

BRIEFS



CLUBCORP OPENS EASTERN OFFICE

VIENNA, Va. — Club Corporation of America has opened its newly established Eastern regional office here in Tycon Tower I/Tysons Corner to oversee operations for the more than 90 CCA clubs in the Northeastern and Southeastern United States. CCA has owned the Tower Club since 1994.

PALM-AIRE NAMES COLLINS GM

POMPANO BEACH, Fla. — Palm-Aire Resort Management Corp., has named W. Gary Collins president and general manager of Palm-Aire Country Club.



Collins has been in the club and resort management business for 20 years including stints with Club Resort & Management, Dye Club Management and ClubCorp of America. The 1,600-acre Palm-Aire community includes five golf courses, 37 tennis courts and two full-service clubhouses.

CMAA HEAD RECERTIFIED

ALEXANDRIA, Va. — Club Managers Association of America Executive Vice President James Singerling has been recertified as a Certified Club Manager (CCM). A 22-year veteran of the private club industry, Singerling has served as CMAA executive vice



president since 1990. Prior to that he was chief executive officer of Robert Trent Jones Sr. International Corp. and served as general manager of Coral Ridge Country Club in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. He is on the National Golf Foundation board of directors and served on the scholarship and research committee for the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America.

SULLIVAN TAKES CALIF. POST

EL DORADO HILLS, Calif. — Western Golf Properties has named Tom Sullivan general manager of Serrano Country Club, part of the master-planned Serrano El Dorado community being developed here. Serrano includes a Robert Trent Jones Jr.-designed golf course. Sullivan previously served as clubhouse consultant to the Paiute Indian Tribe in Las Vegas and club manager for PGA West in LaQuinta, Calif. He has also worked for Walt Disney Productions, Hyatt Hotel Corp., and La Quinta Hotel Golf & Tennis Resort.



Crosswater at Sunriver is the newest addition to the growing Destination Hotels family.

The end of the line is profits for Destination Hotels and Resorts

By PETER BLAIS

ENGLEWOOD, Colo. — The recent opening of Bob Cupp-designed Crosswater, an 18-hole golf course at Oregon's Sunriver Resort, is just a taste of things to come for Destination Hotels and Resorts.

The Denver-based subsidiary of Lowe Enterprises, a national real-estate services company, plans to open a major golf resort/community complex every 12 to 18 months into the foreseeable future, according to Vice President of Marketing Tom Goodwin.

"We have development deals that are close to being completed in Florida and Arizona," Goodwin said. "We should be able to make an announcement by the end of the year."

Destination Hotels and Resorts manages commercial hotels and resorts from the East Coast to Hawaii. Golf courses are an integral part of several properties:

- Sunriver near Bend has three courses — Crosswater, North Woodlands and Cascades.
- The Inverness Hotel and Golf Club (GC) in Denver includes Press Maxwell-designed Inverness GC.
- Wild Dunes outside Charleston, S.C., features two Tom Fazio layouts, the world-ranked Links Course and challenging Harbor Course.

"Golf will be a major focus in our future resort-side development," Goodwin

Continued on page 37

LEGAL CORNER

Lawyer warns bad manners insufficient to bounce member

By NANCY SMITH

Even the vulgar and filthy are entitled to respect, according to a California court. The court recently held that a male country club member, who allegedly used the "F" word to describe women golfers, still deserved a fair hearing before being expelled.

In *Aluisi v. Fort Washington Golf and Country Club*, the California Court of Appeal ruled that member Terry M. Aluisi had been improperly kicked out of his club because the board did not give him proper notice and an opportunity to confront witnesses against him.

Although the identity of the women who complained about Aluisi's conduct was kept confidential because they were afraid of him, the court held Aluisi had a right to confront his accusers before losing his membership.

The suit stemmed from a 1990 incident involving allegations of cheating at golf by Aluisi's wife. In response, Aluisi allegedly told his wife, in a loud voice heard by a group of nearby women members, that she should not play with "those f—ing old women." He also reportedly said his wife should advise the women as to certain sexual conduct they should perform on themselves.

The incident prompted a complaint letter by the women's board to the club's governing board. The identity of the complaining women was not revealed, however, because they claimed to be afraid of Aluisi. After determining that the com-

Continued on page 37

Nancy Smith, J.D., is an attorney practicing in Pasadena, Calif. Her "Legal Corner" feature will appear in these pages on a regular basis. You may call her with story suggestions/queries at 818-585-9907.

MARKETING IDEA OF THE MONTH

The art of bartering creates a masterpiece in N.J.

By PETER BLAIS

CRANBURY, N.J. — The art of bartering can reduce costs and boost sales for many golf courses.

"Trade-outs are a very underutilized way of doing business," said Rich Katz, vice president of marketing for Billy Casper Golf Management (BCGM).

Katz's most recent horse-swapping experience came at Cranbury Park Golf Club (GC) in Cranbury, N.J. As of July 15, Casper was able to increase rounds by 33 percent over the same 6 1/2-month period a year earlier.

Course owner Sky Court Ltd. of Japan hired BCGM to manage the facility last year. Casper went to work immediately. An \$800,000 capital improvements and renovation plan brought a new irrigation system, continuous cart paths and remodeled clubhouse. Casper imported a new superintendent to oversee the various projects and the company provided daily oversight from its Vienna, Va., headquarters.

