

Pension Plans: THE INDUSTRY'S SHAME

The widespread lack of pension plans for golf course superintendents is an embarrassment to the entire club industry

by FRED V. GRAU

Unless golf course superintendents get busy and do something to change the present situation, superintendents can expect no pension of any kind when they retire.

Ever since a superintendent friend in Florida wrote to me, relating his sad predicament of "no pension after 26 years of service," this reporter has been collecting material from other superintendents around the country. My editorial ("What! No Pension?" May, 1973, p. 15) and a brief article ("Not Even a Gold Watch," August, 1973, p. 43) opened some eyes and brought several unsolicited comments.

A letter from one top superintendent in a wealthy golfing state deserves to be quoted. I reproduce here some excerpts:

"... No more than 50 per cent of the superintendents in this area have pension programs No more than 10 per cent have pension programs for their key employees on the course. This is a sad state of affairs."

He goes on to say that the plans that do exist have come about because, "As the younger men have come into better jobs, they have demanded more benefits when they are interviewed. The clubs are accepting this without resistance."

"It boils down to the superintendent taking the initiative and selling the clubs on a well-rounded benefit package. We just have not done it."

"... Your plan to write on pensions . . . is a good idea, but it encompasses only a small part of what is needed We should be talking about a total package of pensions, sick pay, holiday pay, overtime, vacations, hospitalization, life insurance, disability benefits, merchandise discounts

and better working conditions for our permanent golf course staff members.

"For the last five years . . . we have been building a benefit plan that has all of the previously mentioned benefits included. It has been a gradual growth. It has made a tremendous difference in the attitude of the permanent staff both on the course and in the clubhouse."

The letter ends by saying, "... I am sick and tired of the business of golf operations not being considered a business like any other."

WHO HAS PENSION PLANS?

GOLFDOM did a formal survey of hundreds of golf clubs, geographically distributed throughout the country, to determine the extent of the pension plan void in the industry. The figures do support Dr. Grau's contentions.

Here are the results of our query. In addition to over-all response, they have been broken down by course type.

Q. Do you have an employee pension plan at your club?

Response	Yes	No
Private	41%	59%
Semi-private	27%	73%
Resort	50%	50%
Public	53%	47%
All course types combined	39%	61%

One superintendents' association estimates that two-thirds of its members now are protected and that most clubs voluntarily have offered a plan. When superintendents ask for a plan, they rarely are refused. When are, it's mainly due to the poor financial condition of the club.

Another report from another association estimates that not more than 12 to 13 per cent of superintendents are covered by any kind of a plan. The pertinent comment is, "General managers of country clubs can do a great deal for club employees." In this area of 114,000 square miles, only one club voluntarily offered a plan.

