



Links Players

Rejoicing

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, and give thanks in all circumstances, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. (1 Thessalonians 5:16-17)

Often collaborating with his amateur champion wife, Alice, Pete Dye designed more than 100 courses. Known for creating some of the toughest challenges, many of Dye's designs have held PGA TOUR tournaments, Ryder Cups, and major championships.

I started to list some of the better-known courses, but there were too many! He is best known for the "island green," the 17th hole at TPC Sawgrass in Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla., the most photographed hole in golf history. Probably the most well-known feature on so many Dye courses is the use of railroad ties. Those who knew Pete Dye say it's no understatement to say he was to golf course architecture what Mozart was to music, Einstein to physics, and Rembrandt to art. One commentator writes: "Pete's courses will live on for generations, challenging, intriguing, befuddling, exasperating, and delighting golfers long after he is gone.

But those who've known, worked with, and befriended the man throughout his career were quick to point out that Pete Dye, as a human being, was as unique as the courses he produced.

In 2015, Pete and Alice Dye were honored for designing the Long Cove Golf Club on Hilton Head Island. The club had been ranked in only its 4th year by Golf Digest as one of the top 20 golf courses in the United States. Part of the ceremony included a prayer offered by Douglas Fletcher, at the time a local pastor and author.

His prayer incorporated so many life lessons about golf that I chose to make it a response to today's Scripture...rejoicing in God and giving thanks for the lessons we take away from the game of golf. Almighty God, Thank you for this game of golf. For the way in which it invites us to step outside of ourselves and to enjoy and sharpen awareness of natural magnificence, a dimension of your love for the world.

For the way in which it creates a small group experience and invites us to do life in relationships with others. We thank you for those things that not only remind us of the obligation we have to others, but also of the pleasure of life together.

For the rules of golf that teach us that rules don't merely constrain and limit us but that in fact, they help to bring order and a way to meaningfully measure progress.

For the ways in which the positive understanding of the rules of a game helps us to be less rebellious to the commands you give to us and to value integrity.

For the ways in which golf teaches humility, that we indeed are our own worst enemy, that consistency is important, and perfection is never achieved, and for the ways in which true humility can prepare a heart to receive your grace and forgiveness.

For the way in which golf teaches that the real competition in life is to improve oneself, that life is filled with challenges and traps and that every time we take a stroke, it is a new opportunity.

For the rich heritage of golf, with its awareness of life's challenges and the test of character, its confidence that there is always a way forward with God's help, and the anticipation of a clubhouse and banquet at the end.

With Pete and Alice Dye and Pastor Doug Fletcher, we all can say AMEN!

Prayer – Father! Thank you for your many gifts, not the least of which is the game of golf.

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Bill Crawford

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