

# LAKE WILDERNESS INSIDER

## WORKING TOGETHER

PARTNERSHIPS WITH  
LOCAL BUSINESSES PROVE  
TO BE A KEY TO SUCCESS

## A VISION FOR SUCCESS

NEW CLUBHOUSE, RESTAURANT  
WILL MAKE LAKE WILDERNESS  
A CENTRAL GATHERING PLACE

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LAKE WILDERNESS PLANNING  
EVENT TO HELP KIDS LEARN  
ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENT

## POSITIVE IMPACT

IMPROVEMENTS AT LAKE WILDERNESS GOLF COURSE  
BENEFIT GOLFERS AND THE COMMUNITY



Course conditions remain high on the list of priorities.

## POSITIVE IMPACT

Improvements at Lake Wilderness Golf Course benefit golfers and the community

**B**ig changes have been taking place at Lake Wilderness Golf Course, and the partnership between CourseCo and the City of Maple Valley has helped enhance the guest experience across the board.

Most notably has been the addition of key staff members – Ron Cox is the course’s new General Manager and Bluzette “Blue” Corner recently signed on as the Food and Beverage

Manager. Both bring substantial expertise to the course and a passion for providing positive guest experiences.

“Ron has extensive industry experience with a background in private clubs, and he is truly focused on building relationships with our golf members and providing outstanding customer service and hospitality,” said Dave Johnson, Parks and Recreation Director. “Blue has led improvements in customer service, food quality and consistency in the restaurant. She is passionate about creating a welcoming and relaxing place for our golfers and residents of the community, offering a place for them to bring their friends and family to enjoy a great-tasting meal or conversation over a drink at the bar.”

The first touch point for most golfers is the golf shop, and Cox immediately went to work on improving the look and feel of the space while focusing on service and keeping merchandise fresh, current and affordable. Another positive benefit implemented by CourseCo – which took over management of the prop-

erty last year – has been the addition of special events, where the community can get together for fun family activities at Lake Wilderness.

Additionally, new Advantage Card Membership programs have created opportunities for resident golfers to enjoy more rounds of golf each year, with an emphasis on providing greater value for senior players.

On the course, Superintendent Jeff Taylor has done a great job for many years providing reliable playing conditions that are consistently enjoyable, with an emphasis on making the greens the best in King County.

“We expect these new memberships and the attention to service and playing conditions to create a more loyal senior following in Maple Valley, and outside the region as well,” Johnson said. “This attention to the quality and consistency of the greens is a major part of our overall plan for success, as golf courses with reputations for great greens enjoy more visitors and more positive reviews of their experience.”

## WORKING TOGETHER

Partnerships with local businesses help support the community

One of the shared objectives between CourseCo and the Maple Valley Black Diamond Chamber of Commerce was for Lake Wilderness Golf Course to build closer relationships with local businesses.

The strategy has numerous benefits. Many people don't realize the financial impact a golf course can make on a community, providing a source of employment, consumption of local goods and services, as well as recreation and social enjoyment for residents. When a golf course can partner with local service providers and buy their products, it is reinvesting in the success of the community and supporting the economic stability of the City.

Looking for ways to develop partnerships with local businesses, Lake Wilderness has reached out to nearby companies and now offers beer on tap from Lumber House Brewery, while the coffee

shop Java! Java! and a local ice cream shop have participated in public events at the course.

"Our core mission remains establishing an environment where businesses recognize the power of growing together. Businesses that grow together build strong communities," said Erica Dial, CEO of Maple Valley Black Diamond Chamber of Commerce. "From their arrival, CourseCo has supported our local partners and shares our belief that local businesses tend to provide higher-quality products and more reliable service."

The Chamber and CourseCo have developed a strong partnership with a supportive and collaborative approach to growth.

"Not only is this a core Chamber value, it is a shared value of the city of Maple Valley and CourseCo," Dial said. "We are fortunate to have many locally owned small businesses with owners who are highly engaged in supporting Maple Valley."

# A VISION FOR SUCCESS

Plans in the works for a new clubhouse, restaurant for the community to enjoy at Lake Wilderness Golf Course

**T**he transformation at Lake Wilderness Golf Course is just getting started, and 2020 will be an important year as plans are beginning to offer the community a chance for a new clubhouse.

Leadership at Lake Wilderness has started the process of selecting an architect to hopefully design a new 5,000- to 10,000-square-foot clubhouse that would include a full-service golf shop, a Taphouse restaurant with an updated menu, and golf simulators for practice and entertainment.

There would also be a new banquet facility for tournaments, weddings and special events.

One of the major benefits is that the CourseCo-managed property would be able to offer more amenities for the community to enhance its standing as a central gathering place.

