

# MISGA

GRAM

**VOLUME 94**  
December 2008  
www.MISGA.org

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## President's Message



As MISGA enters its 34th year, we face serious challenges for the continued growth and development of MISGA. Membership has declined every year since its peak of 4830 associates in 2000 to its 2008 total of only 3838 associates. In addition, participation is down to the point where three or four clubs must be invited to have a reasonable number of players for a mixer. Nevertheless, MISGA remains the best way for senior golfers to enjoy the physical and social activity afforded by the "mixer" format and by the sponsored "frolics." In spite of increasing costs, MISGA events are attractive options for golfing vacations.

What are some of the reasons that senior club members are not joining MISGA or not participating much, or are dropping out entirely? In conversations with both associates and non-associates, I have learned some of the reasons:

1. Slow play – mixers frequently take 5 to 5 1/2 hours for everyone to finish.
2. Cheating – associates not playing by the rules of golf and/or maintaining inflated handicaps.
3. Course length – courses are too long for many to enjoy. Handicaps adjust for the course length, but that doesn't make it any more fun.
4. Too expensive – they want to play golf, not eat a large meal in mid-afternoon. However, it is realized that clubs need that income to offset the "no green fees" policy of MISGA.
5. Too many mixers – this may be related to "too expensive." Playing in only four mixers a month can cost over \$150. It's not uncommon for a club to have 20+ mixers in a season. At some point, cost does become a serious consideration.

I would like to see increased emphasis on playing by the rules, first on "play down, putt out." That would be a big accomplishment. The next milestone would be to educate on "relief situations and procedures" – a "how-to" guide.

Let's Have Fun - With the ages of associates spanning 50 to 90+ and with handicaps ranging from single digits to over 40, we certainly have a diverse population participating in our Mixer Program. The "one size fits all" approach to tee selection just doesn't provide a fun golfing experience for everyone. In many cases, the standard tee placement creates a course that is too long for enjoyment by many players. Some will say that handicaps adjust for course length and difficulty. While that may be true in a technical sense, it doesn't equate to "fun." Fun is being able to hit a club other than a 3-wood for the second shot on most par 4 holes. We need to encourage clubs to offer Multi-Tee Mixers, where the tees played from are determined not by age or handicap, but by individual choice. Call this the "fun factor." Of course, the USGA method for "mixed tees" must be used to assign course and tee handicaps. (Golfnet takes care of this.) Then, according to the USGA, this would provide an equitable competition, which should cause no one to agonize over unfairness issues. Furthermore, as a bonus, we can have fun without dispensing with the rules of golf.

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# Maryland Interclub Seniors Golf Association

**President**  
Byron Keadle

**Vice President**

**Secretary**  
John Babyak

**Treasurer**  
Gary Sorrell

The *MISGAgram* is the official newsletter of the organization mailed free to all Associates four times each year. The mission of the 'gram is to provide information of common interest to all association members. The 'gram also can be read at [www.misga.org](http://www.misga.org).

The publication months for the *MISGAgram* are:

**April**  
**July**  
**September**  
**December**

Noteworthy events and announcement for away activities, and articles of general interest may be submitted to the editor at any time for printing. The closing dates for publication are:

**15 March** (April)  
**01 June** (July)  
**01 September** (Sept.)  
**10 November** (Dec.)

All materials should be sent via e-mail to:

**hahome@verizon.net**

**H. A. Hanson**  
*MISGAgram* Editor

## **President's Message** (continued from pg 1)

Operation Second Chance - The MISGA campaign to collect voluntary contributions for the Operation Second Chance (OSC) Charity was an outstanding success. Under the chairmanship of **Charlie Fieldhouse**, the MISGA associates contributed \$6,500 to the OSC charity. OSC is a non-profit, voluntary organization that provides assistance to wounded veterans of the Afghanistan and Iraq wars and their families. This is the second charity drive that **Charlie** has chaired. In 2001, he collected over \$18,000 from MISGA associates for the 9/11 Disaster Relief Fund, sponsored by the *Baltimore Sun* newspaper.

