

# DIVOTS

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Willow Lakes Golf Club



## Technical Representatives

If you have ever had to write equipment specifications for a government bid contract or had to convince a greens committee board that you need a piece of equipment, you can sure use all the technical information you can obtain.

When submitting equipment acquisitions to a regulated agency such as the military, school board, college or park system in your area, you will have to submit bid forms from different distributors. You, as the superintendent of your facility, know what piece of equipment is needed to perform the job. You have worked with this type of equipment for some time and are comfortable with its operation. You could tell everyone at your facility what piece of equipment you want. But when writing the exact specifications for a certain unit or units for more than one facility, your technical representative is available and willing to assist you. Manufacturers and their representatives such as Jacobsen and Toro have people available to assist you not only in technical data but also to assist you with any presentations you may have to make.

Not only do we need this type of support from our area technical representatives at certain times of the year, we certainly need their support throughout the year.

When I first came to the North Florida area, I had to find out equipment and equipment parts availability. Coming across the United States I have found two equipment companies that are synonymous with the turf industry, Jacobsen Textron and Minnesota Toro. They have not only excellent equipment available but also have the technical representatives to back them up. There are many more excellent turf equipment companies in the North Florida area as well as chemical irrigation and seed companies, etc. The manufacturers of the turf supply industry can put out the best possible products available, but if they don't have the technical representatives with the knowledge and the willingness to give the support needed by the turf manager, he will look elsewhere.

It sure is assuring to know that there are technical representatives like Bob Ward at Zaun Equipment and Paul Hamrick at Tresca Industries who will work hard in your

area to keep you informed of the technical changes not only at the end of the year but will also work with you on a daily basis. These men are the working arms of the equipment distributors in our area. They have the training and technical knowledge to support the superintendent when he needs it. The technical representative in our area knows that when we purchase a product we need to be backed up by the entire company that we are doing business with. When there is a problem that needs to be taken care of we need to be able to talk to the right people. When contacting the representative that sold us the product, we need to know that he will back up his products with warranties, parts and service.

When a new piece of equipment fails because of a manufacturer's defect, we need to be able to contact the representative who sold us the piece of equipment. We need him to be our mediator between the purchaser and the manufacturer, not only to help with all needed records of purchases, delivery date, condition upon delivery, or warranties, but also to ensure both parties of equitable settlement. During this period of waiting for a new piece of equipment we need something to do the job with. Again we go to the rep — he will find something, if possible.

How about when you are looking for a used piece of equipment to fill in your fleet? The representative who calls on you in your area also covers a lot of territory that we can't get to. I ask Paul and Bob to keep an eye out for me and they will ultimately come up with what I need.

Remember when you are out in your shop talking about the performance of a certain piece of equipment that the answers you give the representative will be taken back to his desk and evaluated, to help make any weak points known to the distributor. When these weak points are evaluated throughout his company and we see them turned into strong points at the next field day or equipment show, we know that the representative and his company are listening. When we ask a representative to look into a new alternative to an old problem we expect some kind of answer or solution. The next time we are at our national annual golf course superintendents meeting we can see and hear many answers.

*(continued on page 37)*

(continued from page 36)

As a member of the Board of Directors and the Secretary/Treasurer of the North Florida Golf Course Superintendents Chapter, I know that we need and expect the support of the commercial companies and their representatives. The representatives come and join our meetings and always bring industry information that all the superintendents can use. The representatives at our meetings travel a wide area and bring us useful information from this area.

I hope that the representatives that the superintendents need and count on know that we appreciate their knowledge and expertise in their fields. ■

## ATTENTION!!!

### Lake City Community College Golf and Landscape Alumni

We need your current address — Please send address and phone number to:

John Wildom  
c/o Lake City Community College  
Rt. 3, Box 7  
Lake City, FL 32055

## MASTER GARDENERS Till the Soil of Knowledge

By: Catherine C. Elverston

Gainesville Last year alone, 1,100 volunteers in 33 Florida counties donated more than 25,000 work hours giving some 62,000 pieces of free advice on plant care, with a reported savings to consumers of more than \$400,000.

The Master Gardeners met in Gainesville recently to receive their reward for all that volunteering from the Cooperative Extension Service of the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS).

During the three days of courses, "They named practically every plant or tree and diagnosed just about every plant problem at hand," said Kathleen Delate, master gardener state coordinator at IFAS.

"The MG program was started in 1979 in three Florida counties to help Extension agents deal with increasing numbers of horticulture questions and plant problems of urban population," Delate said. Community volunteers are trained in intensive weeklong horticulture classes in return for committing 50-100 hours of service to the county MG program.

Workshops on 22 subjects — including landscape design, plant propagation, and the basics of plant disease — emphasized hands-on experience for the volunteers who are often called upon to assist in diagnosing homeowners' plant problems.

IFAS Extension Dean Jim App assisted in presenting the annual awards to over 70 Master Gardeners who have dedicated more than 300 volunteer hours.

Award winning projects included city beautification, a community plant seminar series, and creative educational participation at a regional Youth Fair.

The conference closed with tours to seven areas of horticultural interest, including Kanapaha Botanical Gardens, Paynes Prairie, and IFAS horticulturist Benny Yjia's Exotic Gardens.

"Master Gardeners are involved in a variety of county service projects," Delate said, "including demonstration and community gardens at Extension offices, convalescent homes, schools, and neighborhoods. They offer plant clinics at many public locations and diagnose plant problems via telephone, walk-ins, home visits, and computers at the Extension offices, to name just a few."

Any person interested in learning more about plants, their problems and how to solve them, should check with their county Cooperative Extension office to receive an application to participate in the MG program.



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