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activity and root development.

Environmental Management Program

Congratulations to Bob Bittner, CGCS and 2003 FGCSA Presidents Award Winner. Bob has completed all areas of specialization in GCSAA's Environmental Management Program (EMP). Fewer than 40 superintendents have accomplished that feat. There are six areas of specialization within the EMP:

- Employee safety and right-to-know
- Golf course development
- Habitat development and Management
- Integrated pest management
- Storage, disposal and recycling
- Water quality and application

Bob says that by taking seminar courses within these areas of specialization he could focus his continuing education for a specific purpose and goal. He says that the EMP program helped him achieve ACSP certification, designing his new chemical storage/mix load facility and IPM programs, and even in the remodeling of the golf course.

Moving Up

GCSAA has an online booklet available called "From Assistant Golf Course Superintendent to Superintendent: Making a Smooth Transition." The booklet provides information on continuing education, professionalism, tips on ways to achieve career success and other information that will help move you forward in your career. The view is a little different when you are where the buck stops on everything that happens in maintenance.

Compliance Corner

One of best online tools for superintendents is GCSAA's "Compliance Corner" in the Government Relations section at www.gcsaa.org. The section contains a comprehensive list of state and federal OSHA, EPA, DOL and general safety resources. It covers everything from safe handling of drinking water (a really big deal these days) to external defibrillators and child labor laws.

Retirement

With all the buzz about Alan Greenspan's comments on Social Security, it pays all of us to take steps to secure our own

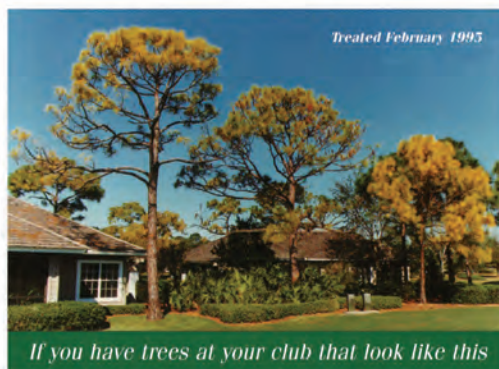
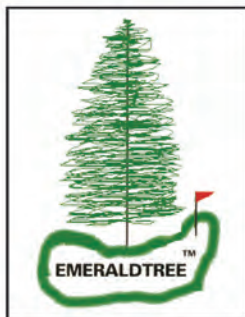
retirement funds. This is especially true in our profession where retirement benefits are often non-existent as part of our compensation packages. The GCSAA has a program called Golf Retirement Plus, which provides the following benefits:

- Personalized retirement planning. Specialists work one-on-one with members to determine the best investment strategy.
- Affordability. There are no sales charges on contributions so every dollar contributed begins working immediately.
- Significant tax savings. Members can defer taxes on potential earnings.
- Portability. The plan can be taken from one job to the next.
- Family Protection. The program provides a death benefit that ensures loved ones will be taken care of after a member's death.

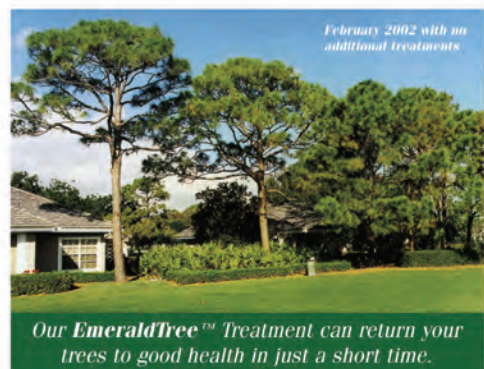
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Compiled and edited by Joel Jackson

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410 – Pull Type



440 – Bunker Fill

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2004 Capitol Hill Visit

Legislators Don't Understand Golf's Role in Economy, Environment

By Joel Jackson, CGCS

Encouraged by our reception and conversations with legislators in Tallahassee last year, the FGCSA officers asked our lobbyist Mike Goldie to schedule another round of visits this year. We went during the legislative session last year, so this year we explored going up during committee-work weeks prior to the session so their schedules wouldn't be so tight.

This year we had a couple of items of concern that we explored with each legislator:

- Six water bills that were on the agenda.
- The upcoming budget and would IFAS again be affected after three years of cuts.
- Legislative funding of turf research. If North Carolina can do it, why can't we?

