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# The Florida Green

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**ON THE COVER:** Hole No. 24, Pelican Pointe Golf Club, Venice, FL. Photo by Joel Jackson.

## FOREWORDS

### A Capitol Idea – Let's Advocate for Golf in Florida

On February 20th and 21st, Joel Jackson, Jennifer Bryan, Mark Kann, Ralph Dain (GCSAA) and I trekked to Tallahassee to represent the FGCSA at the second Florida Golf Day. Our entourage also consisted of representatives from the Club Managers Florida Chapter, the North and South Florida PGA Sections and the Florida State Golf Association. These five groups comprise the newly formed Florida Golf Alliance.

Also on hand to help pitch the economic and environmental impacts of golf to Florida were representatives from the World Golf Foundation, World Golf Hall of Fame, Golf 20/20, the PGA Tour, Rick McCord of the McCord Golf Academy at Orange Lake, the LPGA, the First Tee Program, the Golf Channel, and Susie Doyens representing the Special Olympics golf program.

Our goal was to raise the awareness of golf's economic contribution to the state, specifically: a large employer, a major tourist attraction and the home of golf in the U.S. We also wanted to put a face to the golf industry and develop relationships with governmental agencies to increase funding for golf tourism and provide data on the positive environmental impacts of golf courses.

On Wednesday, we met for an evening session to be briefed Thursday's agenda. We discussed our game plan and talking points and mingled and met the representatives and staff of our allied organizations as well as a few legislators who stopped by.

On Thursday, golf organizations set up information centers in the Capitol Rotunda to advertise our visit. "We Are Golf" flyers were posted throughout the building emphasizing golf's economic impact to the state and inviting legislators to participate in lunch-hour golf lessons and a putting contest between the House and Senate. In addition the Golf Channel aired an interview with Steve Mona on "Morning Drive" and ran several spots on Golf Day on the "Golf Central" show throughout the day.

Also on Thursday, a representative leadership group met with legislators and regulators. Each association assigned



Nancy Miller, CGCS,  
President

one person to speak on their behalf, each as a part of the overall message. I was honored to represent you in discussing the FGCSA BMP certification program and the superintendents' commitment to environmental stewardship.

Next on the agenda was a productive round-table discussion with department heads from economic development, tourism and FDEP. Throughout the day, we met with Senate President Pro Tempore, Garrett Richter, Speaker Pro Tempore, Marti Coley and Lt. Governor Jennifer Carroll.

Our message was this: Florida is the home of the PGA Tour, the LPGA, The First Tee, the World Golf Hall of Fame and the World Golf Foundation. We have more golf courses than any other state (approximately 1200). Golf's overall economic impact in Florida is \$13.8 billion dollars per year. The industry employs 167,000 Floridians with wage income of \$4.7 billion. Golf, from the pro tour to local tournaments, donates approximately \$312 million to Florida charities. Golf course maintenance is a science, which is based on best management practices for environmental stewardship and water conservation.

We garnered positive feedback and made several significant contacts. We received suggestions as to the kind of information the state needed to assist our programs. In addition to the Golf Channel's Morning Drive coverage of the event, they have aired clips of the event on Golf Central. A resolution declaring "Florida Golf Day" will be read during the full session.

Our next step is to strengthen the Golf Alliance, set priorities and develop a plan to work with the Visit Florida tourism program highlighting golf as a tourist destination. Working together to strengthen the golf industry as a whole will strengthen our association and our livelihoods.



# FGCSA Members and Chapters in the Spotlight

## Central Florida

On Jan. 7 the Interlachen CC in Winter Park hosted its 25th annual Turfgrass Research Tournament sponsored by the CFGCSA. On the program for the day, CFGCSA President Mike Gay talked about the reorganization plans for the chapter to reach out to the courses in the eastern region of central Florida. FGCSA Director of Communications Joel Jackson talked about the local ordinances and the FGCSA Golf BMP program; GCSAA Regional Representative Ralph Dain discussed the Rounds4Research campaign being conducted by the Environmental Institute for Golf division of GCSAA.

Then Pete Snyder, executive director of the FTGA, gave a presentation dealing with the



*Arlington Ridge GC Superintendent Ron Hibbard and Big Cypress GC Superintendent Gary Newcomb teamed up for a 63 to win the Turf Research Tournament at Interlachen CC in Winter Park. Photo by Joel Jackson.*

Central Florida chapter and Florida's golf and turfgrass industries.

Following lunch, the attendees participated in a two-man scramble on the always-lightning-fast Interlachen greens. Arlington Ridge GC Superintendent Ron Hibbard and Big Cypress GC Superintendent Gary Newcomb teamed up for a 63 and won in a match of cards over Jim Ellison and Bill Sellers who also fired a superhuman 63.

On March 4 the CFGCSA held its Vendor Day at the Reunion Resort. Vendors set up booths in the conference center ballroom and superintendents, suppliers and guests were able to visit and network during two tradeshow-like sessions. Dr. Bryan Unruh, UF/IFAS, Ralph Dain, GCSAA, Kevin Sunderman, Florida GCSA, and Mike Gay, CFGCSA president and Rickey Craig, CFGCSA vice president gave presentations during the educational session. Following the education, the group reconvened to the trade show for more networking to wrap up the day.

## GCSAA

At the GCSAA Annual Meeting during the February Golf Industry Show in San Diego, two Florida superintendents were recognized. Bob Randquist, CGCS, Boca Rio CC officially stepped down from the GCSAA Board of Directors and received his Past President's White Blazer. Meanwhile Darren Davis, Olde Florida GC was elected to a

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*Roz and Stuart Leventhal, CGCS at the 25th Annual Central Florida Turf Research Tournament at Interlachen CC. Leventhal has hosted this event since its inception and was presented the FTGA's Wreath of Grass Award for his lifetime service to the turfgrass industry. Photo by Joel Jackson.*

challenges facing Florida's golf industry and the need for funding research, education and advocacy to counter the emotionalism surrounding much of the local ordinances and battles against turfgrass in general. Snyder unveiled the new voluntary opt-out program of a .06 percent check-off donation to the new EREF (Environmental Research and Education Fund) program.

Next, Todd Himmelberger from the Syn-genta Company recognized host superintendent Stuart Leventhal, CGCS by presenting him with the 2012 FTGA Wreath of Grass Award for his lifetime service to the



From left: FGCSA Vice President Kevin Sunderman congratulates Darren Davis on his election to a two-year term on the GCSAA Board of Directors at the GIS in San Diego. Coming off the board is Bob Randquist, CGCS who received his GCSAA Past President's white blazer during the Annual Meeting. Photo by Joel Jackson.

full two-year term as a director on the board. Darren had served a one-year appointed term in 2012.

Steven H. Huffstutler, GCSAA certified golf course superintendent at Glen Eagle Golf & Country Club in Naples, has completed the renewal process for maintaining his status as a Certified Golf Course Superintendent with the GCSAA.

Huffstutler has been at Glen Eagle Golf & Country Club since 2003. A 16-year GCSAA member, he initially achieved his certification in 2009. Approximately 1,600 golf course superintendents worldwide currently hold CGCS status.



FGCSA President Nancy Miller, CGCS with Jeff Wright of Statewide Turf Equipment who donated back \$420 of his 50-50 FGCSA Benevolent Fund Raffle winnings at the FGCSA reception in San Diego. Photo by Joel Jackson.

### FGCSA

FGCSA President Nancy Miller, CGCS covered the 2013 Florida Golf Day event in Tallahassee in her President's Message of this issue. Mark Kann also had scheduled individual meetings with select legislators or their aides. Meanwhile at our display booth in the rotunda, we met a few legislators who were passing by enroute to committee meetings, and we had a chance to give them a look at our BMP manual and a two-page list of economic and environmental bullet points. Many thanks to Erin Wilder and her Sod Solutions folks

for setting up a display of golf turf sod samples to give folks an up close look at "golf grasses."

