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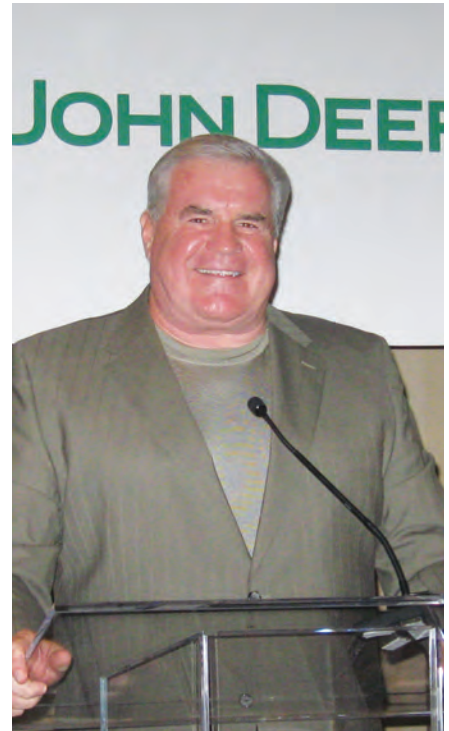
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*FGCSA President Shane Bass, CGCS and Association Manager Jennifer Innes staff the FGCSA Booth at the FTGA Trade Show. Jennifer reported that lots of Golf BMP Manuals and Media Kits were handed out. Photo by Joel Jackson.*



*Bill Bergey, four-time All-Pro middle linebacker with the Cincinnati Bengals and Philadelphia Eagles was a humorous and entertaining keynote speaker at this year's FTGA Award Luncheon. Photo by Joel Jackson.*

## **PGA National Resort Hosts 2008 FTGA Conference and Show**

The location was great. The education was outstanding. The proximity of the lobby-lounge area made for a great meeting and networking location. The Toro Corn Boil was held at the rustic and secluded Bonnet Creek Hunting Club, but was only a few minutes from the resort and offered up tasty portions of open-pit-cooked wild boar, ham butt and roasted turkey. New FTGA President Todd Himmelberger said final numbers on attendance aren't in yet, but initial results appeared optimistic for the future.

The golf course was in great condition and a real test from the tips. One of the host superintendents, Blair Kirby won the FTGA Golf Tournament and a spot on the FGCSA Team for the GC-SAA Golf Championship to be played in Gulf Shores, Ala. in February.

The FGCSA staff did its part with Association Manager Jennifer Innes helping out at the registration desk and manning the FGCSA booth in the Trade Show. Executive Director Joel Jackson



*Golf Agronomics Supply and Handling continued its generous annual support for turf research by donating \$3,000 to the FTGA Research Foundation. From left: Dale Mitchell, Todd Himmelberger, FTGA President, and Wesley Mitchell. Photo courtesy of Leading Edge Communications.*



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made a presentation on BMPs and Water Conservation in the Wednesday Golf Concurrent Session and served as moderator of the Thursday Golf Session.



*Beljan, Himmelberger and Wreath of Grass.*

Course Siting and Design section. Photo courtesy of Leading Edge Communications.

Golf Course Architect and FTGA Past President Jan Beljan was presented the 2008 FTGA Wreath of Grass award at the 56th Annual FTGA Conference and Show in Palm Beach Gardens. Beljan, with the Fazio Golf Design Group, served on the Golf BMP Manual Task Group in charge of the



*Following the swearing in of the 2008-09 FTGA officers, Immediate Past President Darren Davis from the Olde Florida Golf Club passes the gavel to President Todd Himmelberger, sales representative for DuPont Professional Products. Photo by Joel Jackson.*

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# The public should know how we are regulated

By Matthew R. Taylor, CGCS

Many folks think golf courses use water, fertilizer and pesticides wantonly. The general public has no idea what kinds of rules, regulations and inspections that golf courses are subject to as a routine matter of conducting business.

Here is a summary of all the checks and balances and regulatory authorities that dictate how we operate our golf courses. We may be unique on some items at Royal Poinciana, but most are pretty much standard for any operation.

