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*Nancy Miller, CGCS  
President*

well. If your chapter would like to sponsor a certification class and exam, please contact Jennifer and we'll set one up. The current mission of the FGCSA is to unify the Florida golf course superintendent chapters. A large part of our unification mission these days is governmental advocacy. As a group, our voices are heard louder and more clearly than as individuals. When local individuals speak up to be heard concerning local ordinances, we will group together to support you. While I was trying to decide on a personal note to add to my message, I was bemoaning to a friend that I was stuck finding a topic. He suggested that since it's the holiday season I write a letter about thanks. As he listed the things in his life that he's thankful for, I caught on. You've seen a hundred Hallmark Christmas movies and read a thousand sentimental holiday books, poems, cards and stories. No matter what our religious beliefs, this season infuses our spirits with hope. Hope for a peaceful world that brings our military men and women home for good. Hope that our loved ones are healthy and safe. Hope that our own lives will be better, more prosperous, and happier next year. But we also should look back with gratitude on the year that passed. As golf course superintendents, we make our livings executing our passions: fresh air, Florida sunshine, warm temperatures. Literally and figuratively, we are growing a greener world. Our workplace is a living, breathing holiday card. So, take a minute to fish, golf, sit back, crack open a beer, uncork a bottle of wine, sip a hot toddy or relax for just a minute and count the good things in your life. I wish you Happy Holidays.

## *President's Message*

A new year is on the horizon. The FGCSA Board of Directors has a full docket for the coming year. We met in early December to discuss the long-range plans of the Association. On the agenda were hiring an executive director, a review of publications, the Industry Partners program, Golf BMPs, Rounds 4 Research, government relations, chapter communications and membership dues.

As you know, Joel Jackson is cutting back his responsibilities to the FGCSA as of January 1 and will remain as director of communications. The board is revising the executive director job description and salary requirements. With Joel's assistance, the board will share the executive director's responsibilities until we can hire a professional. In conjunction with a new ED, we need to determine a business model that will carry us forward as a viable trade association. As you all are adapting to the new economic realities, our association must also adapt to fit "the new normal." Finding the right person to guide us will take some time and money. Funds may be needed to hire a search firm and set up the new executive director. It will take time to get through the process, make him/her familiar with the issues and find solutions. As a board, it is our duty to provide the association with a strong leader. A sound state association strengthens and unifies the local chapters. Publications are the backbone of the FGCSA. We depend on advertising sales as well as membership dues to fund the benefits that we provide our members and chapters. Advertisers are feeling the same economic pinch that golf courses are. The widespread use of digital media has had a significant effect on the impact of print media and we are examining all ways to strengthen our financial position. The Industry Partners program seems to be a good fit for our major sponsors, but we are looking for more sponsors. Small or large, we have an advertising package to fit any budget. Please contact Jennifer with prospective advertisers that service your course. We need your help! The Golf BMP certification is progressing

# The Florida Green

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**ON THE COVER:** *View from the 13th Green, Isla Del Sol Y&CC, St. Petersburg. Photo by Joel Jackson.*





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# Wrapping up 2012



*Representatives of the major golf equipment companies discussed the future and implication of the new EPA Tier 4 regulations on engine emissions at the Suncoast-West Coast GCSA joint meeting at the September meeting. From left: John Deere's Kreg Kinney, Toro's Grant Young and Jacobsen's Chuck Grief. Photo by Joel Jackson.*

**Suncoast/West Coast Joint Meeting**

The Suncoast GCSA hosted the Florida West Coast chapter at the Ritz-Carlton GC in Bradenton for an educational session on Tier 4 engine emissions with representatives of Toro, John Deere and Jacobsen on hand to discuss the coming changes to golf course equipment. Following lunch, both chapters competed in a Ryder Cup-style match for the 2nd Annual "Beyond the Bridge" Cup. The team scores ended up tied; therefore the Suncoast retained the cup it won last year in St. Petersburg.



