

As President, one of the questions that I get asked the most is, what are people asking you about (in other words, what are they complaining about?). This is especially true from those that I don't play with on a regular basis. Many of you may be thinking that you know the answer to that question. Is it about the course or maybe it is about the restaurant? No, the most complaints that I have received over the past 2 months have been related to the poor / loud behavior of some of our members.

The Board has been dealing with some of the complaints. For some reason, some of us feel that behavior that would never be tolerated in a public restaurant or bar is OK to occur at Ballston Spa

Country Club because we are members. It is NOT OK to curse, be very loud or act inappropriately in our clubhouse. We have had members approach the Board and tell us they were embarrassed to have their spouses and guests at the clubhouse for dinner while some of this behavior was going on.

The board will be looking into what we can do to make sure that inappropriate behavior does not become the norm. We will be looking into developing a formal member code of conduct, including how to discipline members who do not adhere to that code. While it is only a small number of members, it does have an impact on all of us. I ask everyone to please be aware of how our behavior can impact others and together we can raise the bar for our club and make it an inviting place for all of us to gather.

The Facility Improvement Committee continues to meet, with many of the subcommittees meeting on a regular basis. I continue to urge you to check out the progress of the various committees by going to our website.

If you have any comments, suggestions or complaints, please don't hesitate to contact me. My email address is <u>tucats@nycap.rr.com</u> or you may call me, (W) 395-6472 or (H) 371-1926.



Rick Funaro

A Message From Villagio Green

To all Members of the Ballston Spa Country Club:

From the Villagio Green staff, we would like to thank you for a great year and we look forward to seeing you again next year. Hope you all have a great Winter.

Richie





The Facility Improvement Committee (FIC) continues to make progress within the various sub-committees, and once again we encourage you to visit the FIC link located on the BSCC homepage to see the latest information. We also post information on the exterior bulletin board located outside the Office. We want to reiterate that we are taking a slow and methodical approach, and we are a long way from making any recommendation to the membership, which is prudent during this unstable financial environment. The FIC has not expended any BSCC funds to date.

The Information Gathering, Communications, Marketing and Finance Sub-Committees each provided updates at the September 30th FIC meeting. The following is a brief summary.

Information Gathering:

Roger Laime gave an excellent presentation of a draft Facility Comparison Report he prepared, which is the final stage of completion. This sub-committee has been gathering information from other golf facilities within the area with a primary focus on their clubhouse size, design layout, costs, banquets capability, membership and management strategy. Hats off to Roger for the great work and comprehensive report, and special recognition to Bob Miskanin, who was able to successfully obtain the majority of the data Roger used to compile the report. Upon completion of the report it will be published on the FIC website.

Communications:

Mike Zegarelli reported on the progress made with communications strategies being used including publishing Questions and Answers, and our latest pilot survey using the Survey Monkey software. Our purpose was to test the Survey Monkey software (at no initial cost to BSCC), and take the opportunity to obtain your feedback on a few basic, but critically important questions regarding a clubhouse.

The software quickly analyzes results and provides summary data, which we will soon post on our FIC, Communications Sub-Committee page. We greatly appreciate the valuable feedback we have already received from 116 members, as of the writing of this update. We will be publishing additional frequently asked questions and the FIC answers.

Based on the success of this pilot, the FIC will be sending a more detailed and comprehensive questionnaire out in the near future using this valuable new tool. Max Tucker provided some excellent model questions to consider for inclusion.

Marketing:

Although the Marketing Sub-Committee is awaiting recommendations from the FIC, that hasn't stopped them from planning their marketing strategy. Ed Schwencke provided a proposed model called a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats Analysis (SWOT). This coupled with the excellent membership plan Tucker had already developed and successfully implemented this year, will put us in good position once we begin any marketing efforts.

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Finance:

Pete McNamara reported that the Finance Sub-Committee is conducting an analysis of historical financial data back to 2003 for comparison and projection purposes. Thanks to Al Squire, Chuck Griswold and Dennis Crimi for helping with this critically important effort. During these unprecedented and dire fiscal times, we must carefully consider all options before we can ever recommend moving forward with any major clubhouse renovations or consider building a new clubhouse.

