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The Edge You Need

The Florida Green

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ON THE COVER: 16th Hole, The Great Wave, Aberdeen G&CC. Photo courtesy of Premier Aerials International.

FOREWORDS

President's Message

After the winter we just had, we probably need to look into renaming the issues of our magazine. By the time this Spring issue reaches you, it may feel a whole lot like summer. Hopefully, everyone will take advantage of the warm weather and have their courses in great shape a little earlier than normal. Those of you in South Florida probably didn't have much of a break down there, so you have been going strong all winter long, I'm sure.

I hope that everyone who made it out to Las Vegas for the GCSAA Conference and Show had a good time and made it back safely and with a little bit of money left over. Congratulations to the Florida GCSA Golf Team of Deron Zandt, Bob Harper, Steve Bernard, and Steve Wright for winning first place in the Team Championship.

Thanks to all who attended the Florida Reception, especially our Industry Partners and Reception Sponsors, for making the event possible. Hopefully, everyone enjoyed the food, drink, and mingling with their colleagues. Thanks to the generosity of our attendees, we were able to raise more than \$1,000 for the Benevolent Fund. Lastly, I would like to congratulate Darren Davis who was appointed to the GCSAA Board of Directors to fill a one-year term as Director.

I heard a story on the radio a few weeks ago on the way home from church. The lesson was a bit off topic, but it got me thinking in a different way. The woman spoke about walking along the beach one morning. As she strolled with her feet just barely in the water, she came upon a small pool of water on the beach. In that pool, a small fish was struggling to get back into deeper waters. The fish was waiting for a big wave to come along and set it free.

Suddenly, a bird swooped down out of the sky and nearly grabbed the fish.

The woman telling the story said that sometimes people hang out in the shallow waters and wait for that big



Mark Kann,
President

chance to come along. The problem is that as long as you hang out in the shallow water, you are more susceptible to predators.

The woman was talking about people getting involved in different groups. Too often, people just belong and do not participate. When they just belong and don't get involved, other groups can attack.

We have been a proactive association for a long time and we need to continue that attribute. We have been able to keep ahead of most of the attacks from our critics due to staying engaged on the issues. We were one of the first groups to create a Golf BMP Manual and now we are serving as a model for other associations to follow. We are close to moving yet another step ahead with our Golf BMP Certification Program. The program will be voluntary, but in order to stay ahead of the attacks, we need massive participation. We are finalizing details and hope to begin testing soon.

We need everyone to stay abreast of events happening in their local areas. The sooner we know about local issues the sooner we can act as an association. When we send out e-mail alerts and requests to contact your local legislators, we need your help. We need your participation!

In this age of mass communications, we maintain an updated website and have even established a page on Facebook. We have been posting news, links, and photos of various events taking place involving our Association and our membership. Check us out on Facebook!



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From left, FGCSA Voting Delegate Dale Kuehner, CGCS; GCSAA Director Darren Davis and GCSAA Past President Bob Randquist, CGCS at the conclusion of the GCSAA Annual Meeting and Election of Officers in Las Vegas. Photo by Joel Jackson.

The Florida GCSA Scores in Three Big Events

Recent February and March events brought good news and results for all the members of the Florida GCSA. On Feb. 14, a delegation of leaders of the major state and national allied golf associations met in Tallahassee to witness the proclamation of Florida Golf Day.

Besides being a springboard for improved coordinated relations among all golf associations at the state level, the event gave the Florida golf industry a chance to meet en masse with government agency leaders to discuss the huge economic impact and environmental benefits that golf brings to Florida's economy and natural resources.

The ceremonial house and senate resolutions on Florida Golf Day were nice,

and the governor's press conference put an official seal on a day full of meetings and displays at the state capitol. Perhaps the most satisfying was the Business Roundtable meeting in which the allied association and state department heads met and exchanged facts and promises of improved cooperation going forward.

Members of the golf and turf industry attending the event included FGCSA officers Mark Kann, president, Nancy Miller, CGCS, vice president and Executive Director Joel Jackson; GCSAA's Field Representative Ralph Dain; USGA Agronomist Todd Lowe and FTGA Executive Director Pete Snyder. At the national level GCSAA CEO Rhett Evans



Mark Kann, Nancy Miller, CGCS and Joel Jackson (back left) sat in on the Florida Golf Day business roundtable meeting, where Rhett Evans, GCSAA CEO, Steve Mona, World Golf Foundation, and Drew Bartlett, Florida DEP, praised the FGCSA and superintendents for their environmental stewardship efforts. Photo courtesy of Capitol Alliance Group.

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Thanks to all of our
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wonderful event in Las Vegas!

and World Golf Foundation head, Steve Mona did an excellent job of highlighting the impact of the contributions that golf course superintendents and their associations make to the success of the golf industry.

On March 2, the GCSAA's Annual Meeting and Election of Officers took place in Las Vegas during the 2012 Golf Industry Show. Everglades GCSA President and Florida GCSA Past President, Darren Davis, was running for a seat on the GCSAA Board of Directors in a field of four candidates, which included two incumbents seeking re-election, for two spots on the board. Darren finished in a strong third place more than 3200 votes ahead of the fourth-place candidate.

Because the newly elected Secretary/Treasurer Keith Ihms, CGCS had one year remaining on his director's term, incoming GCSAA President Sandy Queen, CGCS held a quick caucus of GCSAA board members and he appointed Darren to fill that vacancy. Congratulations to Darren for running a strong race in a tough election cycle, with outstanding incumbents seeking re-election. Congratulations also to now Immediate Past President Bob Randquist, CGCS who has done an excellent job representing the GCSAA and Florida during his service on the GCSAA Board.

