

# Fore!

## Highland Springs residents take miniature golf indoors during hot summer days

By Sara Martin

It may not have the allure of Augusta or the prestige of the Old Course at St Andrews in Scotland, but the 18-hole miniature golf course inside Highland Springs garners its own brand of acclaim.

“This was the most fun course I’ve played,” says resident Gayle Manassa, who joined the action on August 30, when more than 100 residents gathered in the Hillcrest Clubhouse for an inaugural game on the community’s new, portable, indoor miniature golf course.

“I ordered the miniature golf set online,” says Barbara Blachly, community resources coordinator at Highland Springs. “We have the outdoor putting green and a number of golf courses nearby, but I thought this would be fun on days when it’s just too hot to play outside.”

Residents were eager to participate. Chuck Cutler, a member of the Highland Springs Woodchucks, a woodworking group, crafted hole markers to line the course.

“We had a great turnout,” says Blachly. “Even residents who opted not to play volunteered to be hole marshals stationed along the course.”



Photo by Dick Manassa

**Doug Swenson won the indoor mini-golf tournament at Highland Springs with a low score of 57.**

### No turf needed

The course snaked through the second floor of the Hillcrest Clubhouse, winding its way through the living room, dining room, billiards room, and hallways, with a brief detour on the elevator.

“Hole 14 required residents to hit the ball on to the elevator and ride down with their ball. As they exited the elevator they putted the ball into the disk on the first floor,” says Blachly. “Hole 15 was the reverse, ending up back on the second floor. We told people to yell ‘Fore’ as soon as the elevator doors opened.”

As an added layer of interest, not all holes required a standard golf club. When residents reached holes 8 and 9, they traded their putters for croquet mallets. At hole 18, they used an umbrella to move the ball toward the hole.

“Some of the obstacles were challenging,” says Blachly. “Hole 10 had a 360-degree obstacle. It looked like a loop-the-loop, and residents had to hit their ball with the right speed to get it all the way around.”

“Indoor mini-golf is the perfect social activity for all ages and abilities,” says Mary Anne Penton of Starting Time Golf, the company that sells the holes and obstacles used at Highland Springs. “The set was designed in Germany by Audi car designers. Their target audience was initially children and young adults, but we’ve found that it’s just as popular among senior adults.”

### Fun for all

Resident Doug Swenson won the tournament with a low score of 57.

“I play golf every week at nearby golf courses, but this course challenged me,” says Doug. “I had two hole-in-ones, so that helped my score.”

Joe Hale doesn’t regularly spend time on the links, but he says his score pleasantly surprised him.

“I haven’t golfed much since I was in the Navy serving in Vietnam,” says Joe.

“But some of my shots went in like I was a real golfer.”

Joe, who played the course with his wife Annette, says the event made for a fun afternoon.

“We enjoyed it,” he says. “It was good to try something new.”