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OPENING SHOT

Dave Silbar

It's hard to believe that the end of the golf season is upon us, but we can fondly recall a season on the PGA Tour dominated by Scottie Scheffler and LPGA Tour where a star was truly born in Nelly Korda. Thanks to T-Mobile (not to mention her five consecutive victories this season), Korda has now become a household name.

The controversy that a year ago dominated the airwaves, pitting LIV Golf against the PGA Tour, seems like ancient history. And, while no one seems to know where things stand when it comes to the two tours merging, we do know one thing: the only pro tour to visit Chicago this year was LIV (Bolingbrook Golf Club in September).

In this month's issue of GOLFCChicago, we bring you the second installment of our new Chicago Proud department. This month we'll introduce you to a local teacher—turned firefighter—turned teacher—and now boys golf coach at Carmel Catholic High School in Mundelein. Tomm Smithe learned that it's never too late to chase your childhood dreams and how those dreams continue to get better and better,

Speaking of proud, our Sweet Home Chicago department features a pair of Illinois Special Olympians who captured gold medals in some big-time golf tournaments this summer. We also bring you results from a very special tournament marking the 125th year of the Jackson Park Golf Course. Jackson Park, along with the 1st Tee of Chicago and Troon Golf, hosted a memorable Junior tournament on the Jackson Park and South Shore courses.

And while the Central Wisconsin region will never lose its role as one of the country's premier family vacation destinations (hello Wisconsin Dells), senior writer Neal Kotlarek assures us that golf has evolved into a game the entire family wants to play and, along with championship courses that challenge even low-handicap players, multiple Dells resorts have built short courses that serve both as post-dinner entertainment for golf groups and as introductory experiences for families.

Long a vacation destination for Chicagoans seeking lake views and cooler temperatures, Southwest Michigan features long stretches of public beaches amidst rolling sand dunes and a cornucopia of incredible golf. Our story will introduce several great options just a stone's throw away.

This month we'll also feature a pair of instruction articles. The first comes from Beverly Country Club's Billy Fitzgerald, who helps us to build a better backswing to help you swing on a more inside to out path for more consistent contact and greater distance. Cantigny Golf's Emily (Coach Em') Burns shares her passion for teaching the youngest of new golfers, and what to do and what not to do to help get them on the path to a game they'll enjoy for the rest of their lives.

So sit back, enjoy golf during the best time of the year along with this installment of GOLFCChicago!

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Chicago's Premier Multimedia Golf Source & Authority

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Printed in the U.S.A.

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THE GOOD STUFF / HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE



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The new ERZero might be the funkiest design EVNROLL has ever produced, but you won't be able to argue with the results. Featuring SweetFace Groove Technology, this winged mallet reduces dispersion and is designed to lock into your target technologically and aesthetically.
\$399 www.evnroll.com



Safe Travels

Fall and winter are the perfect seasons for us to take our games on the road. This backpack from Club Glove will become your favorite travel companion whether you're headed to Scotland or Summerlin. This water-resistant, high-quality nylon pack has multiple zippered compartments and plenty of space for your laptop or even an extra pair of golf shoes. Available in black, navy, and slate.
\$200 www.clubglove.com



A Load Off

Whether you own one golf bag or you have a bit of an equipment problem, you can stop tossing your sticks in the corner. ClubsDock mounts to the wall and has a sliding system that is not only convenient but easy to use. With a rubber-coated hook and a solid base, ClubsDock holds all types of bags and up to 110 pounds. One of our favorite products of 2024.
\$119.99 www.clubsdock.us



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It's golf hoodie season here in Chicago, so why not go out and get the best one? The Fergus Hybrid Hoodie from Galway Bay moves with your golf swing despite having 100 grams of quilting insulation. It's also rainproof and made from a quiet fabric, so there's no backswing swishing. This hoodie easily goes from the golf course to wherever life takes you beyond the 18th hole.
\$229 www.galwaybaygolf.com

Feeling Hot, Hot, Hot

Mizuno is several generations into producing its Hot Metal lineup, but the new JPX925 versions are turning heads early. With some additional tungsten weighting added low on the head, the ball flight is going to be high with these but the clubface cooks. The Hot Metal is designed for the mid to high-handicap player, with the Hot Metal Pro available for the true mid-handicaps of the world.
\$1,050 [7-piece set] www.mizunousa.com



THE GOOD STUFF / HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE



Ugly Sweater Lid

Made with real sweater material, this latest melon topper is sure to be a hit this holiday season. The golf designed lid will be sure to turn heads and round out your party attire for this year's celebrations.

\$35 www.aheadusashop.com



Distance Solved

Shot Scope brings together technology and value in all of its products, and the new Pro LX+ laser rangefinder is a perfect example. This durable unit is deadly accurate and has a front/middle/back GPS option. A strong internal magnet ensures it stays put and it also pairs with Shot Scope's performance tracking tabs. All for less than the competition.

\$369.99 www.shotscope.com



Protect Your Assets

The new SP0092 Sport ACTV glasses from Adidas offer multiple ventilation slots and wide temple arms for maximum light protection. The Kolor-Up lenses and flexible frame provide clarity and comfort for on and off the course.

\$169 www.framesdirect.com



Barefooting

TRUELINKS newest shoe is a nod to their beginnings. With the OG Cush they perfected their zero drop heel design with extra cushion in the platform. Comfort, cushion, and performance right out of the box. So comfortable, we forgot we had them on and that's what we were looking for. A wide toe box with lightweight and flexible construction will make this your go-to shoe from round 1.

\$175 www.truelinkswear.com



Birdie Bottle

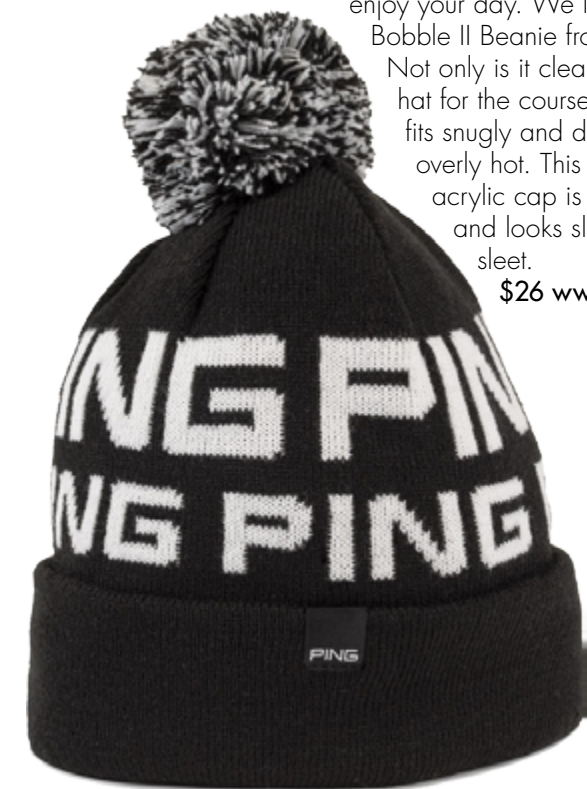
Will Leather goods are made of full-grain vegetable tanned leather. Truly a statement piece. These flasks hold 8 ounces of your favorite liquid encouragement and come with a stainless steel funnel to boot. Some days it becomes our par bottle but we're not here to judge.

\$60 www.willleathergoods.com

Warm Dome

You can prepare for fall golf all you want, but if you don't have a warm hat in the bag you're not going to enjoy your day. We like this Bobble II Beanie from Ping. Not only is it clearly a winter hat for the course, but it fits snugly and doesn't get overly hot. This 100% acrylic cap is two-toned and looks sleek even in sleet.

\$26 www.ping.com





Build a Better Back Swing

Rotation in the backswing is a key component to good ball striking. This motion allows a path for the arms and club to get back to the ball. Not only is rotation important, but how the rotation is happening is just as important and it starts with set up.

Step 1: Yes we want to hit the ball from the inside, but moving farther away from the ball to accommodate will only make things worse. Set up close enough to the ball so in the backswing the trail foot is able to push the trail hip back.

Step 2: To help feel the trail foot pushing the trail hip up and back, practice with a cable or band from the ground. As you pull the cable back with your trail arm, feel how your trail foot is pushing your hip back and away.

Step 3: The hips and shoulders need to work approximately 90 degrees around the spine. Since our posture puts us in a bent over position, our trail side will be higher than the lead side in the backswing. To achieve this feeling, place a club across your shoulders and practice feeling your shoulders rotating 90 degrees around your spine angle. Now, set up to a ball with the club across your chest and pair this motion with standing close enough to the ball that your trail hip back and up and your shoulders work around your spine. This combination is an absolute game changer in providing enough space for the club to return to the ball.

Step 4: Now we are ready to put it all together. Set up close enough to the ball where you have the ability to make your trail foot push. As you take the club back, force goes into your trail foot allowing you to push your hip up and back. A simple "feel" to blend is lead shoulder goes down and trail hip goes back and up. This blend of set up and body rotation around the spine angle supports and stabilizes the momentum of the golf club working on the swing arc.

Billy Fitzgerald, PGA, is Director of Instruction at Beverly Country Club. www.BillyFitzgeraldGolf.com.



