

# Rock Harbor News



## Hugh's Views:

Enjoy more pictures of The Toronto Golf & Travel Show!  
*Picture Credit: Hugh Tolson*



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## 31 BELOW: The Toronto Golf & Travel Show

*Hugh Tolson: Staff Writer*

On February 2, 2023 (*Groundhog Day*), your intrepid Pro Shop staffers Ken and Hugh headed out to the great



Pro Shop Staffer Ken, pictured above.

Pro Shop Staffer Hugh, pictured above.

frozen north and the Toronto Golf and Travel Show. As fate would have it, we passed right by Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania on the way up, and don't you know as we were driving by that little critter predicted six more weeks of winter. He sure was right about that, day one of that forecast resulted in all-time record cold for the northeast and the Toronto area. We saw -11 degrees, with a wind chill of -31 degrees the first two nights we were there! Now, that gives a new meaning to "baby, it's cold outside".

It took us about seven and a half hours or so to get close to the show and that was when we were introduced to Canada Rt 401. The claim to fame for "The 401" is it having worse traffic than any of the California Freeways. Confirmed! We can attest that it lived up to its reputation as we spent two hours going three kilometers (not far) trying to get to the event. We finally made it to the show location, got our credentials and

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were shown to our booth (home for the next three days). The venue was a huge, open, high bay warehouse, and boy, it was cold! All of the doors were open for the vendors who, like us, were moving in. So, we got all of our materials and handouts into the building and created our display.

The show opened to the public on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. We would guess that about 25,000 to 30,000 folks visited the show during that time. Given the volume of material we distributed, our best guest would be we spoke to at least 3,000 people during our time at the show.

Most of the people we talked to had final destinations of Myrtle Beach, Pinehurst, or Florida. Almost everyone we spoke to had said that they had “driven through Virginia” but had not stopped. We took our cue from that comment to point out that Winchester and Northern Virginia was just about halfway, or at least a good jumping off point, to all of those destinations. Then, of course, we sang the praise for Rock Harbor and its two fabulous golf courses. We pointed out the history and beauty of the Northern Shenandoah Valley and the year-round golfing opportunity. We had lots of pictures of the course displayed in poster form and we ran a continuous loop via slide projector. We are sure that we at least planted the seed of coming to our area, we will see in the coming season if we were actually successful in convincing folks to come see us.

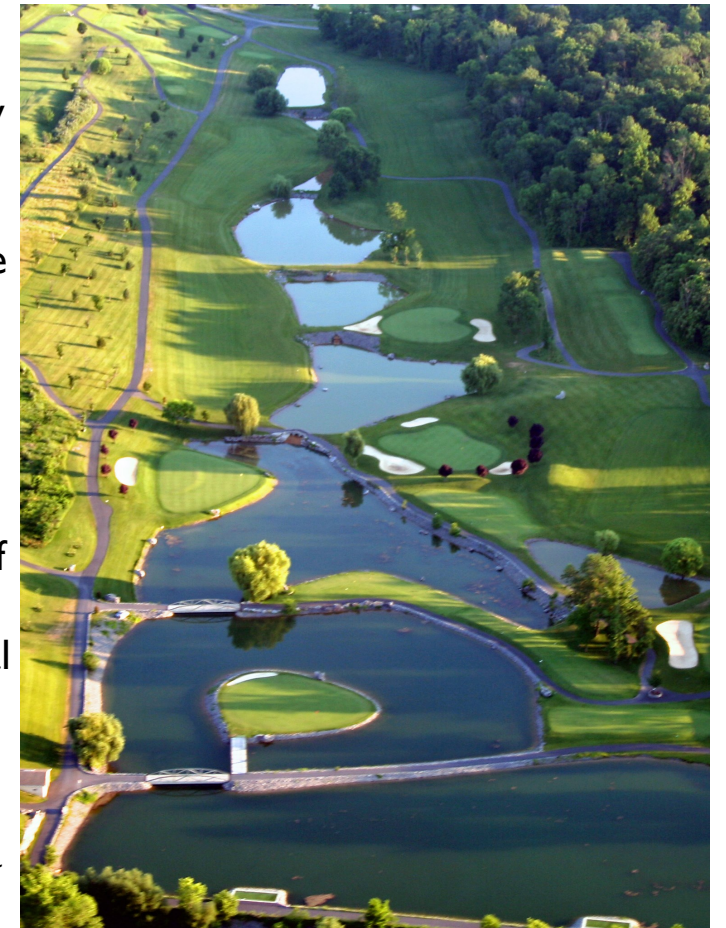
One of the obstacles we became aware of rather quickly was most people were going south down I-95 to our east or I-79 to our west. So, we spent quite a bit of time doing geography lessons for folks to show them new routes to their intended destinations, which just so happened to come by our front door.

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We had some fun with the long aerial view of the ponds. We would see folks streaming by us and then slow down while looking at this photograph. Once you made eye contact with them, they would stop and comment on the amount of water on the course. Well, out of the blue, Ken told one of our potential customers that was one of the unique holes we had on the course, and as a par 20, it was much easier to score on than it might seem!



Aerial picture of the “Par 20”, pictured above.

So, I stole his line, and we made a lot of people chuckle, which gave us the time to engage them in a longer conversation.

I am sure we made some friends, and truly believe we represented “The Rock” well to our Canadian neighbors. Hopefully, we will see many of their smiling faces beginning in April and continuing through the fall. Should you have questions about the trip or anything for that matter please stop by the Pro Shop and we (Ken and/or Hugh) would be glad to share our experience with you.