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# The Florida Green

Fall 2012

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**EDITOR** Joel Jackson, CGCS  
6780 Tamarind Circle  
Orlando, FL 32819  
407-248-1971 voice/fax  
FLGRN@aol.com

**PUBLICATIONS CHAIR** Kevin Sunderman  
Isla Del Sol Y&CC  
6000 Sun Boulevard  
St. Petersburg, FL 33715  
727-867-8098

**EDITOR EMERITUS** Dan Jones, CGCS  
Oviedo

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**ON THE COVER:** 15th hole. Country Club of Naples. Photo by Joel Jackson.

## FOREWORDS

### President's Message

I recently had the pleasure of participating in the first all-women's FarmLinks tour. Organized by Chris Key of BASF with support from FarmLinks, a diverse group of women in the Florida golf industry gathered for education, a golf course tour, fun and camaraderie. Dr. Laura Basher led a lively discussion on the differing ways we communicate: men vs. women. I never gave the differences much thought, but now that I'm aware of them, I hope to become a better communicator. Being immersed in two days and nights of turf talk with these amazing, friendly and dedicated ladies, reminded me again of why I love my job and enjoy being involved with all of you who share the same passion.

Speaking of passion, we need to continue our proactive stance in dealing with critical regulatory issues. Whatever your connection to the golf industry, we need your help. Regulation changes may threaten our livelihoods, so we must stay abreast of current trends. I know we all have demands on our time from families to jobs and hopefully some downtime, but please carve out some time to become involved with your associations on some level. Get your course signed up for Rounds 4 Research. Participate in chapter meetings. Volunteer for your local board. Respond to Action Alerts. Take the G.C. BMP certification exam. Numbers count. Many efforts take very little time and can pay huge dividends.

Our BMP certification program is up and running. In order to forestall any more local fertilizer ordinances that may affect our industry, the FGCSA, GCSAA, USGA and UF/IFAS, with the support of the Florida Dept. of Environmental Protection, have produced an excellent, voluntary certification exam and education program based on the Golf Course BMP manual. Our aim is to stay ahead of local regulations and build relationships with legislators and regulators. We ask you to attend one education day immediately followed by an exam. The second class and exam will be given at the FTGA Conference and Show in Orlando Sept. 26. Future sessions will be held in various sites throughout the state during the coming year. CEUs have been approved for PDI, CGCS and Florida pesticide licenses.

FGCSA representatives continue to work with our allied associations on local fertilizer ordinances with Martin County



Nancy Miller, CGCS President

the latest target. We are also working with the allies to oppose changes to pesticide-use statutes that would eliminate some critical-use products from use on urban open spaces such as golf courses, sports fields, parks, etc.

The GCSAA has assumed the reins and opened participation in the Rounds 4 Research fund-raising venture originally developed by the Carolinas GCSA. Be sure to read the information on our FGCSA website or emails from Ralph Dain on how important and easy it is to sign up your course to participate in the program. Your course simply donates a round (or rounds) of golf to be auctioned off online. Proceeds are donated to GCSAA chapters, which the course designates. The chapter then donates the proceeds to research facilities at the chapter's discretion. It's a win-win situation. Golfers get to play their dream course while donating to turfgrass science!

I also want to thank our FGCSA Industry Partners and advertisers for their continuing support of our members and our mission. Your support allows us to reach out and educate golfers, legislators and regulators. We ask all superintendents to encourage anyone doing business with them that is not already in the program to call our association manager, Jennifer Bryan, at 800-732-6053 for details on how they too can become an Industry Partner.

Get in the habit of visiting our website: [www.floridagcsa.com](http://www.floridagcsa.com) for a complete roundup of news and events around the state. There are links to all chapters so you can connect to everyone with a few simple clicks.

In closing, thanks to Mark Kann for being an excellent president last year. Mark and the BMP committee of Ralph Dain, Todd Lowe, Dr. Laurie Trenholm and Mike Thomas worked tirelessly on BMP certification, which we are now presenting to you.

I'm looking forward to a great year and I'm honored to work with the current board of directors and to represent you.



