

OPEN SPACE

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Golf foes must first make the cut

by Guy Wilson



Depending on public opinion and the results of further studies, the city of Santa Rosa may decide to build an 18-hole golf course on the 318-acre Kelly Farm property along the Laguna de Santa Rosa at the eastern border of Sebastopol.

With Laguna Awareness Day having been recently celebrated in Sebastopol and with public fervor for Laguna preservation steadily growing, the very idea of a golf course on the environmentally sensitive Laguna may strike many folks as simply insane.

But do these objectors to the Laguna golf course really know what they are talking about? Are they aware of all the benefits that a Laguna golf course would bring? Have they considered that all their objections may indeed be an ill-considered "knee-jerk response," to quote Sebastopol's Mayor Sam Crump?

Clearly, what is needed is a greater public awareness of the Laguna golf course issue. Only through education can we prevent this matter from becoming a wedge issue that will divide and handicap us all.

Accordingly, before we have any further knee-jerk responses, I believe that all concerned citizens should first be required to take, and pass, the following multiple-choice Laguna Golf Course Awareness Test, which is offered as a public service. Answers should be written with a little three-inch pencil lacking an eraser.

- 1.) Contrary to the "knee-jerk response" of Laguna golf opponents, there would be tangible environmental benefits from building the course. Select all that apply:
 - a.) Increase in birdies, eagles, and even the rare double eagle
 - b.) During flood season, better drainage from divots
 - c.) 318 acres of weed abatement and pollen count reduction
 - d.) Laguna restoration in the form of a water hazard on the back nine
- 2.) What is a "knee-jerk response," anyway?
 - a.) Doctor hits your knee with funny little rubber hammer
 - b.) Doctor hits your knee with a three iron
 - c.) If you knew, you wouldn't be hooking your

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- d.) What happens when you step into a divot while strolling the Laguna
- 3.) Why do many of Sebastopol's voters actually support a Laguna golf course?
 - a.) They didn't approve an Urban Golf Boundary Initiative
 - b.) They are all planning to move to Santa Rosa
 - c.) They figure it's their only chance to attract Tiger Woods to the area
 - d.) Scandia Fun Center course in Rohnert Park is too tough, especially that annoying windmill with the closing doors
- 4.) What economic benefits will the Laguna golf course bring to the area?
 - a.) Local youth will learn caddy and ball retrieval vocational skills
 - b.) Revenue from corporate sponsorship — "Laguna de Nike"
 - c.) Stray golf balls to be repainted and sold as fossilized eggs
 - d.) Trap door in 18th hole will allow Sebastopol to keep golf balls

- 5.) What public health benefits will local residents enjoy from a nearby course?
 - a.) More doctors attracted to area
 - b.) Existing doctors more easily found
 - c.) Doctors can use electric carts to respond to emergency calls
 - d.) Relief from guilt feelings over plight of golf-starved Santa Rosans
- 6.) What cultural benefits will result from construction of the Laguna course?
 - a.) Primitive artifacts to be unearthed by divots
 - b.) Primitive artifacts to be broken into two-inch shards, used as golf tees
 - c.) Ritual 19th hole libations enhanced by Laguna water chasers
 - d.) Promotion of bonding opportunities for imperiled white male culture
- 7.) The City of Santa Rosa should be allowed to build the Laguna golf course next door to Sebastopol, without any objection by Sebastopol, because:
 - a.) It's the Laguna de Santa Rosa, not the Laguna de Sebastopol
 - b.) The issue was secretly settled in a Skins game lost by Sebastopol
 - c.) Santa Rosa's scud missiles are aimed at us
 - d.) Who knows, someday we may want to build a Laguna in Santa Rosa

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