Art and love of nature come together for super

BY MARK LESLIE
Let us know if Andy Stoffel is not one of a kind.

Here's a guy—the oldest of 13 children—who grew up quickly, yet may grab hold of a dream of his youth. A guy who hammered nails for years while running his own roofing a siding company, yet handles a paintbrush with the aplomb of an award-winning artist. Who bought a farm to build a housing development, then constructed a golf course on it instead. Who first opened his course on the day after he built it. Who has pulled two loves together into two distinct careers that are, well, inseparable.

And Andy Stoffel, 1) owns and maintains his own golf course, Auburn Bluffs in Campbellsport, Wis., and 2) paints wildlife/golf course pictures that people are encouraged to bring down to his studio for all to see.

"I love my work on the golf course. It's a real challenge, keeping beautiful greens... And I love my paintings. I'm always getting new ideas and they stay there in my head until I get them on canvas. If I don't paint it, it won't leave," Stoffel said.

From the time he was a boy drawing pictures while the teacher spoke of history or arithmetic, art has been a crucial part of Stoffel's life. "I've always felt the need to sketch or paint," he said.

Stoffel first used his self-taught skill in the Army. He used it in his roofing and siding business while the teacher spoke of history or arithmetic, art has been a crucial part of Stoffel's life. "I've always felt the need to sketch or paint," he said.

Stoffel first used his self-taught skill in the Army. He used it in his roofing and siding business while the teacher spoke of history or arithmetic, art has been a crucial part of Stoffel's life. "I've always felt the need to sketch or paint," he said.

"I'm just looking for that one big break, one big breaker," he said. "People say my work is getting better with each painting."

"You strive for the day you can get on your feet. In my case, I will pursue my art as I'd like," he said. He does in the off-season between early October and late March.

Still, his golf course has a pull of its own. Construction began on Auburn Bluffs in 1979. It opened in 1982. Stoffel built the clubhouse and began work there full-time in 1984 when he left the siding business.

"I did put a few houses on the land," he said. But he pictured a nine-hole golf course on the rest of the land and has never regretted his decision.

Three holes run down between bluffs. One of the tees stands elevated 80 feet above the fairway. Little ponds formed by the glacier, Stoffel said. While stationed at Fort Lewis when he was 18, Stoffel painted murals on the 30-by-eight-foot mess hall walls.

"I painted ducks, bears, elk. I got out of a lot of KP and guard duty. Once it took me two weeks to paint the rear of a black bear," he laughed. "They knew I was dragging my feet. But I'd finish one, and they'd tell me to do another one. I painted murals in seven mess halls."

In the siding business while giving an estimate, Stoffel would sketch the house and add colors to show the homeowner what it would look like. "I sold the job every time," he said.

There came a back injury that led to his new life as an owner-operator of nine-hole Auburn Bluffs, which the artist appropriately calls a "scenic" challenge.

He started entering duck stamp competitions, winning prizes and receiving encouragement from other artists.

"I've always been fascinated with nature," he said, and one day it clicked: "Why not combine the wildlife with the golf course?" asked himself. "I was more interested in wildlife on the course's 107 acres tucked into Kettle Moraine State Forest."

Now, putting his paintbrush down to draft a 18-by-24-inch canvas instead of a wall, Stoffel said: "I'm using my golf course for all my ideas, but I added it. They're my own dream shots. I'm just putting them to the canvas."

"Being a superintendent, I have the opportunity to observe nature at my fingertips."

"They're my own dream shots. I'm just putting them to the canvas."

We are committed to the proper use, management and conservation of water within the horticultural environment. We provide our customers with a superior product that is sensitive to budget without sacrificing function.

Certified Consultants, Ltd., is a water systems management/consultant/design firm with extensive experience in golf course irrigation systems.

CERTIFIED CONSULTANTS, LTD.
Water Management Professionals
3904 Wilson Road, Woodstock, IL 60098
PH: 815/338-3947 FAX: 815/338-3968

Ad Index
RS# Advertiser Page
151 Anderson Instruments 28
163 Bell Turf Equip. 29
164 Bloch & Co. 29
112 Backer 53
130 Certified Consultants 50
139 Ciba-Geigy 21
152 Continental Bridge 28
122 Cushman 24-25
131 Cushman 24-25
102 Dow Elanco 3
121 Eagle Golf 8
156 Excel Bridge Mfg. 29
113 Foster Dicken 28
153 Golf 2000 Favers 28
125 Grace-Sierra 31
106 Greensmart 10
116 Guettler & Sons 17
126 Jacobsen 32
117 John Deere 18-19
113 Lasco Fittings 14
112 Master of the Links 29
129 Melex 2
114 Neary Mfg. 17
108 Page Corn 10
154 Page Corn 28
150 Par Aide 11
114 Patten Seed Co. 28
165 Precision Tool Co. 27
106 Quill Valley Farm 29
111 Regal Chemical 12
120 Reliant Lifestyles 26
127 Rosenmuen Mfg. 29
120 Seed Research of OR 22-23
105 Southern Concrete 8
157 Sporting Valley Sod 29
102 Stottlemann 28
104 Toro Comm'l Prod. Div. 67
161 Warehouse Radio 29
118 Watertronics 29
159 Willadsen Scale Models 29
130 Yard Edge 28

Continued on page 26