

We've Got Mail

■ LETTERS FROM THE FIELD

Toy Drive

I just finished reading your recent column regarding assisting the poor (Pin High, November). I've been involved in local charities in the Manistee, Mich., area since I moved here in 1999. Arcadia Bluffs Golf Club does a lot for the less fortunate, but we intentionally keep it quiet. That is just our way. However, one program that works great is at our annual employee Christmas party. All guests are asked to bring one unwrapped toy for the Toys For Tots program. This generates as many as 50 toys.

I applaud you for bringing this to the pages of your magazine.

William Shriver
COO/General Manager
Arcadia Bluffs Golf Club
Arcadia, Mich.

More Than Money

I just read your article (Pin High, November) about raising money for poverty, and sometimes it isn't all about raising money. Locust Hill Country Club in Rochester, N.Y., has found a tremendous way to help the poor. The assistant pro here, who is also a teacher in the inner city of Rochester, developed a caddie program that started with recruiting kids from the inner city at his school. He now trains 40 to 80 youngsters from the city per year to be caddies. They're issued white jumpsuits for uniforms to give them a feeling of belonging. As an incentive, they have an "iron caddie" award for the caddie who logs the most hours on the golf course.

The kids benefit from the interaction with the club and its members. For many kids, it's their first experience with nature.

The caddie program has been very successful in helping inner-city children, and it has been a great public relations for Locust Hill. The city of Rochester now donates almost \$7,000 to the program, and even helps to bus the inner-city kids to the golf course.

The membership has also embraced the program. The members stage a season-ending banquet to honor the caddies, and they also have established a

scholarship fund and each year at the banquet they award a scholarship to one of the caddies.

There are many individual success stories and, as part of a program like this, there are also stories of failure. But the positives have greatly outweighed the negatives.

Rick Slattery
Superintendent
Locust Hill Country Club
Rochester, N.Y.

Pop Go the Geese

A follow-up to the "Strings Attached" article in October (the article discussed fishing line as a good and ecological way to rid golf courses of geese): Geese did return briefly the next year, staying mainly on the grass, but in fewer numbers and were more easily harassed off the site than before the fishing line was installed.

The same geese also returned at night, however, and I added an additional method that seems to have cinched the deal to scare them off. I asked my superintendent to create a "geese program" as part of our normal irrigation schedule. This program schedules heads to pop on and off on one-minute cycles on all the holes around our ponds. The key is to schedule this program to run a little after dusk, right after the geese typically arrive. We have not seen any geese on our grass or in our ponds since we started the program, although I hear them every day on our neighboring properties.

Joe Hills
Owner
Blue Mash Golf Course
Gaithersburg, Md.

We want to hear from you. You can e-mail your letters to Thomas Skernivitz at tskernivitz@advanstar.com, fax to 440-891-2675 or send them via snail-mail to: 7500 Old Oak Blvd., Cleveland, OH 44130. Make sure to include your name and phone number for verification. Letters may be edited for length or relevance.

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