

Boys & Girls Club achieves benchmark with 40th annual Friel Memorial Golf Tournament



Photos by AMY DEMIEN Charlie Hall, Eric Gelinias, Mark Smith and Rob Launier play in the Friel Memorial Golf Tournament at Green Meadow Golf Club.

NASHUA – More than 250 players loaded up their golf carts and took to the green to compete in the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Nashua’s 40th Annual Friel Memorial Golf Tournament at Hudson’s Green Meadow Golf Club last week. Within teams of four, participants played either the Prairie or the more challenging Jungle course and, between holes, enjoyed pre-lunch hotdogs, chips and watermelon provided the Ninety-Nine Restaurant & Pub.

Many of the tournament’s participants were employees and owners of companies throughout the city of Nashua who have chosen to sponsor the fundraising event.

“It’s a wonderful day for a wonderful cause,” said golfer Bryan Tulley of Tulley Automotive Group, one of the tournament’s Premier Sponsors. *“It’s nice to see the participation of so many people and businesses throughout the city.”*

Charlie Hall of J. Lawrence Hall, another of the event's sponsors, commented, *"This is a great event. I'm a big supporter of the Boys & Girls Club, which does a great job for the community."*

Following the lively game, players gathered in a tent on a green for the closing program. Players enjoyed a lunch prepared by the Green Meadow's cooking staff, a complimentary craft beer tasting provided by Bellavance Beverages and the musical stylings of local guitarist and singer Mickey Lorden. In celebration of the tournament's 40-year milestone, a slideshow of photos from the Club's past and present was shown on two large screens at both sides of the tent.

Club CEO Norman Bouthilette kicked off the program with a thank you to everyone who came out in support of the Club and a tribute to 40 years of fundraising through the tournament.

Bouthilette expressed, *"Just like the Club has transformed over these past 40 years, so has the tournament. This tournament has grown to over 260 golfers and has risen close to \$140,000 annually. None of this growth would be possible without everyone who came out in support and our hard working committee members who help to organize it every year."*

Co-chair of the event Ryan Friel then stepped up to the podium to present the Friel Memorial Award, which recognizes the person or company who goes above and beyond for the Boys & Girls Club, not only for the golf tournament, but also for the organization.

This award was established to celebrate Phil and Jeanne Friel, in recognition of their support of the Boys & Girls Club's annual golf tournament.

This year's award was presented to Jose Freitas and Barmakian Jewelers. They have been longtime supporters of the Club and have lent their expertise in helping selecting prizes and donated a countless number of valuable items to both the golf tournament and the Club's Bids for Kids Holiday Auction, including the jewelry for the auction's Sparkle and Shine raffle.

After Barmakian Jewelers owner Jose Frietas accepted the award, co-chair and board member Deb Novotny introduced Club member and former Youth of the Year candidate Allen Godfroy, who delivered a speech about the impact the Club has had on his life.

"Through my personal struggles, I've been able to rely on the Club to encourage me, push me and never give up on me," said Godfroy. *"When I come to the Club, I know the staff have my back. I feel safe, and I feel cared for. I'm now growing into a caring young adult and have a plan for my future. I hope one day I can invest the same passion and commitment in my family and in my job that I see in the Club every day."*

Proceeds from the day's event went to fund the Club's operating costs, including underwriting memberships, free daily nutritious meals, transportation and youth development programs that support the Club's mission of helping the Nashua youth who need it most. Since its inception, the tournament has raised over \$4.1 million to benefit the Club.

During the program, the Friel Family and Tulleys stood with Norman Bouthilette behind a check showing the amount fundraised over the course of 40 years in a symbolic display of unified support for the Club. At the end of the event, raffle prizes were given out, including Red Sox tickets, a silver strap watch from Long's Jewelers and a golf trip for two to Ireland sponsored by Jeanne D'Arc Credit Union. Tournament winners were then announced and awarded crystal bowls from Barmakian Jewelers.

The Golf Tournament was made possible thanks to support of the tournament's sponsors. Legend Sponsors, including the Friel Family, Tulley Automotive and the Demoulas Foundation, have given a cumulative amount of \$25,000 and above. Master Sponsors, including C & M Machine Products Inc., Eastern Bank, Eaton & Berube Insurance, Enterprise Bank, Liakos Companies, Lowell Five Bank, Melanson, Heath & Company, RE Marble and Granite and Triangle Credit Union have given \$12,500 cumulatively and Player Sponsors, including BNY Mellon, Cross Insurance, Dube Properties, Enterprise Rent-A-Car, Jeanne D'Arc Credit Union, K-Town Disposal LLC, Main Street Private Wealth Management, Roedel Companies and Toyota of Nashua have given \$2,500 this year.

The Club established the Phil Friel Golf Tournament in 1978 in honor of the owner of the Green Meadow Golf Course who donated the use of the course for the Club's charity golf tournament. Over the years, three generations of Friel Family members have continued to make this event possible. Following the passing of Phil and Jeanne, their sons, Philip, David and Tom, and now their grandchildren, Liz and Ryan, have graciously continued the tradition of hosting the tournament, preserving Phil and Jeanne's charitable vision.

"The tournament is a way for all of us to focus on bringing a fun event to golfers and raising critical funds for the kids in our community who need the extra help," Friel said. "We are proud to partner with the Club to allow kids to build Great Futures."