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Golf

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Golfers do seem to bond at these events, and also are good sports. Deacon Mike Pichler, on the Catholic schools tournament committee since its beginning four years ago, emceeds the after-golf raffle of donated items and awarding of prizes.

He has presented the highest-scoring players (in other words, the losing team) with fishing poles, tennis rackets, and this year, kites — hints that golf may not be their game.

Such prizes are for "no ability, but a big heart," the deacon said. "We like to recognize those people. We get people who are good and bad, who have a whole lot of fun together."

He added that Bishop Matthew H. Clark learned to golf at a previous schools tournament. "We taught him to putt," Deacon Pichler said. "He's a pretty good putter, but he should keep his day job."

Growing phenomenon

Dave Eaton, editor of the Rochester-area newspaper *Golf Week*, said Rochester alone probably has a couple hundred charity golf tournaments a year.

"I'd have to say on first guess there have been at least three or four new tournaments added each year for the last 10 years," he said. "It seems to keep growing as a phenomenon. I would say at the rate it's growing we'll add another four to five tournaments a year for the next five or six years."

Reaping about \$15,000 is typical for such events, he said. Little of that usually comes from the golfers' fees — which cover their greens fees, carts and dinner later — but rather from generous hole sponsors, general sponsors, and perhaps a raffle or auction that also draws nongolfers.

"Some tournaments are hosted by private courses, which most golfers don't get a chance to play," Eaton said. "It's a significant selling point."

About 40 charity tournaments take place in the Geneva area each summer, according to Ed Dailor, who helped organize a first-time charity tournament for the Roman Catholic Community of Geneva.

"Golfers just want to play golf," he said. "If they have the chance to go out there for the day for a good cause — this is just another \$30 to \$40 above their cost going to a good cause."

In addition to holding the tournament, the two Geneva parishes auctioned their pastor, Father Roy Kiggins, for \$180 as a one-time caddy for the winning bidder. In the end, it was agreed he would ride along in the cart instead.

An offer by Father Paul Bonacci, parochial vicar, to cook dinner for four in the winning bidder's home went for \$200. And Father Jim Hewes, parochial vicar, offered a three-hour sing-along with guitar accompaniment that went for \$625.

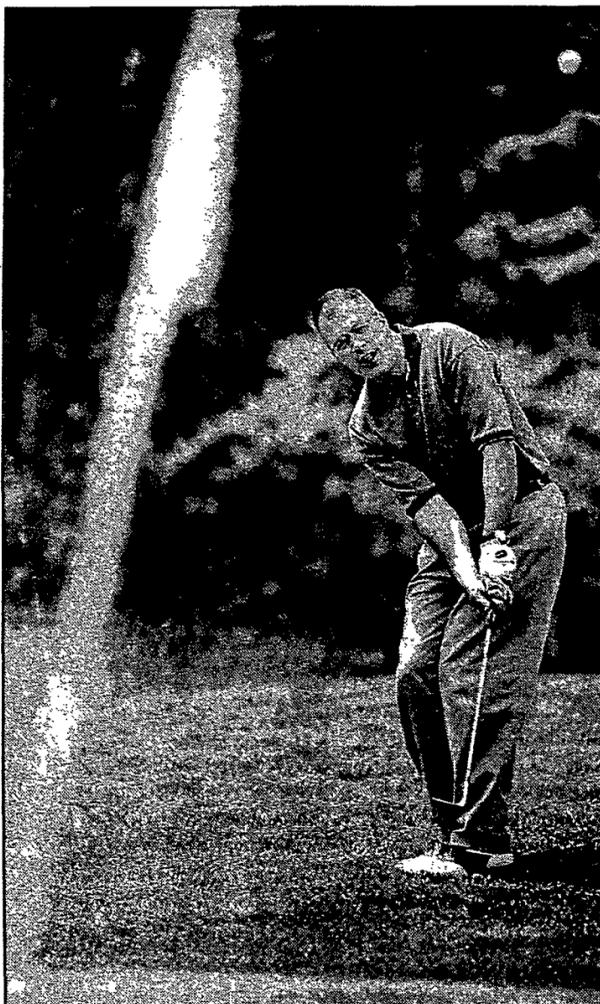
The golf tournament raised \$9,000 for the church, and another \$9,000 came from the auction, Dailor said. "We didn't know what to expect, really, but it turned out beyond what our expectations had been or might have been," he said.

