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**Progress
Out of
Adversity**

Research and education have always been primary focuses of this association and will continue to be so in the years ahead.

The current uncertainty regarding the Otto Schmeisser Research Green at the Fort Lauderdale Research and Education Center has been a concern to us all, and not the least to Gary Pederson, who is the technician responsible for its care. We are committed to a proactive relationship with the University of Florida and with Vice President Dr. Mike Martin,

and we will continue to build upon this relationship. Communication among the university, the FTGA and the FGCSA has improved considerably thanks to the work of Mark Jarrell CGCS, Kevin Downing CGCS, Steve Pearson CGCS and Don Benham, FTGA director of public affairs as well as many others in the industry that have seen the advantages to open and effective communications.

There is a certain disappointment amongst those that have supported the Ft. Lauderdale research green through their donations of time, money and equipment. As to its probable demise, Dr. Martin and Dr. Nell are very aware of our views and opinions and communication has been very open. Representatives from individual chapters as well as the executive board are working closely with the university and are building upon our experiences to chart a new course of action, one that will provide us with research facilities and applied research programs that will help us in the long term.

The South Florida chapter's Turf Expo that only last year donated \$27,000 to the Research Fund will continue to be a very prominent event in terms of education, product awareness and fund raising.

The support that this event has seen from vendors and turf professionals alike has been nothing less than stupendous, the monies raised at this event have been the mainstay of the Research Fund for a number of years and hopefully will continue to fund new research proposals into the future. This is not an issue that affects us alone; we are but one piece of a large pie.

Without getting on my political soap box, the disregard that our elected officials have for the education system including the work of IFAS choosing instead to rely on tourism, is a fallacy. The events of last year have shown us that to put all our eggs in one basket is sheer short sightedness. We must look positively to the future and work proactively to insure our own prosperity. Those who sit back and grumble will only serve their own misery and disappointment. Their sour grapes will not solve the challenges facing us. Change is upon us and we must participate to make the inevitable changes work in our best interest.

This year's FTGA Conference to be held in Tampa will be a great opportunity to listen to what has been accomplished through research and what proposals will be funded in the near future. One true test of our resolve, when it comes to supporting research, will be the number of us that will attend this year. While this association seeks to reflect the viewpoints and wishes of the entire membership, your attendance and involvement will speak volumes compared to what I can do in this column. Take an interest this year. Let's show support for the FTGA conference and send a wake up call to those high and mighty elected officials that we are not to be overlooked.

**PRESIDENT'S
MESSAGE**



*Geoff Coggan,
CGCS, MG*