

Perhaps one of the most relished times of the year for GCSAA members is the GCSAA Show & Conference.

It's a time to learn the newest and best turf information and to network with many friends... a time to recharge the batteries, so to speak, and take back to their clubs fresh ideas to old problems.

The GCSAA puts on a truly progressive conference which sets new attendance levels each year.

An aspect of the annual event is the GCSAA Golf Tournament.

From around the world aspiring golf enthusiasts spend good money to participate and showcase their golfing expertise. It is a well-attended and well-run event which offers not only golf but also a social program and atmosphere that is appealing to the golfing superintendent.

As my friend Ned said, however, "If what you say is true, why are so many of our members wanting a change?"

You see Ned and I go way back and he is the type of person to tell you what's really on his mind. And after you take into account that Ned has played in the last 10 GCSAA tournaments with varying degrees of success, you have to lend some credence to what he's got to say.

"So what's wrong with the tournament?" I ask Ned.

In his deep, Georgian drawl he answered, "It's at the wrong time of the

year. It should be held in the summer or early fall."

He went on to explain his reasoning.

The winter time is a very "iffy" proposition for having decent weather. The conditions, weatherwise, are normally fairly miserable... especially this year in Dallas.

"I mean, why do we have to play the tournament at the worst time of the year?" He asked. "We have great golf courses all over the country which we can play most any time of the year other than winter. We are unfairly limiting our course selections because of the way we do our planning and scheduling."

"Whoa there partner," I said to Ned. "I'll grant you that it is held at the wrong time of the year as far as weather is concerned. Is there anything else?" I asked.

"Yes, as a matter of fact, there is," he replied.

"As far as selecting the best golfer of our association, we also have missed the boat," he continued, offering a lengthy dissertation on the reality of golfing and practicing golf during the months preceding the tournament.

"None of this time period is a period when a superintendent can practice and hone his skills to his best level for competition. Only during the summer and fall months are superintendents actually playing decent golf."

By this time Ned was really starting to open up.

"However, I think the entire tournament format should be changed," he said.

"Well pray tell, Ned, what should we change it to?" I asked.

## *A change for all seasons — the right reasons*

### **Editorial License**



Tom Benefield, CGCS  
Editor

This was just what Ned had been waiting on as he charged straight ahead with his new ideas on the tournament format.

The heart of his proposal is to run competitions around the country in chapter or local events. The next step was to take local winners — both teams and individuals — to regional events for qualifying to the nationals. The regionals would send (x) number of teams as well as (x) number of individual players based on a percentage of the number of total participants.

“The beauty of this format also,” says Ned, “is that it does not present a major financial burden to individual members as does the tournament we play now. The people who do not move up to the next level of competition will have participated in their GCSAA-sponsored tournament without having incurred a huge expense.

“This would stimulate more involvement by the members: too many people are shut out of the process the way it presently stands.”

I thought to myself a minute.

“Hmmm, ole Ned might be on to something here. What he says sure makes a lot sense.”

I can remember wanting to participate every year myself, but due to time and financial constraints, I have been able to do so only twice. The format and schedule Ned is talking about would definitely allow people like myself to be a part of this event.

The complement of courses available for the tournament, from the first round to the championship, would be tenfold the number now used... or more. The format and qualifying rounds would bring out the best in our member golfers. By the time of the championship, we would have participants who exemplify the best golfers our profession has available: the cream will have been allowed to rise to the top.

The local and regional tournaments could also double as excellent public relations events by generating funds for local charities, addressing local needs and helping the communities. The possibility of success for this type of tournament is tremendous.

From speaking with Ned and other members of the GCSAA — both local and in other states — I know support is out there for this type of event... an event that can spank some life and excitement into an otherwise dismal affair.

Too many of the rank and file feel shut out of this the premier golfing event of their organization. Many of the participants in this event are looking for something different, something progressive and innovative.

Many say it is time for new blood on the tournament committee with fresh ideas. Many say it is time for a “can-do” attitude from the board, tournament committee and, most of all, staff to find a way to do the things the membership wants.

The time has come for a change.

Let's hope the GCSAA officers and directors can understand the need, the desires of their members and the potential for success on several fronts. For it is only through this type of foresight that the association can progress on all fronts.

Until next “May God Bless one and all”.

## Paul Harvey report draws strong response

### Reporter Paul Harvey:

Two years ago you and I talked about the pesticides which were poisoning so many birds that our golf courses faced a silent spring.

