

## If this isn't open space, what is?

Couldn't help but titter a bit when I read J. Barry Mothes' story on the long-delayed demise of Liberty State Park's proposed golf development (page 3). While this story has dragged on for 18 years and a definitive decision had to be reached at some point, it's ironic that Gov. Christie Todd Whitman — that pro-business, GOP wunderkind rumored to be the running mate of choice on at least two Republican presidential tickets — was the pol who leveled the final, fatal blow.

Whitman, of course, is New Jersey's newly elected Republican governor who stormed into office decrying the state government's anti-business stance on a range of public-policy matters. How interesting that she saw fit to bludgeon a proposal that would have preserved and enhanced a dilapidated park site while simultaneously generating funds to maintain the entire park.

Let's listen to a conservative politician staking out her environmental credentials, shall we?

"Liberty State Park provides green sanctuary in the state's most densely populated county," Whitman said, in announcing her decision. "More important, the park belongs to all the people of New Jersey. Public sentiment overwhelmingly supported keeping it that way, without a golf course. I agree.

"It is time to close this issue once and for all and move ahead with the original intent of Liberty State Park," she continued. "The idea was for Liberty State Park to be a park in a classic sense — where people can go to enjoy quiet and solitude. A golf course doesn't fit that definition."

It's this last part that really steams me. It's not necessarily Whitman's transparent, righteous attempt to cast herself as "sensitive" on environmental issues — so she can play the "Liberty State Park card" during an upcoming vice presidential debate!

What burns my bacon is Whitman's stubborn unwillingness to see public-access golf courses as open space, not to mention her use of class-based rhetoric to denigrate golf as inherently exclusive. The governor and, unfortunately, the public at-large still haven't grasped that public-access golf courses are green belts that smart communities have been exploiting for years.

Allow me a short, illustrative vignette: I played George Wright Municipal Golf Course in Hyde Park, Mass., the other day. This truly magnificent Donald Ross design was laid out in 1931, when Hyde Park was still a sleepy suburb of Boston. The city has since overtaken the area, sprawling (as

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Hal Phillips,  
editor

## Think you've got a handle on the left? Think again...

So, the Sierra Club is a bunch of wimps who've sold out to The Establishment. Factories don't burn down by themselves; they need your help. And President Clinton is environmentally "spineless."

Welcome to the world of *Earth First!* ... And pray they don't visit your golf course. The mere existence of *Earth First!* and its 100 chapters nationwide should make us all thank God for the other environmental groups — you know, the ones who are at least partially cohesive and rational in their thinking.

I just read through *Earth First! Journal* and got an education — an education I'd like to pass along to you. Of special interest to the golf industry is this edition's installment of "Dear Ned Ludd," a regular feature for discussion of "creative means of effective defense against the forces of industrial totalitarianism." With a disclaimer that neither the *EF!* movement nor the *EF! Journal* "necessarily encourage anyone to do any of the things discussed," the column details how to destroy a golf course's irrigation system — trusty hammer and flathead screwdriver in hand.

"Forget all that you have heard about pouring gasoline or Roundup on the greens," the column advises. "Don't even bother carving up the tee's [sic] or stealing golf carts. Just cut off that IV from the aquifer."

Now, think of your club's protocol as you read this caution to the Dear Ned Ludd reader: "A quick note on security. There is virtually no security. I worked as a night waterman and security guard at a municipal golf course for four months. I was specifically told not to mess with anyone that [sic] trespassed. I was instructed to call 911 and let the herbies deal with any vandals."

The last graph serves as a call to arms: "So now you know. Go get busy. And if you get really serious about drying out a golf course, get hired on. You'll make some extra dough while conserving precious water."

In another attack leveled at golf, an *EF!* reporter called Cedar says Freeport McMoran's Barton Creek Properties in Austin, Texas, "is polluting Barton Creek and Barton Springs with sewage effluent used to fertilize two existing golf courses." (First time I've ever heard of golf courses **desiring** effluent — and to **fertilize** to be sure. Boy, there's so much scientific knowledge in this group.)



Mark Leslie,  
managing editor

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## Letters

### DOAK WARNS AGAINST OVER-RENOVATION

To the editor

I read with interest your column about course "face-lifts" in the April issue.

I agree with the architects you quoted that, often, club committees are too "gung-ho" to make changes to their courses. But many young architects have just as much trouble restraining themselves in suggesting "improvements," when there is a committee full of eager members willing to tear up as much as the architect recommends. For those struggling to find work on their own, the temptation is even greater to fix things that aren't really broken.

A lot of these vintage courses don't really need face-lifts at all — or at least nothing more than advice on how to re-edge their bunkers and return greens to their original size. They're only considering more because the club across the street just rebuilt all its greens, or because they read about it in *Golf Course News*.

What some of them need is reassurance that their courses have stood the test of time quite admirably. But how many architects are willing to throw away a consulting fee to tell them that?

Not many — and that's why the renovation market is really booming. Every club should get a second opinion before opting for major surgery.

Tom Doak, president  
Renaissance Golf Design, Inc.  
Traverse City, Mich.



