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Project EverGreen chooses winners for the Because Green Matters Award

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Project EverGreen named Verandah, Bonita Bay Group's master-planned community near Fort Myers, Fla., and Evergreen Marriott Conference Resort/Stone Mountain Golf Club near Atlanta, as winners of its prestigious Because Green Matters award for 2007.

"Selecting two Because Green Matters winners is a first in the history of this award," said Den Gardner, executive director of Project EverGreen. "However, it was almost mandatory when we reviewed how thoroughly each organization has integrated promotion and preservation of green spaces into their planning."

Mitch Hutchcraft, Bonita Bay Group's regional vice president for Verandah, said, "As a company, Bonita Bay Group was founded on environmental stewardship, and we remain committed to responsible development. Hopefully this award will help draw attention to the importance of green space in master-planning of neighborhoods and communities, and how it can be done for the benefit of both residents and the environment."

Located along the Orange River, Verandah was Florida's first community to achieve certification as a Green Development by the state's Green Building Coalition. The development has also been certified by the Florida Yards & Neighborhoods program for its work in promoting water conservation and preservation of other natural resources through Florida-friendly landscaping.

Anthony Williams, director of grounds for the Evergreen Marriott Conference Resort and the Stone Mountain Golf Club, said the award "validates our constant efforts to apply 'environomics' which is the practice of preserving green space in harmony with operating a successful business."

Located only 16 miles from Atlanta, the resort and the golf club which it manages have initiated a number of programs which successfully blend environmental and business stewardship. These include designation as a Certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary, conversion of 12 acres to native grass/wildflower habitat, as well as comprehensive programs for water management, wildlife habitat preservation and integrated pest management.

"Our 2007 winners more than uphold the standards of the Because Green Matters award," Gardner said. "Their leadership in this area reflects growing recognition of the importance of green space preservation and planning of well-maintained green spaces among all sectors in our society."

Thursday, April 26, 2007

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