



NEWSLETTER

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Club Managers Aid in Tax Fight

BY BILL CAREY

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We share with member clubs the mailgram accolade to FSGA from new NCA President H.L. Emanueison, Jr.

"NCA'S YEAR LONG BATTLE TO PROTECT THE CONTINUED DEDUCTION OF CLUB DUES HAS BEEN VICTORIOUS; CONGRESS DID, HOWEVER, DISALLOW FURTHER DEDUCTIONS FOR YACHTS AND HUNTING LODGES. NCA IS GRATEFUL FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE IN THIS EFFORT."

While many managers either were not aware of the issue nor active in opposition, the quality of those who came forward to help was outstanding.

The physical climax to President Carter's initiative to zap the club industry came during the NCA Octoberfest at Doral Country Club at 9:45 p.m., Saturday, October 14. Jerry Hurley, hard-working executive director of the National Club Association, mounted the bandstand to tell members at their annual meeting, that the club dues disallowance had been dropped from the hotly contested bill. The announcement, roundly applauded, signaled victory in the long effort spearheaded nationally by NCA which scrapped aggressively to inject some realism into the proposed Carter tax revision legislation.

The last ditch vote by Congress, before it broke for electioneering in home districts, saved jobs and operational revenues for many Florida clubs. The action permitted private business the continued freedom of calling its own shots on the validity of business expenses which still must be documented in tax returns.

FSGA, aided by NCA research, helped make the case to oppose disallowance of legitimate expenses in communications to Association member club management, Florida's U.S. Senators and Representatives, chambers of commerce and in letters to editors of the state's principal daily newspapers.

U.S. Representative Andy Ireland (D., Winter Haven), Florida's 8th District Congressman, a member of the Small Business Committee of the House, was particularly helpful to FSGA. After an alert to Walt Powers, Ireland's district honcho in Bradenton and a letter direct to Ireland in Washington, the wheels turned.

Sandy Streeter of Ireland's Washington staff, a savvy holdover from the Jim Haley days, pushed the button in Rep. Sam Gibbons' (D., Tampa) office. Gibbons, a member of the combined House-Senate committee reworking the President's tax revision proposal, had underlined for him the Association's position which was:

- Valid business expenses should be deductible, regardless of where incurred.
- It is not the province of Congress to decide which valid expenses are "deductible."
- Taxpayers must now document expenses and current law is sufficient. If abuses are suspected, strengthen the audit enforcement program.
- Club expenses should receive the same tax treatment as business meals at commercial restaurants.

Florida, with more to lose through tax revision than any other tourism-recreation-oriented area in the country, thusly stepped around the coiled venom of more government intervention and control of private business. And there is no business more personal and private than the recreation business.

However, those versed in reading storm warnings at the federal government level predict the issue will be raised again next year and the club industry is not home free.

"You're not home free because there is an element in this country opposed to recreation pursuits during which legitimate business also can be accomplished. They are the bureaucrats and the non-producers in our society who resent this time-honored and productive method of operation. America needs another Paul Revere to ride through the land and awaken us to these insidious forces."

That was strong comment from a Congressman known as the best orator in the House. Rep. Guy Vander Jagt (R., Mich.), an influential member of the House Ways and Means Committee and Chairman of the Republican Congressional Committee, flew down from Washington in modern day Paul Revere fashion, to share his views of the 95th Congress with NCA members. His was a quick turn-around visit as he had to be back on the House floor for the final Saturday night session. He used his Saturday morning time in Miami wisely and delivered a well-framed message which brilliantly highlighted the current day 40 years' war in America between "producers and non-producers, the tax takers and the taxpayers. And, gentlemen, we're losing that war," Congressman Vander Jagt said with flourishes.

His message to a standing-room-only audience of free enterprise business and professional people was sharply critical of big government spending with an insider's view that terrorized his listeners.

We knew things were bad, but this bad?

Hurley's invitation to Vander Jagt to speak to the leadership of America's club business was a master stroke. Here were the people who could relate on a daily basis and hopefully react constructively to the growing oppression of appointed faceless bureaucrats who hold captive our elected public officials.

