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TM

# Hole of the Month

HOLE NO.

**2**

LOCHINVAR GOLF CLUB  
▶ HOUSTON, TX

Some say the beauty of golf lies in the strategy it requires for one to play the game well. To succeed, a golfer must combine mind, muscle, technique and vision.

Perhaps no one appreciates the mental side of the game more than the legendary Jack Nicklaus, who meticulously designed the course at Lochinvar Golf Club in Houston, Texas, to appeal to what he called “the thinking man.” As a part of the Jack Nicklaus Signature Design series, Lochinvar tests the skills of every golfer who steps foot on its 7,039 yards with 58 intimidating bunkers and water hazards positioned dangerously close to 10 of the holes.

Lochinvar’s Hole #2 is a true double-threat with a sizable bunker on the right of the green and water on the left. Fail to take a cautious approach, and you could easily find yourself fishing for your ball or digging it out of the sand.

To care for a course painstakingly imagined by Jack himself, Kevin Cooper, Golf Course Superintendent at Lochinvar, must also thoughtfully plan his approach. Cooper relies on Solitare® herbicide from FMC to control multiple postemergence weeds like crabgrass, sedges and broadleaf species – all in a single application. “Solitare has been great in that it has a broad spectrum of weeds it can control or suppress,” says Cooper.

And thanks to the versatility of Solitare, maintaining healthy turf has never been easier. “Having the ability to utilize one product lessens the likelihood of turf damage and the quick impact it has shows our members we are attentive to any weed outbreak.” Cooper also uses Talstar® Select to fight armyworms and fire ants, Segway® to combat pythium, and Dismiss® to control sedges. For Cooper, FMC plays an important role in his intelligent approach to keep the turf of Lochinvar looking truly brilliant.



Kevin Cooper, Golf Course Superintendent

**HOLE STATS**

Distance: 174 yards, Par 3

**THE TURF**

Greens: Champion Ultradwarf Bermudagrass

Fairways: 419 Tifway Bermudagrass

Tees: Zeon Zoysiagrass

To learn more about Solitare® herbicide visit [www.fmcprosolutions.com](http://www.fmcprosolutions.com).



GOLFDOM'S HOLE OF THE MONTH IS MADE POSSIBLE BY:



# Picture *This*

It's one thing to make your golf course environmentally friendly. It's another thing to spread the word of what you're doing to benefit your course and the entire industry

**D**ave Barber treads up the nature trail between the third and fourth holes at Cranberry Highlands Golf Course. It's the height of summer and the trees, brush and myriad plant life that enclose the trail are in full bloom. Birds whistle and squirrels scatter against a placid backdrop. The forest's lushness provides a haven from the searing sun on this July day.

The half-mile nature trail isn't a secret spot where Barber, golf course superintendent at Cranberry Highlands, goes for a little downtime during a busy day. Just the opposite, Barber wants everyone — from Cranberry Township, where the course is located, to Pittsburgh, the city that borders the town — to know the trail exists. It's an integral component of the golf course, which prides itself on its environmental prowess.

Barber and his maintenance crew built the trail last year. Cranberry Highlands invites various groups, from Boy Scouts to birdwatchers, to walk the trail. Trail guides, including Barber, take the time to educate visitors about the golf course, telling them how they use pesticides responsibly and how the course acts as a haven for wildlife, among many other things.

