

Pioneers of public-access

We pay a great deal of attention to the public-access golf course market in the pages of this publication. Indeed, *Golf Course News* coined the phrase "public access" so we wouldn't have to say "daily-fee, municipal, semi-private and resort" every time we referred to the largest portion of this country's 15,000-plus golf facilities.

Five years ago when the boom in public-access development was not yet evident, *Golf Course News* decided to create an educational forum for the owners, superintendents and developers of these facilities. Why? Because even then, back in 1990, while public-access courses accounted for half the nation's golf course stock, there was no conference and trade show that served this vibrant market sector.

That was five years ago.

During the ensuing five years more than 2,000 golf courses have opened nationwide — a full 80 percent of them public-access. Today daily-fee, municipal, semi-private and resort facilities account for more than two-thirds of American golf courses. Ninety percent of those courses now under construction are slated to be public access, so don't expect the trend to change anytime soon.

With the fifth Public Golf Forum scheduled for October 27-29, in Chicago, I want to take time here to salute all those golf industry professionals who've spoken at the Forum over the years. They saw the market changing and made it their business to prepare their golf industry colleagues for the unique challenges that lay ahead. Special thanks go to our keynote speakers: the inimitable Arnold Palmer, architect Robert Trent Jones Jr., Pete, Alice, Perry and P.B. Dye, and ClubCorp Chairman Robert Dedman.

Add to that prestigious list golfer, designer and certified character Peter Jacobsen who will keynote The 1996 Public Golf Forum this October (see story page 1).

Of course, speakers and keynoters who've participated in the Public Golf Forum aren't fools. They recognize that public-access is the wave of the future — "where the action is," so to speak. And who can blame them for wanting to align themselves with the fastest-growing portion of the golf industry? Who can blame them for taking advantage of an opportunity to



Hal Phillips,
editor

New faces, fewer fences?

Purged leadership and mended fences. It's fascinating how the two so often play out in concert. A case in point affecting the golf industry is the National Audubon Society's hiring of President John Flicker to replace Peter A.A. Berle, and the ensuing warming relationship with Audubon International (AI) and its Audubon Society of New York State branch.

The two associations have been in a heated battle for several years — ever since AI created the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program and began working with nature's perceived "enemy" — golf courses. Ever since, NAS has vocally and venomously — not to mention wrongly — blasted AI as a rogue group.

Yet, the NAS leadership has been purged, to an extent, and the fence appears to be on the mend.

"We're making inroads with National Audubon," said AI President Ron Dodson. "A couple of months ago, we had two NAS staff people in the office, talking about what we're doing and they're doing. Dr. [Frank B.] Gill [NAS' new director of science] was here. Later, we received some nice complimentary letters back from them."

Next is a meeting between Dodson and Flicker to discuss "program philosophy, direction, and so forth."

"My ultimate hope," Dodson said, "is that we can learn to support each other where we can. We don't need to get to the point — nor do I think we ever will — where we will endorse each other's programs or philosophies on everything. The bottom line is that we're all busy. There are a lot of environmental issues we all need to work on..."

"I'm hoping that, if nothing else, we'll at least get some correspondence generated from them, communicating with their chapters that some of the correspondence sent out from the previous administration of National Audubon is no longer in effect; that while they do not do the same kind of programming we do, we all philosophically are trying to help people do good things for the environment; and that using personal agendas and casting disparaging remarks about fellow environmental organizations and people concerned with the environment is not to be pursued any longer."

While NAS can still disagree with AI's work with golf courses, Dodson added, "they don't have to put out shaded half-truths, mostly lies that make people question our integrity and personal attacks on me and my staff. I want to get over that."



Mark Leslie,
managing editor

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Letters

OLYMPIC CLUB PRESIDENT RESPONDS

To the editor:

I am writing to clarify your article, "Two new holes approved at Olympic Club" in the June 1996 issue of *Golf Course News*.

