

President Profile

Resident President



View of the 18th hole and Indian Creek clubhouse. Photo by Joel Jackson

By Joel Jackson, CGCS

No, Joe Pantaleo isn't a native Floridian. Actually he's from Wisconsin where he majored in business management. He also earned a master's degree in human resource management/sports business at Biscayne College with an eye to perhaps becoming an athletic director at a college or university some day. The residency refers to the fact that he lives with his wife Lila in the center of his golf course, the Indian Creek C. C. in North Miami Beach.

Indian Creek is a golf club, an island and a community with its own zip code and police force. The 300-acre island lies in

north Biscayne Bay and this year the club celebrates its 75th anniversary. The golf course occupies about half of the island with residential lots taking up the rest. Movers and shakers in business, entertainment and sports make this gated community their sanctuary. While there are only 30-40 homes on the island, there are several hundred club members. Pantaleo stepped onto this secluded but seasonally active island in 1996 and was greeted that first year with the beginning of a long-range plan to restore the original 1920s look to the golf course. The renovations continue today.

Because he was very sports minded and loved golf

already, Pantaleo became interested in classic golf-course architecture. Spending hours with golf-course architect Ron Forse, a specialist in Donald Ross course restorations, fueled his desire to learn more and it has become a hobby that serves him well in his role as a *Golf Digest* panelist who plays and rates courses across America.

"As panelists, we have very specific details and questions that must be noted and evaluated," Pantaleo said. "This isn't just a golf road trip with your buddies. The fun comes in seeing and playing some of our country's greatest tests of golf, but it is also serious work with timelines and schedules that must be met."

Indian Creek was designed by William Flynn, a Ross contemporary, and built by the firm of Toomey and Flynn. Howard Toomey was a civil engineer who specialized in railroad construction.

"The site was an architect's dream and nightmare at the same time," Pantaleo said. "Created from scratch — dredged up from the bay — Flynn had a blank slate to work with to recreate elevations and contouring. The big negative was access, which meant everything from mules to manpower had to be barged in. We are working with Geoff Shackleford and a couple of other writers who are working on a book about Flynn's contribution to American golf. He hasn't really



The beach along the par 3, 12th hole is preserved as a reminder that seaplanes once ferried people to the island. Photo by Joel Jackson.

Joe Pantaleo



Joe Pantaleo literally lives on his golf course and loves it. Photo by Joel Jackson

24th President of the FGCSA

Originally from: Beloit, Wis.

Education: B.S. in business management, U. of Wisconsin Eau Claire; M.S. human resource management/sports business, Biscayne College

Employment history: 1996 to present, superintendent, Indian Creek CC, Miami; 1995-96 superintendent, Delaire CC, Delray Beach ; 1990-95 superintendent, Ft. Lauderdale CC; 1989-90 superintendent, Eagle Trace GC, Coral Springs; 1984-89 superintendent Key Biscayne Links; 1980-84 superintendent of various parks and golf courses for Dade County Parks and Recreation Department

Professional affiliations: GCSAA, FTGA, FGCSA

(director, and all officer chairs), South Florida GCSA (past president 1989-90)

Philosophy/Advice: Those who know me know I don't satisfy easily. I'm always looking to improve myself in my current position and for the future. I always try to elevate the facility where I work to new levels of excellence. I encourage team effort and only consider myself the "head coach" of the operation. My players do all the work and should have share of the credit. Since I didn't have a formal turf education, it was necessary for me to be aggressive early in my career. I couldn't stand mediocrity and I could see early on that getting to the top wasn't going to be easy. Hard work, long hours, patience, perseverance, and many questions later, I've arrived here. That formula for success has stayed with me for my entire career. Anyone knows that staying on top requires intense effort. The down side from this effort is the strain it can put on family relationships. It cost me my first marriage. I only knew one speed coming up, full ahead! Be careful to keep the big picture in perspective, especially with your family and friends.

Memorable moments: Sports: High finish in state high school golf tournament; state championship in 1975; winning the Poa Annuu Classic in 1993, the FGCSA State Championship in 1997 and the GCSAA Golf Championship in 2003. Playing historic golf courses and meeting people as a *Golf Digest* course-rating panelist. Hosting pro golf events, Senior

PGA Tour's Royal Caribbean Classic and the PGA Tour's Honda Classic. Last, but not least, is the valuable construction and renovation experience at Ft. Lauderdale CC, Delaire CC and now at Indian Creek.



