

# Executive golf division works hard to keep courses in top shape

**W**ith the holidays upon us, everything seems to speed up a little. We have Christmas parties, family gatherings, reunions with old friends and everything in between.

Over Thanksgiving vacation, we made our annual trip to Chicago. For seven days we were able to enjoy some of Chicago's best attributes – the Hancock Building, the White Sox stadium, Chicago pizza, ice skating, the Bean, and the overall big city atmosphere.

This was truly exciting for all of our family, especially for my 5-year-old son and 10-year-old daughter, since they saw snow in the Windy City for the first time.

Over the course of this Thanksgiving holiday, I focused on guaranteeing that my family had a fun and successful trip. I wanted to make sure that we created lifelong memories since my kids now are old enough to appreciate and take in all that the city has to offer.

I knew we could do this with some great planning, but without the cooperation of the community it would be tough. This made me extra vigilant about how the people we interacted with treated our family and making sure we steered clear of possibly unpleasant encounters.

Thank goodness we had no incidents in our travels, and I witnessed how hard the staff at all of the places we visited worked to make our family comfortable during the holidays, even though they were away from theirs.

That same philosophy holds true with your District staff here in The Villages. After being on vacation, I am excited to return to start implementing some of the golf maintenance projects planned and budgeted for fiscal year 2014-15 to ensure that residents can continue to experience



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great things in their community.

In the short time I was away, two major events occurred that related to golf. The first was that we experienced 5 inches of rain in a single day, and the second was that our executive golf courses had some of the highest player numbers recorded in recent years.

After learning of the weather conditions, I cheered myself up with the thought that if we were living in colder temperatures, the 5 inches of rain might have been 2 feet of snow. It is wonderful that we live in a community where we can play golf year round!

With the start of the new fiscal year, we have been planning and are moving ahead with approved projects. Some of these projects include continued improvements to playing areas on some of the earliest designed courses.

Many of these will encompass the reconstruction of bunkers, tees and greens. There are many other small, but just as important, improvements plans involving drainage, cart path repairs, building of new tee areas to accommodate the increased amount of play and more.

All of these planned, budgeted items are to ensure your courses are kept in the best playing condition possible and for sustained growth in the future.

We will continue to let you see the perpetual golf plan at work for you with the implementation of our 10-year plan, improving consistency in maintenance practices, and communicating to the community of golfers what

is on the horizon. This will help the community, like my family in Chicago, to have the most enjoyable time possible.

Please feel free to introduce yourself if you see me on the courses. My contact information is posted below and at every VCDD executive starter building. I welcome correspondence from residents regarding your executive golf courses.

If you are looking to improve your understanding of the golf course systems here in The Villages, sign up for Good Golf School at the tee time office at La Rena building in Spanish Springs. While you're there, pick up your latest copy of the Good Golf Guide or visit your local Villages golf shop.

We, as golf professionals in the industry, can do a lot. But without the cooperation of resident golf players, we would struggle to maintain golf standards. Repairing ball marks, fixing divots and raking bunkers all are part of the good golf etiquette that has helped us maintain the golf courses.

Also in your Good Golf Guide, the executive courses are rated for difficulty on a scale of 1 to 4, with 1 being the friendliest and 4 being the most challenging. These ratings will help you pick the best courses to meet your skill level and increase your enjoyment.

As your director of executive golf maintenance, I want all of you to enjoy the courses over these winter holidays and for many years to come.

Have a safe and wonderful holiday season. See you on the course!

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