

# Call For Articles

This is a call for articles for the 1997 Fall issue of the Florida Green.  
Contact Joel D. Jackson, Editor for more information. Phone: 407-248-1971. Fax: 407-248-1971.  
E-mail: FLGrn@aol.com

## HANDS ON TOPICS:

Renovations and Rebuilding. Submission Deadline: August 15, 1997. Superintendents are invited to submit articles relating to renovation and rebuilding projects. Topics may include: the decision-making process, planning the project, construction techniques, problems and solutions, in-house vs. outside contractors, impacts to the maintenance and members. Slides and photographs encouraged.

## SUPERINTENDENT'S JOURNAL

Personal observations or experiences related to any phase of the turf management profession. Slides and photographs encouraged.

## HEADS UP:

Examples: facilities, personnel, computers, training, etc. Slides and photographs encouraged.

## OPINION:

Exactly what it means! Articles voicing a personal point of view on any topic concerning Florida superintendents. Slides and photographs encouraged.

## RESEARCH:

A section reserved primarily for university and technical authors to report on research results within the turf industry. Slides and photographs encouraged.

## RUB OF THE GREEN:

Articles and anecdotes with a humor-

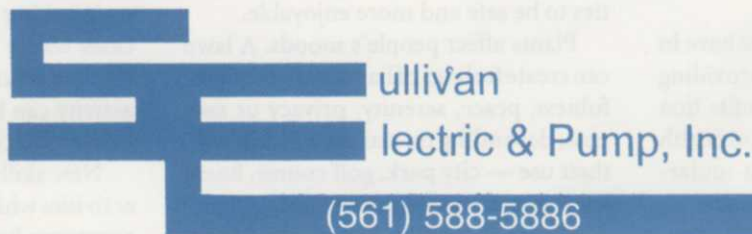
ous twist. Slides and photographs encouraged.

## TURFGRASS TRIVIA:

Facts and Tips that promote the benefits of turfgrass and golf courses. Slides and photographs encouraged.

## STEWARDSHIP:

Superintendents are invited to submit ideas and articles about environmental issues and initiatives at their courses. Slides and photographs encouraged. Contact Shelly Foy, Stewardship Coordinator for more information. Phone: 561-2620. Fax: 561-546-4653. E-mail: 102677.257@compuserve.com



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# Turf Trivia

## Health Benefits From Lawns

"Today almost everyone living in the urbanized centers of the western world feels intuitively a lack of something in life. This is due to the creation of an artificial environment from which nature has been excluded to the greatest possible extent" [Hossein 1968].

Americans have become more health conscious in the 1980s even as urban living abuses to physical and mental health seem to increase daily. Problems have become more complex and more difficult to cope with.

The media regularly features headlines about health hazards, over which individuals have little control. Concerns about water, food and air pollution have mounted to near panic levels at times from the feeling that disaster is about to strike.

It is important to see what we have in nature that is working for us, providing health and environmental benefits that are often overlooked. Survival and health of humankind are based on an understanding of nature and her processes.

Professor Patrick Horsbrough, professor of architecture at the University of Notre Dame, considers the proximity of plants to people as a psychological imperative [Horsbrough 1972].

Seeking the benefits nature provides is necessary for our own well-being.

Keeping a lawn free of insect and disease damage provides a dense turfgrass cover which can yield many health benefits. Use of the new cultivars gives vigor to the turf. When needed, the careful use of pesticides will help to give a thick turfgrass cover which not only will be more beautiful but will help to cut back on noise, modify the temperature, reduce glare and help control allergens, which are some of the environmental stressors which add to daily living discomfort. Plants are not a cure-all to ten-

sions and personal problems, but "involvement with plants can help you cope" [McDonald 1976].

Roadside rest stops, parks, cemeteries and home lawns are all conducive to good health because they provide settings that calm us, create a sense of well-being and help to reduce stress. Over 4000 members of the American Horticulture Society were surveyed as to the benefits of gardening.

Over 60 percent stated the most important satisfaction as "peacefulness and tranquillity." Taking care of a lawn, like other gardening activities, "is a process which includes all the thought, actions and responses which occur from the time a gardening activity is first contemplated, through the planting and growth of seeds, to the enjoyment of the mature plant" [Lewis 1978].

