

# 2019 KPGA Golf Professional of the Year Nomination

Barry Bonifield  
Crescent Hill Golf Course  
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\*This is my official response to the nomination for **Golf Professional of the Year** in the Kentucky Section of the PGA.

## 1. Nominee's overall performance as a Golf Professional

Visibility as a Player- I have participated in over 50 Kentucky PGA Professional tournaments during the last 3 years and approximately 300 over the past 20 years. Won multiple tournaments to include 2008, 2015, 2017 Ky PGA Senior Professional Championships, 2018 Ky Senior Open, 2017 Ky PGA Senior Match Play Champion, 2016 and 2017 Senior Player of the Year as well as multiple appearances in regular and senior division National CPCs. Low Ky PGA member professional at the 2001 Ky Open championship.

I work with High School coaches providing instruction for high school and college players, both male and female. This work, along with my Junior golf program which has averaged over 50 participants a year for the last 20 years, has been a particular joy as I have seen much success with scholarship players at Bellarmine, LSU, Northeastern, Southern Wesleyan, Rutgers, Centre, and Campbellsville Universities. In addition, my players have seen victory in many local junior events, including the overall Junior Falls City Champion. Like most PGA golf professionals, many of the lessons I have given have been without charge to under funded folks who had a need. I have supported most Play Golf Louisville or America events in the interest of growing the game. I have taught for many hours the last 4 years at the January golf expo at the Louisville fairgrounds, in addition to hosting Junior golf initiatives such as Bring Your Daughter to the Course, Get Golf Ready, and my own programs encouraging golfers to bring a guest. I also have, for 15 years, run a ladies only Tuesday evening teaching program that has had as few as 5 but as many as 22 participants. This particular program has created many lifelong friendships that are priceless to me, and where I have benefited far more than they.

I own and run the golf shop at Crescent Hill Golf Course, many days with the help of my great indispensable wife Diana and a few volunteers. I own a fleet of 30 golf cars, a small golf shop, and a food and beverage operation for our guests. The golf shop merchandise success is minimal after employee purchases at or below cost, and primary sales come from golf balls, gloves, and hats to cover bald spots. My significant compensation at Crescent Hill comes from the golf car revenues and the food and beverage operation, as well as certain teaching programs. This is all done on course as I have no driving range or practice area to speak of, apart from a shag area

which is approximately 130 yards deep, where patrons hit their own balls. Yet we make it work with creativity, hitting balls up the side of the first hole when play is light. My League play is a particular joy for me with Men's Seniors and a Thursday Ladies' league that I thoroughly enjoy, as well as a Law enforcement league, hospital league, a weekly Beer Distributor group scramble, and several small leagues comprised of self legendary personalities!

Perhaps my most important role in the golf business has been the role of mentoring others. This has come in a variety of ways, from helping with homework (speeches are my favorite!), to soothing hurt feelings in relationships, to solving employee issues, to helping passers by whose minivans have been tagged by errant drives by people who have not taken lessons with me, to giving epitaphs as many of my golfers have aged and passed on. Now at an advancing age, I find myself being sought out by parents to help with kids, golf professionals seeking references on jobs and recommendations, young people who are struggling with being young people, and the occasional financial need that can be such a blessing to give to someone. All of this has come from this high calling as a PGA member that I am privileged to be, as well as being surrounded by golf professionals I admire and continue to learn from.

## **2. Nominee's service to the local Section**

My service to our section has been one of the biggest joys of my life. I have been a KPGA Board of Directors member for the last 2 years, and recently re-elected to another 2 year term as District 2 director. I also serve as the Chairman of the Special Awards Committee, have just completed my first year of a 6 year commitment on the Hall of Fame Committee, and am a past member of the Communications Committee. I was privileged to attend the 2017 PGA Annual meeting in Austin, Texas.

My goal is always to answer in the affirmative when called upon, especially to our fellow members and our great local PGA office at all times.

## **3. Nominee's Leadership Ability**

My leadership ability is one that has been slow in coming in my mind, but has been greatly aided by my dear wife Diana who pushes, encourages, and supports me to go above and beyond my comfort level, and sometimes even my fear of failure. This is a difficult area for me to discuss because I believe true leaders lead by example and not with self-proclamation. However, I do my level best to remember significant occurrences in people's lives, professional achievements, and personal milestones to others and to acknowledge them in such a positive way as to build them up and enable them to continue their own personal momentum, as well as provide an example to them that I have been taught and believe strongly in, and that is to be YOUR best at all times, and press on to be great and inspire others to do so as well. I have been blessed to learn from past PGA Tour players such as Dave Ragan, a member of the 1963 Ryder Cup Team and multiple winner on the Tour, and Don Essig III, the 1984 national Horton Smith Award winner and a member of the PGA Hall of Fame. Their mantra to me, as well as from a past pastor, is "everything rises

and falls on leadership". I make it a point to model this in my personal and professional dealings at all times in my dress, demeanor, and discipline.

#### **4. Nominee's Inspiration to Other Golf Professionals**

Again, I struggle with penning these words, because in my heart I believe inspiration to others in our field must come from such a place of sincerity and faith that words cannot convey it's truth, but I'll share this hoping it may be of benefit to others in their own journey and growth . I believe sincerely in sending notes of encouragement and congratulations, as well as occasionally tapping the shoulders of well- to- do members at other courses to ask them to bless their golf professionals anonymously. In my own life, I share with my fellow professionals that I am remembering them before the Throne of Grace where we all find love and mercy. Again deeply personal, but my fellow professionals mean more to me than I can express. And finally, I call people and thank them for their contributions to our association and congratulate them in professional and family achievements.

#### **5. Nominee's Growth of game initiatives**

Many of my growth of the game initiatives have been highlighted above, so I will not burden anyone with needless repetition. However, please suffice it to say I am , have always been, and will continue, to grow the greatest game there is, with my every breath and ounce of strength I possess while I am here on this earth. I have been privileged to work with many players from the Ballard Boys Golf team, and am currently helping coach and teach the Assumption Girls Golf team. The girls, after being winless for a prolonged period, went 9 and 7 in dual meets in 2017, and UNDEFEATED in dual meets, 13-0, in 2018. They finished 4<sup>th</sup> in the Regional tournament. I have had the honor of introducing the vast majority of these fine girls to the game of golf from day 1, so I'm extremely proud of them and expect many to play collegiately.