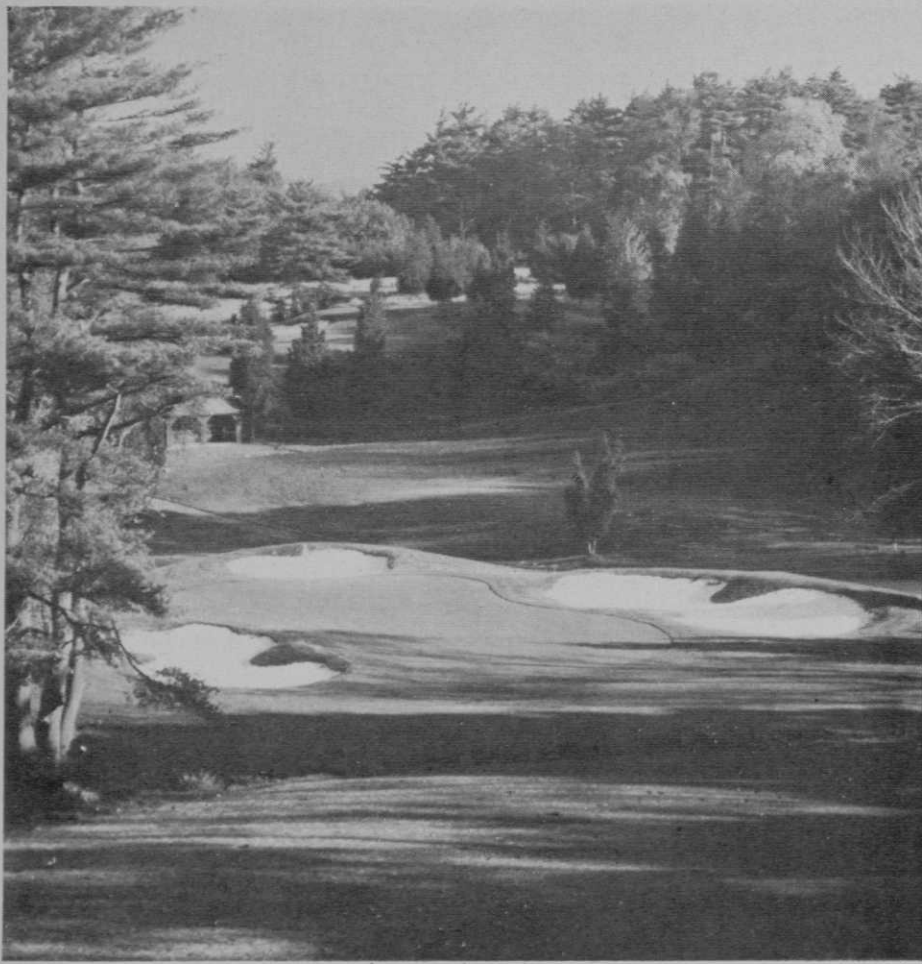
In another area, consisting of 220 golf courses, less than 10 per cent have any type of plan. Only four or five clubs voluntarily offered a plan to their employees.

Clubs in another area, renowned for its majestic scenery, are not renowned for their generosity. My correspondent there says, "... only three out of 13 clubs . . . had any pension provisions for their superintendents." He says further that the more prominent and affluent clubs provide the benefits. These clubs apparently demand better management, and in turn superintendents at these clubs demand better compensation and broader protection.

A representative of a large chemical and fertilizer firm writes, "... I feel that pension and retirement plans for superintendents are definitely needed Only 5 per cent of those I call on have plans of any kind."

A superintendent at a wealthy club in a wealthy state said that, of 24 people he knew, two had asked for a plan and got one. This man asked his club for two years with no response. He got his

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- El Dorado CC, Palm Springs, Ca.
- Indiana Wells CC, Palm Springs, Ca.
- La Quinta CC, Palm Springs, Ca.
- Thunderbird CC, Palm Springs, Ca.
- Desert Inn CC, Las Vegas
- Mission Viejo CC, Mission Viejo, Ca.
- Marina Del Rey GC, Venice, Ca.

EASTERN AREA:

- Camelot CC, Spring Valley, NY.
- Dutchess CC, Poughkeepsie, NY.
- I B M CC, Poughkeepsie, NY.
- Indian Ridge, Andover, Ma.
- New Jersey CC, Wayne, NJ.
- Pawtucket CC, Pawtucket, RI.
- Portsmouth CC, Portsmouth, NH.
- Stanwich GC, Greenwich, Ct.
- Topsfield CC, Middleton, Ma.
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plan the third year. Apparently, it pays to be persistent.

Another superintendent writer says, "I have no pension or retirement plan now, but am planning to get one established soon; one that I may transfer if I change jobs Less than 20 per cent in this association have any plan. In fact, I personally know of none. Most clubs do not voluntarily offer plans."

One association conducted a survey, which showed retirement plans for superintendents at the 35 per cent level in 1967; 40 per cent in 1970, and 29 per cent in 1971. There has been no explanation for the decline.

Another superintendent says: "A 1970 survey in our . . . association showed less than 10 per cent of superintendents on any kind of plan. I think we are about 10 years late in getting started. Most clubs are very lax in offering a plan. If the topic is brought up often enough, and the cost of the plan is included in the yearly budget, eventually it is implemented. This will mean more to superintendents than anything done thus far."

An association secretary writes, "At

our last meeting, five members said that they have plans; 21 were not covered. Clubs do not voluntarily offer plans. Most superintendents have had little luck when they have asked for a pension plan. I had to put my job on the line to get hospitalization. The best way is to have benefits included when you accept a new job. It is very difficult to get coverage afterwards."