Thanks to the support of our Industry Partners and Reception Sponsors we were able to host around 200 people at the FGCSA Reception during the Golf Industry Show in San Diego. Once again Jennifer found a great venue at the Palomar Hotel rooftop lounge. Jeff Wright with Statewide Turf

FGCSA President Nancy Miller, CGCS representing the FGCSA at the Golf Industry Roundtable Meeting in Tallahassee. Photo by Joel Jackson.



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## SPOTLIGHT

*Left: Allison Barrick thanked Suncoast VP Nick Kearns for the Suncoast Chapter's \$2,500 donation to the Ronald McDonald House Charities. Right: Nicole Double of the All Faiths Food Bank told the audience at the Suncoast Scramble that the food and money they raised at the Suncoast Vendor Day in January provided 5,300 meals for people in need. Photos by Lee Crosby.*



*From left: A golf industry panel composed of Todd Lowe, USGA, Jim Demick, FSGA, Ralph Dain, GCSAA, Kevin Sunderman, FGCSA and Rich Smith, North Florida PGA Section held a Q&A session after their industry update presentations at the Suncoast Scramble in Sarasota. Photo by Joel Jackson.*

In the next issue we'll report on the USGA Green Committee University series that began in mid March, but it and other March events are too late for this issue's deadline. We'll be highlighting other chapter events and news, as this is the beginning of a busy season for many traditional chapter events.

Help us put your chapter in the spotlight by sending a brief report and photos from your event. Please make sure those photos are at a high resolution so we can enlarge them to use in the magazine. So set those cameras and phones on the "High" setting when you take send them along to us. Thanks!



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Special thanks to Superintendent Zach Lane and  
the Laurel Oak CC for hosting this event



# Pelican Pointe G&CC: Twenty-seven reasons to play golf!

On the southwest coast of Florida just below Sarasota, situated roughly halfway between Interstate 75 and the Gulf of Mexico, the LittleStone Management Group operates a 27-hole golf course complex in the residential-golf community of Pelican Pointe in Venice.

The Meadows and Preserve nines opened in 1995 and Hatchett Creek nine opened seven years later. The 40-acre Hatchett Creek Conservation area lies within the confines of the golf course and provides ample cover for a diverse

wildlife population, which utilizes the 40 lakes on the property. Residents and golfers who are birding enthusiasts must have a field day on the course. I know I enjoyed my bird and critter watching during my two visits to do the story.

Since this is a residential-golf community, home sites border many of the holes, but every hole is also bordered by a waterway or wooded native area, giving the course a very natural feel. The man in charge of keeping everything looking good and playing well is Dan

Haubein. Haubein rose to the rank of superintendent much like an enlisted person in the service who receives a battlefield commission – he earned it!

Haubein's dad is a retired navy master chief, who finished his naval career in the Jacksonville area and that's where Dan's golf career began almost by chance. Haubein explained, "After high school I enrolled in a manager training program with the Food Lion Corporation, but as an athlete, I really loved being outdoors. A couple of my high school buddies were

# SUPERINTENDENT FACTS

## Meet Dan Haubein

### Originally from:

Bangkok, Thailand.

**Family:** Fiancee Amy and their dog Teak (a boxer and pit bull mix). Dan and Amy's wedding is scheduled for April 20th as we go to press.

**Education:** Graduated from Fletcher High School in Jacksonville Beach in 1992

**Employment history:** 1993 – 1996 Crew member at TPC Sawgrass; 1996-98 Irrigation Tech, Marsh Landing CC; 1998-2000 Spray Tech/Forman Hidden Hills CC; 2000-02 AS St. James GC; 2002-04 Superintendent St. James GC; 2004-07 Superintendent Crystal Lake CC/ Tam O'Shanter CC (36 holes); 2007-2008 AS Indian River GC with LittleStone Management. 2008 – Present Superintendent Pelican Pointe G&CC also with the LittleStone Group.

**How did you get into the business:** I was working for Food Lion and enrolled in a manager training program with them when a couple of ex-high school friends mentioned they were working at the TPC course in Ponte Vedra and mentioned there were openings on the crew. The rest is history.

**Professional affiliations/awards:** 8-year member of the GCSAA. Currently serving as the Secretary of the Suncoast GCSA. This year the Southwest Chapter of the North Florida Section of the PGA of America presented me with the Superintendent of the Year Award.

**Goals/Accomplishments:** One goal I've been thinking about is to have Pelican Pointe join the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program and become a certified sanctuary. On the accomplishment side, I'm proud to have taken several formerly contracted-out seasonal operations like aerifying, bulk fertilizing, etc. and brought them in-house and reduced operating costs. Also, we've fine-tuned the irrigation system to reduce run times and make the system more efficient environmentally and economically.

**Personal philosophy of work:** You have been put in to a position of leadership. Control your emotions and choose your words wisely. Your actions are a mirror image on your club, course and staff. Be open-minded and respect your staff. I would never ask anyone to perform a task that I haven't done or wouldn't do myself.

**Hobbies and Interests:** Fishing, hunting, golf, Tampa Bay Rays baseball and generally just enjoy life.



## DAN HAUBEIN

*Dan Haubein with his Superintendent of the Year Award. Photo by Joel Jackson.*

*The 9th tee complex with one of the 40 lakes on the course. Photo by Joel Jackson.*

*Bottom right: Mind the gap! You have to thread the needle on your tee shot on No. 18. Photo by Joel Jackson.*

working at TPC Sawgrass and mentioned they were hiring. I longed to be out in the fresh air and sunshine so I interviewed and went to work on the crew.

"I enjoyed the work. I listened and I asked lots of questions and they often gave me the tough jobs because they knew I would get it done. Following three years on the crew at TPC, I spent the next four years split between being an irrigation technician and a pest control spray technician. So I learned all the jobs on the golf course. During my spray tech days I was also the crew foreman. Nine years after starting at the





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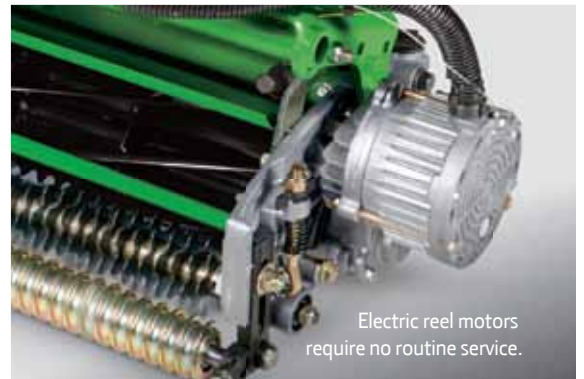
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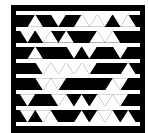
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*The 19th hole. It's not in the clubhouse. It's on Hatchett Creek. Photo by Joel Jackson.*

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bottom, I got my first superintendent assignment.

"I had help along the way, of course, and it all began with the foremen and assistant superintendents at TPC who were willing to answer my questions and teach me the "how and why" of doing the things required on a golf course. Mitch Clark was one of those assistants at TPC and he was the biggest influence in my full development as a future superintendent when he asked me to be his assistant at the St. James Golf Club in Port St. Lucie. After two years under his tutelage, I was named to fill his shoes as superintendent when he left St. James."

After tours of duty at the 36-hole complex of Crystal Lake and Tam O'Shanter in Deerfield Beach and the Indian River Colony Club in Melbourne, Haubein came to Pelican Pointe in 2008. He joined the Suncoast Golf Course Superintendents Association and he is an eight-year member of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America. He is currently the secretary of the Suncoast GCSA.

Involvement in professional associations helps superintendents continue to develop not only their agronomic skills through formal education programs and networking, but also in developing communication, leadership and business skills. One of the greatest investments a golf facility can make is encouraging their superintendents to become actively involved with their

## HAUBEIN FUN FACTS



Photo by Joel Jackson.

**Vehicle:** 2008 Ford F-150 4-door Crew Cab

**I stay home to watch:** Swamp People

**Favorite performers:** Blue Collar comedians – Jeff Foxworthy, Bill Ingvall, Ron White and Larry the Cable Guy

**What I've been reading:** Fishing and turf magazines

**Favorite meal:** Anything but brussel sprouts

**Prized possessions:** My new bride and — oh yeah, my boat also

**Personal heroes:** My Mom and Dad

**I'm better than anyone else when it comes to:** Putting a smile on my fiancée, Amy's face.

**Nobody knows that I:** Played running back in high school averaging 6.8 yards per carry was offensive player of the year.

