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Four Steps to Success

Golf season is upon us. As we wrap up our summer projects and get everything in place for the golfers, I encourage you not to “over-focus.” Certainly you need to focus on doing your job and make sure everything is done correctly, but don’t focus so narrowly that you’re aware only of your own facility. Often we get busy and have little time to spare. We reduce our staffs while our responsibilities increase. We stop worrying about anything that is not pertinent to the immediate needs of our facilities.

Keeping up with industry news, participating in industry programs, furthering our education and building relationships with other professionals all go on the back burner. While we might feel that there isn’t time to do these things, the truth is we can’t afford not to. I’m going to challenge you to accomplish four things that will make you a better superintendent and bring more value to your course.

First, attend as many meetings of your local superintendent chapter as possible. If you rarely attend meetings, check your chapter’s upcoming schedule and reserve time for the next appropriate event. If you don’t know a lot of people and feel like an outsider, call a superintendent or vendor whom you do know and make arrangements to attend with them. It’s a great way to extend your network and meet other professionals. Don’t be afraid to tell your employer that you would like to attend. Most chapter events have a lot to offer in terms of education and networking. Make sure you communicate to your employer what you plan to gain from your participation. Employers are usually supportive if they can see the value.

Second, complete the Golf BMP Certification if you have not already done so. This program is critical in strengthening our position as golf course managers to continue using fertilizer, water and pesticides in a responsible manner. It is important that as an industry we demonstrate our dedication to protecting the environment through responsible use of resources. If we fail to do so, water, fertilizer and chemicals will be taken from us. Every time we lose a resource, providing an enjoyable golfing experience becomes more difficult.

Kevin Sunderman,
President

Third, sign up to participate in EREF (Environmental Research & Education Foundation), which is backed by a coalition of related industries including lawn care, pest control, golf courses, sod growers, sports turf managers, etc. Its purpose is to raise funds to support our cause through research and advocacy. For years opponents to our industry’s use of fertilizer have communicated uncontested claims. Lawmakers and the general public have taken our opponents at their word. EREF’s purpose is to represent our views and effectively communicate them to lawmakers and public alike. You can find the link to sign up on the FGCSA website. Your participation involves a 0.6 percent donation billed on all of your fertilizer purchases from participating distributors. This amounts to just 60 cents for every $100 purchased. Everyone’s participation is needed to make this program successful.

Finally, I ask you to do business with those companies that support the FGCSA, your local chapter and the industry as a whole. Our vendors rely on our success as much as we do. Many of our vendors recognize the importance of promoting the golf industry. They advertise in the FGCSA publications. They join local chapters. They sponsor events. While this can be seen simply as advertising, it also has to be viewed as support for our industry. Without their help, both the FGCSA and local chapters would not have the funding needed to provide services and benefits to our members or funds to support the advancement of the industry. Please take the time to thank our supporting vendors and encourage others to get involved.

We superintendents are busy. It’s easy to get bogged down in the everyday demands of our own facilities. However, the long-term success of both the industry and your facility depends on many other factors. By accomplishing the above four items, you will be helping yourself, your employer and the industry.
For Every Superintendent
There is a Season

From left: Andrew Jorgensen, CGCS, president, Seven Rivers GCSA; Dr. Jason Kruse, Dr. Kevin Kenworthy, and Dr. Brian Unruh of UF/IFAS; and Jim Shaffer, External VP, Seven Rivers GCSA.

According to the heavens it is autumn, which can mean peak hurricane season and/or just cloudy "blah" days before we finally start cooler weather. It is a time for the turf to heal from all the renovation and construction programs. It is the last of the "slow play" days before the snowbirds flock to the fairways to begin the busy winter golf season. It is during this time that many of our chapters and associations wrap up their final events of the year. Here are some of the things that happened during the "dog days" of summer. Look ahead in the "Calendar of Events" and on the FGCSA website and you can see what’s coming up for the remainder of the year all the way to the GCSAA GIS Conference in Orlando in February!

Seven Rivers: In August the chapter presented a check to Drs. Jason Kruse, Brian Unruh and Kevin Kenworthy at the University of Florida to fund one year of a continuing multi-year turfgrass breeding study, which is also supported by the Florida GCSA.

