

LIQUID AG FORMING PARTNERSHIPS.

TOGETHER, WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

In 1973, Liquid Ag Systems, Inc. planted a seed from which acres of development sprang forth. Liquid fertilizer had received widespread agricultural acceptance in the late 1960s and with the development of automatic irrigation on golf courses in the early 1970s, the timing was perfect for a company that could marry the developing technology with innovative ideas, a company with a zest for achievement, a company like Liquid Ag Systems.

In the early years of the business, acceptance and enthusiasm soared as Dr. Max Brown and his associates promoted a philosophy stating: If you provide a unique service in a valuable way through trusting personal partnerships and you can do it in a way that meets or exceeds the customer's expectations, you've provided something of value.

"You work hard and develop a reputation - you work hard and make a commitment to doing something right and you put your whole self into it," Dr. Brown said.

Today, however, as they enter their third decade, Dr. Brown and the Liquid Ag Systems team are rededicating the company to the ideals upon which the business was founded.

The company is not just selling commodity products. Liquid Ag Systems is forming customer partnerships that develop unique, environmentally-responsible products being led by the new Enviro Products line.



IF YOU PROVIDE A UNIQUE SERVICE IN A VALUABLE WAY THROUGH TRUSTING PERSONAL PARTNERSHIPS AND YOU CAN DO IT IN A WAY THAT MEETS OR EXCEEDS THE CUSTOMER'S EXPECTATIONS, YOU'VE PROVIDED SOMETHING OF VALUE.

"Profit is not the goal, but the essential result of doing business. The goal is to provide unique solutions to problems in the industry," Dr. Brown said. "Customers need someone to bounce ideas off of, someone they can depend on. We want to be that for our customers."

To this end, Liquid Ag Systems also offers an analytical service, soil and tissue sampling/evaluation, irrigation water treatment, experienced consultation for growers' nutritional programs and environmentally sensitive alternatives that can reduce the need for harsh chemicals.

The common thread being an insatiable desire to remain on the leading edge of global technology.

Dr. Brown's summation: "We want to be working with our customers as partners doing something unique, something that makes a difference that we are there, something that says 'You're a partner.' "

ENVIRO PRODUCTS

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four years for him to figure this out? College in the 1960s. Those were the days!

After graduating from college, Bill decided to celebrate by torturing himself on a 650-mile bicycle trip from Pennsylvania to Boston in 10 days. Bill decided he had enough of the winters in Pennsylvania and he was lured to South Florida by the promise of year-round green grass, mole crickets and bikinis. He is still having problems with all three.

Bill still stays active by playing tennis during his time away from the golf course. One of his favorite playing partners is Allen MacCurrach III of MacCurrach Golf Construction. Allen did some renovation work at Deer Creek and at Oak Tree during the summer of 1993 and Bill would challenge Allen several evenings a week. (I believe the cigars must have finally caught up with Allen and given Bill the edge.)

Bill started to work in Florida at the Golf Club of Plantation in 1973 as a laborer. He worked his way up to superintendent and left to accept the superintendent position at Oak Tree Golf Club in 1988. Bill is still the Golf Course Superintendent at this private club and is responsible for the 18-hole golf course, practice facility, and clubhouse grounds.

Bill was President of the SFGCSA for two years in the late 1980s and served on SFGCSA board for five years. He is a member of the GCSAA, FTGA, and has served on the Broward County School System AgriBusiness Advisory Board for two years. Bill has been a major part of the SFGCSA/Adam Walsh



Bill McKee (left), recipient of one of the 1994 FGCSA President's Awards was roasted handily by his good friend and presenter, Bob Klitz.

Golf Tournament Committee for the past seven years. This is a fund raising tournament for the Adam Walsh Child Resource Center that has raised over \$50,000 over the past ten years to help find and aid missing children and their families. This



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tournament took on even more significance for the superintendents involved in South Florida with the recent child abductions and murders that have made headlines nationwide.

During Bill's twenty years in South Florida he has been assisted by almost all area superintendents by trading equipment, ideas, and suggestions and borrowing equipment or supplies during a breakdown or shortage of materials. Early in Bill's career he attended a turfgrass course at Broward Community College with Dr. Max Brown as the instructor. Dr. Brown was of great assistance when Bill was learning to handle the difficulties of growing quality turfgrass in South Florida.