MISGA is indeed fortunate to have such a dedicated and outstanding person as **Charlie Fieldhouse**, whose efforts on behalf of the organization continue to mount.

If you have suggestions for improving the MISGA experience, please email me at [b.keadle@comcast.net](mailto:b.keadle@comcast.net).

*Byron Keadle, President*

## **This Isn't the PGA**

A fellow associate suggested to me recently that MISGA seniors should improve their lies everywhere within the tree lines, except bunkers. I mentioned that that was not in keeping with the spirit of the game, even cheating. He said, 'We're not the PGA; we're out here to have fun. Besides, everyone (in MISGA) cheats.'

Isn't that a sad state of affairs? How can cheating ever be fun?

However, cheating is deeply embedded in the MISGA culture. It is not only tolerated, but actually abetted. How often are putts conceded by teammates, or given to a teammate, or just taken, period? Have you noticed that a player, after missing one putt, casually backhands the next for another miss? But never mind, it was already taken as "good." In fact, his teammates will be quick to announce, "That was good!" so as not to embarrass the player by counting the already missed putt as a stroke. It is considered an insult to expect him to putt out from a "short" distance. And how about the next one, which was merely picked up instead of being putted into the cup?

There are no gimmes in golf!

I really don't believe that everyone cheats. I think that the large majority of MISGA associates will not violate the USGA rules if they are given explicit instructions during the pre-mixer announcements. Everyone can understand, "Play 'em down! Putt 'em out!" After all, golf is not a game of perfect lies. The challenge is to get the most out of a given situation, whether in a divot or behind a tree.

Any game is more fun when played within the rules. So, let's play golf, MISGA! Play 'em down and putt 'em out! You'll have more fun.

*"Golfers must love the challenge when they hit a ball into the rough, trees, or sand. The alternatives -- anger, fear, whining and cheating -- do no good." -- Robert Rotella*

*Byron Keadle, Patuxent Greens*

## 2009 MISGA SPRING FLING

### WILLIAMSBURG, VIRGINIA

TUE., MAY 12 (ARRIVAL) – THUR., MAY 14 (DEPARTURE)

The 2009 Spring Fling will again be held in Colonial Williamsburg, Virginia. Williamsburg is located about 2.5 to 3 hours south of Washington, DC. We had three fantastic weather days last year with temperatures in the 70's in the daytime and mid 60's at night. We will be playing three excellent and different golf courses: The Green course at Golden Horseshoe, Kiskiak Golf Club, and Williamsburg National. Participation is limited to 120 golfers. Applications will only be accepted from MISGA members who have paid dues this year.

Accommodations will be available at Hospitality House which is located 1.5 blocks from Merchant Square and the historic district. All guests must provide a credit card at check-in. Additional room nights are available, if desired, for the two nights before and/or after for \$139.50 per night (includes all taxes). If you would prefer to make your own accommodations, that is acceptable. (Many people rented time shares and stayed for the entire week. They used the MISGA games for the heart of their week and then scheduled additional golf games for the other days.) If there is enough interest, it is possible that a Friday morning game could be scheduled at a slightly reduced group rate.

Golf shotgun-start times are projected to be 12:30 PM on Tuesday, 9:00 AM on Wednesday and 9:00 AM on Thursday. Projected games will be typical MISGA team games. There will be no scrambles.

Since the hotel is not located at the golf courses, any of the non-golfing ladies that wish to can meet with Patty Dale and Kay Starkey in the lobby of the Hospitality House at 12:00 noon on Tuesday for lunch and discuss things to do in Williamsburg. They can have a leisurely lunch at the hotel and then investigate the nearby shopping areas. Many stores are within walking distance and shuttles are available to explore other shopping centers. The variety of possibilities is too large to list but certainly includes the outlet stores, the historical area and the pottery. On Wednesday, those non-golfing ladies that are interested can sign up for lunch and a tour of the Williamsburg Winery. Please mark the appropriate place on the registration form since a head count and payment is required in advance.

Dinner on Wednesday night will be held at the Hospitality House and is included in the package price. Other than the Wednesday night dinner, we have not scheduled any other meals, since there are such a large variety of excellent and different restaurants in the Williamsburg area, including several in the historic area.

