



Golfers Find an Escape at FCPA Golf Courses



“Next up on the tee, Savage, Bishop, Cormany and Colley,” announced a man’s voice over the loudspeaker at Jefferson District Park and Golf Course. Seconds later, the four golfers happily made their way to the course to tee off in their standing Monday-morning Senior Men’s League game. It seemed like old times, sort of, with new safety rules following a pandemic-related, two-and-a-half-month, golf course shutdown.

“The reopening of the golf courses was like being pulled from the dark abyss of boredom and despair,” said Mike Savage, an avid Fairfax County golfer and retired middle school teacher. “No one minds wearing a mask while indoors, and the call-ahead check-in allows you to stay outside the whole time. You never have to go inside [the clubhouse] unless you want to.”

When the COVID-19 pandemic struck, all Park Authority courses closed indefinitely in March to slow the spread of the highly contagious illness and help ensure the well-being of golfers and staff. During the shutdown, all Park Authority golf courses followed CDC and professional golf industry recommendations to shore up facilities to limit contact and reduce the risk of illness. Plexiglass barriers were installed in pro shops and at food service cashier stations. Enhanced indoor and outdoor cleaning protocols were developed and implemented. Limited occupancy and directional signs were installed to assure social distancing, and online services were improved to enable golfers to both reserve a tee time and pay online. The goal was to ensure that all six Park Authority courses could operate responsibly, and all golfers could play safely in an ongoing pandemic.

“I think the safety measures put in place are good and adequate for our safety,” said John Cormany, an avid golfer and retired postal carrier. “I think being able to reserve and pay for a tee time online is a great idea.”

Golf courses were among the first Park Authority facilities to reopen in May. Once the news spread, golfers welcomed the new safety rules and jumped at the chance to play again.

“Pent up demand and lack of recreational opportunities resulted in a record number of rounds, buckets and business,” said Park Authority Golf Enterprises Manager Todd Johnson. “We’re also seeing golfers who are new to our courses.”

For veteran golfers Mike Savage, George Bishop, John Cormany and Joe Colley, returning to Jefferson was like coming home again to a treasured friend. Just seeing the course was a hopeful sign that all is well, and all will be well again after the pandemic ends.

“It’s a great course to walk and get your daily exercise,” Savage said.

“I just want to thank Jefferson management and the maintenance crew for keeping the course in great shape during the course shut down,” Cormany said. “The course was in the best shape I have ever seen it when we resumed play.”

To make and pay for your tee time in advance, call the Park Authority course of your choice or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/golf/teetimes. For course locations, turn to the Golf section.

