

Issue 46 | Winter 2019

BY DESIGN



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This has long been the case for the American Society of Golf Course Architects, too. As a collective, we formed the ASGCA Environmental Committee in the early 1970s (pre-U.S. EPA), and published the landmark *An Environmental Approach to Golf Course Development* a little more than a decade later. And as individual members, we seek to deliver projects that fulfill our clients' briefs in the way that has the most positive impact on our environment.

We are proud to continue this environmental leadership with the introduction a new initiative to recognize innovative work. Our Environmental Excellence Awards program, presented by Ewing Landscape & Supply, highlights projects that have addressed a multitude of environmental issues, including resource management, flood prevention and habitat quality. Read more in the article that begins on page 17.

And throughout this issue of *By Design* you'll find more examples of ASGCA members working to improve sustainability for golf clubs. Our cover story, for example, which begins on page 12, is focused on phased renovation projects. We find out how our members have worked with clubs to implement a measured and pragmatic program of improvements that will help them thrive long in to the future.



Jan Bel Jan, ASGCA
President
American Society of Golf Course Architects

BY DESIGN

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CONTENTS

Digest 4

The issue opens with details of the schedule for the first ASGCA Winter Meeting, and includes a round-up of the latest ASGCA member projects.

Steps to success 12

Richard Humphreys considers the pros and cons of phased renovation projects, and finds out why this approach may be appropriate for many clubs.

Green stars 20

Snapshots of the seven projects recognized by ASGCA's first ever Environmental Excellence Awards.

Pride and professionalism 24

By Design reflects on the life and designs of Texan golf course architect David Bennett, ASGCA Fellow.

The way forward 26

We hear about the impact of new forward tees on the Preserve course at Shadow Wood CC in Florida.

Five to finish 28

James Cervone, ASGCA, answers our five questions to finish the issue.

COVER



Shangri-La Golf Club in Monkey Island, Oklahoma, photographed by Mike Klemme.

ASGCA Winter Meeting to provide information for all industry professionals

Registration is open for the first ASGCA Winter Meeting at GIS, Jan. 28, 2020 at the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando. ASGCA is a Presenting Partner of the Golf Industry Show.

‘Tradition and Innovation—Where the Golf Industry Is and Where It Is Going’ is a day-long, multi-presentation seminar for architects, superintendents, builders, owners, golf industry vendors, and all other golf development industry professionals.

Featured presentations and speakers are designed to help attendees better understand today’s changing and

challenging marketplace.

Highlights include an enlightening view on golf’s future in America from Ignacio Giraldo, a partner with TPC Growth and TPG Rise, and *Golf Channel*’s Matt Ginella moderating a lunchtime retrospective on the life and impact of ASGCA Past President Alice Dye. Additional sessions will provide valuable insight to help golf facilities be more successful in 2020 and beyond.

ASGCA Winter Meeting registration and additional information is available at: asgca.org/membership/events/2020-asgca-winter-meeting.



The ASGCA Winter Meeting will be held at Orange County Convention Center.

Renovation

Hills Forrest Smith completes Bonita Bay project

Bonita Bay Club in Bonita Springs, Florida, has reopened its Bay Island course following a renovation by Hills Forrest Smith.

“The primary goal of the project was to restore the original design and rebuild the infrastructure,” said Shawn Smith, ASGCA, of Hills Forrest Smith.

Most bunkers were restored to their steep grass face character and greens have been expanded to their original dimensions, or larger in some cases.

Hills Forrest Smith has also designed a 2.5-acre short game area with four greens. It was created by converting the eighteenth hole of the Creekside course to a par three.



Photo: Hills Forrest Smith

sight and
ls



Convention Center in Orlando

ASGCA Winter Meeting

Jan. 28, 2020

Presentations scheduled for the ASGCA Winter Meeting at GIS include:

The Future of Golf in America
Ignacio Giraldo, TPG Growth

Low Hanging Fruit: Management and Renovation
Practices of Superintendents at Courses Nationwide

Community Links: Examples of How Golf and Community
Make one Another Stronger

Alice Dye, ASGCA, Retrospective
Moderator: Matt Ginella, Golf Channel

Collaboration: How and Why Working Together Works
Moderator: Ron Whitten, Golf Digest

Leveraging Big Data
Jon Last, Sports & Leisure Research Group

Innovation in Short Game/Practice Areas

Renovation

Haworth caters for families at The Royal Ottawa

Nelson & Haworth is overhauling the practice facilities at The Royal Ottawa Golf Club in Quebec, Canada.

“The club’s goal was not only to improve the golf course but also provide world class facilities that were more family orientated,” said Neil Haworth, ASGCA.

The firm has been working on implementing a renovation plan at the club since 2016. The first phase began in 2017, with the rebuilding of three holes on the 18-hole course.

A year later, two new holes were built for the club’s nine-hole layout—the Royal 9—which were ready for play in July 2019. This meant the original second and third holes could be



Photo: Nelson & Haworth

closed to make way for construction of the new driving range.

