

In seventh grade, this new kid joined our class. In the interest of confidentiality, her Convocation Speech name will be “ELLEN.” ELLEN was small, shy. She wore these blue cat’s-eye glasses that, at the time, only old ladies wore. When nervous, which was pretty much always, she had a habit of taking a strand of hair into her mouth and chewing on it.

So she came to our school and our neighborhood, and was mostly ignored, occasionally teased (“Your hair taste good?” – that sort of thing). I could see this hurt her. I still remember the way she’d look after such an insult: eyes cast down, a little gut-kicked, as if, having just been reminded of her place in things, she was trying, as much as possible, to disappear. After awhile she’d drift away, hair-strand still in her mouth. At home, I imagined, after school, her mother would say, you know: “How was your day, sweetie?” and she’d say, “Oh, fine.” And her mother would say, “Making any friends?” and she’d go, “Sure, lots.”

Sometimes I’d see her hanging around alone in her front yard, as if afraid to leave it.

And then – they moved. That was it. No tragedy, no big final hazing.

One day she was there, next day she wasn’t.

End of story.

Now, why do I regret that? Why, forty-two years later, am I still thinking about it? Relative to most of the other kids, I was actually pretty nice to her. I never said an unkind word to her. In fact, I sometimes even (mildly) defended her.

But still. It bothers me.

So here’s something I know to be true, although it’s a little corny, and I don’t quite know what to do with it:

What I regret most in my life are failures of kindness.

Those moments when another human being was there, in front of me, suffering, and I responded...sensibly. Reservedly. Mildly.

Or, to look at it from the other end of the telescope: Who, in your life, do you remember most fondly, with the most undeniable feelings of warmth?

Those who were kindest to you, I bet.

It's a little facile, maybe, and certainly hard to implement, but I'd say, as a goal in life, you could do worse than: Try to be kinder.

Now, the million-dollar question: What's our problem? Why aren't we kinder?

Here's what I think:

Each of us is born with a series of built-in confusions that are probably somehow Darwinian. These are:

1. We're central to the universe (that is, our personal story is the main and most interesting story, the only story, really);
2. We're separate from the universe (there's US and then, out there, all that other junk – dogs and swing-sets, and the State of Nebraska and low-hanging clouds and, you know, other people), and
3. We're permanent (death is real, o.k., sure – for you, but not for me).

Now, we don't really believe these things – intellectually we know better – but we believe them viscerally, and live by them, and they cause us to prioritize our own needs over the needs of others, even though what we really want, in our hearts, is to be less selfish, more aware of what's actually happening in the present moment, more open, and more loving.

So, the second million-dollar question: How might we DO this? How might we become more loving, more open, less selfish, more present, less delusional, etc., etc?

Well, yes, good question.

Unfortunately, I only have three minutes left.

So let me just say this. There are ways. You already know that because, in your life, there have been High Kindness periods and Low Kindness periods, and you know what inclined you toward the former and away from the latter. Education is good; immersing ourselves in a work of art: good; prayer is good; meditation's good; a frank talk with a dear friend; establishing ourselves in some kind of spiritual tradition – recognizing that there have been countless really smart people before us who have asked these same questions and left behind answers for us.

Because kindness, it turns out, is hard – it starts out all rainbows and puppy dogs, and expands to include...well, everything.

One thing in our favor: some of this “becoming kinder” happens naturally, with age. It might be a simple matter of attrition: as we get older, we come to see how useless it is to be selfish – how illogical, really. We come to love other people and are thereby counter-instructed in our own centrality. We get our butts kicked by real life, and people come to our defense, and help us, and we learn that we're not separate, and don't want to be. We see people near and dear to us dropping away, and are gradually convinced that maybe we too will drop away (someday, a long time from now). Most people, as they age, become less selfish and more loving. I think this is true. The great Syracuse poet, Hayden Carruth, said, in a poem written near the end of his life, that he was “mostly Love, now.”

And so, a prediction, and my heartfelt wish for you: as you get older, your self will diminish and you will grow in love. YOU will gradually be replaced by LOVE. If you have kids, that will be a huge moment in your process of self-diminishment. You really won't care what happens to YOU, as long as they benefit. That's one reason your parents are so proud and happy today. One of their fondest dreams has come true: you have accomplished something difficult and tangible that has enlarged you as a person and will make your life better, from here on in, forever.

Congratulations, by the way.

When young, we're anxious – understandably – to find out if we've got what it takes. Can we succeed? Can we build a viable life for ourselves? But you – in particular you, of this generation – may have noticed a certain cyclical quality to ambition. You do well

in high-school, in hopes of getting into a good college, so you can do well in the good college, in the hopes of getting a good job, so you can do well in the good job so you can....

And this is actually O.K. If we're going to become kinder, that process has to include taking ourselves seriously – as doers, as accomplisners, as dreamers. We have to do that, to be our best selves.

