

## Off The Fringe

# So Much More Than a Maintenance Facility

GEORGIA SUPERINTENDENT KNOWS HOW TO THROW A GOOD PARTY

By Anthony Pioppi, Contributing Editor

**A** maintenance facility can be so much more than just a place to store equipment and have lunch. At the Oaks Course in Covington, Ga., the building took on the role of reception hall.

When the course's one banquet room was double-booked for two December events last year, an idea was floated about using superintendent Curtis Singleton's building for one of the events. Singleton said OK, and the result was a hit at the semiprivate layout.

"It was a heck of a job and effort by him and his crew," said course owner Dick Schultz.

According to Schultz, a wedding reception was scheduled the same day as a popular year-end golf tournament that featured a post-round meal. The problem came to light during a staff meeting, and after a short discussion Covington's maintenance facility was chosen as the area to be used by the golfers.

Covington, who had only been on the job since October, went to work. He and his crew even fashioned two large wreaths out of black drainage tile and large pine branches. For the occasion the building was renamed, "The North Pole."

When the big day came, machines were moved outside or lined tightly in the back of the building so there was plenty of room for about 130 golfers.

"It was a good situation for me," said Covington, who stayed at the course the entire day to make sure the event went smoothly. "They were asking me questions, and I told them about our facility and the equipment. A lot of them had never seen the equipment. We try to get our work done early so golfers don't even know we've been there."

Schultz said the day enlightened many people to how their green fees are spent. "They saw the things we need to keep the course in shape," he said.

## What's Mona's Handicap?

One might think that Steve Mona, as CEO of the GCSAA, plays golf about four times a week. One might also think that Mona, because he plays such frequent golf, could hold his own with the pros.

But that's not exactly the way things are. Mona doesn't play that much golf. In fact, he's lucky to play once a week. Mona says he plays 15 rounds to 20 rounds a year.

"In the golf business, the saying is, 'The closer you are to the game, the less you play.' As I continued to advance in my career, I played less golf," Mona says.

The golf he does play is business golf, Mona adds, although he's starting to play more golf with his children.

Because Mona doesn't play as much golf as one might think, his handicap has gone up over the years. But make no mistake: Mona is a good golfer with a handicap around 12. He doesn't find himself in the drink and the woods as much as the average golfer.

"My lowest handicap was a round a 6," he says. "I was in the single digits for a lot of years."

Here's betting that one day Mona will be back in the single digits — when he retires from his career and has more time on his hands. — **Larry Aylward, Editor**



## Bayer Backs Assistant Education

COMPANY PLANS MORE EVENTS AROUND THE COUNTRY

By Frank H. Andorka Jr., Managing Editor

**W**ith all of the educational opportunities available to superintendents around the country, who had time to put on an educational program targeted at assistants? Well, Bayer Environmental Science did.

In March, the company hosted a program called the Future Superintendents Academy for North Carolina assistants at its research facility in Clayton, N.C. Forty assistants attended, inspiring the company to try and do

other such events around the country. Bayer and Toro distributor Smith Turf and Irrigation Co co-hosted the two-day seminar.

"We look at these people as the future of the industry," said Trey Warnock, a Bayer sales representative. "We felt it should be part of our mission to prepare them for the day when they're ready to be superintendents."

The educational program consisted of presentations from USGA Southeast Regional Director Patrick O'Brien on

topdressing, a panel of local professors talking about turf diseases (and solutions), as well as a presentation on the ins and outs of leasing machinery.

As an added bonus, the two hosts surprised the assistants and paid a year's membership for the attendees to the Carolinas GCSA at a cost of \$25 per membership.

"We really believe the Carolinas GCSA is a great organization that does a lot of good for the superintendent profession," Warnock said. "It will help these assistants get involved in the educational programs it offers and may inspire them to get more involved."