

## MIDWEST BREEZES

Charles Anfield, CGCS, *Heritage Bluffs Golf Course*



*Fall has always been a great time for golf courses to embark on improvement projects. They can benefit the turf growth and create upgrades to facilities for the coming season. Our Members have been taking full advantage of the favorable weather and have been very busy.*

**Chris Pekarek** of the Village Links of Glen Ellyn has been involved in a major clubhouse and practice area expansion project. "We are basically doubling the size of our existing clubhouse. We will improve our food service to be able to accommodate larger outings, weddings and other special events." The improvements will increase the clubhouse size, making it possible to host events serving over 150 people. The project includes a full bar with a seating capacity of 40. A new dining room, new restrooms, and a new patio are also included. The expansion of the parking lot required the existing putting greens be removed and relocated. The new practice putting green will be 9400 square feet. The first tee on the nine-hole course had to be moved to accommodate the expansion. While they were at it, Village Links looked to increase the size of their driving range tee from 1.25 acres to over 2 acres. The new tee will be sodded with low-mow bluegrass and be ready for play in 2013. The total cost of the work will be \$6.3 million.

**Chuck Barber** tells us that St. Charles Country Club recently completed installation of XGD drainage on three greens with drainage challenges. "The goal was to help get water off of the older push up greens. It was very impressive how quickly and efficiently they completed the work." They started on Monday and were finished by Friday. It took about a day and a half for each 5000-square-foot green. A 6-inch width of sod is removed and a trench is dug. The pipe they install is a 2-inch, micro-slit, perforated pipe that connects to an exterior port, which connects to existing drainage. The sod that's removed is stacked to the side during the work and is replaced in its original location. The putting quality after the project is uncompromised.

**Don Cross** of Skokie Country Club has been overseeing work on expanding fairway landing areas. Rather than using purchased sod, which is expensive and looks noticeably different when installed, Don chose vegetative propagation, a method he has used many times. "It is highly successful, relatively quick, inexpensive, and most importantly, the resulting turf is an exact match to the turf species in the 'donor' area." Don first removes the bluegrass rough from the expansion area. He then core aerates healthy fairway areas and harvests the plugs. The plugs are laid out, two to three deep, in the expansion area and then rolled, dimpled, fertilized, and watered. This tried and proven method looks the same, performs the same, and saves money. **-OC**

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