



According to Oscar, this view of no. 7 from no. 13 tee reflects every natural feature of the Merit Club, from the water and wetlands, to the prairie with its vivid wildflowers, to the oak savanna. Clubhouse engineer Judd Hansen took this spectacular shot in October 2001.

and 1971. During his tenure at BNGC, he added another nine Western Opens to his tally. After a decade at Butler, happy, content and proud, Oscar soon learned that Merit Club president Ed Oldfield, Sr., had other plans for him. You see, Oldfield was working with Bert Getz to develop a jewel of a golf course in the far north suburbs.

The property in question was owned by Mr. Getz and had a long history as a steer-breeding farm. There, Mr. Getz raised prize black Angus bulls for breeding. People would come from all around and bring their cows to be bred at what is now the Merit Club. They would even bring the pregnant cows back to give birth, for the farm had a small veterinary clinic on property.

The Merit Club was to be the collaboration of Oldfield, architect Bob Lohmann and land planner John Zandere. The 325-acre golf course would be well-planned, constructed without cutting any corners. With some persuasion, Oscar was on board,

(continued on page 12)

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and he had significant input into the course's design and infrastructure, bringing 30 years' accumulated knowledge and experience to bear on the project.

In May of 1990, construction began. Oscar and staff would transform the steer farm into one of the area's finest clubs. Today, the Merit Club comprises 21 holes of golf, 18 regular holes and three practice holes. These holes are nestled among 15 acres of water, 35 acres of wetlands, 75 acres of prairie and 20 acres of oak savanna running over 180 acres of meadows. The course has an elevation change of 100 feet, and 75% of the property can be seen from the thirteenth hole.

The property was originally designed to handle a 25-year flood but since has been revised to accommodate a 100-year flood. The discharge of the course is extremely minimal so as not to impact the Des Plaines River or any of the club's neighbors. Oscar and staff work very closely with the CorLands Group, with whom they maintain a conservation easement. Every three months, the Merit Club undergoes an inspection to ensure harmony with the wetlands and their appropriate management. The Merit Club will always remain open space, as it is part of the Liberty Prairie Conservancy.

Oscar is served by his assistant John Nelson, his second assistant, Enrique Valadez, and his other second assistant and mechanic, Joel Guadaramma. Oscar is proud of all



Photos by Jim Trzinski.

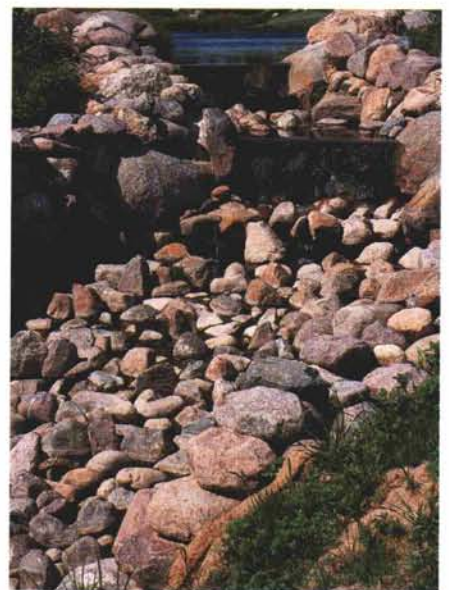
Front row: equipment technician Joel Guadaramma; assistant superintendents Enrique Valadez and John T Nelson; intern Zachary Anderson, SIU grad now at U of I for Master's. Back row: interns Scott Verdun, SIU grad, and Jeremy Stull, SIU senior.

the young men who have worked for him over the years. He claims in excess of 60 current superintendents who once worked for him. He is a 12 handicap nowadays, and he chips and putts everyday. He recently hosted the 2000 U.S. Women's Open, which was a huge success. He enjoys surrounding himself with youthful individuals with whom he can share his experience as a means to keep himself sharp.

Oscar looks forward to seeing you at the Merit Club for what should be a tremendous day of golf and your opportunity to see and enjoy one of the top-200 modern-day golf courses.



After work at the Merit Club.



Merit Club staff is rebuilding water features. Pictured is hole no. 3.