**PRESIDENT** Nancy Miller, CGCS  
Maple Leaf G&CC  
2100 Kings Highway  
Port Charlotte, FL 33980  
941-255-3677

**VICE PRESIDENT** Kevin Sunderman  
Isla Del Sol Y&CC  
6000 Sun Boulevard  
St. Petersburg, FL 33715  
727-867-8098

**SEC/TREAS** Bill Davidson, CGCS  
Country Club of Naples  
185 Burning Tree Ln  
Naples, FL 34109  
239-593-4125

**PAST PRESIDENT** MARK KANN  
UF/IFAS PSREU  
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Citra, FL 32113  
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Old Memorial GC  
813-926-2420

**STAFF**

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR** Joel Jackson  
6780 Tamarind Circle  
Orlando, FL 32819  
407-248-1971 voice/fax  
FLGRN@aol.com

**ASSOCIATION MANAGER** Jennifer Bryan  
PO Box 65  
Jensen Beach, FL 34958  
772-334-7515; 800-732-6053 (FL)  
fgcsa@comcast.net



*FGCSA Officers for 2013, from left, Secretary-Treasurer Bill Davidson, CGCS; Vice President Kevin Sunderman; President Nancy Miller, CGCS and Immediate Past President Mark Kann.*

# In the Spotlight: Volunteers, Donations, Scholarships and Golf Champs

*Howard Hulsebosch (left) won the superintendents' President's Cup and Karl Schmidt captured the vendors' Vice President's Cup at the 2012 SFGSA Chapter Golf Championship played at the Pembroke Lakes C.C.*



*FGCSA Directors for 2013, from left, Carlos Arraya, Bob Coffey, Jim Shaffer, Jim Foster, CGCS, Ricky Reeves, Bill Tyde and Brian Main. Not pictured: Rickey Craig, Scott Scamehorn and Trent Inman, CGCS.*



*PBGCSA Scholarship Winners. Dads and students: From left and top to bottom: Joe Hubbard (red shirt). Jeff Klontz, Karliegh Klontz, Tennison Hubbard, Moises Rodriguez III, and Moises Rodriguez. Steve Wright (dark jacket w/light slacks) Bailey Wright and J.B. Branstrom (green shirt). Marissa Miller (floral dress), Dan Miller, Jayne Branstrom and Larry Balko, PBGCSA President. Not pictured: Isabel Branstrom and Pierce Wright.*



*The Low Gross winners of the TCGCSA's Blue Pearl Tournament at Quail Valley were, from left, Matt Redmond, Rob Kloska, Paul Emmi and John Foy.*



*Steve Bernard from the Adios GC won a place on the FGCSA Golf Team by capturing the Individual Flight at the FGCSA Golf Championship at the Southern Dunes GC in Haines City.*



*Winners in the Palm Beach Future of Golf event in the Gross Division were, from left, Shawn Rosario, Jeff Valdry, Pete Vitali and Bill Palmer.*



*Mike Giddens (left) congratulates Tim Keeney for winning the 2012 Jack Harrell, Sr. Memorial – Ridge Invitational last June at the Cleveland Heights GC in Lakeland.*



*The Palm Beach GCSA Team captured the Chapter Team Division at the 2012 FGCSA Golf Championship. From left, Mark Henderson, Steve Wright, Mark Heater, Deron Zendt and Steve Bernard.*



TCGCSA's Blue Pearl Tournament donated \$10,000 to the Florida Oceanographic Society. From left, Kellie Van O's, Chris Gast and Suzanne Ross.

President Marcus Prevatte (left) presented Dr. John Cisar, UF/IFAS a check for \$20,000 for turf research during the SFGCSA Annual Meeting.



Lebanon Turf presented the SFGCSA with a check for \$3,000 after Joe Pantaleo's dog, Maise, won the company's 2013 Dog-of-the-Year contest. A photo of Maise is at the bottom of the poster. Pictured are, from left, Lebanon's Greg Ellis, Superintendent Joe Pantaleo, and Chris Holter and Lissa Donald-Minus.

## 2012 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### OCTOBER

- 4-6** FGCSA Fall Board Meeting and NFGCSA Fall Classic at the Amelia Island Plantation.
- 16** Suncoast Pro-Superintendent, Lemon Bay Club
- 19** South Florida Missing & Exploited Children Tournament, site TBA
- 29-30** Chemical Spill Response Training Sessions in order by date: Jacksonville and Sebring. Contact Chris Pappas at 863-287-5957.

### NOVEMBER

- 11** Suncoast "Bucs Bus Trip" to Tampa
- 15** Treasure Coast Education and Golf Outing – Site TBA
- 26-30** Chemical Spill Response Training Sessions in order by date: Ft. Pierce, Jacksonville, Lake Wales, Ft. Myers, Boynton Beach and Naples. Contact Chris Pappas at 863-287-5957.

