

Larry Velten, PGA
Manor Country Club, Rockville, Maryland

Larry is a native Washingtonian and was born on August 29, 1946 to parents, Vincent & Kathleen. He has two sisters, Brenda and Marianne, who live in Florida. The family moved to Prince George's County in 1954. His Suitland Junior and Senior High Schools did not offer golf, just the three sports of football, basketball and baseball. He decided to play school and American Legion baseball. Larry was in the first, or certainly one of the first, four-year honors programs in P.G. County during his 9th through 12th grades.

Larry went to Catawba College in Salisbury, North Carolina. At Catawba, his main interest was in American history, more specifically Colonial American History. His sophomore year is when he took up the game of golf. This is when Larry realized that his baseball career was over. He worked as a waiter at Salisbury Country Club in Midlothian, Virginia and the General Manager allowed them to play at the club. During the summer months of his undergraduate studies, Larry played golf and worked in the golf shop and on the range at Belair Golf Club (now Bowie Golf Club) where Bill Deck (MAPGA Hall of Fame Class of 1998) was the PGA Professional.

In 1969, Larry was accepted at Georgetown University to continue his studies in colonial history. At Georgetown, he received academic awards and recognition – holding scholarships from Georgetown as well as from the Smithsonian. While at Georgetown, he still played golf at Belair when he could (Bill Deck was still the PGA Professional and the assistant was Larry Ringer). Needing a break from the rigors of primary research and trips to the Historical Society in Baltimore and the endless hours at the library, Larry took a year off and worked at the golf shop at Belair.

When Larry Ringer became the Head PGA Professional at the Naval Academy, Larry joined his staff as did Jimmy Deck (Bill's son). It was at the Academy that Larry entered the apprentice program of The PGA of America. Also, while at Navy, he passed his PAT on the first try. In preparation for taking the PAT, he and Larry Ringer played countless rounds together where a target score was the main focus and any wager was only to enhance the focus. Without Larry Ringer's help and guidance, passing the PAT would have been much more difficult.

Bob Schuh, PGA, asked Larry to join his staff at Lakewood Country Club in 1981. Having known Bob from Belair (since Crofton Country Club was nearby), Larry did not hesitate. Little did Larry suspect that would be Bob's last year at Lakewood. It was at Lakewood that he was exposed to the demands of a private club in Montgomery County and where he learned many valuable lessons. Upon leaving Lakewood, Larry joined Kim Hand's staff at Manor Country Club in February of 1982. Little did he know that would be Kim's last year at Manor Country Club. Larry pondered returning to Georgetown and continuing work towards a doctoral degree and a life of teaching at a small school such as Catawba, but Manor made a wise decision in hiring Coleman Plecker as its next PGA Professional (finally, someone who lasted more than a year). Coleman allowed Larry the freedom and the choice to develop as a golf professional. It was at Manor Country Club that Larry became a member of The PGA of America in 1986.

Coleman entrusted Larry with the management of the golf shop and imparted to Larry experience, philosophy, and advice on golf shop management. But most importantly, he gave Larry the opportunity not only to succeed, but also to fail. Larry will always be in his debt for his wisdom. For seventeen years, Larry felt they were a pretty good team. When Coleman left Manor, the Club offered Larry the job of Head PGA Professional.

Manor Country Club is truly Larry's home. Having recently signed a five-year extension of his contract with a five-year option, he hopes to retire as Manor Country Club's PGA Professional. It is without a doubt the highest honor and achievement that he has attained in life.

Larry's personal philosophy is getting up every day, going to work dedicated to doing the best possible job based on the foundation of fairness and integrity. Being a PGA Professional is not a just a job, but a way of life.