

Volunteer of the Year Award

A lot has changed on the Golf Association of Philadelphia landscape in the past decade.

From the introduction and yearly evolution of the Web site, to the growth and increase in the Association's member clubs, staff, tournaments and tournament fields. Expansion combined with change has been somewhat of a constant theme with the GAP.

That is until you look at the heart of the Association: The volunteers. Their faces and devotion remain the same.

J o s e p h Tyrrell, an 11-year GAP volunteer out of Spring Ford CC, has earned the 2007 Volunteer of the Year Award for his service and unwavering commitment to the Association and, above all, the game.

"Golf is a game for a lifetime and I just enjoy it just as much when I'm playing as I do volunteering," said the soft-spoken 69-year-old from King of Prussia, Pa. "The game means a lot to everybody and that's what I love about it."

Tyrrell has been a volunteer even longer than the Golf Association of Philadelphia's Executive Director, Mark Peterson, has been at the helm of the Association.

"Joe epitomizes what a GAP volunteer strives to be," said Peterson, who took office in 2000.

"He's always one of the first to show up at a tournament and never leaves the course without offering his help to the staff."

Mark Peterson

Executive Director

"He's always one of the first to show up at a tournament and never leaves the course without offering his help to the staff."

Tyrrell, who retired in 2002 from a 33-year career as a lawyer for the Unisys Corporation, got into volun-

teering with the Association after Dick Nelson, a GAP Volunteer at the time and fellow member at Spring Ford CC who has since passed away, discussed volunteering with Tyrrell.

"I just heard him speak of volunteering and I thought, 'Hey I could do that,'" Tyrrell said. "I wanted to give something back to the game and [volunteering] seemed like a good way to do it."

The Golf Association of Philadelphia volunteer veteran, who joked



JOSEPH TYRRELL

that he had to count the number of volunteer shirts he owned to figure out how long he has been a volunteer, has primarily been a starter for the majority of his volunteer career. He's also been to a number of Rules seminars and is set to become a Rules Official this year as well.

"I like starting because it has a pace to it," said Tyrrell, who has worked events for every skill level of GAP competitions. "When you're starting you get to send everybody off on their round and you get to meet all the players. It's fun."

In 2007 alone, Tyrrell gave up his time to volunteer at everything from the Junior Boys' Championship to the Caddie Tournament to the Patterson Cup and even the Open, spanning three states and hundreds of

History

2006: Will Carr, Merion Golf Club

2007: Joseph Tyrrell, Spring Ford Country Club

miles.

"It's all golf," said Tyrrell when asked which event was his favorite. "The beauty of the game is that, at all levels, people can play it. I just wish more people would volunteer. Now that I'm retired volunteering is basically my life."

Added Tyrrell, "I'm going to try and live up to this award and hope to continue to be able to say 'Play away please.' I'm going to do this as long as I can and still give something back.

"It's quite an honor but I also know there are many others just as if not more deserving than I. This was completely unexpected. It was a total surprise."