The only sad news for the FGCSA coming out of these recent events is that FGCSA Past President and long time GCSAA Voting Delegate for Florida, Dale Kuehner, CGCS has announced that he and his family will be leaving Florida at the end of March to return to Pittsburgh, PA to run the family-owned golf course up there. Dale's service and commitment to the South Florida GCSA in hosting many of the successful annual Missing & Exploited Children Tournament at Colony West and his dedicated service to the Florida GCSA all these years is deeply appreciated and will be missed. Congratulations and good luck Dale.

Before the education and elections rolled out at the GIS, the Florida GCSA golf team of Steve Bernard, Bob Harper, Steve Wright and Deron Zendt won the overall Team Championship in the 2012 GCSAA Golf Championship. We don't have a team photo from the event, but you've seen them all throughout 2011 as they won their individual qualifying events. Congratulations guys! ■

2012 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

MAY

- May 2** West Coast GCSA Social Meeting, Courtside Grill near Feather Sound
- May 17-20** Everglades GCSA Poa Annua, Naples Beach Hotel & Club
- May 17** Florida GCSA Board Meeting
- May 18** FGCSA/USGA Poa Seminar, Naples Beach Hotel & Club
- May 22** Treasure Coast GCSA, Blue Pearl Tournament, Quail Valley GC
- May 22** Suncoast GCSA Annual Business Meeting, Sara Bay CC

JUNE

- June 5** FWCGCSA Chapter Championship, Old Memorial G.C.
- June 14** EGCSA Vendor Appreciation Day, Colliers Reserve
- June 21** Seven Rivers Chapter Meeting, Candler Hill G.C.

JULY

- July 1** Florida GCSA Membership Renewal
- July 10** EGCSA Annual Meeting and Golf Outing, Grey Oaks – Pines Course
- July 11** FWCGCSA Annual Roundtable Discussion, Beef O'Brady's, Odessa

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The Aberdeen Golf & Country Club: It's A Family Affair!

By Joel Jackson, CGCS



Hole #4, Beauty & The Beast. A par 5 with a tempting island fairway shortcut. Photo by Joel Jackson.

The Aberdeen golf course, an interesting and unique Desmond Muirhead design which opened in 1983, is located in south-central Boynton Beach in southeastern Palm Beach County. This country club community lies almost midway between the Atlantic Ocean beaches to the east and the Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge to the west.

And wildlife is no stranger to the Aberdeen golf course. Superintendent Brian Main, who has been at the helm of the golf and

grounds maintenance staff since 2003, reports an impressive list of waterfowl, shore and wading birds, burrowing owls, Egyptian geese, bald eagles, osprey, hawks, iguanas, alligators, rabbits, squirrels, and even armadillos. One day while riding the course, he came across a gathering of more than 200 anhingas with wings spread on one side of a hole and more than 100 sea gulls on the other. Golf course green spaces truly are effective wildlife habitats in urban areas.

Each hole on the course has a name, which itself is not unique — many courses have named their holes, such as Augusta National with its holes named after flowers, shrubs and trees. At Aberdeen, the holes' names are a little more evocative, such as *Grasping Hands*, *The Dragon*, *The Mermaid*, etc. The club has Muirhead's notes explaining his thinking and the symbolism of the features on each hole. *The Mermaid* is in the World Golf Hall of Fame and an aerial photo of the hole is



featured in this issue.

In the aerial photo on page 10, see if you can find the mermaid's head, tail, scales and a couple of fish swimming with her.

The course has not undergone any substantial renovations other than the conversion of the greens complexes in 1998 to TifEagle ultradwarf to eliminate the off-type grass contamination in the putting surfaces.

Brian says each year he tries to introduce a new feature for the members. Over the years he has made it a project to burn in stripes to give it that neat

SUPERINTENDENT FACTS

Originally from: Carrollton, Ohio

Family: Wife, Andrea. Twin 4-year-old daughters: Isabella and Savannah and my dog, a boxer named Apollo.

Education: 1998, Associate Degree in Applied Science in Turfgrass Management from North Carolina State University.

Employment: 2003 – present, Superintendent Aberdeen G&CC; 1999-2003, Golf Course Superintendent, Emerald Dunes GC, West Palm Beach, FL; 1998-99 Assistant Superintendent Emerald Dunes GC; 1997-98 Spray Tech, Lochmere GC, Cary, NC; 1998 Intern, Greenwich CC, Greenwich, CT; Grounds crew, Carroll Meadows, Carrollton, OH.

Professional Affiliations & Offices Held:

GCSAA: Chapter Delegate 2006-07; Member of 2008-09 Nominating Committee. **Florida GCSA:** Board of Directors and Research Committee Chairman 2011-12. **Palm Beach GCSA:** President 2007-08, Vice President 2006-07 & 2010-11; External Vice President 2011-12. Board of Directors 2005-06; Future of Golf Committee 2005-09. **Tournament Volunteering:** 97th PGA Championship, Winged Foot GC, Mamaroneck, NY and 2006 Honda Classic, CC of Mirasol, Palm Beach Gardens, FL

Career Path: Like many, I worked on a course in Ohio while in high school. It didn't really click as a real career until I was in North Carolina and two mentors, Donald "Bert" Totten and Danny Gwynn, CGCS showed me a different path. It was one that demonstrated the passion for the profession and how success was achieved through commitment, dedication and continuing education. After moving to Florida, Steve Bernard and Tyler Warner were instrumental in my maturation as a more effective leader and planner. My current GM/COO Michael DiPietro has been a vital cog in my career at Aberdeen. He exposed me to the internal workings of the club, which I had not experienced before. I cannot begin to describe the valuable knowledge and perspectives I have gained from him.