Fortunately, a blue ribbon band, thoroughly representative of the golf industry, was on the scene. PGA President Don Padgett with Executive Director Mark Cox and Director of Education Dr. Gary Wiren — later to lead an excellent seminar on the selection of a golf professional — were front row center for Vander Jagt's impassioned message. The PGA had contributed important dollars in the final days to the NCA fight as did other golf organizations represented.

George Cleaver, President, and Conrad Sheetz, Executive Director, Golf Course Superintendents of America; Don Rossi, Executive Director, National Golf Foundation; Joe Schwendeman, Director of Communications, PGA Tour; Dr. Frank Thomas, USGA; Rees Jones, President, American Society of Golf Course Architects and David Canavan, President, Golf Course Builders of America, all members of NCA's golf advisory group, were present at Doral to hear how their contributions of time, expertise and money had been brought to bear on the proposed legislation.

Vander Jagt complimented a last minute NCA jab at President Carter's use of the most exclusive private club in the world — Camp David — to help achieve peace in the world.

"The President acted as any good salesman would when he invited Sadat and Begin to share this comfortable, isolated conference and recreation oriented retreat, to sell them an idea. Your President Bob Meyer and Jerry Hurley and his staff displayed a masterful touch with this exercise for it epitomized a basic club use deductible business expense.

"And it was not paid for by business but subsidized 100 per cent by taxpayers. But the taxpayers didn't mind because there was achievement and certain progress toward the sale, at this point, so vital to mankind," Vander Jagt said.

The Michigan Republican startled his audience with the statement that Congress, this year, was spending its way to a one-half trillion dollar budget. Certainly a mind-boggler of dollar signs. Then the nifty item that it will take the income tax paid by two-thirds of American taxpayers to make the ante for this year's interest on the national debt.

"While liberals vote for more government people, programs, controls and regulations we now have more Americans living from funds in the Federal Treasury than we have Americans working and paying into the Treasury.

"With one-third of all land in America owned by the government we have one of every six Americans working for the government, and one in three dependent on a regular check from Uncle Sam for existence," Vander Jagt said.

"The fruits of our labors should be ours!" he shouted, as the decibel needle bounced crazily off its pin on the P.A. monitor.

Living up to oratorical notices which preceded him, Vander Jagt stated: "I believe America is great not because of what the government does for its people but because what a government

permitted a free people to do for their government. We must continue this greatness. But unless you wake up the war with the non-producers will be over and you will have lost your freedom. Individual economic freedom is endangered by too much government free spending. We can't take any more!"

Shifting down to a lower key, confessional level, Vander Jagt began his concluding remarks by saying, "We can get so depressed with what's wrong we sometimes forget what's right. And there's still a lot right about our country. Before you wake up and fight you must appreciate what we've got. I don't think we want anything more. We just want to keep what we have a little longer."

"We must count our blessings. Government hasn't taken it all away. What we do as individuals in forgetting our blessings is inconsequential. But what we do about forgetting our blessings as Americans is self-destructive."

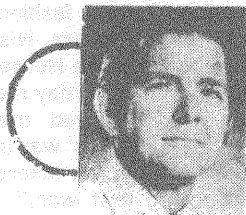
"We have more of everything than any other people in the entire history of the world. And we have a system. It is the dynamism of that system, the productivity, opportunity and freedom of that system we are in danger of losing if we don't wake up!"

"Sleeping on will be our destruction. So go back to your home communities and be the Paul Revere who awakens his fellow man to the dangers of big government spending and do something about bringing it under control," Vander Jagt concluded.

VJ's message and the fact that our system still works, as proved by Rep. Andy Ireland's action, turns me on. And pushing the go button on FSGA's member clubs with their 150,000 members, is a good place to start. There's a helluva bunch of clout in those members, most of them private enterprise business people, that should be focused on upgrading the lunacy level in Washington. Let's sort out the guys who can help and help them to get moving!

LARRY BUSH, Palm Beach Times Sports Editor, accurately reports the position of Junior Golf in Florida in the article reprinted below. Lack of participation by good Florida Juniors in national and regional events has been a concern of FSGA. A program to produce greater participation in the USGA National Junior Championship in 1979 is covered in the Bush Report.

