

# The Florida Green

Winter 2009



# The Florida Green

WINTER 2009

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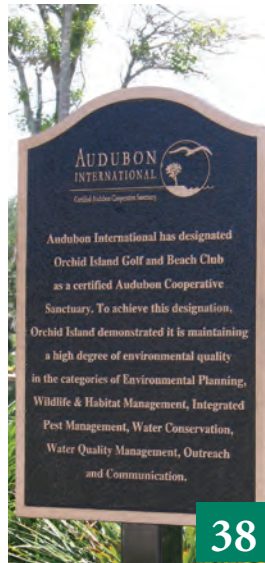
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**ON THE COVER:** Number 6, The Loxahatchee Club, Jupiter. Photo by Daniel Zelazek



38



4



34



6

4 SPOTLIGHT .....	SUMMER IS 'GO' SEASON
12 COVER STORY .....	A RIVER RUNS NEAR IT
24 HANDS ON .....	COMMUNICATION
30 INDUSTRY NEWS.....	CONNECTING WITH INDUSTRY
34 STEWARDSHIP .....	REACH OUT AND EDUCATE
42 AFTERWORDS .....	NEW YEAR! NEW DEAL!

## DEPARTMENTS

President's Message .....	2	Super Tip .....	27
Course Facts .....	14	Green Section Update .....	30
Superintendent Facts .....	16	Green Side Up .....	40
Fun Facts.....	18		

## ADVERTISER INDEX

Aerification Plus.....	19	Green-Way.....	18	ShowTurf of S. Fla. ....	Bck Cvr
Agrotain International .....	9	Kilpatrick Turf.....	33	SMR Farms.....	26
Almar Turf Products.....	26	Lake City CC Alumni.....	7	South Florida GCSA .....	5
Bayer Env. Science .....	3	Palm Beach GCSA .....	23	South Florida Grassing.....	31
Brandt Consolidated .....	17	Phoenix Env. Services.....	8	Spread-Rite .....	22
Classic Greens .....	9	Pike Creek Turf Farms.....	8	Team UGA .....	1
Coastal Equipment.....	29	Pine Island Growers ..	Ins Bck Cvr	The Andersons .....	22
Country Club Services.....	6	Plant Food Co.....	28	TifEagle Growers Assn.....	37
Dow AgroSciences.....	35	Ragan Technical .....	22	TifSport Growers Assn .....	15
Ducor International.....	25	Rymatt Golf .....	27	Tifton Physical Lab.....	40
Emerald Tree .....	36	SeaIsle 2000.....	1	Tom Burrows Turfgrass Svc..	27
Florida Turf Support .....	39	Seaisle One Growers .....	1	Toro Distributors of Fla.....	20
Golf Agronomics Supply ....	38	SeaIsle Supreme .....	1	West Coast GCSA.....	11
Golf Ventures.....	33				

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## FOREWORDS

### Hope for the Best - Plan for the Worst

Writing an article to be printed in the future is tough; you never know what tomorrow might bring. This past year has been full of ups and downs with our industry, the economy, jobs, health, weather, gas, and fertilizer costs.

It has almost been as wild as some of the rides at a fair but hopefully we have all weathered it with a positive attitude and can start out this New Year with higher expectations than the last. The elections are over thank goodness and gas prices are down, so hopefully this will at least level things out for a while. I still think it is going to take a few years for the housing and stock markets to resume some normalcy but I do believe (hope) it will be sooner than later.

But for now we all must deal with the realities of the nation's economic slowdown. At my course I was told to lay off five employees including my assistant. It was a hard thing to have to do. Every course is dealing with cutbacks in different ways based on their situations. On top of that, my wife's sister was diagnosed with breast cancer. We will be making changes in our lives to support her. The point is bad things happen to good people and we must be prepared to meet those challenges when they come.

With things being as uncertain as they are, I think it is important that you take a look at your personal plans just as we look at issues at work, so no matter what challenges come your way, you have a plan of action. Having a plan will help you face things calmly rather than reacting to situations that may arise. You can make better choices, and ultimately achieve your goals or at least some stability for yourself and your family.

I was reading some of the other past President's Messages and one that I thought might need revisiting now is Cary Lewis' Winter 2001. In his message he talked about the BMPs and how they were just beginning to actively work on them and how this tool will not only serve as a great resource for our members, but also better position our industry with our regulatory agencies,

local and state governments and special interest groups.

The Georgia GCSA stepped up and showed that they supported their Water Conservation BMPs by getting some thing like 97 percent of their courses to comply with the plan. It saved them from a greens-and-tees-only watering restriction and allowed them to use 65 percent of their permits. I think it's time for us to do the same and endorse and support our Golf BMPs.

I have not seen any emails come across my in-box that say "City Council doing away with Fertilizer Ordinance." So I challenge all of you who have not sat down and reviewed the checklist in the back of the BMPs to do so. You do not have to spend a lot of time on it and all of your answers do not have to be "yes" but at least you will know where your course stands. Why not make it one of your goals for the New Year?

At this time you probably don't have to turn the checklist in to anybody, so it would be wise to have an idea of what you might need to do to comply with the BMPs. You will probably be surprised at how much you are already doing. If you have any questions do not hesitate to ask Joel or myself.

I hope most of you will still be able to go to the GCSAA Show and Golf Championship in February. I look forward to seeing you at our reception.

Remember: Make a plan to cover contingencies in these uncertain times. It can always be changed as needed.

Most of all I hope everyone has a good new year.



*Shane Bass, CGCS*  
President

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On Sept. 27th, the Palm Beach Chapter won the Team Trophy at Southern Dunes G.C. in Haines City. From left: Front row - Steve Bernard and Mark Henderson. Standing Mike Spiwak, Deron Zendt, Mark Heater and Kevin Downing. Photo by Joel Jackson.

## Golf Tournaments Wrap Up the Year

Two major golf victories of note led the fourth quarter of 2008 when the Palm Beach GCSA won the individual and team events at the Florida GCSA Golf Championship held at the Southern Dunes GC in Haines City in September. Deron Zendt from the Banyan CC in West Palm Beach shot 70 to win the individual title and lead fellow teammates Mark Heater, Mark Henderson and Steve Bernard in the chapter team event. Zendt is now eligible to play on the FGCSA team in the GCSAA Golf Championships at Gulf Shores, Ala. in February.

Joining Zendt on the 2009 FGCSA team will be

Blair Kirby from the PGA National Resort in Palm

Beach Gardens. Kirby won the FTGA Golf Tournament on his own golf course last September which was hosting the FTGA Turf Conference and Show. The remaining members of the No.1 Florida team are Seth

Strickland and Steve Bernard by virtue of their respective victories at the Poa Annua Classic and Crowfoot Open.

The Everglades GCSA sent two teams to participate in the 2008 CREW Tournament held Oct. 18 at the Bonita Bay East GC. The EGCSA has been involved with the CREW (Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed Land & Trust) since 2002 and has helped to support and contribute to golf tournaments which have raised around \$35,000 for environmental education. The Wild Turkey team of Terry Wood, Joel Jackson, Matt Neider and Corey McDonough took second place and won a private, guided moonlight tour of the nature preserve for friends and family.

The South Florida GCSA continued its winning streak with the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children by holding their annual M&E Tournament at the Carolina Club in Margate. Host superintendent and SFGCSA President Ted Hile reported that this year's



Representing the Everglades GCSA, the Wild Turkey team of Terry Wood, Joel Jackson, Matt Neider and Corey McDonough came in 2nd in the annual CREW Tournament held on October 18th at the Bonita Bay East Golf Club. Photo by Matt Taylor.

The South Florida Golf Course  
Superintendents Association's 24th Annual

# Benefit for Children at The Carolina Club

The South Florida GCSA is proud to support this tournament for the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. Please support all the sponsors who make this worthwhile event possible.



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Ted Hile & the Golf Maintenance Staff



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**SPOTLIGHT**



*Deron Zendt from the Banyan G.C. shot a score of 70 to win the FGCSA Championship and a spot on the FGCSA's #1 Team to compete in the GCSAA Championship in February 2009. Photo by Joel Jackson.*

event raised \$24,000 for the charity at the October outing.

Over in the Tampa Bay area, Bill Kistler hosted the West Coast GCSA's 45th Annual Bud Quandt Tournament at the Tampa Bay

Palms G&CC. During the breakfast meeting, FGCSA Executive Director Joel Jackson presented information on legislative and regulatory issues.

