



THE GREEN SHEET

VOLUME XXVI, PART III, MAY/JUNE 2010

NEWSLETTER OF THE FLORIDA GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENTS ASSOCIATION



Suncoast GCSA President Jeff Strother presented a \$3,500 check for Turfgrass Research to FGCSA Executive Director Joel Jackson, CGCS Retired at the 2010 Suncoast Scramble In Sarasota. Photo by Darden Nicks.

May 6th – FGCSA Spring Board Meeting, Naples Beach and GC

May 6th – FGCSA Past Presidents Dinner, Naples

May 6th – Palm Beach GCSA Chapter Meeting, Broken Sound CC

May 7th – FGCSA/USGA Seminar and Poa Annu G.C. Horn Memorial Tournament, Naples

May 8th – EGCSA Poa Annu Classic

Upcoming Events

and Luau, Naples Beach Hotel and GC

May 17th – Treasure Coast GCSA, Blue Pearl Tournament, The Medalist

May 19th – IFAS Field Day, G.C. Horn Turf Plots, Citra

May 19th – West Coast GCSA Chapter Meeting, Lake Jovita GC

June 5th – Palm Beach GCSA Future of Golf Tournament, The Falls CC

June 17th – Seven Rivers GCSA Annual Meeting and Vendor Appreciation Day

July 29th – Palm Beach GCSA Annual Meeting, Polo Club of Boca Raton

July 30th – Central Florida GCSA Crowfoot Seminar

July 31st – Central Florida GCSA Larry Kamphaus Crowfoot Open

Aug. 2nd – West Coast GCSA Pro/Superintendent Tournament

President's Message By Bill Kistler

Spring has finally arrived. It's nice to get beyond those cold days of winter. Weeds seem to be at a premium this spring, so there's more than just oak and pine pollen in the air: must be great for herbicide sales.

Many of us are preparing to treat for mole crickets or in some cases, this has already been completed. Aerification has been scheduled or taken place. I think you get the picture; this is a very busy time of year.

Things have been heating up on the State legislature front. Mike Goldie sent out an update about Senate Bill SB382 coming out of committee amending the state model ordinance to allow fertilizer applicators with limited certification to be allowed to apply fertilizer during the blackout periods. Make no mistake, while homeowners and lawncare

companies have been the primary target of the two dozen local fertilizer ordinances so far, a Sierra Club member was heard to respond to a question of why the Golf BMPs make us "exempt" from the blackouts by saying, "They're next!"

GCSAA has prepared comments to assist us in reaching out to our legislators in Florida regarding EPA's Numeric Nutrient Criteria proposal. This link can be found on the GCSAA Home page under the Advocacy header. Follow the links to create your talking points and email to your representatives. The comment period directly to EPA ended April 28th, but contacting your lawmakers will let them know the ramifications of this unworkable unfunded mandate that comes from a lawsuit settlement and not from scientific debate or common sense. There are some great events coming up. May 7 - 8 the "POA" sponsored by the Everglades



Bill Kistler

chapter, the Treasure Coast's Blue Pearl on May 17th, the University of Florida Turf Field day on May 19, and don't forget to mark your calendar for September 15 - 17 FTGA in Orlando.

It's also time for membership renewals with your local chapter to go out. It is through your dues and participation that we have been able to make the progress that we have on issues that affect our industry and build working relationships with allied associations and regulators. As you renew your dues, also renew your commitment to participate in your profession. Stricter water, fertilizer and pesticide regulations loom on the horizon and we must meet these challenges with research and advocacy.

Please make sure you support your local chapters: attend your local meetings and events, participate in the continuing education that is planned for your area and volunteer to serve on your local Board. We depend on each other. As always, I wish you all success in your endeavors.



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All material submitted for printing will be edited at the discretion of the editor. Material must be typed or clearly printed. Photos are encouraged. Items must be for the good of the association.

Deadline next issue June 15.

Executive Director Report

By Joel Jackson, GCCS

1. Legislative update: There are a couple of bills that seek to modify or cancel out previous legislation and a couple more attempting to address the frenzy over fertilizer regulation. A bill seeking to put Fertilizer Regulation under the Dept. of Ag has failed so far as it smelled too much like “pre-emption” for the Home Rule forces. Another that seeks to negate the ban on the sale of fertilizer during blackout periods has passed so far.

