

News



Special 25th Anniversary Issue 2011



Association Presidents Cut the Anniversary Cake!

GCGA presidents Wayne Simmons, Carey Soud and Hugh English (L to R) “officially” begin Gulf Citrus’s 25th Anniversary Celebration. Bernadette Rashford, GCGA’s Director of Administrative & Membership Services, assists.

“Gulf Citrus” Celebrates its 25th Anniversary

The Gulf Citrus Growers Association’s annual meeting on June 1, 2011, marked a major milestone in the organization’s history: **GCGA’s 25th Anniversary!** The celebration, including the association’s 25th annual meeting and a special tribute to its “founding” members and leaders, brought together generations of growers, allied trades reps and community leaders from throughout the state and region. It was a “very special” day, a day that will be long remembered by those who shared in the festivities and jubilation!

From 1986 to 2011, “Gulf Citrus” has served the needs of the region’s citrus growers, and has represented their collective voice on issues impacting their operations in Southwest Florida. The association’s 25th anniversary was truly a “celebration” of the many successful efforts and initiatives that the leadership has implemented in the “Gulf” region with the support and cooperation of its

members and other AG “partners.”

Dr. Bernie Lester, one of GCGA’s first secretaries, served as master of ceremonies for the “celebration,” and provided interesting perspectives on GCGA’s history.

“Founding President” Hugh English, with his “spirit” and “humor,” told of the first grower meetings which led to the association’s formation. According to English, these early 1980’s sessions were “very informal” yet “productive” as Florida’s citrus industry was undergoing rapid change caused by major freezes in the traditional “citrus belt.” He noted that with many central Florida growers/companies planning and planting new groves in the Southwest region, local growers felt that the time was ripe for organizing. Since thousands of grapefruit acres were being planted at that time, the leadership insisted that one of the top priorities for “Gulf Citrus” was build-

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Gulf Citrus Growers Association Elects 2011-12 Officers

At its 25th annual meeting on June 1, 2011, at the LaBelle Civic Center, the Gulf Citrus Growers Association (GCGA) elected its officers to serve the organization for the 2011-2012 fiscal year. Elected to lead the regional citrus association are:

President

Wayne Simmons
LaBelle Fruit Co., LLC

Vice President

Mark Colbert
A. Duda & Sons, Inc.

Secretary

Wade Timpner
George Austin, Inc.

Treasurer

Callie Walker
English Brothers

Wayne Simmons was elected GCGA's president for the coming year. Simmons, president of LaBelle Fruit Co., LLC, owns citrus groves in Hendry, Collier and Hillsborough counties. He has over 30 years experience in the citrus industry, and has served on the GCGA's board of directors



Gulf Citrus Elects 2011-2012 Officers

L to R: Wayne Simmons, President; Wade Timpner, Secretary; Callie Walker, Treasurer and Mark Colbert, Vice President are prepared to lead GCGA during the coming year.

for several years, including a one-year term as vice president. In addition to his leadership at GCGA, Simmons currently serves on the Citrus Research and Development Foundation (CRDF) board of directors, and on several of the newly

formed organization's committees and subcommittees. He has also served as president of the Florida Citrus Production Managers Association and the Hendry-Glades Farm Bureau. Simmons is a graduate of the Hendry/Glades Leadership Program.

GCGA Honors Hoffman and Soud

At its 25th annual meeting, the Gulf Citrus Growers Association recognized two leaders who have served "Gulf" growers for the past few years. John Hoffman of the Barron Collier Companies was honored for his leadership on the GCGA board and as chairman of the Community Relations Committee. Carey Soud of Soud Family Partnership was recognized for his leadership as "Gulf Citrus" president for two terms.

In his "President's Report," Soud thanked the membership for "the privilege of 'driving the tractor' for the past couple of years."

"Also, I would like to thank the 'volunteer' GCGA board members who supported me and provided leadership to the advocacy role of the association. Thanks to the staff...Ron and Bernadette...who made my job a lot easier! And, a 'special' thanks to our associate members and the Associate Member Committee that provide outstanding support to GCGA and its events and activities. We are an effective and financially sound organization because all of your efforts...and you are greatly appreciated," Soud said.



GCGA Thanks President Soud

Ron Hamel (R) presents a Bill North "citrus grove" oil painting to Carey Soud for his service as GCGA president for two terms.



