

Atlanta and Beyond

The 74th GCSAA Conference and Show is history but I would like to reflect on some of the highlights of the convention for those who may not have attended.

First, Florida superintendents walked away with several awards and they need to be recognized again and congratulated for their achievements.

Joe Panteleo, superintendent at Indian Creek Country Club in Miami Beach, won the GCSAA Golf Tournament with a 7-over-par, two-day total of 150. Conditions were quite cold and windy for this golf event at Hilton Head, S.C., but Joe prevailed and we're all very proud of him.

Joel Jackson, director of communications, was presented with GCSAA's Distinguished Service Award.

Joel's eloquent acceptance speech included praise toward superintendents Dan Jones and Tim Hierns and the impact that they have had on his career. He also thanked his wife Susan and daughter Jennifer, who were also in attendance, for their support. You have a wonderful family, Joel.

Darren Davis, superintendent at Olde Florida Golf Club, Naples, was awarded his second Leo Feser Award for his articles in *Golf Course Management Magazine*.

Scott Whorrall, superintendent at the Club at Mediterra in Bonita Springs, received the Environmental Leaders in Golf Award for national private clubs.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



David Court, CGCSA

Again, congratulations to all of you. It's great to know that your efforts are appreciated.

Our annual FGCSA reception on Thursday evening was well attended by an estimated 600 people. A "Big Thank You" to our sponsors who continue to make this an outstanding event every year. Thanks also to Association Manager Marie Roberts and Business Manager Mike Perham. They organize the party and make sure we don't run low on food and refreshments. The 50/50 drawing for our inaugural benevolent fund got off to a great start raising just over \$3,000 for members who are in need. Keith Longshore of Lesco had the lucky ticket in the fund-raising raffle.

Keynote speakers at this year's convention had inspiring messages to lead off the convention. John Kasich former Ohio congressman's message was "With Leadership and Teamwork We Can Make a Change." He said, "We are the kind of people who are based on the way we were raised, with values that have traveled through time." Those values being honesty, integrity, persistence and accepting personal responsibility. These are ideals exemplified by the successful people in our industry today.

At the Golf General Session, Captain Al Haynes delivered his awe-inspiring keynote address. Capt. Haynes was the pilot of the United Airlines flight that lost all hydraulic systems in the air July 19, 1989. His message focused on luck, coupled with teamwork, communications, preparation, execution and cooperation, all which enable him to land his DC-10 aircraft and save 185 of the 296 passengers on the ill-fated flight. He went on to say, "If something goes wrong, you

must be able to stop, think and react to the situation." It is also important to listen to your team members, including those you supervise. Even if you think you have the answer, they might just have one better." You can see how this applies to us as golf course superintendents and our everyday situations. Capt. Haynes's presentation included audio tapes of conversations from the cockpit to the tower and all of the emergency departments involved in this crisis. I noted that level heads reigned throughout this horrendous ordeal. Panic was never detected with these highly trained professionals.

At the convention, one always runs into old friends whom we haven't seen for a while. Maybe it's someone who worked with you as an OJT student or former assistant and now is a superintendent. I ran into both and renewed old friendships, and there are always good seminars and a trade show that has everything you could need at your course. One of the instructors who was missing this year was Dr. Bree Hayes. She was diagnosed with cancer and the treatments left her physically unable to attend. If you have attended her seminars you might drop her card and send get well wishes. I'm sure this would brighten her spirits.

I know this is a busy time of year with spring renovations and upcoming summer projects, but I urge everyone to attend some of your chapter meetings. The directors for your chapters work hard to provide good meeting sites, good educational programs and the host superintendents usually knock themselves out to make their golf courses the best ever for the meeting.

I often hear that some superintendents are turned off because they think their local associations are big "cliques." They say the same guys hang together, play golf together and don't allow anyone else into their group. That may be true in a few cases, but for the most part our members who attend meetings regularly are just more familiar with each other. So if you aren't attending meetings for this reason, try again and give people a chance to get to know you.

I am looking forward to the EGCSA Poa Classic weekend

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and the CFGCSA Crowfoot weekend. These are two weekends of some rest and relaxation and good fun for the family. Everyone needs a break once in awhile. Other events of interest will also be the Suncoast Scramble, SFGCSA Turf Expo, NFGCSA Mike Richards Memorial, Jeff Hayden Envirotron Classic, SFGCSA Missing and Exploited Children's Tournament, PBGCSA Future of Golf and TCGCSA Blue Pearl. Proceeds from these tournaments go toward turf grass research, scholarship funds and to other worthwhile causes.

I hope to get to as many of these functions as possible and look forward to meeting as many members as I can. Please feel free to introduce yourself anytime, anywhere.

David A. Court, CGCSA