

# Golf Course Marketplace

To reserve space in this section, call Mary Anderson, 813-898-7077

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## MacDonald comment

Continued from page 11

as a link between the downtowns and the Park, and a buffer to the natural values preserved within Acadia.

In Northeast Harbor, the private golf club is set amidst a network of trails that link the different parts of the village to the Park and to town-owned land on Schoolhouse Ledge. Weathered cedar signs directing a hiker to Norumbega Mountain or Hadlock Pond stand beside the clean white arrows directing the golfer to the next tee. I know one woman who is a full-paying member of the club, not because she plays golf there, but because she walks her dogs there on her way to the trails of Acadia.

Kebo Valley Golf Club in Bar Harbor is a public course renowned for its history and scenery, but it is probably best loved by locals for its sledding hills, in particular the famed Big Bunker on number 17 — where President William Howard Taft once took a 17.

Like the Northeast Harbor links, Kebo is strategically placed between fully-developed residential areas and the pristine woods of Acadia. Numerous hiking trails and the popular Park loop motor road are within a wedge of Kebo's back nine.

Unlike the other two courses, the Causeway Club in Southwest Harbor includes shorefront property, wrapping around the eastern shore of Norwood Cove and linked to a nearby peninsula by a granite causeway and foot-bridge. The causeway itself — and its continuation onto club land — is one of the most scenic spots in the area, providing a favorite loop walk from the village, with views out to the Western Way and islands beyond.

All three courses are great places to play golf; the other traditional uses enjoyed by locals do not compromise the clubs' ability to serve their members. Golf clearly comes first here, yet the season is short in eastern Maine and the general public is able to enjoy the benefits of the open space year 'round.

...

Until I began working in the field of land conservation, I never considered that golf courses might not always remain as open spaces. But as I talked to more landowners struggling to hold onto their long-time family properties in the face of soaring real estate and inheritances taxes, it only figured that golf clubs might feel the pinch, too.

Maine's regressive property taxes places a great burden on the land by assessing properties, not according to their current use, but rather by looking at a property's "highest and best" potential use, financially — which, in most cases, is development. Golf courses here on Mount Desert Island are facing increasing tax revaluations and, by implication, the longer-term pressure to sell pieces of their holdings to help pay the bills. It has already happened on plenty of courses in other parts of the country.

Like farmland, golf courses possess qualities that make them especially attractive for development: good soils, easy access, land already cleared of trees and leveled for building sites and, of course, the amenity of the adjacent open space.

Owners and managers of golf clubs that have maintained these areas as successful courses and valuable open spaces deserve our thanks. They should also be urged to consider conservation options to ensure that future generations are able to enjoy the public benefits of open land.

Our nearby golf courses seem like local parks for at least half the year. My own experiences of fishing in Hadlock Brook, sledding on Big Bunker, and watching the tide rush in and out beneath the Causeway indicate to me how much these places mean to our local communities. The open space values of golf courses will only grow with time; their fates should not be left to chance.

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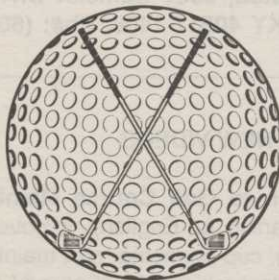


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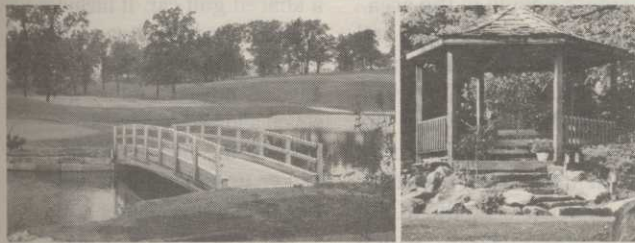
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For more information contact Editor Peter Blais at 207/846-0600

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## Course photography

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"We do a lot of sales of photos back through the pro shops," Klemme said. "They use them for decorations and sell them to members and guests. It's a great marketing tool because it ends up on a golfer's wall in his office. Visitors ask where the photo was taken, and it works as word-of-mouth advertising."

Golf course personnel "needs to understand just how important it is that they work hand in hand with the photographer to make sure everything is done correctly because of the power of these photographs," he said. "If a picture is published somewhere and it's not perfect, it reflects on everybody—the developer, superintendent, head professional and golf course architect."

"People need to be very careful about their image. No matter who they choose to photograph their course, they need to make sure they control these images better."

From a promotional standpoint, the best time to bring in a photographer, the two agree, is three or four months prior to opening. That, Klemme said, is "for a light, one- or two-day shoot. Get some good shots of the signature hole and the environment around the course. Capture the overall feel of the property to give people a sense of place."

Then, at the opening or within six months afterward, a more detailed picture session should be set up, where all the holes are photographed.