

EUGENE DAILY NEWS

L I F E I N L C

LCGG: Laurelwood Golf Course

BY MARK APKER · AUGUST 11, 2013 · FIREHOSE / GOLF GUIDE / LATEST / ROTATOR · 



Laurelwood represents Eugene perfectly. When I spoke with Debby King, General Manager and Head Professional at Laurelwood, she said that, to get an accurate picture of Eugene you need look no further than their parking lot. **“It’s not uncommon to have a few BMW’s parked right next to the bikes that some of our players rode in on.”**

Laurelwood is a municipal course. The City of Eugene owns the land and buildings and leases the course to Debby and Will, who have operated the course as partners since February of 2013. Though the City doesn’t own the business, they still have a vested interest in seeing their lessees’ succeed. The City and the business have an excellent working relationship, so there are a few cooperative aspects between the City and course management. The course, a

dy on their water bill during the Recreation department also

ave a place to play golf: from seasoned businessman. And really, dies the characteristics of both

privileged. Wrought with pomp and circumstance, formality and decorum. Business is conducted and deals are made over golf. Lawyers and doctors play golf as the stereotypical rule. **Laurelwood welcomes the “traditional” golfer but they also welcome the more earth conscious, and everyone else who wants to play a round of golf, in a variety of ways.**



Greens fees are reasonable for everyone year-round (\$15 in the Summer and only \$10 in Winter), **but even more reasonable for College Students and juniors**, for whom there are discounts and a variety of promotions to encourage play.

Debby, an LPGA pro, has placed an emphasis on getting girls involved in golf through the LPGA sponsored Girl’s Golf Day. **Girl’s Golf Day occurs yearly and is open to girls ages seven to seventeen.**

are welcome to borrow clubs if you have a letter of authorization from the University of Oregon. The program is for the entire U of O Women's golf team and provides training. Last year Eugene, Oregon, who participated in the program, says that Laurelwood reaches a level where you can play golf.

Programs for girls. Juniors can play golf for the entire summer. Laurelwood also supports juniors by hosting Kidsports golf. **Laurelwood has a multitude of other, ever-changing programs for juniors, which patrons should be sure to ask about in the clubhouse.**

Being so close to the University Laurelwood takes special care to welcome students. Debby said that it's common to see students from the University of Oregon ride their bikes up the hill to Laurelwood with their clubs slung across their back. They also get a lot of parents killing some time while their kids visit the University. "They drop off their kids, play a round, then go pick them up: it's perfect."

As part of the improvements made since taking over the course, Will has put in several new bunkers, including their signature "O" bunker on the second hole which pays homage to their ties with, and proximity to, the University.



Laurelwood also takes great care to ensure the treatments to the course are environmentally friendly. **They use a molasses mixture on the greens and treat the fairway with an all-natural fertilizer.** The fertilizer is more expensive than the typical golf course fertilizer chemical, but much more earth friendly. In another show of cooperation between the course and the City of Eugene, and because the City recognizes the need to keep its golf as green as possible, Eugene helps to pay some of the difference between the typical fertilizer and the upgraded treatment. It's in the City's interest to keep the course in good shape and to keep the sport of golf as green as possible. To Eugene the goodwill is worth the extra cost.

In keeping with the Earth friendly vibe at Laurelwood, **dogs are welcome on the course.** The owners and employees have their animals with them in the clubhouse and they welcome their patrons to walk with their dogs on the course during their round. All they ask is that pets remain leashed.

Debby and Will have not only placed an emphasis on keeping the course environmentally friendly, but on making it more playable as well. "The fairways used to be littered with daisies, they made it hard for players to find their ball." **"The daisies are gone, and the course is in much better shape."** Debby and Will didn't just get rid

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When playing the course you notice the improvements as soon as you reach the first fairway. The daisies are gone, the grass is smooth, and the hole plays much better as a result. There aren't a lot of obstacles to impede your shot at Laurelwood. **Though there is the occasional tree or bunker, the fairways are mostly wide-open, making tee shots very forgiving.** This makes it possible for players with a less precise game to potentially score well.

