



# Fore Scottsdale safety

By Paul Breslau, Breslau Insurance & Benefits Inc.

Scottsdale is a wonderful city where we work, conference, live, snowbird, and vacation. Two of the great amenities we are blessed with are the wonderful greenbelt and many golf courses.

According to [scottsdaleaz.gov](http://scottsdaleaz.gov), "The Indian Bend Wash Greenbelt is an oasis of parks, lakes, paths and golf courses traversing 11 miles through the heart of Scottsdale." Also, "Scottsdale has been recognized by the League of American Bicyclists as a Bicycle Friendly Community at the Gold Level for 2011-2019."

Regarding the many golf courses, [travelandleisure.com](http://travelandleisure.com) states, "Golf may have been born in Scotland, but it has been transformed into a way of life in Scottsdale."

## The scenario

We love the Old Town Farmers Market on Saturday mornings. My wife and I enjoy the crowds, the pet dogs, and the fresh produce. We ride our bicycles to the market frequently along the greenbelt. On Saturday, May 19, I decided to ride my bike to this season's penultimate market.

"Located in the heart of Scottsdale, Continental Golf Club's par-60 executive layout offers premium golf and an array of beautiful amenities open to the public seven days a week," according to [continentalgc.com](http://continentalgc.com). At the 4th hole, golfers tee off toward Indian School Road. The greenbelt there is immediately adjacent to the left side of that fairway. There is no protection from errantly hit golf balls.

## Personal injury

While riding my bike, I am always aware of the golfers teeing off. On that Saturday, there were carts on the fairway, which meant those on the tee box were waiting. I pedaled faster, trying to get past the tee box in time. However, the fairway golfers had hit their shots and the tee box golfers wanted to keep things moving. A strong young golfer hit a line drive right to my chest. I saw it coming and could not avoid being hit.

Although the ball hit near my heart, I survived the incident with just severe bruises. However, if I had been hit in the eye or Adam's apple, it could have been much worse, even



fatal. Yes, people are killed by golf balls each year. What happens when another person or a child is hit at some time in the future on our Scottsdale greenbelt?

Both population increase and the Lime and Ofo bike rentals have increased use of the greenbelt significantly. Future serious golf ball accidents that result in serious injury or death will be unavoidable unless there is a concerted effort to prevent them.

## Determining liability

For over 30 years, attorneys Jones Raczowski have successfully represented clients in varying premises liability cases throughout the Phoenix area. According to their website, "When a fatal accident has occurred, difficult questions arise about what caused the accident, and inevitably about whether there was negligence on the part of a property owner, retailer, contractor, landlord, or another party involved."

Why should Scottsdale residents and guests be subject to an avoidable physical threat when we can work together to find ways to prevent it? Why should the finances of the City of Scottsdale and Arcis Golf, owner of Continental Golf and other properties, be subject to the expense of lawsuits with potential multi-million-dollar liability?

## Fix the worst locations

There are many different golf courses

that border the greenbelt paths. Therefore, a cooperative effort might be led by the City of Scottsdale. I spoke briefly with Vice Mayor Virginia Korte. Some may object to screens and fences and say that they are ugly and not necessarily in the philosophy of Scottsdale. The planting of trees would help but trees are not 100 percent protective. Additional signage might help, especially if instructions are provided on how to wait for the tee shots to be completed.

Scottsdale proactively installed stop lights along the canal path street crossings. Similarly, an initiative should be started to proactively identify the worst locations for potential golf injuries. Then there should be a combination of corrective actions implemented that will be beneficial for all parties. This might include redirecting the pathway for short distances in certain locations. Also, check out the protections that the City of Tempe's installed on the Ken McDonald Golf Course, which are very well-received. ■

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