at Amelia Island Plantation in October. First, Brent Holmes of Harrell's received the Butch Singo award at our annual reception by the beach. Fittingly, the award was presented by Rip Phillips, who was close to Butch Singo for many years and who was a member of the same freshman class at Lake City Community College with Holmes.

Phillips is a North Florida GCSA past-president and former superintendent now with Golf Specialties. He described Singo as a "man of high morals, solid character, who was committed to his family and his God." Those traits were celebrated in the award to Holmes, he said, adding that Holmes is "fair and honest" in business "whether that results in a sale of his products or not."

The other big winner was Jimmie Murphy from Stone Creek Golf Club, who shot 75 to be the low superintendent on the Ocean Links course. That round earned him a place on the state team. Doug Andrade of Golf Specialties was low vendor with a round of 70. Alan Brown from Timuquana Country Club shot a round of 80 to win the Crash Cup as the low North Florida GCSA superintendent member.

THE SOUTH FLORIDA GCSA MISSING AND EXPLOITED CHILDREN'S 2016 BENEFIT TOURNAMENT



The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children Greatly appreciates the support of sponsors, volunteers and participants at the 32nd annual tournament. Many thanks also to host superintendent Todd Ingram, his staff and everyone at Fort Lauderdale Country Club for an outstanding job.

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



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SOUTH FLORIDA



South Florida GCSA's Billy Entwistle, Jr., Joseph Pantaleo and Bryan Singleton presented a check for \$25,000 to Nancy McBride from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children.



South Florida GCSA board members Ricky Reeves, Bryan Singleton and Joseph Pantaleo with one of the Yeti cup giveaways and volunteer Bradley Jacklin.

for this charity over the history of the event. We commend Nancy McBride and her staff for doing an excellent job assisting many South Florida families

Special thanks to Fort Lauderdale Country Club and staff for their outstanding service and hospitality, especially superintendent Todd

Ingram, golf professional Mark Van Dyck, club manager Mike O'Brien and food and beverage manager Mia Sanabria.

In keeping with the Florida GCSA membership committee's effort to get superintendents to rejoin and attend meetings, the South Florida GCSA board will be riding to courses with our vendors and visiting superintendents to personally invite them to become active.

Finally, we wish Paul Ludwig of Fisher Island Country Club a continued recovery from an injury sustained at work. In addition, get well wishes go out to Tom McGuire of the Carolina Club who is recovering from illness. We would also like to send a shout out to all across the state who have come across tough times. May all of your spirits be picked up speedily.

-Billy Entwistle, Jr., Flamingo Lakes Country Club

The South Florida GCSA would like to congratulate our own Ricky Reeves from Miami Beach Country Club on being elected president of the Florida GCSA. We know he will do a great job for the entire state.

Early September we had a dual meeting with the Palm Beach GCSA. The meeting was hosted by Kevin Fipps from Jacaranda Country Club and was well attended by both chapters. A seminar presented by Travis Shaddox, Ph.D. assistant professor at University of Florida/IFAS Ft. Lauderdale Research and Education Center, on minor elements in fertilizer had the interest of all attendees.

At the end of the seminar, Roly Molina presented the University of Florida/Otto Schmeisser Turfgrass Research Green with a check for \$18,000. A huge thanks goes out to Roly for getting the South

Florida GCSA Turf Expo going again last March and helping make it so successful. Dr. Shaddox was very appreciative of the donation and excited to get working on upcoming research at the Otto Schmeisser Research Green.

After a great lunch, the two chapters hit the course for the annual matches to see who would take home the Jimmy Blackledge trophy. This year the Palm Beach team had that honor winning five matches to four. Congratulations.

Late October we had a great turnout for our 32nd annual golf tournament to support the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children at Fort Lauderdale Country Club. There were 144 players across 36 teams and we were able to present a check for \$25,000 to help make our world a safer place for children to live. We have now raised about \$635,000

The 21st Annual Florida GCSA Golf Team Championship and Scramble



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The Florida GCSA is grateful for the generous support of our sponsors for the 21st annual golf team championship and scramble at Reunion Resort. Our sponsors also helped us present a successful roundtable discussion and reception on the eve of the golf championship. Thanks also to everyone who attended and joined in the discussion.



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PALM BEACH



\$10,000 gift: Jack Barrett, Bobby Hendel and Steve Rockoff all from The First Tee of the Palm Beaches, with Palm Beach GCSA vice-president John Spiwak, Ryan Kelly (superintendent) and Dick Sheehan, from The First Tee of the Palm Beaches, Palm Beach GCSA president Dan Elchert, Mark Reid from The Breakers and The First Tee of the Palm Beaches, and Carl Mistretta from The First Tee of the Palm Beaches.

The Palm Beach GCSA and South Florida GCSA enjoyed a joint meeting early September at Jacaranda Country Club. Kevin Fipps was the host superintendent and the education was provided by Travis Shaddox, Ph.D., University of Florida. Travis provided great insight into his recent research findings on the use of iron, manganese and magnesium on Tifeagle bermudagrass.

In the golf event, after lunch, the Palm Beach team walked away victorious, returning the Blackledge Trophy to our chapter with a 5-4 win. Ryan Swilley, Alex Elchert, Steve Morgan, Matt Claunch and Robert Anderson were match winners for the Palm Beach GCSA. Thank you to the South Florida GCSA on providing us with a great day of education and golf.

We proudly donated \$5,000 to the Environmental Institute for Golf, which elevated us to the Executive Club giving level. That level recognizes lifetime donations between \$25,000 and \$49,999.

With the pledge, we also renewed our Platinum Tee Club status within the EIFG's annual giving program. That program recognizes organizations that give \$5,000 or more annually to the EIFG which we

have supported since 1997.

In October, we retained the Cavanaugh/Wagner Cup in our annual challenge against the Treasure Coast GCSA at Admirals Cove Country Club. Thanks to Blair Kirby for hosting a great event. At this event we presented The First Tee of Palm Beach County with a check for \$10,000. This is a credit to our members and a great investment in the future of the game and our community.

Congratulations to our talented players who won the state team championship – for an amazing fifth year in a row – at Reunion Resort this summer. We are very proud of Jason Bagwell, Steve Bernard, Declan Freswick, Steve Wright, CGCS and Deron Zendt. (See report page 20) Deron also won the state individual championship for a seventh time and the fourth time in succession.

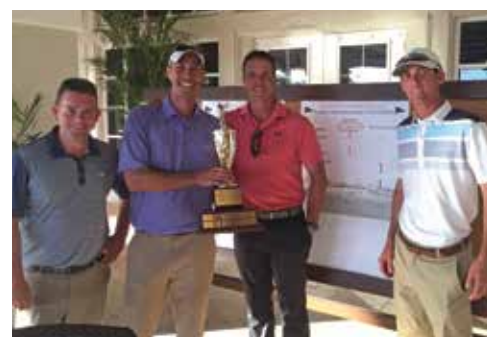
At press time we were looking forward to a chapter meeting on November 17 at Boca Dunes Country Club hosted by Greg Redshaw and our annual Toys for Tots golf only event at Atlantis Country Club on December 8 with Steve Yager hosting. Thank you Greg, Steve and Blair for having us.



GCSAA Director, Raphael Barajas, CGCS, right, accepts a check for \$5,000 for the Environmental Institute for Golf from, left to right, Dan Elchert, president; Ryan Swilley, director; Robert Anderson, secretary; and Nate Watkin, director.



Alex Elchert, Matt Claunch, Steve Morgan, Robert Anderson, Ryan Swilley and Dan Elchert with the Blackledge trophy after the Palm Beach GCSA beat the South Florida GCSA 5-4.



Brian Birney, Brett Sanderson, Ryan Swilley and Dan Elchert with the Cavanaugh/Wagner Cup.

Did you know that the Palm Beach GCSA is on Facebook and Twitter? Check us out and stay connected. Thank you for your continued support of the Palm Beach GCSA and we look forward to seeing you at our upcoming events.

-Dan Elchert, Woodfield Country Club.

RIDGE



Adam Ellison, superintendent at Grasslands on the left, Adam Varney with Aerification Plus

We are looking forward to one of our most important events on the calendar with our annual member-vendor day at Lone Palm Golf Club on January 24. We are very grateful for the loyal support of our vendors and this event is one chance we have to show our appreciation. Mike Caudill is our host superintendent.

The Ridge GCSA chapter continued to have great success this past May hosting over 100 players at the 25th annual Jack Harrell Sr. Ridge Invitational. The par 3 format is a nice change of pace and gives players an opportunity to win a cash prize on every hole. This year we would like to congratulate Adam Varney with Aerification Plus for his ace and award him with a \$5,000 check for his stroke on the 13th hole at Grasslands Golf and Country Club.

Tournament proceeds help support The First Tee of Lakeland which in turn provides a fun atmosphere and a much needed introduction of golf into the lives of today's youth. They are our future.

We would also like to thank Dave Levin and the County Club of Winter Haven for hosting our most recent meeting this past August. More than 30 attendees came out to what could be considered one of the most anticipated meetings of this year. Not only did attendees learn the basics of skin cancer prevention and protection courtesy of Florida Dermatology, they were also

able to enjoy an awesome round of golf following Dave's recent renovation.

The Ridge GCSA board is striving not only to provide valuable industry education but also personal wellness and development information at our chapter meetings.

