



GOLF BUSINESS ADVISORS

A Division of Chambers

2022 NEWSLETTER



Golf Business Advisors has a Clear Mission:

To assist our clients with determining and meeting their objectives in the golf and club industry.



CONTACT US

Jeff Fleishman: jeff@golfbusinessadvisors.com
Beverly Van Straten: beverly@golfbusinessadvisors.com



Golf Business Advisors Acquired by Chambers

A One-Year Reflection & Eye Toward the Possibilities

After 28 years of assisting our clients in the golf and club industry with meeting and exceeding their operational, marketing, and financial objectives, Golf Business Advisors has begun a new chapter. In January 2021, GBA was acquired by Chambers, which is headquartered in Baltimore, Maryland with additional offices in Dallas, Minneapolis, Naples and Washington, DC. Chambers is a 123-year-old planning, architecture and design firm that specializes in lifestyle design for private clubs, communities, and hospitality spaces across the country and abroad. Chambers takes a holistic approach to enhancing lifestyles and experiences.

As the founder of Golf Business Advisors, I am very excited about the future of GBA and the synergistic relationship that we have created over the last year. Chambers is the industry leader in master planning and design for private clubs and communities. Their team of professionals is the best at developing club concepts, master plans, renovations, and design. We are certain that our partnership will now provide clubs with a turnkey approach to our clients operational needs to ensure improved services and financial success. The combination of our strengths makes Chambers and GBA a perfect choice for premier golf and country clubs.

"This is a major step to expand our services and add greater capabilities to support our firm's growth," stated Chambers' President and CEO Rick Snellinger when announcing the acquisition. "GBA has extensive golf experience working with over 400 clients in its history and these additional services will significantly enhance our firm's ability to deliver full-service, value-added solutions for our clients."

GBA's unique suite of services as shown below complement those of Chambers:

- **GOLF COURSE RENOVATION AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT** — Planning for course improvements and serving as Owner's Rep for golf course renovations in coordination with the Greens Committee, Superintendent, Architect and Contractor.
- **OPERATIONAL REVIEWS** — Situational and historical analyses and golf course reviews to provide improvement options and recommendations.
- **MEMBERSHIP SALES AND MARKETING** — Developing and helping to implement a sales and marketing plan to attract prospective new Members.
- **EXECUTIVE SEARCH** — Specializing in General Managers, Golf Course Superintendents, PGA Directors of Golf and Membership Directors.



*Conceptual Rendering
Eagles Mere Country Club, PA*

It is clear to me that GBA and Chambers share the same core values and a true desire to provide our clients with the highest quality of personalized services. Within the first few months of the Chambers and GBA partnership, we were able to work together with several clubs to assist them with improvements to their facilities and operations. We see this as a very positive development for our clients and staff. GBA will continue to operate in Williamsburg as a division of Chambers and I will serve as President of the division.

Our recent clients include the following:

- Centre Hills Country Club *State College, PA*
- Glens Falls Country Club *Queensbury, NY*
- Eagles Mere Country Club *Eagles Mere, PA*
- Old Palm Golf Club *Palm Beach Gardens, FL*
- Willow Oaks Country Club *Richmond, VA*
- National Park Service *Washington, DC*
- Boyd Homes *Virginia Beach, VA*
- Liberty University *Lynchburg, VA*
- The City of Harrisonburg *Harrisonburg, VA*
- The City of Providence *Providence, RI*
- The City of Amherst *Amherst, NY*

GET IN TOUCH! We would be pleased to assist you and your club in 2022 and hope that you will contact us soon. Thank you and best wishes for success as our nation gets back on track and we navigate through the return to a “new normal” at our clubs.



COVID-19 AND GOLF

Perfect Social Distancing Partners



Although many golf and club facilities were shuttered (or offered limited access) in March and April of 2020 due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, many began re-opening in May 2020 to record numbers of golfers not seen since the “Tiger Woods” effect in 1997. The golf courses met many of the recommended strategies for reduced transmission of the Coronavirus—being outside and at least six feet from others—not to mention the mental and physical reprieve from the “lockdown” status that many Americans faced.

Now that the numbers are in from the National Golf Foundation for 2020 and 2021, the number of rounds, number of golfers and number of new club members increased significantly in the Covid-19 years over prior years. For most segments, golf rounds were up approximately 20% from 2019 to 2020, then another approximately 5% from 2020 to 2021. And although no actual numbers have been reported, new memberships at country clubs have sky-rocketed, with many clubs now on “waiting lists” for new members.

