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Pine Lakes Country Club reopens after major renovation project

[Pine Lakes Country Club](#) reopened this week in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, after a 20-month, \$15 million project by Burroughs & Chapin Company, Inc. The renovation project honors the past by preserving much of the historic course's routing and design, while also incorporating forward-thinking golf industry technology by grassing the course with environmentally friendly SeaDwarf® Seashore Paspalum grass.

The Pine Lakes renovation began in November 2006 with the vision of restoring the golf course as closely as possible to architect Robert White's original 1927 specifications for the course, then known as the Ocean Forest Country Club. Over the years, routing changes made by various golf course architects deviated from the original design. Course owners Burroughs & Chapin brought in nationally-known golf restoration architect Craig Schreiner to bring the course back as closely as possible to its intended layout. Schreiner preserved 16 of Pine Lakes' original 18 corridors, utilizing a strategic golf architecture style similar to White's philosophy; the more risks taken by the golfer, the better the scoring opportunities. Schreiner and his staff made many improvements to enhance the playability and enjoyment for golfers of all skill levels.

Because of Burroughs & Chapin's desire to be in tune with today's environmentally friendly attitudes towards golf, the owner and architect planted SeaDwarf® Seashore Paspalum grass on all of the playing surfaces including greens, fairways, tees and roughs.

SeaDwarf turfgrass is considered to be environmentally friendly because it requires less water and less fertilizer than many traditional warm-season turfgrass varieties. And though potable water may be used for irrigation on the grass, it is not necessary. SeaDwarf may be irrigated with alternative water sources such as effluent or brackish water. In fact, SeaDwarf is so salt tolerant that salt may be used to kill weeds.

The SeaDwarf planted at Pine Lakes was grown and harvested by Modern Turf in Rembert, South Carolina, and delivered to the golf course site. Modern Turf is a licensed producer of SeaDwarf under the auspices of Environmental Turf, Inc, the Florida-based company that markets the grass and licenses sod producers to grow it around the world.

"Water issues are everywhere these days. The entire East Coast is experiencing more restrictions on water use, particularly of potable water," said Hank Kerfoot, president of Modern Turf. "There is little reason to believe that anybody's irrigation water quality will improve or even stay the same in the years to come. All the well water within fifty miles of the coast is being infiltrated by the ocean. The ability of this grass to use brackish and reclaimed effluent water will go a long way toward helping not only Pine Lakes but any other paspalum grower become more environmentally friendly. The ability for SeaDwarf to survive with limited amounts of nitrogen fertilizer will also be a big environmental plus."

While SeaDwarf has been used extensively on golf courses around the world, from Egypt to South Africa to Mexico, and domestically in warm-season climates such as Florida, Georgia, California and Texas, the installation of SeaDwarf® in Myrtle Beach at Pine Lakes marks the furthest north the grass has been planted in the continental United States.

"This hopefully marks the beginning of a new era for grasses for the Grand Strand," Modern Turf's Kerfoot said. "In an admittedly conservative industry where nobody wants to be "the guinea pig", Pine Lakes has made a bold statement of their commitment to the future of golf and turfgrass in the Myrtle Beach arena... it will be a lot easier for other courses to observe the success of this project and choose to make the leap themselves."

Kerfoot worked extensively with Randy Allen of Burroughs & Chapin, and with Alan Jarvis, superintendent at Pine Lakes, to help in the decision to choose SeaDwarf® Seashore Paspalum as the new grass for the golf course renovation.

"Randy Allen and Allan Jarvis did more research on paspalum than you could possibly imagine. I have no doubt that they made the right decision for this golf course," Kerfoot said. "They have learned through their research and the actual planting and establishment of SeaDwarf that this is not like any other grass. They are also fully aware that the "wow factor" is about to kick in. When the golfing public sees the paspalum thriving this summer, striped up in its lush green splendor, they will know they have seen something different - and better. That is sort-of the wonder of this grass. We get so caught up in explaining the environmental strengths of this grass we sometimes forget to stop and say 'oh yea, by the way this is the most beautiful grass you have ever seen!'"

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Throughout the restoration project, Burroughs & Chapin also envisioned conveying the grandeur and regal stature of the once-great Ocean Forest Hotel to the new Pine Lakes Clubhouse. Featuring a Dorothy Draper "Great Gatsby-esque" design, the clubhouse is an ideal setting for golfers to relax with a beverage after play, as well as hosting lavish weddings, receptions, birthday celebrations, holiday galas, family reunions and business or social functions.

An antebellum clubhouse designed by Henry Bacon McKoy after he completed the Lincoln Memorial, the design and integrity of the Pine Lakes Clubhouse was saved including the Snug Pub, the meeting place of the Time Inc. editors in 1954 when they visited Pine Lakes to play golf and plan for a new weekly sports publication, Sports Illustrated. The two magnificent Pine Lakes ballrooms, the site of countless weddings and parties since 1927, were restored and will again host a variety of social events. The rich history and tradition of Pine Lakes is now on display in the new History Hall, which features memorabilia and artifacts from the club's first days.

A new 6,000 square foot wing was added to the perimeter of the clubhouse to house the pro shop and locker rooms, the Robert White Pub, the grill kitchen, an outside patio, the cart barn and swimming pool. Just off the clubhouse is the Garden at Pine Lakes, a private area that will also be used for weddings and events, with the golf course as a backdrop. Recently established is the new Myrtle Beach Golf Hall of Fame that honors those that helped build Myrtle Beach into the "Golf Capital of the World."

"Restoring and preserving Pine Lakes to its former glory days and history as a premier golf destination on the East Coast was important to Burroughs & Chapin as not only an investment for the future, but also as a place for many generations to enjoy," said Jim Rosenberg, president and CEO of Burroughs & Chapin Company, Inc. "Pine Lakes not only holds a special place as a golf legend but also in sports history as the birthplace of Sports Illustrated and the Myrtle Beach community."

About Environmental Turf, Inc.

Based in Avon Park, Florida, Environmental Turf works with researchers and universities all over the world to develop environmentally friendly grasses for use in home lawns, common areas, sports fields and golf courses. These grasses contribute to modern golf and landscape architecture's overall goal of creating sustainable landscapes that use less water and less fertilizer while promoting healthy green spaces. Environmental Turf licenses sod farms worldwide to produce its environmentally friendly turfgrasses. For more information or to find a licensed sod farm near you, call 863-452-6595, or visit www.environmentalturf.com.

About Modern Turf

Modern Turf is a licensed producer of SeaDwarf® Seashore Paspalum based in Rembert, South Carolina. Modern Turf, a company founded by former golf course superintendents, specializes in growing and installing the highest quality turfgrasses available on the market today. Their clients exist primarily in the golf and landscape industries. They are also pleased to sell to the general public. Contact Modern Turf at: 803-713-8873, 888-413-8873 or visit www.modernturf.com

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