



Four-time superintendent association president Dick Blake (left) receives the 2001 FGCSA Distinguished Service Award from the Palm Beach Chapter President Randy Bushway at the PBGCSA's July 18th meeting.

## Blake wins DSA

From New England to Kansas to Florida, Dick Blake has left a legacy of leadership in his wake as he sailed through his golf course management career.

On July 18, the FGCSA recognized Blake for his unselfish, lifelong devotion to the profession by presenting him with the Distinguished Service Award as he was surrounded by his Palm Beach peers at a local chapter meeting.

"I was totally surprised by the award," said Blake, "but I am extremely pleased and proud to receive it. I had a couple of the Palm Beach members call me and ask if I was planning on coming to the chapter meeting, which was a little unusual, but I

Island, New England, GCSAA and Florida superintendent associations.

Of course each presidency was preceded by years on each board of directors before moving up to the top spot.

Blake's service to his profession has given those associations much more than they can repay with a plaque, but at least he knows his sacrifices of time and energy were appreciated.

Blake's reflections on his career yield fond memories and insights that still ring true in today's work environment. Blake recalled the result of some of his early work, "When I visit New England, it is very satisfying to see the maturity of the courses I helped build and to know I have left a mark on the landscape. Just as important is to watch the growth and development of over 30 superintendents that worked with me over the years."

### DICK BLAKE

**Education:** Stockbridge School of Agriculture, Mass.

**Career History:** Massachusetts - Mitchell Brothers Corp. (golf course building and renovation); Whittinsville CC; Concord CC; Salem CC and Mt. Pleasant CC.

Vermont - Woodstock G&TC, Rock Resort Chain.

Florida - Card Sound G&CC; Quail Ridge CC; Bocaire CC and Growing Technologies, Inc.

**Association Presidencies:** 1968 Rhode Island GCSA; 1970 New England GCSA; 1971 GCSAA (first director to be nominated and elected from the floor); 1987 Florida GCSA

had no idea this was coming." Blake's presidential record sets the bar for professional association volunteerism and duty as he banged the gavel for the Rhode

For those contemplating the life of a superintendent, Blake advised, "You cannot be thinned in this business. You should expect to work long, hard

hours to pay your dues before becoming a head superintendent. While paying your dues, do yourself a favor and develop sound business-management and people-handling skills. Take speaking and business-writing courses.

"Communication is a critical part of the profession today."

In a telephone interview, Blake said he has been heartened the past year by a resurgence in attendance at local superintendent meetings. "We had some bumpy years where attendance had fallen off, but it seems like the demand for professionalism by employers is spurring superintendents to seek out more education to remain competitive."

Blake also recounted his move to Florida and how local superintendents like Lou Oxnevad and Paul Turcotte — whom he had met at GCSAA conferences — helped him adapt his management techniques to fit warm-season grasses.

"Those guys and others rolled out the southern hospitality to me and my wife. Their generosity and willingness to help me is a true salute to the brotherhood of superintendents everywhere," he said.

Joel Jackson

## Crawford Wins President's Award

Paul Crawford's winning the FGCSA's President's Award for Lifetime Service this summer is like getting elected to the Major League Baseball Hall of Fame on your first eligible ballot.

This award was created in 1990 to honor those superintendents who served the turfgrass industry for a minimum of 20 years, which is exactly the number of years Crawford has been employed at the Palm Beach Country Club. This is a reflection of the high esteem and apprecia-

tion that his contemporaries in the Palm Beach Chapter regard him and his many contributions.

But it isn't only the Palm Beach Chapter that has recognized Crawford for his outstanding service to the golf and turf industry. In 1996, he won the FGCSA's Distinguished Service Award, a "yearly award presented to a golf course superintendent who has given his time unselfishly in promoting golf course management and unification of the Florida Golf Course Superintendent."

It seems that as soon as he became a superintendent, Crawford embraced the spirit of giving back to his peers and his chosen profession.



After winning the FGCSA Distinguished Service Award in 1996 and a roasting by his good friend Butch Gill (left), Paul Crawford didn't rest on his laurels. His continuing state and national committee service earned him a 2000 FGCSA Presidents Award for Lifetime Service. Photo by Joel Jackson.

I first met Crawford in a hospital room in Jupiter in 1981. We were both visiting Harold Murphy, my former boss and general manager at Sugar Mill C.C., and Paul's former associate at Jupiter Hills.

While I can claim no prescience about his future dedication and service to our industry, I was aware that I had met a caring person of strong character. The next 20 years proved that my first impression was correct, as he went on to become one of the most insightful, dedicated, and productive superintendents in our state's history.

Crawford first joined the