

**BRUCE BARILLA**

Bruce Barilla has consulted at over 60 clubs. As a courtesy, he provides many complimentary teaching tools for a better locker room at: www.lrcgolf.com

Honoring Those Who Have Honored You

Recognizing Employees with Many Decades of Service

I have always liked serving members and guests when working at golf and country clubs. Doing so made me feel good and gave me a sense of satisfaction. Truthfully, I feel more comfortable sometimes waiting on others rather than being waited on. For example, I would rather be the caddie, which I did as a teenager and also in my 30s, than have a caddie.

My combined years of golf locker room experience include eight years at Butler National Golf Club and 12 years at The Greenbrier. This pales in comparison, though, to those employees with many decades of service at clubs and hotels throughout the country. These individuals deserve recognition in a very special way.

WHY RECOGNIZE SUCH EMPLOYEES?

In a time when it is difficult to find and keep good employees, those with 20, 30, 40 and 50 or more years of service are a breed of their own. They know all the members, their personal preferences and their children's names, and they maintain close friendships with many without crossing the line between the employer-employee relationship. They make the membership feel extra special and are a reason why members like to go to the club. A few have a national reputation. Their upbringing has a lot to do with their work ethic and character. They set an example for other employees to emulate and are mentors.

It is a show of appreciation when a club takes the time and makes the effort to recognize such employees. It is the right thing to do. Doing so boosts staff morale and provides an incentive for other employees to remain loyal and dedicated. By bestowing honor, the club is honored, too. The club shows a touch of class, and, truthfully, class also includes compensation and sometimes reconciliation.

WAYS TO RECOGNIZE

I do not recall which club I visited down South, but while touring the clubhouse, I noticed that the club named one of the dining rooms after an employee with many decades of service. This impressed me, left a lasting memory and motivated me to encourage departments at other clubs to do the same.

For employees with 50 or more years of service, I know of clubs hosting and sponsoring a banquet in their honor. This can include a chauffeured limousine to and from the special occasion. Gifts from the members and the club are the norm and customarily include cash or checks in thank-you cards. An all-expenses-paid luxury vacation and a new Cadillac are other worthwhile considerations. Upon retirement, such employees can be elevated to emeritus status and greet members and guests at outings and events. They will be a welcome sight.

MY FAVORITE EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION STORY

This true story does not include gifts received, dinners held nor was it a news story on the local TV station. Only five of us were present. Not many people know about it either, and it was quite unexpected on my part. Every time I tell it to others, I almost get teary-eyed.

As a young boy, Gaston Caperton came with his family to The Greenbrier. Don Crump, who worked in the golf club locker room, saw young Gaston during these times. Don worked at the hotel for 52 years before retiring and knew many people. In fact, after his retirement, a day almost did not go by without a guest inquiring about Don's whereabouts.

One day, Don, Carl, James and I were working together at the same time because it was a busy day during the golf season. Young Gaston, who is now a grown man, comes into the locker room and says "hi" to Carl, James and me, calling each of us by our first name. However, to my surprise, when he saw Don, he said, "Hello, Mr. Crump." Don respectfully replied, "Hello, Governor." **BR**

TIP OF THE WEEK #87
Service: recognition of