*From left: Mark Todd, President, Suncoast GCSA and Kevin Sunderman, Vice President, West Coast GCSA shake after the two teams tied in the tournament, and Suncoast retained the trophy for another year. Photo by Joel Jackson*

**FTGA Conference**

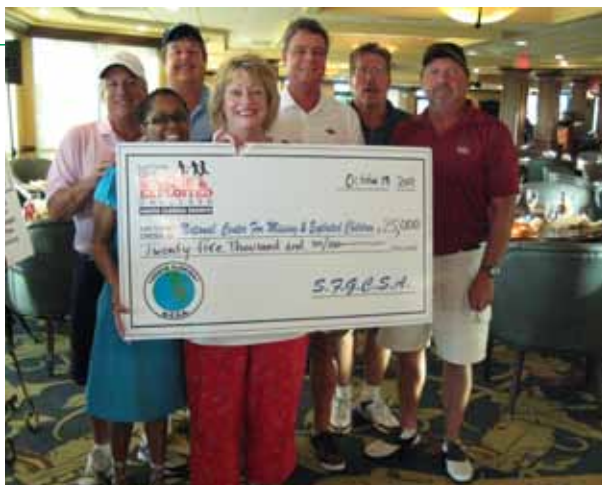
This year's FTGA Conference and Show was the site for the second Golf BMP Training and Testing Session. The session was well attended and the number of Golf BMP-certified superintendents continues to climb steadily. During the conference, Ralph Dain, GCSAA Regional Representative for Florida, presented the FTGA's highest service honor award the "Wreath of Grass," to Greg Pheneger from the John's Island Club in Vero Beach.

*Long time Florida golf course superintendent and current GCSAA Regional Representative Ralph Dain, left, introduced and presented John's Island Director of Golf Operations and FTGA Past President Greg Pheneger with the 2012 FTGA Wreath of Grass Award at the FTGA Conference and Show in Orlando in late September. Photo Courtesy of Leading Edge Communications.*



### South Florida GCSA

For the past 28 years, the South Florida Golf Course Superintendents Association has sponsored an annual golf tournament that benefits the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children Florida Regional Office, located in Lake Park. This year's tournament, held at the Fort Lauderdale Country Club Oct. 19, raised \$25,000, bringing the 28-year total to more than \$392,000 to support local programs and services.



The SFGCSA presented a \$25,000 check to Nancy McBride, national safety director for Missing and Exploited Children. From left: Back Row: Bryan Singleton, SFGCSA vice president; Billy Entwistle, Joe Pantaleo, Marcus Prevatte, Ricky Reeves, SFGCSA President. Front Row: Lissa Donald-Minus, SFGCSA association manager and Nancy McBride. Photo courtesy of the SFGCSA.

### North Florida

Now that GCSAA has added a fifth member to the golf teams participating in the National GCSAA Golf Championship in February, Florida needed an official fifth event to allow members to qualify for the team. The North Florida GCSA stepped up and created the North Florida Fall Classic, a two-day event of education, networking and golf. This year the event was held at the Omni Resort on Amelia Island. The education session was a success with speakers Todd Lowe, USGA Green Section; David Dougherty, International Sport Turf Research Center; Gary Grigg of Grigg Brothers Fertilizer; Paul Vermuelin of the PGA Tour Agronomy staff and Tom Vlach, superintendent of TPC of Sawgrass. The trophy (Crash Cup) for the golf tournament the next day was named in honor of Edward "Crash"

Hall, one of the founding members of the North Florida chapter. Scott Scamehorn, CGCS from the Mountain Lake GC in Lake Wales shot a respectable 70 to take home the trophy and win the first-ever NGCSA Fall Classic.



Crash Cup Tournament Chairman Jay McCord, left, presented Mountain Lake GC Superintendent Scott Scamehorn with the very first Crash Cup trophy. Photo by Joel Jackson.



