



The pond that flanks the uphill 506 yard 5th hole on the South nine is part of the stormwater retention system for the residential area around the course. Photo by Daniel Zelazek.

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*Killearn Country Club Maintenance Staff including Jake, the Labrador retriever, head of the Canadian Goose Patrol. Photo by Joel Jackson.*

## Killearn C.C. & Inn

**Location:** Tallahassee

**Ownership:** American Golf Corporation

**Playing policy:** Private Membership and 39 room inn.

**27 holes-North, South and East nines:** Original South/East Course - Par 72 at 6432 yards. Course Rating: 71.2 Slope 120. North/East Course - Par 72 at 6360 yards. Course Rating: 70.9 Slope: 121. North/South Course - Par 72 at 6328 yards. Course Rating: 70.7 Slope: 133.

**Designed by:** Bill Amick.

**Opened:** South/East 18 holes in 1967. North nine opened in 1981.

**Management:** Ed Hoover, club manager; Ray Barr, Jr., head golf professional; Betty Edwards, advisory board president; Kevin Selsor, American Golf regional superintendent; and Rick Barnett, American Golf director of maintenance for East Coast private clubs.

**Major Renovations/Projects:** 1998-Asphalt paths replaced with concrete paths; 1998-Rebuilt greens and tees on North Course; 1995 - OSMAC irrigation control system installed. Planned future projects-Level tees and reconstruct bunkers on South and East courses.

**Acreage under maintenance:** 157 acres of turf.

**Greens:** 4 Acres. Average size: 6,000 sq. ft. Turf type: Tifdwarf. HOC 5/32". Overseeding: Poa trivialis @ 12#/1000 sq. ft. Green speed goals: 8.0.

**Tees:** 3 acres. Turf type: Tifway 419. HOC = 1/2". Overseeding: PhD perennial ryegrass blend = 35#/1000 sq. ft.

**Fairways:** 60 acres. HOC = 1/2". Overseeding: None.

**Roughs:** 90 acres. Turf Type: 60 acres irrigated Tifway 419 and 30 acres non-irrigated bahia/centipede. HOC = 1 1/2". Overseeding: None.

**Waterways/Lakes/Ponds:** 6.5 Acres. All are storm water retention ponds with most of them receiving a great deal of runoff from property surrounding the golf course.

**Irrigation:** Source- two wells. Equipment-South/East = 75 hp Worthington vertical turbine pump. North = 25 and 50 hp centrifugal pumps. Single-row fairway coverage on South/East nines. Primarily Toro 630, 670, 690, 730 and 750 heads.

**Staff:** Total of 16 including supt. includes 2 part time employees. Shane Bass, assistant superintendent; Floyd Robinson, mechanic; Dean Richards, pest control tech; Richard Stephens, irrigation tech; Pat Porter, landscape maintenance.

**Maintenance equipment:** Greens: 2 Jacobsen Greens Kings. Tees: 2 Jacobsen Greens Kings. Fairways: 2 Jacobsen 3810, 5-gang mowers. Roughs: 1 Jacobsen 3810, 5-gang mower and a Woods 9204 bat-wing mower.

**Cultural programs:** Greens - aerify 2x/year w/Greencare Coremaster 12. Tees - aerify 1x/year with Coremaster 12 and 1x/year with Ryan Renovaire. Fairways - Core aerify 2x/year with Ryan Renovaire.

**Wildlife inventory:** Killearn currently involved in a wildlife study with Leon County Extension Office in a Master Wildlife Conservation Program to determine how to enhance wildlife populations on the golf course.

As an assistant at Stonebriar C. C. in Frisco, Texas, she helped prepare for two LPGA Skins Games in 1990 and '91 and one Murata PGA Seniors Reunion event. Don January was the director of golf while Geri was at Stonebriar. And then there was the 1985 PGA Championship at Cherry Hills in Denver when she was a student doing an internship.

Buchheit said, "One of my best tournament experiences was when Nancy Lopez went out of her way to introduce herself to me during an event. She didn't have to do that and I really didn't expect it. It showed what kind of person she is and what class she has.

"And probably the worst tournament experience I ever had was at the Colonial Invitational one year. Everything was looking real good on the bentgrass greens, then we got 4 inches of rain and the temperatures soared just before the event. The heat and the humidity and the tournament conditions took their toll. We were spreading ice on the greens at night



*Mature pines and oaks frame the No. 2 South green giving the course a distinctive parkland appearance. Photo by Daniel Zelazek.*



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Killearn's Pro Shop and practice greens. The 39-room inn is to the right and behind the flagpoles. Photo by Daniel Zelazek.