Step 1



Step 2



Step 3



Step 4

LIFE'S TOO SHORT

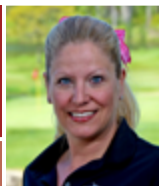
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Keep it *Simple*, Keep it *Fast*, Make it *Fun*

I often get asked, as do many Professionals, to share 'drills' that I use during my clinics. If any of you, or more specifically your kids, have ever been in Coach Em's classes, you would know that I rarely reference my clinic activities as 'drills'. Instead, I incorporate fun game-based activities that allow kids to practice without knowing they are ... kind of like the mystery chicken nuggets that have hidden veggies in them.

With the bulk of my day focusing on 4 to 12 year-old golfers, my instruction requires a 'short and sweet' approach. The attention span of my audience is literally counted in minutes if not seconds. Arriving for Clinics, I move quickly, talk fast (and loud!), and bring energy. Instruction is given while demonstrating, using as few words as possible.

At this young age, I focus on the three C's during my lessons. Contact being first, Control being second and Consistency being third. Once this is accomplished the real fun begins. That's when we can polish the gem and focus on the issues that are consistent enough to work on.

I like to start all lessons with the full swing using the driver (specifically the US Kids UL Drivers) and yes, naming these are not only needed but required! I have the Red Tomato, Yellow Banana and the popular and most sought-after Blue Bomber. All of my clubs have molded grips that I strongly recommend. These are the *best* items you can pass to your little golfer; after all, the grip controls the club face! Remember the 3 C's!

Let's tackle each of the three Cs here. I break the full swing into three positions.

Position 1: Is all about the set up, posture, and grip, to the students the most boring part of the swing. There is nothing to move, except for a booty shake (which is key to any superior swing). To the instructor, Position 1 is one of the most important, setting them up for great contact and a controlled swing.

Position 2: The take away and L position or as I refer to as the L for *Launch*. This position is where the amazing UL Drivers come into play. Many students using cut down drivers or drivers too large, are too heavy, which makes it extremely challenging to make a proper L position.

Position 3: The "funnest" position. Hitting the ball and focusing on sticking and holding the *finish*. I encourage all students to hold this position for three seconds, or until the ball stops moving. After all, these future tour players will be photographed holding a great Position 3.

As far as targets go, they can and should be *fun*! A great addition to the ordinary boring hitting stations can be animal or figure head-covers on alignment sticks, and adding sun glasses, baskets, or golf balls to knock off, the games are endless. This provides a familiar face to class, adds a multitude of challenges, and provides instant feedback when hitting them. Launching over, under, or in between. Pick your favorite animal and stick the finish!

Working our way to the putting green can be treacherous. To putt at the beginning of the lesson when you have a better chance of attention and patience or do you save it for the end of your practice session?

Over the years I have become creative on the putting green and have even developed putting clinics that kids beg to enroll in. This is, if I had to be honest, is my favorite place to add *fun*, and maybe most important to work on our games.

The following are a few of my favorite games and activities that instill *fun* while allowing kids to practice control.

Tic Tac Toe: Using grids to form a grid along with a colorful drink coaster, matching colored balls and my patented 'Squishtees' (search on Google) to capture the squares.



Skittles in the Circle: Placing a six-foot circle around the putting cup instantly makes the long putts less daunting. We start with a goal of two golf balls in the circle and each class after that we raise our goals.

Teams: Breaking the kids into the younger vs. the older, boys vs. girls, or my favorite—kids vs. coach—losers always need to do the clean-up or lose the golf cart ride back to their parents!

Lolli Palooza: My year-end classes get the remaining, if any, DumDum lollipops. I arrange lollipops all over the putting green. The object is to travel from start to hole without hitting a lolli ... what's horrible about candy on a putting course?

In the end, introducing the game of golf to the kids, although tough, is extremely rewarding. Watching them develop lifelong skills, and friends to a game that will be able to be enjoyed lifelong.

Remember, for the youngest of learners, Keep it Simple, Keep it Fast, Make it Fun. 🏌️

Emily Burns began her career in the golf industry at Royal Fox Country Club in 2000. She later moved to Ruth Luke Country Club. In 2008, Emily joined Cantigny Golf as the Youth Links Head Golf Professional. During her time at Cantigny, Emily has developed several classes, programs, and leagues for her junior golfers of all levels, from Pee Wee players (4 years old) to teens. Emily also began a family during her time at Cantigny and now has three little golf lovers of her own..



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As Willy Wonka said to Charlie: "You know what happened to the boy who got everything he wished for? He lived happily ever after."

For Tomm Smithe, deciding to follow his childhood dream would turn out to be one of the best decisions he'd ever make, even if it was well after his youthful years.

But when it comes to golf, ask him what he thought about the sport just a few years ago and he would have scoffed. Nowadays, though, the 53-year Palatine resident can't get enough of it.

"I was a golf hater for years," Smithe laughs before providing an explanation. "My dad was a scratch golfer, a really great player. He was a country club kid, grew up as a member at Ridgemoor and all that. When he got married, my mom gave him an ultimatum: it was either golf or her, so at age 22 he gave up the game."

"He never golfed another day, until I was 22 years old, when he took me golfing for my first time. For me it just didn't click. Many years later my father-in-law asked my son Thomas why he didn't play golf. My son's answer hit me like a ton of bricks.

"Because he hates it," said Thomas. Hearing that, Tomm took his son out to their local Palatine Hills Golf Course and they were both hooked.

Let's backtrack a bit.

Upon graduating from Marquette University, Tomm worked for his dad's furniture business, but only for a very short time. Although content working in the family business, his dad seemed to know better and would prod what else his son would want to do with his life. Tomm quipped that he'd probably be a teacher.

From there, his dad told him to go back to school and that's exactly what he

did. Tomm got his teaching certificate and master's degree from Loyola University and then, in 1995, receive his first job teaching at Carmel Catholic High School in Mundelein.

Like most little boys, Tomm's true dream was to someday become a firefighter, running into burning buildings and saving lives. He would work at Carmel until 2003, and even though he loved his job, he left in pursuit of earning his certificate as a first responder.

"It was very difficult to leave Carmel," says Tomm. "It was a great job. I left to simply follow a childhood dream. I was getting to the age where you can't be a (new) firefighter. Back then you couldn't be a firefighter if you were 35, although things may have changed."

And for the next 25 years, he would work for the Wauconda Fire Department. He says the best part of the job was the public interaction while the worst, of course, was being a front row witness to some 'very bad things'. "I've rode in my fair share of ambulances," he says. "When you're a fireman in the suburbs, you must be both a firefighter and a paramedic. It's not like the city where you can just be a fireman and never see an ambulance your entire career."

Asked what people might find surprising about his newfound profession: "It's not like TV," he was quick to answer. "When you're in a fire, you can't see your hand in front of your face. It's jet black. And it's not like (the movie) *Backdraft* where your fellow firefighters can see each other and talk to each other. It's jet black, and you move toward the sound of the crackling. You don't even see the red glow until much later."

Was he ever scared? "If you're not scared then you're stupid," he laughed.

Last year, Tomm retired from the Fire Department, had plenty of time to play golf,

and took full advantage, spending much of his time on the Palatine Hills golf course, getting further hooked on the game.

"When I started I would go out and shoot between 120 and 130 but now I'm consistently shooting between 95 and 100. And that's a big improvement. The next step would be to average in the 80s. Breaking 90 for the first time is going to be special.

His former employer, Carmel Catholic High School, heard about the retirement and began to reach out to have Tomm as a substitute teacher.

"But all the sudden, the school lost their business teacher and needed someone to fill the role as they looked for a replacement.

"It was only supposed to be two, maybe three months maximum," he chuckles. "They kept coming back to me to see if I would stay on indefinitely."

So Tomm took the job, even though he says he really had no intention of going back full time as a teacher. "If you asked my old coworkers (here at Carmel), they would always say 'you're going back to teaching when you retire from the fire department.'"

In the summer, another opportunity crossed Tomm's desk: the boys golf team was looking for a new assistant coach. The person who had held that role for the past two years had just accepted the position as head varsity coach for the Carmel girls' team. Tomm didn't hesitate, and had the chance to meet and work with his golfers at a summer camp the school conducted at Pine Meadow, the school's home golf course, this past July. He says he was counting the days until tryouts in mid-August.

"I'm so excited, but to tell you the truth, it's a bit nerve wracking," he admits. "I consider myself still a newbie golfer, but I can fill the role of helping the kids manage their psyche. I love working with kids, so this job is just another one of those dream positions."

Editor's Note: As well as editor of this magazine, I am also the varsity boys golf coach for Carmel Catholic High School in Mundelein and am proud to welcome Tomm to the team!



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For more information, visit www.golfsanctuary.com.