In addition, lawn tending provides the best in walking, bending and lifting exercise that help to promote good health. Out-of-doors gardening is more enjoyable to many than physical fitness workouts indoors. The soft, resilient cushioning attributes of turf allow outside activities to be safe and more enjoyable.

Plants affect people's moods. A lawn can create feelings of happiness, thoughtfulness, peace, serenity, privacy or sadness, depending on our association with their use — city park, golf course, home lawn or memorial park.

Where vegetation grows, child mortality, suicide and energy consumption are less than in places where there are no plants [Schery 1976].

Watching grass grow and respond to the seasons may be for city people a last link to the solace and understanding our vanishing wilderness once gave.

The therapeutic value of gardening has been recognized since ancient Greece. Hippocrates' famous work on *Airs, Waters and Place* recognized "that man's life, in sickness and in health, is bound up

with the forces of nature..." [McHarg 1971].

In the 18th century, mental hospitals in Spain prescribed gardening as therapy [McGrath 1987].

Today Horticultural Therapy has become an important professional specialty in the rehabilitation of the ill, the elderly, the chemically dependent, the handicapped, the incarcerated and school dropouts. "Gardening as a normal activity is used as a tool to achieve treatment goals" [Fearing 1978].

There is a growing body of evidence that personal health is linked with the person's beliefs, inner-space or psychological landscape [Lewis 1978].

A person who takes pride in helping plants to grow, and in nursing plants back to health after they have declined, starts to regain belief in themselves, establishing a level of pride, confidence and self-worth that can help in the healing process.

Those who work on lawns and in nurseries and greenhouses show a high degree of respect for these areas and gain a feeling of accomplishment.

Working with plants has helped in cases where people have been hospitalized for severe depression so this type of activity can be of use in combating normal everyday blues [McDonald 1976].

New skills are learned through these activities which build enthusiasm for life, overcome boredom and ease the mind. The excitement generated by watching and helping plants grow can make patients feel that they have overcome their disability.

A person who has been ill often loses the power to focus on tasks at hand. When a person focuses on the tasks associated with growing plants, their power of concentration is enhanced. This important quality can be transferred to other tasks and increase the individual's productivity [McGrath 1987].

***It is important to see what we have in nature that is working for us, providing health and environmental benefits that are often overlooked.***

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*Still*

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It has been noted that the recovery rate among hospitalized patient when their rooms viewed landscaped areas is often quicker than among patients who have non-landscaped views [Weyerhaeuser 1986].

The restorative qualities of turf and other plants provide a healing experience for people that is real [Stainbrook 1973].

Plants are non-threatening as they respond to care by everyone; they have natural inner rhythms which can teach us lessons about our own lives. In patients who are overcome with a feeling of failure, plants offer paths to success [Autry 1986].

Heightened socialization is noted among nursing home patients who are exposed to plants. Evidence is strong that involvement in lawn care and other gardening activities not only benefits the individual gardener but that it serves to

connect people in a positive way.

Neighborliness increases in places where residents become involved in gardening. A new spirit rises which can impact the community and bring people together [Lewis 1978].

When you take care of lawns and gardens, you also take care of yourself. Plants are a creative life force which can offer many benefits to those who are strong and well, as well as to those who need medical care. We cannot exist on this earth without plant life. As we learn more about plants, we find hope for the future and reassurance in today [McDonald 1976].

"Grasses and people get on truly good together" [Wilson 1961].

*Editors Note: This article concludes the Turfgrass Trivia series.*

## RUB OF THE GREEN

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## Silly laws enter through front door while liberty slips out back

### Guest Column

CHARLEY REESE  
*The Orlando Sentinel*

#### Editor's note

This column in the *Orlando Sentinel* is filled with common sense and is reason enough for everyone to get involved enough to know what is going on in the halls of local, state and national government.

It is why we help fund Legislative Consultant Mike

*Continued on page 108*

What would you think if Congress passed a law making it illegal to have a barbecue in your back yard or to have a fireplace or to drive your car to work.

Congress won't pass such laws — but those things may be outlawed anyway.

How so? Well, it's an interesting lesson in how liberty is taken away through the back door.

All Congress has done is to pass a Clean Air Act. All the law states is that the Environmental Protection Agency can set standards. We are all in favor of clean air, so congressmen can say they're just being good guys.