While the decision to construct the clubhouse is still in the early phases of review and consideration, a new Taphouse restaurant would reposition and modernize the dining experience at Lake Wilderness, and offer craft beer and food selections, and a fun and lively at-

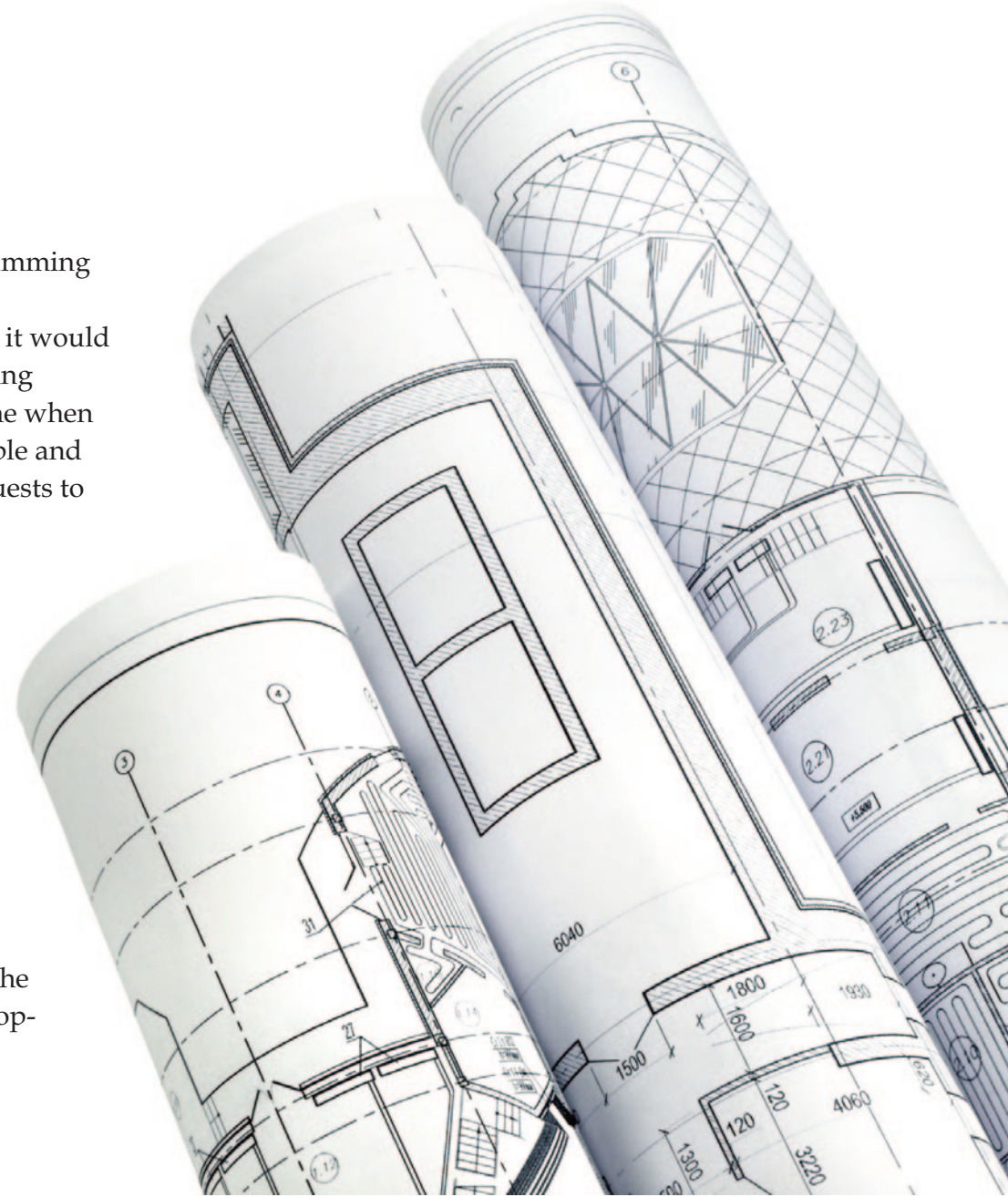
mosphere with consistent programming and events.

Should the clubhouse be built, it would include new golf simulators, giving golfers a chance to enjoy the game when the weather might not be favorable and also creating opportunities for guests to enjoy evening entertainment.

With more to do at the course, people are likely to visit more often, expanding revenue opportunities.

The industry is seeing the introduction of these additional entertainment vehicles that expand the opportunity for residents of the community to enjoy recreational and family time.

The first step in the process is the selection of an architect and the review and design of clubhouse options.