Thank you to all the vendors who participated in the "Bring a Superintendent" concept we have adopted over this past year.

-Mike Giddens, YMCA Par 3, The First Tee

TREASURE COAST



John Curran presents Florida GCSA president Ricky Reeves with a \$10,000 donation from the Treasure Coast GCSA to support turfgrass research.

EVERGLADES



Everglades GCSA president Stuart Bothe with the Spainhour trophy.

The joint meeting between Everglades GCSA and Calusa GCSA in August was a great event despite some rain. A big thank you to Old Corkscrew Golf Club and Brad Caporini and his entire team for their work in hosting us. The golf course was in fantastic shape and to everyone's surprise there were no cart-path-only holes that day.

The rain held off for most of the day before opening up over the last four holes. Congratulations to the players who represented the Everglades on defeating our Calusa colleagues 8½ to 2½. So we retain the Spainhour trophy for another year. Well done team.

Congratulations also to Bryce Koch from Cypress Lake Country Club on winning the Florida Turfgrass Association stroke play event at the Copperhead course at Innisbrook Resort. Bryce shot a 77 to win by one shot and qualified for the Florida GCSA team to compete in the national championship in Orlando in February.

I would like to thank Sam Mueller and his team at Vasari Country Club for providing a great golf course for our vendor appreciation event early October. The golf course was in awesome shape. I truly appreciate everyone who attended in helping us thank all of our affiliate members for their continued commitment and generosity to our association. It was truly a successful event for all participants.

I had the pleasure of hosting our pro-superintendent and pro-vendor event at Vanderbilt Country Club at the end of October. The relationship between the golf course superintendent and the golf professional are vital to the success of a club, and this event is a great way to strengthen that bond. We had 90 players which was the largest field for this event in 10 years. Many thanks to Brian Bowles from ShowTurf who was our presenting sponsor for the fifth year.

Jake Sherwin from Florida Gulf Coast University shot a wonderful round of 66 to win the pro division and also won the pro-vendor competition with partner Steve Spaugh from G to Z Turf Services and Southeast Partners. Low pro-super winners were Phil Murray and Frank Tropfenbaum from Stonebridge Country Club.

Thanks also to the 50 people who turned out for our crew golf tournament at Old Corkscrew early November. Winners after scorecard playoff were Lance Allen, Club Care; Matt Fancher, Pinestraw of South Florida; Cory McDonough, Kensington Country Club; and Bryce Koch, Cypress Lake Country Club.

Assistant superintendents received some great education recently at Olde Florida Golf Club thanks to our host Darren Davis, CGCS and fellow speakers Tim Hiers, CGCS and Delphine Tseng from the Audubon International. Each presented

topics about the Audubon certification program for golf courses with facts on how to achieve this status and the different classifications of being certified. Nine holes of golf followed on the beautiful Olde Florida Course with many balls being donated to the Olde Florida landscape. Billy Gamble of Wesco Turf was the presenting sponsor for the seventh year.

Finally, we are proud of the fact that our association was able to give \$10,000 to promote research projects through the Florida GCSA. Ongoing turfgrass research is critical to our success and kudos to our members for doing their part.

Merry Christmas everyone.

-Stuart Bothe, Vanderbilt Country Club. ■



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Association Better Off THANKS TO E.D. BRYAN

The Florida GCSA board of directors has recognized executive director Jennifer Bryan for 10 years of service to the association. The directors made a small presentation to Bryan at a recent board meeting to acknowledge the milestone but also the caliber of her work.

"It's quite staggering what she has achieved," says immediate past-president David Dore-Smith from Copper Leaf Golf Club in Bonita Springs. "She is the pivot around which the whole chapter revolves and she has very quietly and very creatively pulled us all together as a state association. We are no longer 11 disparate local chapters just doing our own thing. It's a much more collaborative effort now that benefits everyone."

Dore-Smith says Bryan's administrative and leadership skills are apparent at board meetings, in the performance of committees and in the improved health of the association finances. "Everyone looks to Jennifer to make sure everything is running as it should be, that everyone is fulfilling their role," he says. "We've come a long way in recent years but we would not be near as well off if not for Jennifer."

Current president Ricky Reeves from Miami Beach Golf Club in Miami Beach concurs with Dore-Smith's impressions. "Jennifer has certainly laid the groundwork for our officers and directors to be much more effective in moving things forward," he says. "Because she does such a good job of maintaining our records and keeping everything on track, we, as directors, can devote more time and energy onto what's next for the association."

Kevin Sunderman from Isla Del Sol Yacht and Country Club in St. Petersburg was on the board for much of Bryan's time with the association. He was president in 2013-14. He says Bryan began making a strong impression from the time she was hired "for what was largely a clerical role" as association manager. She became executive director in August of 2014.

"It was such a logical choice to promote Jennifer at that point," Sunderman says. "Because she had already done so much and was so familiar with duties beyond her job description. Whatever it was that needed doing she made sure it was taken care of without having to be asked. That's dedication."

Sunderman credits Bryan with freeing the board to transform



Florida GCSA's immediate past-president David Dore-Smith with executive director Jennifer Bryan after a presentation to mark her 10th anniversary with the association.

the Florida GCSA into a "more responsive, more proactive association." "She has been instrumental in the evolution of the state association as we know it," he says. "None of what we have been able to achieve in recent years would have been possible without Jennifer. She is always full of great ideas. She's extremely intelligent, diligent, just as loyal and always very even and calm in her demeanor."

In a report this year's winter issue of The Florida Green Sunderman summed up where the association was at the time of Bryan's promotion. "We needed to shift the focus away from the status quo. We had to re-brand ourselves as an association and give members a better idea of the value and services we could offer. We had to shift the culture and

provide more benefit, otherwise, why be in business. Jennifer has been instrumental in turning things around."

Reeves, Sunderman and Dore-Smith all make the point that they are continually impressed by the fact that Bryan has achieved what she has as a "one person office." "I'm always amazed by what she accomplishes as a single staff member," Reeves says. Dore-Smith points out that Bryan also runs the annual Florida GCSA reception at the Golf Industry Show which can have as many as 1,000 attendees. "It can be a huge undertaking but she gets it done, all on her own," he says.

Dore-Smith says Bryan's efforts to travel the state and present a face for the state association at local chapter events has promoted "a greater sense of unity." "With that work and the changes we've made to some of our Florida GCSA events and with the website and the magazine, and so on, I think there's more of a feeling of connection. More people are getting to know more people from other parts of the state and that's a great thing."

Sunderman says Bryan has steered the association's adoption of new technologies for database management and communications. "She's really brought us into the 21st century," he says. "Her contribution has been huge. I sincerely hope she is with us for another 10 years and then some." ■

GCSAA Offers Members MORE THAN THEY REALIZE

Craig Weyandt first stepped into a GCSAA chapter delegates meeting in the mid-'90s. It was a tumultuous time at the national association with serious questions swirling around its direction and its leadership. No one would deny that GCSAA has come a long way since. But Weyandt wonders whether today's members appreciate just how far.

Weyandt, from The Moorings Yacht and Country Club in Vero Beach, first attended a delegates meeting for the Treasure Coast GCSA. In October, he went back to GCSAA headquarters in Lawrence, KS as the delegate for the Florida GCSA.

"I'm fortunate enough to have been involved for a long time and can remember when we formed the chapter affiliation agreement between GCSAA and the chapters," he says. "It was really important that we united. With what we needed to achieve as a profession we couldn't have different by-laws and be pushing in different directions. The philosophy was 'so goes the nation, so goes the local chapter.' And that's what it needed to be."

One of the primary goals back then was to elevate the standing of the profession. "We wanted the same recognition as the PGA of America," Weyandt says. "We always wanted our voice up there as big and as bright as what they had it. But we didn't have the marketing power; we didn't have the history. I think the process has been a lot slower than what the members wanted but it's a lot better than what it was before."

Perhaps more importantly, he is convinced too many members don't make the most of the full range of services. "Most superintendents don't use their benefits of GCSAA," he says frankly. "If you were to ask any member when was the last time they called (GCSAA) headquarters...well, let's just say it's a membership they are paying for that I don't think they take full advantage of."

That puzzles Weyandt. "I mean it really is the easiest place in the world to call," he says. "I memorized the number probably 20 years ago and it hasn't changed once, it's still the same number. Two to three rings is all it ever takes to get a live person on the phone, not a recording. I like that. I don't want to talk to a computer, I want to talk to someone who can help me get where I want to go."

Weyandt believes many superintendents only have a cursory understanding of the services GCSAA offers. "I bet if you took the average member and sat them down in front of a computer and said 'Did you know this is here?' they would be surprised at what they'd find," he says. "There is a whole lot more than I what I believe they know. Every time I get on I find something new. If you are having a battle on a local government front with fertilizer laws, the facts and information are there to help you defend the green industry. If you need help with resume writing, or job hunting, there are so many tools that GCSAA has."

Some of the onus for the gap in what's offered and how much it is under-used falls on GCSAA, Weyandt says. "But their communication has improved a lot," he says. "Ultimately though, every member has the ability to know as much as they want to know. All of these tools are available even if you are an introvert. You don't need to socially engage, you don't need to physically engage. It's still there for you and you can still improve your career, improve your profession, be more knowledgeable, just by using what you are already paying for. I recommend starting at www.gcsaa.org."



