

GCSAA INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE AND SHOW: A PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE

'It Was Big But It Wasn't Always Easy!'

GCSAA Great But Bourbon Street Highly Overrated

BY JOEL JACKSON, CGCS

The experience was big but it wasn't always easy! I'm not hard to get along with, but this ranks as one of my worst trips to our national conference. It had nothing to do with GCSAA. In fact, the time spent at the Convention Center was the best part of my trip to New Orleans.

I was looking forward to jambalaya and crawfish pie me oh my oh, and I did manage to satisfy my culinary curiosity somewhat, but the rest of my interaction with N'awlins left me wanting. In defense of the chamber of commerce and all the jazz musicians and oyster shuckers that didn't get a chance to entertain or serve me, I didn't have much time to sightsee or take guided tours to the historic and colorful places that help define New Orleans history.

Maybe it was the stench of curbside garbage on Bourbon Street. Taking a walk down Bourbon Street was like dumpster diving for leftovers. I guess my Disney days are showing. Bourbon Street is highly overrated unless you want to go to a fraternity party that never stops. After a

couple of hours I was ready for Harrah's Casino, but I never really made it to the slots or blackjack tables. I did donate \$1 to the one-armed bandits while cutting through the casino on the way to the convention center.

Or maybe it was the derelicts sleeping under cars and doorways. Nor did it help set the mood when one of the colorful street people came into the restaurant where I was having breakfast. He traded in his beer can for a cup of coffee and then proceeded to curse at three superintendents from Minnesota for causing the ills of the world. I had to signal the hostess standing

...maybe it was the derelicts sleeping under cars and doorways. Nor did it help set the mood when one of the colorful street people came into the restaurant where I was having breakfast. He traded in his beer can for a cup of coffee and then proceeded to curse at three superintendents from Minnesota for causing the ills of the world.

right behind the guy and ask her if she thought this was good customer relations!

I think the real problem was trying to get to and from New Orleans. Evidently, the best way is by riverboat from Natchez or by car from Florida, because the airlines haven't got it figured out yet. Citing mechanical problems, Delta Comair let us enjoy Orlando airport's passenger waiting area for a couple of extra hours that we might have missed. Hey, take all the time you need fixing the plane.

Normally, the major hotels run complimentary shuttle busses to and from the airport. That works in New Orleans if you want to go to Kenner, the suburb surrounding the airport. Otherwise, the shuttles all have to have a \$30,000 taxi stamp to cross into other jurisdictions. Taxi cabs and airport shuttle vans, which are really big taxis, were the



Leo Feser Award to Blanchard

During the opening ceremonies of the GCSAA Conference and Show in New Orleans, Mike Blanchard, GCS Tampa Palms G&CC (right) received GCSAA's Leo Feser Award from GCSAA President Dave Fearis, CGCS for his March 1999 article, "The Bosnian Connection" in Golf Course Management Magazine. Photo by Joel Jackson.



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Distinguished Service Award to Grigg

GCSAA President Dave Fearis, CGCS presents Florida's own Gary Grigg, CGCS/MG with one of three GCSAA Distinguished Service Awards handed out at GCSAA's 71st International Conference and Show in New Orleans in February. Photo by Joel Jackson.

only means to go down-town at \$21 to \$25 a trip. I shared an inbound cab with some big spenders who comped my ride. Coming home I paid my own way.

