Endowment program pays for Duke course repairs

By Peter Blais

With the recession forcing universities to cut back expenses, renovating school golf courses is usually a low priority. Many university facilities, some of which are among the finest courses in the country, are falling into disrepair.

That was the case until two years ago at Duke University, the Durham, N.C. home of the reigning NCAA college basketball champions and one of the finest Robert Trent Jones, Sr. courses to be found anywhere, according to Duke Athletic Director Tom Butters.

"It was starting to look like a lot of university golf courses," Butters recalled. "We just didn't have the money to keep it up the way we should." About that time, Butters held a brainstorming session with his staff on how to raise money to make the improvements the 50-plus-year-old course so desperately needed.

The award, honoring a small business owner demonstrating staying power, growth in number of employees, increased sales volume, innovativeness of service, response to adversity, and contributions to the community, was presented to the Caplins at a ceremony May 4. During their 13 years at Elkorn, the Caplins have increased membership from 150 to its maximum of 500, with 57 waiting to join.

An incoming director of the PGA of America, past president of the Northern California Section of the PGA and winner of the Bill Straussbaugh Club Relations Award, Ty Caplin's commitment to projecting and maintaining the professional image of golf is evident in Elkorn's daily operations, in which he is very involved.

Dupuis named Shaker Hills Director of Golf

HARVARD, Mass. — Peter P. Dupuis has been named director of golf operations at the new Shaker Hills Golf Club, which opened July 4.

Dupuis is a resident of Amherst, N.H., and a Class A member of the Professional Golfers Association.

Prior to coming to Shaker Hills, he served at Amherst (N.H.) Country Club. He has been the head professional and golf course manager at Fort Devens Golf Course in Ayer, Mass., and served at Cochecho Country Club in Dover, N.H.

In return for their pledges, each donor was given a permanent locker, lifetime membership and a stone marker along the tree holes and at the practice range reading "In lasting appreciation to (name)."

Three donors, wishing to remain anonymous, had the names of Butters, long-time golf coach Duffy Hagler (practice range) and present golf coach Rod Myers inscribed on their markers.

"It was an interesting idea and one that worked for us," Butters said.

"The individual contributors seem to be pleased with our efforts to bring the course back to where it really should have been all along."

Chamber honors golf course owners

STOCKTON, Calif. — Ty and Nancy Caplin, owners of Elkorn Country Club in Stockton, Calif., have won the Greater Stockton Chamber of Commerce Small Business Person of the Year Award.

The award, honoring a small business owner demonstrating staying power, growth in number of employees, increased sales volume, innovativeness of service, response to adversity, and contributions to the community, was presented to the Caplins at a ceremony May 4.

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Elkorn's outside tournament program and award-winning Junior Golf program attract many members of the community to the facility. Ty Caplin is a PGA Class A-4 Golf Professional. Nancy is Elkorn's office manager.

Winning the local award qualifies the Caplins to compete for the state of California Small Business Person of the Year Award.

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