

It is an honor to become president of the FGCSA and follow in the footsteps of leaders who had the vision to take our association to where it is today. We cannot rest on past accomplishments and put the association on cruise control. We have some great leaders on our executive committee in Vice President Greg Pheneger, Secretary-Treasurer Dale Walters, and Immediate Past President Geoff

Changes and Challenges Ahead

Coggan to help me guide our association in the right direction. In addition Joel Jackson, director of communications and Marie Roberts, association manager are two extremely valuable people we have relied on for years.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



David Court, CGCS

These volunteers take several days out of the year to attend FGCSA board meetings around the state. Please give them your attention at your chapter meetings. They will be updating you on issues important to our profession.

The South Florida Turfgrass Task Force recently made its recommendation on the relocation of the South Florida Turf Grass Research Program. The task force members included Ralph White, chairman, Jim Goins, Mark Jarrell, Steve Pearson, John Foy, Greg Pheneger, Dr. Robin Giblin-Davis, Dr. John Haydu and Joel Jackson. Their preference was to keep the program at Ft. Lauderdale.

According to Dr. Mike Martin, vice

I would like to also thank Darren Davis for his insight on the board of directors. Darren did an extra tour of duty as immediate past president after Cary Lewis had to resign last year.

The external vice presidents who serve as directors and committee chairpersons play a vital role for the association.

These volunteers

president of IFAS, two problems are keeping this from happening. First the area has become "urban bound" which would restrict the things that can be done. Hasn't all of South Florida become that way? We still manage to maintain beautiful landscapes and golf courses just the same. Ft. Lauderdale is the perfect location and that is all I will say on that subject.

The second reason for the relocation is the deferred maintenance cost to the facility of \$3,314,500. It is highly unlikely that we would see this kind of money go into this facility for repairs, but with that amount a new facility could be built. Would anyone out there like to make a donation? I'm sure that we would name the facility after you. Seriously, it looks like the relocation might be to Immokalee at the Southwest Research and Education Center as recommended by the Task Force. Consideration was also given to Belle Glade, Ft. Pierce and the Ag Reserve Land in Palm Beach County.

Dr. Martin's goal is to build the best program in the country. This will require change. Change in the long run is usually for the best. We need to accept this move to Immokalee and continue to support research in South Florida. The transition from Ft. Lauderdale to Immokalee will take time. Research is still taking place at the FLREC and will continue for a few years until the new location is established.

My vision for the FGCSA is to get more member involvement with the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program. Golf course superintendents are often referred to as "Stewards of the Environment." We all need to be able to live up to this title. A few facts:

- There are 1363 golf courses in Florida
- 234 (17%) ACSP members in Florida
- 13% of U.S. courses are ACSP members
- 58 fully certified ACSP courses in Florida
- 500 certified ACSP courses nationally
- 9 Audubon Signature Sanctuary Communities in Florida

I believe we can vastly improve our numbers in Florida. Kevin Fletcher with Audubon International would like to see these numbers higher. His goal for members of AI is 50 percent of the clubs in the next five years. The first step is to become a member of the ACSP program at a cost of

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\$150 per year for your club. Certification is next. There is no time constraint or great amount of money that needs to be spent in order to become certified. Any club can do this. We will have some hands-on workshops for ACSP at several locations around the state in early December to make the process easier

I would like to see increased membership and meeting attendance for all chapters. Many of you know superintendents who aren't members. Invite them to your meetings. Introduce them around and get them involved with the education programs. Let them see that meetings can be productive as well as educational for all members and maybe they will join and become active.

Spokesperson training with Dr. Tom Morgan will be another service available to our members this year. Golf has been a target in the media. We can be good sources to set the record straight. We need to learn how to handle ourselves when the television camera is bearing down on us. We will offer three programs around the state this year.

If anyone has any comments they would like to share with me, please feel free to call, write or e-mail. I'm looking forward to a productive year.

David Court, CGCS
President