

**R**etired superintendent Paul R. Latshaw should thank the golf course gods that he married a woman who was raised on a farm. Phyllis Latshaw, Paul's wife for 37 years, lived and labored on a dairy farm in Liberty, Pa., while growing up. She recalls performing chores before and after school, as well as working on weekends.

So Phyllis understood why Paul, who hung up his work boots in February after 37 years as a superintendent, had to work 15-hour days and weekends when he was tending turf at some of the world's most famous golf courses, including Oakmont, Augusta National, Riviera, Congressional and Winged Foot.

"The cows don't know that it's Saturday and Sunday," Phyllis says. "Neither does the grass."

But Phyllis did more than understand why Paul had to work so hard in his quest to become one of the nation's preeminent superintendents. She provided Paul with unwavering support in his career goals. She gave him love in its truest form — patience, devotion, support and humility.

Her tolerance for Paul's vocation was often tested. For instance, Paul and Phyllis would make a date for a Sunday-afternoon drive. But Paul, who had gone to work in the morning, would phone Phyllis shortly before he was to meet her and tell her that he would have to stay at work for the entire afternoon. Phyllis was sad when this happened, but she never read Paul the riot act.

"I knew he would rather be with me doing something fun," she says. "It was frustrating, but I understood."

Ever since Paul began his career in Jackson, Mich., in the early 1960s, he would come home from work for dinner and then return to the course in the evening to work a few more hours. Phyllis and Paul B., the couple's young son, often accompanied Paul in the evening.

"That was my recreation," Phyllis says. "We couldn't go to the movies or anything like that because he felt responsible to his job. If I didn't go with him, I didn't see him."

## Phyllis Latshaw Stands By Her Man

BY LARRY AYLWARD



**SHE GAVE HIM  
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AND HUMILITY**

Paul, who began his career at 23, was known in the field as a rambling man. He'd go to one course and get it in shape. Then he'd move to another course and do the same. Paul didn't stay anywhere for too long because there was always another challenge to tackle elsewhere.

Phyllis was a teacher for 15 years in various towns where the Latshaws lived. But she didn't complain about Paul uprooting her career and the family to move to places like Oakmont, Pa., or Augusta, Ga.

"Paul's the kind of guy who wants to be on top," Phyllis says. "I always wanted him to be happy and successful, and I would do whatever I could to make that happen. It was important for me to see him happy."

Phyllis confesses that being married to Paul before he retired was like being married to her father, who also worked long hours to support his family. She didn't see either man very much.

Maybe Phyllis gave in to Paul and his demanding career. Maybe she should've insisted that Paul work less and stay home more. Maybe she should have demanded that Paul take her to the movies.

But Phyllis doesn't see it that way. Despite Paul's long hours, she maintains he was a devoted husband. She believes that Paul didn't just let her and Paul B. join him at the course at night as a gentlemanly gesture — he wanted to be with them. That's why Paul also invited Phyllis to the annual GCSAA show and made her his secretary when he became superintendent at Wilmington CC in the early 1990s. That's why Paul took Phyllis with him on trips around the world.

In his illustrious career, Latshaw hosted four Masters, two U.S. Opens, one PGA Championship and one U.S. Senior Open. He was one

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of the top paid superintendents in the country.

"I've enjoyed the satisfaction he has received as much as he did, if not more," Phyllis says. "It has been a great ride. My goodness, what a life he has given me."

What a life she gave him. And you get the feeling that Paul realizes that and knows his career might not have been as stellar if it wasn't for Phyllis.

But nobody has to tell Paul that he's fortunate to have married her. Nobody has to tell him that he should be grateful for Phyllis' support and love.

He is. Every day.

"If you want to be successful in this business, you have to be willing to work long hours," Paul says. "That could be



a real problem if you don't have a wife who understands. I was lucky."

Not surprisingly, Paul isn't leaving the industry for good. He's working part-time as a consultant for Signature Control Systems, an irrigation man-

The retired Paul R. Latshaw and his wife Phyllis, pictured here during the 1997 U.S. Open at Congressional CC, are more than a married couple. They're best friends.

agement control company. But there will be no more 15-hour days and working weekends.

There will be more time to spend with Phyllis and the couple's two grandchildren. There will be time for Sunday drives. Perhaps Paul and Phyllis will even see a movie.

"She's my best friend,"

Paul says proudly.

"We're one," Phyllis echoes.

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