**If I could do it over:** Get a college degree

**I'd give anything to meet:** Both my grandpas one more time

**My fantasy is:** To visit every major league ball park

**The one thing I can't stand:** Scalped cup plugs

**If I could change one thing about myself:** Grow back the hair I had in high school

**Most humbling experience:** Overseed transition in 2008. We quit overseeding greens after that.

**The words that best describe me:** Forgiving and patient

**My dream foursome would be:** My dad, brother and nephew

**My best fish story:** Hooking, fighting and landing a 180-pound tarpon.

**My most amazing/lucky/important golf shot:** Tee shot on TPC's infamous #17 par 3. The ball bounced off the top of the bulkhead and stopped one ball rotation from going in for a hole-in-one.

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## PELICAN POINTE GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB



*Pelican Pointe Crew Members. Photo by Joel Jackson.*

**Location:** Venice, FL

**No. of Holes:** 27 holes. The Meadows Nine, Preserve Nine and Hatchet Creek Nine.

**Yardage:** Meadows/Preserve Course – The longest at 7,182 yards Par: 72 Slope & Rating: 140/75.5

**Ownership:** LITTLESTONE Management Group

**Playing Policy:** Semi-Private. Average 60,000 rounds per year.

**Designed by:** Ted McAnlis.

**Opened:** Meadows and Preserve nines opened in 1995. Hatchet Creek nine opened 2002.

**Management Team:** Club Manager Tom Weaver; Head Golf Professional Bill Neal; Superintendent Dan Haubein.

**Special and Ongoing Projects:** Laser-leveled the par 3 tees and constructed 2 new tees for better playability yardage. Annual conditioning of our crushed concrete and shell rock cart paths.

Aggressive invasive species removal program targeting Brazilian pepper trees around the borders of the property. Renovate selected bunkers, bulkheads and bridges. Removed hard concrete paths around par-3s and installed shell rock paths.

**Total property acres:** Acreage under

maintenance: 160. Total acres: 180

**Greens:** TifDwarf; average size 7200 square feet; 5.0 acres total; height of cut: .140 to .125 depending on green-speed goals.

**Overseeding:** none. Green speed goals: In season 10 to 11; off season 9 to 10.

**Tees:** Tifway 419. 6.0. acres HOC: .550 - .650". Overseeding: 3-Way Perennial ryegrass @ 400 lbs. per acre.

**Fairways:** Tifway 419. 45.5 total acres; HOC: .550 - .650" Overseeding: 3-Way Perennial ryegrass @ 400 lbs. per acre.

**Roughs:** Tifway 419 Total acres: 90. HOC: 1.50 – 2.0". Overseeding: None

**Bunkers:** 73. Sand type: GA30; machine-raked. Equipment: Groom Master II with brush finish.

**Landscaped and/or naturalized areas/beds:** 40-plus acres of conservation area. Crushed shell rock, native vegetation; maintained with Earth Balance.

**Waterways/Lakes/Ponds:** Total 40 on or bordering golf courses; 60 lakes total in the development. 39 littoral shelf plantings, 3 designated wetland areas, and Hatchet Creek flows through property from east to west. Lake maintenance by Aquagenix Lake Company.

**Wildlife Inventory:** Bald eagles, hawks and songbirds of all varieties plus coyotes,

red-tail fox, and gopher tortoise inhabit the uplands. Alligators, otters, turtles, waterfowl, shore birds and wading birds find food and shelter in the lakes.

**Irrigation:** Effluent water plus two 100-ft. lake fill wells. Pumps: two 75 hp VFDs and two 60 hp VFDs. Controls: Toro OSMAC Site Pro CCS. Heads: 1,460, 60-foot spacing. No fertigation system.

**Water Restrictions:** None currently.

**Water Management/Conservation practices:** We strive for firm and fast playing conditions. The use of adjuvants and hand watering helps maintain proper soil moisture levels.

**Staff:** Total including superintendent: 19 with 16 full time and 3 part-time crew members. Schedule: 40 hours straight time. Technicians may get up to 4 hours OT weekly.

**Key Staff:** Assistant Mike Scheyhing; Head Equipment Tech Keith Taylor; Assistant Equipment Tech Randy Plyer; Pest Control Tech Kevin Fincher; Irrigation Tech Bucky Lucey.

**Meetings/ Communications:** Daily crew meetings. Weekly technician meetings. Manager meetings weekly in season and monthly out of season. I also attend any Club or HOA meetings when scheduled.



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Let's get down to some grass roots information about the turf management at Pelican Pointe. Haubein likes having a 27-hole operation. He's allowed to close nine holes for a week at a time to get necessary aerification, verticutting, top dressing and pesticide and fertilizer applications done in an orderly fashion.

Primary pest control applications include three large-scale herbicide applications for weed control. In October they apply Barricade to the roughs to prevent stray fairway overseeding from popping up during germination in the fall. Then in January there is a follow up application to keep volunteer ryegrass seeds from doing late season germination.

In April, Ronstar is applied with fertilizer to prevent warm season weeds from germinating and to give the native bermudagrass a boost to help with transition in the overseeded fairways. A little later in the spring — around



*The 530-yard 12th hole has a wicked little dogleg right in front of the green. Photo by Joel Jackson.*

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*The 10th hole showing off its striped ryegrass fairway. Photo by Joel Jackson.*

May and/or early June — insecticide applications are made to control mole crickets and grubs. Weed or pest activity is monitored and any outbreaks are spot-treated where needed.

Greens are aerified three times a year. Once a year, a heavy verticutting with a Mat-a Way is done for thatch removal. Thereafter greens are verticut

and topped monthly. Primo growth regulator is applied at 5 ounces per week.

The tees, collars, approaches and fairways are aerified twice per year and verticut once. Primo is applied at 15 ounces per acre during the summer months. The roughs aerified once per year and scalped down to 3/4 inch to

help remove thatch.

Each course has its unique challenges with water and soil qualities. Haubein spoke about some site-specific issues at Pelican Pointe. He said, “Holes 19, 20, 21 and 27 were built using soil dug up between the 19th tee and the 27th green. Unfortunately it contained a lot of limestone rocks and boulders. On

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hole 27, the soil was so rocky and the turf cover was so thin that we had to designate that hole as "cart path only!"

"We began a very aggressive aerification program to help break up the rocks to improve drainage and root growth. We also removed some trees to allow more sunlight and air movement. By staying on a consistent program we have been able to drive carts on the 27th fairway all year long for the last three years."

Other projects and programs include laser-leveling par-3 tees and in 2010 constructing two new tees to offer better playable yardages. There is annual maintenance and renovation to the concrete and crushed shell rock cart paths and waste bunker areas. The club also embarked on an aggressive exotic plant removal program, tackling the Brazilian pepper trees bordering the property. And with 40 lakes on the site, there is always plenty of annual selective bulkhead and bridge renovation work to do.

In some of the photos for this story you'll see striped overseeded tees and fairways. However, after a disastrous greens transition in 2008, Haubein convinced the club to stop overseeding greens and just let him manage the TifDwarf greens.

We've had a generally warmer than normal winter this year and during my recent visits in January and February the greens were looking good and rolling fast and true.



