

RIVER VALE

Golf club sees renovations under new ownership

BY KATHERINE MILSOP
Staff Writer

The new owners of River Vale's Edgewood Country Club have undertaken a multi-million dollar renovation of the golf course and club facilities with an emphasis on providing more recreational and social activities for families and children.

Hampton Golf Management

will provide management oversight at Edgewood. Owners Bruce Schonbraun and Eric Witmond, who officially started last April, discussed comprehensive capital improvements and updates at an open house held at Edgewood on Oct. 13.

Schonbraun said they "could not be more excited about new Edgewood."

He said their vision is to main-

tain a "family-oriented private country club" and "an attractive physical facility."

"We need to be focused on all areas of the club... whether it's the golf course, the golf program, the dining program, banquet and catering... Those are all tentacles of this operation," Schonbraun said.

He added that achieving their vision will be a "timely and expen-

sive process," to which he and Witmond are committed.

Club representatives said in a press release, "2014 marked the 8th straight year that more golf courses closed than opened and more golf country clubs have been purchased to be redeveloped for other purposes such as multifamily rental or townhouse/condo developments." Traditional member-owned models for golf club ownership and management have proven to be "non-sustainable in the current environment."

Schonbraun said that they have begun discussions with local officials regarding developing a portion of the property for residential town houses, "the size of which is less than nine holes." He said that they are committed to "maintaining an excellent 18-hole golf course."

He added that the predevelopment process will take a few years, and the club will likely maintain the existing 27-hole course for the 2016 season.

The new owners recently renovated the golf course, in addition

to overseeing landscaping and beautification projects.

The new "Lifestyle program" offers family activities including Sunday poolside barbecues, movie nights and a tennis program for all ages.

Upgrades to the family swimming pool and club house are scheduled to begin this year, officials said. Edgewood's Midway Bar & Grill will also be updated to include a "New York-style deli" and "cocktail lounge."

"There's a culture and history of this club that is extremely unique, which is something we can build on...no matter how great we make the facility, unless you have the right memberships and the right culture of the club, the club will not reach its maximum potential," Witmond said.

He said that they want the club to be used by members year-round.

"The more we can open up our doors for you on a 12-month basis...the more you're going to

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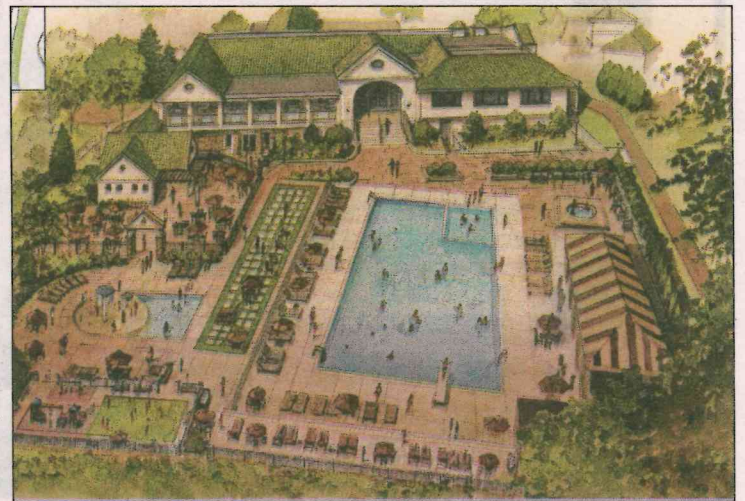
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An overall aerial rendering of the new Edgewood Country Club.

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