Read more about The Royal Ottawa in the [2018 edition of ASGCA's Design Excellence Recognition Program](#).

“Our scope of work was to design the two new holes and a new driving

range that is world class,” said Haworth.

Construction of the new range began in August and grassing started in late September. Once it opens in July 2020, the existing range will be closed, and construction work will begin on a new short game area.

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- Eric Bauer, Director of Agronomy, Bluejack National

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Renovation

Sherman oversees work on Pete Dye's Ocean course at Kiawah Island

Scot Sherman, ASGCA, has completed work on the Ocean course at Kiawah Island Golf Resort in South Carolina, in preparation for it hosting the 2021 PGA Championship.

"In advance of the tournament, the resort recognized the need to perform some necessary maintenance work to the Ocean course while taking great care not to stray from Pete Dye's original design," said Sherman. "Because I had worked on another project with the resort's owner, and have a history with the Dye family, they reached out for some assistance. My role has been to review every aspect of the course and recommend necessary maintenance, while ensuring Pete's masterpiece was not tampered with."



Photo: Scot Sherman, ASGCA

The project included laser-levelling, resizing and regrassing tees. Sherman also made a few greenside tweaks. "On the fifteenth, sand from the waste area to the left of the green had blown up onto the left edge of

the green. Eventually, that made the green slope away from the waste area. We removed that sand to make the green slope back towards the waste area, as Pete originally designed it," said Sherman.



"Recently I've turned to other design disciplines to get a better feel for the bigger picture"

DAVID DRUZISKY, ASGCA

In the latest podcast from *Golf Course Industry's* Tartan Talks series, David Druzisky, ASGCA, talks about his most memorable projects.

"Laughlin Ranch was one of the most dramatic places I have worked," he said. "It was just an unbelievable piece of property overlooking the Colorado River. The play of light on the rocks and the mountains over the property was spectacular."

When asked about presenting ideas to clubs, Druzisky said: "It's a challenge working with a diverse range of personalities and customers and working within the framework of committees. Convincing people in a committee is what you have to do sometimes. It is challenging but can also be fun."

Druzisky says he studied architects like Dr. Alister MacKenzie when

he was younger. "Nowadays, I've looked at designers in general, not necessarily golf. Like many of us, we just evolve and sometimes we take inspiration from other golf architects and sometimes we take from other designers."

Listen to the full Tartan Talk at golfcourseindustry.com.

HERE ARE LINKS TO OTHER RECENT "TARTAN TALKS," NOW FEATURING OVER 20 EPISODES:

- Doug Myslinski, ASGCA, [talks about his work in construction and how he became a golf course architect.](#)
- John Colligan, ASGCA, [shares a few Texas-sized laughs and golf course architecture tales.](#)

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New golf course

New RTJ II-designed course opens in Mexico



Photo: Evan Schiller

The new Robert Trent Jones II course at Costa Palmas Golf Club near Los Cabos, Mexico, has opened for play.

ASGCA Past President Robert Trent Jones, Jr., ASGCA Fellow, describes the course as “a golf symphony composed of three movements and two transitions.” He has designed the first six holes as a links-inspired “dunescape” with greens accessible for bump-and-run shots. These holes include seamless transitions between putting surfaces and the next hole’s tees, and sand dunes as the main obstacles for players.

The par-five seventh serves as a transition to the course’s second movement—six “upland” holes that include views of the Sierra de la Laguna mountains. These holes

provide players with wide landing areas, but trees and bunkers mean golfers will have to consider club and shot selection carefully.

The final four holes play along coves, harbors and channels, with the par-four eighteenth bringing golfers back to the sea and the resort community’s private marina close to the Four Seasons Resort Los Cabos at Costa Palmas.

“We were given a spectacular site and shaped a golf course generous to the golfer that takes advantage of ocean views without being right on the water,” said Jones. “The challenge will come into play as the contouring around the green complexes can either be forgiving or rejecting. It will take an imaginative short game to get the ball on the green.”

Renovation

PGA National appoints Staples for Squire ‘reimagination’



Photo: PGA National Resort & Spa

PGA National Resort & Spa in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida, has hired Staples Golf Design for a ‘reimagination’ of its Squire course.

“We’ll be coming up with an innovative solution that addresses golf’s future, and that’s really exciting,” said Andy Staples, ASGCA. “You’re going to want to keep an eye on this project.”

The resort is home to five courses, including the Champion, which has hosted the Honda Classic since 2007.

New golf course

Albanese & Lutzke designs second course for Vietnam resort



Photo: Yen Dung Resort & Golf Club

Construction of the new Rock Valley course designed by Albanese & Lutzke at the Yen Dung Resort & Golf Club near Hanoi, Vietnam, is set to begin in 2021.

“The views on Rock Valley are like nothing I have ever seen that does not have an ocean,” said Paul Albanese, ASGCA. “Golfers will be standing on top of mountains up to 125 meters in height looking across the entire golf course and, on some holes, over to beautiful rice paddies and a traditional Vietnamese village.”

The architects have worked at the resort before, with the design of the Hillside course (pictured above) that opened in August 2017.