At a recent meeting of a prominent association, there were 50 superintendents present. Nine had some kind of plan; one got it without asking; two got it when they asked; six did not specify. This is the situation in a very well-to-do area.

In a territory surrounding another huge metropolitan area, it was estimated that 30 to 40 per cent of the superintendents were covered. Only two clubs had offered a plan voluntarily, one that covers all employees. The correspondent goes on to say, ". . . The most important facet . . . would be to retain 100 per cent mobility We can generally advance only by becoming the superintendent at another club. My plan enables me to transfer the full amount that has accumulated if I

should . . . move."

He cites a difficulty where a superintendent has advanced through a union labor force where there was a pension plan. As superintendent, he must retain union membership. As a result, he is playing fields: management and labor.

In a recent national study, it was reported that 26.1 per cent of the superintendents who responded had some type of pension program. Half of these had a plan "across the board." It is suspected that this figure is somewhat high, because those who responded were from the more affluent clubs and they were not as hesitant to reply as those who had nothing going for them.

Strangely, public, city-owned courses voluntarily have offered retirement plans to their superintendents, but country clubs rarely do.

When a pension is asked for by the superintendent, the answer usually is no.

One turf friend wrote and gave specific instances of long-time friends who have been retired with no pension. Those who have been fortunate enough to have retirement coverage are few and far between.

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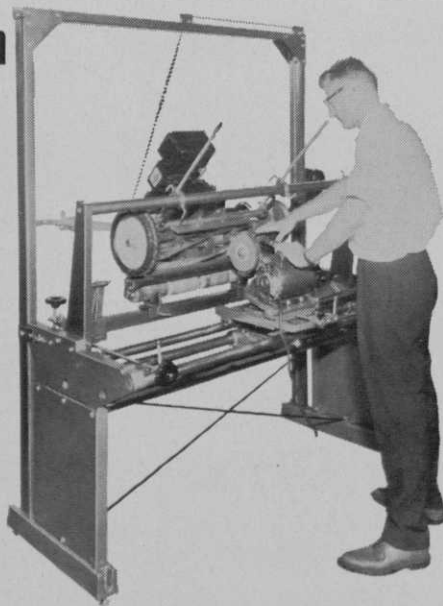
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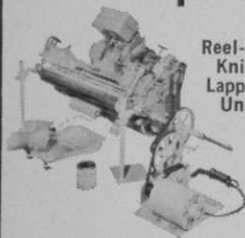
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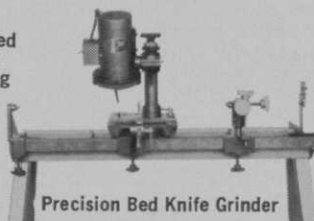
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It has been said that "golf course superintendents are poor salesmen." In one association there were 36 questionnaires mailed to members. Eleven replies were returned. It would seem that the majority of superintendents were not interested enough in their own future security to take the trouble to return the letter. Of the 11 who replied, there were five who have no pension and had not asked for one. Four have plans and the other two were in the mill.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The many reports that were sent in from around the country reveal a pitiful and shocking situation. The worst offenders are the country clubs. Most city-owned courses provide protection as do those that are under union influence. As one superintendent has said, "... I am sick and tired of ... golf operations not being considered a business like any other."

In general, the more prominent clubs seem the most likely to provide plans. Perhaps the reason is that these forward-looking clubs do consider themselves businesses and have instituted modern business methods. Perhaps the green chairman has had training in law. One superintendent suggests that the time is ripe for clubs to give their loyal employees reasonable benefits before superintendents are forced to go into other industries.

The younger, college-trained men invariably demand retirement and pension plans before they sign their contracts. This puts it on the line for them; but what about the older men who have served their clubs faithfully and well? Are they to be turned out to shift for themselves with only a gold watch and a testimonial for their reward? Clubs that continue to follow this insensitive, antiquated practice soon will find it difficult to find superintendents to work for them.

