

Fast Play

The Monthly Member Newsletter
of Shadow Hills Country Club

Growth, Culture Change & Ongoing Improvements Mark the Highlights of "The Shelton Era" at SHCC

By Patric Miller - Digital Communications Editor

As has been written about in previous articles, Dave and Jenny Shelton's tenure at Shadow Hills Country Club has been marked by navigating through some of the toughest years for the golf industry, the club, and the overall economy. But through it all, they kept an eye toward huge improvements and growth.

The history of the "Shelton Era" at SHCC, started just before the recession of 2008, which decimated and eliminated untold numbers of country clubs nationwide. Almost ignoring the grim reality of this fact, Dave Shelton looked beyond the challenges, to completely grow, build and improve the facilities, as well as the general culture of the club, in ways almost no other general manager was able to do during this time period.

Taking the reigns in 2006, and then faced with a huge loss of golfing members after 2008, Shelton kept moving forward with one of the largest, most impressive, well-managed gambles, by planning and building a new clubhouse, expansive practice facility, and huge new ballroom/dining facility, that set up record profits and income in the years to follow.

But, knowing that those who "rest on their success are doomed to eventual failure," Shelton continued moving forward with projects, key hires, and fiscal planning, to add to an ongoing list of improvements that will serve the membership of Shadow Hills CC for decades to come.

When Dave and Jenny arrived new on the job, fresh from years at a multi-course, expansive two-club resort in northern Washington (Semiahmoo Resort in Blaine Washington), they found a well-established course, which had made a name regionally, hosting events on the PGA Nationwide tour. However, the course did not remotely match the aging clubhouse, pro shop, and pool area, which all suffered from years of use, leaks, structural issues, and an overall lack of space to be able to handle golf and social activities. Coming from a club that had grown substantially, due in part to expansive facilities, Shelton made it his mission to see that a new clubhouse was planned, built, and supported by the membership. **CONTINUED- Page 4**



APRIL 2022



Upcoming Events

April

- 3 Dave Shelton Retirement Reception
- 8 SHCC Senior Men's Opener
- 13 Women's Club Kick-Off Breakfast
- 17 Easter Brunch and Egg Hunt
- 20 Winemaker's Dinner
- 24 Jack and Jill Tournament

May

- 8 Mother's Day Brunch
- 10 Men's League Opener
- 16 Women's Twilight Opener
- 18 Gourmet Club
- 20 Crazy 8 Scramble
- 30 Memorial Day

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FastPlay is published monthly for the membership of Shadow Hills Country Club.

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Manager's Report

By Dave Shelton

General Manager, PGA Golf Professional

It is only fitting that my last newsletter article is in April, the month I began my career at Shadow Hills Country Club, sixteen years ago. Much has changed since 2006, it would be easy to say that the club that is Shadow Hills today resembles nothing of the club in 2006, but that isn't true. The true essence that makes Shadow Hills special hasn't changed, just improved upon. There are very few clubs that capture golf as it is meant to be. Golf should be rural not urban, peaceful not noisy, inviting, not exclusive, and most of all provide an environment for families and camaraderie. It should be that great place to grow up and learn all the life lessons that the game of golf provides.

I always tried to run the club like it was my business, finding a way to be successful. The early days were challenging, as anyone who owned a business during 2009 – 2011 can attest, it was difficult just staying in business. The struggling economy brought a declining membership. The bold decision to build a new, transformational clubhouse and practice facility was the first step in changing the financial future of the club. There were so many members that helped make this transformation possible giving of their time, support, and money. Harriet Smith, Smith Garden, donated over \$400,000 to the club even though her golfing days were over. Gene Gustafson, for the second time in his long tenure as a member, was instrumental in making a major project a reality. All the Board of Directors during those years were key contributors as well as Presidents Rodger Van Voorhis, Tom Morgan, Allen Gardner, and Mark Allen. The building committee was Susan Gilmore, Tom Morgan, Rich Bernhardt, and myself. True to who Shadow Hills is, the club supported our local economy by only using local contractors and businesses in the building process. Hyland Construction was a great choice as the general contractor, as was Robertson/Sherwood as the architectural firm. Jim Robertson being one of the principals, and is a long-time member of the club. Other key contractors were Twin Rivers Plumbing, Builders Electric and Curtis Restaurant Supply.

