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Boca Greens Assistant's Essay Earns Trip to Academy

Boca Greens Superintendent John Gallagher and his club are proud that Assistant Superintendent Brad Johnson has been selected as one of the 50 winners of a national essay contest conducted by Bayer Environmental Sciences and John Deere Turf One Source. Winners will attend the two-day Green Start Academy in North Carolina at the companies' headquarters.

The goal of this program is to give assistant golf course superintendents a rare opportunity to get to know Bayer and John Deere better and hear from industry experts on a variety of topics, including golf course care and maintenance, products, regulations, science and research. This knowledge will help any assistant continue to build a strong foundation for their career, as well as help ensure the future of a course's business.

Below is Johnson's winning essay on the topic, "Where do you see yourself professionally in ten years? What will the role of the Golf Course Superintendent be in ten years?"

ESSAY BY BRAD JOHNSON

Where do I see myself and others in my profession in ten years? Because I am in my tenth year of working in the field of golf course maintenance, I find this question interesting to answer. In the next ten years I envision the role of myself and others in this business to evolve to higher, more positive levels of perception. I can envision where I and others will be politically, typographically, and technologically.

Politically, I see myself as being highly involved in the environmental image of the golf courses. I expect this role to be one of communicating viable alternative, environmentally friendly, plant management techniques. I also see myself as playing an interactive role in the local superintendent's chapter in the area wherever I am working. I very much desire the industry's perception of myself to be a positive one. Moreover, I also expect the political role of the golf course superintendent to continue to evolve towards one of environmental stewardship. I think we will see more superintendents taking an active role in ensuring that society's

perception of the impact that golf courses have on the environment as being a positive one.

My goals of where I will be typographically are harder to pinpoint than where I envision myself politically. I very much enjoy managing warm season grass in a tropical to subtropical climate. Therefore, I can say that I will definitely be managing warm season turf somewhere in the world. I am open to living in the United States or other friendly countries that have the correct climate for warm season grass. Therefore, I will be going wherever the opportunities present themselves. In regards to locations where other superintendents will be playing their roles, I think we will see more courses pop up in Asia and Central and South America. More specifically, China and Costa Rica. Therefore one of the challenges of more golf course superintendents in ten years will be adapting to foreign cultures.

One of the biggest changes that will happen over the next 10 years will be how modern technology is applied to golf course management. In ten years I see myself as being a twenty first century golf course superintendent. I will embrace every chance I get to learn new technologies and apply them to my operation. Moreover the golf course superintendent will have to become technologically adept. Blackberries, electric mowers, and remote moisture sensors are just the beginning. The technology will also go beyond individual devices. There will be new genetically engineered grasses that both simplify and complicate the job at the same time. In ten years a golf course superintendent in South Florida might have to choose between ultra dwarf paspalum and Southern Roundup-ready bent grass. These are both, of course, fictional grasses; however they are not far-fetched in the least. Those of us who choose to embrace these new technologies will excel, while those who don't will be left behind.



Brad Johnson

Newsletters: A Key Communication Tool

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Superintendents get into hot water because members — and even management — don't know or understand what's going on with golf course maintenance, whether it's projects or problems. They can deflect a lot of criticism and build up good will by educating members in a proactive yet passive way, especially if they find it difficult to engage members in conversation around the clubhouse or on the course. Here are some*

tips from GCSAA that can help kick-start or improve your newsletter articles.

Are you responsible for contributing to your facility newsletter? Are you confused about what to write and how? A good newsletter article can be a key communication tool. Following are a few tips to help you get started.

WHY CONTRIBUTE ?

There are only so many hours in the day and superintendents already work long hours. However, golfers may not see the superintendent as often as they

see the rest of the golf course management team, which makes it important for superintendents to connect through other means, if possible. Providing content for your facility's newsletter is a quick and easy way to stay in touch with golfers, let them know what is going on with the course and why. Newsletters also are good for getting employees, the media, sales reps, and others excited about your facility and projects.

WHERE SHOULD I START?

The first step is to develop an editorial calendar — having a plan will allow

you to efficiently gather the information you need for each issue. Outline topics you'd like to cover during the year, including key projects.