Candid camera caught Joe at the 2004 Poa Annuu Classic in a rare miscue on the course. This watery recovery attempt cost him a bid for a second Poa Classic title. Photo by Joel Jackson

been recognized like Donald Ross a few others of that era.”

That first year in 1996 found Pantaleo growing in new greens complexes that Forse had restored complete with redan greens and risk-and-reward approaches. (*A “redan” green is wider than it is deep, is angled so that the left is further away than the right, and slopes front to back and right to left. The name comes from The Redan, the 192-yard 15th hole at North Berwick Golf Course in Scotland. -Ed*)

Fast forward to 2004 and Pantaleo and staff are still at it as each year they tackle a few fairway bunker complexes and tree removal or relocation as shot values are compromised by the growth of well-intentioned but misplaced trees in the past. Pantaleo said, “Not all the renovation is on the course. The clubhouse is also an historic landmark. Ongoing restorations on the Maurice Fautio design are aimed at preserving the heritage of the architecture and interior design of the 20s.

“There are always pros and cons to living on site. The members can find you pretty easily, but then it sure comes in handy to make adjustments to irrigation programs based on the weather and I don’t have to commute in our heavy south Florida traffic.” The superintendent residence on site is a vestige of many of the golf courses built in southeast Florida during the early 1900s.

Teamwork is essential at any golf club and Pantaleo has general manager Michael MacDonald, CCM in his corner when it comes to his participation in the Florida GCSA. MacDonald himself is a director of the Seminole Region of the Club Managers Association of America. MacDonald said, “We totally support Joe’s participation in the association. In fact I would like to see the various Florida golf industry groups have more joint meetings so we can strengthen the

industry and support the issues with a united effort.”

Pantaleo’s management style is highlighted by his thoughtful and analytical approach to fact gathering and decision making. He is a careful listener and asks lots of questions and that applies from agronomy to association business. He credits south Florida superintendent Jim Walker for nudging him into the superintendent ranks.

Pantaleo said, “I was working in the pro shop at Greynolds Park back in 1980 and asking all those questions about the golf course. Jim got tired of me bending his ear every day, so he gave me my first book on turfgrass management. He has been a true friend and mentor over the years, and I appreciate his inspiration and advice that helped to launch and sustain my career.”

All work and no play makes Jack (or Joe) a dull boy, so Pantaleo is a devout sports nut. Even though he’s from Wisconsin, he somehow became a Chicago Bears fan. “I am considered the black sheep of the family because I got turned onto the Bears,” he said. Pantaleo is no idle couch-potato athlete however; he also loves to play basketball, billiards, all water sports including fishing, which he admits he hasn’t done that much of lately. Of course there is also golf.

A collegiate golfer at University of Wisconsin Eau Claire, Pantaleo is a veteran of many amateur tournaments at both the state and national levels. He won the Florida GCSA State Championship in 1997, and perhaps his proudest golf accomplishment was in capturing the GCSAA Championship in February 2003 at Hilton Head, S.C.

Pantaleo had never placed higher than 13th at seven previous championships and had no reason to expect a victory this time around. Pantaleo indicated in a GCM magazine interview that his game was rusty because a tough winter that year had demanded all

his time on the course and gave very little opportunity to hone his game. He thought a nagging hip injury might keep him from playing his best and he questioned whether he should even make the trip, given the busy time of year in south Florida.

After shooting four-over-par on the first day at the Palmetto Dunes G.C., Pantaleo played solid golf in the final round on Pete Dye’s Harbour Town G.C. The leaders in the final group, perhaps focusing to on each other, began to self-destruct, but Pantaleo buckled down on the back nine and made several par saves from bunkers. A key birdie on the 14th hole put him firmly in command of the tournament.

Buckling down and getting the job done is perhaps a fitting keynote to what Pantaleo hopes to accomplish during his Florida GCSA presidency.

“We have been blessed with some forward-thinking leaders in the recent past, who have set in motion ideas and goals that will strengthen our association’s future,” he said. “Using the input from a recent FGCSA member-needs survey and ideas from a GCSAA chapter-assessment tool, I plan to carry those goals forward and build on them to better serve our members.”

As It Lies

Reflections: Objects in the rear view mirror may be closer than they appear

By Jim Walker

The day before yesterday it was 1962 and I was an 18-year-old hotshot golfer and baseball player who, when asked what he planned on doing after college,



responded: “I’ll either play major league baseball or be a professional golfer.” No wonder the phrase “youth is wasted on the young” was coined.

During that summer between graduating from high school and entering college, I was rear-ended by a 1960 Ford station wagon which was larger than some of the ships the Japanese sank in Pearl Harbor.

