



Photos: Bill Bergin, ASGCA



Pictured left, the team for the McLemore Club project (as seen in construction above) includes Steve Weisser, ASGCA (far left), ASGCA Past President Rees Jones (centre left) and Bill Bergin, ASGCA (second from right)

# Working together

The Spring 2019 edition of ASGCA's *By Design* magazine profiled Rees Jones, Inc.'s work with Bergin Golf Designs at McLemore Club in Georgia

The former Canyon Ridge Club in Rising Fawn, Georgia, occupies a spectacular setting on top of Lookout Mountain, with breathtaking views of the surrounding national and state parks. The owners, Scenic Land Company, planned to convert the club into a community and resort club, and wanted a design team that would be hands-on and could provide a course that would attract second-home buyers and resort guests.

Bill Bergin, ASGCA, had received widespread praise for his renovation of nearby Chattanooga Golf & Country Club, and has worked on three of the top 10 courses in neighboring Tennessee. ASGCA Past President Rees Jones is known for his work on U.S. Open venues like Bethpage Black, Torrey Pines and Congressional. Scenic Land Company hired both, along with Jones's senior designer Steve Weisser, ASGCA, bringing three ASGCA members to the project team.

Jones says: "We first worked together with Bill Bergin at the Country Club of Winter Haven in 2013 and when

the opportunity to work with Bill again at McLemore arose, we saw it as a chance to really deliver something special for Duane Horton and the entire Scenic Land team.

"We have a design team comprised Bill Bergin, me, Steve Weisser and Matt Bergin [Bill's associate and son]. The collaboration among the four of us works because we share common ideas about strategy, playability and the way a golf hole should fit the land."

The team set about fulfilling multiple objectives: creating more variety to the mountaintop course and making it a test for the best players as well as being accessible for beginners.

Bergin says: "Once grading plans were complete, Rees, Steve and I went over each hole in detail. Working with Rees and Steve has been a pleasure both professionally and personally. Our styles mesh very well, and we have similar goals.

"Our collaboration has produced a golf course that offers the highly skilled player a formidable test, while being enjoyable and playable for all levels of recreational golfers. A day

at McLemore presents a pleasurable physical and visual journey through an amazing landscape."

"The course is nearly complete, member excitement is high, and the course will open this summer."

"When a relationship works as well as ours," says Jones, "we are able

**/// We are able to draw on each of our individual talents to produce a golf course that we might not be able to achieve on our own**

to draw on each of our individual talents to produce a golf course that we might not be able to achieve on our own. I believe the results of the soon-to-be-opened course at

McLemore will showcase the results of this collaboration. Collaborations can be a wonderful method of creating an exceptional design for a client."

Scenic Land Company president Duane Horton is delighted with how the team he assembled has worked together: "We could not have asked for a greater spirit of collaboration and creativity on the McLemore project than what Rees and Bill brought to the table.

"From planning through execution, the expertise and artistry were matched only by their shared vision and passion for the course. Equally impressive was their understanding of our site's unique mountaintop setting, respect for our overall master plan, and stewardship of the land. We are confident members and guests will appreciate and enjoy McLemore for generations to come as a result of the partnership of Bill Bergin and Rees Jones." ●

Read the full 'Working Together' article in the *Spring 2019* issue of *By Design*