HOW DO I BEGIN?

Identify your audience. Are you writing to golfers, employers or potential members? Make sure the newsletter content is relevant and important to them.

KEEP IT SIMPLE.

Precise editing for grammar and facts is more important than an exciting look. Pictures can help tell the story, but too many pictures or irrelevant pictures can make a newsletter too confusing or busy. Remember, newsletters are meant to be quick reads, so keep the stories short and to the point. If you're writing on a topic that's too long to be fully discussed in the newsletter, you may want to summarize your topic and provide a link directing readers to your facility's Web site for the full story.

WRITE WHAT YOU KNOW

Potential topics to address include new staff members, facility changes, upcoming events, specials, golf car rules, ball marks, divots, aerification, winter play/frost, raking bunkers and pesticide applications. If you're still stumped, search chapter and industry publications and Web sites, as well as www.gcsaa.org which have a wealth of resources on industry topics that can be easily applied to your facility and situation.

PERSONALIZE YOUR CONTENT

Make your stories personable and phrase articles with a positive, informative slant. Include quotes, interviews and even tasteful jokes (if applicable) and be sure to cite your sources. By telling your golfers what you and your crew are doing and writing in a way that lets them get to know you better, they'll feel more included and be able to understand and appreciate the work you do.

GATHER FEEDBACK

Ask your patrons for their opinions – are you hitting the mark with your articles? By tracking reaction, you'll be

able to better meet your golfers' needs.

With the proper set-up and writing, a newsletter can be a tool for reaching your audience in a quick, concise way. It allows you to reach out and tell your golfers the enjoyment you get from your job and how the work you do contributes to their recreation and enjoyment of the game.

SOURCES:

• <http://www.gcsaa.org/industryclients/re->

[search/print/newsletters.asp](http://www.gcsaa.org/industryclients/research/print/newsletters.asp)

- http://www.riches.com.au/articles/writing_email_newsletters.htm#how_to_write
- <http://www.email-marketing-reports.com/emailnewsletters/newsletterwriting.htm>
- <http://www.publications.pdx.edu/tips.html>
- <http://www.topstory.ca/newsletters.html>
- <http://www.gcsaa.org/gcm/2002/dec02/12Write.asp>

-GCSAA Communications Department

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GLOBAL POSITIONING SATELLITE TECHNOLOGY

Bell, Whistle or Tool?

We have seen the GPS units on golf cars. On an unfamiliar course, they certainly can help with strategy and club selection... assuming we have a golf swing capable of carrying out our good intentions. But has that technology had made significant gains in the maintenance side of the golf business?

There have been visionary depictions of a superintendent tracking pesticide and fertilizer applications, mapping irrigation and pest hot spots and even operating remote-controlled mowers. So, where are we on this march toward high-tech maintenance?

Many superintendents have benefited the most from the mapping aspect of GPS accurately located and identified irrigation systems. I can certainly remember time-consuming efforts to find a long-forgotten and unmapped isolation valve in my early days. We ended up making our own As-Built maps after repairs were made.

When I worked at Isleworth CC, one of the best tools I had was a wall-sized map of the irrigation system. It wasn't produced by GPS back in 1988, but the detail and accuracy was similar. Now it's just easier to produce and pull one up on a computer screen.

While we may still be taking cautious steps in using GPS in day-to-day maintenance, it is coming and will help the next generation of turf managers be more precise in practicing their craft. Here is a look at how our industry is using GPS technology today.

IFAS PLANT SCIENCE RESEARCH TURF PLOTS, CITRA

We rely quite regularly on GPS for numerous things. The pesticide depart-

ment uses it all the time for applications. The entire unit (more than 1,000 acres) has been mapped out using GPS. I have all of the current research projects marked out for records purposes as well. I also use it to find distances between areas. I can send you some pictures of our maps if you want.