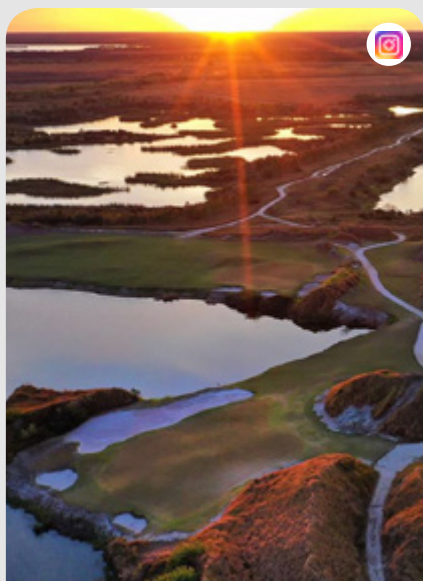
“The game
is saying hello
to a new crop
of designers.
I’m a voice of
the ASGCA.”

— BRANDON JOHNSON



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Social update



The sixth hole of the Red course at Streamsong (by [@coorecreshaw](#)) pictured is a testing par 3 playing over water to a largish green.



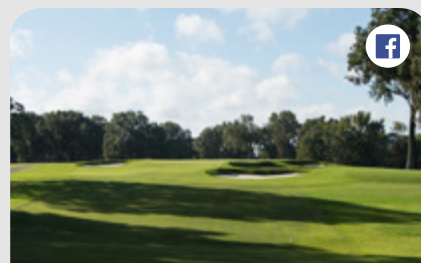
garylisbongolf
@garylisbongolf



If you love a tropical paradise, a great golf course in an idyllic setting, then you need to make it a point to get to Punta Espada in the Dominican Republic. This Jack Nicklaus design on the eastern end of the Island is one of my favorites



Evan Schiller, Golf photography
evan_schiller_photography



The twelfth hole at Chickasaw, showing our recent renovation to this 1922 William Langford gem!



Bergin Golf Designs
@bergingolfdesigns



Finishing and sodding at Morganfield. A course's shape is never better. Glad this day finally came.



Jeff Blume, ASGCA
@JeffBlumeASGCA



"Sloping land is unsuitable to manoeuvre and park motorhomes, which was part of my learning curve. But for golf, we know that craggy rock outcroppings and desert terrain can be an incredible and dramatic adventure, especially for par-three holes."

Forrest Richardson on the new 12-hole par-three course he has designed in Arizona, which will form part of a luxury RV park development.



Golf Course Architecture
@gcamagazine



"Veteran course designer opens his playbook" Chris Cochran, [@ASGCA](#) tells [@GOLF_com](#) about 30+ years designing w/ [@jacknicklaus](#). "Priority No. 1 is preparation. I've earned his trust because he knows we have the same goal: to create something memorable."



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Steps to success

While comprehensive ‘blow-up’ renovations might grab the headlines, for many golf clubs a phased approach is more appropriate. Richard Humphreys finds out more

Some remarkable golf course transformation projects have taken place over the past decade: from Coore & Crenshaw’s restoration of Pinehurst No. 2, which was ground-breaking in its embrace of a natural aesthetic, to Fazio Design’s employment of advanced technologies to create Augusta-like surfaces in one of the wettest regions of Europe, at Adare Manor in Ireland.

But most clubs don’t have the luxury of eight other courses to play on, or an owner happy to bankroll such a radical change. Closing the doors on the course for a year, or more, is usually simply not feasible.

“Ripping the band-aid off all at once is the preferred way to go, but sometimes clubs just don’t have the means to make that large of a commitment or investment and they cannot withstand

the extended closure,” says Drew Rogers, ASGCA. “Executing projects in smaller, surgical bursts is really the only way they can make progress.”

For Kenosha Country Club, one of only two Donald Ross layouts in Wisconsin, a phased approach was the only viable option. The club wanted to spread the cost of changes and remain operational while work was going on.



Photo: Chris Wilczynski, ASGCA



Photos: Drew Rogers, ASGCA



Kenosha Country Club in Wisconsin (above) engaged Drew Rogers, ASGCA, to bring back the original Donald Ross design intent while addressing modern demands. Chris Wilczynski, ASGCA, completed a nine-year project to renovate Wanakah Country Club in New York (left) in 2018

“This is where proper planning and guidance by the architect comes into play, to help the club prioritize the work sequentially so that the improvements follow the overall vision in a consistent manner and so already completed works are not redundantly impacted again,” says Rogers.

Kenosha is under way with a thoughtful resurrection of the course’s original Donald Ross design intent, plus other improvements to address modern demands related to infrastructure, playability and management.

Added complications

Choosing to phase the work over multiple years does bring difficulties.

“As well as complicating some work consistencies and limiting economies of scale, it is also a more ongoing inconvenience to golfers.” But Rogers says that this approach was the best and only choice for Kenosha. “Because there is a strong superintendent, leadership and a great relationship with the architect, we can remain laser-focused on details and we can still execute very strategically within the constraints and available resources.”

