

We'd like to hear from you.

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

An easy target

I have a comment about Charlie Birney's Pro/Con article ("A Cautionary Tale," May 2010, page 28). I've been around golf long before the boom that brought so many business owners looking for a quick buck. The result: owners who knew little about golf wanted the municipalities – who were there for many years and who provide recreation for the less fortunate who want to play – to go away. It was all about not wanting competition. The question became: "Why is government in golf?" And the answer: "Because the private sector will only do it if it makes money."

Parks & Recreation departments are not revenue producers – they are tax supported. The essence of this is to provide recreation for the masses. Ice arenas, tennis courts and playgrounds are not being built by the private sector for similar reasons. Are some municipal courses losing money? Yes. Many are not making it because too many courses were built around them. In the Minneapolis/St. Paul area there were more than 110 courses added to

the metropolitan area since 1970 (2003 Clasp Report by the NGF). Think about capacity and dividing the pie. Who is the easy target to go away? No one addresses who built all this oversupply.

Next, we have the courses built for land sale with walk-away realtors. They could care less about the cost of golf or how to run a facility. But the older courses are left with increased green fees that hurt everyone. It helped destroy the game we all loved. Now we reap what was sown by strictly profit motivations. There is a place for government run course where private enterprise cannot afford to provide for the amenity, especially in urban centers.

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Hearing the message

Just read Pat Jones' April 2010 column ("Huh?" pg 58) – good stuff. I too suffer from hearing loss, and the older I get the worse it

is for me to "get a grip on my problem." I've been a "rocker" for as long as I can remember. As a Golf Course Superintendent I stress the importance of hearing protection. I've been a "super" for more than 20 years. I'm 44-years-old and I can hear an owl from a half mile away but I cannot hear my assistant talking to me from the end of the lunch room table.

I too witnessed Pete Townshend and The Who – damn those lymie bastards... (Pat's line). I tell all my young guys once your hearing is gone, it's gone. Now when I use a chainsaw or even weedwack I have hearing protection on. The young guys are following my lead.

"We" cannot stress the importance enough. As always I'll continue to read my Golf Course Industry magazine from back to front.

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