

state,” Kaszak explains. “These restrictions apply even if the land is sold, thus preserving it for future generations.”

Since the easement's inception, The Merit Club's superintendent, Oscar Miles, CGCS, has worked diligently to cultivate and fortify the course's natural habitats. With guidance from CorLands, Oscar applied three decades of experience, specialized research, careful experimentation and his own heartfelt appreciation for the outdoors to nurture The Merit Club to where it is today.

### A look at Oscar's top-notch team

Always shying from the limelight, Oscar is quick to point out that he is not The Merit Club's sole custodian. In fact, he praises his current staff, and recognizes in particular three men whose roles are critical to The Merit Club's smooth operations: assistant superintendent John Nelson, foreman Enrique Valadez and head mechanic Joel Guadarrama.

“If a superintendent is looking for dedication and loyalty among staff, these three have what's necessary to be the leaders of The Merit Club,” says Oscar. “They have good values, they are good family people and they are sensitive to and respect our members.”

John worked for Oscar in the early '80s as an intern, then moved on to assist Al Fierst at Oak Park C.C. After moving to Florida for a brief period, John approached Oscar in 1990 about job opportunities in Chicagoland. Oscar hired John as construction foreman for The Merit Club. Eventually, in 1996, John earned the first assistant position.

“I like the way our team is organized,” says John. “The sense of cooperation, camaraderie and

friendship are strong, and we have achieved some longevity with our crew.”

Of the opportunity to prepare The Merit Club for the Open, John notes, “I'm very excited. You can get stuck in a rut with everyday routine maintenance and this is a nice change of pace that has afforded the chance to do a variety of tasks you don't normally get to do working on a golf course.”

Like John, foreman Enrique Valadez has a longstanding relationship with Oscar. Hired on at Butler National in 1986 as extra help during the Western Open, Enrique impressed Oscar with his work ethic. By summer of 1988, he was Butler's foreman. When Oscar left Butler in 1989, course officials permitted him to take a few employees with him, including Enrique, who joined The Merit Club after 1990's Western Open.

As foreman, Enrique applies his fluency in English and Spanish to act as liaison to a largely Hispanic crew. He oversees all special projects, including the construction of a new practice tee last fall and its grading and seeding this spring.

“Hard work is coming up with the Open, but we're all really excited,” says Enrique. “We're all working together for a united purpose.”

Head mechanic Joel rounds out Oscar's key staff. At the age of 20 or so, Joel came to work on The Merit Club's grounds crew during seeding, sodding and hydromulching of the new golf course. After being seasonal for several years, Joel expressed interest in working full-time in equipment maintenance. Two years ago, Joel moved up into the role of head mechanic.

With the Open looming, Joel needs to focus on making sure all mowers and other equipment are running well. The fleet is expanding, too, increasing Joel's responsibilities as he prepares for his first tournament. Like his colleagues, he is rising to the challenge.

“So many worldwide will see this tournament,” Joel says. “We can present this place where we've been working together and be proud.”



*Next: Preparing The Merit Club for the 2000 U.S. Women's Open, and a tourney preview.*



(L to R) The Merit Club's head mechanic Joel Guadarrama, foreman Enrique Valadez, assistant superintendent John Nelson and superintendent Oscar Miles.



The site of the present 18 holes was built in 1930, designed by C.D. Wagstaff. William Langford designed the existing nine-hole par 3 course in 1959, while in semi-retirement. The par 3 course is still original and has some interesting green sites. It may be Langford's last design. The site also contains several playing fields and a unique tennis facility donated by the A.C. Nielsen family, as well as an ice arena.

Winnetka Golf Club is constructed on a peat muck soil. Its primary function is flood relief, with its secondary purpose being recreation. The Skokie Lagoon and the golf course were built at the same time. The whole topography of the site does not change more than one foot. Because of this, drainage—both micro and macro—is Henry's biggest challenge at the golf course. The par 3 course has gravity drainage, while the 18-hole course is drained by sump pumps. Henry has three drainage lift stations that pump from the drainage into his ponds. Along with that are four pumps that drain water from the property at 5,000 GPM. During February of 1997, they received 7" of rain in 18 hours, which caused the elaborate pumping system to move 22 million gallons of water. As Henry will state, proper monitoring of irrigation is critical, especially on a site of this nature. His pump house is the original


from 1930 and is still operational.

Henry and his excellent staff continue to improve drainage on an annual basis, while improving other areas of the golf course. Recently they completed a half mile of cart path work, installed 400' of a 36" culvert line and renovated the irrigation pond. One item they are quite proud of is the installation of drinking fountains throughout the golf course. Along with drainage, Henry's next area targeted for improvement is to enhance his fairway turf.