Another club with a Ross layout to have successfully adopted a long-term approach is Hyde Park Golf and Country Club in Cincinnati, Ohio. Tim Liddy, ASGCA, first started work there in 2002, creating a master plan for course improvements.

Course superintendent Pat O’Brien says: “The club was ultimately trying to improve infrastructure, given the failing irrigation system and poor drainage. Tim was also able to raise the discussion about tree removal, returning to the Ross roots while improving playability and infrastructure.

“It made sense financially and the membership was not in favor of a shutdown to accomplish what was in the plan. Tim to this day is still excellent to collaborate with on changes on the course.”

“A project like this must have a close understanding and relationship between club manager, golf professional, superintendent and



Photos: Kevin Atkinson, ASGCA



Kevin Atkinson, ASGCA, has worked with an in-house team at The Club at Ravenna in Colorado on recent golf course renovation work. He has reduced the square footage of bunkers by 50 percent

architect,” says Liddy. “Any changes would have been an issue but fortunately all have remained—and they have all stayed focused on the guidance of the master plan.”

“The membership is happy with the strategy,” says O’Brien. “The ease of budgeting allows for our team to engage on annual basis in changes to the course.”

Staying efficient

The financial trade-off for spreading the work over multiple years is typically a higher total cost—clubs that can afford to close their doors can reap economies of scale. But

doing work in smaller chunks can bring its own efficiencies.

At The Club at Ravenna in Littleton, Colorado, Kevin Atkinson, ASGCA, has worked with an in-house team on almost all of the golf course renovation work. He estimates that by having club staff undertake renovation work alongside their existing maintenance duties, the work is 40 percent cheaper than bringing in a contractor.

When the club opened in 2006, it had 160,000 square feet of bunkers, and greens that were severely contoured, resulting in tough conditions for players. “One of the

primary goals of our ongoing project, which began in 2014, has been to make the course more playable for members, so they could actually enjoy playing golf time and time again,” says Atkinson.

Reducing the maintenance burden has also been a priority. “We have reduced the sand bunkers to 80,000 square feet and rebuilt, or softened, greens,” says Atkinson. “By utilizing the latest research findings from Michigan State University, we saved nearly \$100,000 in material costs, just in the greens.

“Because of the method of how we build things, it gives the owner and

the staff a great opportunity to fit projects in their normal schedule—most clubs wouldn't have that opportunity. For instance, once they have done their typical maintenance routine in the morning, they can go into projects in the afternoon, as well as taking advantage of two-to-three hours here or there, while most clubs need a golf contractor on site the whole time and pay them for it. This project allows the club to pick away at projects and fit it into their schedule of golf operations.”

Steve Datwyler, the club's superintendent, says: “After identifying that our productivity was limited by the equipment, we purchased a track skid steer and a mini excavator, which greatly accelerated the pace and quality of our work.”

Managing expectations

Atkinson is careful to advise clubs on the complexities of carrying out a long-term plan. “The course can feel, from a membership point of view, like it is always under construction,” he says. “That is the dynamic I find most complicated—it is much easier to shut it down and do everything you want. However, that approach for a lot of courses is not financially feasible. You shut the course down, you might lose

half your members, because they don't have anywhere to play.”

Datwyler adds: “The biggest trial was making the transition back to golf course maintenance. The most humbling experience was in 2018 when we were wrapping up a large-scale project that lasted into early

“// This project allows the club to pick away at projects and fit it into their schedule of golf operations

June. We struggled a good part of that season to keep up with maintenance and we learned that we should never over-extend our abilities at the expense of the golf course conditions.”

When the course opened in 2005, membership was at 80, but following renovation work, the club now has around 300 members.

“It's not only been the best choice for the club from a financial point of view, but it also allows the superintendent to maintain consistency amongst his maintenance crew,” says Atkinson. “Typically for seasonal labor, different people would come in and out. But he keeps them on all year round, which allows projects to get done in the off season.

The club continues to pay the wages of this crew but that is a drop in the bucket compared to having to always retrain a crew and then have typical golf construction costs.”

Datwyler adds: “The phased approach was an excellent choice in our particular situation. We were

looking for a cost-effective approach to tackling the project and the in-house option allowed us to pick off the ‘low hanging fruit,’ complete the majority of work on our own timeline, and did not require a large upfront financial investment. Taking on a few renovation projects each off-season provided a fresh playing experience each spring for our members.”

Member buy-in

Small steps can help build members' confidence in the long-term goal.

“I think, if they could afford it, most would choose to make the desired improvements all at once,” says Dave Heatwole, ASGCA. While working at Bonnie Briar Country

The master plan that David Heatwole, ASGCA, created for Bonnie Briar Country Club in New York evolved during the project to focus on enhancing the course's playability





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Club in Westchester County, New York, he says one motivation for a phased approach was getting the membership to understand the value of investing money into their greatest asset, the golf course.

"We began with some tee renovation work as the overall master plan was being developed," he said. "Over the next four-to-five years we implemented many of the items contained within the master plan. Many of those items were the basic infrastructure of the course including tree and brush removal, drainage projects, and stream restoration."