The club has been a wonderful place to work and spend a significant amount of my life. The fact that both Jenny and I worked at Shadow Hills means we spent very little time not talking about Shadow Hills. Case in point. On a road trip about 8 years ago after talking only about work for hours I suggested we find a different topic for a while. After about 10 minutes the conversation lead back to Shadow Hills. For both of us working at a country club has always been a job that takes over our lives. Ask any of our 4 children and they would tell you this without hesitation. This is exactly why for 11 years we commuted separately from Thurston 5 to 6 days a week. As of today, I feel that Shadow Hills has exceeded by expectations and grown into a wonderful Country Club, instead of a "Club in the Country," like it once was.

It has truly been a pleasure working at Shadow Hills Country Club, serving the membership, and working with my management team. The club is in great hands, and I'll enjoy watching it continue to grow and prosper through the years.

Dave Shelton The Journey to Shadow Hills

It's easy to forget that every journey to great accomplishments begins with countless steps before. Dave's journey was one marked with almost constant change, but with an eye toward improving everywhere he landed.

People often forget that the journey of a PGA Certified Professional General Manager, starts with gaining his certification and experience. Dave's started almost as an alternative to his original career aspiration of becoming a lawyer!

Dave has been involved with golf in some capacity for more than 60 years.

Dave started playing golf in 1962 (at the age of 8) at McNary golf course, in Salem, Oregon. While he played other sports, golf was always his favorite recreational sport, playing on his **High School golf team, at McNary HS in Salem.** He continued his competitive golf career, playing on the golf team at **Oregon College of Education**, while studying business and pre-law, including an appearance at the **NAIA National Tournament in Spartanburg, NC.** During college, he took his first "golf job," working at **Oak Knoll golf course**, working there all through college in the pro-shop, running the tee sheet, selling merchandise, helping with the men's and women's clubs and doing the "lost art of club repair."

After graduation from college, he took a job with a small independent insurance agency in Portland, before re-entering **the golf business in 1992**, at the old driving range in Salem, at Cottonwood Lakes. While earning his PGA Class A Certification, Dave worked at a number of course, finally getting his certificate in 1996.

His **first head professional job was at Echo Falls in Wood-ville Washington** in April of 1996, and in June of 1999 the company that owned Echo Falls gave Dave the opportunity to be the **Head Golf Professional at Indian Summer Country Club in Olympia.** The following year, 2000, he became the general manager of Indian Summer.

In 2002, Dave left Indian Summer to become the **general manager/director of golf at the Semiahmoo resort in Blaine Washington.** Jenny was hired as the assistant GM. There were two separate country clubs to run, Semiahmoo and Loomis Trails. Physically the two facilities were 4 miles apart, members had playing privileges at both.

In April of 2006 Dave accepted the position as GM of Shadow Hills CC. *And the rest, is the SHCC History!*



Dave and Jenny are Retiring!
Come Help Us Celebrate
Their Legacy of Service
To Shadow Hills CC!
Sunday, April 3rd - 2p-4p
Free Food and Beverages
Smiles, Tears & Fun With
Memories of the "Shelton Era!"

Jenny Shelton

The "Art and Soul" of Shadow Hills CC

An artist, a gardener, and at one time the assistant general manager of a huge multi-course resort, it's easy to understand why Jenny has had multiple ongoing roles here at Shadow Hills. As Dave's partner in life, as well as business, it is Jenny's artistic sensibilities that have added beauty to the club, and every event she touches.

Decorations, themes, and an ongoing obsession with gathering "just the right" finishing touches to every corner of the clubhouse, Jenny is often leading the charge on the "final detail" of almost every event held at Shadow Hills, since she and Dave arrived in 2006.