Craig Weyandt

Key Points from the Delegates Meeting

Membership engagement and growth, advocacy efforts and an upcoming best management practices guide were among key topics at GCSAA's 2016 chapter delegates meeting. The two-day meeting in Kansas City, MO and at GCSAA headquarters in Lawrence, KS opened with updates from GCSAA president Peter J. Grass, CGCS, and chief executive officer Rhett Evans.

Delegates heard of GCSAA's plans to increase membership and member engagement across all classifications. Contact with new members will increase, with personalized messages sent at regular intervals after joining. There will also be focused efforts on moving Class B members up to Class A, creating new member packets for the equipment manager (EM) class, and strengthening ties between student members and local chapters.

Delegates were told that the Grassroots Ambassadors program continues to grow, with government affairs efforts currently focused on the issues of H-2B, Mega 16 initiative, WOTUS and the overtime pay rule. Discussions were also held on participation in the 10th anniversary of National Golf Day in 2017 and options for expanding GCSAA advocacy efforts.

Delegates also got a sneak peek at GCSAA's BMP planning guide and template, which will be launched at the 2017 Golf Industry Show in Orlando. The tool will provide a roadmap for golf-centric organizations at the state level to develop and implement BMP programs. The goal is to have BMPs for all 50 states by 2020. ■

Zendt Extends Streak WITH SUB-PAR ROUND

Deron Zendt's string of consecutive Florida GCSA golf championships now stands at four after he fired a one-under par 71 on the Watson course at Reunion Resort to beat a strong field in this year's championship. Zendt, from Banyan Golf Club in West Palm Beach, has now won the title in seven of the past nine years. He missed out in 2010 and 2012 when fellow Palm Beach GCSA member Steve Bernard took home the trophy.

Both Zendt and Bernard – who also won the championship way back in 2003 – were also on the Palm Beach GCSA team that claimed the state team championship. They teamed with Steve Wright, CGCS from Pine Tree Golf Club and Jason Bagwell and Declan Freswick, both from Gleneagles Country Club, to finish 14 shots clear of their nearest rivals from the Everglades GCSA. It was the fifth year in a row the team title has gone to the Palm Beach GCSA.

Scott Corwin from Vinoy Golf Resort and Luke Little of E-Z-GO/Cushman won the two-man scramble.



Deron Zendt from Banyan Golf Club retained the Florida GCSA championship.

The golf championship followed a reception and panel discussion the night before on the subject of course renovations with an emphasis on roles of the superintendent and the golf course architect. Panelists included Kipp Schulties of Kipp Schulties Golf Design, Jason Straka of Fry/Straka Global Design, Stuart Bothe from Vanderbilt Country Club and Nick Kearns from The Oaks Club.

Bothe completed a \$2.4-million, 18-hole renovation at Vanderbilt Country Club in November, 2015 with Schulties as the architect. Kearns and Straka oversaw a \$6.3-million renovation at The Oaks Club's Heron Course that wrapped up at the same time.

Florida GCSA executive director Jennifer Bryan says she was encouraged by the strong turnout for the reception in only its second year. "Every seat at the tables was full and there were almost as many people standing," she says. "That's a big increase on the previous year and a good sign that the format was something members are interested in. The chance to socialize, network and join in the discussion on a topic that is relevant to every superintendent was clearly very appealing."

Wright, who also serves as the Florida GCSA golf committee chairman, made special mention of the many sponsors who supported both the reception and the golf championship. He also singled out host superintendent Robert Guerra and his staff for preparing the golf course in such good condition and thanked Jake Etherton, PGA and his golf staff. ■



Scott Corwin from Vinoy Golf Resort and Luke Little of E-Z-GO/Cushman won the scramble event.



Jason Bagwell, Steve Wright, CGCS, Declan Freswick, Steve Bernard and Deron Zendt carried the Palm Beach GCSA to victory in the team championship.



David Dore-Smith, CGCS introduces panelists Stuart Bothe, Kipp Schulties, Jason Straka and Nick Kearns.

GOLF RESULTS

Championship Gross

- 1 - Deron Zendt, Banyan Golf Club 71
- 2 - Steve Bernard, Adios Golf Club 75
- 3 - Bryce Koch, Cypress Lake Country Club 77*

*Won on scorecard playoff

Championship Net

- 1 - Mike Stevens, Billy Casper Golf 78-12-66
- 2 - Mike Gay, Tuscowilla Golf Club 84-12-72
- 3 - John Lammrsh, LPGA International 77-5-72

Team Championship

Gross

- 302 - Palm Beach GCSA
- Jason Bagwell, Gleneagles Country Club
- Steve Bernard, Adios Golf Club
- Declan Freswick, Gleneagles Country Club
- Steve Wright, CGCS Pine Tree Golf Club
- Deron Zendt, Banyan Golf Club

Net

- 296 - North Florida GCSA
- Alan Brown, Timuquana Country Club
- John Lammrsh, LPGA International
- David Hillhouse, Fernandina Golf Club
- Mike Stevens, Billy Casper Golf

Scramble

- 1 Scott Corwin, Vinoy Golf Resort 65
- Luke Little, E-Z-GO/Cushman
- 2 Ken Arsenault, Wesco Turf 66
- Paul Hoffman, Wesco Turf

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KNOCKED DOWN, KNOCKED BACK AND KNOCKED OUT

Roly Rises Despite it all

By Trent Bouts

Rolando “Roly” Molina descends from hardy Cuban stock. His grandmother and his father, barely into his teens, stowed away in the hull of a ship to get here in 1963. A year later, his grandfather, an anti-Castro rebel marked for execution, escaped under cover of darkness by commandeering the very boat his captors ordered him to repair.

The courage and resolve embedded in those genes would prove essential to Molina’s own survival in the family’s new homeland. The welcome wasn’t exactly universal. At one point he was forced to transfer elementary schools because of “ignorance and racism” – from a teacher.

Resentment of the Cuban influx heightened in 1980 with the Mariel Boatlift when 125,000 exiles – some ejected from prisons and mental institutions – poured into the U.S. in a matter of months. Molina was 10 at the time and growing up in Dania north of Miami. He wasn’t on the wrong side of the tracks, but was close enough to it – “about 200 yards” – that many of his friends were.

“They were mostly African American,” he recalls. “They knew what it was like to live with the hostility so I had more in common with them. Being Hispanic in south Florida was tough. You were constantly having to prove yourself, and prove yourself, and prove yourself.”

Today, Molina works close to where he spent the latter, better, part of his childhood with his mother’s parents in Hollywood, FL. That virtual stone’s throw couldn’t be in starker contrast to how far he has come in his life.

The one-time wanna-be golf pro, who waited tables and pressure washed houses to make ends meet, is golf course superintendent responsible for 36 holes at the county-owned Country Club of Miami. He is a past-president of the South Florida Golf Course Superintendents Association and a director of the Florida GCSA.

Time and again he has defied the odds, and the omens, to make it in an industry that seemed all too ready show him the door.

His DNA, from both sides of the family, certainly helped. His mother’s American-born father was a service repairman for Sear’s “forever.” He was also a pastor, who was religious in his habits as well as his faith. “Watching him get up every morning, put on his uniform, eat breakfast and walk out that door, he showed me a work ethic,” Molina says.

An older Cuban colleague, Moises Perez, who was on the crew at two facilities where Molina would work, suspected the hand of a Babalawo, or spiritual sage, because good things kept happening after the young guy came along. “He thought I had a witch doctor,” Molina smiles.

From his perspective, Molina credits being “a little (self-) abusive and OCD at the same time.” “I can get caught up in something very easily,” he says. Once he signed for a UPS parts delivery at 5pm and stayed until 11pm “changing out reels and things like that” so his 70-plus-year-old mechanic wouldn’t have to.

Roly Molina oversees 36 holes at the Country Club of Miami.



“I wanted to show off my golf course. To have my peers say the golf course was in wonderful condition and to expose myself to their critiques was a good thing. It brought validation to what I was doing, to my management style, my thoughts and my keys on how to grow turf and kill weeds, and how to aesthetically put together a facility.”

Roly Molina has made up in experience and dedication what he never gained in a turf school.

Ultimately though, he says, there was perhaps nothing more valuable on his journey than simple opportunity. He made that point in his first president’s address to South Florida GCSA members.

“There could be somebody on your staff that is me,” he said back then. “They could be in this position right now if you give them the same attention that you give your golf course. If you nurture, cultivate them and give them the right direction. They could be here if you give them the instruction and positivity that they need so they can believe it too.”

That is a powerful message coming from where Molina does. Not just for the significant percentage of Hispanic workers in Florida golf, but for anyone who thinks they might never reach further than a bunker rake or a weedeater. “It helps so much when somebody has faith in your abilities,” he says. “When they put you in a position to do well. Or recommend you. Or talk to you when you’re willing to come up and be in the association.”

Molina had some of those people – those willing to invest some belief - and it’s just as well. He needed the help.

For a long time he thought a dew whip loaded on a mower was a pointer to help keep the driver straight. The first time he mowed greens he left off the gas cap. “The mechanic read me the riot act,” Molina laughs. “I thought my golf career was ended right there. But they kept me on. That’s a running theme throughout my career: I’ve been able and allowed to fail or make mistakes and continue.”

Once, while mowing the driving range the deck mower spat a ball into a retaining post. The rebound struck Molina’s left eye knocking him out cold. The blow detached the macula from the retina

reducing his vision to 20/70 and creating a permanent blind spot.