Chris Wilczynski, ASGCA, approached the renovation of Wanakah Country Club near Buffalo, New York, by doing two-to-four holes a year. "The club moved forward with the first phase of the renovation in 2009," he says. "This was the first test run with the goal of getting the membership to buy into the process and the improved course."

"Most of the golf course was flat, and drained poorly. Our recommendation was to regrade the poorly draining holes and create a minimum slope gradient of three percent, and add underground drainage. We were also able to convince the membership that we should rebuild the tees and bunkers and expand the greens back

to their original shapes and design intent. We also proposed to remove several hundred trees."

Such ambitious plans can make stakeholders nervous. But after the initial phase in 2009, members approved and Wilczynski completed five further phases over the following eight years, allowing play to continue at all times.

// We proved that a multi-phased project could work

Staying on track

When changes are being implemented over a long timeframe, maintaining consistency and continuity can be challenging.

"Throughout the entire process we have had many changes of club representatives including about seven or eight club presidents, about five or six greens chairmen, a couple of general managers and thankfully only one superintendent", says Heatwole, of the Bonnie Briar project. "While each club representative has had slightly different priorities, we have managed to maintain a consistent focus on the club's original goals and objectives for the overall facility."

Three different contractors were used in Wilczynski's Wanakah renovation. "The continuity and cohesiveness of the work was challenging because of the different construction personnel doing the work," says Wilczynski. "We also did not always know when the next phase would resume or how much work we could accomplish in

each phase because the club had to approve the work from one phase to the next.

"The fact that the project was carried out over a nine-year period was also a challenge. As an architect, my eye evolved and it was challenging to keep consistency with the finished work."

"I am satisfied because the club is thrilled and the members love the renovated course. The course drains well and the membership gets to play more golf because of the improved drainage. We exceeded expectations and delivered a first-class project where each phase was completed on time and budget."

"We proved that a multi-phased project could work."



Photos: Chris Wilczynski, ASGCA

Wilczynski's work at Wanakah CC, where he completed two-to-four holes a year over a nine-year period, included addressing poorly-draining holes



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asgca.org/membership/events/2020-asgca-winter-meeting



ASGCA Past President Tom Clark, ASGCA, has renovated all 27 holes at Shangri-La Golf Club in Oklahoma. The project has been so successful that the club is considering adding another nine and a parthree layout

Moving forward

The approach worked at Bonnie Briar, too; membership numbers increased, as did the club's profile through the early years of Heatwole's master plan. "With a stronger membership and better financial situation, the club then realized it was time to update the master plan as we began to think about course improvements for the next ten years. As we developed phase two of the master plan, we began to focus on the playability of the golf course, the restoration of the bunkers, rebuilding a few greens that did not match the original style, the expansion of a few of the existing greens, irrigation and drainage improvements, as well as adding new short game practice areas."

ASGCA Past President Tom Clark, ASGCA, references his work at the 27-hole Shangri-La Golf Club in Monkey Island, Oklahoma. "We would work on one nine, leaving 18 holes in play, then move onto the next nine, and so on."



Photos: Mike Klemme

Having successfully completed renovation work on all 27 holes, the club is now considering adding a new par-three course and a driving range. "This would take some pressure off the current 27 holes and will also provide an entertainment venue for the newly completed hotel and its guests," says Clark. "The final piece of the puzzle will be an additional nine holes to bring the course back to its original 36 holes."

"A long-term approach was absolutely the right method for the club as it kept the membership happy. When the owner took over the golf facility with 36 holes, I think he had 50 members. Now they have 600—it has worked out tremendously well."

"All clubs benefit from solid long-range planning programs," says Rogers. "It's important for the club to understand where they're going and why, so they can remain steadfast, focused, consistent and fiscally responsible. Leadership at private clubs is also ever-changing and by having a solid plan adopted and in place, it becomes the roadmap that is deferred to, no matter how many times the faces change. After all, if the club makes an investment to develop such a plan, it's like throwing that money away to go in a different direction." ●

To find an ASGCA member near your club, visit asgca.org/architects.

Green stars

Snapshots of the seven projects recognized by ASGCA's first ever Environmental Excellence Awards program.

The Environmental Excellence Awards program, presented by Ewing Irrigation & Landscape Supply, was introduced to recognize the innovative work being done at golf facilities to address the needs of the environment. We take a look at how golf course architects have worked with course owners and operators to make a positive impact on the game and local communities.

Photo: Willow Oaks Country Club



WILLOW OAKS COUNTRY CLUB



Location: Richmond, Virginia
Architect: Lester George, ASGCA

Whenever the waters of the James River rose above a certain level, half of this Virginia course would flood due to a lack of water flow control into and out of the course. Renovation work included the creation of flood channels to alleviate flooding and effectively manage the flow of water.

