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White Pelicans, cormorants, wood storks, herons, egrets and ducks are regular residents at Orchid Island. Photo by Joel Jackson.

ENVIRONMENTAL OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

Start with your members!

By Joel Jackson

This year Orchid Island became the 71st Certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary in Florida, so I was momentarily taken aback when Superintendent Matt Turner invited me to come down to Vero Beach in November and give a talk about the ACSP program to a group of the club's members. I figured they already knew.

Once I got there I found out that I was just one speaker in a whole series of environmental programs lined up this winter for the members. These programs fulfill the Outreach and Education requirement for the ACSP, and you are talking to people who have a vested interest in the course and the community. Additional speakers on plants and bird identification and a host of other

subjects will follow. Turner wanted me to explain how important the program is in the big picture. JoEllen Zeh from Audubon International sent me a Power Point presentation on the ACSP to use in the presentation.

I arrived several hours early and took a tour of the golf course with Turner and took some photos that illustrated some of the points in the slide presentation and, just before the program started, I downloaded the Orchid Island photos into the presentation so the members could see exactly how their course was fitting into the program. That turned out to be a great idea as they responded very well to seeing familiar scenes in the presentation.

The Orchid Island property is bordered on the eastern side of the property and highway A1A by a native

plant buffer called the Jungle Trail. To the west is the Indian River Aquatic Reserve and mangrove preserve maintained by Orchid Island. Also just off shore in the Indian River is the Pelican Island Wildlife Refuge. And speaking of pelicans, Orchid Island is the winter home to a large flock of white pelicans. Turner doesn't know exactly where they are from but my field guide said that they breed and live in British Columbia, northern California, Utah and Manitoba and winter in central California, the Gulf Coast and Florida south to Panama.

While the members were arriving and taking their seats, I also ran a Power Point presentation I made up last year titled Golf is Good for the Environment which was a collection of captioned photos showing primarily



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wildlife, habitat and irrigation practices. It also included facts from the 2000 Golf Economic Impact Study. Many of the photos drew oohs and ahs from the crowd. About 35-40 people attended including General Manager Rob Tench and Membership Director Marci Arnold.

Because of the members' overall interest and enjoyment of the wildlife on the course, Tench encouraged Turner to make the certification project a high priority item and, to help him complete the project, Turner hired Peggy Ogden as a consultant. Ogden, who currently works at the Arlington Ridge Golf Club near Leesburg, has earned several ACSP certifications at other courses.

After the presentation there was a Question and Answer session, and the members had a variety of inquiries:

- Does the runoff from the course go into the Indian River?
- What is that blue stuff you are spraying on the course?
- Are the chemicals you use safe for the wildlife?
- What are some things we as homeowners can do to help the environment?

Answering the questions gave Turner a platform to explain his golf course maintenance program and the things he does to comply with Audubon certification standards. Turner had explained to me earlier that, like many superintendents, he already was doing many of the positive things, but the ACSP program gave him a way to document and verify his practices with the help of environmental authority. It also gave me an opportunity to provide the members with the big picture on environmental issues facing the golf

industry, and ask their help in being proactive for golf.

Those questions above show exactly why outreach and education, starting on the home course, is vital, and I had a chance to see some of the answers in action when we rode the course. Turner told me that all the runoff for the community is retained on property and mostly in the lakes on the golf course. The lakes are the source of his irrigation water, so the runoff is essentially recycled and filtered through the turf.

The waterways are buffered from golf course maintenance activity by observing a 25-30-foot no-spray-or-fertilizer zone along the lakes. Turner, his assistant and two spray technicians apply all products by spot treatment from 25-gal-

fertilizers are applied by licensed pest control operators and that they follow label directions.

Turner even told the story of how he stopped killing moles and began trapping them, 1100 to be exact. He said, "I just couldn't do it anymore (harpoon traps), so my assistant and I would lightly tamp down an active tunnel and come back six hours later and watch for their movement. Then we would just scoop them out. We relocated them way up the Jungle Trail far from the course."

Turner said he learned to use the moles and other critters as signals that the course was likely experiencing insect infestations that he might need to treat. The same went for wasps hovering around his tees. He said they were usu-

ally a good sign that sod webworms were working on his new paspalum tee tops. Others might be interested to know that Turner's new TifEagle greens and Tifway 419 fairways seem to doing quite well on his 1480 ppm TDL irrigation water. His irrigation lake is supplemented by a brackish water well that taps into the salt-intruded portion of the Floridan Aquifer near the coast.

