

# Paul Voykin makes it Five in the Hall of Fame



*On October 21, 2011, Paul Voykin, 80, will be inducted into the Illinois Golf Hall of Fame. He is the fifth golf course superintendent to receive this honor and joins the likes of Bob Williams, Ray Gerber, Oscar Miles and Carl Hopphan.*

The Illinois Golf Hall of Fame was created in 1989 by the Illinois PGA Foundation in an effort to recognize and honor those individuals who have contributed to the rich history and tradition of the game of golf here in Illinois. Representatives from Illinois' allied golf associations serve on its selection committee including the Midwest Association of Golf Course Superintendents. Paul was selected from a field of over 25.

Paul held the position of Golf Course Superintendent at Briarwood Country Club from 1961 until retiring in 2007. He is still part of the club, a member treasured by many. After spending a morning with him and sharing a meal, the member's love for Paul is obvious and genuine – each took the time to share a joke, a story, or concern for his well being. It was great to see. Since his retirement, Paul has had nothing but admiration and praise for Justin VanLanduit, his successor. Justin has continued one of Paul's legacies at the club – not mowing areas that are out of play and nurturing native plants in their stead. In the early 1970s, as golf course conditioning began its upward climb, Paul experimented with these “out of play” areas for a dual purpose. The first was to control costs – oil prices climbed because of the OPEC proclaimed oil embargo. There was fear that it would last, disrupting supply and causing recession. It was less expensive not to maintain those areas with fertilizers, mowing, and spraying oil-based pesticides. Secondly, Paul liked the plants that started to grow. They reminded him of his walks to school as a child in Saskatoon, a town that is now the largest city in Saskatchewan, the Canadian province north of Montana and North Dakota.

Paul was working for the Saskatchewan Telephone Company when he and his brother Peter answered an advertisement to work for the Jasper National Park Golf Course

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*The current roster of Illinois Golf Hall of Fame members is made up of men and women who have played significant roles in all aspects of the game, from teaching to playing, course design and construction to administration and inspiration. These individuals represent not only an impressive collection of accomplishments in golf, but the true spirit and integrity that make the game great. The current Illinois Golf Hall of Fame roster includes some of the most influential contributors to the growth of the game throughout the state.*

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(over 500 miles away) as laborers. Peter had golf course experience working at the Saskatoon Golf and Country Club, and both were hired on very quickly. Jasper National attracted many celebrities of the day. It was a visit from Ben Hogan that caused Peter and Paul to stay in the golf business. During a talk to the caddies, Mr. Hogan told those present, “working in the golf business will allow you to live like a millionaire.” Both young men were hooked, Paul especially, with his love for the outdoors. Paul realizes he's not a millionaire, but lives like

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one – playing golf in his retirement and realizing the good fortune the industry has provided him.

Paul has received many accolades throughout his career including the Charles Bartlett Award (1967), the Leo Feser Award (1981), and the Superintendent of the Year Award (2003). Paul is a MAGCS Past President (1972) and author of two books, *A Perfect Lawn, the Easy Way* (1969) and *Ask the Lawn Expert* (1975). Both books can still be found on Amazon, the first edition of *Ask the Lawn Expert* is going for \$17.95 and is listed under the Collectible heading. – I've got an edition signed by the author, in which he proclaims I'm his good friend, making my copy priceless.

Congratulations Paul. **-OC**

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*The Illinois Golf Hall of Fame exhibit is located on the main level of the clubhouse of The Glen Club in Glenview, Illinois. Visitors can find The Glen Club at 2901 West Lake Avenue in Glenview, Illinois 60025.*

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*Paul at Briarwood during his first season in 1961. This photo still hangs in the clubhouse.*

*Below Left: Paul finds a lead plant in one of Briarwood's native areas, a plant that is indicative a healthy and vibrant restoration.  
Right: Not every native area has to be large to be successful and eye catching.  
This one frames a green and shelters it from an adjacent hole.*