It is the standard practice of the California Coastal Commission to include a non-discrimination clause in all Coastal Commission permits issued to private clubs. In fact, there was no discussion on this issue by the Coastal Commission or its staff at the hearing. The Olympic Club has advised the Coastal Commission that the non-discrimination clause is acceptable because it simply reaffirms the club's existing policy on non-discrimination. Any suggestion to the contrary in your article is regrettable.

I trust that you will print this letter in a prominent position in your July edition in order to set the record straight.

Dennis F. Moriarty
President
The Olympic Club
San Francisco

Ed. — The above letter was received after deadline for the July edition, which explains why it appears this month. According to Bob Merrill, chief of permitting for the California Coastal

Commission's (CCC) North Coast office in San Francisco, the CCC considers all private golf clubs "visitor service facilities," i.e. facilities that do allow public use of coastal lands. However, in exchange for permitting, the CCC often insists that private clubs promise — by including language in or rewriting their bylaws — not to discriminate on the basis of race or gender, said Merrill. While there is precedence for the CCC to insist on this non-discriminatory language when issuing permits to private clubs, it is not "standard practice," as Mr. Moriarty claims. Indeed, because the Olympic Club leases land from the City of San Francisco, the club was enjoined by the city as recently as 1987 (prior to the U.S. Open) to remove gender-discrimination language from its bylaws. Prior to this year's permit approval, which allows construction of two new holes on a coastal parcel, the Olympic Club "did not have a policy that definitively stated that it's the policy of the club not to discriminate," Merrill explained. "The club eliminated gender-based language in 1987, so we asked that they include some more definitive language; we asked that they go a step further to say they wouldn't discriminate."

TELLING AN IRRIGATION STORY

To the editor:

We receive your *Golf Course News* on a regular basis and thoroughly enjoy the articles that you put in it. We are writing to you to inform you of a project that we completed last July that has been a great benefit to our course.

In 1993 we underwent an expansion program in which we added an additional nine holes to our already nine-hole course. We also added a driving range plus complete computerized irrigation. Our architect was Joel Goldstrand from Minneapolis. Our irrigation system was installed by Rainbird irrigation systems. We formally opened our addition on July 2, 1994, and are very proud of the results.

The consummation to this project did not happen until July 1995 when we hooked our irrigation system into the wastewater plant. We are now irrigating with effluent water. There were many months of testing, and permitting before we were approved for this. The water we receive has maintained a test of 90 to 95 percent pure water. We piped it into one of our six ponds, which are tied together with a tiling system. We then installed two

pumps in the most strategic pond from which we irrigate the entire course.

This was not only a money-saving program, as we were previously using city water for irrigation, but we have found that our grass has a better root system and is more lush from the effluent water. We have also noticed that it takes less water to obtain the same results. We are presently the only golf course in the state of Minnesota using this type of irrigation. At this time, we have not had any odor or scum problems with this water.

We are concerned about environment, and the conservation of our natural resources and we feel we have indicated this by going with this program.

Other courses being built might consider doing the same thing if it is feasible to them. We feel it is in their best interests to investigate the possibility.

John LaFramboise
Club Manager
Montgomery Golf &
Recreation Club
Montgomery, Minn.

Ed. — Thanks for the tip. A story on this extraordinary expansion appears on page 32 as part of our special report on irrigation and pumping stations.

GOLF COURSE NEWS

THE NEWSPAPER FOR THE GOLF COURSE INDUSTRY

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Editorial Office
Golf Course News
Box 997, 38 Lafayette Street
Yarmouth, ME 04096
207-846-0600; Fax: 207-846-0657
hphillip@gcn.biddeford.com

Advertising Office
National Sales:
Charles E. von Brecht
Box 997, 38 Lafayette Street
Yarmouth, ME 04096
207-846-0600; Fax: 207-846-0657

Western Sales:
Robert Sanner
Western Territory Manager
2141 Vermont
Lawrence, KS 66046
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Golf Course News
P.O. Box 3047
Langhorne, PA 19047
215-788-7112

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Publishers of specialized business and consumer magazines.
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GOLF COURSE NEWS