### DECEMBER

- 2** Treasure Coast Annual Christmas Outing, Grand Harbor Club
- TBA** Calusa Christmas Charity Event
- 19-21** Chemical Spill Response Training Sessions in order by date: Ft. Plant City, Bradenton and Sebring. Contact Chris Pappas at 863-287-5957.

### FEBRUARY

- 7** FGCSA Annual GIS Reception, Hotel Palomar, San Diego



Steve Pearson (right), host of the PBGCSA Future of Golf event, outbid the competition to win the Power Pak Auction by Brian MacCurrach of Bayer Environmental Science. The winning \$7,100 bid was donated back to the chapter.

THE 2012

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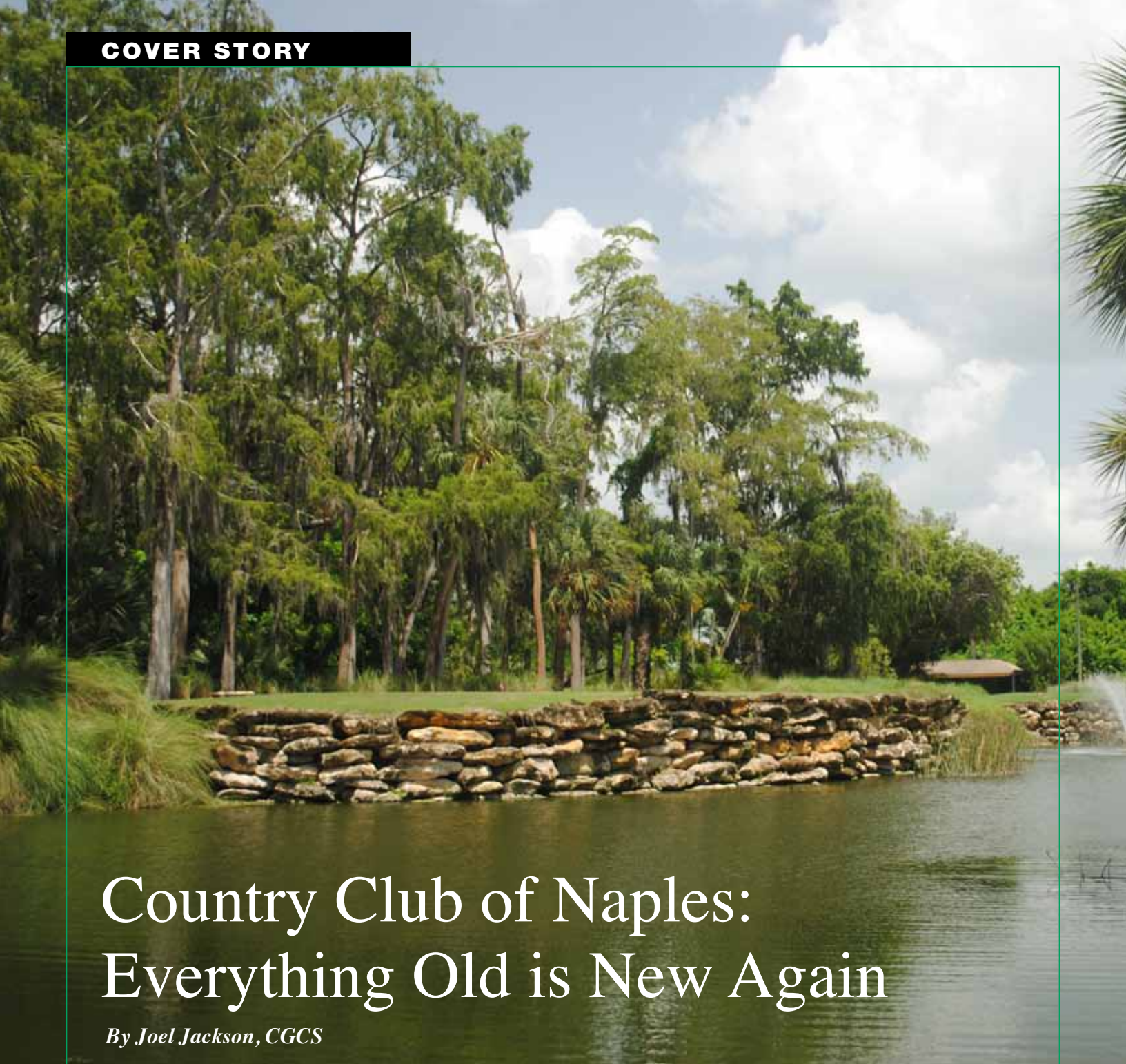
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# Country Club of Naples: Everything Old is New Again

*By Joel Jackson, CGCS*

The last stop on the 2012 tour of South Florida courses is the Country Club of Naples (CCN). A search of the club's website indicated that CCN was the fourth course built in the Naples area following the Beach Club (1920s), Hole-in-the-Wall (1957) and Palm River (1959) which were already active by 1966. The growth of golf in southwest Florida over the past 46 years didn't really explode until the real estate development boom in the 1980s and 90s.

