

# CHIP SHOTS

## VENUES, TIMES SECURED

LOCKED AND LOADED – What a difference a year makes. Last year we were shut out from Saturday golf at Geneva because of a change of leadership and poor communications. When I called this year to confirm tee times, you would think we were having phone sex. Amie nearly orgasmed anticipating our return. Last July she stated the Geneva Open was the best outing she ever worked. The thrill she exuberated when we spoke was certainly the product of fond memories. Another feather in the cap for the Geneva Open. Amie bragged in a giddy schoolgirl fashion that she is a full-time employee of the golf course now and promised to be at our service. Tee times on the hallowed grounds of Geneva start at 8:30 AM on Saturday, July 27, followed by a 9-hole Scramble at 3:30. Sunday's round commences at 9:00 AM. Friday's golf at Hemlock was harder to confirm. Calls throughout the month of March were answered by a recorded message stating Hemlock was closed. In past years, this was not a reason to panic. Other options are available whether it be Powderhorn, Manakiki, Painesville, or never played Black Brook. But I am sitting on rainchecks, 45 of them. My responsibility as Commissioner is to get this matter resolved. I drove to Hemlock. Let's see Roger Goodell show this much dedication. On arrival, it was obvious the course was closed. The maintenance crew was inside the clubhouse. When I told them who I was and the business I sought, they quickly summoned Brian, the course manager. Hemlock reopened April 1. Our tee times for noon on July 26 are secured. The rainchecks will be honored. Let's play golf.

BILL KIRK – The death of long time Geneva fraternity brother, Bill Kirk, was neither a shock nor surprise. It has been evident for the past few years his health has been deteriorating. His whereabouts were unknown. The family stashed him privately away. Bill last played in Geneva in 2019. His appearance in that outing exposed memory disfunction. Ron Szymczak and Tom Jech stayed close to his side making sure Bill did not lose his way. Despite his dementia, his golf game was barely affected. He shot 84 at Hemlock, then 85 and 86 on the Geneva course. A year earlier in 2018, Mr.

Kirk partnered with Jay Green to win the Gavin Cup. His swing was elegant and graceful like a ballet dancer. He controlled his golf balls, able to flutter them left to right or right to left with accuracy. It was like watching a Gaylord Perry knuckleball usually splitting the fairway when touching down. If Kirk missed the green, count on his chipping to save his score. Bill had a knack of advising struggling golfers during a round. His lessons were constructive and if heeded, improved one's game. Many called him Pops because of his golf knowledge, experience, communication skills, and age. Geneva worthy? What do you think? He came to every Geneva Open armed with cases of Budweiser. Mini-Legend Jack Berger e-mailed these words. "We would call him Pops or Old Man (affectionately). First met him when Peanut (Jim Plageman) brought him down to sub in the Friday Night Golf League. I played him when I thought I was hot shit. He kicked my ass. He traveled on the Anheuser-Busch golf team. Very accomplished." He is an entrenched dividend of Geneva lore. Bill Kirk was 82. Rest in Peace.

HOMELESS NO MORE – Last November, I reported on Jay Green's horrific return home from Geneva weekend. On his arrival, strong indications suggested Jay missed a life changing event. Closer investigation revealed Jay hosted a blazing house party, one that he was not present. Those in attendance were firemen bearing big hoses and axes. The fire left Jay with no place to live and only the dirty clothes from Geneva as his full wardrobe. Oh yeah! Jay still had his golf clubs, a prize possession. He slept in his car for two nights before moving to a motel for shelter. Here is Chapter 2 of Jay Green's saga reported by Jay himself. "I am staying in the Ritz," Jay told me in gleeful fashion. The Ritz to him is his new dwelling. As of March 1, he moved into his "own place isolated from neighbors." Piecing his words together, I concluded he lives in a small independent unit as part of a senior assisted living community on East Broad St. across from Mt. Carmel Hospital. I will leave you to draw your own conclusions. He was exceptionally happy that his electricity, gas, water and sewage were not his financial obligation anymore. He was proud that the furnishings inside the home he chose himself including pictures for his walls. With the intention of stocking his closet and spicing his brand, Jay ordered several high-quality shirts from the head of the Geneva Merchandising Committee, Fritz Ford. It was at this point in our conversation when Jay admitted being victim of some small semblance of

senility. As for his old digs, he ignores it for bank foreclosure. He says it is still inhabitable. I brought up the million-dollar prize from the magazine giveaway he claimed to have won. Jay brushed me off giving the impression he realized he was played. Passing from the dream of chasing a million bucks to living in a place of his own came across as a happy transition. If you see Jay at a wedding, funeral, or class reunion which he often crashes, he will have plenty of stories to tell.

BACK TO NORMAL – Since the pandemic closed life back in 2020, so much has changed and returning to normalcy has been long and tedious. It was difficult but Covid-19 did not shut down the Geneva Open. We played on. I like to believe we guided the procedure the NFL followed to play their season. That is what I would like to believe. One more victim of the coronavirus reopened recently. Chops, the long-time favorite restaurant of the old timers who have been chowing down there since 1977, is once more dishing grub. That is a big thing. Some of us handle forks and knives more expertly than a driver or wedge. Back on common ground for Saturday's round of golf, with cooperation from Mother Nature, the Skill Shot competition will return to familiar Geneva holes. The Saturday rain out on the Hemlock course moved several of Saturday's games to Sunday. Even in today's high-tech world, this overburdened our IT people. Not every winner was paid. Rick Jonas (\$50), Dagon Abdon (\$20), Keith Boggess (\$10), and Mark Johnson (\$10) will receive their winnings this July. The Geneva Open vows to do right to those who do right. We are old-fashioned that way. So old-fashioned, I remember when native tribes beat the ground with clubs and yelled. Back then it was called witchcraft. Today, in civilized society, it is called golf.