



## PRESIDENT COMMENTARY

### Life lessons

I am writing this article in the beginning of July and I sincerely hope my fellow board members are able to relax and unwind a bit this summer.

I am currently teaching golf to 5 - 12 year olds at junior golf camps in Northeast Connecticut. To teach children the game of golf one should include what we call "life skills". Golf is the only sport that does not employ a referee or umpire, so players need to be honest about their scores and games.

We teach the kids that if they break a golf rule they need to call a penalty on themselves. While we are teaching the proper techniques for putting and driving the golf ball, we are also stressing the need to care for their surroundings, particularly the putting green and tee box areas. The greens and tee boxes are incredibly expensive to build and maintain. Our young golfers are taught the proper methods to care for the putting surface while using it at the same time, this is also true of the tee boxes.

The campers are encouraged to use these life values of honesty and respect for their surroundings in school and at home. Honesty, integrity, courtesy are three words that have come to represent the spirit in which the game of golf is played. The spirit of golf dictates that players make sure they give others on the golf course, often opponents, a fair chance to play the best shot they can.

Repairing divots on the course or being quiet and still while another player is preparing to hit their shots

are just two examples of what integrity means on the golf course. We teach that maintaining your composure and etiquette even when others are not watching is the true definition of integrity and should not be confined to just the golf course.

I would love to see golf become a regular feature of elementary school gym classes. The life skills that are a part of the game would be beneficial for all children. I know of at least one charitable organization that has in-school golf programs. For more information, contact me and I will forward it.

The CABE Leadership Conference, in Old Saybrook, will have taken place by the time this *Journal* edition will be published. I hope that I will have seen many of you at the Leadership Conference. I am sure the fall election season will have a particular focus on public education. Common Core, teacher evaluation, and the recent court ruling on teacher tenure may all be part of the public debate leading to Election Day in November.

It is vitally important for board members to stay current with the issues facing public education even if those issues may or may not be directly affecting our local districts. I hope all of our budgets have passed muster with the voters; it took four iterations in my community before the budget referendum finally passed.

Good luck to all and enjoy the rest of your summer.