Jackson also visited the neighboring Gulf-



*Blair Kirby, one of the host superintendents at the PGA National Resort, won the FTGA Golf Tournament in September and also a spot on the FGCA Team for the GCSAA Championships to be held in Gulfshores, AL. Photo by Joel Jackson.*





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**SPOTLIGHT**



*The Everglades GCSA has been involved with the CREW Land and Water Trust since 2002 to help raise funds for environmental education.  
Photo by Joel Jackson.*

**Preserving Land Today  
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coast GCSA chapter for its November meeting at Bob Holmes' Santa Rosa Golf & Beach Club, and updated members on the issues since many Florida superintendents in the Panhandle

belong to the GCGCSA and statewide issues affect them as well, and we need their support too.

In December, Metro-West GC superintendent Jim Kernohan will be

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hosting the annual Central Florida GCSA/TESTA meeting and golf outing which brings superintendents and equipment technicians together for a day of golf and good eats.

Several chapters will also be holding their annual Christmas tournaments and parties to raise and donate funds and toys to families in need. We will report on the success of those events in the next issue. Meanwhile, Happy New Year to one and all.

## LCCC Event Returns

After a one-year hiatus, the 16th Annual Lake City Community

College Endowment Golf Tournament resumed at the Colony Golf & Bay Club in Bonita Springs on Nov. 7. All proceeds from the event help support the golf and landscape programs at Lake City. These programs began in 1967 and continue to thrive due to strong industry support.

John Piersol and the Tournament Committee of John Johnson, Glenn Zakany, Scott Hamm, Odell Spainhour and Steve Rauh thanked the sponsors and participants for the support of the event which helps maintain the school's status as one of best programs of its kind in the country.

After all strokes were counted and handicaps subtracted, Tim Denton

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**2009 CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

**FTGA Regional Seminars**

- Jan 6 Tampa – St. Lawrence Parrish, 5325 N. Himes Ave
- Jan 7 Orlando – Rosen Plaza Hotel, 9700 International Dr.
- Jan 8 Ft. Myers – Three Oaks Banquet & Conference Ctr, 20991 Three Oaks Pkwy
- Jan 13 Vero Beach – Richardson Center, Indian River State College, 6155 College Lane
- Jan 14 Lake Worth – Polish American Club, 4725 Lake Worth Road
- Jan 15 Plantation – Central Park, 9151 NW 2nd Street
- Jan 20 Ocala – Marion County Extension Service, 2232 NE Jacksonville Road
- Jan 21 Jacksonville – Duval County Extension Service, 1010 N. McDuff Ave
- Jan 27 Milton – Santa Rosa County Auditorium, 4530 Jimmy's Way

Registration opens at 7:30 a.m. at all locations. Get more detailed information at [www.ftga.org](http://www.ftga.org)

**FGCSA Chapter Events**

**JANUARY**

- Jan 8 West Coast Meeting, Palma Ceia G. & CC
- Jan 9 Suncoast Vendor Appreciation Day, Bradenton CC
- Jan 12 – Central Florida/FTGA Research Tournament, Interlachen CC, Winter Park
- Jan 13 – North Florida Chapter Meeting, LPGA International, Daytona Beach
- Jan 14 – Seven Rivers Meeting, Continental CC
- Jan 14 – South Florida, Crandon Park GC
- Jan 29 – Palm Beach Evening Meeting, CC of Boca Raton

**FEBRUARY**

- Feb 2 -7 – GCSAA Golf Industry Show, New Orleans
- Feb 5 – FGCSA Reception, Riverview Room, Shops at Jackson Brewery
- Feb 23 – West Coast Benevolent Tournament, East Lake Woodlands GC
- Feb 25 – Seven Rivers Meeting, Airco GC

**MARCH**

- Mar 2 or 9 (TBA) – Ridge Invitational
- Mar 9 – North Florida Research Tournament, Pablo Creek GC
- Mar 16 – Central Florida - Supt/Vendor Tournament, Eagle Creek GC
- Mar 16 – Suncoast Scramble
- Mar 25 – Seven Rivers Vendor Appreciation Day – Chiefland GC

**MAR TBA**

- Everglades – Naples Princess Sunset Cruise
- West Coast Meeting, Largo Municipal GC
- South Florida Turf Expo
- FGCSA Spring Regulator Tour

**APRIL**

- April 14 – North Florida, Memorial Tournament, Jacksonville G & CC
- April 16 – Everglades Spring Symposium
- April 20 – Seven Rivers Jeff Hayden Envirotron Classic
- April (TBA) – West Coast meeting, Wentworth GC



*The 2008 LCCC Tournament Committee: From left, front row: Steve Rauh, John Piersol and John Johnson; back row: Glenn Zakany and Scott Hamm, CGCS.*



*Winners of the LCCC Two-man Scramble Tournament, from left: Mike Dillinger (B Flight) and Tim Denton and Chad Montgomery (A Flight). Not pictured: Mike's partner Matt Neider.*

and Chad Montgomery won the A Flight and Mike Dillinger and Matt Neider won the B Flight.

But the Lake City Endowment Fund was the real winner along with all the alumni, guest and sponsors who enjoyed the Thursday

night reception and Friday golf tournament on the beautiful Colony Golf & Bay Club in Bonita Springs. Kudos to Scott Hamm, CGCS and his staff for having the golf course in immaculate condition.

# 45<sup>th</sup> Annual Bud Quandt Tournament

*The Florida West Coast Chapter thanks the following sponsors for their generous support of this event.*

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*Special thanks to Bill Kistler and the Tampa Palms G&CC for hosting this event.*



*The clubhouse behind the 18th green welcomes golfers as they finish their rounds on a course that Jack Nicklaus has called one of his most imaginative and one of the best he's ever done. Photo by Daniel Zelazek*



## THE LOXAHATCHEE CLUB *A River Runs Near It*

*By Joel Jackson, CGCS*

When I learned that The Loxahatchee Club had been selected by the Palm Beach GCSA as their representative course for this issue, a floodgate of memories opened up. My dad grew up in Jupiter and we spent many family vacations and holidays with my grandparents at their home on Riverside Drive along the north fork of the Loxahatchee River. In the early 1900s dad's family followed Uncle Charlie south to Jupiter from Camden, NJ, and Uncle Charlie used to haul mail and kids to school in his boat, which was the most efficient transportation of that time.

We spent many hours, day and night, on the river – fishing, boating to the inlet, swimming and exploring the sand pine woods and scrub oak wilds that later became Tequesta. We used to travel up the headwaters to the home of the reclusive Trapper Nelson who kept a wildlife menagerie on his secluded property. Not a visit to Jupiter went by that scrub jays didn't congregate by the

back steps of grandpa's house to take raw peanuts from our open hands. Yes, lots of great memories of Jupiter and the river, but now it's time to tell the story of The Loxahatchee Club.

Loxahatchee is a Seminole Indian

word meaning turtle river. The main branch of the river intersects the Intracoastal Waterway in north Palm Beach County near the Jupiter Inlet at a point closest to the Gulf Stream. Following the river's main course inland, you wind your way northwest up into Martin County into Jonathan Dickinson State Park and then turn southwest as the channel



*It is long but scenic journey down the 552-yard, par-5, 8th hole with dense aquatic plantings of arrowhead to protect the lake and enhance the view with massive purple flowers in the spring. Photo by Daniel Zelazek.*

finally disappears in the Loxahatchee Slough along the eastern edge of the Everglades.

Back in the early-to-mid-1980s, golf legend Jack Nicklaus was well into his golf course design career, and he teamed with Canadian developer Gordon Gray to create what is now The Loxahatchee Club a few miles east of the southwest fork of the Loxahatchee River, east of the Florida Turnpike and just south of the Indiantown Road. On the Nicklaus Design Web site, The Bear says about Loxahatchee, “the course was designed as a ‘members course,’ with flavorings of the old Scottish game mingled with the finest characteristics of modern American golf.”

In fact, the rough mounds and sandy transitional bunkers planted with native grasses were the beginnings of the changes in modern golf design which uses less irrigated acreage and intensely managed turfgrass.

The course was renovated in 2004 and greens were planted in TifEagle ultradwarf bermudagrass, while the rest of the course was converted from Tifway 419 to SeaIsle1 seashore paspalum. In May of 2007, James Sprankle III, CGCS took over the reins at this Nicklaus Signature Golf Course after six years at the Ibis Golf & Country Club (another Nicklaus design) just down the road. In fact, Sprankle has been associated with the Nicklaus course design and management team for many years during his career with some of that time spent overseeing courses in Mexico, Indonesia and the Phillipines.

