

BRIEFS



BERNARD ACQUIRES R.I. FACILITY

PORTSMOUTH, R.I.—Bernard Investments, Ltd., a Rhode Island development company that builds courses and residential subdivisions, acquired nine-hole Pocasset Country Club at auction for the price of \$1.15 million. The course had been in Chapter 11 bankruptcy for almost a year, and the auction was part of a court-ordered liquidation. The loan acquisition was negotiated and funded by Clubhouse Capital, a Rhode Island-based golf finance company which has worked with Bernard on previous deals. Bernard will complete about \$200,000 in improvements to the course and clubhouse. The course will be managed by Bernard Golf & Asset Management Company, a newly formed affiliate of Bernard Investments, Ltd. The management company is headed by Don Carpenter, formerly of American Golf Corp. and National Fairways, Inc. Bernard Investments, Ltd. is considering several other golf course acquisitions in the region.

FREE MARKETING SERVICE OFFERED



LAS VEGAS — MasterMind Communications, a leading marketing and Internet consulting firm, in conjunction with the newly formed

World Golf Association (WGA), has created a new marketing program for course and range owners to promote their courses worldwide called "Partners 4 Profit." Course owners who participate will have their courses listed as a WGA Member Course, have their courses promoted to all World Golf Association (soon to be 100,000+) members, get a free course listing and web-page link on the high traffic-MasterMind Sports "Golf Links - The Best Golf Courses To Play In The World" web site and more. For further information, contact Fred Conquest, MasterMind Communications, 9353 West Twain Avenue, Suite 165, Las Vegas, NV, 89117; telephone 702-363-1174.

LEGG MASON'S WELLS MOVES OFFICE

LUTHERVILLE, Md. — David Wells of the Sports Consulting & Finance Group of Legg Mason Real Estate Services has moved to 2330 West Joppa Road, Suite 375, Lutherville, Md. 21093; telephone 410-296-0701; facsimile 410-321-8049.

LEGAL CORNER

Harassment, discrimination part of golf workplace

By LAWRENCE ROGAK

Boss, you had better think twice before commenting on how tight that co-worker's skirt looks, or passing around jokes based on race, sex or national origin. You might have to reach deep into the company's coffers to pay for it.

Businesses have always had to worry about risk and lawsuits, but this was usually in connection with injuries. But now, injured feelings can present a bigger economic hazard than injured bodies, and savvy business owners have no choice but to familiarize themselves with the potential risks in this area and to put into place a set of rules to deal with it.



Lawrence N. Rogak is the principal attorney in The Law Office of Lawrence N. Rogak, a 10-attorney firm in Oceanside, N.Y. which specializes in defending businesses in liability lawsuits. His telephone number is 1-888-LET'EM SUE.

Employees who have been affected by real or perceived discrimination or harassment in the workplace have been turning in increasing numbers to the courts, where juries have, of late, shown an alarming willingness to award millions of dollars in compensatory damages for emotional injuries, even where the alleged victim has not shown any economic harm.

In any business, management must make it a goal to rid offensive behavior from the workplace, and to have written procedures in place to respond to it when it occurs. The Courts usually decline to hold a company liable when it can provide documentary evidence that it complies with the law, even when an employee or supervisor has engaged in an offensive or discriminatory act.

There are three steps to creating an effective workplace policy that can help immunize employers from harassment/

Continued on page 50

PERSONNEL CORNER

Our golfing guests have arrived

By VINCE ALFONSO

The Bible has a lot to say about how you treat guests. The Orient has forever been known for its traditions concerning guests. The word hospitality truly transcends all cultures and religions. To say that someone is hospitable, that they practice hospitality, is to pay them a wonderful compliment. And everyone loves to receive genuine warm hospitality from their host or hostess. Don't you? I certainly do. Why, to be



Vince Alfonso

Continued on page 52



A GOTHAM ORIGINAL

Stonebrook Golf Club in Pensacola, Fla., is one of the first courses acquired by Gorham Golf Partners, April's management company of the month. For the complete story on the fast-growing, 4-year-old firm, see the cover story on page 1.

Dakota Mgt. signs on in Sioux Falls

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. — The city of Sioux Falls and Dakota Golf Management, Inc. have announced the signing of a long-term contract for management services at the City's three municipal courses.

Dakota Golf Management, founded by PGA Professionals Terry Comstock and Tom Jansa, has managed the courses since 1995 when the city of Sioux Falls decided to privatize operations at the courses. The new contract is for four years, with a four-year extension based on satisfactory performance by Dakota Golf.

"We are very pleased to be able to continue our work with the city," said Terry Comstock, Dakota Golf's president. "The new contract will allow both the city and Dakota Golf to continue to make real improvements at the courses."