All photos: Carly Alvers



Unified in Golf: The Golf Factory

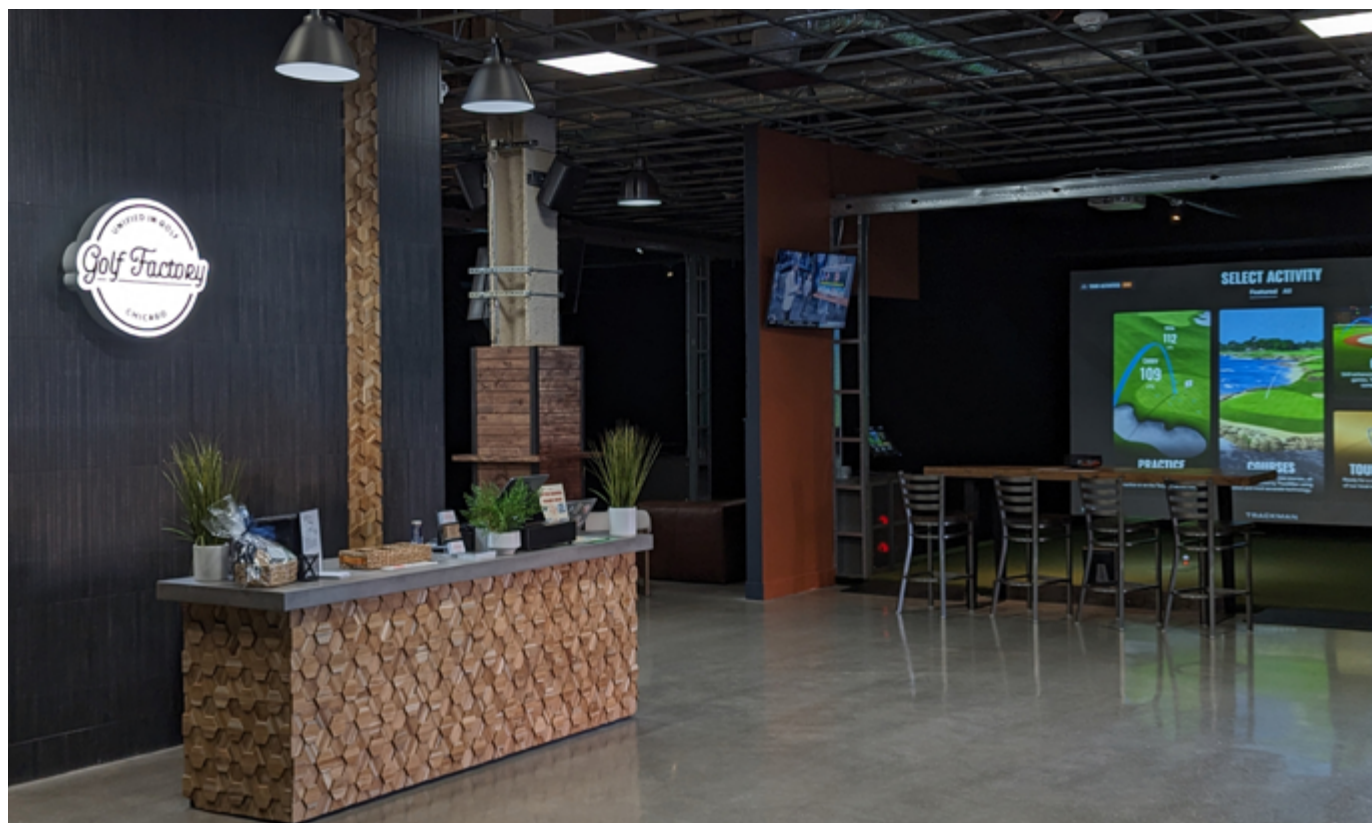
Once upon a time we met working in the golf shop at Hinsdale Golf Club. Golf has always played a major role in our lives. I have worked as a golf professional for almost 20 years and love exploring new courses, golf course architecture, and spending time with friends on the links. Michelle on the other hand has done all she can to avoid actually playing golf but loves the easy going nature of the sport and has spent her summers off from teaching, working at various courses. They say if you make your passion your job you never work a day in your life. In late 2019, we began to approach the idea of creating our own golf space. What we appreciated in golf was the laid back atmosphere devoid of distractions and frivolous rules where one can enjoy the game to the fullest. Golf Factory is our manifestation of that. A golf facility that focuses on what is important in golf. A place to gather with friends and family, compete, practice, and just enjoy the game we love. Whether you're playing on our top-of-the-line simulators or enjoying the game "Michelle style" with a snack and beverage, we hope you love it as much as we do!

I wanted to create a unique golf space focused on everything I love about golf. I seek out an experience that is laid back and focused on the golf. You will find that at the Golf Factory. Three things you won't find are slow play, strict dress codes, and warm beer.

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Golf Factory offers lessons from PGA and Trackman certified instructors. Trackman is a powerful tool used by almost every PGA Tour player to improve their game. Let us show you how powerful this tool is. Contact Brian@golffactory.golf for any lesson inquiries.



Sweet Home Chicago

Special Day (Part 1) for Local Special Olympians

He's been featured in this magazine before for founding his own used golf ball company and now he's a state champion golfer. On September 7, Morton Grove's Bryan Liston shot a career low 41-40 at Hickory Point Golf Club in Decatur to capture his first Illinois Special Olympics Gold Medal.



Liston earned a trip to the State Finals after firing another career best, a 44 at Bartlett Hills Golf Club back on July 20, finishing as tournament medalist and earning the right to represent the Maine-Niles Association of Special Recreation at the State Finals.

This was Bryan's third trip to the State Finals, previously earning a silver medal. This year, though, he had his eyes firmly set on gold. "I recognize that I'm playing well and am pumped to bring home the gold," said

Liston after firing his 44 at Bartlett Hills in July. "I knew I had just played a special round (at Bartlett Hills). I walked off the 9th green knowing that I had won, even though I didn't know where everyone else stood. I just felt it in my heart"

Special Day (Part 2) for Local Special Olympians

Lake Zurich's Aubrey Soukup, 28, captured her first Gold Medal after firing a career-best 60 at the Illinois Special Olympics Regional C Championship July 20 at Bartlett Hills. "She's usually pretty consistent but that day she was really focused," said her dad (and caddy) Dana Soukup. "Aubrey was driving well, oftentimes 30 to 40 yards ahead of her playing partners, and her putting was outstanding."

Using Callaway's Triple Track balls were part of the key to her putting. "I can't help her aim but she used the balls to help line up to her starting direction," added Dana. "From

there, I would simply tell her to hit it 'soft, medium or hard' and the rest was all her. She adjusted very well. She was super focused and excited. She knew she was playing better than her competition but wasn't sure where she stood with regards to the leader board."

The Soukup family is a very tight-knit one, with a slew of athletes and golfers. "Of all my kids Aubrey is the most competitive, but she also has a sweet, soft side," laughed her father, who noted that Aubrey shot another personal best, this time firing a score of 105 for 18 holes at Countryside Golf Course in Mundelein in early September.



Aubrey and Dana Soukup

The Reopening of Winnetka Golf Club

The Winnetka Park District reopened August 12 following a significant, 18-month long extensive storm water management and golf course renovation project to both the 18-hole and 9-hole golf courses.



If you've ever played Winnetka after a significant storm, you'll understand why extensive measures were necessary to help keep the course playable. The Village of Winnetka, along with the support of other community partners, has completed an extensive storm water management project that allows the golf course to hold and reuse excess storm water for irrigation. This, along with improvements to the course, will allow the golf course to remain open following large rain events.

A newly constructed water feature, continuous cart paths, renovated bunkers, and several enhancements to the golf courses are among many highlights of the renovated courses.

"We are excited for our local community members and golfers across Chicagoland to come and see our modernized golf course," said Shannon Nazzal, Executive Director, Winnetka Park District. "For more than 100 years, Winnetka Golf Club has remained a beacon of outstanding public golf on Chicago's North Shore, and this renovation ensures a strong future for the municipal gem."

75th Illinois Open Championship

Founded in 1899, historic Flossmoor Golf Club proved to once again be a challenging layout and ideal host for the Land of Lincoln's annual open championship.



Charlie Nikitas

Despite prolonged rounds due to inclement weather, it was Glenview's Charlie Nikitas who would hang on for his first professional victory by one shot. Nikitas carded rounds of 69, 69, and 71 for a three-round total of 7-under-par 209. "This is the coolest thing ever; I've wanted to win this tournament since I started playing golf," said Nikitas,

a Glenbrook South High School grad. "There's a lot of cool names on this trophy; many people that I'm friends with and it just means the world to me. I can't really explain it, I'm just so excited."

Mattis Besard of Belgium finished T2 with former PGA Tour player and University of Illinois product Luke Guthrie at 6-under-par. George Goich, owner of Flossmoor Golf Club, had been instrumental in the success of the club that was originally designed by Herbert Tweedie. Fifteen years ago the design was renovated by Michigan-based architect Ray Hearn to rave reviews.

Introducing the Evans At Canal Shores

The Evanston Wilmette Golf Course Association and KemperSports have completed the rebranding of Canal Shores to The Evans at Canal Shores. This new name and logo mark the beginning of a new era for the historic 100-year-old course, aiming to provide exceptional and memorable experiences for golfers in the Chicagoland area.



The renovation, which began in 2022, is spearheaded by architect Todd Quitno. The project aimed to modernize and reimagine the urban golf course. Situated alongside the North Shore Canal, which flows into the Chicago River, The Evans at Canal Shores will become a hub for youth golf development and caddie training, thanks to partnerships with First Tee – Greater Chicago and the Western Golf Association/Evans Scholars Foundation.

The new name honors Chick Evans, one of the greatest amateur golfers of all time, who attended high school in

Evanston. Rather than turning professional, Evans collaborated with the Western Golf Association to use his golf career earnings to establish the Evans Scholars Foundation in 1930.