Phil Amman was another pioneer of the turfgrass industry in South Florida who had a significant impact on Bill's career. Phil built the Golf Club at Plantation, started the SFGCSA, and offered a great deal of encouragement to young Mr. McKee as he started out in this business.

Elroy Timmer, part owner of AmerAquatic, Inc., also was a significant contributor to Bill's early success in this area. Elroy was the individual who contacted Bill when Orthene first became labeled for mole cricket control in Florida. One of Bill's most memorable moments was experiencing the thrill of driving over hundreds of mole cricket bodies doing the "Orthene Shuffle" the morning after that initial treatment.

**1994 FGCSA
Presidents Awards**

- Bill McKee**
- Paul Nevers
- Lou Oxnevad
- Joe Snook
- Royce Stewart
- Lonnie Stubbs

Some of the most dramatic changes in the industry that Bill has witnessed include the introduction of the Verti-Drain aerifier which brought him several years of successful aerifying programs at Oak Tree. Also, the changes from manual labor to complex equipment, walk mowers to triplexes, and back again to manual labor, has been an interesting display of how some of the older techniques are still the best.

As Bill reflected on some of his past experiences and thought about the future of our industry during our interview, he mentioned several key points that might be beneficial for those starting in our industry to ponder as they're mowing that first green in the morning. First, be patient. Spend your time on a crew gain-

ing the knowledge, making mistakes and suggesting improvements. Spend the early years developing and maintaining friendships and relationships that will be a benefit to you throughout your career. Second, take time to enjoy the environment and wildlife that is around you. We are all very fortunate to work in such beautiful surroundings and we should take every opportunity to appreciate the special environment we are maintaining. Third, don't get wrapped up in your own problems on your golf course! Stay in contact with other superintendents! Join your local superintendent's chapter! Go to meetings! Give yourself the opportunity to discuss your problems so your associates can help you find a solution. Bill's last words of wisdom are to develop some outside interest away from the golf industry. We all need a break to gather our thoughts and recharge our batteries. Too much of the best job will still cause you to lose some of your effectiveness.

Although Bill's family is still up in Pennsylvania, he has started a new family of friends in South Florida.

The close circle of people Bill has assisted over the years throughout the area will attest to his great attitude, willingness to help with area events, and his frequent phone calls and visits to check on fellow superintendents. We are fortunate to have Bill in South Florida, and we are proud of his accomplishments and commitments to the industry in South Florida.

