



**“It often takes hard times
to bring people together
for a common cause.”**

JOEL JACKSON, *Contributing Editor*

Golf shows and golf days

In January, I attended the PGA Merchandise Show in Orlando. February found me in San Diego at the Golf Industry Show and in Tallahassee for Florida Golf Day.

My main goal at the PGA show was to connect with my golf media contacts and fellow members of the International Network of Golf. I also was interested in growing the game initiatives and the latest news from the Golf Channel, which unveiled a new Morning Drive feature format.

Like the GCSAA Rounds-4Research project to raise funds for education, research and advocacy, the success of growing the game programs such as Get Golf Ready, Play It Forward and First Tee depends on people's involvement. Everyone can find the time to do what they deem is important in their lives. How are these golf industry-enhancing projects not getting more attention?

Here are some takeaways from the GCSAA Education Conference in San Diego. The show is a melting pot of superintendents from around the globe. As usual, I found the Opening and General Sessions ranging from inspirational to entertaining. I hope Tim Rosaforte and Brandel Chamblee take their newly found regard for superintendents on the air during more telecasts.

I really enjoyed the general sessions on the Politics of Water and the USGA Golf Talk program. There is a nice cross-section of issues, research facts and audience feedback.

Water is our number one concern, especially given officials' and the public's idea that golf is a big water consumer. That brings me now to state Golf Days.

As of February, the Florida GCSA is one of five founding members of the new Florida Golf Alliance, comprising the

North and South Florida sections of the PGA, the Florida chapter of the Club Managers Association and the Florida State Golf Association.

Florida GCSA President Nancy Miller, CGCS, joined association leaders and Steve Mona, CEO of the World Golf Foundation, in visiting with legislators and department heads from the Florida Sports Foundation and the tourism bureau Visit Florida. They were there to encourage the state to target destination golf advertising.

In a golf industry roundtable meeting, each group presented facts, giving state leaders a clear idea of the economic and environmental impact of the Florida golf industry. Beyond the number-crunching stats, quality of life issues were highlighted. A perfect example was the

presentation by Special Olympics champion golfer Susie Doyens.

Doyens explained to this roundtable of imposing “suits” that she was a non-verbal special needs person, who, through the sport of golf, came out of her shell, became a fierce competitor and ultimately became a spokesperson for the Special Olympics. You had to be there. It was a special moment for those of us who sometimes take the benefits of golf for granted.

Beyond Golf Day, the new Alliance hopes to partner more closely on the issues facing the golf industry, including H-2B, water availability and growing the game.

It often takes hard times to bring people together for a common cause. I urge those in states where golf associations haven't joined together yet to do so sooner than later.

I'll have more updates from more meetings — there's never a shortage of those — in the upcoming months. Recently I've been to the Turf and Ornamental Communicators Association meeting (nice job, team *Golfdom!*), the Everglades GCSA *Poa Annua* Classic, the International Network of Golf meeting, the Florida GCSA Spring Board meeting and the Jack Harrell Sr. Ridge Invitational. All good meetings, all very productive.

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