



FTGA Conference and Show Draws Nearly 1200 to New UF Hotel & Conference Center

Santella Becomes First Woman to Lead State's Umbrella Turf Group

The Florida Turfgrass Association held its 2000 Conference and Show in Gainesville Aug. 14-16 for the second year in a row. The new University of Florida Hotel and Conference Center located near campus served as conference headquarters and is an excellent venue for future meetings and educational sessions. The friendly staff and comfortable surroundings made an excellent place for conference attendees to meet and network.

Meanwhile, the Florida Gymnasium Building across the street from the O'Connell Center had excellent facilities for 650 people attending workshops and concurrent sessions over the three-day event. Over 300 attended the traditional conference-opening Toro Corn Boil Aug. 14 at the Touchdown Terrace at Ben Hill Griffin Stadium.

At the FTGA business meeting and awards luncheon on Aug. 15. Over 120 people witnessed the history-making swearing-in of the FTGA's first woman president, Erica Santella. Santella is a regional manager with TruGreen-ChemLawn and has been very involved in government affairs issues since coming onto the FTGA board. The other officers elected for the year are Vice President Alan Puckett, golf course superintendent at the Eaglebrooke G. C. in Lakeland and Secretary/Treasurer Ray Carruthers, consultant for Emerald Island/South Florida Turf Companies.

Newly elected or reelected directors were Tom Alex, Jan Beljan, David Robinson, Barry Troutman and Tom Wells.

During the awards ceremonies, scholarships and fellowships were handed out to eight turf students enrolled either at Lake City Community College or at the University of Florida. Following those



New FTGA officers from the left: Secretary/Treasurer Ray Caruthers, Emerald Island/South Florida Turf Companies; President Erica Santella, TruGreen-ChemLawn; and Vice President Alan Puckett, Eaglebrooke CC. Photo by Steve Pearson.



A couple of FTGA past presidents share the podium as Gerry Millholen (96) presents Michael J. McLaughlin (90) with the 2000 FTGA Wreath of Grass award for his service to the association. Photo by Steve Pearson.

*30 superintendents
attended a GCSAA
Leadership Series
seminar on team
building techniques
presented by Gerry
Sweda, a long time
GCSAA faculty member
and a former
superintendent.*

presentations, Mike McLaughlin was presented the FTGA's Wreath of Grass Award by his old friend, Gerry Millholen.

Golf course superintendents in attendance took advantage of several educational opportunities designed especially for them. On Tuesday, 30 superintendents attended a GCSAA Leadership Series seminar on Team Building Techniques presented by Gerry Sweda, a long time GCSAA faculty member who is also a former superintendent and now owns his own training and development company. On Wednesday, three speakers made presentations for the Golf Concurrent Session:

- Florida Fertilizer and Agrichemical Association President Mary Hartney spoke on Crisis Management Planning and Communications. Hartney reminded the group that it's better to have a communication plan ahead of time instead of trying to react when a crisis happens and the TV cameras are rolling.

- Gary Grigg, CGCS/MG compared and contrasted the USGA green construction versus the California Sand Green method. Citing the need to adhere to the specific materials specifications, Grigg told attendees the biggest failure with both of these greens is that they often are not built properly and so the research data and management recommendations don't work because of the short cuts made in the construction phase.

2000 Florida Plants of the Year - Part 4

Editors Note: Last in the 2000 series. The Florida Plants of the Year program was launched in 1998 and has been beneficial to both consumers and growers. Purchasers are introduced to under-utilized but proven Florida plant material. The plants are chosen each year by a committee of horticulturists, nurserymen, educators, landscape architects and other members of the horticulture industry representing Central, North and South Florida.

COMMON NAME: Yellow Barleria

BOTANICAL NAME: Barleria micans
HARDINESS: Zones 10-11
MATURE HEIGHT AND SPREAD: 4-5 feet tall and wide
CLASSIFICATION: Landscape shrub
LANDSCAPE USE: Mass planting or specimen in light shade
CHARACTERISTICS: Terminal spikes of pale yellow blooms



This herbaceous plant forms a dense multi-branched shrub with clear yellow flowers at the top of each shoot. The rounded bush blooms almost year round. The tropical to subtropical shrub grows best with a steady water supply and ample fertilizer. Bed preparation for the landscape requires rich soil with high organic content.

COMMON NAME: Ficus Midnight

BOTANICAL NAME: Ficus benjamina 'Midnight'
HARDINESS: Low to medium light
MATURE HEIGHT X SPREAD: At one year old the plant is 12-14 inches high and 8-10 inches wide
CLASSIFICATION: Ornamental foliage plant
INTERIOR/LANDSCAPE USE: Specimen plant for interiorscape; 6 inch pots of 'Midnight' can be used as ground covers



CHARACTERISTICS: This cultivar has very thick extremely dark blue-black leaves. This ficus has proven to be a fast grower with an upright bushy, compact growth habit. The leaves are very thick and the overall appearance of the plant is one of extreme health and vigor. 'Midnight' is capable of growing under lower light and water conditions than ficus of the past.