Henry also has enrolled Winnetka Golf Club into the Audubon program. The course has a prolific purple martin colony with 55-75 fledglings a year. Henry's bluebird population has also been picking up over the years. Henry claims this is runover from Don Cross over at Skokie Country Club. Henry developed his love for the outdoors growing up one block away from the forest preserve and Des Plaines River and mowing lawns as a child.

Behind every good man, stands a great woman, as Henry would state. He has been married to his wife, Lisa, for 11 years. They have two wonderful children, Kenny and Tony. Every winter Henry builds a 30' by 50' skating rink in his Mount Prospect backyard for the family. For hobbies, he has two German

Shepherds to keep him busy and a restored 1968 Dodge Charger R/T with a 440 engine.

The entire staff at Winnetka Golf Club is looking forward to hosting the June outing. It will be a fun experience at a unique public facility, which I am sure everyone will enjoy. 

Basic Medical . . . (continued from page 20)

Rogers James Seymour. Englewood Cliffs, NJ. Prentice Hall, Inc.. 1981.

Emergency Medical Procedures For the Home, Auto, and Workplace. Revised in consultation w/ Elliott C. Cohen, M.D., F.A.C.E.P. Chief, Emergency and Ambulatory Services, Beverly Hospital, Beverly, MA. Prentice Hall, 1980.

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# the Bull Sheet

John Gurke, CGCS  
Contributing Editor

## DATES TO REMEMBER

June 19 — MAGCS monthly meeting at Winnetka Golf Club, **Henry Michna, CGCS**, host.

July 17 — John Deere Team Championship at White Eagle Golf Club, **Gilberto Velazquez** host.

July 18 — MAGCS monthly meeting at Redtail Golf Club, **Pat McDonagh** host.

July 20-23 — U.S. Women's Open at Merit Club, **Oscar Miles, CGCS** host.

August 3 — University of Illinois Field Day in Urbana. See below for more information.

August 22 — MAGCS monthly meeting at White Deer Run, **Joseph Meier** host.

September 14-16 — 2000 LaSalle Bank Chicago Open at Beverly Country Club, **Les Rutan** host.

September 18 — MAGCS monthly meeting at Stonewall Orchard Golf Club, **Larry Flament** host.

October 10 — ITF Fall Golf Day at Gleneagles Country Club, **Keith Fuchs** host.

As mentioned above, the University of Illinois Field Day will be held on Thursday, August 3 at the Landscape Horticulture Research Center and Hartley Selections

Garden in Urbana, IL. Field Day activities will begin at 8:00 a.m., when current turfgrass, nursery and landscape research will be displayed and explained during morning tours. The afternoon program will feature workshops and classes. U of I horticulturists, educators, plant pathologists and entomologists will

be available to discuss research, answer questions and diagnose plant problems. For questions and information, contact **Luke Cella**, U of I Extension turfgrass associate, at 217-265-8222.

A hearty MAGCS welcome to **Dan Gruett**, the new irrigation service manager at Chicago Turf and Irrigation. Dan brings to our area a world of knowledge in irrigation systems and computers (as your author was fortunate to learn firsthand), and is available 25 hours a day to troubleshoot

*(continued on page 36)*



MAGCS April 2000 meeting host **Tod Hoppfan** of Elgin C.C. with **Kevin DeRoo** of Bartlett Hills G.C.



25-year MAGCS members (L to R) **Dave Nadler** (Nadler Golf Car Sales), **Randy Wahler** (Knollwood Club) and **Peter Leuzinger** (Ivanhoe Club).



The usual suspects duffing it around the beautiful Elgin C.C. — (L to R) **Albie Staudt**, **Ed Braunsky**, **Jim Burdett** and **Kerry Anderson**.

The April MAGCS meeting was a great success, with Elgin Country Club and host **Tod Hoppfan** providing us a beautiful golf course and excellent hospitality. The day was perfect for golf, but the treacherous track took its toll on the many teams vying for a trip to the prize table. The education topic, provided by Paul F. Gleeson of Vedder, Price, Kaufman, and Kammholz, was Legal and Employee Relations Aspects to Union Organizing Drives. Paul brought up some very good points about the treatment of employees, which hit home even where union drives are not expected.



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**B**EFFICIENT **B**CLEAN **B**POWERFUL **B**PRECISE  
**B**QUIET **B**EFFICIENT **B**SLEEK **B**POWERFUL  
**B**EFFICIENT **B**CLEAN **B**POWERFUL **B**PRECISE  
**B**QUIET **B**SMOOTH **B**SLEEK **B**COMFORTABLE  
**B**EFFICIENT **B**CLEAN **B**POWERFUL **B**PRECISE  
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any problems. Congratulations, Dan, and welcome to Chicago!

