

The Hole Truth

January 2011

President's Message
By Lou Camerota

Dear Fellow Members:

This year could well be designated the year of the volunteer at NLCC! Since I became president, many of you have demonstrated enormous support through emails, phone calls, and letters. In addition to moral support, you have generously offered your time. Thank you on both counts.

On Thursday, January 13, the board will vote on the 2011 budget and our season will officially begin.

Two major undertakings have the biggest impact on keeping the club on solid financial footing and maintaining low dues. To the board these are paramount issues, and I solicit your support to accomplish them.

1. Managing and restructuring our debt

We are fortunate to have Walter Barry and George Mitchell, who have taken the lead in addressing this task. Both men are in close contact with our lender and have already successfully negotiated some breathing room for the club.

Additionally, they have ideas for restructuring the debt to keep dues low. This is a long-term goal, as progress is made, it will be communicated to you. ***Increasing membership is a short goal with long-term benefits. It is the single most important task because it will have the most immediate impact on both dues and the overall well being of the club. Please lend your support to accomplishing this goal.***

2. Increasing membership

I'm pleased to announce that Kevin O'Reilly has become our Membership Chair. Kevin and I spent a recent afternoon exploring ways to reach out to former members who would like to return to NLCC, and developing strategies to attract new members. Kevin will be expanding the membership committee and be seeking input from the membership at large on how they might more effectively attract new members. Kevin and I will be working together on this.

Other undertakings:

** Sale of the lot*

We are again actively attempting to sell the lot and recently had two potential buyers. One fell through and the second is still interested. Selling the lot will help our cash position as well as our intent to maintain low dues.

** Communication*

Good communication is essential to any organization. We will continue to communicate important club developments to you in a timely manner. Later this month you will receive a survey asking what you think the club's priorities should be and any other issues you think should be addressed. The findings will be posted. Further, each month's Hole Truth will list our membership numbers so you'll have firsthand knowledge of our progress.

** Reestablishing Policies*

Diane Smith will chair a committee that will revisit and update our policies and report back to the board on their progress. Policies will be followed and our progress will be communicated to you.

** Volunteerism*

We will be actively seeking members to serve on committees and help accomplish tasks for which we would otherwise have to pay an outside source. Currently, Rich Schmidtke and Jon Gunderman are taking a look at our golf carts to insure that they'll serve our needs well this coming season. John Taglianetti, our House Chairman, will be organizing a "spruce up" day this spring when club members can help ready the clubhouse and surrounding grounds for the season.

** Special Events*

Under the umbrella of membership, we will follow up on the success we realized last year with special events like "glow in the dark night golf" and the Red Sox -Yankees tournament. Pat Norton and Patty Cleary are organizing a "Valentine's Day" potluck. We have also talked about revisiting the annual Christmas Party. Other ideas will be developed by the membership committee. If you have more suggestions, please email either Kevin O'Reilly at drkor@aol.com or the club at office@newlondoncountryclub.org, with the subject line "special events."

** Support our staff*

We are very fortunate to have a staff that is talented, selfless, and dedicated to the good operation of our club. We have pared budgets and presented operational challenges that they continue to step up to... a tribute to their dedication and professionalism. Compliments don't show up anywhere on our budget's expense lines. But when deserved, they pay dividends. When the opportunity presents itself, please be sure to compliment our staff on the good, professional job that they do.

In closing, I look forward to a year of building NLCC back to what we all want it to be...a great golf course that we all enjoy and take pride in. The body of experience that we have to draw on is an enormous resource that I hope you will continue to offer the club. Everyone's opinion matters and is valued. YOU are New London Country Club. Please join in and help rebuild our golf club into being, once again, one of the area's points of pride.

Sincerely,

Lou Camerota
President
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Greens

By Dan Rogers, Superintendent

The winter months bring a lot of time to reminisce about the past golf season, family, fishing and summer BBQ, out of all that reminiscing comes planning for the season to come. Thinking back on 2010 is unpleasant for many golf course superintendents' factors such as high temperatures, periods of little or no rain and high night time temperatures. These factors caused disease pressure and insect pressure to increase, stressed water supplies and superintendents to the limit. The net result of these environmental challenges was not as devastating to NLCC as some; all in all we did ok. "What does not kill you makes you stronger" right???...

The up coming year will not be with out its challenges from a maintenance perspective, I am very optimistic that we can provide our members with the conditions they have come to expect and most certainly deserve. My plan is to continue to be innovative and efficient in the operation of the green department. Containing cost is our primary objective going into 2011 and striking a balance between course conditions and fiscal responsibility will be my challenge. Again I am confident I can provide the course conditions you all have come to know in the last 4 seasons for 2011.

I have always felt that communication is one of the keys to success; I strive to interact with as many members as I can. Many times I feel that I do not do enough especially during peak season as other tasks take up countless hours. I have been brainstorming ways to have more interaction with all of you. With new members coming in every year it's hard for me to see everyone, I feel the hole truth, while a valuable tool is not enough. So in an effort to communicate more effectively I have developed a web site that will allow members and others to learn more about me, what I do and how I do it. With this tool I hope to give members a better understanding of what goes on daily to maintain a golf course. I will be able to post pictures year round to show progress, highlight problem areas and explain tasks such as aeration. There will also be a forum for members to communicate directly with me about course conditions, this area will allow people to express comments, concerns and complements. I have developed this site at my own expense because I feel going forward into 2011 it will help me be a more effective superintendent and manager.

Please visit me at www.DanRogersGolf.com

Dan Rogers