The chapter was also highlighted in a human-interest story in the Ocala Star

Seven Rivers members hold a Work Day to help fellow member Barry Greenwalt and his family. Greenwalt has been battling liver disease for nine years. Back row from left: Nathan Armstrong, Jim Shaffer, Andy Jorgensen, Duncan Orris, Ron Palsgrove, Danny Cravey, Josh Carter, Gavin Carter and Chad Nixon. Front row Barry Greenwalt and his daughter Sofia.
At the SFGCSA Annual Meeting at the Hillcrest CC on July 25th, South Florida GCSA President Ricky Reeves (right) presented a check in the amount of $25,000 to Dr. George Snyder, Professor Emeritus representing the UF/IFAS REC in Ft. Lauderdale. The funds are for research projects and maintenance of the facilities at the research center.

Banner when they surprised the Barry Greenwalt family with a "Work Day" at their Ocala home on Saturday August 3, 2013. Barry Greenwalt received his second liver transplant in December of last year is now back on a waiting list for a third transplant. The group did landscaping, roof repair, mowing, clean up and assembled a playground for little 5-year old Sofia. "The gesture was overwhelming," said Barry and his wife Andrea, "we have been truly blessed by this and are forever grateful." (From an article by Lisa Crigar, Ocala Star Banner).

South Florida: More turf research support was evidenced by the SFGCSA as the association used proceeds from the annual South Florida Turf Expo held every March to present a check to support continued research studies and maintenance of the turf plots and research green at the UF/IFAS Research and Education Center in Ft. Lauderdale.

Central Florida: On Aug. 22, the first joint event between the CFGCSA & the NFGCSA was held at Spruce Creek CC. The concept of the "Fly In Shoot Out" was the idea of Spruce Creek Superintendent Bo Irby and Jayce Ramage from Pro Plus. More than 50 participants hailing from Polk County to Duval County made the journey to what proved to be a great day. A big "thank you" goes to Irby and his staff for their preparations as the golf course was in awesome condition. And thanks to Jayce Ramage for assisting Bo in the planning and promotion of this event. Golf results: 1st Place Gross Winners: Chris Cartin & Don Mashaw and 1st Place Net Winners: Chris Flynn & Josh Kelley. The CFGCSA is excited about the opportunity to partner with the NFGCSA and hopefully make this an annual event.

Palm Beach & South Florida: From the newest joint chapter meeting, we journey south for one of the oldest joint ventures in the association. In 1978 the Palm Beach Chapter split from the South Florida GCSA, and sometime in the 1980s the joint meetings began. This year the Palm Beach chapter hosted the South Florida GCSA at Mark Heaters Addison Reserve CC, a 27-hole Arthur Hills layout, with the nines being called: Salvation, Trepidation and Redemption. The group played the Salvation and Trepidation nines in both the Ryder Cup-style challenge matches for the Jimmy Blackledge Trophy and the individual stroke play division. At the end of the day, the Palm Beach chapter was victorious, 3 to 2, over South Florida.

Next month Palm Beach takes on the Treasure Coast Chapter in its annual match at Martin Downs GC in Vero Beach. The Treasure Coast GCSA split away from the Palm Beach GCSA in 1980, so both of these events go back a long way.
Meet your newly elected FGCSA officers for the 2013-14 fiscal year. From left: President Kevin Sunderman, Vice President Bill Davidson, CGCS, Secretary-Treasurer David Dore-Smith and Immediate Past President Nancy Miller, CGCS. Photo by Joel Jackson.

Florida GCSA: The state association officers and directors also meet this time of year for the combined Fall Board Meeting and Annual Meeting and election of officers for the new fiscal year. The association will be studying business models and, as needed, may retain a business consultant specializing in nonprofit associations to develop a new strategic member-service-based business plan. The need, criteria and skill set for the executive director position will be examined. The association will take all the time needed to find the best plan that will fit the needs of the association and its members. Meanwhile, former Executive Director Joel Jackson, will continue to serve the association as communications director with the main responsibilities of working on our publications and communications.

