

Fulfilling Own Philosophy Earns DSA for Davis

Darren Davis' success isn't a fluke of destiny, but rather a product and fulfillment of his philosophy and work ethic. As the incoming president of the FGCSA in 1999, he said in an interview for the *Olde Florida* cover story, "Effective superintendents today don't just happen. They are the sum total of not only formal and on-the-job turf education, but also the intangibles of curiosity, a love for the outdoors and the traditions of the game of golf. Successful superintendents don't sit idly waiting for things to come to them. They get



Darren Davis has been at the *Olde Florida Golf Club* since 1992. His top priority is the golf course, and he uses the ideas and information from his travels and association participation to make it even better. Photo by Bruce Mathews.

out and seek knowledge and new ideas. They interact and participate. Relationships with other people in the industry are key factors in making a good superintendent."

In a section on advice to young superintendents he said, "Obtain a formal education. Do not get wrapped up in titles. Set goals and plan your future. Do whatever it takes to obtain your goals regardless of the personal sacrifice. Once you become a superintendent, don't forget those who helped you get there. Don't walk around with blinders on. Travel, even if just locally, and meet and get to know your peers. Don't be afraid to share

your knowledge and experiences. Expand your horizons whenever possible. Make yourself a well-rounded golf course superintendent."

All that makes for great quotes and sound bites, but it wouldn't be worth the paper it's printed on unless the author of those words actually lived by them and walked the talk. In Davis' case that's exactly what he's done. And because he has, the Everglades GCSA nominated him for the FGCSA's Distinguished Service Award for 2004. And it precisely because he delivered on his own advice that he was selected by the board of directors to receive that honor.

Anyone who has ever read a *Florida Green* magazine should know by now that Davis has a permanent feature called "Super Tips" in which he shares the tips and ideas he has gleaned from his globe-trotting travels. But most of them come from his neighboring golf courses in the Naples area or his own shop, hence his advice to at least get out and visit with your local neighbors in the golf community. He has been a regular contributor to the "Superintendents' Videomagazine," a VHS/CD-format educational and informational instrument.

His willingness to share his experiences via GCSAA's *Golf Management* magazine has earned him an unprecedented two Leo Feser Awards (1997 and 2001) for his articles. In 1996 he earned a GCSAA National Steward Award. Counting his volunteer activities serving on boards and committee for the EGCSA, FGCSA and GCSAA, Davis has devoted much of his free time and energy in the promotion of our profession and in the workings and progress of our associations. A couple of his peers had this to say about Davis and his qualifications for the Distinguished Service Award:

"Darren is energetic,



Greg Pheneger presented Darren Davis, right, with the 2004 FGCSA Distinguished Service Award at the Past Presidents Dinner during the 2004 Poa Annua Classic in Naples. Photo by Joel Jackson.

enthusiastic, available, willing to step out of the box, not satisfied with the status quo and always pursuing excellence. Above all this he is willing to share his experience and expertise with anyone that will ask. I have watched Darren grow as a person and a golf course superintendent and he is an asset and credit to our industry and profession."

— Tim Hiers
The Old Colliers Club

"As a golf course superintendent, Darren has continuously been involved with the FGCSA and EGCSA from the very start of his introduction to southwest Florida. His commitment to these associations has helped bring and additional awareness of the South to the GCSAA as he has interacted with several facets of the national organization.

"Although it may seem far reaching to think of the local benefit from an individual such as Darren, it is actually the local area he has served

that has benefited. Southwest Florida is home to several high-profile clubs that are on the cutting edge of golf turf management. Any increased exposure, increased research and increased interest from such high profile industry representatives such as Steve Mona had been of great benefit to EGCSA. Undoubtedly Darren played a huge role in this.

At the same time Darren has continued to elevate the role of the golf course superintendent as an integral and very important aspect to any club. He strives for excellence both on the job and his association involvement and he delivers the results."

— Kyle Sweet
Immediate Past President, EGCSA.

Davis is a goal-oriented person. In 1999, he said he had accomplished many of his early career goals and that he would be reassessing his personal progress and making a new list of goals and then create a plan to achieve them. A man of his word,

Davis is not resting on his laurels or waiting for things to come to him. Not satisfied with his two-year technical certificate in turfgrass management from Penn State, Davis is currently enrolled at Florida Gulf Coast University and is majoring in communications.

