

CHIP SHOTS

A SALUTE TO ALL

THANKS APLENTY – Every year at this time, the Geneva Open expresses a hearty “Thank You” to all who participated. It is not Geneva that makes this weekend special, it is you that makes Geneva. 47 golfers and 3 on the Social Package attended. Whether on the golf course, stumbling down the sidewalk on the Strip, or hanging out on the Summertime Inn veranda, new personal memories were created. Many of those memories will be shared and rehashed often during future gatherings. Congratulations to the fantastic 50 who made the 2025 Geneva Open another success story. Still, I want to point out a few who earned extra credit. There are the normal cast of contributors who I thank every year. You know who they are. There is Don Jander who is the ringleader of promoting high alcoholic consumption. Something unusual occurs on his watch every Geneva. The extra efforts of Blaise Plageman and Shawn Dorn are instrumental in much of Geneva’s production. The hospitality of Legend Fritz Ford and Bob Rutherford, who open their cabin like a Community Hall in a Senior Living Complex is unmatched. This allows Mike Sachs, better known as Dr. Hate, to distribute his Old Fashion concoction with the pleasure of a demon. Did I mention Don Jander? Two others I have not acknowledged in past salutes, I will thank at this time. At the Commissioner’s Dinner, many come and gobble, but one man sets up the serving table and cleans afterwards, Kerry Joyce. I am great at making messes but lazy at restoring order. By the time Kerry performs his magic, there is little evidence of our feast except the full garbage cans. Of course, I would be remiss if I did not call out Don Jander. This year, he recruited an assistant, Steve Miller. A special “Thank You” needs shouted to Ron Szymczak. Besides the web master for these pages, Ron spent hours developing and testing the program for Squabbit. His work was sensational. If I had not expressed my gratitude earlier, let me take this opportunity to thank Don Jander. He did wonders for my head and liver.

GONE FISHING – The purpose of introducing Squabbit to Geneva was to free time for Ben Lloyd and Blaise Plageman, our scorekeepers the past several years. Squabbit passed the test. Blaise took advantage of his free time to pursue the pleasures of malts, hops, and rye. Anyone around Blaise that weekend can attest he spared no can from consuming its alcoholic content. As Blaise would opt to do, he found other ways to bind his time with his newfound freedom, fishing. During his Saturday round of golf, he found his foursome waiting to hit shots. I do not want to accuse the group in front of him of playing slow, but Blaise had time to fish off No.4 tee, and 5 and 6 fairways. So slow was play, Blaise snagged nearly 20 largemouth bass. Five of those hooked creatures were not as lucky as the other 15 caught. Blaise brought them to Lumpy's Hideaway where they were cleaned, grilled, and consumed. We have the word of Bill Boggess to prove this was not a fish tale. During Sunday's golf, Billy arranged to try his hand at the sport. Bill's aches and pains were too discomforting to golf. Taking possession of Blaise' rod and reel, he parked himself by the pond. 45 minutes into his venture, he quit. "It wasn't any fun," Bill said. "Every time I cast into the water, I caught a fish." Good thing he packed up his pole early because he was the first on the scene to celebrate Ray Ballard's hole-in-one on No.9. With all this fishing success, a suggestion has been made to change the menu to surf and turf at next year's Commissioner's Dinner.

HEAVY HEART – Last August 14, Geneva lost fraternity brother, Ralph DiCarolus. He died of complications from dementia. For over 20 years, Ralph made Geneva an essential stop on his calendar. I roomed with him every year. His golf game was not special, but his personality surely was. I never saw him take a drop of hard liquor and he had a limit of three beers a night, proving one can enjoy Geneva without the assistance of overindulging. All those years and I could never grasp that philosophy. Ralph knew it. Many nights he was close by to be sure I did nothing stupid. When I did get out of sorts, like falling and breaking a table, he was there to pick me up. I talked to Ralph a week before he expired and was able to get a laugh, maybe more of a smile, when I relived that incident. I do not think he had an enemy in this world, but if he did, it was not any from the Geneva family. He loved golf, music, and football, especially Ohio State and

Cleveland Browns. That made him a great guy. Every draft, he preached that the Browns should pick all Buckeyes. Ralph had a unique knack for taking a story from the past and presenting it to others in a humorous manner. His laugh was infectious. I have known Ralph for 65 years and I have many stories stored, but I will close this paragraph by saying Geneva misses Ralph DiCarolus. May he Rest in Peace.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW? – When it comes to Chuck Rotter, that is quite the appropriate question. Chuck played in Geneva regularly through the early years of this century. His last tournament was in 2015. Partnering with Matt Mazzocco, he won the Gavin Cup in 2007. Chuck earned the reputation of a great Scramble teammate. He was part of numerous winning teams. He plays to a 9 handicap. At 75 years old, that is damn good. I am envious. His tall, lean body makes the huge turn with his golf swing. He powers his drives far down the fairway embarrassing me and my 125-yard pokes. His form reminds me of Tom Weiskopf in his heyday. Then he watches me jiggle like the Pillsbury Dough Boy when I take my turn. To his credit, he holds his laughter inside. Chuck keeps his game sharp at Quail Hollow Country Club where he has been a member for years. He retired after spending 40 years selling steel and he was an excellent salesman. He used his selling skills one year to secure a Friday round for Geneva at the Quail Hollow track. Mr. Rotter calls Concord, Ohio home. Good luck finding him there. During the Spring of 2024, he traveled the coast of the Adriatic Sea through the countries of Slovakia, Croatia, among others. This past April, he and his lovely wife celebrated Holy Week in Rome after floating in gondolas on the waterways of Venice. They made their way to Genoa and admired that city's beauty and history. Back in the States, Pensacola, San Diego, New York City, and Hartford, Connecticut have recently welcomed the couple to their community. Often, throughout the year, they find themselves in golf resorts tackling some of the finest venues in the sport. Besides golf, music and dining grab much of Chuck's attention. Attending concerts is a favorite pastime of his. Many artists I do not know, and many are classic rockers and blues singers who we are familiar. Last Summer, he rocked with the Rolling Stones whom he has seen multiple times. Unfortunately, Chuck cannot sing a lick. He has trouble

holding a tune. When Chuck sings, dogs howl. The Rotter's have dined in nearly every restaurant and bar in the Cleveland area. They can tell you the good ones and the bad ones. One last tidbit about Chuck. In our college days back at Ohio University, in our spare moments between classes, the library, the pinball arcade, and lunch at the Side Bar, we watched jeopardy daily. Chuck knew 95% of the answers. I swear he could have beaten Ken Jennings. Chuck Rotter is a man about town. Do not be surprised if you happen to run into him anyplace at any time.

IN THE BOOKS – We nail the lid on Geneva 2025. All of us returned to our pressured life, be it with screaming kids, demanding bosses, or remodeling the kitchen. Hang in there until July 23, 2026, when we will be back together. If you find time on December 26, we will continue the tradition of having lunch inside the Gahanna Grill at noon. It is a fun time and gives us a chance to relax and get away from all the violence and chaos in this world. Sickening, isn't it? I learned to make the best of the current state of affairs. After all, if it weren't for pickpockets, I'd have no sex at all.