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The Midwest Association of Golf Course Superintendents (MAGCS) is a professional organization founded in 1927 whose goals include preservation and dissemination of scientific and practical knowledge pertaining to golf turf maintenance.

We endeavor to increase efficiency and economic performance while improving and enhancing the individual and collective prestige of the members.

The MAGCS member is also an environmental steward. We strive to uphold and enhance our surroundings by promoting flora and fauna in every facet in a manner that is beneficial to the general public now and in the future.

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I heard a great line at the GCSAA convention in Las Vegas. On Sunday of the conference, there was a general educational session titled "Grow Your People Skills." C. Michael Jousan of the Clear Communication Company talked about good people skills. He stated, "Keep your words soft because you may need to eat them someday!" How true this is. My thought is today's golfers better keep their spikes soft, or they may not play someday! The soft spike charge is on.

Let me tell you about some of the facts about soft spikes. The MAGCS will be "spikeless" at all of our events this year. We will have soft spikes available but would like to have our members change them on their own before a Midwest event. Talk to Luke Strojny, our golf chair, about receiving some. I recently read an article in the *Aurora Beacon News* by Bill Kindt about the momentum of soft spikes. Some of the facts in the article include:

- Every public and private course in Tulsa, Oklahoma, will be spikeless this year.

- The Weekly Golf Challenge Tour will be spikeless for all of its 28 events.

- The Illinois PGA will make spikeless shoes mandatory for its events in 1997.

- Many private clubs within the ranks of the Midwest are spikeless already.

- Several public courses, such as Ruffled Feathers, Odyssey and Orchard Valley, will push for the use of soft spikes in 1997.

Our own Jim "Bradley Boy" McNair will try a novel idea this year. Jim plans to rope off a section of his practice putting green to soft spikes only. He hopes to show golfers the difference between steel spikes and soft spikes. I think that Jim has a great idea there. Communication will be the key in making the switch from steel to soft. Maybe a few other facts will help convince the golfers at your club to make that change.

According to a USGA study, the average golfer wears 12 spikes on each shoe and takes an average of 56 steps on each green. On an 18-hole facility with 200 rounds being played, that makes 2.5 million spike marks per day. While you tour your course in the late afternoon, you will see the aftermath of a long day of play. Communicate to your players that a soft spike green will not be as torn up as the old steel spikes. Take a survey to see what the golfers want. Have people talk to clubs that are near your own to see how they feel about changing over. I know a switch to straight sand topdressing forced my club to make the change. Other clubs may be in the same boat.

Comfort, safety and tradition may be some of the reasons given for not making the change. Many people I have talked to enjoy the feel of spikeless. Have your players try them out. Safetywise, not many incidents have been reported, as far as I know. Tradition will always be a strong reason for not making the change. Tradition continues to be thrown out the window everyday. The golfers of the '90s demand the best conditions that money can buy. Tell your golfers to go out and spend a few bucks on a pair of soft spikes. I think they will like the change! Now, on to divots, ball marks, geese . . .

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ed Braunsky".