Reassigned to the pro shop, Molina arranged his work schedule around television coverage of the Ryder Cup, being played in Europe. On the eve of play, he was asked to change his hours. He declined. In rapid succession that invitation was upgraded to a request and then an order. Molina handed over his keys. “I think I had already made up my mind with regard to not wanting to be there any more given the structure of management that they had,” he says.

It was at that point that Molina found himself, now nearing 30, taking odd jobs wherever he could.

It wasn’t the first time he and golf had failed to find an accord. Years before he approached Buddy Alexander at the University of Florida looking to walk-on to the golf team. “I wanted to make a professional career out of it,” Molina says. “I was known among my friends for playing good golf. I’d played in high school. I thought I could keep playing. You have your aspirations...”

But the coach told the kid he was one of 15 competing for the last slot and he had the highest handicap (four). Molina went on his way.

Having secured a degree in general arts from Santa Fe Community College in Gainesville, Molina was in the early stages of pursuing another in the relatively new field of Health and Human Services when his grandfather, the Sears repairman, died. He went home to Hollywood to help take care of the family property and never made it back to school. He took a job negotiating payment of hospital bills through Medicaid and social security for indigent patients.

That work entailed some networking through golf and eventually a regular playing partner convinced Molina that he needed to pursue the game as a career after all. Responding to a newspaper ad from Arrowhead Golf Course (now Davie Country Club) Molina “went from \$500 a week to \$5.25 an hour.” “It was quite a change,” he says, of planting impatiens and weeding beds around the clubhouse. “But I got free golf and that was the whole point of it. I played every day.”

He tried to qualify for several USGA championships but “didn’t get close at all.” So by the time that pro shop manager at Arrowhead accepted Molina’s keys, it looked like his golf career was over, whether he was playing the course or working on it. For almost a year he cobbled together a living with that pressure washer and working in restaurants. He mowed lawns too.

Then his phone rang about an opening on the golf course maintenance staff at Weston Hills Country Club, formerly home to the Honda Classic and, until 2001, the Dan Marino Celebrity Invitational. He got the job but again the game tried to tell him something.

Molina attempted to qualify for the U.S. Mid-Amateur but missed out. He also came up short on the Playing Ability Test which he hoped would be his license to teach. Then, in 2000,

“I couldn’t get out of bed one morning because I couldn’t move my arm,” he recalls. A herniated disc between his C4 and C5 vertebrae forced him to quit the game for three years. “They wanted to fuse my spine and I was like “No!” because, financially, I couldn’t afford to take time off.”

It was 2004 before a chiropractor delivered some relief. While he worked through the pain at Weston Hills, Molina says he was lucky to be under the eye of veteran superintendent Eddie Snipes, now at Southwood Golf Club in Tallahassee.

“He pulled me to the side one day and said, “I want you to know something. You can be part of the problem or part of the solution. And it’s up to you to decide who you want to side with. If you are with the wrong crowd you are not going to have the ability to do other things around here.”

Molina took the advice to heart and volunteered for every additional duty he could find. “Eddie saw that and allowed me to step into new areas,” he says. Molina’s dedication made an impression. When the spray technician moved on, Snipes asked Molina if he was interested in taking over.

“So I went and got the books, studied for it and got my license,” Molina says. “Right then and there I got 50 cents extra.” Molina was now earning \$8 an hour, hardly gold, but the job’s real value was in demonstrating that golf course maintenance was more than a path to free golf. He began to believe it could be career in its own right.

Molina started riding with Snipes to South Florida chapter meetings. He met a lot of people and asked a lot of questions. Sometimes he would bring back a suggestion and Snipes would let him run with it. “That’s the type of person and superintendent he was,” Molina says. “Eddie was a big influence because he allowed me to explore.” Molina also picked the brains of people like Dale Ander-

son, then with Lesco and now Howard Fertilizer and Chemical, and Raymond Snyder with Harrell’s.

When course ownership changed Snipes also moved on and Molina found himself working for a succession of superintendents. He learned from each of them and especially John Anderson, who is still there. “He really helped me with the administration part of it because we worked hand in hand with what was being bought and what was being applied and what was being done on the golf courses,” Molina says, who was finally on his way, or so it seemed.

One of Anderson’s assistants left and Molina wanted the job but club policy barred him because he didn’t have a two-year turfgrass degree. It was another rejection but not necessarily an ejection. He learned of another assistant superintendent opening - at Melreese Golf Course, now also known as International Links Miami - and started there in May of 2005.

Within three months, after a difference of opinion between the superintendent and the course manager, Molina, who had been knocked down, knocked back and even knocked out trying to gain a footing in golf, was now a golf course superintendent.

Moises Perez, who had moved to Melreese from Arrowhead sometime earlier, was surprised enough to see the new assistant. He was doubly convinced that a Babaalawo was at work when Molina then suddenly become the superintendent. “It had been seven or eight years,” Molina says. “But Moises said he always knew something good would happen for me.”

A few months later Molina was asked what new equipment he needed. He came up with an ambitious list worth with a price tag close to \$450,000. He got half of it and was over the moon. Soon there was a new fleet of golf carts. Then a new clubhouse. Then he was offered the other half of the equipment package.

“We worked our asses off,” he smiles. “Sometimes seven days a week. Sometimes 12 hours a day. I was trying to put my stamp on what I wanted with the golf course.” When he was happy enough, he offered to host a meeting for the South Florida GCSA, which he now served as a director. It went well.

“I wanted to show off my golf course,” Molina says. “To have my peers say the golf course was in wonderful condition and to expose myself to their critiques was a good thing. It brought validation to what I was doing, to my management style, my thoughts and my keys on how to grow turf and kill weeds, and how to aesthetically put together a facility.”

When his fellow directors announced they wanted him to become president, Molina took that vote of confidence as further validation. “To me it said the things that I lacked in education I had made up for in experience,” he says.

Then in 2012, when he felt he’d done all he could in his first role as a superintendent, he took on his current job at the Country Club of Miami. His office sits just 3.5 miles from where he spent time as a kid with his father’s side of the family and 15 miles from where he first played golf, tagging along with his maternal grandfather who received a set of clubs on his retirement from Sears.

It’s all so close, yet Molina has come so far. ■

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A New Maintenance Facility: THE LONG AND WINDING ROAD



Andy Neiswender

As tours go, this was one I'll never forget. My eyes were wide and I kept wrestling with a possible career move that would be so important for me and my family. The golf cart bounced around over the sprawling, picturesque Belleair Country Club property. It was all part of the interview process, but with Ed Shaughnessy, the club's general manager sitting beside me, he remarked, very candidly: "Our maintenance facility is an embarrassment."

At that time, the outdated, old-looking facility was the only thing on the property that hadn't been updated. Now, just over eight years later we were moving our equipment into our new state-of-the-art facility. It was an interesting process.

The old facility was built in 1976 for what then was about a third of the crew and equipment that we have today. The equipment wash area and chemical mix load areas were both in violation with FDEP codes. To accommodate the larger crew over the years, an equipment storage area was converted to a breakroom for workers. This area was in deplorable condition - no insulation, two

A drone's eye view of the new golf course maintenance facility at Belleair Country Club.

window air conditioners, no heat and still not enough space to hold a full crew meeting or seating for lunch.

In addition, there was no women's restroom and the men's facility was disgraceful. All of the larger equipment and implements were stored outside - under oak trees and the always-threatening Florida skies. Even the covered equipment storage area had at least one open side. To say the facility was bad is putting it mildly. It was deplorable!

Several times dating to the late-1990s the club engaged architects and at least started the process to update the facility. For whatever reason, things never went any further. It seems there were always more pressing or relevant needs for the club's resources. A new maintenance facility was put on the back burner.

In early 2008, I assumed my position at Belleair Country Club and, frankly, there was a myriad of major turf issues that had to be rectified before we even thought of a new maintenance facility. By the beginning of 2010 we had the golf course conditions under control and once again shifted our focus to a new maintenance facility plan.

I determined we needed a plan of action. I spoke with Rick Chesler, our green committee chairman, and we agreed the first step should be to open some eyes as to how dreadful our current

facility was. We decided to have members of the green committee and the board of directors tour the place to see for themselves - the good and the bad.

We tried to show them how we maximized what we had. We were organized, we tracked our man hours, we maintained and stored equipment well, but didn't hide the fact of how exposed we were to violations with the Florida DEP. We pointed out throughout the tour where a proper facility could save us time, improve our organization, improve the longevity of equipment, empower our staff to be more professional, lessen environmental impacts and protect the club from regulatory breaches.

The committee and board fully agreed something needed to be done, but also agreed that in the midst of the financial downturn the time was not right to propose spending the funds it would require to upgrade the facility and expect membership to approve it.

Ironically, less than a month later, we had a visit from FDEP to check out our wash-down area. The best thing that came out of the visit was it forced our hand in the purchase of an ESD Waste-to-Water System to wash equipment and to highlight the need for doing more.

In 2012, Bud McMoran became our new green committee chairman. His priority - make that mission - was to get a new facility approved. Later that year, after a lot of research and numerous interviews, we found Stephen A. Brock, an architect with a lengthy list of golf course maintenance facility designs on his resume. Brock projected the cost at between \$2 million and \$2.5 million. The price tag shocked club members, but we justified the estimate, stating that Brock (who died before the facility was completed) was from an area where it's more costly to construct such a facility. It turns out, he was right.