But the problem is this: If the EPA sets standards, then it must enforce them. And if, as it appears, it sets ridiculous standards not based on sound science, then it may well have to outlaw outdoor barbecues and fireplaces as well as make car-pooling or the use of public transportation mandatory to achieve its standards. The standards almost surely will put a lot of small businesses out of business, not to mention adding an easy 10 percent to everybody's power bills.

When the Endangered Species Act was passed, I thought, well, that's OK. It just means that you can't shoot eagles or other animals that are in danger of extinction. I'm in favor of that.

What I didn't know, of course, was that the government would declare oddball insects and rodents, worms and minnows and obscure plants nobody but a botanist could identify as endangered. I didn't know that the government then would state that, to preserve the species, it must preserve habitat no matter how much economic destruction and injustice it inflicts on people.

The habitat approach is a big difference that has resulted in wholesale injustices and, in effect, the taking of private property without compensation.

If you owned 100 acres of woodland, you

probably wouldn't mind if a woodpecker lived in one of your trees. But then the feds come along and say that woodpecker needs your 100 acres of timber to get three square meals a day, so you can't use the 100 acres in any way that would disturb the woodpecker. You can, of course, continue to pay taxes on it.

Nearly all evil is done in the name of doing good. It's no exaggeration to say that the greatest threats to the liberty of the American people today are environmental laws and the drug war.

Congress needs to revise seriously the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act and the Endangered Species Act. Unfortunately, the environmental extremist industry, heavily financed by federal grants, tax-exempt foundations and big corporations, screams so loudly at any thought of amending these laws that Congress, which is infamous for its cowardice, is scared to touch them.

But unless you want to live an environmental version of George Orwell's Big Brother dictatorship, you'd better find a way to inject a little backbone and common sense into Congress.

What's missing from environmental legislation and enforcement is what is known as the "reasonable person" rule. Environmentalism has become the new McCarthyism. Anyone who dares to suggest some reasonable amendment is branded an enemy of nature.

That doesn't sit too well with me, because I hate an extremist the way Redd Foxx hated midgets. I hope it doesn't sit too well with you. We can, given the limits of population and economic necessity, do a reasonable job of preserving the environment without destroying the economy, trampling on the most basic human rights and destroying what's left of our free society. But to do that, we must wrest the environmental laws and agencies away from the Green Jacobins.

What good are clean air and clean water if the only people left to enjoy them are an impoverished mass of slaves and a few rich masters? Smoke pollutes air, but fanaticism and bad laws destroy freedom.

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Goldie to keep an eye out for us in Tallahassee. It is why you need to be an informed member of the electorate, and it is why you need to send a letter to your representative when proposed legislation isn't backed up by facts.

This column also says to me that laws with compliance, regulatory and penalty language should be written completely before they are passed in concept. That way the "well intentioned" legislators can be held accountable for the full impact of the law, and not leave the voters to the mercy of regulation-writing, nameless bureaucrats

# Letters..

...to the Editor

Joel,

*I have been reading The Florida Green magazine for the last nine months, over three issues. The articles, pictures and editorial commentary by yourself and others are educational, very informative and amusing. I was also very gratified The Florida Green receives the continued and much-deserved accolades as noted by GCSSA. Isn't it marvelous to be the best in your field?*

*Again, kudos to all who work with you to help distribute such an outstanding publication for our industry.*

*Thanks again for publishing the article written on high technology lubrications.*

*Keith VanMeter, The Protector Mfg. Co.*

*I just can't say enough about how impressed I am with the people who organize and support the Envirotron Classic. The tournament is wonderful indication of the*

*great people we have working in Florida's turfglass industry. Without industry support we won't grow.*

*Researchers utilizing the Envirotron are eternally grateful to the Seven Rivers Golf Course Superintendent's Chapter. They had the vision to begin this hugely successful tournament that provides money to purchase equipment for research use today and years to come.*

*As for supporters, Ron Kitchen Sr. and Terry LaGree of Barbaron, Inc. have been two of the finest people I have ever had the pleasure to worked with. I am grateful for their help in building the Envirogreen and their continued support for the Envirotron through their generous donation to the Envirotron Classic.*

