

FEATURE II

Doug Davis, *Flagg Creek Golf Course*

# A Unique Fall Flowerbed



*When I have the opportunity to play golf at courses other than my own, I get to see many things other than greens, tees, and fairways. (Especially where my ball flies on occasion!) I particularly enjoy seeing how other facilities utilize areas of the golf course such as the front entrance and clubhouse surrounds using color by way of annual/perennial flowers, bulbs, fall mums, etc.*

At Cantigny, I have always been impressed by the way Scott Witte creates some of the most eye catching flower beds in some of the, otherwise, most out of the way areas. Whether it is a colorful landscape bed on an island in a pond or lake, hanging planter boxes on a bridge, or even cascading plants dropping down out of the crotch of a tree, these stylish ideas create rainbows of color that might otherwise just be green landscapes.

In the middle of my golf course, near a bent grass nursery, bordered by a practice range I had this mound of aerification plugs, mostly sand, that I didn't have an immediate use for, but that I didn't want to just lose in my waste area. The pile was visible from the 1<sup>st</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, and 7<sup>th</sup> holes and had good access to an irrigation source. So, one morning in early June I looked at that mound and said to myself, "Hmm—pumpkin patch?" A few bags of compost blended in and all was set. The good folks at Burpee and Livingston Seed Company have many varieties to choose from and experiment with. Packets for the largest pumpkins may have only four seeds in them.

So, I put four to six seeds in each of about three mounds, tossed a little straw around the mounds to conserve moisture

and ward off weeds, and I waited. It took very little time at all for the sprouting to begin, and we were on our way. At the beginning, I fertilized the plants almost weekly or bi-weekly to get them aggressively growing and then cut back after the first fruits started to form. The fun part at that point was this huge patch of green vines and leaves that everyone drove or walked by each day and no one had a clue as to what it was.

Then, toward the end of August, the big orange globes started to show themselves through the foliage, and boy did the comments begin! Guess it's one thing to see a pile of pumpkins for sale in a box at the store and quite another to see them growing naturally in a large patch. I had people coming up to me left and right inquiring, complimenting, and of course wondering what I was going to do with them. The pumpkins, approximately 14 in all, will be part of a fall display outside the entrance to our clubhouse.

I think if you were to ask most people what their favorite season is they would say fall. Creating a pumpkin patch somewhere on your course might generate some smiles and excitement and add to this enjoyable time of the year. (Ed note: plus give Linus something to do on Halloween.). **-OC**