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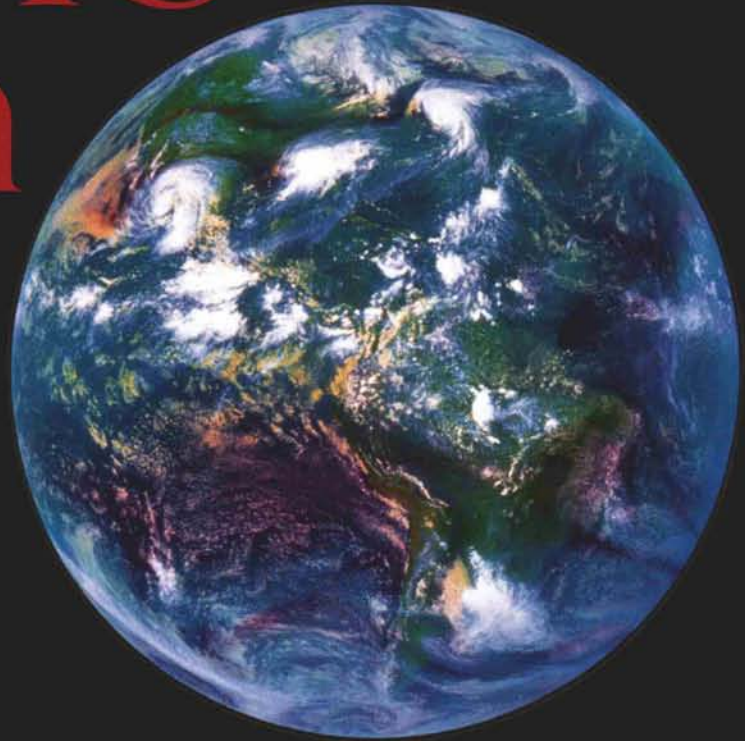
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Ozone Action Days

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Middle and late summer—this is the time of year we expect to hear weather forecasters talk about or issue warnings for “ozone action days.” A typical ozone action day (OAD) is a busy day with daytime high temperatures at or above 85 degrees Fahrenheit, high humidity and poor air circulation (winds calm to 8 mph). An ozone action day has a good potential for poor air quality aggravated by activities such as emissions from diesel, gas and two-cycle engines; gaseous emissions while fueling equipment; emissions when using an oxygen and acetylene torch; industrial emissions; etc. The ozone on an OAD is especially influenced by these activities between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.

*The recipe for
an ozone action
day: heat, humidity,
stagnant air.*

My facility joined Partners for Clean Air in 1995. Partners for Clean Air is an alliance of participating Chicago-area businesses joined together in an effort to establish methods of eliminating or at least minimizing activities thought to damage the ozone (and wreak havoc on pure, fresh air). All participants in Partners for Clean Air receive a bulletin via fax alerting them the day prior to an ozone action day. The bulletin contains a list of ideas and basic examples to follow so that each individual business manager can form a customized set of activities to be put into effect on OADs. The following are the guidelines and practices that Orchard Hills uses on ozone action days:

1. Begin work at 5:00 a.m. rather than 6:00 a.m.
This allows for work to be accomplished earlier in the day.
2. Encourage car-pooling among employees.
3. Fuel equipment before 10:00 a.m.
4. Use oxygen and acetylene torch prior to 10:00 a.m.

5. Use welder before 10:00 a.m.
6. Perform almost all jobs requiring the use of diesel, unleaded or two-cycle fuel prior to 10:00 a.m.
7. Reserve time after 10:00 a.m. to perform jobs NOT requiring the use of engines. Some examples are: pick up branches and litter; cut cups; hand-rake edges of traps; service ball-washers, towels and garbage; de-weed traps and flower beds by hand; adjust high and low plugs on the greens; fix ball marks on greens; trim with a knife around sprinkler heads, yardage markers and CDGA markers; seed and soil divots; clean shop, lunch-room and restrooms; grease and service equipment without running engines, etc.
8. Use electric carts for general transportation of maintenance staff after 10:00 a.m.
9. Postpone lunch break until 10:00 a.m.
10. Schedule work so that employees may avoid rush-hour traffic.

The above guidelines can be adapted for almost any golf course management setting. For additional information on Partners for Clean Air, see story at right.



Partners for Clean Air and Clean Air Counts are both voluntary programs to reduce ozone-causing emissions and help the Chicago metropolitan region maintain compliance with the one-hour ozone standard and meet the newly adopted eight-hour ozone air-quality standard.

www.cleantheair.org

Partners for Clean Air focuses on ozone action days—days that the states forecast will have high ozone (smog). Organizations that join Partners are notified the day before an ozone action day and asked to implement their emission-reducing measures the next day. These measures can include deferring lawn-mowing, painting, driving or refueling vehicles; encouraging employees to take transit or bike to work or do a brown-bag lunch; and postponing manufacturing processes that release VOCs.

www.cleanaircounts.org

Clean Air Counts promotes a variety of strategies to reduce ozone-causing emissions from business, government, development and households. These strategies focus on nonregulated activities and include using low-VOC paints and cleaning products, converting lawns to natural landscaping, implementing energy-efficient lighting, purchasing low-emitting vehicles and holding lawnmower buy-back/replacement programs. Participants' annual activities will be quantified for state credit toward meeting the air-quality standard. The initiative is a project of the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the Illinois EPA and the Delta Institute.