The Country Club of Naples is located

just off Goodlette-Frank Rd, which fronts quite a few of Naples' in-town golf courses. The banks of the Gordon River Extension mark the eastern boundary of the golf course property and the Gulf of Mexico lies a scant two miles to the west as the crow flies. The course property, with its five lakes and 15 acres of natural areas, creates a prolific wildlife habitat in the urban setting.

In describing the architectural design of the course, superintendent Bill Davidson said, "The style of this course emphasizes

the ground game, in the true spirit of the iconic golf courses built during the 'Golden Age' of course design. There are very few forced carries from the tees or 'heroic' shots required to reach the greens on this course. The challenge lies in hitting fairways and mastering your short game around the accessible greens."

To that end Davidson's maintenance program seeks to maximize fast and firm playing conditions throughout the course.

The architect, Bill Diddel, was an



*View of the 16th Tee complex from the fairway. Photo by Joel Jackson.*

Indiana native and his design portfolio teems with a long list of Midwestern golf courses, but he also designed and/or remodeled some notable Florida courses, including Melbourne G&CC, Sunset G&CC and Sunset Hills CC all in 1926; Jupiter Island (1958); CC of Naples (1963) and the Bardmoor Courses (East – 1968 and North and South in 1974). Diddel also did remodels or expansions of Ponce de Leon Resort (1955); Oceanside G&CC (no date) and the Mountain Lake Club (1961).

The subtitle of this story is “Everything Old is New Again.” One of the main reasons for that selection is that back in the late 1930’s, according to the link

## SUPERINTENDENT FACTS

### Meet Bill Davidson, CGCS

**Originally from:** Born in Miami. Grew up in Naples.

**Family:** Wife Trisha. Together we have four kids. We are busy!

**Education:** Graduated Barron Collier High School in 1992. Worked at Quail Creek for Steve Durand while waiting to get into Lake City CC (Now Florida Gateway College). 1996 AA in Golf Operations from Lake City.

**Employment history:** 1996 spray tech Collier’s Reserve CC for Tim Hiers; 2000 Promoted to assistant superintendent at Colliers Reserve CC; 2003-2008 superintendent Naples Grande GC; 2008- Present superintendent Country Club of Naples.

**Professional affiliations/awards:** Class of ’96 President Lake City CC Golf Operations. GCSAA member for 18 years. Past president of the Everglades GCSA and board member for 10 years. Currently secretary/treasurer of the Florida GCSA and serve as chairman of the Government Relations Committee. 2001 recipient of the GCSAA’s Environmental Leaders in Golf Award for both Private Clubs and Overall category.

**Goals/Accomplishments:** Attained my CGCS status earlier this year. This has been a goal since college. Try to be as good a father as possible, which can be challenging in today’s “in your face” atmosphere. Teach my new assistant what my mentors shared with me. Implemented and administered Audubon International’s Signature Sanctuary Program. Included among his achievements are “Recipient - Environmental Leaders in Golf Award for Private Country Clubs 2002,” sponsored by the Golf Course Superintendent’s Association of America, and “Recipient - Overall Winner for Environmental Leaders in Golf 2002,” sponsored by Golf Digest.

**Personal philosophy of work:** In today’s golf market, great greens and playing surfaces are not just for special occasions, they are the standard. Run your operation like a business and balance what you do with how it affects the bottom line.

**Hobbies and Interests:** Fishing and coaching his children’s sports teams.



**BILL DAVIDSON, CGCS**

Photo by Joel Jackson.



*A natural area on the 13th hole. Photo by Joel Jackson.*





*The open accessible 17th green is an example of the “ground game” course design. Photo by Joel Jackson.*

titled “Bill’s History” on the website, “The Golf Courses of Bill Diddel,” he became intrigued with the idea of smaller golf courses to bring more people into the game. He even developed a golf ball that flew half the distance of a regular golf ball. It never caught on, but 40 years later the “Cayman Ball” with similar “shorter” flight characteristics was developed.