After fiddling around for some years not wanting to give up the ghost of my dreams, I finally realized you don’t get guys out with 84 mph fastballs and you had to hit it 250 yards off the tee to be a real player.

So, in 1971 at the tender age of 27, I took my first job as a “working superintendent” for Jim Yancy at Ocala Golf Club. Damn, I’ve been getting up early for 33 years growing and mowing grass.

What prompted this rambling preamble is twofold: first, my wife is planning my “Oh NO, the Big 60” birthday party next month, and second, was the August 2004 issue of *Golfdom* magazine. On the cover is a wonderful picture of David Swift, the superintendent at Whistling Straits, which just hosted a very successful and exciting PGA Championship.

Now you may be asking yourself why Mr. Swift would trigger old memories. He’s 27 bloody years old!! Are you kidding me? I’ve got socks and tee shirts older than that.

He was born in 1977. Think about it. Before he was born, we fought wars in Korea and Vietnam, color TV came into existence, and we put men on the moon and brought them back. Eisenhower created the federal Interstate highway system, Tricky Dick at al succumbed to the Watergate scandal, a Peanut farmer with very large teeth was elected President. The Miami Dolphins had won two Super Bowls, the AFL merged with the NFL, the ABA merged with the

2004 Photo Contest Results



First Place -
"Unplayable Lie" by Teri Hoisington, Lansbrook G.C., Palm Harbor



Second Place
"Florida Osprey" by Jim Mandeville, Bear's Club, Jupiter

The submissions for the 2004 contest have been judged and the first- and second-place winners in each category will be presented over the next four issues. This is the first year we accepted high-resolution digital photographs. We begin with the winners of Category 1 – Wildlife.

2005 Photo Contest Categories

Category 1 – Wildlife on the course: includes any critter on the course that walks, flies, swims, slithers or crawls.

Category 2 – Formal Landscaping: includes annuals and ornamental shrubs and trees planted in formal beds on the course or club entrance.

Category 3 – Native Areas: includes beds of native plants including trees, shrubs and grasses used in naturalized areas to reduce turf inputs and aquatic vegetation plantings used to create habitat and protect water quality.

Category 4 – Scenic Hole: includes any view of a golf hole (panoramic or close up) that demonstrates the scenic beauty of a golf course.

2005 Photo Contest Easy Rules

1. Color prints or slides. Prefer prints. Only one entry per category. Digital images: Digital image entries must be taken at a resolution setting of 300 dpi or higher and saved as JPEG (minimum compression) or TIF format images. Images taken, saved or sent at lower resolutions or at high compression will not qualify for the contest. If you're not sure. Send a print instead.

2. Photo must be taken on an FGCSA member's course. Photo must be taken by an FGCSA member or a member of his staff.

3. Attach a label on the back of the print or slide which identifies the category, course and photographer. **DO NOT WRITE DIRECTLY ON THE BACK OF THE PRINT.** Each print shall be attached to an 8.5 x 11-inch sheet of paper using a loop of masking tape on the back of the print. Slides should be in plastic sleeves for easy access for viewing. Digital images must be accompanied by the same information in an email or document, or on a CD.

4. A caption identifying the category, course and photographer should be typed or printed on the sheet of paper below the mounted print.

5. Judging will be done by a panel of FGCSA members not participating in the contest.

6. Mail entries in a bend-proof package marked "PHOTOS DO NOT BEND" to Joel Jackson, 6780 Tamarind Circle, Orlando 32819. Entries postmarked after Aug. 1, 2005 will be automatically entered in the 2006 Photo Contest.

NBA, and Major League Baseball expanded to 112 cities. Palmer was past his prime and Nicklaus, Irwin, Watson, and Johnny Miller were in theirs. The top tennis players were Jimmy Connors, John McEnroe, Bjorn Borg, Chris Everett, and Martina Navratilova. Cassette tapes had replaced eight-tracks and the vinyl LPs were about to be replaced by CD's.

There are a lot of other things I could mention, but I think you get the point, which is: I'm growing older, but not growing up. David Swift has a brilliant career ahead of him. In closing I would like to pro-

vide some hints on how you can tell you are getting longer in the tooth as well. You know you're getting older when:

- You walk into a room and upon arrival can't remember why you went there.
- You meet and introduce yourself to someone on the first tee and when you get to the green you have forgotten their name.
- In the middle of a very intellectual conversation, you completely lose your train of thought.
- You know all the answers to the Jeopardy questions, but you can't think of them at the moment.

