



Fall 2013



22nd GCGA Banquet Features Congressman Diaz-Balart

The Gulf Citrus Growers Association recently hosted its 22nd annual "Gulf Citrus Industry Banquet" in conjunction with the 2013 Citrus EXPO! The August 14th banquet festivities continued to provide Florida's citrus leaders and supporters with a "special event" aimed at celebrating the "Sunshine State's" signature agricultural crop...CITRUS!

Over 300 growers, industry leaders and special guests attended this year's banquet, held at the Harborside Event Center in downtown Ft. Myers.

GCGA President Wayne Simmons welcomed attendees to the 22nd annual event. He introduced Tris Chapman, "retired orange squeezer" and former Hendry County Commissioner, who served as master of ceremonies for the second consecutive year.

After introducing the many "special guests," Chapman noted that Florida Senator Marco Rubio had taped a "special" video for the state's citrus industry. The senator's remarks were aimed at paying tribute to the industry, as well as recognizing the many challenges it faces. "The citrus industry is a key part of Florida's heritage...going back to when the first orange trees were planted in St. Augustine in the days of Ponce De Leon," said Rubio in

the video. "Since that time, through your hard work, the industry has grown to represent over 60% of the total U.S. citrus production. It's an economic engine for our state... but today, it is threatened by the policies that are coming out of Washington, DC," he added.

Senator Rubio also noted the challenges that the Florida, Texas and California citrus industries are facing, including the battle against the bacterial disease "greening," as well as the growing complexities of creating and maintaining a viable, legal workforce. "The bottom line is that today's immigration system is broken. We took some major steps to modernizing our agricultural workers' visa programs to ensure that when farms and dairies need seasonal workers for jobs where American laborers are not available, they can find workers to do the job legally. The issue is now in the 'House,' where I am hopeful that a solution can be reached to deal with the different aspects of our broken immigration system, including all of the problems that our agricultural industries are facing," he said.

Gulf Citrus Growers Association Scholarship Foundation President Callie Walker reported that over \$80,000

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Gulf Citrus Growers Association Elects 2013-2014 Officers

At its 27th annual meeting on June 5, 2013, at the Dallas Townsend Agricultural Center, the Gulf Citrus Growers Association (GCGA) elected its officers to serve the organization for the upcoming 2013-2014 season. Elected to lead the regional citrus association are the following:

President

Wayne Simmons
LaBelle Fruit Co., LLC

Vice President

Paul Meador
Gulf Citrus Partners, LP

Secretary

Bob Newsome
Barron Collier Partnership

Treasurer

Callie Walker
English Brothers

Wayne Simmons was re-elected GCGA's president for the coming year. Simmons,



Gulf Citrus 2013-2014 Officers

Seated: Wayne Simmons, President
and Callie Walker, Treasurer.

Standing: Bob Newsome, Secretary
and Paul Meador, Vice President

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 for several years. 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/sub-committees. 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.

The Gulf Citrus Growers Association represents citrus growers in Florida's "Gulf" production region including Charlotte, Collier, Glades, Hendry and Lee counties. The region accounts for about 25% of the state's total citrus production, and generates nearly \$1-billion of total economic impact.

Barwick, Colbert & Kirschner Honored by GCGA

At its 27th annual meeting, the Gulf Citrus Growers Association recognized three leaders who served the region's citrus growing industry for the past several years as members of the GCGA board of directors. Don Barwick, Heller Bros. Packing Corp., Mark Colbert, A. Duda & Sons, Inc., and Tom Kirschner, Ranch One Co-operative were presented commemorative GCGA 25-year "Gulf Citrus" grove prints.

Barwick served on the GCGA board for six years. Colbert served on the association's board for twelve years, including two terms as Vice President and several years as Chairman of the Production and Research Committee. Kirschner served on the board for three years, and currently serves as Chairman of GCGA's Production and Research Committee.



Thank You Don Barwick!

GCGA President Wayne Simmons recognized Barwick at the association's 27th annual meeting.



Mark Colbert Recognized!

Mark Colbert, who served as GCGA Vice President for eight years was honored by the association.



