DOWNIE TO HEAD SALES AT MID-PINES

SOUTHERN PINES, N.C. — Helen Downie has been named resort manager of the Mid-Pines Golf Club here. Downie has been director of sales and marketing at the resort since 1988. Mid-Pines was acquired by the Pine Needles Resort and a trio of North Carolina business executives. The inn and golf course were operated by Pine Needles. Mid-Pines opened in 1921, and features a Donald Ross-designed golf course to complement 118 guest rooms.

ALEXANDRIA, Va. — Joe Perdue has been named director of education and professional development for the Club Managers Association of America. Perdue has been with CMAA since 1986. He has also served as director of CMAA’s Business Management Institute programs since that time.

HAYNIE NAMED TIMARRON DIRECTOR

SOUTHLAKE, Texas — Ladies Professional Golf Association Hall of Famer Sandra Haynie has been named director of golf at Timarron Country Club. Haynie won four tour events, including the 1974 U.S. Women’s Open. The 18-hole Byron Nelson design, located in a Mobil Land community in Southlake and Colleyville, is scheduled to open in September. Haynie will act as construction liaison and be responsible for overseeing all pre-opening activities. Before joining Grayhawk, Haynie was marketing director for the David Leadbetter Golf Academy. David Graham and Gary Panks designed the Talon 18, scheduled to open in December. The Tom Fazio-designed Raptor course is still in the design stage.

PERDUE TO HEAD CMAA EDUCATION

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. — Catherine Curry has been named special projects manager of Grayhawk Golf Club, a new 36-hole golf project scheduled to open in September. Curry will act as construction liaison and be responsible for overseeing all pre-opening activities. Before joining Grayhawk, Curry was marketing director for the David Leadbetter Golf Academy. David Graham and Gary Panks designed the Talon 18, scheduled to open in December. The Tom Fazio-designed Raptor course is still in the design stage.

GreenVisions becoming major player in Midwest management

By PETER BLAIS

NORTHBROOK, Ill. — The steady growth in golf course development in the Midwest has helped a Northbrook firm become one of the leading management companies in the region, if not the United States. GreenVisions currently operates 10 golf facilities in Illinois, Wisconsin and Iowa. In early May the Northbrook firm took over the management contract at New Berlin (Wis.) Hills Municipal Golf Course. It plans to spend $500,000 on capital improvements there over the next five years. It is building Sand Creek Country Club in Chesterton, Ind., and remodeling Emerald Hills Golf Club in Sterling Hills, Ill. Plans are to add two to four courses annually.

“Recognizing the opportunities” is the key to the growth of the company’s business. The company’s philosophy is to provide the best possible service and value to its customers. GreenVisions offers full management services, including marketing, budgeting, accounting and personnel management functions. One of its specialties is turning around ailing operations, such as Highland Park (Ill.) Country Club.

The former private club filed for bankruptcy in the early 1990s, according to GreenVisions Chief Financial Officer Allan Swaringen. LaSalle National Bank hired GreenVisions as a consultant in 1991. The company assisted with the foreclosure, appraisal and sale of the property.

Prepare a master list of media representatives from local, regional and national publications and broadcast outlets. Plan a media day celebration including complimentary golf before the official opening to introduce your facility. Marketing ideas can be helpful at an existing facility. Whether you have remodeling plans, management changes, or simply during development can create interest in your target markets and give you a head start promoting what you plan to offer the golfing public.

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Textron donation pushes CMAA closer to goal

ALEXANDRIA, Va. — Textron Group has made a pledge of $100,000 to The Club Foundation’s Campaign for Excellence, a Club Managers Association of America fundraiser. The Textron Group consists of Jacobsen, Textron Financial Corporation, Textron Specialty Materials and E-Z-Go.

The Campaign for Excellence was launched in 1992. In April, 1993, the Club Foundation announced the successful completion of the first phase of the Campaign for Excellence, with $81 million, or one-third of the total goal of $243 million.
GreenVisions
Continued from page 33

peared as an expert witness during the bankruptcy proceedings and assumed management in June 1992. GreenVisions assisted in the sale of the course from LaSalle to the city for $10 million. The city retained GreenVisions to manage the facility. Between 1992 and 1994, membership grew from 190 to 350. The course is expected to show a profit this year for the first time in five years. "We'll take on assignments that many others won't," Swaringen said. "We've even done short-term deals, working with year-to-year contracts until an operation is turned around. We make the client's problems our problems."

Miles heads the management team. He has 20 years experience in golf management, specializing in project development and administration, operational programming, financial forecasting and policy management. He is also a certified golf course superintendent (CGCS) and PGA professional.

Rounding out the management staff is Swaringen, who has 10 years experience in the real-estate development industry; Vice President of Operations Warren Litavsky, with 25 years financial and personnel experience at a Fortune 500 company; and Vice President of Construction Tom Jauch, CGCS, with 20 years experience supervising course construction.

"Tom's been with us 10 years," Miles said. "He's the one who interfaces with the on-site superintendents and developed our maintenance tapes and manuals."

Another executive worth noting is Chief Executive Officer Ram Thukkaram. Thukkaram earned an engineering degree in India and a master's degree in business administration in the United States. He purchased a small die-casting business in the mid-1970s, which has evolved into Ganton Industries, with 800 employees and annual sales of $100 million. In 1992, President Bush honored him as one of eight outstanding Asian Americans.

While not involved with the day-to-day operations, Miles said, "Ram is an entrepreneur who provides us with tremendous insight and direction."

It was Thukkaram's idea that GreenVisions institute Kaizen, a program of continuous improvement that utilizes employees' suggestions. Toyota developed the program in Japan. The car maker undertook 95 percent of the 1.9 million suggestions employees made in 1989. Kaizen is recognized as one of the keys to Toyota's success.

With 22 courses in the construction/planning stage in the Chicagoland area, supply is quickly catching up with demand, Swaringen said. Consequently, course operators are being more aggressive in attracting golfers.

"Even park districts are running ads and selling discount coupon books," he noted. "I've never seen that before."

GreenVisions has also weighed in, offering a $25 discount card potentially worth $375 in savings at five GreenVisions courses.

Textron pledge
Continued from page 33

goal, pledged by CMAA members and chapters. The second phase of the Campaign, or the corporate phase, was then launched by George Gasser, CEO of The Gasser Chair Company, with a corporate pledge of $50,000. "I'm delighted to report that, as a result of these major pledges, and now with the most significant support of The Textron Group, The Campaign for Excellence is proceeding on schedule and we have nearly reached the pivotal $2,000,000 mark," reported Club Foundation President James R. Singlerling. The organization's goal is to secure pledges totaling $3 million to create a permanent endowment to fund educational and research opportunities for the club management industry.

Created in 1988, the Foundation is a separate entity and is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt, publicly-supported organization formed for educational and research purposes. Through the Campaign for Excellence, the Foundation will:

• Provide funds to create and expand continuing education and professional development programs;

• Establish courses of study in colleges and universities specifically geared to the club industry;

• Provide grants for underwriting research on topics of mutual interest to clubs, hotels, restaurants and sectors of both the golf and hospitality industries; and

• Award scholarships and educational grants to practicing professionals seeking to enhance their abilities and to students pursuing careers in the club industry.

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