

# Morning Sentinel

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## Spector to kick off benefit tourney

By AMY CALDER, Staff Writer

When Abby Spector was growing up, her father, Gary, played a vital role in her activities, whether it was playing golf, basketball or tennis.

For Spector, 6-time Maine Women's Amateur Golf champion, that father-daughter connection was critical in helping her to become independent and successful, she says.

"I've been fortunate that my father has taken a great interest in my life," Spector, 22, of Waterville, said. "He has helped me realize my potential in athletics and in the rest of my life. His love and support have allowed me to accomplish great things which otherwise would have been impossible."

Spector's experiences prompted her to help Hardy Girls Healthy Women kick off its Father-Daughter Initiative with the first annual Hardy Girls' Golf Tournament June 30.

The event will be held on the new Tomahawk course at Natanis Golf Course in Vassalboro, where Abby Spector works. Those wanting to register are asked to call Hardy Girls at 861-8131 or download registration from the Web site at [www.hardygirlshealthywomen.org](http://www.hardygirlshealthywomen.org).

Spector, her father, and brother, Toby, will be on hand to help golfers test their skills.

"We'll be on one hole so we get to play with everyone," Abby Spector said.

Karen Heck of Waterville is a co-creator of Hardy Girls, an organization that seeks to help girls grow into healthy, well-adjusted and independent adults. Heck said the tournament is designed to draw attention to research showing that girls with strong, positive relationships with their fathers grow up to be more independent, financially secure and less likely to be involved in violent relationships.

Gardiner Savings Bank is sponsoring the tournament. Arthur Markos, president and chief executive

officer of the bank, said he was happy to be contacted by Heck for the event.

"It's a great organization with a great message, and terrific role models in Abby and Gary," Markos said. "Gardiner Savings is proud to sponsor this event."

A silent auction will be held during the tournament. Dan Covell, a sports management professor, donated auction prizes of rooftop box seats to a Red Sox game, as well as tickets to a Sea Dogs game, according to Heck. She said Covell said he sees the baseball games as opportunities to extend the purpose of the tournament, as well as a chance for fathers and daughters to experience another fun activity together.

Abby Spector recently graduated from University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill with a degree in communications. She said Wednesday that she hopes to play golf professionally.

She has been playing golf since she was 4, and playing nationally since she was 13. She does a few tournaments a year for charitable causes, she said.

Spector said she hopes a lot of groups sign up for the June 30 tournament. Heck said she is appreciative of her willingness to help.

"Abby is a local hero and we are tremendously grateful for her support," Heck said. "She is a terrific role model and a great example of what can happen with a father's love and support."

Heck suggests people go to the Dads and Daughters Website to learn about how fathers can communicate effectively with daughters, at [www.DadsandDaughters.org](http://www.DadsandDaughters.org)

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