

SUN CITIES INDEPENDENT

OPINION, Letters

August 6, 2008

Pg 5

Wasting resources on bad ideas

There was an article in the papers recently ("Guest Commentary," Sun Cities Independent, July 23, 2008) where the Recreation Centers of Sun City's general manager claimed to want to save money on the golf operations.

Here are some mistakes in judgment if that's indeed the goal:

1. **DON'T PUT DESERT LANDSCAPING ON GOLF COURSES.** Management wasted \$800,000 to redo Lakes East Golf Course, 10433 W. Talisman Road, to save water. If the lawnmower was raised in the fairway and the rough an eighth or a quarter of an inch and a half inch, respectively, they could water every other day and save 50 percent of the water (except for the greens which have to be watered every day because they have to be cut short).

Lakes East is a complete mess. Weeds and grass are filling in the stone areas. Then they sprayed green and orange grass killer that looks like graffiti defacing the expensive decorator stones. Additionally, stones can damage the reels to the lawnmowers which probably cost between \$15,000-\$20,000 each.



Lakes East weeds/grass encroaching stones

2. **SAND GOES IN SAND TRAPS NOT STONES OR GRAVEL.** We are the only golf course in the U.S. with stones and gravel in sand traps. How could anybody make such a HUGE mistake? Clubs cost \$300 and the head can break from hitting into stones. Also if you hit it right that stone can be hurled and could take an eye out. The liability is avoidable by just putting in sand which is proper.

They're called "sand traps" not "gravel traps," and the only thing that is supposed to be in them is granulated whitewashed sand that won't stick together. The present condition of the traps in Sun City is an accident just waiting to happen.

3. **WATER IN SAND TRAPS.** There is water in the sand traps. It hardly rains here so you can't blame the weather -- it's the watering system that needs adjustment. It will take probably 15 or 20 minutes to adjust so the water won't go into the traps. There's no need for expensive drainage systems here in the desert like they put in at Lakes East and then they built the traps wrong.

It's part of the job to spend the night watching the water to adjust it. Obviously, it is not being done.

4. **NEW WATERING SYSTEM IS BAD.** An outrageously expensive watering system has been installed at Willowcreek, 10600 N. Boswell, and Lakes West, 10433 W. Talisman Road, that wastes water. And it's very expensive to repair compared to the system that was here before, which proved itself for more than 30 years. We didn't need to reseed in those days. Proper watering practices would correct the problems they are having.

I hope these tips will help the golf operations improve. Also, see my Golf Operations Proposal on <http://www.annereport.com> that would cut the budget drastically.



Water in sand trap

Angelo Zappella

RCSC member/Retired golf course superintendent