FAR HILLS, N.J. (Feb. 17, 2015) – Orchid Island Golf & Beach Club, in Vero Beach, Fla., has been selected by the United States Golf Association (USGA) as the host site for the 2018 U.S. Senior Women's Amateur Championship. The club's first USGA championship is scheduled for Sept. 29-Oct. 4.

"The USGA is honored to add Orchid Island Golf & Beach Club to its distinguished list of championship sites," said Diana Murphy, USGA vice president and Championship Committee chairman. "We're confident the club will be a terrific host for both players and spectators, and we look forward to crowning the 57th U.S. Senior Women's Amateur champion in Vero Beach."

Designed in 1990 by Arnold Palmer and nestled between the Indian River Lagoon and the Atlantic Ocean, Orchid Island is one of Florida's few barrier island courses, and it became a certified Audubon cooperative sanctuary in 2005. Led by Erik Larsen, formerly of Arnold Palmer Design Company, the course was renovated in 2005. Changes included the installation of a new irrigation system, the reconstruction and redesign of several bunkers, the regrassing of teeing grounds and the rebuilding of greens. A second renovation is scheduled for this summer and will be led by Thad Layton of Arnold Palmer Design Company.

"Orchid Island is deeply honored to host the 2018 U.S. Senior Women's Amateur Championship," said Ted Hutton, club president. "Being selected to host this prestigious championship is a testimony to the quality of our Arnold Palmer-designed golf course, the excellence of our staff and the dedication of our members. We thank the USGA for the opportunity to work together in producing an outstanding experience for all players."

Orchid Island has hosted several important regional events, including the 2008 South Florida PGA Professional Championship, won by Lee Rinker; a 2009 U.S. Open local qualifier; the 2010 Florida Senior Amateur Match Play Championship, won by Pete Andrews; and the 2014 South Florida PGA Professional Championship, won by Paul Scaletta.

The 2018 U.S. Senior Women's Amateur will be the 22nd USGA championship and fourth U.S. Senior Women's Amateur contested in Florida. The Sunshine State will also host the 2015 U.S. Mid-Amateur at John's Island Club, in Vero Beach, and the 2016 U.S. Women's Amateur Four-Ball on Streamsong Resort's Blue Course, in Streamsong.

The Senior Women's Amateur Championship is open to female amateurs who will reach their 50th birthday on or before Sept. 29, 2018, and have a Handicap Index® not exceeding 18.4. Championship play is preceded by 18-hole sectional qualifying conducted by state and regional golf associations. From sectional qualifying, 132 players will compete in 36 holes of stroke-play qualifying at Orchid Island, from which 64 individuals will advance into the championship's match-play bracket that will determine the champion.

Upcoming U.S. Senior Women's Amateur Championships will be contested Sept. 26-Oct. 1, 2015, at Hillwood Country Club, in Nashville, Tenn.; Sept. 17-22, 2016, at Wellesley Country Club, in Wellesley Hills, Mass.; and Sept. 9-14, 2017, at Waverly Country Club, in Portland, Ore.

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