Sprankle talked about his career path that led him to his current post, “After graduation and several years as an assistant, I came into contact with John Hamilton, who at the time was the Asian agronomist for Nicklaus Design.

“I expressed interest in traveling and very soon after speaking with John I was in Indonesia at age 25 growing in two golf courses in two different locations.

“I have to say that this was the start for me and being exposed to the Nicklaus organization at a young age really molded me. Their commitment



*Some of that Scottish flair Nicklaus mentioned in his comments on the Loxahatchee design is evidenced by the double green serving the par-5, 13th hole and the par-4, 15th holes. Photo by Daniel Zelazek.*

to their projects, professionalism and attention to detail has solidified my relationship with the organization through the years. I owe a lot to the entire architect and agronomy arms of the Nicklaus and Dye organization.

“A few who have influenced me and have trusted me with their vision are Jack Nicklaus, Pete Dye, Lee Schmidt,

Brian Curley, Greg Letsche, Chris Cochran, John Cope and Troy Vincent. And the agronomists who have been there to assist me with situations and offer some much-needed conversation at some very remote locations are Ed Etchels, John Scott, Jay Spurl and Dave McIntosh.

“I would be remiss not to mention



*The use of sandy waste (transitional) bunkers and native grasses on the par-3, 12th hole was a proactive design change pioneered by Nicklaus and others in the 1980s to create dramatic views and protect the environment. Photo by Daniel Zelazek.*

## THE LOXAHATCHEE CLUB



*The Loxahatchee Club Golf Maintenance Team*

**Location:** Jupiter, FL  
**Ownership:** Member Owned  
**Holes:** 18; 7,147 yards; Par 72  
**Slope/Rating:** 151 / 76.2  
**Design:** Jack Nicklaus  
**Original builder:** Wadsworth Construction (opened 1985)  
**Renovation:** National Golf (2004)  
**Management:** General Manager/COO Kevin Carroll; Club President Robert Hooker; Green Chairman Richard Herlehy; Golf Chairman James Long; Head Golf Professional Wilson Zehmer; Superintendent James Sprankle III, CGCS.  
**Ongoing projects:** Improvements to cart paths and native areas  
**Total acreage:** 100. Turf acreage under maintenance: 70  
**Greens:** TifEagle; Avg. 5,500 sq.ft., 2.3 A; HOC .100 (Oct-Mar) - .120 (Apr-Sept); Green speed goal: 10-11.  
**Overseeding:** None  
**Tees, Fairways and Roughs:** SeaIsle 1 seashore paspalum, no overseeding. Tees 2.8 Acres, HOC Walk mow tees and approaches year round at .300". Fairways 25 A; HOC .325"; Roughs: 32 A; HOC 1.25" with rotary mowers.  
**Bunkers:** 55, G-Angle sand, hand-rake greenside bunkers, machine-rake remainder with Smithco Superstar.

**Waterways:** 13 lakes (71A) maintained by outside contractor.

**Irrigation:** reclaimed; Watertronics 2,000 GPM pump station. Controls: Rainbird Cirrus System, 1,573 heads.

**Staff:** Total including superintendent: 24 (22 full time, 2 part time). Straight-time hours 40 per week and 2.5 hours of overtime. Two student interns budgeted from May to August. "Sometimes we get them, and sometimes we don't."

**Key maintenance staff members:** First Assistant Charlie Rimpela; Second Assistant Nathan Wallace. Equipment Manager Juan Martinez; Pest Control Technician Joel Martin; Irrigation Technician Willie Avellaneda; Administrative Assistant Esther Lopez splits her time between Golf Maintenance and the Homeowners Association.

**Communications:** Crew meetings every Tuesday. Golf Committee meetings monthly from November to April. All department heads meet weekly in season and I attend the annual board meeting. I also do a weekly article for the membership email newsletter and an article for the quarterly club newsletter.

the shapers I have worked with – and I have worked with the best. No need to mention names. They all think they are the best."

During his years overseas Sprankle developed his keep-it-simple and stick-to-the-basics management style out of necessity, since it was very difficult, sometimes impossible or downright too expensive to import chemicals, fertilizers, materials and even equipment into foreign countries.

With all the products available at his fingertips here in the U.S., Sprankle maintains the 100-acre property at Loxahatchee with 24 people compared to the 200-member staff he had in the Phillipines. Hand labor had to make up for the lack of technology.

He learned to adapt to the culture where he was. In a sense we are all currently faced with adapting to a changing culture which is demanding more conservation of our resources.

"I sometimes struggle finding a way to balance golfer expectations with the message we keep getting from regulators, which is basically 'Do more with less.'"

"American golfers just need to play the game," he offered. "In Scotland and Ireland, it's all about playing and enjoying the game. The lushness of the golf courses is not the main focus. It's all about playing the game."

To the credit of the Loxahatchee members, that appears to be exactly what they do. As we drove around the course, it was pretty much a tie between the members or Sprankle as to who waved and called out first. While it is a full-service country club, golf is the main activity, and the members truly seem to enjoy not only the golf course, but the genuine friendly atmosphere of one another's company. That warmth and friendliness permeate the organization and make for great working conditions for Sprankle and his staff.

General Manager and Chief Operating Officer Kevin Carroll is involved with the Club Managers Association of America and has worked closely with the GCSAA on education and organization issues. He had strong



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## SUPERINTENDENT FACTS

### James R. Sprankle III, CGCS

**Originally From:** Born in Alaska but moved to south Florida while still in diapers. Lived in Jupiter since 1980.

**Family:** Married to Patricia with three children: Madison (6), Emily (7), and Zak (11).

**Education:** A.S. Degree in Golf Operations from Lake City Community College, 1989

**Employment:** May 2007 to present golf course superintendent, Loxahatchee Club; 2001-2007 director of golf course maintenance, Ibis G&CC, West Palm Beach; 1997-2001 vice president of operations over eight golf courses, Golforce, Inc. (Fil-Estate Golf & Development, Inc.), Manila, Philippines; 1994-1997; director of maintenance, Las Vegas Paiute Resort, Nevada; 1993-1994 golf course superintendent, Cabo del Sol Golf Club, Cabo San Lucas, Mexico; 1992-1993 golf course superintendent, Damai Indah G&CC (two courses), Jakarta, Indonesia

**Professional Affiliations:** Member of the GCSAA (22 years) and Palm Beach GCSA. Became a GCSAA certified golf course superintendent in 2001.

**How did you get into the business?** I worked in the bag room at Indian Creek, a public golf course in Jupiter right out of high school. The owner, Sonny Smith, owned a fertilizer and chemical distributorship and soon had me mowing greens in the morning



*Superintendent Jim Sprankle can't say enough about the friendly engaged membership at The Loxahatchee Club. Green Chairman Richard Herlehy, left, agreed to "take one for the team" and pose with Sprankle. He graciously obliged during his round of golf.*

and delivering products in the afternoons. I enjoyed the maintenance aspects so I soon applied to LCCC with the help of Darryl Rejko, the superintendent at the time.

**Work philosophy and advice to prospective or new superintendents:**

Choose to work for a quality organization. I truly believe this overshadows location and notoriety. Don't chase money. With hard work and a good reputation, money will come to you. Don't over think. Keep it simple. Attention to detail is the key to success.

**Hobbies & Interests:** Boating, snowboarding and kids' sports..

words of praise for Sprankle's business, communication and leadership skills. Not coincidentally, those are the same skills GCSAA is trying to focus on as it markets and brands "Class A" and "Certified" superintendents as professionals committed to growth and development.

Along with his business card, Carroll also shared The Loxahatchee Club's mission statement and components of "The Loxahatchee Club Experience," which embodies keywords like: Welcoming, Friendly, Personality, Enthusiasm, Respect, Helpful, Clean,

Secure, Teamwork, Quality and Tradition.

Over the years, I have observed that clubs that are successful – not only in appearance, but also in productivity and morale – are those that have clear, written commitments and plans to guide all phases of the operation. Once again it goes back creating positive working conditions.

Working conditions for a golf course superintendent also mean turf conditions, since that is one of key measurements of success in our business. To be successful, Sprankle

says superintendents need to get a handle on and fight for the Big Three in maintenance: labor, fertilizer and chemicals.

"Every course is different, but those three line items will be key factors in your budget. You have to have the people to mow and go, and enough fertilizer to keep the turf healthy, and finally the products necessary to combat weeds, disease and insects."