"We had some would-be golfers," Dailor noted. "They enjoy it. They come with friends. It was a handicap event. I noticed an awful lot of people had the highest handicap. They give you strokes to even you out with the better golfers."

Most charity tournaments are scrambles, with a team teeing off at each of the 18 holes on the course for a simultaneous "shotgun start." Then each of the team's four players proceed to the ball that went the farthest of the four, and each hits from that place.

Awards are given for the longest drive and for the ball that lands closest to the pin. The Geneva organizers also sold "mulligans" — cards that entitled a golfer to disregard a bad shot and try again — for \$5 each.

The Catholic Schools Classic raffled a hat, gloves and golf balls signed by Joey Sindelar, a pro golfer who has two children attending St. Mary Our Mother School in



Andrea Dixon/Staff photographer

Steve Thompson chips a ball onto the green on June 28 at the Catholic Schools Scholarship Golf Classic at Greystone Golf Club in Walworth.

Horseheads. Sindelar also autographed a photo of himself, Jack Nicklaus and Arnold Palmer that raised \$350 for Elmira's Notre Dame High School Crusader Classic Golf Tournament June 10.

In Auburn, organizers of the second St. Joseph School golf tournament gave players golf towels with the school name and logo, according to Chris Cuff, an organizer and member of St. Mary's Parish. "We found that actually a lot of people came that we don't see at our other fundraisers ... That was kind of a nice change; we're not asking the same people all the time for money."

Families came together, as did friends, she said.

And one priest came. "Father (Peter) DeBellis golfed, which was really a lot of fun for us," she said.

Father DeBellis, now parochial vicar at Our Mother of Sorrows Parish in Greece, said, "My feeling is it's a great sport, I love to be out with the people and to support a great cause. ... It's a great way to raise money. Golf is very popular now."

"I love playing in tournaments. I love being invited," he said, adding that he is still open for suggestions this summer.

His father brought him up playing golf, Father DeBellis said, noting that he had once wanted to play professionally.

"But back then it wasn't cool to play golf," said Father DeBellis, 42. "I played football."

Another priest, Father Ray Booth, actually has a tournament named after him — the Ray Booth Classic, sponsored by St. Paul's Parish in Webster from which he retired last year. This is generally a close-knit parish event and, Father Booth said, "My golfing is so poor I tend not to go out in public with it too often."

One of the tournament's organizers, Mike McDonald, explained the tournament is "just for community building" and not intended to make money. The organizers named it after Father Booth as a way to stay in touch with the priest in his retirement, he said.

Further, noted Father Booth, St. Paul's renamed the creek in front of the church "Ray's Creek." As golf aficionados will realize, the name is a play on the Rae's Creek that runs through the Augusta (Ga.) National course where the Masters Tournament is played.

ment is played.

Priests are welcomed at tournaments, where they have been known to bless golf carts but generally just say a prayer before dinner.

But blessing carts is not a bad idea, noted Brad Jones of the 9th Annual St. Patrick's Society Benefit Golf Tournament, which made a record \$6,700 for the Seneca Falls parish and school June 5.

"Father (David) Gramkee is invited each and every year to join us, at dinner. He doesn't golf, but we do allow him to drive around in a golf cart, which is a risk in itself. We're always telling him to stay out of the fairways."

But seriously, the pastor "talks it up all year long," which Jones believes helps contribute to the tournament's success.

"Over the first nine years, it raised over \$35,000," he said. And Jones is not concerned about the growing number of charity tournaments.

"Ours is well-known," he said. "We're on the calendar and people know it, and plus, it is one of the better causes. It is for the children more than anything."

Another tournament with little trouble attracting supporters is the Sisters of St. Joseph of Rochester Tournament of Care. The fifth annual tournament last year

raised a record \$33,000, according to Sister Theresa Daniel Knapp, chairperson, who has been golfing for 60 years.

"We have had wonderful sponsors, people who made that possible," she said. Proceeds of the event, which includes a silent auction and dinner, benefit the St. Joseph's Convent Infirmary, and this year are intended to buy a van for wheelchair patients, she said.