We talked to the following people: Rep. Dudley Goodlette (R-76, Naples); Sen. Ken Pruitt (R-28, Port St. Lucie), chairman of the appropriations committee; Sen. Paula Dockery (R-15, Lakeland),

member of the agriculture and natural resources committees; Sen. David Aronberg (D-27, Greenacres), whose district runs from Fort Myers to Palm Beach; and Sen. Skip Campbell (D-32, Tamarac) from Broward County. What we discovered in our conversations was that these folks understood that golf was out there, but they didn't always understand how our industry fit into the big picture. Or simply that golf in and of itself was not on their radar screens as having issues that needed addressing.

Rep. Goodlette. On Monday evening, we spent an hour with Rep. Goodlette. If you've ever been to Naples you have undoubtedly seen or passed Goodlette-Frank Road. So Mr. Goodlette is from pioneer family stock. He has seen Collier County grow and understands how important golf is to his part of the state. But like many legislators he doesn't understand how turf research gets funded and when we gave him the examples of the North Carolina legislative support and how we used grass varieties developed exclusively in Georgia, he became very supportive of

improving Florida's efforts to become a leader in turf research.

On Tuesday morning we started the day with a meeting with Steve Rutz, Dennis Howard, Dale Dubberly and Leigh Humphrey of the Dept. of Agriculture and Consumer Services. The topic of chief concern was the status of the arsenic issue as it related to the use of MSMA. They reported that the state and the MAATF were negotiating an agreement on a prospective ground water study to try and determine the exact role, if any, that the application of MSMA is playing in releasing arsenic into the ground water. Our message was that we support decisions and policy based on sound science and that we would cooperate as much as we could in the process. After that session, we began our appointments with four senators.

Senator Pruitt is an advocate for IFAS, but he is frustrated that IFAS doesn't do a better job of taking its message to the people. He encouraged the institution to publicize its contributions to health, wealth and food and environmental safety of the state. He suggested that IFAS hold more open-house tours of its research centers to tout their value to the citizens of the state.

We also broached the subject of direct legislative funding for turf research. We used the example of North Carolina's funding of \$650,000 a year to NC State's turf program. He was supportive and offered some ideas that we will follow up on with Mike Goldie.

Senator Dockery had all sorts of nature photos and plaques on her walls from environmental groups. She was the sponsor of one of the water bills dealing with the mandatory use of effluent water for irrigation, and the first words out of her mouth were... "since golf is a big water user." We quickly dispelled that misconception with our Economic and Environmental Information Kit that we left with each legislator.

Mike eased us into the discussion of the intent of her bill which had exempted golf courses from being forced to hook up to effluent unless it was



From left, FGCSA Lobbyist Mike Goldie with Vice President Joe Pantaleo and President Greg Pheneger during the January 2004 trip to Tallahassee. Photo by Joel Jackson.

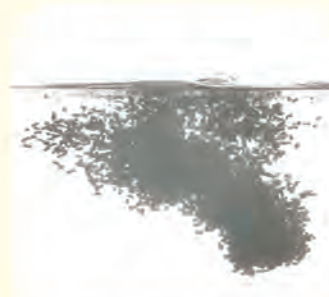
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technically, practically and economically feasible. It was those interpretations that we zeroed in on. In the course of the conversation she also acknowledged that she couldn't understand the knock against golf courses since she saw so much wildlife on the courses she played during those annual political fundraisers. She also confessed her contribution to her scramble team was as a putter and not much else.

Senator Aronberg is a young lawyer who helped the sugar industry negotiate the Everglades clean-up issue and sugar tax. He comes from a golfing family. He plays, but in truth it isn't a passion right now. When we brought up research funding, he associated us with the recently approved PGA-sponsored license plate for junior golf and asked if we didn't get money from that. We told him that IFAS researchers had to solicit the money for their projects and the private industry and non-profit associations like ours were the major source of funds. He was surprised. After hearing some facts about golf's impact to the state and our long-term support, he said he would help us in any way he could. He was the lone legislator to respond to my thank-you letter that I sent to each of them. Again he pledged his support for our issues.

Senator Campbell is a golf nut. He loves the game. Before we even got down to the business of

our visit, he challenged us to a putting contest in his office. It was a great ice breaker. I have to report that only Greg Pheneger, who hasn't been able to play since his back operation, was the only one to sink a putt to challenge the senator, who holed both of his. Local knowledge I suspect. Senator Campbell was also a sponsor of one of the water bills, and we found out it was a shell bill kept in the wings in case private entities tried to take over water rights without due process. In an area of the state where golf is being heavily scrutinized in the arsenic issue, we have an advocate for golf.

