

**M**y hat is off to the FTGA Board of Directors and its staff for presenting the professionals of the turfgrass industry such a wonderful opportunity for education, fellowship, and networking at the FTGA Conference and Show at Gainesville in August.

The Board and the various committees involved with the event listened to suggestions and desires from industry and certainly made every attempt to appease the masses.

Were they successful in their attempt to pump new life into the annual conference and show? Well, if you go strictly by the number of attendees, they probably were not. However, those who took the time and made the effort to take part in this outstanding event were treated to a first class affair that certainly was as good as, and — to most attendees — probably better than any previous FTGA

Conference and Show.

Once again, the excuses for choosing not to attend will be rampant and, while some will definitely be legitimate, others will be almost humorous not to mention “old” and overused. Yes, I said “choose” because it is after all a choice for most people to attend just as it is a choice for most golf course superintendents whether to be a member of a professional association like the FGCSA.

I have heard, “Isn’t it enough that I send in my dues each year? After all, by paying my dues I am supporting the association, right?”

Well, it would undoubtedly benefit us all if we had every individual in our profession who resides in Florida as a member of the FGCSA, but being a dues-paying member is not enough.

Associations such as the FGCSA do not make a profit on dues. In fact, the money raised from dues covers only a fraction of the expenses required for the association’s day-to-day operations. Obviously, since dues do not even cover expenses, they are not being used to pay for

research, public relations, or other services the FGCSA and the FTGA provide their membership that allow superintendents to do a better job and gain respect in their chosen profession.

Where does this extra money come from? I hate to say it but to be blunt... vendors, from direct donations, participation in trade shows, sponsorship of events or rebates. And, just as dues do not provide profit, the entrance fees for our meetings and golf outings in most situations merely cover the costs associated with the event. The money raised from these events and subsequently donated to the various associations in most situations comes from support by vendors.

The bottom line is vendor participation for most Superintendents is a double-edged sword.

Just like most of you, I have said, “Isn’t this supposed to be a golf course superintendents’ association?” Or, “It seems like the majority of the people at these events are vendors!”

Well, like it or not, we need and rely on vendor support to raise money for advancements in the profession and vendors are going to attend meetings, golf outings, and trade shows in order to associate themselves with their customers... *you!*

You should be asking yourself, “How long will vendors continue to support our associations if their customers (you and I) do not attend the events that allow them to come in contact with us. Is it enough to just send in your dues check every year? That is a question that only you can answer.

I would like to thank the vendors that have been longtime supporters of the association and especially those who made the effort to sponsor and support the recent FTGA Conference and Show. The money raised by the FTGA is used for turfgrass research that directly benefits the members of the FGCSA. I would also like to thank the countless volunteers of the FGCSA, the local chapters and the FTGA for devoting your personal time to provide quality education, and events in an effort to entice your peers to attend these extracurricular outings that benefit them and the profession as a whole.

Thank you and I look forward to a productive year as president of the FGCSA. 🦩

*Support is a Two-way Street*

**PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE**



Darren Davis  
President  
FGCSA