Hobbies & Interests: I am an avid home brewer. I love mountain biking, skiing, golf and family activities.



BRIAN MAIN,
Superintendent Aberdeen G&CC

Photo by Joel Jackson.



Neat fairway stripes point to the 18th hole and the Aberdeen Clubhouse. Photo by Brian Main.

ABERDEEN GOLF & COUNTY CLUB



Aberdeen G&CC Golf & Grounds Maintenance Staff. Photo by Joel Jackson

Location: Boynton Beach

Ownership: Member equity

Playing policy: Private. Average number of rounds: 38,000/year; 18 holes, 7,016 yards, Par 72,

Slope & Rating: 74.5/137

Unique course design by Desmond Muirhead with holes like the Mermaid, Marilyn Monroe, Florida Keys, Thread the Needle and Grasping Hands to name a few. The course opened in 1984.

Management Team: General Manger & Chief Operating Officer Michael DiPietro; Club President Richard Kaplan; Green Chairman Jerry Rozenzweig; Club Manager Sean Lutwin; Head Golf Professional Jackie Cort; Golf Operations Manager Wally Martin and Golf Course Superintendent Brian Main

Major projects: Removal of off-type contamination on greens

Total acreage: 150. Acreage under maintenance: 135 (course 100, club grounds 35).

Greens: 3 acres. Turf type: TifEagle. Avg. Size 6,200 sq. ft.. HOC 0.105 in. September–May; 0.120 in. June – August. Green speed goals: 10. No overseeding.

The Tees, Fairways & Roughs are all Tifway 419 and are not overseeded. Tees: 2.75 acres. HOC 0.550 in. Fairways: 35 acres. HOC 0.650 in. and Roughs: 60 acres, HOC 1.75 in. in summer and 2.0 in. during the season.

Native areas/beds: 15 acres. Most areas are mulched, some Wedelia groundcover

Bunkers: 64. Machine raking w/Toro Sand Pro 3040. Sand Type: G-Angle.

Lakes/Ponds: 7 lakes covering approximately 45 acres. Maintained by Advanced Aquatics Co.

Irrigation System: Reclaimed water. Controls: Toro Site Pro Central and OSMAC field satellites. 750 heads

Water Restrictions: No restrictions on the course. We irrigate the pool deck area with potable city water, so we follow the 2-days per week schedule.

Water Conservation: Irrigate using ET rates and regularly use a soil probe to check moisture level in greens root zones. Daily field inspection of heads, nozzles and programs. We adjust run times based on turf and weather conditions. Created various programs to customize water delivery to specific areas. We hand water isolated dry areas and use wetting agents monthly on tees and greens.

Staff including superintendent: 21 (20 full time and 1 part time) on the course and 3 full time for the club grounds. Weekly hours: 40 hrs. ST and 1-2 hrs. OT

Key staff: 1st Assistant Angela Wilson, 2nd Assistant Jose Andujar; Equipment Tech Sonny Rosado; Pest Control Tech Hector Segura; Irrigation Tech Revoque Lafontant; Admin Assistant Ellen Spellacy and Club Grounds Foreman Lucio Carranza.

Meetings/Communications: Quarterly crew safety meetings and general meetings as needed. Quarterly Club Management, Golf and Green Committee meetings. Monthly Financial meetings.

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overseeded appearance when, in fact, no overseeding is used on the course. This past year he installed a “first” or “intermediate” cut around the fairways and approaches to give it that tournament look and feel.

The members appreciate the attention to detail that the maintenance staff puts into the course. I saw several golfers filling divots in the fairway and rough as we rode around.

“The members do a great job of policing divots and ball marks,” Brian said. “We appreciate that. It keeps the course playable for everyone and makes our job that much easier so we can focus on the important agronomic practices to keep the turf healthy.”

While riding the course with Brian, he mentioned the photo of the Egyptian geese published in the *Winter Florida Green*.

“We have four families of the Egyptian geese on the course,” he said. “I discovered a new nest in the green’s bunker on the 8th hole and told the crew to avoid the area. The female defended her nest aggressively when I wandered too close to inspect the bunker. Then the male came flying in and honking to the rescue. The members are also advised to avoid the area during the nesting season.”

And speaking of a “tournament look,” the maintenance department uses an “inside-the-ropes” approach for grooming, conditioning and weed- and pest-control programs. The reasoning is sound operationally and for cost control.

“We try to use our labor and



#11, *The Mermaid*. Can you find her tail, scales, head and fishy friends?
Photo courtesy of Premiere Aerials International.

financial resources for the biggest bang for the buck,” says Brian. “This isn’t a new concept. Everyone has had to manage his budget wisely so we focus on the greens, tees and fairways first and then the roughs.”

I was impressed with the tee complexes and Aberdeen’s approach to the whole “Play it Forward” initiative so golfers new to the game and longtime veterans can have a wide selection of tee — or should I say “course” — options. And to make it even more inviting to juniors, beginning golfers and perhaps seniors who can’t hit it

so far anymore, the club has a “course within a course.” Called the Desmond Muirhead Course, it is an executive length par-3 course with a separate forward teeing area designated in each fairway by a large gold in-ground plaque, similar to a yardage marker. There is a corresponding gold marker on the cart path to indicate the tee location. The Muirhead yardages are also listed on the scorecard.

