

**O**n February 14<sup>th</sup> I had the honor to be in the Florida GCSA delegation along with FGCSA President Mark Kann and Vice President Nancy Miller, CGCS, as part of the Allied Golf Associations in Florida that went to the state capitol in Tallahassee to celebrate Florida Golf Day. Joining us were Todd Lowe, USGA Florida Green Section and Pete Snyder, Florida Turfgrass Association.

Both houses of the Florida Legislature and Governor Rick Scott proclaimed February 14, 2012 to be Florida Golf Day in recognition of the Economic, Environmental, Charitable, and Wellness and Youth Developmental contributions of the Florida golf industry to the state of Florida.

The lineup of Golf Associations was impressive: The GCSAA, World Golf Foundation, PGA of America, PGA Tour, LPGA, Club Managers Association of America, Florida Club Managers Association of America, USGA Florida Green Section, The First Tee, Florida Junior Golf Council, World Golf Hall of Fame, Florida Turfgrass Association, Florida State University Professional Golf Management School, Golf Channel and the David Leadbetter Golf Academy were all there.

Rhett Evans, CEO of the GCSAA, and Ralph Dain, GCSAA's Florida Field Representative, were in attendance. Rhett was the superintendent's representative in the business roundtable session and in private meetings with the governor and legislators. I was in the gallery at the business roundtable. Rhett did a great job of discussing the environmental contributions of courses in general and the Florida GCSA's contributions in particular.

Also at the roundtable were the heads of several state departments like Enterprise Florida, the Senate Commerce Committee, the House Economics Affairs Committee, the Department of Economic Opportunity, Enterprise Florida, the Florida Sports Foundation, Visit Florida and the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). The most welcome and unexpected report came from Drew Bartlett of the Florida DEP's Department of Water Policy. Mr. Bartlett raved about the Florida GCSA's proactive in-

## Is Florida Golf Day Just the Start?

BY JOEL JACKSON



**I HAD ALWAYS  
HOPED THAT THE  
WE ARE GOLF  
CONCEPT WOULD  
TRICKLE DOWN TO  
THE STATE LEVEL.  
I'M GLAD FLORIDA  
ASSOCIATIONS ARE  
NOW ON BOARD  
WITH THE IDEA.**

volvement and cooperation in the development of the Florida Golf BMP Manual. I admit, I was filled with pride as he spoke so highly of our association's role in the partnership with DEP and the development of the manual, which has received national recognition.

Rhett was quick to point out that the FGCSA was now developing a voluntary certification program for the Golf BMPs, which we hope to have in place later this year. We are working out final details with the DEP, Department of Agriculture and the University of Florida. The exam portion has already been Beta-tested. We are now developing a designated team of qualified presenters to present the material.

Meanwhile, behind the scenes at the Allied Golf Association reception on Monday night before Florida Golf Day, the energy generated by the occasion brought another welcome surprise as discussions focused on creating a permanent "Florida Golf Council" of all the associations. The council would meet regularly to stay current on issues facing the industry and speak with a consistent message. I know several states already have such coalitions and have been very successful, so I was pleased to see this initiative on everyone's mind. I had always hoped that the We Are Golf concept would trickle down to the state level. I'm glad Florida associations are now on board with the idea.

It was heartening to see the officers of the various state departments begin to recognize how the various pieces of the Florida Golf puzzle fit and how they contribute to the economic, social and environmental well being of the state. I encourage all of you to reach out to your state golf organizations and give it a try.

---

*Certified superintendent Joel Jackson is Executive Director of the Florida GCSA.*