



View from porch terrace, Farmington CC, Charlottesville, Va.

Balance in Club Officials Keeps Club on Even Keel

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This is an actual story of a golf and country club that could not stand medium prosperity and forsook conservative management, trying to keep up with the Jones' who lived next door. Today the organization does not exist.

In the twenties, this writer accepted the position of professional and greenkeeper with a southwestern golf and country club. At the time the club had 400 active members. It was financially sound, met all its obligations promptly with club spirit and activity was at a high pitch.

The above sound condition was brought about by a balance of two extremes working against each other. The president was a former chairman of the membership committee and in that post had done an excellent job. By profession he was a life insurance salesman and well skilled in the art of promotion. On the opposite side of the fence was a hard shelled banker who knew the value of a dollar. He was the club secretary and treasurer who would not permit the spending of any money unless there was cash in the treasury to meet the debt.

These two men were the power behind the throne and as such made a combination that could not be surpassed. No bank check was valid unless it carried both signatures. The salesman was full of high pressure ideas and enthusiasm, however the conservative banker always managed to hold him in check. This guardian of the funds was not penny wise nor pound foolish, or a mossback, he was just a sound business man who would not bite off more than he could chew. With this team working together in close harmony, the club was successful and flourished.

Also in this picture was another salesman. His line was lumber. He was very cocky, had ideas of his own and was very biased in his own opinions. This man had also served on the membership committee and later was chairman of the entertainment group. In the last mentioned post he was very active and ambitious. It was his goal to paint, decorate and refurbish the clubhouse. Such a project and undertaking was out of the question and to do so would only invite financial problems.

Our president, the insurance man, finally

left for other fields; the lumberman was his successor in office. The banker was re-elected to his old job and was still able to hold all unwise spending in check. However, this slight change of administration was the start of the doom that lay ahead, the house soon became divided. The two men were continually at loggerheads over what should be done and how money should be spent. The treasurer stood his ground and would sign no checks unless there was funds on hand to cover the obligation.

Springing the Leak

One day the man of finance left for a vacation of several weeks and during his absence things began to happen. The promoter was left with the situation in his own hands and lost no time in putting into effect all of the improvements that he thought were needed for the good of the place. The clubhouse was renovated from front to back at quite an expense. After the work was completed and paid for the club treasury was depleted. The ship had sprung the leak that was later going to cause it to sink.

The zealous official still had other plans to be put in effect. The largest club in the city was operated on the general manager plan, it was one of the oldest organizations in the State and was composed of very wealthy men who could pay a top price for whatever they sought. However, our prey was trying to keep up appearances with his wealthy neighbor, so he made the club steward—general manager—a man who was a very efficient dining room operator, but his knowledge and qualifications did not fit him for the supervision of the entire

plant. The mistakes he made in learning how, were costly to all concerned and helped to hasten the final collapse.

The depression came on top of all this for a final finishing touch. We started to lose members and all sorts of methods were tried to forestall disaster, which was all of no avail. A membership amounted to no more than the paying of dues with no equity value behind it. This greatly cheapened services and drove old-substantial standbys elsewhere. One of the departing members was our watchdog of the treasury, the banker.

This yarn teaches a very valuable lesson in club management. First, never obligate your club for any unnecessary purchases or improvements without knowing definitely how payments are to be made. Choose a middle-of-the-road group when electing a board of governors, and follow this through in the selecting of committees, as an example; equally divide and balance conservatives and egotists, they will hold each other in check and tend to prevent extremes from going too far in the wrong direction. Last but not least, never cheapen the value of a membership, keep the original cost behind it at all times. Increase its worth, never sell the club short at a discount, no matter how hard the going becomes.

Under such conditions old loyal members will never lose interest and forget the sentiments that are attached and are a part of an old familiar haunt. They will always find ways and means to keep things going. Transients who are here today and gone tomorrow have no such binding ties.

INGENIOUS DEVICE SPEEDS SEEDING AT PINEHURST



Frank Maples, supt. at Pinehurst, N.C., contrived this device to seed Pinehurst's famed 3 courses with their winter fairways of rye. Lime spreaders, 15 ft. apart, and controlled from tractor, enable 2 men—one driving tractor and the other controlling distribution of seed—to do job formerly requiring 15 workers. A tooth from a hayrake, attached to outside wheel of seeder, marks limit of seeding. Fairways are spiked after seeding, then chain-dragged.