Note: I would add a fourth key element and that would be water. But the availability and quality of the irrigation water is not always within the superintendent's or even club's direct control. However, the superintendent is the one who must manage the resource for the greatest benefit.

"We only receive 550,000 gallons of reclaimed water per day from the local utility," Sprankle said. "That amount was even cut back 20 percent in 2008 during restrictions. We set irrigation run times based on visual and weather-station feedback. To make our irrigation as effective as possible, we apply wetting agents to tees and greens monthly and to fairways monthly from October to May (dry season). We hand-water greens six days per week and, on the seventh day, we flush them with 1 inch of irrigation to move the salts from the reclaimed water out of the root zone."

Sprankle's cultural practices and nutrient management programs have entailed a search for a balance that produces acceptable playing conditions while protecting the environment. The installation of TifEagle and SeaIsle1 have allowed him to reduce the amount of nitrogen on the course.

"The greens receive about 5 pounds of N per year, most of which is through weekly applications of a Milliken foliar program, Crytogro and Primo at 3 ounces per acre," he said. "We will apply some granular as I am not a proponent of starving the greens to achieve speed. We also apply Anderson's 0-0-28 every three weeks to supply needed potassium.

"The tees are sprayed with a foliar mix twice a month and the fairways once a month. In addition the tees receive a Milorganite application in the

spring and fall at a rate of a half-pound of nitrogen per 1000 square feet. The fairways have one pound of Milorgantie applied in October and May. The roughs receive one pound of nitrogen in the spring and fall via applications of sludge.”

So with 5 pounds of N on the greens and 2 pounds of N in the fairways and roughs, The Loxahatchee Club is well within the nutrient-management recommendations in the Florida Golf BMP manual. That is one of the benefits of using the new grass varieties that require less nitrogen.

But healthy turfgrass requires some TLC besides feeding. Judicious cultural practices can ensure successful playing conditions.

“We make up our maintenance schedule a year in advance, so we can plan our turf maintenance needs around the club’s seasonal events,” Sprinkle said. “However, we are not a slave to the printed schedule. We keep



*The par-3, 5th hole is guarded by one of 13 lakes on the course. Part circle heads, taller grass along the shore and aquatic plants guard the lake’s water quality. Photo by Daniel Zelazek*

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FUN FACTS



*Jim Sprankle says kids' sports is one of his favorite things to help find balance in his life. Emily(7), Madison (6) and Zak (11). Photo by Patricia Sprankle.*

- Vehicle:** work vehicle Toyota Tacoma/Fun vehicle 1987 Porsche 911
- The last good movie I saw:** High School Musical 3 with the kids
- I stay home to watch:** Sad to say but the "Oakland Raaaaaiders"
- The book I've been reading:** The Last Lecture by Randy Pausch
- Favorite meal:** A nice steak
- Prized possessions:** My family
- Personal heroes:** Anyone in the armed forces
- Nobody knows that I:** Have met 4 presidents: Indonesia, Mexico, Philippines (2)
- I'm better than anyone else when it comes to:** Staying balanced
- If I could do it over:** Nothing
- I'd give anything to meet:** Have dinner with Robin Williams
- My fantasy is:** Have lived it
- The one thing I can't stand:** Repeating myself
- Most humbling experience:** Heart issue in 2004 made me think of more than work
- The words that best describe me:** tough but fair
- My best fish story:** Double hooking a 550 lb. blue marlin with Greg Letsche in Cabo, we landed it after 3 hours.
- My most amazing/lucky/important golf shot:** Chipping my ball off the road behind 17 green at St Andrews to about 4 feet

an eye on the weather and growing conditions and adjust accordingly. TiffEagle and seashore paspalum need a firm hand, but you also need to know when to back off.

"On the greens we schedule half-inch, hollow-tine core aerifications in May and September and we do a Graden half-inch verticut in July just prior to a solid tine aerification. We hydroject monthly, skipping the aerification months and verticut as needed May through September. We spike the greens, apply gypsum to offset the bicarbonates build-up from the reclaimed water, and lightly topdress (dust with dry green sand) from December to April, and the greens are brushed three times a week with the walk mowers.

"The tees, fairways and roughs are aerified three times a year. The cores are allowed to dry and then dragged to separate soil and organic material and then the debris is cleaned up with a sweeper. We slice the fairways and roughs in the off months and they are cleaned up with a follow up mowing."

As far as pest control programs, "We employ a preventive fungicide program on the greens from April to October, and we apply grub-control products to greens, tees, fairways usually around June. Since seashore paspalum doesn't tolerate many of the conventional herbicides used on bermudagrass, we apply Barricade to the roughs in October and January and Dimension in March and June to prevent weed emergence as much as possible.

*(Continues on Page 22)*

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The Loxahatchee Club has pervious cart-paths made of concrete screenings. While they are considered a “low maintenance” item, they do require periodic maintenance and repair, especially after a very heavy rain.



Senior maintenance staff members from left: Second Assistant Nathan Wallace, First Assistant Charlie Rimpela, Equipment Technician Juan Martinez, and Golf Course Superintendent Jim Sprankle III, CGCS. Sprankle hopes the Loxahatchee experience will give his assistants a boost for their first head superintendent opportunity.



Loxahatchee superintendent Jim Sprankle, CGCS puts his finger on the fine line maintained between the TifEagle greens and SeaIsle 1 paspalum collar. Photo by Joel Jackson.



In the foreground is a nursery plot of seeded SeaSpray Paspalum being evaluated for possible use in the future. Newly planted TifEagle nursery greens are growing-in in the background.

  
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“And last – but not least – is the ongoing program to remove residual bermudagrass areas in the paspalum. We spray it, cut it out and resod as needed each summer.”

The mechanics and realities of turf maintenance are often dictated by the club’s physical setting and fiscal resources, but most of the time it is the attitude of the superintendent that is the deciding factor. That attitude is a product of formal education and life experiences. Jim Sprankle has had his share of both and he humbly summed up his career to date.

He said, “One of my greatest satisfactions comes from the nearly 15 assistants who I have worked with who are now successful superintendents around the world. I would like to feel I had a hand in their success. My younger brother Jason is a successful superintendent at the Turtle Creek Club in Tequesta, which makes me very proud.

And now Sprankle is home again working near the river I knew as a boy.

*A few who have influenced me and have trusted me with their vision are Jack Nicklaus, Pete Dye, Lee Schmidt, Brian Curley, Greg Letsche, Chris Cochran, John Cope and Troy Vincent. And the agronomists who have been there to assist me with situations and offer some much-needed conversation at some very remote locations are Ed Etchels, John Scott, Jay Spurl and Dave McIntosh.* ■

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# THE LOXAHATCHEE CLUB

## JUPITER, FLORIDA



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PHOTO BY DANIEL ZELAZEK

# Communication is a BIG Part of My Job

By David Court, CGCS

Communication with members, staff and upper management is a big part of my role at Black Diamond. *Member News* and e-mail blasts are quite common. We let the membership know about aerification and overseeding schedules as well as the course closing schedules. With the frequent possibilities of frost – something we didn't have in South Florida – we will announce starting-time changes and the shift to shotgun starts a day ahead of time so the members can plan.

All department heads and assistants have e-mail addresses so they can be contacted by members. I often find myself answering questions by e-mail or if necessary, the old-fashioned way, telephone. If a topic requires more attention we will put the message out on *Member News*.

I make myself available several times during the week. If work schedules permit, I play in a Thursday Scramble with the men. My wife, Janet, and I are invited to dinner for Trivia night, Name that Tune night, and, yes, even Bingo. We love the fact that we are able to participate with the members at their functions and parties. If members have questions or comments, this gives me time to address their concerns one-on-one in a more relaxed atmosphere.

Communication with the crew is done as needed with safety meetings and during frost delays and rain events. We try to take advantage of these down times and present information to the staff and discuss any issues that have



David Court, CGCS

come up. Some of the issues are those that I hear about through the members. This is also a good time to present the Employee of the Month award for them to be recognized by their peers.

Communication with the senior staff is done at our Wednesday meetings. Upcoming events are discussed including tournaments, weddings and outside outings. A calendar of events is also published for members in the monthly newsletter to which all department heads contribute articles. This is my opportunity to get the word out about our Audubon Certification progress, effluent water updates and when we can expect the beginning or completion of any projects.

Communication is one of the most important aspects of our jobs. We do it all day long without even realizing it. Just stopping to talk with a member of the club or the crew can make a big difference with people on all levels.