I received some indignant responses from greenskeepers and their association and from pesticide manufacturers. They were adamant in their insistence that the stuff they were spraying on fairways and greens were not toxic.

It was and it still is!

Today the Golf Course Superintendent's Association of America is holding its annual meeting in Dallas. And a study commissioned by that organization of superintendents is reporting that not only are golf course pesticides killing the birds, but they're killing golf course superintendents also.

Golf course superintendents have a higher incidence of cancer.

The association has to know that this is going to open the door to lawsuits by

golf course workers against their employers for exposing themselves to cancer causing chemicals. A statistical mortality study found among golf course superintendents: more lung cancer, more brain cancer, more cancers of the large intestine and the prostate, especially however, lung cancer.

Doctor Burton Kross, University of Iowa, one of the researchers on this project, recommends further studies and recommends, meanwhile, that golf course workers minimize, however possible, their exposure to pesticides.

There's a moral here which demands to be underscored, “We and the beautiful wild things live in harmony together or we perish together.”

*Lord, Sullivan & Yoder  
Radio News Transcript  
Columbus, Ohio  
WTVN 610 AM  
2/9/94 11:30 a.m.*

February 10, 1994

Mr. Paul Harvey  
333 North Michigan Avenue  
Chicago, Illinois 60601

### Dear Mr. Harvey:

Last evening I received a telephone call from my brother-in-law, a farmer in western Iowa. He heard your radio report this week describing our mortality study of golf course superintendents. He asked me how did our study determine that pesticides were killing birds and humans on golf courses. I knew something was wrong, so I obtained a transcript of your commentary.

Your commentary is inaccurate and misleading with respect to our study. Our study did not collect any data about pesticides and birds. Moreover, as clearly stated in our press release (copy

*Continued on Page 79*

**Audubon Cooperative  
Sanctuary Program  
criteria categories**

Environmental planning

**Public Involvement**

Wildlife Cover Enhancement

Wildlife Food Enhancement

Integrated Pest Management

Water Conservation

Water Enhancement

ACSP, Part 1 . . .

*Nature's guardians*

This is the first in a series of articles about the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses, which we refer to as ACSP.

These articles are intended as teaching and educational sources to help those golf courses signed up for the program to successfully complete the program criteria and become certified. They are the result of a cooperative effort of the FGCSA and the USGA Florida office in Hobe Sound.

To become certified, participating courses must complete programs in seven different categories:

- Environmental planning
- Public Involvement
- Wildlife Cover Enhancement
- Wildlife Food Enhancement
- Integrated Pest Management
- Water Conservation
- Water Enhancement

We presently have more than 100 golf courses in the state signed up but only a small fraction of them have complete the program.

This series is an excellent avenue to help those attempting to become certified to overcome hurdles presently in their way.

"Public Involvement," the category covered by the first article, is probably the most difficult to complete. We think you will find the information very useful. Future issues of *The Florida Green* will contain articles on the other categories.

We encourage our industry affiliates to send in positive information. Anyone wishing to contribute helpful ideas on any of these categories should send that information to FGCSA headquarters or to the USGA office in Hobe Sound.

Enjoy!

*Shelley Foy, Tom Benefield*



Sign announces a no-hunt area as part of wildlife protection program at Gateway GC in Fort Myers is part of a "public involvement" project.

*Have the public  
become involved  
and enjoy it!*

BY PETER LEUZINGER

*St. Charles (Ill.) CC*

JEAN MACKAY

*Audubon Society of New York*

**M**any participants in the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary program for Golf Courses look upon public involvement with mixed feelings.

On the one hand, they are desperate for golfers to support their management efforts and for the public to know that they are not dumping chemicals and wantonly destroying the environment. On the other, they are reluctant to approach members to invite their input, and worried about losing their status as a private club by involving "the public."

"Public Involvement" was not meant to be a road block. Rather, its intent is to help superintendents get the recognition



*Members of Martin County Cub Scout Pack 888 took part in a nest box project at Summerfield GC in Stuart.*

and support they deserve, increase golfer understanding of wildlife and environmental quality on the golf course, and let the public know that golf courses can be valuable community resources — whether or not the public ever gets to step on the course.

If thoughts about how to achieve “public involvement” are more than a little unsettling to you, then read on. There are plenty of ways to increase public understanding, educate members, and involve people in your environmental efforts without losing your status as a private club.

Remember, achieving public input does not mean you have to have an open

**Tour groups might be made up of grade school children, young adults, biology clubs, Cub Scouts, senior golfers, women’s golf leagues, college students, local golf course superintendents, and don’t forget the “press.”**

house for your community or base decisions on what your neighbors want. Think of “the public” as members of the local community who can help you with publicity, habitat enhancement, water monitoring, native plant selection, or other

environmental programs.

