

Callawassie Island completes \$4 million Fazio golf course renovation

From worldgolf.com

OKATIE, S.C. -- Callawassie Island residents will celebrate the eagerly awaited finale of their \$4 million Tom Fazio golf course renovation with a ribbon cutting and champagne toast on the 9th green of the club's Dogwood nine at 6:30 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 3. An Oktoberfest party will follow the toast and ribbon cutting.

The ceremony marks a new era in golf at Callawassie Island, where the sport shapes daily life for many of its residents.

"The economy has caused many other communities nationwide to put similar projects on hold," said Bob DeLuca, president of the Callawassie Island Club Board of Directors. "The club leadership, members, property owners and staff are proud to have completed this major renovation on time and on budget."

According to Callawassie Island Club Golf Course Superintendent Matthew Tacilauskas, the two-year renovation of all 27 holes rebuilt greens with sturdy, fast Mini Verde ultradwarf hybrid Bermuda grass, restored the courses' routing elements to Fazio's original design standards and installed a state-of-the-art irrigation system that reduces watering requirements by more than 50 percent. This system saved more than 30 million gallons of water between May 2007 and May 2008. The Dogwood nine were the last holes to be renovated and will be open for play after the celebration. Billy Fuller, president of Billy Fuller Golf Design and a former superintendent at Augusta National, consulted with the Fazio team specifically on green design elements to accommodate the ultra high performance putting surfaces. East Lake Golf Club in Atlanta (home of the PGA Tour Championship), the Tournament Players Club at Sawgrass (home of The Players) and TPC Myrtle Beach also feature Mini Verde ultra dwarf hybrid Bermuda grass on their championship courses

"The 27 holes of Fazio golf at Callawassie Island have become more challenging with better playability because of quality of the putting surfaces and the features within the green complexes," said Fuller. "The courses offer high aesthetic and strategic values resulting in tremendous playability for all levels from higher handicapped amateurs to the professional level. It is strategically exceptional and could attract many primary state and regional tournaments."

Hilton Head Island Amateur Golf Association players who competed on the already complete portion of the renovation earlier this year "raved about the condition of the Palmetto and Magnolia courses at Callawassie Island Club, where the firm, fast greens made for difficult scoring," according to Justin Jarrett of the Hilton Head Island Packet.

"When the majority of players complete their rounds at Callawassie, most would tell you that, strategically, the challenge and reward is there all the way around," Fuller continued.

Callawassie Island's golf courses and many other amenities complement its extraordinary natural surroundings, which include 11 miles of coastline, ancient live oaks, fertile salt marshes and an abundant population of Lowcountry wildlife. Its 27 holes of Tom Fazio golf provide superb play options for every skill level. Tennis activities anchored at Callawassie's six Har-Tru courts have attracted more than 200 dedicated members for the Callawassie Island Tennis Association with special events, clinics and competitions for both casual and competitive players.

Through the efforts of Callawassie's dedicated Ecology Committee, the island was the first area in South Carolina - and one of only 15 nationwide - to achieve the National Wildlife Federation's Community Wildlife Habitat certification. Ongoing conservation efforts and programs guided by the Ecology Committee will help protect Callawassie's natural beauty for future generations while enhancing residents' knowledge and appreciation of its Lowcountry habitat.

Now home to almost 500 families, 70 percent of whom live fulltime on the island, Callawassie hosts 26 active organizations ranging from the third-largest kayak club in South Carolina to book clubs for nearly any taste. The Callawassie community not only offers some of the Lowcountry's best golf and home values, it provides a range of lifestyle options with likeminded neighbors. Callawassie's enthusiastic residents include such a fascinating variety of individuals, from nationally recognized artists to corporate executives.

For more information, visit www.callawassieisland.org.