When I attended the Florida Pesticide Review Council meeting the week before our Tallahassee trip, I had the opportunity to meet Rep. Roger Wishner (D-98, Plantation), who is also from the Broward County area. He was the legislative sponsor of the PGA's junior golf license tag. Mike introduced us and filled him on our issues and concerns to give a different view of golf besides playing and growing the game. And a couple of weeks after our trip I attended a Florida Fertilizer and Agrichemical Association meeting in Crystal River. One of the speakers was Sen. Nancy Argenziano (R-3, Crystal River), chairman of the agriculture committee. She's heard of the Environtron Classic. She understands the

importance of agriculture and arranged a tour for freshmen senators who came from urban areas and have no clue about the Number 2 industry in Florida (See Mark Jarrell's column in this issue).

There is no doubt in my mind that the professional fact-based meetings that we are conducting on these annual trips to Tallahassee will help us gain support for the issues facing the golf industry. We aren't asking for special treatment or favors. We are providing facts and pledging to work for solutions that will benefit our industry of course, but ones that make sense for everyone.

But Mike Goldie repeatedly tells us that the best way to deliver our message and earn legislative support is at the grass-roots level. Each chapter can work with Mike to arrange a meeting with the senators and representatives that serve their regions. It will carry more weight for a legislator to be among his or her constituents at the local level. Chapters should seriously consider allocating one of their monthly meetings to a meet-your-legislator session. It would be a great time to have a superintendent/manager or club official joint meeting. Find out from Mike the best time of year to hold such a gathering and do your part to improve government relations.

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Stewardship Notes

Why You Should Join the ACSP Now!

By Joel Jackson

Can we agree that golf courses often get a bad rap in most news stories whenever pollution or water quality are mentioned? Can we also agree that we know golf courses really are positive environmental assets to a community? Would you or your club ever want the positives to be praised and the negatives debunked? If you answered “yes” to these questions, then I hope you already are a member of the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program.

If not, why not?

We are good for the environment and it's way past time we tooted our own horn. The ACSP is best way we've got to demonstrate our environmental stewardship.

Reputation and Results

For \$150 per year dues, you receive the services of an environmental consultant with a stellar reputation. The Audubon International (AI) has received numerous awards and recognition from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the GCSAA for its proactive work, not only with golf courses, but also schools, commercial properties, residences and whole communities. They will help and guide you and encourage you, but they will never dictate what projects you must do at your club. Their suggestions and recommendations are just that and they are based on the information you supply about your particular site. Here are some examples of the high regard officials have of the ACSP program:

Programs such as Audubon

International's represent the types of positive partnerships that need to be created across the country. This type of an effort is the only way that we can positively deal with the many, serious environmental issues we face as a nation. - Christine Todd Whitman, former EPA Administrator

My observation has been that Audubon International provides a real service to, and sets up a real challenge to be met by, real environmental professionals, and in doing so, is responsible for signifi-

cant voluntary environmental progress... I can attest that AI's strategy is not just words, but represents genuine accomplishments. - Michael C. Farrar, Office of Pesticide Planning and Toxicity, EPA

Audubon International has stepped up and created a very practical and effective program that now serves as a model for other industries. It is one of the few programs that can demonstrate clear, on-the-ground accomplishments that benefit the environment and that is also successfully changing people's attitudes - Peter W. Stangel, Director, SE Partnership Office, National Fish & Wildlife Foundation

Why wouldn't you want to be part of that effort for the good of your own property and the community? Not only is it the right thing to do, it makes

good business sense.

Courses involved in the ACSP, and especially those who get certified, have realized genuine cost savings. In the time of tight budgets who doesn't want to save money and direct efforts to maximizing customer satisfaction? I don't know what dollar amount you can put on the public-relations value of holding school or environmental tours, annual bird counts or other community outreach, but it certainly can't hurt. Here are just some of the benefits to clubs in the program tabulated from a recent survey:

- 82% reduced pesticide use
- 75% reduced pesticide costs
- 80% decreased managed turfgrass to increase wildlife habitat (less turf, less cost) Average increase of 22 acres per course for habitat
- 69% decreased water usage or 1.9 million gallons per year per course
- 99% report playing quality has been improved or remained the same
- 99% found golfer satisfaction improved or remained the same
- 99% of superintendents report job satisfaction improved or remained the same
- 85% did not track costs or benefits of ACSP.
- 100% of the certified courses that tracked costs noted a reduction in costs due to ACSP

So we've got a respected environmental association (Audubon International), with a highly regarded program (Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary System) that protects the environment, saves money and enhances your reputation as a good neighbor. Then I have to ask, “Why are only 13 percent of the nation's courses participating in the plan?”