.....  
 Congratulations to **Dan Anderson, CGCS**, of Fox Valley Golf Club for his hole-in-one on the ninth hole at his home course on April 28. Dan and his group thought he'd hit it over the par-3 green until a little investigative work proved that he did indeed ace the hole—his second ever, and only 23 years apart!

.....  
 Anyone interested in FREE wood chips and fill-grade soil can contact **Darin Ayres** at Panoramic at 630-285-0300, ext. 230.

.....  
**Ken Shepherd** of Prairie Bluff Golf Club is looking for an assistant. Prairie Bluff is run by the Lockport Park District, and opened in 1998. Interested applicants can call Ken at 815-588-0053 for details. There must be a black hole sucking assistants into some other dimension, what with everyone looking for them.

**Dr. Randy Kane's** *Poa annua* seedhead control study, which is being conducted at several MAGCS member courses, is in the evaluation phase (i.e., deciding which discolored rectangle looks best). Look for results in *On Course* soon...

.....  
 Keep an eye out for the latest of Mother Nature's gifts—a newly-diagnosed disease called "Ball Mark" disease. Caused by the fungus *Ophiosphaerella Agrostis*, the symptoms are small brown spots on sunny bentgrass greens prone to wilt. Dr. Peter Dernoeden of the University of Maryland, the leading expert on the disease, reports that several currently available fungicides (soon to be an oxymoron?) will control the disease.

.....  
 In case you've been in an isolation booth for the past two months, the National Weather Service has issued its first-ever drought warning for the coming season. Higher-than-normal temperatures with lower-than-normal precipita-

tion are expected for our area. Yippee.

.....  
 This just in: **Jim Burdett** is still retired. Who'd have thought it would last this long? Congratulations on sticking to your plan, Jim.

.....  
 On Thursday, May 11, Bull Valley Golf Club and superintendent **Ken Goodman** hosted the annual pro-superintendent event. As usual, weather was uncooperative at the start, but once the players (and supers) were on the course, Mother Nature changed her mind and provided us with a decent day on a great golf course. This event is a wonderful opportunity to continue to build strong relationships between the PGA professional and golf course superintendent in a relaxed, non-work atmosphere while at the same time helping the pro to experience shots he or she would never otherwise have to make. Congratulations to the winning team from Conway Farms (**Chad Ball, CGCS**) and to Kenny Goodman and his staff for having the course in such beautiful shape despite the rain.

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Finally, this item from the USGA, titled

## It's Still Just a Game

*I don't know about you, but I'm beginning to fear  
That much has been lost from the game we hold dear.  
The players, it seems, have made the decision,  
The course must be a thing of precision.*

*Each line must be perfect, greens pool table true,  
The bunkers 'consistent', the sand white and new.  
Each hazard once different, must now play the same,  
There simply can't be any luck in this game.*

*The rub of the green, bad hops and tough lies,  
Are signs of bad care in today's golfers' eyes.  
'Let's fire the course super, and hire one we know  
Has control over Nature, who can force grass to grow.'*

*I think I can prove my point to you all,  
By briefly discussing a visit last fall.  
To a course, I am sure, you would all recognize,  
It's been on TV—the ultimate prize.*

*As an agronomist for the USGA, my routine  
was the same  
On this fine autumn day.  
The group was assembled, for the tour of the course,  
The superintendent and me, and the committee  
in force.*

*One lady, two seniors, three flat bellies and more,  
I'd have to be careful, I could start a war.  
There were few shared opinions in this group  
I could see,*

*So with great trepidation, I stopped at one tee.*

*"Just look!" they exclaimed. "Our tee's thin and bare."  
Well it's too small, don't you see, and just look up there.  
While the tree is truly a beautiful sight,  
The grass on your tee doesn't get enough light.*

*They gasped and fell back—why one nearly died.  
'Are you saying that we should commit arborcide?'  
I promise the memory of this tree will soon pass  
When you once more can tee up your ball on the grass.*

*They scowled and they glared, all down in a bunker,  
'To heck with the tees, let's look at a bunker.'  
'The traps all play poorly,' said Flat Belly three,  
'This sand must be bad—it couldn't be me.'*

*'Our sand is just fine,' the lady next said,  
The seniors agreed it was all in his head.  
No feathers were smoothed when I tried to explain,  
That the bunkers are hazards, and that part  
of the game  
Is to develop a 'feel' for sand dirty or clean—  
But the committee had already left for the green.*

*'They're too slow.'  
'They're too fast.'  
'They're too soft.'  
'They're too hard.'  
'They're too steep.'  
'They're too flat.'  
'They're worse than my yard.'*

*I tried to explain, their greens were quite good.  
In fact, the ball rolled just as it should,  
And that actually, their course was much better  
than most.*

