



Locust Hill's attractive clubhouse is a winter mecca for its members

ADULT GAMES are key to Locust Hill's success in pulling winter attendance

By **HERB
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THERE is a country club in New York state that has a full membership roster, that has an excellent clubhouse paid for, that makes a sound financial showing in a metropolitan district on dues that (with tax) don't exceed \$7.15 a month, that is open the year around, and that has more monthly revenue from December to May than during the summer season.

It listens impossible, but such is the condition of the Locust Hill CC, Rochester, N. Y.

Locust Hill is something to study. The golf club operating and management picture is changing. That's natural, inasmuch as the golf club is of a nature to be quickly and strongly affected by changing social and economic factors. The golf ball changed from feather, to gutta, to the Haskell general type of construction. Clubs have changed greatly in design and construction. Course design and maintenance methods have changed. It isn't logical to act as though the nature of golf club operating policies and methods were immune to change.

Locust Hill was built in 1925. It is not the most "exclusive" club in its district, but it gets the largest attendance. With its sound financial position, its year-a-

round entertainment program, and its emphasis on big value for the members' recreation dollar, Locust Hill can be—and is—very choosy about membership qualifications.

Its present membership is about 285, representing a class that has a highly desirable combination of lively good fellowship and good credit rating.

An "inside" on the development of the Locust Hill winter program is given by Dr. Theo. C. Blatau, president of the or-



**THEO C.
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ganization. The Locust Hill year-around program solved for that club the winter resignation problem that puts many clubs

behind the 8-ball at the start of each outdoor season.

"Our year-around schedule at Locust Hill," says Dr. Blutau, "started a few years back when some of us restless dubs, hating to see the end of the summer season and the closing of the club, petitioned the board of governors to keep the club open for winter activities. We were given a flat 'no'. Reason: 'Expense—heat, light, janitor service, watchman, snow removal, barkeep, etc.'"

"Undaunted we proposed to underwrite the expense personally as far as we could go. . . . We did. And we stayed open from election day in November until the regular season started. We paid all expenses, returned the amount advanced by the underwriters and turned \$770 over to the club treasurer!

"We've never been closed since and our profit now is more than double per month the amount we turned back for the whole year then.

Provide Many Attractions

"Our first move was to modernize our bar, give the grill room a cozy atmosphere, and put in good grade wines and whiskey. We kept our bar prices below those of the downtown hotels and night clubs and our members were attracted to the club nightly. They were certain to find a familiar, congenial crowd there.

"Realizing that sensible people cannot entertain themselves entirely with bibulous occupation, a committee was formed to procure adult games and to provide other forms of sport.

"A trip to Abercrombie and Fitch produced an indoor English lawn bowling game with weighted bowls that roll beautifully on our lounge room rug. Young and old alike are seen kneeling and coaxing the bowls to better performance with many an order for refreshments hanging on the outcome.

"A shuffleboard court was painted on the concrete floor of our pro-shop to which many an inseparable foursome from the more balmy months carried their grudge fights each Saturday afternoon throughout the winter.

Minnesota Golf Ass. now requires any club bidding for the State Amateur championship be a member of the USGA. State group members and officials are of the opinion that strong organization is important to golf, and that it is the duty of all private clubs to belong to the USGA.

"A game room was built on the second floor. The proceeds came from one of the two stag parties held each winter. Three hundred men attend these affairs and plenty of entertainment is provided. Two pool tables, one billiard table, a ping-pong table and poker tables were installed in the room. A two-way speaker system was connected between this room and the bar.

"The best attraction of all is a full size badminton court constructed in the men's locker-room. Lockers are removed and stored in the attic December 1st and from then until April 1st the court is so busy that starting times must be reserved. Other games dot the grill room and more are being sought all the while. Adults are children grown large and they all love games.

"The Entertainment Committee then stepped in to finish the job. Dinner dances are planned for every other Saturday night with a new chairman for each dance (usually man and wife). The dances are cheap enough to attract the members and the profit comes from the money spent in the grill room. Keeping the club open in the winter also allows plans for a New Year's Eve party, Christmas party, Easter, Halloween and other holiday dances. The children are entertained at a gigantic Christmas party and two junior dances for 'teen age are scheduled, one being held during the winter.

"The Ladies Association serves Sunday night suppers on the alternate weeks when no Saturday night dance is scheduled. A novelty act or stunt is staged for entertainment and each chairwoman strives to beat the performance of preceding weeks. These Sunday night parties usually break up by 10:30 or 11 o'clock.

Pot Luck Suppers

"The most popular evening is the weekly Thursday night "Chef's Night". The chef cooks what he pleases and everyone turns out to eat it, 'pot luck'. The chef now has a year around job and the problem of keeping him is easier.

"When the weather is right, sleigh-rides are planned. Hare and hound chases over the hills and through the woods are great fun. These are planned on the spur of the moment. Treasure hunts and scavenger hunts have been favorites in the past.

"We had a bowling league but badminton replaced it.

"We formed a trapshooting league with three of the other local golf clubs. Shoots were ticketed for one Sunday morning per

Reasonably priced Sunday night supper is a popular institution at Locust Hill.



month during the winter. They are well attended. Coffee and doughnuts are furnished by the club gratis. We are also fortunate to have a game preserve adjoining our club property although we do not own it. Many of our members hunt some game during open season. It is not a bit strange that their steps lead to Locust Hill grill for a Tom and Jerry when the snow is deep and the going is tough.

300 Attend Bridge Parties

"The Ladies Association sets aside one day each month throughout the winter for a bridge party. These are well attended, with from 200 to 300 players usually present. The profit from this enterprise goes to buy necessary equipment for the Ladies Lounge or locker rooms and sometimes it helps obtain little luxuries that the club proper does not deem necessary. They also engage women lecturers such as Dorothy Fuldheim and others, and members bring enough guests to swell the ladies' treasury.

"The greatest contributing factor to a successful winter program is to provide games—Games—MORE GAMES."

Locust Hill keeps its members informed on what's going on at the club by a flow of bright announcements, usually mimeographed and inexpensive but cleverly written. The competition among committees responsible for the various events keeps them all on their toes to turn out a crowd.

One of the announcements characteristic of the zip the Locust Hillers put into their stuff, is that of a Southern supper. It was simply mimeographed and signed by the 30 couples comprising the committee.

It read:

"Honey"

Come Sunday, November 10th, we all are goin' to have a real ole Southern cooked suppah. The chahm of De Ole Southland will sure fill all the crannies and nooks of old Locust Hill.

Cain't you just see yo self sitting down to a mess of fried chicken, yams and fritters? It beats all how our mouths do water just to think of it.

And say the music you will heah will soothe your ole savage breast sho nough.

Right off aftah suppah you can just sit down to a game of bridge with three other honies—if you all want to. Lan sakes alive if you play right well could be you might win the cutest dog-gone prize you evah did see.

Why don't you treat yo self to a powerful good time and come out with a whole shebang of friends? You all won't go away mad.

Suppah — yum-yum — 7-9 with music. "Bridge Brawl" — right aftah.

Price 75c (most next to nothin)

Locust Hill members have an annual booklet, "This Is Locust Hill," in which the official and operating personnel, the club activities, and the rules and regulations which the club keeps to a minimum, are set forth. This booklet is primarily intended for new members. Locust Hill believes in continuously selling itself to its present members and issues attractive pamphlets setting forth the attractions of the club.