The regular tee markers are not the usual dogmatic black, blue, white, gold and red with all the historic connotations. Instead, you are welcome to play the Maroon,



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Teal, Orange, Green, Ocean and Khaki Courses. Sometimes a tee location will share two different colored markers. The yardage total remains within designated handicap ranges so your stroke rating is not affected, just your enjoyment of the round.

During a tour of the maintenance facility, Brian explained that they use a combination of 60 percent leasing and 40 percent purchasing plans.

“We purchase equipment with extended-life uses like trap rakes and triplexes, which can be staged from use on greens to tees to collars and first mowings after top dressing and aerification,” he said. “The same for walk mowers. The older mowers are used for those

initial cuts after seasonal greens renovations.”

This is a common practice superintendents use to extend the useful life of a club’s capital investment in turf maintenance equipment.

The key is for clubs to recognize that there comes a time when annual maintenance costs and meeting member expectations on course conditioning collide with the budget.

Speaking of capital investments, recently the clubhouse underwent a total renovation. Brian and Aberdeen’s Chief Operating Officer Michael DiPietro gave me a tour of the facility and over lunch, Michael explained the innovative concepts incorporated in the renovation and

also the management philosophy and family atmosphere that prevails in all aspects of the club from the members to the employees.

DiPietro said, “Our goal was provide the ultimate country club experience at a tremendous value. The form and function of the final product accomplishes just that. In fact the new design has won awards and lots of inquiries from other clubs. We are proud of that, but we are more excited about the response and use by the members and the operational efficiencies that help the staff provide great experiences for our members.”

Two great examples were the outdoor, multi-pool activity area and the Cardio Stadium, a theatre-style exercise/fitness room.

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I stay home to watch: NC State football

Last good movie I saw: I can't remember any recent movie I saw that didn't involve Disney princesses

Favorite meal: Filet mignon, baked potato and steamed vegetables

What I've been reading: Who has time to read?

Prized possessions: My family

Personal Heroes: Members of the U.S. Military

Nobody knows that I: I'll keep that one to myself

The one thing I can't stand: Irrational people

My most humbling experience: The birth of our twin daughters

My dream foursome: Jack Black, Will Ferrell, Adam Sandler and me

My best "fish" story: Still waiting for one

My most amazing golf shot: See the answer above



Brian Main with twin daughters, Isabella and Savannah. Photo by Andrea Main.

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“We have three distinct pool areas: the Serenity Pool for people to read and relax, the Exercise pool with swimming lanes for doing laps, and an Activity Pool for the kids,” DiPietro said. “You will note how the landscaping helps to separate and frame each area. Brian and his grounds staff do a super job of doing the detail work necessary to keep the area looking great.

“We are also very excited about the fitness room. All of the equipment is recessed into the elevated flooring levels and each station is offset from the ones behind so that everyone has a view through the window wall overlooking the pool areas and the 18th green. The use volume of the fitness room has increased dramatically since the redesign makes the surroundings more

conducive to achieving wellness goals.”

Another topic discussed at length was the work environment at the club. Expectations and opportunities were a major focus and DiPietro was proud of the retention, longevity, and 55 percent internal promotions rate for employees.

“It begins with the interview process,” DiPietro explained. “Not only is a club looking for the right person for the job, but the interviewee should be also looking for the right fit for their career growth and expectations. When we interviewed Brian, I told him that we expected his first year would be dedicated to making the improvements to the course that we desired and for him to learn our system and get to know

his fellow department heads and employees. During his second year, which should be easier, we’d like to see him get more involved with his professional associations by volunteering and getting involved on committees. Thereafter we’d hope he would assume a leadership role and serve on the board(s) of his groups which would be good for his continuing education which would benefit the club and himself.

“I call this a system of deposits and withdrawals. In the beginning you make deposits of time and effort for learning the systems and accomplishing primary goals. Later, when you need personal time off for travel and education and for raising your family, you make withdrawals.”

Michael DiPietro is the son of Jay DiPietro, who helped pioneer



Bunker fingers define hole #3, The Grasping Hand. Photo by Joel Jackson.

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First Assistant Angela Wilson shows off a back saving spreader rack idea that Brian brought home from a trade show. Photo by Joel Jackson.

the growth and effectiveness of the Club Managers Association in South Florida. He has learned to appreciate true professionals who serve their clubs well, but who also understand that it is a joint effort by everyone that makes a club ultimately successful over the long term. He also understands the importance of having a global view of the issues facing our industry and for all committed professionals – manager, pro, membership, food and beverage or superintendent – to participate in their associations to grow personally and professionally for the success of the golf industry.

Brian has certainly thrived in

this positive atmosphere and he's following the model magnificently.

Like any new superintendent he spent long days getting the course into shape. He has served in all offices of the Palm Beach GCSA and is now on the Florida GCSA Board of Directors and he has a growing family he's devoted to.

When I asked him what advice he might share with others to help with having a successful career, he responded, "Never close the lid on your 'toolbox of knowledge.' Be open to criticism as well as new ideas. Practice sound judgment and agronomic practices. Be a leader, a role model and an enabler for learning. Finally, be a member and

get involved in your local chapter. Take advantage of the professional resources, educational sessions and networking opportunities they provide."

My visit to Aberdeen was unique in the history of the cover stories I've written over the years. It's often easy to convey the passion of the superintendent for his job at a club, but never before have I been treated to such a detailed discussion of the goals and mission of the entire facility. I called it "Team Aberdeen."

"We call it the "Aberdeen Family," Michael DiPietro said.

