

FAIRVIEW GOLF CLUB History

By Howard Stevens

In 1954 Two-Black golfers went to play golf at the West Palm Beach Country Club, a city golf course. They were John W. Stevens and Dr. Collie. After arriving to play, they were denied the right to do so.

These men did not think it was right for them to be denied an opportunity to play on the city-owned course. The next day they made an appointment to talk with West Palm Beach's first Black attorney, William Holland.

After another attempt to integrate the golf course, the City of West Palm Beach Commission continued to deny the men the right to play. Mr. Steven and Dr. Collie made a decision to have Attorney Holland file a law suit in Palm Beach County courts. After six months, the Palm Beach County court ruled in favor of the City of West Palm Beach Commission.

This did not deter the men. Attorney Holland filed an appeal with the District Court of Appeals. In 1955, after a fight in court, the District Court of Appeals ruled in favor of Attorney Holland and his clients. The ruling stated that because all citizens pay taxes in the City of West Palm Beach, no citizen could be denied use of city owned property. The West Palm Beach Country Club was integrated in 1955. A great victory for justice was obtained. Thanks to John W. Stevens and Dr. Warren Collie for their fight and dedication.

In June 1956, a group of dedicated golfers met on a Sunday afternoon to organize a golf club for Black golfers in West Palm Beach,

Florida. The first meeting was held at Stevens Funeral Home Chapel, 1803 North Tamarind, West Palm Beach. The founders were: John W. Stevens, David Bennett, Pete Toomes, Howard Stevens. Wilson McDonald and Dan Calloway.

After two meetings of the attendees, Mr. John Stevens suggested the name Fairview Golf Club and gave reasons for the name. The name was accepted by the attendees and Fairview became an organized golf club in 1956. Shortly after organizing the club, they offered memberships to all Black golfers in the area. The club continued to grow larger every year and by the year 1969, the club had a membership of 59 golfers. The first set of bylaws were written in 1969.

President, Howard B. Stevens, led the club to greater heights. He held the longest term of office - 13 1/2 years, (1972-1985).

In August 1983, the Fairview Golf Club held its first SSAGA State Golf Tournament at the PGA National Golf Club, Palm Beach Gardens, Florida. The Fairview Golfers are among the best golfers in the State of Florida.

Fairview Golf Club's primary objective is to promote junior golf throughout Palm Beach County by teaching young people golfing techniques. The club also serves the community by helping underprivileged families at Thanksgiving with food baskets and gifts for Christmas.