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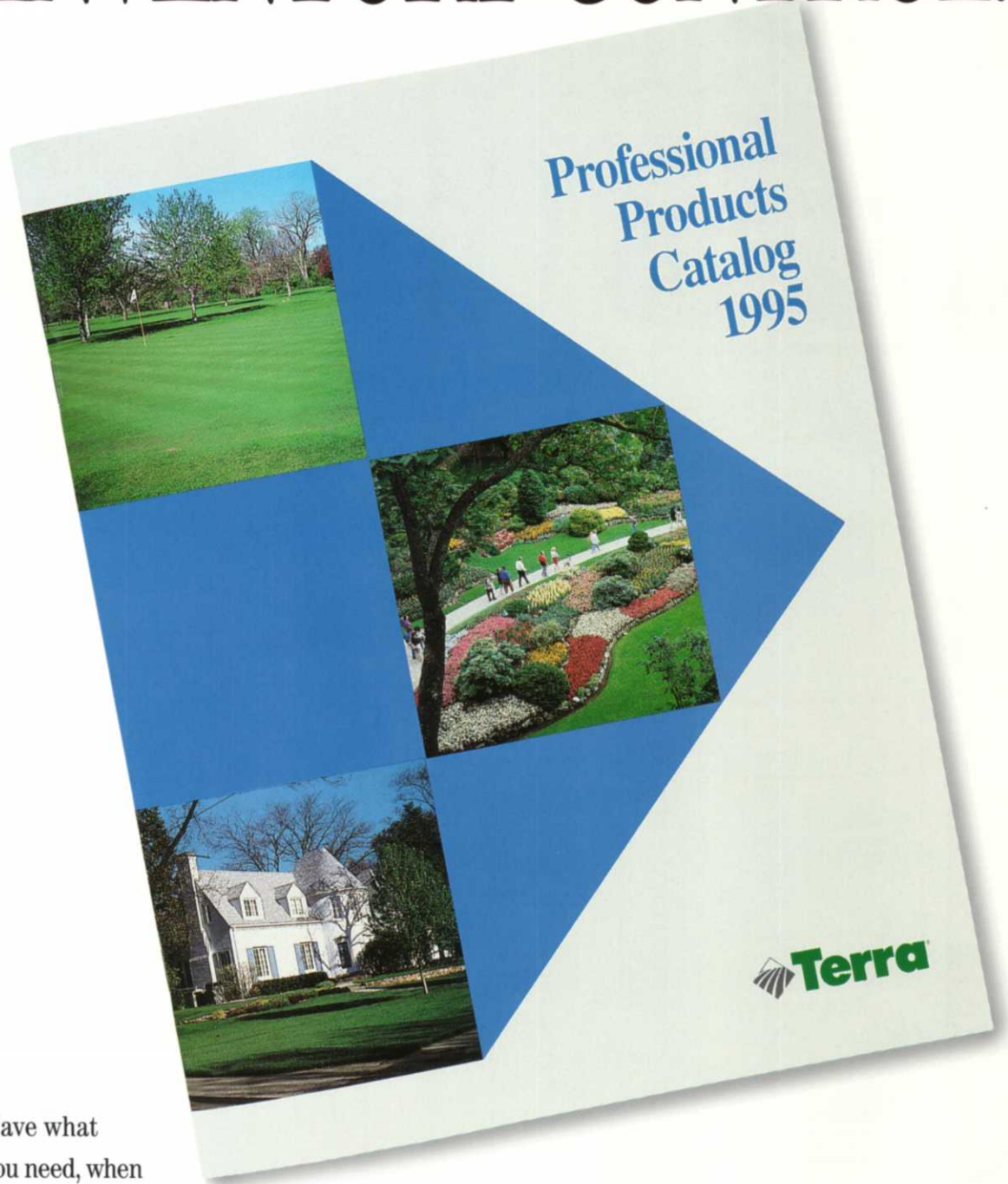
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*Occurs when stresses such as Rhizoctonia and Pythium species combine with heat, traffic and other factors. This results in reduced turfgrass vigor.



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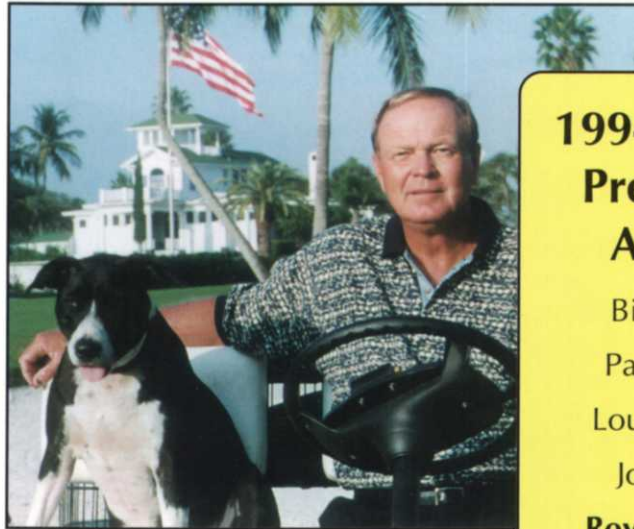


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President's Award



Royce Stewart and Divot at the Gasparilla Inn.

1994 FGCSA Presidents Awards

Bill McKee
Paul Nevers
Lou Oxnevad
Joe Snook
Royce Stewart
Lonnie Stubbs

Royce Stewart —

Leadership by Example

BY JOEL D. JACKSON, CGCS

If you worked on a golf course managed by Royce Stewart, you had a sense of belonging to a family. There is always a closeness, a togetherness of the staff. One of his best traits is his ability to foster a teamwork attitude among co-workers.

