

Kevin DeRoo -N-



The DeRoos (L to R): Chris, 16; Kayce, 14; Kyle, 11; Cheryl and Kevin.



This month's golf meeting takes us back to good old Bartlett Hills Golf Course, where MAGCS president Kevin DeRoo has been plying his trade for the past 12-plus years. The author has a personal interest in writing this particular article, as it was I whom Kevin replaced (and what a good thing for Bartlett Hills and its clientele!). If you had the opportunity to play at BHGC the last time we were there, fuggeddaboudit—thanks to Kevin and the folks at the Village of Bartlett, many changes await you on August 11. I'll get to those in due time—first, a little about the storied history of this village-owned daily-fee course.

The first nine opened in 1924 on the site of the Gloss Dairy Farm. In 1928, architect Charles Maddox added a second nine holes (Maddox also designed Old Wayne and Stonehenge, to name a couple). The original owner, Mr. Gloss (I'd love to say his first name was Lip or Semi, but that'd be too easy), was an avid card player and a tad eccentric to boot, and his pastimes were apparent in the design of the old course, with its heart-, diamond-, spade-, church keyhole- and star-shaped greens. These original greens stayed very much intact until much later, when in 1978 the Village of Bartlett bought the course and undertook a progressive improvement plan. In 1980, under superintendent Doug Papp, the ninth green (the heart) was removed in favor of a more conventional shape built (somewhat) to USGA specs. At that time, the first tee complex adjacent to no. 9 green was also rebuilt.

Later, in 1981-82, superintendent Joel Purpur, CGCS (currently at River Forest Country Club) installed a new pump station (replacing a diesel-powered, pain-in-the-butt-to-prime pump), a manual fairway irrigation system throughout the course with quick-couplers in fairways, and manual, valve-controlled greens irrigation to replace the center-sod-cup system of yore. Since he wasn't too busy, Joel also rebuilt holes 10, 11 and 12, and began work on nos. 7, 8 and 14, following architect Bob Lohmann's design.

The next superintendent, a young snot-nosed kid who was in WAY over his head (me), tackled the rebuilding of holes 14, 15, 17 and 18, along with the removal of the old no. 10 and no. 11 to make way for a practice facility. I don't know what kind of magic Kevin has been using, but upon his arrival in 1991—after a stint as Mike Bavier's assistant at Inverness—he has basically brought BHGC into the 21st century. The remaining greens were rebuilt

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Kevin DeRoo and Ginger behind no. 15.

(spelling an end to all the goofy greens), installation of an automatic irrigation system took place, a new clubhouse sprang up (replacing the old barn and silo), a new maintenance facility was erected (and a real beauty at that) and fairways underwent conversion to bentgrass.

During my visit with Kevin, we toured the course and took in the vast changes that it has undergone over the 25 years since its purchase by the village. It's difficult to describe the feeling I got while looking at the trees I planted (most in the wrong locations) and the holes I rebuilt—and then realizing how much better they look under Kevin's artful hand. When I left, I didn't know whether to shake his hand or punch him in the nose. Decorum, and consideration of my friendship with Kevin, took over, and the handshake won. You see, while I was muddling through my stint at



The new clubhouse terrace overlooking the 18th hole.

BHGC, I lived in the basement of the DeRoo household. Kevin and his wonderful wife, Cheryl, took pity on this bachelor without a clue and put me up (knowing full well the potential for the harm that could be caused to their marriage and to their impressive son, Christopher, born in 1987). Seeing no signs of permanent

damage to his psyche (all he really ever did was keep repeating, "John go downtown, John get money first"), they decided to add to the family with the birth of Kayce in 1989 and Kyle in 1991. The kids, all negative outside influences considered, have turned out normal, with baseball, hockey, dancing and tumbling keep-



(Photo by Jim Trzinski)

Beautiful scenery and rolling terrain await us at Bartlett Hills.

ing them occupied, and Kevin is manager of Kyle's little league team. Cheryl, the more "cerebral" of the two, recently graduated with a Master's degree in education from Aurora University, and is pursuing a second Master's in education administration, also at AU. The couple also is the driving force behind this month's Kane County Cougar outing, as if they don't have enough on their plate.

Kevin and his staff look forward to hosting this month's meeting, and hope you all will enjoy the changes to Bartlett Hills as much as they have enjoyed implementing them. See you on the 11th!



(Photo by Jim Trzinski)

Some of the fruits of Kevin's and his staff's labors.

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