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90	90
100	100

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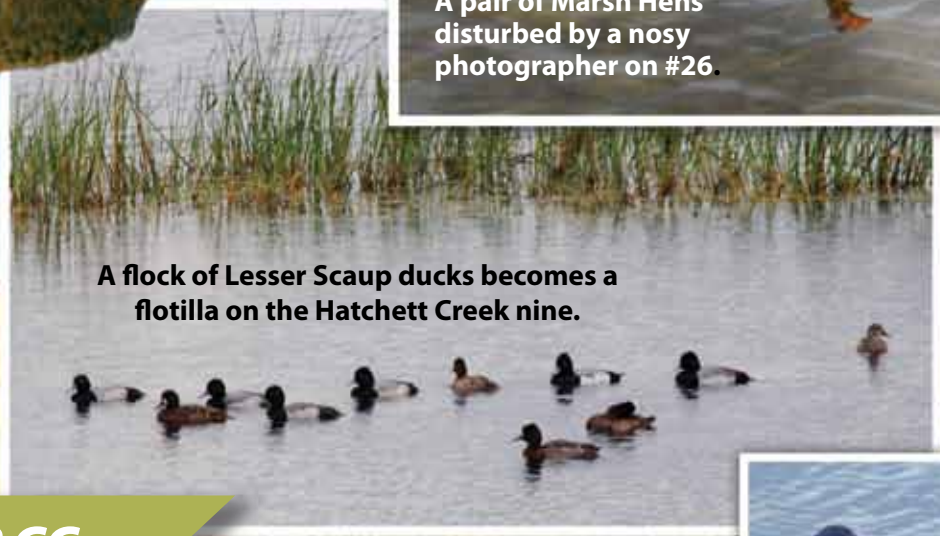
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**A Sandhill Crane stalks the shoreline along the lake on #22.**



**A pair of Marsh Hens disturbed by a nosy photographer on #26.**



**A flock of Lesser Scaup ducks becomes a flotilla on the Hatchett Creek nine.**



**A Little Blue Heron looking for minnows in the lake on #25.**

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**Photos by Joel Jackson**

**Birds are scarce around this bull gator on the 12th hole on the Preserve nine.**



**Egrets and Herons congregate in the marsh grass on the lake on hole #2.**







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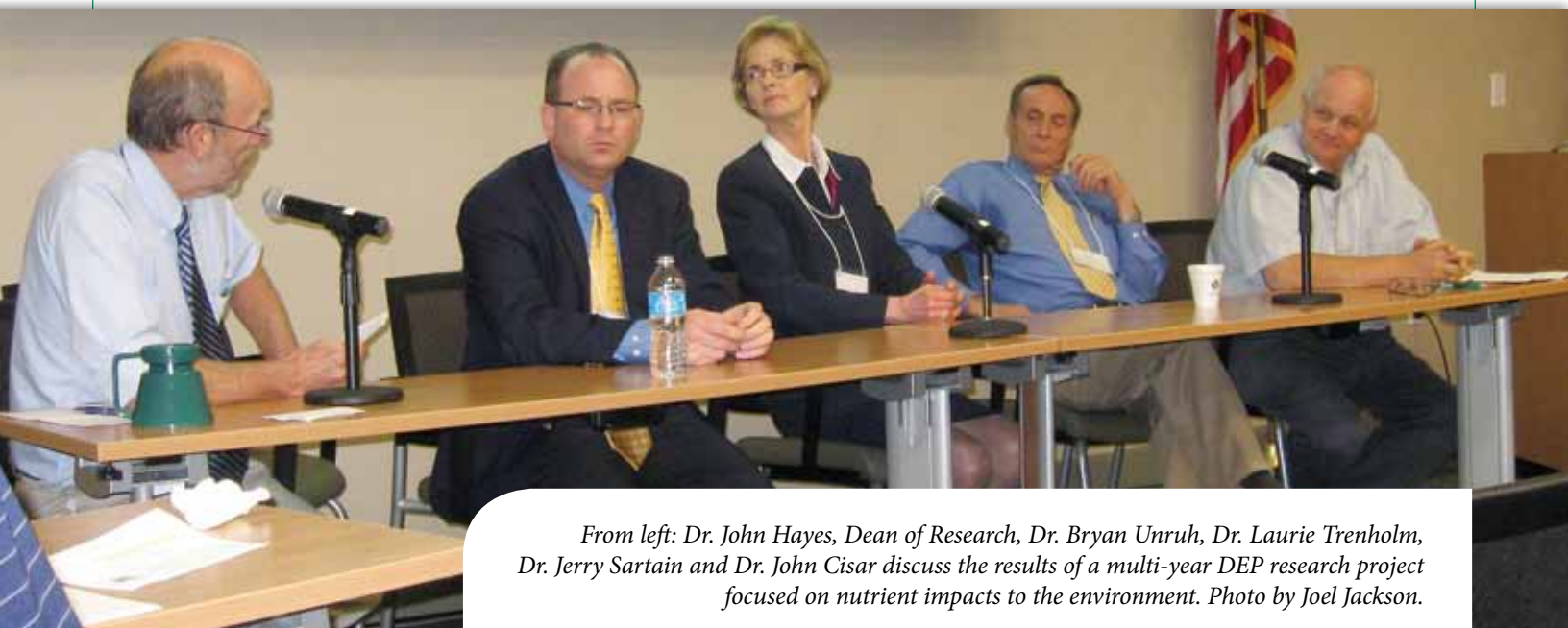
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*From left: Dr. John Hayes, Dean of Research, Dr. Bryan Unruh, Dr. Laurie Trenholm, Dr. Jerry Sartain and Dr. John Cisar discuss the results of a multi-year DEP research project focused on nutrient impacts to the environment. Photo by Joel Jackson.*

**February 19, 2013**

## To help homeowners, industry personnel, UF/IFAS posts videos on turfgrass research

GAINESVILLE — Researchers with the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences recently completed the state's largest-ever study of landscape turfgrass and fertilizer use, and new online videos will help homeowners and lawn-care professionals understand the findings.

The eight-year, \$4.2 million study was funded by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection to determine the effectiveness of current UF/IFAS fertilizer recommendations, which have been in use since about 2000, said John Hayes, UF/IFAS dean for research. Florida has more than 5 million acres of home and commercial turf.

"This work is an important body of information generated here to address important questions about nutrient management," Hayes said. "We're proud to communicate our findings and we hope they will play a substantial role in helping residents, industry personnel and policymakers protect water quality."

Three hours of technical presentations from a Jan. 15 live symposium are available at <http://tinyurl.com/be2la7q> and a three-minute video aimed at educating the public has been posted at <http://tinyurl.com/ajy4ytr>.

The results generally are consistent with current UF/IFAS recommendations for fertilizer use, Hayes said, but the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services plans to review the state's urban fertilizer rules in light of the study findings. The agency will hold public meetings to seek comment about possible changes.

**The study involved three locations, numerous establishment, fertilization and irrigation practices, and multiple turf varieties, including St. Augustinegrass, zoysiagrass, centipedegrass and bahiagrass.**

**Despite the differences, researchers made several basic conclusions:**

- Very little nutrient leaching results from summertime application of UF/IFAS-recommended fertilizer rates to healthy, growing turfgrass.
- Summertime fertilizer bans could potentially deprive healthy turf of nutrients when needed most, threatening turf health and quality.
- Nutrient leaching can result from fertilizer application to dormant or unhealthy turf.
- Newly laid sod should not be fertilized for 30 to 60 days because it will not have an established root system for effective nutrient uptake and it is likely to carry nutrients from fertilizer applications at the sod farm where it was grown.

The study involved experiments conducted at UF/IFAS research facilities in the Panhandle, Gainesville and Fort Lauderdale, using turf, soils and management practices common to each area. The state's most popular turf, St. Augustinegrass, was studied at all three sites.

Faculty members John Cisar, Jerry Sartain, Laurie Trenholm and Bryan Unruh led the study and presented their research findings at a public meeting in Citra, where much of the footage was shot.

The video includes a question-and-answer session with the scientists, and comments from Andy Rackley, director of agricultural environmental services for FDACS.

Several researchers mentioned that their findings raised new questions and pointed out the need for additional research on topics including the use of bio-solids and other organic nitrogen sources, the use of reclaimed water, turfgrass phosphorus requirements, and the effects of summertime fertilizer bans.

"We're in some conversations with DEP (the state Department of Environmental Protection) still about moving forward with some additional data analysis," Unruh said.

He also noted that the results suggest UF/IFAS' nutrient recommendations for zoysiagrass may need to be modified, but any changes to those nutrient recommendations must come about through a vetting process by the Plant Nutrient Oversight Committee, a team

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of administrators and scientists who review all nutrient recommendations from UF/IFAS.

