



CHIPS & PUTTS

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Mountain Laurel Golf Club

John Walton, GCS

When you get a chance, visit the lovely Mountain Laurel Golf Club in White Haven. If you've never played Mt. Laurel, you're in for a treat. This Jeffery Cornish designed course was built in 1968, and playing at 6,888 yards from the tips it has everything a course needs to challenge your game. The sprawling course features a fully irrigated 3 acres of bent/poa greens, 2 acres of bent/poa tees, and 28 acres of rye/poa fairways. The signature 10th hole features an island green followed by an island tee for #11.

Mt. Laurel has seen many different owners and management over the years (including its original association with Mt. Laurel Resort and the Hershey Corporation), but it's been the most recent ownership that has invested in some great upgrades and improvements to the property. In the last 6 years they've built a new pro shop, gutted and totally remade the restaurant (complete with a covered patio area), built a new maintenance building, and constructed numerous rock walls throughout the golf course.

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President's Message.....

Editor's Notes.....

What a great summer we've had for golf so far. The weather has remained quite temperate, and with the exception of some dry periods, we couldn't ask for more.

For those who missed the clambake at Water Gap you missed a beautiful day for golf and some outstanding food!!

If anyone has any articles or items they'd like to include in the newsletter, please feel free to pass them on to me.

Brian Bachman



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Through all of these changes one thing has remained constant and that is the presence of long time superintendent John Walton. John has been at the course since 1980 and has been superintendent since 1991. His seasonal staff of 10-13 employees and his year round mechanic Joe have this Pocono course in great shape.

A lifelong native of the White Haven area, John has been married for 22 years. His two daughters have given him 2 grandsons and a granddaughter to enjoy.

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Congratulations to this year's scholarship winner Michael Handley



*Pictured are: Front row: John Downer, Michael Handley, Greg Boring, Gino Marchetti
Back Row: Pat Healey, Jerry Decker, Steve Chirip, Brian Bachman*

Michael Handley was awarded this year's Patterson Scholarship during the August meeting at Water Gap C.C. The Scholarship is awarded each year to a candidate who has met the specific criteria of our scholarship requirements.





Where have all the golfers gone?

By Aimee Picchi, **MONEYWATCH**, May 23, 2014

Just a decade ago, it looked like the golf industry had hit a hole-in-one. Interest in the game was surging, and consumers snapped up equipment and booked tee times.

These days, though, the sport is caught in the rough.

Golf is losing more players than it's gaining, as 4.1 million people [left the sport in 2013](#), outpacing the 3.7 million who picked it up last year. With an overall decline in the number of players, that's causing a ripple effect in the golfing world: Sales of clubs and other equipment are plunging, while some courses are pulling up their tees and calling it a day.

"The main issues that cause people to leave the game and not to try the game are the same. They boil down to time, cost and difficulty," said Steve Mona, the chief executive of the World Golf Foundation.

Golf reached what Mona calls its "high water mark" in 2005, when the sport had 30 million participants playing 550 million rounds of golf. Last year, that had shrunk to 25 million participants and 465 million rounds.

The recession had an impact, as well as tough winter and spring weather the past two years, Mona noted. But the industry is also aware that it needs to overcome some perception issues about the sport's expense, the length of a game and the time it takes to master golf, he added.

To tackle those perceptions, some courses are introducing variations on the game, such as "foot golf," which uses soccer balls instead of golf balls, and the industry is reaching out to under-represented groups, such as women, minorities and the Millennial generation, Mona added.

"The core group who loves golf will stick with it, but we're worried about those people who have not taken to it totally," said Trillium Sellers, a pro golfer who is a member of the PGA and is working on the golf association's task force for player development. "They are in that make-or-break state, where they might try it, but if they don't like it, they won't come back again."

With fewer people opting to play, that's hurting retailers and courses alike.

Take Dick's Sporting Goods ([DKS](#)), which on Tuesday said its golfing division had weighed down quarterly results, with same-store sales at its Golf Galaxy outposts slipping by 10.4 percent. Shares of Dick's Sporting Goods fell 13 percent the following day.

"We don't feel we found that bottom yet in the golf sales number," chief executive Ed Stack said on a conference call with analysts. "We now expect this trend to continue for the balance of the year."

Across the country, golf courses are calling it quits. More courses [closed than opened](#) in the U.S. last year: While 14 18-hole courses were christened in 2013, a whopping 157 closed. The majority of those closures were public courses.

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Continued from page 5

What's causing golfers to put away their clubs?

The sport's high costs are one issue, given even a low-ball price tag pegs the cost at about [\\$700 in course fees, apparel and equipment](#). At the same time, consumers are increasingly strapped for money, including those middle- and upper-middle-class consumers who are most likely to visit a golf course. Median per capita income for American households has [barely budged since 1989](#) in inflation-adjusted dollars.

Women golfers are another problem spot for the sport because they're more likely to join but also more likely to quit, Sellers noted. Over the past five years, the number of women and junior golfers has declined 23 percent and 35 percent, respectively, according to a report she prepared for the Club Managers Association of America.

"The perception is that A, golf is an old white man's sport, and B, it's very hard to learn," she said. "Golf courses and golf clubs are realizing that it's not about him anymore. It's about the wife, because she's usually the one making the final decision about where the money is spent."

One benefit to the downturn? It's a buyer's market for equipment, Mona noted, adding, "You can find pretty good deals. If you shop smartly, you can consume golf pretty reasonably."

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August Meeting Results Water Gap Country Club

1st Place—Match of Cards

Chris Boyle, Bob Boyle,
Ian Kunesch, Jeff Smolha

2nd Place

Bob Brown, Mark Brown
Mike Harris

Closest to Pin #4

Chris Boyle

Closest to the Pin #12

Mike from Pocono Manor

Skins

Bob Boyle #11
Mark Brown #8

Longest Drive

Mike Harris



Photo of the Month

We all see interesting things every day....wildlife (like bald eagles and bears), strange turf problems (like a lightning strike), an employee who stayed out too late the night before, etc. So if you have a great photo, send it to me (bbachman@genesisturfgrassinc.com) and share it for everyone to enjoy (or laugh at).



September Photo of the Month

Just the tip of the iceberg!

You never know what's lurking just under the surface when a small project turns into a much bigger one.

Compliments of Patrick Healey at Scranton Canoe Club.

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POCONO ROUNDUP

Please Note!

If you have changed your mailing address in the past year, please email Melinda with your updated information.

Also, please make sure you, your club, company accounting department, etc., has the correct mailing address for the Pocono Turfgrass Association office. Due to the 911 System the address changed. The post office will soon be returning to sender any mail containing the old address.

Please note the address at the bottom right of this page.

Thank you!

PTGA SCHEDULE

Oct 6 PTGA Golf Meeting
Great Bear CC

Nov 18-20 PSU Turf Conference

Dec 9-11 New Jersey Green Expo
Atlantic City

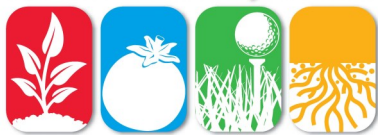
Unfortunately, the meeting at Mountain Laurel Golf Club had to be cancelled. We hope to see everyone next month at Great Bear C.C.

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