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## Looking for Answers and You're Help Finding Them



John Curran

Summertime is upon us and I'm sure everyone is having a great time destroying what we work so hard to perfect for our golfers! The idea of breaking things down to make them better is not something that happens in every part of the country. Some would say it's a luxury that many of us are able to do major projects in summer while most of our golfers have gone north to escape the heat.

And maybe it is a kind of luxury, but it certainly isn't restful.

For many of us, summer is as busy and as intense as it gets as we toil to meet that deadline of the start of the fall season. That being said, I hope folks will try hard to take a little time and attend local chapter meetings. Recently, I've heard from a few chapters around the state that

attendance at meetings has been less than stellar.

I'm really not sure why we're seeing the decline in attendance. If it's due to lack of interest in speakers, locations, etc., then I say step up and get involved, share your ideas and energy. It's always easy to criticize but rarely is it as constructive as stepping up to the plate and working to improve things.

Speaking of getting involved is a perfect segue into my Part B. Your Florida GCSA board has tasked Craig Weyandt and another mentor of mine Greg Pheneger with forming a committee that is known as the "Future of the Association" committee. This committee will have a representative from each chapter in the state who we need to be a full and active player in this endeavor.

Quite simply, what we are trying to figure out is where we want this association to be in the future. Do we stay the same as we are now? Do we merge weaker chapters to form stronger chapters? Does the state association provide more administrative support for the local chapters?

I can keep going with ideas and potential scenarios, but I'd rather hear from everyone else. There is no right or wrong opinion here. There's only the health and longevity of our association that should be thought of first and foremost. If you can find the time, and would care to share your opinion, please contact the external vice-president of your chapter. All input is welcome. After all, this is your association.

I would also like to mention and thank all the facilities that contributed to Rounds4Research. We had 130 facilities donate this year netting close to \$27,000. That's a lot of money but when you consider that we had participation from roughly just 10 percent of the facilities in the state, it's easy to see how much potential there is for growth.

I'd really like to thank Florida GCSA director Nick Kearns from The Oaks Club for his time and effort in getting our state's participation to where it is now. While it is one thing to have research dollars rolling in, I'd like to urge everyone to come up with suggestions for issues they would like to see researched. The best ideas in my opinion come from the people who manage our great facilities. Feel free to reach out to me personally or your local board with any ideas.

I look forward to seeing everyone at Streamsong Resort in August for our annual meeting, golf championship and reception. We have a few tweaks to the program this year that I hope will provide a fun change for everyone. ■



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*Special thanks to David Court, CGCS and staff for excellent golf course conditions, and to general manager Scott Wycoff and staff for their hospitality.*



Glen Thompson of Golf Ventures presents a \$25,000 check to Seven Rivers GCSA president Andy Jorgensen, CGCS at the Envirotron Golf Classic.

## It's All About Making Us the Best We Can Be



Jennifer Bryan

Growing this association for the good of the golf course superintendent profession is clearly a worthy goal. At our annual meeting at Streamsong Resort in August, members will vote on a proposal to introduce a new membership category. An EM classification would allow equipment managers - so important in the day-to-day success of most operations across the state - to become members with full rights, except for voting and holding office.

Your membership committee believes bringing equipment managers into the association can only enhance their access to education and ability to build a network. The contention is that helping equipment managers become better at their jobs will better serve superintendents and their facilities. It will also bring

the Florida GCSA in line with GCSAA, which introduced its own EM classification in 2015.

The committee recommends welcoming equipment managers into the association at no charge up to the beginning of the new financial year on July 1, 2019. From that point EM dues will be \$115, the same as Class A members.

For existing members, a dues email has gone out calling for payment for the new membership year which runs through June 30. I urge everyone to do their best to take care of their membership renewal promptly, and also to reach out to colleagues whose membership may have lapsed some time ago or who have not joined the Florida GCSA.

Of course, growth doesn't always have to be about adding members. It can also be about improving services, increasing efficiencies and becoming a more effective voice for those members. To that end, your Florida GCSA recently created a "Future of the Association" committee. The purpose of this committee is to identify strengths and weaknesses of the association and explore ways to make your association the most powerful golf association in the state.

A lot has changed in recent decades with the advent of the Internet and other technologies overturning the way the world does business and how we interact. The "Future of the Association" committee is working to identify ways the Florida GCSA can be better in that environment. It is important to note that every chapter is represented on this committee, either by their external vice-president or by another nominated representative.

There are no hard deadlines for the committee to return findings or make recommendations. This likely will be an ongoing process that we will continue to update you on, in addition to the reports you should receive from your chapter representative.

I am grateful to all those members who are serving on the "Future of the Association" committee. And, of course, I'm grateful to all those superintendents serving on a committee on behalf of their profession. There is always room for more help so if you are interested in participating on a Florida GCSA committee, please contact the Florida GCSA office at (772) 334-7515. We would love to have you on board and think you will find, as so many volunteers do, that you will get as much, if not more, out of being involved than you will put in.

Finally, I want to make sure everyone is aware of another wonderful opportunity to help strengthen the profession. Florida Gateway College has an endowment offering scholarships for the college's online turfgrass program. If you have a staff member that is interested, please encourage them to apply. It's a great way to develop your staff from within. Inquiries can be made directly with Florida Gateway College.

I wish everyone every success over the rest of the summer and hope Mother Nature is much kinder to our state this fall. ■

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*The Palm Beach GCSA is also extremely grateful for the hospitality and support of the staff and members of Eastpointe Country Club for hosting the 38th annual Future of Golf Tournament.*

## CALUSA



Calusa GCSA board members Kyle Cheek (blue hat), Brad Caporini (purple shirt), Jake Wentz (grey shirt), and John Vuknic (white hat) with staff from The Children's Network of Southwest Florida.

The Calusa GCSA again joined forces with The Children's Network of Southwest Florida to help raise money for a great cause - Zac's Friendship House in Labelle. Zachary Reyna was 12 years old and out with his friends enjoying all-time favorite activities - knee-boarding and swimming in canals. A couple days later, Zac started to have some flu-like symptoms, so his parents took him to the doctor's office where their worst nightmare unraveled.

He was diagnosed with primary amoebic meningoencephalitis (PAM), a brain-eating amoeba. As a web-page dedicated to Zac's Friendship House explains: "Zac fought long and hard to battle the amoeba, but after three weeks, it was God who had won and gained a great little man with lots of spunk."

The town of Labelle donated money to help Zac's family out any way they could. Zac's parents wanted to do something to keep Zac's memory alive and help the community as well. They took the money and bought a building and started a youth club with it.

Now kids from 10 to 15 years old have a place for summer camps and after-school activities. They have basketball, foosball,

pool tables, gaming systems, and lounge areas for the kids. It is a very cool and safe place for kids to go who are at an age where they have a lot of choices to make. For more information on Zac's story visit: [www.zacsfriendshiphouse.org](http://www.zacsfriendshiphouse.org).

Looking to help out any way we can, the Calusa board recently meet with the parents who own and run the shelter all on their own. Hurricane Irma did quite a bit of damage to their building inside and out. They need a lot of work and we are going to do what we can to help them. They need a new roof, new lighting, new ceiling tiles, their porch put back together, new seating for the kids and new paint. They need a lot of stuff and received no help from the insurance company after the hurricane.

We have started a "Go Fund Me" page to help raise money for this great cause. You can find the page by going to [www.gofundme.com](http://www.gofundme.com) and searching for Zac's Friendship House Labelle. We are looking for any kind of support, large or small. If you are unable to donate to this cause please help us in sharing the news on any social media you may have or any other people you may think will have an interest in helping.

- Jake Wentz, *The Verandah Club*.

## TREASURE COAST



Scott Bell from Redstick Golf Club, left, is congratulated by Brian MacCurrach of Bayer on winning the Bayer pack auction.

We enjoyed a very special iteration of our Blue Pearl Charity Tournament this year. It was the 25th anniversary of this great event and to mark the occasion in May we went to PGA Golf Club in Port St. Lucie where our host was Dick Gray, who came up with the tournament name. The first was at what was then Loblolly Pines in Hobe Sound. It seemed befitting to have the 25th Anniversary at his present club.

Thanks once again to Hector Turf for being the presenting sponsor and a special thanks to Everglades Farm Equipment for sponsoring the raffle prizes. Congratulations to Scott Bell, our Treasure Coast GCSA president from Redstick Golf Club, on winning the Bayer pack auction which raised \$6,200 for the association. Thanks to Brian MacCurrach for providing the auction prize.

Winners of the gross division of the golf tournament were Lance Allen, Sean Anderson and Todd Evans. Net winners were Wendall Cave, Andie Smith, Shane Wright and Tom Levenic.

- Barbara Tierney, *Johns Island Club*.



# 2018 POA ANNUAL GOLF CLASSIC AND G.C. HORN MEMORIAL TOURNAMENT



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With special thanks to Dick Gray and the entire staff at PGA Golf Club in Port St. Lucie for a wonderful event made possible by generous support from the following sponsors



## CENTRAL FLORIDA



Jay Buccellato receives the Central Florida GCSA champions trophy from Lisa McDowell.

Congratulations to Jay Buccellato on winning the Central Florida GCSA chapter championship early May. Local knowledge may have played a part, since the championship was at West Orange Country Club where Jay is golf course superintendent. Still, he had to beat a field of 50 golfers and was thoroughly deserving and a great host.

He will lead our team competing in the state championship alongside Rob Torri, Joe Ondo, Mark Harper and Pat Murphy.

Our annual meeting was at the Country Club of Orlando late June. Many thanks to superintendent Josh Dunaway and head golf professional Brian Corn for their hospitality and a great golf course to play.

We welcome Mike Brownsberger, from Deer Island Country Club, on his election to our board of directors, taking the place of fellow superintendent Mitch Leininger, from Shingle Creek Golf Club. We also elected two new affiliate directors, Kevin Wasilewski of Syngenta, and Hal Richburg of SiteOne. Thank you to each of these gentlemen for their willingness to serve.

We also awarded four scholarships to the following: Tyler Duffy, son of Sean Duffy, Isleworth Country Club; Sophia Bellino, daughter of Michael Bellino, DeBary Golf and Country Club; Ashley Lichter, daughter of Alan Lichter, Dubsdread Golf Course; Bethany Rotti, daughter of Kevin Rotti, Legacy Club at Alaqua Lakes.

We also voted to amend our scholarship requirements. In future, families of all chapter members, including affiliates, will be eligible to apply. In other business, we also introduced a new membership classification for certain vendors. Sole proprietors can now belong for \$250.

At press time were looking forward to continuing our support of Arnie's Army at Bay Hill Club and Lodge in August. Arnie's Army does a lot of great work for charity's in the Orlando area. Also, don't forget to mark your calendars for the Crowfoot Classic at Grand Cypress Resort on December 14.

- Lisa McDowell, Grand Cypress Resort.

## SEVEN RIVERS



Glen Thompson of Golf Ventures presents a \$25,000 check to Seven Rivers GCSA president Andy Jorgensen, CGCS at the Envirotron Golf Classic.

The Jeff Hayden Memorial Envirotron Golf Classic was a tremendous success in mid-April. This annual event had a sold-out field with 288 players playing both the Pine Barrens and Rolling Oaks courses at World Woods Golf Club in Brooksville. A special thank you goes out to host golf course superintendent David Court, CGCS and staff for the excellent golf course conditions, and to general manager Scott Wycoff and staff for all their help to make this event go off without a hitch. We would also like to thank our Champion Sponsor, Golf Ventures, and all the additional sponsors and attendees that made this event a huge success.

Now in its 26th year, the Envirotron Golf Classic has raised over \$1.2 million to fund turfgrass research in the state of Florida.

Over the years the proceeds have helped build the Jeff Hayden Envirotron Turfgrass Research Facility located on the University of Florida campus in Gainesville, and has helped construct the 40-acre G.C. Horn Memorial Field Laboratory located at the U.F. Plant Science Research and Education Unit in Citra. Both facilities continue to provide locations for pertinent turfgrass research projects being conducted to this day.

Most recently, the proceeds have reached beyond central Florida by providing funds and equipment for the continuance of research projects performed at the Jay and Ft. Lauderdale research stations. The chapter remains committed to fund research that provides benefits to all Florida golf course superintendents and would like to thank everyone who has supported the event over the years.

The May meeting at Golden Ocala Golf and Equestrian Club was hosted by superintendent Jack Creveling. We were fortunate to get in ahead of a busy tournament week for the club and were greeted by immaculate course conditions. Our guest speaker, Dr. Adam Dale from UF provided great information and updates on the Seven Rivers funded pollinator project being conducted at a few of our member courses. Dr. Dale also answered a few questions relating to turf insects currently posing issues in this area. Many thanks go out to Jack and all of the staff at Golden Ocala for their efforts in making this monthly meeting a success.

Our annual meeting at Candler Hills Golf Club in June provided a nice change as we welcomed Travis Teuton, Ph.D. from the Southeastern Turfgrass Research Center. Dr. Teuton provided great information on new herbicides coming to market and methods to use existing herbicides in new ways. Over 70 people in attendance enjoyed the morning weather as they traveled around the driving range looking at more than a dozen plots pertaining to tropical signalgrass, nutsedge, goosegrass and broadleaf weed control. The day wrapped up with a nice round of golf just ahead of the weather moving in.

- Andy Jorgensen, CGCS On Top of the World.

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## NORTH FLORIDA



Gross division winners from the Memorial Scholarship Tournament Rod Turner, Chris Zena, Andy Maguire and Bill Griffith.



Scholarship winners, from left, Bob Solms, Andrew Maguire, John Lammrsh, MacKenzie Esser with father Bill, and Riley Jones with father Randall.



North Florida GCSA board members with Keeper of the Green Award winner Betty Hooten.



John Lammrsh, right, presents a \$7,000 check to Mike Stevens for the Florida GCSA research fund.

Our 26th annual Memorial Scholarship Fund Tournament in April was another great success. We started with boxed lunches before teeing off at 11am with 96 players at the beautiful LPGA International in Daytona Beach. The spring temperature was perfect with a little wind and a few clouds. The rain did move in on some players for their last few holes, but didn't seem to dampen anyone's spirit.

After play we gathered in the clubhouse dining room for some great wings, shrimp shooters, egg rolls and other great eats along with a few cold beverages. President and our host for the day, John Lammrsh, presented Florida GCSA vice-president Mike Stevens with a check for \$7,000 for the state turfgrass research fund. This money was raised at our annual Pablo Research Tournament. Thanks to Al Clements for his continued support.

We also gave out eight scholarship grants totaling \$8,000 as a result of the Memorial Scholarship Tournament. Congratulations to MacKenzie Esser, daughter of Bill Esser; Riley Jones, daughter of Randall Jones; Kimberly Solms, daughter of Bob Solms;

Sierra Maguire, daughter of Andrew Maguire; and Kasey Lammrsh, daughter of John Lammrsh.

Another highlight of the day was the presentation of the Keeper of the Green award for lifetime service. This year the award went to Betty Hooten, our association manager who has done a wonderful job for a long time.

Rain did get the better of our annual Benevolent Tournament at the Creek Course at Hammock Dunes in Palm Coast in May. We were only able to play about six holes. Even so, everyone agreed that all monies would still go to the Benevolent Fund and money collected for a skins game was also donated. Over \$3,000 was raised which was a new record. Thanks to Matt Howes and his staff of making this tournament possible.

At press time we were getting ready for our annual meeting at Jacksonville Golf and Country Club. And please remember to mark your calendars for the annual Fall Classic at Amelia Island Plantation on October 12-14.



# 2018 North Florida GCSA Memorial Scholarship Tournament



North Florida GCSA board members surround association manager Betty Hooten, winner of the 2018 Allan MacCurrach Lifetime Achievement Award, The Keeper of the Green.

