

Club house,
HISTORIC SITE FILE: PW Golf Course
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New irrigation system, tee boxes among improvements at PW Golf Club

By **ROB BILLINGSLEY**
Observer staff

Prince William Golf Club, between Vint Hill and Nokesville on Vint Hill Road, was originally built by a group of local golf-loving farmers in the 1960s. The course offers pleasure and challenge for players of all skill levels.

Vince Fratercangelo, head golf pro managing the facility, described the course's versatility this way, "This is a course that can appeal to players on both ends of playing ability. It's not overly frustrating for the beginner; but to score well, the better golfer has to hit some good shots."

Fratercangelo came to the club last year from his position as head golf professional at the Walden Course in Crofton, Md., which is operated by Arnold Palmer Golf Management. Fratercangelo remembers his first impression of the local course. He said, "I loved the layout of the course and its character, but I was concerned about the challenges of improving the clubhouse."

Golfers of many skills and from many walks of life play at Prince William Golf Club. "This is a friendly course with great employees, and we attract a broad range of customers from both blue collar and executive professions," said Fratercangelo.

This club is one of three county-



The Prince William Golf Clubhouse and Pro Shop

Rob Billingsley / the Bull Run Observer

owned courses. For many years, it was managed by private companies but is now under the county's park authority's direct management. For one annual fee, customers may also play Forest Greens and General's Ridge, the other two county-owned courses.

Golfers can look for improvements to the greens this year. A new irrigation system should ensure greener fairways in the summer months along with a high-tech sprinkler system. With a wide grin of relief, Fratercangelo said, "We are ahead of schedule at this point and expect completion [of the irrigation

system] by the end of April.

"One of our improvements this year includes new tee boxes for seniors and ladies. Instead of just mowing down a section of the fairway, we will add real tee boxes like the other golfers have," Fratercangelo explained the club wants to appeal to these golfers.

In addition, the club is creating a way to improve golfing students' experiences significantly, Fratercangelo said. The club will soon have a golf lesson area, which will be adjacent to, but separate from, the driving range. Fratercangelo hopes this will alleviate crowding on the

range during class times and provide a better and more private experience for young First Tee students. First Tee is a program to encourage youngsters to learn lessons of golf and life and take up the game.

The Prince William Golf Club also offers a golf tournament service. Sean Calhoun, first assistant golf pro, described the various services that come with the service. "We are willing to work with the needs of all our guests. We want them to have as good a time as possible out here. Every tournament is a custom-built package."

Golf rates can be as low as \$40

to \$50 per player for tournaments. Calhoun noted tournament players also have the option of consulting a golf pro to help the rustier players before the event. He noted, "The pro clinic can help with everything from hitting balls to going over all the basics. It won't turn anybody into Tiger Woods, but it will help you get around the course for the day."

Fratercangelo outlined the next challenges that face the golf course and the Park Authority: rebuilding the pro shop to accommodate food sales, clothing sales, and collection of green fees.

The current shop is located in the original farmhouse on the property. Fratercangelo believes the 19th century house will require significant modernization, from its current multiple small room layout, to create a larger shop and dining lounge. If the house is not used for the new pro shop, county professionals will need to identify and begin construction on another location near the current house.

However, Fratercangelo touts the club as a good course for locals. He said, "We provide a combination of a quality product with employees who make an effort to let our guests feel comfortable in a great environment, and all for a very reasonable cost."

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