Extension personnel will be trained to help them communicate the findings to homeowners and there may be additional public workshops, Trenholm said.

Homeowners with unhealthy lawns should contact county extension personnel to discuss the problem

and not automatically assume that fertilizer is needed, Cisar said.

"If you have a lawn that's in bad shape, it makes sense to ascertain why," he said. "It may be that the grass needs fertilizer but it could be something else, like a lack of proper irrigation, proper mowing height, or the grass isn't getting enough light."

## CONGRATULATIONS

Peter Brooks, CGCS and The Everglades Club!



*The Everglades Club in Palm Beach becomes the 113th golf course in Florida to become ACSP Certified.*

## THE EVERGLADES CLUB RECOGNIZED FOR ENVIRONMENTAL EXCELLENCE

*By Joellen Lampman, ACSP  
Programs Director*

PALM BEACH – The Everglades Club has achieved designation as a “Certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary” through the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses. Peter Brooks, CGCS, Golf Course Superintendent, has led the effort to obtain sanctuary status on this course and is being recognized for Environmental Stewardship by Audubon International. The Everglades Club is the 113th golf course in Florida and the 1003rd in the world to receive the honor.

“The Everglades Club has shown a strong commitment to its

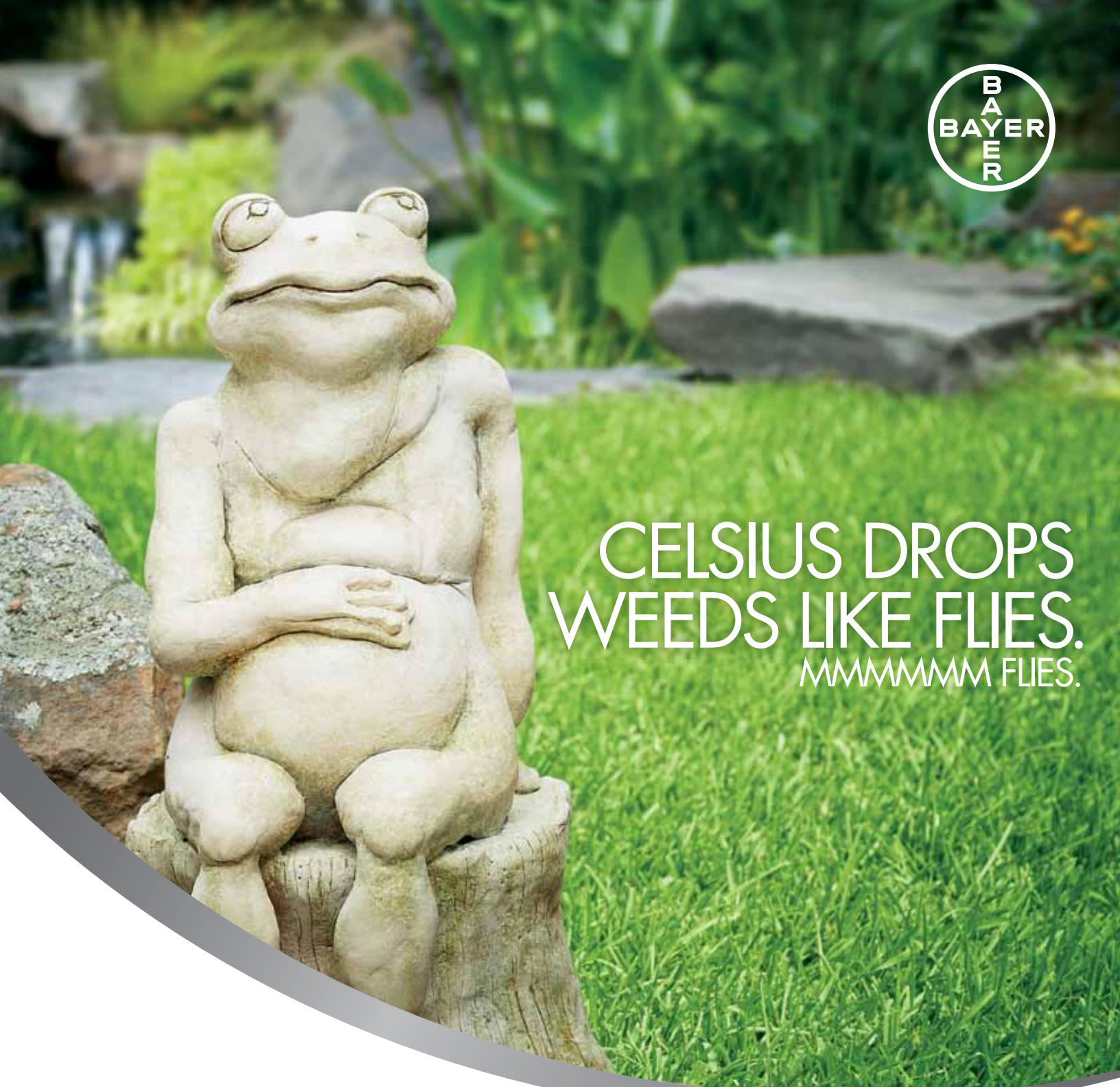
environmental program. They are to be commended for their efforts to provide a sanctuary for wildlife on the golf course property,” said Joellen Lampman, Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary programs director. “To reach certification, a course must demonstrate that it is maintaining a high degree of environmental quality in a number of areas,” explained Lampman.

These categories include: Environmental Planning, Wildlife & Habitat Management, Outreach and Education, Chemical Use Reduction and Safety, Water Conservation, and Water Quality Management.

The Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses, endorsed

by the United States Golf Association, provides information and guidance to help golf courses preserve and enhance wildlife habitat, and protect natural resources. Golf courses from the United States, Africa, Australia, Canada, Central America, Europe, New Zealand, and Southeast Asia have also achieved certification in the program.

In addition to golf courses, Audubon International also provides programs for businesses, schools, communities, and new developments. For more information, contact Audubon International, 120 Defreest Drive, Troy, New York 12180; phone: 518-767-905; fax: 518-767-9076



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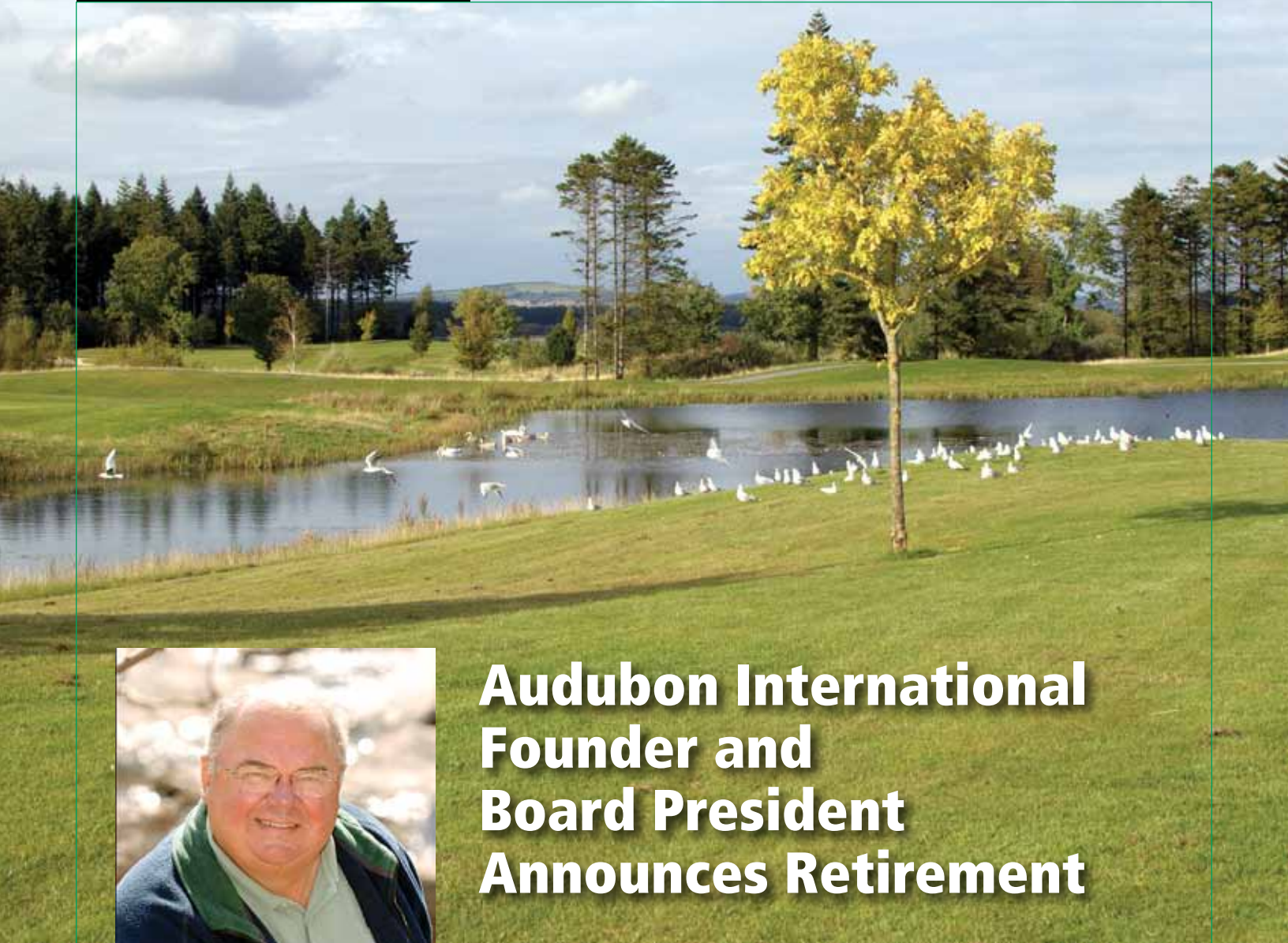