Every lesson, every counseling session with a young lady or young man, every tear with a family member who has lost an older golfer of mine, every memory of my 52 years playing this game, and every growth program I've been involved with has molded me into the man and PGA golf professional I am honored to be today.

#### **6. Section or National Awards**

This is currently an area in which I have not been recognized.



# PGA

Kentucky Section

## 2019 KPGA GOLF PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR NOMINATION

**Name of Nominee:** Donnie A. Caldwell, PGA

**Facility Name:** Wasioto Winds / The First Tee Pine Mountain

**Facility Address:** 114 Highway 190 Pineville, KY 40977

**Facility Phone Number:** (606)-337-1066 / (800)-814-8002

**Nominee E-mail Address:** donniecaldwellpga@yahoo.com

*The nomination form should be typewritten.*

1. Please describe the nominee's overall performance as a Golf Professional.
  - 1990 recipient of JAGA Scholarship at University of North Florida
  - Resort experience at Hidden Hills Country Club, Ponte Vedra Inn & Club
  - Kentucky Section experience at Harlan C.C., London C.C., Crooked Creek Golf Club, and Kentucky State Parks (Pine Mountain/Wasioto Winds)
  - Worked under golf mentors:
    - Florida – Jim Howard, PGA (Ponte Vedra & Club)
    - Robert Harris, PGA (The Greenbrier- currently) – Ponte Vedra
    - Kentucky - Luther Minor Sr. PGA (Harlan C.C.)
    - Luther Minor Jr. PGA (London C.C.)
    - Bill Moore, PGA (Crooked Creek Golf Club) / Eddie Mudd, PGA
    - Kevin Main, PGA/Dan Strohmeier, PGA/Jerry Shoffner, PGA
  - Over 25 years golf industry experience in Florida and Kentucky
  - Over 18 Years of experience with The First Tee as Program Director (Kentucky)
  - Several Roles with The First Tee locally and nationally:
    - Program Director – The First Tee Pine Mountain (1 of 5 in Kentucky)
    - National Trainer – The First Tee Home Office (1 of 10 national)
    - National Academy Coach (8 years)
    - Chapter Advisory Committee
    - Life Skills Experience Committee
    - Golf Skills Curriculum Committee
    - The First Tee Master Coach (1 of 9 worldwide)
  - Daily Operations at Pine Mountain State Resort Park as Golf Professional promoting Drive, Chip, & Putt/ The First Tee / LPGA Girls' Golf / daily play
  - Successful team member in securing over 3.5 million in college scholarships at Georgetown College, Union College, and Lincoln Memorial University for over 35 participants of The First Tee through The Scholar's Program.



2. Please briefly describe the nominee's service to the local Section and to the Association.

- Served (Kentucky Section) committees on:  
Pro to Pro mentoring, Growth of the Game, Junior Golf
- Served on Diversity Awareness Committee with PGA of America meeting at PGA Headquarters joining Mr. Ernie Ellison and Joe Steranka on early initiatives and improvements for youth of all social strata.
- Presented at Kentucky Section Spring / Fall Meetings on Junior Golf
- Promoted Kentucky PGA Junior Golf Tour hosting events and travelling with juniors across the state for the past 18 years.
- Represented the Kentucky Section at ECU Golf Management Program on Growth of Game initiatives and junior golf

3. Please briefly describe the nominee's leadership ability.

- "Learning from others"
  - Thirty years ago I learned the "power of introduction" from Jim Howard, PGA and Robert Harris, PGA. Both gentlemen would take a junior golfer to lunch and take the time to proudly "introduce" them to numerous ladies and gentlemen at the club. The mentoring golf professional would convey the introduction as an honor to share this junior's story and it made you feel important and appreciated. From learning this "power of introduction", I have introduced thousands of young people to caring adults and the game of golf.
- "Combination of 5 Star Resort and mountain hospitality"
  - While at a 36-hole resort, I learned the importance of being ahead of the customer's expectations – having everything ready for their golf experience and making a great first impression
  - Never get too busy to thank a guest or member for coming and sharing their time with you. A sincere smile and focused conversation will be remembered if we as professionals keep in mind – people matter.
- "Train, Cross-train, Help, Servant-Leadership"
  - I remember learning club repair when it included rewhipping as a cart attendant at Ponte Vedra Inn & Club. Learning new skills can raise moral of a staff and build confidence
  - We work with a mentality to help any department in need: serving tables, golf maintenance, banquet preparation (Teamwork)
- "Put others in a position to lead"
  - Develop training to build confidence - then let them lead
  - Inspect what we inspect / Communicate / Strive for excellence

Recently, at a career day for local high schools – the college recruiters were both former participants of our program who now work for two separate colleges: Lindsay Davis, LMU / Whitney Baker, University of the Cumberlands

- We are in 20 schools and 4 drive locations in programming and we mostly run it with alumni students who are giving back.

4. Please briefly describe how the nominee inspires fellow Golf Professionals.

- Inspiration may come from seeing a young man grow up in Southern Kentucky move away to college to enter the golf industry in Florida. Then, return home to grow the game to thousands of young people in Kentucky who otherwise may not have the opportunity. PGA Professionals can inspire in many ways: their playability, their instruction, their management, or their growth of the game to name a few. My mark may be that I have taken what I have learned over the past twenty-five years and applied it to an area and group of people who could benefit. The First Tee Pine Mountain in its 18<sup>th</sup> year with hundreds of youth choosing college or career work environments
- Former participants have played college golf in NAIA, Division I, II, and III along with young men successfully becoming PGA Members and recently a young lady signed with Ferris State PGA Program to become our first female PGA Member from The First Tee Pine Mountain

5. Please briefly describe how the nominee grows the game of golf at the facility, in the community and throughout the Section.

- Nearly 50 free golf lessons each season given to schools/families/individuals
- Hosting or promoting junior golf through SEKJGT, Kentucky PGA Junior, AJGA, LPGA Girls Golf, and The First Tee
- On the front lines to remove the barrier of expense – We have collected 125+ sets of donated clubs over the past three seasons from supporting golf clubs and put those reconditioned clubs into the hands of non-golfers and juniors to get them started. Many times these donated sets are put into the hands of both parents along with a free golf lesson to make it affordable for new families starting the game.