Two Rivers Country Club here in Williamsburg, Virginia (where I have enjoyed being a member for 13 years) is a private member owned club and enjoyed increases in rounds of 14% in 2020 over 2019 and then 4% in 2021 over 2020. In addition, Two Rivers never missed a beat with food and beverage with an excellent “take out” program. The only segment that was down at Two Rivers during the Covid years was for special events like weddings and they are recovering nicely now.

This new found love of the game of golf was much needed for an industry that had suffered over the last decade with waning participation numbers, limited attraction of new golfers and club members and over-saturation of courses compared to the demand for golf. Both Junior Golf and Family Golf began to thrive as children wanted a way to get out of the house and golf became the perfect family get together and outdoor activity. And all of a sudden, people were working from home with much more time on their hands, kids ballgames and social events were put on hold—and everyone in the household was excited to get outside and enjoy some golf and family time—one of the true winners in the pandemic were the golf courses and clubs.

As challenging as the last few years have been, golf activities and clubs have been able to provide a safe place for golfers and their families to spend time and continue building new memories.



ATTRACTING AND RETAINING MEMBERS

Through Membership Sales & Marketing and Innovative Programming

We have continued to share our knowledge of Membership Sales and Marketing with many clients, as adding new Members is a key objective for financial success for most clubs.

The cover photo of this newsletter is of the famed Pine Needles Resort and Lodge in Southern Pines, NC—a multi-year client of ours. We developed their new Membership Plan and the sales and marketing program to introduce the membership options and they have had amazing success with it over the past 10 years. Pine Needles is hosting the US Women's Open Championship in June, which will be their fourth time hosting the championship of the top women golfers in the world.

We work to better understand the needs of both club members and potential club members, help clubs understand their current demographics and identify target markets. Then, by developing and implementing comprehensive Membership Sales and Marketing Plans (in cooperation with the General Managers, Membership Committees, and Membership Directors), we have helped our clients add over 1,500 Members valued at over \$6 million in first year Initiation Fees and Dues in the past few years.

Most clubs have learned that a calendar of fun programming is now essential to help attract and retain new members. It now takes more than a great golf course and other club facilities, but it is the on-going club experience that has become more and more important. This should be planned for both adults and children and should cover all of the sports and food and beverage.

In addition to the standard Holiday type programming, a few of the “best in show” programming ideas that we have seen include:

- Beginner ladies golf instruction with champagne
- Outdoor yoga and exercise classes
- “Date Night” dinners for the parents with childcare at the Club
- Special nights of Hamburger, Pasta, Pizza, Fish and Chips, Sushi
- “Wine and Nine” golf evenings
- Family Camp out on the lawn
- “Dive-in” movies at the pool on a weekly basis in the summer months
- Bocce and Pickleball leagues
- Mother-Daughter Tea
- Speaker series
- Polar Swim Club in winter (if pool is heated)
- Wine Shop with discounted wines
- Trips to ballgames, golf tournaments, historic sites, gardens, etc.



EXECUTIVE SEARCH

Hiring the Right People Makes All the Difference

Having the right people leading your club's team makes all the difference in providing outstanding service to your members and guests and in making your club financially successful. These experienced leaders ensure excellent member and guest experiences and quality facilities and programs resulting in successful financial operations. Conversely, the wrong people can negatively impact the brand, the business, and your overall success.

GBA prides itself in helping our clients find the "right" people through our vast network of industry contacts and our understanding of the golf/club business and the responsibilities of these key positions at successful clubs. We ensure we attract the top candidates and assist owners, Board Members and/or Selection Committees in making the right decision for their unique situation.

We develop positions descriptions, assist the club in understanding salary comparables, and utilize our database to attract the right candidates. We then conduct resume reviews, first round interviews, and background checks. The best candidates are interviewed by key staff and Board Members using an objective rating scale to ensure the selection of the best candidate. GBA has assisted private, resort, daily fee and municipal clubs in successfully recruiting outstanding candidates and eventually hiring the best candidates for the following positions: **General Manager/COO, Director of Golf, Golf Course Superintendent, and Membership Director.**

We have completed successful Executive Searches over the past few years for:

- Centre Hills Country Club – *State College, PA* General Manager/COO
- Glens Falls Country Club – *Queensbury, NY* General Manager/COO
- Eagles Mere Country Club – *Eagles Mere, PA* General Manager/COO
- Willow Oaks Country Club – *Richmond, VA* Director of Golf
- Otesaga Resort – *Cooperstown, NY* Golf Course Superintendent
- Otesaga Resort – *Cooperstown, NY* Director of Golf
- James River Country Club – *Newport News, VA* General Manager/COO
- James River Country Club – *Newport News, VA* Director of Golf
- Bent Creek Country Club – *Lancaster, PA* General Manager/COO
- Nemaquin Resort – *Farmington, PA* Director of Golf
- Nemaquin Resort – *Farmington, PA* Golf Course Superintendent
- The Country Club of Virginia – *Richmond, VA* Golf Course Superintendent
- Golden Horseshoe – *Williamsburg, VA* Golf Course Superintendent
- Old Trail Golf Club – *Crozet, VA* PGA General Manager
- Farmington Country Club – *Charlottesville, VA* Membership Director
- Indian Creek Yacht and Country Club – *Irvington, VA* General Manager
- Two Rivers Country Club – *Williamsburg, VA* Membership Director
- Hershey Resort – *Hershey, PA* Director of Golf