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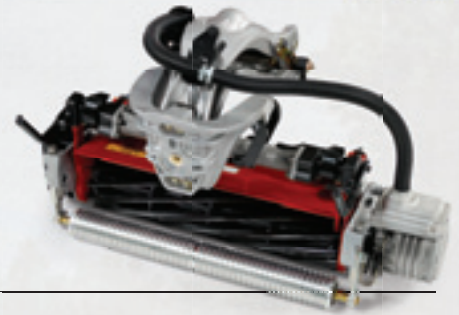
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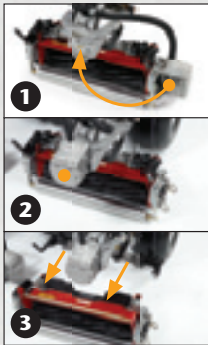
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Debugging Your Golf Course

Because of a warmer-than-normal winter and spring, insect life cycles and your treatment programs probably began a tad earlier than usual this year; of course the drier-than-normal conditions may also have had an effect on program timing as well. That's why it pays to monitor and visit your traditional hot spots for signs of activity. We asked superintendents to respond to an Insect Control Survey for tips and ideas on what they're doing to manage pest pressures. Here are comments by three superintendents: Darren Davis, Bill Tyde and Joe Ondo. There may be a few weed control comments thrown in for good measure.

Survey Responses and Comments

1 Do you make any truly wall-to-wall insecticide applications on your course?

Davis: For the first time in over 10 years, I did a wall-to-wall for mole cricket control. I used a product from DuPont — Provaunt®. I also made my first “almost” wall-to-wall preemergent application in over 10 years this year using Specticle®.

Tyde: No wall-to-wall applications this year. Only treating where hot spots are active.

Ondo: The insect control program that worked for us the last few years is to apply Bifenthrin® and Imidacloprid® with a wetting agent around the end of May through the full moon in June on our greens, tees, slopes and clubhouse area. Most of our roughs are treated with fertilizer plus Talstar® during that same time frame.

2 Do you primarily do spot treatments including selective greens only in treating outbreaks (as opposed to treating all greens if you see signs on a couple of greens?)

Davis: Yes I do primarily, but I will do preventive fungicide application on greens mid-November to mid- February.

Tyde: Yes, but depending on the pest and time of year, aeration schedule determines if we treat all greens or other



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locations, specifically for worms. We pretty much keep a history of the activity locations and expect nature to follow course. There are time windows that we work within. As far as products, we rotate a few different active ingredients depending on the timing of life cycles and degree of activity.

Ondo: If and when any subsequent mole cricket damage starts to occur, we spot-treat those areas with Orthene® or Dursban® Bait. Any worm damage that begins to show up will be treated with Arena®, Orthene or Allectus® on a spot-treatment schedule.

3 Do you rotate pesticides to prevent insects from developing pesticide resistance?

Davis: Yes, always.

Tyde: Yes, Our main pests are mole crickets, grubs and worms but don't forget about nematodes. It's hard to rotate products here, but I have tried everything that comes out as the next latest-and-greatest product.

4 Have you discussed and/or revised your threshold levels for certain pests?

Davis: Not necessarily; we have always been good IPM managers.

Tyde: Yes, but it all depends on the location of the problem.

5 Has the economy affected your chemical budget?

Davis: No.

Tyde: Chemicals and fertilizers are the toughest areas to sacrifice. We have improved practices to keep our costs down but product costs keep going up so we really don't save much money. We try to keep the same budget number and hope to be as efficient as possible.

6 Due to rising costs of products, many people set specific acreages to be treated annually and then rotate treated areas each year. What products are you rotating (Curfew, Chipco Choice, others?) and/or how many acres, or areas (greens, tees, fairways, roughs) are you treating and rotating?

Davis: Currently no area rotations.

7 Do you treat for nematodes annually?

Davis: No.

Tyde: Yes approximately 40 acres

8. There is a variety of products on the market for nematode control. What is your main product of choice for nematode control?

Davis: I still have 10-15 bags of NemaCur®. I only use a couple of bags a year.

Tyde: We use Curfew to begin the year in April; this has

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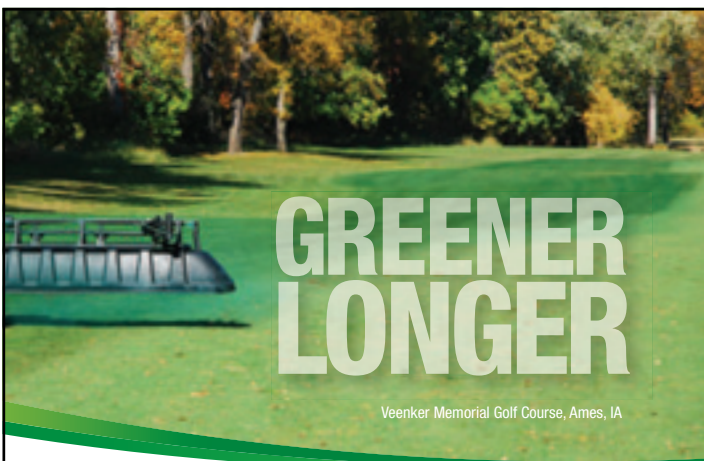
actually saved us on our water consumption going into our dry season. Also, we use mustard seed extract to spot-treat greens and add microbes to help improve roots density. There is a variety of names for those products. We also use wetting agents and even an occasional fungicide application when also dealing with some other non-nematode related issues to reduce the pressure on turf roots.

Ondo: Our nematode control program consists of alternating NeoTec® and Quantum VSC monthly on greens. This year we will be treating one acre with Nortica® and monitoring the results with some nematode sampling later in the year.

9 **New products for nematode control include several bio/organic-based materials and programs. What products and programs including rates, application frequency, etc. are you successfully using to control nematode populations on your course?**

Davis: See No. 8 above.