How does he do it? Quite simply, he walks the talk. Royce is the epitome of leading by example. As Jack Harrell, Sr. of Harrell's, Inc. put it, "Every day, he's always out there stirrin' amongst 'em." Tommy Morrow, former employee and current superintendent at Turtle Creek in Tequesta, adds, "Royce would often eat lunch and take breaks with the crew. He created a comfortable atmosphere of trust that eliminated the possibility of tension."

Tommy continued, "I started in the golf business at the age of 18 or 19 under Royce at the El Conquistador Country Club in Bradenton. I can remember being given a weedeater and a gas can and walking the course trimming as I went. I learned from Royce that being a superintendent was more than growing grass. As I look back on it now, it was the aspect of professionalism that he portrayed by his

actions. I must have recognized that he used a good formula for success, because I find myself working and eating with the crew like he did."

Royce displays another key behavior of a good leader. He shares information. For Tommy, that information changed his career path. "One day, as we were all taking a break together, Royce shared the results of the FGCSA Superintendent Survey with us. I had learned from Royce the value and potential of a career as a superintendent. It was easy to identify that the higher paying jobs were on the lower east coast. So, I chose to pursue my career from the "suncoast" to the "gold coast", but it was only because Royce cared about his people that I was able learn about the possibilities that existed."

Royce is very proud that five of his former employees have succeeded in becoming superintendents. Besides Tommy, there are David Jackson, Gary Mull, Jon Roxburgh, and Clinton Smith that spent time learning the trade from the "old master." Clint had this to say about Royce, "I was there at El Conquistador along with Jon and Gary. Royce

Experience is also a good teacher

took the time to answer questions and teach us about the business. He's the man I learned it all from. He's as fine a gentleman as you will ever want to meet. I just want to thank him for all he's done for me." Staff development is another key skill of a good leader.

Just as these young men had Royce as a mentor, Royce had mentors and counselors along the way. Royce cites his father-in-law, the late Jamie Jackson, and Jack Harrell, Sr. as having the greatest influence in his early development in the golf business. In 1965, he helped Mr. Jackson build and operate the Skyview Lakes Golf Course in Lakeland, Florida. Royce recalled, "I helped build it, install the irrigation, grow it in, maintain it, and work in the pro shop. I wasn't the superintendent, just a jack-of-all-trades. My father-in-law taught me a tremendous amount about golf course management. He is the person most responsible for my becoming a superintendent. He showed me that this profession could lead me to meet many fine people and all the while providing a decent living for my family, financially."

"My other mentor was Jack Harrell, Sr. I have known Jack since I was sixteen years old. He has been a great friend and a tremendous influence on my life personally and professionally. I have always admired his honesty and integrity. He has offered very wise counsel to me for many years." And so it was that when Royce took his first superintendent position at Seminole Lake Country Club in Pinellas County in 1970, he and Jack used to talk turf management when Jack made

Royce Stewart

1965-69 Skyview Lakes Golf Course, Lakeland, FL

1970-77 Seminole Lake CC, Seminole, FL - Superintendent

1977-83 El Conquistador CC, Bradenton, FL - Superintendent

1983-90 Imperial Lakes CC, Lakeland, FL - Superintendent

1990-present Gasparilla Inn, Boca Grande, FL - Superintendent

his calls. There are many of us who still "consult" with Jack, Sr. when we want a honest answer to a question.

Experience is also a good teacher. While time itself is not a benchmark for wisdom, after 28 years in the business, Royce has learned many lessons. I asked him to share one that he has found to be helpful. He said, "For new superintendents, do your job to the best of your ability and your knowledge. If you have a problem, don't be afraid to ask people for help. You can get into much more trouble by moving ahead into something that you really don't understand. People will actually have MORE respect for someone who is honest enough to admit they need help and are bold enough to seek it. I try to let all of our employees know that **THERE ARE NO STUPID QUESTIONS!** Do not hesitate to seek advice."