6. Please list any Section or National awards the nominee has received

Award	Year Received	Section
Assistant Professional of the Year	2004	Kentucky
PGA President's Council for <i>Growth of the Game</i>	2005 - 2009	Kentucky
Junior Golf Leader of the Year	2006	Kentucky
Junior Golf Leader of the Year	2007	Kentucky
Junior Golf Leader of the Year	2009	Kentucky
Junior Golf Leader of the Year	2010	Kentucky
Golf Professional of the Month (November)	2011	Kentucky
Junior Golf Leader of the Year	2012	Kentucky
Youth Development Leader of the Year	2014	Kentucky
Youth Development Leader of the Year	2015	Kentucky

Deadline – December 10, 2018

Return forms to:

Kentucky PGA

Golf House Kentucky

1116 Elmore Just Drive

Louisville, KY 40245

(502) 243-9266 fax

Email Word documents to:

csaner@kygolf.org



# PGA

Kentucky Section

## 2019 KPGA GOLF PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR NOMINATION

**Name of Nominee:** Luther Conley  
**Facility Name:** Cherry Blossom Golf Club  
**Facility Address:** 150 Clubhouse Drive, Georgetown, KY  
**Facility Phone Number:** 502-570-9849  
**Nominee E-mail Address:** lutherconley@pga.com

*The nomination form should be typewritten.*

1. Please describe the nominee's overall performance as a Golf Professional.

Those of you who are reading this, remember your first day on the job, the excitement that you had having your first head professional job at the your club. Well after 37 years as a professional I still have that excitement and the same level of enthusiasm to come to work each day as I did on my first day as a professional. I have a great love for the game and take pride in the condition of the golf course and practice facility. I have an innovative mindset and I'm always trying to improve both facilities. I've had great success with Longview Resort and now it's become a very popular stay n play destination. I'm still trying to improve as a golf professional since I was first inducted into the PGA in 1986. I greatly enjoy coming to work early and staying until the day is completed. This makes doing the job so much easier. In the golf business it is so important to stay focused and taking care of priorities, completing them and being well organized. I try to be very positive in my job, not only in the things that I'm trying to accomplish but to influence those around me. I've never been one who others try to motivate. I have no problem to get the day started without someone telling me to. I'm a firm believer that to run an efficient program everyone needs to work together. I try to get those working with me involved as much as possible. So much more can be accomplished working as a team.

2. Please briefly describe the nominee's service to the local Section and to the Association.

I have not had the opportunity to work with the Section as a board member but I feel that I can contribute doing my part by making my course available for local, state and national events. While here at Cherry Blossom we have hosted several events. Those events include hosting several junior tournaments every year for the KGA junior programs, 2007 Mid-Am Qualifier, 2009 Women's State Am, 2011 US Girls Junior Qualifier, 2014 Men's State Am, 2015 US Open Qualifier, 2015 Women's Senior State Am, 2017 Women's State Am, 2018 Girls Junior State Am. For the 2019 season we are hosting the Girls Junior State Am, US Mid-Am Qualifier, 2019 PGA Tour Barbasol Championship Pre-Qualifier. I try to host at least one major event each year for the Kentucky Section. I feel that opening my course for these events helps the Section. I'm always open to help if something happens to another location. I very much enjoy working with Mr. Coomer in whatever capacity that I'm needed.

3. Please briefly describe the nominee's leadership ability.

I believe one should have a collaborative leadership style. I try to seek out the skills and talents of my employees so that everyone has a feeling of ownership and belonging as part of a team. I believe that a good leader shares responsibility. I work with my staff so they will have the feeling of being part of the team and the satisfaction of accomplishment. I try to train them the way to do things and then give them the freedom to do it. One of the best ways to train is by example. Working with my staff and being positive, works much better than giving orders. I am always there to give them the help and support to grow in their job responsibilities. My hopes are that they can use me as a stepping stone to be able to move on to bigger and better job opportunities.

4. Please briefly describe how the nominee inspires fellow Golf Professionals.

I try to lead by example and work cooperatively with my staff to set clear expectations and model high standards. Golf is a game of honor and integrity and I always give my time and counsel others on the most important thing in the golf business "How to deal with people". We are all public servants and our goal is to promote the game through smiles, kindness and a positive attitude.

5. Please briefly describe how the nominee grows the game of golf at the facility, in the community and throughout the Section.

I direct my staff to stay very involved with juniors, ladies, and beginners. I feel that if you want to grow the game you need to introduce golf to these groups. By getting kids involved in the game you will get the parents involved also. When I was at Paintsville I grew our membership from 40 to 289 and this was largely due to my junior golf program. This Year (2018) we started the PGA junior league. We only had 10 players but feel this will continue to grow.

Another way that we are growing the game at both our courses is through league play. We have a couple of church leagues, we have a men's league at both facilities of about 55 players each. We have this open to non-members. We also have a league for police officers in the area. For the Section, by hosting several tournaments for adults and juniors we keep players coming out to practice and to know the course. This keeps players involved in the game.

6. Please list any Section or National awards the nominee has received

Award	Year Received	Section
Junior Golf Leader	1994	Kentucky





**PGA**

Kentucky Section

## **2019 KPGA GOLF PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR NOMINATION**

**Name of Nominee:** Colin Gooch, PGA  
**Facility Name:** Griffin Gate Golf Club  
**Facility Address:** 1800 Newtown Pike, Lexington, KY 40511  
**Facility Phone Number:** (859) 288-6193  
**Nominee E-mail Address:** [colin.gooch@marriott.com](mailto:colin.gooch@marriott.com)

*The nomination form should be typewritten.*

1. Please describe the nominee's overall performance as a Golf Professional.  
(Verbiage below provided by my direct report, Lexington Griffin Gate Marriott Resort & Spa, General Manager, Theona Simbrat)  
Colin is a master at all areas as it pertains to the entire golf operation. He has increased sales by over 35% in the two years since arriving. He has changed the overall view of the local market and has increased profit by over 20%. His customer scores are in the top 5% for Marriott Golf overall and continues to challenge himself to get better. He has so many great ideas and is the first to take risks so that he can improve the overall golf operation at the Griffin Gate Marriott Resort & Spa.
2. Please briefly describe the nominee's service to the local Section and to the Association.  
(Verbiage below provided by my direct report, Lexington Griffin Gate Marriott Resort & Spa, General Manager, Theona Simbrat)  
Colin is a great local supporter of all the Lexington market as well as Kentucky. Colin is from Kentucky and every opportunity to support local charities he is the first to jump in and help raise money for the community, i.e. 1<sup>st</sup> Tee of Lexington, Children's Charities of the Bluegrass, PGA HOPE, Children's Miracle Network, God's Pantry, etc.