Gulf Citrus Growers Association 2013-2014 Board of Directors

Wayne Simmons, President

Paul Meador, Vice President

Bob Newsome, Secretary

Callie Walker, Treasurer

JD Alexander

Emmett Evans III

Joe Hilliard II

Sam Jones

Mike Murphy

Carey Soud

Hunter Teal

Aaron Troyer

David Wheeler

Ron Hamel

Executive Vice President

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Gulf Citrus Growers Association Elects 2013-2014 Directors

At its 27th annual meeting on June 5, 2013 at the Dallas Townsend Agricultural Center in LaBelle, the Gulf Citrus Growers Association “officially” seated its 2013-2014 board of directors for the coming season. The newly elected leadership will direct the association as it works to represent the citrus growing industry in

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

The “Gulf Citrus” board of directors and their respective counties of representation are listed below. Each director has been elected to serve a one-year term.

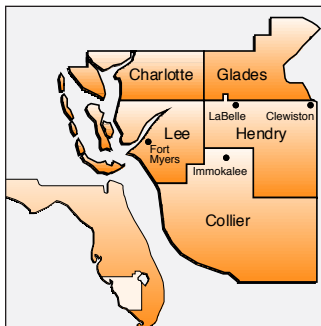
The association’s board members are

volunteers and work on behalf of the “Gulf” region’s citrus growing industry. Please support these leaders during the coming season. The board encourages suggestions for positive changes to improve the association’s service to its members, and also is looking for leadership on GC-GA’s operating committees.



2013-2014 Gulf Citrus Growers Association Board of Directors

Back, left to right: Ron Hamel, Aaron Troyer, Bob Newsome, Sam Jones, JD Alexander and Joe Hilliard II. Front, left to right: Wayne Simmons, Carey Soud, Callie Walker and Paul Meador. Board members absent from photograph are Emmett Evans III, Mike Murphy, Hunter Teal, and David Wheeler.



Florida’s Gulf Citrus Production Region

The Gulf Citrus Growers Association represents thousands of acres of citrus groves in Southwest Florida’s “Gulf” region, which is officially noted as a production region in state statutes. The “Gulf” region accounts for about 25% of the Sunshine State’s total citrus crop production. The region’s citrus industry generates nearly \$1-billion of economic impact.

GCGA 2013-2014 Board of Directors

Charlotte County

Emmett Evans III
Evans Properties, Inc.

Collier County

Mike Murphy
Cooperative Producers, Inc.

Paul Meador
Gulf Citrus Partners LP

Bob Newsome
Barron Collier Partnership

Hendry County

JD Alexander
Alico, Inc.

Sam Jones
Duda Products, Inc.

Joe Hilliard II
Hilliard Brothers, Inc.

Wayne Simmons
LaBelle Fruit Co. LLC

Carey Soud
Soud Family Partnership

Glades County

David Wheeler
Wheeler Farms, Inc.

Lee County

Callie Walker
English Brothers

At-Large Seats

Hunter Teal
Heller Brothers
Packing Corp.

Aaron Troyer
Troyer Brothers, Inc.

Committee Chairs Appointed to Serve for 2013-2014 Season

GCGA President Wayne Simmons appointed the following leaders to chair the association’s operating committees for the coming year.

Please contact these volunteers for updates and information related to their respective committees.

Associate Member

Sarah Markle

Governmental Affairs

Joe Hilliard II

Labor Relations

Paul Meador

Long Range Policy & Planning

George Austin

Research and Production

Tom Kirschner

Tax

Cliff Bowen

Association Hosts 17th “Gulf Classic” at Verandah

The Gulf Citrus Growers Association hosted the 17th Annual “Gulf Classic” May 10, 2013 at Verandah Country Club. Thirty-two (32) teams competed in this year’s tournament, reflecting continuous industry-wide support of this GCGA event.

The “Gulf Classic,” coordinated and directed through the association’s Associate Member Committee, is one of key “special events” which financially supports the organization’s community and governmental relations programs in the region.

“Our association is truly thankful for the continual sponsorship support of the “Gulf Classic” by both grower and associate members,” said Ron Hamel, GCGA executive vice president. “The Associate Committee is to be commended, once again for putting on a first class event,” he added.

The 2013 “Gulf Classic” Tournament Committee included **Alison Pool**, Insurance Office of America, Chairman; **Jeff Campbell**, Campbell Insurance; **Julie Forrest**, Stallings Crop Insurance, Corp.; **Cody Hoffman**, Syngenta; **James Holland**, Northwestern Mutual Financial Network; **Stacey Howell**, Bayer CropScience; **Stacy McCullough**, Farm Credit of Florida; **Sarah Markle**, Valent USA; **Robert Murray**, Timac AGRO USA; **Wade Timpner**, Southern Gardens Citrus; **Bernadette Rashford**, GCGA and **Ashley Timpner**, GCGA.