## Overseeding at Killearn

### PREPARATION

Apply split applications of Ronstar XL. The first in August and the second 60 days later using drop spreaders to outline the putting surfaces, collars and tees. Then making two more passes outside of that with rotary spreaders to control *Poa annua* and walked-off seeds. When the bermuda is at least 80% dormant, usually around December, we spray the fairways with Princep for *Poa annua* and volunteer ryegrass control. In 1998 we used Barricade with good results.

### SEEDING

We only overseed tees and greens. We apply all of our seed at one time. With 27 holes to work with, we close nine holes at a time usually in late October and apply 12 lbs of Sabre *Poa trivialis* to the greens using rotary spreaders going in several directions until the correct rate is achieved. Using the same method we apply 35 lbs of PhD perennial ryegrass to the tees.

### GROW-IN

After the seed is down. We apply a light top dressing and do not mow for almost 10 days to allow the seed to germinate undisturbed. Since the turf growth is slowing down, the playability is not affected as much as you would think. It is a trade-off that the members make to assure a good catch of seed. We will syringe off the dew in the mornings during this 10-day waiting period. We apply a low rate of granular starter fertilizer after germination and then switch to soluble fertilizers for most of the season.

### TRANSITION

We don't do anything heroic or really aggressive to aid transition. Our main procedure is to begin dragging the greens with a heavy brush made by our mechanic to help groom out the grass slowly as the temperatures warm up. By late March or the first week in April we are usually ready to aerify and verticut.

trying to lower the soil temperatures. The conditions were beyond control."

But now the Texas A&M graduate is in control of the 150-acre Killearn layout that offers plenty of challenges to any turf manager. The 32-year-old course has a single-row irrigation system and lots of mature trees in the roughs.

"The unirrigated and shady areas in the roughs require special attention," she notes. "We had to hand-water a lot of new sod along the new cart paths we put in last summer because they weren't covered in many cases by the existing heads.

"On a regular basis we also add topsoil to many of the thin areas under the trees and plant shade tolerant grasses. Then we rope off the area and monitor the cart traffic until the grass gets established."

Buccheit is tackling another project designed to enhance the wildlife on the golf course.

"Over the years with all the homes along the golf course, the understory vegetation has been cleared out. I began looking at the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program to learn ways we could improve the habitat. About this time I happened to meet Will Sheftall with the Leon County Extension Office. He was looking for a way to develop a Master Wildlife Conservation program and so we joined forces.

"We submitted a letter describing our goals and the community volunteer involvement to secure a grant for the project. We have local environmentalists and Audubon members working with us on the project. We are focusing on four primary areas: aquatics; bird populations and small mammal, reptile and insect populations; and exotic plants. All the areas under consideration are being mapped using GPS and can be overlain onto topographic and soils maps.

"We are conducting monthly bird counts and we have set up drift fences with traps in several locations to catch, count and release the critters so we can monitor their numbers and movements. In out-of-play areas we will be planting beneficial native species for food and cover and creating brush piles to provide habitat for small animals."

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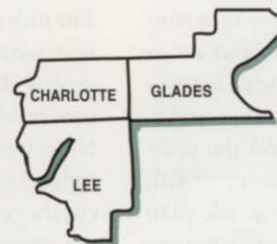


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*The first rays of sunrise begin to highlight the green on #1 South. Note the unusual purple martin house right of the hole. Photo by Daniel Zelazek.*

“The aquatics will be a major part of the effort. All of the water hazards on the golf course are designed to capture runoff from the neighborhoods and act as stormwater retention ponds. Consequently, the water quality is of concern. We are testing the water and the sediments and taking an inventory of fish and invertebrate populations. We plan to aquascape the ponds to help improve the filtration of the runoff and to restock with fish and minnows as needed.”

Buccheit said a few of the environmentalists approached the project with some skepticism, but that it has been a good experience as everyone learned about each other’s commitment and concerns.

This past year was not easy for Buccheit and her crew as they grew in the newly renovated greens on the North Course and had to deal with the cart path project as well.

“It took some getting used to, man-

aging the new greens on one nine compared to the older greens on the other 18. The older greens are so much more resilient with their thatch layer. The new greens didn’t have much recuperative power when they had to deal with the El Nino weather effects last year. In hindsight, I would have raised the height of cut more to relieve some of that stress on the new greens.”