John Hoffman Recognized

Carey Soud (R) "Gulf Citrus" president, presents commemorative plaque to John Hoffman.



Gulf Citrus Growers Association 2011-2012 Board of Directors

Wayne Simmons, President
Mark Colbert, Vice President
Wade Timpner, Secretary
Callie Walker, Treasurer
John R. Alexander
Don Barwick
Emmett Evans III
Joe Hilliard II
Tom Kirschner
Paul Meador
Bob Newsome
Carey Soud
David Wheeler
Ron Hamel

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25TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

“Gulf Citrus” Recognizes Pioneer Members!

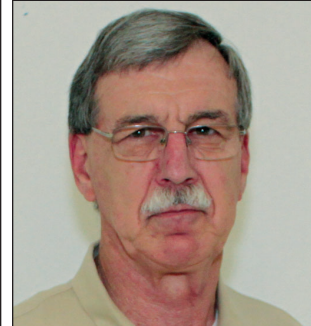
These “founding” GCGA members have supported “Gulf Citrus” from its beginning and throughout its 25 years of service to the citrus growers of Southwest Florida.



Bryan Paul
Dick Crockett



A. Duda & Sons, Inc.
Dan Duda and Mark Colbert



English Brothers
Joe English



George Austin, Inc.
George Austin



Collier Company Grove Division
Gary Briscoe and Katie Sproul



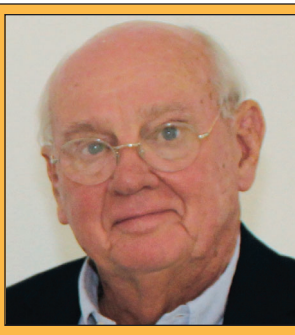
JEBCO Grove
Dale Johnson



Hilliard Brothers, Inc.
Joe Hilliard II



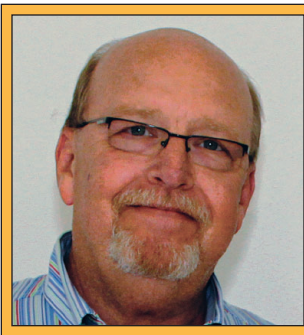
Cooperative Producers, Inc.
Mike Murphy and Calvin Lloyd



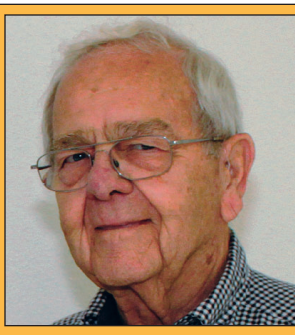
Jack Paul Jr.
Jack Paul



P. Wayne Jackson, Inc.
Wayne Jackson



LaBelle Grove Management
Bryan Beer and Victor Beer



Ultimate Citrus.com
Chet Townsend

Pioneer Members not photographed, but recognized:

Mary L. Douglas, Sunkiss Groves, Triple “J” Citrus & Farming, LLC

THANK YOU
Gulf Citrus Growers Associate Members!
FOR 20 YEARS OF SUPPORT



Hunt Bros. Cooperative
 Frank Hunt III



Maxijet/Thayer Industry
 Donna Kelm



Monsanto
 Jack Conroy



Murray Consultants, Inc.
 Gail Murray Doyle



SunTrust Bank
 Robert McCollum



The Andersons, Inc.
 John Guglielmi

20 Year Associates not photographed, but recognized:
Nufarm Americas, Inc.

FOR 10 YEARS OF SUPPORT



Left to right: Jessica Taylor, Syngenta Crop Protection; Randy White, Newton Crouch, Inc. and Ali Pool, Brown and Brown of Florida, Inc., receive plaques from GCGA President Carey Soud.

10 Year Associates not photographed, but recognized:
MANA and MetLife Agricultural Investments

“Gulf Citrus” Celebrates its 25th Anniversary

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ing “identity” and a marketing program for the quality grapefruit and other fresh varieties grown in the region. English said the “founding” leaders also realized that the water management, environmental regulation, land use and tax issues were also “growing” in the region. These “pioneer” leaders felt the best approach in dealing with them was by working together to address the local issues...locally!

English explained that the situation brought citrus growers together to start the organization. In 1986, the leaders prepared and filed the paperwork with the State of Florida to “officially” incorporate the Gulf Citrus Growers Association.