## CENTER OF ATTENTION

Community events provide non-golfers the chance to experience all that Lake Wilderness Golf Course has to offer

**W**hen is a golf course more than just a golf course? When it serves as a community gathering place, a central hub for activity, and an asset that the surrounding neighborhoods can benefit from – whether those who visit the course love the game or have no intention of ever picking up a golf club.

Thanks to the efforts of the City of Maple Valley and a dedicated and creative staff at Lake Wilderness, the course serves as much more than a property that golfers can enjoy. New General Manager Ron Cox has spent significant time and effort planning community events that have helped make it a hub of activity year-round.

“The new community programming has been a huge success at Lake Wilderness,” said Laura Philpot, City Manager of Maple Valley. “We wanted a management partner that could deliver an operating strategy for our public golf courses that included a rich and robust calendar of non-golf community-inclusive programming



## HAPPENINGS



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that brings families to the property for family fun and recreation.”

Some of the events that took place in 2019 included a Flashlight Easter Egg Hunt, a Halloween celebration, a Christmas-time “Breakfast with Olaf” (the goofy, lovable snowman from the animated Frozen movies), and sledding on the 18th hole. In addition to those events, a Summer Open House will be added in 2020 as well.

The events are free for the community to attend and offer plenty of fun and activities. Last April’s Flashlight Easter Egg Hunt included glow ball mini-golf, food, and drinks, while the Halloween Open House offered face-painting, pumpkin decorating, a balloon animal artist, pie-eating competitions and, of course, a costume contest. At Breakfast with Olaf, kids got their photos taken with their favorite snowman and enjoyed a complimentary pancake and sausage breakfast. And whenever enough snow coats the ground, Lake Wilderness opens its 18th hole for sledding.



“Normally it can take some time for excitement and participation to build and we don’t see large attendance until the second or third time we host an event,” Cox said. “At Lake Wilderness, the support and attendance at our non-golf events has been amazing and among the strongest we have seen anywhere.”

Community events at the golf course serve many purposes and this type of programming is critical to long-term success and growth.

“The biggest challenge we have seen is the reluctance of women and children to come out and play golf due to their lack of game knowledge and the intimidation of trying out a sport that is highly competitive,” Cox said. “Our community programming is strategically designed to remove the barriers to entry for women and children by getting them to the golf course to enjoy activities that are fun and enjoyable for the entire family.”

## FUN FOR ALL

### SPECIAL EVENTS AT LAKE WILDERNESS GOLF COURSE

#### FLASHLIGHT EASTER EGG HUNT

Held in April from 7:30-9 p.m., the family fun night included glow ball mini golf, \$1 hot dogs and soft drinks, and a hunt for eggs filled with candy, prizes and gift cards.

#### SUMMER OPEN HOUSE

The first-time event will be held this summer and will include a live band with music, crafts, special food offerings, putting challenges, and more.

#### HALLOWEEN OPEN HOUSE

The community celebration in October included activities for kids of all ages, such as face-painting, pumpkin coloring, a balloon animal artist, and contests for pumpkin-eating, putting skills and best costumes.

#### BREAKFAST WITH OLAF

Participants of the family holiday get-together enjoyed a complimentary pancake and sausage breakfast along with a host of other activities, including a coloring station, face-painting, and photo opportunities with Olaf, the animated snowman character from the Frozen movies.



Collecting soil samples (above) and testing water quality are part of the program.

# GOING GREEN

Lake Wilderness planning First Green event to help kids learn about the environment

CourseCo is planning to take its environmental leadership to the next level at Lake Wilderness Golf Course. The management company, which has received numerous awards for its first-rate environmental practices, is looking to host a “First Green” day at Lake Wilderness later this year, and is in the process of selecting a school or youth-based organization to participate.

First Green is an innovative environmental and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) education outreach program founded by the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America. The program uses golf courses as environmental learning labs.

Superintendents and other golf course representatives host students on field trips where they test water quality, collect soil samples, identify plants, design plantings, assist in stream bed restoration, and are involved in the

ecology and environmental aspects of the golf course.

“First Green supports the learning environment of local students and gives them access to field-based instruction and learning with hands-on experiences,” said Dave Johnson, Parks and Recreation Director for the city of Maple Valley. “Many of the students will be visiting the property for the first time, and we’re sure they will be amazed by the abundance of local animal and insect species making the golf course their home.”

Johnson said CourseCo regularly looks for new ways to utilize golf courses, and has had success with similar educational efforts in the past.

Whether the kids who participate in the program grow up to work in the golf industry or simply have their interest piqued in a certain subject, it has proven to be a worthwhile program for the community.