### OLD ABE'S NEW HOUSE

Word has been received here regarding the historic exploits of Joe and Pat Gibbs, owners and developers of the Chocoday Downs Golf Course and Residential Community in Marquette, Mich., on the Upper Peninsula. Mr. Gibbs, a longtime antique collector and history buff, has decided to build an exact replica of Abraham Lincoln's Springfield, Ill. home on the golf course. Joe even went to the trouble of securing the building's original plans, drawn up in 1838. "The folks at the National Park Service said it's the first time anyone has ever requested the plans," he explained. In addition to the Lincoln home, Mr. Gibbs is adding a carriage house connected to the main structure by — you guessed it — the Lincoln Tunnel. Chocoday Downs is a 36-hole Jerry Matthews design in the making, with nine holes complete and nine more nearly on line. According to Mr. Gibbs, a full third of the course can be viewed from Old Abe's new house.

# GOLF COURSE NEWS

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## Earth First! & last

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Let's take a further glimpse inside *EF!*'s house organ in this, its Eostar issue (the April-May edition being named for Eostar, the Saxon Goddess of Spring who "takes the form of a white rabbit. She brings the dawn. The sun rises at equinox, directly out of the east..." enough already!).

- Where else could Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt be called "Babbling Bruce" and cited as hobnobbing with "Republican politicians, developers, polluters and compromising eco-puppies"? This is the same Bruce Babbitt who, as chairman of the League of Conservation Voters (LCV), proclaimed in his introduction to the LCV's 1991 Environmental Scorecard of Congressional votes: "We must identify our enemies and drive them into oblivion."

- Where else could an "indigenous person" (that's Native American Indian for the neo-politically correct) excuse arson that destroyed 32 years of research at Michigan State University with the statement: "Sometimes we are forced to do things we do not like when we are warriors?"

- Where else can you order the book: *A Field Guide to Monkeywrenching*, whose cover is duplicated as the cover of this Eostar edition: a silhouette of two wrench-wielding people in the darkness of night walking toward a piece of machinery. Guess their intent?

- Among the T-shirts it promotes: "My Heroes Have Always Killed Cowboys" (emblazoned with a picture of four gun-toting indigenous persons) and "Factories don't burn down by themselves... They need help from you" (sporting a picture of a charred building).

- Among the bumperstickers it offers: "Resist Much, Obey Little" and "Developers Go Build

## Professor urges triazole research

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in we have problems with density of turf.

"People are trying to prevent algae and the PGR effect seems to actually increase algae. But it seems to be temperature-related. In the spring and fall these triazoles don't give a growth regulator effect."

Burpee's tests, using triazoles to control brown patch on creeping bentgrass, have been performed in June, July and August. Brown patch control requires one of the highest label rates as well.

He said he did not have evidence of growth regulator effects from all the triazoles, "but at least some. And it is very possible that not all the triazoles react equally severely. Some may give more potent PGR effect than others."

GOLF COURSE NEWS

in Hell."

Speaking out of one side of their mouths, *EF!*ers say they want to be a real—and respected—player in the field of ideologies. Yet, out of the other side of their mouths they espouse careless destruction of property.

You might think environmental organizations care for the Earth? "No way!" say *EF!*ers.

Speaking at the Land Air Water Conference in Eugene, Ore., *EF!* spokesman Jeffrey St. Clair said, "We've got some national environmental groups like The Wilderness Society and the Sierra Club that are doing a damn fine job" of destroying the envi-

ronmental movement.

Tell that to the scores of homeowners, landowners, developers and others whose plans they've held up for months, even years, in courts and community meeting rooms.

Calling the environmental movement neutered, without vision and void of common sense, St. Clair said groups like the Natural Resources Defense Council, Environmental Defense Fund and The Wilderness Society have been bought by corporate foundations who advocate "extremely conservative social agendas." E-gads! St. Clair said they even give across the spec-

trum—from "right-wing causes like the Billy Graham crusade, the Christian anti-communist crusade" [anyone ever heard of such a group?] to the Western Ancient Forest Campaign.

Shame!

Asking readers in an editorial if the *EF!* movement should work within the system for the strongest law possible or pursue avenues of resistance that are more overtly revolutionary, Craig Beneville says: "Perhaps we would be best off focusing less on law and more on making life hell for the eco-plunderers in the field?"

Overlooking the great strides

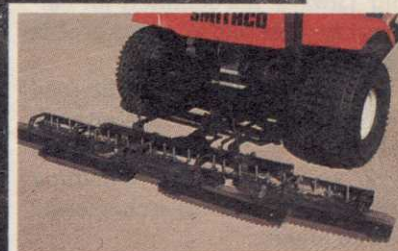
the EPA claims have been made over the last 25 years of Earth Days, Beneville contends that politicians care not about the environment when pitted against business or industry. Perhaps he has been living in Kiev?

Believe it or not, the Eugene, Ore.-based *EF!* has chapters from Alaska to Georgia. And there may be one in your backyard. (We're blessed with three in Maine.) So watch out.

As Seed Research of Oregon technical agronomist Skip Lynch said: "In the afterglow of the golf summit in Monterey just a few months in the past, I was saddened to read such hatred."

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