

LPGA

The inaugural Valley Forge Invitational brought women's professional golf to Montgomery County in May!

Held on the challenging Ed Shearon-designed Raven's Claw Golf Club in Pottstown, the event is one of more than 20 on the Symetra Tour schedule for 2018. Louise Ridderstrom from Sweden shot a course record to win the tournament, which was the first time the Symetra Tour played in the Philadelphia region.

The Valley Forge Tourism & Convention Board and its Valley Forge Sports sales team helped bring the tournament to the area.

"The Valley Forge Invitational was a tremendous success, but wouldn't have been possible without the strong support and guidance from the Valley Forge Tourism & Convention Board (VFTCB)," said Mike Nichols, Chief Business Office for the LPGA Symetra Tour. "Their involvement and leadership efforts helped to create a solid sponsorship foundation, as well as media presence, in all of the neighboring communities. We are looking forward to many years of partnership as we prepare the next generation of LPGA stars for success."

The Meet the Pro's party was also held in Pottstown at the Sunnybrook Ballroom. The Pro-Am featured former Eagle, Vince Papale, and other local businesses entertaining top customers and prospects alongside the future LPGA Tour stars.

Now in its 37th year, the Symetra Tour attracts thousands of spectators, and results in millions in positive economic impact. The top-10 players on the season-ending Race for the Card money list will be awarded LPGA membership for 2019.

Since it opened in 2005, Raven's Claw Golf Club has been a consistent selection on the list of "Pennsylvania's Top 10 Daily Fee" courses, as selected by Golfweek. In fact, Pennsylvania is one of the top 10 states by number of golfers, and the Philadelphia region is in the nation's top five, according to the 2017 National Golf Foundation's Golf Participation in the U.S. Study.

The major sponsors for the Valley Forge Invitational included the VFTCB and the Pottstown Area Health & Wellness Foundation (PAHWF). Local charities, as designated by the PAHWF, that serve the people of Pottstown and residents in seven public school districts within a 10-mile radius of the borough, are the beneficiaries of the funds raised during the tournament.

The VFTCB is working on its third year of building its Destination Montco Golf brand as a celebration of the more than 50 golf courses throughout the county – that's 300,000 yards of play – and the LPGA Symetra Tour was a result of the sales team attending trade shows.

Also in May, the VFTCB debuted its 2nd Annual Montco Golf Guide to more than 10,000 golfers in a 150-mile radius that included a feature on the LPGA Symetra Tour. The VFTCB also promoted the event to its more than 500 members, and on Montcogolf.com.