Also, don’t forget your members!

Informing your members of your involvement in the ACSP and inviting their participation is crucial to the long-term success of your program. If your club

**A resource committee can be made up of fellow employees, golfers, and even people outside the golf course who bring expertise to the group. There are many people out there who are willing to donate their time and add their names to a project like the ACSP.**

**Do you have an opportunity to write an article for your state superintendent's association newsletter or a golf publication? Tell others about your commitment to environmental quality and describe the things you've done on your course.**

reluctant to invite public participation, focus on educating members or regular golfers.

How do you reach members and the public?

Try any or all of these ideas. All have been successfully tested on a number of ACSP golf courses.

• **Resource committee.** A resource committee can be made up of fellow

employees, golfers, and even people outside the golf course who bring expertise to the group. There are many people out there who are willing to donate their time and add their names to a project like the ACSP.

The resource committee at St. Charles CC consists of a writer/promoter, a bird watcher, a handyman who builds and repairs birdhouses and feeders, a craftsman, one outdoor lover, and a local landscape architect and folklore expert.

Combine these talents with a golf course superintendent, who is used to wearing many hats, and you will be surprised how fast your programs take shape.

• **Clubhouse Display.** Don't forget to tell your members that you're involved in the ACSP. The easiest way to do this is to

## Hiers receives first Audubon Steward Award

**N**APLES — The world's first John James Audubon Steward Award was presented to William Timothy Hiers, CGCS, golf course manager of Collier's Reserve, a residential country club community here.

In making the presentation, Ronald Dodson, president of the Audubon Society of New York State, explained that the concept for the award had been developed several years ago as the highest recognition of leadership in the field of environmental responsibility.

"Tim's personal dedication and un-failing commitment to excellence made it clear to us that he should be the first to receive this important award," Dodson said.

Dodson and Hiers have worked together on several projects, most recently the design and construction of the Collier's Reserve golf course, the first ever to be awarded the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Signature designation. This rigorous process has made the Collier's Reserve course the international model for others to follow.

"Also to be commended is Collier Enterprises, the developer of Collier's Reserve," said Dodson. "It was their commitment to environmental excellence and the Signature program that not only gave Tim the opportunity to become involved, but also provided the necessary resources



*Tim Hiers, right, golf course manager at Collier's Reserve in Naples, was the first recipient of the John James Audubon Steward Award. From left are Ron Dodson, president of the Audubon Society of New York State; architect Arthur Hills; and Jeffrey M. Birr, head of Collier Enterprises Real Estate operation.*

to complete the project."

A family-owned company with roots that trace to the creation of Collier County in Southwest Florida, Collier Enterprises has significant interests in commercial and residential real estate, agriculture, financial services and oil and energy interests.

Hiers is an expert on "Integrated Plant Management," a holistic philosophy

which views the golf course as a complete entity. Featured by the United States Golf Association as environmental steward, he has assisted in the development of a national Environmental Management Policy for GCSAA.

Before joining Collier Reserve, Hiers — a former president of the FGCSA — had been golf course manager of the 56-hole St. John's Island Club in Vero Beach.

## A simple trail through woods or grasslands can be enjoyed by members, staff and the public if you wish. A trail will also add to what your course has to offer members and guests.

post your registration art print and certificate in the clubhouse. You could also expand your display to include photographs of wildlife, plants, or natural areas of the course, you wildlife inventory, and information about the projects you've done.

- **Press Releases.** The ACSP will help you reach local papers with announcements about your environmental programs. You may strike up some friendships and develop some very positive reaction from the press. There is nothing like a front-page picture to bring positive attention to your golf course.

- **Brochure.** Make some simple pamphlets that detail your ACSP work. Leave the pamphlets at the reception desk, pro shop and lounge. Make your pamphlet available at career day in schools and the local garden club. Toot your horn a little!

- **Newsletter articles** at your golf course are a natural. You need new subject material anyway. How many times can you talk about defending your green speed? Fee free to use information from ACSP fact sheets or newsletters for your newsletter.

- **Wildlife reports.** Have golfers get involved in reporting and monitoring wildlife. Provide golfers with maps of the course and let them help you take inventory of the varied wildlife on the property.

You can also invite a local bird club to conduct a bird survey. A wildlife inventory will be valuable evidence that your course is hospitable to wildlife.