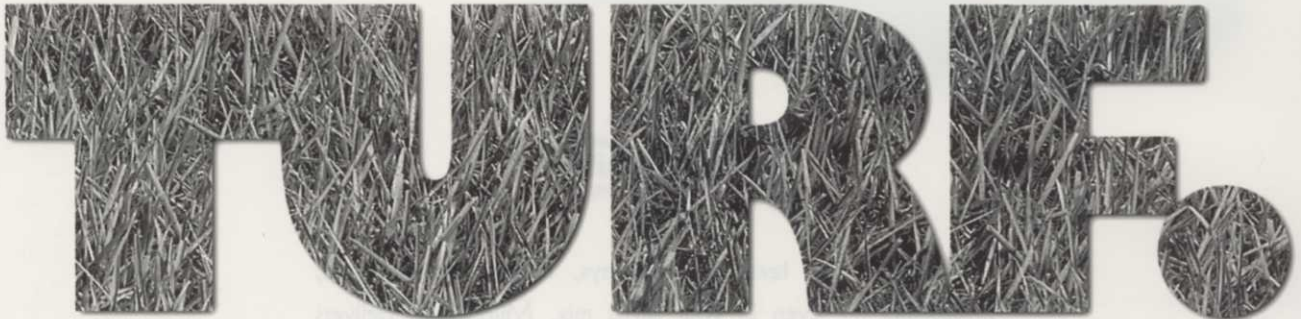
Did I say coming home? I meant going to the airport. Once again Delta Comair pleaded maintenance problems and the Sunday, 12:15 pm flight home was canceled. While some persistent souls played the stand-by game on other airlines, which were grossly overbooked, several of us gave up hope and let Delta put us up at a nearby hotel. We watched golf in the lounge and some of the wives went to the nearby mall. Bad luck for the hubbies. Monday

morning after an hour delay, people were seriously considering car rental in order to get out of New Orleans, but our plane arrived and we finally headed home.

As I said earlier, the real reason we went to New Orleans was fulfilled. Nearly 7,000 GCSAA members attended 112 seminars held Monday through Thursday. Marie Roberts and I attended the Chapter Leaders Track which included sessions on chapter management issues, PDI, research funding, government relations and publications.

We drop-shipped two cases of the *Florida Green* which were put out for public consumption in the

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GCSAA media room and the Lake City and U. of Florida booths. Marie also took copies around and visited the booths of potential advertisers hoping to meet with various marketing and advertising reps.

Florida GCSA members brought home the gold, marble, mahogany, acrylic and parchment in the form of several awards. Gary Grigg, CGCS/MG received GCSAA's Distinguished Service Award and Mike Blanchard, GCS was presented the Leo Feser Award during the Opening Ceremonies on Wednesday night.

At the Friday CGCS Luncheon, Geri Buchheit, CGCS of Killlearn CC in

Tallahassee and John Lammrish, CGCS joined 79 other superintendents in receiving their CGCS pins for completing the Certified Golf Course Superintendents program.

Saturday afternoon, yours truly picked up *The Florida Green's* ninth Best Overall Award in the last ten years. We couldn't do it without the dedicated hard work and special talents of Marie Roberts bulldogging the advertisers and Larry Kieffer of Janlark Communications designing our great-looking layout and providing journalistic mentoring. My job as editor and your job as members is to keep the stories coming.

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Mike Perham, CGCS, working with Marie Roberts made his debut as FGCSA reception host in addition to his role as Florida Green business manager. Kudos to Marie and Mike for providing food and drink to the sponsors, superintendents

and their guests on Friday night. Attendance was estimated at nearly 600 for the event, and the shrimp legacy lives on. Many thanks for all the sponsors who funded the reception. Please see our thank-you page recognizing these generous supporters of our



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FGCSA RECEPTION, NEW ORLEANS, FEB. 18, 2000





association.

Saturday morning was the GCSAA Annual Meeting followed by a Town Hall meeting on the Professional Development Initiative. After much soul searching and discussion in the election of officers, the FGCSA chose to support Jon Maddern's nomination from the floor for secretary/treasurer. One of the original candidates, Sam Snyder, CGCS had resigned from the GCSAA board of directors citing personal reasons. FGCSA's voting delegate, Dale Kuehner, CGCS, who has interviewed and talked with all the candidates and delegates from around the country, felt that it was in the best interest of the association to have a true election to this important position. So we supported Maddern's nomination. While Jon did not succeed in this eleventh-hour bid, we feel Mike Wallace's election as secretary/treasurer was validated by the members having a choice rather than ascending the office by default.

Congratulations to newly elected President Scott Woodhead, CGCS; Vice President Tommy Witt, CGCS; Secretary/Treasurer Mike Wallace, CGCS; and directors Jon Maddern, CGCS and Ken Mangum, CGCS. Director Mark Woodward, CGCS has another year remaining on his term and Tim O'Neill was appointed to a one-year term as director to fill Wallace's position. Woodhead will also appoint one other director



The 2000 Lake City Alumni Endowment Committee helped organize and run an event which raised \$14,000 for their alma mater. From left, front row: Mike Smith, John Piersol, Scott Hamm and Dick Bessire; back row: David Fry, John Johnson and Glenn Zakany. Photo by Robert Toski.

to fill Snyder's vacated position.

