

## SALESPERSON OF THE YEAR

*This award bestows special recognition on a golf salesperson in the mid-Atlantic region for his/her outstanding service and dedication to the members and apprentices of the MAPGA, as well as support of the Section through sponsorships and other programs.*

### **Mary H. Leahy**

*Callaway Golf, North Potomac, Maryland*

Mary Leahy was born August 1, 1967 in Peoria, Ill. to William and Mary Ann Leahy. She grew up as the youngest of five girls. Her father worked for Continental Can Company for 34 years, who was later bought out by Crown Cork and Seal where he spent his last seven years. In effect, he spent his entire career with one company. Mary's mother and father moved all over the country with his job and ended up moving 11 times in their first 33 years of marriage.

The Leahy family lived in hot spots like Ponca City, Oklahoma, St. Joseph's, Michigan, Peoria, Illinois and St Louis, Missouri before landing on the east coast in 1973.

One of the moves brought the family to Baltimore, where they joined Towson Golf and Country Club. When Mary was around eight years old, her father took his five daughters to the golf course, and she was the only one who stuck around! Bill Sporre and Coleman Plecker were the PGA Golf Professionals when the family was at Eagle's Nest. Coleman ran a Junior Golf Program and had his Assistant Professional teach most of the lessons – that Professional was Frank Laber. Frank was a great teacher and helped Mary learn the game at an early age.

By the time she was 12, the family was on the move again, this time to Vineland, NJ. In New Jersey, Mary still continued to play golf, although basketball became much more prevalent in her life, and her summers were spent teaching tennis.

Mary's high school years were spent in New Jersey at Sacred Heart High School in Vineland. She played varsity tennis, basketball and golf all four years there, and was recently honored by being inducted in to their Athletic Hall of Fame. After high school, Mary went to Texas A&M on a full basketball scholarship and played for one year. The kid from Jersey thought it would be best to finish at Maryland, where she transferred and graduated in 1990 with a Bachelors degree in Marketing.

Mary's relationship with her Father is one that she treasures the most. "We have an incredibly strong bond that comes from the quality time that we spent playing golf" she says "When my Mother was alive, she would always be waiting for us on the 18<sup>th</sup> hole whenever we traveled or played together." Her father introduced her to golf at an early age, and it is the sport that has formed their relationship into what it is today. Although her mother did not play golf, she did understand what it meant to have some friendly competition between two people, as the rides back from vacations usually involved some sort of "discussion" between Mary and her father on who played better.

Mary's first job was at Ridgewood CC in Ridgewood, NJ during her summers in college. Although she worked in the Tennis Department, she spent some quality time with the Assistant

Golf Professionals and played golf with them. After college, Mary worked for Swarovski Jewelry US in New York, NY. One of her golf buddies was the VP of Sales and thought she should work for him. He gave her a great chance to learn how to sell in Manhattan and the NYC boroughs!

After living in the New York City area for two and a half years, she decided to move on and relocated, with no job, to Philadelphia. Luckily for her, Ray Cook Golf Company happened to put an advertisement in the Philadelphia Inquirer for a Sales Representative. Mary answered the ad, got hired, and started on March 22, 1993. In February of 1997, after 4 great years at Ray Cook, she began a new job with Odyssey Golf and moved to Baltimore. Within 4 months, Odyssey Golf was bought out by Callaway Golf.

In December of 1997, Mary became an employee of Callaway Golf where she has now been for 13 years. For the past 9 years, for a week in August, Mary plays in a Ryder Cup style event called the Ely Cup. This is a tournament put on by several Callaway Golf Sales Representatives to honor their founder Ely Callaway. Mary said that if you ask her about Callaway Golf, she will tell you that she is a true “kool-aid drinker” and believes in the brand.

Being the MAPGA Sales Rep of the Year is something that Mary has dreamed about for many years and secretly wanted. Her goal is always to support and service her customers to the best of her ability, and to put them in a position to make money, be successful, and to share Callaway’s great products with their members/customers. Mary desires to be a partner with PGA Golf Professionals and try her best to work hard in their partnership. Her parents instilled a solid work ethic, brutal honesty, and integrity into her life, and she tries to live up to those expectations.

Mary’s personal philosophy is to work hard and play hard. Many PGA Golf Professionals see her as one who is more serious than not, although she certainly does like to have fun! She loves her job, her company, and her life. Mary says that when playing golf, it is most important to laugh and enjoy the game...when living life, she feels the same! As Ely Callaway used to say, “Enjoy the Game!”