I never consider my position as a golf course superintendent to be a job but more of an adventure, especially on a good day when you only have to work half days: 5:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. Did I mention that it helps to have support and communication on the home front as well?

## Effective Communication is Vital for Success

By Kevin Sunderman

Effective communication among a superintendent, senior management and the membership is vital to the success and survival of both superintendent and club.

The first step is to establish and maintain a healthy communication line among the superintendent, general manager and greens chairman. This



Kevin Sunderman

should be easy.

At the end of the day, relay any important information to your general manager and/or your greens chairman. Some days won't require any communication. Others might require 30 minutes or more depending on the situation.

Serious matters are often best discussed face-to-face, and don't wait until the end of the day. Make sure, however, always to send a follow-up e-mail on important matters to create some sort of documentation. Documentation can help you remember the specifics of previous issues. Also, documentation is insurance for those unfortunate CYA situations.

Anticipate situations. Relay answers/explanations to questions that haven't been asked. For example, if a mower has left a hydraulic leak all over No.14 fairway, let management know about it right away. When they are questioned, they have an answer. Managers and board members hate nothing more than being caught off guard.

Second, good communication between the golf professional and the superintendent is necessary for coordinating both golf and maintenance activities. After a series of "surprise shotguns," I finally coordinated weekly meetings with the head professional. These meetings only require 15-20 minutes to review the upcoming calendar. They ensure the greens aren't being verticut the morning of the ladies' invitational and they allow the golf shop to know when the golf course will be fertilized.

In fact, a meeting can make it easier to get time blocked for course work because the golf shop can plan ahead when making tee-times. It might be a good idea for the general manager to sit in on these meetings so he knows what has been scheduled.

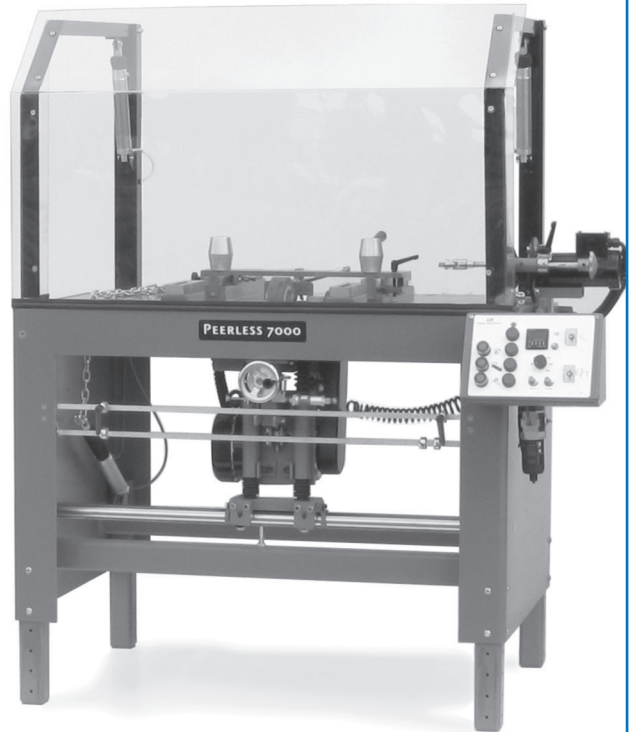
Finally, communication to the general membership leaves everyone feeling informed and confident that you know what's going on with the golf course. This can be done several ways. Face-to-face contact in the golf shop and on the golf course is not always fun but usually very effective.

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Our club manager sends weekly e-mail blasts to the membership. I include a few sentences every week just to inform the members of whatever seems pertinent at the time. Contributing to the club newsletter is always important. Writing articles that educate on a basic level provides your members with the basis to understand what has happened or what is to come.

For example, writing about transition before it takes place prepares your members with the understanding of what will be happening. Then when they see it, they can say, "Yeah, it's just transition. It'll be better in a few weeks." Our newsletter is bimonthly so I often write updates to be posted on bulletin boards throughout the club on the off months.

The difficult economic times have made it even more important to have good communication with those around you. It is impossible to provide the same level of conditioning as a few

years ago without a significant increase in the budget. Without effectively communicating this with management and members, a superintendent's reputation could be damaged because he did not provide the expected conditions or went over budget to do so.

To keep my manager and board members better informed, I frequently pass along e-mails and articles describing things like the increasing fertilizer and chemical costs. I also try to show them specific examples in order to make the increases "real." If I can show them an invoice from last year and another one from this year, it tends to hit home more effectively.

I then make it a point to follow up with them to answer any questions they may have as well as discuss ideas for dealing with these increases. We have lengthened the time between fertilizer applications. This decision is a result of informed discussions with club management. Once the decision was

made, we then let the members know that we had to reduce the total amount of fertilizer and what would result.

Keeping the membership up to date is just as important as communicating with management. This year at Isla Del Sol we have decided not to overseed; we did so wall-to-wall in years past. While this makes agronomic sense, the real reason behind the decision is the financial saving the club will experience. As soon as the decision was made, I began informing the members through bulletin board postings, e-mails, and most importantly face-to-face communication.

I make sure to let them know of the consequences of the decision. If they know what to expect they are usually much more comfortable with the decision. It's also important to paint both sides of the picture. Not only am I preparing them for a less green golf course, but also I am letting them know that they will benefit with more roll.

Warn them about the bad news, but leave them feeling good. By keeping members informed, they tend to feel more involved. As I write this, I got a call from a member who suggested that every day we rope off a different hole to give it a break from the cart traffic.

Other issues that have been discussed because of the changing times include the increasing regulation of water, fertilizer and pesticide use and our efforts to be more environmentally proactive. In years past our members would have not been happy to see our lake banks allowed to grow, but this year, in attempt to create a buffer zone, we did just that. With plenty of notification, the members understood why and actually supported the decision to do so.

Communication is always an important tool for a successful superintendent no matter what issue needs discussing. The bottom line: it doesn't matter what methods you

use to inform your members as long as you do it effectively. The more you communicate with management and members, the better understanding they will have about your operation. Over time it will improve your credibility and make them more confident in your abilities.

## **SUPER TIP** for **Your Topdressing Program**

*By Sean Sullivan, CGCS*

As I was traveling the Far East (East Georgia) this past February, I came upon a new step in the topdressing program. The new step has been added only recently, because three years ago when I was working in Georgia, it was not being used. I was visiting the superintendent at Sea Island Seaside

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Course, and he was showing me all the wonders that money can buy. He cuts greens at .100 inches every day of the year.

Because of the low height of cut, a PGR program, and topdressing every week, I asked what kind of problems he sees with the sand and mowers.

His response was that they don't have any problems because they started spraying a product called Speed.

After brushing in the topdressing sand, and two or three rotations of the irrigation heads, they sprayed Speed at 1oz. per 10 gallons of water in the spray tank. That was it! The next morning when they mowed greens there was a significant reduction in the sand that was picked, and the sand didn't ball up on the rollers. I confirmed this with several superintendents in Atlanta, who used the same program, and had the same results.

When I got back to Billings, I researched Speed on the Internet.

Speed is a product from Precision Labs and is a nonionic siloxane surfactant. There is no mention of Speed's ability to hold down sand on the product label. So, I called technical services for Precision Labs and they confirmed that although the product was not labeled for topdressing programs, it will "trick" the sand into thinking it is wet and hold it down. They also said that the residual is two to three weeks.

They shipped me a case, six one gallon containers, from the factory and billed me through a distributor in Salt Lake City. The cost is \$62.50 per gallon. Each application to my greens costs approximately \$15.

I experimented with Speed and it did everything that I was told. I was not concerned about the two-week residual because it would take only a couple of days before the grass was above the sand. Speed can also be used as an adjuvant for pesticides and fertilizers. I have not experimented with other

siloxane surfactants to see if the results would be the same, and there may be another product that is less expensive.

I don't topdress my greens in the winter, and I don't know if you guys roll your greens every couple of weeks to keep them smooth. But it seems like if they were treated, the sand wouldn't move around when rolled.

This isn't an ad for Speed; I am simply letting you know that there is a product that helps with the topdressing program. It keeps the sand where we put it, and we don't pick up half of it with the next mowing. The reels don't get trashed out and my equipment manager is happier. We also don't have to send out extra help to knock down the piles of sand that come off the rear rollers.

*EDITOR'S NOTE* This article was submitted by Todd Lowe, USGA Agronomist Credit: Peaks & Prairies GCSA magazine, The Perfect Lie, August 2009 issue.