While the new clubhouse is beautiful, it takes the eye of an artisan to make it a "home" to the community here at Shadow Hills. Year after year, Jenny did just that.



Add to this, years of buying and merchandising duties for the Pro Shop. Her long-standing association with buyers and suppliers resulted in the expansion of our clothing lines, and accessories, making SHCC one of the finest Pro Shops of any club in the area.

From season to season, Jenny shaped the look and fashion of Shadow Hills, in ways that were both subtle and everlasting. We will miss her hand in the day to day operations, but her legacy of perfection will remain for years to come.



Accomplishing this feat, was due to the guidance and support and generosity of several key members, a series of brave, and imaginative (as well as fiscally prudent) board members, and a staff willing to endure the building period, while selling new members on the concept. All of this during a time when the industry was still in steep decline.

One of the most important aspects of managing a "Member Owned" country club, is getting membership "buy-in" on the reasons for such a huge capital expense. Shelton and his board members worked hard for almost two full years, not only increasing the membership with creative initiation options, but also promising the membership that the overall cost would not result in an ongoing parade of large assessment charges to do so.

Finding the right lenders, taking on well-managed debt, and making sure that every detail of the new facility was not only necessary, but would result in increased revenue for the club, was the benchmark of the project. Shelton spent countless hours, days, weeks, and months, giving tours of the ongoing construction, sharing the vision of the club's future, and promising to reach their goals on budget.

In the end, the results exceeded expectations. And in 2012, the new facility was opened, and Shelton and the rest of the leadership and "Long Range Planning Team" never looked back.

Receiving the "Facility of the Year" award in 2014, could have been the endgame for some. But, Dave, Jenny, and several other key members continued to plan, budget and build. Huge improvements were made to the grounds, tees moved and improved, the practice facility improved, along with countless small improvements to add features that make Shadow Hills one of the premier clubs in the Northwest.

The list of improvements continues to this day.

- Club House, Multi-use Ballroom with AudioVideo Meeting Rooms
- Formal Dining Facility with Expanded Kitchen and Storage
- Expanded Locker Rooms
- Workout Gym
- Expanded Pro Shop
- Three Practice Ranges - 2nd largest in the Northwest
- McKay Teaching Center (plus weatherizing improvements) with Trackman Technology
- New Cart Barn
- Pool improvements – Including Changing Rooms, Snack bar, Covered patio
- Cart path replacement and improvements
- Repaving of North parking lot
- North Parking Lot Utility shed
- In-House Bunker/Hazard refurbishing, redesign
- Family Tees
- Family Camping Area/Camp-outs
- Wedding Garden with Fountain

Welcome To Our New Members

- Robert & Leslie Pitts**- Individual Golf
- Robert & Samantha Pitts Jr.**- Exec. Family
- Anthony & Alison Corwin**-Family Golf
- Chris & Diana Andrus**- Family Golf
- Matt & Lisa Walden**- Individual Golf
- Peter & Tessa Kirkpatrick**- Family Golf
- Peter Kirkpatrick**- Individual Golf
- Dennis Watson**- Individual Golf
- Brock Jabusch**- Junior Exec. Individual
- Robert & Leslie Pitts**- Individual Golf
- Tim Marcotte**- Individual Golf

- Updating, moving tee boxes
- Updating and improving irrigation, wells, and pumps
- The Filbert Orchard (which generates annual income)
- Audubon facility certification
- New entrance signs and landscaping on Govern and River Road
- Paving of the River Road Entrance Road, Maintenance Road, Cart Barn Parking Area and Maintenance Parking Lot
- Developing the Club Mission Statement
- Countless improvements to the grounds gardens, and teeing area plantings.

All of these, and untold others were improvements on a facility that could very well have followed the fate of countless other Willamette Valley clubs and golf facilities.



The Clubhouse as the Shelton's found it in 2006...and the award-winning beauty that is SHCC today!

