

MIDWEST BREEZES

Charles Anfield, CGCS, *Heritage Bluffs Golf Course*



"Out with the old...in with the new".

I walked into Tim Anderson's impressive, brand spanking new shop at Naperville Country Club to interview him for this article, WOW. Tim walked up shortly with his face bandaged up, looking like he had been in a fight. He explained that he had recently been to the doctor and had a few patches of skin cancer "burned off". Tim said, "I go in once a year and he usually finds something". No big deal, this guy is a cool customer.

The 12,000 square foot shop is state of the art. It was relocated and rebuilt from the old central location on the course to a new area in the southeast corner of the property. Tim had visited many existing shops in the Chicago area to get some ideas. There is more than adequate space for equipment, parking, tools, storage, office areas and break room. The break room has six microwaves, a stove, icemaker, cabinets, refrigerator and a flat screen television! Wireless computer, telephones and security cameras are located throughout the facility. The pesticide wash pad, fertilizer and storage area are all indoors. Tim calls it the Environmental Center. If you know Tim, everything in the shop design was no accident (his desk and office are meticulously organized). Everything was all thought out to the last detail. Cost's were analyzed and budgeted under the leadership

of Mr. Tierney, a member and Project Coordinator. The goal was to do it right the first time, despite extra costs. Their mantra was "what is it going to take to get the project closest to the end-point they want".

The changes started before Tim was hired for the Superintendent Job in January of 2005. In the fall of 2004, a vote was put forth to renovate the clubhouse and bunkers. It was voted down. In 2005 the club met again and looked at four possible options for renovation of the golf course that Arthur Hills/Steve Forrest Design & Associates had put together for the club. Numerous meetings were held and plans were debated among the members. Finally, a vote was held and passed for a complete redesign.

The club started earth work on the ambitious project in July of 2006. Wadsworth construction had the task of shaping the design. The course was closed. The goal was to improve an aging Tom Bendelow design and make better use of the land. The new technology of the golf playing equipment had made the course outdated. It had become a narrow, tree lined, target short course infested with poa annua. The bunkers were out of place and in desperate need of an overhaul. There was concern

(continued on next page)



Views of Naperville Country Club's new shop.

(L) An image from the Chicagoland Shop Tour this past winter from the storage area above the offices.

(R) I wonder where they keep the line trimmers in this place, I can never find one!

among the membership that this project was needed to retain and attract new members.

Steve Forrest was the lead architect on the project. He spent countless hours walking the course trying to find the best routing within the site. In some ways, this is a tougher task than starting fresh on a new site. Over 90 acres were disturbed with dirt moving on the small 124 acre site. The only areas left untouched were some of the existing tree line areas. The old design was a par 71, it became a par 72. He was able to keep some of the old holes, create new holes and somehow make it all fit together to look like an 80 year old golf course. He was also able to pick up 400 yards of distance. The design included a new irrigation system, new USGA A-1 greens, bunkers relocated and rebuilt with Best sand. The fairways were newly shaped and contoured, new drainage installed, over 150 trees removed and relocated with a 100" tree spade. The new course has five sets of tees and a greatly improved driving range and practice area. Leibold Irrigation did the irrigation installation. Tim was very complimentary of the company's ability to stay organized, remain on task and work with the other contractors.

The front nine was opened in June of 2007 and the back nine in September of 2007. It has been met with rave reviews. Long time PGA Professional Jim Arendt said the membership has been very happy with the results. The course has always had great elevation changes and when you get on it, it becomes very difficult to figure out where the old holes were. The course changes include a #8 hole that is a 604 yard par 5 called "Forever", enough said. The par 3 #17 hole plays 230 yards to a freaky peninsula green and it is called "Anxiety". Good stuff.

It's really impressive to think about all of the challenges the club had to go through to make the changes. It was a battle at times and the outcome was uncertain. Tim showed me a section in his office for the permitting paperwork required for such a project. He had to write numerous detailed reports outlining the scope of the work. The Dupage County had restrictions on the work around the watershed that runs through the middle of the property. The club had to demonstrate a positive impact on the area. Changes included expanding the watershed, rerouting the floodplain, increasing the wetland and slowing water flow off site. The County will monitor the watershed for five years. In order to make the project happen, the club had to deed the watershed to the County. The weather presented challenges for Tim as well. Heavy rain events washed out newly shaped and seeded areas creating delays and expensive setbacks.

Tim is a fighter. Don't let his quiet demeanor fool you. He has persevered throughout the project all the while serving the MAGCS as President. Try that one on for size. Now he just wants to get into a maintenance mode and increase the level of manicuring on the course. The course still has some construction scars that need to grow in. Tim was just the right guy in the right place at the right time to make it all happen. He had to work with all of the different people attending countless meetings all the while overseeing the project from top to bottom. He may be a little beat up, scarred and tired from the project but no big deal, Tim Anderson, CGCS can go the distance and come up a winner. -OC

