

Critical issues aired at Golf Summit

The month of November was a big one for the golf course industry. As you see on our front page, there is some news coming from the third Golf Summit sponsored by the National Golf Foundation.

I had the pleasure of attending the conference and, although I did gain some knowledge from the meeting sessions, I feel I learned more by sharing thoughts with other attendees.

Several major points were made which should continually be addressed:

- 1) The minority issue.
- 2) Public/private facilities.



C. von Brecht

3) Cooperation and coordination among industry leaders.

4) EPA restrictions/rulings.

5) Speed of play.

6) Innovative practice facilities.

Golf Course News will continue to keep you apprised of these and other key issues in our industry.

Following the summit and a day of sales calls in Los Angeles, I

headed back to the desert for the third annual John Deere Team Championship. As reported last month, this event teams a PGA club professional with the superintendent and two other board members (ideally the club president and general manager) from the facility.

Great camaraderie developed in the teams and ideally a better working relationship back home.

I did have a chance to play a few desert courses. Most memorable was the Nicklaus Resort Course. I feel it is a fair test for an 18 or under handicapper.

The course is in great condition,

and I even made a birdie on the #1 handicap hole (#19).

Golf continues to flourish. As we heard at the summit, some real estate development tied to a golf facility may be hurt because of the down economy.

However, established facilities and stand-alone courses will continue to attract new players and grow even stronger in the coming year.

Best wishes for a safe and happy holiday season!

Sincerely,
Charles E. von Brecht
Publisher

Righteous judgment a must in future

BY MARK LESLIE

"Don't muck it up."

The words still ring days after Environmental Protection Agency Associate Administrator Lewis S.W. Crampton warned the 500 or so people attending Golf Summit 90 in Palm Springs, Calif.

"A pleasant environment is a very important part of enjoying the game. If you muck it up some way by doing something stupid out there, not only are the environment and game going to suffer, you're going to get a community mad at you," Crampton said. "And at least with the degree of activism we see



M. Leslie

starting to develop around hazardous waste sites, for example, you'll find that as these activists start to network together ... it will be more and more difficult to develop good projects."

No question, Crampton gave the golf industry fair warning.

Yet he later said there are friends of the game of golf at EPA, who are

willing to help those who will "play the ball as it lies" and who don't attack the system with bazookas booming.

In our recent survey of golf course architects we asked how they could help expedite the permitting process. More than one suggested sending the Army Corps of Engineers to Outer Mongolia, the Yukon Territory, or other regions either uncomfortable or unknown.

Well, some of the Corps of Engineers are, in fact, on the other side of the planet today. But wherever they share bread this Christmas, the environmental problems

will still exist here at home in the United States. And as responsible, innovative and intelligent people, the brain-power of the golf industry must still find ways to build courses without damaging an ecology already endangered by rain forest depletion, holes in the ozone layer and other exotic maladies.

The public — sometimes seemingly ruled by a few loud (and often uneducated and uninformed) voices — must see overwhelming evidence of righteous judgment on the part of golf course developers, builders, superintendents, architects and

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Golf the solution, not the problem

BY FRED JARVIS

The prevalent no-growth attitude of the NIMBY (Not In My Back Yard) has been sweeping across the United States. And now, even the NIMBY's are being replaced by the NOPE's (Not On Planet Earth).

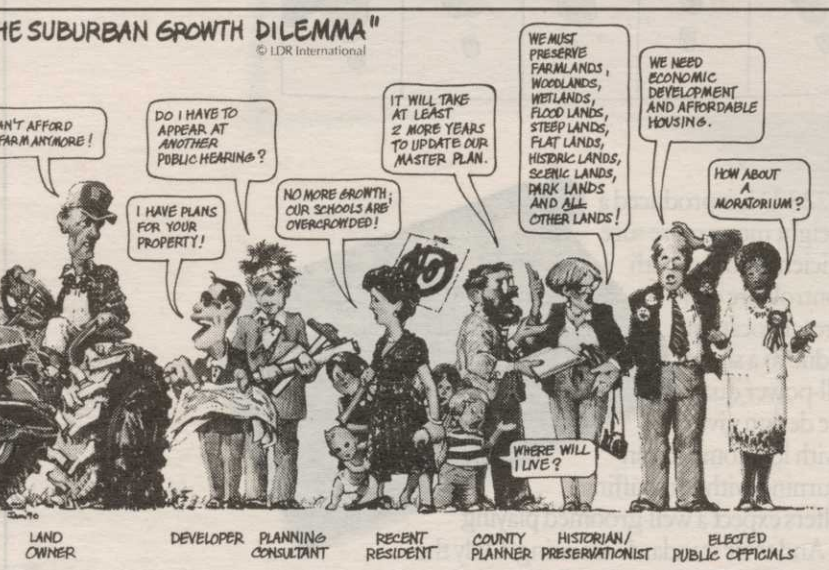
True, the public has been frustrated in recent years by the negative side of development — from a lack of balanced growth to an absence of government leadership; low-density, single-use zoning patterns; and traffic congestion.

There are no easy solutions to the suburban growth dilemma, but the recent resurgence in the game of golf has suggested at least one viable growth alternative to no-growth — golf course communities.

Many consider a golf course to be the ultimate community amenity, and communities developed around them possess desirable characteristics that counter the arguments of growth opponents.

Golf course communities:

- foster cluster and mixed-use planning concepts;
- provide substantial areas of permanently protected open space;



- are normally controlled by less stringent development controls; and

- create positive community and fiscal impact.

The ultimate amenity

Golf courses are one of today's most sought-after amenities. Many areas of the country are significantly short on golf courses.

According to the National Golf Foundation, the number of golfers is expected to increase from 21.7 million to 30 million in the next 15 years. The NGF estimates the United States will need 4,500 more golf courses to accommodate these golfers.

Many will be centerpieces of residential communities, as more people discover the pleasure of living next to an attractive fairway. It's not just golfers who desire a green in the back yard. In some golf course communities, as many as 80 percent of the residents do not even play golf.

Because of their desirability, golf courses have become increasingly important in rezoning decisions. In working through many rezoning cases with neighbors, we have found they usually favor golf course community proposals. Adjacent homeowners understand that a golf community enhances the neighborhood and increases property values.

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