*We sincerely appreciate the wonderful support we received from the following sponsors:*

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*Special thanks yet again to our host superintendent John Lammrish and the staff at LPGA International for their hospitality and wonderful playing conditions.*

# MAKE IT A DATE

## — 23<sup>RD</sup> ANNUAL FLORIDA GCSA — GOLF TEAM CHAMPIONSHIP AND SCRAMBLE



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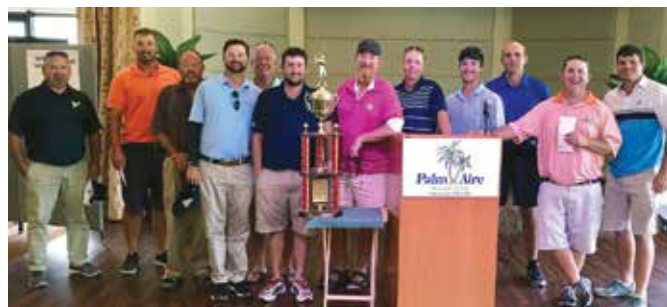




## SUNCOAST



Most, but not all of the Suncoast GCSA's diamond level sponsors were on hand at the Suncoast Scramble to receive plaques of thanks.



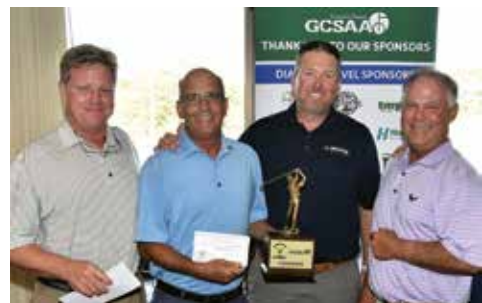
Superintendents once again beat turf suppliers in the annual Summer Slam.



Dan Haubein with Michelle Atkinson and Marguerite Beckford of Sarasota and Manatee County IFAS extension with their new soil testing machine and Nick Kearns.



Suncoast Scramble panelists Tim Hiers, CGCS, Armen Suny, John Cunningham, CGCS and Tom Alex.



Suncoast Scramble winners Ben McCoy, Chip Copeman, Andy Engelbrecht and Bob Wagner, from Lemon Bay Golf Club.

It's been a busy few months for the Suncoast GCSA beginning with the Suncoast Scramble at historic Sara Bay Country Club in Sarasota. We had a great event with 144 golfers taking part after a morning that included a business meeting and a panel presentation.

The panel was the idea of John Reilly from Longboat Plantation and it was a good one. We had four very talented current or former superintendents talk about how their career paths had evolved so differently. Many thanks to John Cunningham, CGCS, general manager at Aronimink Golf Club; Armen Suny, search and consulting executive at Kopplin, Kuebler and Wallace; recently-retired Tom Alex and Tim Hiers, CGCS. The panel was moderated by Florida Green editor Trent Bouts. A big thank you to everyone for their participation (See story page 26).

We raised a considerable amount of money and made several donations as a result. We presented a soil testing machine worth \$3,400 to the Sarasota and Manatee County IFAS extension, \$3,500 to the Florida GCSA research fund, \$1,000 to the Ronald McDonald House, \$500 to All

Faith Food Bank and \$500 to The First Tee of Sarasota/Manatee. More recently we also donated \$1,700 to the Folds of Honor program for military veterans.

The Scramble winners were Ben McCoy, Chip Copeman, Andy Engelbrecht and Bob Wagner, from Lemon Bay Golf Club. We greatly appreciate the hospitality of Sara Bay and the great work of host superintendent Bob Gwodz, who went into a greens and bunker renovation soon after our visit.

At the business meeting, Lee Crosby of Harrell's – a 23-year member - and Nick Kearns – a 13-year member - from The Oaks Club both received plaques for their outstanding service and dedication to the Suncoast GCSA. We also recognized our 15 Diamond Sponsors with plaques. The support of all our sponsors enables us to do so much more for our members and we're extremely grateful.

Soon after the Scramble we had a joint meeting with the Calusa GCSA where we played a Ryder Cup-style singles format for bragging rights and a trophy. We won, retaining the trophy for the second year

in a row. Since its inception in 2008, the Suncoast GCSA has won seven times and Calusa four. This year's event was played on Calusa territory at River Hall Golf and Country Club, thanks to host superintendent Kyle Cheek.

Congratulations to our superintendent team that won the annual summer slam at Palm Aire Country Club in Sarasota. It was the second year in a row the superintendents beat the turf suppliers in the two-person team scramble format. Thanks to our host superintendent Erik Gowdy.

Another pat on the back goes out to our chapter for a great showing in this year's Rounds4Research auction. Tee-time donations from Suncoast GCSA members netted more than \$4,600 which is a fine effort. Let's do even better in 2019.

We have a number of events still scheduled for the year so please keep an eye out for emails or check in on the Events tab at [www.floridagcsa.com](http://www.floridagcsa.com) to see what's coming up.

- Dan Haubein, Pelican Pointe Golf and Country Club.

## EVERGLADES



Alex Holt, Seth Strickland and Declan Freswick before their playoff to decide the Poa Annua golf champion.



Alex Holt with his trophy for winning the Poa Annua championship.



Henry DeLozier of Global Golf Advisors makes a point during his presentation during the educational session at Naples Beach Hotel and Golf Club.



Rain forced the luau at the Poa indoors but that didn't spoil anyone's fun.



Aaron Ohloff helps 12-year-old Nolan Zimmerman draw a raffle ticket while dad and Everglades GCSA president Jason Zimmerman waits for the winning number.

In May, the Everglades GCSA hosted one of our highlights of the year the Poa Annua Golf Classic and G.C. Horn Memorial Tournament. This is always a great weekend for friends, colleagues and families to catch up and relax before we start into the summer busy season.

The weekend was kicked off by a great education seminar with speaker Henry DeLozier. Mr. DeLozier is a principal and partner with Global Golf Advisors and he gave a great presentation on the business of golf and answered many questions.

The morning education was followed by the G.C. Horn Memorial tournament hosted by superintendent Holden Jones at the Naples Beach Hotel and Golf Club. Holden had the course in great condition for two busy days of golf.

Winners in the gross division were Lance Allen and Jake Wentz, and in the net

division they were Nick Forest and Scott Griffin. The Poa Annua Golf Classic Scramble on the Saturday morning at Naples Beach Hotel was won by Tim Denton, Jeff Glase, Jim Glase and Jimmy Glase in the gross division with Shane Barnett, John Duncan, Nick Forest and Payton Tucker winning gross.

The strokeplay championship was played concurrently at the Country Club of Naples and hosted by Billy Davidson, CGCS. Alex Holt eventually won in a three-way playoff from Seth Strickland and Declan Freswick after they were tied with rounds of 72. Alex Holt works at Gulf Harbour and is a member of the Everglades GCSA.

Because of rain the luau dinner that night was moved inside but we didn't let the weather dampen our spirits. Kids and adults enjoyed the band and food, wrapping up another memorable weekend.

At press time we were getting ready for our annual business meeting at Quail Creek Country Club. After the business portion of the meeting we had lunch and golf planned to crown our chapter champion. This meeting was also to be the end of the tenure of our Everglades GCSA president Jason Zimmerman. While the strength of our association is due to our members, we would not be who we are without great leaders. Jason has served for six years as a board member and we thank him for his time and dedication.

Congratulations also to Jason Ellis from the Villages at Country Creek in Estero on being one of 10 GCSAA superintendents chosen to assist at this year Ryder Cup in France. It will be a great experience and one we look forward to hearing about when he returns.

-Tyler Casey, West Bay Golf Club.





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### What You Need to Know

1. **Entry is free to all chapter members.** Any current member of a Florida chapter is eligible to participate.
2. **Official Rules.** Through to the end of May, 2019, take a picture with your catch while holding a recent issue of The Florida Green magazine, and email the picture along with your name, company name, chapter, and the weight and/or length of the fish to [jgbailey25@yahoo.com](mailto:jgbailey25@yahoo.com). There is no limit to the number of entries an angler may send. The picture must have a copy of The Florida Green magazine visible to be validated.
3. **Prizes.** All entries will be evaluated by the selection committee at the end of the Challenge. Prizes will be awarded to the largest species of fish in the following categories: Freshwater species - Largemouth Bass and Peacock Bass. Saltwater species- Redfish, Snook, Mahi-Mahi, any legal Grouper species, and any Snapper species. Special consideration will apply for all other species. Prizes will also be awarded to the angler with the most different species entered and the best picture overall. Winners will be announced in the summer issue of The Florida Green.
4. **Legal.** All participants must adhere to all state and local fishing and/or boating laws. By sending in your picture, you give permission for the Florida GCSA to use the picture in any future publications by the Florida GCSA or your local chapter.







# THE 2018 SUNCOAST SCRAMBLE

Presented by the Suncoast GCSA with thanks to Sara Bay Country Club  
and host superintendent Bob Gwodz.

*Please support the following sponsors who supported your association in staging this event:*

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The Oaks Club



## PALM BEACH



"Get Sum" led by boat captain Craig Merit took top boat honors at this year's Fishing Tournament.



Florida GCSA past-president Ricky Reeves shows off his grouper caught during the Fishing Tournament.

In early April, the Palm Beach GCSA and the USGA held a Latitude 36 Field Day at The Loxahatchee Club in Jupiter. Superintendents had the opportunity to participate in a walking tour of the Loxahatchee Club with USGA agronomist, Todd Lowe, and discuss the new, cutting-edge turfgrass variety – Latitude 36. Special thanks to host superintendent, Jim Sprankle, CGCS, Todd Lowe and the USGA as well as J.W. Turf Farms for sponsoring lunch.



Future of Golf Tournament participants Declan Freswick, Steve Wright, CGCS, Chris Cartin and Glenn Thompson.

The 38th annual Future of Golf Tournament at Eastpointe Country Club early June attracted a total of 145 players. Everyone showed up for a great day of golf, camaraderie and fun. Fortunately, the rain held off until at least nine holes were completed and scored. Many thanks to our great sponsors for their support in making this a great event each year.

Proceeds from this annual event go to turfgrass research, The First Tee of the Palm Beaches, the Palm Beach GCSA Scholarship Fund, and many other great initiatives. Special thanks to Palm Beach GCSA president John Spiwak and his entire team for their tireless efforts in the preparation and execution of this flagship event.

After the event, we received a very nice note from Jack Barrett with The First



The Palm Beach GCSA presents their \$10,000 donation to The First Tee of the Palm Beaches at the 38th Annual Future of Golf Tournament.

Tee. He wrote in part, "I would like to personally thank all of you on behalf of our kids, veterans, board members and staff for your generous and continued support of The First Tee of The Palm Beaches. We could not continue to grow the future of golf without the help of the Palm Beach GCSA and all golf course superintendents that support all of our chapters."

The 17th annual Palm Beach GCSA Fishing Tournament was at the end of June with the weigh-in and barbecue at Blowing Rocks Marina. The weather was perfect this year and it turned out to be a great day of fishing with a total of 21 boats participating. The top boat this year was "Get Sum" led by captain, Craig Merit.

First place wahoo went to "Cracker" led by captain Eric Swenson and first place dolphin went to "Double Down" led by captain Duane Cyr. "Stress Management" led by captain Chris DeGeorge took first place kingfish. Thank you to our tournament sponsors for making this event a huge success.

Our annual meeting was scheduled to take place on mid-July at The Falls Club in Lake Worth. The board of directors continues to work hard trying to fill the calendar for the upcoming year. We hope to see everyone soon at one of our upcoming events.

- Parker Ferren, The St. Andrews Club

# CHAPTER ROUND UP

## WEST COAST



Golfers gather at the Florida West Coast GCSA's Chapter Championship at Tampa Palms Golf and Country Club.

The Florida West Coast GCSA's annual meeting and Chapter Championship was at Tampa Palms Golf and Country Club mid-June. This event was used as qualifier to send our top team to the Florida GCSA's State Team Championship. The team will include Nick Huston from The Landings, David Patterson from Buckhorn Springs, Carson Kamps from Palma Ceia, Pat Hickey from Brookridge, and Kevin Baldwin a retired member. The West Coast has missed the last two Florida GCSA State Team Championships, so we are excited to be participating this year at Streamsong Resort. Our team is looking forward to the challenge. Congratulations to our team and good luck.

We would like to thank all the vendors for the support that they provided for this event and thank Mickey Subotic and the Tampa Palms crew for setting up a great day of golf for us.

-Ryan Franklin, St. Petersburg Country Club.

At the end of May, we had our first technicians meeting at Belleair Country Club with about 12 people in attendance. The education for the day was provided by Wesco Turf and covered the Intricacies of Tier 4 diesel and how to manage these systems that are fairly new to our industry. I believe every technician left with something they didn't know before they came to the meeting. It was good to see

the technicians come together and develop a support group to help one another. Breakfast and lunch were provided by the Florida West Coast GCSA and I think it was a good first meeting to build from going forward.

-Bill Cash, equipment manager, Belleair Country Club.

## SOUTH FLORIDA

The South Florida GCSA's Ricky Reeves presents a check for \$2,500 to Florida GCSA president John Curran for the state turfgrass research fund.



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# IN MEMORIAM

## Daniel Hall Jr.

One of the longest-serving members of the golf course superintendent profession, Daniel Hall Jr., died April 2 aged 89. A 63-year member of GCSAA, Hall received the President's Award for Lifetime Service from the Florida GCSA in 2006. He was a past-president of the Everglades GCSA in 1984-'85 and served on the board for many years.

Hall was the son of a superintendent and started in the business working for his father in Savannah, GA. He worked at a number of facilities in Florida including Imperial Golf Club in Naples and Serenoa Golf Club in Sarasota. When he was a superintendent, Hall often invited staff interns who could not go home for Thanksgiving into his home. Over the years he also served as a contributing writer for The Golf Course Reporter, now known as GCM.

"Dan was a tremendous influence on me both personally and professionally," says Mark Black, himself a past winner of the President's Award for Lifetime Service. "His knowledge of bermudagrass and how to manage it was unsurpassed. He set an extremely high

standard for excellence. He knew the game of golf and prepared many courses for professional players throughout his career. It was a privilege to work for and with Dan as his assistant superintendent. I will miss him."

For the last 13 years of his life, Hall worked part-time at Royal Poinciana Golf Club in Naples and was employed there until the day he died. "It was a pleasure having Dan work with us. Everyone enjoyed the time we spent with him," says Matt Taylor, CGCS from Royal Poinciana. "He was a true gentleman and always had a story about the good old days. Dan was one of a kind and will be missed."

A former certified golf course superintendent, Hall served in the U.S. Marines Corps during the Korean War and spent several months hospitalized for war-related injuries. He was a diehard University of Georgia fan and is survived by Desiree Biesterfeld, her husband Barry; and sister Tilly Findley. ■



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# Florida Makes Major Progress IN NATIONAL RESEARCH AUCTION

Florida continues its growth as a major player in the annual Rounds4Research auction raising money for turfgrass research. The Florida GCSA was the second largest money-raiser in the nation this year thanks to a record number of facilities donating rounds. A total of 134 individual facilities donated this year, up from 97 in 2017. That led to a net return of \$26,752, more than \$10,000 better than the state's previous best.



“We’re thrilled that we’re beginning to build the kind of presence you’d expect from a golfing state the size of Florida,” says Florida GCSA Rounds4Research committee chair Nick Kearns from The Oaks Club in Osprey. “We clearly exceeded our goal of \$20,000 and we’re very grateful to all those facilities that donated rounds. But we still feel like we’re only scratching the surface.”

The Carolinas GCSA raised \$60,000 and was the leader among more than 70 GCSAA affiliated chapters and turfgrass organizations that generated round donations for the auction. Kearns believes Florida could one-day rival the Carolinas in terms of money-raised.