The Sub-Committee recommends that we must increase our revenues and cash flow. Of course, increasing and maintaining our membership is the best, long-term means to accomplish this. We must work hard to increase membership for 2009 just as we did in 2008. The Sub-Committee also suggests that we explore new incentives for both membership and external events.



John Paolucci

Clubhouse Inspection:

As we previously reported, a site inspection/building assessment was conducted last month by two architects J.T Pollard and Jay Hopeck (at no cost to BSCC), who were accompanied by Dick Cody and Tom Shannon. We still have not received their official report yet, but we anticipate receiving it soon. Tom Shannon, who is a Mechanical Engineer has graciously agreed to prepare an independent report and estimate to renovate the clubhouse.

As you can see, a significant amount of work continues to occur, so we want to thank the efforts of the FIC members.

The Facility Improvement Committee News
The Finance Subcommittee Minutes
September 2008

The second meeting of the Finance Committee of the FIC convened at Ballston Spa CC office. Members present were Peter McNamara, Chuck Griswold, Dennis Crimi and Dick Cody. Al Squire also attended and once again provided very valuable isights.

This meeting focused on the existing club debt and our ability to finance any increased expansion. Currently, we have two loans – a mortgage on the course and a cart rental agreement.

The mortgage is \$637,000 @ 5.10% for the next 5 years (2013). The fixed payment of \$7,100per month breaks down as approximately \$3,900 in principal and \$3,200.00 in interest. This uninterrupted payment will result in the reduced mortgage of \$440,000 by 2013.

The cart lease is paid only for 6 months per year and is two fold: a \$6,255 per month lease on the new carts and a remaining 3 month lease on the old carts (used for Tournaments or outings) for \$4,500. per month. Since the \$4,500 is budgeted every year and terminates soon, this committee suggests that some portion of the item be earmarked for debt reduction.

We explored the best ways to estimate the revenue of a new facility from both known (dues) and unknown (event income) sources. Dennis, Chuck and Al will construct a pro forma budget based upon current variables and will report to us soon. This should be viewed as a work in progress and may be revised many times.

The committee also suggests that we should explore new incentives for both membership and external events.

Peter McNamara

BSCC: Our Story

Our club history to date has never been written in one document. It is our intent to remedy this situation to the best of our abilities, starting with this year's first issue. We will be dedicating a page in the Fox every month or so until we have as much of the history on record as possible. The full history will be posted on our website and eventually published. If any of you, your family or friends have any documents, pictures or anecdotal material that might be of interest to this endeavor, please submit them to the Fox by contacting: Tucker

wtucker2@nycap.rr.com

or

893-7646.

Thank you.

In the Beginning Part Five

The start of something big came about September 13, 1953, when an application for a summer liquor license was approved ,covering the period from April 1 to October 20. This project was destined to fall through when it was learned that the kitchen had to be operated to obtain the license. An estimated \$800 was spent to buy the necessary equipment. Members came to the rescue and worked in the kitchen on weekends when this service seemed doomed due to lack of help.

1954:During this season, club handicaps were established for the first time with W.W. Sweeney named as chairman of the handicap committee.

Memberships were closed and a waiting list established. Starting time signups were discussed with Fran Cary, delegated to talk to Pro Jim Farina to set this up. A sign was to be erected on the first tee not to allow twosomes to play on Saturdays and Sundays until noon, a practice that still holds until today. (*Editor's note: it's since been changed to 11 AM*).

Even in those days, the subject of allowing women on the course before noon on Sundays was under discussion. The matter was finally resolved when it was rejected by Bailey Tiel in 1963. (*Editor's note: I'm not sure what this means*).

Over the years, much work was done on the grounds, an endless project.

The decision to remove the old porch and replace it with the patio came about this year.

The operation of the kitchen was a continual problem. It wasn't until 1958 that this problem was solved with the hiring of William Strianese to operate the bar and kitchen for \$3,000. He was given additional help if it was needed on Saturdays, Sundays. And holidays with the club paying for the salaries. He resigned in 1964 and was replaced by Leonard Bayes, who served until 1966 when Betty and Manny Rodriguez took over. They were replaced by Charles Richer in 1974.