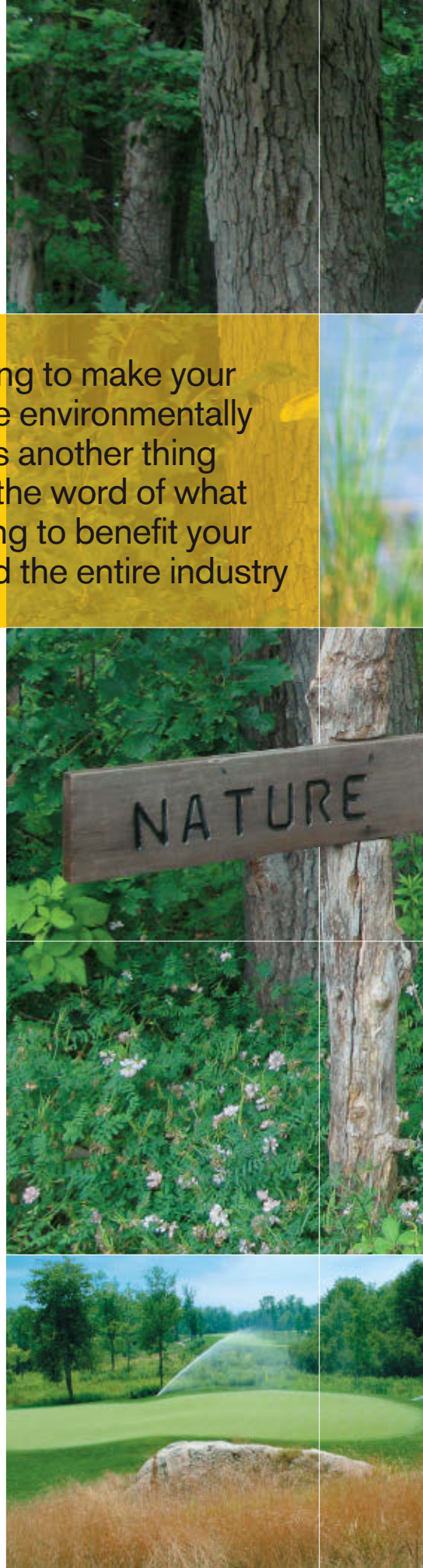
"I want the course to make an environmental statement because a lot of people believe golf courses are just pesticide dumps," Barber says.

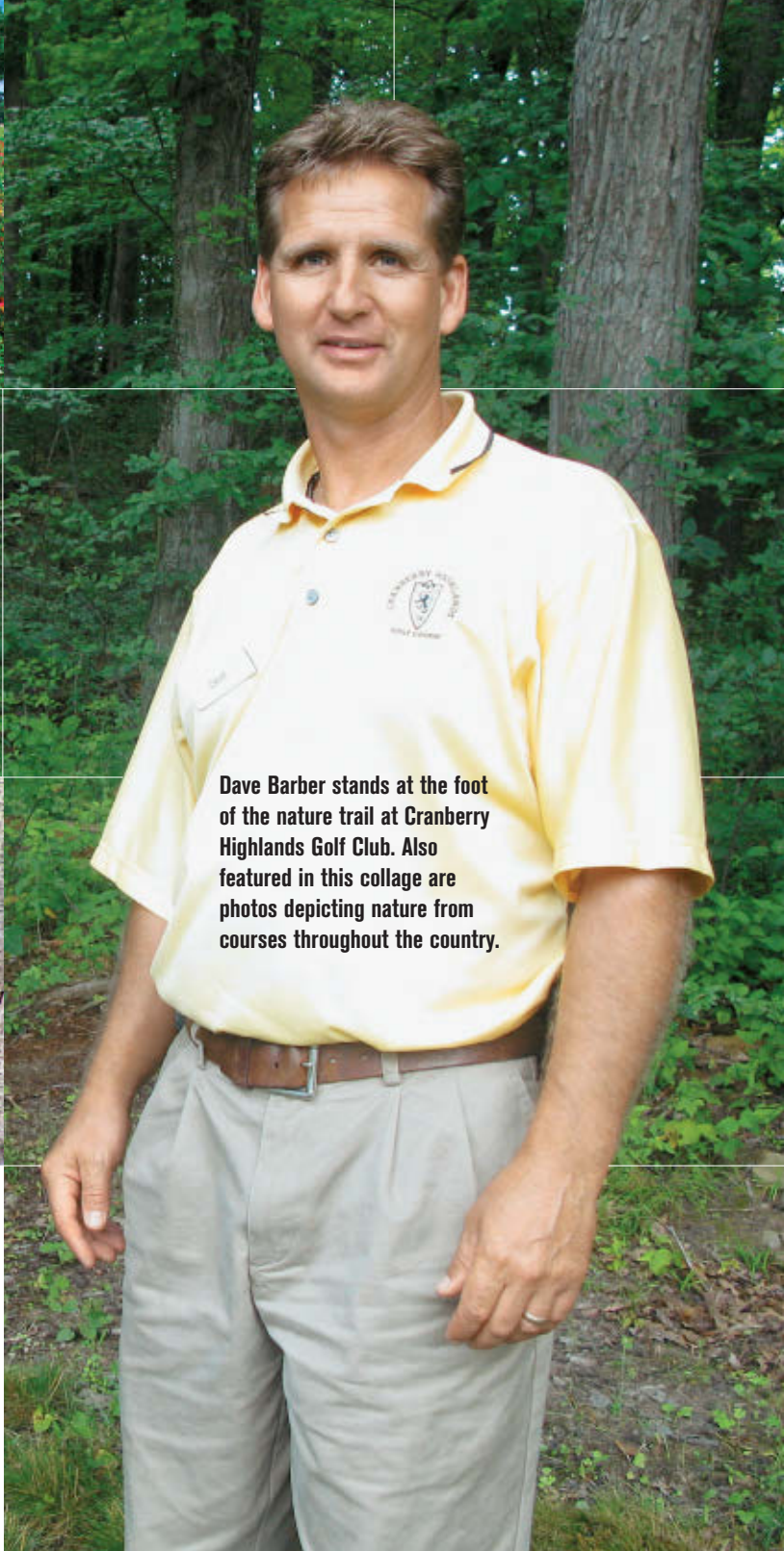
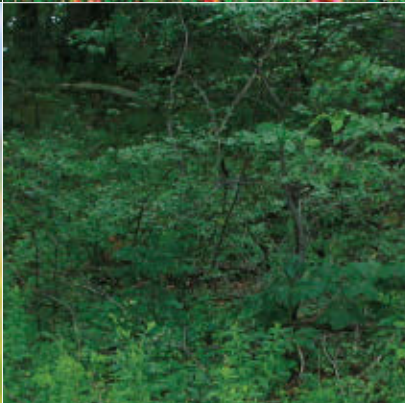
It's one thing for superintendents to implement programs to make their golf courses environmentally sound. It's another thing for them to spread the word — to golfers and non-golfers alike — of what they're doing to benefit their courses and the entire golf industry.