“Every superintendent understands and appreciates the value of research,” Kearns says. “This auction has already funded important work in our state but there remains enormous untapped potential. This year we had donations from roughly 15 percent of courses in the state. It’s not unreasonable to think we could be raising \$100,000 or more if we can get 50 or 60 percent of courses to participate.”

One of the keys to maximizing the potential of Rounds4Research in Florida, Kearns believes, will be the quality of the research projects themselves. “The more we can identify research that benefits superintendents and their courses, the more I think we can expect other facilities to buy in,” he says. “It also helps tremendously when the individual chapters in the state commit to getting their members active in recruiting rounds.”

There are four research projects currently underway thanks to funding from the Florida GCSA and the 11 local chapters through Rounds4Research:

- Investigation of seasonal dynamics of warm-season turfgrass rooting;
- Multi-location trial to establish maintenance requirements and performance of new bermudagrass cultivars for fairway use;



Florida GCSA executive director Jennifer Bryan and Rounds4Research committee chair Nick Kearns prepare to draw the winning ticket for the Target Specialty Products package to next year's Golf Industry Show.

- Enhancing Florida golf courses to conserve beneficial insects and natural resources;
- Multi-location trials to identify experimental lines of bermudagrass, seashore paspalum and zoysiagrass suitable for use on Florida golf courses.

Every donating facility was entered into a drawing for a prize to send their superintendent to the Golf Industry Show in San Diego, CA in February. The winning facility was Mark Bostick Golf Course at the University of Florida, where Paul Hamilton is superintendent. The prize includes airfare and four nights of accommodation in San Diego. The prize package is presented in partnership with Target Specialty Products.

Indian Creek Country Club near Miami, where Joe Pantaleo is the longtime golf course superintendent, drew the highest bid in Florida, of \$2,210 for a foursome. Next highest, of \$1,540, went to Pine Tree Golf Club in Boynton Beach where Florida GCSA secretary-treasurer Steve Wright, CGCS is superintendent. Lake Nona Golf and Country Club in Orlando, with superintendent Brandon Richey, again was a top-three money earner attracting a bid of \$1,300.

Nationally, the auction raised more than \$312,000 from a slate of 1,443 offerings.

The Florida GCSA greatly appreciates the support of the following facilities which donated to this year's auction:



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 Bent Creek Golf Course  
 Bent Tree Country Club  
 Black Diamond Ranch  
 Boca Grove Golf and Tennis Club  
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 Calusa Lakes Golf Club  
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 Chi Chi Rodriguez Golf club  
 Cleveland Heights Golf Club  
 Colony West Golf Club  
 Copperleaf Golf Club  
 Country Club of Ocala  
 Countryside Country Club  
 Cypress Lake Country Club  
 Deer Island Country Club  
 Del Tura Golf Club  
 Dubsdread Golf Course  
 Dunedin Stirling Links  
 Eastpointe Country Club  
 Esplanade Golf and Country Club at  
 Lakewood Ranch  
 Fairways Golf Club  
 Fernandina Beach Golf Club  
 Gator Trace  
 Golf Club of the Everglades  
 Grand Cypress Golf Club  
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 Indian Creek Country Club  
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 Kings Gate  
 Lake Nona Golf and Country Club  
 Lakewood National Golf Club  
 Laurel Oak Country Club  
 Legacy Club at Alaqua Lakes  
 Legends Golf and Country Club  
 Lemon Bay Golf Club  
 Longboat Key Club



*Indian Creek Country Club in Miami drew the largest bid in Florida of \$2,210.*

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 Ponte Vedra Inn and Club  
 Quail Village Golf Club  
 Riomar Country Club  
 Ritz Carlton Golf Club  
 Ritz-Carlton Members Golf Club  
 River Hall Country Club  
 River Run Golf Links  
 Royal Oaks Golf Club  
 Sailfish Point Golf Club  
 Sanctuary Ridge Golf Club  
 Sarasota National Golf Club  
 Shadow Wood Country Club  
 Southern Dunes Golf and Country Club

St. Johns Golf and Country Club  
 St. Petersburg Country Club  
 Stone Creek Golf Club  
 Stonebridge Country Club  
 Stonegate Golf Course  
 Stoneybrook Golf Club  
 Sun 'N Lake Golf Club  
 Suntree Country Club  
 Tampa Palms Golf and Country Club  
 Tara Golf and Country Club  
 The Club at Gateway  
 The Club at Shell Point  
 The Country Club of Winter Haven  
 The Dunes Golf and Tennis Club  
 The Forest Country Club  
 The Golf Club at South Hampton  
 The Loxahatchee Club  
 The Meadows Country Club  
 The Monarch at Royal Highlands  
 The Oaks Club  
 The Rookery at Marco  
 The Royal St. Kitts Golf Club  
 The Seagate Country Club  
 The Village Golf Club  
 The Vinoy Renaissance Resort and Golf Club  
 TPC Prestancia  
 TPC Sawgrass  
 Tranquilo Golf Club  
 Trump National Doral  
 Twin Isles Country Club  
 Twin Rivers Golf Club  
 University Park Country Club  
 Vanderbilt Country Club  
 Verandah Club  
 Walt Disney World Golf  
 West Bay Club  
 World Woods Golf Course  
 Wyndemere Country Club

# Scramble Panel Examines THE SUPERINTENDENT LIFE

The Suncoast GCSA offered a panel discussion at this year's Suncoast Scramble that had everything to do with anything other than the grass. The 90-minute panel discussion at Sara Bay Country Club in Sarasota brought together four senior industry figures with markedly different resumes. Each either is or was a superintendent. The goal of the panel was to help reveal secrets of success and also to demonstrate how a superintendent's basic skill set can be a great basis for alternative careers.

As Tom Alex recently-retired after 34 years at Grand Cypress Resort in Orlando explained: "The neat thing about being a superintendent, when you take a good hard look at the skill set, to be good, really does kind of hone you to be good at a lot of other things in life. We deal with people, we deal with budgets, we deal with other departments, committees, guest relations, we manage environmental stewardship, regulatory issues... those are skill sets that can very quickly transform into other things in your life."

The panel was the brainchild of John Reilly from The Resort at Longboat Key Club and was moderated by the editor of The Florida Green magazine, Trent Bouts. Alex was a prime example of his own point. During his career, he maintained interests in several businesses away from Grand Cypress and is now owner and operator of Alex Golf Services and a new custom home building operation.

John Cunningham, CGCS started his career in Florida spending time at Martin Down Country Club in Palm City and at Black Diamond Ranch in Lecanto. He became director of golf and grounds at Four Seasons Resort and Club in Dallas, TX then moved to Belverive Country Club in St Louis, MS eventually becoming assistant general manager. Today, he is general manager at Aronimink Golf Club in Philadelphia, PA which hosts this year's BMW Championship.

Tim Hiers, CGCS, founding president of the Florida GCSA is a

*Suncoast GCSA's Nick Kearns and John Reilly with Suncoast Scramble panelists John Cunningham, CGCS, Tim Hiers, CGCS, Tom Alex and Armen Suny with Suncoast GCSA president Dan Haubein.*





legend in the profession, not just the state. Recently, as director of agronomy at The Club at Mediterra in Naples, he received the USGA Green Section Award recognizing distinguished service to the game. He is now involved in a new-course project elsewhere.

Armen Suny is a search and consulting executive at Kopplin, Kuebler and Wallace but he started out in golf course maintenance more than 40 years ago. At 27, he became the youngest superintendent host of a major with the 1985 PGA Championship at Merion Golf Club. He later served as a general manager and is a partner in Suny, Zokol Golf Design.

Here is a selection of what the panelists had to offer, with some of their most salient messages in bold text -

*Armen Suny:* Organizationally, superintendents have great skills. I think there is something in a superintendent's nature that is very different than in a lot of careers. We go through life man against nature. We're always fighting Mother Nature, and sometimes unfortunately that carries into other aspects of our life or career, where it's us against them. At your club when your members might want this or that, instead of embracing some of these things, we take that same kind of mindset of fighting Mother Nature into those relationships. We need to think hard about that, change our thought process, maybe we compromise once in a while and we should do that outside work as well. We should stop looking at it as a war...It's a matter of readjusting your thought processes and realizing **it's not always you against everybody else.**

*Tom Alex:* **Be true to your craft**, if you're not a good grass-grower you might want to find another occupation because it's going to start there. If you can't provide the conditions and the course levels that your facility demands, you're in trouble...People often asked how I could stay at a golf course for 34 years. Without getting into the nitty gritty of it, we provided conditions that were favorable within the budget limitations we had. We took care of business at the house.

*Tim Hiers:* In 1975 Ron Hill told me go to go put some 1648 on the driving range. After the guys in the shop loaded the fertilizer I thought, 'That looks like an ammonium nitrate bag. It even says 3300.' But I was afraid to say anything, so I went out to the driving range and put it out. The driving range was white as toast in about four days. I'd been afraid to ask. Twenty-five years ago I was taking a seminar in Dallas, and in those days, you had to take exam at the end to get the credit. There was some mathematical calculation and I couldn't make this one problem work. I was sitting at lunch thinking about it, 'Do I go back in front of 75 people and look stupid?' Ron Hill came back to mind, '**Never be afraid to ask the question.**'...So, I said, 'Dr. Christian, I can't make this problem work right.' He looked at it and said, 'Oh, the intern plugged in the wrong numbers.'...Don't be afraid to ask for help in the business.

*John Cunningham:* A huge part of being successful in any career, it doesn't matter what you want to be, is how can you **be a better version of yourself.** Mentorship and reaching out and looking for advice to be a better version of yourself is so important. We all have those two or three people we're very close to and fraternize with.

But it's actually going beyond those you are so comfortable with and going a little bit further, to a general manager, or sales person, or someone not even in the industry. You're not working on the grass side but on being a better version of yourself.

*Tom Alex:* Don't ever dismiss how important connections and relationships are. I worked with seven GMs and about 10 or 11 golf pros. There was one jackass GM, the rest were very good. Among the golf pros, if I had 11, 10 and a half were pretty good. What made the difference in those good relationships was that there was a **mutual respect for everybody's profession**, their jobs...We'd be brutally honest with each other but with a common goal of getting the job done. The respect levels were really good.

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**"When you can read somebody's heart, you can understand who they are and what they want to be."**

*- Tom Alex.*

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*Armen Suny:* In 1981 was the assistant at Merion. It was a difficult world. Richie Valentine, the superintendent, was really looking out for me. Frank Hannigan was executive director of the USGA. Richie said, 'Take Mr. Hannigan out.' So, I had him with me in a golf cart for 15 minutes, talking about everything we were doing. I guess maybe five years later I was applying for the job at Cherry Hills. I called Mr. Hannigan and reintroduced myself and asked him, if it was alright and appropriate, if he could write me a letter of recommendation. He said he remembered me, and he would...That was a 15-minute cart ride that changed my whole professional career. So, **you have those opportunities every day, to meet people that can change your professional career**, and your personal life...You all have opportunities to meet some very interesting people. I think it's incumbent upon all of you to exploit that to its fullest. There's no reason that you can't use those things to your benefit. You're going to work hard, do a good job and all those things. But you have an opportunity in front of you. Take advantage of it.

*Tom Alex:* When you peel back the onion a little and you think about how you're going to be successful, we all know that the best way to do that is put some good people around you...Can you **see some talents inside someone that you really should develop?** ... When you can read somebody's heart, you can understand who they are and what they want to be. Then it's easy to develop them. We started looking just at the person. It didn't matter what their background was, we could develop them...We've all seen the 25-year-olds, good guys, hard workers, energetic, they're motivated. But you ask them what they're going to do be doing when they're 40, and they give you this blind stare. I say how about we go and get you a little education, get you into junior college, you could become one of our managers.

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**"...if I had a choice of being in the top 20 on Tour today or doing what I'm doing, this is what I'd want to be doing"** – *Tim Hiers, CGCS.*

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**Tim Hiers:** The golden rule, is you'll get more fulfillment out of life helping other people than you will from any raise, any promotion, job satisfaction. As I go back and think about people who mentored me, a paper man, a lumber man, a grocery man, I never had a bad boss. Every boss I had had a sense of humor and a great work ethic and it was modeled to me in living color. **What are you modeling to your employees and your family?**

**Tom Alex:** Whenever I had a very unhappy employee, I would sit them down and say, 'You're not happy here, so what are you doing here? It's America! My gosh you can go and do anything you want but why would you work at a job where you're unhappy?' Because if you are unhappy in your job, and most superintendents are all in, your existence must kind of suck. If you're not happy, then figure out what might make you happy. Is it another job, is it another job in our industry? But be careful, a lot of times guys transfer from one job to another job and they're just as unhappy. If that's the case, it might be time to look inward a little bit. But do something you like. Life is way too short. But **if you're not happy, get happy.**

**John Cunningham:** I've introduced myself to the gym, which is a novel idea. As a golf course superintendent, I could never figure out how to do that. But I can tell you health-wise...you have to **take care of yourself, you have to invest in yourself.** Because if you're not and you don't have that energy, you're not going to get 100 percent out of your time or your opportunity.

**Tim Hiers:** I learned a lesson in 1976 at Suntree. I was working 90-hour weeks. They had fired six superintendents in 13 months. The last one had a heart attack on the job. The president of the club had played for the 1942 Rose Bowl team, tough as nails.

I actually lived in my office for nine and a half months. He called into my office one weekend and he said, 'Timmy, how many hours are you working a week?' And I'm thinking I'm going to nail this. I said, 'About 90.' He said, 'I'm going to tell you something.' He looked me right in the eye and said, 'If you're here this weekend, I'm going to fire you. I'd rather you stay here 40 hours and give me 50 hours of work than stay here 90 hours and give me 30.' **When you get away from work you recharge your battery...** I can tell you I know some guys right now who have some regrets, guys whose names you would know, very famous, who'd go back and say I wish I'd spent more time with my family.

**Tom Alex:** I was very lucky that my kids grew up in one house. As a superintendent, that's very unusual. I built a nice house, we moved into it the day my daughter was born, we still live there today. But family was always very important to me. **How do children spell love? It's T-I-M-E,** right? I always made it a point to spend time with my children.

**John Cunningham:** It's been a great journey, if you will. That's what we call it, it's the journey. My parents would say, 'Don't put too much money into the house because, you never know, another six or seven years it's going to be up and out.' ...But it's been great. Met

The advertisement features a background image of a golf ball on a green. At the top, the text reads "North Florida Chapter" above the large logo "GCSAA" and "GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENTS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA". Below this, it says "Presents the" above a dark red banner with the text "FALL CLASSIC AT AMELIA" in white. At the bottom, it says "Omni Amelia Island Plantation" and "October 12-14, 2018" in white, followed by "Golf Tournament, Education and Reception" and "More details contact [www.nfgcsa.wordpress.com](http://www.nfgcsa.wordpress.com)".





Part of the packed crowd at Sara Bay Country Club listening to the panel discussion at the Suncoast Scramble.

so many great people going around the country this way, interacting with people professionally but in our personal lives too... **One thing that's really helped us through our journey is our faith,** to be quite frank. Finding that home base, that church, no matter where we went. That's kind of where we would find our friends and then kind of grow it from there. It's been a great way for us to find central no matter where we were.

**Tim Hiers:** I wanted to be a golf pro. But if I had a choice of being in the top 20 on Tour today or doing what I'm doing, this is what I'd want to be doing. You've got to love the business. **If you think of it as a job you're in the wrong business...** I think keeping your hunger, your edge is probably the most important thing... Personally, I think I've got more energy and zeal now than I had 30 years ago, because I'm afraid of losing my zeal. That's why I take so many seminars. I don't want to show up to a job and it's just a job... When I go to a seminar, I take bullet notes and share them with staff... One of the worst things you can do is go to a seminar and just sit, not be engaged.