Over the next two years we would take several necessary steps along the design process. Many times I felt like I was being given enough money to take the next step to keep me entertained but not with much hope of finishing the project. This was a frustrating roller-coaster ride; making decisions on how the facility should be designed, what tools should be in it when in reality chances were very slim I'd ever see it completed.

By the summer of 2014 there seemed to be a change. The club was in a stronger financial position and there were no other major projects members would prefer over the facility. Ed Shaughnessy, the general manager, felt the time was right to go for it. After years of an extremely slow pace everything skyrocketed from that decision.

The general manager and board felt we could afford \$2.3 million. Our preliminary numbers were high, but we felt we could trim what we needed off the project to squeeze it in under budget. Because of the size of the project, we needed the members' approval by way of a vote. This required a large marketing plan.

To get the ball rolling, we solicited the help of Hal Bodley, one of our members and a professional journalist. He wrote an article, Behind the Scenes with Belleair CC's Maintenance Department,



What the former facility looked like.

for the club newsletter describing what we do as golf course professionals every day, for the membership, that largely goes unnoticed.

He also helped us compile a brochure which we published and distributed to the members explaining the entire project in great detail. We created a video using the club's drone to show where the facility was lacking and how it could be improved. In addition, we set up several tours for the members to view the existing facility and held three informational meetings at the clubhouse to further explain the project. Most everyone who attended any of these well-prepared sessions understood the need for the project, including several who were skeptical beforehand. Ultimately, we had a third of the members vote and more than 90 percent of those ballots were returned "yes" - a huge success for our marketing campaign.

Construction went relatively as planned and we completed the project just under budget. We had an open house for the membership a few weeks after we moved in to show the fruits of what they funded. To say the least, it was a huge success.

Recommendation: If you haven't brought members to your facility before, do it! I had one green committee member who'd been on the committee for two years tell me, "When you said we needed to spend \$1 million for a shed for lawn mowers I thought you were nuts...I had no idea how much equipment you had and how much goes on over here every day. It's a no-brainer."

Throughout this process, that was the reaction of everyone. To most of our members, we are out of sight and out of mind. Without good communication the membership would have had no idea how much one mower costs, let alone what we do all day.

Now, when Ed Shaughnessy and I tour our two beautiful courses and pass by our state-of-the-art facility there are smiles on our faces. Broad smiles. ■

-Andy Neiswender is golf course superintendent at Belleair Country Club in Belleair.

Membership Drive Good for PROFESSION AND INDUSTRY



Nick Kearns

Mastercard based one of its better known marketing campaigns pitching the idea that “membership has its privileges.” The same can be said of the Florida GCSA according to Nick Kearns, from The Oaks Club in Osprey. As chairman of the association’s membership committee, Kearns is at the head of a concerted effort to boost participation from superintendents and their assistants across the state.

“Belonging gives individuals tools and support to make them better at their jobs,” he says. “But it also gives the profession a much stronger voice in a day and age where that is more important than ever.

And when superintendents are better organized and represented, the industry as a whole is better off.”

The Florida GCSA’s membership drive is the latest in a growing list of initiatives reflecting new energy at the state level. Most recently the association launched a new website to better serve chapter needs and streamline the information flow. It has revamped this magazine, The Florida Green, to bring a sharper focus on the people and issues shaping golf course maintenance. It has also brought new rigor to its financial performance, turning a profit that will seed new services and more support for existing programs such as turfgrass research. Events like the annual golf championship have been tweaked in terms of timing and structure to make it easier and more inviting to attend.

That is only a sampling of some of the positive change but Kearns says the opportunities for networking alone make membership worthwhile. “No one understands what a superintendent does or the challenges of the job better than other superintendents,” he says. “Chances are that no matter what problem a superintendent might confront, there’s someone else out there who already has the answer or is working to find it. The more superintendents you can get to

know the more likely you are to find that person. There are a lot of experts out there.”

Finding solutions is only one half of the equation, Kearns says: “The chance to provide them and help a colleague can be very fulfilling. The fact that we help each other out, even though sometimes there’s a perception that our facilities are in competition, is one of the hallmarks of the profession. It’s something that sets ours aside from many others.”

Kearns says the Florida GCSA’s slate of meetings and events over the course of a year offer superintendents excellent opportunities to build their networks and broaden their horizon. Conversations with members from other parts of the state can also open doors for job opportunities or leads on potential new staff members.

He cites fellow Florida GCSA director Rolando Molina from the Country Club of Miami as a prime example of how association membership can benefit an individual. Molina never attended turf school but quickly worked his way through the ranks by making the most of education and networking at South Florida GCSA events. His story appears on page ...

“Our local chapters do a wonderful job in their regions,” Kearns says. “They are critical piece of the puzzle. But so much of what affects what we do these days happens at a state level – policies, regulations, laws, you name it. A strong state association makes for stronger representation. We’ve seen the benefits of that over the years with research funding as well as on issues such as fertilizer

The new-look Florida Green reflects a growing list of initiatives to boost service to members.



ordinances, water regulations and labor challenges.

Underscoring Kearns belief in the role of the local chapters is the state association’s effort to create a template for a membership brochure that can be tailored for each chapter. “We want to create something tangible that can be put on the desk of a potential member,” he says. “Ideally, superintendents are going to belong to their local chapter, the state association and, yes, GCSAA. We want to have conversations with those folks and be able to leave them with something that spells out why that’s a good thing, for them and their facility.”

To that end, GCSAA field representative Ralph Dain, CGCS is working alongside Kearns and his committee to identify potential new members and others whose membership may have lapsed for some reason. They have found the most successful means of securing new members is personal contact. In this era, that can mean everything from a simple text message all the way up to walking into the maintenance facility and shaking hands.

“Simply reaching out is enough sometimes,” Kearns says. “Everyone is busy and sometimes people simply forget. Either way, we all appreciate it when someone goes to the trouble of talking to us directly. Guys appreciate the personal contact. That’s where current members can help out by encouraging folks they know to consider joining.” ■

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Association Sharpens FOCUS ON RESEARCH

As far back as 1990, former USGA Green Section agronomist John Foy was on record pondering the potential health benefits for putting greens topdressed with charcoal. Foy mused about the charcoal generating a “positive growth response” and a “lusher green color.” “This response has also been observed by others,” he wrote, “But a reason for it has really not been determined.”

Thanks to a project suggested by superintendents and funded by the Florida GCSA, we are finally close to getting answers to the questions Foy raised more than a quarter century ago. Researchers from the University of Florida have entered the home stretch of a two-year study to determine the impact of colored sands on bermudagrass putting greens.

The project is one of a slate of investigations being carried out at the University of Florida with financial backing of more than \$260,000 from the Florida GCSA and local chapters.

“Research is one of the most powerful tools a superintendent can call upon,” says Florida GCSA research committee chairman John Curran from John’s Island Club in Vero Beach. “That’s why, as a state association, we are increasing the focus on our relationship with the folks at the University of Florida. They have always been great allies but we hope we can get better still at helping them produce the research that provides the greatest benefit to superintendents and their facilities.”

Curran says the colored sand study and another into warm-season turfgrass rooting were inspired by requests from superintendents. That is a trend his research committee wants to see gain momentum. To that end, Curran has renewed the call for Florida GCSA members to speak up on issues they believe should, quite literally, be put under the microscope.



Florida GCSA president Ricky Reeves accepts a check for \$3,000 to help fund research from Dale Mitchell of Golf Agronomics.

“Superintendents have spoken with the colored sand and rooting studies and we want to see more of that,” Curran says. “If someone is dealing with a particular turfgrass challenge then the chances are they are not alone. We can help ourselves and our colleagues by raising a hand and saying ‘Hey, we need some answers on this.’ The more that members speak up and make suggestions the more likely it is that we’ll get the research they need.”

In 2017, researchers hope to have enough data and analysis to tell superintendents just how much colored sands influence canopy temperature, soil temperature and, ultimately, the quality

of the plant itself. They are also looking hard at what role colored sands can play during dormancy and spring green-up.

To date, the project headed up by Drs. Bryan Unruh, Travis Shaddox and Jason Kruse indicates that green and black sand may increase turf quality but only cosmetically. Early findings suggest that sand color bore no influence on photosynthesis or transpiration. Soil temperature appears to increase as a result of colored sand application but only to a minor degree and only between midday and 4pm over the following week.

Curran says the role of the Florida GCSA and local chapters funding university research has only grown in importance as the supply line from traditional sources has tightened in recent years. He says that scenario makes collaboration between the state and local chapters even more important. “Pooling funds from the local chapters and the state chapter gives us a much stronger voice in determining what research is actually performed,” he says.

Curran also reminds members of the potential to raise money through Rounds4Research, the annual online auction of donated tee-times administered by the Environmental Institute for Golf. Last year’s auction raised more than \$164,000. Rounds for the 2017 auction can be donated now online at www.eifg.org.

“We are very grateful to those chapters, vendors and individual members who have already stepped forward this year with money to support research,” Curran says. That list includes:
 Seven Rivers GCSA - \$16,000
 Everglades GCSA - \$10,000
 Treasure Coast GCSA - \$10,000
 Calusa GCSA - \$5,000
 Golf Agronomics Supply and Handling - \$3,000
 Member Contributions - \$1,255 ■

Currently Under THE MICROSCOPE

Current research projects at the University of Florida with funding from the Florida GCSA and local chapters:

- Seasonal dynamics of warm-season turfgrass rooting, \$48,121 (Ends 2018);
- Maintenance requirements and performance of new bermudagrass cultivars for fairway use - \$74,792 (2019);
- Instrument funding - nitrogen analysis by combustion - \$50,012.57;
- Influence of colored sands on canopy temperature and turf quality when applied to bermudagrass putting greens in winter - \$31,080 (2017).