Projects always put an extra strain on routine operations, so Buccheit was extremely proud of her crew as they dug in and got the job done.

“I think the most important thing a superintendent can do is to talk with the employees and let them know on a personal basis you appreciate them and their work. There is a suggestion from the crew to try a “zone” or “team” concept in work assignments. We’re discussing trying it out. It can be a good pride and morale builder for those who want to take ownership and responsibility for

their work product.”

Buccheit says she also makes sure to talk to someone in the pro shop at least once a day to make sure every one is on the same page with course conditions and the status of play for the day.

“Communications is the key! We have so much to do, so many bases to cover, we can get stretched pretty thin sometimes. We need to know what’s going on, and they need to know what we’re doing for the best product for our members.”

Buccheit salutes the members for their recognition of the efforts being made to improve course conditions.

“The members have just been great when it comes to our projects and programs. They know we are working hard to provide them with a better golf course and they let us get on with our business. New members also drive changes, and as the competition for the golf market in Tallahassee changes, so will we!”

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# Unfair Criticism, Lost Loyalty and Rumors

## Dealing with Unwarranted Criticism

**Y**ou've just been chewed out by your boss about something that is inaccurate, unfair, and absolutely not your fault. You feel your blood pressure rise. You don't know whether to tell him what you really think of him or punch him in the nose (which is probably the same thing).

You resist, knowing that, at this point in your life, it's imperative to remain employed, but the feelings persist. You're mad! What can you do?

First, you can take a deep breath and remind yourself that your reaction is healthy. And the fact that you did not punch this guy is also healthy. No one likes to be criticized, especially if it is unwarranted. In the future, try these four steps.

One, ask questions. Even if you believe the criticism is unfair, delay reacting defensively. State that you're confused and that you'd like to understand it better. Then ask questions about specifics. "Exactly what I have done that is making you angry?"

Second, actively listen. This involves listening with more than your ears. It also involves paraphrasing. "Let me make sure I understand. You felt angry when I told one of the members our plans for

### How to Lower Your Blood Pressure

1. Ask questions.
2. Listen with more than your ears.
3. Agree with some part of the criticism.
4. Accept your critic's right to feel any way he wants.

renovating the course? Is that it?"

Third, agree with some part of the criticism. You might offer, "I can understand how that made you angry." Notice that this is not agreeing with the criticism merely shows some degree of empathy. It is very disarming.

Fourth, accept his right to feel any way he wants; even if he is wrong... and do not take it personally.

If you follow these steps, you will find that your blood pressure remains low and the criticizer is left believing that you have heard and understood him.

*BREE A HAYES, PH.D.*

*Dr. Hayes is an organizational consultant and counseling psychologist. She has been on the GCSAA faculty for the past 12 years. She is president of The Hayes Group, an Athens, GA-based international consulting firm. Credit: The Carolinas Green*

## Loyalty Between Employers, Workers at an All-Time Low

**Loyalty:** faithful adherence to a person, government, cause, duty, etc.—*Webster's New World Dictionary Third Edition.*

**G**one are the days when employee/ employer relationships are built on long-term trust and loyalty. There are occasional exceptions, like the following story I read several years ago. A

textile factory in Massachusetts was gutted by fire a month prior to Christmas.

Several hundred employees were suddenly put out of work, or so they thought. The employees feared that the owner (a single owner, not a corporation) would choose not to rebuild the company, but just close the doors and collect the insurance settlement.

Twenty-four hours following the fire, owner Aaron Feuerstein surprised employees by announcing that he planned to rebuild the plant immediately, with portions to be completed and operational in 90 days or less. Not only did Mr. Feuerstein begin immediate reconstruction of the plant, but he continued paying all 1,400 employees their full wages for the next 30 days and provided 90 days of insurance coverage.

He said it was his responsibility to both his employees and the community because they had been responsible for his success. This gentleman showed a tremendous amount of loyalty to his employees, above and beyond what many current-day entrepreneurs and corporations consider reasonable.

Except in rare cases like this, loyalty between employees and employers is at an all-time low. Employees no longer are rewarded with job security for many years of faithful service. Salary increases and benefits that coincide with long-term employment are often looked upon nega-

*Tenure and experience seem to mean little these days because there are many up-and-coming turf professionals willing to work countless hours for less pay.*

**Editor's Note:** I came across a couple of articles recently that seem to reach out and grab me, because I hear the topics everywhere I go. Our jobs can be quite stressful at times, and learning how to deal with that stress can save your life or avoid serious illness. Read on and find out you're not alone out there and maybe you can find something in these articles to help your situation.

