

Golf pro could tour with best; chooses home

By Mary Beth Phillips

Working at Prestonwood Country Club is the ideal job for a PGA champion with a bad back, and watching his daughters grow up is the main reason Vance Heafner stays away from most professional golf tournaments now.

"My daughters tell me how many tournaments I will play in each year," Heafner joked, as he reflected on his life over a cup of coffee in a Prestonwood dining room.

Because he came in first in the Disney Classic in 1982, he is invited to play any PGA tournament he chooses, but those games are fewer and farther between as his time becomes taken up with his daughters' dance and gymnastics competitions.

"Maybe it's because my parents died so young," he said of his absorption in his two daughters, Elizabeth, 12, and Allison, 9.

His father was also a professional golfer, but died when Heafner was only six. His mother died a year later; an aunt in Cary raised him.

Though there is a long legacy in the family, neither daughter has shown any interest in golf, Heafner said. "They may come out two or three times in a summer and hit golf balls," he said.

Until last year, the Heafners held the title of the only father and son champions in the PGA. Last year, Guy Boros won a tournament, and his father, Julius, had also been a PGA champ. Heafner only holds the one championship title, but came in second many times in his 9-1/2 year career on the PGA tour.

Heafner says maybe when his daughters become teenagers and "won't have anything to do with me anyway," he might join the senior tour.

"A part of me wants to go back, and a part of me doesn't care anything about it," he said.

"I miss the competition. I don't miss the travel at all."

In his last years on the tour, he would have severe back pains off and on. They would put him flat on his back for a month at a time, and then he would be fine again.

In 1988, during one of those episodes, he took the job at Prestonwood. "It was tough not to



VANCE HEAFNER

go back when my back felt better," he said, adding that he has no regrets now.

The disease progressed from a herniated disk to a degenerative disk disease. Rather than having surgery, he waited for the disks to fuse naturally, which eventually happened.

When the fusion was complete, he no longer got periodic sharp pains, but keeps a dull pain all the time. He said he is well enough that he could compete again, but admitted, "my back gets tired when I play a lot."

He loves the job at Prestonwood, which has changed a lot in the 10 years the country club has existed. Heafner started before the country club opened. The first year, there were 75 members. Now there are 1,065 families.

"It's hard to get to know anyone any more," he said.

The staff, however, is one big family, especially those who have been at Prestonwood from the beginning.

Heafner manages seven people, including two head pros and several other golf pros. He only teaches if someone has a little extra ability.

"I don't like to charge people," he

said. "A lot of people took a lot of time with me coming up. Besides, I can teach all I know to someone in 10 minutes," Heafner joked. "I hate to take their money for an hour."

Heafner has a business degree from N.C. State University, but said in his four years there, "all I did was play golf." One plus from his years at State was meeting his wife, Paige, who lived in Raleigh.

She went along with him on the tour in the early years until the children came along.

At the time he took the job at Prestonwood, he had a two-and-a-half-year-old daughter and one on the way.

"I saw a lot of my friends on the tour who had kids; they were making a big sacrifice," Heafner said.

Off the golf course, his hobbies include fishing and doing things with his family.

"I guess I'm pretty absorbed with them," he said.

But there's still that glimmer of possibility that he could go back.

"It was like a fantasy world," he said. "I met all the presidents, all the most famous people in the world. I traveled to Australia and New Zealand and all over Europe and Japan. It's fun to look back on."

Board nips committees; taps Silver-Smith as Mayor Pro Tem

Mark Silver-Smith is Morrisville's Mayor Pro Tem.

Leavy Barbee, who had campaigned for the position at the December meeting, decided to nominate C.T. Moore instead. Moore has the second longest length of service to the town.

But new board members Jan Faulkner and Bill Case voted not along with Mark Silver-Smith, who has been on the board two years.

Mrs. Faulkner then nominated Silver-Smith and he was elected 3-2 with Barbee and Moore dissenting.

Then the new board voted to do away with internal committees, saying issues could be looked at by the entire board.

Silver-Smith had inserted a suggested lineup for the positions into the agenda packet. He had suggested that Faulkner should head up the personnel committee with Case serving along with her; Silver-Smith should head up the finance committee with Faulkner as the other committee member; Case should be chairman of the public safety committee with Silver-Smith as the other member; Moore should head up community development with Barbee as the other member, and Barbee should head up public works with Moore serving on the committee.

Moore made the motion to temporarily do away with the committees, which was approved unanimously.

The following commissioners filled county and statewide committees:

Triangle J Council of Governments—Faulkner, with Silver-Smith as alternate.

