

ing hundreds of thousands of people involved by giving individually is much more powerful than just a club writing a check from a budget line item.

The current format of the computer-generated presentations has Benham introducing the program with a little background on the FTGA and then he introduces Dr. Nell who talks about the UF/IFAS Florida First role, mission, accomplishments and current programs. Then Benham brings it home with accounts of his experience as a former club president and green chairman and the success of Michigan's program and why it was so important and effective.

At the conclusion of the presentation and question and answer period everyone is given a folder with a hard copy of the basic information and how to participate.

The clubs that do participate will be sent an update twice a year to post on the club's bulletin board or include in their newsletters to keep the contributors ad-

vised of the various projects under way.

Three very positive things happened at Boca Lago that day. First Benham and Nell were invited to make their presentation to the monthly meeting of Palm Beach Green Chairmen the following month. Second, one club official gave Benham three names of people he thought would be interested in hearing the program. Third, we finally began to take our message to the people instead of holding another choir practice.

It may be too soon for hearty congratulations, but we did get some great news that raises our hopes for the program. While everyone was in New Orleans for the GCSAA Conference and Show, Cheryl Stocklin of the FTGA Office sent Don Benham a two line fax. The general manager of the Boca Lago CC called to say that 1100 members of the club had pledged to the Golfers For A Better Environment Program. Since returning home, Don has written follow-up letters to the other attending clubs

and has had several follow up calls inviting him to meet with clubs' boards of directors.

This is just the first step in a journey of a thousand miles, but it is definitely a good beginning. Congratulations and thanks to Don Benham and Dr. Nell for their time and energy devoted to this fund raising project that may soon become a vital sustaining part of our industry.

FTGA Seminars

At last count FTGA's Regional Seminar Series held in January and February reached out to 1,264 attendees around the state, a 2 percent increase over last year's figures. This year also saw FTGA Vice President Erica Santella inviting members of the Nitrate Remediation Working Group to attend to hear Dr. John Cisar's presentation on nitrate leaching results from the IFAS Florida Yards and Neighborhoods Program.

JOEL JACKSON, CGCS

FGCSA Director of Communications

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NEWS RELEASE OF NOTE

Phosphorous Acid OK'd as Plant Nutrient Material

The Florida Department of Agricultural and Consumer Services has recognized a new plant nutrient in the form of phosphorous acid.

Since 1995 the Department investigated claims from the agrochemical industry that phosphorous acid may actually be used as a fungicide against Pythium and Phytophthora sp. and petitioned the Department not to recognize phosphorous acid as a nutrient. But after an exhausting five-year study and review, the Department agreed phosphorous acid meets the definition as a plant nutrient and approved its use as such.

The scientific journal, *HortTechnology*, will publish in the near future a peer-reviewed article that quantifies and demonstrates a beneficial plant growth response attributable to phosphorous acid.

Not to be confused with traditional

phosphoric acid, phosphorous acid is more water-soluble and can be readily taken up by the plant when applied as a foliar spray. Phosphorous acid is used at far less dosage rates than phosphoric acid and is recommended for supplemental use when there are high demands for phosphorous, such as, new root and shoot growth, flowering and fruit production.

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Editor's Note: Phyto-Fos is the trade name of the new phosphorous acid product available locally. For more information contact Ted Owen, Upstart Products, at 800-203-5629.

NEWS RELEASE OF NOTE

Lease Program Allows 100% Irrigation System Financing

Golf courses can finance the entire cost of Flowtronex PSI's pumping

systems, including the cost of freight and installation, thanks to a unique leasing program just unveiled by the company.

Flowtronex PSI's preferred lease rate schedules provide flexible monthly payments for pumping systems. Not only do these plans make Flowtronex systems affordable for almost any course, they preserve working capital and conserve existing bank lines to boost profits and stretch dollars, says Flowtronex PSI Marketing Director Willie Slingerland.

"Lease payments also can be written off as business expense," says Slingerland. "And the additional profits realized by better investments can cover monthly lease payments. That's a win-win situation."

Slingerland said some of the advantages of leasing that golf courses should consider are:

Conserving existing bank lines—Leasing frees up bank credit for working capital, discount purchases, or to use in short-term emergencies.

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profits –Companies can earn more by investing in inventory or other gainful opportunities, rather than tying up hard-earned profits in long-term equipment purchases which will depreciate in value.