3. Please briefly describe the nominee's leadership ability.  
(Verbiage below provided by my direct report, Lexington Griffin Gate Marriott Resort & Spa, General Manager, Theona Simbrat)  
Colin is a big part of the overall resort as an executive leader in the resort. He comes to work every day ready to make positive changes no matter what the area is. He has changed the golf operation to be more balanced between members and resort guests. He is a strong leader and continues to lead by example.
4. Please briefly describe how the nominee inspires fellow Golf Professionals.  
(Verbiage below provided by my direct report, Lexington Griffin Gate Marriott Resort & Spa, General Manager, Theona Simbrat)  
Colin works with the universities in our area (UK, ECU) to get young talent into our operation to allow them an opportunity to learn and grow with a great company like Marriott Golf. Colin takes time daily to meet with our young leaders in the resort so that they learn what the golf operation is about as well. He has promoted several young leaders straight out of school to embrace the ever changing golf world.
5. Please briefly describe how the nominee grows the game of golf at the facility, in the community and throughout the Section.
- **Ladies' Golf Day** – Tuesdays, all ladies play at a discounted golf rate all year long. (262 rounds YTD)
  - **Senior Golf Day** – Wednesdays, all seniors (men & ladies age 60+) play at a discounted golf rate all year long. (368 rounds YTD)
  - **Women's Golf Day** – 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the property participating in Women's Golf Day at the club. Generated 50+ rounds and 25 lessons each event.
  - **National Golf Day** – 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the property participating in National Golf Day at the club. Generated 80+ rounds and 30 lessons each event.

- **1<sup>st</sup> Tee of Lexington Annual Club Drive** – 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the property participating in this initiative created by the club. Over 250+ clubs and 30+ golf bags donated for the 1<sup>st</sup> Tee of Lexington since inception.
- **PGA HOPE** / Labor Day Weekends – Golf tournament and silent auction in 2017 raised \$10,775.75 for PGA HOPE (most among Marriott Golf properties). Approx. \$11,759.42 raised in 2018.
- **Fairway Furloughs Military Program** - Active, reserve and retired military are offered an early twilight rate of \$36 Monday through Friday and \$46 Saturday, Sunday and Holidays at 1:00pm instead of 3:00pm. Reservations can be made up to 7 days in advance and a valid military ID card must be presented at check in. (100+ rounds YTD)
- **Kids Golf 4 Free Program** - Juniors ages 15 and under can play one free round for each full-paying adult accompanying them, after 3:00pm all year round. Kids also rent for free with this program. (200+ rounds YTD)
- **Youth on Course Program** - To get more Junior golfers to play, we have offered the Youth on Course program since the fall of 2017. In this program, youth register via [www.youthoncourse.org](http://www.youthoncourse.org) and join for a \$5 membership that lasts for the entire year. With this program, each Youth will present their information upon check-in and play for \$5 anytime on Monday-Thursday and Sundays after 12 pm (excluding all holidays). (244 rounds YTD)
- **College Links Program** - College students are offered an early twilight rate of \$36 Monday through Friday and \$46 Saturday, Sunday and Holidays at 1:00pm instead of 3:00pm. Reservations can be made up to 7 days in advance and a valid student ID card must be presented at check in. (75 rounds YTD)
- **Children's Charity Classic** – I've been honored to have been on the committee of this wonderful charity over the last 2 years in conjunction with Greenbrier Country Club. <http://www.childrenscharityofthebluegrass.org/> Over \$600K raised for Central KY children at the 2018 event alone and over \$6 million since 1981.

6. Please list any Section or National awards the nominee has received

Award	Year Received	Section
Merchandiser of the Year	2017	Kentucky
Golf Professional of the Year	2017	Marriott Golf – National Award

Deadline – December 10, 2018

Return forms to:  
Kentucky PGA  
Golf House Kentucky  
1116 Elmore Just Drive  
Louisville, KY 40245  
(502) 243-9266 fax

Email Word documents to:  
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**PGA**

Kentucky Section

## **2019 KPGA GOLF PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR NOMINATION**

**Name of Nominee:** Scott Sedgwick  
**Facility Name:** Louisville Country Club  
**Facility Address:** 25 Mockingbird Valley Trail, 40207  
**Facility Phone Number:** 502-895-8477  
**Nominee E-mail Address:** ssedgwick73@gmail.com

1. Please describe the nominee's overall performance as a Golf Professional.

Scott's performance as the Head Golf Professional at Louisville Country Club can be measured by his dedication to the position, the PGA, members, and his staff. His ability to sustain and continuously improve upon a successful golf operation in every category also proves his outstanding performance. These categories include: servicing the membership, the operation and management of employees, tournaments and merchandising, and the junior/teaching programs.

In a previous member-wide survey conducted by the Louisville CC in an effort to improve upon the golf operation for the upcoming season, the member's responses to the survey called Scott's operation "helpful, friendly, organized, knowledgeable, professional, and available." Another year an outside firm that administered the survey noted that, "they had never seen such high marks for the overall performance of a golf operation." Although the golf staff receives such positive feedback as noted above, Scott continuously strives to raise the bar. Whereas a lot of operations would become complacent in this regard, Louisville Country Club always strives to become even better.

By conducting staff meetings organized by Scott, the entire golf professional staff meets regarding preparations, times, and course availability for upcoming events and operational programs. When attempting to raise the standard at a golf operation such as Louisville Country Club, communication is vital to meeting and exceeding goals and standards. Meetings as such and constant performance reviews are essential to the success of the golf operation.



2018 has been an exciting year where Scott and the Golf Professional Staff have been able to incorporate new programs and systems into the operation that has resulted in renewed vitality to the golf program for both existing players and those new to the game and also, just as importantly, for junior golfers at Louisville Country Club. LCC has also worked in tandem with other club operations such as tennis and food and beverage to maximize the members' enjoyment of their club while keeping revenues & expenses constant with budget expectations.