As the meet-

ing was breaking up a few announcements were made: There would be a new journal in the pro shop for the golfers to jot down their wildlife sightings with date, hole number, etc. and one couple invited everyone over to help themselves to their backyard vantage point to view a pair of bald eagles that had been showing up daily in a large tree nearby.

And that is what the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program could be all about on your course too.



Native grasses buffer the lakes which also act as runoff retention ponds for the community. Photo by Joel Jackson.

lon electric Raven sprayers using hand wands only. They also hand-spread any fertilizer to make sure none gets thrown into the lakes.

Turner suggested that homeowners can help the environment by doing several things: use more native plants in their landscapes, install native plant buffers like the Spartina (cordgrass) used along the majority of the course lake banks instead of having manicured St. Augustine right down the the water line, and make sure that all chemicals and



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Superintendent John Lammrish at LPGA Golf Facility with two Hispanic coworkers. Photo by Bruce Witt.

Diverse Workforce Requires Creative, Flexible Management

By Bruce Witt

This past summer I had the privilege of traveling across Florida and visiting numerous golf course facilities. My aim was to interview managers and other workers of all types to gather the best management-practices information available in the greens and service industry. This venture was made possible by a partnership grant through the Florida Turfgrass Association, Club Managers Association, and the Florida Golf Course Superintendents Association. Their generous assistance and belief in the importance of this study is greatly appreciated.

In February, 2006 I sent out a short e-survey to members of the Golf Course Superintendents Association and Club Managers Association to determine the percentage of non-English-speaking workers at their facilities. The respondents with the greatest percentage of non-English speaking workers were

sent a follow-up request to visit with them and interview various managers and other employees. Their kind invitations set the stage for my travels.

Over a three-week period in June I visited 21 facilities and interviewed 49 people ranging in position from club managers, human resource managers, superintendents, assistant superintendents, office managers, mechanics and foremen. These individuals provided me with a wealth of information regarding management practices used for their workers. I traveled from Jacksonville to Key West and experienced a tremendously diverse assortment of management practices which I recorded in my interviews and have compiled into a training model for new or inexperienced managers supervising a culturally diverse workforce.

The cultural breakdown of the countries represented at these facilities was surprisingly diverse. Many people be-

lieve the Hispanic worker has occupied a large percentage of the labor force in Florida. That perception reflects reality in many parts of central and south Florida, but I found large pockets of areas where Hispanic influence is minimal or entirely non-existent. These areas and others across the state still have predominantly American workers or an assortment of other various cultures.

Hispanic countries: Mexico, Argentina, Honduras, Puerto Rico, Nicaragua, Ecuador, Cuba, Peru, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Colombia, Guatemala*, Venezuela, Chile, and the Dominican Republic.

Non-Hispanic countries: Haiti, Poland, Serbia, Germany, Philippines, Albania, Korea, Croatia, Czechoslovakia, and Russia (several states).

** Many Guatemalans speak a Mayan Indian dialect which is not of Hispanic origin.*

At the 21 facilities I visited, these are the countries represented in their workforces:

Hispanic countries: Mexico, Argentina, Honduras, Puerto Rico, Nicaragua, Ecuador, Cuba, Peru, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Colombia, Guatemala*, Venezuela, Chile, and the Dominican Republic.

Non-Hispanic countries: Haiti, Poland, Serbia, Germany, Philippines, Albania, Korea, Croatia, Czechoslovakia, and Russia (several states).

Many great books and resources address cultural diversity and its impact on management, and I recommend that current and new managers utilize these important resources to broaden their understanding of cultural differences.

What I found to be most valuable in researching these many differences is the individual dynamic that occurs at each facility and how it is managed by the people there. This unique and powerful variable is not found in books or

videos but establishes itself uniquely at each facility and is based upon several factors which include:

- different cultures present in the workforce
- personalities of all the different workers and managers coming together
- management styles of the club manager, superintendent, etc.
- individual club policies and procedures

When these dynamics are mixed together, it is easy to see quite a difference per facility on how to best manage that particular establishment. This concept I have hoped to capture and utilize in my model development that will show new managers the best management practices utilized in a culturally diverse workplace.