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USGA GREEN SECTION WEB UPDATES

## A Great Resource For Communication

By Todd Lowe

Communication is a vital component of an effective golf course superintendent. Yet sometimes, golf course superintendents need additional backup when dealing with issues like the impacts of weather, seasonal differences on golf course conditions, the need for increased maintenance practices, and sensitive subjects like tree removal.

Some golfers cannot be reached through newsletters or even direct contact with the golf course superintendent; and it helps to have an outside opinion from an unbiased professional. USGA agronomists are often called upon to communicate important information to golfers through the Turfgrass Advisory Service, which are on-site agronomic consulting visits.

USGA agronomists occasionally hear phrases like, “We’re the only club that looks this brown,” or “No other courses have winter fairways as tight as ours,” or “Why are we the only club that aerates greens more than once yearly?”

The weather, seasonal playing conditions, and cultural management practices are all common issues discussed during TAS visits. USGA agronomists each visit more than 100 golf courses annually and they provide a wealth of information concerning topics that courses face. An important part of our job is explaining these common issues to golfers.

Superintendents and course officials can also glean the benefits of our travels by visiting the Green Section Web site and reading the Regional Updates published each month. Agronomists from each region write updates every three to four weeks on current playing conditions and factors affecting turf quality.

Updates are usually only a few paragraphs in length and are excellent resources to help golfers quickly understand important golf course



issues. Comments from unbiased professionals like USGA agronomists, are often easily received by golfers, since there is no motive for our remarks other than “for the good of the game.”

The USGA Green Section Web site ([www.usga.org/turf](http://www.usga.org/turf)) has valuable resources including Regional Updates, *Green Section Record* articles, golf course construction guidelines, course official information, environmental publications, and turfgrass research.

With the click of the mouse, golf course superintendents have access to all of this information and can get a feel for what’s going on in each region. The Regional Updates are archived on our Web site, so viewing past updates is easy.

Here are a few suggestions on how to access and utilize them:

- **Receive Regional Updates via e-mail.** To ensure you receive current updates, contact Kimberly Erusha at [kerusha@usga.org](mailto:kerusha@usga.org) and request to be added to the e-mail list. Regional Updates are sent out automatically, ensuring you won’t miss one.

- **E-mail Regional Updates** to officials like Green Committee members, the general manager or director of golf.

- **Add this link** on your club’s Web site so that golfers can easily access the information: [http://www.usga.org/turf/regional\\_updates/regional\\_updates.html](http://www.usga.org/turf/regional_updates/regional_updates.html)

- **Print Regional Updates** and place them in a visible area for golfers to read.

Improve your communication prowess by utilizing this free source of information. As always, never hesitate to contact me or John Foy if you need additional information or possibly some one-on-one consultation at your club.

## Communicating the Sustainable Use of Pesticides to Golfers

By Todd Burkdoll

Superintendents are faced with all kinds of job-related questions, particularly about the agronomics of using pesticides and other chemicals on their courses. Many are having a hard time clearly explaining the benefits of chemical use to curious golfers and community members, and as a result, sometimes avoid the topic.

However, communicating with the public is no longer optional; superintendents must address questions, ease concerns and take part in community education programs on a regular basis in order to continue building and sustaining community confidence. Many golf course superintendents now take a proactive approach to combat the general public’s misperceptions and fear of pesticides and convey their role as an environmental steward.

### INDUSTRY PEERS GET THE WORD OUT

Superintendent Jed Spencer, CGCS, for Chenal Country Club in Little Rock, Ark., participates in monthly Greens Committee meetings and now hosts annual open houses to give all members a behind-the-scenes look at how he maintains his course. In addition to addressing topics such as chemical and fertilizer use, maintenance and even golf etiquette, his crew operates equipment for participants, allowing them to get a firsthand look at what his crew does and how they do it. Spencer’s goal is to educate the community, and show members the purpose behind his crew’s actions.

“The response to our communication efforts has been extremely positive,” Spencer said. “Community members really appreciate the visual component. It reduces concerns about the possible effects our treatment plan could have on them and their surroundings.”



Spencer has taken additional steps to show his concern for the environment, which the community has applauded. Three years ago, he formed a partnership with Ducks Unlimited to establish a wood duck colony on the course, which helps attract the birds and allows his crew to manage the population. He also maintains a chemical building on his property that houses a 1,000-gallon storage tank for recycling chemicals.

Fred Gehrish, superintendent for Highlands Fall Country Club in Highlands, N.C., holds educational forums for residents living on or near his course to explain what his crew is spraying and why. He also writes a regular column for his local newspaper that addresses course issues such as the scientific benefits of safely controlling disease and invasive plants on his course.

Gehrish also is involved in a study under way by the University of

### Tips for Communicating with Your Community

- 1) **Know your topic** and know it well. Be willing to give research to back up what you are saying.
- 2) **Do not lie.** A lot of the information you share is a matter of common sense; however, your audiences will fact check.
- 3) **Be as consistent** as you can. Some information will change over the course of time, but the majority of it should remain constant.
- 4) **Be patient.** It is important to remember that members of the community are not as versed on the subject matter as you are.
- 5) **Provide resources** where people can obtain additional information. Encourage them to spend some time learning about the issues they care about.

- Todd Burkdoll

Missouri on salamanders at 10 courses in the area – including his – to see how they are affected by chemical use. Along with the university, he regularly works with environmental groups, whether it is coordinating joint speaking engagements or donating his staff to support a local event.

Gehrish says most people he speaks with are relieved once they learn the chemicals he uses are similar to

everyday household products.

“I have found that using common medications as examples is the most effective way to demonstrate why they do not need to fear the products we use,” Gehrish said. “I read a list of side effects and lead them to believe it is a chemical I am using to treat turf disease when, in reality, it is aspirin.”

Communicating with the public falls under the many day-to-day

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responsibilities of a superintendent, and more of them are taking it upon themselves to go above and beyond that duty. At a minimum, superintendents should be able to confidently explain the parallels between plant and human disease, and how science helps alleviate damage in both cases.

“We talk a lot within our inner circle about what needs to be done, but as an industry, we tend to be slower in responding to the public than we should,” Gehrisch said. “For any change to happen, supers need to leave their desks and get out in front of their communities.”

Despite the fact that pesticides are useful tools that can provide significant benefits to our communities, the debate over whether to use them will undoubtedly continue. By basing communications on science instead of emotion, superintendents can help community members appreciate the time, labor and money-saving benefits of environmentally sound chemicals.

*EDITOR’S NOTE: In keeping with the communications theme of this issue, our friends at BASF shared this article which provides some ideas on the topic of pesticide use.*

## **Bag Tags Spread The Good Word About Golf** **Project EverGreen and GCBAA Announce Educational Outreach Program**

Project EverGreen is teaming with Golf Course Builders Association of America Foundation’s Sticks for Kids program and its partner the National Recreation and Park Association to give more than 60,000 children helpful information about the environmental benefits of golf courses. Sticks for Kids provides young people with their first golf experience and promotes the life values of the sport. Through the partnership, Project EverGreen and Sticks for Kids will provide golf club bag tags to 407 courses the first year.

The two versions of the bag tags read:

- Go hug that tree you just hit. The shade it’s creating is trying to keep you cool out here.

- Nice divot. Now go fix it. That grass you’re tearing up cleans the air so you can breathe a little easier.

“This humorous approach is a great way to give kids ages 5-15 the big picture about how important golf courses are to the environment and to them personally,” says Den Gardner, executive director of Project EverGreen.

“Our partnership with Sticks for Kids is just one small part of our larger efforts to educate and inform people of all ages about the environmental, economic and lifestyle benefits of green spaces.”

Golf clubs and marketing funds for the Sticks for Kids programs are provided by the GCBAA Foundation in conjunction with its partnership with the National Recreation and Park Association. Sticks for Kids will grow to more than 400 programs in 2009 and cover all 50 states in 2009.

“Promotion of the environmental advantages of green spaces is very important to our members,” GCBAA Executive Director Paul Foley said. “We appreciate the opportunity to work with Project EverGreen to get this message out to the youth that represent the future of our sport.”