2. Please briefly describe the nominee's service to the local Section and to the Association.

Although Scott has not served as an officer or chairperson of a committee, in the past he has been involved in the section by continuing to assist any questions or concerns from other golf professionals. Scott has done this by instructing educational seminars and general one on one conversation answering any concerns other professionals may have.

3. Please briefly describe the nominee's leadership ability.

Scott's leadership ability is one of his many great attributes as a Golf Professional. He is always concerned with the welfare of others and places an emphasis on the preparation of assistants in order to advance their careers. Scott demands a whole lot from his staff and sets very high standards and expectations for them to meet, keeping their best interests at heart. His leadership ability is visible throughout many clubs in the Kentucky section in other PGA sections that now have one of 18 former assistants now as the head professional (or successful person outside of golf). Recently, we have heard a quote that describes the environment Scott creates at the Louisville CC golf operation -- "Culture eats strategy for lunch". Scott's leadership has created a very successful and member oriented culture at Louisville CC.

4. Please briefly describe how the nominee inspires fellow Golf Professionals.

Scott's commitment to helping his assistants advance through the PGA both professionally and as an individual shows his inspiration he has placed in fellow golf professionals. Scott continuously demands a lot of his assistants and constantly challenges them, but in the end, they are prepared to be successful in the uniquely challenging career as a PGA Golf Professional. Scott gives everyone the tools and confidence to succeed and has been honored with former assistant and fellow golf professionals referencing him for advice on various issues.

5. Please briefly describe how the nominee grows the game of golf at the facility, in the community and throughout the Section.

Scott consistently makes an effort to evolve the teaching, tournament, and junior golf programs in order to grow the game of golf at Louisville Country Club. As times have changed Scott continues his hands on approach to create opportunities for members to enjoy and play more golf. We are very proud that we break down every program, event and managerial expectation and rebuild the program in the attempt to keep it up to date and in line with the needs and desires of his membership.

6. Please list any Section or National awards the nominee has received

Award	Year Received	Section
Bill Strausbaugh	2008, 2013, 2018	Kentucky
Golf Professional Year	2012	Kentucky
Junior Golf Leader	2003	Kentucky
Merchandiser of Year	2004, 2016	Kentucky

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# PGA

Kentucky Section

## 2019 KPGA GOLF PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR NOMINATION

**Name of Nominee:** Kim Shafer  
**Facility Name:** PGA of America  
**Facility Address:** 100 Avenue of the Champions, Palm Beach  
Gardens, FL 33418  
**Facility Phone Number:** 561-657-5372  
**Nominee E-mail Address:** [kshafer@pgahq.com](mailto:kshafer@pgahq.com)

*The nomination form should be typewritten.*

### **1. Please describe the nominee's overall performance as a Golf Professional.**

The most successful Golf Professionals are those that are willing to seek advice, admit their weaknesses, openly ask others for help, have a desire to learn and aren't afraid to fail. Throughout her professional career, whether it be as a teacher of the game, a Section Staff Member or a member of the National PGA Player Development Team, Kim has always strived to improve her skill set and learn from others who have different strengths and abilities than her own.

As a teacher, Kim dedicated herself to learning how to best communicate with her students and how to effectively improve their performance. She reached out to the top instructors for assistance and attended many teaching seminars to improve her skills. She went on to have a successful teaching career as the Teaching Professional at Hurstbourne Country Club for 17 years and was named the Teacher of the Year in 2007.

As the Director of Player Development for the Kentucky Section, Kim committed herself to becoming as prepared as possible for this new position. She became certified in the PGA's Player Development and Teaching & Coaching programs and reached out weekly to the National Player Development Team for continued education. Kim's dedication to the PGA Jr. League program allowed the

number of teams to increase from 43 to 87 during her tenure and Kentucky was annually ranked in the top three Sections out of 41 Sections for the percentage of professionals participating in the program. It was this success that led her to the current position as Regional League Manager for the PGA of America. During her first year in this role she experienced a 25% growth in the number of players within her Region. Kim's desire to continually improve her professional skills has allowed her to grow, learn and be successful in her various professional roles.

**2. Please briefly describe the nominee's service to the local Section and to the Association.**

From 2014-2017 Kim served as the Director of Player Development for Golf House Kentucky. Throughout her three years at Golf House Kentucky, Kim participated on the KPGA Tournament Committee, KGA Tournament Committee, the KPGA Education Committee and the KPGA Fund Committee. Kim served as a member of the KPGA Player Development Committee and assisted in the development of new ideas and programs to promote growth of the game around the state. Since September of 2017 Kim has been employed by the PGA of America as the Regional League Manager for PGA Jr. League serving the Indiana, Michigan, Northern Ohio and Southern Ohio PGA Sections. Kim was recently selected as a committee member for the National Coaching & Player Development Committee. Whether it be at the Section Level or the National Level Kim has always believed that the voice of the local PGA Professional is of the utmost importance and she is dedicated to listening to her fellow PGA Professionals and sharing their thoughts, concerns, and ideas with the National PGA Leadership.

**3. Please briefly describe the nominee's leadership ability.**

Leadership styles can vary greatly. Kim provides leadership through her ability to listen to and respect other individuals and their point of views. She provides compassion and empathy for others. She possesses a determination to pursue excellence and always strives to exceed expectations. She has a positive attitude and focuses on solutions rather than problems. She is committed to her promises and follows through on deadlines. She understands the importance of each team member to the overall goal. Her leadership qualities have allowed her to succeed as a teacher of the game, as a member of the Kentucky Section Staff and now as a member of the National PGA Staff.

**4. Please briefly describe how the nominee inspires fellow Golf Professionals.**

According to Kim's current teammates it is her incredible passion for the game and her joy in helping others that is truly motivational and inspires her fellow Golf Professionals. The enthusiasm and energy that Kim exudes can be infectious and can serve as a motivating factor for others to become involved or further increase their level of involvement with Player Development programs.

**5. Please briefly describe how the nominee grows the game of golf at the facility, in the community and throughout the Section.**

During Kim's time working with the Kentucky PGA Professionals and her time working with the Indiana, Michigan, Northern and Southern Ohio PGA Professionals she has been fully committed to traveling her territory and personally getting to know the golf professionals within their local communities and at their facilities. She provides educational opportunities through Town Hall Meetings to learn more about PGA Jr. League and other Player Development programs. She creates a comfortable meeting atmosphere that promotes discussion and the sharing of best practices amongst golf professionals. She encourages golf professionals to work together within their local communities to promote and grow the game.

