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WANADA Open set for May 16 at Lansdowne Resort

New golf skills and tennis competition set for annual event



WANADA members will want to put Wednesday, May 16 on their calendar for a fun filled day of camaraderie and competition at the association’s annual golf tournament (WANADA Open) returning this year to the beautiful Lansdowne Resort in Leesburg, VA.

The “shotgun” start for the Open is set for 12:30 to be preceded with lunch on the terrace overlooking the 18th hole of the Greg Norman designed golf course. Golf registration is \$250 per golfer.

If you don’t play golf, plan to be on hand for cocktails and dinner that evening, or come to play tennis or spend a few hours at the spa!

New this year are three golf skill challenges administered by Albatross Golf Events:

- The Lob Wall – Tests to see who can elevate the ball high enough to clear the lob wall
- The Glass Blast – measures ball trajectory to see who can break a pane of glass from 20 yards away, and
- The Money Putt – Pays \$2,500 to whoever can sink a fifty foot putt with one try.

The WANADA Special Events Committee has also instituted some improvements for this year’s tournament to include the following:

- No golf cart restrictions
- 60 years and older will play from the White Tees
- Closest to the pin & longest drive prizes will be awarded for both Blue and White tee competitors
- The WANADA Cup Competition will be open to *all* foursomes provided that each has a minimum of one dealer representative (each foursome will be designated Maryland or Virginia based on dealership location);

The winner of the WANADA Cup will be determined by totaling the scores of all VA foursomes and all MD foursomes, divided by their respective number of foursomes. The state with lowest average foursome score will win the title and the foursome with the lowest score on the winning state team will have their names added to the WANADA Cup plaque.

For tennis players, the Committee has arranged for a one-hour clinic with Lansdowne's tennis professional and day-long open play. Registration for the clinic, locker room facilities, lunch, cocktails and dinner is \$125.

All are encouraged to register *early* for The WANADA Open as the number of golfers is limited to 124 players. To book your golf foursome or tennis clinic, click [here](#) to download a registration form which can be sent in via fax or email Kristina Henry at kh@wanada.org.

Schedule of events

9:00 AM –	Tournament registration and driving range warm-up
10:45 – 12:00 noon –	Lunch on the patio
12:30 PM –	Shot Gun start
1:00 PM	Tennis clinic
5:30 PM –	Cocktail Reception
6:30 PM –	Awards Dinner

For more information, call Kristina Henry 202-237-7200, ext. 18 or kh@wanada.org

Good news for the auto industry: consumers cover the car payment first!

The recession has forced many Americans to rejigger their finances, but a new study indicates deferring car payments is one of the last things they will do.

TransUnion, the credit check company, studied payment patterns of 4 million Americans with at least one car loan, one credit card and a mortgage, and found a clear priority for staying current on the car loan. Among Americans who were late on payments last year, 39 percent were delinquent on the mortgage, while current on the car loan and credit cards, and 17 percent were late on credit cards while current on the other two. Only 10 percent were late on the car loan while current on the other two.

When TransUnion first did the study in 2006, staying current on the mortgage was the priority, said Ezra Becker, the company's vice president of research and consulting. "Today, most people need a car to get to a job or to look for a job, and that has made cars a priority," he says.

FTC finally nails auto warranty scammer

It has taken more than three years, but the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has finally succeeded in prosecuting one of the more notorious auto warranty scammers there is.

In 2008, several state attorneys general teamed up to prosecute auto warranty scammers for making illegal telephone solicitations for bogus auto warranty programs. The next year, a federal judge ordered two companies to cease the illegal calls.

This week, the FTC announced it had closed down LA-based SBN Peripherals (Asia Pacific Telecom, Inc.), which it said had made more than 2.6 billion random calls in less than 20 months and bilked approximately 12.8 million consumers in some way or another.

The FTC ordered the company to pay \$5.3 million in fines and attached liens on more than \$1 million from a Hong Kong bank account, a \$357,000 house, 50% interest in a Saipan office building, interests in seven tracts of land, a 2004 Corvette, a 2005 BMW X5, a 2004 Dodge Durango, and a recreational vehicle. It also ordered the company to cease and desist telemarketing.

Sub-prime borrowers returning to auto market



Credit scoring company Equifax says subprime borrowers are gaining share in new auto loan originations, especially in the auto finance segment where they now make up over 46% of the market.

Equifax said new auto finance loan amounts increased from \$164.6 billion in 2010 to \$176.2 billion in 2011, hitting the highest originations level since 2007 (\$221.1 billion).

Additionally, Equifax said auto bank loan amounts were up 14% from 2010 (\$162.1 billion) to 2011 (\$187 billion), nearly reaching pre-recession levels.

The number of new auto loan originations increased over 2% from 2010 (\$17.3 million) to 2011 (\$19.6 million). The 2011 figure surpasses 2008 totals and is 9% lower than the six-year high reached in 2007 of \$21.5 million.