This year’s “Gulf Classic” featured a \$1000 cash prize drawing for registered golfers, a 50-50 putting contest, individual “special hole” prizes and awards for the first, second and third place teams.

This year’s “first place” winning team was sponsored by D&K Harvesting, Inc. and included **Larry Marsh**, **Ross Fleming**, **Chris Tritt** and **Andy Paulet**.

Winning “second place” was the team from Gulf Citrus Harvesting & Hauling, Inc. team including **Lawrence Williams**, **Jesse Reyna**, **Gene Hillman** and **Ricky O’Ferrell**.

Coming in “third place” was Car Two team comprised of **John Paul**, **Mike Halloran**, **Eddie Rodriguez** and **Jason Dyess**.

Winners of the 17th Annual “Gulf Classic” individual awards were as follows: Most Accurate Drive, **Jim Snively**; Longest Drive, **Jesse Reyna** and **Tim Devlin**; Longest Putt, **Doug Per-vis**; and Closest to the Pin, **John Whitehead** and **Jeff Campbell**. The Putting Contest was split between six individuals.



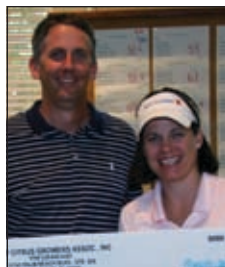
First Place Team sponsored by D&K Harvesting, Inc.



Gulf Citrus Harvesting & Hauling, Inc. places Second



The Car Two team takes Third Place



Simons Wins \$1000 Cash Grand Prize!

Fred Simons of Carden & Associates, Inc. was the lucky winner of the “Gulf Classic’s” third \$1000 cash prize for participating golfers in the tournament. Ali Pool of Insurance Office of America and chairman of the associates committee, presents the “big bucks” at the luncheon.

2013 Gulf Classic Tournament Sponsors

The Gulf Citrus Growers Association would like to thank the “Gulf Classic” sponsors

Breakfast

Tropicana Products, Inc.

Luncheon

Alico, Inc.
Citrus Expo
The Andersons, Inc.

Hospitality

Helena Chemical Company
Syngenta Crop Protection

Beverage

Everglades Harvesting
and Hauling, Inc.
Helena Chemical Company
KeyPlex

Water

Culligan Water

Individual Cooler

Farm Credit of Florida

Visor

Bayer CropScience

Photography

Stallings Crop Insurance, Corp.

Hole in One

Florida Coast Equipment

Most Accurate Drive

Valent USA

Longest Putt

Insurance Office of America, Inc.

Longest Drive

Car Two
Heller Bros.

Closest to the Pin

Everglades Farm Equipment

Raffle Prize

Beef O’ Brady’s at the Verandah
Chemtura AgroSolutions
Gulf Citrus Growers Association
Orange-Co.
Redneck Fishing Tournament
Wellmark International
Wheeler Brothers, Inc.

Tee / Green

Aglime Sales
BASF Corporation
Beef O’ Brady’s at the Verandah
Chemical Containers
Culligan Water
Custom Citrus Care
Cutrale Citrus Juices USA, Inc.

DeSoto AutoMall

First Bank

Florida Grower Magazine

Gowan

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Oakley Groves

Orange-Co.

Peace River Citrus Products

Stallings Crop Insurance, Corp.

Stantec

Syngenta Crop Protection

Total Containment Solutions, Inc.

Tranex, Inc. dba Valencia

Harvesting

Triangle Chemical

Wheeler Brothers, Inc.

Yara North America, Inc.

22nd GCGA Banquet Features Congressman Diaz-Balart

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has been awarded to deserving students through the foundation. She also shared the “good news” that nearly \$20,000 in funds contributed via a “special fund drive” through the foundation, following Hurricane Charley to help rebuild infrastructure for farm workers devastated by the storm, had been “invested” through Catholic Charities Housing, Diocese of Venice to support the development of Casa San Juan Bosco “farmworker village” in Arcadia. Walker reported that the “village” has been completed and is 100% occupied, serving farm worker families who work throughout the region.

