



# **Friends of Pusch Ridge Golf**

## *Newsletter*

**October 7, 2026**

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*Background course picture courtesy of Guy Cook.*

## FRIENDS OF PUSCH RIDGE GOLF FALL 2026 NEWSLETTER

Hello Everyone.

It's happening! As we write this newsletter, the El Conquistador Golf Team is preparing the course for our 2026-2027 season. The projected opening date is October 24th, with the leagues starting the following week. We have key articles to share in this edition. Our continued work on Audubon Certification and our Marketing partnerships. Both are excellent examples of "Friends" commitment to the community and how we continue to live our mission: *Connecting the Community through the Game of Golf*.

We have a couple of leadership changes to announce. Andy Kilgore will be managing the Monday Men's League and Cindi Keeler has assumed the role of FOPRG Treasure. Stan New created and held both of these roles for the past five years. We are very grateful to Stan for his contributions.

Save the date for our Celebration Golf Tournament: November 20th, 9:00AM shotgun with lunch to follow. Stay tuned for more details. If you would like to help, contact Anna Bifano at: [annabifano73@gmail.com](mailto:annabifano73@gmail.com).

Our beautiful course hosted 20,858 rounds last season, which included four strong leagues, visitors from states all over the country, seasoned players, beginners and multiple generations! Let's rock Pusch Ridge for its 6th season since reopening while enjoying the views and having fun with friends and family.

With gratitude, Your Friends of Pusch Ridge Golf Board and Advisors

### Audubon Project Update

During the summer months, The Pusch Ridge Golf Course hosted Disc Golf, which included significant league play on the weekends. Meanwhile, the work of the Resource Advisory Group for the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for golf (ACSP) continued.

The butterfly gardens, planted during the golf season last winter, were watered BY HAND almost daily over the summer by ACSP advisors Peter Leuzinger and Jim Schilling, and are currently being consolidated into one flourishing butterfly garden along the south side of the Hole #6 fairway. The pollinator plants placed around the pond on #5 will remain in place but will be cut back as the course is being prepped for the golf season.

7 Owl and 9 Flycatcher Bird nest boxes, purchased by individual ACSP supporters over the past year, were installed this summer in the trees around the course, again thanks to Schilling and a crew from the Oro Valley Parks & Rec Department. Their efforts were supported and orchestrated by a representative from the Tucson Bird Alliance who made

recommendations for the best locations for the boxes in the coming years. These boxes join the 11 smaller Lucy Warbler nest boxes already installed over the winter months by the advisory group. Walkers and golfers should “look up” as they make their way around the course to try spotting these additions.

To accommodate a much-needed drainage and beautification project between Hole #1 and the pro shop, the Cactus Garden was moved closer to the parking lot along the north side of the cart path, across from the ADA ramp. Volunteer Scott Creeger was instrumental in assisting the El Con agronomy team in making sure the cacti and the accompanying signage successfully made the trip. Additional work will be done on the cactus garden itself once the overseeding work is completed.

The Audubon pages of the Friends of Pusch Ridge Golf (FOPRG) website were updated over the summer to reflect the many changes. To read about the history of the project and see photos of some of the progress, go to [www.friendsofpuschrIDGEgolf.org](http://www.friendsofpuschrIDGEgolf.org).

Certification was approved by ACSP for the Outreach and Education requirements. The Case Study for the butterfly gardens and the Wildlife and Habitat Management work were submitted with certification approval expected soon. Three additional areas to complete the entire certification requirements will be submitted over the winter months, with final certification as an ACSP Golf Course expected next Spring.

### **Marketing Pusch Ridge for 2026-27 Season**

The Friends of Pusch Ridge Golf marketing committee is busy promoting our season opening with target audiences such as 17 local hotels and resorts, and 13 apartment communities.

Once again the popular “**Hotel Guest Special**” is being offered at \$49.00 for hotel guests and visitors. The package is 9-hole play, golf cart, rental clubs, and a sleeve of Callaway golf balls and brochures are displayed in hotel lobbies and concierge areas.

We also have a “referral program” in place with the El Conquistador Resort for front-line employees such as bell staff, front desk, bartenders and concierge, etc. A cash prize of \$50 is awarded at the end of each month for the employee who sends the most players down to the course.

Pusch Ridge general rack brochures are supplied to our local apartment communities and are included in new resident welcome packets and other resident areas of the community.

### **Grand Opening “Gift Basket Giveaway”**

To encourage Friends and others to support the course during the first month of opening, FOPRG and Indigo Golf are sponsoring a Gift Basket raffle. For each round of play purchased, the player is eligible for one (1) entry to win. Last year's basket was valued at

purchased, the player is eligible for one (!) entry to win. Last year's basket was valued at over \$250 and contained a variety of golf items such as golf shirts, water bottles, golf balls, gloves, as well as gourmet treats and wine. This year we are asking local businesses to contribute to the basket as well. The winner will be drawn after 4 weeks of opening. Be sure to play early and often for more chances to win this great prize!

### **Happy Hour Promotion**

Once again, in an effort to support our local businesses and a perk for our players, we will be offering the "All Day Happy Hour" for Pusch Ridge golfers (same day as play). Our golfers simply need to show their scorecard or receipt to receive any happy hour offerings all day. We will feature The Landing, Fork & Fire BBQ, and The Overlook restaurant at the OV community center. We are hoping this year to add at least one more participating business.

### **Social Media**

We are striving to ramp up our social media presence with the assistance of Melissa Bernal, Membership and Marketing Director for El Conquistador Golf. With Daryl Janisse (G.M. El Conquistador Golf) and Melissa, we will be positioning Pusch Ridge Golf as a completely different experience and product from the 36 holes.

We are learning more about our customer demographics which includes a good representation of seniors, young adults, college age players, families and of course our leagues.

The 9-hole experience represents a new opportunity for marketing our unique and challenging course along with the beautiful views of the Pusch Ridge. We want to capitalize on the fact that Pusch Ridge is "Fast, Fun and Affordable", as well as the advantage of having a fun golf experience in two hours or less! You will see more about these new marketing approaches as the season continues. There are several social media sites that Tucson and AZ golfers follow which we plan to incorporate into our strategy. If you happen to follow any of these golf sites (AZ Golfers, Tucson Area Golfers, etc) be sure to leave comments on the course and help spread the word.

Since the course reopening in 2021, Pusch Ridge has continually proven to be a profitable and valued recreation asset for Oro Valley. This is due to the dedication of the FOPRG board, and your continued support through league play, tournament participation, leisure play and your generous donations.

Also, if you are interested in helping with any of the marketing efforts and contribute new ideas, we would welcome your participation. Contact Lisa D'Angelo @ [lisaedangelo@gmail.com](mailto:lisaedangelo@gmail.com)

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