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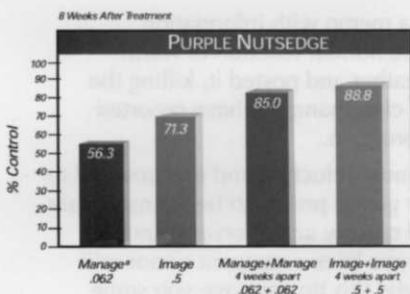


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tively by upper management.

Such rewards are considered too damaging to the bottom line. This attitude seems to be found throughout the entire business world. Everyone is looking out for number one with a survival-of-the-fittest mentality.

Tenure and experience seem to mean little these days because there are many up-and-coming turf professionals willing to work countless hours for less pay. They get a nice increase in salary compared to their prior assistant's position, but very often nowhere near the pay level of the experienced superintendent. The course "saved money" by this move, or at least that was the justification used by management—a corporate downsizing philosophy, I suppose.

I have seen a number of older, very good golf course superintendents released over the years, replaced by a younger person with a college education and maybe two or three years of experience as an assistant. Does this cost-cutting move make up for many years of experience and local knowledge of a property? I don't think so.

In reality, the overall financial position may not have improved other than in the superintendent's salary line item category. A careful look at the entire

***We all need to stop and think about the good and the bad times we've had over the years... If you are fortunate enough to have a trusting and loyal working relationship with your employee or employer, do you really want to throw it away?***

budget in subsequent years might reveal that overall spending increased while course conditioning remained the same. How could this happen? Could the previous superintendent's many years of experience have paid off in more cost-effective management and fewer mistakes? Equal golf course conditioning at less expense? It is possible. I am not implying that all young turf managers are incompetent or wasteful, but remember the adage, "You get what you pay for," and this goes for work experience also.

It is not just employers who have forgotten the meaning of loyalty. Superintendents, both young and old, are also guilty of changing jobs at the drop of a hat. Superintendents will jump ship for a small increase in salary, or make a lateral move for the chance to manage a more prestigious course. This quite commonly is justified as required to move up the ladder.

We all need to stop and think about the good and the bad times we've had over the years. Course officials must ask themselves who it was who stuck by them when the going was rough. Who was there during the lean years when there wasn't money in the

budget to perform needed course improvements or purchase new equipment? Who spent their nights babysitting an unreliable pump station to get the course watered? Or, as a superintendent, perhaps the course officials stood by you in a time of serious need such as a personal family problem or serious illness? If you are fortunate enough to have a trusting and loyal working relationship with your employee or employer, do you really want to throw it away and risk what you have for a few more dollars in your paycheck or budget? Loyal working relationships don't just happen; they must be developed. Once developed, they need to be appreciated

MIKE HUCK

*Mike Huck loyally works as an agronomist in the Southwest Region of the USGA Green Section. Credit: March/April 1999 USGA Green Section Record.*

## Facts Grind the Rumor Mill to a Halt in a Hurry

**A**lan Puckett, CGCS of the Lake Region Yacht & Country Club told me recently about a communication tool that has cut the infamous rumor mill at his course by 80–85 percent. Alan's general manager, Mike Fiddelke, picked it up from another club manager and it goes something like this.

All department heads are encouraged to report immediately or at staff meetings any unfounded rumors they hear circulating through the club. The general manager will post a memo titled "Rumor! Rumor! Rumor!" in the pro shop, clubhouse and locker rooms. The memo will simply state the rumor and then present the facts of the matter.

For example, the Lake Region Club recently rebuilt their greens and planted FloraDwarf bermudagrass. When the

first cold snap of the season hit the newly seeded greens, the bermuda turned its usual cold temperature purple. Immediately the rumor spread that the new greens were dead or dying.

The club manager wrote a memo with information supplied by Alan about the normal reaction of warm-season grasses to cold weather and posted it, killing the rumor in its tracks. Other club managers have reported similar results using this program.

It seems people become more reluctant and embarrassed to spread rumors when their gossip proves to be so inaccurate when the facts are posted quickly and everyone knows who spread the rumor. If you have a rampant rumor mill problem at your club maybe this tip can save you some grief from the whiners and complainers.