More than ever, golf courses are being scrutinized for their ecological worth in this so-called "green" age. Activists accuse courses of various infractions, from wasting water to using too many pesticides. Alas, many superintendents realize the importance of stepping up to promote their courses' eco-friendly sides through various endeavors.

"We have to be more proactive," Barber says.

**BY LARRY AYLWARD, EDITOR IN CHIEF**





Dave Barber stands at the foot of the nature trail at Cranberry Highlands Golf Club. Also featured in this collage are photos depicting nature from courses throughout the country.

### On the offensive

From its beginning, Cranberry Highlands Golf Course has touted a message of environmental stewardship. Barber, who was brought on during design and construction of the course in 2001, worked closely with Bill Love, who's known for his environmentally friendly architectural approach.

In January 2009, Cranberry Highlands achieved certification in environmental planning from the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses, an international program administered by Audubon International, a not-for-profit environmental education organization.

Barber, who spearheaded the project, has used the certification to promote the course's image. Throughout the course, golfers and other visitors will find a colorful brochure with the title, "Find Sanctuary at Cranberry Highlands: An Audubon-Certified

*Continued on page 16*



PHOTOS BY: JOE HUBBARD AND LARRY AYLWARD



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## Picture This

*Continued from page 16*

out the variety of plant life and nature, such as the dam built by a beaver in one of the wetlands.

“The members are extremely proud of the property as a golf course and a nature preserve,” Palich says.

How does Rick Slattery communicate that his golf course is environmentally friendly? “Any chance I get, and to anyone and everyone who will listen,” says Slattery, the superintendent of Locust Hill Country Club, and 18-hole private club in Pittsford, N.Y.

Slattery aims to manage high-quality turf with low inputs. His motto is, “Let grass grow, don’t make it grow.”

“Like a drumbeat, I persistently explain my management style to the Locust Hill membership,” Slattery says. “The membership dynamics are always changing — long-time members need to be refreshed, and newer members need to be educated with the basics.”

Slattery says he’s fortunate to have the opportunity at Locust Hill to communicate his environmental message on a larger stage because the club hosts an annual LPGA event. In interviews with local and national media, Slattery touts his environmental programs.