The “founding”/“pioneer” members were: **A. Duda & Sons, Inc.; Bryan Paul; Collier Company Grove Division; Cooperative Producers, Inc.; English Brothers; George Austin, Inc.; Hilliard Brothers, Inc.; Jack Paul, Jr.; JEBCO Grove; LaBelle Grove Management; Mary L. Douglas; P. Wayne Jackson, Inc.; Sunkiss Groves; Triple “J” Citrus & Farming, LLC and UltimateCitrus.com.**

These members were the first to join the newly formed association, and have been members ever since! Each of them received a framed commemorative print of a “Gulf” orange grove painted especially for the occasion by local artist Bill North. **Please see page 3 for our recognition of these “pioneer” members.**

English also noted that these original members provided the financial base to fund an executive director position to handle administrative duties and “grow” the membership. In May of 1988, GCGA hired Ron Hamel, who was vice president of public affairs for the National Dairy Board in Washington, DC, as its first executive vice president and general manager. Hamel, a UF graduate, wanted to move back to Florida and take on the “new” challenge. He has been GCGA’s executive director ever since, logging in 23 years of service.

Carey Soud, 2010-2011 GCGA President, highlighted the association’s “initiatives/achievements” over its 25-years of service. He called attention to fliers at each table which recapped many of GCGA’s accomplishments, noting that without the leadership and cooperation of its members and supporters...the successes would not have been possible. Soud recalled the growth of GCGA in its first 15 years before citrus canker hit, drastically reducing the region’s acreage. And, the years of low fruit prices which forced many growers out of business...and out of the association. He noted, however, that GCGA weathered the storm and is now a stronger organization.

As part of its salute to its leaders, GCGA recognized the association’s presidents who served over its 25 year history. They include: **Hugh English, George Austin, Chet Townsend, Tom Rogers, Calvin Lloyd, Dick Crockett, Tom Jones, Buddy Kemper, Billy Heller, David Wheeler and Carey Soud.**

In closing, Dr. Lester led the GCGA board in an orange juice toast, with special 25-year Anniversary glasses. “Here’s to the association’s ‘past successes’ and ‘future endeavors,’” said Lester, with his glass raised!

Each attending member and guest received a 4-pack of the commemorative juice glasses from the association. Both the 4-pack of juice glasses and the 25-year “Gulf” citrus grove prints are available through the GCGA offices.



GCGA Leaders and Guests Celebrate!

Top: “Gulf Citrus” presidents attending included (L to R) Hugh English, George Austin, Calvin Lloyd, Chet Townsend, Dick Crockett, Buddy Kemper, David Wheeler and Carey Soud.

Second Left: Dr. Bernie Lester served as GCGA’s 25th Anniversary emcee.

Second Right: Mei-Mei Chan, president/publisher of the Ft. Myers News-Press, and Dr. Wilson G. Bradshaw, president of Florida Gulf Coast University, were among the “special” guests attending the event!

Third Left: Diane McGee of U.S. Senator Bill Nelson’s staff reviews the historical collection of GCGA’s newsletters.

Third Right: Ashley Timpner greets members and guests at the festive event!

Bottom: Over 200 “Gulf Citrus” members and guests joined the festivities.

Gulf Citrus Growers Association Elects New Directors



2011-2012 Gulf Citrus Growers Association Board of Directors

(Front, Left to Right) Carey Soud, Wayne Simmons, Ron Hamel, Mark Colbert and Don Barwick. (Middle) Bob Newsome, John R. Alexander, Callie Walker and Joe Hilliard II. (Back) Wade Timpner, David Wheeler, Paul Meador and Tom Kirschner. Not in photograph but elected Emmett Evans III.

At its 25th annual meeting on June 1, 2011, at the LaBelle Civic Center, the Gulf Citrus Growers Association “officially” seated its 2011-2012 board of directors for the coming fiscal year. The newly elected leadership will direct the association as it works to represent the citrus growing indus-

try in Southwest Florida’s “Gulf” region, including Charlotte, Collier, Glades, Hendry and Lee Counties.

Each of these leaders is a volunteer and is working on behalf of all the region’s citrus growers to address the issues that impact their “bottom lines.” Please thank

and support them during the coming season. The GCGA board members are open to any positive changes that can be made to better serve the industry in the “Gulf” region. Your input is welcome.



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