LAKE CITY COMMUNITY COLLEGE
GLO Alumni Raise \$14,000 for Program

The 8th annual Lake City Community College Endowment Golf Tournament was held Jan. 7 at the newly rebuilt Gulf Harbour Yacht and Country Club in Fort Myers.

One hundred and forty-plus players in the two-man scramble event were greeted at 8 a.m. by a thick fog that added to an

already demanding golf course. Once the fog cleared the weather was absolutely perfect and the festivities wonderful.

Tim Pratt, our host superintendent, and his staff did a magnificent job of preparing the golf course. Gulf Harbor was in excellent condition and proved to be a challenging test of golf. Preparing a golf course for 140 of your peers is not an easy job, especially when you consider several of the greens on the back nine were not sprigged until October. Congratulations,

Tim, on a fantastic job.

This year's tournament raised more than \$14,000 for the Lake City Endowment Fund. Thanks to your support, Lake City Community College progresses into the 21st century as it continues to fuel the industry with golf course superintendents, service technicians, and irrigation technicians. It remains one of the most comprehensive training programs in the industry. Because of government funding cutbacks it takes our support to help keep Lake City at the top.

It takes a lot of hard work to organize a tournament of this magnitude. Special thanks goes out the Tournament committee who once again did an excellent job. David Fry and Glenn Zakany, co-chairmen, Scott Hamm, Dick Bessire, John Johnson, Odell Spainhour, and Mike Smith. Thanks also goes out to all the raffle prize contributors, WCI Communities for providing us with the facility and to Jim Hafner and his staff for their wonderful hospitality.

MIKE HAMILTON
 Foxfire CC

L.C.C.C. Tournament Results

It was nice to see some new names on the leader board this year. Kudos to Lou Conzelmann for his handicap adjustments on some of the notorious sand baggers. Thanks a lot Lou!! Here is a list of those winners

A FLIGHT, B FLIGHT

- 1st Place,** Mark Hoffer & Scott Laufren, Don Burnett & Woody Woodward
- 2nd Place,** Doug Padgett & Bill Lund, Todd Himmelberger & Jason Brod
- 3rd Place,** J. D. Varon & Mike Cantwell, Mark Metzger & Doug Kucera
- 4th Place,** Glenn Zakany & Michael Smith, Jim Osburn Dwight Meeker
- 5th Place,** Scott Zakany & Bob Bittner, Dave Cheesman & Bob Shevlin

EVERGLADES GCSA

Members On The Spot for NBC Sports

In late November the Everglades GCSA was contacted by NBC Sports and asked if we could help supply spotters and scorers for the televising of the 1999 Office Depot Father and Son Challenge Dec. 4-5 at Twin Eagles Golf &



Everglades GCSA members served as spotter and scorers for NBC Sports at the PGA Tour's Father & Son Tournament held at Twin Eagles CC in Naples on December 4-5, 1999. Left to right: James Brinkmeyer, Jim Wahlin, Darren Davis and Trevor Brinkmeyer from Olde Florida GC; Steve Simpson, Wesco Turf; Bill Davidson, Collier's Reserve; Rick Tatum, Mike Anderson and David Pagel from Shadow Wood CC. Not pictured: Dale Walters, Royal Palm CC; Terry Wood, Royal Wood G&CC and Glenn Zakany, Golf Ventures, Inc.

Country Club in Naples. The call went out and a dozen EGCSA members stepped up to lend a hand in the production of this popular event.

Some of the well-known PGA Tour fathers who brought along their sons were Jack Nicklaus, Raymond Floyd, Tom Kite, Lee Trevino and Hale Irwin.

Coincidentally, the Twin Eagles design was also a father-and-son collaboration of Jack Nicklaus senior and junior. They must have had unfair advantage because they were the eventual winners.

Congratulations to superintendent Greg Maze and his assistant, Jason

DeMartino, for having the golf course in superb condition for the tournament.