Tim Fleegel, superintendent of



“The animals are here, and we’re just kind of here with them,” says superintendent Tim Fleegel, whose course created a wildlife bulletin board (left) in the pro shop for golfers and the course’s employees to post photographs.

Bear Mountain Ranch Golf Course in Chelan, Wash., gets a little help from his furry friends to tout his course’s environmental endeavors. Bear Mountain, carved out of the hillsides that border the Cascade Mountains in eastern Washington, features an abundance of wildlife often seen by golfers. It’s easy for those golfers to assume the course is a haven for wildlife — not a detriment to the environment.

“People view our course as a friend, not a foe of the environment,” Fleegel says. “A reason for that is the amount of wildlife golfers see while playing.”

One morning, Fleegel was driving his utility vehicle around the course when he came upon a doe cleaning off her newborn fawn. A few months ago, a

mother bear and her two cubs climbed a tree near the first hole. Besides deer and bears, the land surrounding and including the course is also abundant with coyotes, bald eagles, osprey and snakes.

A wildlife bulletin board was created in the pro shop for golfers and the course’s employees to post photographs of the critters they see on the course.

“The animals are here, and we’re just kind of here with them,” Fleegel says.

Wildlife is also welcomed at New Jersey’s Newton Country Club, where Les Carpenter is superintendent of the 18-hole private club. Carpenter says natural areas on the course are used as nursing grounds for does and their fawns.

*Continued on page 20*

PHOTOS COURTESY: BEAR MOUNTAIN RANCH GOLF COURSE

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## Picture This

*Continued from page 18*

Township, is also a base for bears, wild turkeys and several bird species.

Carpenter has utilized the media to help get the word out about his course's environmental endeavors. Newton achieved certification in environmental planning from the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses in 1998 and was recently recertified.

"When we first were certified, we did a television spot with the local television station," says Carpenter, who's in his 25th season at Newton. "We've had five different newspaper articles written about us since then."

Because they've gone on the offensive to promote their environmental programs, superintendents like Carpenter, Barber, Palich, Fleegel and Slattery are prepared for environmentalists who might accuse them of being reckless when it comes to ecological responsibility. All they have to do is tell them what they're doing.

"If someone was to accuse me of that, I would tell that person the course has gone from 0 to about 40 acres of naturalized areas since 1998, and that I've stopped irrigating 10 other acres in that time," Carpenter says.

### Transcending the message

While Barber does his share of public relations to spread the word about his course's environmental initiatives, he credits the township's trustees for com-



**"We've had five different newspaper articles written about us."**

— Les Carpenter

municating the course's environmental initiatives to the public.

Barber maintains solid communication with the township's manager and five supervisors, all of whom are elected officials. Barber explains to them in detail what he's doing on the golf course and how it impacts the environment. They, in turn, tell others who reside in the township.

Barber is thankful the township has embraced the course's environmental programs. But he's not surprised. Even prior to the golf course being built, the township had a sustainability program in place anchored by a water tertiary treatment plant, in which treated water is disinfected chemically so it can be used for groundwater discharge and other purposes. So when the course was built, irrigating it with the township's effluent was an easy choice.

"We're the pioneers in this area to use effluent," Barber says.

Cranberry Highlands also implemented golf course hayrides last fall

— yes, you read that correctly — to help transcend its environmental message. The plan is attract parents and their children to the hayrides and educate them.

"We take them around the course and talk about the course and the environment," Barber says.

Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts and other community groups can also help transcend a course's environmental message. At Newton Country Club, local Cub Scout groups have been assigned to watch over the bird boxes on the course. Yes, arranging for Cub Scout meetings on your course will take up even more of a superintendent's time, but it's worth the effort, Carpenter says.

### More important than ever

Superintendents need to tout golf's positive role in the environment. And they need to become their courses' spokespeople for this message.

"This has and will become even more of an extension of our jobs," Palich says.

Despite the daily challenges of maintaining his course, Palich has challenged himself even more to educate people about the club's environmental approach.

Slattery will continue to speak to whomever will listen about his environmental philosophy. He's also working the other side of the fence by preparing future superintendents to spread the word.

"I've had close to 50 interns and assistants come through Locust Hill while I've been here," he says. "Many of them have gone out on their own with a philosophy they learned here." ■

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