



Florida Golf Central Magazine recognizes Disney Superintendent Bob Karnes for his environmental leadership with new birdhouse for his course. Photo by Joel Jackson.



Scott Whorral (left) from The Club at Mediterra in North Naples accepts the Environmental Leaders in Golf Award for the top National Private Club from GCSAA President Mike Wallace, CGCS. Photo by Joel Jackson.

for being the top-ranked National Private Club in the Environmental Leaders in Golf Award given by GCSAA and *Golf Digest* magazine.

We received a nice thank-you letter from the Children's Home Society for our donations of cash and toys. They informed us that we helped to

feed two families Christmas dinner and the toys valued at \$2,500 made for a Merry Christmas morning for a lot of kids. We are hoping for a big

turnout at our EGCSA Spring Symposium to be held April 25. We have lined up speakers like Dr. Fred Yelverton, Dr. Frank Rossi, Dr. Joe

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*The Ridge Invitational Committee, from left: Tom Barnett, Jeff Brown, Clay Marshall, Steve Ciardullo, Chris Clarke, Roy Wilshire and Mark Hopkins. Photo by Joel Jackson*

Dipoala, Frank Thomas/ EPA Water Shed Coordinator, and Lake City's John Piersol for a full day of education.

**North Florida**

We had a great turnout at the Duval County Extension Office for the FTGA Regional Seminar in January. At our March meeting we will have a presentation by Carolyn Silvers from the St. Johns River Water Management

District on water issues as we seek to stay current and informed on our number-one resource. We are also busy signing up volunteers to act as TV spotters for NBC Sports for the TPC Championship in late March. On April 7 the Jacksonville G&CC will host the Mike Richards Memorial Tournament. This event raises funds for scholarships for turf students in the memory of two north Florida golf industry leaders - Mike Richards and Alan Maccurach.

**Palm Beach**

The Palm Beach-heavy FGCSA Golf Team No. 1 came in second at the GCSAA Golf Championship in February at Hilton Head, S.C. Congratulations to Mark Henderson, Steve Bernard and Tyler Warner for their fine play. Speaking of golf, the PGA Tour's Honda Classic moves to Palm Beach's Mirasol Club the second week in March and our chapter will once again be working as TV spotters and scorers for NBC Sports. It's a fun way to raise funds and to see the tournament from inside the ropes. We have two other big events coming up in April and June: the Chip Fowkes Memorial at Bocaire G.C. will raise funds for Chip's daughter's college education and the Future of Golf at The Falls C.C. will benefit turf research and junior golf programs.

John Foy, director of the USGA Florida Region Green Section wrote an article on the tough winter weather's effects on area golf courses that was printed in the Palm Beach Post's sports section. Thanks John. The golfers don't always believe us. They have to hear it from an outside

expert! We bid a sad but fond farewell to our President Tyler Warner. Tyler had to turn his gavel over to Pete Powell as he stepped down from his superintendent's job at Addison Reserve to take a position with Golf Ventures.

**Ridge**

FGCSA Director of Communications Joel Jackson had to turn his 10-minute government relations update into a full presentation when our speaker failed to show up at our January meeting at the Lake Region Yacht & Country Club. With questions and input from the audience the session turned into a good discussion of the regulatory and public relations issues facing our industry.

March 3 marked an even dozen Ridge Invitational tournaments that Roy Wilshire, CGCS and the Grasslands C.C. will have hosted. Thanks Roy for helping us raise needed funding for turf research and the local charities we support. This year's champion was Brian Montillaro from The Hamptons C.C. in Auburndale. Brian, a 4 handicapper, had a hot putter as he fired an even-par 72 to win the event.

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**CHAPTERS**

Central Florida, Calusa, Coastal Plains,  
North Florida,  
Palm Beach, Seven Rivers, Treasure Coast,  
West Coast

**Seven Rivers**

Our leading turf research fundraiser gets a new name and a new Championship Sponsor April 21. In memory of our friend and mentor, Jeff Hayden, the 11-year-old event becomes The Jeff Hayden Envirotron Classic, and Golf Ventures, Inc. becomes the Championship Sponsor. We can't say enough thank-you's to Barbaron, Inc. and the Kitchen family for their leadership and generous financial support, which set a new benchmark for corporate funding for turf research in Florida.