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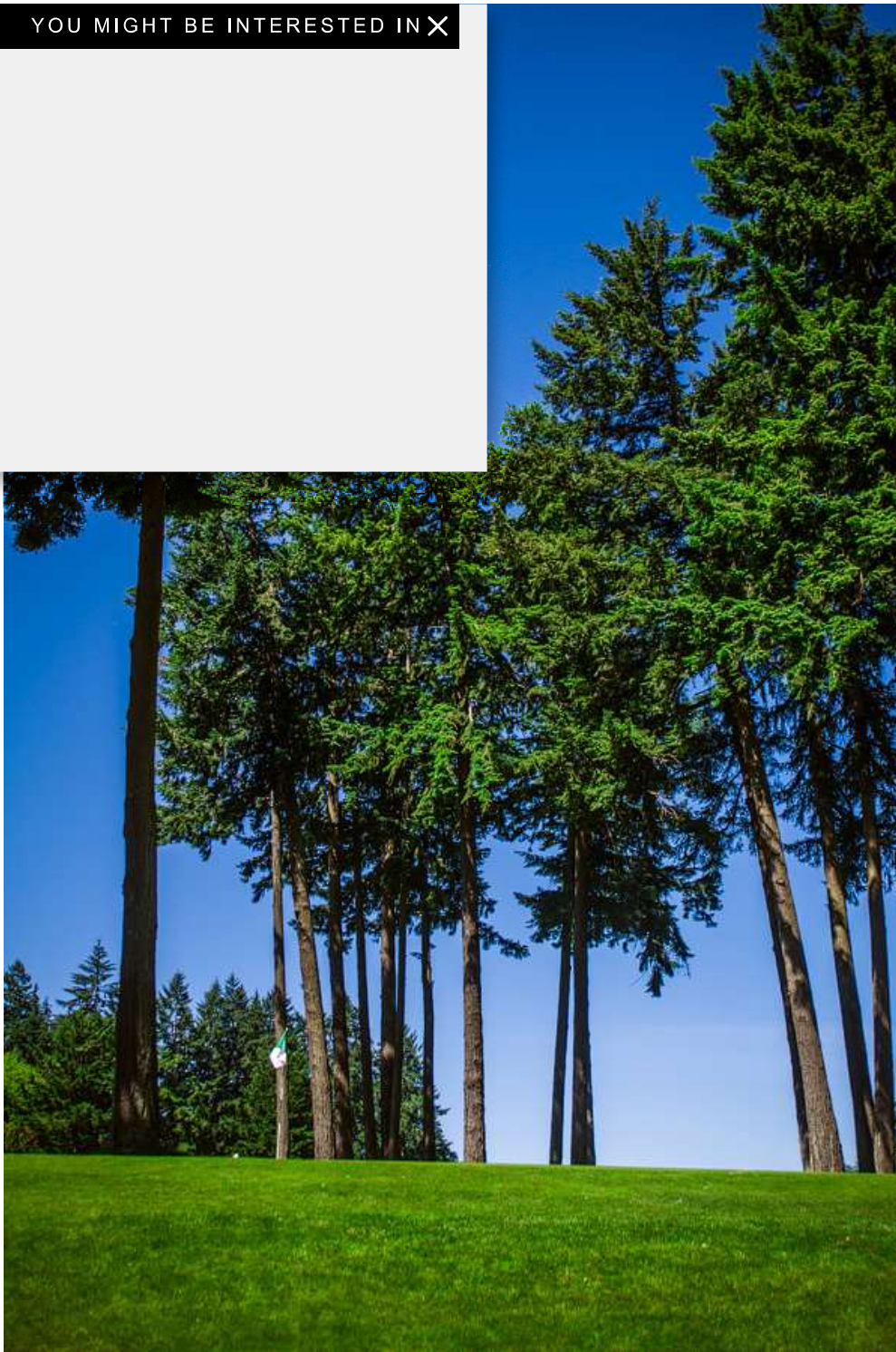


There are a few exceptions. The fifth hole plays into a narrow area surrounded by dense trees. It's an intimidating shot to the green which requires accuracy to avoid the surrounding deep rough.



The seventh hole is interesting as well. It's a short par 4, but a massive oak tree guards the entire fairway. Players are given the option of going over, under, around or through the tree. If you can avoid having your tee shot snagged by a branch you should be left with a short pitch to the elevated green surrounded by massive firs.

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Sustainable, organic, affordable and well maintained.

Laurelwood is family, earth and animal friendly with a laid back atmosphere which welcomes all. **It is the alternative golf course for an alternative town.**

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Mark is a graduate of Brigham Young University and Lewis and Clark School of Law and an MBA candidate at the Marriott School of Business. His career has focused on the intersection of politics, law and business. He brings a unique insider perspective to each article he writes.



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