The EGCSA members who assisted in the two-day assignment as spotters and scorers were Darren Davis, Trevor Brinkmeyer, Jim Wahlin and Jim Brinkmeyer from Olde Florida GC; Rick Tatum, David Pagel and Mike

Anderson from Shadow Wood CC; Dale Walters from Royal Palm CC; Terry Wood from Royal Wood G&CC; Bill Davidson of the Collier's Reserve; Glenn Zakany of Golf Ventures and Steve Simpson from Wesco Turf. Here are some of their comments about the experience:

Rick Tatum: I thought

I thought it was a great experience. The intensity that goes along with one of these productions was incredible. I can't remember the last time I felt that type of pressure.

-Rick Tatum

it was a great experience. The intensity that goes along with one of these productions was incredible. I can't remember the last time I felt that type of pressure.

I would love to participate with helping NBC any time they need us. Listening to the background conversations and directions was quite entertaining. I certainly watch golf on TV from a different perspective now.

Glenn Zakany: The most fun of the NBC experience was listening to how they put the broadcast together through the headphones. It made the day even more enjoyable. I will definitely do it again next year.

Dale Walters: I was at "scoring central." My job was to record scores and pass them along to the TV people plus check and verify any discrepancies between NBC and the volunteers.

I was surprised that we were really important for NBC to have a quality event.

I heard all the info being called in by the NBC and Office Depot volunteers. The combination of the two clarify any doubts in scores or stats. It was very interesting and I would do it again.

DARREN DAVIS
Olde Florida GC

Editor's Note: Central Florida, North Florida, Palm Beach and South Florida chapter members will also be serving as TV spotters for tournaments this year.



From left: Don Benham, FTGA Director of Public Relations; Rich Skorepa, Bayer Corporation; Dr. Pat Cobb, Professor Emeritus Auburn University and John Kopack, President Central Florida GCSA were part of the program at the annual Central Florida/FTGA Turf Research Tournament held at the Interlachen CC in Winter Park. Photo by Joel Jackson.

CENTRAL FLORIDA GCSA

12th Annual Event Funds Research

A total of 32 teams participated in the 12th Annual Turf Research Tournament at the Interlachen Country Club in Winter Park Jan. 10.

The two-man scramble pairs a superintendent with an official from his/her club.

This event is a combined effort of the Central Florida GCSA and the FTGA to raise money for turf research.

Dr. Patricia Cobb, professor emeritus from the Entomology Department of Auburn University, was the guest speaker for the education portion of the

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day's events. Dr. Cobb's appearance was sponsored by the Bayer Corporation. She spoke at several superintendent meetings around the state in January.

The purpose of Dr. Cobb's presentation was to offer an alternative method of controlling mole crickets with Merit that would also control grub populations that may be on the increase since the widespread use of Chipco Choice.

Dr. Cobb was quick to point out that Choice does an excellent job on mole crickets, but grubs are not affected by the active ingredient in Choice.

Dr. Cobb encouraged all superintendents to return to basics with their insect control programs by utilizing scouting, mapping, flushing and life cycle observations to accurately time the application of chemicals for the most efficient application of products to control target pests.

She calls it, "Intelligent Plant Management."

By careful observation of the development of the female adult mole crickets in the spring, a superintendent can time an application of Merit that will not only control the new hatch of mole crickets, but it will also control grubs when they are near the surface.

A word of caution — it is better to be a little early than late or the grub cycle will be missed and the mole cricket nymphs are best controlled when they are small.

Armed with those words of wisdom, the audience

adjourned to a bountiful buffet lunch prepared by the Interlachen culinary staff.

After lunch the players battled traditionally tough pin placements on the immaculate greens groomed to perfection by host superintendent Stuart Leventhal.

The Interlachen C. C. donates the use of the golf course and carts for the event and the only costs are for the lunch, guest speaker and prizes.

This year we want to thank the Bayer Corporation for sponsoring Dr. Cobb's appearance. The remainder of the proceeds will be donated to the FTGA Research Foundation.

