**Plucking issues from the golf industry cupboard**

- It's that time of year — time to bash the ubiquitous Resolution Trust Corp., and its high-handed, bureaucratic approach to free-market issues.
- The RTC will stage a mid-June auction in order to unload the former landmark properties, which include some of America's premier golf destination resorts. At this point (and nothing is ever set in stone with America's largest salvager/wholesaler), the New Orleans auction will be winner-take-all. You bid on the whole package or nothing at all.

If there is local interest in Carmel Valley Ranch, for example, the potential buyer can't bid on it individually. The members at PGA West — who've shown interest in purchasing their high-profile, four-course complex — would be foiled by this one-size-fits-nothing format. After the Landmark legal debacle, local/ member ownership should be encouraged. Instead, it's precluded.

- Aren't the RTC's role to solicit the best possible price for these properties? Early estimates indicate the RTC would be fortunate to draw 60 cents on the dollar for this $3.3 billion package. Such a deal...

- Pessimism reigned supreme in the golf industry circles the morning of Nov. 4, as folks braced for the coming of Democratic administration. The wailing increased in volume and volume when veep Al Gore hand-picked Carol Browner to lead the Environmental Protection Agency. Before you unload the Golden Bear stock and move to Hudson Bay, step back for a moment. Let's wait and see, shall we? All accounts indicate Browner, the former head of Florida's Department of Environmental Regulation, is a politician at heart — not a tree-hugger. And while she may come across as unyielding in her development stance, Browner displayed a capacity for compromise during her tenure in the Sanibess State. Critics point to her deal with Disney, where hundreds of acres set aside for protection in exchange for development rights. Well, trading open space for governmental approval is nothing new (just ask the would-be Homestead developers in Michigan). If that's the worst precedent Browner sets, the golf course industry should survive it...

- First the facts on Sen. Dennis DeConcini's bill that seeks to open up military golf courses to public play and private management. Bill S.234 has been sent to the Senate Governmental Affairs Commit-tee, chaired by Sen. John Glenn.

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**Getting right with the PC kingdom**

- Are you Politically Correct? Are you socially "with it?" Are you caffeine-free, yogurt-loving and driving a recycling/stick utility vehicle?
- If you wonder, just check the pages of your daily newspaper, paying particular attention to stories on city, state and federal government, to letters and commentaries. Maybe then you'll know whether you are...Politically Correct.

This is the message: There's a great move in this country. Brought about by Mr. Reddick..."Let's have a common position..." Correct.

It's sometimes hard to tell who's on which side or who has the power to make people take notice. This is the value of Political Correctness. It's that time of year — time to lead the PC movement in this country. Brought about by Mr. Reddick is a small group of (6) people with financial inter-

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**Letters**

**HOMESTEAD ADDENDUM**

To the editor: A story by Peter Blais [February issue of Golf Course News, page 3] contains inaccurate or misleading statements that you and your readers should be made aware of.

The citizens group referred to by Mr. Reddick is a small group of (6) people with financial interests in the Homestead Resort. This committee has invited the Glen Lake Association, Friends of the Crystal River, National Dunes Advisory Committee and the citizen council of the Sleepin' Bean Dunes area to sit in on their meetings but none has endorsed the land exchange.

I sincerely feel that, with many people of these organizations, the reasons given is that they do not want to participate in the ongoing political debate and who's who of long-term locals know of many parcels of private acreage most suitable for 18 holes golf that are available nearby that could have ended local hostilities as many as five years ago.

This long-standing golf course debate could have ended long ago had not the owner and investors of the Homestead Resort insisted on violating our state and national wetland laws, and this has done much damage to the image of the golf course industry.

I am writing you of my concern because of my employment in the golf course management industry.

Fred Anderson
Traverse City, Mich.

**REMEMBER NEBRASKA!**

To the editor:

I certainly enjoyed receiving my copy of Golf Course News. There is always new information in it. I do, however, have one small complaint.

When I read about new golf courses and their stage of development, the state of Nebraska is almost always omitted. I assume this is because you have no correspondent in that state. But, we'd like the world to know it's not because we aren't progressive in golf course development.

I have been doing golf course ratings for the last 17 years and have a fair idea of the development of courses in Nebraska.

Accordingly, I'm enclosing a chart of our work done here in the last three to four years. You may also like to know Nebraska is the fastest growing golf state in some of the National Golf Foundation rating categories.

Keep up your fine newspaper.

Del Ryder
USGA Sectional Affairs
Grand Island, Neb.

**Editor's note:** Thanks for the information, and we'll try to keep a closer eye on golf course development in Cornhusker country.

**More letters, next page**
Trees: Tough to live with, yet you can't live without

By Dr. R. JAY STIPES

Can anyone imagine a golf course devoid of trees? Just turfgrass, perhaps with a sprinkling of woody and herbaceous ornamentals? Despite the agonizing they sometimes cause golf course superintendents, I think not. Trees figure prominently in the names of approximately 275 country clubs in Virginia alone. There are Lonesome Pine, Cherry Hills, Burning Tree, Cedars, Cedar Crest, Longwood, Chestnut Creek, Cypress Cove, Dogwood Hills, Ewing Green, Glen Oaks, Great Oaks, Tall Oaks, Holly Hill, Oakwood, Pinecrest, Poplar Forest, Roundwood, Stump Lake, Willow Brook, Woodlawn and others.

Trees are focal points, bold statements, historical markers. Some of the finest golf courses are aesthetically unique and essential in providing varied interests in different shapes, sizes, colors and dimensions. They also "excrete" pure water in return. They also "excrete" pure water in return. The proposed changes would be more for us than we would ever realize. The trees serve as screens for ugly sites and hide or camouflage structures frequenting the golf course.

Recently, a Chicago area superintendent became a distinguished and significant contributor to the industry. Michael Bavier, from Inverness Golf Club, wrote a letter that later was published by "Golf Course News." He expressed a concise and skillfully worded criticism of the "Golf Course Superintendents Association of America's proposed bylaw changes. The letter was widely acclaimed, and coagulated support on the part of superintendents to defeat proposed changes.

Bavier's letter in "Golf Course News" was the impetus necessary to galvanize support for the defeat of these proposed bylaw changes. The proposed changes would have altered the direction of the association. These include the ability for the Board of Directors to regulate dues, change voting procedures (from chapter voting to individual ballots by mail), establish regional liaisons, and numerous other changes.

GCSAA has elected Randy Nichols, superintendent at a top-notch 36-hole golf course near Atlanta, as its new president. Two incumbent directors, who had supported the proposed bylaws, were not re-elected. Apparently, the GCSAA is returning to its roots and is concentrating on assisting superintendent members.

Gordon Witteveen
Board of Trade Country Club
Toronto, Canada

The Golf Course News Development Letter

Stay abreast of the nation's golf course development with the new Development Letter, published twice monthly by Golf Course News.

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- Updates on projects under construction.
- Expanded charts listing new course projects, facility information and contacts.
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