

Wells, Unruh Awarded FTGA Wreath of Grass

The Florida Turfgrass Association honored Dr. J. Bryan Unruh and the late Thomas R. Wells with the 2009 FTGA Wreath of Grass Awards Sept. 17 during the 57th Annual Conference and Show Awards Luncheon.

The FTGA's highest honor recognizes outstanding service to the turfgrass industry and also to the FTGA.

Wells' award was given posthumously; his wife and son accepted the award, which was presented by Robert Ellis.

Dr. Barry Brecke with the University of Florida presented Unruh his award. "The FTGA is extremely proud to present Tom and Bryan with the 2009 FTGA Wreath of Grass Award," said FTGA President Gregory A. Pheneger. "Tom dedicated his life to turfgrass and the industry has lost a superb advocate."

In 2004-05, Wells was the FTGA president and served on several committees. "Bryan's extensive knowledge and research has been vital to the industry," said Pheneger. "He continues to provide exceptional education." Dr. Unruh is an associate professor of environmental horticulture at the University of Florida on the Milton Campus. He teaches courses in turfgrass culture,



FTGA Immediate Past President Darren Davis with Mrs. Judi Wells and her son, Scott Wells, as they accept the Wreath of Grass Award posthumously dedicated to Tom Wells. Photo provided by Leading Edge Communications.

landscape and turfgrass management, and golf and sports turf management.

At the Awards Luncheon, the Florida Turfgrass Research Foundation also announced that six Florida students will receive scholarships for the 2009-2010 academic year. All recipients attend either the University of Florida or Lake City Community College and are preparing for careers as a golf course superintendent or in turfgrass management. These students were selected based on their academic record, leadership capabilities and extra-curricular activities.

LAKE CITY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

PHILIP SOUKUP received the James L. Blackledge Memorial Scholarship awarding \$1,500. Soukup is from Oxford, Miss. and plans to pursue a career as a golf course superintendent in Florida with the goal of becoming a certified golf course superintendent at a "top tier" course.

ROBERT MITCHELL received the General Scholarship awarding \$1,000. Mitchell is from Mississippi and has worked at three golf courses including FarmLinks GC in Alabama. He plans to become a golf course superintendent in the Southeastern United States.

TRAVIS CROSBY received the Hans Schmeisser Memorial Scholarship awarding \$1,500. Crosby is from Tallahassee, and aspires to finish his turf degree at Lake City and earn a business degree prior to joining the Florida golf industry full time in pursuit of a career in turf.

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

ANDREW TAYLOR received the Col. Frank Ward Memorial Scholarship awarding \$1,500. Taylor is from Las Vegas, and plans to combine his education in turf and pest management to pursue a career as a golf course superintendent in Florida.

IVAN VARGAS ALTAMIRANO received the General Scholarship awarding



Darren Davis, immediate past president of the FTGA congratulates Dr. J. Bryan Unruh from UF/IFAS upon receiving the 2009 Wreath of Grass Award for his continued research and education efforts in turfgrass science and management. Photo provided by Leading Edge Communications.

\$1,000. Vargas Altamirano is from Costa Rica and plans to use his education to create a strategic alliance between researchers and other turf professionals working in the similar climates of Florida and Latin America.

BRADLEY WILLIAMS received the Max J. McQuade Memorial Scholarship awarding \$1,000. Williams earned a bachelor's degree in soil science from the University of Wisconsin. For the past seven summers, Williams interned at golf courses in Wisconsin and Colorado. Upon graduation, he intends to pursue a career in golf course management in Florida.

FLORIDA TURFGRASS RESEARCH FOUNDATION LIVE AUCTION

The Florida Turfgrass Research Foundation announced that the 2009 Live Auction Fundraiser, held in conjunction with the 57th Annual Conference & Show, raised \$4,400 for turfgrass research and student scholar-

ships. Because of participants' support, the FTRF is able to continue funding valuable turfgrass research and supporting turfgrass students who are the industry's future.

**USGA REPORT
Early Season
Golfer And Disease
Concerns**

By John H. Foy

The Florida winter golf season is under way. While play is now increasing, rounds and membership levels are still down at many courses compared to just two years ago. Many courses and clubs throughout the state continue to deal with very challenging times.

With reduced revenues, cuts in operating budgets and capital expenditures have been mandated at essentially all facilities. However, based on Turf Advisory Service visits in late autumn,

appropriate and good quality course conditioning for daily play is being provided. Many courses are operating with reduced staff, which has required reductions in grooming and manicuring practices of perimeter areas and hazards. So far, this change has not been noticed by most golfers.

In the central and northern Florida, elimination or reductions in large-acreage winter overseeding programs also has been a common cost-saving measure. Large-acreage overseeding is not an economic, agronomic, or environmentally sustainable course-management practice.

As bermudagrass enters into a semi-to fully-dormant stage, which is the normal response to colder temperatures, quality conditioning can still be provided. Aggressive and ongoing traffic management must be employed when turf is not actively growing, and recovery from wear damage cannot occur, regardless of inputs. While we still have a way

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