The city owns three courses with a

total of 54 holes. Elmwood Golf Course is a 27-hole facility, with an 18 hole course designed by Larry Packard and a nine-hole layout that has been redesigned by Comstock and Jansa. Elmwood was listed on *Golf Digest's* original list of "America's 200 Toughest Courses."



Kuehn Park Golf Course is a par-30 executive course that opened in 1976.

The city's newest facility is Prairie Green Golf Course, which opened in 1995. The course has received numerous honors. It was designed by Dick Nugent and built by Landscapes Unlimited.

The three courses hosted more than 130,000 rounds in 1997.

Under the agreement, Dakota Golf will continue to manage all aspects of course operations. The courses are completely funded by user fees.

AGC's Price receives Humanitarian Award

SANTA MONICA, Calif.—American Golf Corp. Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer David Price has received the prestigious 1998 Jerry Buss Humanitarian of the Year Award, in recognition of the company's many years of support for the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA) and numerous other local charitable organizations.



David Price

Price received the award, named after Los Angeles Lakers owner Dr. Jerry Buss, on March 1 during the 11th Annual Magic Johnson Sports Star Award Dinner & Auction benefiting MDA.

The American Golf Foundation operates its "Adopt-A-Charity" program in which each of American Golf's courses develops a partnership with a local charity and organizes an annual benefit golf tournament or other special event. Proceeds, including green fees, cart fees and

Continued on page 52

Alfonso

Continued from page 47

made to feel as though I am intruding or that I am in the way is downright uncomfortable. I can assure you that when, as a guest, I am made to feel that way, I have only one thought on my mind... "Get me out of here."

The big question for course owners and managers is really quite simple. Is your customer a

guest? For me, the answer is as simple as the question. Yes.

Let's think about this for a minute. The game of golf is a recreational activity for the golfer population of the world. People choose to play golf. (*Stay with me on this*). In spite of what some people think, people do not have to play golf. People choose to play golf and they choose where they are going to engage in this activ-

ity. They do not need our product or service. We, in the golf business, are not selling fossil fuel. We are selling recreation and our customers have a plethora of recreational options from which to pick. Therefore, when golfers choose to come to play golf at our establishments, I believe we should be most thankful and should treat each and every one of them as we would treat a guest in

our own home.

Okay, Vince, my customers henceforth will be known as GUESTS. Now what?

This is the fun part. Treating customers as guests is really quite simple. First, we start out like we do at home, by cleaning the bathrooms spotless and by providing the best toilet paper and paper towels on the planet. (Would you want your guest using tree bark? I

Vince Alfonso Jr. is a 40-year, golf-industry veteran, president of Alfonso Creative Enterprises Inc., and owner/PGA professional at Kimberling Golf Course near Branson, Mo. He can be reached at 417-739-4370.

think not.) Clean the shop. Clean the golf cars. Clean the pull carts. Clean the snack bar. Clean the restaurant. Clean the golf course equipment. Clean the golf course. Put on your best clothes.

Splash on you finest cologne. Warm up your smile. Make some fresh coffee. Put a log on the fire. And most of all, thank them for coming to see you. Thank them and thank them some more. You see, customers truly brighten our day and make our business what it is. Why without them, our business would simply disappear.

"OUR CUSTOMERS ARE OUR GUESTS AND SHOULD BE TREATED ACCORDINGLY."

Put this little sentence by your time clock, in your break room, on your employee's paychecks, on your office wall and then act accordingly. Talk at length with your employees about this concept. Help them understand that making customers feel like guests, extending to them warm and genuine hospitality, will make their decisions as to where they choose to recreate much easier. Believe me, golfers will always choose to play where they are made to feel welcome and appreciated.

Please excuse me. I have to run. Our guests have arrived. I'll see you next month. Thanks for reading.

AGC's Price

Continued from page 47

donations from hole and tee sponsorships, raffles and auctions, are given directly to the charity.

Since the Adopt-A-Charity program's inception in 1985, American Golf has raised more than \$14 million for local organizations including MDA, Special Olympics, the Make-A-Wish Foundation, Toys for Tots, children's hospitals, March of Dimes, Boys and Girls Clubs, Hispanic Scholarship Programs, senior citizen centers, centers for abused and neglected children, and disabled services. In 1997 alone, the program raised more than \$4 million.

Additionally, American Golf recently announced an alliance with MDA in which the company will host charity golf tournaments as its courses, as well as offer a rebate program in which the company will donate a percentage of green fees and cart fees generated through MDA charity events staged at its courses.

A TURF HERBICIDE



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