Tyde: I use microbes supplied from Nutra Turf/Bio Performer on a weekly schedule. We use a one-pound pouch per 50 gallons of water in a 200-gallon solution. I caution against the word “successfully” in your question. It’s still a learning curve!



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Gators and Golfers Don't Mix

By Kyle Sweet, CGCS, *The Sanctuary Club*

The role of today's golf course superintendent has evolved over the years to expand well beyond turf management. Many would agree that beyond managing the turf, the most rewarding part of the job is learning more about our environment. Environmentalism and golf course management exist hand-in-hand and are embraced by clubs with involvement in Audubon International's Sanctuary Golf Course Program and operating within the recommended Best Management Practices.

Creating, maintaining and improving wildlife habitats results in increased wildlife, and finding a balance between wildlife and golfers can be a tricky task.

Florida golf courses are known for their alligators. Admittedly, many seasonal golfers will seek them out to show to a guest and they commonly make for good conversation at the end of day. Often, the interaction between gator and golfer takes place while riding along a lake edge looking for that wayward shot that might just still be in play.

Instead, the golfer comes upon a sunning gator, that's half asleep and minding its own business. The gator will remain lying there... possibly thinking, "Hey, I was here first and I'm very comfortable. Thank you." Or it leaps up and thrashes into the water. The important thing is that both remain safe in this situation,

but avoiding this situation altogether would be even better.

Here are a couple of easy-to-implement ideas that may help our gators and our golfers.

Alligator Beach

Dr. Kent Vliet, University of Florida Coordinator of Laboratories for the Department of Biology and alligator behavioral expert, visited the Sanctuary Golf Club, Sanibel Island in 2010. During a course tour to view all of the lakes, a recommendation was made to create suitable areas for alligators to bask that were away from typical areas of play. The lakes are mostly vegetated along the banks, so it was necessary to pick areas less vegetated with the correct sun orientation and a subtle rise to provide the best scenario for the gators to use.

Following the tour and recommendation, two areas were chosen. The 9th hole was chosen as very suitable because it had seen several golfer and gator interactions. With a small loader, the lake bank was graded to allow easy access up the bank and dead palm logs were installed to provide a steep wall, deterring the gator from going toward the course once in the area. Important also was the location relative to the afternoon sun. The area



Above: Sanctuary crewmembers building a protective gator beach area. At top left: Gator sunning on a beach created on The Sanctuary Club. Photos by Kyle Sweet.

faces southwest, taking full advantage of the strongest seasonal sun for the gator to bask in. If desired, a covering in natural trimmings could have been placed in the area to camouflage it but was not necessary.

Now, after two years, our golfing members have recognized that “Gator Beaches” work. The gators are keeping happy in the sun away from play, and the golfers have a great area to view them. Win-Win!

Alligator Basking Platform

Paul Bradley, golf course superintendent at Bonita Bay’s Bay Island Club, has been managing his course for the past six years and has plenty of gators and golfers to keep happy. Paul has taken an interesting and effective approach in one of his several lakes that allows gators to bask well clear of his golfers by using a basking platform.



Sam Bradley, superintendent of the Bay Island Club, uses “gator docks” to lure gators away from the golf course.



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Paul began by researching some ideas for this platform online and incorporated his own ingenuity into what is now a very successful idea that was constructed completely in-house. One goal was to recycle products for the construction of the platform, so Paul incorporated 30-gallon, triple-rinsed-and-sealed chemical drums for flotation, PVC piping and fittings for hinges and polypropylene roping for fastening. Additional supplies included lumber and stainless steel fasteners, which in total combined for less than \$1000.

Once the platform was completed, it was transported to the course and placed in one of the club's larger lakes. Unfortunately, it was met with some criticism from nearby residents and was moved to another location. During the moving process, it was painted black and it was being used soon after installation. "First, we saw turtles,



Superintendent Paul Bradley (center) and Bonita Bay crew with a newly constructed gator platform. Photo by Maryle Barbe.

aningas, great egrets and everything but gators," explained Bradley. Soon, however, they realized their goal with the sighting of a big gator soaking up the sun. Now, golfers and staff can both view the gators using the platform while working and enjoying the course. Another win-win!

Alligators and golfers will continue to interact as long as there are golf courses in Florida. In many cases, we have created these watery habitats in our communities and courses and we can have an impact on the protection of both golfers and alligators. I'm sure golf in Florida wouldn't be the same without the enjoyment of wildlife, so good luck with your efforts.

Lake Masters Aquatic Management team gives Superintendent Paul Bradley and a gator dock a tow to its new location. Photo by Maryle Barbe.



Gator basking on platform at the Bonita Bay Club. Photo by Paul Bradley.

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Birdies On Almost Every Hole!



The 2011 Christmas Bird Count

Members of the 2012 Sanctuary G.C. Christmas Bird Count teams were (l-r): Shirley Levine, Dr. John McCabe, Susan Cassell, Denise Carnell, Merry Lee Neil, Margaret Nelson, Dr. Wendy Kindig and Suzanne Springer. Photo by Kyle Sweet.

Thanks in part to Audubon International's Cooperative Sanctuary Program for golf courses and more avid birders turning to golf courses for their annual Christmas counts, people are learning that golf course truly are great wildlife habitats. Each year there are stories of skeptics who finally set foot on a golf course and see the reality for themselves, and there are fun reports of rare or unusual critter sightings. Several FGCSA members shared the stories below of the latest bird count. Space will not permit listing the species seen on each course. Needless to say, many familiar wading birds, waterfowl, songbirds and raptors are on everyone's list. We will highlight the number of birds and species and some of those rare sightings, which were special for the birders.