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## **Audubon International Founder and Board President Announces Retirement**

***Ron Dodson, founder of Audubon International.***

*Photo courtesy of Audubon International.*

SELKIRK, N.Y. – Ronald G. Dodson is retiring from Audubon International after serving as the organization’s founder and president of the board for more than 25 years.

Audubon International, a not-for-profit environmental organization headquartered in the Albany area of New York, provides education and technical assistance to businesses, government agencies and communities throughout the United States and over 30 other countries to implement sustainable natural resource management in all places people live, work and play.

After playing a central role in Audu-

bon International’s intensive search for a new executive director, which culminated in the hiring of Ryan Aylesworth (formerly of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service) in June 2012, Dodson informed Audubon International’s board of directors at a recent board meeting of his intention to retire.

“Audubon International has a unique and important mission,” said Dodson. “Under its new executive leadership, the organization is making considerable progress toward its mission and will continue the vision of a public that is well educated in environmental issues and a society committed to sustainable

natural resource management practices.

“It is not without nostalgia that I bid farewell to the organization’s dedicated staff and board members – many of whom I have worked with for decades,” Dodson said. “But I am very excited about what the future has in store for Audubon International under Ryan’s capable leadership.”

Dodson is credited with re-establishing the Audubon Society of New York State in 1987 after the pioneering environmental organization had been inactive for several decades. Dodson shaped and guided much of the work the organization does today under the

name Audubon International.

Over the course of a more than 30-year career in natural resource management, land-use planning and “green” design, Dodson has assisted hundreds of small businesses, major corporations, educational institutions, government agencies, not-for-profit organizations and communities around the world in achieving their goals while advancing sound environmental stewardship. As a wildlife biologist, educator and avid birder, Dodson will remain an ardent environmental leader and champion of biodiversity and watershed protection.

“Ron has helped set a vision for a sustainable future that will allow Audubon International to continue thriving far beyond the conclusion of his long tenure with the organization,” said Aylesworth. “Audubon International will honor Ron’s legacy by building on our past accomplishments and continuously improving to even more effectively address new and evolving environmental challenges.”

During Dodson’s tenure, Audubon International saw substantial growth in program offerings, services and

organizational outreach. Under his long-time leadership, Audubon International has emerged as a highly reputable organization that employs education, technical assistance, certification and recognition to implement environmental management practices that ensure natural resources are

sustainably used and conserved. Dodson also worked closely with the United States Golf Association to grow the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program, an internationally renowned education and certification program that helps golf courses protect our environment and preserve the natural heritage of the game of golf. Since its founding, Audubon International has enrolled more than 3,000 properties – including golf courses, cemeteries, ski areas,

housing developments, hotels and many others – and communities in its rigorous certification programs.

“Ron’s passion for environmental conservation is well known, and he retires from an organization with a cadre of individuals who share that same passion,” said Aylesworth. ■

**“We wish Ron a very happy and well-earned retirement, and will continue drawing on his wisdom as we work with our valued conservation partners across the globe to provide valuable environmental education and help proliferate application of sustainability principles.”**

– Ryan Aylesworth

**Audubon International**



**About Audubon International**

Audubon International is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization dedicated to delivering high-quality environmental education and helping to implement sustainable natural resource management in all places where people help the environment where they live, work and play. Through education, motivation, certification and recognition, Audubon International educates people about the responsible management of land, water, wildlife and other natural resources. Utilizing a set of environmental education and certification programs, Audubon International is able to positively impact the environment at all levels from individual property to entire communities.

For more information, please contact Ryan Aylesworth at 518-767-9051, ext 106 or Ron Dodson at 518-859-5370.

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# Marking Time

## Assistant Superintendents Caught in a Traffic Jam



By Trent Bouts, Editor of the Georgia GCSA's *Through the Green* magazine

Bill Murray spoofed an assistant golf course superintendent as Carl Spackler in *Caddyshack*, but increasingly his performance in *Groundhog Day* shows like a documentary on the position. Day after day, after day, assistant golf course superintendents across the country are rolling out of bed as if it's yesterday all over again. For many, it's becoming increasingly difficult to remain upbeat in the face of a seemingly endless cycle of long hours, low pay and, worst of all, limited prospects.

The golf industry's contraction, instigated, ironically enough, by overbuilding and now exacerbated by the Great Recession, has brought superintendent openings to a virtual halt. For a lot of talented young people, the way ahead looks like the worst Atlanta traffic jam. Their options are stark — remain on idle and hope for a break, or get out and walk on a profession they've poured their hearts and their hopes into, in many cases for years.

It's not just that new-course-construction has ground to a dead stop. Existing courses are closing, and elsewhere veteran superintendents are staying put. Some because they want to limit any risk, others because the crash drained the nest eggs they planned to retire on. When a rare opening does come up, there's not so much a rush to fill it as there is a stampede.

"I couldn't cope with it," admits Drew Wilson, who stepped away from the logjam a year ago to start his own landscaping

business in Atlanta. Wilson's case is illustrative of the frustrations occupying many assistant superintendents and also the extent of the bottleneck. "I would make it to the final cut for jobs but then get beaten out by guys who had 10 or 15 years experience on me, as superintendents. It's very tough out there. I graduated with about 60 turf students and I would bet 50 percent or more of them are now out of the industry altogether."

In all, Wilson, who is 29, spent 14 years in golf course maintenance going back to his high school and college days when he worked part time. Armed with a turf degree from Kansas State University, he later worked at world-renowned Prairie Dunes Country Club and Augusta National Golf Club. Then he put in five years as assistant to Georgia Golf Hall of Famer, Mark Esoda, CGCS at Atlanta Country Club. That's a resume that surely would have fast-tracked Wilson to a senior role a decade ago.

Instead, with a young wife and a desire to have children, he was forced to take a long, hard look at whether a passion for the profession was enough to justify being patient indefinitely. In the end, he couldn't see himself getting his hands on the tools he needed to build the future he wanted for his family. "I was at a point in my life where I needed a next step," he says. "Pulling 80 hours a week at the same golf course for years pushes you to want that next step."