For all his volunteer work that has accolades from his peers, his number-one job and top priority has always been his role as director of golf course operations at the Olde Florida Golf Club in Naples, where he has applied his professional work ethic for more than 12 years through construction, grow-in, years of improvements and a complete regrassing renovation. He applies the tips and ideas he shares with us to create time and labor savings on his own course. We just happen to be lucky to go along for the ride via his articles.

Outspoken but thoughtful in his comments Davis continues to serve on FGCSA committees and helps to keep the association making progress in its organization, operation and services to its members. For his

unselfish service and dedication to his profession and his willingness to share his knowledge with others, we say "Well done," and congratulate him on his well-deserved Distinguished Service Award.

Joel Jackson

2004 LCCC Endowment Tournament Nets \$18,000

This year's 13th annual event held at WCI's Hammock Bay G&CC promises to net close to \$18,000 for the alma mater of many of the Florida golf course industry's superintendents and suppliers. This year's participants were treated to a round of golf on a wall-to-wall, 100-percent seashore paspalum golf course, which earned positive reviews from the players.

There were some great raffle prizes including three-day, two-night stays at nearly a dozen resorts from the Florida Keys to Colorado by



Cary Lewis, left, and Bill Schmidt shot a 62 to capture the low gross honors at the 13th Annual LCCC Endowment Tournament. Photo by Robert Toski.



Steve Pope and Mitch Miller used their handicaps to win the low net honors at the LCCC Endowment tournament at Hammock Bay G&CC. Photo by Robert Toski.



Flanking the ice sculpture of the LCCC Endowment Tournament logo, which was the center of attention at the event, from left: LCCC alumni Glenn Zakany, David Fry, John Johnston and Scott Hamm, who have been instrumental in organizing the annual LCCC Endowment tournament. Photo by Robert Toski.



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way of West Virginia, and scores of complimentary golf rounds from top Florida golf courses. The top golf winners were Cary Lewis and Bill Schmidt taking the low Gross Honors and Low Net Honors going to Steve Pope and Mitch Miller.

Most who have played this tournament in the past 12 years know that this fundraiser puts money back into the Lake City Golf Operations that were eliminated by previous state budget cutbacks. Thanks to your support and our generous sponsors, we have donated more than \$125,000 as of this event.

Special thanks to our hard-working tournament committee: David Fry, Glenn Zakany, Scott Hamm, John Johnson, Odell Spainhour, Roy Bates, Mike Smith, Celeste Langer and course superintendent Rodney Whisman. Thanks to our friends from Hammock Bay Golf & Country Club: Bob Radunz, Cory Schaub, Robert Gowett, Robin Strob

for helping to make our outing a special day for all LCCC alumni.

**Chapter Round Up
Hurricane Recovery,
Fundraisers Mark
Fall Schedule**

Calusa

After a couple of hurricane postponements, we held our September Superintendent/GM-Club Official outing hosted by Laurie Frutchev at the Lexington CC. Al Kinkel, chief operating officer of Lexington gave a great presentation on "What It Takes to Be a Success In Golf Course Management, From Manager to Leader." In October we had 62 players show up for our annual Su-Pro-Liers outing at Heritage Palms, and despite the hurricanes the course looked great thanks to Greg Kriesch and staff. Our annual Christmas party in December at the Kelly Greens GC netted a \$1,100

donation to the Abused Counseling Treatment Center of Lee County. If you are looking for news and meeting information about the Calusa chapter be sure and check out our new website at www.calusagesa.com.

Central Florida

Superintendents and equipment managers held a joint meeting/golf event at the Metrowest GC on Dec. 6 to raise money for the chapter's benevolent fund. Former Ridge superintendent Ray Cuzzone provided the barbecue lunch. Thanks to host Jim Kernohan and his staff the course was in great shape.

Coastal Plains

At our September meeting we had Joe Gallagher from A.G. Edwards speak about retirement planning for golf course superintendents. In November, Joel Jackson FGCSA director of communications gave an update on statewide issues. Joel was also up to

do the Florida Green Winter 2005 cover story interview with our host Shane Bass at the St. James Bay G.C. [Everglades](#)

Our busy fall schedule included our Pro/Super tournament in October at the Hideout Golf Club. Thanks to our hosts, superintendent Alberto Quevedo and golf professional Gene Fieger for putting on a great event. In November we held a golf outing at Tim Hiers's The Old Colliers Club and had a chance to check out the seashore paspalum turf.

