

Pete Van Pelt, PGA
Mount Vernon Country Club, Alexandria, Virginia

Pete was born February 5, 1958 in Kansas City, Missouri to Warren and Janie Van Pelt. Pete's parents live in Alexandria, Virginia and recently celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary. Warren is a retired Air Force officer and World War II aviator. Janie worked for Pete at Mount Vernon Country Club for 20 years as a golf shop assistant and special events coordinator. Pete and his four brothers, Rick, Jay (deceased), Carl, and John, as Air Force "brats," had the opportunity to live overseas in Italy and Germany as well as stateside in Missouri, Alabama, Ohio, and Virginia. In a family with five boys, athletics and competition were a way of life.

Pete began playing golf at age twelve at Ramstein Air Force Base in Germany. The golf course was located adjacent to the baseball fields and Pete would go to the course to caddie after baseball practice. He began taking lessons from an old Scottish golf instructor and was immediately hooked. While he remained active in team sports through high school, Pete found the one-on-one nature of golf especially challenging and competitive.

During high school, Pete worked for Head PGA Professional Steve Tobash at Army Navy Country Club on the driving range and in golf car operations. He was very active in Frank Emmett's Junior Golfers of Washington program and won numerous area junior events including the First Annual Bobby Bowers Junior Memorial. Following his graduation in 1975 from Thomas Jefferson High School in Annandale, Virginia, Pete attended the University of Virginia School of Engineering on an ROTC scholarship. He found engineering school and ROTC -- and most importantly the lack of golf -- to be too much to bear. Pete transferred to George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia in 1976, and competed in intercollegiate golf for three years. Pete's relationship with Steve Tobash continued through his college years with new positions at Army Navy as golf shop assistant and bookkeeper. Steve has continued to influence Pete's development over the years.

Pete declared his professional status in 1979 and played on the Florida mini-tours. Following his first winter on the mini-tours, Pete returned to Northern Virginia and secured his first golf professional job at Cedar Crest Country Club (now Fairfax National Golf Club) in Centreville, Virginia under the tutelage of PGA legend Gerry Long and began his PGA apprenticeship. Pete returned to Cedar Crest after a second winter in Florida playing on the mini-tours and then secured an assistant position at Kenwood Golf and Country Club in Bethesda, Maryland. It was under PGA Professional Rod Thompson's leadership that Pete was elected to PGA membership in 1983. Not only did Pete learn the finer aspects of the business side of the profession, but he further enriched his teaching skills and established an extensive club repair and custom club making operation at Kenwood that eventually serviced many area clubs. Pete's deep interest in club repair, alterations, and club fitting and their relationship to teaching the game continues to this day. The years at Kenwood working for Rod provided Pete with the

polish and the confidence to apply for his first Head PGA Professional position. After several near misses he turned to Jim Folks, PGA for counsel and advice. Pete feels Jim's assistance was instrumental in securing his first Head PGA Professional position at Woodlawn Country Club (now Mount Vernon Country Club) in Alexandria, Virginia. Pete has benefited from the knowledge of many MAPGA legends, including Bill Strausbaugh, Bill Clarke, Max Elbin, John Haines, and Al Jamison; as well as his employers; and his contemporaries, Dick Canney, Melvin Rowe, Bill Wallace, and Quin Sullivan.

Pete was the Head PGA Professional at Mount Vernon Country Club from 1985 through 2004. The Club experienced tremendous growth over those years and established itself as one of the premier private country clubs in Northern Virginia. In January of this year, Pete accepted the Club's offer to assume the duties of General Manager and PGA Director of Golf.

Throughout his many years at Mount Vernon Country Club, Pete's consistency, honesty, and fair treatment of all has inspired others and earned him the respect of his peers, his employees, and the club members he serves. Pete's love of golf began with a wonderful junior golf experience and he has dedicated himself to giving back to the game that has given him so much. Pete's stellar work with junior golf was recognized in 1997 when he was named the MAPGA's Junior Golf Leader. Pete earned Master Professional status in 2004. Through his work with the Section, his junior golf programs, and his one-on-one promotion of the game, Pete is the consummate PGA Professional.

Pete and his wife, Leslie, will soon celebrate their 25th wedding anniversary. In 1980, as an aspiring golf professional, Pete sold a portion of his childhood coin collection to purchase Leslie's engagement ring. They now live on a five-acre horse farm in Clifton, Virginia with their three children, Kimberly, age 22, Ryan, age 18, and Kellie, age 17. Leslie tends to the boarding of the six horses on their property and is active in the Northern Virginia horse community. Kimberly is studying political science at Northern Virginia Community College. Ryan is a freshman at Lynchburg College, a recipient of an MAPGA Bill Deck Family Scholarship, and is a member of the Lynchburg golf team. Kellie is a high school senior also attending George Mason University and an accomplished equestrian who has represented the United States in two of the last three North American Young Riders Championships.