



Lake City CC's Ed Combest Retires *Honored by Golf Ventures*

Ed Combest may be retiring from his position at Lake City Community College, but his legacy will live on through Golf Ventures.

Combest, a retired Navy chief, joined Lake City Community College in 1975 as the program coordinator and has turned a fledgling golf course equipment mechanics program into a turf equipment management program with national renown.

Golf Ventures supplies chemicals, granular and liquid fertilizers and various golf accessories to more than 1000 golf courses in Florida and Southeast Georgia and employs many graduates who have trained at Lake City Community College.

"The success of Golf Ventures is directly related to Ed and his teaching ability," says David Cheesman, vice president of sales for Golf Ventures, and a 1984 LCCC graduate. "As an instructor, Combest has taught many of our employees in turf equipment management as well as instilling many positive traits such as sound business values and the way to present ourselves in a professional manner."

"Ed Combest has been a pleasure to work with over the years, and I greatly appreciate the job he has done in training many of the present technicians in our industry," says Don Delaney, vice president of sales for Golf Ventures and a 1973 LCCC graduate.

To show LCCC and Ed Combest its appreciation for their work and studies in the turf equipment management program, Golf Ventures provides students at Lake City Community College with internships to earn school credit, and supplies the equipment technicians program with over \$45,000 worth of equipment to train students. A yearly graduation banquet is also sponsored by Ransomes and Golf Ventures, Ransomes distributor. Two scholarships are awarded each year for equipment technicians, and golf



David Cheesman(left), Vice President of Sales for Golf Ventures and a 1984 Lake City graduate, congratulates Ed Combest on his retirement as Program Coordinator for Lake City Community College's nationally recognized Golf Course Equipment Technicians Program.

course graduates.

To further appreciate Combest, the division faculty as well as the golf and mechanic alumni are honoring Combest with a benefit golf tournament with Golf Ventures as one of the sponsors at the Lake City Country Club. All proceeds go to endow a scholarship fund for the turf equipment management program. Plans are to raise \$25,000 which will be augmented by the state to produce a total of over \$40,000. The money will be invested and produce more than \$2,000 a year for the Ed Combest Scholarship Fund.

Lake City Instructor nominated to state panel

In other news congratulations are in order for John R. Piersol, chairman of the division of Golf/Landscape/Forestry at Lake City Community College. Piersol has been nominated to serve on the state Technical Committee for Agricultural Business and Natural Resources Education, a committee composed of Florida agriculture industry professionals and educators.

The task of this group is to advise the Department of Education on the status of the agriculture industries in Florida and to recommend additions, deletions

or other changes in agribusiness education programs statewide.

Piersol has a B.S. in horticulture from the University of Delaware (1970), M. S. in horticulture from Colorado State University (1974), and credits towards an Ed.D. from the University of Florida. Piersol has been at Lake City Community College since 1974 and chairman of the nationally recognized division of Golf/Landscape/Forestry since 1987.

He resides in Lake City with his wife and four children. Lake City Community College has nationally recognized programs in golf course operations, forest management, landscape technology, turf equipment management and a new program in irrigation management.

From the Turf Coordinator's Desk

Dr. John Cisar writes:

- The University of Florida Turf Team will once again display posters detailing new and ongoing research at the Florida Turfgrass Conference and Show in Tampa. The faculty will be on hand to discuss their research and answer questions.

- Thanks to everyone on the faculty and in the turf industry for their participation at this year's retreat in West Palm Beach. A package of material generated from the retreat was sent by the FTGA office to the retreat attendees and the UF administration. Progress continues to be made as we position the turf coordinator to facilitate a more accessible and unified turf faculty.

- At the Florida GCSA board meeting in Orlando, we discussed the local chapters inviting UF faculty to be speakers at their monthly meetings. It is my understanding that the FGCSA chapters will pick up lunch and golf expenses for any speaker. Long distance travel and lodging should be discussed with the chapter to make sure it is clear what the chapter can cover, but the opportunities are out there for chapters to get quality presenters for their educational sessions.