The results of the election of officers for the 2013-14 fiscal year: President Kevin Sunderman, Vice-President Bill Davidson, CGCS, Secretary-Treasurer David Dore-Smith and Immediate Past President Nancy Miller, CGCS. Past President Mark Kann was not able to attend because of a family emergency. The board appreciates Mark's board service to the association and his organization and administration of the BMP Certification program.

2013 Calendar of Events

NOVEMBER
Nov. 9 CFGCSA Vendor/Supt Meeting, TBA

DECEMBER
Dec. 6 Calusa Christmas Charity Tournament, Stoneybrook GC
CFGCSA Crowfoot Open, Grand Cypress
Dec. 16 NFGCSA Christmas Golf Tournament, Deerwood GC
December SFGCSA Holiday Outing, Flamingo Lakes, TBA
December Palm Beach Toys for Tots Event, TBA

JANUARY 2014
Jan. 21 PGA Merchandise Demo Day, Orange County National GC
Jan. 22-24 PGA Merchandise Show, Orange County Convention Center

FEBRUARY 2014
Feb. 3-6 GCSAA Golf Industry Show, Orlando
Feb. 6 FGCSA Reception, B.B. King's House of Blues, Pointe Orlando
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- Pat Ford's Nursery
- South Florida Grassing
- Sullivan Electric and Pump Service
- The Fountains Country Club
- John Sanford Golf Design
- Aquatrols
- Pike Creek Turf
- Dunns Signs
- Gulf Stream Golf Club
- Prime Turf – Shelly Israelson
- Redox Turf
- Quali-Pro
- Aqua Turf International
- TriEst Ag Group – Curfew Applicators
SPOTLIGHT

FGCSA Golf Championship

All work and no play makes superintendents dull guys! So every year – usually in August – FGCSA members gather for fun, networking and serious golf. The 2013 Championship held at the Southern Dunes GC in Haines City was a history maker in two ways. It was the first time every chapter in the state participated, and superintendent aka “golf pro” Deron Zendt won his fourth state champion title and his spot on the Florida team for the GCSAA Golf Championship in February.

Congratulations to Deron Zendt for shooting a remarkable 69 to win the 2013 FGCSA Championship and a spot on the FGCSA Golf Team to compete in the 2014 GCSAA Golf Championships next February in Orlando. Photo by Joel Jackson.

Led by Zendt’s low score of 69, the Palm Beach Team #1 captured the Chapter Team Trophy at the FGCSA Golf Championship held Aug. 23 at the Southern Dunes GC in Haines City. From the left: Steve Wright, Deron Zendt, Steve Bernard, Robert Anderson and Mark Heater. Photo by Joel Jackson.

The Palm Beach Chapter won the Jimmy Blackledge Trophy 3-2 in the Ryder Cup-style match. Winning their matches, from left: Robert Anderson, Shannon Wheeler and host superintendent Mark Heater. Photo by Joel Jackson.

Kasey Kauff, Country Club of Orlando (right) accepts the Low Net Superintendent prize from FGCSA Golf Chairman Joe Ondo at the FGCSA Golf Championship. Photo by Joel Jackson.

Joe Ondo (left) congratulates John Swaner of Golf Agronomics for winning the Low Vendor title in the Supplier Division of the FGCSA Golf Championship. Photo by Joel Jackson.

Individual Stroke Play winners at the Palm Beach GCSA & South Florida GCSC Joint Meeting and Golf Challenge, from the left: Joe Hubbard, Low Net Vendor; Matt Ticiliauskas, Low Gross Superintendent and Kevin Downing, Low Gross Vendor. Not pictured was John Gallagher, Low Net Superintendent. Photo by Joel Jackson.
Thanks everyone for making this a successful event!

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IN MEMORIAM

This past spring we lost two of our legendary superintendents who served their chapters and our industry well. We take a moment to remember them, their leadership and their service.

