

## Longtime Gateway golf club gets new owner, big improvements

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*Mary Ann Dominiak has been intrigued by the Fort's history and citizens' commitment to the golf course, even during the Depression.*

Craig Handel

While golf may still be the star, a Lee County club will soon offer a much stronger supporting cast.

A club in Gateway is under new ownership, with plans for major upgrades on the drawing board.

What's been Gateway Golf and Country Club since it opened in 1989 is now [The Club at Gateway](#). Donald Garrett, via Club at Gateway LLC, bought it for \$5 million from club members on March 30.

"It's a careful balance," Garrett said of the name change, noting Gateway's griffin logo remains. "We wanted to give the club somewhat of a new look without it being a major change. We thought the name change here gives a feeling of more of a community golf club."

Garrett, who owns Naples-based [D. Garrett Construction](#), has worked in the construction industry for 37 years, specializing in clubhouse and golf course projects.

The club's signature feature is the 18-hole Tom Fazio-designed course. Plans call for surrounding it with more amenities to appeal to a variety of people.

"You start with a great golf course to sustain the game of golf," Garrett said. "You supplement that with other activities such as bocce, pickleball, a resort-style pool, wellness and fitness. So you build around a great golf course and that's what we're doing."

In its first season, the course debuted on the Golf Digest list of Top 100 Courses. That allowed it to host events from the Ben Hogan Tour Gateway Open to the Gateway Senior Invitational. It has also hosted many United States Golf Association qualifiers and PGA chapter and section events.

The course plays over 7,000 yards from the longest tees, with a par of 72, featuring stands of native cypress trees. It has six sets of tees.

The club was envisioned as the centerpiece of the Westinghouse Gateway Development. In 2002, its ownership was transferred from the developer to the members.