Why do superintendents seem to be reluctant to go to their clubs and ask for a benefit plan? Why do clubs, run by efficient businessmen, so grossly neglect this aspect of business? Clubs that have been derelict in this aspect of business should be ashamed. This neglect also is ultimately inviting unionization.

The key to any plan is mobility. Legal avenues are open so that benefits may be transferred when the man moves to another position.

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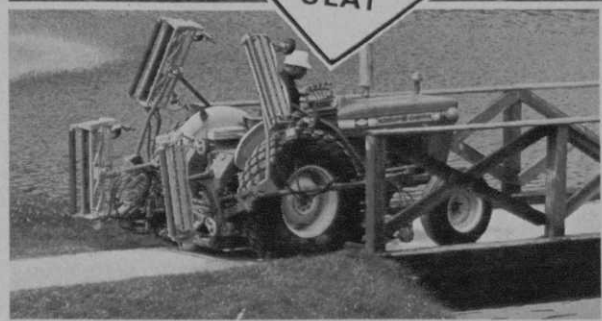
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When club managers meet later this month for the 47th Annual Conference of the Club Managers Assn. of America in New Orleans, they will be faced with the monumental problem of sorting out and understanding the maze of economic steps taken by the Nixon Administration to help solve the present inflation. The association is calling the theme of its conference "Phase V," which will take the form of various "caucuses." Through these caucuses, club managers will be able to meet with and talk to governmental and industry representatives.

"Caucus with Industry" will feature representatives from the National Broiler Council; American Meat institute; United Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Assn.; Dairy Industry and the American Baker's Assn. The industry panel will be moderated by Gerald V. Marlatt, CMAA president. These industry experts will discuss the current shortages of meat and vegetables in the United States, what is being done and how the future looks. The audience will get a chance to ask questions of these experts to get specific answers to their particular problems.

The other panel discussion, "Caucus with Government," will be moderated by National Broadcasting Corp. Washington correspondent, Peter Hackes. On the panel will be Barry Goldwater Jr. (Rep.-Calif.), spokesmen from the Department of the Treasury, Department of Agriculture, Cost of Living Council and the White House. Larry Morgan, of the accounting firm of Harris, Kerr, Forster and Company in New York will also be on the panel. These men will discuss current issues affecting the private club industry, club management and the economy, including minimum wage legislation, private pension reform and taxation.

Other seminars held during the conference include: "Professional Development" with Dean Gerald V. Lattin, a member of the faculty at Florida International University; "Operation Bootstrap" with Richard Landmark, executive director, Council on Hotel, Restaurant and Institutional Education; "You Are What You Wear" with John T. Malloy, a management consultant from New York City. Three more seminars are also scheduled: "There is No Excuse for Mediocrity"; "Prescription for Inflation" and one to be announced.

Under the topic of personal development and growth, an especially important seminar, "Building and Planning a Personal Estate," is planned.

Roundtable discussions, another feature of the conference, will cover topics such as, "Wage and Hour Regulations," "Ethnic and Special Interest Clubs," "City Clubs," "Country/Swimming/Tennis Clubs," "Yacht Clubs," and "Tax and Legislation Update," plus a special seminar of educational films of interest to club managers.

On January 25, the CMAA will present a mixed seminar to which managers' wives are invited. The topic is "The Role of the Club Manager's Wife."

SCHEDULE

Tuesday, January 22: *Caucus with Government.* Peter Hackes, NBC Washington correspondent, moderator.

Wednesday, January 23: *Caucus with Industry.* Gerald V. Marlatt, CMAA president, moderator.