**6. Please list any Section or National awards the nominee has received**

Award	Year Received	Section
Teacher of the Year	2007	Kentucky

Deadline – December 10, 2018

Return forms to:  
Kentucky PGA  
Golf House Kentucky  
1116 Elmore Just Drive  
Louisville, KY 40245  
(502) 243-9266 fax

Email Word documents to:  
[csaner@kygolf.org](mailto:csaner@kygolf.org)





# PGA

Kentucky Section

## 2019 KPGA GOLF PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR NOMINATION

**Name of Nominee:**            \_Bryan Slone\_\_\_\_\_

**Facility Name:**                \_Weissinger Hills Golf Course

**Facility Address:**            \_2240 Mount Eden rd.; Shelbyville, KY 40065

**Facility Phone Number:**    \_502-633-7332

**Nominee E-mail Address:**   \_slonepga@gmail.com

*The nomination form should be typewritten.*

1. Please describe the nominee's overall performance as a Golf Professional.

I feel that my performance as a Golf Professional is exceptional. I continually try to improve our facility and it's image along with keeping our staff customer friendly and working as a team. Regardless of your position...if help is needed, someone is there to help. I try to lead by example...I don't ask my staff to do something that I haven't done myself but more importantly, I listen to my staff and value their opinions to work toward a common goal.

I have an open door policy for everyone and I'm very accessible and open to suggestions that will improve our product.

2. Please briefly describe the nominee's service to the local Section and to the Association.

I did serve on the board as Director at Large for one term. It was enlightening and a great experience and would like to be able to commit to the time and be able to do it again one day. I was in charge of the special awards committee and helped in getting the awards moved to the spring meeting to be on a better timeline with the national awards in an effort to get more national attention to our Professionals.

3. Please briefly describe the nominee's leadership ability.  
I'm not afraid to take charge of a situation and look forward to challenging myself to become a better leader. I have always had leadership roles my whole life through sports growing up, time served in the United States Marine Corps, and as a General Manager in the golf profession. I try to listen to others and lead by example...We need to because we have so many employees, players, parents, & children looking to us to have the answers and guide them in their pursuit of self improvement.
4. Please briefly describe how the nominee inspires fellow Golf Professionals.  
Probably through my work ethic and my passion for improving the experiences of others.
5. Please briefly describe how the nominee grows the game of golf at the facility, in the community and throughout the Section.
  - a. Host several Junior clinics, adult clinics throughout the season
  - b. Co founder of the "SCJGF" (Shelby County Junior Golf Foundation) this will help out local junior golfers achieve better golf experiences, future scholarships, future mentor programs, etc...
  - c. PGA Jr. League Captain and advocate---spreading the word in community.
  - d. Get jr.'s to stay focused with winter fitness programs & swing programs
6. Please list any Section or National awards the nominee has received

Award	Year Received	Section
titleist level 2 scholarship recipient winner	1999 (not sure exact date)	national(based on test scores)
titleist Level 3 scholarship recipient winner	2003	national (based on test scores)

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**PGA**  
Kentucky Section

## 2019 KPGA GOLF PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR NOMINATION

**Name of Nominee:** Tom Walters  
**Facility Name:** Summit Hills Country Club  
**Facility Address:** 236 Dudley Rd, Crestview Hills, Kentucky, 41017  
**Facility Phone Number:** 859-344-7949  
**Nominee E-mail Address:** tomw@shcclub.com

1. Please describe the nominee's overall performance as a Golf Professional.

*I would like to start by saying that being nominated for Golf Professional of the year is an honor and quite humbling. Being brand new to the Section, I only knew 3 Golf Professionals in the entire state of Kentucky. So to be nominated I think says a lot about how I have positively impacted the other Professionals in this Section.*

*As far as my performance as a Golf Professional goes, I always take an approach to delivering an enhanced Member/Guest experience. All of the experience that I have gained in my career at high end private facilities, especially Isleworth Golf & Country Club, has led me to a why not us mentality. Why can't we be just like Isleworth minus the tour players? If the service that we provide and the relationships that we create with everyone who walks through that door are successful, then the perception of our club will change. Summit Hills Country Club is going to be the place to be in Northern Kentucky. I have always prided myself in being the guy that I would want to deal with. I love this job and being a golfer is part of the core of who I am as a person. I look at the services that we provide and ask "what could we do to enhance any golfer's experience?" Building strong personal relationships with our members through interaction, travel programs, tournaments, and player development is what I am all about. I treat the job as a lifestyle not a job, it's who I am. I also have a unique ability to connect with any person I interact with no matter*

*race, age or gender. I can always find something that we have in common and make people feel welcome and at ease.*

2. Please briefly describe the nominee's service to the local Section and to the Association.

*My first year in the section, I was asked to be on the Tournament Committee because they thought that I could bring some new perspective from the experiences that I have had in other sections much like Brent Paladino has been able to successfully do. I love playing this great game and anyway that I can help enhance the experiences of our fellow professionals I will.*

*I also felt that part of my duty to the section, especially being new, was to support it as much as possible. I always view myself as a Golfer, and as one, I love to play and compete. It is very important for us as golf professionals to play as much as we can in tournaments as well as with members. A great way to help support was to enter every golf tournament that was on the schedule that I could. I also have attended every meeting either by phone or in person even though I am one of the guys who has to travel the farthest.*

3. Please briefly describe the nominee's leadership ability.

*Leadership is an important role for a golf professional because we wear so many different hats. Leadership comes very naturally for me because of my infectious personality. I have a knack for getting people excited about something just because of how excited I get talking about it. I am not intimidating at all but very approachable. I can be firm when I need to be but mostly a very welcoming person.*

*I think it is important to develop my Assistant Professionals and help them grow to become the next great Head Professionals. I do this by inviting their ideas and to run with them. Make them feel as if they have ownership in the operation. We operate taking care of our customers to the best of our ability but when a mistake is made, we own it and operate under what we call GEODE.*

*Greet – Engage our customer*

*Empathize – Show empathy for what is bothering the person*



*Offer – Offer them a solution that both of you can live with and helps resolve the situation*

*Deliver- Make sure you deliver whatever you said you would do*

*Evaluate – Look back at what happened and figure out what can be done better so we can avoid the situation next time.*