- Dr. Laurie Trenholm discussed the qualities of the new "wonder grass" seashore paspalum. Describing its unique ability to tolerate high saline conditions, Dr. Trenholm reminded everyone that this grass may have great applications in coastal areas, but may not be for everyone.

The FTGA Trade Show this year began on Tuesday evening with the Grand Open-

ing and Open House reception for the attendees. It was a nice relaxing way to grab a bite to eat and wander the trade show floor at the end of a busy day of classes. Reaction seemed very positive to this new format and the complimentary food and refreshments were appreciated by all. Early numbers indicate nearly 1200 attended the conference and show this year.

JOEL JACKSON, CGCS



Harrell's Turf Academy Draws Good Crowd

In its annual show of appreciation to its customers, the Harrell's Fertilizer Company hosted its Seventh Annual Turf Academy at the Westin Innisbrook Resort in Tarpon Springs June 7-8.

Harrell's put on quite a jam-packed day-and-a-half event with golf, education, keynote speakers, a mini-trade show, meals and a hotel room all for a measly \$20 registration fee guarantee. To top that, Harrell's matched the registration fees paid and then rounded it off to make a \$7,000 donation to the FTGA Research Foundation.

Golf was first as 312 attendees teed it up Wednesday in either a scramble tournament on the Island Course or the stroke-play competition on the Copperhead Course. That evening at the awards banquet, keynote speaker, former Florida Supreme Court Chief Justice Stephen H. Grimes gave a thought-provoking address, "Is There Any Justice?"

His talk highlighted several cases that came before the court and the thinking that went into the decisions.

The next day was Academy Day and eight speakers from academia and industry discussed:

- Overseeding Turfgrass Varieties for the Southeast: Their Development and Use by Steve Johnson, Iowa State University, Cebeco International Seeds - The constant search for grasses to meet the needs of various geographic regions with emphasis on season durability but easier transitions.

- Nutrient Fate & Utilization: An Environmental Perspective by Dr. Jeff Higgins, Auburn University, Pursell Technologies, Inc. - The nitrate regulations are coming. We need more factual documentation on what's happening to nitrogen in the environment.

- Innovations in Mole Cricket & Grub Control, by Dr. John Paige, III, Texas A&M, Bayer Corporation. - Research seeks the weak link in an insect's life cycle and exploit it with chemical controls. Pesticide users must learn to moni-



Turf Academy host Jack Harrell, Jr., left, poses along side a David Pursell drawing of Payne Stewart with GCSAA CEO Steve Mona who gave a "State of the GCSAA 2000" keynote address at the event held June 7-8 at the Westin Innisbrook Resort. Photo by Joel Jackson.

tor those life cycles to take biological and economical advantage of those weak links.

- Is Your Turf Getting Its Daily Requirement of Oxygen? by Larry Lennert, U. of Wisconsin, Profile Products LLC. - Oxygen is the key component of photosynthesis. Make sure your soils have the quantity and quality they need.

- Golf Course Ornamental Disease Control and Fungicide Update by Dr. Deborah Meier, U. of Arkansas, Zeneca Professional Products.

- Adjuvant Selection and the Impact on Pesticide Efficacy by James D. Reiss, Illinois State University, Precision Laboratories, Inc. - No one adjuvant or surfactant does it all. There are various products for different needs. Read the label. Know your target and the goal you need to achieve to make the chemical more effective.

- Fire Ant and Mole Cricket Control: Five-year Performance Data by Dr. Ken Kukorowski U. of Wisconsin-Madison, Aventis Environmental Science (Chipco) - Low-dose insecticides are gaining favor with EPA. Life cycles of insects are not as critical as before. Clean Water Act may

require more precision application with drop spreaders and setbacks from water bodies.

- Soil and Plant Nutrition Through Organic Fertility by Steve Thomas, U. of Kentucky, Nature Safe - Synthetic nitrogen fertilizers were born in the bomb factories of World War II. We needed to have a way to use leftover nitrate materials.

By using synthetics we quit putting organics into the soil as often as we used to. Carbon is now the missing link. Carbon is the microbes' food. Microbes help make a healthier soil.

After the education program was finished, GCSAA CEO Steve Mona was the featured luncheon speaker, focusing on the state of the association. Highlight's of Mona's presentation can be found in the Professional Development section of this issue.

To wrap up the two-day event, Dr. John Cisar chaired a panel of experts to field any questions from the audience on any topic. Following that discussion, the event was adjourned and CEU and pesticide license forms were handed out and class was dismissed.