Project EverGreen is a national nonprofit service organization representing service providers, associations, suppliers/distributors, media companies, and others affiliated with the green industry. Project EverGreen’s mission is to preserve and enhance green space in our communities for today and future generations. To learn more about Project EverGreen visit [www.projectevergreen.com](http://www.projectevergreen.com) or call 877-758-4835. The Golf Course Builders Association of America is a nonprofit trade association of the world’s foremost golf course builders and leading suppliers to the golf course construction industry. It was founded in the early 1970s and its members represent all segments of the golf course



industry. The GCBAA Foundation is the charitable arm of the GCBAA and a separate, 501(c)(3) organization. The GCBAA’s national executive office is located in Lincoln, Neb. For more information, visit [www.gcbaa.org](http://www.gcbaa.org) or call 402-476-4444

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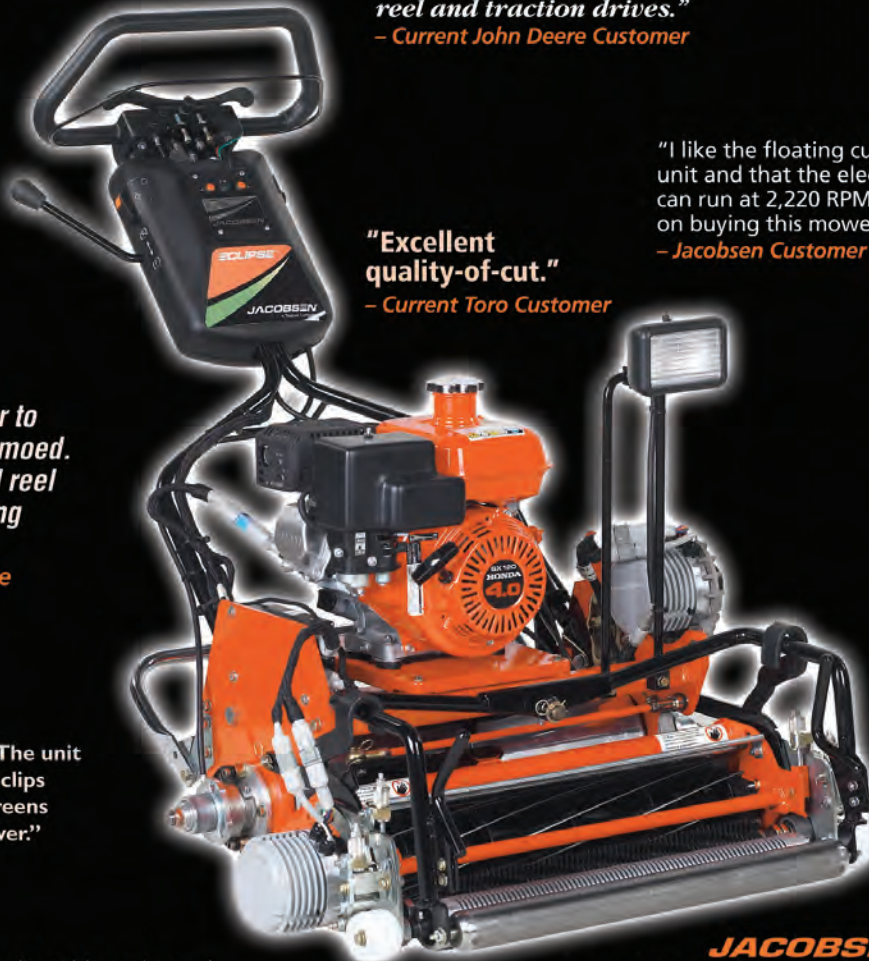
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*A spring bird count outing at The Sanctuary Golf Club on Sanibel Island. Photo by Kyle Sweet.*

## Reach out and Educate

### **How Audubon International's 'Outreach & Education certification Can Work for You**

By Kyle D. Sweet, CGCS

Over the past 15 years, Audubon International's Sanctuary Golf Course Program has grown to include 90 certified golf courses in the state of Florida and a total of 669 certified golf courses worldwide. This increasing popularity has made the word "Audubon" as recognizable in our industry as verti-cutting and topdressing. The increased awareness has gone beyond our offices and maintenance facilities to clubhouses and golf shops.

This means one thing – our golfers know about it too. They know about it from their own club, playing the club across town or maybe a friend's club locally or far away. Is this important to us, our industry and Audubon? The answer is yes.

The six special categories required for certification status help to create a well-rounded, environmentally-sound operation for the participating golf course. Most of the certification sections are topics that we are trained in and are the core essentials of our jobs.

Pesticide Use Reduction, Water Conservation and Water Quality Management are a few section examples that we deal with each and every day.

Obviously, every course is different and each property has its own strengths and challenges when beginning the Audubon Certification process. One section, however – Outreach and Education – may bring about a new adventure in your position as superintendent and you're the one who can steer this part of certification to success. Outreach and Education, two words that may strike fear into many superintendents, can be the highlight of your Audubon Program involvement.

Here are a few tips that I hope help. They have worked for us for the past several years.

#### **Joining Audubon International and creating a committee:**

Mailing in your membership fee is a great start, but doesn't get you anywhere if you don't get active. If you're a member, forming a committee to work alongside you is a big step in moving down the road to certification. The committee makeup will vary from club to club, but should include at least you, a club representative (member/owner), your golf professional and possibly an outside volunteer. This volunteer could be a biologist, birder, land manager or the like. The goal

of the committee should be to work together, utilizing individual strengths for the common goal of the program. Meet as often as you need to get the job done. This committee begins your outreach to your club and community.

**Schedule activities where members, residents or golfers can join in:** These don't have to be complicated and, when beginning, the easier the better. Include the dates for the activities in your club's newsletter, post at your golfer entrance and put a bright reminder in the golf shop. Place anywhere that you can get maximum exposure to your target group. Some activity ideas include:

**Native Plant Tour:** This tour can take place throughout your course. You know the plants; just share your knowledge with your group. You may have an area expert with your city or county nearby who may be willing to volunteer and co-host the tour. A co-host with additional plant knowledge can be a big help. Following up with a photo recap of your tour with plant identification and a "thanks for touring" letter goes a long way.

**Maintenance Facility Open House:** If you've been wanting to clean up the shop, schedule one of these tours for your members or golfers. You will look at your shop in a different light when you know guests are coming through the facility. Create scheduled stops, know what you will say and have your assistant, equipment manager, IPM manager and irrigation manager present their respective areas. Highlight your environmental stewardship with your fuel station, mix/load containment area, equipment wash water recycling and equipment repair facilities. They will be impressed and many will be surprised at your level of expertise off of the course.

**Spring Bird Count:** We know plants and insects, because it's what we do. Now, expand that knowledge of your property to the birds. Birding takes practice and interest and I bet you would be surprised how many birders are out there on your course. Hold a bird count for your club each year and have a sign-up for participants. A six-seater cart is handy to haul the

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group around. Contact an area birder who can help with the count and with identification. Many county extension offices have contacts who would probably welcome the opportunity to birdwatch on your course. Their expertise can be the key to success with this and you'll learn more as well.

**Wildlife Tour:** You know your property and the wildlife it contains. Bring a out a group to search the property for these animals and their habitats. A better understanding of the animals will help to protect them, especially if they are a threatened species such as the gopher tortoise. Passing along your wildlife knowledge to others at your course is an eye-opening experience for them and reinforces your position of a professional environmentally conscious superintendent.

In addition to your hosted tour of the course in search of wildlife, your golfers may want to let you know what

they see out there. It's simple to post a wildlife sighting sheet in the pro shop, locker room or other area at your course. The date, what they saw, where they saw it and how many are data items for the sheet. This information may prove very valuable with your Audubon wildlife inventory and increase your golfer interest.

**Announce your accomplishments**

If you do any or all of these activities, publicize your accomplishments. Club newsletters, websites and postings for golfer/members are all great outlets for announcing your accomplishments. Group photos, bird count results and the opportunity to get your golfers more involved can go a long way. Your local newspaper is interested about your successful environmental efforts as well. When you become certified in each respective category, announce that achievement. And when the process

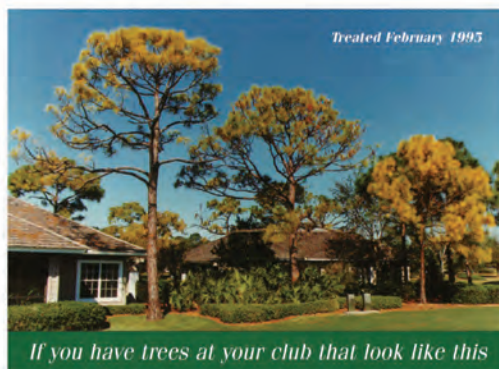
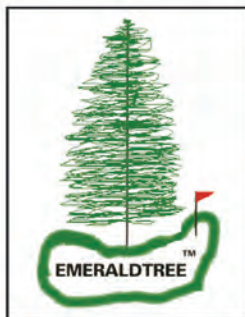
is completed wrap it up in one big press release. Audubon International is pleased to help with formatting the press releases.