At our February chapter meeting, Perry Haley from Harrell's talked about soil aerification and in March at Haile Plantation in Gainesville we will have a health-care expert give us a presentation on wellness management.

**South Florida**

We'd like to congratulate Joe Pantaleo, Indian Creek C.C. and our external vice president and the new FGCSA secretary-treasurer on his great victory as the 2003 GCSAA Golf Championship winner. Joe shot a final-round 74 on the always-tough Harbour Town course to take home



*Brian Montillaro wins the 2003 Ridge Invitational. Photo by Joel Jackson.*

the USGA Traveling Trophy. We have golf on our minds as the PGA Tour rolls into town the first week of March at the (Ford) Doral Open and begins its Florida swing. At our January meeting at Key Biscayne, we were treated to a presentation by Champions Tour (Senior PGA) player Christy O'Connor on life on the Tour and course set-up for a PGA event. O'Connor has won 12 European Senior Tournaments, two British Senior Opens, and two US Senior



*FGCSA Secretary/ Treasurer Joe Pantaleo from the Indian Creek C.C. in Miami is all smiles as he accepts the USGA Traveling Trophy from USGA's Danny Yates for winning the 2003 GCSAA Golf Championship. Photo by Bruce Mathews.*



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## Cantwell Trust Fund Raiser a Big Success

On Nov. 11, members of the Everglades and Calusa Golf Course Superintendents Associations unexpectedly lost a longtime friend and colleague, Mike Cantwell.

To pay our respects to Mike and lend support to his wife Gwen and three children - Jessup 17, Alex 8, and Tracy 7 - the two chapters co-hosted a benefit golf tournament on Jan. 17 at Miromar Lakes Golf and Beach Club and the golf course at Grandezza.

Both golf courses and the local vendors, colleagues and other friends of Mike's rose to the occasion to make the event a huge success. In addition to having a sellout crowd of 250 golfers for the scramble event, paying \$100 a person, vendors were very generous in their support. Hole sponsorships were sold for \$200 each, and a variety of terrific silent auction items and raffle prizes were donated. Items ranged from rounds of golf at a number of the area clubs, golf equipment, vacations and even autographed sports memorabilia.

Both for enjoyment of those who participated and as a fund-raiser, the event was a huge success. The hole sponsorships raised \$12,400; the raffle generated \$4,660 and the silent auction added another \$7,080 to the total. In all, the event raised \$50,000, which was deposited into a trust fund that was established for the future needs of Mike's children.

events. We also got to break in Key Biscayne's brand new TiffEagle greens.

### Suncoast

We held a joint Suncoast GCSA and Equipment Technicians Association meeting Jan. 27 at Jim Svabek's Bradenton C.C.. This superintendent/supplier event was conceived to show our appreciation for all the suppliers who faithfully support our events and programs throughout the year. Suppliers are invited to set up displays on the driving range and bring up to three pieces for demonstrations. Lunch included the now-infamous "Belly Busters" hot dogs and, after golf, we headed down to the maintenance facility

The Grandezza winning team was the twosome of Steve Simpson and Tim Denton and the foursome that took top honors at Miromar were Charlie McMullen, Lee Crosby, Kenyon Kyle and Rob Buege. Each winner was presented a plaque that was donated by the Trophy Case of Fort Myers.

It would be impossible to mention all of those who made the event a success but a special thanks is owed to the management and staff of both golf courses who were gracious enough to donate their facilities, and to Wiley McCall of Emerald Island turf who once again donated his time and money to prepare his famous barbecue dinner for all in attendance. The boards of both associations worked diligently on the event but a special debt of gratitude is owed to Jim Leiseberg, president of the Everglades GCSA and to Samantha Kriesch, executive secretary of the Calusa GCSA, who worked so hard to make the event a huge success.

Contact information for those friends of Mike who may not have been able to contribute previously: The name of the trust fund is Michael J. Cantwell Memorial Trust Fund. The bank is Union Bank & Trust Co., 121 South 13th, Lincoln, NE 68505

The trustee for the fund is Kathy Lahman, 402-476-8681. The branch manager for the bank is Joan Zieger, 402-0323-1670.

*Darren Davis*

for Andy, Mel and Bob's Famous Barbeque, which made the day complete and kicked off our 2003 season in fine form.