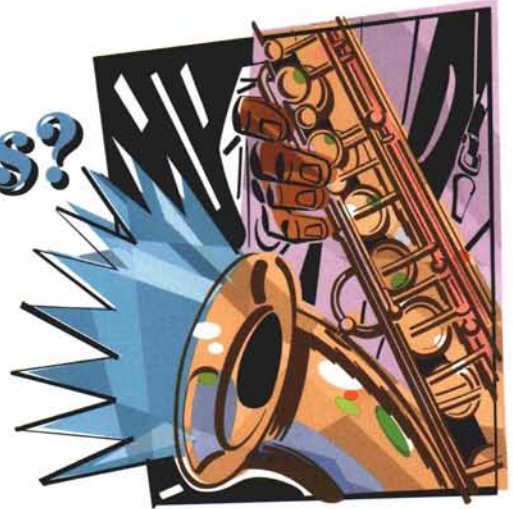


Air Quality Guide for Ozone

Air Quality	Air Quality Index	Protect Your Health
Good	0-50	No health impacts are expected when air quality is in this range.
Moderate	51-100	Unusually sensitive people should consider limiting prolonged outdoor exertion.
Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	101-150	Active children and adults, and people with respiratory disease, such as asthma, should limit prolonged outdoor exertion.
Unhealthy	151-200	Active children and adults, and people with respiratory disease, such as asthma, should avoid prolonged outdoor exertion; everyone else, especially children, should limit prolonged outdoor exertion.
Very Unhealthy (Alert)	201-300	Active children and adults, and people with respiratory disease, such as asthma, should avoid all outdoor exertion; everyone else, especially children, should limit outdoor exertion.

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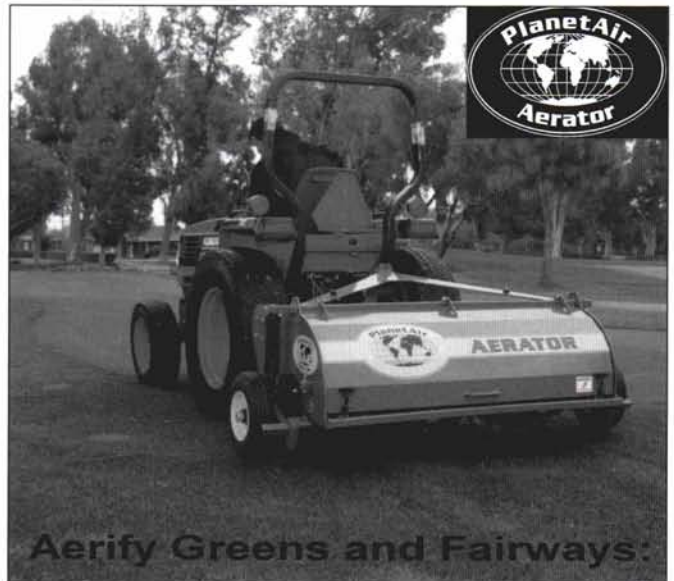
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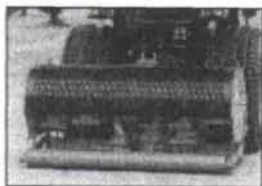
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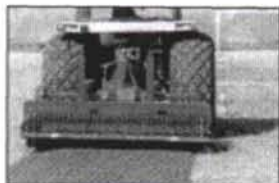
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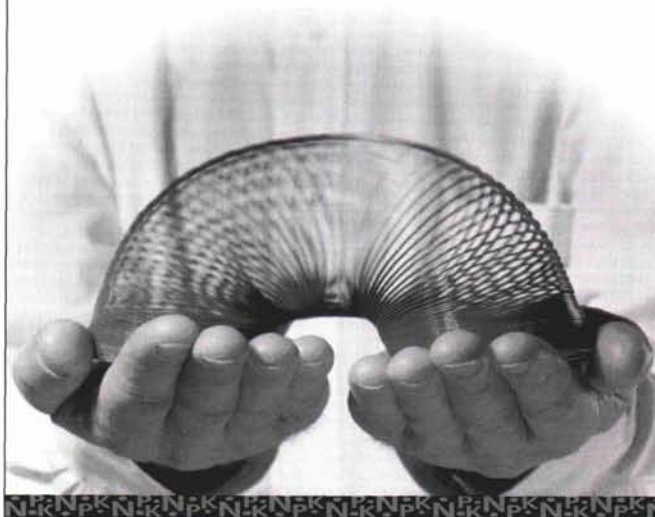
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