

## VOLUNTEER OPERATION

***The combined forces of McConnell Golf's membership and staff have added major momentum behind the company's up-and-coming "Footprints on the Green" program, which is already changing the lives of less fortunate around the Carolinas.***

**RALEIGH, N.C. (June 2013)** — When McConnell Golf Founder and CEO John McConnell first announced his company's "Footprints on the Green" volunteer program early last year he said the platform was designed for members and staff at McConnell Golf's eight private golf properties around the Carolinas to contribute by volunteering part of their time and efforts to help enrich the lives and the environment around them.

Seeking to leave a vast "footprint" of giving, McConnell Golf's nascent program has already elicited a strong and supportive effort by McConnell Golf's collective community. In less than 18 months, Footprints on the Green has become a formidable driving force in the local communities where McConnell Golf clubs reside.

In 2013 alone, more than 115 McConnell Golf staff and employees have volunteered at least 40 hours of their time to give back to Footprints on the Green and with each passing month, these numbers grow.

McConnell Golf has helped provide more than 500 pounds of food sent and packed for the Food Bank and Urban Ministries, created 43 Blankets for Project Linus, participated in building a home for Habitat for Humanity as well as assisted during a Habitat restore event, hosted a 5K Run for Urban Ministries, collected more than 300 pairs of shoes for Soles4Souls, brought hundreds of smiles to athletes during assistance with the Special Olympics — not to mention served as a host site for a number of charity tennis, golf, and social events.

"The McConnell Golf team had in mind a way of bringing together all age groups to serve as a learning tool for the youth," said McConnell. "We envisioned a team-building activity for the McConnell Golf staff and a friendship-building platform to strengthen membership connections. We are very pleased that Footprints on the Green has achieved some rousing successes."

During the 2012 calendar year, McConnell Golf hosted 10 "Chef's Unplugged" events — each with a different theme, a different menu and a different atmosphere — throughout its properties that raised \$7,245 in honor of Make-A-Wish.

McConnell Golf culminated the 2012 fundraising by entertaining members with a night showcasing the talents of McConnell Golf's eight Executive Chefs at the Wish Gala. The evening featured a silent and live auction and moving conversations and speeches from

some of the Make-A-Wish recipients as well as Kristin Mercer Johnson, CEO and President of Make-A-Wish Eastern NC — and raised more than \$15,000, bringing the total to \$22,270 to Make-A-Wish after the culmination of the event series.

“The donations generated from these events help us grant wishes to children with life-threatening medical conditions in the 49-county region of Eastern North Carolina,” said Johnson. “[In 2012] we granted nearly 200 wishes that provide hope, strength and joy to the children and their families. Because of McConnell Golf, wishes will be granted. And we could not be more excited to work with them again in 2013 for another Chefs Unplugged series, Up, Up & Away.”

“Our members are involved in so many things in their areas,” said Lauren Barry, Marketing and Events Director of McConnell Golf. “As successful individuals in business and leaders in their field, many of our members are already strong supporters in their communities as on-going donors and volunteers, board members of charities and organizers of events. Now, we can further enhance their missions and provide an outlet for others to join us to make a larger impact.”

One example is Wakefield Plantation resident and McConnell Golf member Susan Flanagan, who in her dual roles as local league coordinator for the United States Tennis Association (USTA) as well as Community Coordinator for the Raleigh Tennis Association (RTA) — a non-profit organization designed to promote the growth of tennis around Raleigh — has made a point of helping turn both associations into springboards for numerous charitable fundraising events.

Flanagan recently helped organize and run the successful 2013 “Spring Swing” Round Robin Tennis Event to benefit a new, statewide, USTA-based organization called the Adaptive Tennis Association of North Carolina (ATANC).

The ATANC’s goal is to offer support, training and events for children and adults with intellectual disabilities in the sport of tennis. The ATANC, in cooperation with local community tennis organizations, arranges tennis tournaments and offers tennis clinics and other events throughout the year in Raleigh, Wilmington, Charlotte and Winston-Salem.

Numerous McConnell Golf members volunteered for the event — which raised more than \$8,000. One of the ATA event highlights was when Wakefield Plantation Director of Tennis Butch Young played in an exhibition unified doubles match in which local professionals teamed with Adaptive Tennis players.