The basic package price includes three rounds of golf and one dinner. The "cafeteria" style registration form allows you to pick the following additional items if you desire: lodging at Hospitality House, wine tasting tour plus lunch, nine-hole ladies golf or Friday Golf at a course to be determined. Basic entry is confirmed when money is received for the golf.

Just for information, please note that Mother's day is May 10. In addition, the LPGA tournament is scheduled for May 7 to 10 at Kingsmill golf course.

MISGA associates must submit a REGISTRATION FORM accompanied by a check for payment in full to the address on the form. (Additional forms are available at [WWW.MISGA.ORG](http://WWW.MISGA.ORG)) Entries close April 1.

*Dick Dale*

**MISGA SPRING FLING (MAY 12/13/14-2009)  
WILLIAMSBURG, VIRGINIA**

Please print all information. (Only paid up MISGA members qualify for this event.)

**MISGA associate name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Cell:** \_\_\_\_\_

**E-mail:** \_\_\_\_\_

**MISGA Club** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone** \_\_\_\_\_

**Wife or guest name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Her club** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone** \_\_\_\_\_

**Category:**

- 1. Couple--2 Golfers—Staying at Hospitality House----- \$878
- 2. Couple-1 Golfer---Staying at Hospitality House----- \$637
- 3. Single Golfer---Staying at Hospitality House----- \$637
- 4. Couple-2 Golfers—No MISGA accommodations----- \$582
- 5. Couple--1 Golfer---No MISGA accommodations----- \$339
- 6. Sing le Golfer---No MIS GA accommodations----- \$295
- 7. Non golfing ladies-- (Lunch + Winery Tour + Wine tasting) ----- \$28
- 8. Nine-holers -Circle X and indicate what day(s) you are interested in--X (See note)
- 9. Friday golf- Circle the XX----- XX (See note)
- 10. Extra nights at Hospitality House @ \$139.50 per night \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please specify what nights)

TOTAL COST = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Notes:** Above costs include dinner for **two** for categories **1, 2, 4 & 5** and dinner for **one** for categories **3 & 6**. **The dinner will be on Wednesday night.**

**X-** Nine-holers will be contacted separately to determine if there are enough to make a group and to determine the cost. (Cost will be different depending on the course desired. In addition, the limit is 120 and there may not be space available if there is a full field.)

**XX-** Possible Friday Golf: We will determine the level of interest in early March. If there are enough people interested, we might be able to get a slightly reduced group rate and play some type of MISGA game.

If staying at Hospitality House: Smoking \_\_\_\_\_ Non-Smoking \_\_\_\_\_

Latest handicap index: Man \_\_\_\_\_ Woman \_\_\_\_\_

Send applications and check payable to '**MISGA WILLIAMSBURG**' to:

**RICHARD DALE  
25135 PINE ROAD  
SEAFORD, DELAWARE 19973**

**Questions:** Ralph Starkey at 410-479-2968 E-mail: [ralph.starkey@comcast.net](mailto:ralph.starkey@comcast.net)  
Dick Dale at 302-629-7322 E-mail: [dickdale@verizon.net](mailto:dickdale@verizon.net)

I and my spouse or guest agrees to indemnify MISGA for any physical damage to the golf course, golf carts, equipment and resort facilities incurred due to our negligence and to abide by the MISGA Code of Conduct, Article 1X of the MISGA constitution. All personal charges for services not included in the registration fee are the responsibility of each MISGA member. Also, I certify that I am a current MISGA member with paid up dues.

**Signature of associate:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Old Men on the Tee

Old men play golf differently than the rest of us. Some play it well and some play it poorly but, as a class, their journey from the first tee to the last is worth studying. You can both improve your score and deepen the game's pleasures by paying attention when the elders lace up their spikes.

My own education began in a foursome that included three artificial joints: two hips and a knee. The orthopedic hardware was bolted to the bones of three men in their eighties, all residents of a gated community in South Carolina. I joined them for a round during an annual visit. They eyed me warily as I walked toward them with the starter. I learned later that my own age was almost a deal breaker. As a reasonably fit "kid" of fifty, they feared I might disrupt the octogenarian rhythms of their round. We exchanged greetings, handicaps, picked teams and teed off. What followed was a post-graduate education in good manners, good fellowship and, in the end, what's so good about the game.