- When you turn your arms or legs into certain positions, your skin gets all wrinkled.
- You discover there is only one stronger magnification in reading glasses.
- One of your favorite channels is TV Land where you watch Gunsmoke, Leave it to Beaver, and I Love Lucy among others.
- Lovemaking used to take a minute to get ready and would last an hour, now it takes an hour to get ready and lasts a minute.
- You hate rap, heavy metal, electronica, dance and new wave music, and love the Beatles, Beach Boys and

- James Taylor.
- You want a Porsche, Corvette, Viper, or Mustang Cobra.
 - You would love to have a cherry 1969 G.T.O "Judge" with a really big block engine.

These are just a few clues to the wonder of the aging process. There are many others everyone discovers in their own sweet way and the own sweet time. At least I still have a full head of hair, most of my teeth and impeccable hearing.

Good luck to David Swift and all the other youngsters in the business. I hope your next 33 years will be as good as mine.

By the time this issue hits the street, only the people who lived and sweated through Hurricane Charley and its aftermath will still remember that Friday the 13th in August that changed some lives forever. After the initial relief of actually surviving the storm and after the shock and awe of surveying and cleaning up the debris is over — the ripple effects will take over.

In some cases it will be post-traumatic stress for those who lost homes or had family members lose homes, or the financial burden of costly repairs, rebuilding or relocating. These folks will not necessarily be the same focused employees they may have been before the

storm. They can definitely be on edge until their lives return to normal.

Golf courses will be shelling out lots of bucks to repair structures and remove debris, and there may be significant lost revenue going on at the same time. I know courses will be racing to reopen as soon as possible to minimize those losses so they can pay the bills and salaries and serve the customers. But it may be months for some courses to reopen.

Massive clean-up efforts will divert staff from normal turf programs designed keep the turf in tip-top shape. Mowing schedules likely got behind and lack of power kept shops in the dark and equipment technicians from servicing equipment as thoroughly as before or lapping and grinding reels on schedule. There may be some ugly mow patterns for a few weeks and scalping the tall turf as crews struggle to catch up and afternoon rains complicate the process keeping the ground too soft to mow.

The look of many courses has been altered dramatically as reports of thousands of downed trees are coming in. Some of the older, stately courses have been torn asunder by the eye wall of the storm as it crossed the state. Hundred-year-old oak trees will not be replaced in some members' lifetimes.

If large specimen trees are affordable by some clubs, the heavy equipment needed to bring them may also cause collateral damage. Meanwhile the replanting and replacing of trees takes time and money away from routine course grooming and the new trees need staking-up and extra watering until they get established.

There may also be a large investment in time and effort to replant key mature trees that fell over. A noble sentiment but one fraught with its own set of pros and cons since the weight of the big tree will be a liability to the damaged root system, and unless the big tree is securely anchored with guy wires and cables, it can fall again in a severe thunderstorm.

And remember hurricane season isn't over yet.

But there are also good ripples from the crisis. Golf course superintendent have been swapping and borrowing chain saws and blowers and helping each other to clean up, and vendors are hauling these loaners to clients with their trucks and trailers. Of course they have made some sales too; as folks have added a blower to the inventory or replaced an old one.

Another positive ripple comes from the folks at Grandezza and Old Cypress golf clubs in the stricken southwest Florida area. They have been cooking and serving more than 6,000 meals for survivors and volunteers in the hardest-hit areas. Reports are also filtering in about members pitching in with the course clean-up and some are grilling burgers and hot dogs in their backyards for crew members working so hard cleaning up the mess on the courses.

A more subtle ripple effect will be that on the local ecosystems. Perhaps no damage was as severe as on the islands of Sanibel, Captiva, North Captiva, Cayo Costa, Boca Grande and Pine Island. The foliage on many — if not most — of the trees was stripped off by the strong winds. Once-shady cool areas will now be exposed to the grueling sun. Temperatures will be hotter and force critters to seek shelter elsewhere. To some extent the same is true for those courses inland losing hundreds of — if not close to a thousand — trees. Lots of creatures will now be fighting for new territories or moving out of the area with the loss of food, cover and habitat. Some courses also will be battling back from salt and sediment contamination of the turfgrass and water sources.

A hurricane makes a big splash when it hits, but the ripple effects linger on long after the storm is gone. These ripples now have turned into shock waves thanks to hurricanes Frances, Ivan and Jeanne.

Ripple Effects

GREEN SIDE UP



Joel Jackson, CGCS

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