Affordability – Golf courses can acquire new equipment conveniently and affordably, when budget restrictions might not allow for purchasing the equipment

“We can finance almost any course’s equipment needs with flexible lease packages that run anywhere from 24 to 60 months,” Slingerland says. “And a simple credit application is all that is required to set up an Express Lease for systems costing up to \$100,000. We can finance systems up to \$1 million with a more extensive financial report. Approval usually takes only a day or two.”

Flowtronex PSI can structure the lease/finance plan to fit any course’s need, such as providing for deferred payments for courses under construction and not yet earning income, and skip payments for courses closed during winter months.

With more than 8,000 golf course installations worldwide, Flowtronex PSI is the world’s largest manufacturer of water pumping systems for the turfgrass industry.

WILLIE SLINGERLAND

Flowtronex PSI Communications

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Editor’s note: As a rule, we do not run news releases on new products, companies or personnel. Exceptions are made from time to time solely at the editor’s discretion when new technology or services are announced that offer new turf management options to our readers.

FLORIDA AUTOMATED WEATHER NETWORK

Current Weather Data

Available From IFAS

The Florida Automated Weather Network (FAWN) is composed of 16 automated weather stations located at UF/IFAS Research and Education Cen-

ters and Extension Service Sites in Central and South Florida.

Its mission is “to provide accurate and timely weather data to a wide variety of users.” Because of the importance of weather in agriculture, every effort is made to have data collected and reported every 15 minutes.

Each site collects the temperature at 2, 6, and 30 feet, a soil temperature at 4 inches, wind speed and direction at 30 feet, relative humidity, rainfall, barometric pressure and radiation. Leaf wetness will be added soon. The information is transmitted to Gainesville where it is then distributed through the Internet (web site <http://fawn.ifas.ufl.edu>—There is no “www” in the address) and by way of a voice data system (see below).

Weather information is essential for agriculture and natural resource management. Although the initial motivation for the development of FAWN was a real-time data collection and delivery system for agriculture, interest and re-



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quests of the data have come from a wide variety of users. Water management districts, emergency service agencies, National Weather Service, private forecasters and private industry such as construction, service, manufacturing, etc. are interested in the data.

Growers are encouraged to use FAWN and provide comments so the system can be improved. Plans call for expansion to North Florida, improving the database, linking models such as chemical movements in soils, minimum temperature predictions, DISC (decision information system for citrus), and others.

FAWN INTERACTIVE VOICE SYSTEM	
LOCATION, COUNTY	STATION NUMBER
Gainesville, Alachua	10
Pierson, Volusia	11
Oklawaha, Marion	12
Umatilla, Lake	13
Tavares, Lake	14
Okahumpka, Lake	15
Apopka, Orange	16
Avalon, Orange	17
Lake Alfred, Polk	18
Dover, Hillsborough	19
Ft. Pierce, St. Lucie	20
Ona, Hardee	21
Bradenton, Manatee	22
Belle Glade, Palm Beach	23
Immokalee, Collier	24
Homestead, Dade	25

Editor's note: I thought this UF/IFAS based weather network may be of interest as golf courses and urban areas

spread. You can cross check the data with what you are getting on DTN or the weather.com sites. Of course for those not yet online, the voice response system might be useful as you flirt with Mother Nature!

Interactive Voice Response System

When you travel or you are away from your computer, you can access the FAWN network data through a conventional telephone. To use the FAWN Dial-up system:

- (1) Dial (352) 846-3100
- (2) Enter a two digit weather station number shown in the table below, or a selected location.
- (3) Listen to the latest weather from FAWN.

NECROLOGY

Everglades Pioneer Paul Frank Dies

Paul Frank, a pioneer golf course developer, manager, superintendent and turfgrass researcher, died March 5 after a long bout with cancer. He was 66.

Except for three years in college (Florida Southern and UF) and two years in Germany with the U.S. Army, Frank spent his entire life in Collier County, where he and his father built the county's second golf course — Hole-in-the-Wall — on their 420-acre ranch in 1958. Fifteen years later, they built Wilderness Country Club where Frank served as superintendent and general manager.

One of the founders of the Everglades GCSA, Frank was a 40-year member of



Janlark 1992 File Photo

the GCSAA and a former director of the FTGA. He also served on the Collier County Planning Board for more than a decade and as a director of Barnett Bank for nearly two.