Sanctuary Golf Club

Kyle Sweet, CGCS, Superintendent

The Christmas Bird Count is organized by Susan Cassell each year and is well supported by our members. The club has two 6-seater carts that the members use to travel around the course in their groups. The results from The Sanctuary are provided to our local Sanibel-Captiva Audubon Society Chapter. We supply Audubon International with the Christmas Bird Count information with our Cooperative Sanctuary Program recertification application.

The island splits up into several sections, and for years The Sanctuary group has been doing the course. The way they did it this year was

four people riding the front nine and four people on the back nine. I typically do not join in on the Christmas Bird Count itself since I do all of the member activities throughout the year



Above: Black-Bellied-Whistling Duck. Right: White Ibis

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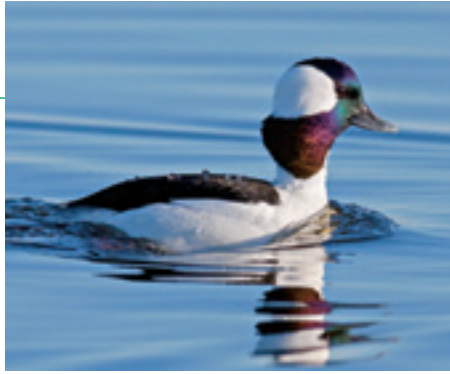
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and, as you know, the teams counted 36 different species and 338 total birds. As far as any rare sightings, this was the first year for the Red Head Duck and the Bufflehead Duck and one Yellow-Bellied Sapsucker. Oddly enough, we have only had a very few Yellow-Bellied Sapsuckers sighted over all the years of the counts.



Bufflehead Duck

Hole-in-the Wall Golf Club

Letter from Monica D. Higgins, Bird Count Coordinator

Hi, Russ. I wanted to thank you and all the members of Hole in the Wall Golf Club for allowing us to count birds on your course during the Audubon Christmas Bird Count on Saturday. We had a great time. I have attached a spreadsheet of all the birds we found with the ones found at your course in the last column. We found a total of 46 species and 328 birds there including several that we found nowhere else.

You can also compare the increase this year in bird species and numbers with those from last year when they didn't have the opportunity to include your

course in the count. I was also pleased to use the occasion to reach out to the non-golfers in my group. At first one of our group was concerned about birding a golf course. She thought it would be too sterile, too many pesticides. I was able to inform her about your work with Audubon International and the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program.

By the time we left, the numbers of birds we had found amazed her along with the great habitats you have developed. She had a total change in her opinion. Perhaps the best moment though did not belong to the birds. Just off hole No. 5 we spied a bobcat! Everyone thought it was really great that you could have such great course in the middle of town that would attract and support not only birds but a bobcat too. All in all, a great day! We got to see lots of birds and met several golfers that were excited about what we doing. Thanks again for the opportunity and I hope we can do it again.

Submitted by Russ Geiger, CGCS.



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Shell Point Golf Club

Submitted by Mark Jacobs,
Superintendent

Kyle Sweet and I were talking at my maintenance facility the other day and he reminded me that the *Florida Green* was looking for comments about the 2011 count. We were discussing our Audubon program that we are working on here



Roseate Spoonbill

at Shell Point. I will be conducting a course/maintenance facility tour here in two weeks, which Kyle and Shelly Foy will be attending.

Here are the results from our 2011 Christmas bird count. There are some residents here who have been doing a Christmas bird count on the course since 2002. They are residents of Shell Point Retirement Community and do the count for the Shell Point Golf Club. They toured the entire course. I'd like to recog-

nize Dr. Bill Saunders, Dr. Iver Brook and Ms. Dotty Morrison. These are the folks who organize and conduct the annual counts, and Dr. Saunders also works with us on our environmental programs.

This year the group logged 32 species and 309 birds. The rare sighting of a pair of Roseate Spoonbills was this year's highlight. The Roseate Spoonbill is our rare one. Below is a summary of the total of species and birds over the past nine years.

2002-2011 BIRD SUMMARY:

Year	Species	Count	Most Frequent over the years
2002	32	177	63 Boat tailed Grackle
2003	18	88	25 Great Egret
2004	31	311	81 Mourning Dove
2005	29	650	249 Fish Crow
2006	35	364	126 Double Crested Cormorant
2007	33	871	453 Fish Crow
2008	23	478	310 Common Grackle
2009	33	521	239 Common Grackle
2010	32	257	75 Common Grackle
2011	32	309	46 White Ibis




Common Grackle

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STEWARDSHIP



Earlier in 2011 at the High Ridge course this Screech Owl was spotted in its nest just 30 feet from the 8th green. Submitted by Steve Kuhn

High Ridge Country Club

Submitted by Steve Kuhn, Superintendent

Our 2011 survey was conducted by Linda Barnes of The Audubon Society of the Everglades. It's the 12th straight year they have done it at High Ridge Country Club, representing our geographical area of Palm Beach County.

The counts were down slightly from years past, perhaps due to a major renovation we did in 2010 and the warm winter up north delaying normal migration patterns and timing. Over the years, our property has been privileged to become home to more than 75 different species of birds. This year, seen for the first time ever, were the Black Bellied Whistling Duck and the Parula. The 2011 Count results: 33 species with 261 total birds.

Christmas Bird Count at Heritage Oaks

Report by Frances and Peter Rice

Submitted by Andrew Bell, Superintendent

This year the Heritage Oaks count was 38 Species, 210 birds. Every year near the end of December, Christmas Bird Counts are conducted across North America. In northern Sarasota County, the Sarasota chapter of the Audubon Society coordinates these counts. As part of this effort, we performed a "backyard" Christmas Bird Count here at Heritage Oaks Golf & Country Club.