Other causes

Several charity tournaments memorialize community figures and family members. The second annual "Nitti Memorial" was held June 3 in memory of Craig Paterniti, a former physical-education teacher at Immaculate Conception School in Ithaca. Paterniti died at a young 47 two years ago.

Proceeds from the event, about \$1,500 this year, go to gym and athletics programs for such items as wall mats for the basketball court.

"We figured it was what Craig would want, as an avid golfer and teacher," explained Paul Alexander, a tournament organizer, who noted that Paterniti had been a star athlete at Ithaca College.

"He was good enough of a pitcher to be drafted into the Cleveland Indians ... He played in the minor leagues. When he quit for whatever reason, he began teaching here, was active in sports as an umpire and referee," Alexander said. "He was very, very popular in this area in all circles of athletics and in the school community."

At St. John Fisher College a Lavery/Dorsey Memorial Golf Tournament is held in memory of two former administrators, Fathers Charles Lavery and Joseph Dorsey. Each year the tournament awards a Rev. Joseph B. Dorsey Memorial Scholarship and a Charles and Eleanor Lavery Memorial Scholarship. The 12th tournament was held June 6, according to Jennifer Viano, college development officer.

The college also helps oversee the annual Christopher A. DiQuattro Memorial Golf Tournament. It memorializes the son of George and Carol DiQuattro, Our Mother of Sorrows parishioners who organized the tournament.

A psychology major at the college, Christopher DiQuattro was killed at the age of 26 in a motorcycle accident in May 1996, one year before he was to graduate.

His father explained that the tournament provides scholarships for nontraditional students such as Chris, helping them return to college and complete degrees after breaks in their educations.

"There's dozens and dozens of people who make it happen," George DiQuattro said, explaining that family, friends and people who went to school with Chris support the tournament.

Another memorial golf event debuted this year when Scott Fox organized the first Birdies for Bethany House Charity Golf Tournament. This event raised \$2,400 for the Catholic Worker home that serves as emergency shelter for homeless women and children, some escaping abusive situations.

"I was looking for something to do with the little time I had," said Fox, a parishioner at St. Paul's Parish in Webster. The golf tournament clicked into place after someone introduced him to Bethany House.

"I love golf almost as much as life itself," Fox said. "It's the one place I can get away and relax. It's one place I find peace." Bethany's guests, too, find peace, he said. But he had a compelling reason to create the charity event.

"My sister was killed by her husband about 25 years ago," he said adding he was about 10 years old when the sister drowned in a bath tub. "In hindsight, she was in an abusive situation, and it led to her death," he said. His sister left behind a 1-year-old daughter.

Yet if his brush with domestic violence ultimately helps others, he said, "that's all the better. This not only raises money but awareness for a very very good cause. I felt being guided to do this work. And I'm going to make it bigger, bigger, bigger."

Tournaments yet to be played this summer

• Monday, July 24 — Sixth annual Sisters of St. Joseph of Rochester Tournament of Care, at Irondequoit Country Club. Benefits St. Joseph's Convent Infirmary. Sold out, but names are being accepted for a cancellation list. 716/586-1000, ext. 230.

• Sunday, July 30 — 3rd Annual Golf Tournament to benefit St. Mary's School, Canandaigua, at Centerpointe Country Club, Canandaigua. Call Greg, 716/398-3040, by July 23.

• Sunday, Aug. 6 — Fifth Annual Christopher A. DiQuattro Memorial Golf Tournament, at Salmon Creek Country Club, Spencerport. Deadline was July 10, but latecomers may call 716/227-0911 or 716/385-8134.

• Thursday, Aug. 17 — Mercy Golf Tournament, at Shadow Lake, Penfield. Benefits Sisters of Mercy Ministry Fund and Our Lady of Mercy High School. 716/288-2710 x 114 or 288-2610.

• Monday, Sept. 11 — Advent House eighth annual golf tournament, at Victor Hills Golf Club. Victor Benefits Advent House, a ministry of Perinton Ecumenical Church Ministries, a home for the terminally ill. 716/223-6112.

• Sunday, Sept. 17 — Knights of Columbus 12223 Father John Guy Council second annual tournament, at Cato Golf Club, Cayuga County. Benefits community charities. Call Dennis Taylor, 315/626-6813.