

*It's a matter of fairness,
humility, and dedication
to serving the members*



It was one of the nicest birthday presents I have ever received.

Just a few hours after my biorhythms began their 48th annual cycle, your board of directors voted to award my company, Janlark Communications Inc., a contract to publish your magazine beginning next year. The action taken by your board amounted to an overwhelming personal vote of confidence.

My first prayer, then, is that I might never violate that trust you have placed in me. As we grow together, I hope none of us ever forgets that the FGCSA and Janlark began their relationship because some real people genuinely liked and trusted one another.

The second prayer is that I might never forget that *The Florida Green* is your magazine. If your magazine doesn't serve you and your association, it will be time to look for a different publisher.

During the five months of discussions that led up to the board meeting of May 21, some of the most difficult moments occurred as we tried to decide whether the magazine's primary function is education or public relations.

The magazine can serve both roles, but one must take precedence. Is it a public relations tool that educates its members? Or should it be a good educational tool that reaps public relations benefits?

We finally settled on the latter.

Also coming under scrutiny was the matter of geography. Some think the magazine has been biased towards South Florida.

As a 15-year observer of the Florida golfing scene, I estimate that at least a third of all the state's golf activity takes place in the three Gold Coast counties. When you consider that Southwest Florida is the fastest-growing golf area in the nation (according to the National Golf Foundation), *any* golf publication in Florida is going to appear slanted towards the South.

However, the situation has been aggravated because your publication has been produced by members who live in South Florida and depend on help from their colleagues.

The arms easiest to twist are those within reach.

Under the new arrangement, your magazine will be pro-

duced by a full-time professional staff that will be expected to cover the whole state. . . from the center of the state.

Hopefully, superintendents will continue to form the backbone of the reporting staff but no arms will be twisted.

The most important aspect of the publishing agreement, and one which required no negotiating, is the issue of control. It's *your* magazine. Your association must control it.

The mechanics of exercising that control are much too involved to discuss here, but, in summary, all policies — everything from advertising rates to suitable story ideas — will be set by the publications committee. Every major story will be approved by a superintendent-editor before it is written and *every word* will be approved by that same editor or his assistants before it is set into type.

This joint venture may not be profitable for anybody but the telephone company and manufacturers of fax paper.

Speaking of profits, our agreement assures income to the FGCSA right off the top. You get a percentage of the gross revenue roughly equivalent to what had been turned over to the association in previous years. It's up to me to try to make a profit out of what's left.

Finally, I must say a few words about Dan and Irene Jones, who have written *The Florida Green's* 15-year success story.

The enormity of their accomplishment is staggering.

Dan and Irene have succeeded where experienced publishers have failed because Dan and Irene have been dedicated to serving this profession. They have done things the hard way, the long way, the complicated way and sometimes the inefficient way, all because no one had shown them the professional shortcuts. And who would like to argue with the awards they have earned for the FGCSA? Not I.

When I can hang some agronomy awards next to the journalism hardware on my wall, I will be able to stand in their league. In the meantime, I intend to follow their formula: fairness, humility and dedication to service.