JOE ONDO, CGCS
Winter Pines GC

RIDGE GCSA

**Paul Hickman
Roasted at Lone Palm**

In a rare display of touchy-feelie emotion, the Ridge Chapter embraced Paul Hickman during their November meeting at the Lone Palm CC in Lakeland.

Known for capturing the bragging rights in many of the state's golf tournaments, the members of the Ridge GCSA paid respectful homage to Paul Hickman, one of the chapter founders and the former superintendent of the Grenelefe Resort.

Hickman, now vice president of Landscape and Golf Services for OneSource, Inc, was presented an FGCSA President's Award at the chapter meeting following



Paul Hickman, CGCS (center) of OneSource Landscape & Golf was honored and roasted by his former proteges and peers at the Ridge GCSA meeting in November. Presenting Hickman with the 2000 FGCSA President's Award were Steve Ciardullo, president of the Ridge GCSA, and David Barnes, president of Greg Norman Turf, Inc. and former classmate of Paul's at the University of Florida. Photo by Joel Jackson

the golf outing. The audience was full of Hickman's proteges, many of whom are now practicing superintendents in the area. Professionals like Alan Puckett, Bobby Ellis, Buck Buckner, Steve Ciardullo, Mark Hopkins, Tom Cowan, Roy Wilshire, David Barnes, and Jack Harrell, Sr. came to praise and mildly roast Hickman.

Each had a tale of either working with or for Hickman, and the old war stories were a poignant and often humorous testimony to the affection each person had for their classmate, friend or mentor. To a man they claimed Hickman to be a tough task master, but that they learned good work habits under his tutelage. Hickman was visibly moved by the outpouring of sincere love and appreciation by his former interns and assistants.

Hickman was raised in

**1999 FGCSA
President's Award
Winners**

- Paul Hickman
- Dave Holler
- Steve Pearson
- ✓ Al Ross
- ✓ Dale Walters

Jasper and graduated from the University of Florida in 1971 during the G. C. Horn years. He took a job at Palm Aire CC but soon found himself at the Bardmoor CC in Clearwater with classmate David Barnes. In 1975 Hickman was hired as the superintendent of Grenelefe West. He had just ten on the crew.

As golf grew in the region, Paul organized informal golf outings with area superintendents and they would sit around and



talk shop after the round. Travel time to attend meetings of the closest chapters, Central Florida and West Coast was a burden for most of the superintendents so they just continued to meet informally to discuss problems and issues.

In 1990, when the FGCSA organized, the Ridge group decided to formalize their organization. The first set of bylaws were written on a cocktail napkin and the Ridge legend was born.

Hickman is considered the instigator and chief founder of the organization often making phone calls and mailing out meeting announcements to get the chapter rolling. The

founders decided quickly to make the primary purpose of the chapter to continue a relaxed friendly atmosphere and not get caught up in politics. It was to be service and substance above all else.

If there can be a measure of the success of the chapter's approach it can be found perhaps in the relatively low turnover rate for superintendents in the area. In his acceptance speech Hickman pointed to the spirit of community that has been fostered over the years. Indeed the Ridge Chapter is involved in several regional programs including annual donations of time and money to the Winter Haven Youth Soccer program, Bartow Youth Girls Villa, Ministry for

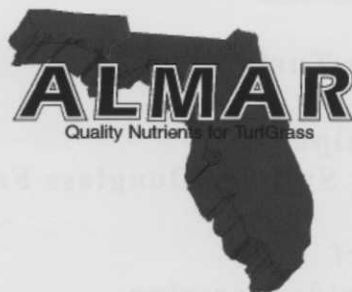
Boys, Ag Crime Unit, Disaster Relief Fund, Children's Hospital and last year the Ridge Chapter stepped in to help a young boy with spina bifida replace a stolen bicycle and helped his family get a special wheelchair.

This spirit of helping stems in part from Hickman's own set of values where he ranks Christian living, family life and being a superintendent as the order of the priorities in his life. He met his wife Terry on his crew at Grenelefe. He had to fire her so he could marry her. They have been married 20 years and have two children, Will (16) and Anna (12).

Hickman sees the fierce

competition for business and jobs as creating a stay-at-home mentality for many superintendents. He said, "With golfer and management expectations so high these days, it is easy for superintendents to fall into a rut and not take time to get away for meetings and even continuing education. They get so afraid something is going to happen if they're gone, so they stay on the job longer and longer and lose confidence in themselves and they lose balance in their lives."