Frank is credited by many to have "discovered" ultradwarf bermudagrasses in the early 1980s when he propagated a single stolon of a dark, dense mutant of Tifton 328 bermudagrass from his 11th green into a 300-square-foot plot. In 1984, he planted the 11th green with his new grass, dubbed PF-11 in honor of its birthplace.

"Paul's greens were frequently used by scientists at the University of Florida for nematode research and other projects," noted Dr. Phil Busey, UF turfgrass breeder at the Fort Lauderdale Research and Education Center.

"He was a pioneer in new grasses and other technology. One of Paul's grasses, PF-11 ultradwarf bermudagrass, has performed the best in several tests... he appears to have been the first to discover and first to adopt such cultivars."

"The golf turf industry will miss the vision and wisdom of this man of old Florida pioneer stock who asked little and gave much to his profession," said Joel Jackson, FGCSA communications director.

Frank is survived by a son, Paul M. Frank, and two daughters, Tamara Frank and Daria Webber.

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St. Johns County Fertilizer Ordinance Gets Statewide Notice

On Jan. 25, the St. Johns County Commissioners passed an ordinance regulating the use of nitrogen based fertilizers. While there are good reasons for the county to take action — regional drainage, residential flood control concerns and general environmental health — the action by the county has raised more questions than it has answered.

Only two golf courses are involved in the region covered by the ordinance and both superintendents, Frank Sbarro and Jay Reister were invited to sit in on the workshops held to discuss the ordinance. Both superintendents felt that with the exceptions granted for new sod and turf repairs, and permitted use of state-inspected fertigation systems, they could live within the intent of the law.

In the big picture, however, others in the turf industry are feeling left out of the process and feel the impact to lawn care and pest control is not tenable as the ordinance is currently written. After presenting their concerns at a Feb. 15 meeting, the St. Johns

County commissioners agreed to sit down with representatives of science and industry to discuss possible modifications to the ordinance and hear more facts about the fate of fertilizers in the environment.

True professionals in the green industry and agriculture understand the need for good responsible environmental stewardship, and will always work towards that end. The unspoken concern, however, is for the potential of a rash of local, specialized ordinances popping up all over the political landscape as government bodies try to apply quick fixes to complex environmental problems without due diligence.

The major pertinent sections of the ordinance are presented here for your information. In the Opinion Section there are comments by Dr. Phil Busey, Erica Santella, FTGA vice president and Tom Stone, CGCS, NatureGolf, which address this ordinance and some of the issues raised.



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ORDINANCE NO. 2000 - 6

An ordinance of the County of St. Johns, State of Florida, providing for regulation of golf course, lawn and turf fertilization; providing for geographic jurisdiction; providing for enforcement and penalties; providing for a public nuisance declaration; providing for exceptions; providing for a severance clause; and setting an effective date.

WHEREAS, St. Johns County, Florida (the County) has identified the Guana Marsh Basin as a critical area for drainage, and for the avoidance of nitrogen leaching; and

WHEREAS, nitrogen is an essential element for plant growth and is commonly used in various forms as a fertilizer for lawn and turf application; and

WHEREAS, improper use (including overuse) of fertilizers containing nitrogen cause significant leaching of nitrogen, with the effect of causing overgrowth of vegetation in natural and artificial drainage water-courses and basins; and

WHEREAS, such overgrowth of vegetation in natural and artificial drainage water-

courses and basins has the effect of degrading drainage capabilities causing (1) increased flooding of developed areas, and (2) damage to the natural environment; and

WHEREAS, there is a need by the County to regulate the use of nitrogen-based fertilizers to minimize the damage caused by the improper use (including overuse) of said fertilizers; and

WHEREAS, said regulation would properly act to protect the health, safety, property and welfare of the citizens of and visitors to the County, by establishing standards for use of nitrogen-based fertilizers; and

WHEREAS, the County recognizes that regulating the amount of fertilizer used in any one application or cumulatively at any given property would be unduly cumbersome and virtually unenforceable; and

WHEREAS, the County recognizes that regulating fertilizers by the type of fertilizer would be relatively more effective than regulating by amount; and

WHEREAS, it has been recognized by soil science professionals that use of slow

release (as opposed to quick release) nitrogen sources acts to minimize harmful nitrate leaching; and...

