

# California Dreamin' in Southwest Florida

By Kyle D. Sweet, CGCS

*(Editor's note: Stories like the one Kyle Sweet is sharing here is but one more example of the talent, imagination, creativity and adaptability of golf course superintendents everywhere. By displaying a "can do" attitude, superintendents demonstrate their value to their clubs in many unexpected ways. They just don't teach this stuff at turf school.)*

Today's golf course superintendent is a far cry from the role filled many years ago. The ris-

Well, for the fun of it, let's add golfer/member relations to that laundry list. Although this may be an area that many of us shy away from, I would like to highlight one great evening at The Sanctuary Golf Club that might just change your mind.

The golf season in Southwest Florida takes place from November to April. Early in the 2003/2004 golf season, a group of five members approached me about hosting a "California Dreamin'" party for more than 200 members at my maintenance facility. Their ideas were excellent and

dred feet from the best beaches on the Gulf Coast, we needed the beach at our front door. With 20 tons of fresh bunker sand delivered, we got it. All of the equipment was removed from the shop. If it wasn't bolted down, it was removed. And we placed the sand throughout the entire equipment-storage area with a front-end loader. A dance floor was created with sand approximately 6 inches deep and, throughout many seating areas, the sand was installed at a 3-inch depth. A bunker rake was used to thoroughly smooth the surface and the result was amazing.



*How to build a beach. Start with 20 tons of sand and an empty maintenance building.*

ing expectations for turfgrass management, environmental safety, and ongoing labor challenges are enough to keep anyone busy.

without hesitation I began to work with them on the party that took place Feb. 29, 2004.

Although our facility is only a few hun-

That was the easy part. Now, with the sand in place, the members and an interior decorating company sprang into action and decorated both



*Bunker rake. Beach rake. What's in a name? It smoothed out our indoor party beach just fine.*



*The members and interior decorators took over to finish the transformation to a beach scene.*

the interior and exterior with palm trees, murals, ceiling coverings, food and beverage tents, bars, and seating for more than 200. Once the band set up, the preparation was complete, and the facility didn't look or feel much like the "shop" we started with earlier in the day.

Fortunately, my family and I were

invited to attend along with my two long-term assistants. We greeted many members attending the party, took photographs, and of course discussed questions or comments about the golf course. The Sanctuary food and beverage department supplied the finest food and drink for the evening and a wonderful time was had by the



*From shop to shore, we were now ready to entertain 200 people at the beach party.*

members and staff alike.

Now, several weeks later, our department is still hearing the compliments on our cooperative effort with our members and the use of our facility in creating a "California Dreamin'" party that everyone will remember.

# 2004 Photo Contest Results



First Place – “Old Hickory Main Entrance” by John Stach, Old Hickory G&CC, Ft. Myers



Second Place – “No. 16 Tee Azaleas in Bloom” by Tom Biggy, Bent Tree, Sarasota

## Category 2 – Formal Landscape

Formal landscape beds add color and visual appeal to golf courses, but they also require maintenance. Congratulations to the winners:

### 2005 Photo Contest

**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.

### 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 or tiff (tif) format images. Images taken, saved and sent at lower resolutions 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-inch 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 post-marked after August 1, 2005 will be automatically entered in the 2006 Photo Contest.