**Armen Suny:** The best use of my time was to go those shows and **meet everybody I could meet and as many smart people as I could meet** and learn about these people, where they come from and how they do what they do. And when I got home from the show, if anybody who spoke in seminars on a subject I was interested in, I'd call them and if they were really smart I had a new friend. And if they weren't so smart, I'd get off the phone in five minutes and not waste my time. To me that was the best use of my time. Everybody is wired differently.

**Tom Alex:** People that have known me a long time will tell you I'm a grinder: 5am starts, going home at 5.30, 6 o'clock, five days a week. Resort living is different. It was nothing for the resort to call a 5 o'clock meeting on a Friday, because everybody else is there. They didn't get there til 9 that morning. One of the things having other business interests taught me, is that you are either a full-

time managing partner or you're not. You can't have it both ways. I found very quickly with my time constraints in my primary job, that I could not be a managing partner in the other endeavors I got into. So, now all of a sudden, you're needing your partners to do everything that they're supposed to be doing in a timely fashion and with a business sense and that was a difficult gap for me to bridge, I'll be honest with you. Superintendents are Type A personalities, we've got our fingers on stuff, this is the program boys, let's make it happen, that kind of thing. But all of sudden, it's, 'I wouldn't have made that decision, or that was kind of dumb.' But you're not there, day to day. So, **it's a totally different mindset but it actually helped me grow.** It took some time, but it helped me grow a little bit because it made me an even better delegator. And I got better at communicating things I thought needed to be done.

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**"Go to your people who are raking your bunkers and ask them to tell you what you're not doing properly." – John Cunningham, CGCS.**

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**Armen Suny:** I grew up in Philadelphia and worked at some great clubs. In those days GMs were hands off on the golf course. They wore glorified clubhouse managers. Superintendents were disdainful of GMs. I had the great fortune at Cherry Hills to work for a great GM Joe Vincent... In our business an abundance of common sense passes for genius. Joe was a genius in that respect. He was picking the board members who got to go on the board. He looked in closets, he went down the line, he rode the golf course every day. This is the same guy who when he was GM at Westchester in

the late '70s, he hired Teddy Horton (as superintendent) and paid him more than he was making. And Joe told me, 'I knew if Teddy got me the golf course he could get me, they'd give me anything I wanted.' That's when I realized there was more to a GM's world than I had seen growing up. So, think about what **you can learn from the people you work with, the good ones**, what kind of skills you can pick up on.

*Tom Alex:* Superintendents are creatures of habit. We get into our routines, we hit the shop, make sure everything's going, do our ride-throughs, take care of a couple of meetings, do some stuff in the afternoon, maybe another ride through and, boom, off we go... But **if we bust up our routines a little bit, we become better managers**. Perhaps that's delegating to some subordinates some things you might normally want to do but they should maybe learn. It may be changing your routines totally. Maybe you're picking up the weekends and the guys aren't... For me, it was always multiple golf courses, so it was very easy for me to start on one golf course and work my way around, and the guys could almost pinpoint where I'd be at what time. One day I figured this out, that it was kind of dumb. So, I started going backwards. You should have seen their eyes light up.

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## "It's important that you take control of your career instead of bouncing around like a pinball."

– Armen Suny.

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*John Cunningham:* Talk about routines, losing zeal, all those things, one way to deal with that is **really disrupt what's going on**. Go to your people who are raking your bunkers and ask them to tell you what you're not doing properly. Go to your people who are filling your water coolers, and ask, 'What would we be doing differently if I wasn't here?' Literally take that look, that feedback, and think about what it does for you...really dig in because, I'll tell you, that exercise will completely change the way you do things at your club. I promise you.

*Armen Suny:* What happens in the interview process is magic...In the interview process, I'll watch the people on the committee far more than I'll watch the candidates. Because this is about making that connection, and the connection is a cultural connection. I could take the same three or four candidates to different clubs and different candidates would get each of those jobs...Let's say all candidates are pretty good fits. What is the difference then? The difference then is believing. The committee has got to believe that you're going to take them to the promised land. That you're the answer to their problems. That you're it. And how does that happen? What we see is, generally speaking, **it's the candidates that are more aggressive in the interview process that end up with the job**, all things being equal. Three quarters of candidates for all the positions never ask for the job...If you've got two candidates about equal and one tells you why they're a good fit for the job and why they want the job and the other one doesn't say anything, which one are you hiring?

*John Cunningham:* For me, hiring is more about data analytics. There are a lot of tools out there you can use, and one of the tools is behavioral analysis. It's really changed the way we hire people now. **We have job assessments for every position at our club now**. A cup-cutter is someone who is high detail, high patience, high formality, those sorts of things... We don't want a high extrovert cup cutting because that's the guy who stops every single person as he's going through the golf course. You're like, 'How can't this guy have more done than he has?' It's not that he's lazy. It's just that he's high extrovert. He's talking his way around the whole golf course and you're frustrated as heck because you've put him in that role... There are better ways of hiring, of maximizing your dollars. If 50 to 60 percent of your budget is labor, you've got to make sure your getting the maximum amount out of those dollars...and one way, one way, is to use data analytics in your hiring scheme. It's not difficult and it's very quick.

*Armen Suny:* When you leave here today, put together a plan for yourself and your career, what you want to do. I want you to spend 15 minutes a week on your career. And don't just say, 'Yeah, yeah, yeah. That's a great idea.' Actually, pick a time during the week that you're going to **spend 15 minutes working on your career**. There are a lot of different ways to do it...It's important that you take control of your career instead of bouncing around like a pinball - or my golf ball yesterday - and think about how you are going to proceed in this.

*Tim Hiers:* When I read a book, I just take a highlight marker, highlight what's important and later I can go back and read that book in 95 percent less time. I even highlight the Bible when I read it. The average person, when they leave college, will read two books the rest of their life. But the brain is a muscle. If you're not exercising that muscle it is going to atrophy... I keep a log book over my whole career of important things. **If you can't learn two things a week, you're not breathing**. But if you set a goal of learning two things a week, then come 15 years later you've got a lot more arrows in your quiver.

*John Cunningham:* One thing you can do immediately is start reading, **make some time for yourself to read about other things**, other businesses, other success stories. I constantly have a book open. We have a book club at Aronimink. We had 18 people subscribe to the book club. I literally will buy you the book, all you have to do is read the book and come to the meeting where we talk about what we got out of the book. It's not a big, high-pressure thing. Start a book club at your club. You are one of the leaders at your club. You don't have to wait for your GM to do it. Some of the smartest members I deal with, they rattle things off all the time and they've just read them. It's not that they're brilliant, it's that they read. It's one thing you could start doing tomorrow that would make a difference.

*Tim Hiers:* Invest time in things that are going to pay off because our life here is a vapor and a mist. You can't take anything for granted. Go back to the balance, work your job, take pride in your work, treat your people right and don't forget about your family. If you really want to get sober, walk into a graveyard and look at these headstones. Those people laughed and lived and cried. They were just like us, but their time has come and gone. And that time will come and go for all of us. Just really **pick your priorities**. That's one of the things I'd really emphasize. ■





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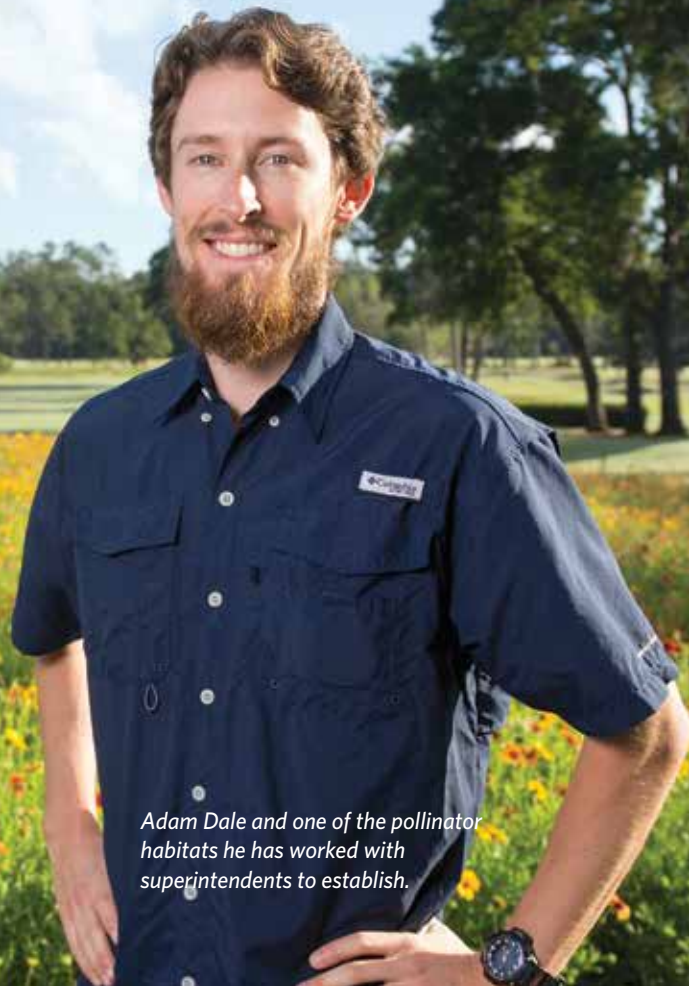
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## UF Research Homes In on BERMUDAGRASS MITE AND MORE



*Adam Dale and one of the pollinator habitats he has worked with superintendents to establish.*

**B**ermudagrass mites are taking a bigger bite out of some Florida golf courses than they have for many years. Superintendents from various sites across the state are reporting an increased incidence of the microscopic mite that causes plant galls or what is often referred to as witches' brooms. Fortunately, researchers have made some progress towards solutions.

Dr. Adam Dale, turf and ornamental entomologist at the University of Florida, IFAS, is about to formally publish findings from recent investigations into the mite and its management. "Bermudagrass mites are one of the most prominent and problematic golf course pest issues we've seen recently," he says. "They have become widespread, even rampant, over the past two or three spring seasons."

The full report on Dale's research is to be published by the UF/IFAS electronic data information source (EDIS) in July. It will be searchable at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>. "We performed a series of trials with various products and have identified some things that appear to work well and some that don't work so well," he says. "We hope this work will at least provide superintendents with some short-term solutions."

In short, Dale recommends an integrated approach involving cultural, mechanical and chemical elements, as excerpts from his findings show:

**Cultural control** - Proper fertilization, mowing, and irrigation will promote a healthy and vigorously growing stand of bermudagrass, which should reduce the risk of mite damage. Although, recycling

grass clippings is generally recommended, this is not the case if you suspect an active bermudagrass mite infestation.

One of the best cultural control strategies is the use of resistant bermudagrass cultivars. Resistant cultivars have been identified in multiple other studies and include: Cardinal, Midlawn, TifSport, FloraTex, Tifdwarf, and Midiron. Cultivars recognized as susceptible to this pest and highly symptomatic include: FloraDwarf, Ormond, Tifdwarf, TifEagle, Tifgreen, Tiflawn, and Celebration.

**Mechanical control** - When severe infestations are detected, mowing as low as possible (scalping), collecting, and disposing of grass debris away from the site can reduce bermudagrass mite populations and subsequent damage. Afterwards, minimize turf stress and promote rapid regrowth by watering the area for several days. UF/IFAS research has found that simply scalping and removing infested bermudagrass clippings can reduce bermudagrass mite damage by 50 percent from the time of mowing to 28 days later when the turf has regrown. However, the same research has found that scalping is most effective in the late spring and has little benefit in the early spring when mite activity seems to be ramping up.

**Chemical control** - Due to their small size and protected feeding behavior, chemical control of bermudagrass mites is difficult. Recent UF/IFAS research has evaluated different active ingredients and application rates to determine the best control tactics. Evaluated products include abamectin (trade name, Divanem), chlorpyrifos (trade name, Dursban), and a combination of imidacloprid, bifenthrin, and z-cypermethrin (trade name, Triple Crown), in



addition to the mechanical removal of infested plant material by scalping with no chemical application.

Results indicate that abamectin is the most effective active ingredient that has been tested, reducing bermudagrass mite damage within a 28- to 36-day period. Best control was observed after two, 14-day interval applications of abamectin at 0.14 fl. oz plus 3 fl. oz Hydro-90 (surfactant) per 1000 square feet. We evaluated higher and lower application rates of abamectin and the surfactant, but saw higher or no additional reduction in bermudagrass mite damage. When a combination of imidacloprid, bifenthrin, and z-cypermethrin was applied at multiple rates, we observed no reduction in bermudagrass mites compared to the untreated control plots.

Dale has also been keeping an eye on chinch bugs, traditionally a foe of St. Augustinegrass, which are now periodically causing damage to bermudagrass and zoysiagrass on some golf courses. “Ultimately, we don’t know how big of an issue this is or is going to be,” he says. “There is a little concern, but to date the severity is not enough to be super-concerned.”

Another major project Dale’s lab has been working on for golf courses is exploring strategies for, and benefits associated with, converting out-of-play areas from maintained turfgrass to wildflower habitats. Dale worked with superintendents to create several 5,000-sq. ft. wildflower plots on a few courses in north-central part of the state. Objectives included conserving pollinating insects and native bees; conserving predatory and parasitic insects; increasing biological control of golf course turf pests; engaging golfers and the community with environmental stewardship efforts; and reducing maintenance inputs on golf course acreage.

Dale says the most abundant pollinator attracted to the pollinator conservation habitats was a predatory insect that attacks fall armyworms. “As a result, we saw a 50 percent increase in fall armyworm biological control in fairways adjacent to wildflower plots compared to those adjacent to out-of-play turfgrass areas,” he says. “We are currently working on an extension publication and a peer-reviewed scientific publication about this project with the goal of developing guidelines and recommendations available for superintendents to use by the end of summer.” ■



*Bermudagrass mites in action.*



*Bermudagrass mite damage on the golf course.*



*A close up look at the plant galls or witches' brooms bermudagrass mites inflict.*

## Adam Dale

Turf and ornamental entomologist, Dr. Adam Dale, arrived at the University of Florida in Gainesville in January of 2016, taking the place of Dr. Eileen Buss who retired several years earlier. Dale spent the previous 10 years at North Carolina State University in Raleigh, NC.

He is responsible for researching economically important pests of turfgrass and ornamental plants in urban and landscape settings, including golf courses, residential lawns and sod farms. “The ultimate goal of my lab is to generate more sustainable, ecologically-based management strategies that benefit the environment as well as the turf and ornamental industries,” he says.

He also serves as the sole turfgrass entomology extension specialist for the state.

Dale grew up primarily in the Greensboro, NC area and while he says he enjoys golf, he adds “I wouldn’t call myself a golfer. I’m not good enough. I spend a lot more time doing research on golf courses than I do playing.”

He originally enrolled as an undergraduate at NC State with no intention of becoming an entomologist. However, after getting a summer job working in an entomology lab as a sophomore, he was hooked. Several years and graduate school later, he is recruiting undergraduates to work in his own entomology lab at the University of Florida.

# MacPhee Brings First Green TO FLORIDA AT SAILFISH POINT

While golf industry representatives touted the game's benefits in the nation's capital in April, one Florida GCSA member made his own push at the micro level. Scott MacPhee from Sailfish Point Golf Club in Stuart hosted dozens of school children in a First Green outing to coincide with National Golf Day.

For MacPhee, in his 15th year at Sailfish Point, the First Green field trip was part of a day-long effort to celebrate the game and invest in its future. First Green is an outreach program that presents golf courses as environmental learning labs. It recently came under the umbrella of GCSAA's Environmental Institute for Golf.

"It's a great opportunity to create exposure for kids who might not otherwise get to see golf and to learn what it's about," MacPhee says. "They benefit from the education and hopefully some are interested enough to start playing or see it as a future career." Among other activities, centering on science and math, MacPhee showed off the club's reverse osmosis system. A wildlife expert also spoke to children.