In addition, the Florida GCSA is funding the following research projects with the complete financial support of the Seven Rivers GCSA:

- Trials to identify experimental lines of bermudagrass, seashore paspalum and zoysiagrass suitable for use on Florida golf courses - \$49,280 (2018);
- Enhancing Florida golf courses to conserve beneficial insects and natural resources - \$12,000 (2017).

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IN THE NEWS



Excerpts from press coverage on people in the world of golf course maintenance in Florida.

Rich Moos

Oak Bridge Club, Ponte Vedra Beach

Florida Times Union, August 16

To David Miller's thinking, he's not just trying to save a golf course. He's trying to preserve what is perhaps an under-appreciated part of First Coast golf history and at the same time look ahead to the future of the playing and practicing experience.

Miller, a Southern California native and a resident of Ponte Vedra Beach for the last 10 years, purchased the Oak Bridge Club in December of 2014 and has spent the last 18 months formulating a plan that will save at least a part of the third-oldest golf course in Ponte Vedra — older than its two neighbors within the current confines of the TPC Sawgrass, the Players Stadium Course and Dye's Valley.

One of the first things Miller did was restore the name of the golf course. It was changed to the Ponte Vedra Golf and Country Club by the previous ownership group 10 years ago but all that did was create confusion with the Ponte Vedra Inn and Club across A1A and to the north.

Miller has already pumped more than \$1.2 million into the property: 10 new tennis courts and improvements to the clubhouse, renovations to the golf clubhouse and offices and work on the practice range.

That's good news for course superintendent Rich Moos, who has been with the club for 14 years and trying to maintain a golf course with old equipment and few financial resources. "They've kept me doing what I'm doing," Moos said. "I was thinking about another career before they bought the course. They've given me everything I've asked for too and I'm very optimistic about our future. It's not all doom and gloom now. I think we're on the way up."

Fred Theus

The Plantation at Ponte Vedra Beach, Ponte Vedra Beach

Florida Times-Union, October 24

The Plantation at Ponte Vedra Beach, which opened in 1986 to brisk home sales and great fanfare in the golf community, has re-opened after being closed for 14 months for the extensive project supervised by architect Greg Letsche. The \$7 million price tag included re-grassing the fairways with Celebration bermudagrass, the greens with Tifeagle bermudagrass, replacing bulkheads with stone walls and expanding the teeing grounds to allow the course to stretch more than 7,100 yards from the tips.

In addition, "Capillary Bunkers," which drain when it's wet and draw moisture from the ground when it's dry, replaced the old traps and irrigation and drainage were improved. Maccurach Construction, who has done all recent renovations on the TPC Sawgrass, did the work on the Plantation.

Billy Horschel, the PGA Tour's 2014 FedEx Cup champion and a Plantation resident, provided his input... The club also will save on maintenance costs with the better drainage from both the fairways and the bunkers — not that this club ever skimped on conditioning in the past. The hallmark of the Plantation has always been pristine conditions and superintendent Fred Theus has nurtured the changes into what Horschel said "is not only the best-conditioned course in the area but maybe in the state."

Mike Hendricks

Imperial Golf Club, Naples

Naples Daily News, October 25

The East Course had a full renovation in 2013 and now the West Course has gone through a full one as well. Part of the renovation was improving No. 5, the signature hole, and also replacing a major pipe, raising the fairways, and adding new grass - Imperial Nano that superintendent Mike Hendricks developed in the last few years. No. 5's green was enlarged, raised 18 inches and a cap rock wall replaced a wooden one in front of the green.

Hendricks and the Imperial green committee worked with course architect Kipp Schulties from mid-April up to the re-opening Friday. Fairways were also tilted to about 10 inches to improve drainage and playability. Bimini grass was used on tees, fairways and approaches, as it was on the East Course.

Dick Gray

PGA Golf Club, Port St. Lucie

WorldGolf.com, November 1

PGA Golf Club's Dye Course is scheduled reopen to the public Friday, November 25 following a regrassing project that will enhance year-round playability and overall appeal. All 18 greens have been regrassed with TifEagle, an ultradwarf Bermudagrass variety lauded for its improved speed, consistent smoothness and superior color retention, while TifGrand was chosen for the collars. Additionally, putting surfaces have been expanded to their original sizes when the course opened in 2000, revealing pin placements players have not seen in years. Celebration Bermudagrass... was installed on all fairways.

"Mother Nature takes a toll on a golf course; this comprehensive project has corrected altered surfaces due to years of top dressing and in turn restored the greens to Pete Dye's original vision and intent," PGA Golf Club superintendent Dick Gray said. "The new-age, genetically modified grasses will reduce maintenance needs, increase labor efficiency and provide consistent playing surfaces for years to come."

Fresh sand has been added to fairway and greenside bunkers. Several bunker faces have also been refined and resodded with Empire Zoysia, a denser grass requiring less mowing. "The Dye will be in the best shape since it opened," Gray said. "It's going to look great and play even better as the various grass strains will complement one another instead of competing for space."

Paul Hamilton

Mark Bostick Golf Course, Gainesville

Newswise, November 4

This spring, a handful of golf courses in Florida will become a little more "green" thanks to a new project led by a University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences Extension specialist and researcher. "In our state, resource conservation is a big issue, especially water conservation," said Adam Dale, a UF/IFAS assistant professor of entomology. "Other big issues include pollinator conservation and insect pest management. Both of which are connected to the vitality of our ecosystems."

According to Dale, golf courses could be used to conserve pollinators while reducing water consumption and management inputs such as pest control. Over the summer, Dale worked with Paul Hamilton, superintendent at Mark Bostick Golf Course on the UF campus, and superintendents at two other courses - On Top of the World and Adena, both in Ocala - to plan and establish two wildflower plots on each course. Each plot is 4,800 square feet, nearly twice the area of a standard tennis court. Dale has just finished planting wildflower seeds on each golf course. The seeds will sprout and bloom in spring of 2017. ■

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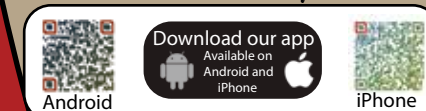
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Florida Gateway Honors Golf Operations Program



Monument dedication: Dr. Kyle Brown, retired instructor; Bobby Weed, alumnus and golf course architect; John Wildmon, retired instructor; David Robinson, alumnus and management with Marriott Golf; B. J. Cannon, retired instructor; Mark Henderson, alumnus and golf course superintendent; Kevin Downing, CGCS alumnus and golf course and landscape consultant; Dr. Jerry Cheesman, retired program director; John Piersol, FGC executive director; Chris Leahy, alumnus and superintendent; Anthony Baur, alumnus and superintendent; and Joe Petersen, incoming online program coordinator.

Florida Gateway College has dedicated a monument as recognition for 48 years of the golf and landscape programs on campus. Alumni and former instructors were among a group that gathered for the dedication ceremony. The event was also a chance to farewell long time instructor and administrator John Piersol who retires shortly before Christmas.

The golf course operations program developed a national and international reputation and many alumni are at work today in leading positions across the country and overseas. The program has now changed to an all-online format to allow students the option of working in the industry while completing their studies.

“Working in a business that crosses over to your hobby is fantastic,” says alumni and Florida GCSA past-president Kevin Downing, CGCS of Three Putt Services. “Young people can now seek out employment, whether full time or part time, at a local facility while they study. This is the best way to learn what golf course maintenance entails and whether it is the right fit for them.”

Downing adds that as a result of the program’s long and illustrious history, it has access to funds that can offset tuition costs for students. For information, he says, parents and youngsters can inquire with new online program coordinator Joseph Peterson after January 3 at joseph.petersen@fgc.edu. Or they can email anne.sawyer@fgc.edu, visit www.fgc.edu or call (386) 754-4219.

Melrose Award Sends Caporini to Orlando

Congratulations to Brad Caporini from Old Corkscrew Golf Club in Estero on receiving a Melrose Leadership Academy grant. The award means Caporini will attend the Golf Industry Show in Orlando in February with all expenses paid. The Melrose Leadership Academy 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.

