

"ALL ABOUT HARRY"
and the S.P.G.A. Harry Gruber Memorial Tourney & Party

In the past few years I have been noticing more and more often that there are many younger golfers in the SPGA who I have not met and who surely never met my Dad , Harry Gruber. There have been moments of confused surprise when I show up , alive and well, at "The Gruber Memorial"! Hence, a brief history;

In 1974 my Mom passed away and Dad moved from New York to Federal Way to be near me and his granddaughter. Dad bought a house and I did a remodel to include all his favorite things, namely; Pool table, Poker table, full Wet Bar and outdoor brick Bar B-Q....Dad didn't play golf but he loved company and a good party!

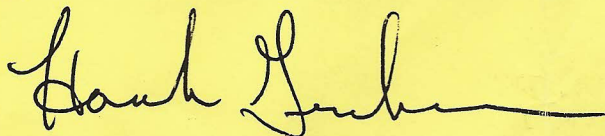
About 1978..maybe 79, the Golf Assn. had golf days at courses in the north and south ends much as we do today. They chose Northshore (in Federal Way) one year and it was before Northshore had a beer & liquor license. After golf, I invited my foursome and a few others who were around to stop back at Dad's house for a beer or two. Dad's house was exactly along the way from Northshore to the Freeway. About seven or eight golfers stopped by, drank beer and whiskey, played pool and ate chips and pretzels. I don't remember who this first group was for sure but think John Nordlund and Dave Hortin were among the original founders. In either case they had a good time and Dad Harry was delighted with the surprise guests & party!

The following year I stocked in some extra beer, hot dogs, hamburger, etc. and made a map and invite to Dad's that I passed out at the course. About 25 golfers showed up and enjoyed a great party. After a few hours of Pool, the Pool table became a 4-5-6 game and the tradiuon began. Food, drink, a good cigar, pool , poker, 4-5-6 and stag movies! After the first two years the Golf Assn. helped with the planning and cost of beer, pop (mixer) and food. The Golf Assn. entertainment committee had volunteers to help with cooking and clean up chores. The "GRUBER STAG " became an annual event; 75 to 85 guests became the norm and the party always lasted well past midnight..... the record according to Dad's neighbor (SPD retired Phil Cruse) was 7:45 AM the next morning!..... I don't remember because I kind of accidently had too much to drink and sort of fell asleep at 4AM !

Dad "Harry" died at age 74 in December 1987 and a notice was printed in the S.P.D. Daily Bulletin. In lieu of flowers I requested any remembrances be made to the S.P.D. Golf Assn. with the plan of offering a cash prize in Dad's name for a HOLE IN ONE until someone won it. The fund had about \$1250 and was put in a C.D. by the Golf Assn.; It is still waiting for someone to win it. The par three selected for the Hole In One chance has always been and will continue to be offered on the shortest available hole .

The popular "Harry Gruber Stag Party" was moved from Dad's house to Gene Birkeland's home in Kent in 1988 and all the traditional festivities continued there until Gene moved about five years later. Since then the Bar B Q and party have been held at the Police Range.

GOOD LUCK AT THE HOLE IN ONE CHANCE !



Hank Gruber