

Can we be satisfied being the major stockholder in a company we don't own? I see no alternative...

Congratulations to new Director of Communications, Joel Jackson! The Florida GCSA created this position at the Winter Board meeting and promptly hired Joel to fill it. I can think of no one more

qualified to assume the responsibilities that will elevate our association to new heights of prestige and effectiveness. Joel brings invaluable and unequalled experience, insight and dedication to this position, and we're lucky to have him.

On that same day, the executive boards of both the FGCSA and FTGA met to

improve communications, clear up misunderstandings and chart a course for the future. I think we accomplished quite a bit, but as always, time constraints left a lot of loose ends. Procedures were implemented to keep everyone better informed so the two associations don't work at cross purposes.

There are those who have some times tried to characterize any discord between the two associations as an us-against-them conflict. Such depictions are absurd, given the numbers of superintendents involved with FTGA. Superintendents or ex-superintendents make up 100 percent of the current FTGA Executive Board and about 50 percent of the Board of Directors.

It is frustrating to have other turfgrass professionals regard FTGA as "just another golf association," at the same time that some superintendents consider any FTGA initiative

not directed specifically at superintendents as unimportant or unnecessary. Disagreements about policy, priorities and direction are to be expected in a state as large and diverse as Florida.

My respect and admiration for any superintendent sacrificing his or her time and effort on behalf of their profession by serving on a board is not diminished because we disagree on an issue.

One of the benefits of having two strong associations like FGCSA and FTGA in the same state is that a greater number of people are able to get involved and contribute to our industry. We just need to communicate better and develop a shared philosophy, while better defining the role each association should play in the development of our profession.

As a past president of FGCSA and a current officer of FTGA involved with one or both organizations for nearly 20 years running, I am guided by the following basic convictions, no matter which organization's hat I'm wearing on a particular day:

1) Florida has a unique environment and most applied and some basic research need to be done in Florida to have validity to our situation.

2) The highly regarded university turfgrass programs in the country all have one thing in common - a strong turfgrass association working closely with a university.

3) The larger and more diverse an organization, the stronger the organization.

Adhering to these principles, I get concerned when either the FTGA or FGCSA Board or a local chapter takes action that moves us in another direction. As superintendents, we operate at a faster pace and under greater pressure than the university system or turfgrass professionals in non-golf related activities, making it

Building Bridges

Mark My Words



Mark Jarrell, CGCS
Assistant Editor

extremely frustrating when we must wait for things to happen, like the of hiring a turf coordinator at the University of Florida.

This should not discourage or dissuade us from continuing to work on the foundations, networks and bridges necessary to achieve our long range goals of having: the strongest and most influential superintendent's association; the largest and best funded turfgrass association and the most respected and productive university turf program in the country.

These may seem like lofty — or even unattainable — goals, but all one has to do is consider the size and scope of the golf and turf industry in Florida to realize that the potential is here to

accomplish all this and more.

Superintendents can't do it all on their own, but we have the drive and the talent to spearhead the effort. As Joe O'Brien of GCSAA put it when trying to analyze the FGCSA's relationship with the FTGA, "Can we be satisfied being the major stockholder in a company we don't own?"

I see no alternative if we're going to continue growing and moving forward. Let's not kid ourselves about where the money comes from for financing our current efforts, or future endeavors. Building bridges and forging alliances with other golf and turf interests and organizations is crucial for our future growth and success.

BACK ISSUE SEARCH

Still looking for a copy of the April 1974 Florida Green! Dan Jones, editor emeritus of the *Florida Green*, has passed along to me an almost complete collection of issues! We are missing one issue, April 1974. If any of you packrats out there have a copy, please send it to me. I would like to have the complete collection bound in hard back covers to preserve the magazine's history.

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