- The turf coordinator will meet regularly with the Turf Advisory Working



Sixteen faculty members of the University of Florida's IFAS Turf Team met with 26 members of the Turf Industry in an historic gathering in West Palm Beach to discuss the best ways to serve the Turf Industry in Florida. Photo by Joel Jackson.

Group (TAWG) as part of the coordination effort of the turf team. The TAWG will be made up of administration, department heads, and center directors. Topics discussed at the most recent meeting: Retreat report, coordinator report, coordinator duties, turf design team update.

As part of the effort for the turf coordinator to be visible to the industry, recent travel for July and August:

- FTGA Turf Certification Meeting, Belle Glade.
- Seven golf course test site visits.
- Two NTEP turf trial visits, Jupiter Island Club.
- Cricket Association. Retreat planning.
- GCSAA Program, Cherry Hill, NJ.
- IFAS Field Days, Gainesville.
- Golf Course tours of five courses in Naples.
- Florida GCSA Board Meeting in Orlando.
- Club Managers/Superintendent Workshop, Naples.

Florida Golf Alliance Update

The Florida Golf Alliance met Aug. 10 at the Registry Hotel in Naples. In attendance were President Ron Garl; Vice President Roy Bates; Treasurer Jack Brennan; Director Mike Fiddelke. Guests: Sylvia Garl and Joel Jackson, FGCSA director of communications.

The resignation of FGA Secretary Ann Palmer of the Mercury Titleholders was announced. Ann has moved out of the

state. A motion was made to elect Joel Jackson as the new secretary. The motion was approved.

The FGA bylaws were presented for final approval. All board members were also given copies of the 1998-99 business plan and asked to review and give feedback prior to release to new prospective members.

The first-year goal of conducting a total golf economic impact study was the next topic of discussion. The board decided that Roy Bates and Jack Brennan would meet with Mike Goldie and Larry Pendelton to discuss the feasibility of involving the Florida Sports Foundation in funding the impact study to be done by Florida State University. Later reports indicate that such a study is under way and the FGA will support the research efforts by the FSU professors.

Roy will tweak the mailing list of potential member associations and the letter of invitation to join the FGA from Ron and a copy of the business plan will be sent to all prospective golf associations in the state.

The board then watched an eight-minute video on Golf House Tennessee, which showed a superb effort by the Tennessee golf industry to organize and unite state golf associations in one location.

1999 Florida Plants of the Year

Part 1

Last year we participated in the Florida Nurserymen and Growers Association's

inaugural "Plants of the Year" program by publishing the 1998 selections of underutilized but proven Florida plant material. The plants are chosen by a committee of horticulturists, nurserymen, educators, landscape architects and other members of the horticulture industry representing Central, North and South Florida.

We present the 1999 Plants of the Year selections in a three-part series to make readers aware of landscape materials that are successful in the diverse Florida environment.

Black Sweet Potato

Common name: Black sweet potato.
Botanical name: *Ipomoea batatas* 'Blackie'

Hardiness: Zones 9-11. **Mature height & spread:** Trailing, about 9 inches tall, vines 6-8 feet long. **Classification:** groundcover or basket plant. **Landscape use:** Groundcover in partial shade. **Characteristics:** Deep purple-red leaves

Strong groundcover forming low, dense mounds in rich, moist soil; prefers a little shade but will thrive in full sun if the water supply is constant. The dark foliage is a good foil for other plants and is valued for use alone or in mixed baskets and window boxes. Edible storage roots with greenish yellow flesh, a firm texture and mild flavor will form late in the season.



Firespike

Common name: Firespike. **Botanical**



name: *Ondontonema strictum*. **Hardiness:** Zones 8-11. **Mature height & spread:** 4'x4'. **Classification:** Shrub. **Landscape use:** Specimen shrub. **Characteristics:** Brilliant red inflorescences through much of the year.