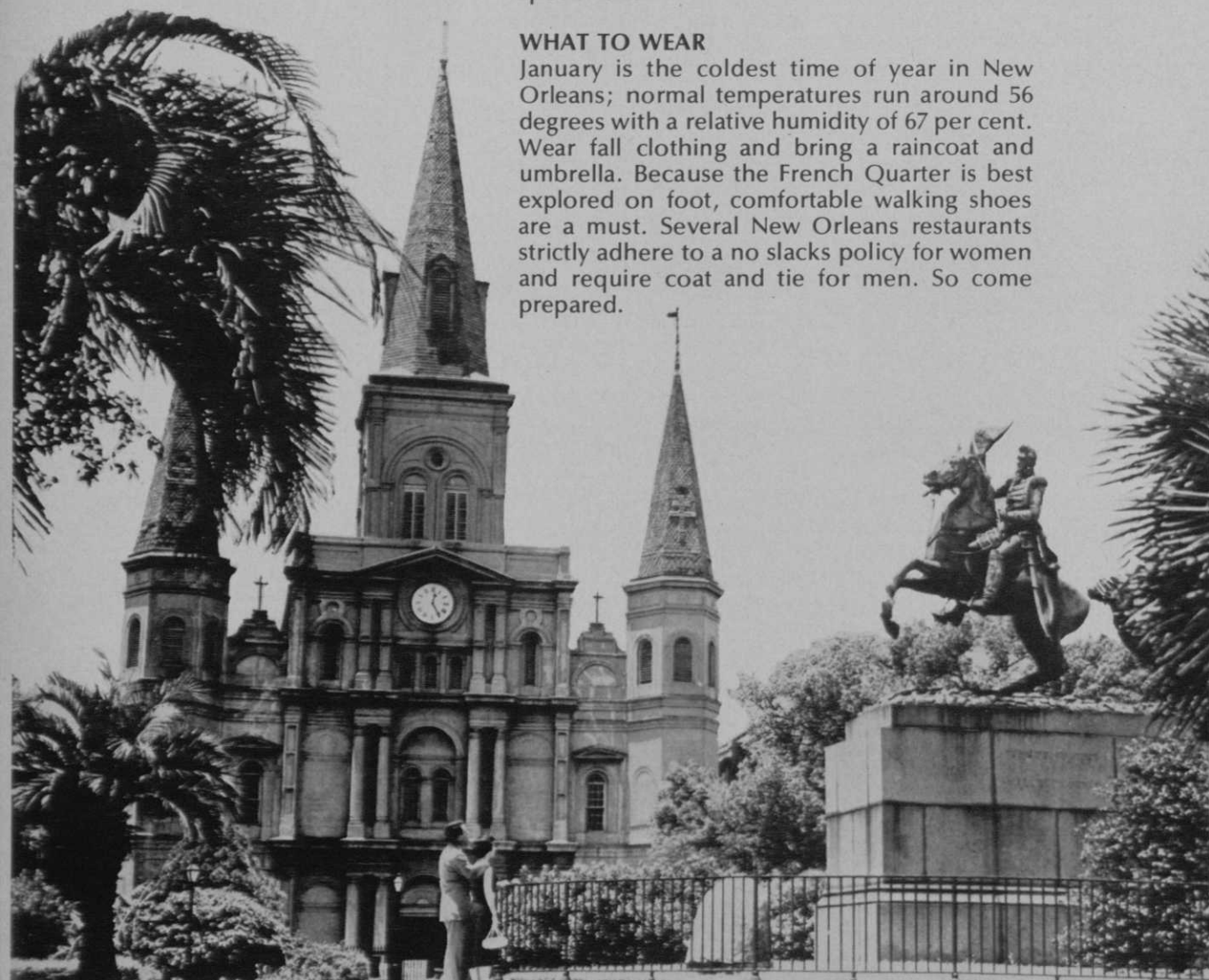
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WHAT TO DO AND SEE IN *New Orleans*

New Orleans, as everyone knows, abounds in great restaurants, authentic jazz, antique shops of every kind, specialty food shops and good shopping. Its architecture and Old World atmosphere treat visitors gently and graciously. In short, club managers this year can expect their stay in New Orleans to be a very special one.

WHAT TO WEAR

January is the coldest time of year in New Orleans; normal temperatures run around 56 degrees with a relative humidity of 67 per cent. Wear fall clothing and bring a raincoat and umbrella. Because the French Quarter is best explored on foot, comfortable walking shoes are a must. Several New Orleans restaurants strictly adhere to a no slacks policy for women and require coat and tie for men. So come prepared.





Lacey iron scrollwork adorns many of the buildings in the Quarter.

RESTAURANTS

Acme Oyster & Seafood House, 724 Iberville St., 523-8928. Open 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. Closed Sunday.