A major problem developed in 1958 when the state decided to widen Route 67, meaning a property loss of three and a half acres, necessitating the altering of three holes. A committee composed of Ray Ashdown, Don Nichols and Gino Turchi was named to look after the club's interests in this matter with Ed Tracy to act as the legal advisor. Another committee, made up of Turchi, Jim Farina and Art Garbrecht, was appointed to oversee the course due to the proposed highway changes. After receipt of a survey map and planned changes, the committee decided two new sets of tees would be necessary since they were not sure how much land would have to be forfeited to the project. However, the state held up on plans, but the committee continued to prepare for changes to the east end of the course should they become necessary.

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In 1959 the state notified the club of plans which resulted in only the 7th green having to be moved. After the state completed its project, the club brought legal action which resulted in the state paying the damage claim with \$14,000 in 1962 after urging by Ed Tracy that the club press for the settlement.

1959: The board tabled the request by Jim Farina to operate two electric carts because the bridges were too narrow to pass with safety. He was told a month late that the use of cars was inadvisable. Today (1975), the carts are prevalent, but it wasn't until 1963 that permission was granted to obtain them for course use.

The club standing was 232 playing members and 25 social which increased in 1960 to 251; 1961 to 269; 1963 to 300 and in 1964 there was a waiting list of 86 people.

A membership list was established in 1965 limiting the number to 300 and then increased in 1968 to 375, which still remains.

During this year, the lookout tower on the 4th hole (the present 10th) was removed because of its unstable condition. The new power line to the pump house was installed at a cost of \$1,200.

In 1954 an initiation fee for members was also discussed so that advance notice could be given to new prospects.

Other points of interest were that a juke box was installed at no cost to the club and a colored television in 1968. Ray Ashdown donated a truck which was to be repaired by the club and also gave a 275 gallon oil tank that was installed in the basement. Another donation came from Art Garbrecht of an oil burner. The hi-fi system was installed in 1956 for \$300 and the ladies room was remodeled at a cost of \$500. Inflation also upped the green fees to \$2 on weekdays and \$4 on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays.

1956: (*editor's note:* we seem to be skipping around here). George McDonough and Ed Tracy were named to look into obtaining an option to acquire adjacent land for expansion.

The club was incorporated with the operation set up by Ed Tracy to expedite obtaining a liquor license which finally arrived may 23, 1956. Incorporation Officers were Ray Ashdown, President, George McDonough, Vice President, Harold Arff, Secretary-Treasurer; Frank Thomas and William Eldridge, directors.

The first annual meeting of the corporation took place September 19, 1958.

1957: The initiation fee was set at \$25 which went up to \$100 in 1963 and \$120 in 1964 and remains at \$150 today (1975)

Elizabeth Thielemann, affectionately known as "Little Thiel", was elected the first election inspector and still continues to serve in that capacity.











Fun Time 1955

Members are pictured having a good time during a costume tournament which was popular in 1955.

Clockwise from upper left: 1: Agnes Garbrecht, Ruth Morse, Helen Fitzgerald, Sue Finch. 2: Pete Wetsel, Duane Fuller, Art Garbrecht 3: Duane and Quil Fuller, Penny and Elizabeth Thielemann 4: Gino Turchi 5: Art Garbrecht and Muriel Decker



Superintendent's Report

This past month has been great weather wise. I am sure everyone is or should be taking advantage of this great end of the season golf.

My crew and I aerated the greens, tees, and approaches a few weeks ago. The greens were aerated with 5/8 tines and the holes were filled with sand. I overseeded the bad greens with some bentgrass seed. Hopefully we will get some good germination and the greens will fill in tightly, like they were in the earlier part of the season.

I am hoping the funding is available this fall for our greens to have a deep tine aeration. Currently our greens have only been aerated with a conventional aerator, which is great to break up any compacted soils up to 4 inches and also to remove thatch. A deep tine aerator will aerate up to 10 inches deep and break up the black clay that was used as a base on our greens. This machine is very necessary to be able to help our greens drain and to have roots grow as deep as possible.

As you know the greens take a beating over the course of a season. We started out the season with great lush greens. When we got into June and July I lowered the height of the greens down to below a tenth of and inch, lower than I have ever gone before and we rolled the greens three times a week. The greens were rolling great and I got a lot of compliments during the member guest and the New York state amateur qualifier. The greens became very compacted over the season and the heavy rains in mid summer came and made a big mess. The water stayed on top of the greens and then the black algae starts to grow choking the weaker poa annua grass.