G. Quick Release Nitrogen shall mean any product containing:

- (1) Ammonium Nitrate
- (2) Ammonium Sulfate
- (3) Diammonium Phosphate
- (4) Potassium Nitrate
- (5) Urea (not in the form of Slow Release Nitrogen)

(6) Monoammonium Phosphate
(7) Others as may be designated in writing by the County Administrator or his designee.

G. Slow Release Nitrogen shall mean nitrogen prepared by industry standards in the form of:

- (1) Isobutylidene diurea (IBDU)
- (2) Resin, Polymer, or Sulphur coated urea
- (3) Sewage sludge
- (4) Urea formaldehyde
- (5) Others as may be designated in writing by the County Administrator or his designee.

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H. Turf shall mean any Lawn or other grasses or area intended to be used as or for a Lawn.

Section IV. General Provisions

A. During the Critical Time Period (May 15-Oct. 31 of each year), no person shall fertilize using quick-release nitrogen in the Guana Marsh Basin.

B. Slow-release nitrogen is recognized as the preferred method of adding nitro-

gen to lawns.

Section V. Exceptions: The General Provisions contained in Section IV above shall be waived only under the following circumstances:

A. For newly sodded Lawns (except when using sod plugs or sprigs), Section IV above shall be waived for 30 days after installation of the new sod is substantially completed. Said waiver shall only apply to

the area the new sod is placed on the Lawn, and said waiver shall not extend in any case more than 35 days per calendar year on any given Lawn.

B. On Damaged Turf (Damage equal or greater than 30% loss of Turf canopy), Section IV above shall be waived for 60 days on the areas of said Damage.

C. When sod plugs or sod sprigs are used to build, or rebuild a Lawn that has lost more than 30 percent of its Turf canopy, Section IV above shall be waived for 60 days after planting of such plugs or sprigs. Said waiver shall only apply to the Lawn areas containing the new sod plugs or sprigs.

D. Section IV above shall be waived on golf course putting surfaces (greens).

E. Section IV above shall be waived for nitrogen applied through State of Florida certified fertigation systems which are supervised on a daily basis.

Section VI. Enforcement and Penalties:

A. Any person violating any of the provisions of this Ordinance shall be prosecuted in the same manner as misdemeanors are prosecuted and shall, upon conviction, be punished for each offense by a fine not to exceed \$500.00 or by imprisonment in the County jail not to exceed sixty (60) days, or both such fine and imprisonment. Each day that an offense or violation of this Ordinance continues shall be deemed a separate offense.

C. The County Administrator, or his designee, is authorized to conduct an administrative search of any vehicle, container, or other equipment used or to be used for Fertilizing, when such vehicle, container, or other equipment is in St. Johns County. Said administrative search may include the taking of a sample of any solid or fluid intended for use as a fertilizer, and shall be limited in scope to determine what type(s) of Fertilizer chemicals are present. Any Person equipped and with the intent to provide Fertilizing for compensation, shall be deemed to have consented to the Administrative Search described in this paragraph while in St. Johns County.

Section VIII. Farm and Agricultural Uses: Nothing in this Ordinance shall be construed to limit fertilizing for farm and commercial agricultural uses.

