

Court requires env't study for Calif. course

KNIGHTS FERRY, Calif. — In a closely watched case concerning land-use laws for farm land, an appellate court ruled that an environmental impact study is required for any possible golf course and country club development on the Willms Ranch.

The Willms family wants to develop a semi-private golf course and country club on a 2,500-acre grazing ranch it has owned since 1840.

The appellate court's decision was prompted by a lawsuit filed

by the Stanislaus Audubon Society. The Audubon Society challenged the county's 1992 decision to waive an environmental impact report. Stanislaus County Superior Court Judge Al Giorami then upheld the county's decision in February 1993, after which Audubon filed an appeal.

In ruling that an environmental study was necessary, the court said the proposed golf club might have a significant adverse effect on the surrounding area — including the prospect of at-

tracting housing development. The land in question is also subject to the Williamson Act, a 1965 state law that gives tax breaks to farmers who promise to keep their land in agricultural production for 10 years.

One of the concerns of the Audubon Society is that if a golf and country club are built, the family could allow the surrounding Williamson Act land contracts to expire and thereby set up the possibility of rezoning and residential development.

Seattle golf park contains Griffey Jr.

SEATTLE, Wash. — The new Golf Park in Kent may just be one of the few parks around that can contain baseball All-Star Ken Griffey Jr., of the Seattle Mariners.

Griffey is apparently something of a regular at the double-deck, 90-stall driving range that opened in February. So far, he's yet to crack a golf ball over Golf Park's farthest fence, which is 240 yards away (720 feet in baseball di-

mensions) and 115 feet high (that's just about three times as high as Fenway Park's trademark Green Monster).

Golf Park is proving to be a hit with Seattle golfers. The facility features a carpeted landing area with six different flagstick targets, snack bar, pro shop, meeting room and lesson area with the option of videotaping. Golfers can also use a self-service, split-screen video.

Leslie fund to benefit Cleary worker's family

The Golf Course Superintendents Association of New Jersey (GCSANJ) and W.A. Cleary Chemical Corp. have established a scholarship fund for the two daughters surviving Robert Leslie, who was killed March 21 in a Montclair, N.J., post office shooting.

Leslie was a popular GCSANJ member and Cleary technical sales representative for New England, New Jersey and New York. He is survived by his wife Kathy and daughters Jennifer, 3, and Christine, 10 months.

"Many of our members have asked the board [of directors] to find a suitable way to honor Bob's memory, to support his family in this time of grief and uncertainty, and to provide a show of sympathy and financial support for his children," wrote GCSANJ President Paul Powondra.

The GCSANJ officer said the fund will help provide for the college education of the Leslie children.

Those wishing to contribute may do so by writing to: GCSANJ Bob Leslie Fund, c/o GCSANJ, 66 Morris Ave., Suite 2A, Springfield, N.J. 07081.

Golfers finance Calif. expansion

VISALIA, Calif. — An ongoing \$2.27 million nine-hole expansion at Valley Oaks Golf Course is being funded completely by those who use it — the golfers.

Dean Glass, a volunteer on the city's golf committee that has been an advisory group for the long-planned expansion, said increased green fees over the years have allowed the course expansion without the need for city funds.

The green fees covered land acquisition for the expansion and will pay off a \$3 million bond that the city will issue to build the new nine holes and remodel the clubhouse to include a restaurant and walk-up snack window. Michael Poellot was the course architect for the expansion.

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