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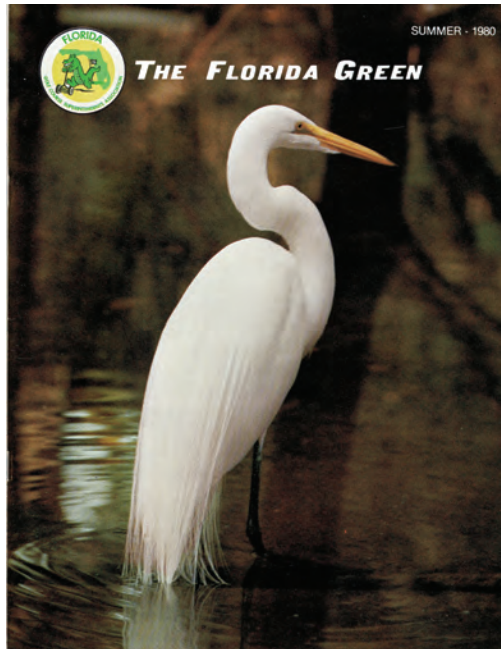
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# Celebrating 30 Years of the Florida Green

Before there was a Florida Green, there was the South Florida Green. It was the official magazine of the South Florida GCSA, the oldest of the state local chapters, having been founded in 1939. You can see the founding dates of all of the state's eleven chapters in the FGCSA membership directory, which will give you a brief history of the evolution of the FGCSA that became a reality in 1980. At that time, the South Florida Chapter in a show of unity voluntarily allowed their magazine to become the official voice of all Florida superintendents.

The South Florida Green was seven years old at the time of the conversion, having begun in April 1973. The editorial staff remained the same for several years with Editor Mike Barger and Associate Editors Tom Mascaro and Max Brown. Dan Jones became the editor in 1976 and Tom



*The first Florida Green Cover. Summer 1980. Photo by Henry McCartha*

and Max continued in their roles. The following year 1977, the first photography credits began and Harry McCartha of Henderson & McCartha served as official photographer until the summer of 1981. Staff writers David Bailey, Guy Williamson and Harry

Lincoln, III also began as regular contributors in 1977.

In the early '80s, Jones and Bailey were the primary editorial contributors, and Daniel Zelazek joined the magazine in the summer of '81 as the principal cover photographer and still holds the job today. For many years,

Mark Jarrell, CGCS, penned an editorial column on industry issues titled, "Mark My Words."

By the mid 80's Dan began recruiting chapter reporters to submit stories on a theme or topic for each issue as told from that chapter's perspective. My name can be found in there from time to time reporting for Central Florida.

After 13 years of Dan and Irene Jones turning their home into a print shop with cut-and-pasted pages all over the house once a quarter, Dan began thinking of retiring as editor. Of course the rule of the day was you had to be a superintendent to be the editor. Go figure! Anyhow after rounding up stories with Irene as the assistant editor, the Joneses were ready for a break.

In 1989, Larry Kieffer came on board with the Spring issue as publications director and has held the position ever since. By the spring of 1990, I went for

## The Advertisers Make it Happen!

The Florida Green wouldn't exist without the advertising support of our industry partners, the suppliers who support your local chapter events and your state magazine. Since we're reviewing the history of the magazine. Here are those companies that were there in the beginning. Some are still with us and many more have come on board since. Some of the companies have merged and some have gone away. Here are those pioneers from the beginning that will bring back memories for the veterans among us. In order of appearance in the 1980 issue:

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## SPOTLIGHT



Winter 1995. The era of the gatefold covers. Saddlebrook GC. Photo by Daniel Zelazek.

the Full Monty and became the FGCSA president and Florida Green editor while managing bentgrass greens at the Isleworth CC. (Pub Director's Note: Joel didn't mention that he had a heart attack that year as well)

In all this time, the magazine has gone from an eight-page chapter bulletin to issues averaging 88-92 pages in its heyday in the 1980s and 90s. We have gone from vertical covers to the horizontal fold-out covers and back to single page vertical covers. In 1991-92 we even tried six bimonthly

issues per year, but found the quarterly concept more practical for all concerned.

Speaking of the covers, people and places besides golf courses could be found on the covers in the 1980's and early 90's. Selected by the editor they depicted GCSAA Conference sites notable persons in the golf industry and of course scenic golf holes. By the early 2000s we settled on a rotating chapter plan so each region of the state could be highlighted on a regular basis. Each chapter is responsible for selecting the cover course and superintendent to be profiled.

In 2007 the FGCSA Board approved the addition of the GCSAA logo to the cover of the magazine to reflect unity with the nationwide brotherhood of superintendents on issues affecting our industry and the work being done by GCSAA to promote our profession.

Thirty years later the Florida Green goes to every golf course superintendent and club in the state with a known address. It is the official voice of the FGCSA and seeks to educate and promote the professionalism of our members.



Fall 2008. Resource stewardship forced a return to the vertical covers in 2008. Photo by Daniel Zelazek. The GCSAA logo was added in 2007.



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## CORAL OAKS GOLF CLUB

# The People's Choice

History is a fascinating window to look through, and I really enjoy doing background searches on our cover story courses. The Coral Oaks story is a perfect example of interesting tidbits and anecdotes that go unheralded until it becomes story time once again.

Coral Oaks is the municipal golf course for the city of Cape Coral and opened in 1988. The Arthur Hills course wasn't built until 30 years after the city was founded by the Gulf American Corporation. Prior to 1958 Cape Coral was mainly a hunting and fishing camp on Redfish Point on the Caloosahatchee River.

In 1963 Cape Coral covered 103 square miles with a population of 2,850. The land is mainly a peninsula bounded on the east and south by the Caloosahatchee River and on the west by Matlacha Pass which leads to San Carlos Bay and the Gulf of Mexico.

*Reaching the 2nd green is a 401 yard journey on this tree lined par 4 hole. Photo by Daniel Zelazek*

There were 80 miles of roads, 1,300 buildings, a public yacht club and one golf course. Before the Cape Coral Bridge was built, it was a 20-mile trip to Fort Myers just across the river.

By 2009, thanks in part to the building boom of the 1980s and '90s, Cape Coral is the third-largest city by area (120 sq. mi) and ninth largest by population at 162,852. It contains parks and eco-preserves, more than 400 miles of navigable waterways, and seven golf courses in the city limits. While Cape Coral sports a large retiree population, in the 1990s young families and professionals began moving in as well. Cape Coral is also the home of the largest number of burrowing owls in the state.

According to an article by Larry

Kieffer in the *The Florida Green* 20 years ago, one of the most remarkable facts is that the Coral Oaks Golf Club cost the city and its taxpayers just \$10 to build. That was the token cost for the land donated by the developer. The actual construction cost was financed through municipal bonds which were retired from golf course operating revenues.

Today, we find the city's golf course hosting around 63,000 rounds per year. Unlike many courses that see winter feasts and summer famines, superintendent Jim Foster, CGCS says the course usually averages more than 100 rounds per day year-around.

Foster added, "Of course in the dog days of summer the tee times are more concentrated in the morning and twilight special hours."



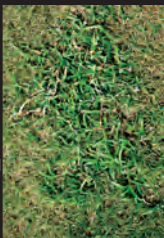


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