Obviously, the ability to speak the language of your workers well enough to communicate effectively is critical in successfully managing your staff, but equally important is the need to identify and understand the differences of each cultural group as it is filtered through the many personalities at your specific facility.

What I have found in my travels is great respect and appreciation for the many cultures represented in the workplace, and a tremendous flexibility on the part of the manager and workers in coming together to reach a common ground of understanding, respect and responsibility.



Bruce Witt, professor of golf course operations, Lake City Community College.

My hat goes off to all the managers and workers in our ever-changing and exciting industry; they have made their facilities productive and successful. I'm looking forward to the future, and believe that the best times are yet to come!

* Many Guatemalans speak a Mayan Indian dialect which is not of Hispanic origin.

Witt recorded "a tremendously diverse assortment of management practices which I ... have compiled into a training model for new or inexperienced managers supervising a culturally diverse workforce."

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Giving Back!

When doing just a little can mean so much to so many

By Jim Colo

At first glance you may just see a field. With a second look, it looks very much like a golf course. In 1995, a 23-acre parcel of land in Dyer Park (Palm Beach County) was leased to the Children's Golf Foundation (CGF), which is the only chapter of The First Tee program designed for mentally and physically challenged children.

Palm Beach County leased the land for the next 100 years at \$1/year solely for the purpose and mission of the foundation. That mission is to teach mentally and physically challenged children life's lessons through the game of golf.

The objective for the foundation is to increase socialization skills, increase their range of motion, build confidence, and to provide them a game they can participate in for the rest of their lives. The kids hear only two phrases as they are taught: Great swing or great shot.

Keith Stuhler, president and CEO of The Children's Golf Foundation, had volunteered for two years and then was asked to help design and build this facility in 1999. After seeking assistance from local companies in 2001, Stuhler called on superintendent Bryan Plummer from Fort Lauderdale CC to help transform the property into a golf course.

Through countless weekend hours, Plummer and Stuhler cultivated the land and managed to change the grounds into a golf course with limited funds and using equipment donated by various vendors and golf courses.

Stuhler comes from a background rooted in the golf industry. Having six uncles, all PGA professionals and his father, who owned and operated a golf course, Stuhler made his career out

With all of the time others invested in me, it was my time to give back to what has proven to be an outstanding organization. Through my knowledge and outside resources I knew I could help keep The Children's Golf Foundation keep moving in the right direction.

of being a PGA professional himself. He has recognized high standards and values within the PGA organization and feels proud of the accomplishments with the Children's Golf Foundation and his small part in designing and building such a facility gives these incredible children game of a lifetime.

Six years ago I was introduced to The Children's Golf Foundation through Plummer. I became involved because I saw something special. In my 13 years of golf course maintenance, I have been given many opportunities. I have worked at Old Marsh Golf Club since 1994. I have met many people who have influenced my career.

With all of the time others invested in me, it was my time to give back to what has proven to be an outstanding organization. Through my knowledge and outside resources I knew I could help keep The Children's Golf Foundation keep moving in the right direction.

The foundation serves 200 children

during the school year and more than 300 children in the summer. Each child who is a member of the club is given his or her own set of golf clubs. The children are taught by PGA professionals and assisted by caring, dedicated volunteers. The golf course has an 8,000 sq.ft. putting green, an 18,000 sq.ft. practice tee and four fully functional "target" greens on which to either practice or to play conventional golf. The course can be converted into 15 possible golf holes that the children can play and it carries a slope no higher than 2 percent, which is a requirement for The Americans with Disability Act.

The Tam O' Shanter clubhouse finishes off the property with its warm setting and comfortable "back porch" feel for parents to watch their children learn the game of golf.

Their "superintendent," Zach Stuhler, is learning emergency medicine by night and working very hard by day to keep the golf course looking great. With the devastation of four hurricanes, times were real tough. Donations were being distributed among many other organizations. The CGF needed all the assistance they could find. Through talking with the Stuhlers, I was able to come up with a few solutions.