This year, we noticed fewer species and a smaller number of birds. We surmise that this lower bird count was due to milder weather for much of North America during the autumn and winter, prior to early January. This mild weather up north likely resulted in many birds delaying their migration south. Not found were a couple of Limpkins that we have spotted from time to time along the shores of our ponds. Also, for the first time, we did not find the usual House Sparrows congregating around one home near the north end of Chase Oaks Drive. An interesting bird we did see is a Great Horned Owl. Notably, during October and November, two of them spent many nights on top of our house, loudly hooting.

Our local specialty is the White-winged Doves. They usually are seen at dusk and dawn during the winter perched together in large numbers along Bee Ridge Road Extension on the wires or in a tree. For the rest of the year, they spread out, and some have been seen several miles away. In previous years, we have counted as many as 38, but this year we only saw 20. ■

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FIELD OBSERVATIONS



By *Ralph K. Dain Jr.,
GCSAA Field Staff
Regional Representative Florida*

Breaker! Breaker! Do You Read Me?

bands must cease operating using 25 kHz efficiency technology, and begin operating using at least 12.5 kHz efficiency technology. For those readers who just thought, “So, what does this mean to me?” It could impact the utilization of the hand held radios currently used for communication and control of your irrigation system.

I am aware of facilities across the country that have paid only small licensing fees because they have newer technology already in operation and others that have paid between \$20,000 to \$28,000 to convert older hand-held radios and irrigation control systems. Regardless of the current status of your system you *will* be required to make this transition by January 1, 2013.

I am including some bullet points from an FCC PowerPoint that detail information pertaining to this process:

- Narrow banding ensures more efficient use of the spectrum and greater spectrum access for public safety and non-public safety users

- Will relieve congestion in and result in increased channel availability for public safety VHF/UHF systems
 - Narrow banding has been consistently supported by the public safety community, including APCO, NPSTC, and other organizations
 - After January 1, 2013, FCC interference rules will not protect non-compliant wideband systems from harmful interference
 - Systems that fail to narrowband by the deadline could create interference or inter-operability problems for systems that have narrow banded
 - Wideband equipment will not be available after January 1, 2013
- GCSAA is currently working on a communication piece to provide more details on this issue. I am always available if you need more information. It is critical that you have this information so you are able to discuss this with the managers and owners of your facility and you are not caught off your guard on this matter.

I recently came across an interesting countdown clock on the Internet that caught my attention.

“There are 297 Days, 8 Hours, and 41 minutes left!” This does not reference the end of the Mayan Calendar on December 21, 2012. But if that does mean the end of the world, then I guess this countdown really does not matter!

This countdown is to January 1, 2013, when all public safety and business-industrial land mobile radio systems operating in the 150-512 MHz radio

**The link for information regarding FCC Narrow banding is:
<http://transition.fcc.gov/pshs/public-safety-spectrum/narrowbanding.html>**

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**GREEN SIDE UP
BY JOEL JACKSON**

With a warm winter in general, it's been hard to decipher the beginning of the spring season. In fact, if it weren't for the annual migration of snowbirds, we might not have ever known when the season changed. Temperatures were not the critical factor in turf management so far this year; it was the lack of adequate rainfall that has affected course conditioning the most this year.

The water management districts are getting antsy as the monitoring wells, aquifer levels and rain gauges are getting lower or coming up empty. Now is the time, when water shortages are in the headlines, to remind your club members and course customers that golf water use is only three percent of the total fresh water withdrawals from wells and surface waters. Of the six major water-use categories tracked by the water management districts and the U.S. Geological Survey, golf, as part of recreation, comes in 5th out of the six categories.

What often gets lost when restrictions are placed on golf water use is that every golf facility is a business enterprise, and when you combine all facilities – from the highly visible multi-course resorts to the elegant private clubs to the semi-private and daily fee courses – golf has a \$13.8 billion impact on state and local economies and affects about 167,000 jobs in golf.

Due to the erroneous “rich man’s game” perception, water management districts

often bend to that public misconception when cutting back water use. I give them credit, because they do have a delicate balancing act of conserving resources and providing adequate water for all uses. However, there is a big difference between restricting home lawn watering and providing the water necessary to operate a business like a golf facility. Nobody tells restaurants they can only wash dishes three times per week, but watering greens, tees and fairways for healthy turf to withstand wear and tear during the busy tourist winter golf season, which is our traditional “dry season,” seems to be fair game.

Please make sure your members know how you responsibly monitor and apply water daily to provide excellent fast, firm and healthy turf conditions for their enjoyment and turf survival. Share the advances in irrigation technology and your daily routine for setting up run times for the various zones on your course and how precise your computerized control systems can help

conserve water.

This time of year golf is in the air, literally, as we enjoyed the PGA Tour’s swing through Florida.

Besides making the world aware of several excellent Florida golf venues, charities benefit from the Honda Classic, Doral WGC, Transitions Championship, and the Bay Hill Invitational and in May the Players Championship at TPC as well. These major events coupled with many local charity outings and local superintendent chapter tournaments at your neighborhood courses contribute over \$312 million per year to worthwhile causes.

Won’t you “spring” into action during this active spring season when we have lots of golfers enjoying the weather and our courses to share the positive and pro-active economic and environmental impacts that the Florida golf industry has on your local community and the state. Bullet point fact sheets will be available on our website: www.floridagcsa.com for your use.



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