



May 2008

# KEN'S KORNER

G R E A T E B A Y C O U N T R Y C L U B

*Another Step towards Audubon International Certification*

## **Achievement in Water Quality Management**

We recently received recognition and certification from Audubon International for our on going program of Water Quality Management that we developed and put into place years ago to protect the water resources that are on the course, and for those that our course drains into. Protecting our waters has always been our priority and we are very proud to have received this award and we will continue to monitor our efforts and document present and future results.

Anchoring our program was the establishment of “no zones”, or buffers, surrounding our water features on holes #'s 9, 12, and 18. In these designated areas we allowed natural vegetation to grow (“no” mowing zone) to stabilize banks and stop erosion, while providing habitat for wildlife. Further out, we increased the turf height of cut (“no” close mowing zone) to strengthen the turf so it wore better, again preventing erosion, but providing for a healthy barrier to water runoff. In these same zones, we prohibited the use of any pesticides and used only organic fertilizers to ensure that chemical drift or wash was eliminated (“no” spray and “no” synthetic fertilizer zones). “No zones” eliminated almost any potential of contaminating our waters.

To document the effects of these programs, we instituted water testing and wildlife surveys. The waters are routinely tested for nitrogen loading, oxygen levels, pH, and conductivity. In every test, and in each parameter, we have greatly exceeded the standard criteria set forth by government and private organizations. Our wildlife surveys have shown increases in aquatic species and populations, as well as for water fowl such as ducks, cranes, herons, etc. and we have also seen a dramatic increase in plant species that provide shelter, food, and nesting areas for these species.

We hope to attain full accreditation by Audubon International within the next few years. Presently, we have been certified in the following program categories: Environmental Planning, Water Conservation, Water Quality, and Wildlife Habitat Management. There are two remaining certifications - Chemical Use and Community Education – which we have been working towards for the past few years.

We are really proud of our accomplishments with Audubon International. Years ago it seemed such a long way off, but now it is very much in reach!

*Ken Thompson, Golf Course Superintendent*

*It's always a Greate day at Greate Bay!*