Today, the golf industry is engaged in “Growing the Game” and “Tee It Forward” initiatives to make golf easier and more enjoyable to attract more golfers. CCN already has a friendly

ground-game design and they are adding a set of Silver tees so shorter hitters can move up and still enjoy their golf outings.

Davidson brought a few more interesting and noteworthy facts about Diddel to my attention. By 1971, he had shot his age 1,261 times. He shot his age 77 times at the age of 81 in 1966. In 1970 at age 86 Diddel played CCN and shot a 74. At the age of 93 he made his seventh hole-in-one which put him in the Golf Digest’s all-time hole-in-one record book. He passed away on February 25, 1985 just a few months shy of his 101st birthday.

Following the story’s theme of renewal, the club rebuilt the original greens to USGA specifications in 1997. The original irrigation system was modernized in 2004 and, in 2009, a complete restoration of the course was done under the guidance of architect Gordon Lewis. Everything was refreshed and restored except the greens’ wells, which remained in their original locations.

During these reconstruction projects, Davidson learned quite bit about the soil profile he was managing.



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The layout of the course is a north-south orientation with the front nine occupying the western half of the property and the back nine the eastern half closest to the Gordon River Extension. He already knew he had rocky subsoil on the back nine and mostly a sandy profile on the front nine. In southwest Florida, finding limestone near the surface is not an unusual occurrence. However, buried rocks ranging in size from baseballs to steamer trunks play havoc with aerifying, verticutting and Curfew injection blades and tines.

During each construction project, Davidson's crew has major harvests of the rocks and boulders and uses them as riprap to stabilize several of the course's lake banks. He has quite a rock garden growing around the lake behind the tenth green. Seasonal aerifying also identifies more rocks under the surface. Each rock harvested means fewer broken tines and lower parts costs each year.

Another project that Davidson undertook was necessitated in 2005 when hurricane Wilma slammed into south Florida from the Gulf of Mexico. He said that they have planted more than 700 trees on the course to replace the damaged landscaping.

The landscaping and "rock mining" comments lead to another aspect of modern course management that is slowly but surely evolving – the use of social media and other popular computer-age communications opportunities to keep members informed of golf course news.

The membership at the County Club on Naples is made up of about 25 percent year-round residents and 75 percent seasonal members who come down for the winter season. When the course was being rebuilt from stem to stern, Davidson started a blog to keep them informed of the various individual projects and overall progress. After discussions about content and presentation with the club leadership, Davidson launched the CCN Golf Maintenance blog site during the course rebuild in 2009.

The advantages of having a blog are twofold: First, when members are gone for eight to nine months and come back, the course looks normal or slightly different with new features, but they have no idea of the amount of work that actually went on during those long, hot summer months.

Davidson's regular blog entries with ample photographs documented the challenges and time and effort it took to accomplish the finished product. The blog became an instant hit with the members and now, if he misses posting something regularly, people write and ask what's going on.

The second benefit is that now there is a large group of members who know what's going on, and when a fellow member asks a question about maintenance, they say, "What, you didn't read about that on Bill's blog?" There's no doubt blogging can be an excellent communication method to keep members informed. Davidson admits that it's not all work and no play. Sometimes he just posts "beauty shots" of the course like blooming flowerbeds,

## DAVIDSON FUN FACTS



*Bill with a large pike he caught on a trip to Lake Lac Seul in Ontario. Photo by Joel Jackson.*

**Vehicle:** 2003 GMC Yukon

**I stay home to watch:** The Discovery Channel

**What I've been reading:** Fictional and historical books about Florida

**Favorite meal:** Seafood

**Prized possessions:** Family

**Personal heroes:** My Dad

**I'm better than anyone else when it comes to:** Observation

**If I could do it over:** Might have become an engineer. I'm very analytical.

**I'd give anything to meet:** Benjamin Franklin

**My fantasy is:** To become independently wealthy

**The one thing I can't stand:** Misuse of words and grammar in the English language.

**If I could change one thing about myself:** I know where to get copies of records online and from other hardcopy sources, but I'd be more of a paperwork saver.

**My most irrational act:** At age six, donning my Batman costume and jumping off the roof.

**Most humbling experience:** A chewing out by Tim Hiers.

**The words that best describe me:** Leadership, communicator, people person.

**My dream foursome would be:** Matt Damon, George Lopez, Toby Keith and me.

**My best fish story:** Taking my son fishing and watching him land his first catch with his granddad and me present.

**My most amazing/lucky/important golf shot:** Scoring two eagles from 150 yards out from the green.