



MID-
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CHARTER

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APATHY and the Mid Atlantic Association of Golf Course Superintendents or Reading Time Three Minutes

The World Book Dictionary defines apathy as "lack of interest or desire for activity; indifference; lack of feeling."

October 1, 1963, thirteen years ago I joined this organization. On that day, I left my wife and new born son in Massachusetts at 6:00 a.m. and set out to a new job in Maryland. I was full of pain at leaving my new family, relatives, and old friends, and unsure of what lay ahead. Sounds like a soap opera, you say. I arrived at my new job at 3:00 in the afternoon, was met by the golf course architect, briefed as to what was expected of me at the new job, and in closing was told that the M.A.A. of G.C.S. was holding its October meeting at Woodmont Country Club in Rockville, Maryland, and that I should attend. Not knowing a soul, nor ever having seen rush hour traffic around a metropolis like Washington, D.C., but with directions in hand, I set out. To travel from Crofton, Maryland to Rockville, Maryland can't take more than 30 to 35 minutes, I managed to navigate it in about two hours.

To say I was shaken on my arrival at Woodmont would be an understatement. After regaining my composure, I made my way from my car to the men's grille, where I was told I would find Bob Shields, the host, and the rest of the Mid Atlantic membership.

Arriving at the men's grille, I couldn't believe my eyes, there were 100 to 125 men in there having what looked to be a great time. Well, again, not knowing a soul I entered and as luck would have it, Bob Shields was standing near the door and because he didn't recognize me and also because Bob, as you know, is a congenial host, he introduced himself and asked if he could help me. After I explained my situation, Bob took me in tow, introduced me to Alex Watson, the then Membership Chairman. Al, in turn, filled me in on the Mid Atlantic Association, and he also took me around the room and introduced me to some real fine guys, *You The Members*. The friendliness, spirit, and comradarie

of the group overwhelmed me.

What does all the preceding have to do with apathy you ask, let me explain. We are an association consisting of some 180 dues paying members and yet attendance has dropped drastically over the past five years at all meetings, conferences, and other Association activities. Why? Is it because you are unhappy with the programs and activities of your Association, are the prices too high, are the demands of your jobs increasing thus curtailing your time for Association activities? I ask these questions because you are the members not communicating to your elected Board what the problem is.

Yes, your Board has directed itself to our decreasing attendance and to you the members overall attitude of indifference, almost disinterest, toward Association activities. We've concluded that we've done what we can. It's up to you the member to turn this Association around again. We need you. We thought you needed us. You joined the Association.

If you are unhappy with the way things are going, if the Association isn't answering your needs don't just stay away, get involved, bitch. The squeaky wheel gets the grease. You've got the vote.

Where is the friendliness, spirit, and comraderie I saw and felt 13 years ago. I know its out there.

Gentlemen, believe me this Association can not have an impact or be viable without strong membership participation. We have problems, but we don't have problems that working together will not solve.

Come to the meetings, air your grievances, host a meeting. Get involved, it only takes time, a little money and commitment to the professional good of all. You'll be glad you did. I am.

Apathy is a dirty six letter word.

Bill Emerson
Vice President
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