Photo: Todd Schoeder, ASGCA



CITY PARK GOLF COURSE



Location: Denver, Colorado
Architect: Todd Schoeder, ASGCA

As well as improving the course and practice facilities, the renovation of this Denver municipal has integrated features to alleviate the threat of flooding in local neighbourhoods. A detention area collects stormwater, which is then slowly released into an existing pipe north of the course, helping to prevent city drainage systems from becoming overwhelmed.



LOS ROBLES GREENS GOLF COURSE

Photo: Dave Sansom



Location: Thousand Oaks, California

Architect: Dana Fry, ASGCA and Jason Straka, ASGCA

More than 30 acres of turf was removed during the renovation of Los Robles Greens so that less fertilizer, pesticide and fossil fuel is required. The irrigation system was redesigned to enable more efficient watering leading to a projected 20 to 25 percent reduction in water use.



ROOSEVELT GOLF COURSE

Photo: Chris Zablan



Location: Los Angeles, California

Architect: Forrest Richardson, ASGCA

The main challenge during the restoration of this municipal nine-hole course in Los Angeles's Griffith Park was to convert the irrigation source from potable to recycled water. After a decade of planning and permitting, water conservation has improved, habitat has been restored and the course is integrated within the natural environment.

Photo: Nathan Grace, ASGCA



THE REFUGE GOLF COURSE

Location: Flowood, Mississippi
Architect: Nathan Grace, ASGCA

One element of the major remodeling of The Refuge was a comprehensive study of all trees along playing corridors. Invasive species, those that were dead or dying and others that posed a danger were removed. The remaining trees can now be healthier and live longer, and the work has also addressed turf and erosion issues and improved playability.

Location: Addison, Illinois
Architect: ASGCA Past President Greg Martin, ASGCA

Planning, design and permitting was coordinated with 19 separate agencies during the transformation of this Illinois course that delivered a wealth of environmental benefits including reduced flood risk and improved water and habitat quality.

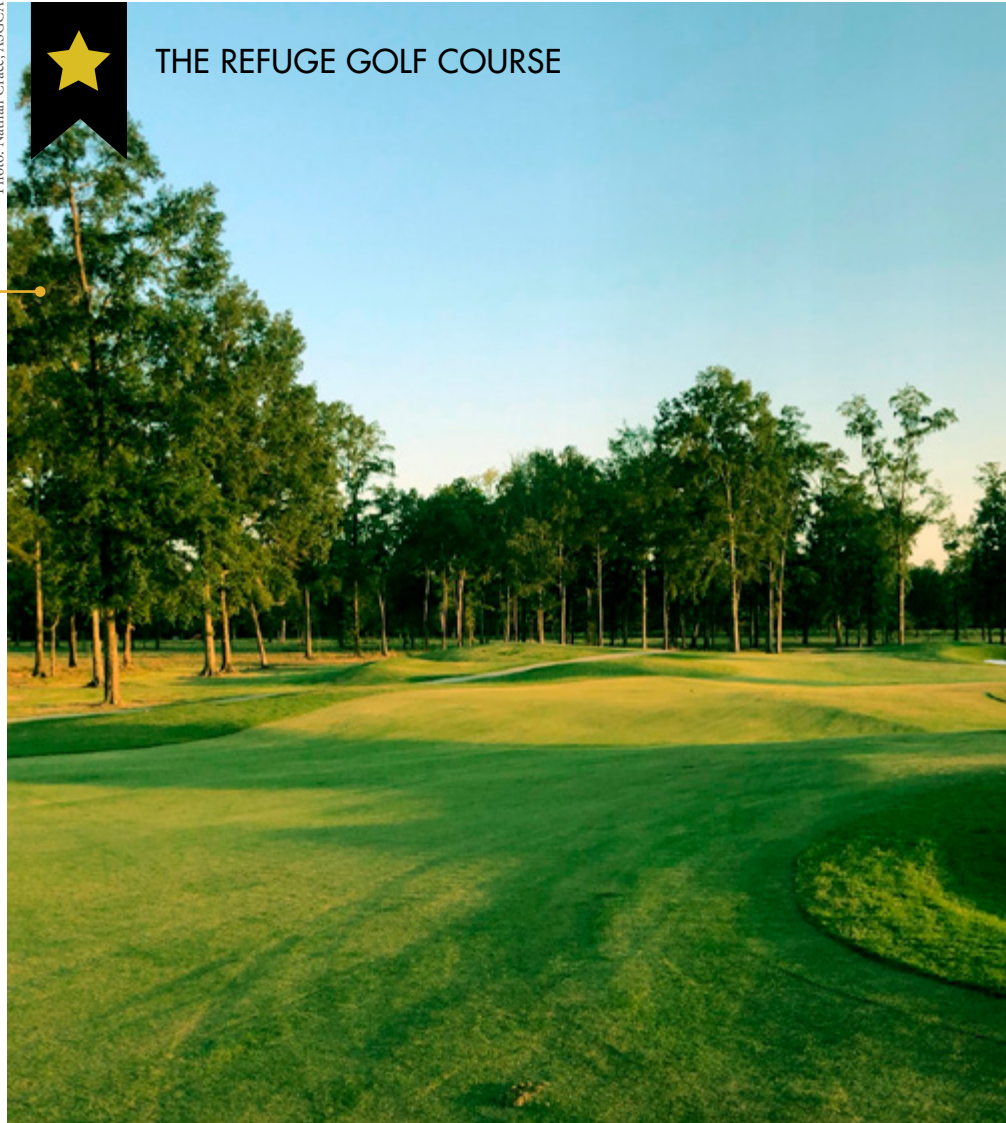


Photo: The Preserve at Oak Meadows



THE PRESERVE AT OAK MEADOWS





Photo: Sanford Golf Design



CRANDON GOLF AT KEY BISCAIYNE

Location: Key Biscayne, Florida
Architect: ASGCA Past President John Sanford, ASGCA