The great part about being in the position to receive the President's Award is that you've got lots of highlights and memorable moments to recall. Royce

began, "The Gasparilla Inn is a favorite retreat for former President George Bush. He has been here three times as the guest of the owner, Mr. Bayard Sharp, since I've been here. The first time was while he was still President. They flew in on the Presidential helicopter and landed on the 4th and 5th fairways. The helicopters were so heavy they left 6-inch deep indentations in the turf. I guess we can overlook that, considering who it was."

"The security was incredible in advance of the visit and while the President was there. There were even sharpshooters on top of the pro shop. Every morning at 7 a.m., he would jog the perimeter of the course. During his stay, he would spend half the day playing golf and the other half fishing. Mr. Bush was very nice and I was able to have my picture taken with him."

"Another of my fondest memories was during my stay at Seminole Lake C.C. We hosted the LPGA's Orange Blossom Classic three times. The Classic was one the early tournaments for the LPGA. It was a fun experience. And now, I have the pleasure of the great feeling that comes with being associated with the other recipients of the President's Award. I am privileged to be part of this group. It has been a very fast 28 years, 24 of which have been as a Superintendent."

Royce Stewart has left his indelible mark on those who know him best by setting an example worthy of following. He is a man of integrity, who has demonstrated that actions, indeed, speak louder than words.

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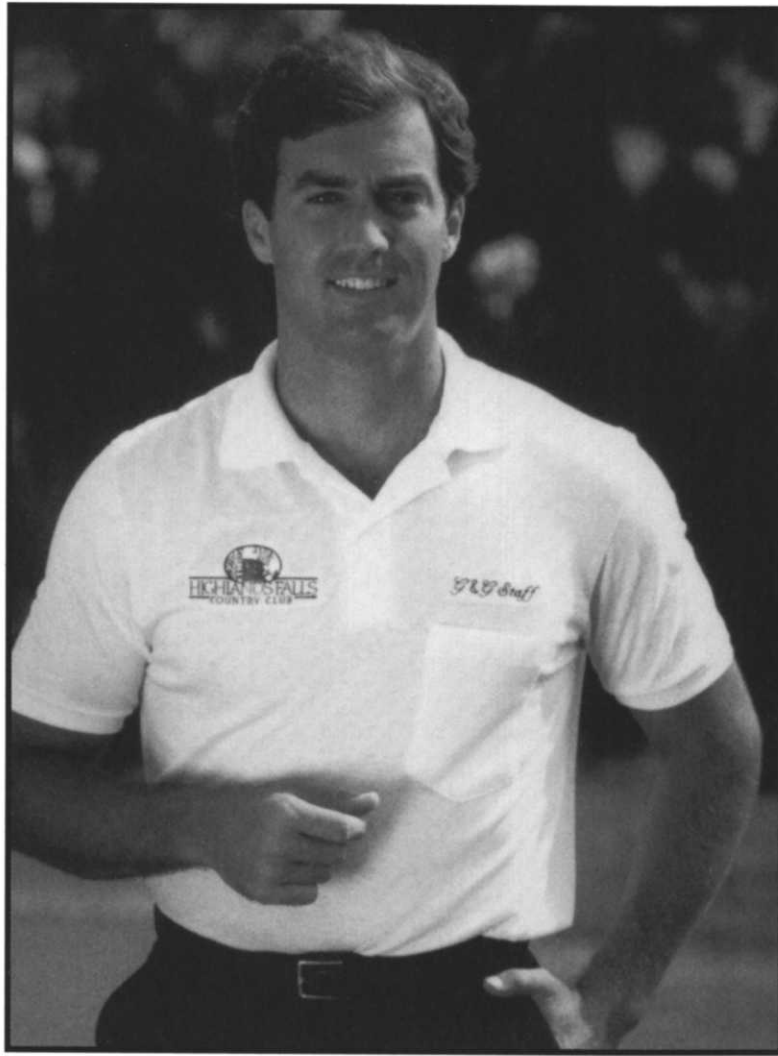
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A photograph of a golf course clubhouse and green with a pond in the foreground. The clubhouse is a large, light-colored building with a dark roof and several palm trees in front of it. A green is visible in the middle ground, and a pond with a wooden retaining wall is in the foreground. The word "Saddlebrook" is written in large, red, serif font across the bottom of the image.

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