Mark Kann

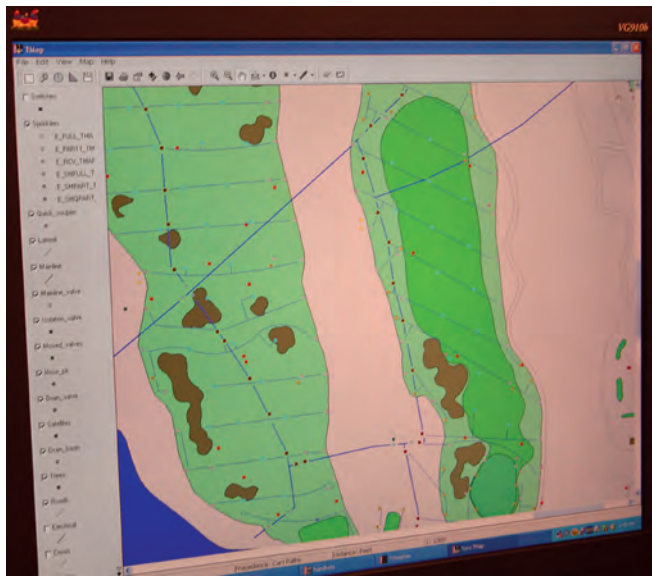
Turf Research Coordinator

THE MOORINGS CLUB, VERO BEACH

We used GPS mapping on the course in 2003 for a major renovation project. We were rebuilding the

of 2004. Because we had extensive flooding from Hurricanes Francis and Jeanne, we were able to determine the elevation of the storm surge by the debris lines found on the course. We then could shade in the map to show the level of flooding on the property. This made a vivid representation of the extent of the flooding on the property. This map was able to show that more than 70 percent of the golf course was flooded from the storm surge.

Craig Weyandt
Superintendent



This GPS map of the Old Collier irrigation system is a location, identification and management tool that provides for precise operation and maintenance of the system. Photo by Joel Jackson.

greens to USGA spec. and correcting some other problems on the course at the same time. Since this involved the drainage system, I convinced the board to do a master drainage plan that incorporated the entire golf course under one plan for review with the SJWMD. The GPS mapping was able to produce a topographic map and show elevations of inverts of pipes, catch basins and turf areas. This plan was essential before beginning and while undertaking the project to make sure that water moved properly throughout the golf course during storm events.

Another use that I found for the map was after the hurricanes

WINDSOR PARKE GOLF CLUB

We are in the process of getting the course mapped for the OSMAC system. Unfortunately it won't be finished in time for the magazine deadline, but we are looking forward to working with the map for our operating and maintaining our irrigation system.

Rip Phillips
Superintendent

OLD COLLIER GOLF CLUB

We had all our heads, valves, main lines, bunker edges, lake edges, cart paths, GPS-mapped during grow-in. We had Toro put it on the T-Map program for our irrigation. We use it to calculate area, total acreage of tees, greens, etc., to help find heads and valves when they get

lost, to help with hot spots and wet spots, we use it mainly for these types of applications.

In the near future Tim wants to purchase a backpack unit so we can go out and map our own areas, mole cricket colonies, hot spots, nematodes, grubs, etc. We have not used any other GPS units on sprayers or equipment here at our club.

Todd Draffen
Superintendent

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Tom Burrows, Consulting
Agronomist/Turfgrass Specialist
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- ◆ Analytical Service
- ◆ Recommendations
- ◆ Specifications for Contractor Bidding

Soil Testing

- ◆ Greens, Tees, Fairways
- ◆ Analytical Report and Soil Fertility Recommendations

Water Testing

- ◆ Report & Recommendations

In the business 40 years

Jensen Beach, Florida
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versy over certified turf and off-type contamination. We would often have to shut down the crew for two days in order to take and reconcile measurements of the total area being treated with a tape measure.

Accurate measurements are needed for several reasons. Accuracy is important to us for proper billing and to also to maximize the customer's budget and actual coverage. It also protects all parties from disputes concerning the billing.

While we have fairly accurate Raven computers on our injecting units, which measure the amount of product dispensed, but there is always overlap which can eat into the customers's budget. Using GPS units can help define the exact area treated. We still use tape measure readings to cross reference and compare so we can all agree on the numbers. GPS works best on flat ground and a certain error factor can still creep in with highly contoured

fairways, but that's why we cross check. We could do some 3-D grids with hundreds of plot points but that becomes a cost factor as well.