We will be hosting our annual Suncoast Scramble at Misty Creek C.C. on March 18. This superintendent/golf pro/club official/supplier team event is the epitome of cooperation across all areas of the golf business. Our President John VanVranken is now hanging his GCS shingle at the Stoney Brook at Heritage Harbor G.C. in Bradenton.

### Treasure Coast

Kevin Downing organized a "Trends in the Club Industry" meeting in February with guest speakers from the Club Managers Association,

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The newly enacted FGCSA Benevolent Fund got a great start with over \$3,000 in donations at the FGCSA Reception in Atlanta. Photo by Joel Jackson.

USGA, and National Golf Foundation, and McGladrey Pullen, a CPA firm. It was an informative session for key decision-makers at golf clubs. The TCGCSA board also voted to donate funds to support the South Fork High School turf program and to donate \$5,000 to the Florida Turfgrass Research Foundation. The board also approved a \$5,000 donation to the Challenger School for disabled children to help with the cost of

landscaping their new playground and pavilion. TCGCSA member Kevin Downing will consult on the design and plant material for this project.

**West Coast**

We had positive feedback from our first Chapter Vendor Day meeting at the USF golf course hosted by superintendent Mike Wilcox in December. We are looking forward

making this an annual event. Our education committee has made a commitment to providing education with pesticide and GCSAA CEUs/points to satisfy pesticide-license renewal and PDI/CGCS requirements. With that in mind, Dr. Lawrence Datnoff, plant pathologist with UF/IFAS spoke about pythium blight on overseeded turf at our January meeting at Crescent Oaks

GC. At our February meeting at Gerald Marquart's Largo G.C., Syngenta's Kevin Wasalewski and Steve Kammerer made a presentation on turf and ornamental diseases with the emphasis on ornamentals. Both presentations earned pesticide CEUs. The meeting at Largo is an annual tradition as Gerald always puts on a fun two-man scramble event at his nine-hole executive course. In March, at Jim Sharpe's Summerfield G.C., the International Sports Turf Research Institute will make a presentation on the properties and physics of soil including aeration and drainage issues.

**Florida GCSA**

The association is very proud of the fact that four FGCSA members won four top national awards at the 2003 GCSAA Conference. They have been mentioned in the various chapter sections above. President David Court, CGCS will be leading a delegation to Tallahassee to meet with key legislators as part of our commitment to reaching out and establishing relationships with lawmakers, media and the general public. Mike Goldie will be arranging appointments with Senate and House leaders to discuss issues facing the golf industry. In a move to encourage new members, the board approved prorating FGCSA dues for the rest of the fiscal year. The FGCSA Reception in Atlanta lived up to its reputation for good food and good fellowship. Marie Roberts estimates that nearly 600 people attended the event. The reception was also the debut of the FGCSA Benevolent Fund which took in more than \$3,000 in donations. The fund was made part of the FGCSA budget in response to the overwhelming need to support members' families in the wake of the unprecedented number of deaths of FGCSA members last year.

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 *Jake Gaither GC*  
*Hole Number 3*  
*Photo by Daniel Zelazek*





TEE TIME IN TALLAHASSEE

# Twenty-Seven Holes of Municipal Golf

*By Joel Jackson, CGCS*

**Location. Location. Location.**

Tallahassee is an island of golf opportunity located at the point where the state's peninsula takes a left turn into the panhandle. With the exception of the state capitol, which has about a baker's dozen courses in the metropolitan area, golf courses are few and far between from the Gainesville/Lake City area until you get to Panama City and points west.

The good news about operating a golf course in northwest Florida is that there haven't been any watering restrictions during the last drought period. The bad news is that just about every weather front passes through the area so there can be too much cloudy weather and plenty of cold snaps. But Mother Nature is fickle everywhere. FGCSA Coastal Plains Chapter President Jeff Heggen told me during my interview visit in January, "Today marks the third frost this week. Last winter we only had two all year."

Heggen oversees the maintenance on the two city golf courses; the 18-hole Hilaman Park G.C. and the 9-hole Jake Gaither G.C. Both are located on some hilly terrain which provides great views of the course and interesting golf shots. The courses also serve as part of the city's flood control system for storm-water runoff and retention. During unusually heavy rain events, several holes on the Gaither course can become impassable and the course has to shut down. We'll talk about water-quality issues a little later.