The dark green leaves are a perfect backdrop for bright red inflorescences produced through much of the year and each lasting several weeks. The plants are equally happy in sun or moderate shade and appreciate ample water. The individual flowers are small but the whole spike is often flattened or contorted like a cock's comb giving an even better show. With a relatively fast growth rate, this shrub makes a great trouble-free backdrop to your borders.

Snailseed



Common name: Snailseed. **Botanical name:** *Cocculus laurifolius*. **Hardiness:** Zones 9b—11. **Mature height & Spread:** 18' x 12'. **Classification:** Landscape shrub and cut foliage. **Landscape use:** Hedge, screen in sun or shade. **Characteristics:** Dense growth that stands hand-pruning well to make an informal hedge.

Handsome evergreen foliage provides a dark green background for other plantings. The foliage is valued for flower arranging, and is distinctive for the prominent veins running the length of the simple leaves. Its moderate growth makes it an excellent choice for the landscape in areas where it is hardy.

Turfax Tidbits Plants Have Sweet Tooth Too

In my many years of pursuing the perfect putting surface, I have heard more than once that spraying a sugar solution on turfgrass helps supplement the plants'

While the basic concept of foliar carbohydrate applications has been demonstrated through research conducted 40 years ago, it is only recently that interest has arisen concerning this technique.

carbohydrates. I came across this article in the May/June 1998 issue of *Turfax* that gives some conditions and caveats on this practice.

Q. Is the use of sugar applications to turfgrasses beneficial?

A. Based on the research conducted by J. Beard in 1957 and 1958, it has been documented that the leaves of creeping bentgrass (*Agrostis stolonifera*) have the capability to take up foliar-applied, water-soluble carbohydrates, such as glucose, fructose or sucrose. The first two are monosaccharides and the third is a disaccharide. Further, it was demonstrated that these foliar-applied carbohydrates are readily translocated to metabolic sites in the plant where they are utilized in growth processes for the leaves, stems, and roots.

When adequate carbohydrate supplies are not available via photosynthesis and from storage sites within the plant, a foliar application of a water-soluble carbohydrate may prove beneficial. Such conditions include

- (a) closely mowed turfs growing in the spring and autumn period under favorable temperatures for rapid shoot growth,
- (b) severe turf scalping that results in root dieback,
- (c) loss of the root system following spring root decline of warm-season turfgrasses, and
- (d) during periods of tissue hardening prior to the onset of an environmental stress. Applications of water-soluble carbohydrates are not effective during severe heat stress conditions of midsummer.

While the basic concept of foliar carbohydrate applications has been demonstrated through research conducted 40 years ago, it is only recently that interest has arisen concerning this technique. Additional practical field research is

needed concerning the most effective timings and rates of application. A potential negative dimension in the use of foliar-applied carbohydrates is the potential to induce accelerated spore germination/fungal invasion of turfgrass leaves, which increases the severity of attack by certain fungal causing diseases.

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Lebanon Awarded Distribution Rights for IBDU

Isobutylidene diurea (IBDU), the much-coveted nitrogen source in the popular turf fertilizer line, Par Ex, will now be available from Lebanon Turf Products..

Isobutylidene diurea, in the past sold to the professional turf management market by Vigoro as IBDU™, will be sold under the trade name IsoPRO™ in 15 different blends including 21-3-16, 24-4-12 and 31-0-0, Grosh said. Lebanon already markets isobutylidene diurea in homogeneous granular form as IsoTek31™.

Lebanon has signed a marketing agreement with a subsidiary of Nu-Gro Corp. (TSE-NU), the new owner of the production facility for isobutylidene diurea, located in Bucks, Alabama. Nu-Gro recently purchased the Bucks plant from IB Chemical Company, a partnership of subsidiaries of Celanese and Mitsubishi.

Vigoro had held a supply contract with IB Chemical Company. IMC Global recently divested its Vigoro Professional Turf division and the isobutylidene diurea supply agreement was terminated. Lebanon jumped at the chance to become the marketer of isobutylidene diurea.