When times get tough, people need help. The CGF's golf course needed a boost. Following hurricanes Jeanne, Frances, and Wilma, things at the foundation struggled. After explaining to my crew the needs of The CGF, they all agreed to volunteer their time. We put together a group of guys to help them get back on their feet. My two assistants, Eric and Donovan, my common grounds superintendent, Carlos and 18 crew members from Old Marsh and five members from Emerald Dunes G.C. gave their time on



Volunteers from the Old Marsh and Emerald Dunes golf courses pose in front of the Children's Golf Foundation clubhouse. Superintendent Jim Colo is kneeling on the right.

a Saturday in June. We accomplished quite a bit in one day. Our crews pulled weeds, fixed irrigation heads, planted new flowers around the clubhouse, patched weak areas with sod, edged, trimmed and fertilized the turf. Just one day's effort made a big difference for the foundation.

Recently, the foundation was infested by mole crickets and invaded by fire ants. After explaining the situation to Brian MacCurrach, southeastern sales representative from Bayer Environmental Sciences, he donated 14 acres worth of Top Choice. Two days later I applied it with one Lely spreader. Thanks to Bayer and MacCurrach, the CGF is clean of fire ants and mole crickets

Much of my involvement includes

assisting with fertilizer and chemical applications, irrigation needs, cultural practices, and consulting with Zach on weekly activity. We talk about timing of fertilizer applications, weed control techniques, and mowing practices. My time spent with the foundation is 10 – 20 hours a month in phone conversations and site visits.

Currently, the CGF continues to look for assistance in labor, equipment, fertilizer/chemical resources and most of all, money. Jack Nicklaus is one of the foundation's major supporters through public service announcements and other endeavors. Also, through The Loxahatchee Club, Dottie Pepper will name The Children's Golf Foundation a major charity for an LPGA event in January.

If any of you or your crew members would like to assist us in maintaining The CGF's golf course please call me. If you are physically unable to help and would like to financially support the Children's Golf Foundation, please contact Keith Stuhler.

This organization shows that despite the capacity and limitations of individuals, everybody should be able to enjoy all the opportunities possible in life. Through very small efforts of many people, not only can we make a tremendous difference for the children, but also for the parents who see and feel the strong effects the program has on the kids.

Jim Colo may be reached at 561-662-7931; Keith Stuhler may be reached at 561-842-0066

2006 Photo Contest Results

Winners of the Wildlife Category in the 2006 Florida Green Photo Contest.



First Place: Gator Day at the Pool. By Michael Mongoven, CGCS, Shell Point GC.



Second Place: Sandhill Cranes by Ted Johnson, Fairwinds GC.

2007 PHOTO CONTEST RULES

Category 1 – Wildlife on the course: includes any critter on the course that walks, flies, swims, slithers or crawls.

Category 2 – Formal Landscaping: includes specimen trees, annuals and ornamental shrubs planted in formal

beds on the course or club entrance.

Category 3 – Native Areas: includes beds of native plants including trees, shrubs and grasses used in naturalized areas to reduce turf inputs and aquatic vegetation plantings used to create habitat and protect water quality.

Category 4 – Scenic Hole: includes any view of a golf hole (panoramic or close up) that demonstrates the scenic beauty of a golf course.

EASY RULES

1. Color prints or slides. Prefer prints. Only one entry per category. Digital images: **Digital image** entries must be taken at a resolution setting of 300 dpi or higher and saved as Jpeg or Tif format images. Images taken, saved and sent at lower resolutions will not qualify for the contest. If you're not sure. Send a print instead.

2. Photo must be taken on an FGCSA member's course. Photo must be taken by an FGCSA member or a member of his staff.

3. Attach a label on the back of the print or slide which identifies the category, course and photographer. **DO NOT WRITE DIRECTLY ON THE BACK OF THE PRINT.** Each print shall be attached to an 8.5 x 11-inch sheet of paper using a loop of masking tape on the back of the print. Slides should be in plastic sleeves for easy access for viewing. Digital images must be accompanied by the same information in an e-mail or document, or on a CD.

4. A caption identifying the category, course and photographer should be typed or printed on the sheet of paper below the mounted print.

5. Judging will be done by a panel of FGCSA members not participating in the contest.

Mail entries in a bend-proof package marked "PHOTOS DO NOT BEND" to Joel Jackson, 6780 Tamarind Circle, Orlando, 32819. Entries postmarked after August 1, 2007 will be automatically entered in the 2008 Photo Contest.