

STITT,
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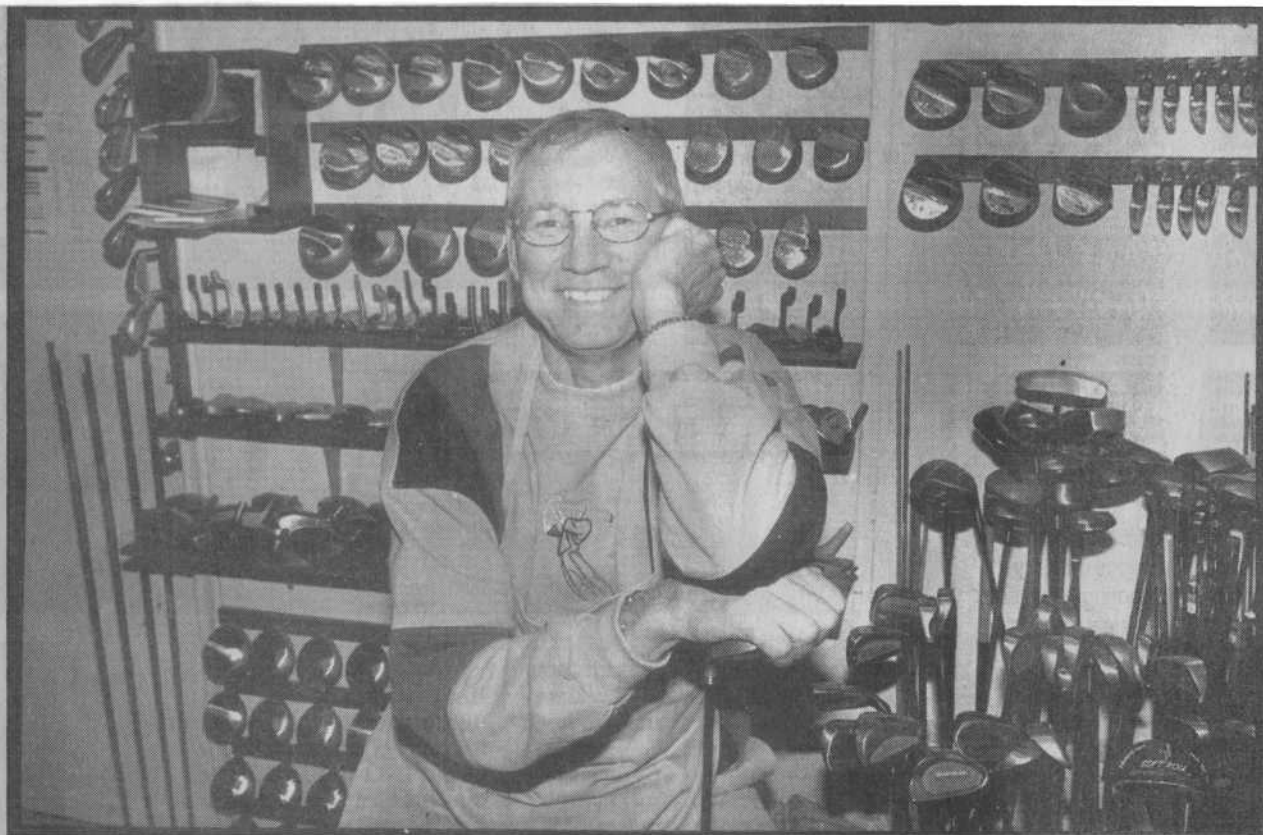


Photo by Crombie McNeill

Al Stitt

Quinte personalities

Sharing his passion for golf

By Henry Bury

The Intelligencer

Al Stitt made a difficult decision years ago to stand in front of the blackboard instead of a goal net.

It's a decision he's never regretted as, this past June, Stitt, 56, retired from a 34-year career in teaching.

As a teenager, Stitt was an accomplished junior hockey player in the Pembroke and Ottawa areas. He even won junior scoring titles in his last two years in Ottawa and, in 1988, was one of the first four inductees into the Central Junior League hockey hall of fame. At 19 years old, he had a chance to play semi-pro in Dayton, Ohio but chose instead to finish teacher's college.

Regardless of his decision to teach, the Bridge Street East resident has kept playing hockey. He's been a member of the Belleville McFarlands senior team for the past 20 years.

If hockey wasn't enough, Stitt is also a very good golfer, boasting a handicap of three and earning him various titles.

He was club champion in Renfrew at the age of 18. He then won the Bay of Quinte club championship one year here and also participates in the Ontario Senior golf

championship tournament and the Canadian Senior tournament.

His love of golf took him one step further 15 years ago when he started making golf clubs for others who share his passion.

He makes about 50 sets a year as well as such specialty clubs as wedges, drivers and putters.

"I'd like to think the clubs I have are a very good quality. They're all top line components," Stitt said. But it's his teaching that makes Stitt especially proud.

"I've enjoyed the career. It was very rich and rewarding. I'm a people person and that's why I chose teaching. And I've had 34 years of being around kids, parents and staff," he said.

The Kingston-born Stitt began his career in 1964 in Onaping, north of Sudbury. He taught a Grade 8 class for a year.

Stitt then left for what is now Peel region near Toronto and taught various grades in Malton for seven years. In that time, Stitt married LeeAnne and the couple moved to Brampton.

Stitt accepted a vice-principal's position with the former Hastings County Board of Education and the couple and their two young children moved here in 1972. Another reason for moving here was to be closer to their families in

Renfrew.

After his first year at Marmora Senior School, Stitt became vice-principal at Earl Prentice School in Marmora, then principal in 1974 and continued as principal at various schools until his retirement. These included Prince Charles in Belleville, Marmora Street School in Trenton, Prince of Wales and Stirling Primary and Junior School.

"For the first 25 years in my career, things were relatively stable in education. Changes were well orchestrated. But in the last 10 years, change has been something that is commonplace and at a moment's notice," said Stitt.

He's now facing the biggest change — retirement.

"I don't plan on slowing down. I'll keep playing hockey and golf. The only thing I won't be doing is teaching...the key is to remain active."

If you wish to suggest a name for Quinte Personalities, jot down the individual's name including some background information and send it to: Quinte Personalities, c/o The Sunday Intelligencer, 45 Bridge St. E., Belleville, Ont., K8N 4C7; or by e-mail, intell@intranet.on.ca We will consider all suggestions.

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