The Everglades Golf Course Superintendents Association hosted its annual Christmas Tournament and Gift Drive on Wednesday, Dec. 15 at the Quail West Golf and Country Club, Bonita Springs. J. Mark Black, CGCS, EGCSA president and director of maintenance operations at Quail West, hosted the outstanding event for a record group of 132 players. The two-man scramble format was fun for all

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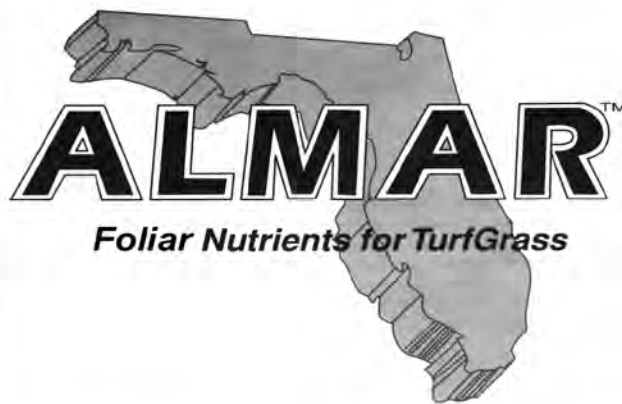
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and the golf course was in superb condition.

For the fifth year, the gift drive was very successful with more than 300 toys donated to benefit the Children's Home Society of Southwest Florida. All of these gifts were donated by the tournament participants and are distributed throughout Southwest Florida to provide a merry Christmas to children and their families in need.

North Florida

This fall we had a golf outing at the Deerwood Club and our Christmas outing at the Hyde Park GC in Jacksonville. Happy New Year everyone.

Palm Beach

We are sad to announce the sudden passing of Norm Pilote, superintendent of Frenchman's Creek in Palm Beach Gardens. Norm was 50 years old and was struck down by



EGCSA President Mark Black, CGCS, with Erin Sweeney, Katie Black, Simon Greer of the Children's Home Society of Southwest Florida at the 5th Annual Christmas Tournament. Photo by Kyle Sweet.

a heart attack. Our condolences go out to Norm's family and friends. December was a busy month with our annual Miami Dolphin football trip, and our Christmas Party (88 members and guests showed up to welcome the holidays), then we had our traditional golf outing with the South Florida GCSA at TPC Eagle Trace. We will finish up the year with a holiday golf outing at the



Superintendents Tim Hiers, CGCS and Darren Davis pitch in to help out at the FGCSA display for the Collier County School's annual Career Fair held at the Golden Glades High School in November. Sixteen professional categories to raise occupational awareness were highlighted at the event including Agriculture and Horticulture. Photo by Joel Jackson

Abacoa GC. We will kick off 2005 with a superintendents-only meeting at Emerald Dunes in January.

Ridge

Greetings from Ground Zero. The Ridge Chapter is beginning to see the light at the end of the



From the left, USGA's Florida Region Director John Foy and Agronomist Todd Lowe were joined by Boca Rio's Superintendent Bob Randquist, CGCS as moderators for the 2004 USGA Regional Conference held in Palm Beach Gardens. Photo by Joel Jackson.

tunnel. With the exception of a couple of courses, we are pretty much up and running again. Because of the recent turbulent summer we haven't had much time to take care of a lot of chapter business, however, we did see a little sunshine at our November meeting. We were pleased to award Danny Hidayad, a turf and ornamental student at Florida

