

## **MERCHANDISER OF THE YEAR**

*These awards bestow special recognition on those PGA members who have demonstrated superior skills as merchandisers in the promotion of golf. This award is given for excellence in golf shop operations in three categories: Private, Resort, and Public/Municipal/Military/Semi-Private.*

*Private Category*

### **DENNIS M. SATYSHUR - Caves Valley Golf Club**

*“Supply the best quality of merchandise possible and combine it with excellent customer service,”* is Caves Valley Golf Club professional Dennis Satyshur’s key to successful merchandising. Dennis also takes the selection of vendors very seriously. *“My personal feeling is that creating partnerships with vendors allows us to provide the best products, which combined with excellent service creates a wonderful selling atmosphere. This feeling is passed on to our members and their guests.”* Attractive display is another integral part of Dennis’s philosophy. He maintains crisp, clean and organized displays with layers of clothing. He continually changes and adjusts the shop’s displays to keep them looking fresh and interesting, making sure to use bright color selections that are sure to catch the eye of the most scrutinizing customer. Dennis keeps his shop separated into two basic sections, one for ladies and one for men. His merchandise is displayed by vendor, with each area having a distinctive look while at the same time blending together to create interest. He relies heavily upon display tables, trunks, armoires and benches to create interest. To ensure prompt and courteous service, he keeps at least two staff members in the golf shop at all times to assist customers. One of the biggest merchandising challenges that a private club professional faces is providing a seemingly unlimited selection of the highest quality and broadest array of golf equipment and apparel. With a membership of 400 and nearly \$1,000,000 in annual sales, Dennis has without question succeeded in meeting this challenge.

Dennis is one of seven children who grew up in a middle-class, blue collar family in Erie, Pennsylvania. His father, John Satyshur, worked for General Electric Corporation, and through his employer, the Satyshurs had access to a golf course. When he was twelve years old, Dennis’ father taught him to play golf. Dennis preferred football at the time, and thought golf was a “sissy sport” until he was challenged by his father to see if he could hit a golf ball. When he discovered he couldn’t hit the ball and that it wasn’t as easy as it appeared, he was determined to learn the game and soon became “hooked!” Dennis successfully earned a football scholarship to Duke University, where he was a quarterback and team captain in 1971. His golf game became strong enough to earn him the Pennsylvania State High School Championship in 1968, and later, a place on the Duke University golf team during his junior and senior years.

Dennis declared his professional status in 1972, but didn’t begin his career in golf until 1977 when he accepted an Assistant Professional position at Pinehurst CC in Pinehurst, NC. From there he went to Columbia CC in Chevy Chase, MD, where he spent three years working with the legendary “Coach” Bill Strausbaugh. He then went to Camelback CC in Scottsdale, AZ, and on to Pine Tree GC in Del Ray, FL. In 1982, he accepted a Head Professional position at Bent Pine CC in Vero Beach, FL, where he stayed five years before accepting a position at Baltimore CC in Timonium, MD.

In 1990 Dennis accepted his current position as Head Professional at Caves Valley GC. Dennis has worked for and with top professionals in the industry. *“I believe you have to find the best people you can — those that have already proven themselves — and learn from them. You do not always have to be original to become successful.”* Not only is Dennis a successful merchandiser, but he is actively involved in the promotion of the game of golf. He was instrumental in the development of the Caves Valley Caddie Scholarship Program, which has raised over \$300,000 and has sent 15 caddies to college since its inception in 1997.

Dennis and his wife Ellen have been married 27 years and are extremely proud of their two children — Nicole, who graduated this past summer from the University of Delaware, and Michael, who will be a junior at Duke University this fall.