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LOCAL GOLF NOTEBOOK

NCGA Foundation honored for work with underserved youth

By **JERRY STEWART**
Herald Correspondent

The California state legislature didn't debate this one.

Last Thursday, the NCGA Foundation, which invested more than \$1 million in deserving youth in 2009, was honored on the Senate floor by a concurrent resolution from the state legislature for its work in encouraging and developing core values in kids through golf.

The resolution cited the Foundation's efforts in "supporting a continuum that extends a wholesome success oriented life through

scholarships, internships, career opportunities and wholesome life" and acknowledged Foundation efforts that "funded scholarships, grants for youth programs, subsidized 90,000 experiences on driving ranges and 60,000 rounds of golf for the young people of Northern California."

As noted in the resolution, the charitable arm of the NCGA hosted nearly 20 clinics last year, increasing its focus on deserving youth in underserved communities through instruction, scholarships and job opportunities. More than 70 clinics,

Local aces

- ▶ Tom Ballard on the 156-yard fourth hole at Bayonet Golf Course, using a 6-iron.
- ▶ Kerstin Jones, of Pacific Grove, on the 117-yard third hole at Rancho Canada Golf Club's West Course, using a 6-hybrid.

impacting underserved communities, are scheduled for 2010.

"The Foundation is honored to be recognized by the California legislature," NCGA Foundation Executive Director Adam Heieck said. "We will continue to create

and implement programs that impact youth in underserved communities throughout Northern California."

During the ceremony at the state capitol, Heieck, NCGA CEO Lyn Nelson and five kids from Friendship Baptist Church in Seaside, beneficiaries of eight Foundation clinics in 2009, were honored. The kids met with Senator Ron Calderon, who introduced the legislation (SCR 101) in his office and later with acting Lt. Governor Mona Pasquil in the governor's office — it was Pasquil's final day as acting Lt. Governor.

CJ Garrett, one of the five kids representing Seaside Baptist Church, spoke on the Senate floor at the capitol regarding the significance of the Foundation's Youth on Course program and access it provides to golf.

"I am here today to discuss how Youth on Course has changed my life," said Garrett to open his address. "Youth on Course has taught me to be a calm and patient person. The program has taught me to stay focused on the golf course and off the

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golf course. It has also taught me to always try my best and never give up."

Friendship Baptist Church's youth attended clinics throughout 2009. The original series of lessons were guided by Pebble Beach Golf Academy Director Laird Small and his staff at Spyglass Hill, leading to the kids playing a round at Pebble Beach's Peter Hay Golf Course. Later, the group attended at clinic at Poppy Hills with the San Jose State University golf team and head coach John Kennaday.

The clinics were part of a Foundation initiative to leave clinic participants with messages and ideas that should improve their everyday lives at school and home. Developing golf skills while honing important character traits inherent in the game were the focus of the clinics hosted in 2009, including one led by NBC Sports personality and Foundation Honorary Board Member Roger Maltbie, as well as the golf teams from Stanford and Santa Clara Universities.

Youth development is the Foundation's focus, with golf serving as the vehicle to teach life skills and core values. The Youth on Course program, which partners with more than 115 facilities across the region, allows certified kids to play golf for as low as \$2. The pioneering program was the first of its kind to make a connection between clinics for beginners and developing full-fledged golfers. The program has since been replicated by other golf organizations throughout the country.

SCR 102, a resolution acknowledging "golf week" throughout the state during the playing of the U.S. Open June 17-20, will be introduced in May.

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