The program provides up to 20 scholarships every year and is open to applicants who meet the following criteria:

- Must be a current GCSAA Class A or Class B member and GCSAA chapter member in good standing.
- Must be a Class A or Class B member for five or more years.
- Class A or Class B members working for current members of the board of directors or the board of trustees, and children of GCSAA staff members shall not be eligible for the Melrose Leadership Academy.
- Must not have won the award previously.
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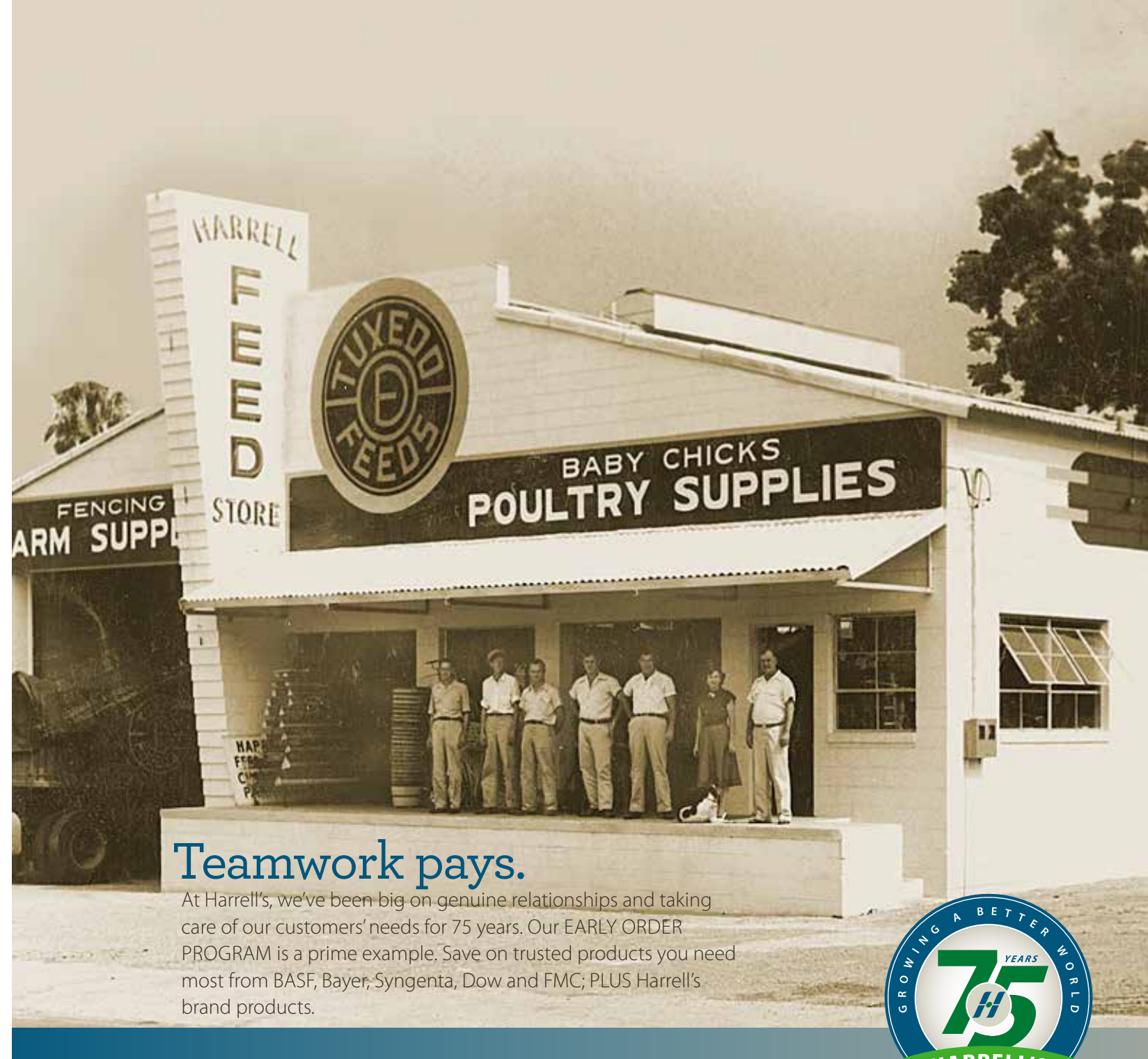
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Palm Beach Chamber Honors Campbell



Mayor Town of Palm Beach Gail Coniglio brings some levity to the presentation of the employee of the year award to Tim Campbell, far right. Ned Barnes, president of Palm Beach Civic Association, is in the middle.

The Florida GCSA congratulates member Tim Campbell who was recently honored as town employee of the year by the Palm Beach Chamber of Commerce. Campbell is superintendent of Palm Beach Par Three Golf Course which has achieved considerable success since undergoing renovation three years ago. Campbell received a plaque, a check for \$3,500 and will have his picture included on the Town Hall Wall of Fame.

“Ever since I graduated from college I wanted to work at a golf course on the ocean and I feel lucky I get to live that dream every day,” says Campbell, who started with the town in 2005. “I feel lucky I get to come to a place where I love to work every day.”

“His quiet leadership, commitment to teamwork and dedicated service are deserving of recognition and praise,” Mayor Gail Coniglio said. “Our crown jewel, the Par Three Golf Course, enjoys unprecedented success with a great reputation of course conditioning, receiving rave reviews embraced by both first-timers and golf regulars. His efforts meeting the day-to-day operations ensure an excellent golfing experience for all who visit.”

Campbell was nominated by golf manager Tony Chateauvert. “Tim has shown tireless dedication and pride in his work as our golf course superintendent,” he said. “The proof is in the success that we have had ... We continue to get accolades from all of the golfers who visit us year round. Tim takes his work personally ... He is often called in to fix pump or irrigation issues that far exceed the normal 40 hours of work. Tim can often be found late in the evening riding the spray rig or in the pump house before sunrise. These traits have helped us have the success that we have enjoyed.”

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Turfgrass Association Welcomes New Leaders



Heather Russo

The Florida Turfgrass Association has named Heather Russo as the association's executive director and Mac Carraway as the association's director of operations. Russo will be the chief executive for the association with primary responsibility for its financial health, staffing and representing the association with constituent and other key stakeholder groups. She will also establish overall strategic objectives, while seeking new areas of expansion that are consistent with the direction

given by the association's executive committee and its board of directors.

Carraway is the president of Carraway Consulting and executive director of the Environmental Research and Education Foundation. He will mentor Russo with particular emphasis on financial matters and industry advocacy.

In other Florida Turfgrass Association news, Bryce Koch from Cypress Lake Country Club won the golf championship at Innisbrook Golf Resort, Copperhead Course in September. Koch's round of 74 secured a spot on the Florida GCSA team for the GCSAA National Championship. Stuart Bothe from Vanderbilt Country Club was one stroke behind and won the net division.

Dr. Barry Troutman received the association's 2016 Wreath of Grass award. This award is the association's highest honor and



Bryce Koch with his trophy as the Florida Turfgrass Association champion.

pays tribute to individuals who have shown outstanding service to the association and to the turfgrass industry. Dr. Troutman's award was presented during the 64th Annual Conference and Show in Palm Harbor by colleague Mac Briley. "Dr. Troutman has been a leader and a mentor to many turfgrass professionals with integrity and his external presence," Briley said. "When Barry speaks, people listen."

In December 2015, Dr. Troutman retired from BrightView Landscape Company (formerly ValleyCrest Companies). He now has his own company Turf and Ornamental Technology that provides horticulture and agronomic solutions and training to lawn and landscape professionals. Troutman is a certified trainer in Florida Friendly Best Management Practices and a certified pest control operator.

Quail West's Preserve Readies to Reopen



Stacked capstone replaced timber retaining walls and reinstated the levels between putting surfaces, collars and hazards.

The Preserve Course at Quail West Golf and Country Club will reopen early in 2017, following a major renovation authored by architect Drew Rogers. A similar overhaul of the club's second 18, The Lakes Course, begins in the spring of 2017. Rogers' work at The Preserve included a complete green and bunker renovation, irrigation replacement, conversion to Celebration bermudagrass, practice facility expansion and tee realignment.

According to Mark Black, who was director of golf course maintenance and grounds during the renovation, the former putting surfaces on The Preserve Course sat some 13 inches higher than the day the course opened for play, in 1992. Accordingly, Rogers completely overhauled all 18 green complexes at The Preserve, equipping each one with a PrecisionAire system that allows moisture to be mechanically siphoned through the sub drainage more effectively.

Rogers also revamped the entire tee system at Quail West, lowering and enlarging many tee platforms where needed while adding a second forward set that measures between 4,400-4,500 yards. The existing forward tees are 5,100 yards plus.

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Naples Beach Club Renovated and Open



Golf course grounds superintendent Holden Jones, general manager Jason Parsons, co-owner Henry B. Watkins III, co-owner and president Michael Watkins, vice-president Azi Azami, and director of golf George Willard, cut the ribbon to reopen the golf course at Naples Beach Hotel and Golf Club.

Naples Beach Hotel and Golf Club has completed the renovation of its championship golf course, which was the longtime host of the Everglades GCSA's Poa Classic and G.C. Horn Memorial Tournament. The total redesign was done with input from Jack Nicklaus in collaboration with course architect John Sanford. The \$9-million project follows \$50 million in renovations and enhancements at the resort over the last few years.

"Being back at The Naples Beach Hotel and Golf Club is like a walk down memory lane for me," Nicklaus said. "Returning to the same course where I first broke 40, with my father by my side, brings back a lot of very special and very fond memories. At the same time, I am enjoying the opportunity to work with John (Sanford) on this rebirth, if you will, of a wonderful layout."

Sanford said, "The redesign takes advantage of the sandy soils so the course will play 'firm and fast.' The ball will roll out so tee shots will be longer and approaches are open to accept running shots to the greens. Many of the large trees were cleared to 'open up' the course and various types of palm trees have been planted to extend the beachfront character of the resort."

Sanford added, "We have a number of great new holes at the

resort course, which includes the signature hole, No. 16. It is a medium length Redan par three. The green is a peninsula with water in front, on the right and behind the green. It's not long but will require accuracy to hit the green."