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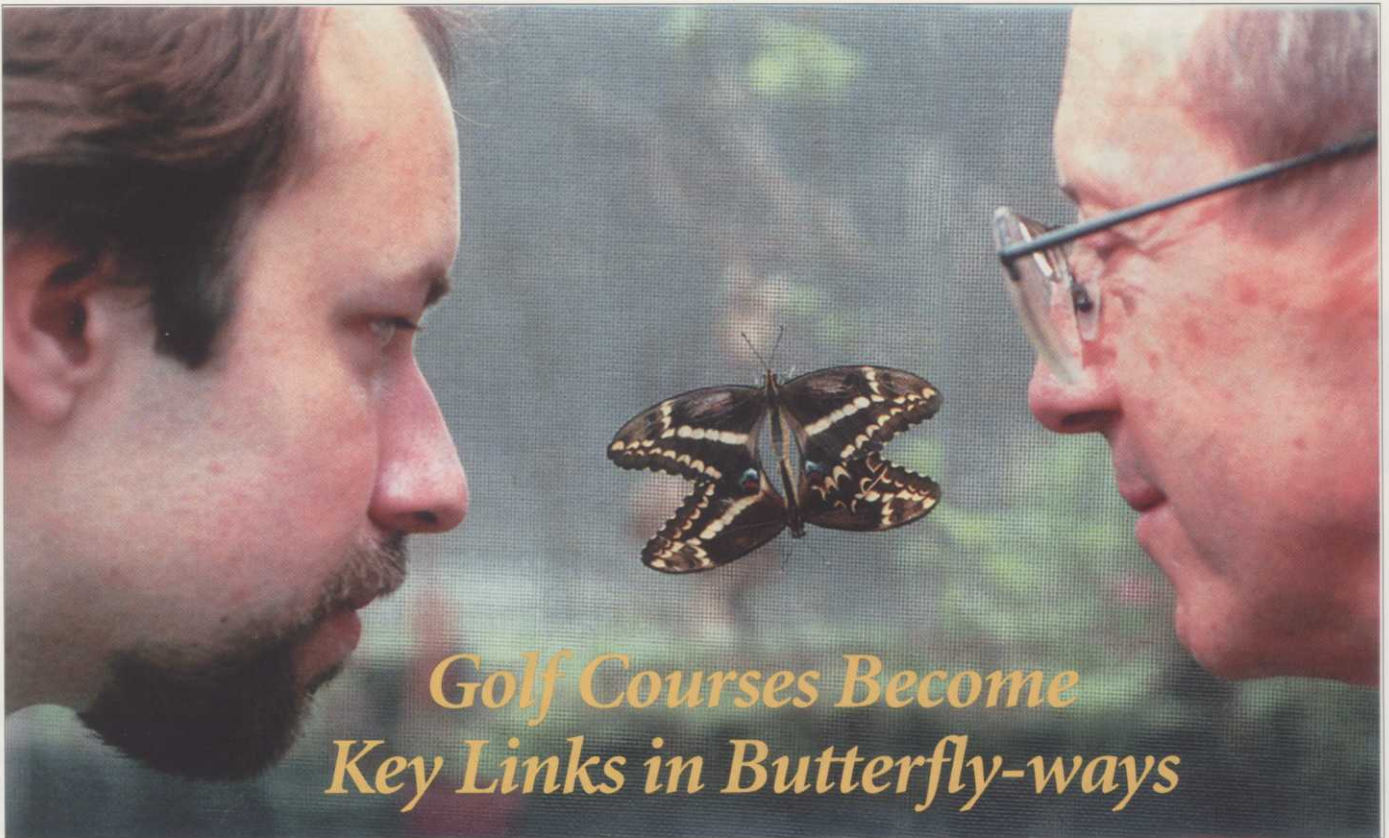
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Golf Courses Become Key Links in Butterfly-ways

Jaret Daniels, left, a UF doctoral student in 1996 who headed UF's captive propagation program, and Dr. Thomas Emmel watch a pair of Schaus' Swallowtail butterflies mating in a butterfly house on the Gainesville campus. Two days later Daniels and Emmel joined Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt at Charles Deering State Park to release some butterflies. Photo by Milt Putnam, UF/IFAS.

USGA Grant Helps Save Species from Extinction

University of Florida researchers have found an unusual ally in their efforts to recreate rare native habitat for an endangered butterfly in the Florida Keys: golf courses.

The UF zoology and entomology researchers are working with two large private golf courses to recreate large areas of tropical hardwood hammock in the course

roughs to provide a corridor between breeding colonies for rare Schaus Swallowtail butterflies. The work, already showing signs of success, represents one more chapter in the ongoing comeback of the butterfly from the brink of extinction less than two decades ago.

"We realized that to really get the butterfly in a self-sufficient state, it has to be

able to move back and forth between colonies as it could 20, 30 or 50 years ago," said Tom Emmel, a UF professor of zoology and nematology. "Private golf courses own some of the largest tracts of land in the Keys, so they were the obvious choice."

The project is funded in part through a three-year \$55,000 grant from the U. S. Golf Association Foundation as part of a program called "Wildlife Links." Operated jointly with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, a nonprofit conservation organization, the program seeks to establish corridors for a range of wildlife on the nation's golf courses.

"We strongly believe there's a good compromise between having a golf course and protecting a lot of the wildlife habitat that's out there," said Michael McKenna, research director for the USGA Green Section. "Existing golf courses have a lot of open space, and if something can be done for the Schaus or other species, why not do it?"

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