In Water World, there is a bill afoot to repeal last year’s decision to allow permits/rules passage by the Water Management District Directors alone without the full Board’s vote or public input, not that both wouldn’t have been consulted, but they weren’t binding. In other water concerns over quality issues, the EPA Numeric Nutrient Criteria “Railroad Express” campaign has slowed down and won’t reach conclusion until sometime in 2011 as the outcry against this rush to assign fixed numbers was so loud EPA had to “Stop, Look and Listen.”

Meanwhile ramifications are still being felt as N and P concentrations in reclaimed water are raising concerns for such waters stored in holding ponds and irrigations lakes for fears of overflow during a storm event and discharging into protected state waters. Nitrogen in 6 to 9 ppm in reclaimed water is a far cry from the 1.6 ppm being considered by EPA. Cleaning that water up before it’s used for irrigation will cost Florida citizens and local

governments more than they can afford.

But there is some good news. St. Lucie County recently adopted the State’s Model Fertilizer Ordinance as their local fertilizer ordinance. So that’s one more of only a couple for science over emotion. Jacksonville/Duval and Orange County also passed ordinances that offer some common sense and science based options rather than the draconian blackouts that can serve up unintended consequences of thinner turf which is shown to allow more soil erosion and phosphorous pollution. That’s peer reviewed fact, not opinion.

2. Association Business: The FGCSA will hold its Spring Board Meeting in Naples at 10:00 AM on Thursday, May 6th in conjunction with the Everglades Poa Annua Classic. The Board will address the upcoming fiscal year budget among other business items. Among those other items being considered are: A new interactive website, online credit card payment service for dues renewals, registrations, magazine advertising, and expanding local chapter dues renewal collections for chapters seeking that state service option.

In other association news, the FTGA has moved its office from Orlando to Lakeland. New contact information and address can be found at www.ftga.org.

3. Education: The FGCSA will host its 2nd USGA Green Section Half-Day Seminar at the Poa Annua on Friday, May 7th from 8:00 am to Noon. GCSAA Education Points are available. A

complete agenda can be found elsewhere in this issue. And in a few short months it will be time for the FTGA Annual Conference and Show with a change in venue from Palm Beach Gardens to Southwest Orlando near Disney at the Caribe Royale Hotel near Lake Buena Vista. Details can be found at www.ftga.org.

General Comments: The long economic slump is starting to take casualties among our brothers and sisters in all phases of our industry as crew members lose jobs to staff cutbacks, superintendent burnout is growing as juggling more with less takes its toll when golfers, club members, club board officers and committee members don’t share common goals and expectations. Industry partners can’t make sales to clubs not buying equipment, products or services. And the common sentiment is that the golf industry will never be like it was during the boom years.

Maybe being as “chronologically experienced” as I am, I can see a bigger picture when I factor in my parents’ privations and challenges as children in The Great Depression. They endured and of course the economy rebounded and they lived the “Dream” as they provided for their three kids, forged a secure retirement and enjoyed work and family times.

I have no doubt that history will repeat itself once again. In that

Continued on page 4...

long meantime since the 30's and war years of the 40's, we grew fat and sassy and mostly impatient as technology gave us instantaneous gratification or at least instant access to options and information. We aren't used to waiting. We have clicked our way to alternative answers and courses of action for so many years that patience is not something we are not used to having to embrace. But there aren't a lot of alternatives out there today. Everybody is hurting and running on reduced resources so patience is the only practical measure one can employ unless you find something entirely different you want to try, but even then other professions and industries have their challenges too.

So take a deep breath and find the simple pleasures in the day. Don't expect miracles, but pray for progress. Smile more and complain less to project a positive attitude to all around you. Take care and hang in there.



During the Awards Ceremony at the NFGCSA Memorial Tournament (l-r) John Piersol from Lake City received \$2,000 for the LCCC Scholarship Fund, Pepper Peete of the 1st Tee of Jacksonville and Thomas Lawrence of the 1st Tee of Duval County each received checks for \$1,500 for their organizations. Photo by Joel Jackson.

Andy Maguire (left) host of the 2010 North Florida Memorial Tournament and Past President of the NFGCSA was given the 2010 Keeper of the Green Award by NFGCSA President Chris McCranie on April 12th during the event at the Marsh Creek CC in St. Augustine. Photo by Joel Jackson.



