

COLONEL DICK JOHNS, USA (Ret.)
(Former) EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
MIDDLE ATLANTIC SECTION
THE PROFESSIONAL GOLFERS' ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

Born in Chicago to Betty and Dwight Johns, Jr in 1946, “Dickie” moved around for the first eight years of his life due to his father’s service in the US Marine Corps. They lived in Japan for a year when Major Johns served as the Provost Marshall. He has an older brother, David, who is retired from the US Forest Service in Quincy, California. The family settled in Oakland, California, where Dickie was active in all sports, church and the Boy Scouts of America, earning his Eagle Scout rank as well as the Pro Deo et Patria (For God and Country) Award. Dick met his future wife, Barbara Lauck, during 11th grade history class; and before too long, they were a steady couple. He lettered in football and track while Barbara performed as a cheerleader in her junior year and then as a song-girl in her senior year (sort of sounds like the Beach Boys hit “Be True to Your School,” doesn’t it?...gag!). Dick’s first exposure to the game of golf came during the summer of 1957 which he spent in West Chicago, Illinois, with his Grandma and Grandpa Adams. His grandfather was an accomplished amateur who had three brothers who were PGA Professionals. A retired railroad conductor after 55 years, Grandpa Adams taught Dickie about golf etiquette, how to caddy, how to play quickly, and how to treat people of all ages. In addition to golf, the two of them enjoyed watching the baseball stars of both leagues at numerous Cubs and White Sox games throughout the summer.

Dick attended California Polytechnic State University in San Luis Obispo, California, where he was elected to serve as the President of the Inter Fraternity Council and later of his fraternity (Delta Chi). He also was elected to be the Chair of the “Week of Welcome Camp” program welcoming and orienting new freshmen prior to the beginning of classes. During school he completed the two-year ROTC program and graduated in March of 1969 as a Distinguished Military Graduate receiving his Bachelor of Science degree in Electronic Engineering and a Regular Army Commission. Dick’s 73 year-old grandfather, BG Dwight F. Johns, Sr, USA (Ret.) proudly administered the Commissioning Oath to then 2nd LT Johns, US Army Corps of Engineers. Dick and Barbara were married ten days later. After two months, Dick was on active duty and off to Fort Belvoir, Virginia, for the Engineer Officer Basic Course and then to Fort Benning, Georgia, for Airborne and Ranger School.

Dick retired the first time in 1995 after serving 26 short years in the Army. His final assignment was on Capitol Hill at the Corps of Engineers Headquarters where he served as Chief of Staff for the worldwide 40,000-person organization. Prior to that assignment Dick was the District Engineer in Norfolk, Virginia from 1990 to 1992. He had overseas assignments in Germany (78th Combat Engineer Battalion) and the Republic of Vietnam (Province Engineer Advisor) along with numerous positions in the United States, including service with the famed 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment (where he earned not only his spurs, but also his nickname, 'the skull'). His most rewarding assignment was serving as the commander of the historic 4th Engineer Battalion with the 4th Infantry Division at Fort Carson, Colorado. Prior to teaching at the United States Military Academy at West Point for four years, Dick earned a Masters degree in Civil Engineering and an MBA from Arizona State University. He also became a Registered Professional Engineer in Virginia.

The skull came to work for the Middle Atlantic Section of The Professional Golfers' Association of America (MAPGA) in April of 1995. He has served as a rules official at numerous local and regional events for both amateurs and PGA Professionals, including three (1996, 2000, 2005) Presidents Cups. He was recognized by the MAPGA with its President's Award in 1999 and was made an Honorary Member in 2000. Dick has attended 6 USGA/PGA Rules Schools and as a volunteer taught numerous MAPGA/VSGA one-day Rules Schools from 1996-2016. He was also recognized by the Virginia State Golf Association (VSGA) with its 2011 President's Award for his long and dedicated service to golf, the VSGA, and his community.

