

2019 at the Detroit Country Club

2018 was another great year at the Detroit Country Club. All of us on the board wish to thank you, our patrons, for continuing to help make our facility a shining star in the local golf scene. Our DCC 100 Campaign (stemming from the 2016 100th anniversary of the Club) continues to be key for the overall upgrade of some long-needed capital projects at the Club. To date, we have received nearly \$825,000 (with over 75% fully paid/collected) in pledges and contributions from local and visiting golfers and community businesses and individuals. Donations are still being accepted if you are interested.

The DCC 100 campaign has had a drastic impact on your experience at the course, even though you might not be able to see where all the dollars went. With those funds, we have been able to completely replace the irrigation system, resurface all of the cart paths, begin a major upgrade of the cart fleet, and perhaps most importantly, undertake an extensive (and long overdue) program to replace key equipment in the grounds department. We still have projects yet to come, so keep an eye out for future improvements. The Club is beginning to be well-situated for long-term success.

Although 2018 was a good year, it was prevented from being a great year due to the late spring and early winter. In the spring, it seemed like one day we had snow, and the next it was 70 degrees and the course was open. In the fall, it was the opposite. We were golfing in short sleeves one week and had six inches of snow on the course the next. One key part of the formula for the DCC to have a successful financial year is extended golfing seasons in the spring and fall. Last year, we had neither. Hopefully, the weather will cooperate for us this year, and we'll have a great 2019.

Plans for 2019 include: Finishing the cart path replacement project on the Lakeview Course; planting additional trees in key locations; addition of more new golf carts; addition of new equipment in the grounds department; and we have retained the services of an architect to review and hopefully allow us to reconfigure the clubhouse to make it more user friendly. If we are not able to proceed with any major structural changes of the clubhouse, we will proceed with a series of interior upgrades to flooring, walls, and other areas.

We continue to find stability with regard to our key personnel at the Course. We again welcome back all our management staff from 2018. This is a level of consistency we haven't had for a while, and we hope the product that is presented to you reflects the team that is coming together. Mark Holm continues in the position of Club Manager and Head Golf Professional. Darwin Lindsey returns as our Greens Superintendent. Kris Smith will be back at Lakeview as our other Golf Professional and as our Growth of the Game Director. Dave Johnston will be back managing Food and Beverage at Brassies.

As I did last year, I would like to again take this opportunity and this platform to explain the finances of your Club. The Detroit Country Club and Lakeview are municipal public courses. The board, and especially the finance committee has again put in an extraordinary amount of time to keep this Club in the black. Yet again, the DCC has not had to go to the City to subsidize operations. We have specific operating instructions to do what we can to make the game of golf as affordable as possible to all, while still operating the club in a self-sufficient manner.

Our goal each year is to bring in enough revenue to have a little "cushion" in our capital account for future expenditures. As indicated above, sometimes factors out of our control, such as a short season, can have a big impact on our finances. I can let you know that, despite the short season, we were able to yet again finish the year in the black. With some help from the weather this year, I would hope to add to that and to start to build up some reserves to deal with issues at the Course that have been neglected for too long.

Brassies continues to be a key part of the formula for the DCC to be successful. The board, Mark Holm and Dave Johnston continue to do what we can to make Brassies an attractive spot for golfers to spend some time after the round. We hope to continue to improve upon that model this year. I would again ask all of you to meet us in the middle. To tell us what you want to see and tell us how we can make the experience better. In exchange, I would ask that you give Brassies a shot, as doing so will only help provide you with a better place to play golf.

The Pine to Palm golf tournament returns in 2019, scheduled for August 5 thru 11. Online registration opens in April. We would encourage everyone to come out and play! If you are not playing but have some time to help out, contact Jim at p2pre@detroitcountryclub.com for volunteering options.

Thanks to Darwin and his staff, our course has never been in better condition. With the commitment to seeding with the new 007 bent grass strain, the greens are in amazing condition. The winter weather has been good for the greens thus far, and we expect another great year of conditions at the Club. We sent out a survey this past winter asking about various matters at the Course, and it was nearly unanimous that the conditions at Lakeview and Pine to Palm continue to be the best in the area.

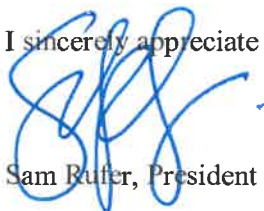
The Season Pass and Greens Fee structure is similar to 2018. As indicated, we sent out the survey to try and judge where DCC fits in terms of value for greens fees and season passes. We compare this information among other clubs in the area, and our needs to keep the course open. Of course, we'd all like to pay less to play golf. That being said, there are costs involved with keeping our course open. I can assure you that the board has worked hard to cut our expenses to a minimum, or as far as we can while still delivering the product you expect. As much as we'd like to keep things the same, or take prices lower, everything the golf course uses, from fertilizer to hamburger buns, goes up in price year over year. Our Greens Fees, especially at Lakeview, are near 2008 levels. But our costs for supplies to keep the course running are far from 2008 levels. For that reason, other than a small cost of living increase, we have not made any wholesale changes to either the greens fees or season passes.

Our Beautification Fund is the Club's sustaining/endowment fund. The DCC 100 specified that 15% of all donations go into the Beautification Fund. As an endowed fund, ONLY the income generated each year is available to the DCC. This fund is a primary source of funding for the purchase of new trees and landscape improvements. We encourage all season pass holders to consider a donation.

There have been requests of the board to obtain and place "memorial benches" on the course to honor those that loved the game and loved our courses. These benches would strictly be in memory of, and no advertising would be permitted. We have not yet decided about what to do in that regard, but if you have such an interest, please let Mark in the Pro Shop know.

You can stay informed as to what is going on at DCC by checking us out at detroitcountryclub.com; on twitter: @DetroitLakesCC; on Facebook at Detroit Country Club; and by email at detroitcountryclub@gmail.com. If you have any suggestions for 2019, use any of the above to give us your thoughts. If you are not getting email communications from the Club, please send us an email so we get you on the list. As always, we are looking for volunteers to help out in all areas of the Club, if interested, just let Mark Holm know!

I sincerely appreciate your patronage, and we're looking forward to a fantastic 2019!



Sam Ruffer, President