A project is under way to reduce turf areas and water use at the only public golf course on Biscayne Bay, 10 minutes from downtown Miami. Data was collected from GPS tracking devices carried by golfers to prioritize areas that could be converted to naturalized and aquatic planting and crushed stone, reducing irrigated turf areas by over 30 percent. ●



Pride and professionalism

By Design reflects on the life and designs of Texan golf course architect David Bennett.

David Bennett, ASGCA Fellow, died on October 1, 2019 at his home in Texas. He was 84.

"I am so grateful to have known David," says ASGCA President Jan Bel Jan. "He was a modern-day gentleman—courteous to all, refined by his desire for excellence and knowledge and honorable to clients, professional colleagues, political contacts and personal friends."

Bennett's career began in the Texas Highway Department, having graduated from Texas Tech University with degrees in landscape architecture and park administration.

But by the mid-1960s, his passion for golf (he was a good amateur player) led him to course design, initially working for Leon and Charles Howard in Austin, Texas.

Bennett established his own business in the 1970s and in its early years he worked alongside pro

golfers; first Terry Dill and then six-time major champion Lee Trevino. Most of those projects were in nearby states but ultimately, he would complete more than 100 projects across 14 states, and further afield in Canada, Mexico and Venezuela.

Bennett became an ASGCA member in 1976 and achieved Fellow status in 2006.

"Because Dave was foresighted enough to understand the needs of the golfer and the home buyer, his clients engaged Dave to master plan their golf courses and the surrounding developments and then to manage the construction," says Bel Jan. "His visionary approach to golf communities has been enjoyed by thousands of golfers and residents. I am saddened at his loss, but I am gladdened that his work lives on."

In an article for *Golf Digest*, Ron Whitten says that Bennett was

"one of the Old School golf course architects who drew volumes of blueprints and took pride in sticking to a construction budget, no matter how small."

Whitten describes Bennett's big break at what is now The Clubs at Prestonwood in Dallas: "Given a healthy budget, he was instructed to produce a championship venue (this was the beginning of the slope-rating era, remember, when tougher was considered better), and he delivered with The Hills Course, featuring 13 water carries, big, rolling greens and a long par four that required an approach shot over a ravine dubbed 'The Pit of Doom.'"

Eric Kaspar is the director of golf at one of Bennett's most celebrated layouts, Cypress Bend Resort in Many, Louisiana, and he has also worked at two others: Crystal Falls in Leander, Texas,

Photo: Cypress Bend Resort





Above, the seventeenth hole at Bennett's Cypress Bend Resort layout in Many, Louisiana. In 2006, Bennett (right) was presented with his ASGCA Fellow plaque from then-ASGCA President Tom Marzolf

and The National in Westlake, Louisiana. "At Crystal Falls and Cypress Bend, there are tremendous changes in topography, which Dave took advantage of with many uphill, downhill and sidehill holes," says Kaspar. "Many of the holes feature risk-reward shots, both utilize the existing landscape to its fullest and they have a few blind shot holes to challenge the golfer.

"The National is at a much more level piece of land, but Dave was able to create enough rolling terrain to make it very visually appealing, yet not look contrived. All three courses fit the properties very well. There is



Photo: ASGCA

a good mixture of par fours, both lengthy and short, and challenging, if not sometimes unconventional par fives, as is the case at Cypress Bend. The par threes are very beautiful and

well laid out with good variety from one to the other. To his credit, if a visitor played each course, they would not know that the same architect designed them." ●

The way forward

ASGCA Past President Steve Forrest, ASGCA, has introduced a new set of forward tees on the Preserve course at Shadow Wood CC, to offer members a fun, enjoyable and attractive playing experience.

The Preserve course is one of three at Shadow Wood Country Club, an upscale private club community in Estero, Florida. Its North and South courses were originally designed by Bob Cupp, ASGCA Fellow, and were renovated in 2017 and 2018. ASGCA Past President Rees Jones and Bryce Swanson, ASGCA, oversaw the renovation, which included adding new membership tees, expanding selected ones, and relocating some to help offer more variety.

The Preserve course is a twenty minute drive north of the club's original two courses. It was originally designed by ASGCA Past President Arthur Hills and opened for play in 2003. It was initially well-received, but as the membership aged, only about 20 percent of the club's total rounds were being played on the Preserve.