Flanagan and her various tennis organizations have also recently teamed up with McConnell Golf and its Footprints on the Green program for two other charitable fundraising events. One was a “Packing Party” in which volunteers packed and mailed care packages to the military overseas in Afghanistan and then the USTA followed up by including portable tennis equipment.

Meanwhile, Wakefield Plantation partnered with REX Mobile Mammography in early May for a two-day “Tennis for Tatas” event at Wakefield Plantation to raise funds for the uninsured and under-insured women in Raleigh and surrounding areas through the REX Healthcare Foundation. During the event, the REX Mobile Mammography Coach was on-site offering screening mammograms.

“These type of events didn't happen before McConnell came on [at Wakefield],” said Flanagan. “McConnell makes a difference. You can tell they really want to make a difference by giving back to the community and that is huge.”

Another group growing in popularity and numbers is the Wakefield Senior Men’s Golf Association (WSMGA). Entering its fourth year, this group is comprised of more than 70 men over the age of 50. They have standing tee times several times a week, play in numerous group and club hosted events, and travel to sister properties within McConnell Golf to explore new locations, expand their skills on the course, and grow closer together as friends.

One aspect of the association that makes them stand apart is their mission to serve through charity. This enriching goal is accomplished through members and friends who provide volunteer hours and donations. There are numerous ways in which they give back, but currently their two primary charitable efforts include providing volunteers for the “Shepherd’s Table,” a daily operating soup kitchen in downtown Raleigh. The second is the creation and implementation of the “WE CARE” First Annual Golf Classic to benefit North Carolina Military and their families on October 1, 2013 at TPC at Wakefield Plantation.

With the announcement of Footprints on the Green, this group has now further expanded its charitable efforts to volunteering with McConnell Golf’s scheduled opportunities, such as Special Olympics, Soles 4 Souls, and Project Linus.

What most pleases the group’s founders — Dick Hummel, John Easton, Jim Burns, Ed Kozlowski, Butch Charlton, Bill Brumagim, and John Securcher — is how well everyone gets along and that the Association has become the hub for many member’s social activities. Through charity and camaraderie, they are building lifelong friends and experiences not available anywhere else.

“We are well aware of the challenges our society and environment face daily,” said Barry. “We align ourselves with a variety of organizations to hear their stories and spread their message through our support. Any amount of aid makes a big difference, so no action or donation is too small.

“We encourage our members to unite in a meaningful and collaborative effort by volunteering on their own, with their family and with their friends in all of the events and activities offered. We believe they will strengthen old friendships and develop new ones with those they see around their club, as fellow members and employees.”

## **ABOUT MCCONNELL GOLF**

McConnell Golf's mission during its first decade of existence has been to offer all areas of the Carolinas some of the finest private golf and country clubs. McConnell Golf offers pure golf for the true golfer as a privately held company offering unlimited access to world-class facilities and golf courses designed by legends Donald Ross, Pete Dye, Tom Fazio, Arnold Palmer, Greg Norman and Hale Irwin. Founded in 2003, McConnell Golf provides members a quality golf experience among 153 holes of championship golf at seven clubs: Raleigh Country Club in Raleigh, N.C.; Treyburn Country Club in Durham, N.C.; Old North State Club at Badin Lake, N.C.; Musgrove Mill Golf Club in Clinton, S.C.; The Reserve Golf Club in Pawleys Island, S.C.; Sedgefield Country Club in Greensboro, N.C.; and Wakefield Plantation in Raleigh, N.C. All clubs are maintained and serviced to the highest standards with an emphasis on true golf, complete service and absolute quality. McConnell Golf offers individual club memberships, as well as innovative corporate and national/international memberships that deliver unmatched access to the top courses in the Carolinas. [www.McConnellGolf.com](http://www.McConnellGolf.com)

### **Media contacts:**

Martin Armes (919) 608-7260, [martinarmes@nc.rr.com](mailto:martinarmes@nc.rr.com)

Brad King (336) 306-9219, [king@bradkingcommunications.com](mailto:king@bradkingcommunications.com)