That stretch of bad weather showed how poorly our greens drain. Poa annua will always be a problem on these old pushup greens but if we can provide a good environment for them to grow in and aerate them deeper and more frequently, I think they will have a better chance of making it through the tough times of the year. The greens will also be better able to hand the shorter cutting heights and the rolling. Remember the size of our greens. They are typically half the size of most greens at some other newer clubs. The more people that play on a smaller surface, the more potential damage may happen over the course of a season.

Steve Solsky





Green Committee Report

As I write this Steve is completing the aerification work on the fairways. He has done the tees, approaches and greens. As everyone knows this is a necessary process to ensure the turf is as healthy as it can be. The aerifier we were able to secure in the purchase of the rough mower has allowed Steve to do this work without having to rely on borrowed equipment.

The rough spots seen on a few of the greens and fringes will heal with the combination of aerification, seeding, fertilizing and care from the players. It can't be stressed enough to the membership that constant traffic along the same path leads to a loss of turf. Please...please...please pick a route that doesn't involve walking through these distressed areas. Members may see a lot more ropes next year if we can't collectively change our traffic patterns.

New drainage work has been completed in #12 fairway. Aside from the monsoons that came in late July, the major drainage problems of years past have in large part disappeared. This winter Steve will continue dredging to improve the flow of water when we do get measurable rainfall.

The green committee will be meeting this fall to prioritize the off-season projects, which undoubtedly will include tree work, to continue improving the areas blocked by sun, and repair to the area behind the #10 green. The Green Committee will also be reviewing the need for new equipment and recommending to the Board of Directors that sufficient funds be included in the budget to purchase what is needed. The course improvement fund has been critical in allowing us to purchase much needed equipment such as the new rough mower and aerifier.

Completion of the new tee on #14 continues to be a priority. However, given the unexpected rise in fuel costs our remaining funds are tight. Steve, Carl and I will look closely at our expenditures to date so that this project can be completed without delay.

Finally, since this is the last Fox for the 2008 season I would like to offer my thanks to Steve and his crew for a great season at Ballston and to wish him the best on his upcoming wedding on November 1st.

Sue Kahler

Jason Loewenstein Wins Silver Medal



Playing in his first ever New York State Special Olympics Fall games, Ballston Spa Country Club member Jason Loewenstein earned a Silver medal in the top division of the Alternate shot, 9 hole format. With playing partner Dan (Dad) at his side telling him to "grip it an rip it" Jason smoked a drive off the first tee on a very cold wet morning at the Churchville Park golf course in Rochester. Together they shot a 58 in route to their Silver medal finish. Dad couldn't be more proud of his partner.



Thank You From the Ballston Spa Golf Team

As the season slowly comes to an end, you may have noticed that the purple bags of the Ballston Spa Golf Team are not as visible. The team has packed up their bags and is back to hitting the books. At this time, I would like to extend thanks to the many people who have made our season a success.

First I would like to thank Todd, and the entire pro shop staff. He has accommodated the players for the use of the range, putting green, and chipping area. He has also squeezed in all of our try-out dates, practice times, and home matches. Starting during the month of August, this was no easy task.

Secondly, I would like to thank Richie, Randy and the entire Villagio Green staff. They served many hot dogs, sodas, and pizzas with smiles and words of motivation. They congratulated the players, encouraged the team, and supported the competition.

Finally, I would like to send my deepest thanks to the Ballston Spa Membership. You have come out to play a quick nine after work, saw the purple bags and the school busses, then very kindly walked to the tenth hole. However, you always stopped to ask how it was going. The team has felt your support, and tried to make you proud. I must also add a special thank you to John Keyzer and Bill Walker, who have supplied the Varsity and JV teams with all of your found balls. If you want them back, you may find them in the woods on 3 and 5.

This is my sixth year as the coach for the BSPA Golf Team. I joined this country club, because of the support you have given my team. I thank you for all you have done for them, and I look forward to another season as "Coach" and member.

Sincerely,
Coach Cindy Walkanowski





From the Golf Shop

Golf Shop Credits



We are trying something new this year as I would like everyone to use up your credit on the books by October 31st. I have a lot of inventory in stock and would like everyone to use it by the above date. Maybe think ahead and get some of the Xmas gifts out of the way early to avoid the jammed malls later. I still have over 400 soft good items in stock which include rain shirts, golf shirts, wind vests, wind shirts, for men and women. The inventory won't last long so come in and use those certificates.