*Using these principles, I take a teaching/coaching approach towards my staff. I always stay positive and use situations to help educate and develop not punish. I feel that this approach makes your staff feel that you have their back and that they will go above and beyond for you.*

4. Please briefly describe how the nominee inspires fellow Golf Professionals.

*My current assistant, Charlie Gold, has an amazing work ethic that you just don't see with a lot of young people today coupled with a good personality. I approached him and told him that he has what it takes to be a great golf pro and asked him why he was not in the program yet? He basically told me that no one has ever helped guide him, they just didn't help. This has become a problem in our profession. We are not fostering the development of young golfers who have an interest in staying around this game. I feel it is my duty to help Charlie become the best golf professional that he can become. To do this I include him in everything that I do. Sit with me in sales van and allow him to choose some of the merchandise, help teach him so he can gain more confidence in giving lessons himself, and also allowing him to do announcements every once in a while. All of these things come with feedback so he can learn by doing not by being told to stand behind the counter and answer the phone. I worked for a few professionals who were negative but the ones that helped me grow as a pro and a person are the ones I remember the most. They kept me going in this business with encouragement and help. Charlie is now in Level 1 and excited to start his journey. As far as other professionals, I feel I influence them by showing them that you can enjoy this great game as well as the job. I don't look at this as a job but as my life. I have a wife and 3 kids that are extremely important to me and my assistant has a daughter. I do not work my assistants into the ground because that is the job. I never bought into that. I work my assistants half days on normal days so they have time for a life. I want my staff coming in fresh every day enjoying themselves because it shows in*

*their interaction with the members. This job is what you make of it. I love it but there is a life balance that I feel you must have for yourself as well as your staff.*

5. Please briefly describe how the nominee grows the game of golf at the facility, in the community and throughout the Section.

*When I was hired at Summit Hills at the beginning of the year, I was tasked with changing the culture that the club had gotten itself into and grow the game. To do this we had to create an atmosphere of fun, excitement, and inclusion in our new program offerings and enhance current ones.*

*We started with the Men's League. The league consisted of **80 players**, 40 2-man teams and it was the same format each week. We felt that this was getting stale and there was nowhere to funnel new members to meet people. We decided that we would have a new format each week and do random pairings. This change alone grew the participation to **130 players (63%)**. We did a point's race where the top 22 finishers would go into a shootout to decide the Champion and the winner would get a championship belt.*

*The next task was to better the Junior Golf Program. I didn't realize the big need here until I heard the program only had about 10 kids and it was boring. We implemented a weekly program that consisted of 50% golf skills and 50% TPI fitness and fun. The results were astounding! The program grew to 85 kids.*

*I also wanted to offer a wide variety of instruction to go alongside the usual 1 hour lesson. I created 5 new plans. 1. Short Game Evaluation: Using a grading scale that I learned from a top 100 teacher, we would have the students hit a variety of short game shots and putts from different distances each assigned a score. The student can then really see where they are the weakest and have a plan on what to improve the most. Instruction is provided after the evaluation to show them how to get better. 2. Dial in your Wedges: Using different grip positions and swing lengths, we would chart how far the ball would fly with all of the wedges and record these numbers. This takes out the guess work when playing and now dead aim can be taken. 3. Supervised Practice: This was for the people who feel they have a handle on their game but they just don't know how to practice effectively. 3 stations are set up and students rotate through being challenged and encouraged to finish the drills. 4. Practice Plans: Posted daily for the players who want some structure to their practices.*

Example: Putt 45 minutes do drill A & B, wedges for 30 minutes doing A&B, range for 15, go play 9. 5. Playing Lessons: Play their game. If they hit it only 220 off the tee, that is what club I will tee off with to show them how to score from their way of playing.

To add more excitement to all of these new offerings, I brought up an excellent teaching professional from Florida that is a great friend of mine, and we conducted a 5 day "Boot Camp". We provided clinics for all genders, ages, and skill levels all day for 5 days straight. The result was a success! The clinics filled and people were already asking when we will do this again next year.

I also wanted to provide something that no one else in this area could with my connections to the PGA Tour through my years at Isleworth Golf & CC. I reached out to Tour veteran Nick O'Hern who had recently written a book called *Tour Mentality: Inside the mind of a Tour Player*. In this book he touches on course management, the mental side, and effective practice.

We set up a long weekend where he did a clinic for the membership, spoke on his book and told great Tour stories, and played a few holes with each group. This was a homerun! Not many places could produce a Tour Player on site and it made Summit Hills proud to have done it.

We also created a 1-Day Member Guest for those who couldn't get into the main one. Anyone who was not in the main one had first sign up privileges. It was limited to 48 teams, 12 flights of 4, 3 matches and a shootout. This event sold out in 1 day.

The Summit Hills Professional shop had not carried any golf clubs in the past, instead, sent people down to the Golf Exchange. I felt this to be unacceptable. Why would we want our members to go anywhere else for goods and services? I was allowed to take over ownership of the shop, stock hard goods, invested in a launch monitor and the results were awesome. Shop sales which were around \$90,000 for the entire year, are now currently at \$165,000 (79%) and the year does not end until March 31<sup>st</sup>.

With the help of my Staff, we have created a lot of buzz around the club. Since February 1<sup>st</sup> when I started, we have added 32 new golfing memberships, with more adding as we speak.

Please list any Section or National awards the nominee has received

Award	Year Received	Section

\*I was nominated for Assistant Professional of the Year for 2018 Southern Ohio Section\*

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[csaner@kygolf.org](mailto:csaner@kygolf.org)

We take a lot of pride in our golf course and programs that we offer so we use Facebook to post pictures to showcase these. Here are some examples:



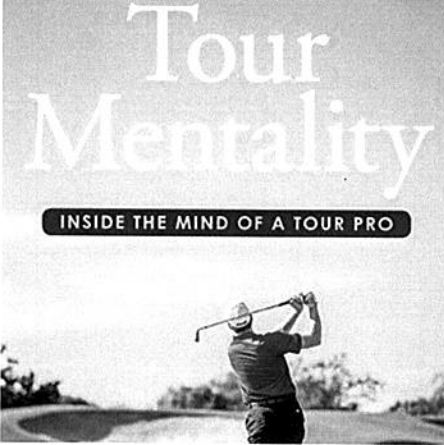
FLIGHT 1	FLIGHT 2	FLIGHT 3	FLIGHT 4	FLIGHT 5	FLIGHT 6
50-5	40-42	53-8	00-0	52-7	42-15
02-2	04-42	32-5	01-7	41-15	40-42
00-0	00-0	15-16	00-0	24-0	24-0
15-45	27-9	45-47	01-12	41-14	50-5











December 7, 2018

To Whom It May Concern:

In knowing Tom Walters over the past twenty-eight years, I've had the privilege of competing with him, competing against him, as well as working with him. His sense of humor is legendary, I'm not kidding. So is his thirst for competition and being the best. Yet in all that time, he has always conducted himself in the highest possible manner, treating everyone he meets with kindness and respect.

