

SUPER -N- SITE

Joshua Therrien, St. Charles Country Club

Gilberto Velazquez -N-



Gilberto (Gil) Velazquez has served as the dedicated Golf Course Superintendent of White Eagle Golf Club for the past eighteen seasons. White Eagle is a private club located in suburban Naperville that opened in 1989. Shortly thereafter, Gil took over the reigns in 1990. The club was originally established as an eighteen-hole course designed by Arnold Palmer. However, construction was far from complete. In 1995, an additional nine holes were added. "Maintaining a twenty-seven hole course has its challenges due to multiple tee off locations," says Gil. "Staying ahead of a.m. golfers can be difficult at times." Even with its difficulties, Gilberto has done a spectacular job of managing a great facility.

Gil is no stranger to the challenges of the industry. In the years of 1992, '93, and '94, White Eagle was host to the LPGA's Sun Times Challenge. While under the spotlight, Gil and the White Eagle maintenance staff preformed miraculously for the three years of the tournament. As Gil looks back to preparing for the tournament fourteen years ago now, it just "seemed like a normal weekend." The current summer staff includes up to twenty-eight crewmembers with three crew foremen. Future projects may include bunker renovation.

Due to his dedication, hard work, and loyalty, Gilberto has been an exemplar of "living the American dream." Gil arrived in the Chicago area at age seventeen as an immigrant from his homeland in Mexico. Leaving his parents and many other family members back in Mexico, he knew that the road ahead was going to be a long one. Remaining positive, he began work as a crewmember at Cress Creek Country Club in Naperville. Being quick and eager to learn without being afraid to get his hands dirty, Gil worked his way up the ladder. In a few short years, he had been promoted to a Crew

Foreman. Not stopping there, Gil kept his nose to the grindstone and was promoted to Golf Course Superintendent in 1982. He served as Cress Creek's Superintendent for eight years before moving on to White Eagle.



Gilberto Velazquez

As devoted as Gil is to his career, he is even more committed to his family. Gil and his wife, Arcelia, live in Aurora, where they have raised three successful children. Gilberto Jr. runs his own landscape company. The Velazquezes also have two daughters. Araceli works for a local medical company, and Elizabeth is in her final year at Northern Illinois University. Two or three times each year the Velazquezes travel to Mexico to visit many members of their family.

While at home, Gil enjoys watching baseball and is also an avid bowler. He also tries to get out on the course to play at least once a week in the summer. That Gil has done a fine job of balancing a good family life with managing a successful career is something we can all appreciate. **-OC**



Views at White Eagle Golf Club
Above: Teeing area transitions.

Middle: The par 5 27th hole from the clubhouse.

Below: The tenth par 4 wraps along a water feature like many others at White Eagle.