Ed Braunsky, CGCS President, MAGCS

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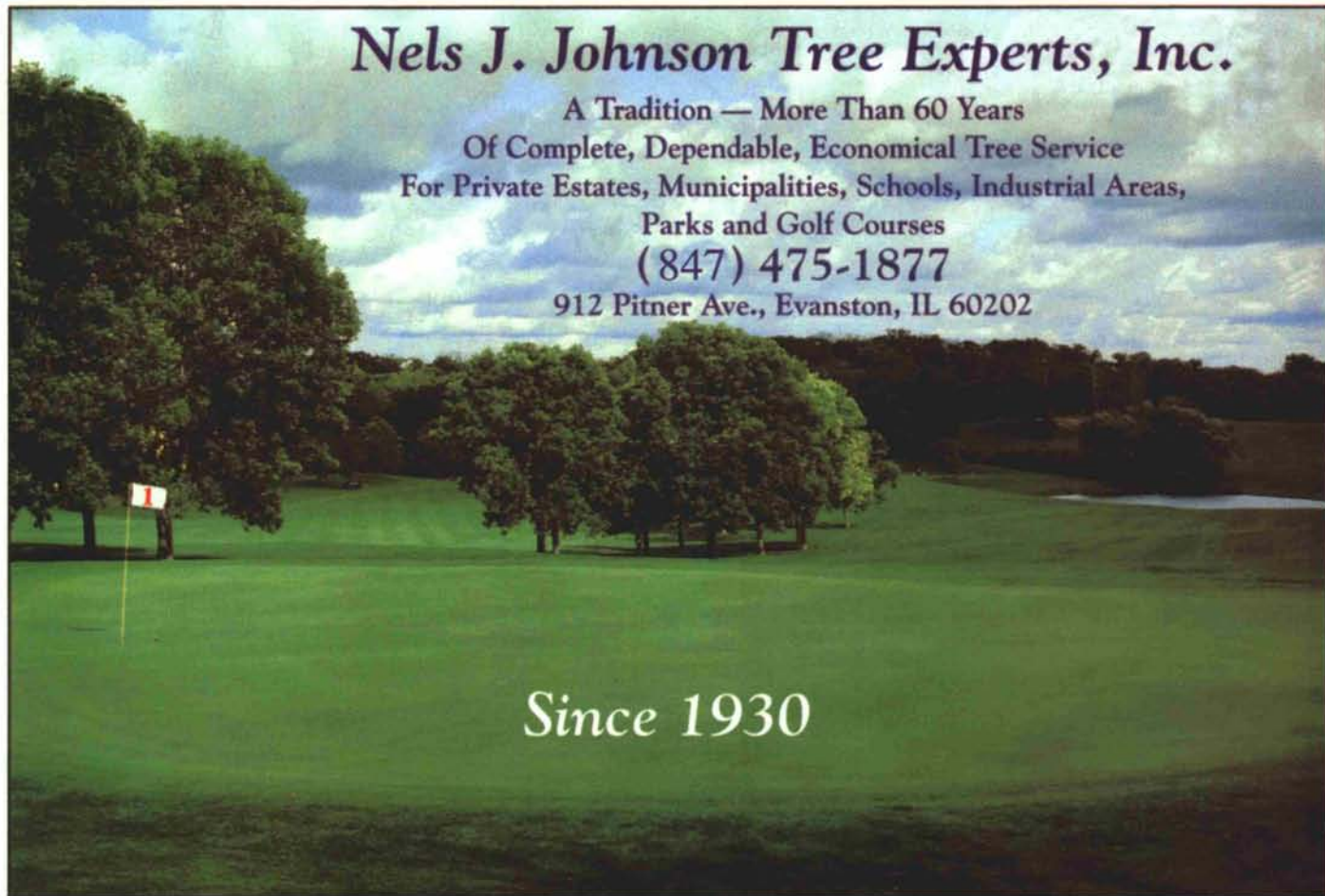
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*Don Ferreri
Seven Bridges G.C.*

As we find ourselves in the beginning of another golf season, we are refreshed to find that we survived another winter. Hopefully, along with being well rested, we have all received small rewards for our accomplishments completed during the off-season.

If you recall back to January, I wrote an article about all of us taking on the task of joining our respective golf courses to the New York State Audubon Society. I hope many of you were able to proceed with this course of action. Not only is it the right thing to do, but it carries with it public relations value that will enhance your golf club, your association as well as your own professional image. So let this be a reminder; it is never to late.

If you haven't already received a survey from the MAGCS Environmental Committee, you will be very soon. This survey, we feel, is one that has potential to carry a lot of weight. In order for the Environmental Committee to use the results as a valuable tool, we need your help!

Please take the brief time needed to answer all of the questions and return the survey to Tom Voigt for tabulation. This survey will enable us to compile enough information from Chicagoland golf courses to be used in newspaper and magazine

articles, as well as public relations material to be used on television and radio. **Please answer all the questions to the best of your ability; we are looking for a large percentage of returned surveys.**

Each and everyone of us has a responsibility to manage and maintain our golf courses in an environmentally safe manner. In today's day and age, it is becoming increasingly easier to accomplish these practices. There are many commercial products geared towards managing with environmental sensitivity in mind. Whether it be using organic fertilizers, safer pesticides or changing the way we do some of our cultural practices, we all can make a difference in our management decisions. Buffer strips left along our waterways will enhance our wildlife habitat as well as filtrate runoff water. Naturalizing out-of-play woodlands will reduce main-

tenance. If you have not read the article written by Pete Leuzinger in the March 1997 issue of *Golf Course Management*, you owe it to yourself to find the time.

On April 14, I attended the annual media golf summit. We again used this opportunity to give a general update on current golf course conditions, new technology and environmental issues. This year questions were addressed from the media regarding setting up golf courses for a major tournament. Chicago area golf courses will be in the spotlight this year like never before. There are five nationally covered golf tournaments in Chicagoland this year. Good luck to all those individuals involved with their golf courses and the weather. No doubt, we can all take pride in the way these Midwest tournaments will be showcased across the country.