Adam Yurigan, Jr.
Adam was born in Turtle Creek, Pa. and attended the University of Pittsburgh. On June 5, 1943 he married Elizabeth Barnes. He served in the U.S. Army in World War II and was discharged in 1945. Adam was in the golf industry for 70 years. In the 1940s through the 1970s he held positions as golf professional and superintendent at a number of courses in Iowa. He eventually migrated to Florida and became the superintendent at the Rio Pinar CC in Orlando. Later he moved to the east coast and worked at the Johns Island Club, Hawks Nest GC and as a consultant to the Vero Beach CC. Adam was passionate about giving back to the community and to the golf industry. He was a mentor to many starting out in the golf course business. He was an active member of the Rotary Club, PGA of America and the GCSAA. Adam was one of the founding members and first president of the Central Florida GCSA and he also was a member of the Treasure Coast GCSA.

Al Ross, CGCS
Al Ross was born in New York and attended Farmingdale State University, majoring in golf course turf management. Shortly after graduation he moved to Florida to start his career as a turf manager. At that time his mother lived in New Port Richey, and learning of Al's plans she made some inquiries on his behalf concerning jobs in the area. Chuck McCracken at Beacon Woods GC hired Ross as his assistant, and Ross was there for construction through grow-in and then some. Five years later Ross got his first head superintendent job at Inverness where he stayed for two and a half years. Ross then relocated to the Sunrise CC in Ft. Lauderdale where he remained for 19 years. In 1986 he joined the South Florida GCSA and served as president in 1991-92. He continued his board service beyond his presidency, assisting with education planning, serving at the will of the chapter. He valued the networking and exchange of ideas at monthly meetings, which he felt helped him fine-tune his programs and efficiency on the job. His favorite SFGCSA event was the annual benefit event for the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, because it was a very worthy cause benefitting the children in the community.

Ross is survived by his wife Candace and their children, Alfred, Courtney and Melissa.

(Editors Note: Thanks to Bob Klitz and his article on Al Ross in the Summer 1999 Florida Green for information on Al's life and contributions.)

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Darren Davis Receives FGCSA President’s Award

During the Everglades GCSA annual meeting at the Imperial Golf Club in July, Darren J. Davis received the FGCSA President’s Award for Lifetime Service from the chapter. The stated purpose of the President’s award is: “...to honor those superintendent pioneers who were instrumental in state and local affair, with 20 or more years of service to the turfgrass industry.”

In his letter of nomination of Davis to the Florida GCSA, chapter president David Dore-Smith said, “Darren has been on the forefront of both local and state issues concerning turfgrass management and helping to promote the professionalism of the industry as a whole.

“Darren is widely respected within local, state and national circles for his dedication to turfgrass management and was recently recognized as one of the 10 most influential people of the industry.

“Using both the local and state director and officer positions as experience, Darren has now engaged successfully with a position on the National Board of Directors with the GCSAA. Once again, confirming his dedication and commitment to turfgrass management.”

Davis was elected to a two-year term on the GCSAA Board of Directors February 7, 2013, at the association’s annual meeting in San Diego. He was first appointed to the board of directors at the 2012 annual meeting in Las Vegas.

Davis has been the golf course superintendent at Olde Florida Golf Club in Naples, since 1992. Previously he was an assistant superintendent at the Loxahatchee Club in Jupiter, Fla. Additional professional experience includes two stints at the Augusta National Golf Club, the first serving as an apprentice superintendent in 1990 and returning as the IPM technician in 1991.

A 23-year GCSAA member, Davis is the past president of the Everglades GCSA, and a past president of the Florida GCSA and Florida Turfgrass Association. He is currently a director with the Musser International Turfgrass Foundation. In 2004, the FGCSA honored him with its Distinguished Service Award, and in 2011 the FTGA presented Davis with the Wreath of Grass - the association’s highest award.

A native of Tallahassee, he earned a turfgrass management certificate from Penn State University in 1991, graduating with highest distinction. He also obtained an associate of arts degree from Tallahassee Community College in 1987, and in 2007, Florida Gulf Coast University conferred upon him a bachelor of arts degree in communication (summa cum laude).

(Editor’s Note: Davis also served as the editor of the FTGA magazine, The Florida Turf Digest, for several years and he has been a regular contributor to the FGCA's magazine, The Florida Green, submitting “Super Tips” and photographs, sharing innovative ideas on equipment and turf management programs with his peers.)