MacPhee received help from five other Treasure Coast superintendents and several vendors in running what was only the second First Green event in Florida. The first was a demonstration during the Golf Industry Show in Orlando two years ago. GCSAA staffers Leann Cooper and Ron Wright, CGCS also traveled to Stuart to help out.

"Hopefully, other superintendents across the state will take a look at doing their own First Green event next year," MacPhee says. "I think it's very worthwhile because these kids are the future of the game. I'm grateful for all the help and the support of the club which was right behind the idea all along."

One of MacPhee's four children, West, was among 16 first grade students from Bridges Montessori that participated. Another 30 fifth grade students from Pine School also took part. Later in the day, MacPhee hosted more kids from The First Tee of the Treasure Coast. He also marked National Golf Day for members with a floating green shoot out. ■

*Host superintendent Scott MacPhee shares a little "sandbox" time with first graders from Bridges Montessori during the First Green outing at Sailfish Point Golf Club.*







Scott MacPhee brings kids close for some hands-on learning.



Scott Bell from Redstick Golf Club explains the use of soil probes.



Leann Cooper and Ron Wright, CGCS were on hand from GCSAA to help out with the First Green event.



Sailfish Point head project engineer Richard Mark tours kids through his utility plant lab and office.

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# REILLY FINDS THE KEY TO LONGBOAT

By Trent Bouts

**T**here is, or at least was, a golf hole named after John Reilly, right. Before he came to The Resort at Longboat Key Club in 2009, Reilly was helping Bill Coore and Ben Crenshaw craft Sugarloaf Mountain near Clermont. On a quiet moment as the golf course was still coming out of the ground, Reilly parked his truck atop the highest point on the course to take in the view...which soon came to include the truck itself.

Reilly hadn't quite moved the gear shift all the way out of drive and, given the slope, he soon found himself in pursuit of his vehicle. As he gathered speed, his unlaced boots flew off. Soon after, so did his loosely buckled shorts. His dog, in the truck, was no help, just another reason for urgency, along with the public road the truck was heading towards.

Eventually, the incline leveled out enough that Reilly managed to grasp a door handle and fling himself towards the gear shift. But "drive" to "park" does not come by increment. So, when the truck stopped in a heartbeat, Reilly's own momentum carried his head into the side of the door opening. He collapsed to the ground unconscious, in his socks and underpants. Ironically, when he came to, U2's "It's a Beautiful Day" was pumping on the radio.







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*John Reilly has overcome "chronic saltwater issues" to deliver a fine product at Longboat Key.*

Still, Reilly had saved the day, and his dog. He could have saved face too since there was not another soul around. But he loves a good story as much as anyone and, despite his headache, he knew this one was a doozy. By the time the course was finished, the incident was legend and that hole had become known as "Reilly's Run."

It wasn't the only vehicular hiccup in Reilly's career. In his first job, at venerable Rolling Green Golf Club just outside Philadelphia, PA, he caused colleagues in the lunch room to choke on their sandwiches when he failed to set the brake on the tractor he'd been running. It slammed unchecked into the maintenance building. Reilly was a kid then, hired by the superintendent Armen Suny, mostly as an insurance policy.

Neighborhood kids getting up to mischief on the course and leaving a mess in their wake were a constant headache for Suny. To beat them, he thought, he'd have them join him. Reilly was hired on. Suny thought the "neighborhood punks" would show some respect for their friend and go easy on the golf course. While there is still some debate about whether Reilly was among the original offenders, the issue soon disappeared. More importantly, the seeds of a career were sown.

In between the tractor and truck incidents, Reilly went on to establish himself as one of the sharpest operators in the profession, with a particular knack for solving seemingly intractable problems. At Solivita in Kissimmee, he brought things back at the 36-hole facility when there was talk of closing after three hurricanes in a single year. At Sugarloaf, he sleuthed and slew an aluminum toxicity problem stemming from nearby Lake Apopka.

"Soil science, I've always enjoyed it," he says. "Figuring things out. Chasing the perfect soil."

From Sugarloaf, now closed, Reilly's prowess as a "fixer" led him to Longboat Key where he found what he describes, with a rueful shake of the head, as "madness." Chronic saltwater issues were being treated with sulphur. There were water treatment sites on property, but none were operational. "What I found was that the soil was basically dead," Reilly says.

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**"I looked at him and said, 'If anyone has told you there's something they can do other than dynamite, they're lying.'"**

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Conditions were so bad that the general manager at the time cut short Reilly's course tour during the interview process. "It was their first day back open after being closed for maintenance," Reilly says. "We got through nine holes and he said 'I'm done. The rest of the place looks just the same. I'm done looking at it.' He couldn't stand it anymore."

The facility was dabbling with paspalum on the main course at the resort, but not in any deliberate fashion. "It was unbelievable," Reilly says. "The greens were ruined. They looked like Rorschach tests." The golf pro, Terry O'Hara, hired just weeks earlier, also took Reilly on a course tour. He asked Reilly if he could do any-



*John Reilly, with Scott Austin, golf course superintendent on the Linkside course at Longboat Key.*



*On ladies day at Longboat Key, staff dress the tees with rose petals.*

thing: “I looked at him and said, ‘If anyone has told you there’s something they can do other than dynamite, they’re lying.’”

The dynamite never arrived but nine years on, both Reilly and O’Hara are still in place and the golf courses at Longboat Key - 18 holes on Linkside at the resort and 27 at Harbourside about two miles north - are, by any measure, in excellent shape. It didn’t happen overnight of course. The agronomic challenges were exacerbated by problems off the golf courses.

“They had lost their way in every possible fashion,” Reilly says of ownership and management at the time. “When I got here there was a management company with an agronomist. The agronomist had his superintendent and there was also a superintendent for the company. Then they threw me into the mix to see what would come out of it.”

Many might have turned tail when that GM headed back to the clubhouse. But if things ain’t broke, there’s nothing to fix, and Reilly was, at his core, a “fixer.” One of his first moves was counter-intuitive. He watered the heck out of the place.

“You would think this is bad water, don’t use it. What I learned was that EC, the pull of salts, goes up exponentially the drier the soil gets,” Reilly says. “If the plant doesn’t dry down, then it doesn’t go looking for moisture and start wicking salts out of the soil. So, we basically put out the fire with gasoline. We used the water.”

Gradually, he worked to rebuild the soil with organics. The bermudagrass began to respond. So did aquatic and bird life because

Reilly wasn’t “throwing the kitchen sink” at the problem, as had been the case before he arrived. “Still, at the end of the day, the bermudagrass was never going to thrive here,” Reilly says. “Not when TDS was at 7,000-plus parts per million.”

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**“The reason we stopped at .055 was because anything more and the reel hits the bedknife.”**

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Longboat Key is not member-owned, there is no green committee. Instead, Reilly and O’Hara held regular roundtables to engage and inform golfers directly. At one about five years ago, right around the time when the property changed ownership, a woman posed a question that flicked the light switch for Reilly.

“I came here every bit a bermudagrass guy. I didn’t like paspalum as a golf greens grass, not even a little bit. The leaf is fat, there’s a waxy coat on it, it’s slow, it’s bumpy,” he says. “But this woman asked why I was fighting it if 80 percent of a green was covered in paspalum despite everything I tried. She said, ‘That grass works.’”



Reilly did some research including a visit and conversations with Tim Hiers, CGCS then at The Old Collier Club in Naples. Over the next few seasons, beginning with the practice facility, he converted both golf courses to Platinum paspalum, wall to wall. Then he started messing with it. When he was mowing greens at .080 of an inch, reps for equipment manufactures told him he was crazy. Today, he mows as low as .055. “It wasn’t that we wanted to be at crazy low heights,” Reilly says. “We weren’t even looking for speed. We just wanted the ball to roll. We wanted rollability.”

He maintains the plant with a twice-weekly foliar- and soil-based program. He vents as much as he can manage using a walking aerifier with pencil tines and a PlanetAir with a hard spike that “kind of fracks the soil.”

In the shop, “we grind twice a week and we change the angle of the bedbar twice a week,” he says. “The reason we stopped at .055 was because anything more and the reel hits the bedknife. It’s the least amount of clearance you can get.” Recently, Reilly also switched to a mower with “more of a knuckle” as distinct from fixed heads which created mechanical damage around the edges over time.

While his program is undoubtedly successful, it chews up a lot of time and labor. Naturally, Reilly would like to “fix” that so he’s experimenting with a new zoysiagrass that purportedly exudes salts in the dew. He regularly posts updates on his trials on Twitter. “Maybe there’s something out there that’s not so labor intensive,” he says. “We’ll see.”

Despite his early introduction to golf course maintenance, Reilly

hasn’t always been a superintendent, even though he knew that’s what he wanted. Golf was in his blood. He grew up in a caddying family, but he loved playing more than he did carrying other people’s bags. Still, he made the most of playing privileges caddies enjoyed at some blueblood facilities in the area, like Rolling Green and Aronimink and a William Flynn-designed public course Cobbs Creek.

Some days, his group would even sneak onto Merion and play “until they caught you and ran you off.” “We had no idea of the quality of the courses we were playing,” Reilly says. “We were just playing golf and having fun.”

Then came the chance to join the crew at Rolling Green and Reilly began to see a satisfying way he could be close to the game when he wasn’t playing. His parents saw things differently. “I got a scholarship to Villanova and in my family, you didn’t go to school to cut grass, which obviously isn’t what we do but that was the perception at the time,” he says. Reilly parlayed that scholarship into a bachelor’s degree in English literature and a master’s degree in psychology.

Running a vocational program at the University of Pennsylvania, he spent several years helping people find fixes to their own issues. That was work. On weekends he pursued his passion on the golf course, once again on the crew at Rolling Green. In the mid-’90s, after a divorce, he plunged into the work full-time, adding a turfgrass degree from Rutgers.

He graduated with an ambition to host a PGA Tour event,

*Like the Linkside course, the Harborside course is now in a condition to match the beauty of its surrounds.*







*Returning bird life, of all varieties, provided a clear sign that John Reilly was restoring water quality as well as the golf courses.*

something he achieved as superintendent at Innsbruck Resort in Tampa. That was where he was bitten by the construction bug, managing a renovation with Jay Overton, the former Tour player and the resort's director of golf, and designer Larry Packard. From Innsbruck, Reilly moved to the center of the state and over the next decade was integral in the construction of five courses.

The last of those was Sugarloaf. Then the Great Recession hit. Within a few years, despite instant top 100 plaudits, Sugarloaf fell victim. Still, Reilly counts himself fortunate to have been part of that process from the very beginning. "It was probably my seminal moment in the profession," he says. "To work with those guys (Coore and Crenshaw), and all their team, was unbelievable."

At Longboat Key, Reilly may have fixed things, but he is yet to finalize them. He foresees a concerted effort to dress the border between the Linkside course and Gulf of Mexico Drive, which links Lido Shores to Bradenton Beach. Precisely what he can do is limited because of easements and covenants.

"Still, there's a lot of plant materials available that are adapted to this salty, caustic environment," he says. "I think there's a lot we can do, so that when you're going up and down the road you really know there's a wonderful golf course here. This golf course is sort of the personality of the island. It's the focal point, the calling card. It's linked with what this town is. We've taken care of the picture, if you like. Now I'd like to take care of the frame." ■





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## Campbell's Beachfront Property IS A PALM BEACH "CROWN JEWEL"

**T**im Campbell is a fan of Seadwarf paspalum, and not just because it covers his golf course from tee through green. Although, he does concede that, "It's nice just having one grass to worry about." "I think it's a beautiful grass," Campbell says. "To me, it's got properties of warm-season and cool. It's got good striping qualities that you don't get here with the bermudas or anything. It does really well with the striping."



*Tim Campbell*

It's not often you'll hear a superintendent of a par three golf course go on about striping, especially one that is municipally owned. "You don't hear many talk about walk-mowing their greens either," Campbell laughs.

But the Palm Beach Par 3 Golf Course, where he arrived in 2005, is far from your average par three. Campbell is even walk-mowing tees this year. "We do try and make this place like a private club experience when you come here," he says. "We try and achieve standards like that."

Separating the Lake Worth section of the Intracoastal Waterway from the Atlantic, the course occupies a narrow band that might otherwise be among the most expensive in the state. President

Trump's Mar-a-Lago Club sits three miles to the north. Forbes suggests that more than 30 billionaires live in the area. Indeed, some prominent names appear on tee signs around the course, thanks to their donations - of \$250,000 each - towards a renovation in 2009.

In all, donations accounted for \$2.9 million of the \$4.9-million cost of the project that involved a total re-routing, new USGA spec greens and a new irrigation system that took the course off city water and onto brackish water from a 1,500-ft. well into the Floridan Aquifer - hence the paspalum. A new clubhouse opened two years later, with donations accounting for \$2.2 million of the \$3.4-million total cost.

"One of the neat things about working in this town is the immense pride of ownership in this course," Campbell says. "And they want it to be a good as possible." Case in point: Last year, Campbell's budget received a \$30,000 annual boost thanks to the efforts of some locals, notably a superintendent and green committee chairman from a nearby private club.

Another example: The golf course is a big enough deal for the Town of Palm Beach that in 2016, Campbell was named employee of the year by the chamber of commerce. Paying tribute to Campbell, Mayor Gail Coniglio said: "His quiet leadership, commitment to teamwork and dedicated service are deserving of recognition and praise. 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."



Part of Campbell's commitment includes walk mowing greens about five months a year, and rolling five or six days a week, to achieve green speeds in the range of nine to 10.5 on the stimpmeter. He aerifies twice a year, late July and September. "I would aerify more," he says. "But if you look at the bottom line, it really does affect revenue a lot." The paspalum, he adds, heals at a similar rate to bermudagrass. "I'd say we're about three weeks to full recovery."

Campbell has two town employees on staff, an equipment manager and a foreman who doubles as an irrigation technician. They are supported by six full-time contract positions hired through a payroll service. The course which occupies 36 acres, is open year-round and sees an average of about 38,000 rounds that take 2.5 hours to play. "The surprising thing is how many rounds we get from members of local private clubs," Campbell says.

Campbell grew up in Chattanooga, TN and was about to graduate college with a teaching degree when the grass bug bit him hard. "I worked on a course one summer and loved it and the superintendent there said, 'You know, you ought to do it, you'd be good at it, and you'll make a lot more money than being a school teacher,'" Campbell recalls. So, he switched majors, moved to Knoxville and completed the University of Tennessee's turf program.

His first job was at Pine Tree Golf Club in Boynton Beach under Tom Vlach, but he could easily have found himself working in the Panhandle. Turns out he was Vlach's "second choice" for the assistant's vacancy so Vlach arranged an interview for Campbell with a friend up north. "But then he called me back a week later and said his other assistant was quitting and he offered me the job," Campbell says.

For someone who labels himself a "career college student" to that point in his life, Pine Tree was "an intense experience" that included a full renovation. Campbell was there two years and remembers, "We worked a lot of hours." And clearly learned a lot too. In 1997, Campbell landed his first superintendent job in charge of the Ocean Course at The Breakers in Palm Beach.

From there, he moved to semi-private Winston Trails Golf Club in Lake Worth where he spent six years, before returning to Palm Beach for the Par 3 job in 2005. Campbell concedes there was "a little bit of hesitation" in switching from a regulation course to a par 3.

"But I knew there had been some good superintendents come through here and go on to very good private jobs," he says. One of them was Mark Henderson, who went on to serve Gulf Stream Golf Club with distinction and is now with Golf Agronomics. Another was Peter Brooks, from Everglades Club, just up the road from Mar-a-Lago. Brooks was the superintendent behind the extra money in Campbell's budget.

Any reservations Campbell may have had are now long gone. "It's turned out to be a really good job. This is a fun place to work - the environment, a bunch of good people, good staff, management has been good. And it's hard to beat the views," he laughs. "I always wanted to work on a course on the ocean, but I think, originally, my hope was to go to a big private club. It's almost like I fell into



Tim Campbell often rides his bike to and from work, particularly when President Trump is in town and traffic becomes a challenge.

this. It wasn't really on my radar."

