

# June 2022 – Did You Know? Golf Etiquette: Some Things Just Do Not Change

*“Always leave the golf course better than you found it.”*  
author unknown, so DYK is claiming it!

Last month the Green Committee emailed all of us announcing an “Adopt-A-Hole” program. The idea is for our members to take special care of one golf hole. Each hole has been assigned to a group of members, who are asked to special care in your assigned hole in several ways:

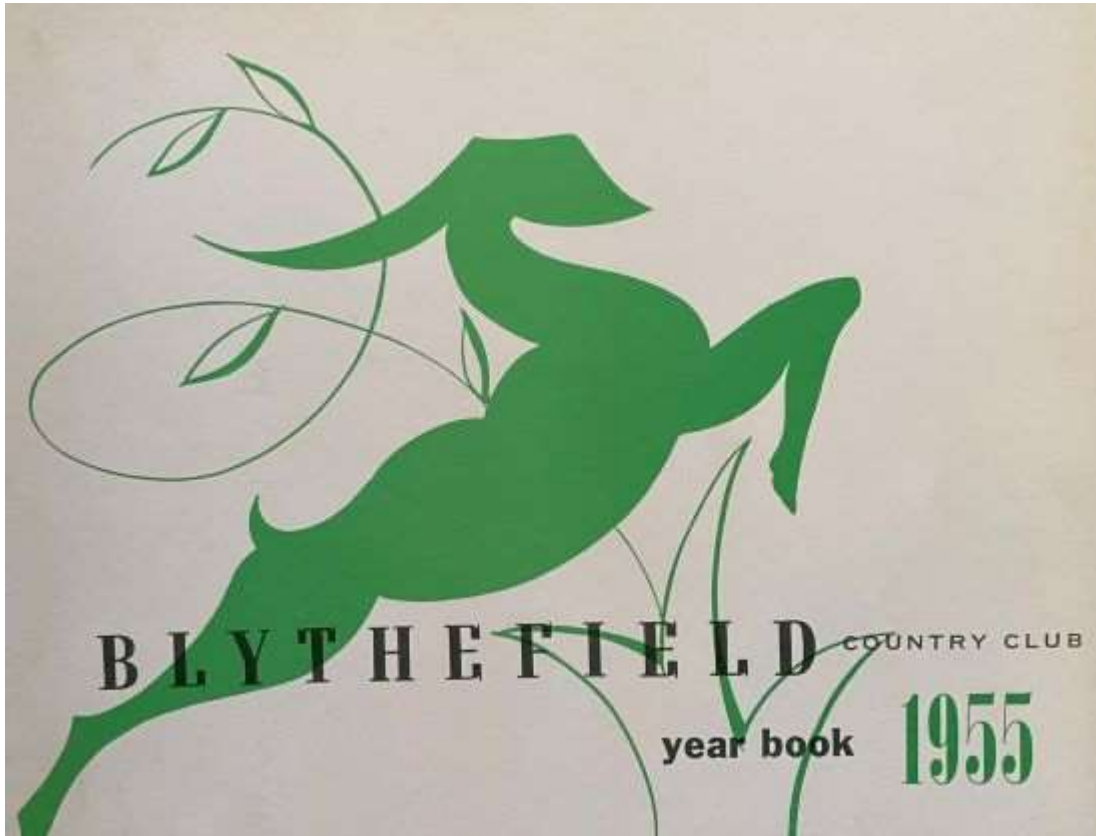
- Repair divots and ball marks
- Note the condition of bunkers and if a bunker needs to be raked, take a minute to do so.
- Pick up tees, broken and otherwise on the tee boxes, especially on the 3 par holes.
- Gathering debris and trash from the golf course.
- Report to the committee or Pro Shop any damage or areas that could use improvement

Click on this link to view the Adopt-A-Hole email - [Adopt-A-Hole.pdf](#)