Following dinner, Chapman introduced Adam Putnam, Florida Commissioner of Agriculture, and led the audience in singing “Happy Birthday” as a “candlelit” order of banana pudding was surprisingly brought out!

Putnam updated the audience on the key issues that are being addressed by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. He included water management, pests and diseases and child nutrition as the challenges at the top of his and the department’s agenda. He also introduced “keynote speaker” Congressman Diaz-Balart as one of Florida’s most committed and “passionate” leaders for the state’s and nation’s agriculture.

Congressman Mario Diaz-Balart, who represents Florida’s 25th District including Collier and Hendry counties, touched on the federal initiatives and issues of significance to Florida’s citrus/agricultural industries. “Agriculture has remained consistent in the face of economic downturns, and has provided a stabilizing force for the state’s economy,” he said. “In fact, Florida’s diverse agriculture is the ‘backbone’ of our state’s economy!”

Regarding efforts to fight “greening,” the Congressman noted that this disease is not a “Florida-specific issue” anymore, but is impacting groves in California and Texas as well. “We must do more to improve resistance to the disease, develop better management practices, continue additional research and ultimately dismantle the disease with a cure,” he said. “Congressman Tom Rooney and I...and other members of the Florida delegation who serve on the Appropriations Committee, were able to include important funding provisions.”

As one of the Florida Congressional Delegation’s leading advocates for addressing immigration reform, Diaz-Balart touched on this complex issue. “For the past four years, I’ve been working with a bipartisan group of colleagues to once and for all fix this broken system. In no industry...is it more evident that our immigration system is a failure...than it is in agriculture,” he said. “Growers must have access to a workable system that provides a reliable and skilled workforce to help operate a business and feed American families without relying on foreign countries for their imports,” he added.

Regarding the Farm Bill, the Congressman said he strongly supports enhancing the “investments” for the competitiveness and sustainability of the American “specialty crop” industry. “Specialty crops not only promote healthier lives, but can also help reduce healthcare costs. Florida is heavily engaged in the production of high value specialty crops...and the Farm Bill ensures that that continues,” he said.



Banquet & Citrus EXPO Launch New Season!

Top Left: Florida Congressman Diaz-Balart (middle left) receives grove painting from Kelvin Hair, artist. **Top Right:** Representative Matt Caldwell is greeted by Kate English (left) and Mary Hartney. **Middle Left:** GCGA vice president Paul Meador chats with Congressman Diaz-Balart. **Middle Center:** David Bull (right) is recognized for his 25 years of support for GCGA. **Middle Right:** Lee County Commission Chairman Cecil Pendergrass (left) enjoys the reception “networking.” **Bottom Left:** Ashley Timpner surprises Commissioner Putnam with “banana pudding” complete with birthday candle! **Bottom Right:** State FFA officers enjoy GCGA’s Citrus Industry Banquet.

Thank You 2013 Banquet Sponsors!