Palm Beach Times, Monday, October 16, 1978—C7



Larry Bush

Junior programs below par

Jack Nicklaus nearly talked himself into a corner a couple of months ago when he took a stand in behalf of junior golf. He escaped, but not before sounding like the wildest male chauvinist this side of St. Andrew's.

The point attempting to be made by Nicklaus, honorary chairman of the newly created PGA Junior Golf Foundation, was that junior golf in the United States could not keep pace with youth programs in such foreign countries as Spain and Japan if more time was not allotted the youngsters on the nation's courses.

But it came out sounding like it was the fault of all the women golfers across the country that their sons and daughters couldn't get to play. That was far from what Nicklaus meant and he subsequently issued a statement clarifying his remarks.

At a recent community appreciation luncheon during which Nicklaus was honored by the Northern Palm Beach County Chamber of Commerce, he again cited the lack of comprehensive and coordinated junior golf programs in the state.

"The quality of junior golf in Florida is higher than it is in Ohio," said Nicklaus, a native of Columbus, Ohio, but a resident of Lost Tree Village in North Palm Beach since 1965. "We just don't have the numbers here."

He cited the fact that only two Floridians played in the USGA Junior Amateur this summer — Dave Pesacov of North Palm Beach and Kevin Janiga, Lake Placid — largely because of the lack of participation in qualifying rounds, with the number of spots in the national event being pro-rated based on local entries.

"There are no golfers on tour at this time who grew up in South Florida," Nicklaus points out. "Sure, a lot of us live down here now because it's a great area for golf. But none of us grew up here, learned the game here. South

Florida should be developing more young golfers."

The PGA's concern over this issue is dramatized in the establishment of a Junior Championship in 1976, a Junior Academy last summer, and the first Junior Cup matches last month, against a team from Venezuela at Caracas.

The PGA Junior Golf Foundation is designed to insure proper funding for these programs and to develop a new series of instructional films especially for youngsters, while also making other programs available for young Jack Nicklaus and JoAnne Carners.

And at about the same time the Golden Bear was being honored by local businessmen, the Florida State Golf Association, meeting in West Palm Beach, was approving plans to lend greater support to junior golf in Florida.

After a year's study, the green light was given by the FSGA board of directors to the formation of a Florida Junior Golf Development Foundation based on recommendations by executive director Bill Carey.

Input came from local junior golf associations, organizations involved with junior golf, the National Golf Foundation headquartered in North Palm Beach, Florida high school golf coaches and, yes, even from Nicklaus.

These are the highlights of the FSGA's plan for the salvation of junior golf in the Sunshine State:

- Establish a clearing house for dates to minimize scheduling conflicts.

- Work through and cooperate with existing high school golf programs and county-wide groups such as the Florida Athletic Coaches Association and, locally, the Palm Beach County Junior Golf Association.

- Each junior in an organized program will be given a membership in the FSGA with monthly mail service

to his home of updated computer handicap card, special Junior Newsletter, schedule and entry forms to all important state, regional and national events.

- Present scholarship program will be abandoned. All new dollars raised go to the Junior Foundation.

- The 1979 events schedule will include specific tournaments, exhibitions and clinics to help fund the program.

- When club and individual FSGA dues renewals are mailed in November for 1979, business and industry also will be solicited to support the foundation.

- A junior golf specialist will coordinate the program, working out of the FSGA state office in Sarasota. The proposed budget for the year's operation is \$50,000.

Says Carey, "At all levels of discussion of the proposed program, there was unanimous agreement that the Florida State Golf Association was the logical body to pull the junior game into sharper focus for national recognition."

"No industry is more important to the economy of Palm Beach County than golf," said Marshall Criser, vice chairman of the Florida Council of 100, during the luncheon honoring Nicklaus. "If young men and women aren't given the opportunity to learn and play golf, who will buy the real estate being developed? What will happen to all the golf courses we now have? Who will pay the bills?"

"Maybe we are fortunate that this controversy was raised. Otherwise, Jack Nicklaus' push for junior golf might have gone unnoticed."

This, then, may be the legacy of Nicklaus. Not all his accomplishments as a player, and some of his records may never be broken, but what he is doing for junior golf, and indirectly for his adopted home. This may be what the Golden Bear will be best remembered for.