A fundamental change to the routing was the conversion of the former first hole to a large putting green, with the second becoming the new opening hole. To compensate for the loss of the old first, Quitno created a unique hole at the north end of the property, close to the Wilmette Harbor. The former seventeenth has also been reconfigured to include an 85-yard par-three bonus hole, designated as 17B. The green has been doubled in size, with a small but pinnable central plateau dividing the surface into sections. The eighteen-hole course will play to a par of 60 and now also features several new template greens, with Quitno paying homage to nearby Chicago Golf Club and Shoreacres. The remaining greens have been restored to their original pads, which date back to the 1920s when Tom Bendelow redesigned the course.

Juniors Shine at IJGA/Troon Event Celebrating 125 Years for Jackson Park GC

The Illinois Junior Golf Association and Troon Golf partnered to present its annual tournament, this year celebrating 125 years since the establishment of the Jackson Park golf course. The tournament was held back on July 22 at both Jackson Park and South Shore Golf Clubs with several age levels for both boys and girls.



The overall winner on the boys side was Johnny Santucci with runner up being Caden Shannahan. In the boys 16 to 18 division, Mitchell Fulayter beat Michael O'Keefe by 10 strokes, while Elish Flynn made it back to back victories at the girls 16 to 18 division.

The overall low gross winner ages 14 to 18 was Grace Zhang who shot an impressive 146, nearly edging out runner-up Hannah Brown.

In the 10 to 13 age division played at South Shore, Oliver Allencook won in a scorecard playoff, defeating reigning champion Carlos Escobar.

Woods Hosts First Tee Clinic

She's back! Troon athlete ambassador Cheyenne Woods hosted a kids golf clinic for the First Tee – Greater Chicago on Saturday, September 7 at Jackson Park Golf Course.

America's First 18-Hole Golf Course

In 1892, Charles Blair Macdonald, the grandfather of American golf, designed the first nine holes west of the Allegheny Mountains in Downers Grove, Illinois, at Belmont Road. At this original site of the Chicago Golf Club, Macdonald designed nine more holes for the course in 1893,

making it the first 18-hole course in the United States. By 1895, Chicago Golf Club members decided to build a new 18-hole golf course near Wheaton, Illinois, and abandoned the Belmont location.

In 1899, Herbert J. Tweedie and a group of friends formed the Belmont Golf

Club on the site. As a founding member of the Belmont Golf Club, his first major accomplishment was to keep several of the original holes of Chicago Golf Club in play after their move to Wheaton.

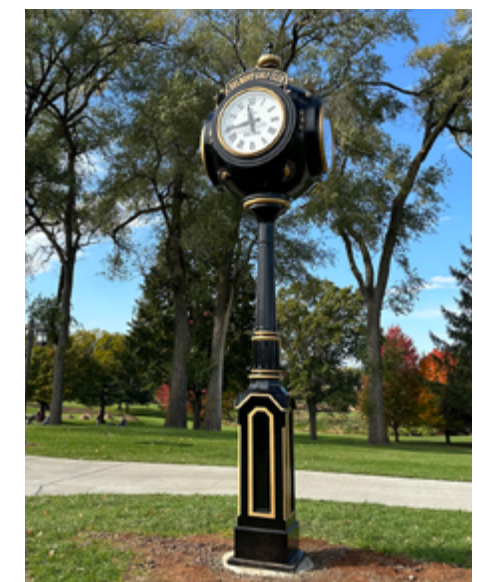
The location of the 18 holes in Downers Grove are most famously known

throughout golf history as Belmont Golf Club, one of the original courses of the Western Golf Association founded in 1899. Today, the historic Belmont Golf Club is a scenic 9-hole par-36 course featuring mature trees, natural areas, elevation, and water hazards to challenge every golfer. The current layout of the course features six holes dating back to the late 1800s that have had very minor changes to them.

Recently, Belmont Golf Club has enhanced the visitor experience with improvements like reconstructed bunkers on holes 4 and 8, a movable canopy on the lesson tee, addition of a 10-station driving range shelter, and extensive clubhouse renovations. In 2023, a unique entertainment space featuring a large pergola with new furniture and ceiling fans was added to the outdoor patio.

The professionals at Belmont Golf Club provide lessons to enhance various aspects of your game, from full swing to course management, short-game analysis, and putting consistency. Whether you seek private, semi-private, or group lessons, or are interested in golf camps for young players, Belmont Golf Club offers a wide range of customized teaching programs to suit your needs.

To book a tee time or for more information, visit www.belmontgolfclub.org or call us at 630-963-1306.



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FALL'S THE TIME FOR THE BOULDERS

Named for the legendary rock formations, the Boulders Resort & Spa is situated on 1,300 acres in the lush Sonoran Desert foothills where the landscape perfectly melds with luxurious amenities. Private guest Casitas are shaped into the natural terrain and offer wood-burning fireplaces, spacious baths, and private patios or decks overlooking dramatic desert landscape. Carefully placed within this desert hideaway are two championship Jay Morrish-designed golf courses that offer an unmatched bounty of magnificent desert panoramas in the shadow of the unspoiled 12-million-year-old boulders. They are renowned for their rugged beauty and considered to be some of the most demanding in the Southwest.

During the fall season, golfers appreciate the smoothest and truest putting surfaces with “perfect playability.” The North Course is par 72 with five sets of tees measuring in distance and slope 6811 yards/137 slope. The South Course is par 72 with five sets of tees measuring in distance and slope 6726 yards/140 slope. The signature hole is No. 5 where the green is carved from a dramatic rock outcropping, making it one of



the most photographed holes in the country. It plays right up to the backdrop of a dazzling spectacle called the Boulder Pile; a massive group of rocks dotted with tall saguaros. A three-story high boulder on No. 7 sits precariously atop a tiny one, just an arm's length from golfers on the tee. Reminder: Bring your camera. You won't regret it!

The Boulders Golf Academy offers private, one-on-one instruction with talented PGA instructors. Other golf amenities include a practice facility, club rentals, club fitting, and a fully stocked Pro Shop. Golf fitness programs include Orange Whip GFX that develops and strengthens the five-golf swing skills through functional golf movements performed within a specific golf workout. The program also uses a 4D Motion Sensor with instant results that improve the game.

Guests at the Boulders Resort embrace the peaceful environment where you feel like you are a million miles from everywhere—at a place where you can relax in “splendid seclusion.” The staff makes you feel special with their desire to provide unsurpassed, often unexpected, service. To soak up the Arizona sun, there are four swimming pools and endless recreation.

The Tennis and Pickleball Garden offers eight tennis courts and twelve new pickleball courts—all surrounded by mesmerizing sculptural rock formations and desert wildflowers. If you want

to take your game up a notch, court professionals conduct private instruction and clinics. If you are anxious to learn about the region and enjoy outdoor activities, you can go on a guided desert hike or mountain bike tour on nearby trails over rolling desert terrain. The Sonoran Explorin' tour, via golf cart, includes fascinating stories about the flora and fauna and a chance to see friendly, desert wildlife darting across the green fairways and surrounding resort grounds. For thrill seekers, guests can climb the face of a 75-foot granite boulder. Nighttime is ideal for the Moonlight Bicycling Tour or stargazing from your private patio or with a professional astronomer to observe the magnificent stars in the Arizona sky

from a fairway. The concierge staff can also arrange hot-air ballooning, horseback rides, desert jeep tours, and Grand Canyon excursions. Nearby shopping in the town of Cave Creek welcomes you to the amusing Wild West.

The 33,000-square foot Spa oasis is a quiet sanctuary that pays great attention to personal service and therapeutic treatments, such as massage, facials, and wellness programs. There is a labyrinth, a fitness center,

movement studio, couple's massage suites, a yoga studio, tea room, Spa Café, and complimentary fitness classes are offered daily.

World-class cuisine at four on-site restaurants include the signature Palo Verde restaurant offering Contemporary Southwestern cuisine; the Discovery Lounge with floor-to-ceiling windows to enjoy a dramatic Arizona sunset and “shared plates;” “American Classics” at the Grill Kitchen & Bar with an expansive terrace overlooking the mountains and golf courses; the Spa Café featuring healthy, poolside favorites; and the Spotted Donkey Cantina for authentic Modern Mexican cuisine and over 70 varieties of tequila, mescals, wines, and Mexican beer.

For a friends' golf getaway, the private Villas include one- to five-bedroom residences that offer spacious comfort and state-of-the-art technology with the convenience of a fully stocked, beautifully appointed private home. In addition to luxury amenities, there is doorstep parking and private entrances—even a swimming pool reserved exclusively for Villa guests.

The Boulders Resort & Spa is a compelling destination and luxurious oasis for relaxation, golf, adventure, celebration, and rejuvenation.

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Where Championship Golf Meets Scenic Beauty

As the summer fades and the leaves begin to turn, there's no better place to experience the magic of the season than at Abbey Springs Golf Club, located on the southwestern shores of Geneva Lake in Fontana, Wisconsin. Renowned for its breathtaking natural beauty, this golfing gem offers a truly unforgettable autumnal experience for golfers.

With each passing day, the course transforms into a stunning palette of reds, oranges, and yellows through the towering oaks, maples, and weeping willows that frame the fairways. The picturesque backdrop and crunch of crisp leaves bring a calming ambiance to the landscape, fit for a golfer's retreat.

