



Fellowship Open Chair John Daniels with some of the folks the event helps each year, the kids. (B. White photo)

10th annual The Fellowship Open was a “hole-in-one!”

The 2010 Fellowship Open Golf Tournament was a blast. Every year, I-Witness attends this powerful event. Golfers from all over the world and the nation come to our city to play golf at the Silver Spring Country Club. This was a milestone tournament that celebrated 10 years of successfully giving children a hand up in life, no matter where they come from.

The Fellowship Open Golf Tournament is the brainchild of the “Big Cheese” as I call him, Attorney John Daniels, who really is a “Big Cheese” at Quarles and Brady Law Offices, one of the most prestigious law firms in the State of Wisconsin, where Daniels serves as chairman.

The Fellowship Open Golf Tournament was formed to help organizations in our community who are children focused prepare children for life. In 10 years they have contributed over a half million dollars to over 50 organizations throughout our community.

Daniels serve as chairman of the Fellowship Open Golf Tournament, Billy Young and Jim Allen were the co-tournament directors. Beverly Taylor of Fox 6 and Michelle McCormack from CBS News were the emcees. The Honorees’ this year were Redonna Rogers and former Milwaukee Bucks star Junior Bridgeman of Bridgeman Foods.

Folks have a good time at the Fellowship Open Golf Tournament. Even as a bystander, you will roll on the golf course in stitches laughing at those who think they’re Tiger Woods. Holla!

The tournament starts in the early, early morning. Mind you these folks pay to get up at 4:30 a.m. in the morning to play in the tournament. Bobbie Webber, Ken Little, Mark Sain and Anthony Ross, a professor at UWM, who’s new to Milwaukee, were a team representing Associated Banks.

I will not say who missed the entire hole in ones. I will say clearly Tiger wasn’t part of their group. Holla! Of course, I-Witness will not reveal how those golfers from Bridgeman Foods did either. No I-Witness didn’t say they all missed putts I could have made. Psssst...But you didn’t hear it from me. Holla!

While they are hilarious golfers, they are also true humanitarians who care about children and they give to make a difference in the world.

You know in all the years, I’ve gone to the golf outing, I can’t tell ya’ll if Daniels golfed. Mmmmmmm I wonder what the Big Cheese’s handicap is, Holla!

As the golfers tried to be like Tiger, young people representing the different organizations the open helps such as the Milwaukee County Council of Boys Scouts of

America Youth Program, Solomon Community Temple United Methodists Church and Transitions: Men of Tomorrow, who would be receiving monetary awards from the Fellowship Open Golf Tournament.

I-Witness brought along her 12-year-old niece Angel King to see some of the things that other young people were doing and to hear the inspiring success stories of the guest speakers.

The guest speakers were Attorney Lynette McNeely, Dr. Ramel Smith, James Kirk, a Marquette University student and manager at Panera Bread, Yvonne Ochilo, an African law student at Marquette University, Surr Grice a pharmaceutical student.

All of these young professionals were dynamic in sharing, inspiring and giving vision to all the young teens. Many of them had me on the verge of tears. Okay ya’ll I was seeing hope again and I was so proud of them.

The exchange of inspiration and encouragement from the speakers to the teens about success was visualized through powerful messages of being persistent and never, never giving up on yourself or your dreams.

All of their stories on success included working hard, believing in you even when folks say you can’t do it and staying out of the way of negative things and negative people.

The golfers soon arrived for lunch, all of them claiming to be number one and the first place winner. Holla! A beautiful lunch was laid out. I love the pizza at the country club.

Dr. Ron Price of Dallas, Texas was asked to do the invocation.

Billy Young did the welcome and the introductions of the co-emcees, McCormack and Taylor. McCormack was truly funny in her opening remarks talking about the golfer wanna-be’s. Holla!

Both stated they can’t say enough about those who help make the event happen.

They talked about the recipient organizations selfless dedication and commitment with them being leaders who have a long history of working with children in a positive way.

Their programs show real results in life changing opportunities for many young people.

All kinds of folks were on hand such as Urban League CEO Ralph Holloman, CC Henderson (who has since passed), CEO of MLK Health Care; Cecilia Gore, Richard Badger, Bill Stevens, Mark Phinisee, Gerald Randall, Tony Reider of Chicago, Ill., Common Council President Willie Hines, and Greg Martin of Lena’s Foods.

Former Green Bay Packer Leroy Butler made a special appearance to support the Fellowship Open.

At lunch there were special presentations and salutes. The PGA was saluted in big fashion as a major contributor to the efforts of the Fellowship Open Golf Tournament with a special salute going out to Earnie Ellison of the PGA Golf Tournament.

Stay Tune for 2010 Fellowship Open part 2 next week.