



A FAZIO VISIT ON A BLUE CAROLINA DAY

Bright's Creek Golf Club is in a perfect little corner of the world.

MILL SPRING, NORTH CAROLINA: Tom Fazio developed a reputation of limiting his design business to courses east of the Mississippi River. "I think my competitors had started the rumor," smiled Fazio. "The truth is, family is important to me. Designing courses close to home is appealing. There are only so many dance recitals and soccer games before your kids are grown.

"I think the trend of private golf communities expanding their amenity package and embracing the whole family will pay dividends," said Fazio. "With both mom and dad working, parents feel a responsibility to spend weekends doting over their children.

"Golf will always be an important part of the mix, but clubs can no longer rely only on a quality golf course to lure new members," said Fazio.

AS GOOD AS IT GETS

Bright's Creek Golf Club is located at the base of the Blue Ridge Mountains.

"I had thousands of acres to work with at Bright's Creek. It is a rarity in this business to have such an enormous parcel of land to work with. It was like having all the whiskey, food, and money you wish for at the same time," teased Fazio. "It was a fun course to design. The meandering creeks, rock outcroppings, and knolls provided me a lot to work with. I had to get over my angst that I didn't miss something."

"As a father of five-year-old twins, I understand the importance of offering an active lifestyle with a wide base of activities," said Omar Botero, developer of Bright's Creek. "Our industry has regained its sea legs, but caution



Bright's Creek is named for a stream that starts at a natural spring atop Wildcat Spur Mountain, flows through the property, and eventually feeds into the Green River. The area is so quiet that you can hear a putter strike a golf ball from 100 yards away.

"FUNNY HOW AMERICAN'S will suit up in multiple layers and brave wind-blown rain to play courses in Scotland and Ireland that aren't necessarily in the best condition. Back home, days with less than optimal weather, often turn into 'early bar golf.'" – TOM FAZIO

still rules. The strong will get stronger and communities that are unable to invest in member amenities will continue to struggle. Our Fazio course is as good as it gets. His years of expertise in design shines at Bright's Creek.

"This is a big year for us," said Botero. "Construction is under way on both our Gun Club and Swim & Fitness Center. Once complete, they will complement our existing member's only equestrian facility, bocce court, croquet lawn—and, of course, our Fazio masterpiece."

A MYSTICAL SETTING

Bright's Creek is a private community situated on 5,000 acres of unblemished land with dramatic ridgeline views of the Blue Ridge Mountains. It is geographically set in the

middle of a triangle between Charlotte, Asheville, and Greenville. Smaller towns of Hendersonville, Flat Rock, and Tryon are an easy commute and scenic day trips to Lake Lure and Chimney Rock are 20 to 45 minutes away.

On a perfect fall day last October, the Fazios visited the community for a day of camaraderie, golf, and fundraising for the Boys and Girls Club of Henderson County. "I thoroughly enjoyed the day!" exclaimed Sue Fazio.

"Until three years ago, I didn't play much golf. It frustrated me. When Tom would tend to his design commitments, I would paint," said Sue.

"That changed when I was given a set of custom fit clubs. At first, I likened it to receiving a Maserati for someone who was use to pulling a red wagon. (continued)

"PLAYABILITY TRUMPS BEAUTY. Course rankings are often based by low handicappers playing from the back tees. Those players typically aren't paying the bills. Economics rule. Look at your membership profile. Golf is about having fun with friends and family. My courses are designed for the average golfer to enjoy themselves." – TOM FAZIO

"CONVERSATIONS WITH DEVELOPERS usually begin with, 'I have the best piece of land for you to look at.' Before Google Maps, I had an oversized atlas on my desk. My evaluation would start with where is the closest commercial airport. Easy access is a critical component in assessing the viability of a location." – TOM FAZIO



"I decided to get serious and took golf lessons. My professional established a schedule for me to hit 100 range balls for 10 consecutive days with my feet together. After much practice and expert instruction, I found some success and started enjoying the game more. I admit I now have the golf bug!"

