

CHIP SHOTS

NEWS, INFO, & COMMENTARY

FROM THE COMMISSIONER

MARCH ONWARD – We reached the month where we emerge from hibernation and begin to come back to life like the azaleas at Augusta National. Sun sightings increase and temperatures climb to more tolerable levels. Daylight Savings Time adds daytime hours increasing our itch to golf. It is the month drunken Irishmen (or those pretending to be drunken Irishmen) parade down the middle of downtown streets directly to their favorite pubs. The month's madness is on courts. Baseball teams bring thousands of tourists to Florida and Arizona if greed or pandemics do not interfere. Northeastern Ohio meteorologists tweet like singing cardinals about the melted snow and the statistics of the past winter. Geneva juices kick up. Only four months until we march down Geneva's unpredictable fairways. The Merchandise Committee has been hard at work and production for this year's favors is underway. Next order of business is booking Friday's opening round. Other Committees will fall in line according to their pecking order and by July 21, only the solar system will be more organized. 43 golfers and a few contributors blessed us last year. With the worst of the pandemic behind us and life returning closer to normal, those numbers are expected to close in on the 50 figure. Yes sir, the march to Geneva is under way.

RYALED – Sometime in the Geneva past (ten years or so ago) a fellow by the name of P.J. Ryal was among the Geneva field. Sponsored by Charter Member Jim Nogawick, he came to golf and party. Anyone who hangs with Nogs must live that lifestyle. Only once did he make the trip to the Northern Ohio resort village but it remained embedded in his DNA until his death this past January. For 9 years he battled cancer but died of complications from an unrelated surgery. Up to his dying day he boasted about his Geneva experience and the great time he had. Most do not remember P.J. but he remembered us. I have a story I would like to pass along. Noggy and P.J. flew into Cleveland to play in the Geneva Open from the Carolinas on separate flights. As luck would have it, President Obama came to Cleveland on the same day. Nogs flight landed before air space was closed. P.J. was not so lucky. For three hours Mr. Ryal flew around Cleveland waiting for clearance to land. Running short on fuel, his plane was forced to gas up in Akron before reaching its destination leaving Noggy to sit around the car rental without food or alcoholic drink. It was a miracle Noggy survived such an ordeal. P.J.'s return trip to Charleston was another tedious excursion. Take off from Cleveland was delayed long enough he missed his connecting flight in Atlanta forcing him to spend the night. He worked as the sales manager for a T.V. station and their love for him made his Monday absence excusable. Despite all these travel troubles, he was happy to be part of Geneva lore. Rest in peace P.J. Ryal. I want to thank the Geneva fraternity for making his lone Geneva experience so much fun. Proof once more the Geneva family is among the best.

CONGRATULATIONS – One trip to Geneva and it becomes obvious my fan allegiance lies with the CLEVELAND BROWNS. I have been known to pass gibes a time or two although BROWNS football has accomplished little including zero championships since 1964. I have been known to bust a few tables in my day as many of you can attest. Last year the tables turned. I am prepared to take the abuse the Bengal contingent dishes. A simple greeting of “Who Dey” is like twisting a knife deep in my back forcing me to my knees and crawl like a Dawg around Fountain Square. My pride has taken a hit. Still, I must give credit where credit is due. The Cincinnati Bengals performed like champs. There is no sour grapes from this downtrodden Cleveland fan. I respect the new AFC standard Cinci has set. Next year 15 conference teams come gunning to knock the Bengals from their championship post. I hope that includes the BROWNS. Baker is mending and sharpening his cannon for the battle. The season starts on September 8. Until then, I bow to the accomplishments of the 2021 Cincinnati Bengals.

I became out of sorts more ways than one watching Super Bowl LVI. The recent halftime performance brought about a stark realization. I can no longer keep up with the ways of the world. Many people praised the halftime show as one of the best in Super Bowl history. Are you kidding me? I cannot believe some future artist 50 years from now will rerecord Snoop Dogg’s hit “Drop It Like It’s Hot” or Eminem’s “Venom”. Music revolved from Beethoven to Glen Miller to Frank Sinatra to the Beatles to this? Do you think Benny Goodman rocks in his grave or is he embarrassed about the lack of musical talent on stage these days? I stress this point because at my age I may have lost touch with today’s civilization. Geneva probably needs new leadership. I am not announcing my retirement as Commissioner but I am prepared to hand Blaise Plagemen a more active role in running the event. His input may bring about more up to date policies and events. If health starts to fail me, I am confident Blaise will keep Geneva’s spirit alive in his own ways. The transition of total leadership may take several years and I am sure we will keep the integrity of the event where we strive to achieve every year. It is time for me to prepare for Geneva’s future. As Bobby Bowden said, “Somehow, I went from being too young to being too old. Somewhere in there I must have been just right.”