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The City of Tallahassee has been in the municipal golf business since 1956 with the opening of the Jake Gaither Golf Course, which was named in honor of the legendary head football coach of the Florida A & M Rattlers. In 1981, the city purchased the Winewood G.C., also in south Tallahassee, and began making affordable and accessible golf a serious part of its parks and recreation program.

Traditional golf course business and turf management practices don't always easily blend into the policies and procedures and perceptions of how government must conduct its business when it operates with taxpayer's money. Even job titles and descriptions can become awkward when trying to compare apples with apples.

For example, in the golf world Jeff Heggen would be called a golf course superintendent, but in city terminology he's the supervisor of golf maintenance. Jeff's boss Bill Zimmer would be considered a director of golf over multi-course facilities, but in government-speak, he's called the superintendent of golf courses. And Jeff has "foremen" instead of "assistant superintendents." Regardless of the job titles, the duties are all familiar to the golf world.

While parks and recreation facilities play a big role in the lives of the citizens of any city, the budget allocations to these departments are often very conservative, so municipal golf course superintendents are some of the most frugal and innovative managers in the world when it comes to stretching the dollars to the maximum. Superintendents like Heggen might like to have more frills and eye candy (landscaping, etc.) but they opt for healthy turf and good playing conditions instead.

Heggen says, "We'd all like to dress up the course with annual and ornamental beds for the atmosphere, but all those things take more labor hours and maintenance dollars. The bottom line is good greens, tees and fairways first. Our goal is to make incremental improvements over time as warranted by increased revenues and customer response. We are constantly balancing cultural practices and pest control applications with considerations for the disruption of play."

Even though municipal budgets can be tight, Heggen says there's always a bright side to every situation, "Disposable income might be limited, but we have an ace in the hole when it comes to other resources. We have an engineering department for construction emergencies and the rest of the Parks and Recreation landscape equipment, like mowers and manpower, can be tapped for duty if any of our equipment is out of service or we get behind in our schedule due to weather events and storm damage."

Another positive aspect to being part of the city administration is ongoing employee training. Heggen says, "Sometimes the human resources training timetable isn't in sync with our special golf events preparation or turf maintenance plans, but that's not a big problem.

"While we have our regular staff and crew meetings for daily and seasonal operations, the job and personnel evaluation programs help to make us stay on top of our training and coaching responsibilities. Documentation, accountability and follow-up are the keys to success. The city does require continuing education credits for foremen level and up, so we have internal programs and well as industry topics to complete to maintain our progress in the system."

The last awkward topic is purchasing. It takes getting used to the government bid process method of purchasing because of the time lag in processing price quotes and getting approvals versus the booking of contract services for specific dates for minimal disruption to the course for the customers like contract verticutting or aeration and bulk fertilizer applications or Chipco Choice slit injections.

Heggen says, "It can be cumbersome at times, but you learn to really plan ahead and work with vendors on possible date changes if the paperwork isn't processed on time. Once you've gone through the process a few times you get used to what it takes to make it work for your maintenance programs. For example, I try to create a flexible range of acceptable fertilizer formulations that will be good for the turf and still allow the vendors and purchasing agents to submit and consider bids. A superintendent always has to learn how to adapt to get things done."

Heggen's adaptability was put to the test when he came on board in 1998 as a consultant to help finish the renovation to the Jake Gaither course. Soon afterward he was promoted to supervisor (superintendent) and was involved in the renovation of the Hilaman Park course. Jeff was no stranger to Tallahassee: his mother was a former city councilwoman and mayor, and Jeff got his AA from Tallahassee Community College (1980) and took various business management classes at Florida State University.

Heggen was set on being a business major, but found his way to golf when he moved to Ft. Lauderdale with his mother in 1982 and began doing odd jobs on a course called Holiday Springs. He worked on the crew from morning to early afternoon and then he picked up range balls in the late afternoon, and then hit balls or played golf till sundown. His handicap went from 17 to 4 in eight months. Now Heggen tries to play at least twice a month but he admits to teeing it up only nine times last year. About his game he says, "The good news is my game never changes. I'm obviously not a 4 handicap any more, but I always shoot 85-86 when I play.

It's weird and at the same time wonderful to be working here. I learned to play golf on this course with my dad when it was called Winewood, and now I'm back taking care of it. Life is strange."

Heggen's golf maintenance journey began in Ft. Lauderdale, but he got off track a little when he came back to Tallahassee in the early 1990s and began working for George Unglaub, who owned several Gulf Oil - now BP