Still, accomplishment is unreliable. “Succeeding,” whatever that might mean to you, is hard, and the need to do so constantly renews itself (success is like a mountain that keeps growing ahead of you as you hike it), and there's the very real danger that “succeeding” will take up your whole life, while the big questions go untended.

So, quick, end-of-speech advice: Since, according to me, your life is going to be a gradual process of becoming kinder and more loving: Hurry up. Speed it along. Start right now. There's a confusion in each of us, a sickness, really: selfishness. But there's also a cure. So be a good and proactive and even somewhat desperate patient on your own behalf – seek out the most efficacious anti-selfishness medicines, energetically, for the rest of your life.

Do all the other things, the ambitious things – travel, get rich, get famous, innovate, lead, fall in love, make and lose fortunes, swim naked in wild jungle rivers (after first having it tested for monkey poop) – but as you do, to the extent that you can, err in the direction of kindness. Do those things that incline you toward the big questions, and avoid the things that would reduce you and make you trivial. That luminous part of you that exists beyond personality – your soul, if you will – is as bright and shining as any that has ever been. Bright as Shakespeare's, bright as Gandhi's, bright as Mother Teresa's. Clear away everything that keeps you separate from this secret luminous place. Believe it exists, come to know it better, nurture it, share its fruits tirelessly.

And someday, in 80 years, when you're 100, and I'm 134, and we're both so kind and loving we're nearly unbearable, drop me a line, let me know how your life has been. I hope you will say: It has been so wonderful.

Congratulations, Class of 2013.

I wish you great happiness, all the luck in the world, and a beautiful summer.”



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**2013 MGCSA Shoot Out Experience!**  
**Monday, October 14 at the Horse and Hunt Club**  
<http://www.horseandhunt.com/>

Cost for the event: **\$40.00** and includes one raffle ticket

Additional costs include ammunition, along with gun rental if you or your team can not provide a gun.

It is suggested to buy your own ammo before hand at your local gun supply store. Our goal is to have at least one experienced hunter in each group. We are shooting (no pun intended) for 20 teams of 5 shooters on each team. Only one gun is needed per group.

9:30 – 10:00 a.m.	Registration
10:00 – 11:00 a.m.	Educational format: <b>TBD</b>
11:00 – 11:02 a.m.	Drawing for the shotgun, \$1,000 value
11:00 – 12:00 noon	Lunch
12:00 – 3:00 p.m.	Sporting Clay Shoot

**PLEASE CIRCLE YOUR EXPERIENCE LEVEL. "1" IS A BEGINNER AND "5" IS AN EXPERT**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Course / Co. \_\_\_\_\_ Experience Level: 1 2 3 4 5 Gun: Yes No

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Course / Co. \_\_\_\_\_ Experience Level: 1 2 3 4 5 Gun: Yes No

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Course / Co. \_\_\_\_\_ Experience Level: 1 2 3 4 5 Gun: Yes No

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Course / Co. \_\_\_\_\_ Experience Level: 1 2 3 4 5 Gun: Yes No

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Course / Co. \_\_\_\_\_ Experience Level: 1 2 3 4 5 Gun: Yes No

Please register \_\_\_\_\_ person(s) at \$40 ea. For a total of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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**Hole 6 at Brackett's Crossing Country Club, a drivable par 4.**

Once known as Honeywell Country Club, Brackett's Crossing Country Club was planned, developed and managed by the non-profit organization known as Minnregs, Incorporated. The Minnreg Organization was originally made up of male-only employees of Honeywell Inc. The financial support originally came from the receipts of vending machines used by the employees located in the various Honeywell

plants and offices in the Twin Cities area. Times have changed with the development and expansion of what is now known as Brackett's Crossing Country Club.

1960- Four hundred and sixty acres located in the Village of Lakeville was purchased for the purpose of building a recreational center and a country club. The Minnesota Vikings officially became a profes-



# *tion: Brackett's Crossing Country Club, A Walk Down Memory Lane*

*Photos and content by Tom Proshek, Superintendent*



Boundary Water Canoe Area gains new protections under the federal Wilderness Act in 1964.

1970- The Minnregs paid to have a gravel road installed between Judicial Road and Highway I-35. This road was paved in the late 1970's. Mary Richards throws her hat into the air on the Nicollet Mall, and a TV. Comedy is born. Mary Tyler Moore, "turns the world on with a smile" for seven years from 1970 until 1977.

1981-1982- Honeywell leases the club to private operators who change the name to Brackett's Crossing to honor early Lakeville settler J.J. Brackett. Apparently Mr. Brackett frequently crossed over the land on a trail used for mail service between Lakeville and Prior Lake. The general location of the trail still exists behind the 10th green. The Hubert H. Humphrey Metrodome is opened on April 3, 1982.