TEAM SPOTLIGHT

Tim Pemberton Appointed as New William & Mary Golf Coach



Tim Pemberton, part of the Golf Business Advisors family since 2017, recently accepted his dream job as head coach of the College of William and Mary Golf team. Tim is a 2005 graduate of the College of William and Mary and an accomplished amateur golfer. After serving as the interim men's golf coach in the spring of 2021, he was named the Head Coach and is the first W&M alumni to lead the men's golf program since legendary coach Joe Agee '52 M.Ed. '56 reigned after leading the team from 1964 to 1999.

In his first season at the helm, the men's team finished fourth at the CAA Championships—its best finish since 2015—and set the best-ever scoring average in program history with a 293.8 team average.

Pemberton's records for college tournament wins and rounds played still stand today. He also helped lead W&M to the 2002 NCAA Regionals, the last time that the Tribe has advanced to the national post-season. In 2009-10, he was named to the Colonial Athletic Association's 25th Anniversary Men's Golf Team.

Before Tim moved into the business world, he spent two years as a professional golfer immediately after graduation, competing in the Korn Ferry PGA developmental tour and various mini-tour events around the country. Pemberton has enjoyed a successful amateur golf career as well, competing in three USGA Amateur Championships: 2003 at Oakmont, 2004 at Winged Foot, and most recently in 2019 at Pinehurst.

The College of William and Mary has stringent academic standards and Tim is assisting his team in handling life in the classroom and on the course. He has some intelligent student athletes, and in the Spring semester of 2022, five of the ten players earned the *Provost's Award* for having a cumulative GPA above 3.5. In addition, Senior Matthew Feinstein won this year's *President's Award* for sportsmanship, citizenship, and leadership. He is quite impressive on the course, as well as in the classroom with a 3.95 GPA as a double major in Finance and History. Matthew will be entering the College of William and Mary Mason School's MBA program next fall.



Tim will continue to assist GBA with special projects and we wish him well in his new endeavors at William and Mary.

MORE ABOUT CHAMBERS

Planning • Architecture • Interior Design • Procurement

It has been a great learning experience to work with Chambers on a few renovation projects, including Glens Falls Country Club, Eagles Mere Country Club, and Centre Hills Country Club. The Chambers



C H A M B E R S

team works closely with the Board, General Manager and entire membership to understand what the unique needs really are for each club client. Much of this is accomplished through focus groups and detailed surveys to help prioritize potential improvements. Chambers also works to include the key trends in the Club industry that will assist the club in the future, including things like outdoor dining, casual dining, kitchen improvements, pro shop, fitness centers, golf simulation areas, etc.

Using their expert industry knowledge and the data collected directly from members, Chambers then develops conceptual plans with associated cost estimates (and possibly phasing plans), and works with club leadership to develop an appropriate funding model to pay for the improvements. In most cases, these plans are then presented to membership for approval. Following a (hopefully) positive vote—which Chambers holds a 95% success rate at achieving—Chambers' architects and designers then work with the club to implement the improvements.

The following are just a few of the award-winning projects Chambers has brought to fruition. Learn more on their website: www.chambersusa.com.



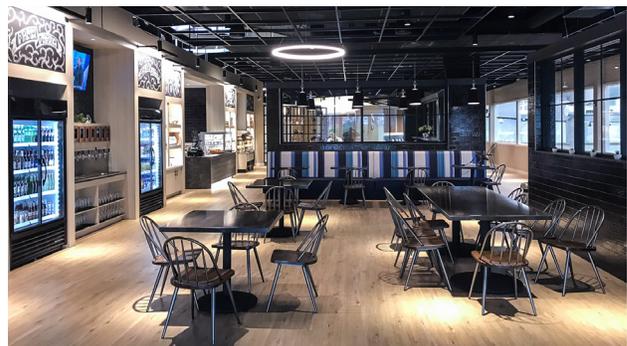
Cape Fear Country Club (NC)



Bald Head Island Club (NC)



The Country Club of North Carolina (NC)



Oxford Athletic Club (PA)