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James Darbey

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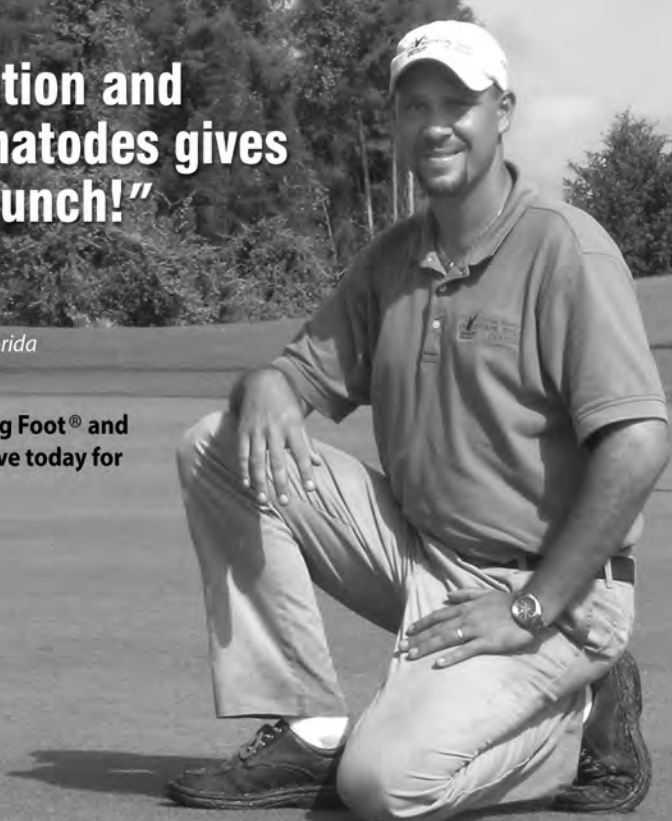
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Southern College, with our first Jack Harrell Sr. Memorial Scholarship. Danny is an excellent student and very deserving of the scholarship. We will be holding our annual Harrell's plant tour and steak lunch in December and our January Superintendent/Vendor meeting will be at the Lone Palm Golf Club in Lakeland.

Seven Rivers

In November we held our 2nd Annual Fishing Tournament in Crystal River and the great weather helped provide a higher fish count than last year. We had a great turnout for our December meeting at the Brooksville CC. Tim Williams from Gatorland gave an entertaining and informative program on gators and snakes. As we close out 2004, we are already planning for the Jeff Hayden Memorial Envirotron Classic in hopes of raising even more funds for turfgrass research.



The Ridge GCSA presented its first Jack Harrell, Sr. Memorial Scholarship to Danny Hidayad, who attends Florida Southern College in Lakeland. From left: Ridge Secretary/Treasurer Jim Rowland, Director Roy Wilshire, CGCS, President Tom Barnett, Danny Hidayad and Director Alan Puckett.

South Florida

With more than 152 golfers teeing it up in our 20th Annual Missing & Exploited Children's Tournament at the Colony West C.C. in October, we were able to surpass our target goal of \$20,000 to \$22,000. Perpetual Chairman of the event, Bill Entwistle, Jr., reflected on the long history of the event which began in 1984. Our chapter has now raised



The South Florida Chapter celebrated the 20th anniversary of its annual Missing and Exploited Children's tournament by raising more than \$20,000 for the 2004 event. The committee cheerfully presented a check for \$22,000 to Nancy McBride, Executive Director of the Florida Branch of the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children.

more than \$206,000 for this worthwhile cause.

After we wrap up the year with our holiday golf outing at TPC Eagle Trace in December, we will be looking forward to the FTGA Regional Conference in January to kick off the new year. We are already making plans for the SFGCSA Turf Expo to be held in March at the UF/IFAS Research

Center in Ft. Lauderdale.

Suncoast

Congratulations to Stephen W. Wood, CGCS, golf course superintendent at El Conquistador Country Club, Bradenton, for completing the GCSAA Environmental Management Program by earning the six required specializations. Of



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the 160 superintendents working towards EMP certification, Wood is one of more than 30 to have completed the program and receive certification. The specialized training consists of six specialized certification programs: Integrated Pest Management; Habitat Development and Management; Employee Safety and Right-To-Know; Water Quality and Application; Golf Course Development; and Storage, Disposal and Recycling.

Inclement weather washed out our November Pro/Superintendent tournament, but the proceeds from registration were fittingly donated to the Red Cross Hurricane Relief Fund along with the proceeds from the Tatum Ridge Sneak Preview Tournament.

Treasure Coast

Congratulations to Melanie Mark for earning her Certified Golf Course

Superintendent status at the Spessard Holland Golf Course in Melbourne Beach. As part of the process, Tom Trammell, CGCS of Hawks Nest GC and Wayne "Bo" Estey, CGCS from the Quail Valley G.C. conducted the required on-site inspection and evaluation.

Thanks to our team of Cody Boutte, Kevin Downing, Chris Gamble, Harry Hanson and Roy McDonald the TGCSA was able maintain possession of the Cavanaugh and Wagner Trophy at the joint Palm Beach and Treasure Coast Meeting in October.