Shadow Wood retained the golf architecture firm Hills Forrest Smith

to develop a master plan for improvements aimed at making the Preserve course more fun, enjoyable and attractive for the membership.

The plan identified four factors that contributed to the difficulty of the layout, including long and elevated side slopes along the wetlands and water hazards that effectively

summer 2016, with the hole playing back to the clubhouse and highly visible. It was selected as the 'test case' for trying out new ideas. A timber wall was installed along the lake edge to widen landing areas and a bunker was added near the green complex to reduce its height above surrounding grades. Bunkers were renovated and

Factors that contributed to the difficulty of the layout included the absence of an appropriate set of forward tees

reduced the playable widths of the hole corridors; highly elevated green complexes; excessive bunkering and feature shaping; and the absence of an appropriate set of forward tees.

The first phase focused on the second hole and was implemented in

made more playable and manageable and a new forward tee was added to shorten the length of the hole.

"On hilly sites, one of the primary goals is to avoid putting forward tee players down in a valley while everyone else is hitting from a lovely,





The forced carry on the second hole of the Preserve course at Shadow Wood CC is avoided from the forward tees (visible in the top-right of the image)

Photo: ASGCA Past President Steve Forrest, ASGCA

elevated perch,” said ASGCA Past President Steve Forrest, ASGCA. “On the flat landscape of the Preserve course at Shadow Wood, we didn’t really have that concern.”

Forrest said that the design team tried to ensure that the placement of forward tees would be accessible from cart paths; would not be a visual distraction from other tees; be big enough and level like the other tees; that they would avoid forced carries over penalty areas; and would reduce the play angle on dogleg holes.

“The biggest challenge usually comes when the cart path is routed on the inside curve of a dogleg hole,” said Forrest. “In those situations, if the tee is convenient to the cart path, the play angle is usually increased and there is most likely a bunker on the cart path side of the hole that can become a challenge to the forward tee player. In those instances, if the cart path can’t be moved to the outside of the dogleg, the best solution is to line up the tees on a single centerline.”

The pilot project on the second hole was well received and the decision to implement more improvements, including a new set of forward tees on all the remaining holes, was made. Glase Golf Construction completed the work in summer 2018 and the Shadow Wood membership now look forward to making the drive north to enjoy the new and improved Preserve. ●

Moving forward

Hills Forrest Smith’s work on the Preserve course at Shadow Wood CC is one of a number of projects that is included in the new ASGCA publication *Forward Tee: Case Studies in Additional Tees*. Download free of charge via www.asgca.org/publications





James Cervone, ASGCA

James Cervone, ASGCA, graduated from Penn State University with a degree in landscape architecture before starting his career in golf course architecture with Ault, Clark & Associates. Cervone has worked on projects across the US, and also in China, the Caribbean, Canada, South Africa and the United Arab Emirates. He founded Cervone Golf Design in 2002, which is based in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

How is your game?

I do not play as many rounds as I would like. I do hit balls or work on my short game as often as I can, which is a form of therapy for me. My game is in decent shape—I'm still able to score well and I have had a few sub-par rounds this season despite my ongoing fight for more distance. I really look forward to playing golf and I thoroughly enjoy the comradery with family and friends out on the course.

Which three people would make up your dream fourball?

I am fortunate to play with my three sons from time to time who make up my favorite foursome. But in the spirit of the question; for entertainment purposes and because he always reminded me of my dad, who didn't play golf, I would pick one of my top crooners and golf enthusiast Dean Martin.

From a historical perspective, I would love to play a round with Alister MacKenzie or A.W. Tillinghast, just flip a coin. And, for the sheer thrill of it, I've got to go with Tiger Woods. I would also ask my good buddy and player-consultant Rocco Mediate to caddy for me and help strategize in case Tiger wanted a side bet!

What is your favorite hole in golf?

This question gives me agita! There are so many good answers and so many holes that come to mind from a design standpoint. I would agree as Pete Dye once said, 'par three holes are amongst the most memorable,' but I'm not going with a par three. I wanted to choose a hole from a course I've actually played, and I've been fortunate

/// Maybe there should be a mandatory two stroke penalty at the end of the round if you're over five hours?

to play many great golf courses. Ultimately, I decided to go with a hole from my beloved hometown area in Western Pennsylvania, which had an emotional effect on me—the eighteenth at Oakmont CC. I remember standing on the tee and being intimidated and I was also just struck by all the history involved there. Playing into the green with the clubhouse off in the distance, I was also thinking of the 1962 US Open ending in a playoff between Arnie and Jack. I remember playing there like it was yesterday.

If you could change or add one rule, what would it be?

It would have to be some refinement or just more enforcement of a rule we already have for undue delay or slow play. I think St. Andrews' target time of 3h 57m for 18 holes is about right. Maybe there should be a mandatory two stroke penalty at the end of the round if you're over five hours?

What project are you currently working on?

Lately, it's been a lot of hamburgers and no big juicy steaks! I've been working near home at Pittsburgh National (pictured below), relocating greens and changing up several holes to address playability issues and slow play. ●



Photo: James Cervone, ASGCA

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