One of the best advantages I have seen is that by using GPS, we can really help the customer from going over budget and in some case extend the coverage because the area designated for treating wasn't as big as the customer thought. Then he can have us spot treat some other chronic hot spots and still stay within his original budget. Overall it is a great improvement for accuracy of applications, maximizing the customer's budget and reducing disagreements in billing.

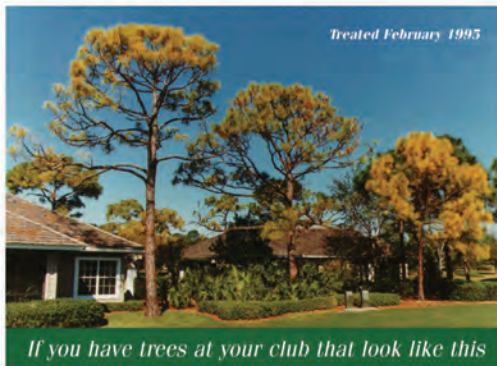
*T. J. Swaford,
Hendrix & Dail*

There are plenty of high tech gadgets and gizmos rolling out all the time. It looks like GPS is the real McCoy and could be a meaningful tool in today's golf course management. ■

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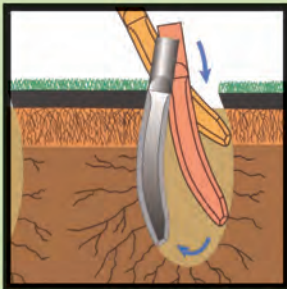
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FTGA Picks New Executive Director

Experienced Exec Brings Impressive Credentials to Post

The Florida Turfgrass Association has named Casey Wohl Pace as the organization's new executive director. She will manage the 900-member organization's daily operations, develop relationships with allied associations, serve as the industry's spokesperson, and direct the strategic long-term direction of the association.

Wohl Pace previously worked for Florida Citrus Mutual as director of public affairs. In this capacity, she served as chief of staff and assisted the CEO in directing all activities of the statewide association comprising 10,000 citrus-grower members. She focused on issues such as international trade, pest and disease, labor as well as legislative and regulatory affairs. She has extensive experience in association management, industry representation, public affairs advocacy, media relations, crisis communications, reputation management, grassroots communication, issues management, strategic planning, fundraising and special events.

Prior to joining Florida Citrus Mutual, she worked for the Florida Phosphate Council.

"The FTGA is very pleased to announce the hiring of Casey Wohl Pace as our executive director," said FTGA President Matt Taylor, CGCS, "The past few years have seen tremendous growth in the FTGA and our industry, and Casey will be a great addition to our organization as we continue that growth."

Wohl Pace has a master's degree in agricultural communications from the University of Florida and a bachelor's degree in environmental policy from Rollins College. She is a native of Sebring, where her family is in the agriculture and real estate business, and she currently serves as president of the Agriculture Institute of Florida.

Meet Casey Wohl Pace

Editor's Note: Ms. Pace's resume should provide FTGA and FGCSA members with a quick, concise look at the skills and experience she brings to the her new role as executive director of the FTGA.

QUALIFICATIONS SUMMARY

Highly-accomplished executive with an eight-year career in public relations, industry representation, public affairs advocacy and association management. Core areas of expertise include association management, media relations, crisis communications, reputation management, grassroots/legislative communication, issues management, strategic planning, fundraising and special events.

KEY CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

- Developed and managed all external and internal communication during 2004 Florida hurricane season. Public relations efforts resulted in extensive and prolonged media coverage highlighting citrus damage, federal hurricane disaster assistance for citrus growers of more than \$400 million, and a press conference featuring President George W. Bush in a central Florida citrus grove.
 - Developed and managed public relations and membership communications for two-year, \$7-million Citrus Tariff Preservation Campaign. Executed media and industry communications strategy at international trade negotiation meeting in Miami.
 - Spearheaded communications component for lobbying efforts that secured \$550 million in state and federal funding for a citrus disease eradication and compensation program.
 - Established and managed successful grassroots advocacy campaign to maintain the orange on the Florida automotive license plate despite the Florida Cabinet's effort to replace the graphic.
- Created and oversaw all facets of the industry's first statewide, three-day annual conference, hosting 300 attendees, high-ranking political speakers and raising more than \$130,000.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- **Florida Citrus Mutual, Lakeland** (April 2003-March 2006)

Director of Public Affairs

Served as chief-of-staff and assisted CEO in directing all activities of national/international trade association comprised of 10,000 citrus grower members, an annual budget of \$4.5 million and 16 employees with four direct reports. Appeared on behalf of CEO and managed his communications outreach. Developed and oversaw programs and strategic initiatives that advocated membership's interests on trade, legislative and regulatory matters at all levels of government.

