



"We received many good comments from the golfers. They thought the Green Golfer pledge was informative and made them more conscious of their own activities on the golf course. The Green Golfer™ Challenge was a great way to get information out there without having to speak with each individual golfer," says Paul Carter, superintendent at The Bear Trace at Harrison Bay.

On Course *With Nature*

Display Your Way to Success

Informational displays help achieve goals in the Audubon Green Golfer™ Challenge.

BY PAUL L. CARTER AND JOSHUA CONWAY

The Bear Trace at Harrison Bay is an 18-hole Jack Nicklaus Signature Golf Course operated

by the State of Tennessee and located 25 miles from downtown Chattanooga, Tennessee. The golf course is located

on Tennessee State Park property, with 11 holes touching water. Although the golf course is home to a multitude of

wildlife, insects, and plant life, there are no residential units located on golf course property.

The Bear Trace at Harrison Bay, a Certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary, has participated in the Audubon Green Golfer™ Challenge since its inception in 2007, with 61 participating golf courses, and was among 107 golf courses that participated in the 2008 Green Golfer™ Challenge. The Bear Trace at Harrison Bay was awarded third place, with 521 pledges, in the 2008 Green Golfer™ Challenge. Below is an account of what Paul L. Carter, CGCS, did to achieve his success in the Challenge.

IN PAUL'S WORDS

We decided to participate in Audubon International's Green Golfer™ Challenge to help The Bear Trace at Harrison Bay fulfill requirements for certification in Education and Outreach in the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses. We thoroughly enjoyed being participants in the Green Golfer™ Challenge. I think the Challenge is an easy and effective way of presenting the environmental elements of golf to golfers and guests.

Our display table was the best part of our Challenge program. I borrowed the idea from a previous Green Golfer™ Challenge participant. I spent about two hours with a local graphic designer and was able to put together a display that cost us \$216.89 for the tri-fold poster and printouts.

Once we got the display up, we saw the attention and participation in the program pick up dramatically. I was surprised by how many of the handouts, which were Audubon International fact sheets, were taken weekly. I saw many people during the year reading these fact sheets while eating their lunch or waiting out a weather delay.

We chose to place a display table in the clubhouse where nearly all who came to play at the course would see it

at some point during their visit. Clubhouse and operational staff encouraged golfers and guests to become involved in the Challenge. They told our guests about the Challenge and the Green Golfer™ sign-up table and greatly supported our efforts.

Our display table was also set up within 15 feet of the area we normally



The Bear Trace at Harrison Bay, Chattanooga, Tennessee, has actively participated in the Audubon Green Golfer Challenge since its 2007 inception.

use to register participants for outings and tournaments. We spoke with the people who were checking in the golfers for the outings and tournaments, explained the Challenge to them, and asked them to direct their participants to the Green Golfer™ sign-up table after they had registered. This request was always met with approval, and I think we got some great numbers from this approach.

I feel that, overall, the Challenge was a great, subtle way to reach golfers about the importance of being environmentally sensitive while playing their rounds. In the future, I would like to have monthly drawings for prizes from the golf course (shirts, hats, a round of golf, etc.). I don't think it would cost much to do, and it would increase interest in our environmental efforts.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

If you would like more information about the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program, please visit <http://acspgolf.auduboninternational.org>. For more information about the Audubon Green Golfer™ Challenge, including how to get involved, please visit <http://www.audubongreengolfer.com>.

PAUL L. CARTER, GCSAA certified golf course superintendent, led the effort to obtain certification in the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses at The Bear Trace at Harrison Bay. The environmental program he helped to initiate already has garnered positive results for both staff and golfers at The Bear Trace at Harrison Bay. Members, guests, and staff have a greater appreciation for the natural beauty of the golf course and better understand how actions — both direct and indirect — impact wildlife, waterways, and other aspects of the environment.

JOSHUA CONWAY is the education and communications manager for Audubon International. He can be contacted at jconway@auduboninternational.org. For more information about Audubon International, please visit www.auduboninternational.org.