



# THE ISLAND PACKET

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SERVING THE LOWCOUNTRY

# Hampton Lake Opens New Amenities Center

By CAROL WEIR  
The Island Packet

Dozens of workers scurried in and out of the brand new waterfront clubhouse and amenities centers at Hampton Lake, getting ready for the community's grand opening Memorial Day weekend.

From installing soothing miniature waterfalls in the spa's sitting room to planting trees around the parking area and dusting the limestone bricks of the clubhouse's fireplace, the buzz of activity confirmed that nearly 800 members and their guests were expected to descend on the new private community this weekend.

The centerpiece of the 955-acre Hampton Lake is a 165-acre freshwater lake. Boat tours, a fly fishing clinic and a kids fishing tournament were scheduled for the grand opening to show it off.

Wade Bales, a fisheries biologist and Hampton Lake's general manager, said the community will be one of the southeast's premier freshwater fishing destinations. The lake, which meanders around 340 acres of wetlands and narrows to channels in sections, has been stocked with large mouth bass, sunfish and other species. It is part of a larger regional wetland system draining into the May River.

Bales is proud of the community's three electric cruising boats, and emphasizes that motor boat traffic on the lake will be restricted to low speeds. No swimming, water skiing or jet skis are allowed in the lake. Staff will be on hand to teach residents kayaking, bird-watching and fishing.

"We want to provide an opportunity for people to learn how to do all this good stuff," Bales said.

This weekend, nationally recognized naturalist Todd Ballantine will



Special to the Packet

The largest pool at Hampton Lake has a lazy river winding through it. Grand opening events for members and their guests are being held this weekend at the community's new amenities center.

lead nature seminars at the community's campsite, across the lake from the boathouse. Boardwalks and eight miles of hiking trails connect the sections of this nature preserve.

Hampton Lake is a new type of venture for John Reed, who developed local private golf communities Berkeley Hall, Colleton River and Hampton Hall. He decided the Lowcountry had enough golf courses and supplanted the planned fairways and greens at Hampton Lake with the lake. Reed likes to say he made the decision because "92 percent of home buying decisions are made by women, and women love water."

Increasingly, home buyers want to connect with their extended families and create memories while escaping from the stress of everyday life. Water activities are conducive to this, marketing experts say. For about the same cost as building golf courses, Reed created

a freshwater lake large enough to effectively serve the owners, friends and families of the community's

900 residences. The annual property owners dues at Hampton Lake are \$3,250 -- lower than a golf club.

For owners who do want golf, memberships will be available at some of the area's top private clubs including Berkeley Hall, with two outstanding Tom Fazio courses, and Hampton Hall, which has an 18-hole course designed by Pete Dye.

People have always come to Hilton Head Island and the Lowcountry lured by water.

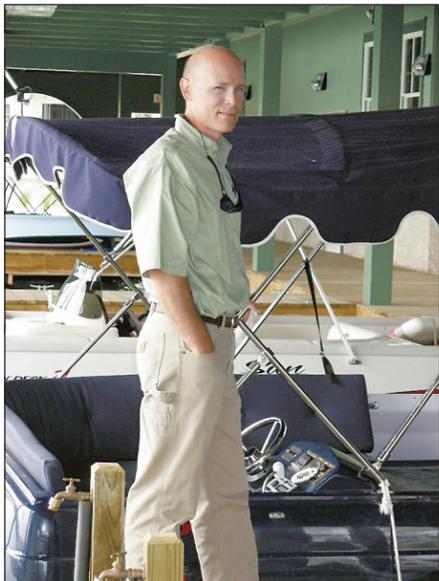
"But that was oceanfront or deep water property that is now priced too high for most to even consider.

Our objective was that, instead of bringing people to the water, we would bring water to the people," Reed has said.

Homes in the community start at about \$375,000 for villas; to about \$550,000 for cottage and coach homes measuring 2,100 to 3,150 square feet. Home builders working in the community include Reardon Brothers and Reflection Homes. Custom homes by local builders will be priced from about \$600,000 to \$1.3 million. The community's first residents are scheduled to move in this summer, and Hampton Lake officials have said buyers are a good mix of locals and second home buyers from other states.

About 300 lots have sold since sales began in May 2006, and another

300 are still for sale, Hampton Lake executives said. The remaining lots will be released in a future phase. Wooded homesites start at about \$190,000 and waterfront homesites start at about \$300,000.



Carol Weir • The Island Packet

Wade Bales, general manager of Hampton Lake and a fisheries biologist, shows off one of the development's three electric cruising boats, which will be available at the boathouse for members to rent.

## WEEKEND EVENTS

The amenities at Hampton Lake will be unveiled this weekend to property owners and their guests. They include: a 165-acre lake with a sandy beach, full-service boathouse and community dock; The Lakehouse clubhouse featuring casual dining at Backwater Bill's; state-of-the-art Fitness Center and The Spa; two pools (both heated in the winter, one for adults only, one with a lazy river), plus a swim and splash deck for kids; multi-level playground and future playground for dogs. Golf memberships to area clubs also will be available.

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