## **COLLIER COUNTY POLLUTION CONTROL**

Because we sit on or near some of the well fields for the county, we must be inspected each year and be given a Certificate of Occupancy. Not many other golf courses in Collier County have this same requirement.

The county reviews our records on disposal of batteries, tire, oil, hydraulic fluids and any accumulated used fuel. They also review our fuel storage tanks and chemical mix-load buildings.

## **FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND COLLIER COUNTY**

Our fuel tanks each year must be inspected and certified that they are in proper working order.

## **FDEP AND CITY OF NAPLES**

The reclaimed irrigation water we receive from the city is regulated by both authorities. FDEP mandates where it can be stored to make sure it is not discharged off our property. The river that runs on the western border of the property is monitored with flow meters on the north and south end.

FDEP also requires the signage around the lakes, on the 1st and 10th tees, and on the scorecard. FDEP has also required that the city drill one monitoring well next to the irrigation lake on front nine of the Pines Course to be certain that reclaimed water is not migrating into the groundwater nearby.

## **FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND CONSUMER SERVICES (FDACS)**

Regulates pesticide use. FDACS requires that someone on the property be licensed in the safe and proper application of pesticides and that person is the applicator of record. Others may apply materials under his/her license. In our case that is me. We require that all assistants, second assistants, IPM manager and most all applicators have been licensed to apply materials safely. FDACS makes inspections to check records of applications to make sure we are complying with the labeled uses of the products. FDACS also inspects the general safe handling, application and storage of chemicals.

## **SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT (SFWMD)**

Monitors the quantity of irrigation water used. Each month we must document how much water has been used, and then the totals must be submitted to the district quarterly. Our permit specifies how much water we may use in a year. During water restrictions, we must report our pumpage weekly. We are currently on Phase II or a 30-percent reduction.

According to the South Florida Water Management District, golf courses only use 2.3 percent of the water compared to 48 percent for agriculture and 30 percent for public supply, half of which – or about 15 percent – is for outside watering.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP**

- We are a member of Audubon International's Cooperative Sanctuary program for Golf Courses, fully certified since 1995 and we re-certify every two years.

- Yearly enrollment American Compliance Technology's Gold Environmental Program. ACT is a private company that works with businesses on issues like hazardous waste clean-

up, and provides environmental consulting. We use their services for OSHA-type inspections twice per year. Every six months or so, we are inspected by one of their environmental compliance specialists who audits our facility from the parking lot to the record keeping. When a potential violation is found, it is documented. After the audit we are given a report that includes a photo of the violation. They will also cite the OSHA violation and what the fine would have been. We normally have a follow-up in 60 days to ensure we have taken care of any problems that are found.

## **WORKERS COMPENSATION INSURANCE**

- We are inspected approximately quarterly by Royal Poinciana's workers compensation insurance company to make sure we are in compliance with safe working practices.

- Internally our department has a safety committee which meets regularly. We also have monthly safety training including a video and short test afterwards. The training is in English and Spanish.

## **STAFF TRAINING**

Additional training required each year for all staff includes:

- Drug Free Workplace
- Sexual Harassment
- Violence in the Work place
- Hazardous Communication Training - reviews what is stored and applied here

- MSDS training - reviews how to read a Material Safety Data Sheet.

- Respirator training - for those who apply hazardous materials • Respirator fit testing - ensures that they can physically wear a respirator (For both of the above respirator categories, we bring someone in who is certified to train on this)

- Pesticide training - all licensed applicators must take continuing education classes to maintain their licenses.

A lot of safeguards are in place to monitor and ensure that our golf courses operate within the rules and regulations designed to ensure worker safety and environmental stewardship. ■



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The club has recycled 8 tons of cardboard using this compacter. Photo by Joe Hubbard

# Going Green Can Save Lots of Green

## Broken Sound Club Reduces its Carbon Footprint, Saves Money in the Process

By Shelly Foy, USGA Green Section

The motivation for undertaking projects often starts with one high-energy person. John Crean, general manager of the Broken Sound Club in Boca Raton is a knowledgeable, charismatic leader who is reducing energy costs, and therefore the carbon footprint of his club. Crean is not only looking for energy efficiency and fiscal economy, he always has protection of the environment in the back of his mind.

