



Owner puts The Rail up for sale to local park district

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. — Leonard Sapp and his wife have offered The Rail Golf Course, a regular LPGA Tour stop, to the Springfield Park District for \$3 million — roughly half its appraised value.

Even though some have called the offer "a steal," the park board officials have said they want the golf course in nearby Sherman to be appraised and audited. The Sapps have said the course is worth \$5.3 million and adjacent land \$1.2 million.

Leonard and Lovene Sapp developed the 18-hole championship-caliber course from a cornfield more than 20 years ago. The State Farm Rail Classic is nearly as old as the course. Managed by former National Golf Course Owners Association President Vince Alfonso Jr., The Rail has won citations from the National Golf Foundation and *Golf for Women* magazine for its programs promoting women into the game of golf.

In a letter to park board mem-

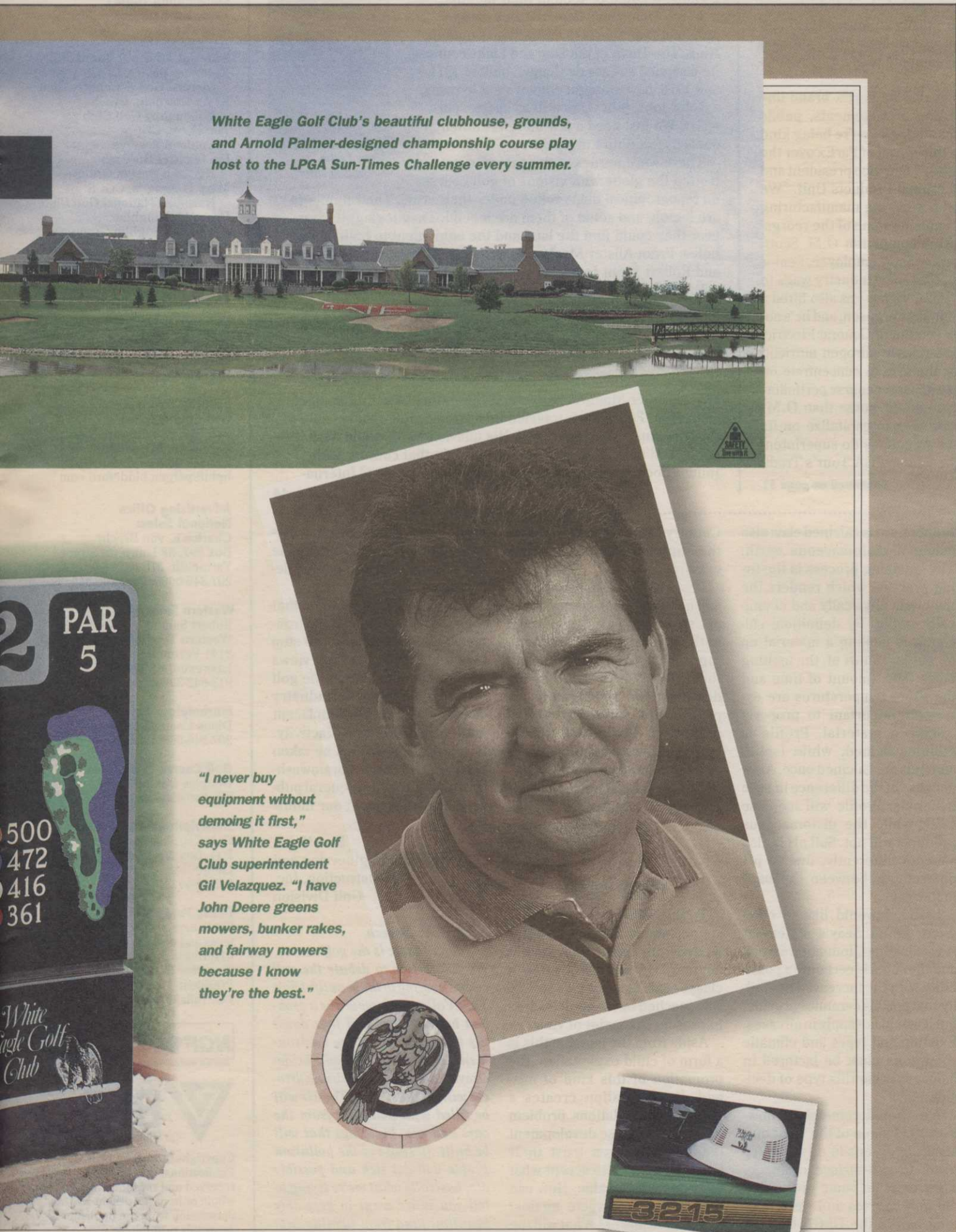
bers announcing their offer, the Sapps, who are in their mid-70s, said they are retiring and want the course to stay in the community for future generations. They also want it to remain a host for the State Farm Rail Classic.