Today, Wilson is still “working 80-hour weeks” but he has his own hands on the wheel as he looks to get ahead. That autonomy, and the flexibility and potential that come with it, are invaluable, he says. “My attitude is better and my wife is happier. My leaving golf had nothing to do with the industry, the people I worked for, or the facility where I worked. My decision was solely needs based. Personally, I wanted more in life and I’m not very patient. I have so much respect for the guys who are still in the industry waiting it out.”

One of those biding his time is Lydell Mack, assistant superintendent to Georgia GCSA director Rob Roy at The River Club in Buford. Mack graduated from Fairview College in Alberta, Canada in 2000. He and wife of five years, Laura, have a daughter, Olive, 3. Mack is 34 and admits he never thought he would still be an assistant superintendent this deep into his career. “My expectation coming out of college was that I would be a superintendent within five years,” he says. “That was probably naïve even in the market at that time. But I never expected it to turn out like it has.”

Mack has been at The River Club for eight years and his ambition is no less than when he finished college. He and Roy discuss his future openly and the boss has even put his shoulder to Mack’s career wheel more than once. “Rob’s been the one to make me aware of some vacancies when they’ve come up,” Mack says. “He’s made some calls to try and get me shuffled to the top of the pile.”

Four times Mack has made it as far as the interview stage for a superintendent position. No small feat in itself when one club told him they stopped collecting resumes at 200. “It used to be that assistants had a little bargaining edge because they’d be willing to work for less just to get the title,” Mack says. “But now you have very experienced superintendents who are willing to do that. The pile has definitely gotten bigger. Just judging from the feeling at meetings and events, there’s an underlying frustration among assistant superintendents who feel that it’s a pretty desolate picture out there. Let’s face it: no one went to turf school to be an assistant.”

Even so, Mack says he is content



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*Lydell Mack*

enough to wait it out. It helps that he is at a club that compensates him sufficiently to “pay the bills and keep a roof over our heads.” Benefits such as medical, dental and vision also help, and carry more weight than they might for someone without a family. “And the guy I work for is teaching me everything I need to know,” Mack says. “Sure, I’m hoping there is light at the end of the tunnel but I made my decision to do this a long time ago and I plan to stick with it. You just have to be adaptable.”

In the meantime, Mack constantly strives to expand his network of contacts. He serves on the Georgia GCSA assistant superintendents committee and also has a seat on the education committee alongside many experienced, well-

connected industry veterans. “Definitely, part of my motivation for serving is to give back and do my fair share but it’s also to meet people, to build some kind of name recognition,” he says. “If you’re not optimistic then you’re sinking your own boat.”

At 37 and with 12 years as an assistant superintendent, Jamey Smith, from Big Canoe in Jasper, has been at it even longer than Mack but he too remains hopeful. “I try to get up with a good attitude every day, some days it’s easier than others,” he says. “When everything was kicking in the industry, guys were being assistants for four years then moving up. My hope was that after six or seven years I’d have a superintendent position. But I try not to dwell on it too much.”



*Jamey Smith*

When he does think hard about his circumstance, Smith always comes away “grateful to have a job” and mindful that there is always a “trade off.” He and wife, Jamie, have been married for 12 years and they have two children, Brody, 4, and Briley, 1-1/2. “Sure, there are good days and bad days but if I didn’t enjoy what I do so much, then the assistant superintendent pay might bother me more,” he says. “It’s always tight. You can always use more money. We’re not buying a lake house. But we get by and I am at a great facility, with great people. I get to work outside. The fact is it’s tight for a lot of superintendents too these days.”

Smith’s last point is true enough. Some superintendents have had their compensation packages trimmed, along with their operating budgets and often their staffing levels. Yet, expectations for the product they turn out remain as high as ever. The stress that comes with that territory is generally not borne as much by the assistant superintendent. But in cases like Smith’s where has been with superintendent Jason Brownell, for eight

years, he does feel a strong sense of ownership, not of the property but definitely of how it performs.

“I take it personally. If I am going to do the job I am going to do it to the best of my ability,” he says. “I want to make it look as good as it can possibly look and try to never make excuses. It’s the work ethic I was raised with.”

Smith says Brownell’s support and willingness to encourage and immerse him in all aspects of the operation also make the wait a lot more bearable. “If I couldn’t be as involved as I am it might be a different story,” Smith says. “But I am in on green committee meetings, bid processes, the whole range, and that’s good because I want to be well versed in everything involved with the job.”

Patrick Reinhardt, 30, says similar support from superintendent Mike Brown, while Reinhardt spent seven and a half years as an assistant at The Standard Club in Johns Creek, was critical as he waited for an opportunity to advance. “It gets hard to push yourself every day of the year, year after year, for five, six, seven years, but you’ve got to keep your head in it,” Reinhardt says. “It’s rough. It takes a toll on you if you’re working until 5pm or later every day. But Mike (Brown) was great. He made sure we took some time off whenever we could. Every chance he got to hook me up with people who might be able to help me out, he made it happen. Phone calls, recommendations, you name it. He was helping me network all the way through.”

Reinhardt’s chance finally came late last year and today he is superintendent at Georgia Southern University where he is overseeing the renovation of what was formerly known as Southern Links Golf Course in Statesboro. The course is expected to open early next year.

Unlike, Smith or Mack, Reinhardt is not married and held off buying a house to ensure he retained maximum mobility while he searched. In total, he applied for more than 20 superintendent positions “all over the country” before his break came. “It’s tough even getting an interview when they’re getting 300-plus applications,” he says.

Not every superintendent-in-waiting is so fortunate, or so patient. “It gets



*Patrick Reinhardt*

really hard being an assistant when you’re competing for jobs with a lot of laid-off superintendents,” Reinhardt says. “A lot of good young assistants are burning out and getting out of the industry because they don’t see any room to move up and it’s hard to start a family and provide for a family on \$30,000 or \$40,000. I think a lot of the guys who are

sticking it out are at the higher-end clubs because they are getting paid just enough to make it possible. But it’s got to be hard to have heavy feet and stick around if you’re only earning \$20,000 to \$30,000.”

Adam Wilhite, from East Lake Golf Club in Atlanta, is the assistant superintendent liaison to the Georgia GCSA board of directors and networks frequently with a group of fellow assistants at informal “shop talk” gatherings away from the golf course most months. Job prospects are “a broad topic of conversation,” he says. “A lot of guys would like to see their name next to the title superintendent on the club website or on the business card. I would definitely like to be in a position to make more money. I planned to be a superintendent by the time I was 30 (which he is now).”

Indeed, Wilhite has had, and rejected, the opportunity to move and assume the number-one job at another facility. “A lot of it is also what type of golf course you want to manage. It’s not just about saying you are a superintendent,” he says. “I’m comfortable with my position now because I’m stimulated and learning every single day. I’m not going to spend all my time looking for a superintendent’s job, I’m going to spend my time getting prepared. It’s a quality-of-life thing. If I’m happy and learning and it’s working for my family, then I’m fine with still being an assistant. The leaf is going to flip when it’s ready.”

In the meantime, neither Wilhite nor his colleagues are expecting any overnight change. They’ve been around long enough and understand their industry well enough to know that the outlook is for a lot more déjà vu and very, very few “Cinderella stories.”

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# FIELD OBSERVATIONS

## FUNDING RESEARCH, ADVOCACY, AND EDUCATION GCSAA/EIFG R4R



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

Are nematodes giving you headaches? Is the fear of fertilizer bans keeping you up at night? Do you want to attend a chapter meeting and be awed by a great presentation (other than the ones I provide)? If only there were an opportunity that could facilitate answers to these questions. But wait a minute! There is an answer!

That answer is Rounds 4 Research. In a previous edition of *The Florida Green*, and in my recent travels, I have discussed the basics of the GCSAA's Environmental Institute for Golf program and the great opportunity we have in Florida to raise some much-needed money. I want to illustrate ways that these funds can provide real solutions to the issues you are facing regularly.

The rewards will benefit the entire industry, not just one segment. Golfer expectations are still very high, and solutions to today's challenges can go a long way to maintaining their enjoyment of the game and subsequently your enjoyment of the profession.