Thanks to Charles Blevins and the Hammock Creek G.C. for hosting our November golf outing. It was a much-needed break from chain saws and tree stumps. On Dec. 10 we will celebrate the holidays at the Gator Trace Golf Club in Ft. Pierce. Gator Trace had some severe hurricane damage, but they report they will be up and run-

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ning in time for our annual Christmas party.

West Coast

We are working on creating a chapter Web site in the very near future. Meanwhile congratulations go out to Andy Neiswender and Matt Felber and Bill Kistler and Jeff Ginther for respectively winning the gross and net divisions of our 2004 Pro/Superintendent Tournament. Our 2004 Bud Quandt Fundraiser Tournament held at Bill Kistler's Tampa Palms G&CC in October raised \$6,000. Beside turf research, the All Children's Hospital and the Moffitt Cancer Center receive donations from these proceeds. At our November meeting we began planning the 2005 calendar of events and are looking into the possibility of hosting a GCSAA Regional Seminar in August or September 2005. In December we held our Vendor Appreciation Day at the U. of South Florida Athletic Fields on campus. It



Congratulations to Melanie Mark, CGCS, right, for obtaining her Certified Golf Course Superintendent designation. Melanie is an IGM Regional Manager at the Spessard Holland Golf Course in Melbourne Beach. Melanie is shown here with her General Manager Rene Uzee. Photo by Joel Jackson.

was a free event complete with equipment demonstrations, food and raffle prizes.

Florida GCSA

At the Fall Board meeting at the Bradenton CC, the board approved and supported the pursuit of a \$1.50 per ton surcharge on all fertilizer purchases to provide a recurring source of turf research funding. In conjunction



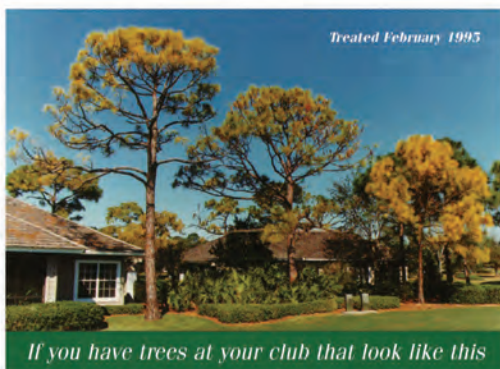
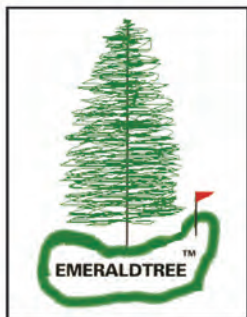
Celebrating his 41st namesake tournament, Bud Quandt, center, is flanked, from left, by golfers Louis Belcastro, Mark Hopkins, Bill Fowler and Rich Wahl for a photo at the Bud Quandt Research and Benevolent Tournament held at Tampa Palms.

with our efforts to get the legislature to create a matching funds rule for all donations made to turf research, it is hoped we can provide a substantial funding resource not solely reliant on inconsistent donation amounts from golf events and chapter treasuries. The surcharge idea is not new, as many Florida agriculture commodities have used surcharges to raise money for research. This concept spreads the cost around so it is not burdensome to anyone, but everyone participates, which is only fair since everyone benefits from the research into better grasses and

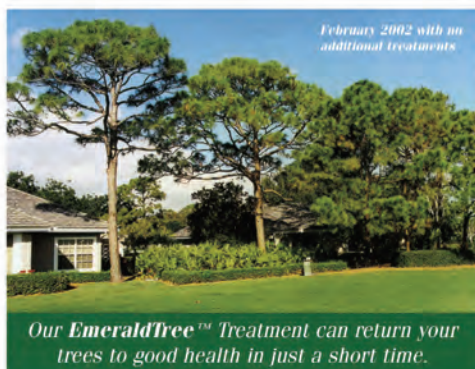
management improvements.

At the same meeting, Suncoast GCSA members Royce Stewart and Jim Svabek were granted Lifetime Member status to the FGCSA. The board was also pleased to see the first-quarter earnings report from the new reserve funds investment plan, which consists of conservative investments, but ones that yield more than the savings and money market accounts previously used. The new investment plan is overseen by the newly formed Finance Committee, and managed by Morgan Stanley-Dean Witter.

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