

A BRIEF EARLY HISTORY of the MGA

by Ed Flook

The seed for the MGA was planted sometime in 1987 when a small group, known as the ROF, would reserve a couple of tee times—just show up and play. Two years later 36 charter members, spearheaded by Paul Allen, formed the Ford's Colony Men's Golf Association at a meeting held on March 6, 1989. During Paul's third and final year as President, the first match-play tournament was held, later known as the Memorial, to honor deceased MGA members. Jack Kessler formed an ad-hoc greens committee much to the chagrin of Club Management. Paul wrote a compelling letter in support of the idea, ultimately assuaging Management's concern.

In 1992 Gene Huffman, now deceased, succeeded Paul and inherited a membership of 113 and a budget of \$1647, increasing by year's end to 135 members with a budget of \$4200. Dues remained at \$10. Our first hole-in-one policy was initiated with a \$50 maximum pay-out. The pay-out later increased to \$100 and then in 1996 to its current \$150.

During 1993 and 1994 President Jack Kessler, also deceased, is remembered as a guy who took on any and every job that came his way. He initiated the first MGA Banquet priced at \$43 p.p. In 1995 this became the MGA Dinner Dance. The featured entertainment was the MGA Chorus organized by George Trainor. Dressed in navy blue blazers and gray trousers, the group sang several songs including a political satire (with lyrics by Lou Imfeld) which were a great hit with the audience. The first Member Packet was developed, our first summer-long Ringer Tournament was held, and the large white "MGA scorecard" was designed, with scoring techniques illustrated in the Quarterly MGA Newsletter. The first full charity event on behalf of the Boy Scouts of America was kicked off at a Club-subsidized breakfast in the Dining Room and featured a speaker from the local Organization.

1995 began with "Mr. Organization" Bob Keith as President. The By-Laws received a total overhaul to accommodate the rapidly growing and changing nature of the MGA. In keeping with the MGA giving back to the Community, an event was held on behalf of the Williamsburg Hospital expansion. Planning began for the first Olde Towne Medical Center Tournament to be held in 1996. In November, the first President's Cup was held to recognize the outstanding golfers and past presidents. The election process was revamped from slate-oriented to a one-on-one election for each position. This resulted in a great Board, of course, but was generally unpopular so Bob went before the 1996 Board to propose a revised procedure, essentially the same as we know it today.

In 1996 Tom House was President, the year of the first Olde Towne Medical Center Tournament. In 1997 Obie Williams was President and the first Shark Shootout Tournament was played. Al Woods was President in 2004 when the inaugural MGA Championship was held in July. In 2009 the MGA celebrated our 20th anniversary at all of our major events and at a special golf tournament and lunch held on June 24th emceed by then President Gene Kessler.

Finally, I would be remiss in not acknowledging the tremendous support which all of our Presidents have received from elected and volunteer members, too numerous to mention here but vital to the success of the MGA.

MGA Presidents

Paul Allen	1989-1991	John Shumate	2001
Gene Huffman	1992	Dick Sorensen	2002
Jack Kessler	1993-1994	Charlie Brown	2003
Bob Keith	1995	Don Baker	2004
Tom House	1996	Al Woods	2005
Obie Williams	1997	Phil Pryor	2006
Ken Golder	1998	Dan Desmond	2007
Nate Walkley	1999	Tony Annoni	2008
Jack Jones	2000	Gene Kessler	2009
	Rick Jackson		2010