*When it came to the game, they surely should boast  
Of conditions that offered a great deal of fun,  
For mother and daughter, for father or son.  
But this fell on deaf ears, for they just couldn't see,  
That it's still just a game, and always will be.*

*The visit then came to an uncomfortable close,  
I fear all I did was add to their woes.  
They just couldn't see the good things that they had,  
They'd lost their love of the game, and that's pretty sad.*

*My kids are just starting to learn how to play,  
A game that has given me much through this day.  
They'll learn to enjoy a shot that's hit well,  
They'll learn that short putts can be living hell.  
But they'll also learn that golf is much more,  
Than a four-hour walk and posting a score.  
Sure, they'll beat it around, but when they are done,  
I hope that like me, they'll find it's great fun.*



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All industries go through labor issues. Most all have learned to adapt to the changing demands of the workforce. The time is upon us to follow suit. If we wish to retain good employees whom we've taken the time to train and assist through the "rocky" times, we must get the word out that we, too, need to adapt. We need prospective employees to feel that ours is a business that has its rewards and offers a sense of self-worth. We've done so incredibly well at dealing with the countless other issues our industry has faced over the years, and it is now time to deal with this one. *Laboris kaputicus* is as out of control as our uncut roughs, and we can stop it with a little diplomacy and ingenuity.



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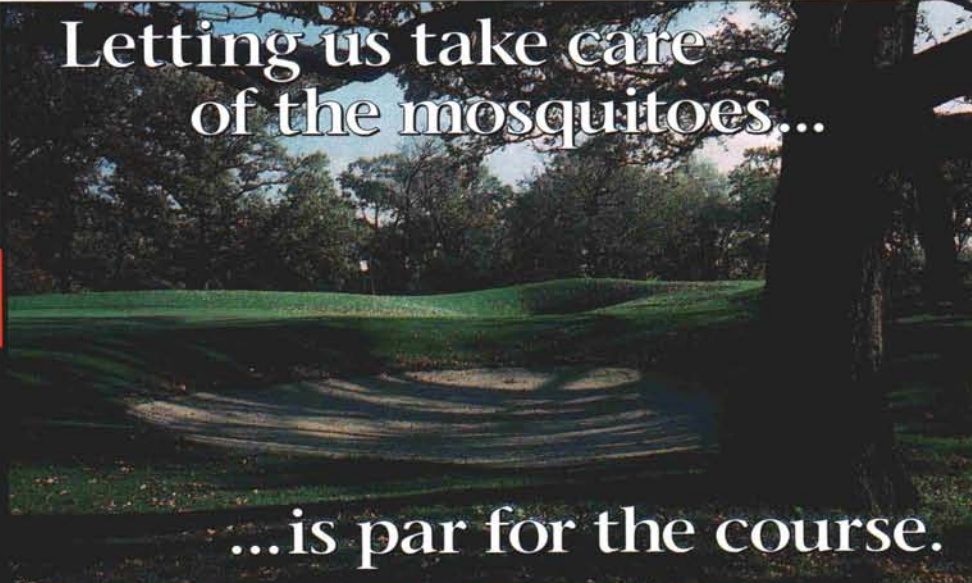
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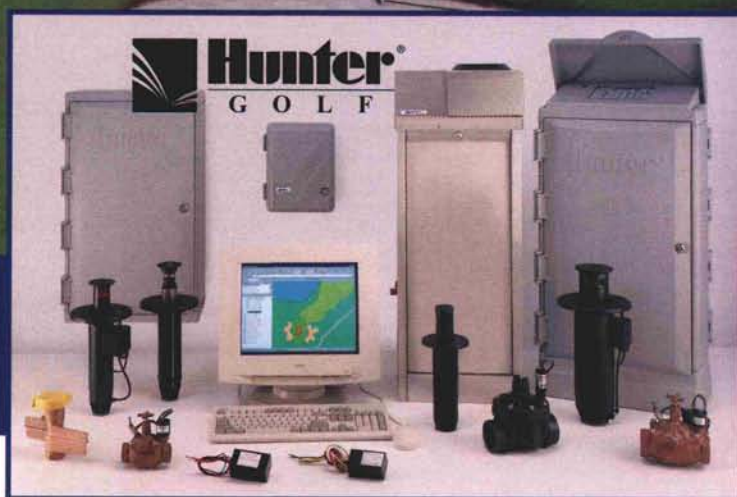


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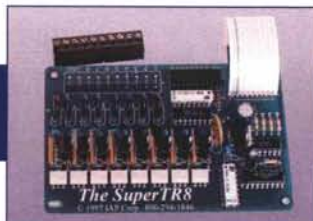
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Glen Flora Country Club	Seven Bridges Golf Club
Glen Oak Country Club	Skokie Country Club
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