He is also happy working for a municipal facility, something that would hearten the late Dan Dupree, who was at Doral when Campbell was at Winston Trails, just an hour up the road.

"He lived in the area and he would always tell me to go home because he would see me at night out there working," Campbell says. "He kept pushing me to go to a city-owned course to get a pension.

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Tim Campbell often takes his golf cart out to the oceanside of the golf course, where he has a view, he says, that's hard to beat.

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Because he'd seen a lot of guys make a lot of money who just didn't have enough put up when the time came."

Day to day, Campbell says there are pros and cons to working for municipal government. He doesn't have to deal with green committees and constantly changing leadership, which is a good thing. "But there's more rules you have to follow," he says. "You can still get what you need to get things done but you have to figure out how to do that within the rules. Purchasing is a little more complicated. You have to get a certain number of quotes. But then, buying capital equipment is easier because you've got a state contract you get a set percentage off of it. The capital equipment budget every year is usually between \$65,000 to \$70,000 – as long as we're replacing stuff every year that's pretty adequate."

Campbell's original career vision might have looked slightly different than it turned out, at least so far, but he's very content. "I would love to retire from here but I'm smart enough to know that you never know," he says. "I've been at places where I was miserable and it's just not fun. I think having hobbies outside work are important too. When I first got into the business I didn't have time for anything else."

These days Campbell's recreation includes sprint-triathlons, paddle-boarding and cycling, up to 30 miles a day. He often rides to work from nearby Palm Springs. "They say if you find a job you love you'll never work a day in your life. I think that's true," he says. "I've been at places where the stress level is crazy. Most of the stress here I put on myself. ■"

-Trent Bouts





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## The Reset Button: MAKE IT YOUR FRIEND

By Anonymous

Ever wish you had hindsight or the chance to do something over? I remember not spraying Primo before a big rain event and wishing I had. The grass seemed like it was a foot tall in some areas and I couldn't even walk there without leaving serious footprints. Some areas of the course I could not mow for weeks, but if I had put out the Primo things may have been different.

Have you ever had an employee that comes in late and you know you should have given them a written warning or done some coaching to correct the action, only to have that same employee not show up on tournament day for an 8am shotgun?

Had you known in advance you would have done something differently. You could have sprayed the Primo; you would have given the problem employee a written warning and made a plan for corrective action. The point is you would have done things differently. We seldom truly live in the moment and always think there will be another opportunity. What if there wasn't?

Recently, I found myself at a crossroads in life, a turning point. Was I expecting it? Nope! There was no way I could have dreamed or imagined the changes that have taken place in my life most recently. I had been working my dream job, the one that we always hoped for in college. A golf course on a beautiful piece of property I could call my own to manage and work for some great people. What else is there right?

Well, don't get too comfortable in that boat Skippy, because the seas are about to get rocky. Or as Ed Combest, old Lake City Community College's turf technician instructor, used to say, "Keep your bags packed!" The company I have been working for owns two golf courses and with no real discussion – at least with me - decided to do some restructuring.

With little to no warning I was told that I would start working at the other golf course, uhhh... tomorrow! I was flooded with emotions to say the least. I was excited for the new challenge but sad to leave the property I had been working on for so many years. After all, I had been managing this golf course for nearly two decades and you tend to get attached (That's my girl).

As I started cleaning out my desk I realized I had to inform the staff of my change. I figured no big deal, just gather the staff at the end of the day and tell them what is going on. I didn't get three words into my farewell speech when I had to stop and walk out of the room. Yes, I broke down. I just couldn't get the words out with



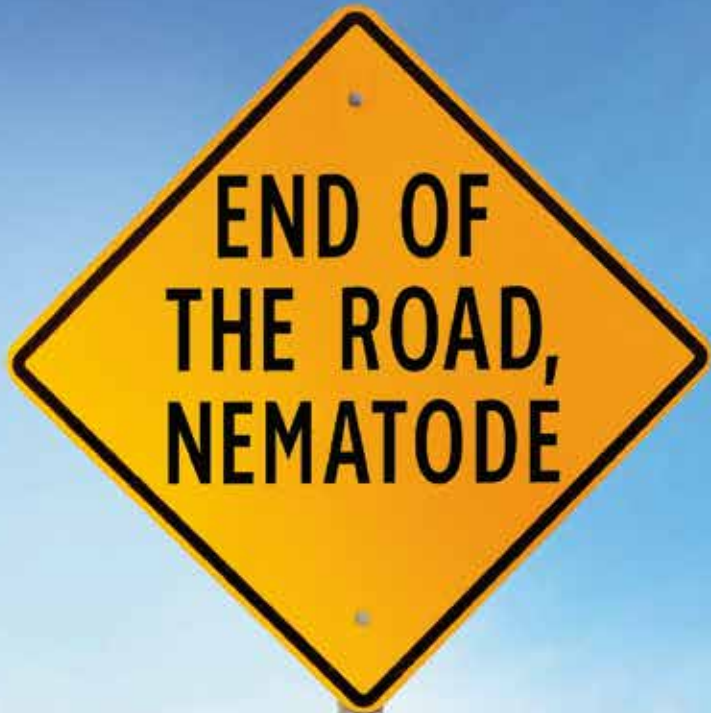
what seemed to be a basketball in my throat. I tried two more times before I could finally utter the words, "I'm no longer the golf course superintendent here."

Starting the new job has been a whirlwind, with no exaggeration, like being thrown out of a golf cart that is moving at full speed. Talk about hitting the ground running! The same shock that my staff had with me leaving was seen in the eyes of my new staff. They were pretty surprised to see me. Most, if not all, had never seen me before except maybe at the staff Christmas party. I didn't know them, and they didn't know me, and I had to remind myself of this on a few occasions that they were just as unsettled and out of synch as I was.

I have to learn a new golf course, the dry spots, the wet spots, how it responds to water, fertilizers, chemicals, and all the other inputs. I am not familiar with the irrigation system, the equipment and, most importantly, the staff. The staff is always the No. 1 most important asset of any club and when I started all nerves, including mine, were on edge.

Today, the dust has settled after three months on the new job and I can finally find my way around the golf course. I know everyone's name on the staff, which as I said before, is the most important asset of any club. I made it a priority to make sure the needs of the staff were being met. I wanted to show them that I cared about them as much as I did about the work they did for the company.





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I could go on and on about how I made the transition, taking soil and water samples on day one, performing an equipment inventory, chemical and fertilizer inventory, who and how many on staff and so on. But I think that is information that any superintendent would do. You must know what tools you are working with before you can start to construct your masterpiece.

What I think is more important here is that we all need to hit the reset button from time to time. I mean back up and really take a look at what you are doing. What if you could temporarily erase your memory and show up on the property today? How would you critique your own work? Can you objectively critique your own work after looking at it for so many years?

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## Real change is difficult, but gorgeous at the end.

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The things that I see are surely different from the things you would see and notice. How often should this be done? I am not sure where I heard this before but, in another industry, the company switches managers from one location to another every 10 years. A merry-go-round of sorts that helps the company, as a whole, do better. There may have been nothing wrong with the facility that the manager was taking care of but switching jobs takes us all out of our comfort zone and forces us to take a look at how things are being done.

When I came into my new position I didn't want to change anything that was working well even if it was being done in a way I was not familiar with. This was an opportunity for me to learn something, a way for me to get better. When I saw areas that I could make improvements I made them. By switching things around (including people) I believe we all advance.

Yes, there is going to be that learning curve for me and I explained to my supervisor that a superintendent typically takes 18 months to learn the property, its character, appetites and shortcomings, before real progress is made. His response, "You have a tournament on Thursday, be ready!"

I have spoken with the superintendent of the course that I left, and we have both promised to get together every few weeks and look at each other's golf course and critique what we see. This is not being done to put one or the other down, just the opposite. It is to make us both better. This is being done to help make the courses we work on even better, to keep us focused and not miss the details.

Since I have made this change in workplaces I have talked with other superintendents that have gone through or are going through similar experiences. They all speak of being challenged, having to step out of their comfort zone. One such superintendent hired a new assistant and spoke of renewed energy around the facility. The assistant had fresh ideas and looked at things differently than in the past.

One of my personal pet peeves is the saying, "Well it's always been that way." Just because something has always been that way doesn't make it right. While this superintendent did not make a job change, only a new assistant, his description of what was going on sounded familiar to me. He spoke of being challenged, being forced to step back and take a good look at his inputs and objectively evaluate his practices again.

"Real change is difficult at the beginning, but gorgeous at the end. Change begins the moment you get the courage and step outside your comfort zone; change begins at the end of your comfort zone!" – Roy T. Bennett.

I often say, "Old people, pets and children do not like change." But in fact, not too many people like change, including me, but as stated above, this is where growth happens. I remember in high school I played many sports. On the track team I often looked back at a race and wondered, could I have run faster, could I have pushed harder?

At the time the activity is going on you always think there is another chance or opportunity to do better. It's taken me a long time to figure this out but that moment when it's time to push harder, time to go faster, to do a better job at something is...right now. There is no do-over button in life but, every once in a while, you get a second chance. A chance to start fresh, to clean the slate, a chance to hit the reset button. ■

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# Superintendent's Son LAUDED FOR INTEGRITY

Money does not grow on trees but as Billy Reid, son of Florida GCSA member Mark Reid, discovered it sometimes turns up on a beach. Billy, 14, was taking part in a charity walk north of Juno Beach Pier when he came upon a scattering of \$100 bills. Before he knew it, Billy had picked up \$1,500. But he didn't pocket the money. Instead, he found a Juno Beach police officer in a nearby parking lot and turned it over.



*Proud dad, Mark Reid.*

That was in April and by summer it was looking increasingly like the cash would go to Billy after all. But the fact he went out of his way to give the rightful owner a chance to claim what they'd lost impressed many people. In fact, news traveled far enough for Billy to be honored at The Players Championship at TPC Sawgrass in Ponte Vedra Beach in May.

PGA Tour commissioner Jay Monahan and The First Tee chief executive officer Keith Dawkins recognized Billy for doing the right thing. He also got a sneak peek of The First Tee Experience, an air-conditioned venue featuring golf-themed games, social media activities and ways for fans to practice trick shots. Billy won a golf simulator competition with Monahan, Dawkins and former Tour commissioner Tim Finchem and was treated to a day at The Players.

Dawkins, a former Nickelodeon executive, said Billy's story "caught like wildfire." "Our world was buzzing with it," he said. Billy's understandably proud dad, Mark, is director of golf and grounds maintenance at The Breakers Palm Beach, and a director of The First Tee of the Palm Beaches. He is in the midst of a renovation of the Ocean Course this summer. Around press time, he was checking in with police to see if the money had been claimed. Police had indicated that the money could end up with Billy if no one could demonstrate ownership within 90 days.

When he found the money, Billy was walking in support of autism awareness with fellow members of the Teen Golfers Association of The First Tee of the Palm Beaches. He spoke with his sister, Quinn, who was also on the walk and reflected on the values that The First Tee teaches – such as honesty and integrity. "If I was in that situation, I would definitely want that person that found it to turn it in so I could get it back," Billy told reporters.

His mom was surprised to hear about his find when he got home. "When people heard about the story afterward, most people said, 'I would have kept the money,'" Denise Reid said. "He's learned a



*PGA Tour commissioner Jay Monahan with Billy Reid, former Tour commissioner Tim Finchem and The First Tee's Keith Dawkins.*

lot from The First Tee, and he has a conscience. (At The Players) He was really treated like he did something phenomenal, which he did."

Florida GCSA past-president Kevin Downing, CGCS, now of Three Putt Services, notes that events seemed to have "gone full circle" as a result of Billy finding the money. "Father helps The First Tee program, First Tee helps child, child's actions bring credit to The First Tee," Downing says. "That is one way of demonstrating why golf is such a great game."

Downing adds the Palm Beach GCSA can take some credit for its long-standing support of The First Tee of the Palm Beaches with financial support from the association's annual Future of Golf Tournament. Billy and his dad were both on hand at this year's Future of Golf Tournament where the Palm Beach GCSA delivered a check for \$10,000 to The First Tee of the Palm Beaches.

Billy, who has spent some time on course with his dad during the renovation, will enter the sports management program at Palm Beach Gardens High School in the fall. This is not the first time the teen has made news in *The Florida Green*. Last year's fall issue noted that Billy pitched for North Palm Beach County Little League representing the southeast region in the Intermediate Division of the 2017 Little League World Series in Livermore, CA while his dad coached first base. ■



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## Battista Finds Computer to be AS VALUABLE AS HIS WRENCH

By Andy Jorgensen, CGCS

In 2005, when I was hired by On Top of the World Communities as golf course superintendent, I inherited a great staff and situation. Most importantly, the equipment manager was on his 24th year with the company. I was fortunate to walk into a great scenario, but something was lacking.

Although the equipment manager, Jim Battista, had many years of experience on the operating end of a wrench, he lacked the necessary technological skills needed to keep current with the newer equipment that was hitting the market every year. Improvements in power-train, cutting units and sprayer advancements kept him scratching his head as he tried to troubleshoot scenarios that he was exposed to on a daily basis. He also lacked even the most basic of computer skills, which meant he wasn't able to fully reach his potential. Something had to change.

The turning point came when we investigated cost-saving measures to reduce the money spent on items that had no positive impact to the conditions of the golf course. One of these items was the amount of shipping and handling fees associated with calling in

parts orders multiple times each day with one of our larger equipment vendors.

The vendor offered an alternative; place an order via their website at an amount over \$500 and no shipping or handling fees would be incurred. Hearing this, we realized this was an easy fix. All we needed was a computer and an internet connection and we would be looking at a savings of over \$2,000 annually.

The computer would also give Jim access to online forums and search engines so that he could continue his education and keep current with industry improvements from manufacturers. Over time, Jim began to hone a new set of skills. He quickly learned the vast resources available on the internet. He subscribed to weekly newsletters, searched online marketplaces for parts, and began to utilize parts schematics and troubleshooting diagrams from our manufacturers' websites.

He took the time to find videos on how to weld aluminum in-house, rather than contracting out this need. Not only does this

*Jim Battista is a more effective equipment manager since developing his computer skills.*





improve efficiency and labor savings, it also allows us to find items at the best price possible.

A few years later, GCSAA began seeing the value in equipment managers across the globe. They created an Equipment Manager classification for membership, and now offer education and a certificate program for them. Realizing the rapid return on investment, we signed Jim up for a membership. Very quickly, he began to read the online forums, look into the certificate program, and become a member of the larger equipment manager community. He keeps current with not only mechanical principles, but agronomic practices as well. Jim says, "I like reading the articles in the magazine. They help me understand why we do things the way we do and ask why we don't do things that maybe we should be doing."

Almost every vendor that stops by knows Jim by name. Some even bring their mower blades by for a regular sharpening or ask advice when they are in need. Sometimes they will pass on a question from another equipment manager. He, in return, asks questions about his own yard, which is a mix of 419 and common bermudagrass that rivals some of the best fairways around.

When asked how all of this has helped him succeed, he responds, "It makes me more of a manager than I ever was. Before, I was just turning wrenches. Now, I am managing a fleet of over 100 pieces of equipment. Staying current is a must." He adds that the influx of

Tier 4 engines caught him off-guard, but after some light reading he now feels comfortable with the switch. "Finding information, and others that have had experience was very simple...just a few clicks away," he says.

This knowledge has also allowed Jim to become an asset to other superintendents and equipment managers in the local area. He enjoys helping others when the need arises, and frequently helps local golf courses with technicians that are new to the golf industry.

