

BUSINESS



LAURA GATES/ BANNER CORRESPONDENT (3)

Ron Zungolo leads a line of Shadow Wood Golf Club board and committee members for a group tee-off ceremony to unveil the updated practice facilities and clubhouse Nov. 7.

On the green

SHADOW WOOD UNVEILS \$4.8 MILLION RENOVATION

By Laura Gates
Banner Correspondent

Shadow Wood Country Club unveiled a \$4.8 million renovation of its clubhouse, along with upgraded golf practice facilities, during a grand gala and ribbon cutting ceremony Nov. 7.

About 1,250 members and guests showed up in party attire, anxious to see the results of the six-month construction project. Most were amazed by the difference, emitting a chorus of “wow”s as they toured the facility, stopping for hors d’oeuvres all along the way.

“It’s beautiful,” declared Mona Akel, admiring the improved ladies’ locker room featuring rich wooden lockers, each with engraved nameplates, and an expanded restroom facility which seemed to radiate with openness and light.

“It’s happier,” Akel mused. “The colors are lighter. It’s lovely, really.”

The renovation process began about a year ago, after a members’ survey indicated the need for a remodel of the 12-year-old facility, noted club President Bill Pritts. Construction -- or rather deconstruction, as Pritts put it -- began in May, with the project expedited to open as Shadow Wood’s seasonal residents returned.

“We stripped this club down to the bare concrete walls,” said Ray Kostelc, Shadow Wood treasurer and member of the Reconstruction Committee. “Not a room went untouched.”

Major improvements included creating moveable partitions to divide the clubhouse’s three dining rooms, allowing it to transform into one, giant dining hall, as it was Wednesday night. The new dining area features an enlarged hardwood dance floor and an expanded al fresco dining patio with new landscaping. Live music from several genres played throughout the gala.

The 30,000-square-foot Grill Room was completely remodeled, as was the card room, which is regularly used for mahjogg. Outside, the golf practice facilities were rebuilt and expanded, to coincide with the Grand Re-Opening event.

“You guys are now a real, live, hotshot, big-time club,” said golf course designer Bob Cupp, a special guest at the gala.

Cupp said he appreciated the opportunity to return to the course he built more than a decade ago to turn the average practice green into a sophisticated practice facility which more realistically mimics golf course conditions with target greens, hills and bunkers. The driving range now has nearly three acres of tee space.

“This is a feel-good thing for me to come back,” Cupp said. “These are just real people who love to play golf.”

Among Shadow Wood’s members is Gary Danielson, former pro football player and a commentator for CBS Sports, who served as event emcee. Danielson has had opportunity to play at many elite golf courses throughout the nation, and he assured Shadow Wood members their course is among the best.

“I can promise you, I’ve seen ‘em all, played ‘em all and eaten at most of them, and there is nothing we can take a back seat to,” he said.

With renovations going on at the clubhouse and golf range, about 30 workers of various specialties were on-site each day during construction, said General Manager Bill Wagner. The project employed tradesmen such as

electricians, plumbers, drywall specialists, carpenters, fabricators, painters and flooring installers.

The open, “Florida casual” redesign was conceived and implemented by BSSW Architects of Fort Myers and Image Design of Atlanta.

Now that the renovation is complete, Shadow Wood is adding 100 new jobs to deliver services to its members at the expanded facilities. Total staff for season will be more than 300, Wagner said.

Sitting with neighbors on the remodeled patio, Marly Ogle admired the finished project.

“It’s beyond what I ever expected,” she said. “It’s just beautiful. It’s just so warm and friendly. We had a great need for this.”

“

WE STRIPPED THIS CLUB DOWN to the bare concrete walls. Not a room went untouched.”

— Ray Kostelc, Shadow Wood treasurer and Reconstruction Committee member



Shadow Wood Golf Course designer Bob Cupp details features of the enhanced practice facilities during Shadow Wood’s Grand Reopening ceremony Nov. 7.



Shadow Wood Renovation Committee members cut the ribbon on their newly remodeled clubhouse Nov. 7, following a \$4.8 million renovation project.