

Through the first half of 2009 there have been 71 golf course closures (18-hole equivalents) compared to 16.5 openings, the National Golf Foundation reports. There were 106 closures in all of 2008.

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FEEDBACK

We'd like to hear from you.

E-mail us at gci@gie.net with your thoughts and opinions.

Change starts within

More people need to think about what Pat Jones is saying in "Golf's reality show," (May issue, page 98). In the same issue, Doug Carrick addressed course design in terms of problems of growth and suggested all stakeholders get involved in growing the game (page 14). Unfortunately, there is not a unified golf industry trying to fix this problem of declining golf that has been going on ever since Golf 20/20 came up with a plan to grow the game in the year 2000.

When we talk about stakeholders, we tend to think about the obvious ones directly connected to the game, but don't really look at the entire supply chain...from paper products to other soft goods. Those suppliers have a vested interest, and it was perceptive for Pat to make note of that. I think he's a little conservative on the attrition over the next few years. In fact, instead of about 1,000 courses failing or falling away, I think it could be more like 3,000, mainly because of declining players and rounds. Recently NGF reported core golfers declining and that's alarming.

The industry needs to come up with a sound marketing program that reflects fundamental change in the way the industry offers its products, goes after new golfers and tries to keep what golfers it has. Pat noted "People seeking exercise and a taste of the outdoors will realize that walking a round of golf is more fun than jogging or running on a treadmill." I couldn't agree more, but nowhere do I see the industry talking about physical fitness and exercise in the outdoors. Change starts within first! People today are more health conscious and fitness oriented, golf offers that, and golf isn't talking about it. What a shame.

While Doug Carrick makes some very good points, I think he makes a serious mistake in

suggesting baby boomers are going to be a demand source of any significance. Boomers are heading towards retirement age, not retirement...they haven't saved enough to retire and will continue to work or won't have enough money to play golf. The boomer boom is a myth perpetuated by the NGF.

Tom Durbin
Former vice president of sales
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Job well done

Just a quick note to compliment Marisa Palmieri on a job well done on the social media article in the May issue ("Is social media right for your career?" page 32). Nice job taking a timely issue and boiling it down. The end user profiles were also helpful.



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SEEN ON twitter

@JustinRuizCGCS:

After reading the article in GCI about Facebook, LinkedIn and Blogging, got a LinkedIn account.

(In reference to the May cover story, "Is social media right for your career?")

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EDITORIAL MISSION STATEMENT:

Golf Course Industry reports on and analyzes the business of maintaining golf courses, as well as the broader business of golf course management. This includes three main areas: agronomy, business management and career development as it relates to golf course superintendents and those professionals responsible for maintaining a golf course as an important asset.



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