We know the annual dues are only \$150, so it can't be the money. Is it apathy or the assumption that it will take a lot of time? I can't address your apathy. You have to look in the mirror each day. I know from personal experience that the “time excuse” is baloney. You have to invest a certain amount to get started, but help is available to do that from AI and the FGCSA.

Numerous articles have been written (see



Your club should have one of these to announce your commitment to good environmental stewardship.

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ACSP Update

New Members

Boca Rio GC, Boca Raton, Bob Ranquist, CGCS
 Coral Creek Club, Placida, Robert Wagner (A)
 Countryside CC, Clearwater, Dale Reash, CGCS
 Naples National GC, Terry Wood (A)
 Queens Harbour CC, Jacksonville, Jason Wilson (A)

Newly Certified

Camp Creek GC, Panama City, Larry Livingston,
 CGCS
 Hammock Dunes, Creek Course, Palm Coast, Matt
 Howes (SM)
 (A) = Class A Supt behind names; and
 (SM) = Supt Member [the old Class B] to recognize
 those who are participating in continuing education
 and maintaining Class A status

the ideas in the Lemon Bay cover story in this issue) and case studies published how superintendents have recruited help from the club members and others to do the legwork on the projects. There are lots of people who want to help the environment and they can be harnessed to do the work. It is a *cooperative*, sanctuary, not just yours.

50-in-5 Campaign

Currently the Audubon International is entering year three of its 50-in-5 campaign to get 50 percent of all golf courses into the ACSP. With a flat membership growth the last couple of years, frankly we're all a little disappointed.

Each FGCSA local chapter was given a chart that showed the total number of FGCSA members and the number enrolled in the ACSP program. The chart also showed that if each chapter made a positive effort to enroll just a few courses each year that we could achieve that 50-percent goal easily. Now we only have three years to go until 2007.

As I said before, this is a *cooperative*

effort and superintendents shouldn't carry the burden alone. I call on the Florida State Golf Association, the Florida Golf Course Owners Association and the Florida Club Managers Association to step up and get their member courses enrolled in the ACSP. The United States Golf Association already supports the program. More people in the golf industry need to

show their commitment to the environment by supporting this program.

We are already called to task for the misconceptions about golf. Won't you join now to promote the game, your club and the industry to give golf its proper respect and place in the environment?

Juvenile Owl Survives Eagle Attack



Superintendent Mark Shoemake to find out what steps should be taken next. Joanna Fitzgerald of the Conservancy informed us that she would be right out to the course to identify the bird and take it for monitoring for any injuries that may need to be treated at the conservancy. In the meantime, we were instructed to find a lift that could get us to the nest, which the mother great horned owl was watching over closely.

We contacted NationsRent and representative Steve Acquafresca graciously donated the use of a 60-foot boom lift for replacing the owl in its nest. At 10:30 a.m. Tuesday, the owl was strategically placed in the nest by Naples Conservancy employee Amy Heller. She was accompanied in lift by Shoemake and myself.

During the course of the day we anxiously awaited the mother great horned to return the nest, which did not happen. Thanks to everyone's efforts and much to our relief, the mother-and-child reunion occurred on the following day when we found the mother huddled next to the juvenile on a branch near the nest.

This was quite a rewarding experience for all and a token moment in the day-to-day routine of golf course and landscape maintenance. It will be added with pride and merit to our membership experiences in the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary System for Golf Courses.

Walk on the Wild Side

By Brian Beckner

It was Monday, Feb. 16, at the LaPlaya Golf Club in Naples and our Landscape Superintendent Doug Fuller was making his routine, early-morning tour of the golf course. As he approached to the 13th green he noticed a bald eagle swooping close to the treetops of the nearby stand of slash pines. Next thing he saw was a juvenile great horned owl that could not yet fly, falling to the ground. The young owl scurried to safety in a nearby landscape bed hiding among the Mexican petunias. He was not attacked again.

The Conservancy of Southwest Florida was then called by Assistant Golf Course

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