Making Every Dollar Count

By Anthony L. Williams, CGCS, CGM
Stone Mountain Golf Club by Marriott
Published in "Through the Green"
March/April 2010

The way that money flows through any economy has been tracked and studied for years especially during difficult times. The legendary Benjamin Franklin gave us some great wisdom when he said, "a penny saved is a penny earned" and we all know how many pennies we were asked to save from our budgets in 2010. But what about the money we spend? Do we really take the time to look at the way our spending affects the golf industry and ultimately our jobs?

During these difficult times it is more important than ever to make every dollar count and be able to get the most out of every dollar we spend. It is more complex than comparing base pricing. Truly these days it is more about what do you get for your money. There are many options for products and services available to us but which ones are really the best. What intangibles affect the value of a product or service? I decided to evaluate my purchasing process and what I learned surprised me. I learned a lot about vendors and products and it really helped me gain a better perspective on tracking the value of our purchasing power as superintendents. I improved my purchasing process by asking three questions to each vendor before I

make any purchase. The questions are #1 does your company support the advancement of the Golf Course Superintendent? #2 what is the actual value of your product and are there any services or guarantees that add value to the deal? Finally, #3 why I should put my reputation on the line by supporting you and your company? If every member of the GGCSA asked these questions and we worked together with vendors to maximize our efforts it would be an unprecedented win – win situation that could see us all through these tough times. Let me explain.

Supporting the Golf Course Superintendent

The question, does your company support the advancement of the golf course superintendent starts with a simple yes or no answer. I learned that some vendors really support our association and the growth of our profession while others do very little or nothing at all. I want to support the people who can say they are committed to seeing a strong golf industry and do so through a documented support (not just financial) of the Golf Course Superintendent. I recently had many vendors that I have never seen or heard from before arrive in my office hoping to bid several upcoming renovation projects. I asked them the first question and received various answers but when I looked at the GGCSA roster and magazine for evidence of their

answers I found none. When I looked at sponsorships from this season I found none. Collectively they could all do the work but none had any interest in building a career long relationship they just wanted the money, now. Then I did find some bold and committed companies that passed the first test for me to do business with them, they had for years reinvested some of their profits back into the very people who they depend on to stay in business, Golf Course Superintendents (GCS). They saw me the GCS as a partner in their success and not as a sheep to be fleeced. I now understand that I should support the people who support my career choice through their words, deeds and donations. It is my choice to spend my budget dollars with vendors who invest in the future of the Golf Course Superintendent. It is this relationship that creates the value of Industry sponsorships for education and edification. It is my responsibility to remind my vendor partners that it is important to me that they invest in our industry/profession and that I will back up my commitment with cash on the barrel head. In short, if I put a potential vendor on trial for supporting the golf course superintendent is there enough evidence to convict them.

What do I really get for my Money

The second question that I ask vendors to make every dollar count is what is the actual value of

your product or service? The value of a product or service is often different than the simple cost per unit. Will the product be consistent and delivered on time? If there is a problem is there a procedure or person who can and will make things right? This is where the rubber meets the road. What do I get for my money? It is a competitive market so, "let the buyer beware". For example, not all seed is created equal. Value per bag of seed often changes when computed to actual Pure Live Seed and some chemicals may appear less expensive but actually deliver lower percentages of actual ingredient. Terms and Early order options and other programs may be great deals but we need to do a little homework before we swipe the P-card. The Value of a product is the combination of results and service. We need our vendors to meet our expectations but we are delighted when they exceed our expectations and customer loyalty is the result. It is good to hear someone genuinely say, "How can I help you be successful today" and not just demand time to show off the latest product brochure. The GCS has the power to make deals happen and the best ones always make the best deals.

Comparing prices is critical for financial success but what I have learned is that it's sometimes necessary not only to ensure that you are comparing

an apple to an apple but that you are not comparing a "Granny Smith" apple to a "Golden Delicious" apple. Be sure that you ask great questions, check out any claims or testimonials and test any new products in a controlled area before betting your job on any product or service. I will make one more suggestion in this area. Be sure to factor in the level of support from question #1 as part of the overall value. I expect my vendors to be the best value but not necessarily the cheapest price.