Andrew Jackson Restaurant, 221 Royal St., 529-2603. New Orleans and French cuisine. Open 11 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. Closed Sunday.

Antoine's, 713 St. Louis, 581-4422. Famous for Oysters Rockefeller, Filet de Boeuf Marchand de Vin, Pompano en Papillote, Crepes Suzette. World famous. Extensive wine selection. Open noon to 9:30. Closed Sunday.

Arnaud's, 811 Bienville St., 523-5433. French and Creole cuisine. Specialties: Shrimp Arnaud, Oysters Bienville, Trout Amantine, Boiled Red Fish Hollandaise, Supreme Volaille en Papillote. Open daily 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.; 5:30 p.m. to 12:30.

Beacon Restaurant, 3001 Napoleon Ave., 895-8373. Specialties: seafood, steaks, Italian dishes. Open weekdays 11 a.m. to 1; Friday, Saturday, 11 a.m. to 2. Closed Monday.

Begue's Restaurant and Patio, 300 Bourbon St., 529-3711. Traditional French and Creole dishes. Lunch: 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.; dinner: 6 p.m. to midnight.

The Bon Ton, 401 Magazine St., 524-3386. Cajun recipes. Specialties: Crawfish Bisque and Crawfish Etouffee. Wine. 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.; 5 p.m. to 9:30 Monday through Friday.

Brennan's Restaurant, 417 Royal St., 525-9711. World famous Breakfast at Brennan's. French, Creole and Brennan. Breakfast: 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.; luncheon weekdays, 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.; dinner: 6 p.m. to 11. Coat for breakfast and luncheon; coat and tie for dinner.

Café Du Monde Coffee Stand, St. Ann and Decatur Sts., 523-8739. Delicious café-au-lait and hot beignets. Open 24 hours.

Charlie's and Naomi's Steak House and Bar, 4510 Dryades St., 895-9705. No menu. Large and small T-bone steaks, sirloin strips, large and small filets. Noted for au gratin potatoes and Roquefort salad. Daily, 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. Closed Sunday.

Chez Helene Restaurant, 1540 N. Robertson St., 947-9155. Soul food: fried chicken, stuffed peppers, red beans and rice. Monday, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday, 10 a.m. to midnight.

Chris' Steak House, 1100 N. Broad St., 822-9565 and 3633 Veterans Blvd., 888-3600. Daily 11:30 a.m. to 11:30 p.m.

Commander's Palace Restaurant, 1 Washington Ave. and Coliseum St., 899-8221. Creole specialties. Daily 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. Creole Brunch served Sunday.

Corinne Dunbar's, 1617 St. Charles Ave., 525-2957 or 525-0689. One of the best; by reservation only. Authentic Creole. Specialties: Oysters Dunbar, Banana Puffs, Jambalaya and Gumbos. Open Tuesday through Saturday. Lunch: 12 p.m. to 2:30; dinner: 6 p.m. to 9:30.

Delmonico, 1300 St. Charles Ave., 525-4937. Popular for seafood and steaks. Sherried Shrimp, Steak Tournedo, Soft Shell Crab Delmonico. Excellent wine selection. Daily 11:30 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Dooky Chase Restaurant, 2301 Orleans Ave., 821-2294. American and Creole. 11 a.m. to 3:30 a.m.

Elmwood Plantation, 5400 River Rd. (East Bank), 733-6862. Gracious atmosphere. Traditional Creole dishes. Excellent selec-

tion of domestic and imported wines. Monday through Friday, 11:30 a.m. to 11 p.m.; Saturday, 5:30 p.m. to 11; Sunday: 1 p.m. to 11.

Emy's Restaurant, 918 Royal St., 524-4975. Creole specialties. Special Sunday brunch. Monday to Saturday, 8 a.m. to 11 p.m.; Sunday, holidays, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.

French Market Restaurant and Pancake Manor, 816 Decatur St., 524-3621. Creole, Italian or American. Lunch, daily from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Open 7 a.m. to 9 p.m.

French Quarter Inn, La Belle Classique, 717 Conti St., 581-1881. Comprehensive wine list. Daily, 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. for breakfast, luncheon; 6 p.m. to midnight for dinner.