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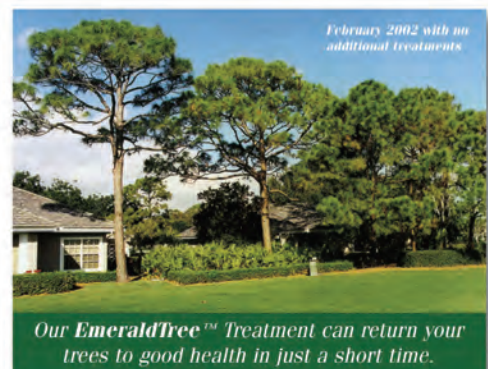
A brochure of your course wildlife can be a great tool for Outreach and Education. This brochure can be customized to your specific site and can be updated as often as you need to keep current. Copies of the brochure can be mailed to your members, handed to your golfers, and distributed throughout the housing community surrounding your course. You are getting out the word about the wildlife at your club, which is important awareness for everyone.

Outreach and Education can be a terrific satisfying part of your Audubon Program. Invest some time, get creative and make this a fun, educational opportunity for you, your golfers, your staff and the community.

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# Signs *Basic Communication Tools*

Using signs as educational tools is an effective way to communicate environmental messages to your golfers. Let's face it, very few superintendents have day-to-day contact with most of the golfers who play their courses. Opportunities to educate golfers are few and far between. Follow the lead of some Florida golf courses, and let signs help you send an environmental message. *— Shelly Foy*



*Demonstrate your proactivity and inspire others to care for the environment.*



*Let golfers know that your course is participating in an environmental program and committed to environmental stewardship.*

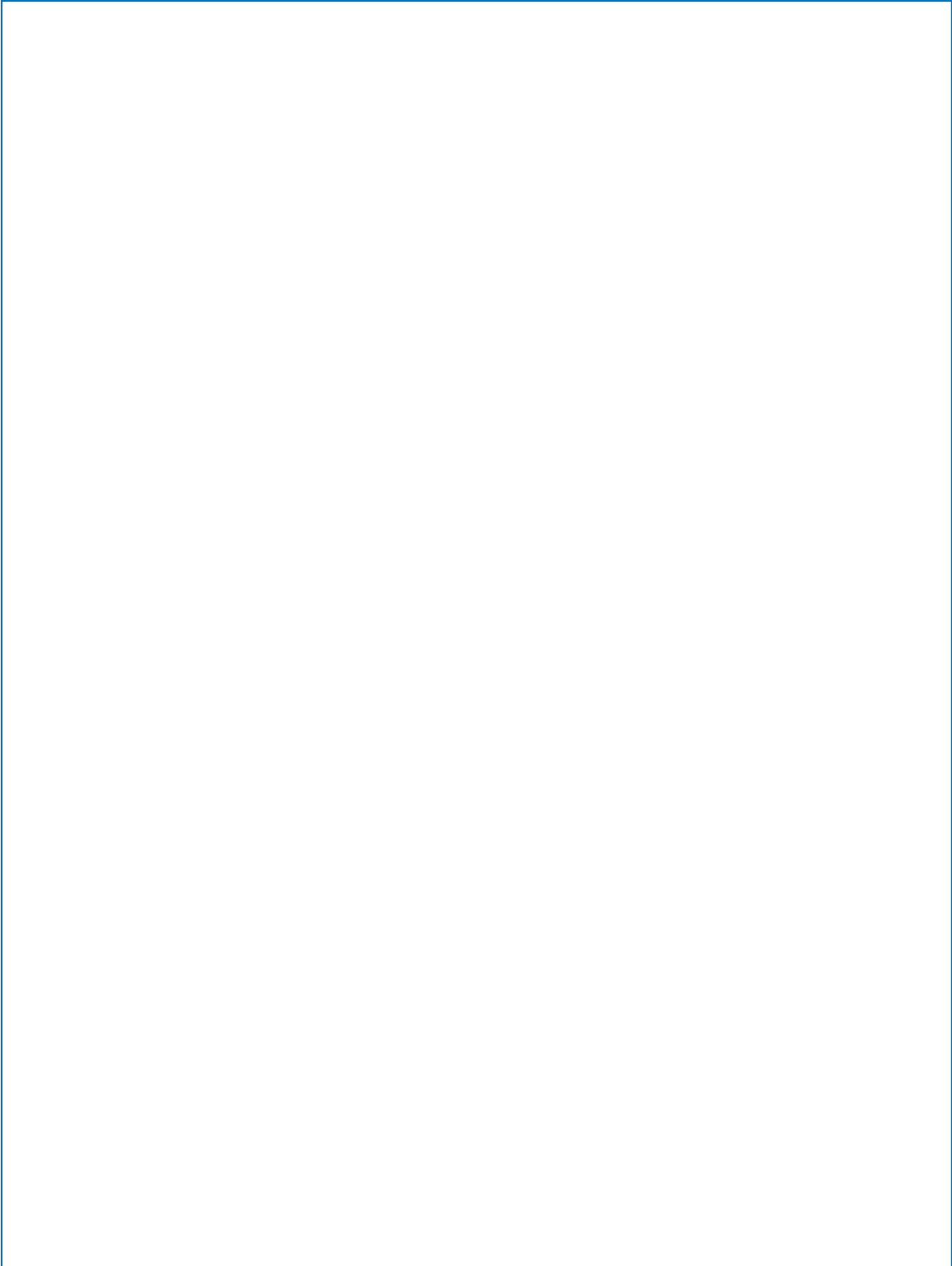
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**New Year!  
New Deal!**



**GREEN SIDE UP  
BY JOEL JACKSON**

First, greetings to one and all and our wishes for a Happy New Year as we welcome in 2009. While we certainly have legitimate concerns over how the economy will play out in the coming months, it will be interesting to see if we witness the 21st century's version of the New Deal Era of the Roosevelt years.

Belt tightening and budget cuts are a given, but show me a solid superintendent and I'll show you an expert at adaptation and survival. There will be unforeseen ripples across our industry, our association and our chapters as we all

adjust. But in tough times superintendents have always been masters at doing more with less.

During times of adversity, people of action with character and leadership and communication skills will be looked up to. Be one of those types of people and your chances of survival will be maximized. Embrace change as it will be coming, and use change to make improvements in your operations. No time for doing it the same old way.

With tighter budgets, I can foresee a dip in attendance and participation at many of our events – nationally and locally. It is important now more than ever that everyone doesn't just go to ground and hole up for the next year or so.

It may be time to cut back a little, but you should still go to as many meetings as you can and even pick up some of the cost if that's what it takes. It's time for clubs to welcome superintendent meetings and outings at rates that generate a modest profit so the superintendent's education and problem-solving networking can continue for the good of all golf courses.

It's also a time to be

very thankful for those individuals, companies and golf courses that have always been there for us. I fully expect many of them may have to scale back on their time and support, but we are all in this together, so we shouldn't just shut down, but rather keep moving forward with a new viewpoint on what's most important and cost effective.

Do we really need to buy more "stuff" for people to win at our fundraisers? How many DVD players and TVs do people need?

I'm sure they didn't sign up just to play for prizes, but rather to support the cause like charity or research. So maybe we could re-evaluate those expenses and return more to the bottom line for donations.

I don't mean to sound like a kill-joy or scrooge; we just need to look at our own operations and associations to see how we can maximize our effectiveness during this recession.

On a more upbeat note, I'm pleased to report that the new magazine format without the gatefold cover and a change in paper weight resulted in significant production cost savings. The

resulting lighter weight of the issue also resulted in lower postage and handling costs even though we had a postal rate increase at the same time.

Thanks to Secretary/Treasurer Gary Myers, CGCS's employee discount, we have been able to move our board meetings traditionally scheduled in Orlando to Walt Disney World venues at a substantial saving from previous locations. That's just another way we are making changes to keep costs down as we go about the business of the association.

And out on main street, the FTGA launched nine regional seminars around the state in January. We don't know the attendance figures since our deadline is before the seminars will be held. The point is that the core principles of member service and continuing education are still in place and functioning.

According to the calendar in the Spotlight section, it appears that most chapters plan on having a full slate of the traditional meetings and events in 2009. So it's good we will have some sense of normalcy as we cinch up our belts and head into the new year. Good luck, everyone.

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