Crowfoot to Settle Final Spot on Team

At press time only one spot remained on the Florida GCSA No. 1 team for the national championship played in conjunction with GCSAA's Golf Industry show in Orlando in February. Who fills that spot was to be determined at the Central Florida GCSA's Crowfoot Open at Grand Cypress Golf Club on December 9.



Steve Wright, CGCS sends off the field at a recent Florida GCSA golf event

"The winner will automatically join team No. 1," says Florida GCSA golf committee chair Steve Wright, CGCS from Pine Tree Golf Club. "Unless we have a repeat winner, then stroke play average will determine the last qualifier. Remember, to qualify using the stroke play average, you must

play in a minimum of two Florida GCSA stroke play events in each year."

Current qualifiers for the No. 1 are Bryce Koch from Cypress Lake Country Club, Jimmie Murphy from Stone Creek Golf Club, Jason Schulte from The TwinEagles Club and Deron Zandt from Banyan Golf Club.

"The Florida GCSA encourages all members to consider playing in one of the many events that the GCSAA championship offers," Wright says. "Good golf, great camaraderie and lifelong friendships are some of the benefits of this event. Your Florida GCSA golf committee will also be looking to team up any other members that plan on playing in this year's event in Orlando."

We are also working on some new events and locations for 2017 so please keep an eye out for updates from your Florida GCSA."



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Kann Steps Down After 12 Years

The Florida GCSA greatly appreciates the work of Mark Kann from the University of Florida who has stepped down as education committee chair. Kann, who oversees research plots and research golf holes at the university's Plant Science Research and Education Unit in Citra, spent 12 years serving on the Florida GCSA board. He was instrumental in establishing the association's golf BMP certification program which was honored by GCSAA for its contribution to environmental stewardship.

"I'm extremely proud of the accomplishments that we have made

and I thank all of those involved for their support and contributions to the program," Kann told the board earlier this year. "I feel that the certification program is well established and ready for someone else to take charge."

In the year leading up to his resignation, the program had offered five seminars, attracting 116 attendees of whom 74 became certified and another four became recertified. Since the program was created in 2011, nearly 500 individuals have taken the exam. Kann also helped create a Spanish version of the current certification exam.



Jennifer Bryan, Tyler Green and Dr. Brian Unruh listen in as Mark Kann, right, announces stepping down as education committee chair.

Rounds 4 Research
Appeal Goes Out

The 2017 Rounds 4 Research auction is scheduled for April 1-9. The Florida GCSA encourages members to please consider donating a round of golf to benefit the auction which funds turfgrass research. Florida offers a potential donor pool of more than 1,100 courses. If each course donated one foursome raising an average of just \$50 each, that would generate \$55,000. Such an injection would make a huge impact on research funding right here in Florida.

Money raised will help the Florida GCSA Research Fund which promotes research that is invaluable in helping superintendents create better playing conditions, reduce turfgrass diseases and increase sustainability practices all benefiting the facility.

Donating is simple. Once you have your facility's approval, visit www.eifg.org and using the Donate Now tab. You can also complete a paper donation form and return it to the EIFG by fax to (785) 832-4448 or by email to Rounds4Research@gcsaa.org.

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Here Today, But Where Are Tomorrow's Leaders

Recently, I was asked to speak as part of an industry panel at the 64th Annual Florida Turfgrass Association Conference and Show. During the discussion, the moderator asked us to conduct a SCOR (Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities, Risks) analysis of our industry sector.



Ralph Dain, CGCS

I indicated that I thought we currently have strong leadership at both the state and national levels and the direction we are moving as an industry seems to be on the right track. The leadership provided by the board of directors and Jennifer Bryan, as the executive director, has been instrumental in guiding the Florida GCSA towards success.

Similarly, we have been blessed with unwavering guidance at GCSAA with the input provided by the board of directors and our CEO, Rhett Evans. We also benefit from the efforts of the dedicated staff that work daily to serve our membership and advance the profession.

Here is the rub. Where do we go from here? I have concerns about the drop off in participation within the Florida GCSA when we compare current superintendents to assistant superintendents. In the state of Florida, we garner 63 percent facility penetration from our superintendents compared with only 17 percent facility penetration from our assistant superintendents. If we have such a significant drop off with the younger individuals, from where will tomorrow's leaders emerge?

It becomes imperative that we attract these individuals to the local and national associations as they will be the future of the industry. Their lack of participation handicaps them in the networking and information exchange that occurs through the chapters. I know social media provides opportunity for gathering information but there is much to be said for face-to-face interactions that you cannot obtain through smart phones or computers.

I really see this challenge as an opportunity to enhance the involvement of the younger sector of our industry. Currently, both the Florida GCSA and GCSAA are conducting membership drives with the goal of being able to deliver messaging and services to a wider range of individuals. The services will provide invaluable tools to help our members as they progress in their careers. These efforts can certainly be directed not only at the assistant superintendents but

also the 37 percent of non-participating superintendents, and also their equipment managers.

I would also ask that if you are aware of individuals who do not participate within the association to invite them to a meeting. The opportunities to get to know people and exchange information at these events is limitless.

As GCSAA recently celebrated our 90th anniversary of service to this incredible industry, I am mindful of the purpose of the association to serve our members; promote the profession; and enhance the enjoyment, growth and vitality of the game of golf. I keep this mission statement in mind as I work for you, the members, as well as those individuals who comprise the rest of the golf industry. Please help me keep the vision alive in our future leaders who will continue the efforts of those who came before them. ■

-Ralph Dain is GCSAA regional representative in Florida. You can reach at (785) 424-4306 or rdain@gcsaa.org.



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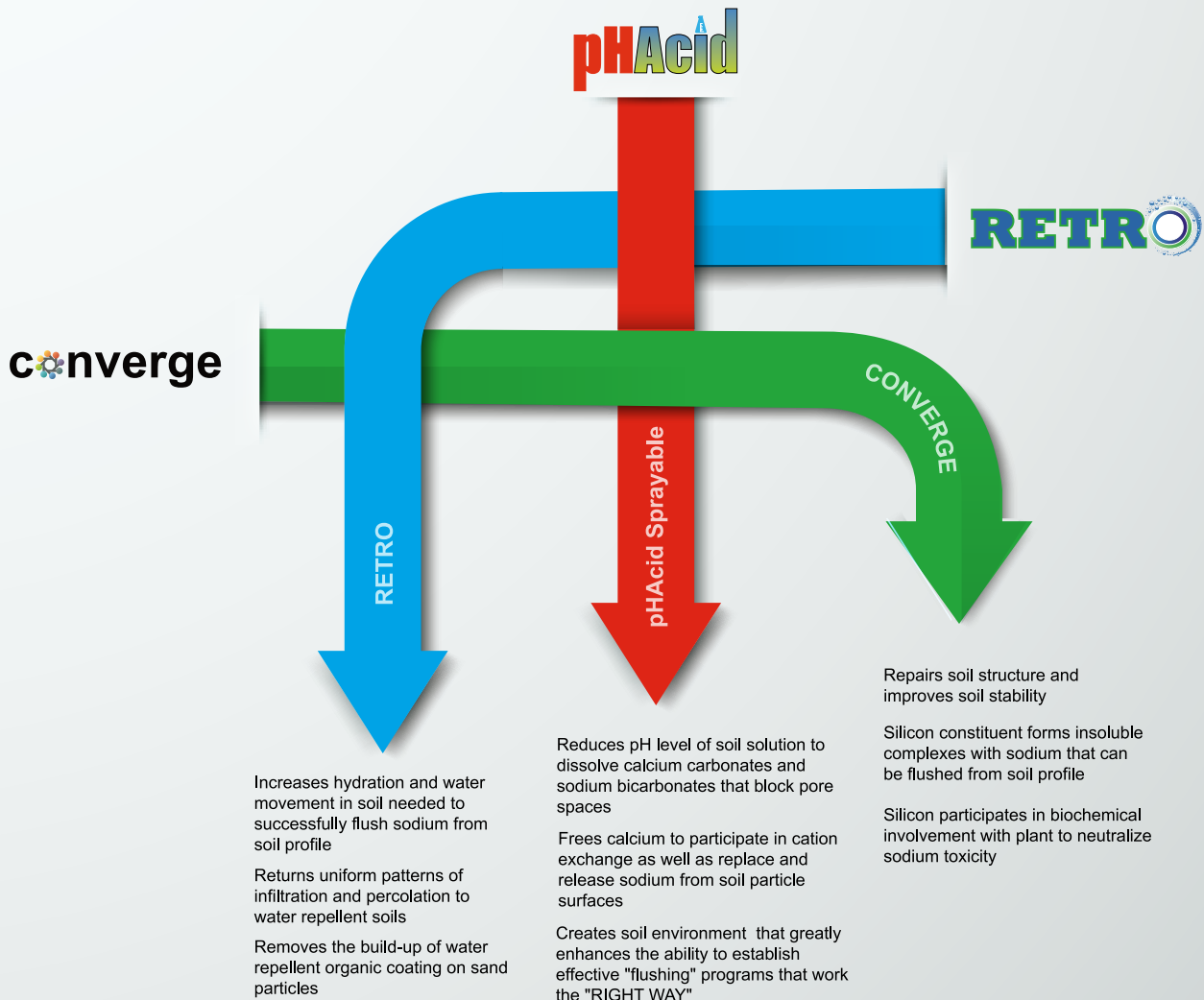
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