

## Coming Events and New Fluff Balls

This was definitely a week to be out on the course, fellow Gappers. Suddenly the course is full of new life -- goslings by the handful, goslings by the armload, brand new fluff balls, riding convoy with proud Mother and Father Goose on either flank; Mallard nestlings, fresh from the shell, cruising around their Ma as Dad posts guard. Graceful young does high-stepping and prancing down the fairways, mindless of careening golf balls. Ah, Spring!

Do whatever it takes to get out on the links over the next few weeks. This is The Gap in its prime. The greens, newly plugged and bumpy as egg crates last week, have been re-sanded, and are looking a bit less formidable. Crews have been out whacking the knee-high "naturalized" grass areas, with more, much more to come.

Driving remains testy. But isn't that what golf is all about? The local rule is, spray one into the deep stuff, play it if you find it, otherwise, don't make a day of it. Take a stroke and drop out into the fairway, just as you would in a lateral water hazard. Have a nice day!

Coming events, about which you'll be receiving more news by and by:

**Lady's Play Day: Monday, April 26, 9 a.m. shotgun start**, Register 8:30 or earlier, walking fee is \$27. Reservations, e-mail Judy Martin at [Judy737@aol.com](mailto:Judy737@aol.com).

**Men's Section Tournament: Saturday, May 8. 8:15 first starting time.** Five foursomes reserved, first come. Phone pro shop, 453-4940 for reservations, individual or team. "Progressive" four-man format. One, two, and three balls count on holes 1 through 3. Repeat formula for 4,5,6; 7,8,9, etc. All balls count on No. 18. Or something like that. Ask Jerry Z. Individual skins as well. \$20 prize fund.

**Merry Month of May "Twosomes" Tournament**, Sunday, May 16, noon shotgun. Bring your husband, wife, partner, significant other, son, daughter, or best bud out to The Gap for a fun round of golf, with hot hors d'oeuvres (I always wonder if I'm going to get that right) and refreshments to follow. Details to come. Or call the pro shop 453-4940 for more info. Patterned on the very popular Member Guest Tournament, March 26, this could become a semi-regular entertainment.

## For the Birds--And the Bird Lovers:

The emergence of all those delightful little fuzzballs this week put me in mind of a development involving the sudden *disappearance* from the lagoon, some years back, of what was at the time a vast armada of Canada Honkers. Here's the story, from the archives of *The Gap*:

## Where Have All the Geese Gone?

Our resident Canada geese seem to have flown the coop. For weeks now there has been no sign of the huge flocks that have gathered here practically year-round for as long as we can remember. There were, however, rumors that the goose population at Marin Civic Center is unusually heavy for this time of year. Have our once happy honkers moved on to greener pastures? And if so, why?

The “why” part of the question is rife with significance. In recent years, golf course managements all over the Northern Hemisphere have been searching for simple, humane ways of ridding their courses of these handsome but messy creatures. Now suddenly we have this unprecedented mass migration—no human agency involved, no known cause. The birds simply disappear! Find the answer to the riddle and the world is your *pate de fois gras*, your services and counsel in constant demand at greenskeepers’ conventions throughout the Western world.

Peacock Gap’s Course Super Rich Lavine thinks he may have the answer: *Sea otters*. Shortly before our geese started disappearing, a lone sea otter was spotted swimming in the lagoon. Several more sightings followed over the next week or so, presumably the same *ott* (we’re not sure whether it was an *otter* or an *ottess*, or, frankly, how one tells the difference) got there. Suddenly the carcasses of dead and dismembered geese and goslings began appearing in suspiciously large numbers along the Gap’s waterways. Soon thereafter the birds upped and vamoosed.

Lavine speculates that the sea otter may have scared off the geese—those it didn’t eat. Interesting hypothesis; interesting prospects. Might the breeding and training of “attack otters” be the solution to the explosion in the world’s Canada goose population? And if a lone sea otter, cherubic looking creature that it is, can play such havoc with a flotilla of over-domesticated, over-stuffed geese, consider what other, more ferocious predators might accomplish—coyotes, foxes, bobcats, mountain lions, alligators, barracudas—great white sharks! The mind boggles at the possibilities.

*Bill Braznell*