We are in this together

Why should I put my reputation on the line by supporting your company? Because a GCS can not be successful alone, they need help in the form of products and services. We are in this together. When the economy was good and golf was growing all of us benefited and now that the economy is down and golf is suffering we all share in the responsibility to persevere. When I choose a chemical for a greens application I am putting my job and many other jobs on the line. I want to know many things from the salesman who is behind this product. Ultimately, when I buy any product that delivers on its claims (control pythium, improve color, create pore space, improve fuel efficiency, lower carbon emissions, last 28 days) then everyone wins. I win because the course conditions are great. The vendor wins because their product delivered the needed results and the sale was successful. Our reputations are both impacted in a positive way. The GCS must

guard this symbiotic reputation as a high priority. It takes years of sacrifice to be reputable and only one short coming to erase all that was so difficult to establish. Be sure to communicate this to any potential vendors and also realize that it is a two edged sword. If you mishandle a product or act unethically you also could affect the vendor. It is a balancing act to honor traditions and embrace innovations but that is the nature of our work. In order to make every dollar count you must invest in the shared reputation of you and your vendor partners. Choose wisely.

Making every dollar count is a moving target at best. Take the time to really track where your dollar goes to ensure that it's going to support all the things that make golf great, starting with you, the Golf Course Superintendent. You alone have the power to make every dollar count so every time you make a purchase do so as if your job depends on it. Remember to ask,

#1 Does your company support the advancement of the Golf Course Superintendent?

#2 What is the actual value of your product or service?

#3 Why should I put my reputation on the line by supporting your company?

From Jennifer's Desk...

It is hard to believe that our fiscal year is almost over and we are once again heading into the final stretch before membership renewals, board elections, and a new budget year. Where has the time gone? This year has definitely been busy for all the chapters and for me.

I have had the pleasure of attending the Crowfoot Open, FTGA's Turfgrass Seminar, several local chapter meetings, the GIS in San Diego, a Chapter Executive's Symposium at the GCSAA Headquarter's in Kansas, a "Board Retreat" to FarmLinks, The South Florida Turf Expo and I am now preparing for another fantastic seminar during the Everglades GCSA's Poa Annua and G.C. Horn Memorial Tournament. (Not to mention, I will be participating in my first ever golf Tournament as I have signed on to play in the Poa Annua Scramble. I sure hope my golf lessons will pay off!)

Through all of this I have spoken with my peers, Board and members and I have learned a lot of valuable information that I hope will empower me to create more value in my position and enable me to better serve you.

Over the next two weeks, I will be working alongside the Survey Committee to finalize the content of the FGCSA's bi-annual survey (which admittedly is short of a year late). Unlike previous years, this survey will be conducted electronically. We will use a service called SurveyMonkey which will enable us to breakdown the results more accurately and effectively; ultimately providing you with the information *you* need.

In order for this survey to be most effective, we need your participation! If the FGCSA office does not have your e-mail address or your *current* e-mail address, please let us know. All you have to do is send an e-mail with your name and club to fgcsa@comcast.net and I will make the update.

In addition, please be sure to check your junk folder and make sure that your firewall or filter did not automatically send the survey to the wrong folder. Completion of the survey should take no more than 15 minutes of your time. Thank you in advance for your participation and cooperation!

The FGCSA has also been busy working to improve our website and services. By the end of next month we will be able to accept credit card payments. This will be very exciting as it will provide not only our members, but our advertisers and sponsors an alternative payment method. We are also working hard to create a more effective database that will link to the local Chapters; creating accurate, real-time data that will be valuable to all of us. Changes take time and patience, but are often necessary and beneficial.

I continue to enjoy serving all of you and welcome your suggestions and comments. I hope to see many of you at the Poa Annua, but for those who are unable to attend I look forward to seeing you at the next event. Please be sure to let the FGCSA office know if any of your information has changed. It is important that we have current and up-to-date information. Remember to keep a look out for the FGCSA survey and please participate.

Thank you.

Jennifer

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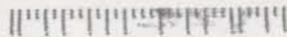


Featured Product

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Naturally

BOLSTER GRANULAR 444+3Fe plus Biostimulants is a powerful, synergistic blend of four mycorrhizal fungi, Sustane organic base 444 plus 3% iron, plant biostimulants to provide rapid root development and Arbuscular Mycorrhizae to promote greater access of plant roots to soil nutrients and water. For all turf and landscape plants

See insert for more information on Sustane Natural Fertilizers & Soil Builders.



Call your Golf Ventures Territory Manager for more information and pricing!

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