The course's championship layout makes for a challenging yet rewarding round for golfers of all abilities. It features a new state-of-the-art "007" bentgrass, which requires fewer pesticides and performs well all year, on the redesigned greens, while the rolling hills, lakes, and carefully crafted bunkers are a key to meeting the exceptional course standards. However, it's the little details that truly make Abbey Springs a premier golf destination.

The friendly staff will greet you and ensure all your needs are met before you journey down the cart path to indulge in a round on the championship-caliber 18-hole course on new luxury carts. The carts provide visitors with Bluetooth speakers, music streaming, high-definition GPS screens, USB charging ports and upgraded cushioning for the seats that provide additional comfort.

More than Just a Golf Course

After your round, it's now time to unwind and recharge at the Abbey Springs clubhouse. The round might be finished but the experience will continue by relaxing with the breathtaking view overlooking the course, this time from one of the numerous dining options.

Savor the seasonal menu while admiring the stunning fall scenery from the Clubhouse Grille or Pool Cafe for breakfast and lunch. At these dining options guests can choose from a selection of gourmet sandwiches, burgers, salads, and homemade pizzas with a refreshing drink, of course.

Is it past lunch? That's not a problem. Guests can shift their dining options to enjoying the delectable flavors at the Below Deck restaurant or encounter an upscale dining experience by trying the exquisite flavor combinations from Chef Ben at the

Yacht Club. With a variety of dining options, there is cuisine for every palate.

Whether cozying up by the fire or sharing golf stories, the clubhouse is your post-round retreat. Learn more at www.abbeysprings.org.



Hole #8



Hole #13



Hole #5

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Just What the Doctor Ordered

By Joe Aguilar



The Lakewood Club



Magnolia Grove Hole #8

Perched 34 floors high in downtown Mobile's RSA Trustmark Building, overlooking Mobile Bay and a buzzing city below, Dauphin's offers a panoramic view that can make a vulture nervous and — warning — can also buckle knees of anyone with acrophobia. The stunning view whets a visitor's appetite.

And that's before patrons of the upscale restaurant are handed a menu that is Southern Coastal with Cajun and Creole cuisine aplenty, essentially saying, "Welcome to Alabama." Fried alligator, anyone?

Look down and enjoy, whether it be your dish or your viewpoint from a high-and-wide window.

"It's a spectacular view with a setting often not experienced, especially in small, urban-town cities," said David Clark, president and CEO of Visit Mobile.

Clark has lived in Alabama for more than 35 years, and not even frequent customers of Dauphin's can match all that he has seen in the Heart of Dixie or, if you prefer, the Cotton State. Mind you, also visible from Dauphin's are Mobile's multi-purpose Civic Center (soon to be demolished and rebuilt), the state's only deep-water port, and a new international airport that went vertical in May with the first beams placed and is expected to open in late 2025.

"It's unprecedented," Clark, who hasn't even touched on Alabama's world-class golf yet, said of the state's growth. "The interesting thing is, it's expected to have unprecedented growth for the next 10 years."

Don't let the impeccably dressed Clark fool you. He can read putts as well as he can menus. A lifetime PGA member and former PGA professional, he's played every hole on the popular Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail, which has become as synonymous with Alabama as Nick Saban in the last couple of decades.

A golf course, by the way, is about the only thing not visible from Dauphin's, although Magnolia Grove is about 10 miles west of downtown. Magnolia Grove, which features a pair of championship tracks and a short course, has hosted LPGA and Korn Ferry Tour events, and is part of the RTJ Trail.

The RTJ Trail, a collection of championship-caliber golf courses that started with 378 holes at eight sites and has grown to 468 holes on 26 courses at 11 spots, debuted almost 35 years ago. The world renowned architect Jones designed the tracks, which offer a variety that includes breathtaking mountains up north, but the visionary was Dr. David G. Bronner, who is a legend in these parts.

Bronner, 79, is CEO of the Retirement Systems of Alabama (RSA), which manages the state's pension fund.

It was Bronner who envisioned a revitalized downtown Mobile. Close to 20 years

ago, Clark, who then was the general manager of The Grand Hotel across Mobile Bay, says he was playing golf with Bronner, who asked Clark to take him to downtown Mobile.

"You know, David, we're putting \$750 million into downtown Mobile, and it's not ready for it yet. This investment is 20 years ahead of its time, but it's going to work," Clark said.

When other businessmen saw Bronner's vision, it was game on, what Clark called "a catalyst" to changing and enhancing downtown Mobile.

"He called that 20 years ago, and it's all happening now," Clark said of Bronner. "That's the vision — people like David Bronner and RSA taking a chance. They truly changed Mobile, the coast of Alabama and the state of Alabama."

Today, like never before, Alabama attracts tourists, people looking for a retirement community, groups wanting to experience Gulf of Mexico fishing and white-sand beaches, and, yes, golfers.

Niall Fraser, a Canadian who graduated from Michigan State, was handpicked by Jones about 1990 and on the ground floor when the RTJ Trail was conceptualized. It was Bronner and Bobby Vaughan, the former director of golf at Tanglewood in Clemmons, N.C., who put together the team for what would become one of the biggest golf course-building projects in the world.

The England-born Jones, who designed or redesigned more than 500 golf courses in 45 U.S. states and 35 countries, died in 2000 at age 93.

"Mr. Jones enjoyed the big stuff, the golf courses that were going to have a U.S. Open, that were going to be renovated for PGA [Championships] and things like that," said Fraser, who's now director of golf at The Lakewood Club at The Grand Hotel. "When you do the biggest golf course construction project ever attempted in the world, that was pretty special to him as late as it was in his career. It was going out with a big bang."

Fraser said they broke ground at Oxmoor Valley in downtown Birmingham, an old mining land owned by U.S. Steel, in late 1990.

The Trail had commenced, and the building never stopped. Bulldozers rolled through the state like Saban-coached Alabama football teams. Roll Tide? Roll dirt.

"It just kept getting bigger," Fraser said of the RTJ Trail. "You'd see big pieces of equipment lined up and down the state of Alabama."

Somewhere, a proud Bronner had to be smiling. Before long, industry was moving into Alabama and so were retired people or those just looking to relax on a beach without having to hop on a plane. Hotels, restaurants and housing communities were popping up as fast as golf courses.

"Dr. Bronner's whole outlook and vision was to change the perception of Alabama," Fraser said. "It has done what it set out to do. It was all built around golf. Golf was the catalyst. Dr. Bronner always said, 'Golf is a little more sophisticated.'"

One day, Fraser took that comment to task. He made a comment to Bronner.

"Talladega [raceway] brings in a quarter of a million people a year," Fraser said. "Bronner replied, 'Yeah, but they sleep in their trucks and they drink Busch beer. Golfers smoke cigars, drink bourbon, drink fine wines, drink craft beers, and stay in nice hotels.'"

Fraser's Lakewood Club hosted the 59th U.S. Senior Women's Amateur Championship in 2021. Many of the golfers, Fraser says, came away impressed with Alabama golf, the state's hospitality and its southern charm.

"We had 138 ladies from around the world come in," he said. "They said, 'We didn't know what to expect in Alabama.'"

Near the shore, Kiva Dunes Golf and Beach Resort, while not part of the RTJ Trail, offers even more greens, fairways, and coastal sunshine. If you're planning a fall trip, Easton Colvin, public relations coordinator for tourism in Orange Beach, notes the golf will be more enjoyable.

"You won't have to jump out for an 8 a.m. tee time to beat some heat," Colvin said. "You can play all day in the fall and in the winter."

Jerry Pate, who won the U.S. Open as a 22-year-old rookie in 1976, and Jim Edgemon designed Kiva Dunes. The links-style course

was ranked the No. 1 public golf course in Alabama by *Golf Advisor* in 2017. Condos and homes overlook the Gulf of Mexico.

If golf isn't on the itinerary that day, hit the water. Hop on a tour boat to go watch dolphins, or grab some bait and see if the fisherman in you is up for trying to snag a shark. You're going to need a bigger fishing rod.

Orange Beach and Gulf Shores, five minutes from each other, offer plenty of options for the avid fisherman and his crew for the day.

"It's huge," Colvin said of the fishing scene. "We've got one of the largest charter fleets on the Gulf of Mexico here in Orange Beach, and Gulf Shores has quite a few places and quite a few boats that run as well."

Crevalle jack ("jacks"), trout, bull redfish and flounder are all there to be snagged on a line.

"In October, you're going to be in that bull redfish run, 30-, 40-inch fish that are going to be monsters and just pull and pull until you're worn out," Colvin said. "Fall is also our big crevalle jack run, so you'll be able to go into Mobile Bay and find the jacks all feeding and circling. They're super fun to catch, another big puller."

The adrenaline rush doesn't stop when you drive 20 to 30 miles back north back toward Mobile. Clark says about \$400 million will be poured into the new airport. Demolition of the old Civic Center was expected to begin late this summer. The building of a new state-of-the-art multipurpose event center could run in the \$300 million range.

Construction of a 200-foot cable-suspension bridge, which will replace the current bridge in Mobile Bay, is expected to start in 2025.

"We probably have close to \$6 billion worth of construction that is either already started or going to start within the next year in downtown Mobile," Clark said. "Then you have a whole lot of other people wanting to build and invest in Mobile. We have other hotels coming on board because they're seeing the opportunity and growth from the leisure traveler to the business traveler."

Just like Dr. Bronner envisioned it.