Speakers at the NFGCSA Fall Classic education session were, from left: TPC @ Sawgrass Director of Agronomy Tom Vlach, USGA Green Section Agronomist Todd Lowe, Grigg Bros. Foliar VP Gary Grigg and PGA Tour Director of Competition Agronomy Paul Vermeulen. Not pictured: David Dougherty, CEO of the International Sports Turf Research Center. Photo by Joel Jackson.



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**West Coast**

The Feather Sound Golf Club hosted the West Coast GCSA's 2012 Bud Quandt Tournament Oct. 8. The event managed to finish before an afternoon storm drenched the course. This event is the primary fundraiser for turf research and charitable donations made by the chapter. This year a traveling team from the Suncoast Chapter won the event. In an act of pure class, the champs donated their winnings back to the fundraising cause.



*The Suncoast traveling team, from left — Bill Tyde, Robby Robertson, Dan Haulbein and Nick Kearns — took Low Gross honors at the WCGCSA Bud Quandt Tournament at Feather Sound Oct. 8. Photo by Joel Jackson.*



*The first- and second-place teams in the annual EGCSA CREW Tournament were captained by Brian Beckner, left, and Kevin Leo. Can you guess who came in first place? Photo by Joel Jackson.*

**Central Florida**

The CFGCSA's Larry Kamphaus Crowfoot Open at Grand Cypress moved from August to December this year. Superintendents and vendors from all over Florida attended and witnessed Jason Regan from Boca Pointe CC win the Crowfoot Trophy and the last spot on the FGCSA Golf Team going to the GC-SAA Championship in San Diego. Local superintendent Kevin Rotti, a CFGCSA past president received the Larry Kamphaus Award for service and dedication to family, job and community.



*From left: Tom Alex, Crowfoot Open host, presented the 2012 Larry Kamphaus Award to long time Central Florida superintendent, Kevin Rotti. Photo by Joel Jackson.*

**JANUARY**

- Jan 11 FTGA, Tampa
- Jan 11 Suncoast Vendor Appreciation Day, Plantation GC
- Jan 12 FTGA, Ft. Myers
- Jan 17 FTGA, Ocala
- Jan 18 SRGCSA Meeting, Continental GC
- Jan 18 SFGCSA Meeting, Crandon Park GC
- Jan 25-28 PGA Merchandise Show, Orlando
- Jan 28 UF Turf Club Golf Tournament, Gainesville

**FEBRUARY**

- Feb 7 FTGA, Orlando
- Feb 8 FTGA, Lake Worth
- Feb 8 SRGCSA Meeting, Williston Highlands GC
- Feb 9 FTGA, Plantation
- Feb 21 FTGA, Milton
- Feb 23 FTGA, Jacksonville
- Feb 24-25 GCSAA Golf, Palm Springs
- Feb 27-Mar 3 GCSAA GIS, Las Vegas

**MARCH**

- Mar 1 FGCSA Reception, Mirage, Las Vegas
- Mar 20 EGCSA Education & Dinner Meeting, Pelican Bay
- Mar 22 SFGCSA Turf Expo, Ft. Lauderdale IFAS REC
- Mar 22 Golf BMP Training & Exam Session, UF/IFAS, Citra
- Mar 29 Suncoast Scramble, TBA

**APRIL**

- Apr 5 EGCSA Spring Symposium, Naples
- Apr 16 SRGCSA Envirotron Classic, World Woods



*Jason Regan, superintendent of the Boca Pointe CC, shot a 75 to win the 2012 Crowfoot Open and a spot on the FGCSA golf team. Photo by Joel Jackson.*

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# Isla Del Sol - Island of the Sun



*Aerial view of Isla Del Sol showing its unique location in Boca Ciega Bay. Photo courtesy of Kevin Sunderman.*