Media Relations – Developed and managed all aspects of the association's media relations efforts including press conferences, media tours, editorial board meetings, opinion editorial placement, letter-to-the-editor campaigns, press releases and white paper development. Media contacts/interviews include CNBC, FOX, ABC, NBC, CBS, USA Today, Associated Press, Reuters, New York Times, Wall Street Journal, as well as local, state and trade media.

Reputation Management - Served as industry spokesperson for Florida's citrus growers on local, state, national and international levels in print, television and

radio mediums. Represented industry during two-year communications outreach campaign with Miami-Dade business community and media.

Strategic Planning - Developed and implemented the association's comprehensive strategic plan to establish goals and provide direction for the board of directors, members and staff.

Fundraising - Reinvigorated the organization's federal political action committee (PAC), raising more than \$50,000 in first year. Coordinated political fundraisers for several members of Congress and state elected officials. Developed and managed Allied Membership, raising more than \$30,000 per year.

Crisis Communications/Issues Management – Oversaw all public and media relations activities relating to many high profile industry issues, including citrus damage during the 2004 and 2005 hurricane seasons, citrus canker controversy, Tropicana patent dispute, federal anti-dumping case and the citrus tariff preservation effort.

• **Florida Citrus Mutual, Lakeland** (*August 2000-March 2003*)

Manager of Public Affairs

Instituted a proactive and aggressive media relations strategy, which positioned association as key media contact for the \$9.1 billion Florida citrus industry. Managed one direct report in the area of governmental relations. Secured more than \$500,000 in state and federal grants to fund public relations outreach activities. Oversaw all membership communications activities including weekly newsletter, website, printed material, Annual Report, membership recruitment materials, etc. Developed and managed the public affairs department budget.

• **Florida Citrus Mutual, Lakeland** (*January 2000-August 2000*)

Public Affairs Specialist

Developed and managed the Florida Citrus Industry Grassroots Network, designed to increase industry political activity and accomplish state and national legislative goals. Recruited more than 600 members and designed network's communications strategy and components.

• **Florida Phosphate Council, Lakeland** (*July 1998-December 1999*)

Communications Coordinator

Served as chief communications liaison for association's external and internal outreach efforts, including media, membership, local and state elected officials, state and federal agencies, and public/private interest groups. Advised the association president and industry officials on sensitive



Casey Wohl Pace

and emerging issues. Developed all communications correspondence, printed material and reports, and oversaw the public relations budget.

AWARDS

- Florida Public Relations Association Community Service Award, 2004
- Florida Public Relations Association Golden Image Award (Public Affairs Campaign), 2002
- Florida Public Relations Association Golden Image Award (Specialty Item), 2004
- The Showalter Group's Political Involvement Innovation Award, (Grassroots Campaign), 2002
- University of Florida Outstanding Agriculture Communications Alumnus, 2005

OTHER ACTIVITIES

- Agriculture Institute of Florida, President
- American Society of Association Executives
- Florida Public Relations Association, Past Chapter President
- Florida Society of Association Executives
- Junior League of Greater Lakeland
- University of Florida Agriculture Education & Communications Dept. Advisory Committee
- University of Florida Wedgworth Leadership Institute, Alumni

EDUCATION

- University of Florida, M.A. – Agricultural Communications, 1998
- Rollins College, B.A. – Environmental Policy, 1996

GCSAA Proposes New Dues-Pricing Strategy

After the last dues increase, chapter delegates asked GCSAA to develop an easy-to-understand dues pricing system that would 1) keep pace with increasing costs of providing member programs and services and 2) reduce or eliminate the negative impact that large, infrequent dues hikes have had on membership growth and retention, and facility budgets.