Kiva Dunes Golf and Beach Resort



Cotton Creek Hole #6



Harbor Shores Hole #7



Some 60 years ago, Benton Harbor was a thriving industrial city replete with a fighter plane components manufacturer, a steel mill, a car battery recycling plant and an automotive brakes producer. Starting in the late 1960s, those businesses lost ground and jobs to international competition. Flash forward to the mid-1980s when the community's main drag was a virtual ghost town. Inevitably, the closed factories led to shuttered downtown shops and businesses which had been left with no buyers of goods and services. Tumbleweed could be found rolling across the city's streets after residents fled the run down city by then plagued by violent crime and the drug trade.

Throughout all of this tumult, local appliance manufacturer Whirlpool Corporation steadfastly held its position to maintain its national headquarters in the city. Indeed,



even as Benton Harbor's struggles made national headlines through those dark days, the company whose brand names included Maytag and KitchenAid outlined plans to revitalize its home city. In May, 2008, an elaborate financing deal anchored by Whirlpool along with a consortium of nonprofit development companies was made public. The deal involved state and federal funds to clean up a 530-acre site abutting Lake Michigan which would afterwards be transformed into a golf course resort community complete with planned housing, a luxury hotel, and a marina. Its name would be Harbor Shores. This aggressive construction plan called for the course to be opened in 2010 and readied for tournament play two years later. In total, over \$900 million was spent to transform the property and its surroundings into a stunning and versatile resort.

Today, a mere 16 years after the funding was approved, Harbor Shores bears literally no resemblance to its former self. Indeed, the massive clean-up effort included the demolition of three million square feet of dilapidated buildings. Portions of the Paw Paw River that border holes on the back nine were cleaned up, with 140,000 tons of waste material removed from its banks and bottom. Contaminated soil that topped the property was taken off the land and replaced with fresh soil. As a reminder of the property's grim past, plaques across the golf course show stark photos of the site in its former state in stark contrast to its present condition lined with lush fairways and greens, wild flowers, and sparkling waterways.

The centerpiece of the property is a stunning Jack Nicklaus Signature 18-hole championship course that the Golden Bear previously declared was

one of his proudest achievements as an architect. Beginning a mere four years after funding was approved, the course has hosted the KitchenAid Senior PGA Championship every second year since 2012. England's Richard Bland captured the 2024 title in May. Harbor Shores is characterized by wide fairways and massive greens protected by bunkers and marshes. The course's signature hole is No. 7, an amazing dogleg that begins from an island tee and heads upward by 25-feet to a small green perched upon a sand dune. Bring your camera to the green, as just below your feet rests the sky-blue waters of Lake Michigan.

Harbor Shores is just one of an impressive group of Southwest Michigan courses that have lured golfers from Chicago and across the Midwest. A 2.5-hour drive around the southern end of Lake Michigan places Chicagoans



The Golf Club Harbor Shores



continued on page 48

Golf course construction may not be the most glamorous aspect of golf, but one local company specializes in it and has led the nation for many years.

As it finishes a new course accompanied by a large-scale high development, another in Texas is slated to begin for one of the wealthiest developers in the world. Locally, the team is working with architect Todd Quitno to renovate Cantigny, a course it originally built in 1986. One knows a company is good at what it does when it is asked back to renovate a course it originally built.

Shovels stay sharpened. Bulldozers never doze. Bobcats are on the ready to pounce.

“Business is undoubtedly good right now. Golf tends to follow the economy,” Eric Wadsworth, vice president of Plainfield-based Wadsworth Golf Construction Company, said before boarding a flight from Chicago to Texas in late August.

Since 1958, when the late Brent Wadsworth started his company during a time when no one in the industry focused strictly on constructing golf courses — a groundbreaking endeavor, so to speak — rarely has Wadsworth found itself not being one of the preferred contractors that golf course designers choose to work with.

Rarely.

“We’ve had plenty of lulls in my time, and I’m sure they had lulls before my time,” Pat Karnick, Wadsworth’s president since 2010, said with a laugh. “After 9/11 [2001], there was a pretty big crisis in the industry. People quit building courses, and the 2008 U.S. recession was devastating to the whole industry. We currently face a position in time when a pandemic [COVID-19] actually fueled the sport of golf. Golf was one of the few activities that remained available for people, and many new golfers embraced the game. That, in turn, led to increased revenues and many deferred projects have now come to the forefront.”

Scroll to the bottom of Wadsworth’s website, www.wadsworthgolf.com, and a tally board, Vegas slot machine-style, live tallies the staggering statistics: 66 years in business, 1,241 golf courses constructed.

Many of golf’s most respected and accomplished architects — including renowned architects such as Pete Dye, Tom Doak, Robert Trent Jones Jr, Rees Jones [sons of Robert Trent Jones Sr.], and Chicagland architects such as Larry Packard with his son Roger, Quitno, Rick Jacobson, and Greg Martin — have collaborated with Wadsworth Golf Construction on projects, many of which are here in Illinois.

Wadsworth’s work includes Medinah [2012 Ryder Cup, 2019 BMW Championship], Conway Farms [2015 BMW Championship] and Valhalla in Louisville [1996, 2000, 2014, 2024 PGA Championship]. Torrey Pines, Pinehurst No. 4 and, locally, Olympia Fields and Cog Hill also dot the list, which is longer than a register of Tiger Woods wins.

Eric Wadsworth, 59, the youngest of four children of Brent and Jean, will tell you his company’s prosperity is a team effort, from laborers who shovel and rake dirt, to foreman and superintendents who supervise, to the company’s top management people, many of whom have more than 30 years experience with the employee-owned company. Eric started with his father’s company after graduating from Fort Lewis College in Colorado with a business degree, worked there for about three years, left, worked and lived in Florida for years, and rejoined Wadsworth 2012 when his dad was in his early 80s.



Bobby Jones Hole 7



Canal Shores Hole 8



CDGA



Cog Hill



Cog Hill

Wadsworth Continues to Thrive and Give Back

By Joe Aguilar

“The guys who work for us, they’re all dedicated guys,” Eric said. “We’re fortunate enough to have a strong group. Our field guys, some of our superintendents have been with the company for 25 years plus.”

Respect, honesty, and fairness are the words that Brent Wadsworth chose when asked years ago what gives him the most pride about his company. He died in 2018 at age 88, still of strong mind to provide insights and feedback about his company and its direction.

“Starting in the early 2000s, he would put out a [company] memo saying he’s retiring. He probably put that out once every five to six years,” Eric said with a laugh. “He would come to the office when he was in town from his home in Florida. He had his hands on the pulse of things up until the end.”

Brent and Jean, who’s 92, enjoyed 63 years of marriage. Add that to Brent’s impressive list of accomplishments, the least of which might be constructing golf tracks.

He grew up in Joliet, graduated from the University of Illinois School of Landscape Architecture, and worked for golf architect Robert Bruce Harris, who was a leader in his profession. Wadsworth proudly served in the U.S. Air Force from 1952 to 1954. In 1955, he started a golf course design firm with Edward L. Packard, Packard and Wadsworth, and four years later established Wadsworth Golf Construction Company.

He was a pilot. A meticulous note taker, Eric said. Brent was an artist, able to wield a pencil as deftly as he could a rake.

“He was so talented,” longtime Wadsworth employee Tom Shapland said in a 2018 *Champaign-Urbana News-Gazette* article, adding that a drawing by Wadsworth still hangs in one of the U of I buildings.

Besides his four children and two grandchildren, one of Brent’s biggest joys was the charity foundation that he, Jean, and their children established in 1997. Brent believed in providing the less fortunate people an opportunity for enjoyment from the game of golf. Through his company, contributions are made to charities devoted to these endeavors.

Nearly \$13,000,000 has been granted to projects and programs since the foundation’s inception, and nearly \$650,000 is contributed annually.

The Wadsworth Cup is an annual golf tournament that invites golf professionals, superintendents, and regular players at a course from their municipal or public access courses that the company has built or extensively renovated. The tournament/gathering is rotated through each of the courses and showcases new and inventive things the courses have recently completed. The long list in the Chicago area includes Cantigny, Orchard Valley, Fox Bend, Heritage Bluffs, Seven Bridges, Springbrook, Wedgewood, Prairie Bluff, Cog Hill, Phillips Park, Glenview Park District, Sunset Valley, Wilmette, Winnetka, and Mount Prospect.

“We gather individuals from those courses to share their stories and talk about their successes and failures,” said Doug Myslinski, Wadsworth project manager and executive director of Wadsworth Golf Charities Foundation. “We learn from each other and hope that takeaways will help each facility grow and prosper.”

The company’s founder was a visionary and a philanthropist.

“[Brent] was a big believer — and we still are — of making sure that golf is accessible,” Myslinski said. “Those municipal, public golf courses, that’s what it does. It provides accessibility to anyone. We embrace that concept to its fullest intent.”

continued on page 50



Frisco West Hole 7



Promontory Hole 9



Schaumburg Golf Club Hole 5



Springbrook



Sunset Valley Hole 2



Winnetka

Championship Courses, Family Fun Reign Across Wisconsin Dells Area

Neal Kotlarek

Most everyone in the Midwest has a happy memory from their youth of the Dells. Maybe that reminiscence centers around the popular amphibious duck rides that churn over dusty roads over and along the banks of the Wisconsin River. Or maybe it involves racing go-karts against family and friends at one of the myriad asphalt tracks located just off the main drag. Or just maybe it is the sultry nights of sitting in the grandstands as Tommy Bartlett and his deft team of water skiers performed remarkable stunts on the placid waters of Lake Delton.