Isla Del Sol Golf & Yacht CC FL 08-023 © Golf Shots Unlimited 2008

In the late 1970s, the state of Florida dredged and filled some low, marshy areas in Boca Ciega Bay to provide some anchor points for the Pinellas Bayway complex to provide land access to the southern St. Petersburg Gulf beaches, Tierra Verde, Mullet Key and Ft. De Soto Park at the entrance to Tampa Bay. Isla Del Sol's front golf course is a great green space to balance the high-density housing, and each homeowner has either a golf course or a water view. The historic Don Cesar Hotel



*View of the 8th hole from behind the green. The walk bridge had to be rebuilt after Tropical Storm Debby flooded the course with 17 inches of rain. Photo by Joel Jackson.*

in Pass-a-Grille Beach, built in 1928, is also in full view less than a mile away as you drive from the 11th green to the 12th tee.

The General Electric Company negotiated with the state to do some additional dredging to create some larger islands big enough to develop home sites and a golf course and the Isla Del Sol Yacht & Country Club and a number of condominium communities were born. The Isla Del Sol course was built and opened in 1977 and our host

superintendent, Kevin Sunderman has called it home since 2005. Kevin actually lives in the Bradenton area so he traverses the Sunshine Skyway Bridge twice a day in his commute to and from work.

I wonder if he's ever thought about using a boat?

In 2007, the TifDwarf greens were converted to SeaIsle Supreme paspalum and Kevin loves the grass. It tolerates the salty air and 100 percent effluent irrigation water, and hardly ever goes off color in the cooler months. The only challenge with the paspalum is managing the paspalum/bermudagrass interface around the greens, which requires vigilant edging and runner control.

Because of the temperature-moderating influence of the bay, the tees are the only turf areas that Sunderman overseeds during the cool season to provide protection for these high-traffic areas. The seed generally goes out in late November to get established before the busy winter golf season gets into full swing.

But even every paradise has issues. I thought the biggest challenge might be the soil profile from the fines dredged up, but according to Sunderman, it is the irrigation system and water availability. The course irrigation system is interconnected with the condo irrigation systems. They are all directly fed from the treatment plant.

The course has two booster pumps to maintain proper operating pressures, but with the demand of all the systems, The course may irrigate a full wall-to-wall cycle only two days a week. The rest of the time, they irrigate on a prioritized, as-needed basis. Add in lower water generated during non-peak seasons and precise irrigation management becomes the key management factor.

Sunderman attempts to coordinate with all the condo associations to develop a workable BMP plan, but he gets very

## SUPERINTENDENT FACTS

### Meet Kevin Sunderman

**Originally from:**  
New London, Ohio.

**Family:** Wife Melani. Son Trent (13) and daughter Elise (10).

**Education:** BS degree from "The" Ohio State University with a major in Turfgrass Science

**Employment history:** 1998 – 2000 Superintendent at Whetstone GC, Marion, OH; 2000-02 Assistant Superintendent (AS) at Snee Farm CC, Mt. Pleasant, SC; 2002 AS at East Lake Woodlands, Clearwater CC; 2002-03 Investment representative for Edward Jones Investments, Bradenton; 2003-05 AS at TPC Prestancia, Sarasota; 2005 – present Superintendent/Director of Grounds Isla Del Sol Yacht & Country Club.

**Professional affiliations/awards:** 12-year member of the GCSAA. Served as the Florida West Coast voting delegate in 2008, 2010, 2011 and 2012. Served on the FWCGCSA board since 2006, currently the vice president. I am also a member of the Florida GCSA board since 2008 and currently the Vice President of that organization as well.

**Personal philosophy of work:** Take the time to consider all sides of an issue and in the end do what is right. Only fight the battles worth fighting. Treat everyone with respect, especially your employees. If they know you sincerely care, they will always be there for you.