There are clear attributes to Tom Walters, beyond all the laughs and the trophies, that separate him from other candidates for PGA Golf Professional of the Year. First, is his broad experience at private golf clubs all across the country – Heritage Club, Isleworth, Wyoming, Western Hills, Summit Hills - where he paid his dues, worked countless hours, and learned the customs, practices, traditions, the tastes and preferences of what people expect of a first-rate Golf Professional. From conducting tournaments, managing staff, to providing tremendous service to his members, Tom has always looked to do things first-rate.

Tom is an incredibly distinguished Player and Teacher, competing with great success locally, regionally and nationally. As an Amateur, qualifying nationally for US Amateurs, and was even Runner-Up at the Division II NCAA National Championships. Professionally, he has won countless PGA titles in Florida and Ohio, he's been Section Player of the Year and has qualified for multiple PGA Club Professional National Championships. He then takes this vast experience with him on the Lesson Tee, where he is equally comfortable helping his students improve greatly from his knowledge.

But truly what separates Tom is his tremendous enthusiasm for people and for golf. It is remarkable because it never stops and it is contagious to those who work with him and his members love him for it.

Lastly, Tom is a man of great character, dedicated to his wife and three children, his friends, his community, and his country. For all these reasons, he is a tremendously successful Head Golf Professional and Leader.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Mark Welage  
PGA Head Golf Professional  
Western Hills Country Club  
5780 Cleves Warsaw Pike  
Cincinnati, OH 45233  
markw@fuse.net  
o (513) 922-0019  
c (513) 616-0429



December 5, 2018

Mr. Barry Bonifeld  
Special Awards Chairman  
Kentucky PGA

Dear Mr. Bonifeld,

It is my pleasure to write this letter for the recommendation of Tom Walters as Golf Professional of the Year for the Kentucky PGA Section.

Over the past two years, I have been thoroughly impressed with my experiences working with Tom in his roles as the Assistant Golf Professional at Western Hills and Head Golf Professional at Summit Hills. I've been fortunate to spend time working in several PGA Section' across the US and to see a turnaround as drastic as what has occurred at Summit Hills from 2017 to 2018 is truly extraordinary. Tom's "always on" approach, attention to detail, sincere passion and ability to deliver elevated member experiences is second to none. Never was this more obvious this past year than during their Member-Guest.

Every club's Member-Guest is their penultimate event of the year. This was the perfect opportunity for Tom to show a level of stress or otherwise not be his welcoming, cheery self. The week's weather couldn't have been worse. It required an alteration to the format and reduction of number of holes played. This didn't derail Tom; it provided him an opportunity to show his true colors to his members by over-delivering with the changes he made and executed.

Tom's clear roadmap for elevated member experience is simply exceptional. Tom dives in head first to identify opportunities to meet and exceed member and guest expectations by creating "wow" at every opportunity. Tom leaves no stone unturned. Summit Hills members now take great pride in the experience their guests have at the club and Tom is the conductor of the behind-the-scenes orchestra that make it possible.

Tom's diverse experience at Isleworth and Western Hills allows him to bring an understanding, energy, excitement and experience to Summit Hills members that is unrivaled. Tom brings more than a wealth of experience and knowledge from his past; he brings intangible traits such as intensity, integrity and ingenuity that Summit Hills, and the KY PGA, is lucky to have in their Golf Professional.

If I can be of any other assistance or answer any questions, please be sure to let me know!

All My Best,

Mark Krahe, Jr  
Mobile: 859-620-4719  
Territory Representative  
TaylorMade Golf Company



December 6, 2018

Kentucky Section  
PGA of America


This correspondence is to serve as recommendation for the selection of Tom Walters, PGA, as Kentucky Section PGA Professional of the Year. Mr. Walters came to Summit Hills Country Club in February, 2018, after serving in comparable roles in Florida and Greater Cincinnati. Even though his arrival was not in what we consider "golf season", Tom made an immediate impact on the club's golf program. The energy, excitement and forward thinking he brought to the club was immediately observed by all.

Tom's tenure has been relatively short, but his impact has been transitional for all things golf at Summit Hills Country Club. Golf Shop sales have skyrocketed. He is actively involved in selecting and stocking goods; he provides a wide variety of equipment from popular golf club manufacturers; he is knowledgeable, open, friendly, and has a positive attitude in everything he does. Of importance to club leadership always looking at finances, Tom has increased our golf bottom line.

That is a tangible benefit. Easy to put a number on. However, I am most impressed with the way Tom interacts with people...with men and women golfers, seniors and juniors, low handicappers and beginners and with coworkers. During his first summer, he revitalized a stale to non-existent junior program. In its first edition, eighty five future golfers participated in his clinic. Tom has also focused on women's golf, injecting new life into a program in need of revitalization. The level of professionalism now displayed by the golf staff is a direct reflection of Tom's management style. They are always available, smartly dressed, courteous and helpful with a renewed focus on service to our members. Tom is also mentoring our assistant professional toward his goal of obtaining PGA membership, an indication of his love for the game and for his profession. Tom has added a few new twists to our summer leagues. All of our signature events were better than ever. Positive feedback from participants has been universal. Additionally, Tom invited PGA Tour Professional Nick O'Hern to the club for a weekend of instruction, course management training and entertainment. Tom's team also ran an intense Golf Boot Camp and a few one-day events with PGA Professionals with whom he has long-standing relationships.

In closing, I am very happy Tom has been appropriately recognized by his nomination for this award. I also feel he is well-deserving of the award and I recommend the Kentucky PGA echo the feelings of his Summit Hills Country Club family. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

  
Lyndon M. Bertke  
President, Board of Directors