

## **Philadelphia Section Breaks Ground on Variety Club Short Course**

Over the past few years one of the biggest initiatives the Philadelphia Section PGA has been involved with is the Golf Buddy Program. The Golf Buddy Program pairs a child with special needs with a Section Professional to help enrich their lives through the game of golf. The program is run in partnership with Variety-The Children's Charity and for the past few years the Program was held at various locations throughout the Philadelphia Section.

In 2005, in an effort to help the program as well as Variety, the Section announced they would be constructing a golf course on the grounds of the Variety Day Camp and Development Center in Worcester, PA. The announcement was made at the Variety Gala, a charity dinner held at the conclusion of the Section's Variety Tournament of Champions Pro-Am.

This past October the Philadelphia Section PGA along with Variety held a ground breaking ceremony at the Variety Day Camp and Development Center. The ceremony was the first step towards the completion of the Vincent R. Mariniello golf course. The course will ensure the advancement of the Section's Golf Buddy Program and when complete will serve as home for the Program. The course also gives the center direct access to a golf facility which will allow Variety to run their camp programs without having to leave the grounds.

The course will feature three holes as well as a practice area all of which will all be astro-turf. This will allow for the course to be fully handicap accessible. Each hole will have multiple tees to allow for variations during each round.

One of the major reasons why the course is coming to fruition is due in large part to the contributions of the membership of the Section. Over the past few years Philadelphia Section professionals have raised over \$150,000 to be used specifically for the construction of the golf course. Additionally, Executive Director Geoffrey Surrette has been able to secure donations from area contractors to help with the project.

“With a concerted effort from the 823 members and apprentices of the Section we will be able bring the game of golf to all of our “Golf Buddies,” said Philadelphia Section PGA Executive Director, Geoffrey Surrette. “This initiative is just another way for us to show our commitment to these kids and our Charity.”

The Section hopes to have the course open for play by the summer of 2008.

-- Joe Monforto