Farewell to Denise

I would like to thank Denise Farnan for all of the work and effort she has put in at Ballston Spa Country Club the past 2 years. She has been a great asset to our club and to our Golf Operation and she will be missed. She has decided to move to North Carolina to get out of the cold. We wish her good luck and will all miss her.

GTC Event

I would like to thank all of the members for their patience on Tuesday the 23rd of September for allowing the GTC Tournament to play our golf course. They had a wonderful time and enjoyed the course and the food and had a great day. It is a major revenue maker for us so on the behalf of the golf shop, we thank you for your patience and allowing us to host this event and they have decided to come back for 2009.





Double Eagle

Recently I was having dinner with a friend and we were discussing the funny things that have happened to us on the golf course. The different rules and the interpretation of them. You can see the conversation I'm sure of two people that love golf and can talk forever about it.

I was telling him of capturing as many of the golf stories as I could that have happened not only to me but within the groups I've played in over the years. With that he asked if he had ever told me his story of his double eagle. I told him no and I had only seen one myself with in my group and also one on TV that was a replay.

He was playing a local course and apparently it was in an outing for work. The first hole as he described is a par 5 with an elevated green that has a backstop on the back of the green. I am not sure of the yardage but I think you can see the picture.

He hit his drive down the fairway and then pulled his second shot into the thick rough. We have all been there, when the rough is thick and wet and hard to find the ball. After not being able to locate the ball, his partner told him to put a ball down and play it as a provisional. While this is not proper golfing etiquette, it was done in the need to keep the groups moving. He struck the ball to the green and it disappeared over the front of the green.



As they started down the fairway, there in the rough about 10 yards in front of them was his tee shot. He said the lie was one of those buried lies with a birds nest of grass all around it. He addressed the ball and some how got the ball out and it too disappeared over the front of the green.

As they approached the green they were able to see the ball marks but the balls were no where to be found. The group naturally looked and looked all around the green and was unable to find either of the balls. Finally someone looked in the hole and there were both balls staring back them. Apparently both shots hit the green as seen by the

ball marks and went to the backstop and funneled into the hole. Of course that meant it was a double eagle!!

This was the first time I had ever heard of anything close to that on the golf course. It seemed like a fitting addition for a book of stories about the quirks that can happen on a golf course.

Mike Martin

House Report

The house continues to function servicing the membership. Windows get broken, toilets break, etc. We just keep up with the repairs. The season is winding down and the restaurant is also. The hours will be reduced and it will open later in the day during the week. Please have patience and make your concerns known to Ritchie or your server when you are there ordering and they will take care of you.

Bruce Kay
Bkay1@nycap.rr.com
583-8864







Parring the 19

As some of you may remember, I once wrote a piece about the influence of great golf literature on Western Civilization. The gist of the article was that most of the great novels were once actually golf books that had to be re-written to make money in the commercial market.

So we had the Birdie Man of Alcatraz, Erica Jong's Fear of Flying the Green, A Farewell to Arms (instruction on how to get more body into your swing), Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore (overcoming the tendency to leave putts short) and of course, Lady Chatterly's Lobber, a story about how Lady Chatterly's golf instructor/boyfriend gives her a 60 degree wedge. When her husband notices her improved short game, he be-

Tucker

And on and on.

comes suspicious.

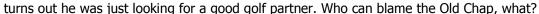
But I knew there had to be more instances of how golf was and is part of the Life Allegory. How it has influenced our very history. Like Woody Allen, I'm a curious kind of guy (Woody has wondered what Jesus did as a teenager and why we never see baby squirrels.) So I thought I would look into how golf has affected the lives of various historical figures.

Well. You just wouldn't believe the information I was able to uncover after intense research.

I guess the first question most of you have is "Was Adolph Hitler a golfer?" The answer, of course, is a resounding "Yes!" As it turns out, Der Fuehrer had to eventually give up the game because of his horrific sand game. He was so inept that every time he got into a bunker he felt like committing suicide. I know exactly how he felt.

For the same reason apparently, Hemingway avoided tournaments like the plague. Seems Ernie had a death premonition about shotgun starts. There's just no end to all the fascinating details!