Hickman says superintendents need to be encouraged to become involved in their communities and their associations. He worries that the young



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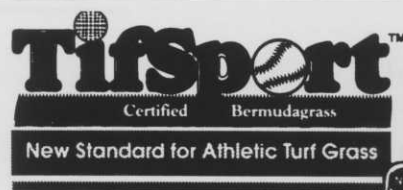
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Steve Keller, GCS of The Moorings Club, presented Treasure Coast GCSA founder Dave Holler with an FGCSA President's Award for Lifetime Service at the joint Treasure Coast & Palm Beach GCSA meeting held at the Jupiter Island Club last October. Photo by Steve Pearson.

men and women coming into the profession can't or don't appreciate the hard work and dedicated service that it took our predecessors to take our profession to where we are today.

Hickman says, "The new generation must now jump in and participate to help continue the progress."

JOEL D. JACKSON, CGCS
FGCSA Director of
Communications

TREASURE COAST GCSA Chapter Founder Receives Award

One of the highlights of the joint meeting of the Treasure Coast and Palm Beach Chapters last October was the presentation of the FGCSA's 1999

President's Award for Lifetime Service to David C. Holler, one of the founders of the Treasure Coast GCSA.

Dave grew up in State College, Pa., the home of Penn State University. He lived a couple of blocks from the old University Golf Course, and at the age of 12 in 1950 Dave began pulling weeds and caddying at the golf course. He became the regular caddy for Dr. Jack Harper, the extension specialist for

Penn State University. Dave also played a lot of golf and he played extremely well. He holds the course record of 63 at the Old University golf course.

Dave graduated from high school in 1956 and was offered several scholarships, but because his father was in poor health, he had no choice but to go to work to support his mother, father and younger brother. Eventually Dave would enroll at Penn State while holding down a regular job as a concrete inspector.

In 1960 Dave was drafted into the Army and had the tough job of giving golf lessons to the officers. After his service was over he returned to Penn State and enrolled in the turfgrass program. Dave married his wife Virginia in 1964 and they are the parents of two children, Dave, Jr. and Karen.

Some of Dave's mentors were Ed Steiniger of Pine Valley, who encouraged him to get involved in the superintendents association; Harry McSloy of Wilmington CC, who helped Dave start the Philadelphia GCSA newsletter; and Warren Bidwell and Tom Mascaro who were good friends.

Dave served as membership chairman for the GCSAA and worked closely with Bill Wagner and George Cavanaugh to help

organize the present Florida Golf Course Superintendents Association.

Dave's resume includes nine golf courses in four states over the past 32 years with stints at Wilmington CC, Delaware; Wildwood G&CC, New Jersey; Schuylkill CC, Schuylkill, Pa.; and in 1971 he was the 32nd superintendent in the nation to be certified while at Gulph Mills GC in King of Prussia, Pa.

In 1980 Dave moved to Coral Gables and began his Florida tenure at the Riviera CC followed by tours of duty at Stuart Y&CC; Quail Ridge, Boynton Beach; Ballantrae, Port St. Lucie; and Frenchman's Creek, Palm Beach Gardens. Dave shifted to the supplier side of the business working for O. M. Scott's, Inc. and he now is currently with Bunch Wholesale Inc. of Texas.

Dave is a great source of information and he is also a collector of golf scorecards, antique golf balls, wooden shafted clubs, seed bags, golf tees and books. In fact he is the author of a short golf instructional book, *Golf Made Easy*. Dave was the 1981 winner of the Poa Annuu Classic and was the runner up in the 1985 Martin County Amateur tournament.

Dave's accomplishments are extensive. His passion for the game of golf and the business of turf management and his willingness to help others make him an excellent recipient for this year's President's Award.

STEVE KELLER
The Moorings GC

CORRECTION

The following sponsors were inadvertently left out of the Sponsor List for the West Coast GCSA/Bud Quandt event on page 17 of the Winter 2000 issue.

Platinum Sponsor - **Golf Ventures**.
Gold Sponsor - **Wesco Turf**.