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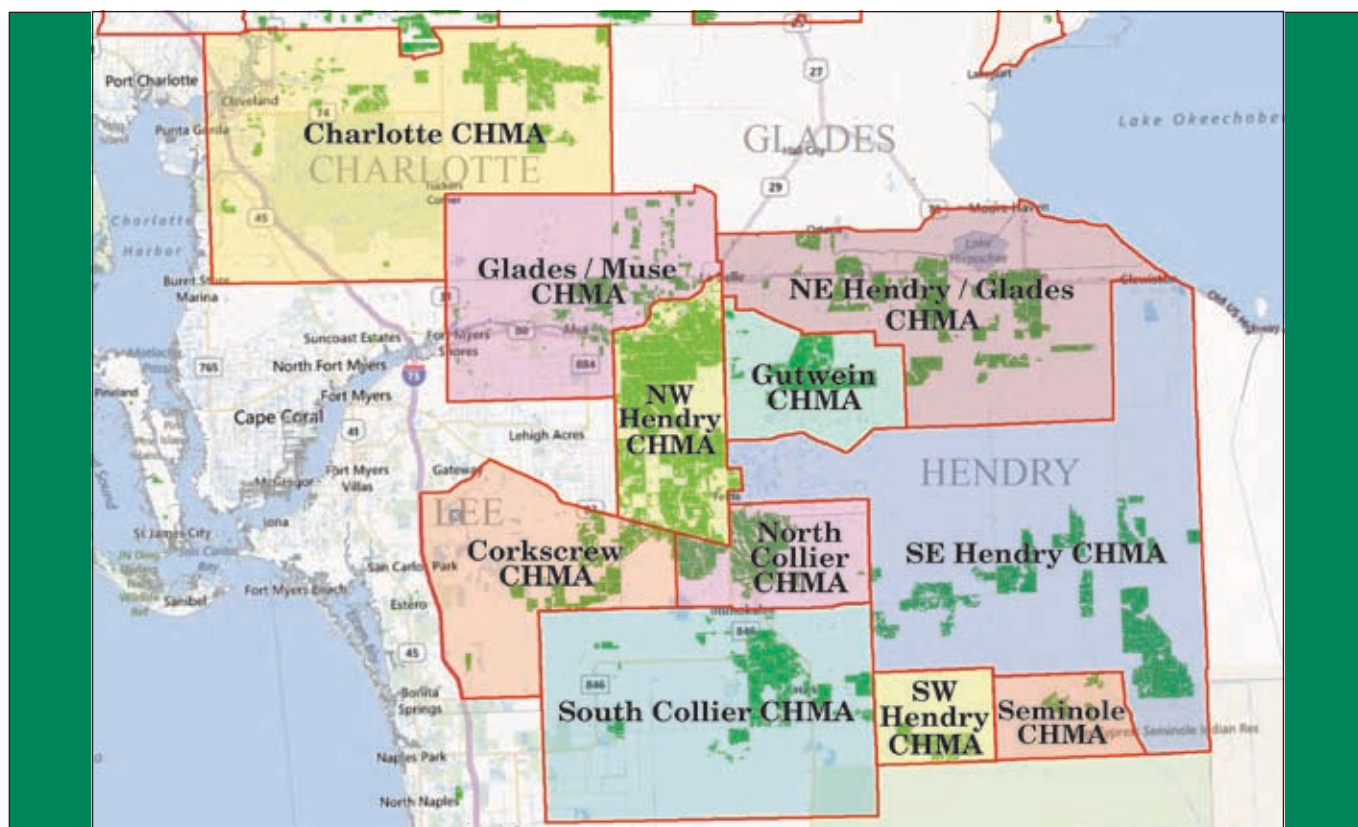
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Blue Goose Growers ♦ Brandt Consolidated ♦ Chemical Containers, Inc.
Citrus Expo / Southeast AgNet ♦ Crop Production Services
DuPont Crop Protection ♦ Edison State College ♦ Elizabeth C. Pines, P.A.
Everglades Harvesting & Hauling, Inc. ♦ Fletcher Flying Services, Inc.
Florida Grower Magazine ♦ Gowan USA ♦ G.P. Solutions, LLC
HSA Engineers & Scientists ♦ JBT FoodTech ♦ MacVicar Consulting
Morgan Stanley – Dick Johnson ♦ Oakley Groves, Inc.
Pacific Tomato Growers, Ltd. ♦ Plant Food Systems ♦ Stantec
SunTrust Bank ♦ The Andersons, Inc. ♦ The Carol Group
The Packers of Indian River, Ltd. ♦ Tropicana Products, Inc.
UBS Financial Services, Inc. ♦ Valent USA
Wedgworth’s, Inc. ♦ Yara North America, Inc.



“Gulf” Region Reorganizes into 11 CHMAs

In efforts to better manage its cooperative spraying logistics, as well as the efficacy of its sprays against the Asian citrus psyllid, the Gulf Citrus Growers Association’s “CHMA Team” has reorganized Southwest Florida’s “Gulf” region into 11 Citrus Health Management Areas (CHMAs). Florida Department of Agriculture/ Division of Plant Industry Environmental Supervisor, Paul Mears, working with UF/IFAS entomologist Dr. Phil Stansly, Multi-County Citrus Agent Mongi Zekri and GCGA leaders, divided the “Gulf” region into the 11 CHMAs based on the geographical location of the citrus groves in the five-county area.

At the CHMA reorganization meeting on September 26th, Tom Kirschner, newly appointed chairman of GCGA’s Production and Research Committee, discussed the importance of “more intensive and effective” spraying to further reduce psyllid populations in the region. Grower leaders from throughout the “Gulf” region participated in the session and agreed with Kirschner’s message that growers need to “step up” their efforts like never before.