Henry VIII of England on the other hand, loved playing in tournaments, especially Holiday Mixers. Unfortunately, he seldom won and, contrary to commonly held beliefs that he went through 6 wives because of religious and political circumstances, it





Helen of Troy is also misunderstood in historical accounts. Conventional wisdom tells us that her beauty from the neck up was responsible for the sinking of a huge fleet. That's a bit hard to swallow, don't you think? In actuality, the famous quote was the result of her solving her short game woes. Her wedge was not getting enough spin because of worn grooves and so she had it refaced with U-grooves. Her wedge game improved dramatically as a result, and here is where we get the famous quote. It was actually "The (club) face that sunk a thousand chips."

No, really.

I'm here to assure you that my research continues unabated. After what I've discovered so far, I'm sure you're all quite thrilled to hear that piece of news.

I'm currently working on a rumor that Ben Franklin always ignored the air horn because he loved to play during thunderstorms, a tip that Abe Lincoln called penalties on himself on a regular basis and inside information that indicates Richard Nixon had some flunkies break into the USGA's GHIN Headquarters in a desperate attempt to "adjust" his handicap index.



My in-depth research has revealed some myths, however. The commonly held belief that Moses never hit one into the pond on 17 because he simply parted the waters when a watery grave seemed imminent, is hogwash. When Moses played BSCC it was a 9 hole course.

Senior News

Men's Senior League Outing Thursday 10/09/2008 9am Shotgun Start with Dinner

\$23.00 Food

Nuevo Mandarin Salad Penne Ala Vodka Lasagna

Garlic bread, vegetable/green beans, dessert/cheese cake, soda, water, coffee, tea.

Paid in cash/check to Pro Shop / Bruce Kay/ or charged to your Restaurant number.

+\$12.00 for game, 5 pins, line#7 & 2nd shot on #11.

\$35.00 Total

Shamble format / quota play.

Harold C. Arff Jr.

Harold C. Arff Jr., a longtime associate of the Ballston Spa Country Club, passed away on August 27, 2008.

Harold was just shy of his 94th birthday and the day previous to his death, hit a wonderful shot on the 8th hole. Golf was always a huge part of his life and his involvement in the Club spanned 82 years.

As a youngster of 10, Harold became a caddy and had the dubious pleasure of caddying for some of New York's "illustrious" mobsters. In fact, one such person became so irate over his poor play that he threw his clubs and bag into the water and then ordered Harold to retrieve them. At that time, the other caddies were Don Wells, Bill Eldridge, Bobby Anderson and Doug Welch, who was the caddie master.

In the 1940's, \$40 was the cost of membership and \$3 fee for 9 holes.

Harold willingly assumed the secretary-treasurer position in the early 1950's, taking over from Frank Thomas. He had this position for approximately 16 years and during that time notable changes within the club evolved.

The old Pro Shop was where the renovated clubhouse now stands. Today's barroom was originally the men's locker room and showers were installed downstairs. The ladies' locker room is much the same and various women of the Club, namely Ruby Arff, Mary Eldridge, and Charlotte Hubel hung the drapes and curtains.

During this era, membership was 250-300 Members and once a month a dinner-dance was held with the Tommy Rhodes Orchestra as the headliner.

Following the renovations of the clubhouse, the Club decided to add an additional 9 holes. This occurred in the late 1950's. Steamrolling the project were Gino Turchi, Ray Ashdown, Jack Hathorn and Bailey Teal, a banker who eventually sealed the loan from a Mechanicville bank. The deal was signed at Ecobelli's restaurant, and according to Harold was completed in a matter of minutes.

Because of his wife's poor health, Harold resigned his playing until after her death in 1988. Returning to play, he joined Bill Dimmick, Doug Welch, and Vance Kohler as his golfing buddies. Later on, Bill Eldridge was included in this select group. Harold continued playing golf until early February of 2008, when he finally surrendered to the aging process. However, his love of the game never ceased as he continued to accompany his daughters, riding in the cart, removing the pin and keeping score.

Harold loved the after-golf socializing in the clubhouse and Johnny Walker Red on the rocks became his signature.

The Ballston Spa Country Club was always an integral part of Harold's life and his involvement over the years reflects many positive changes and a wonderful history.

Jackie Ravena