

## 2016 WMSGGA President's Report

I thought it would only be fitting to label my President's Report as The Future of Golf because there are some exciting things happening in our state. But before we move into the future, I want to express my deepest gratitude to you, our members of WMSGGA, for your staunch support of me over the past year. It's been a steep learning curve, and I have needed all the help I could get. Without WMSGGA, women would not have the opportunity to make new friends, play wonderful courses in our beautiful State of Maine, and help grow the game of golf. I especially want to thank those of you who have stepped up in your official roles within our organization. Your Executive Board has your back in all things, and you can be very proud of them. I know I am. To Committee Chairs and members, I thank you for your continued diligence in making sure that our organization runs as smoothly as possible. To the members of the courses we've played this year, thank you for creating warm and welcoming atmospheres when we come. And to our major tournament organizers: WELL DONE! There isn't enough time to recall all the positive comments from participants.

I hope you all had a chance to read the letter from Michele Davis, President of Southern Maine Women, and myself that was sent by email a few days ago as well as posted on the website. Let me start with a little background. The Maine State Golf Association, recognizing that they weren't effectively leading the way for golf in the State, decided to look ahead and create a Strategic Plan this spring. Their Board had a retreat led by A WOMAN, yeah, in which they looked at themselves and the game of golf in our State. When they looked at their goals within that plan, they realized that without ALL golfers, male and female, those goals would be unattainable, or at least less effective without joining forces. Some of their goals have to do with junior golf, becoming more active in charitable endeavors (after all, they and we are 501 3C nonprofit organizations), and growing the game of golf. Now this reorganization effort was started before the USGA announced changes in the way they do business. So in many respects, it couldn't come at a better time.

We have known that the USGA is changing from the GHIN system to a universally accepted handicapping system all over the world. This will happen after next season. But about three weeks ago, the USGA also announced through MSGA that by 2018 they will work with only one entity per state or region and it must be open to all golfers, male and female. This change will take place regardless of what the two women's groups do, but we are invited to the table to have our say in what that will look like. We cannot exist as we are now without ties to USGA.

Last week Micki, Sherrie, and I were invited to a meeting with SMWGA's Executive Board and Joe Alvarez, the President of MSGA. We had an opportunity to hear what MSGA's goals are and how they have already changed the structure of their organization. More importantly, we had a chance to educate him about how the structure of our women's business is done and how much of it is different from the way MSGA runs things. Joe was very open and let us know that he understands changes would be made on both sides. He is anxious for us to get started on how this will all look. He already has five members from his Board who want to be involved with the planning, and both women's groups will have members as well. I do not want to take up more time because I know you have questions and concerns. We don't have all the answers for you today, but we need to hear your questions and ideas so that we can address them in committee.

I, for one, am really excited about the possibilities and benefits for women's golf that are possible. But positive change can only happen if we are willing to be proactive rather than reactive once change has been made.

*Respectfully submitted*  
*Vicki Lindquist*