

Mass.' Fireman purchases GRA

MASHPEE, Mass. — Willowbend Development Corp. (WDC) of Mashpee, Mass., has purchased Golf Realty Advisors, Inc. (GRA) of Norwell, Mass.

GRA is a privately held firm, specializing in the development management and brokerage of golf courses. Since the firm's establishment in 1992, GRA has been involved in more than 100 course consulting and development projects. Recent GRA projects include: Olde Scotland Links, in Bridgewater; Acushnet River Valley in Acushnet; and Widows Walk Golf Course in Scituate.

In the past three years GRA has exclusively brokered the sale of seven courses representing more than \$26.8 million in total production. Most recently GRA represented the sellers of Steel Canyon Golf & Country Club, a 27-hole property in San Diego.

"We were approached by several firms for potential merger," said Rowland Bates, president of GRA. "Willowbend offered us the best opportunity to expand further into high-profile golf development, brokerage and management assignments throughout the world, due to WDC's deep financial resources and common business goals."

Willowbend is a privately held company organized in 1991 by Paul & Phyllis Fireman. Willowbend specializes as owner, developer and operator of golf and hospitality-related resort fa-

cilities. Current developments include: Willowbend, an 18-hole private residential golf community, on Cape Cod; The Westin Rio Mar Beach Resort and Casino, a 600-room, four-star hotel with casino, two 18-hole championship courses, and country club located in Rio Grande, Puerto Rico; Dorado Del Mar, an 18-hole cham-

pionship golf resort in Dorado, Puerto Rico; and La Posada, a 150-room spa-hotel located adjacent to the Westin Rio Mar Beach Resort, in Rio Grande, Puerto Rico.

Said Willowbend Chief Executive Officer David Southworth, "Our goal for GRA is to continue to grow their brokerage services nationally, and to utilize their development skills to strategically expand our golf and resort portfolio."

NICKLAUS TRACK OPENS IN VERMONT

SOUTH BURLINGTON, Vt. — The front nine holes of the first Jack Nicklaus-designed course in New England have opened, while the back nine of the Vermont National Golf Club here are slated to open by Labor Day. The project will also include 190, single-family homes and 40 condominium units. Ownership has changed hands recently to general contractor/developer Jim McDonald of Lyndon Center. Paragon Construction International Inc. is the builder and ArborTech Inc. of Colchester, Vt., the landscape designer.

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Palmer enters Jack's backyard

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Tartan Fields Golf Club, an Arnold Palmer-designed track here, is scheduled to open later this summer.

The developers of the 511-acre residential golf community spent \$4 million acquiring land for the course and \$12.5 million to build the track and clubhouse. Palmer was given first choice of the land to build on, so he could compete with some of Columbus' top-notch courses, including neighboring Muirfield Village Golf Club, a Jack Nicklaus design.

Palmer's championship course has a mix of sand, grass, water and trees and at least five tee areas on every hole.

SILVA UNVEILS MASS. DESIGN

ACUSHNET, Mass. — The municipal Acushnet River Valley Golf Course is scheduled to open August 16. The team of Cornish, Silva and Mungeam designed the 18-hole, upscale public layout. Johnson Golf Management will operate the facility once it opens.