*Attending the Envirotron Classic to visit with superintendents and other individuals in the turf industry, while playing on one of Florida's most beautiful golf courses is truly a highlight of my year.*

*Dr. Grady Miller  
Assistant Professor of Turfglass Science  
University of Florida*



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# What I Did Last Summer..

by John L. Mower




Thanks to my very loud , I got up. It was a sunny morning and I had planned to spend some time on the lake catching , but I had a major problem in the yard. The  trees were growing nicely, but the bermudagrass was not. It looked as if we had been watering with a very small ! Summer was slipping () away and the stress was mounting. Obviously, it was a growing problem so I began to  for some in-depth clues.

Then, I had a very  idea. I hurried right to the  and called



, the bermudagrass experts. Their great selection of CERTIFIED bermudagrasses gave me exactly what I needed. They told me about

**Sultan**

brand bermudagrass and that I could have a denser, darker and finer textured . Soon, everything was just . I even had time to hit the lake and catch some . For a great summer, you should call SEEDS WEST, too.

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It is unfortunate that deadlines often occur just before important events transpire. I wish that I could be announcing here the name of the University of Florida's new turf coordinator, but the interviews are taking place several days from now.

Of course, it will all be past tense by the time you are actually reading this. Four outstanding candidates have applied for the position and I am confident we will soon have the leader we have been waiting for to take the University of Florida turf program to the next level.

I've never before been as excited and optimistic about the future of our industry as I am right now. We have more

superintendents, suppliers, and university personnel making significant contributions for the betterment of our industry than we have ever had in the past. I'd like to highlight a few of these with the remainder of this column.

The first "Attaboy" goes to Darren Davis of the Olde Florida Club for the outstanding video he has created showcasing golf courses' positive environmental contributions and the superintendents' role in it.

Those of us attending the FGCSA Board meeting in Naples were treated to a preview of the video, and it is simply first rate! Some of the wildlife footage is incredible! The uses of this video are limitless, and every superintendent will have a copy. Great job, Darren!

Darren is also building a test green at his golf course to compare four putting green quality bermudagrasses, which will generate information that will help all of us.

One of the grasses that Darren will be testing is 'Floradwarf', developed by Dr. Al Dudeck at the University of Florida. Dr. Dudeck recently published an excellent technical bulletin called "Floradwarf Bermudagrass" which he is sending out to all members of FGCSA.

This is the kind of information, along with field testing, that our industry needs to be able to make informed choices. I've always held the

belief that there is not, and never will be, one "supergrass" to meet everyone's needs in the Sunbelt.

A public course in North Florida that overseeds and plays 100,000 rounds a year may be better served by a different grass than a private course in South Florida that never overseeds and plays 20,000 rounds a year.

Field trials will help individual superintendents make better decisions.

How about the last few issues of the "Florida Turf Digest"? Through the efforts of Scott Wahlin, Irv Betrock, John Cisar, and others, the publication has evolved into an extremely useful and attractive magazine.

It is particularly gratifying to me because I've always felt that the FTGA magazine should focus on the turfgrass research that the FTGA funds, and that it should be written in easy-to-understand style and language so anyone can read and comprehend the scope and results of research projects.

Want to know about porous ceramics for greens construction? Or the usefulness of the choker layer in USGA spec greens? Or bacteria that can control Sting nematodes? Check out the "Turf Digest." There really is more turf research going on at the University of Florida than any of us knew about, and publishing it in the FTGA magazine is the best way to inform the industry.

What's that? You're not a member of FTGA and don't get this publication? Borrow a copy from one of your neighbors, then call me and tell me why you still don't think it benefits you to belong to the Florida Turfgrass Association.

Whether you acknowledge it or not, if you are working in the turf industry in Florida, you are getting benefits from the activities of the Florida Turfgrass Association. Why can't you join and add your financial and political support to an organization that works for your best interests?

Great things are happening due to dedicated individuals, but we cannot move forward without a larger membership base! While on the subject of FTGA, I'd like to publicly acknowledge the fantastic job that Roy Bates has been doing as this year's President of FTGA. Two "Attaboys" are due Roy!

Right in the middle of writing this article, I

## Heading in the Right Direction

### Mark My Words



Mark Jarrell, CGCS  
Assistant Editor