As an industry, we enjoy a great relationship with the University of Florida. UF scientists are willing and able to conduct research on issues like nematode control, finding alternatives for MSMA and Methyl Bromide, as well as field studies on new chemistries. Unfortunately, there are limited resources to conduct the necessary research. In exchange for foursomes of golf at local facilities, funds could be generated to help raise the necessary dollars.

The fear of fertilizer bans and water regulations definitely keep me up at night. Just when you think you are winning, a new issue arises somewhere in the state. Right now the issue of fertilizer ordinances containing restrictive blackout periods is ongoing in Volusia County with the cities of Melbourne and Rockledge considering ordinances.

In my discussions with the chapters, I reference the \$38.5 million raised by the Conservancy in SW Florida to protect the Florida environment. By the way, the Conservancy views golf as a polluter and would enjoy very much taking us down. I am also aware that in Collier County there is a movement to reduce the amount of water that golf courses have available through their consumptive-use permits. I have been

told by as much as 50 percent. The price of a few foursomes of golf seems very little to pay to fight these issues, right??

I am considering taking up juggling flaming golf balls to keep everyone engaged when I speak at meetings. I will resume practice once my eyebrows grow back. As much as I know that all the chapters appreciate the professionalism of my presentations, wouldn't it be nice to attend a meeting with an authority on any issue with which you are currently dealing. Again, the funds generated from our Rounds 4 Research program can be directed for chapter education. One of the primary functions of the chapter is to educate their members and help them advance in their careers.

Here is what I now ask of you. Please take a moment and visit our website at <http://eifg.org/>. Review the R4R information and if you have any questions contact me (my information is included below). Our first auction this year is June 6-16 in conjunction with the US Open. Our second auction is Aug. 1-11 in conjunction with the PGA Championship. Please, Please, Please consider making a donation of at least a foursome to this very worthwhile cause. your donation is an investment in your future success.

Until next time,  
Ralph Dain – GCSAA Regional Representative (FL)  
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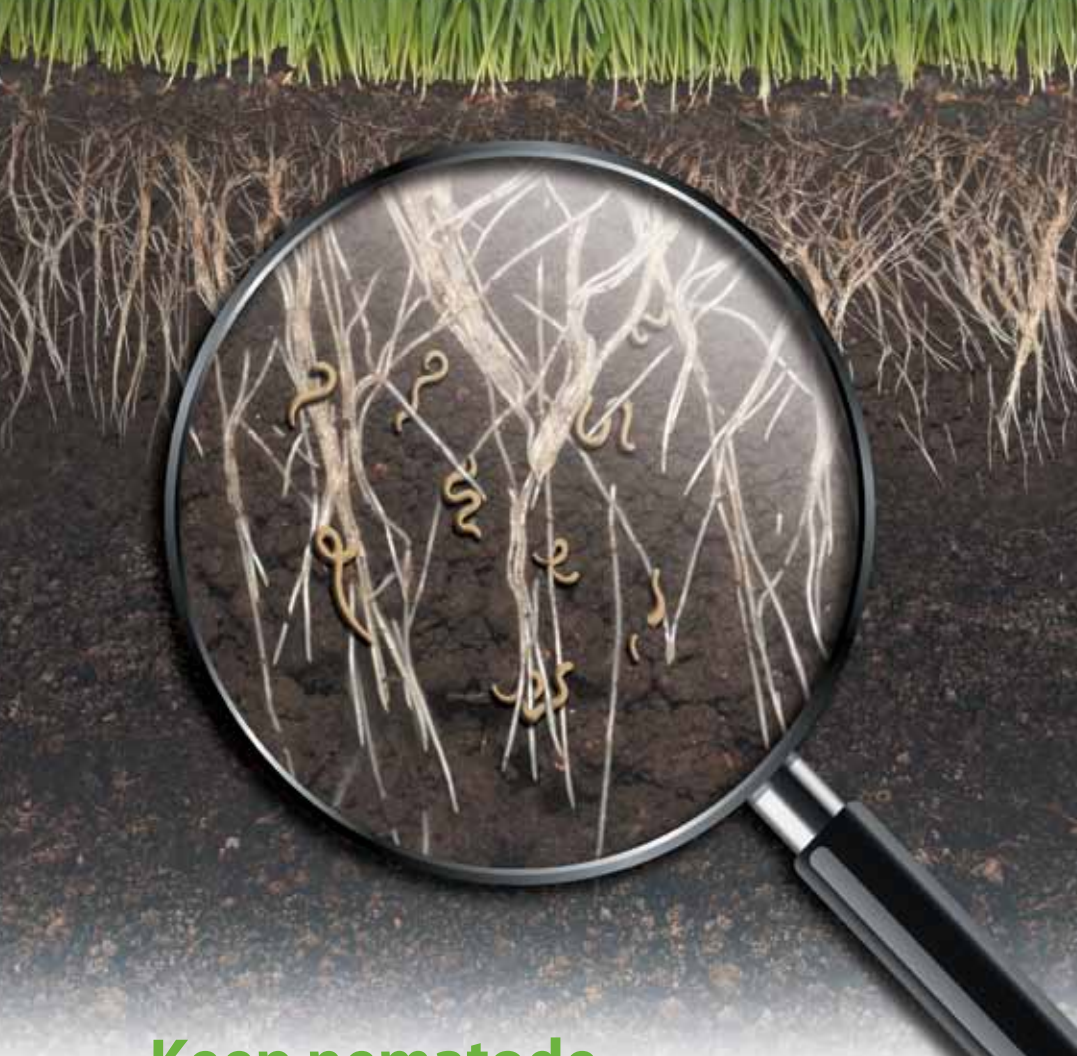
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**GREEN SIDE UP  
BY JOEL JACKSON**

If every golf course in Florida annually donated \$100 to the FGCSA for education, research and advocacy for golf course turf management issues, that would roughly come to around \$120,000.

Consistently, the most important factor for “enjoyment of the game” voted by golfers across the nation is “golf course conditioning.” Yet most courses or golfers

can’t find it in their hearts or budgets to write the check to help the game they love.

Superintendent associations have been trying to raise money from their own ranks and from the vendors they do business with, but business and budgets in general lately are making that a tough proposition. What can we do to engage clubs and golfers into helping out?

Hello! There is a new and simple way to solve the problem. Instead of cash money, all a golf course has to do is donate a foursome round of golf and it will be auctioned off online and 80 percent of the money raised will be returned to the designated superintendent chapter to be used precisely for education, research and advocacy.

Guess what? The program already exists. It’s called Rounds4Research. Surely you have heard of it by now.

Of course the trick is that someone has to tell the general manager, Green Committee, golf pro and members and

customers that the program exists and the club should participate. Why? Oh, I don’t know, ever heard of fertilizer bans, water shortage restrictions, immigrant labor regulations, applicator licenses or certifications and chemical registration cancellations?

Those are all such boring, mundane matters compared to hosting the Member/Guest Tournament, or prepping for a PGA, LPGA or Champions Tour event. But wait, the course presentation and reputation are at stake not just for these special events but for charity fundraisers and, of course, for those who pay dues and greens fees to play golf every day for the pure enjoyment of the game.

No one has to squeeze the budget to eke out some funds to grudgingly donate to turf research or legislative advocacy. All a club has to do is fill out a simple one-sided form designating a month, day and time for a tee time to be donated to the cause. The club dictates the time of year,

time of day, dress code and places a dollar value on the outing. Fill in the name of the superintendent organization to receive the proceeds and you’re done.

But if clubs still can’t bring themselves to donate a round (or rounds) of golf for a worthy cause such as golf course sustainability with regard to conditioning, then they can make a cash donation.

The Rounds4Research program gives golfers a method to contribute to the game, and they are a virtually untapped source of funding to help battle the war mounted by activists on turfgrass in general and they are drawing a bead on golf as they build up steam, and they have deep pockets.

We have enclosed a Rounds4Research fact sheet and donation form with this Florida Green to take to your GM and/or Golf Pro and get your club involved. To paraphrase fictional sports agent Jerry Maguire, “Help us help you!”



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