



Old guy musings – HSV golf

Description

by [Michael Fleming](#), July 27, 2019

We want to hear from you

While I doubt there is a lot of interest in any of my musings, since everybody has them and they are a dime a dozen, I feel compelled to share a few thoughts, hoping that I can, at the end of the day, goad someone else into trying to convey something positive in our little corner of God's green earth. We would like to hear from you too. Tell us about your experiences here. We all have things, people, places and experiences that are near and dear to our heart that has taken place during all of our collective years in HSV. The fabulous place we know as Hot Springs Village. Our little gem. Or big gem...whichever you prefer, the largest gated community in the United States. You all know the story.

Probably, an old man's musings are sometimes like looking at someone's vacation photos. ...boring. Unless you are planning a trip to the very same place, very soon, they can seem a little trite. But when you have been there and done that it might be a little more bearable. They have those memories right there in beautiful living color for you to see and sometimes you might see some familiar scenes that trigger some memories of your own. You can see the excitement in them as they tell you about their exploits, but you politely listen for what seems an eternity, just to be nice, but it is hard to be equally excited. And we've always heard the old saying "a picture is worth a thousand words" and I don't even have pictures folks, so here am I, an old fool telling a story that probably should have stayed in my head. What I am saying is positive and seems we can use some positivity at any given time in our little/big village. Actually, it's what a lot of people have been clamoring for. Some positivity.

I guess I wear my "HSV heart" on my sleeve because I have had so many good memories here in HSV and I am going to hang in here no matter what it becomes. Let's just say I've grown accustomed to its feel. Fifteen years now. It's like an old pair of quality shoes to me. Just feels good and you wear them for life. We are a good fit. The people here are tremendous for the most part.

Golf brought me to the Village

Golf is what brought me here. I don't really play anymore. Bad back. Anyone that has played the game knows how passionate we can become over this silly game. I am at peace with not playing as it was a source of some of the greatest memories and some of the worst. Funny how when I was playing, those bad shots stuck with me and now that I've retired my game, the good shots are what I remember most nowadays. All six of them. hee hee. HSV has some wonderful golf courses and if you mention any hole here in the village by name and number, I can picture in my mind just which beautiful hole you are talking about. Just give me a minute.

Number 9 – Santa Maria

[Number 9 Santa Maria](#) is the only one I will never miss. From the white tees, there are 3 bunkers right down the middle of the fairway. If I caught the tee shot just right, I could end up in the middle bunker. Right there I could stay for a while because there is a high lip on that bunker that is hard to get a non-lofted club over and out of. This game can be so darn frustrating because it looks so easy. I had some anger issues on the course a few times and anyone that says they haven't, did not get into it very much. That hole and I hated each other. I would piss and moan about how unfair that hole was.

Is this even legal?

Since I was in those bunkers so much I would not mind having my ashes scattered in that area. Bet there are a few of you out there that can relate. I'm sure we can't do this legally. We could all get our wives to sneak our urns in there some night, get our ashes scattered in those bunkers and laugh at those cursing golfers as they hack at us trying to make it on that green in two. I mean it is ironic that you could want your ashes scattered at the scene of the horrible tragedy. But it makes sense in my mind in that it is a familiar place for me and have taken up residence there in the past. My nemesis hole.

Golf is a blessing

But it was not all ugly in my golfing career. I met my wife here at [Isabella](#). Another story another day. It has been a wonderful union, especially sharing the golf passion. If anyone ever gets into this game well shame on you, because you will be addicted. Yes for life, unless your body plays tricks on you. People that have never played much golf just don't understand that it can be a truly spiritual experience. I bought a plaque that hung in my house for years that said: "Golf is Life". Of course, I don't believe it to that extent now but that plaque sold quickly at the garage sale. Folks, whether you know it or not we really, really are blessed to be living in this gated community with these extremely beautiful golf courses. They really are extraordinary. We have something here that is under-appreciated and even more, under-marketed.



Isabella Golf Course, Hot Springs Village Arkansas

CMPAC Marketing Subcommittee understands need to market to golfers

I will put in a plug here for the new marketing subcommittee of the CMPAC. They are on the right track. Exciting stuff that got me all goosebumpy. I listened to their recent meeting twice and was highly encouraged by what I was hearing. Yes twice, because I couldn't believe my ears. There was talk of listening to the members to get ideas of how to market golf. They mentioned defining their target market. What amenity in the village is capable of bringing in BIG REVENUE? Golf. We have a revenue shortage in the village and there is only one animal capable of taking a bite out of our revenue shortfall. GOLF. Whether or not you play the game, the health of the village financials depends on this fact.

Golf is not dying

Now I've heard all the talk about how golf is dying. Not true. Golf may have caught a cold but there is

an extremely large number of people that play this game and we are so far away from losing it as a national pastime, well, it's crazy to say it's demise is imminent.

Despite some recent dips in participation, golf continues to attract new players. It's estimated that the number of golfers will increase by 3 million by 2020. There are 5.7 million registered players in Canada. Europe 4.4 million. Asians going nuts. The LPGA tour dominated by Asians. We Americans will want to keep up. You know how Americans are. A very proud nation. And the world is getting smaller. Thanks to programs like [First Tee](#), more children are getting in on the game.

Demographics of American Golfers



Between clubs, shoes and green fees, a golfing habit can eat up a lot of cash. So it is important to

have a solid career if you want to play the game after retirement. The median income of golfers is over \$100,000 annually. A majority of adult players are married. A majority are college-educated. Golf is a game of the mind as much as it is a physical one. Players often need to rely on math and critical thinking skills to get the best shot, but it may be a little easier for the 67% that have a college degree.

Golfers are no strangers to tech and social media

Golfers are tech-savvy. The game is evolving to embrace new technology and the same goes for its players. Always some new technology to perfect that swing. Around 90% of the golfers use the internet regularly and many of them do so to research courses, look for tips on improving their game. (Did not say it does any good.) They are no strangers to social media and therein lies the gold mine. Yes, there is a whole ton of marketing on the cheap right there in the form of social media. Our marketing subcommittee has identified that since we have a limited marketing budget.

Hot Springs Village is much more than just golf

To say I'm bullish on golf is true. The spillover effect of bringing golfers here to this place, especially the hardcore golfers is huge. All the golfing fanatics can enjoy their sport of choice knowing their partner at home, is NOT really at home but out enjoying all the other amenities HSV has to offer. It's win-win for all of the family. The golf subcommittee mentioned the "Heavy Golfer" effect of his/her spending. Lots of money gets spread around to other amenities and restaurants. An eye-opener. If you get a chance it is a good [listen](#).

Hey, y'all, I'm southern, born in Little Rock, raised in Dallas. I've had enough of the big city life and I came back here to retire and live quietly. So far so good.

by [Michael Fleming](#), July 27, 2019

Isabella photography by Joe Dowden

Cheryl's note: If you are interested in writing an article about your experience with Hot Springs Village golf, pickleball, clubs, events or just your life in general here in the Village, we would love to hear from you. Also, don't hesitate to contact us at hsvmatters@hotspringsvillagepeople.com if you have any questions. Thanks for reading and y'all come to visit us soon!

[**Click here to listen to the Comprehensive Master Plan Marketing Subcommittee Meeting \(audio only\)**](#)

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