

As the newly-elected president of the FGCSA I must say that it is an honor and privilege to be selected for this position. I will endeavor to perform the functions of my office in a manner that will be for the betterment of all members of our association. As with all associations, we have both good and bad news. I will be sharing these news items with you for the next few moments.

Don't fail your profession and your future — join FGCSA for the battle, today

Some good news. Our research green we jointly built with IFAS in Fort Lauderdale is doing great. There were funds donated by virtually all the local chapters to this green this year, placing it on firm financial footing. This a prime example of how we are working with the public sector to perform tests, carry out programs, evaluate product, all to gather technical information we can understand and use that is relevant to what Florida needs.

Some more good news is our membership rolls continue to expand. With the addition of our newest chapter, Seven Rivers GCSA, we now have 11 local chapters. The final member count last year was 750. We hope this number will increase during the next 12 months.

Our publication committee continues to perform the same high level of service we have grown accustomed to. The total commitment of the editors and staff keeps our magazines and other periodicals the envy of other state organizations.

The education committee has done a bang-up job the past year. The workshops and seminars we have put on and are scheduling for the upcoming year will

provide valuable ideas and information to help us do our jobs better.

Tim Hiers' government relations committee is finishing work on a regulatory compliance package. This program, when completed, will allow for your facility to be audited by fellow superintendents for compliance with the major state regulations. This is a program administered by your peers to prevent you from being cited and fined by a state agency for noncompliance. Ignorance of the rules is not going to keep you out of hot water.

The bad news. The golf course industry is coming under fire from all sides. Now they are even talking about taking away our water rights. Some want us to pay to dispose of the public waste. We are taking our stand and drawing the line and we need all the support the industry can muster. It is now or never for this industry; we need all golf courses to become members of the FGCSA, the Florida Golf Council, and the FTGA. Together, perhaps, we can change attitudes and protect ourselves from erroneous thinking and bad law.

To sit idly by and not participate is unprofessional and suicidal. If we lose this battle we will have only ourselves to blame.

I implore all golf clubs who receive this publication to become active, join your sister clubs in these efforts. The small amount of money to become members in these associations is peanuts compared to what you will be paying if we fail in our goals.

There are a lot of clubs that receive this magazine that are not members of any of the above organizations. We all are working for the same cause and we will all feel the ramifications if we simply sit back and fail to participate. Send in your membership today, become active, investigate what we are about. I think you will agree that we are worthy of your support.

Tom



Tom Benefield, CGCSA
FGCSA President