What do you do when you realize your cost for waste removal (i.e. dumpsters) approaches \$120,000 a year? Crean, along with Cathy Grana, assistant general manager, implemented a strict recycling program for the club. They eliminated polystyrene foam products and plastic water bottles, while also recycling cans, plastic, and

cardboard. To date, they have recycled eight tons of cardboard and two tons of plastic. The club is paid for the material they recycle, which helps offset their pickup costs.

Sometimes you have to get creative and even learn through trial and error. The club wanted to stop using foam, so they tried a biodegradable “ecotainer” cup but thorough research showed that the energy costs to make them was not friendly to the earth. They decided to use recyclable plastic cups, which posed a new challenge: the plastic cups sweated and dripped all over golfers.

With feedback from head professionals Scott Feller and John Skaf, Crean found a “koozie” that holds the plastic cups and fits into the golf cart’s built-in beverage holders; but golfers found that the koozies came out of the holders with the cups.

A grommet to hold the koozie in place solved that problem. When cleaning out the carts, employees remove the plastic cups and place them in the recycle bin.

But recycling wasn’t Crean’s only focus. Can you imagine Broken Sound’s

power bill with 86,000 sq. ft. in two clubhouses? One of the first steps was to replace the majority of light bulbs with compact fluorescents. They are anticipating measurable energy savings this year from just this one step.

Broken Sound had nine water heaters powered by natural gas. Crean learned that by replacing them with solar water heaters, the club could save \$15,000 a year in natural gas. Each solar water heater cost \$4,500 to install. There is a tax credit from the IRS of \$2,000 for each heater and Florida Power and Light offered a \$500 rebate per heater. Broken Sound’s investment will pay for itself in a little over a year.

Under the watchful eye of David Payne, facilities maintenance manager, solar panels were recently installed on the pool heaters, with an anticipated saving of between \$10,000 and \$15,000 a year. Not only was the choice of solar power good for the environment, it will result in significant savings to the club and considerably reduce its reliance on natural gas.

Broken Sound’s board of directors may approve a \$400,000 investment in digesters (compost units) if a three-month test proves successful.

On the day of my visit to Broken Sound, Tropical Treescapes, Inc., was picking up all of the food scraps and grass clippings mixed with palm fronds from the golf course to put in a test





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digester in Miami. They are seeking the right combination of materials to produce organic material that could be used as compost fertilizer on the fairways and roughs.

If the digester test works and Broken Sound proceeds with the investment, not only will the club be one of a handful in the country to produce their own composter fertilizer, Crean expects to save \$65,000 a year solely on reducing garbage and debris pickup. With golf course fertilizer costs increasing 80 percent since January, these digesters could potentially give the club a 33 percent reduction in fertilizer costs and water consumption over a period of two years.

In addition, if the 15-ft.-high, 50-ft.-by-8-ft. digesters are put into place, there is a plan to purchase debris from landscapers working within the club property, place this material in the digesters, and then sell the composted material back to these companies. If all

goes well with this project, it won't take long for the club to recover the cost of this investment.

The Broken Sound Club also is working toward certification in the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary for Golf Courses. Joe Hubbard, CGCS, director of golf maintenance over both courses, is looking eventually to naturalize many areas, also resulting in cost savings. More than 60 bird species can be found at Broken Sound, and, since one of Hubbard's passions is photography, many of his photographs are featured on the cover of the club's bimonthly newsletter, as well as a few national magazines.

Efforts to conserve resources and save money do not come without a lot of serious thought and research. A future investment in solar golf carts already is under discussion. Although the technology is not quite practical yet, Crean believes it soon will be. He also mentioned a company in Utah that has



*If this demo composter works, Broken Sound might save \$65,000 in garbage and debris hauling fees. Photo by Joe Hubbard.*

developed solar roof panels that look like shingles, and the hope is that solar panels will become available in barrel tile shingles, which Broken Sound currently has as roofing material for the main clubhouse.

Clubhouse Manager Ed Chichiolo, Food and Beverage Manager Tim Nel-



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