



UGA VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

The UGA Could not function in the same capacity without the dedicated help of our volunteers. These extraordinary people give their time and energy back to the game we all love in many different capacities. Each year the UGA will recognize one volunteer who has demonstrated outstanding commitment and contribution to the UGA with our Volunteer of the Year award.

2018 - [James Mitchell](#)

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2018



James Mitchell

James Mitchell readily acknowledges that the occasional opportunity to play an exclusive golf facility in Utah is part of the attraction of rating courses. A lot of work comes with that reward, though. And his dedication in attending nearly all of the UGA's annual course-rating site visits made him the organization's 2018 Volunteer of the Year.

Reese Nielsen, who directs the UGA course rating operation, values Mitchell as a longtime member of the group, helping with some of the less experienced workers, "Jim is one of the bedrock raters," Nielsen said.

Mitchell has a knack of interacting with golfers, as they're playing the course and the raters are trying to do their jobs.

That personable nature comes from his former career as a telephone company sales executive, and the North Salt Lake resident has joined in the rating process for nearly 20 years. Rating courses "is work," Mitchell said. "Fun is not a word I would use to describe it, but it's rewarding." He emphasized "how much I enjoy working with such great people, the other volunteers. We have a cop, a minister, military generals, a teacher, business people and on and on, all donating their time and talents."

That captures the fiber of the UGA. Mitchell is part of a vital operation. "I feel like I'm contributing in a very small way to the quality of golf in Utah," he said.

It's bigger than that, certainly. And in a golf community filled with volunteers, Mitchell deserves his turn to be recognized.

2017



Mike Steele

The Utah Golf Association would not be able to provide its members and member clubs with the quality and quantity of services without the tireless efforts of volunteers. It is our pleasure to announce Mike Steele as its fourth annual Volunteer of the Year.

Mike was born on September 1, 1948 in Provo, Utah, to Ralph and Beth Steele and moved to Orem at age 11. Growing up, he was an avid sports fan and played baseball and basketball competitively. According to his wife, Mike often threw no-hitters and was an excellent point guard before injuring his shoulder, ending his potential career with the Cubs or Giants.

After graduating from Orem High School, Mike was drafted into the U.S. Army in 1968 and spent a year and a half in South Korea. After returning home, Mike enrolled in classes at Utah Valley Technical College, now Utah Valley University, where he graduated in 1971 with an AAS in Machine Tool Technology.

He spent three years as a machining apprentice for Clark Engineering before moving on as a journeyman. After earning his machinist certification, Mike worked five years for Geneva Steel before its closure and Hercules Aerospace. Twenty-eight years of Mike's career was spent with Orbital Alliant Techsystems (Orbital ATK), a global leader in American aerospace and defense technologies, as a space systems machinist before retiring in 2010.

In 1987, Mike married his sweetheart, Gloria Wall of Wallsburg, Utah. Mike and Gloria met at the wedding of Mike's sister, Valerie, and Gloria's son, Brian. Mike was supposed to be videotaping the bride and groom, but he could not keep the camcorder off Gloria. The two reside near Alpine Country Club in Highland, Utah.

Mike picked up golf at the age of 58 to spend time with his son, Will. He later joined the Orbital ATK Golf League and currently plays in the Fox Hollow and Sky Mountain men's leagues with his buddies.

The 2011 Amateur Public Links at Soldier Hollow Golf Course was Mike's first experience as a UGA volunteer. He ended up making so many new friends and having so much fun that he began attending the UGA Rules of Golf Workshop and the USGA Rules of Golf classes in Utah, providing him with the rules knowledge necessary for on-course officiating.

Six seasons and nearly 100 championships later, Mike is one of the UGA's most talented and reliable rules officials. His dedication to learning and practicing the rules has made him a tremendous asset to the UGA. He is a pleasure to work with, and the UGA could not be more grateful to have him on our team. Thank you for all you do, Mike!

2016



Gary Chadwick

The Utah Golf Association would not be able to provide its members and member clubs with the quality and quantity of services without the tireless efforts of volunteers. It is our pleasure to announce past UGA president, former UGA board member, and 40-year volunteer Gary Chadwick as the third annual Volunteer of the Year.

Chadwick was first introduced to golf when he started working as a caddy at Ogden Golf and Country Club at the age of 10. However, caddying was the extent of his golfing experience until later in life when he married his wife, Elaine. Gary and Elaine were married on May 23, 1958. They have four children, Doug, Cherie, Kent, and Robert, nine grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

Soon after their wedding day, Chadwick purchased his first set of golf clubs and later bought Elaine a set as well. She eventually joined the Bountiful Springs Ladies Golf Association at Lakeside Golf Course before deciding golf was not for her. Gary stuck with it and grew to love the game, but before Elaine, he focused on sports such as baseball and basketball. In fact, he lettered three years in baseball while attending Weber High School.