- **Adopt-A-School.** Sponsor a local school in the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Schools. This is a sure way to let the community know you care about the environment. You might also offer one field trip to your course as part of your involvement with the school. To receive a school program brochure, just write or call New York Audubon Society.

- **Speaking engagements.** We all need to develop our communication skills. One wonderful way to do this is to begin talk-

ing to small groups, develop a slide presentation, and go on from there. You might speak with a local school class, garden club, home owners association, or superintendents' association.

Choose a topic you're comfortable with such as tree or shrub care, integrated pest management, environmental quality on your golf course, or your involvement with the ACSP. New York Audubon can make slides or a video available to help you present information to your members or to the public.

- **Wildlife walk.** Ask members who are interested in — or knowledgeable about — birds to host an early-morning walk to look for birds and other wildlife species on the course. Members who attend can add their sightings to the club's wildlife inventory. Providing coffee and doughnuts is a nice way to conclude the walk.

- **Journal articles.** Do you have an opportunity to write an article for your state superintendent's association newsletter or a golf publication? Tell others about your commitment to environmental quality and describe the things you've done on your course.

- **Tours.** Very basic golf course tours have a great impact on public perception. A successful outing demonstrates goodwill and will spread by word of mouth.

Tour groups might be made up of grade school children, young adults, biology clubs, Cub Scouts, senior golfers, women's golf leagues, college students, local golf course superintendents, and don't forget the "press." Not only will you spread the work about the ACSP, you may even recruit a future horticulture student.

- **Nesting Boxes.** These can be used as a tool for reaching out to the community. Make a few extra bluebird houses every year. Nest box giveaways to golfers, schools or the local cemetery association are greatly appreciated and stimulate interest in your ACSP.

You can also invite a local scout troop

or Eagle Scout to make and monitor your next boxes. St. Charles CC has 44 next boxes on the golf course and roadway along the course. This subtle statement along the roadside is sending a message to local traffic around the course.

- **Establish a library.** Books on natural habitat, building nest boxes, butterflies, bird identification, and environmental issues are a worthwhile service to your golfers, and can be checked out at the club.

- **Outreach programs.** Give the public an opportunity to use your grounds for something other than golf; i.e., local photography club, group art classes, and bird clubs can all benefit from the golf course.

- **Craft projects.** These projects may help provide funding for supplies needed for the ACSP. Wreaths made from wild grapevine and bittersweet are unique and popular. Just make sure to tag these as ACSP promotions.

- **Projects for kids.** Get kids involved in making bird feeders or houses for the course or their own backyards.

- **Nature Guide to the course.** Create a simple, hole-by-hole environmental guide for golfers. At each stop, you can point out interesting natural features or environmental projects. This can include native plants, nest boxes, unique trees, habitat areas, common wildlife, IPM practices, and/or water conservation measures.

- **Nature trail.** Are your natural areas large enough for you to create a nature trail? A simple trail through woods or grasslands can be enjoyed by members, staff and the public if you wish. A trail will also add to what your course has to offer members and guests.

- **Tournaments.** If you are hosting a tournament, use the opportunity to educate people about the environmental quality of your course. For example, highlight your ACSP involvement through the media or put up a simple display to show some of the environmental projects you've undertaken.

our statistical mortality study was not capable of supporting or refuting a cause-and-effect relationship between pesticides and cancer. Indeed, my recommendations about smoking cessation and minimizing pesticide exposures are prudent public health strategies for golf superintendents and the general public.

Mr. Harvey, I am very concerned about your misrepresentation of our study. The public does need to be informed about important environmental and occupational health issues. The media are important partners in disseminating accurate results of research studies. I request that you broadcast a corrected version of your commentary about our study. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Burton C. Kross, PhD, PE  
Principal Investigator  
and Associate Professor

cc: Dr. Leon Burmeister, Co-Investigator

## FTGA appreciates FGCSA's support

Paul Crawford  
President, FGCSA  
Palm Beach CC

Dear Paul:

I just received a copy of the *Green Sheet* from Carol Thomas and, much to my surprise, I was on the cover.

I appreciate and thank you for positioning me there and also wish to take a moment to thank you and all your members for their support of FTGA in the past. The hard work of FGCSA members does not go without notice and garners great respect from the green industry throughout the country.

The extra effort is like working a second job, and if one has never done it, it can be hard to understand. I have, and I appreciate the effort of your group and the membership.

I know I speak for everyone when I say thank you for your past and continued support and for placing me on the cover.

Sincerely,

Nick Dennis  
FTGA President

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