Kolb's, 125 St. Charles Ave., 522-5079. German food. Imported draft beer, extensive wine list. Open 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. Closed Sunday.

Leruth's, 636 Franklin-Gretna, 362-4914. French. Superior wine list. 5:45 p.m. to 10:15. Closed Sunday, Monday.

Masson's Restaurant Francais, 7200 Pontchartrain Blvd., 283-2525. French Provincial. Valet parking. Daily 5 p.m. to 11. Sunday, noon to 11 p.m.

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Pontchartrain Hotel, Caribbean Room, 2031 St. Charles Ave., 524-0581. French and Creole cuisine. Award-winning restaurant. Daily, noon to 2 p.m.; 6 p.m. to 10. Coat and tie.

Riverboat Tchefuncte, Highway 22 and Tchefuncte River, Madisonville, 845-2383. Floating restaurant. Seafood. Open 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.; 5:30 p.m. to 9:30. Tuesday through Thursday; 11:30 a.m. to 10 p.m. Friday, Saturday; 11:30 a.m. to 9 p.m. Sunday.

Tujague's, 823 Decatur St., 523-9462; 523-9760. Lunch: 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.; dinner: 5 p.m. to 9:30. Sunday dinner all day.

ENTERTAINMENT

Al Hirt Club, 501 Bourbon St., 525-6167.

Andy's, 424 Bourbon St., 523-0096.

The Blue Angel, 225 Bourbon St., 523-1011.

Chez Frank, 701 Bourbon St., 581-5995.

Famous Door, 339 Bourbon St., 523-9972.

Heritage Hall, 516 Rue Bourbon, 523-8897.

Maison Bourbon, 641 Bourbon St., 523-8416.

Pete Fountain's French Quarter Inn, 231 Bourbon St., 523-4374.

Preservation Hall, 726 St. Peter St.

Royal Orleans Hotel, The Esplanade Lounge, 621 St. Louis St., 529-5333.

Royal Sonesta Hotel, Economy Hall, 300 Bourbon St., 529-3711.

ATTRACTIONS

THE FRENCH QUARTER

The Vieux Carre or Old Square is where it all began about 250 years ago. It is an area

continued

NEW ORLEANS *continued*

of about 100 square blocks, bounded by Canal, North Ramparts, Esplanade and the French Market. Narrow streets, low buildings that hide interior patios, balconies etched with filigree ironwork characterize the oldest part of New Orleans.

This walking tour lasts about three hours. It begins at the Visitor Information Center of the Greater New Orleans Tourist and Convention Commission at 334 Royal St., 522-8772.

What to See:

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Old Bank of the United States, 339 Royal St.
Old Louisiana State Bank, 401 Royal St.
New Orleans Court Building, 400 block of Royal St.
Casa Faurie, 417 Royal St.
The Herman House, 820 St. Louis St.
Maison Seignouret, 520 Royal St.
Merieult House, 533 Royal St.
Casa Comercio, 536 Royal St.
Court of Two Lions, 537 Royal and 710 Toulouse Sts.
LeMonnier House, 714 St. Peter St.
Maison de Fléchier, 718 St. Peter St.
Maison LeMonnier, 640 Royal St.
Old Spanish Prison, 615 St. Peter St.
Pirates Alley
Cathedral Garden, Royal at Orleans St.
Orleans Ballroom, 717 Orleans St.
Père Antoine's Alley, Royal to Chartres St., between the Cathedral and the Presbytère.
The Presbytere.
St. Louis Cathedral.
The Cabildo.
Jackson Square.
Pontalba Buildings, bordering Jackson Square.
1850 House, 525 St. Ann St.
The French Market.
Old Ursulines Convent, 1114 Chartres St.
LeCarpentier House, 1113 Chartres St.
Soniata House, 1133 Chartres St.
Clay House, 618-20 Gov. Nicholls St.
LaLaurie House, 1140 Royal St.
Thierry House, 721 Gov. Nicholls St.
The Gallier House, 1132 Royal St.
Lafitte's Blacksmith Shop, 941 Bourbon St.
The Comstalk Fence, 915 Royal St.
Miltenberger Houses, 900-906-910 Royal St.
The House of Jean Pascal, 632 Dumaine St.