But no one would come see the Eiffel Tower if the French tourist board didn't



Trading rounds for television ads got Cranbury GC the exposure it needed to become a success.

do such a great job marketing the thing. Same with Cranbury and BCGM, despite all the changes. "Improve it and they will come" doesn't necessarily work in an area, like central New Jersey, already endowed with a healthy supply of golf courses.

Katz contacted the local cable television company about advertising. He was particularly interested in obtaining local

spots during ESPN's coverage of PGA and Senior Tour events as well as time on the early-evening editions of SportsCenter.

"Television advertising on tournament events maximizes the captiveness of the audience we're after," Katz said.

For its part, the cable company was

Continued on page 36

Tax changes

Continued from page 1

the year in which the latest deductibility rules occurred.

Golf clubs fared much better than city clubs, which have been struggling for the past few years. For example, total gross revenue at private golf clubs grew 4 percent between 1993 and 1994, compared to just 0.8 percent at city clubs. While the demand for golf facilities protected the country club market from the adverse effects experienced by city clubs, private clubs didn't benefit from the tax law changes either.

John Kinner, general manager of the Woodlands Country Club in Falmouth, Maine, sees it more as a business and cultural shift away from the city and-

ward the country club market.

"City clubs may be laying some of the blame on the tax changes," he said. "But they have been dying slowly for the past 20 years. Corporations aren't looking to get involved in controversial perks for their employees. Buying a membership for key employees at a men's only city club doesn't sit real well with the human resources department."

Jerry Gelinis, a long-time ClubCorp marketing executive and president of recently formed Jerry Gelinis & Associates, explained the city club/country club differences this way.

"City club memberships have long been a perk provided by corporations," he said. "It was part of an executive's job to eat there with clients. But corporations have been cutting city club memberships to

save money for some time. The deductibility changes have just sped up the process.

"Companies have offered to subsidize a portion of their employees' city club memberships or asked them to take over the whole thing themselves. Many employees have chosen to just leave the club. That's taken 10, 20, 30 members away at a time. Small business owners and professionals have been picking up some of the slack. But they join one or two at a time. So the general trend at city clubs has been toward diminishing membership numbers.

"Some companies give their employees several memberships split between city and country clubs. When they cut that back to just one, employees frequently choose to stay with the country

club rather than the city club because of the extra benefits for their families.

"Also, unlike city clubs, most country club memberships are not corporate. At least 75 percent of our [ClubCorp's] memberships are individually owned. People are choosing to keep them because they enjoy the country club atmosphere. There's been minimal loss in the individual membership area."

According to the National Club Association study, 29 percent of private golf clubs reported a decline in membership size between 1993 and 1994. That is up slightly from the 25 percent reporting a drop-off in 1993, the year before the deductibility changes. On the other end, 23 percent reported membership increases in 1994, up from 21 percent a year earlier.

Average golf club food and beverage sales jumped 3.7 percent, from \$1.236 million in 1993 to \$1.281 million in 1994.

"Most companies we deal with have responded to the changes by bumping up their F&B budget at the home office," said the Woodlands' Kinner. "It's what the market demands. If they don't do it, they may lose out to their competition."

Added Gelinis: "Food and beverage profits have been nibbled away at. But it hasn't been a big deal. And corporate outings continue to be big money makers."

Other golf/country club figures from the survey included:

- The number of meals served increased for more than half the respondents in 1993 and 1994.
- Eight percent in 1993 and 11 percent in 1994 reported staff reductions.
- More than two-thirds made a change in dues or initiation fees for members. Most increased dues or fees. Some offered limited-time discounts on initiation fees.
- Forty-five percent expanded membership development campaigns.

Bartering for advertising

Continued from page 35

interested in getting its sales people onto a top-quality golf course where they could play and close deals with potential advertisers. A match made in heaven.

"We were able to barter rounds during off-peak hours in exchange for commercial spots touting the improvements at Cranbury during Friday, Saturday and Sunday tournament coverage," Katz said. "We saturated the area within a 30-mile radius."

As a result, rounds increased by a third through the first half of the year. BCGM is happy. The cable company is happy. And the course owner is definitely happy.

"We expect to make back the money we spent on capital improvements within three years," Katz said.

When determining how many rounds to swap for advertising, Katz recommended sticking to a 2:1 ratio in the course's favor. "Never include among your outlay hard costs such as merchandise or food and beverage," Katz said. "Also, whereas you would waive green fees, you should usually make cart fees mandatory. When applicable, simply cite that carts are leased on a revenue-sharing basis, and exceptions to cart fees contractually out of bounds. It makes for an accounting nightmare."

BCGM has worked out other trades, Katz noted, including tee times for direct-mail drops, seasonal memberships for equipment leases, group or corporate outings for insurance premiums and instructional clinics for fertilizers.

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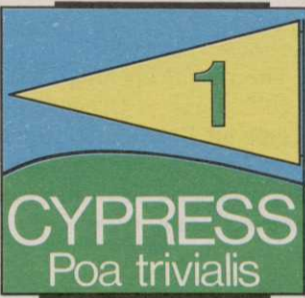
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