While those days of youthful exuberance might be long gone, be content with the knowledge that the Dells area continues to delight and excite today's generation of youth. Along with the rumbling ducks, buzzing go-karts and glamorous Tommy Bartlett skiers, who hosted 30 million visitors through the decades before closing in 2020, the attraction offerings have expanded to incorporate indoor waterparks, a 300-acre crane breeding complex, a trampoline activity center, and a slew of theme parks.

Fortunately for those of us whose interests over the decades have transitioned from duck rides to duck hooks, the game of golf has played a key role in transforming the Dells into a major Wisconsin golf destination. While the Central Wisconsin region will never lose its role as one of the country's premier family vacation destinations, golf has evolved into a game the entire family wants to play. And along with championship courses that challenge even low-handicap players, multiple Dells resorts have built short courses that serve both as post-dinner entertainment for golf groups and as introductory experiences for families.

"Golf has always played an important role at our resort," said Pat Stein, director of golf at Wilderness Hotel & Golf Resort, home of the nationally acclaimed Wild Rock G.C. "But we have seen growing interest in our short course which was built way back in 1998. While most short courses cater to groups of folks who might play a sunset round after a day on the championship course, The Woods 9-hole course has attracted a lot of families for day play. So in between visits to the waterparks and natural attractions, family members tee it up on our short course that even includes an island hole."

Three years ago, Trapper's Turn Golf Club joined Wild Rock in the short course revolution with the unveiling of the 12North

short course. Designed by two-time U.S. Open champion and Wisconsinite Andy North, the course serves up fun par 3s that stretch from 50 yards to 120 yards. "The course has been an important addition to our golf offerings," said Patrick Steffes, general manager and director of golf. "We obviously knew that short courses were a huge trend at popular golf resorts like Sand Valley. But right after 12North opened, we saw how the course was being used as a fun, easy, and quick way to introduce the game to kids and couples."

While promoted as the "Waterpark Capital of the World" by its tourism bureau, the Dells transformation into a golf destination has evolved over the last few decades. The area's stunning topography and pristine waterways have served as a perfect easel for top designers, including Michael Hurdzan, Dana Fry, and Wisconsinite Andy North. In total, the Dells area serves up over a dozen golf courses to play, from the two diverse layouts at Wilderness Hotel & Golf Resort to the thrilling championship golf experience at The Castle Course at Northern Bay (formerly Northern Bay Golf Resort & Marina) featuring replica holes of Augusta National, Bay Hill and TPC at Sawgrass.

Wilderness Hotel & Golf Resort

Unveiled to the public in 2008, the stunning Wild Rock Golf Club earned accolades from national golf magazines as one of the best new courses in the country. Gary D'Amato, esteemed golf writer from *Wisconsin Golf* newsletter, was so impressed by the spectacular views provided at the 7,414-

yard course that he declared it offers "Kodak moments on every tee." Indeed, designer Michael Hurdzan and partner Dana Fry served up a virtual fireworks display of outstanding golf with each hole seemingly more thrilling than its predecessor. The course is characterized by dramatic elevation changes, forested land, and even an abandoned rock quarry.

No matter which tees you play from across the course, treat yourself to the back tee on Wild Rock's signature par 3 No. 15. From an elevated tee, the player is called upon to fire a shot 179 yards over the overgrown remnants of the quarry (thus the "wild rock" course name). One of the scariest tee shots in the state can also be one of the most rewarding as a huge green welcomes any shot that clears the valley.

Both The Woods short course and Wild Rock are centerpiece attractions at this 600-acre mega-resort that includes a hotel, villas, 500,000 sq. ft. of indoor/outdoor waterparks, arcades, and even a zip line tour over a canyon.

The Castle Course at Northern Bay, Arkdale

Does your dream golf wish list include Augusta National, Bay Hill, and the TPC at Sawgrass? This acclaimed 20-year old course in Arkdale, located 30 minutes north of the Dells, transports players to a diverse group of some of America's most iconic holes. These seven "replica" holes are interspersed with contextual holes over the 18-hole course. The immaculately groomed Castle Course is located in a gently rolling, wooded setting off the shores of Castle Rock Lake. The 625-yard 6th hole is a tribute to No. 16 at Firestone C.C. in Akron, Ohio, while

No. 10 is a replica of No. 17 at TPC at Sawgrass, complete with the severely sloping island green which annually perplexes the touring pros at the Tournament Players Championship. My favorite is No. 12, an homage to the famous 3rd hole at Pennsylvania's Oakmont C.C., complete with church pew bunkers resting along the left side of the tee shot's landing area.

Northern Bay is owned by a group of investors that include Arkdale residents and on-site property owners. Accommodation offerings include rental homes, suites, and condos. Along with outstanding golf, the resort provides a wide range of recreational opportunities surrounding Castle Rock Lake. These include fishing, hiking, water skiing, and sailing.

Trappers Turn G.C.

Designed by Roger Packard and two-time U.S. Open champion North, this 27-hole layout traverses along and across dramatic terrain and features some of the state's best par-3 holes. The three nines are similar in length but dramatically distinct in character. The 3,229-yard Canyon nine takes golfers across and over rocky terrain, while the 3,427-yard Arbor nine is carved through dense forests. The 3,531-yard Lake nine features a dynamic finishing dogleg winding around the course's signature lake.

Trappers Turn is part of the 700-room African-themed Kalahari Resort complex which promotes itself as managing "America's largest waterpark." The complex features indoor/outdoor waterparks, a spa, arcades, cinema, dining, and other amenities.

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Nestled within the picturesque Laurel Highlands of southwestern Pennsylvania, Nemaacolin resort is a sprawling 2,000-acre estate that combines luxury, adventure, and relaxation into one exquisite golf destination. With its rich history, diverse lodging options, world-class courses, and exceptional dining experiences, the resort stands out as a premier getaway for travelers seeking tranquility, indulgence, and excitement.

It is easy to become dazzled by the resort's elegance upon your arrival. The Grand Lodge atrium stuns with its high ceilings, chandeliers, sprawling staircases, and eager-to-please staff. Enjoy the magnificence of it all while remaining aware that the property is, at its core, an activity center with a goal of accommodating the entire gamut of sports fun. Within easy reach of the hotel are facilities, trails, waterways, guides, and instructors ready to accommodate your desire to fly fish, ride a horse, make an off-road jaunt on a Jeep, or take some steam off by throwing some axes around.

To keep this review manageable, we will focus primarily on Nemaacolin's outstanding golf offerings, two spectacular champion-

ship courses that cater to golfers of all skill levels. The resort held the PGA Tour's 84 Lumber Classic from 2003 to 2006. The resort's golf facilities are designed to provide an exceptional experience, whether you're a single-digit handicapper or a casual player.

Mystic Rock is a standout attraction at Nemaacolin, having gained national acclaim for its challenging layout and scenic beauty. Ranked #1 in the state by *Golfweek*, this Pete Dye design offers gorgeous mountain views and provides challenges with false fronts and demanding, undulating greens. This course is a true test of skill, featuring strategic bunkering, dramatic elevation changes, and breathtaking views of the surrounding landscape. Hole 12 is a downhill par 3 that uses alternate green locations. When using the left green it plays downhill to a peninsula green fronted by water. A front flag is as intimidating as it gets, especially playing into a headwind.

The Shepherd's Rock Course is a links-style gem. It was designed by the acclaimed golf course architect Tim Liddy and offers a more forgiving yet equally enjoyable experience. This course is characterized by its picturesque setting and well-maintained fairways, and



Nemaacolin Mystic Hole #12

challenges the golfer as you climb hills and dive into valleys, providing a relaxing and rewarding round of golf for players of all abilities. Hole 4 is an elevated par 5 that plays 619 from the tips. The landing area is pinched by well-placed bunkers and offers a split fairway. With its emphasis on natural beauty, including waterfalls and strategic design, Shepherd's Rock complements the Pete Dye Course perfectly. Ranked #5 in the state by *Golfweek*, the fun begins when you reach the greens. Golf is open to resort overnight guests as well as to its all-access members.

Looking to improve your game over the course of your stay? The Golf Academy at Nemaacolin provides a range of instruction programs and clinics for golfers looking to improve their game. Led by Mike LaBella, named *Golf Digest's* Best Young Teachers list, the team of experienced instructors teach out of the 4,000 square foot state-of-the-art innovative training center. Equipped with a Trackman Range, the academy offers personalized lessons, group clinics, and specialized training programs designed to help golfers refine their skills and achieve their goals on the course. LaBella's method is tried and true. "We offer a 360-degree golf assessment that covers course management," he said in an interview. "We figure out what the golfer's dreams are and figure out a path of how to achieve that."

The resort offers a variety of lodging options that cater to different preferences and group sizes, ensuring that every guest finds their ideal retreat. Distinctive accommodations provide a unique "Nemaacolin Experience." Christopher Baran, VP of Sales and Marketing, expounded on the property's constant expansion. "The resort constantly improves," he said. "We look for new angles for customer satisfaction and associate innovation. The re-imagining is happening in a constant fashion. 'Can we do something better?' That's the beautiful thing about working for the Hardy family [who own the resort]."