One of his favorite things to do is attend training classes with other equipment managers. "I like talking with them, hearing their struggles and realizing I may have a solution that could help," he says. He hopes the industry can have more events that allow equipment managers to get together and just talk. "Chances are that somewhere, somebody has already found the solution," he says. "It's just a matter of finding that person. Being in solitude won't help you find the solution. Being involved has helped solve problems."

Now in his 36th year, Jim's outlook remains positive. He continues to learn and express his desire to improve on a daily basis. "There is so much to do and so much to learn," he says. "The industry keeps changing, and we have to adapt and change with it. I have no plans to stop learning anytime soon." ■

*-Andy Jorgensen is certified golf course superintendent at On Top of the World in Ocala.*



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## C Your Way Through A SUCCESSFUL SUMMER

*by Kyle D. Sweet, CGCS*

The days of summer are undoubtedly here but after such a busy season I'm not 100 percent sure if I'm ready. Is it me, or does it feel like there is basically no down time anymore?

The golf shop seemingly runs us in the season, but once the summer starts it's the golf course that runs us. In my case, more and more of the summer actually is dominated by administrative duties such as staff evaluations, budgets, project reports and updates and all of those things I so gracefully avoided during the season. I just want to get out there and work!

Whether we like it or not, the transition from the winter season to the summer season happens quickly. I've always thought that if your club thinks it's tough for you to put on a course during the season, they should really have pity for you trying to put your course through a successful summer. Strangely though, I think we actually like the work, the challenge, the diversity and, yes, even the sunburn and the sweat.

The preparation that goes into a successful summer shouldn't be underestimated and should be looked at as the start of the process

in creating a great upcoming winter season. I sure has heck don't know everything, but I can tell you that a great summer can certainly provide you with a great season.

Making the shift from maintenance mode, in season, to summer mode takes some planning and communication. I understand that many of you out there may not experience the drastic expansion and contraction of golfers but I'm betting that it's better in most cases to get things out of the way in the summer as compared to tackling projects during your winter season. It's going to take a lot of coordination by you to get all the work set up and completed so you're all cleaned up and ready by the end of the summer. There you have it, the three Cs to a successful summer: Communication, Coordination and Clean up!

Communication is something I talk about that all the time. Many of you do such a great job with it and I know it's making a difference in your jobs every day. I like to get the word out about our summer projects, and the weeks that the golf course will have aeration taking place, in the club newsletter toward the end of the season. Posting a list of the projects in the locker rooms and



making sure to talk one-on-one with interested golfers and members is extremely effective as well.

We all have these smart phones attached to our hips these days - damn don't I wish I had one of them while I was at Lake City - and they take great photos, are easy to make notes on, you know where I'm coming from. Blow that phone up this summer with before and after photos. What's the saying? A picture is worth a thousand words. No kidding, it's true.

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## Head down, chin up, lots of work to do this summer for sure.

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Don't just get these "before and afters" out to your members. Share them with your staff and your fellow managers at your club. Start a file on your computer with a fancy complicated title like "Summer 2018 Course Photos" and put all those photos in there during the summer. Having those photos in one place with give you easy access and aid in your ability to communicate your summer successes.

Of course, social media gives you an outlet as well and more and more people are using it. I find an email to my GM, board of governors and green committee is a narrow target, yet very effective. Updates through the club website or course announcements that blast an email to the entire membership are certainly other effective ways as well.

Coordination is the next key. I think we undervalue our suppliers and contractors and should realize that they are working right alongside us and, if they are good, they help you to coordinate your summer and are interested in our success. A successful summer depends on product deliveries, equipment service, technical experts, contractor scheduling and many other factors.

Do you reach out to your aerification contractor a couple weeks ahead just to confirm that you're good and they are too? Is there a date on your calendar that says to get those sand bins filled up? Is the equipment that's been taking it somewhat easy through the winter, ready for those dog days of summer and the monster grass you'll be cutting each week?

Have the greens been tested for nematodes so they can handle the summer stresses? And have you documented those areas you may have struggled with late in the season so they get the extra attention they need to be improved for next season? Putting it all together in a neat package is not easy, but it's what you do and what you'll need to do to accomplish a great summer.

Clean up. The final C is the biggest pain. It won't be long and the summer that just started will be wrapping up. Summer isn't half the year anymore, it's at least a month shorter. Inevitably, all this work we're doing leaves a trail and it seems that the details are the hardest yet most measurable way to determine if you're ready at the end of the summer.

It's easy to do a half-hearted job during the throes of summer and say, "It'll be alright, we'll catch that later." But I challenge you to do an exceptional job in the summer with your clean up and repair work because who knows what's ahead. Last year it was a hurricane and if you weren't done with the course disruptions or at least close to it, you might have had to look at the "leftovers" all past season or spend extra funds to wrap things up. I've said many times that I'd rather have a clean course than a green course and following all of the heavy work and disruption in the summer is no exception. The details are what makes any course great. Pay as much attention as you can to those details, always.

So, it's Florida, it's hot and you've been working in it well into the summer by the time you read this. Head down, chin up, lots of work to do this summer for sure. I hope the three Cs are something you can keep in mind through it all. Make it a great summer and keep your eye on the prize of a great season in 2019. ■

- Kyle Sweet is certified golf course superintendent at The Sanctuary Golf Club on Sanibel Island

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# EREF Carries the Can ON WATER AND MORE

By Mac Carraway

During the January meeting of its board of directors, EREF the Environmental Research and Education Foundation engaged in a serious discussion about its mission and how that related to the current and future needs of its stakeholders.

The current mission statement reads: “The Environmental Research and Education Foundation works to protect Florida’s environment and natural resources through the funding of environmental research and the sharing of sound scientific findings on the environmental and human-health benefits of properly maintained greenspaces and urban landscapes.”

This, admittedly broad, mission statement is necessary to cover the gamut of issues impacting the green industry, including nutrient management, water conservation, lawn care chemistry and landscape ordinances.

Followers of EREF know that it has been largely preoccupied with local government ordinances which outlaw the use of fertilizers on urban landscapes, on both turf and plants, during what is typically a period from June through September. The industry knows that is the growing season for landscapes, and that nutrients are essential to plant health during that time. Further, there is substantial peer-reviewed evidence that landscapes receiving proper fertilizer applications simply do not contribute to nutrient loading.

Nonetheless, activists create fear and uncertainty about these outcomes, and elected officials often act on a “just do something” impulse. EREF stands to offer evidence-based support to alternatives, which support the educational elements of blackouts, but which exempt Best Management Practices (BMP)-trained professionals across the stakeholder spectrum. We will continue to advocate for these sound policies as a staple of our existence.

Beyond nutrient issues, the state of Florida is widely engaged in water-supply planning for the future – up to 50 years out. In many populous areas, future water supplies are projected to become tighter, leading to efforts at developing alternative water supplies and promoting water conservation – both of which are critical objectives.

Frequently, those involved in the water-supply discussions and planning are not well-versed in the current state of landscape-related BMPs for conserving water. Those BMPs, which have been under continuous development and evolution for decades, are not fully implemented throughout the state for a variety of reasons,



Mac Carraway

including lack of consumer education, a need for incentives, and a perception of a never-ending abundant water supply. The same could be said years ago about water-saving appliances and plumbing fixtures. However, with local government and builder incentives, such fixtures are now the norm in residential and commercial construction. Further, they have dramatically helped improve per-capita water consumption throughout Florida.

The next push in water conservation will be for landscapes, sports fields and golf courses. The industry has a profound and vested interest in being actively engaged in this effort. Why? Because activist organizations will continue to promote a notion that irrigation for lawns and golf courses is non-essential, and that it is incompatible with conservation. We know the evidence says otherwise.

In recent discussions within the Southwest Florida Water Management District’s Agricultural and Green Industry Advisory Committee, a vigorous exchange occurred related to these matters. Industry representatives pointed to the following achievable elements of landscape-related conservation versus the current state of the art:

- Water budgets rather than primitive clock and calendar water-use management. Give users an amount of water and let them decide how to spend it.
- Smart irrigation design incorporated into the Florida building code, which currently, and inexplicably (bureaucratically?) it is not.
- Comprehensive, properly-designed, use of water conservation technology like smart controllers and soil-moisture sensors,



rather than that being the exception (more education and incentives are needed).

- Incredible real-time advances in soil amendment technology which promotes reduced irrigation, reduced nutrients, reduced pest pressure and, of course, increased plant health. A focus on soils as a key element in water conservation is sorely needed and very long overdue.
- Last but certainly not least, education about how much to irrigate, when not to irrigate, etc. is critical. Look at the SWFWMD's very successful Skip-A-Week messaging program to turn your sprinklers off at least every other week in the cool season. Even if you are a persistent over-irrigator, you just cut your water use by 50 percent. Brilliant, easy, free and non-destructive.

If all of these were applied appropriately to landscapes, golf courses and sports fields, which is increasingly the case and which can be done at a reasonable cost, the water savings would be nothing short of astonishing.

Finally, certain local governments have been led to believe that the use of certain landscape caretaking materials create a public health risk. The most common subject of these concerns is glyphosate – a safe and widely-used weed killer. The concerns are almost always traced back to a wholly-discredited article coming out of the IARC/

World Health Organization. That article was found to have purposefully withheld critical information showing no public health risk because of their desire to achieve a particular outcome – i.e. to eliminate the use of glyphosate.

Such gross ethical violations are often overlooked by activists who seek similar outcomes. It is EREF's job to continue to shine a light on such behavior, and to compare that to the discipline and science-based approach taken by our industry and its hard-working people.

During the balance of 2018, EREF is seeking additional financial support for its mission. Recently, a support page allowing for credit card donations was added to the EREF website at [www.ERE-Florida.com/support](http://www.ERE-Florida.com/support). Please consider making an annual donation. We are up against large, well-funded activist organizations like the Sierra Club whose agenda is to push managed landscapes off the face of Florida.

If you haven't already, sign up for our e-newsletter, also on the website. We don't bombard you – rather we send out periodic updates on the state of the industry as it relates to these matters so important to our businesses and our way of life. ■

*-Mac Carraway is executive director of the Environmental Research and Education Foundation.*



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# IN THE NEWS

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

## **Chad Kithkart**

Sanibel-Captiva Islander

*May 30*

An island golf course has launched a new program for employees on Sanibel and Captiva. Earlier in May, the Sanibel Island Golf Club began offering discounted memberships for people who work on the islands for the first time ever.

Golf professional Gene Taylor explained that club is aiming to provide golf opportunities in the off-season and spread the word about improvements to the course. In addition, it gives non-members a chance to see the changes that have been taking place.

According to Taylor, the course has not had the best reputation. But new ownership took over in 2012 and began making improvements, and a new superintendent (Chad Kithkart) has been in place for about 18 months. "Our course's condition has improved dramatically," he said. "Specifically, the greens are much better."

The Sanibel River runs through the course, so the club has been working with the city and Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation to make environmentally-conscious changes to prevent runoff from fertilizer. Native vegetation has been planted, along with bee hives and acres of native wildflowers.

## **Chris Tompa**

ABC 25WPBF News

*May 24*

The Florida Golf Club in Stuart was open for business for its first full-day Thursday, after heavy rain forced the club to be closed for five days. Golf course superintendent Chris Tompa said

crews were also allowed to catch up on mowing Thursday, something he said they weren't able to do since last Wednesday.

"We had 16.1 inches of rain since last Sunday and then, since Saturday in a 36-hour period, we had nine inches of rain which kind of put us over our threshold of the water table. I mean everything was so wet," said Tompa. Tompa said the rain that started pouring last week caused a lake to overflow, partially flood the bunker near the 16th hole.

"The lake got so high up there were fish just stranded here it was unbelievable. I've never seen anything like this," said Tompa. He admits business did suffer. "We definitely lost thousands of dollars but there's nothing there's nothing you can do about it," said Tompa. He's hoping the rain that's expected to hit our area over the Memorial Day weekend will not be as severe as the recent storms.

## **Kevin Leo**

Naples Daily News

*April 6*

Don Hunter, Mike Dero, Kevin Leo and everyone at Quail Creek Country Club braced for another blow from Mother Nature as Hurricane Irma approached in September. Nearly seven months later, the North Naples club is finishing up a strong season after its "Irma-vation" and looking forward to eventually reclaiming something Irma cost it - Collier County's first-ever United States Golf Association event.

This week, Hunter revealed that the Florida Women's Open and Women's Senior Open - both of them Florida State Golf Association events - will be played at Quail Creek from August 10-12. The Women's Open has a maximum field of 156 players and a \$50,000 total purse.







As part of an \$18.5-million capital project, the existing tennis and fitness centers, golf pro shop, halfway house and cart barn will be demolished, with the new sports and fitness center taking their place. A tennis exhibition court as well as pickleball courts also are among the additions.

Leo, the superintendent, prepped the Quail and Creek Courses as much as possible before the hurricane, and then everyone worked tirelessly to get them ready for play. Both courses were fully open November 28, 2 1/2 months after Irma hit.

“We had a lot of work to do - vegetation removal,” Leo said. “We started September 11 and we opened up nine holes 36 days later, another nine two weeks later, and both courses were open for Thanksgiving in November.

“The membership and the homeowners association here at Quail Creek, they got together and it was all for one and one for all. They really united - the membership, the management, the homeowners association. We had to do it. The (maintenance) shop was Hurricane Central for months.”

## Landon Clark

Naples Daily News

June 5

Kensington Golf and Country Club has announced the appointment of Landon Clark as superintendent of golf course operations. In this role, he is responsible for managing all of the club’s golf course facilities, training and supervising department personnel, and overseeing any golf course construction, maintenance and renovations.

Clark has several years of golf and country club experience with properties located in Southwest Florida. Most recently, he was at Fiddlesticks Country Club in Fort Myers where he started out as an IPM specialist and was later promoted to assistant superintendent and eventually superintendent of the club’s Long Mean Golf Course.

Originally from Ohio, Clark earned a bachelor’s degree in sport management from Kent State University. After graduation, he obtained his turfgrass certification from Penn State University and then moved to Florida to work year-round in the golf course industry. ■

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## Randquist Now With GCSAA as COO

Bob Randquist, CGCS, is now chief operating officer for GCSAA. Randquist comes to GCSAA after 20 years serving as director of golf course and grounds at Boca Rio Golf Club in Boca Raton, where in the last year he oversaw the renovation of its Robert von Hagge-designed course.



Bob Randquist, CGCS with the Florida GCSA's President's Award for Lifetime Service.

Prior to Boca Rio, he spent two decades as superintendent at Southern Hills Country Club in Tulsa, OK where he hosted the 1982 and 1994 PGA Championships and helped secure the 2001 U.S. Open. Randquist served as GCSAA president in 2011 and has been a GCSAA member for 41 years and became certified in 1985. Randquist served on the USGA Green Section Committee for 27 years and has been honored by the USGA with its Ike Grainger Award, which recognizes 25 years of volunteer service. He received the President's Award for Lifetime Service in 2016.

"Bob has always been an active member and wonderful advocate for GCSAA, and I am very excited for him to join our team," GCSAA chief executive officer Rhett Evans says. "His wealth of experience across the golf industry will be a valuable asset as we continue to accelerate the delivery of our programs and services to our membership. I'm looking forward to a successful partnership as he oversees the day-to-day operations while I represent GCSAA on a more external front."

"Consistent participation in GCSAA's professional development programs has been an integral part of my career success as a long-term golf course superintendent," Randquist says. "I feel extremely privileged and blessed to be selected as the new chief operating officer for GCSAA. I am very grateful for the opportunity to serve in a role that will allow me to make a significant contribution back to GCSAA and its members. I can't imagine a more satisfying way to finish my career than with service to a profession that I so passionately care about."

In addition to his years on the GCSAA board of directors, he was active on the local level, having served on the board of the Palm Beach GCSA and as president of the Oklahoma GCSA and Oklahoma Turfgrass Research Foundation.

