

As we celebrate, this evening, the 20th anniversary of our tournament, I am most honored and pleased to have chaired this annual fundraising event throughout the past 19. It is hard to believe 20 years have come and gone since the time Ernie Fick, Ray Smith Sr. and I were, as Erica Guerrin puts it, "scheming". I would never have imagined our "scheming" would have resulted in one of the most, popular, prestigious and sold out golf event each year.

I remember like it was yesterday, out under the old apple tree, off of the second green, which today is gone, like so many who participated and/or contributed to the tremendous annual success this tournament has enjoyed year after year.

None of this would have been possible if it were not for the other two "schemers", Ernie and Ray. Ernie, proprietor of Eveready Beverage, offered to sponsor the tourney and underwrite most of the expenses. Ray sr., who for some strange reason took a very well liking to me, was overly generous to the SAA with minimal costs and sizeable donations.

As the years went on, times changed, faces changed and along came Greg and Thomasine Helsmoortel who either co-sponsored or sponsored the event. Pat and Ray Smith Jr. continued the Rip show of generosity and support.

Today, as has been the case for many previous years it is Bob and Larry Siracusano, of Sawyer Motors and Sawyer Chevy and, from Rip Van Winkle, John and Sara Smith.

Yes, times have changed, faces have changed, however, the unprecedented generosity and support starting with Ernie, then Greg and Thomasine, Bob and Larry, along with the entire Smith Family for 20 years has never, if anything, it has grown, all for the benefit of the SAA, the youth and community we serve. I can never begin to extend the amount of thanks and appreciation equal to your support and generosity.

Additionally, the combined hundreds of businesses, organizations and individuals who have taken various levels of sponsorship each year, along with those who have donated and contributed prizes, gifts, etc. and the hundreds of players, some, who have participated since year one. Thank you for your overwhelming support.

Before closing, I must make make mention specifically of several who have gone above and beyond over the years, along with giving of their valuable time and dedicated efforts. Joe Tiano and Gardi VanValkenberg (Eveready Beverage), George Sisco (Sawyer Motors) and Ken Wamsley (Dutchess Beer). Further, Ernie's two daughters, Erica and Christine (Ernie's Girls), who have carried on the Ernie tradition of generosity and support to the SAA. Additionally, the many, many Volunteers who have worked, some since the beginning.

To all of you, your tireless efforts, dedication, support and generosity has been unprecedented, I could never have done it without you. Thanks to all of you, it has been most enjoyable and rewarding to have been involved with such a great group of people, such a great event.

What a great 20 years, what great times, what great memories.....times and memories I will never forget.....people I will never forget. Give yourselves a round of applause and enjoy this evening to the fullest, you certainly deserve it. Thank you, again!!!!!!

Greg

Greg Chorvas, Chairman
SAA Golf Tournament