Some park board members who support acquiring the course have said The Rail would relieve pressure on the park district's other three golf courses at Bunn, Bergen and Pasfield parks, where the number of rounds has averaged more than

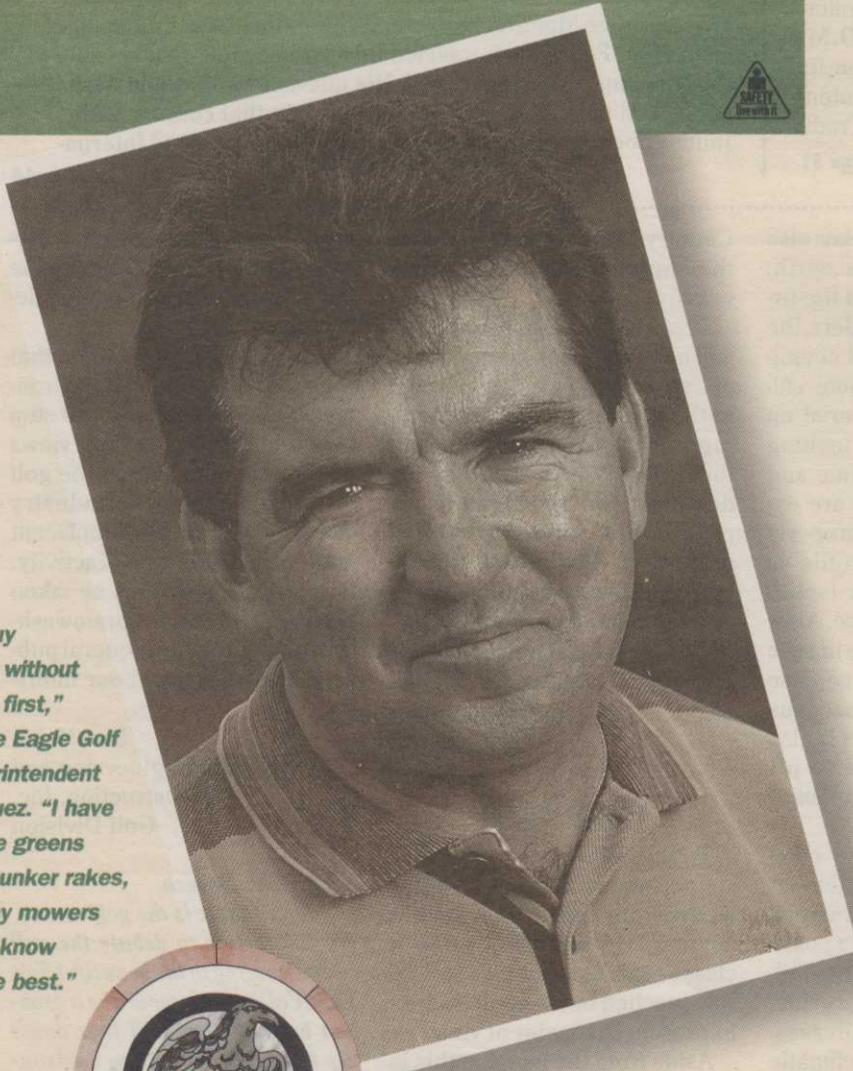
50,000 a year at each over the last five years, a number that exceeds USGA recommendations.

Neighbors of the course have opposed the purchase by the park district, saying they feel the district would not maintain the facility to its current high levels. Other opponents cite lost taxes if the city owns the course.

The contract is being negotiated and could be presented to the park board for a vote Dec. 20.



White Eagle Golf Club's beautiful clubhouse, grounds, and Arnold Palmer-designed championship course play host to the LPGA Sun-Times Challenge every summer.



"I never buy equipment without demoing it first," says White Eagle Golf Club superintendent Gil Velazquez. "I have John Deere greens mowers, bunker rakes, and fairway mowers because I know they're the best."

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White Eagle Golf Club



Superfund site course saves ARCO \$45M

ANACONDA, Mont. — Although it will probably be the most expensive golf course ever built in Montana, the Old Works course has saved ARCO about \$45 million.

Sandy Stash, ARCO's Montana facilities manager, said the original plan to move waste materials at the Old Works, a former Superfund site, to the Opportunity Ponds would have cost ARCO \$60 to \$70 million.

The Old Works course, which is scheduled to open in July 1996, is expected to cost about \$15 million to complete.

More than a year into the project, the once-barren land on the east end of Anaconda has grass growing on it for the first time in more than 100 years. So far, more than 11,000 square feet of sod have been laid on the course, native grasses have been replanted in some spots and the black slag sand traps have been set up.

The smaller of the course's two ponds features a surreal black sand beach.

"You would've never seen use of the land again" had the land merely been scraped clean and left, said Stash. "People just don't reuse Superfund sites. I hope (the course) is a model for Anaconda, Butte and the rest of our cleanup. We can turn these Superfund sites into something positive."

Dirt Classic gives glimpse of new track

CHOWCHILLA, Calif. — Officials at the still under-construction 36-hole Greenhills Country Club gave area golfers a unique sneak preview earlier this fall to help benefit a local high school athletic program.

Calling it the "Dirt Classic," the club allowed golfers the chance to play the first nine holes.

The twist was that the holes were still dirt, although they were shaped and packed.

Golfers were allowed to play off mats and asked to chip out to painted target circles on the greens. No putting was allowed.

Greenhills Manager Dennis McGarvey said he hoped the entire course would be seeded before winter.