

# Midwest Breezes



## Big Foot Country Club, Jim Knulty

Built into the hills above Lake Geneva, in the village of Fontana “land of many springs,” Big Foot Country Club is one of those rare golf clubs where extraordinary natural beauty and exceptional golf course design are combined.

Several artesian springs on the property form small pools and brooks that meander through the course. Where the brooks cross the lines of play, Jim Knulty has contracted with Leafblad Landscaping to build foot-bridges. The use of a fieldstone veneer gives the bridges a natural look.

Jim has cleared many of the steep hillsides of trees and buckthorn, and replanted them with perennial flowers and native grasses. Stairwells are built into these slopes using ledge-rock stone. These hillsides now provide a colorful backdrop for several holes, as well as some spectacular vistas.

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On the third hole, by moving the tee into the side of a hill, Jim reconfigured a short, straightaway, par four into a hard, dogleg left. This was a significant engineering feat involving a large amount of clearing, building a tee into the hillside, and constructing asphalt paths and stone stairways up a steep grade.

The fairways at Big Foot are predominately bentgrass. When Jim started at Big Foot 27 years ago, they were cut over an inch, and predominantly bluegrass. But as Jim began to bring the cut down, and use fertility and watering practices appropriate for bentgrass, the bent came in mostly on its own. In several sections of fairway

Jim enhanced the conversion by mowing the turf down to stubble. He then aerified and slit seeded into the scalped turf. For Jim this worked as effectively as the conventional "Round-up Conversion" program.

Over the years Jim has rebuilt nearly every tee and bunker, making the entire course play superbly. Due to the efforts of Jim Knulty, Big Foot Country Club is as challenging and stimulating to play as it is breathtaking to behold.

Brad Anderson, CGCS



One of the many meandering brooks at Big Foot CC that give the course natural beauty.



A pool created by one of the natural springs found on the property of Big Foot CC.



A veneered fieldstone bridge at Big Foot fits well into the landscape.



A view from atop a hillside that was previously buckthorn, but now planted to native flowers and grasses at Big Foot CC.