"During the grand opening of Bright's Creek several years ago, I was overcome with a mystical feeling," revealed Sue. "The area is special. However, I really didn't appreciate the golf setting. It wasn't top of mind. Now that I play more golf, Bright's Creek is one of my favorite courses to play." ■

Homesites with long-range mountain or golf course views start at \$150,000.

For more information, please call (828) 694-4500 or visit BrightsCreek.com.



The community has 12 miles of riding trails that weave through dense forest and trout streams. Its equestrian center provides horse care with a well-ventilated post-and-beam barn featuring matted box stalls, ceiling fans, two indoor wash racks, and an automatic fly-spray system. The center also includes a dressage arena and a large jumping arena with all-weather footing and 24-hour security.

Avid hikers can choose from three different trails. The Low Fall Walking Path is at the mountain's base, the McCraw Mountain Trail traverses many ups and downs, and the Clifffield Mountain Trail at 2,400 feet, offers long-range mountain views.



"TOM IS A HOMEBOY. The travel bug is out of his system. He would rather sit in his rocking chair with grandkids, our dog Maggie, and our cat Albert at his side." – SUE FAZIO

"BE CAREFUL when reading putts on mountain golf courses. The hilly terrain creates optical illusions. Your mind tends to favor having breaks tilt toward the slant of the land. That is not always the case. My greens will often break in the other direction. To determine which way the green is sloping, be sure to walk the line and judge your balance on your feet as you address the ball." – TOM FAZIO



The Fazios matched money raised during the charity outing at Bright's Creek. Over \$10,000 was donated to the Boys and Girls Club of Henderson County.

CREATING ANOTHER CHOICE

HENDERSONVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA: The Fazios have been involved with the Boys and Girls Club for over two decades.

"You can't be a complete human being without giving," said Sue Fazio. "It doesn't have to be a monetary donation. It can be your time. We have been blessed in life. Many haven't been so fortunate."

"We became involved with the Boys and Girls Club of America when Tom was asked to be on its national Board of Directors," explained Sue. "It opened our eyes to how much support the charity provides to towns across America."

THE MOTIVATING FORCE TO BECOME INVOLVED

"With six growing children, attending high school basketball games in the 1990s was common," recalled Sue. "There was one particular student athlete who was an absolute joy to watch. He was such a natural at the sport. Suddenly, he disappeared from the team. We all wondered, what happened? We eventually discovered, with no role model, he dropped out of school, started dealing drugs, and was sentenced to prison. He fell through the cracks and is part of an ignored population in our country. His story was the impetus for us to become more involved in our local chapter," explained Sue.

"The Boys and Girls Club of Henderson County tries to provide a nurturing support structure lacking in so many children's lives.

The organization focuses on five core programs that include tutoring, healthful living, and art. Just showing someone cares about their well-being goes a long way," said Sue.

"Due in part to the Boys and Girls Club's mentoring, we helped the younger brother understand the importance of an education. Instead of following in his brother's footsteps, he has a job and is attending college," proudly reported Sue.

The Hendersonville chapter, in large part to the Fazio's fundraising efforts, provides support for 350 kids per day.

"A couple of months ago, I received one of the greatest compliments of my life," emotionally remembered Sue. "The father of two young girls who were regulars at the Boys and Girls Club informed us their mother had just overdosed on cocaine. We offered to provide whatever support was needed. The dad said, 'please keep doing what you are doing. You make it possible for my daughters to have another choice.'"



Painting by Sue Fazio

Sue Fazio, an accomplished artist, donates all proceeds from her art, over \$228,000, to the Boys and Girls Club of Henderson County. Visit SueFazio.com to view her gallery.

For more information on how you can help Tom and Sue's efforts, please contact Sarah Werstler at SWerstler@FazioDesign.com.