The eleven (11) CHMAs that have been created and mapped are as follows: **Charlotte CHMA, Glades/Muse CHMA, NW Hendry CHMA, Gutwein CHMA, NE Hendry CHMA, SE Hendry CHMA,**

Seminole CHMA, SW Hendry CHMA, South Collier CHMA, North Collier CHMA and Corkscrew CHMA.

The GCGA “CHMA Team” is in the process of recruiting “Team Captains” for each of the 11 CHMAs. In addition, the “CHMA Team” is in the process of preparing lists of groves and contacts for each citrus operation located within the respective CHMA.

Once “Team Captains” have been confirmed, citrus growers within their respective CHMAs will be notified of the name and contact information so that communication can be established for the CHMA. And, “Team Captains” will be provided with lists of groves and contacts within the CHMAs.

The statewide CHMA Sectional Mapping Program will be used to track the status and success of the “enhanced” cooperative spraying initiative throughout the 11 “Gulf” CHMAs. Brandon Page, UF/IFAS program assistant for the statewide CHMA program, will be updating the data on each of the 11 newly created “Gulf” CHMAs following each three-week survey of citrus groves by FDACS/USDA. **It is strongly suggested that growers become familiar with the CHMA website, www.flchma.org as this “tool” is becoming very important to tracking psyllid control throughout the state!**

Growers should find the participation process easy to follow Page reports. “After logging on to www.flchma.org click on the CHMA Sectional Mapping Program banner, and sign up for the program,” he said. Page is available to assist growers in the process and/or to answer any questions. **He can be reached at (863) 956-8653 or by email: bpage@ufl.edu.**

According to Kirschner, the goal of the new GCGA “CHMA Team” is to initiate four to five coordinated sprays during the 2013-2014 season. This strategy is based on the recommendations of UF/IFAS scientists including Dr. Stansly, who suggest that two coordinated sprays a year are not enough to provide adequate psyllid control due to the current population densities in the citrus producing counties.

The GCGA “CHMA Team” is in the process of organizing the initial two dormant sprays for the region. The first dormant area wide spray is scheduled for the late November, early December timeframe. The second coordinated spray will be targeted beginning mid-January (mid-winter period) which according to Dr. Stansly is the most effective ACP spray of the year. More details regarding area wide spraying logistics, including the materials to be applied, will be discussed and coordinated at the upcoming “Team Captains” meeting.

Collier Commission Honors Gulf Citrus Growers Association



“WHEREAS....GCGA, established in 1986, represents 25% of Florida’s total citrus”

The Gulf Citrus Growers Association was recently recognized by the Collier County Board of Commissioners for its leadership and accomplishments on behalf of the “Gulf” region’s citrus growers. Receiving the proclamation on behalf of the association were: (Front row L to R) Aaron Troyer, Gary Briscoe, John Hoffman, Jaime Weisinger, Wayne Simmons, Bernadette Rashford and Ron Hamel. (Back row) Collier County Commissioners Fred Coyle, Donna Fiala, Georgia Hiller, Tim Nance and Tom Henning.

At its September 10th meeting, the Collier Board of County Commissioners presented an “official” proclamation to the Gulf Citrus Growers Association for its years of leadership in addressing the key issues of economic importance to Collier County and the Southwest Florida region.

Commissioners Fred Coyle, Donna Fiala, Georgia Hiller, Tim Nance and Tom Henning presented the proclamation to GCGA’s delegation of Aaron Troyer, Gary Briscoe, John Hoffman, Jaime Weisinger, Wayne Simmons, Bernadette Rashford and Ron Hamel.

The proclamation cited GCGA’s abil-

ity to “unite public and private agencies and scientists to address labor concerns, environmental protection and conservation, as well as industry threats such as citrus canker and ‘greening’...demonstrates its evolution from a small group to a successful pioneering organization.”

“GCGA has become an influential consortium, comprised of approximately 80 growers and 150 associate members, that addresses a wide variety of topics vital to the financial well-being of growers, as well as the ancillary businesses within the five county region of Charlotte, Collier, Glades, Hendry and Lee,” said the document.

The proclamation also noted GCGA’s objectives, including the protection of natural resources through sound wildlife management on farm lands, high-tech irrigation and water management techniques and environmentally friendly grove and tree culture practices.

Following the presentation, Hamel thanked the Collier County Commission for its recognition of the organization, and he pledged to continue to work with the public and private sectors to address the critical needs of the region’s citrus growers in efforts to sustain the industry in Southwest Florida.