Following high school, Gary spent 11 years in the U.S. Army Reserve where he worked as an ammunition sergeant among other jobs. He served six months on active duty, four of which were in El Paso, TX, at Fort Bliss. After his years in the Army Reserve, Chadwick began installing chain-link fences for American Fence Company. After one summer working for the fencing company, he began a career selling windows, doors, and hardware to residential and commercial real estate. He continued this career with multiple companies in the same industry until his retirement in 2008.

Gary has a very impressive resume when it comes to his time with the Utah Golf Association. He has been a tournament volunteer for more than 40 years, served 12 years on the Board of Directors and was president of the UGA for two years from 1986-1987. He also served on the USGA Public Links Committee for 19 years.

In addition to his UGA and USGA responsibilities, Chadwick has been an active junior golf volunteer for many years and was president of the Utah Junior Golf Association (UJGA). He served as the captain of the Junior America's Cup team for 10 years, the Hogan Cup team for nine years and was the recipient of the UGA Gold Club Award in 1995. He also received the Utah Section PGA Presidential Service Award in 2014. The UJGA has since honored Gary by creating the Gary Chadwick Division for boys ages 9-10 and the Chadwick Tournament of Champions.

"He has gained and earned the respect of different golf organizations and people all over Utah," stated past UGA president, current volunteer, and close friend Sherm Hatfield. "I appreciate all that he has done for me and for Utah golf, and I think that most people feel the same."

The UGA is truly honored to have volunteers like Gary. These volunteers allow the UGA to fulfill its mission to promote interest in the game of golf by encouraging, organizing, supporting, sponsoring, and administering golfing activities and programs.

2015



Joyce Friesema

The Utah Golf Association would not be able to provide its members and member clubs with the quality and quantity of services without the tireless efforts of volunteers. It is our pleasure to announce course rating volunteer Joyce Friesema as the second annual Volunteer of the Year.

Joyce grew up in Midland Park, New Jersey, and graduated from William Patterson University in Wayne, New Jersey, in 1978 with a bachelor's in business administration. She met her husband, David Friesema, on a blind date set up by mutual friends. Joyce and David have one son, Doug, and one daughter, Kim.

Before marrying David, Joyce had never swung a golf club. They decided taking lessons together 30 years ago and were immediately hooked. Joyce and David view golf as a way to spend time with each other, and their clubs follow them wherever they go.

"David and I have moved to various states over the years, and we've discovered that joining a golf club gives us instant friends," she said. Before moving to Utah in 2006, they made friends in states such as New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Texas.

2014



Eric "Doc"
Iverson

The UGA, recognizing the importance of volunteers, has instituted a Volunteer of the Year Award, and the first recipient is Eric 'Doc' Iverson. Upon hearing news of the award he said, "I've been having a ball volunteering for the UGA. Do you get awards for that?"

And to that question UGA Executive Director Bill Walker said, "Yes, we rely on volunteers and you are an ideal example of volunteerism."

Doc was born in Salt Lake City in 1955, but his family moved to California when he was two and he spent the next 50 years of his life in California on both sides of the education equation, learning and teaching. In 2009, one day after retiring as the principal at Del Mar High School he returned to Utah to be near his mother and sister in Orem.

Shortly after arriving in Utah he picked up Fairways Magazine and noticed that the UGA was seeking volunteers to help with the USGA National Public Links Championship at Soldier Hollow. He was there all day, every day.

"That was my first time as a golf volunteer and I had a wonderful experience. It made me happy, broadened by friendships, and I felt like I had contributed to the success of the event, that I was really needed," he said. "I also realized that I was lacking in many ways and that I needed to improve my skills to become a better volunteer."

With that he began a study of the rules and "although I'm not an expert, hopefully I have learned enough to stay out of trouble."

In California he graduated from Del Mar High School and San Jose State where he majored in political science. After graduation he took a temporary job teaching math at his former high school and it turned into a full time position. He also taught physical education and special education and then moved into administration for 20 years, the last five years as the principal.

Golf was his leisure time activity in San Jose and he settled in at about an 11 handicap.

His love of the game comes from his mother, Bevelyn, who didn't take up the golf until she was 65. For her the game is more social than competitive, but she has been interested in improving and has been to many clinics. At 86, she still plays the game quite regularly and walks most of the time.