To date, GCSAA's board of directors, several GCSAA committees and participants in the 2005 Chapter Delegates Meeting have been involved in developing and refining the proposed "indexed" dues-pricing strategy. GCSAA member feedback will be discussed at the 2006 meeting to gauge interest in a potential bylaws proposal to adopt such a system.

THE DETAILS

The proposed system is designed to make dues increases (Class A, SM and C) more manageable from a planning and budgeting perspective and more clearly tied to actual inflation factors. If adopted, the proposal would delegate authority to the GCSAA board to consider raising dues every two years according to the Consumer Price Index (CPI).

Specifically, a maximum potential dues increase would be calculated using the published CPI for 24 months ending on August 31, and then rounded to the nearest \$5. At the GCSAA Plan and Budget meeting in the fall, the board of directors would determine whether to raise GCSAA dues by that amount, a lesser amount or not at all, taking into account other revenue sources, the association's financial position and other general economic and political factors. The board-approved increase, if any, would then be communicated to GCSAA members so that they could adjust their budgets accordingly, and would take effect the following January 1.

If, however, there were a future need for a dues increase exceeding the maxi-

mum tied to the index, it would require a majority vote of the membership at a GCSAA annual or special meeting. The average annual CPI increase over the last ten years has been 2.5 percent.

THE IMPACT

Between 1988 and 2005, GCSAA dues (Class A and SM) rose from \$175 to \$300, with the increases of \$35, \$40 and \$50 – although merited – yielding corresponding drops of 11.3, 6.9 and 6.7 percentage points in the annual membership growth rate.

However, if the proposed strategy had been in effect for that entire time, dues would have increased only \$10 to \$20 every two years to reach only \$285 today – \$15 less than actual current dues. Even with the lower ending dues price and no additional members, the policy of "keeping up" instead of "catching up" would have had no negative impact on revenues over that time. Furthermore, an average annual CPI increase of 2.5% over the next 14 years would yield dues revenue similar to larger increases given every five years, with no potential negative impact upon membership growth and retention.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How would funds from indexed dues increases be used?

Adjusting dues to keep pace with the rising cost of providing member programs and services would allow those services to continue at the current level that members are accustomed to receiving. Membership dues account for only 25 percent of GCSAA's total revenue. Revenue from industry and user fees also increase regularly in order to recover higher costs for delivering services. If dues were the only source of support for the association, professional members would have to pay \$1,200 annually to receive the same benefits.

Why increase dues when total membership has declined the past few years?

The board would only be allowed to increase dues based on the CPI. The key word is "allow." The board would not be required to increase the dues every two years and, as a practical matter, it may

not. Pricing strategy is one of many factors that the board would consider in its review process.

What would happen if the proposed indexed dues strategy were not approved?

If members would prefer not to tie dues to an index to regularly adjust for raising costs, the current process would continue with significant "catch-up" raises, which do not cover higher future costs and tend to negatively impact member retention. Based on the average of the last four dues increases, the next increase would be \$50 in 2008.

On the other hand, a \$15 increase in 2008 would be the likely outcome if a programmed dues increase policy were approved at the 2007 annual meeting in Anaheim.

Why not bring this programmed dues increase to a member vote at the annual meeting on a two-year cycle?

Because the annual meeting occurs in the second month of GCSAA's budget, the association would have to wait 10 months to implement the increase, meaning it would always be playing catch-up with regard to higher costs. It would also eliminate the opportunity for the board to consider GCSAA's current financial condition and other general economic factors that might merit a lower, or no, dues increase.

The board of directors is responsible for making decisions that have major financial impact on the organization, including appropriate increases for user and industry fees, as well as dues for all membership classes except A, SM and C. Delegating the board authority to make timely dues increases not to exceed the CPI would provide for optimal fiscal management of resources.

On the other hand, if a future situation calls for an increase above the allowable CPI rate, then member approval will be required.

If the board wants to increase dues, they should communicate the reasons to members.

True. The board is ultimately accountable to the membership for providing the services, programs and