

Reno homeowners to change the fate of ArrowCreek Country Club

Marcella Corona 8:10 p.m. PDT October 3, 2014



(Photo: Marcella Corona/RGJ, Marcella Corona/RGJ)

Things are starting to look up for the ArrowCreek Country Club in Reno after years of financial trouble, as a local group finalizes a deal to buy the golf course and save it from ruin.

Friends of ArrowCreek, a local group of 32 homeowners, will be assuming about \$2 million of liability, which includes more than \$1.4 million of unpaid water bills, special assessment district fees, unpaid taxes and interest penalties, said Chairman Gary Pestello and Rew Goodnow, an attorney with Parsons Behle & Latimer, representing the group.

The group had been interested in buying the golf course ever since the former owners, Aspen Sierra Leasing Company and Golden Gate Assets, filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy earlier this year. Several unpaid fees had prompted Washoe County to put a tax lien on the property, leading to bankruptcy.

Friends of ArrowCreek had paid a \$100,000 down payment in late September and expect to close escrow by the end of this month or sooner, Pestello said.

Pestello said the group has been working on buying the course since late December. The group plans on renaming it the Club at ArrowCreek.

"It's part of a new outlook on life," Pestello said Friday afternoon. "The past is gone and we're only looking forward."

"Friends of ArrowCreek is acting as a bridge to bring the community together so homeowners can control their own destiny," he said.

[Buy Photo](#)



Gary Pestello of Friends of ArrowCreek stands by the Challenger golf course, one of two courses at the ArrowCreek Country Club in Reno, on Friday, Oct. 3, 2014. (Photo: Marcella Corona/RGJ, Marcella Corona/RGJ)

But ArrowCreek, which includes two courses, wasn't the only golf site to face financial problems. D'Andrea and Northgate golf courses in Reno have closed in the past five years, a fate that Pestello said his group wants to change for ArrowCreek.

"We don't want that to happen to our community," Pestello said, noting that the golf course will be managed by Arnold Palmer Golf, who owns or manages about 200 golf courses nationwide.

"It's like running a newsroom," he said. "You don't buy a newsroom and expect to run it. You have to know something about it, which is why we have someone else managing the golf course."

Pestello said the group has raised an estimated \$2.3 million from private investors.

"There's been a negative cloud over ArrowCreek for almost eight years, and we feel that that cloud is being lifted," he said. "It's affected real estate sales, escrow closings and people's willingness to look here because of this negative cloud that has been surrounding the ArrowCreek community."

"For the first time in a long time, we see people looking forward, and realtors are excited about the new possibilities here," he said.

Sam Fox, Arrowcreek Homeowners Association board of directors, said saving the golf course would help bring up property values by 15 to 25 percent.

"Hopefully we'll keep together a well-funded golf club and the debts with the golf clubs will go away and the homeowner values will rise," Fox said.

The plan is to have homeowners pay an additional \$99 monthly fee towards the golf course in return for a social membership, allowing them use of the facilities and golf courses, Fox said.

That includes having lunch or dinner at the restaurant, free golf rounds and use of the driving range, he said.

[Buy Photo](#)



Ben Collins, 77, practices his swing at one of two golf courses at the ArrowCreek Country Club on Friday, Oct. 3, 2014. (Photo: Marcella Corona/RGJ, Marcella Corona/RGJ)

Homeowners will have a vote on the proposed tax until early next year, giving Friends of ArrowCreek a chance to mail ballots to the homeowners, Fox said.

Until then, business will continue as usual at the golf course, Fox said, noting that there's a 30-day transition period in management.

Friends of ArrowCreek coordinated with Arrowcreek Homeowner's Association to buy the property, raising some concerns on whether the purpose was to resell it for a profit.

Pestello said the goal was to preserve it for the community.

"Our goal was never to make a profit and sell it," he said. "If ArrowCreek homeowners chose not to control their own destiny, then we are prepared to keep both courses, and sometime down the road, when it's profitable, we could sell it."

Friends of ArrowCreek face several challenges, including sustaining the golf course. Fox said the hope is to sustain revenue by offering social memberships — a cheaper offering with fewer perks.

Interest in golf peaked in 2006, just before the the recession, and it hasn't reach that peak again, affecting several courses in Reno, Fox said.

"We're calling it a community club, not just a golf-only club," he said.

Ben Collins, 77, an ArrowCreek resident, was practicing his swing at ArrowCreek on Friday and said he fully supports Friends of ArrowCreek's efforts.

"From what I know, the Friends of ArrowCreek are friends of ArrowCreek," Collins said, who practices golf every afternoon at the club. "If it all works out, it's a big benefit to the homeowners and the club members."

Buy Photo



Kristen Eissmann, 18, of Reno practices her swing at one of two courses at the ArrowCreek Country Club on Friday, Oct. 3, 2014. (Photo: Marcella Corona/RGJ, Marcella Corona/RGJ)

Kristen Eissmann, 18, of Reno often practices at ArrowCreek as part of the girls' varsity golf team at Bishop Manogue Catholic High School.

"I'm excited to see what the condition of the course will be and just have how the course will evolve into an even better practice facility."

Although Eissmann doesn't live in the ArrowCreek community, she's been a club member for more than two years, she said.

"I think the more golf courses for golfers and junior golfers, the more opportunity for experience," she said.

Follow Marcella Corona on Twitter @Marcella_Anahi.

Read or Share this story: <http://on.rgj.com/1vEdZvw>

MORE STORIES



Hawthorne judge dismisses man's warrant 5 years after speeding ticket

[\(/story/news/2014/12/19/hawthorne-judge-dismisses-mans-warrant-years-speeding-ticket/20647601/\)](/story/news/2014/12/19/hawthorne-judge-dismisses-mans-warrant-years-speeding-ticket/20647601/)

(/story/news/2014/12/19/hawthorne-judge-dismisses-mans-warrant-years-speeding-ticket/20647601/)

Dec. 19, 2014, 5:12 p.m.



Even 'dogs in bars' are a concern to Nevada Legislature