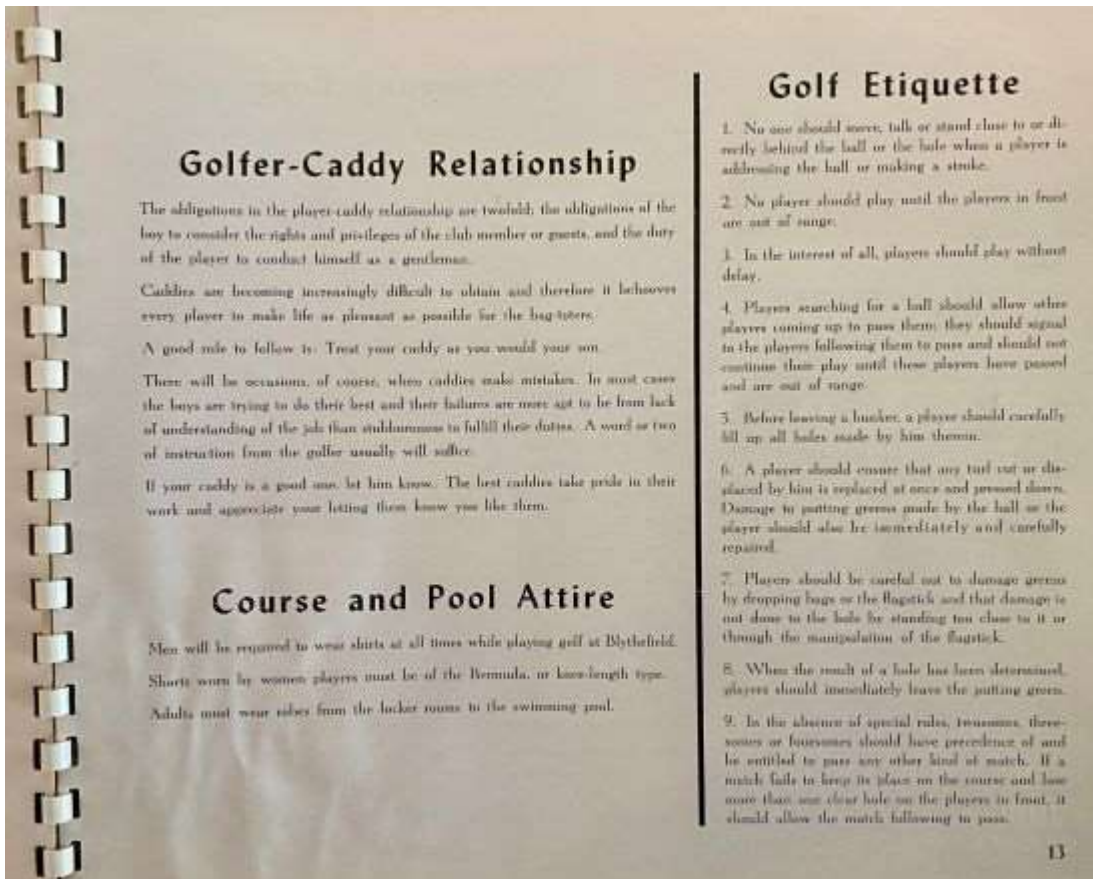
This same idea was used successfully several years ago, so the Green Committee is wise to reinstitute it. One issue not addressed in our “Adopt-A-Hole” program is where to drive golf carts – more on that in a minute.

Caring for the course has always been emphasized for our members. Let’s go back in time to see how it used to be done. Long before computers, email and websites, Blythefield annually prepared a yearbook and sent it to members.

We still do this, but online rather than the glossy paper “yearbooks” from the old days. DYK has been looking over some of our old yearbooks. Here’s what the cover looked like back in the 1950’s:



The yearbook listed the board members and committees, informed the membership of the schedule for club functions, had a membership roster, and gave information on club policies. There weren't a lot of club rules, but everyone was expected to follow them. This was a matter of common courtesy, out of respect for each other and our caddies as well as our course and property. An example of the old rules is at page 13 from that 1955 BCC yearbook:



## Golfer-Caddy Relationship

The obligations in the player-caddy relationship are twofold; the obligations of the boy to consider the rights and privileges of the club member or guests, and the duty of the player to conduct himself as a gentleman.

Caddies are becoming increasingly difficult to obtain and therefore it behooves every player to make life as pleasant as possible for the bag boys.

A good rule to follow is: Treat your caddy as you would your son.

There will be occasions, of course, when caddies make mistakes. In most cases the boys are trying to do their best and their failures are more apt to be from lack of understanding of the job than stubbornness to fulfill their duties. A word or two of instruction from the golfer usually will suffice.

If your caddy is a good one, let him know. The best caddies take pride in their work and appreciate your letting them know you like them.

