



Ridge Chapter members from left, Ray Cuzzone, Alan Puckett, Jeff Brown, Tom Barnett and Mark Hopkins pose with guest of honor Aaron Bledsoe and his new bike at their July meeting.

provided the labor to install it so Aaron's new bike can be kept secured.

On July 22, 1999 Aaron Bledsoe was the guest of honor at the Ridge Chapter's July meeting at Puckett's course where he and his mom thanked the Ridge Chapter for helping them coordinate the efforts and funds that came in to help Aaron. Later Puckett took Aaron on a golf cart tour of his course to show him some alligators.

Puckett said, "Aaron asked me if I had a bike. I told him I did. He asked me if I would come over and ride with him some time. What a neat kid! He has great spirit and he doesn't let his condition stop him from living life to the fullest.

"I was at Aaron's house when they delivered the new bike. When he was trying it out in the carport there was one spot where he got hung up trying to turn. When I got him clear and he looked up at me and said, 'Thank you, Mr. Puckett!' I got teary eyed.

the other that resides at the Kamphaus home.

RIDGE GCSA

8 Chapters Join to Replace Stricken Boy's Stolen Bike

Alan Puckett, GCS at the Lake Region Y&CC in Winter Haven, spearheaded an effort to right a wrong in his community. Alan read a story in the local newspaper about a young boy afflicted with spina bifida who had his new bicycle stolen from his front yard.

Alan called the paper, the Lakeland Ledger, to see if something was being done to replace the bike for 8-year-old Aaron Bledsoe. Alan put out a call for donations from FGCSA

chapters and the Central Florida, Everglades, North Florida, Palm Beach, Seven Rivers, Treasure Coast and West Coast chapters each responded with \$100. Through his inquiries and interest and a follow-up story in the Ledger, the Sunshine Fund became involved and not only replaced the bike, but did so with a specially built three-wheeler customized for spina bifida patients.

With the donations in hand, Puckett asked Debbie Bledsoe if Aaron had any other special needs that could be met with the funds. Mrs. Bledsoe mentioned that Aaron could use a special wheelchair to help him get around on shopping trips and outings. The Ridge

Chapter then partnered with the Bledsoe's insurance company to provide the wheelchair, using the donations to help defray the cost. In addition, Puckett purchased a utility shed and



Host superintendent Steve Pearson, CGCS, left and Palm Beach Chapter President Chip Fowkes, right present UF turf coordinator, Dr. John Cisar, with a check for ultradwarf BMP research at the 1999 Future of Golf tournament at the Falls CC. Photo by Joel Jackson.



People said I was big hearted. My answer was no! I got angry and just did something about it."

PALM BEACH CHAPTER

Future of Golf Event Raises \$25,000

Each year the Palm Beach Chapter holds its annual Future of Golf fund raiser for turf research, local charities and junior golf programs.

This year the event was held June 5 at the Falls CC in West Palm Beach. Host Steve Pearson, CGCS was bound and determined to make it a success and he triumphed.

The event netted \$25,000 and the Palm Beach Chapter pledged

\$15,000 over the next two years to fund Dr. John Cisar's best management practices research on several varieties of the new ultradwarf bermuda-grasses.

The research will be conducted on the FGCSA's Otto Schmeisser Research Green at the University of Florida Research and Education Center in Fort Lauderdale.

COASTAL PLAINS CHAPTER

Tallahassee Tourney Raises \$6,500

Florida's Panhandle may lack the large numbers of golf courses found farther south on the peninsula, but the spirit in this Tallahassee-based



1999 Coastal Plains Classic Committee heads up effort that earned \$6,500 for turf research. From left: Mike Bishop, Southern States, Inc.; Bill Kollar, FSU; Bill Humphrey, Lesco, Inc.; Geri Buchheit, Killlearn CC and Mike McNamara, Cross Creek GC. Photo by Joel Jackson.

chapter is just as big.

Celebrating their Fourth annual Coastal Plains Classic at the Golden Eagle CC this year, two-man teams pairing superintendents, golf pros and suppliers played a scramble.

The chapter raised \$6,500 for turf research at the University of Florida's Research and Education Center in Milton, near Pensacola, and at Georgia's Coastal Plains Research Station in Tifton, Ga.

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