During the skull's years with the MAPGA and thanks to the leadership and diligence of the past officers, members of the Board of Directors, and other staff, the Section's investment funds grew substantially. The Section's current office was completed and occupied in June of 2006. It is not only a busy working-office, but also a golf museum, library and houses the Section Hall of Fame that together reflect the long and storied history of the MAPGA. Dick "retired" from the MAPGA in early 2012 after nearly 17 years. In 2013 the Section officers and Board of Directors named the office Conference/Boardroom in his honor.

In late 2011, Dick contacted Steve Greiner, PGA the then Head PGA Professional at Fort Belvoir Golf Club to offer his assistance with his ongoing Wounded Warrior Golf Program and its potential expansion due to the relocation of a Wounded Warrior Battalion from Walter Reed Army Medical Center to Fort Belvoir. Steve welcomed this offer and COL Johns has been heavily involved ever since as the Program Administrator in the now Links to Freedom Foundation Program. Dick keeps quite busy with recruiting/scheduling PGA/LPGA Professional instructors, volunteers, sponsors, and keeping up the paperwork, as well as assisting with fundraisers and speaking to local community groups about this very special and meaningful program. Over the past 8 years he has put many wounded troops leaving the service in touch with PGA Professionals in their hometowns. In 2013 Dick was made an Honorary Member of the Fort Belvoir (Wounded) Warrior Transition Battalion.

Dick's volunteer work over the years includes (but not limited to):

- Chair, Clubhouse Security and Hole Marshal, Champions of Golf Championship (Senior PGA Tour), Castle Rock GC, Colorado 1986-87
- Volunteer, Anheuser-Busch Championship (PGA Tour at Kingsmill Resort) 1991-92
- Member, VSGA Course Rating Team 1990-92, 2013-14
- Tournament Vice Chair for Facilities (Marshals, Carts, Construction, Medics, Supply, Ecology and Closing Ceremony Committees), Inaugural Presidents Cup 1994, RTJ GC
- Chair, NBC Spotters and Scorers Comm., 1995 US Senior Open and 1997 US Open (Congressional CC)
- Chair, Walking Marshals Comm., Presidents Cup, 1996, 2000, 2005, RTJGC
- Chair, Range and Practice Area Comm., 2001 US Senior Open (Caves Valley GC)
- Chair, Military Ambassador Comm., AT&T National (PGA Tour) 2007
- Co-chair, Information and Program Sales Comm., AT&T and QL National 2008-09, 2012-16
- Chair, Military Caddie (Wednesday Pro-Am) Program, AT&T and QL National 2008-2018
- Volunteer, Wreaths Across America 2011-2017 at Arlington National Cemetery (LTG Frank

Camm Community Leadership Award in 2014)

-Member, Washington Metropolitan Golf Association Board of Directors 2013-15

-Member, Organizational Committee, Virginia Golf Hall of Fame 2014

-Advisor (non-voting member), Virginia Golf Hall of Fame Committee 2015-present

-Assisted the Defense Logistics Agency in securing numerous financial grants for wounded troops 2015-present

-Trustee, St Andrews Legacy Foundation (providing golf trips to Scotland for wounded troops) 2015-17

-Rules Official/Starter (40-45 days per year) for countless amateur (adult and junior) and professional events including Middle Atlantic PGA, WMGA, MAGA, VSGA, MSGA, NIKE/WEB.com Tour, Champions Tour, US Open Sectional Qualifier 1996-present, The Kenridge (Farmington CC) 2005-present, Bobby Bowers (Springfield CC) 1996-present, Belle Haven Fourball, Sage Valley Jr Invitational 2014-present, various college tournaments.

Dick and his first wife, Barbara, have two grown children and two “Great” grandchildren. Daughter Dena served and enjoyed 22 years as an elementary school teacher in Los Angeles. She is married to Jim Vatcher, CEO and President of Jaeger Sports and is a former major league baseball player. Jim and Dena have two sons, twelve year-old, Jack and nine year-old, Graham, both excellent athletes. Son Kirk is in his 22nd year with the Drug Enforcement Administration and has served as a DEA Special Agent for over 19 of those years. Kirk is currently stationed in Saipan, United States CNMI (Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands). Dick and Barbara leave shortly for a vacation in Saipan where they will celebrate their 50th Wedding Anniversary.

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