OTHER PLACES OF INTEREST

Audubon Park, 6300 St. Charles Ave. opposite Tulane and Loyola Universities. Zoo, aquarium, conservatory, tennis courts and 18-hole golf course. Admission is free. Hours: Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, Sunday, 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Chalmette National Historical Park, St. Bernard Highway. Site of the Battle of New Orleans. Admission is free. Hours: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

City Park, Boyou St., bounded by John, Orleans Blvd., City Park Ave. and Robert E. Lee Blvd. Admission is free.

Confederate Memorial Museum, 929 Camp

St. Admission: Adults, \$.50. Hours: Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Fair Grounds Race Track, 1715 Gentilly Blvd. Jacket and tie in clubhouse for men; no slacks for women. Special group rates. Call Special Events Director, 944-5515.

Garden District, bounded by Magazine St. and by St. Charles, Jackson, and Louisiana Aves.

International Trade Mart Observation Deck, Canal Street and the river. Adults, \$.50. Hours: Daily 8 a.m. to midnight, Information: 523-4888.

Voodoo Museum and Gift Shop, 827 Royal St. Admission: Adults, \$.75; Hours: Tuesday through Sunday, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.

TOURS

BUS AND LIMOUSINE

Cadillac Tours, 947-4162.
Dixieland Tours, 288-9788.
Gray Line Tours, 525-0138.
Hank Belas Limousine Tours, 834-1715.
Orleans Tours, 529-1689, 581-7222.

BOAT

Eden Isles Cruise, 821-3464.
Mark Twain, 525-6545.
S.S. President, 525-6311.
Voyageur, 523-5555.

AIRPORT TRANSIT SERVICE

New Orleans International Airport is about 10 miles west of the city on U.S. 61 in Kenner, La. **Taxicab:** Time from the airport to the central business district is about 30 minutes. Fare to that area for one person is about \$9 plus tip; more than three persons, \$3 per person.

Bus: The airport bus of Louisiana Transit Company, Inc. (737-9611) runs from the airport to Tulane Ave. and Elk Place, about a block from Canal St. in the central business district. Fare is \$.35. Buses run at intervals of eight to 10 minutes during peak hours.

Limousine: Two limousine services are provided to and from the airport with passenger pickup and delivery made to several downtown hotels and motels by reservation. For information and reservation, call Orleans Transportation Service, 581-7222 or Toye Bros. Airport Limousine Service, 522-2631.

AUTO RENTALS

Major companies have offices within or near the airport.
Airport Budget Rent-A-Car, 1245 Airline Highway, 729-6449.
Airways Rent-A-Car, 1730 Airline Highway, 721-9321.
American International, 1600 Airline Highway, 721-4788.
Avis, New Orleans International Airport, 729-8421.
Econo-Car, 1818 Airline Highway, 721-6746.
Greyhound, 1701 Airline Highway, 721-4595.
Hertz, New Orleans International Airport, 729-6436.
National, New Orleans International Airport, 729-6447.
Thrifty, 1415 Airline Highway. □

CMAA *from page 77*

SEMINARS:

1. Professional Development, Dean Gerald V. Lattin.
2. Operation Bootstrap, Richard Landmark.
3. You Are What You Wear, John T. Malloy.

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS:

1. Wage and Hour regulations
2. Jewish clubs
3. Country/swimming/tennis clubs
4. City clubs
5. Tax and legislation update
6. Yacht clubs
7. Cinema seminars (will be held three times during conference).

Thursday, January 24:

SEMINARS:

1. There is No Excuse for Mediocrity.
2. Prescription (Rx) for Inflation.
3. To be Announced.

Following the luncheon, there will be a special seminar, *Building and Planning a Personal Estate*, which will be conducted by the luncheon speaker, an expert in this field. Ladies are invited to attend.

Friday, January 25:

MIXED SEMINAR:

There will be another special seminar to which ladies are invited. *The Role of the Club Manager's Wife* will be the topic.

The speaker for Friday's luncheon, will be a noted senator whose name will be announced at a later date. □

by BEVERLY FOSTER

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