Style - Like many retirees, they drove flamboyant golf carts: custom paint jobs, sound systems, flashy hood ornaments. There was the unmistakable echo of the Chryslers and Cadillac's they drove fifty years ago. One, apparently the group's quartermaster, had a year's supply of pencils and scorecards at the ready, wrapped in rubber bands and meticulously arranged in what otherwise appeared to be a medicine cabinet: Advil, prescription meds, band-aids, tubes of mentholated muscle cream, disinfectant and multiple grades of sun block. Sir Edmund Hillary conquered Everest with fewer provisions. Clearly, this would be no ordinary round of golf. This was a pilgrimage and the lessons unfolded on every fairway.

Golf Cartography - Old guys frequently have an encyclopedic knowledge of the natural world. After all, they've spent seven or eight decades walking around in it. If you're lucky, they'll map out the golf course for you, its landmarks, landscape and wildlife. Learning that your ball has come to rest under a "bougainvillea" and not a generic "bush" may be small consolation but it will better connect you to the golf course and, as the details accumulate, sharpen your appreciation of its architecture. Knowing that the bird cartwheeling overhead is an American kestrel can turn an out-of-bounds tee shot into an occasion of wonder. Stop counting strokes and give more thought to the canvas you are playing on.

There's No Swing Like An Old Swing - Their swings are miraculously constructed. In the best of them, there's a hint of the 50's Ben Hogan; in the worst, homage to the same decade's Bob Hope. In all of them, you'll see ingenious compensations for body parts that don't work quite as well as they used to. Their swings aren't uniformly pretty but they're predictably consistent and give new meaning to the term "muscle memory". Remember, they've been tutoring their neuromuscular junctions since Ike was in the White House. Because their testosterone is taking flight, they worship at the altar of timing and tempo more than young 'Turks' do. During your next round, genuflect with them and watch your score improve.

Splendor in the Grass - Because they grew up during America's first mass exodus to the suburbs, these guys love to landscape. They repair divots and rake bunkers unflinchingly. They minister to ball marks on the green as if they were bruises on a granddaughter's arm. They know, from the hard-won experience of guarding their own health, that living things need looking after. Whether you play at a private club or a pockmarked muni, leave every golf hole in better shape than you found it.

Take a Lesson - Remember, you're in the presence of men who have stopped punching the dock and can still afford a tee time. They have more or less successfully retired. They may not be able to lead you to the next Google, but any elder foursome can be full of sage advice on money, marriage and generally managing your life. Ask them about their lives and careers, turning points and blunders. Take notes.

The Wonders of the Wager - With their business careers behind them, a golf wager awakens a slumbering will to win. It is a kind of business deal, isn't it? Strokes are ferociously negotiated and the stakes, typically small, are agreed upon. They started playing golf when Byron Nelson ruled the sport and a buck was still a buck. It's not about the cash, it's about the contest and the unspeakable pleasure of extracting another ten spot from the flinty, New Englander they've been playing with since 1975. Bet smart, bet small, and play fiercely down the stretch.

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## Old Men on the Tee (continued from pg 5)

The Killer Short Game - Every golfer has had a \$5 Nassau slip from his grasp as some old guy gets up and down on a crucial hole. This is their wheelhouse, where they swallow the indignity of being out-driven by seventy yards, offer a sly wink and go one-up on the match. Because they're on life's final lap, they know that how you start matters less than how you finish. Inside 20 yards, this wisdom is decisive. It doesn't hurt, of course, to have memorized every subtle swale on the golf course and they have! If you are lucky enough to meet one of these masters of the short game, share a beer with him after the round and pick up a tip or two.