(continued on page 16)

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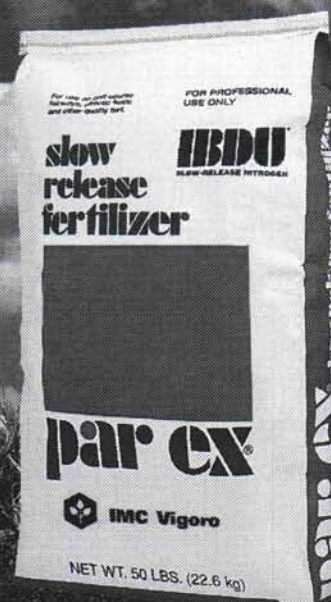
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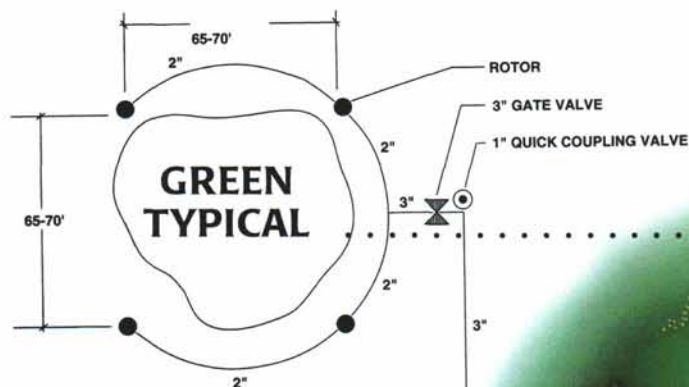
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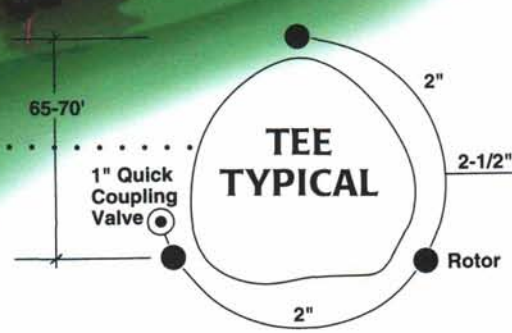
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Scott Witte -N- Cantigny Golf Club

Pat Norton
Nettle Creek C.C.

So how many good and faithful MAGCS members are out there who mispronounce the name of the club hosting the ITF Combined Golf Day on May 19?

According to Scott Witte, golf course superintendent at Cantigny Golf Club (can-teen-e, with a silent "g"), there are still a few out there who have trouble with the pronunciation!

And until talking with Scott recently for this interview, that's about all that I knew about this beautiful and very historic estate that just happens to contain, among its varied features, a great 27-hole public golf course. The golf course itself is a gorgeous



Roger Packard design, was built by Wadsworth Golf Construction, and opened for play in 1989. It was also recognized by *Golf Digest* as "Best New Public Course" in 1989.

The golf club is overseen by the Cantigny Foundation, a non-profit organization that insures that all of the Cantigny facilities, including the golf course, "give back to the community." In that spirit, Cantigny Golf Club hosts several annual outings sponsored by charitable foundations, such as Athletes Against Drugs, Make A Wish Foundation, and many others.

Cantigny is much more than just a great golf course. It's actually part of the 500-acre country estate founded by Col. Robert R. McCormick in the 1920s after returning from WWI and becoming editor and publisher of *The Chicago Tribune*. The estate for many years consisted of the McCormick mansion, formal gardens, guest homes, and the First

(continued on page 35)



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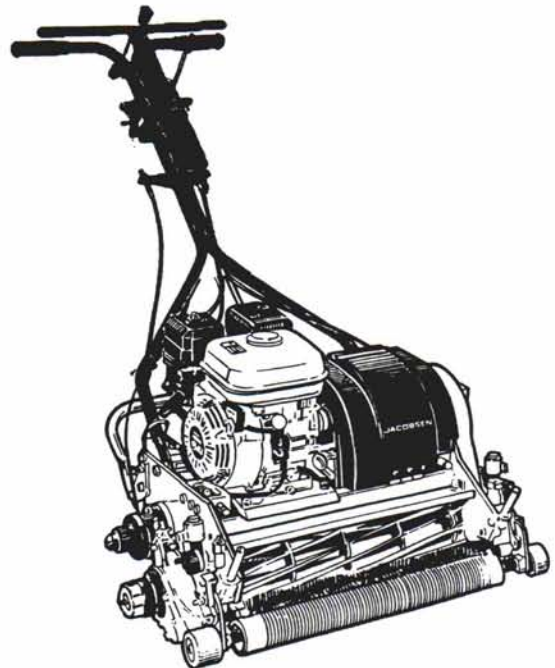
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It is hard to imagine what this place looked like one hundred years ago. There are many stories, some of which are actually true, that piece together a history that sounds more like a family lineage than a business celebrating a birthday. The club was actually incorporated under the name Glen View Golf and Polo Club on March 29, 1897. For the past two years, a committee has been working feverishly to compile documents, pictures, interviews, and anything else pertinent to GVC history. A 130-page book, now ready to be published, repre-

(continued on page 12)



The 18th hole from the 17th green.

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