

Member groups out of their league in Dallas

If you couldn't make it to Dallas for the Bastille Day festivities, here are a few behind-the-scenes highlights from the Landmark auction:

It's hard to feel true sympathy for the members of PGA West and Palm Beach Polo and Country Club, who may have lost their bids but still have their Jaguars. However, they never stood a fighting chance when the Wall Street behemoths set their minds to acquiring these jewels of the golf resort world.

Jim Gilstrap worked long and hard to organize his fellow PGA West members and raise money — a lot of money. The PGA West member group was prepared to spend about \$105 million, and ended up bidding \$131 million with the help of real-estate partner Alan Paulson ("He was buying the dirt, we were buying the golf," Gilstrap explained).

But it mattered little when the smoke cleared. "We were afraid it might turn into a Wall Street bidding war, and it turned into a Wall Street bidding war," said Gilstrap, whose club was sold to KSL Recreation for \$140 million. "Those firms can justify paying anything for anything, which gave us the mess we had in the 1980s."

Jim Wanless, an attorney who represented the Palm Beach members, said his people were



Hal Phillips,
editor

prepared to spend \$17 million, but the golf and polo resort ended up drawing a winning bid of \$27.1 million from Tri-State Group, Inc.

"We thought we had a chance, but it was simply more than we were prepared to pay," Wanless explained. "It was much higher than I expected. I represent developers all over the country, but these prices really surprised me."

Gilstrap concurred.

"We had four of the top golf appraisers in the country come in and appraise the property," he said, "and the winning bid exceeded their estimates by 100 percent. So either the appraisers don't know the value of these golf courses, or the Wall Street folks don't."

"Who knows? History will tell us who was right."

...

Lamar Kelly, vice chairman of the Resolution Trust Corp., had nothing but praise for the Santa Monica-based auction house, Kennedy Wilson, which presided over the Dallas auction.

"I really have to congratulate Kennedy Wilson," Kelly said during the post-auction press conference. "They squeezed every dime out of these

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AND THIS JUST IN...

Could it be that venerated newsman Paul Harvey has experienced a change of heart? The following report was filed by colleague Peter Blais, who had the radio tuned to Harvey during a recent lunch break:

"After lambasting the golf industry for irresponsible pesticide use in his March 25 comment, Harvey on July 9 urged high school and college students to consider golf course superintendent as a career.

College students are finding they can start at a \$25,000 annual salary in the golf industry, Harvey noted.

And with the number of U.S. farms declining, job prospects for agronomy students are much brighter in golf course maintenance than agriculture, he added."

Coffman treatise socks it to 'new age environmentalism'

Double talk, distorted facts, massive grandstanding and blatant deception. Sounds like the latest fiction from Robert Ludlum. But, in fact, it is fact.

Environmentalism! The Dawn of Aquarius or the Twilight of a New Dark Age? by Dr. Michael S. Coffman is a new book that will stand on your ear. A loaded cannon aimed at the super-active environmentalists of the globe, *Environmentalism!* should get into the hands of every concerned golf course superintendent in the land.

Coffman, a former professor of forest ecology at Michigan Technological University, exposes the alarming agenda of the New Age environmentalists and "Deep Ecology," a small subgroup who are nevertheless the ones "most writers cite in

the media and focus on in the literature."

You don't have to agree with Coffman's tenets about New Age and the destructive effects of its beliefs of pantheism, gnosticism, syncretism and Eastern mysticism and metaphysics...

although I do. You don't have to buy his linkage of mysticism to mainstream environmental groups like the National Wildlife Association, Sierra Club and Audubon Society... but Coffman says he has documents to prove it.

THE DUPING OF AMERICA

Whether putting a looking glass on Findhorn (the small spiritual community in the north of Scotland), or quoting



Mark Leslie,
managing editor

extensively from the high-profile leaders (like Greenpeace co-founder Robert Hunter), Coffman unveils their foibles and fantasies.

And he doesn't rely on opinion. Rather he presents scientific facts concerning a

range of issues that certain environmental groups have distorted, twisted and outright lied about.

"Much that comes from environmental groups today is, at best, groundless opinion based on half-truths, even outright lies," Coffman writes.

He quotes from author Andrew Dobson, who said environmental groups spout groundless opinion to strike terror into the hearts of people and generate social change.

And he presents an extensive casebook of condemnation.

- The spotted owl in the Northwest — Although activists succeeded in closing down 11 million acres (3 million acres of private land) to cutting at the cost of tens of thousands of jobs, Coffman said the spotted owl has been found "to reproduce and thrive in certain kinds of managed forests — even in scrub oak forests!"

- The Alar scare in the apple industry — The National Resources Defense Council in February 1989 orchestrated reports that Alar applied to apples could be poisoning the nation's children. Orchardists have lost millions of dollars because of these reports and the subsequent inability to use Alar on their apples. Yet, how many Americans heard the report

exonerating Alar?

- The alarm over 2,4,5-T — Concerns have been shown to be groundless, when it is manufactured and used properly, Coffman said. He added that herbicides can actually enhance wildlife habitat and biological diversity.

- Acid rain; dioxin at Times Beach, Mo.; toxic chemicals at Love Canal, N.Y.; radiation at Three Mile Island, Pa... The list goes on.

Use acid rain as an indicator, multiply it many times over, and you'll get an inkling of the effects of these activists on our society — and our pocketbooks.

"Most people will find it hard to believe that acid rain is not the disaster the environmentalists have made it out be. But the fact is, nearly \$600 million of research done by the National Acid Precipitation Assessment Program was almost totally ignored in formulating the renewal to the Clean Air Act in 1990. Many analyses have shown that billions of dollars could have been saved if the Act properly considered the results of this massive scientific investigation," Coffman says.

"It is not that science showed acid rain didn't cause damage. It does. Rather, it is the gross distortion of what science showed to be a 'manageable problem.'"

Higher percentages of acid in waterways cited by environmental groups include "lakes that have **always** been acid because of **natural** reasons — not acid rain," Coffman says.

The cost? Legislation passed in an atmosphere "bordering on hysteria" will cost between \$40

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Letters

THE MAN BEHIND...

To the editor:

Great article in the June 1993 issue, entitled "Behind Every Great Golf Course Architect!"

I just want to say I really enjoyed the information concerning the people behind the scenes of big-name golf course architects. I could really relate to most every point in the article.

For the last seven years I have worked as a designer for two different architects. For the last six years I worked for Dye Designs, Inc. in Denver. I was one of the key people behind the scenes in the design of several golf courses, with

the name of Dye on the golf courses. We worked on Pete Dye and Perry Dye projects. I was involved in 88 projects and working on the technical drawings. Rarely do assistant designers such as myself really receive the recognition that is due them. Obviously, the golf course design business is a "name game."

With my background, I contributed heavily to the creation of several Dye courses, promoted mostly by Perry Dye.

Again, thanks for such a revealing article. Most every golf course involves a team, and not just one person's name.

Thanks again.

Blake Stirling
Golf Course Architect

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