## Applications Now Open For Business Institute

Golf course superintendents seeking to enhance their business knowledge can now apply for the 2018 Syngenta Business Institute. This year marks the 10th anniversary of providing superintendents with the opportunity to learn and network in an academic setting.

This year's program runs December 3-6 in Winston-Salem, NC.

Applications close August 14, with places for about 25 superintendents.

Through a partnership with Wake Forest School of Business, selected participants will spend three days learning from business school professors about key topics such as financial management, generational and cultural differences, leadership skills, effective communication and negotiation tactics.

To be considered, candidates must complete an online application, which includes relevant work experience and educational background, as well as a short essay on why they should be selected. For more information and application details visit [www.GreenCastOnline.com/SBI](http://www.GreenCastOnline.com/SBI) or contact your local Syngenta territory manager. Successful applicants will be notified in October.



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Our leadership team and staff throughout Florida remain the same. As always, we are committed to delivering superior solutions for your course's lake, pond and wetland management needs. We are excited to continue our journey into 2018 and beyond as SOLitude Lake Management.

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## Florida's Kubel Earns

### Garske Scholarship

Brooke Kubel, daughter of Jason Kubel from TPC of Tampa Bay, is among winners in this year's Joseph S. Garske Collegiate Grants from GCSAA. Kubel received a \$1,000 scholarship to further her studies majoring in medicine and environmental bio-sciences at the University of South Florida. She was one of nine students sharing in \$12,000 in grants.

Established in honor of Par Aide company founder Joseph S. Garske, the Garske grant program is funded by the golf course accessory company and administered by the Environmental Institute for Golf, the philanthropic organization of GCSAA. For 15 years, the program has helped children and stepchildren of GCSAA members fund their education at an accredited college or trade school with one-time, one-year grants. Grants are based on community service, leadership, academic performance and an essay.

"Par Aide is proud to be able to give something back to superintendents and their children," says Dan Brown, Par Aide sales and marketing manager. "Golf course superintendents have a tireless dedication to the game of golf, and we want to honor them and their families for their efforts."

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## Irma's Impact Touches Nearly 6,000 in Golf

Nearly 6,000 golf course employees in Florida were affected by Hurricane Irma in 2017 according to a new report released by the Florida Chapter of the Club Management Association of America in conjunction with Club Benchmarking and the National Club Association. Key findings from the 79 surveyed clubs include insurance claims for damages in excess of \$27.5 million, including \$9.5 million in damages to golf courses, and 5,855 impacted employees.

The report details information about the experiences of clubs across the state in preparing for and recovering from a natural disaster. Details gathered include information about insurance claims, club facility closures and club responses and the final report offers best practices in natural disaster readiness and recovery.

"This publication memorializes the tragic natural disaster, the impact that it had on clubs, and the important implementation practices to be learned from such an event," says Beth Sargent, executive director of the Florida club management chapter. "No event has been documented in such a way within the club industry before. This publication and the supporting documents will be used to provide managers the knowledge necessary when these events occur in the future; not only in Florida, but with club managers throughout the United States."

"Hurricane Irma was a storm of historic proportions and even experienced management teams took away some very hard lessons. We felt it was important to capture their experiences and document them in an informative and meaningful way," says Jim Butler, Club Benchmarking chief executive officer. "Stakeholders in these important community institutions—members, employees and vendors—were deeply impacted by Irma both personally and financially. Our hope is that this report can help to improve what we understand about the importance of preparedness and response planning going forward."

"Hurricane Irma 2017: The Economic, Human and Social Impact on Florida Clubs" is available to NCA members, FLCMAA members and Club Benchmarking clients. For more information, call Beth Sargent at (561) 373-0919 or email [md@flcmma.org](mailto:md@flcmma.org).

## Hughes Earns PGA Award



Trevor Hughes

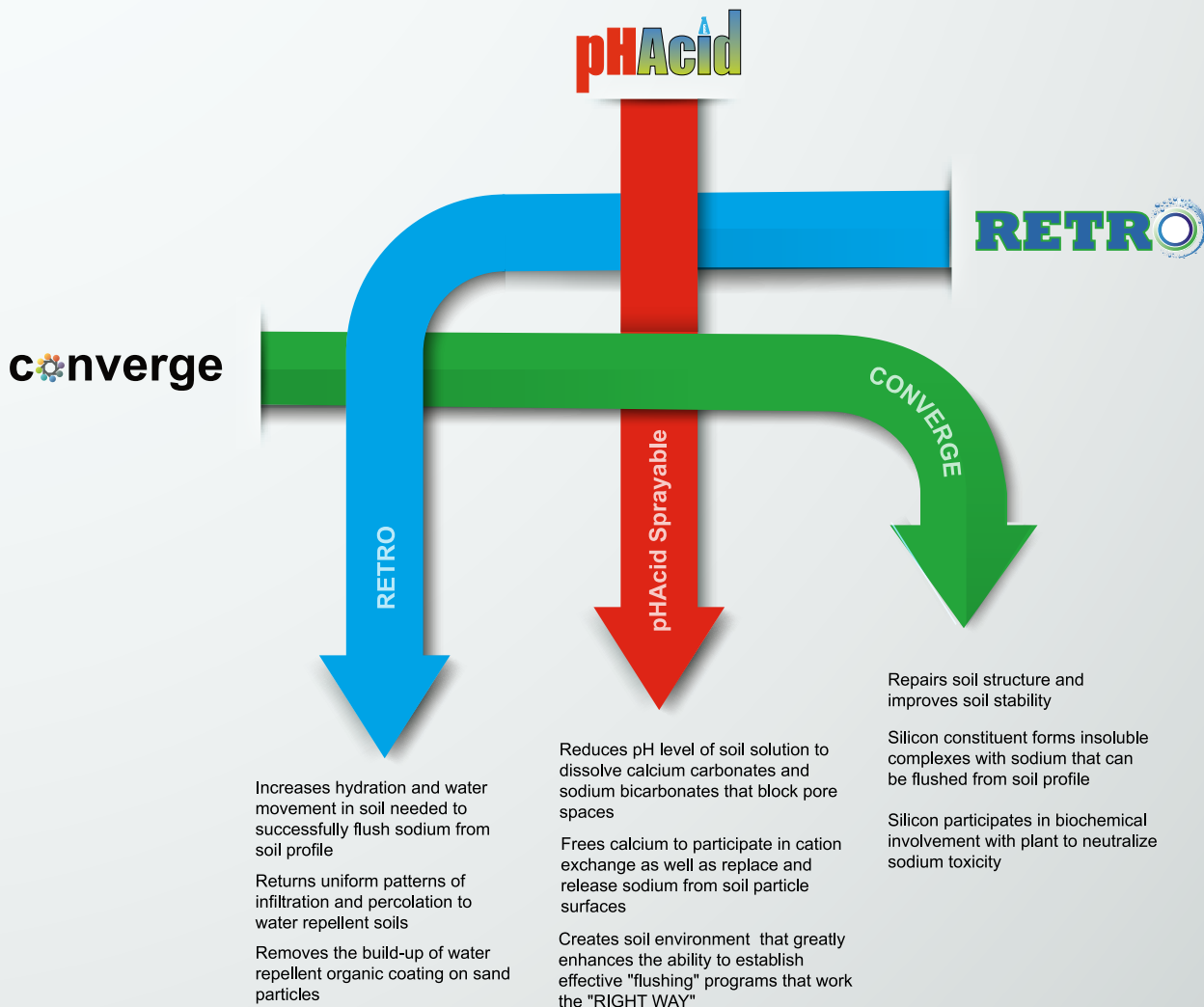
Congratulations to Trevor Hughes from Ponte Vedra Inn and Club in Ponte Vedra being named Superintendent of the Year by the North Florida PGA Section. The Superintendent of the Year Award recognizes the superintendent whose contributions to the facility show exceptional commitment of passion, time and resources to provide the best playing conditions and conservation practices.





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## Second Date Nears To Team Qualify

The second of five qualifying events to represent the Florida GCSA at next year's GCSAA National Golf Championship is the Florida GCSA State Championship at Streamsong Resort in Bowling Green on August 3. Alex Holt, from Gulf Harbour Yacht and Country Club in Fort Myers is the first member of the team, having qualified with his win at the Poa Annua Classic in Naples in May.

After Streamsong, comes the Florida Turfgrass Association Championship at World Golf Village in St. Augustine on September 17. The North Florida GCSA Fall Classic follows at Omni Amelia Island Plantation over October 12-14. The final chance to qualify comes at the Central Florida GCSA Crowfoot Classic on December 15 at Grand Cypress Resort in Orlando.

Winners of those events will play for the Florida GCSA during the national championships in the lead up to the Golf Industry Show in San Diego, CA in February.

## Toro Recognizes May with Award

The Toro Company has recognized two employees who serve in the northwest Florida region. David May of the Jerry Pate Company won Toro's RLC Regional Blazer Award and Mike Payne won the Irrigation Master Salesperson Award.

As a dealer representative, May provides equipment to dealers in northwest Florida, southeast Alabama and southwest Georgia. The award recognizes excellence over the course of a Toro sales career. Special attention was given to performance during the 2017 selling season; total territory performance in sales, new dealer acquisition and value-added activities that develop high performing dealers.

Payne's award recognizes consistently outstanding results in irrigation sales and customer satisfaction. He is a commercial irrigation sales representative who serves northwest Florida, southern Alabama, southern Mississippi and Louisiana.

## Matt Gregg Back With Harrell's

Matt Gregg has rejoined Harrell's as sales director for the Coastal Plains region. Gregg will lead the Coastal Plains team of 10 turf sales representatives and employee-owners in the Panhandle of Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Tennessee, Kentucky and Southern Indiana.

Gregg holds both an undergraduate degree in Horticulture and a Master's degree in Plant and Environmental Sciences from Clemson University and has 15 years of industry experience. After finishing his M.S. degree in 2003, he joined Harrell's team as a turf sales representative in Central Florida. He then pioneered and expanded the Harrell's footprint supporting golf course superintendents in the developing Virginia market for four years.

Most recently, Gregg worked for Hocking International Laboratories where he investigated new product opportunities, product development, and provided technical sales support for Harrell's.

## UF To Take On BMP Program

Administration of Florida's Golf BMP Certification program is being transferred to the University of Florida this year. The move will bring even further credibility to the program that has already earned wide respect from lawmakers and agency representatives.

For members who are due to recertify this year, they can go ahead in the meantime in one of the following ways:

- Attend another Golf BMP Certification class;
- Submit four CEU's to the Florida GCSA office (two core, two category) with a brief explanation of how they relate to the BMPs;
- Complete the checklist in the back of the Golf BMP manual and submit it to the Florida GCSA with any necessary supporting documents.

Recertification costs \$50 for Florida GCSA members and \$75 for non-members.

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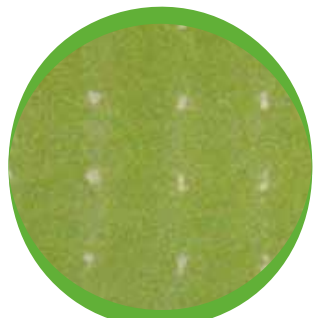
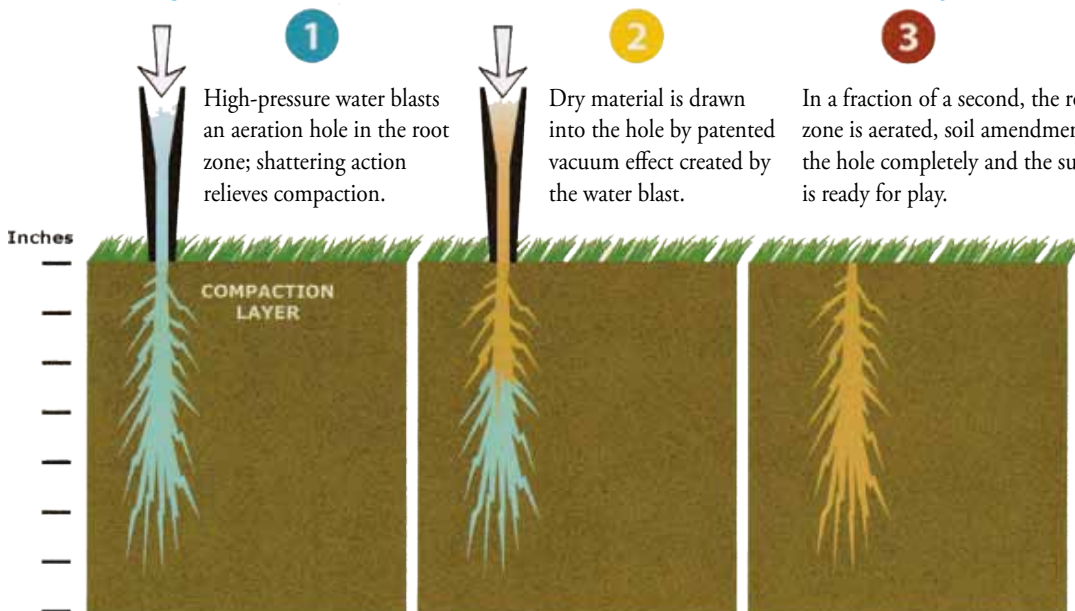
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## Circle the Wagons For MSMA Battle

If I told you there was a chance to get MSMA back as part of your chemical control program, would you be willing to circle the wagons? Would you be willing to put in the effort to bring back MSMA as a product labeled for golf course use in Florida? Well, this is exactly what I have been asked to determine.



Ralph Dain, CGCS

Recently Chava McKeel, GCSAA's director of government affairs, inquired if superintendents in Florida would welcome the return of MSMA for use on golf courses. I have asked chapter board members for their thoughts and the message I am receiving is overwhelmingly, yes.

For years, MSMA provided superintendents with an effective and relatively affordable option for a broad range of weed control. But concerns about ground water contamination led the EPA to call for MSMA use to be phased out. Since that time, there has been a lot of debate about the science behind that decision and whether lawmakers were getting the full story on any impacts from MSMA. There is a growing school of thought that a complete and thorough grasp of the science will show that MSMA is indeed safe for use.

This will be an uphill battle, but we are in the early stages of fighting for the return of a tool that was an effective, low-cost, post-emergent control for a variety of weeds affecting golf courses. I am writing this today to bring most of the Florida Golf Course Superintendent Association's membership up to speed with our efforts.

Chava was initially contacted by Charlie Grizzle who leads the Organic Arsenical Products Task Force, which was integral in getting the use of MSMA extended until 2013. He has now asked us to assist in an effort to get the use of MSMA returned for use on Florida

golf courses. Here is where we stand to date.

There is a new study of the environmental fate of MSMA scheduled for presentation to the EPA in the first half of July. Sometime after these findings have been presented a PRIA (Pesticide Registration Improvement Extension Act) Application will be filed with the EPA. It's at that point that we need the circled wagons.

Recently, I participated in a conference call with Charlie where we put forth a plan of action that will need the support of every willing member if it is to succeed. In speaking with Chava, we are hoping to pull together a webcast explaining our steps to effectively embark on a letter-writing campaign on this issue. Charlie is going to provide specific talking points that should be included in our messaging.

Once we get to the point of writing letters, we will be looking for both quality and quantity. Letters sent to the EPA will stress the reasons why MSMA should be returned for use on Florida golf courses. I envision a template letter similar to what we have used for our GCSAA Action Alerts where individuals can sign and edit as they see fit before delivery to the EPA.

We will also be looking for individuals to compose a letter including the talking points in their own words. This effort should illustrate the desire we have for restoring our ability to use MSMA.

I will ask for Florida GCSA executive director Jennifer Bryan's assistance in getting the messaging out to all Florida members through email correspondence. This is an important issue that impacts most of our members in the state, so I am hopeful that our response rate is high. We know this will be a huge battle but with your support and perseverance maybe we can return an option for you that has been stripped from your chemical inventory. ■

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



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