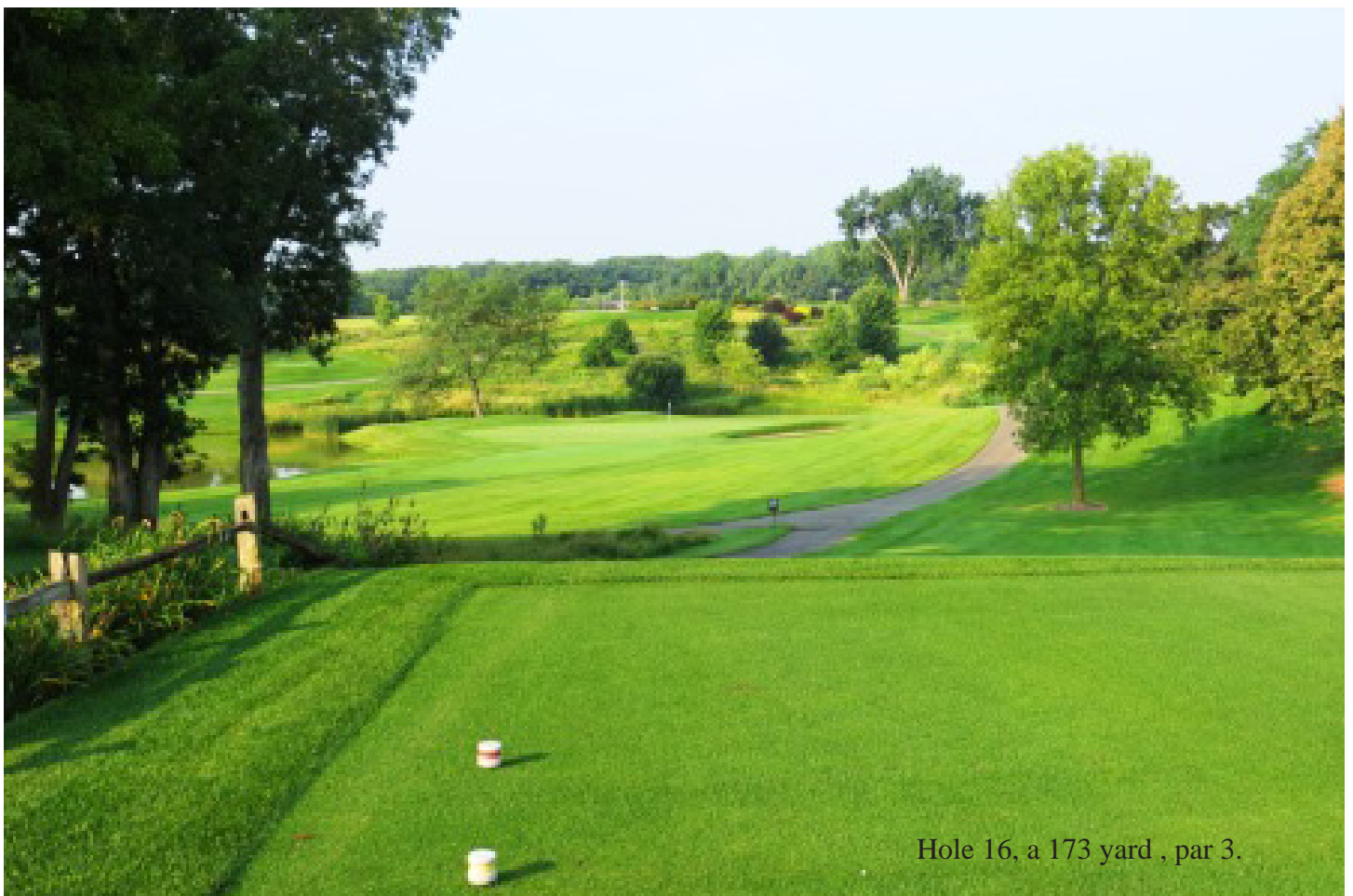
sional football team in 1960.

1964- The golf course was opened to all Honeywell employees and their families who purchased golfing memberships. The course was designed and built by Harrison, Brauer & Ripple and originally used the Lakeville VFW as its clubhouse, which was moved to the golf course and located south of the current clubhouse next to the tenth tee. The

1993- The Club is purchased by current owners Tom and Peggy Smith. Since their arrival the golf course and clubhouse have experienced many positive reconstruction projects. Brackett's Crossing maintains its private status, however the banquet facilities are open to the public. The Minnesota Lottery is initiated and state receives a visit from soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev.

A whole lot can happen over the course of 53 years, but there is

one constant in the community of Lakeville, Brackett's Crossing Country Club, a destination for family golf. This fine club is also playing host to the 2013 Minnesota Wee One Foundation Golf Event on October 7. The Wee One Foundation was developed as a tribute to Wayne Otto to assist golf course management professionals (or their dependents) who incur overwhelming expenses due to medical hardship without comprehensive insurance or adequate financial resources. As a profession we have taken steps nec-



Hole 16, a 173 yard , par 3.