Total consumer debt in the U.S. currently stands at \$11 trillion, a decrease of 11% from its peak in Q4 2008 at \$12.4 trillion. The drop is driven by a nearly 12% drop in home financing balances, which fell from \$9.8 trillion in 2008 to \$8.7 trillion in February 2012. Non-mortgage and non-student consumer debt balances also fell sharply (22%) from the early 2008 peak of \$2.05 trillion. After reaching a post-recession low of \$1.60 trillion in May 2011, consumer debt balances have risen about 2%.

"The evidence of increased lending to sub-prime consumers demonstrates banks' ongoing efforts to grow lending by providing credit opportunities to more consumers," said Equifax chief economist Amy Crews Cutts. "Year-over-year results show borrowers are taking advantage of the new opportunities and seeking to diversify their financial activity, which is building momentum toward economic improvement."

Ally Financial local “hot spot” marketing program may raise licensing issues

Ally Financial is getting ready to launch a new program to increase new-vehicle sales at General Motors and Chrysler dealerships that may raise licensing issues for participating dealers. Known as The Vehicle Intercept Program, it kicks off in Washington, DC, Houston, TX, Detroit, MI, and Ft. Myers, FL in the coming weeks.

The program works as follows: Ally Financial, along with the participating dealership, will set up a tent outside a local “hot spot,” like a Chick-fil-A or a Starbucks, where the dealership will display some vehicles. Consumers who take time to learn more about the vehicles will be offered a free gift card to the local business participating in the event.

Following the brief vehicle demonstration, consumers will also receive a special promotional code to be used to register online for a test drive at one of the local participating dealerships. Consumers who visit participating dealerships and complete a test drive will receive a \$50 gas card.

Ally Financial staff, hired for each event, will be equipped to answer questions about financing options and provide potential customers with sales information. Sales personnel from participating dealerships will also be reachable by cell phone to answer specific customer questions.

“This program is a creative way to get consumers to experience vehicles they may not otherwise consider,” said Tim Russi, executive vice president of Ally's North American Auto Operations. “We’re excited to conduct these programs with dealers to help generate leads and expand our retail financing opportunities as well.”

Dealer attorney Mike Charapp cautions dealers planning to participate in such promotional efforts that state dealer licensing issues may arise if sales and F&I are discussed at these offsite events and urges members to consult legal counsel prior to participating.

Mobile car service franchise launched

Mobix Car Services Franchise Inc. said this week it was rolling out the first onsite mobile car care service and mobile detailing company in the United States and Canada. The company said its service will consist of 11 basic car care services, including routine maintenance and mobile detailing at any home or office at a time convenient for the customer.

Mobix, based in Nevada, said its services would also include oil changes, lubrication and fluid top-off, engine air filter change, battery testing and maintenance, fuel system service, tire rotation, headlight polishing and wiper blade replacement. Mobix said it would use only background verified and ASE Certified technicians to perform the services.

More information on the Mobix Car Services franchise can be found [here](#).



A bridge looking for somewhere

Maryland, Virginia revisit talks on possible new Potomac River crossing

Maryland and Virginia's transportation officials met earlier this month to further discuss the possibility of building another Potomac River crossing to ease traffic congestion in the Washington Metropolitan area. The talks are the latest in a series of discussions that have gone on for decades on how to get travelers from outside the region across the Potomac and limit their impact on local traffic, which is already noted as being some of the most congested in the country.



The key problem remains: where should the bridge be built?

Virginia Transportation Secretary Sean Connaughton disclosed the new push for a second crossing while talking with reporters this week following a luncheon hosted by the Greater Reston Chamber of Commerce to discuss Dulles rail. Connaughton said a new bridge could eliminate 15 percent of rush-hour traffic on the Beltway. "We've started to engage in discussions with the state of Maryland," he said. "It may not have support with all the special interests."

Jack Cahalan, spokesman for Maryland's Department of Transportation said Thursday that Maryland and Virginia transportation officials met March 9 to follow up a general discussion between Gov. Martin O'Malley and Gov. Robert F. McDonnell. "These discussions are very preliminary," he said. "We'd like to keep the dialogue going though, because this has been on the radar screen for many decades."

Maryland has refused to consider any bridge and roadway that would land in Montgomery County's agricultural preserve and has long insisted that a bridge north of the Beltway should land no farther south than Point of Rocks in Frederick County, where a bridge already carries Route 15 across the Potomac.

Virginians have traditionally viewed that location as too far west, arguing for a link between western Montgomery County and Loudoun County that could serve as a "techway" between Interstate 270 in suburban Maryland and high-tech offices near Dulles International Airport in Northern Virginia.

Staying ahead ...

It's right to be patient with stupidity, but not with those who are proud of it.

--Edith Sitwell