

## Golf course destruction is everyone's concern

It does not matter whether we live in Chicago or its suburbs, or if we play golf or not, we cannot allow land developers to bulldoze any more golf courses in the name of progress. The public's lack of concern in regard to this wanton destruction of our fast-diminishing recreational facilities and the complacency of those people who are in the position to stop it, will no doubt prove to be one of our generation's dismal inefficiencies of community planning.

I will not attempt to name all the golf courses in this area that have met their demise due to our form of "progress." I will only name the few I have personally had the pleasure and privilege to enjoy in the past years. The following list only covers those courses which were in proximity of Chicago's western border: Hillside GC, Maplecrest GC, Tam O'Shanter CC, Walnut Hill CC, Indian Head CC, Navajo Hills CC, Mohawk CC, Langford Links CC, Twin Oaks CC, Acacia CC, Westward Ho CC, Big Oaks GC and Bunker Hills CC. With the exception of Tam O'Shanter the courses were public daily fee. This summer Mohawk CC, which has survived these past 47 years, must make way for more factory sites.

The popularity and play of golf has increased many fold in the past decade, possibly due to the free promotion given by the telecasting of golf tournaments in the past 15 years and also because of the public's increased interest in participatory sports. In every new generation more people have more leisure time and enjoy more money than did their predecessors.

This alarming disappearance of golf courses since the 1950s cannot be due to the lack of interest in golf, not be-

cause it is proving to be an unprofitable operation, but because of the pressure put upon the golf course owners by smart money manipulators who can show without difficulty, how by following their advice to sell the land for other uses, they can make millions.

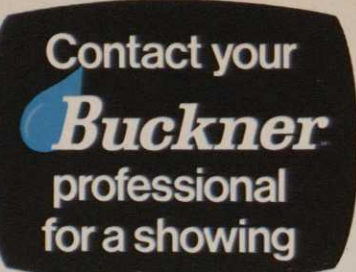
The above is written with my apologies to those who so devotedly worked for the preservation of our golf courses, but were overwhelmed by adversities or numbers.

May I add a fact known to us golf buffs, that those terminated golf courses were built during a period when land in this area was plentiful and only the choicest most suitable land was used for golf courses. The requisites are: accessibility for quantitative play; rolling terrain and natural hazards such as tall trees, flowing streams and lakes. This will be a good start for the making of a championship golf course. Now add many months of man's labor and growth of nature, give five to 20 years, depending on how much a "nature" start you had and you will wind up with a good golf course.

In conclusion, our insane drive to fill every available open or recreational area with housing developments, factories and supermarkets without regard to community planning for the betterment of human needs, without consideration for the aesthetics and quality of living, will most surely assure us of transforming the same quality of life to our outer city as we knew or left behind in our inner city. I am sure that our present city planners will not be here long to enjoy our future environment which they were so instrumental in foisting upon us. Why would they want to live among nothing but concrete, stone and steel entwined with more concrete to support the endless increase of traffic and noise? Not if by choice they can live near nature once again, free of the ugly bleak surroundings they so aptly planned for us.

*Richard Orlow  
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Editor's note: The above open letter was mailed to national and state legislators of Illinois and to other legislative bodies as well as any group, organization, publication or association which may be influential in the preservation of golf courses in metropolitan areas.



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