

Finally the fall season is here. Hopefully a second uneventful hurricane season is behind us by the time this reaches you. With any luck the reality and relief of lower humidity and temperatures is close. Who knows, we may even have a wet fall which would help everyone around the state with lower-than-normal water levels.

Here in south Florida, water restrictions seem to be at the top of the list of issues for many. Through a series of meetings held with the South Florida Water Management District, many chapters have learned that water restrictions at

least for this year will not be lifted. If they are, the relief will likely only be short lived. In other areas across the state, it will most likely not take long before restrictions might be enacted or put back in place. Hopefully this cycle of lower-than-normal rainfall will be over soon and ease the

tensions of managing turfgrass and watching the flow meters every day.

Lately many superintendents and allied professionals have also been busy keeping a watchful eye out and attending local government meetings concerning fertilizer application rates and timing. While most of the attention is being thrust toward lawncare companies and homeowners, you only have to look toward Canada for a glimpse of what lies ahead

By beginning with landscapers' and homeowners' use of fertilizers, it will be much easier in a few years to use these models for many to say that we really don't need to fertilize during the summer months; we really don't need phosphorus in our blends and other assumptions of things we "really don't need."

This is just another reason we need to begin to adopt the BMPs crafted for our industry by industry with governmental and environmental input. BMP's are science-based and show very little emotion... unlike many of our local leaders and environmental groups who do not want to be confused with the facts.

In September the FTGA held its annual conference and show in Estero. This year's event was excellent and was proof of how hard the FTGA staff, board of directors and volunteers worked to make it a success. The education was better than ever with attendance at the sessions up more than 12 percent. The social functions were well attended and everyone seemed to enjoy themselves. One of the highlights of the trade

show was the live auction held on the trade show floor; this was a huge success and a lot of fun.

At any three- or four-day event, one of the largest challenges is getting people to stick around on the last day. This year Casey Pace, FTGA's executive director, and her staff made a step in the right direction by scheduling a panel discussion with leading professionals to discuss topics that are at the forefront of what we face today in the turfgrass industry. The closing remarks were given this year by the Florida Commissioner of Agriculture Charles Bronson. He gave an excellent update on many issues, including recent happenings with immigration, the work being done on the Urban Turf Rule, and a new initiative called Farm to Fuel using cellulosic biofuels.

Congratulations to Darren Davis for being elected as the president of the FTGA. I am sure he will continue to guide the FTGA in the right direction. Next year's event promises to be just as good with a change in venue to West Palm Beach. Hopefully we will see everyone there again.

Meanwhile the FGCSA staff is undergoing a couple of changes. One important change is that Joel Jackson is now our new executive director. His title has been changed from director of communications. This change will help to ensure a smooth transition with Association Manager Marie Roberts retiring, as well as provide better continuity between the changing of officers and boards.

In August the FGCSA selection committee, formed to find a replacement for the retiring Marie Roberts, went through 42 resumes to narrow the field down to four very qualified candidates in Orlando for interviews. Out of those four, we hired our first new FGCSA staff person in ten years! Jennifer Innes began full time with us on October 1. She lives very close to Marie on the East Coast, which will facilitate her training and transition process. We feel that she is more than capable of continuing to provide support for the executive director, officers, board of directors and all members of the FGCSA.

Hiring Jennifer has been a bittersweet experience, because her hiring means Marie will be leaving us soon. Marie will officially retire from the FGCSA in late January 2008, and we hope you will join us at the GCSAA Show in Orlando in January to say goodbye and thank you for 24 years of loyal service.

I sincerely hope that everyone has a productive and successful 2007-2008 golfing season.

See you in Orlando.

A Season of Change



Matthew Taylor, CGCS President