Capital Area Transportation Advisory Committee—Mayor Gordon Cromwell with Silver-Smith as alternate.

Wake County Intergovernmental Liaison Committee—Silver-Smith with Town Manager David Hodgkins as alternate.

Wake County Water and Sewer Task Force Committee—Barbee.

RDU Noise Abatement Committee—Moore with former commissioner Billy Sauls serving as the county appointee.

Wake County Public Safety Committee—Case.

These positions were changed from the recommendations in the packet from Silver-Smith. He had placed himself on two committees and not made an appointment for Barbee.

Town hires Cary native as planner

The best part of the job as Morrisville town planner so far is the drive in the morning, said Mary Willis, only half joking, after being on the job about a week.



WILLIS

Ms. Willis, who lives in Cary, had been supervisor of current planning for Orange County, and made the drive to Hillsborough along I-40 each morning.

"Even when there's a lot of traffic on 54, it's better than I-40," Ms. Willis said from her new office in Morrisville Town Hall on Jan. 20. She is replacing Leisa Powell, who started the town's planning department from scratch a few years ago, and left in October to spend more time with her young daughter.

Ms. Willis had been on the job a week, and was still familiarizing herself with the review and approval procedures for Morrisville.

"Every jurisdiction is different," she said, "especially in terms of the review and approval procedures, the specific regulations."

She didn't have any comments yet about Morrisville's future direction. She was too busy getting ready for her first planning board meeting.

The drive is not the only plus to the new job.

"I can tell the people here will be nice to work with," she said. People from the development community had stopped by to meet her, and the staff has been welcoming.

"I grew up in this area, so it is a little more special specifically to be here," she said, adding that she grew up living along N.C. 54 between Cary and Morrisville and identified with both towns.

Ms. Willis is a 1974 graduate of Cary High School. She earned her Bachelor of Science degree in geology at Western Carolina University and a Master of Science degree in agricultural economics in 1983 from the University of Arizona, where she also has taken graduate classes in the school of urban and regional planning.

She worked for Robinson, Sorenson and Associates in Raleigh before taking the job with Orange County. Prior to that, she worked for the San Diego County Planning Department in San Diego, Calif.

In her spare time, Ms. Willis likes to putter around her house and do yard work. She also does stained glass as a hobby and likes to read murder mysteries. Her New Year's resolution is to use the town's exercise equipment, which is available to town employees free of charge. She said in her spare time she also likes to go out with friends.

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Public hearing on RMZ density to be held Feb. 9

By Mary Beth Phillips

A public hearing on reducing the density in residential management zoning to four units per acre will be held Feb. 9.

C.T. Moore made the motion to set the hearing at the board meeting Jan. 12. Anything over four units per acre would be considered as a special use only under the proposal. The motion was approved unanimously.

The proposed code change comes in response to a flood of multi-family development approved in Morrisville recently. More than 800 apartment and condominium units were approved at one meeting in early November alone. Several others had been approved prior to that meeting. Land is now being cleared for some of those apartment communities.

"It gives us a little bit better control on what does come in," Moore said. "It just makes our job easier, to have some set rules and we can be fair to everybody."

Public comments requesting more single-family homes are one reason for the action, but the main reason is the shortage of water for the town, at least on paper. Cary's new slow-growth board has talked about scrapping plans to expand its water plant, which would have also provided Morrisville with additional water. Morrisville Town manager David Hodgkins is negotiating with Durham for more water.

Durham officials are working on an agreement for Morrisville to react to, Hodgkins said. It should be ready by mid-February.

The town is still processing site plans and subdivision plans, but everything is now approved contin-

gent on the availability of water and sewer.

As people come for building permits, the town looks carefully at their potential water use. So far, no one has been told no, Hodgkins said. Projects already approved by the Morrisville board are expected to triple the population of the 2,500-resident town within the next two years.

Durham has told Morrisville it is first in line for the water. Other municipalities have also come forward to buy water from Durham. Morrisville currently buys one million gallons per day of water from Cary under a 20-year contract signed in September of 1995.

Morrisville plans to continue using that water, at least through the end of the contract, and as long as Cary

is willing to sell it. The Durham water would be an additional source. Morrisville could easily tap into the Durham system because its lines come within about 100 feet of Durham lines along N.C. 54, Hodgkins said.

Water could also be routed through Cary's system, because Cary already is connected to Durham's system. A wheeling charge or some kind of transportation fee would have to be paid to Cary for the use of the lines, he said.

A line would have to be constructed to connect the Durham system. There is also a line that is fairly close to the Durham system that runs along Sister Road, he said. Either way, it would be a nominal investment to obtain such a large water allocation, he said.

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