Enjoy the Journey - When you tee it up with a man in his eighties, you might well be witness to his final round. As fit a fellow as he seems, the basic laws of probability insist that next week's foursome may be a man short and he knows it. I thought more than once when one of my foursomes made his way to the bottom of a bunker that he may never come out and that he might not mind that at all. This must explain, in some measure, the simple joy they take in the journey. They generally play without anger or angst and, in an age of ball caps worn backwards and brawling basketball teams, they'll connect you to a gentler time.

They are the game's true historians and the keepers of its enduring civility. That golf remains such a grand, old game is largely thanks to the grand, old men who continue to play it.

Anonymous

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## Memorable Moments

Congratulations to the following MISGA associates who have each achieved the ever-elusive hole-in-one since the last issue of the 'gram.

**Bruce Cowan**, *Westminster National (Bear Creek)*; on 23 September, **Bruce** got his ace on *Marlborough* hole #8.

**Don Wilgus**, *Cripple Creek*; also on 23 September, **Don** shot a hole-in-one the 1 19-yd hole #5 at *Nutters Crossing*.

**John Schaffer**, *Fort Meade*; on 07 October, John sank his T-shot at at the 10<sup>th</sup> hole (*Fort Meade/Applewood #1*) using a 7-iron on the 125-yd par-3.

**Larry Munson**, *Hunt Valley*, at the season closing mixer at *Hunt Valley*, Larry sank his ace on Red course 145-yd hole #4 using a 6-iron.

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## Seasonal Thoughts

**Posting Scores** - The golfing season in the mid-Atlantic region is officially over for a few months. However, many courses will remain open and temporary tees and multiple pin locations will be used at some of the open courses and 'winter rules' will be in effect on a local basis. Even though some of us will still be on the links when the weather and the greens-keepers permit, we will not be required to post our scores. This is not the case for golfers who be spending some (or all) of the off-season months in the sunbelt. When you play a course during the 'active season', you are required to post your score. The term 'active season' applies to the courses in the southern part of the US where the golf season is yearlong. For those golfers who will be playing on southern courses, their scores should be recorded and then posted when the season opens in the spring at their home club.

**Giving** - As we approach the yearend and especially during the holiday season, remember those who are less fortunate than we and the charitable organizations (and other non-profit groups) whose mission it is to provide help; in whatever form. MISGA associates have demonstrated their generosity by past performance (9/11 victims fund, Operation Second Chance). This year, during a bit of economic stress, such generosity is even more important. Remember to help bring a little cheer to someone less fortunate than we are.

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## Recently Deceased

Ron Twardesky

*Bear Trap Dunes*



# Operation Second Chance Fourth Annual Golf Tournament

October 6, 2008 at *Montgomery Village*

Cloudy, cool, but a day with warmth radiating from fellow players -- 12 of our Veterans were present. Our former partner, legally blind, **Joe Bogart**, has remained in the Army and is back in Iraq, in a safe zone, with a promotion to Captain. He sent regards and hopes to return to play next year. His Engineer insignia in his eye prosthesis has been replaced with an American Flag. Gillian, his Seeing Eye dog is doing well.

Thanks to the dedication and diligent work of **Charles (Charlie) Fieldhouse**, including his extended generosity, a check was presented to OSC not only meeting but also exceeding the goal he set. MISGA is indeed blessed to have such an outstanding patriot and hard worker in its organization.

A team of **Bob Turner, Byron Keadle, Tom Taylor, and Tom Tarpley** represented MISGA and enjoyed being with the participants. This formidable group of golfers finished a mere 13 strokes behind the winners. But, none of us was wounded during the skirmish!

**Jay Dibley's** framed photo collage of last year's event was presented and warmly received. Many who previously participated wanted copies—so will forward photos.

Again, thanks to **Charlie** and to **Cindy McGrew** and the other volunteers of OSC who made us welcome. A few pics from the outing are below. (Editor's Note: *The total MISGA donation to OSC this year was over \$6, 500 and consisted entirely of voluntary contributions by associates.*)

*Tom Tarpley*



Fearsome four with **Cindy McGrew**



Admiring a collage of the '07 event



Some of the players



More of the players



A moment of remembrance



Ladies who make it happen



**Cindy and Bob**



**Cindy McGrew**



The **MISGA** gang

*MISGAgram*

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