## Course and Pool Attire

Men will be required to wear shirts at all times while playing golf at Blythefield.

Shorts worn by women players must be of the Bermuda, or knee-length type.

Adults must wear robes from the locker rooms to the swimming pool.

## Golf Etiquette

1. No one should wave, talk or stand close to or directly behind the ball or the hole when a player is addressing the ball or making a stroke.
2. No player should play until the players in front are out of range.
3. In the interest of all, players should play without delay.
4. Players searching for a ball should allow other players coming up to pass them; they should signal to the players following them to pass and should not continue their play until these players have passed and are out of range.
5. Before leaving a bunker, a player should carefully fill up all holes made by him therein.
6. A player should ensure that any turf cut or displaced by him is replaced at once and pressed down. Damage to putting greens made by the ball or the player should also be immediately and carefully repaired.
7. Players should be careful not to damage greens by dropping bags or the flagstick and that damage is not done to the hole by standing too close to it or through the manipulation of the flagstick.
8. When the result of a hole has been determined, players should immediately leave the putting greens.
9. In the absence of special rules, trophies, three-somes or foursomes should have precedence of and be entitled to pass any other kind of match. If a match fails to keep its place on the course and lose more than one clear hole on the players in front, it should allow the match following to pass.

You can see that there were good tips on golf etiquette: playing without delay, always raking bunkers, taking care of the course by replacing divots and fixing ball marks, extending courtesy to other golfers, etc. So many of these are still relevant to our club today – but not all, such as *knee-length* shorts for ladies playing golf. What would the pros coming for the Meijer LPGA Classic think of that!

One matter of etiquette that was not mentioned in our old yearbooks is where to drive golf carts, or as they used to be called, “buggies”. Before the 1950’s there were no riding carts, and so no need for cart paths or rules for driving carts. Policies for carts were established only in the 1960’s. Before that many players used a caddie, and we had lots of them. I was one of the caddies here in the early 1960’s; that’s how I was introduced to the game.<sup>[1]</sup>

<sup>[1]</sup> I still have fond memories of walking off no. 1 tee in the dew on a summer morning, four players with their caddies, some of us no bigger than the heavy leather bags. We tried to not clang clubs as we walked. It was a good summer

gig. I learned about golf – and some things about people – that have stuck with me.

When I started caddying around 1960, there were a lot of caddies but only a few carts. Some players carried their own clubs or used a pull cart (“trolley”). Here are a couple old photos of early buggies and trolleys:



head pro John Barnum swinging from the first tee, 1962 BCC yearbook;  
buggies can be seen behind him



Golf trolleys lined up outside the old pro shop, 1960 yearbook

Note that it was all grass – no asphalt – behind the first tee. Today we have asphalt areas to handle the high amount of cart traffic. We need to protect the turf by always using cart paths; we don't drive or park on the grass where paths are available. There are other areas where carts are not allowed. As we re-introduce tall fescue areas on our course, we need to be avoid driving carts there.

There is also common-sense on caring for our putting greens. Our modern trolleys should never be walked across a putting green and golf bags should not be placed on the green.

Now go back and read over page 13 of the 1955 yearbook. Note that the section on golfers' relationships with their caddies referred to them as "boys". The advice was to treat your caddie as "you would your own son". This is still good advice, but with one change needed since now our caddies are both boys and girls. Treat your caddies with respect. Remember that for most of our caddies, this is their first job. Many have not been exposed to the game of golf. We should help teach them. If you like to walk the course, consider taking a caddie.

And please, always take care of our course.

*"I like to do something good every day of my life, and I wanna leave the earth better than I found it."*

*Chi Chi Rodriguez*

*Brent Rector*

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p.s. DYK is looking for stuff on the history of the Blythefield Invitational. Do you have memories to share, or any photos, scorecards, other documents, etc. If so, please share them with me. Thanks.

p.p.s. DYK is still looking for a volunteer with photo-editing skills. It won't be much work and there will be no deadlines. Please consider helping.

CORRECTION: The May 2022 DYK on the gangsome incorrectly identified the name of Howard O'Meara's wife. It should have been *Doris* O'Meara. When I caddied long ago, I knew her only as Mrs. O'Meara. She was an excellent player, our ladies' club champion a record 27 times, including 21 in a row between 1958 and 1978.