



In addition to its fine golf course and its beautiful setting, it is often said that one of the many reasons Orchard Hills Country Club is such a desirable place to belong is because of the many special people who make up its membership. With that in mind, this year's Chip Shots will include a new feature highlighting one or more of its members each month. Charles (Charlie) Frey will be the first member in the spotlight.

At the age of 11, Charlie played his first round of golf in Lansing at Red Cedar with his father. At the time, it cost him 6 cents to ride two buses to the course, 25 cents for green fees, and 5 cents for a pop if he got thirsty. My how times have changed!

Charlie joined Orchard Hills in 1960 and has been playing golf there for the past fifty-five years, making him the club's oldest golfing member. Needless to say, he has seen the club undergo many changes over the years. These are some of his memories:

When he first joined in 1960, the pool had just been completed. It had a high diving board, and the University of Michigan held an exhibition at the pool's dedication. Membership fees were \$100.

The course was only nine holes and consisted of the current greens 1, 17, 18, 10, 11, 16, 7, 8 and 9.

There were no watered fairways; and if you hit a drive left of center on 10 or 18, it could easily end up going into the woods.

The dress code was different. The men could take their shirts off on the 1st green but were required to put them back on when they reached the 9<sup>th</sup> tee.

Years ago, the golf course was open in the winter. Charlie was playing the 13<sup>th</sup> hole and hit his second shot onto the ice by the green. He walked onto the ice, chipped onto the green, and one putted for a par. There was a hand pump on the current 18th tee, with a community tin cup from which to drink. After Dr. Landgraf brought up the sanitation concern, that practice came to an end.

When the irrigation system was finally installed, the pipes went directly down the center of the fairways. The older golfers dubbed a straight drive down the center as "on the pipeline." When the second nine holes were added, the members had a party to pick up rocks on the course. They walked arm in arm down the fairways, helping to get the course ready for seeding.

On the summer holidays, there were member potlucks. Members brought dishes to pass, and the club provided sliced meat which could be purchased for 50 cents per person. Members were expected to provide their own table service; but if they forgot, they could rent the club's silverware for 25 cents.

You may have noticed three cement pillars to the right of the 17<sup>th</sup> green. They supported a water tower that Charlie thinks was made of wood. Charlie remembers the first golf carts having three wheels and tells the story of the late Jim Thompson backing his cart down into the ravine, left of the 16<sup>th</sup> green, and living through it. From then on, the ravine was known as "Thompson's Gulch."

Charlie was the voice of WNIL for many years. One morning when preparing for his broadcast, he learned from the police and fire departments that the Orchard Hills club house was on fire. He said he couldn't wait to finish his broadcast and get to the club to assess the damage. What a sad day!

These are just some of Charlie's many memories at Orchard Hills.

In his lifetime, he has had eight holes-in-one, seven of them at Orchard Hills. After successfully representing OHCC in a Channel 28 putting tournament, he became known as "The World's Greatest Putter." Today, many who golf with him know him as "the Chairperson of the Premature Whine." For those of you unfamiliar with "the premature whine," it is when a golfer hits his shot and begins sobbing before the ball stops.

When asked why he has chosen to stay at Orchard Hills all of these years, he said it's because he's never gotten bored. There's always a new lie at Orchard Hills. We hope he has a great time playing golf in his 55<sup>th</sup> year at the club with lots of drives "on the pipeline."

Thank you, Charlie, for being a part of the Orchard Hills family for such a long time!