**Personal/Memorable Moments:** Every moment spent with my family. We are very close and do everything together. Knowing that time doesn't stand still, I treasure every moment and take it all in. I'm also very proud to be an alumnus of The Ohio State University. I have a deep sense of pride and belonging that goes way beyond being a sports fan. "How firm thy friendship, O-Hi-O"

**Hobbies and Interests:** My number one hobby is grilling. I make all my own sauces, rubs and marinades. I also dabble in guitar playing, mostly blues and classic rock. Avid sports fan of college football and the Tampa Bay Rays.



**KEVIN SUNDERMAN.**

*Photo by Joel Jackson.*



*View from the 3rd Green includes the Sunshine Skyway Bridge and Boca Ciega Bay. Photo by Joel Jackson.*



spotty cooperation from the various contract landscape companies.

The cultural programs at Isla Del Sol are in keeping with good stewardship practices most superintendents employ these days. Sunderman has a target of 2.5 pounds of N and 20 pounds of K per year on the greens. He makes four wall-to-wall, slow-release fertilizer applications per year on the rest of the course. The greens are double-aerified at 2x2-inch spacing twice in the spring and rolled and lightly verticut as often as possible. He uses 12 ounces of Primo per acre weekly in season. Chronic dry hot spots on the course



*Accessible approach to the par 5, 540 yard, 4th hole. Photo by Joel Jackson.*



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It takes people to make all this happen and Sunderman has two assistants who help him oversee the daily operation and also serve as the spray and irrigation technicians. Fernando Collazo has been at Isla Del Sol for 24 years and Chris Hewitt for 14 years. Equipment Manager Larry Jones has six years service.

Sunderman, originally from New London, Ohio is a proud Buckeye Turfgrass Science graduate and has been in the business for 14 years. He has managed courses in Ohio and South Carolina before settling into the Florida west coast region with service at East Lake Woodlands, TPC at Prestancia before coming to Isla Del Sol.

A devoted family man, Sunderman left the turf business for a brief time ten years ago to take a position with Edward Jones Investments that offered a higher salary, which was needed to provide for his growing family at the time. Cold-call sales pitches were not personally very satisfying, but he did learn a lot more about working effectively with people, and he brought that business sense with him when he came back to golf course management less than a year later.

Through it all, his wife Melani was his anchor and biggest cheerleader. They met when Kevin was the assistant superintendent and she was the catering director at the Snee Farm Country Club in Mt. Pleasant, South Carolina. Family time is Sunderman's greatest passion, so his golf game is sketchy at best.

In his "family time" Sunderman is a self-confessed outdoor cooking aficionado. In less than a year of doing recent cover stories, Sunderman is the second "Grill Monster" I've come across. The first was Ricky Reeves at the Miami Beach GC. Reeves confessed to owning five grills and Sunderman makes all his own

## SUNDERMAN FUN FACTS

**Vehicle:** 2008 Honda Ridgeline

**The last good movie I saw:** Skyfall

**I stay home to watch:** Ohio State Football

**What I've been reading:** The Big Miss by Hank Haney

**Favorite meal:** Anything I cook on the grill or in the smoker

**Prized possessions:** My wedding band. I've never taken it off

**Personal heroes:** My wife, father and mother

**I'm better than anyone else when it comes to:** Grilling (*except maybe for Ricky Reeves*)

**Nobody knows that I:** Was my high school valedictorian.

**If I could do it over:** I would never lose my temper (*ever*). It doesn't happen often

**My fantasy is:** To work because I want to, not because I have to. (*I'd still be doing the same thing.*)

**The one thing I can't stand:** People without direction or drive. Figure out what you need or want to do and get it done.

**Most humbling experience:** My first spring overseeding transition of greens as a superintendent.

**The words that best describe me:** Sincere, determined.

**My dream foursome would be:** My dad and two brothers.

**My most amazing/lucky/important golf shot:** My first hole-in-one. I was playing alone and had to shout at the group on the next tee to be witnesses and go look in the cup before I got to the green.



*The early heron gets the fish! Photo by Joel Jackson.*