Paul Mears Recognized by “Gulf Citrus” Growers

The Gulf Citrus Growers Association presented its “Special Service” Award to Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Division of Plant Industry, Environmental Supervisor, Paul A. Mears. The presentation was made during the Gulf Citrus Industry Banquet held in conjunction with Citrus EXPO on August 14th in Ft. Myers.

Mears, who has served with FDACS/DPI’s Bureau of Pest Eradication for over nine years, was recognized for his “out-standing service and leadership in the formation and continual enhancement of the ‘Gulf’ Citrus Health Management Areas (CHMAs).”

In making the presentation to Mears, Ron Hamel, executive vice president of the Gulf Citrus Growers Association, noted that Mears has been on “the front lines” in the industry’s battle with Citrus Canker, HLB / “greening” and Citrus Black Spot. “Paul was one of the ‘first’ FDACS/DPI staff members to ‘step up’ as part of the



Paul A. Mears, FDACS/DPI, environmental supervisor, (2nd from left) is recognized by the Gulf Citrus Growers Association. GCGA’s Vice President Ron Hamel (left) and President Wayne Simmons (right) presented the association’s “Special Service” award. Adam Putnam (far right) Florida’s Commissioner of Agriculture, joined in the recognition ceremony.

leadership team in the ‘Gulf’ region to launch our area wide cooperative spray program to reduce psyllid populations and slow the spread of the dreaded ‘Greening’ bacterial disease. Working with UF/IFAS entomologist, Dr. Phil Stansly and the GCGA leadership team...Mears helped to

create and support what has become the ‘Gulf CHMA’”, Hamel added.

“Whenever our leaders have called on Paul...he has gone above and beyond the call of duty to provide timely service,” Hamel said. “He represents ‘the best’ in a State of Florida, FDACS employee.”



News



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Growers**
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Association Holds 27th Annual Meeting & Luncheon

For the 27th consecutive year, the Gulf Citrus Growers Association held its annual meeting. This year's event was held on June 5th at the Dallas Townsend Agricultural Center in LaBelle.

GCGA President Wayne Simmons reported that his second term continued to provide "continuing challenges" for the region's citrus growers, but noted that the association has been actively addressing the issues as they arise. Simmons thanked Commissioner Putnam and the members of the Florida Legislature for their support in securing the \$9.5 million in general revenue to support the industry's fight against HLB. He also noted GCGA's continual engagement with the South Florida Water Management District on "water-related" issues, and its

efforts with local county governments. He thanked the association's leaders, members and staff for their continual support.

Callie Walker, GCGA Treasurer, reported that the association's annual review was conducted by Boy, Miller, Kisker and Perry, Certified Public Accountants and presented to the board at its May 1st session. Walker reported that GCGA continues to be financially strong as an organization.

UF/IFAS Center for Public Issues Education in Agriculture (PIE) Director, Dr. Tracy Irani, reviewed the results of the electronic survey of over 500 Southwest Florida opinion and consumer leaders regarding their perceptions of the region's agriculture. The survey, coordinated by the PIE Center, indicated that 94% of SW Florida's residents

believe that agriculture is very important to the region. And, further, 82% indicated that they had a positive outlook on agriculture, with 87% feeling that AG is "good." "We see this type of response regularly, but what surprised me was the thirst people have for more information about the process behind growing and raising crops," Dr. Irani said.

She reported that the survey would be followed-up by six focus group interviews in the urban communities of the region, in efforts to work with SW Florida's AG industries to better communicate and educate community leaders and consumers.

Sponsors for the 27th Annual Luncheon were Citrus EXPO, Plant Food Systems, Southern Gardens Citrus and Syngenta Crop Protection.

Foundation Holds Annual Meeting, Awards Fall Scholarships

The Gulf Citrus Growers Association Scholarship Foundation held its annual meeting on June 5th.

President Callie Walker reported that to date, the foundation had awarded over \$80,000 in scholarships to deserving students. She also noted that the foundation funnels awards through the SW FL Hispanic

Chamber of Commerce, FGCU and UF.

During its fall board meeting, the foundation re-elected Callie Walker, president; John Hoffman, vice president and Joe English, secretary-treasurer. Scholarships for the fall semester were awarded to Jarad Plair (Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College) and Danielle Sprague (Warner University).

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