The Chateau is the centerpiece of the resort, evoking the grandeur of centuries-old European estates. With its opulent design and luxurious rooms, the Chateau is a recommended choice for those seeking a classic and elegant stay. Guests enjoy the magnificent views of the surrounding countryside, world-class amenities, and exceptional service. The Chateau offers a range of suites and rooms, including the Presidential Suite, which provides an unparalleled level of comfort and sophistication. The Chateau was recently reimagined this past spring to rave reviews.

For a more contemporary and relaxed atmosphere, the aforementioned Grand Lodge offers a charming, rustic aesthetic with its cozy rooms, and inviting common areas. It's an ideal option for families or groups, providing easy access to the resort's many activities and amenities. The Grand Lodge features spacious accommodations and a

Nemaacolin Resort: Majesty and Great Golf in the Quaker State

By Dave Weretka



The Chateau



Fireside Lodge



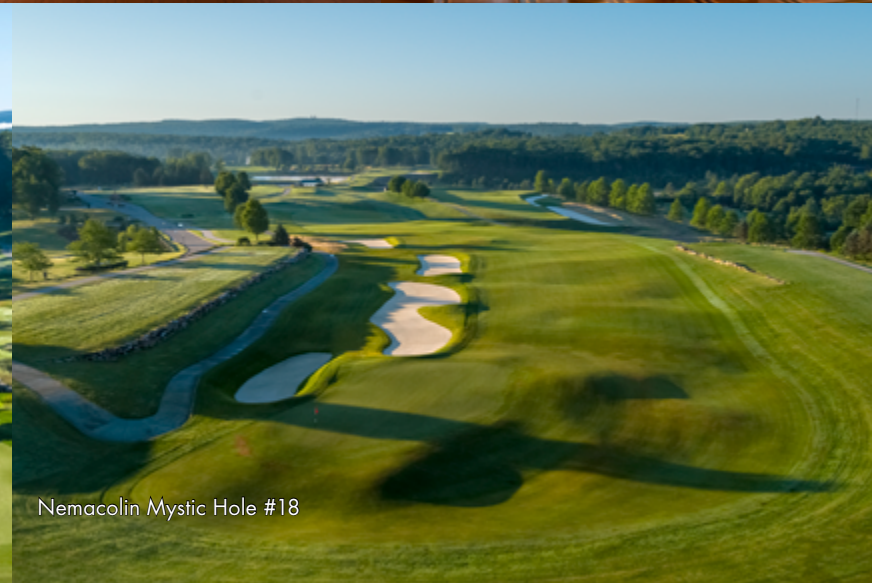
Fawn & Fable



Nemaacolin Mystic Hole #11



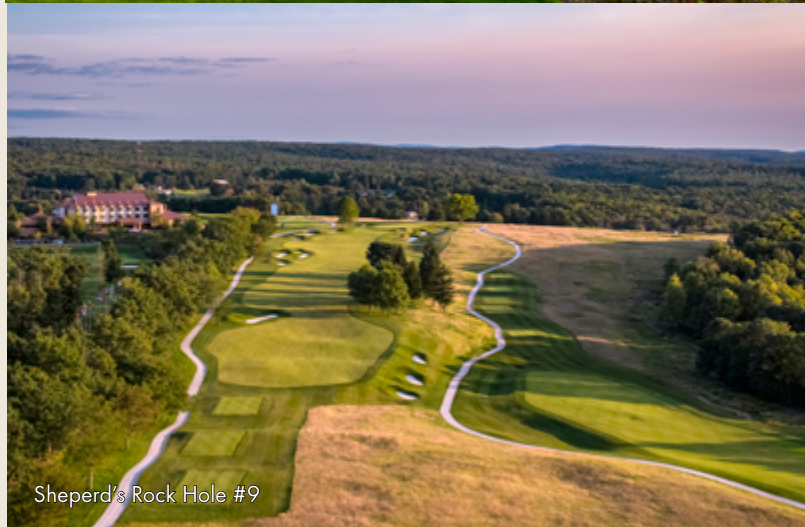
Nemaacolin Mystic Hole #5



Nemaacolin Mystic Hole #18



Sheperd's Rock Hole #18



Sheperd's Rock Hole #9



Shepard's Rock Hole #11



warm, welcoming environment, perfect for unwinding after a day of exploration.

Falling Rock is the resort's boutique hotel. This elegant and modern property boasts luxurious rooms with stunning views of the golf courses and surrounding landscapes. With its sophisticated design and attentive service, Falling Rock offers a high-end experience that perfectly complements the resort's renowned golf facilities.

The resort is not only a haven for outdoor enthusiasts; it is also a culinary destination with a diverse array of dining options that cater to every taste and preference. The resort's restaurants offer everything from casual fare to gourmet dining, ensuring a memorable dining experience for every guest.

Aqueous is the resort's signature fine-dining restaurant, renowned for its elegant atmosphere and sophisticated menu. Featuring a range of contemporary American dishes crafted from locally sourced ingredients, Aqueous offers a refined dining experience that is perfect for special occasions or a luxurious night out. The restaurant's extensive wine list and attentive service further enhance the overall dining experience.

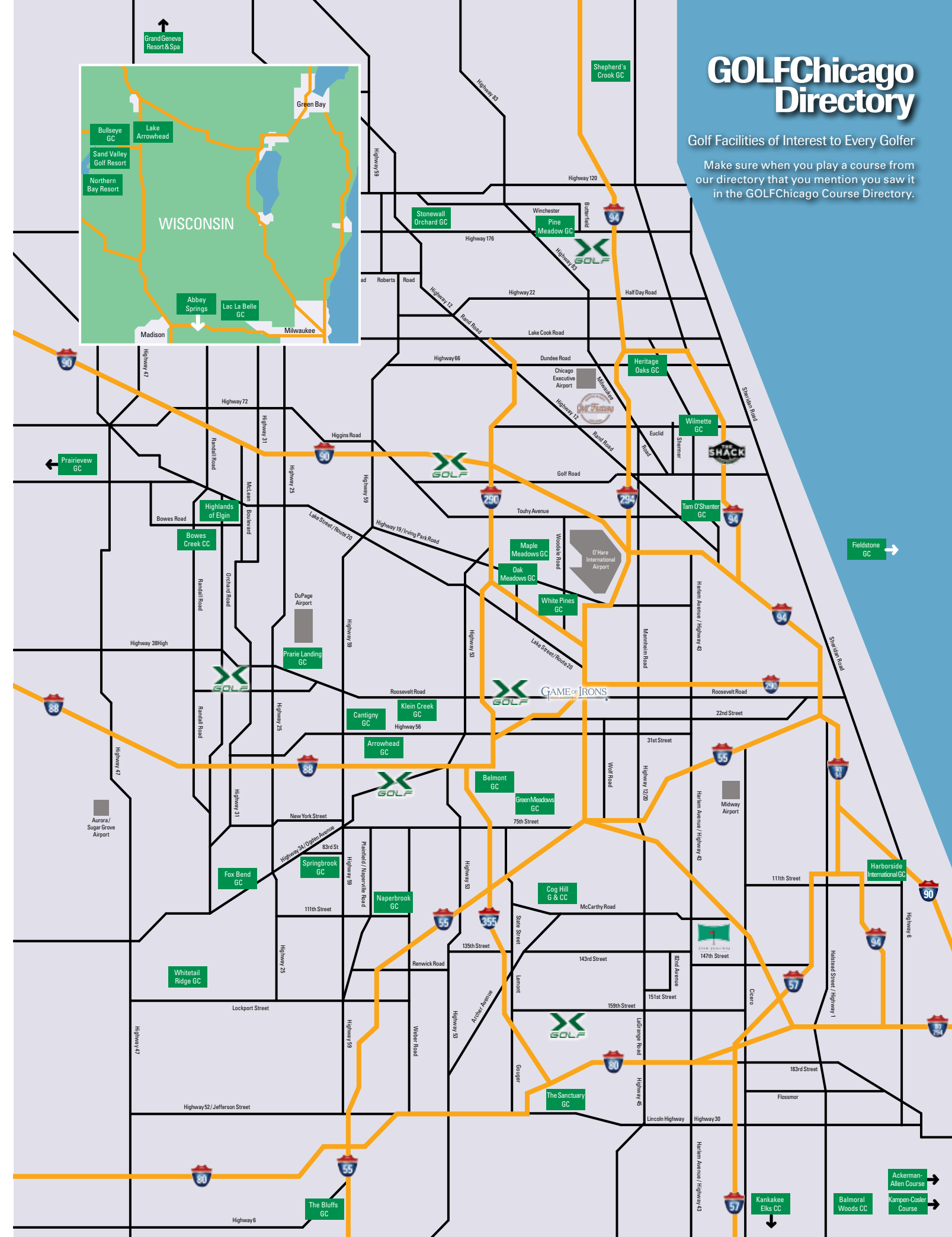
The Night Cap is a late-night lounge serving a tantalizing array of cocktails, savory bites, and decadent desserts as an accompaniment to a jazz club atmosphere and cabaret performances inspired by vintage glamour. It's a fun-spirited and posh place to take in dinner and a show and an experience you just won't find at most resorts.

Fawn & Fable offers traditional steakhouse fare with locally sourced ingredients, including Wagyu tartare as a starter followed up by a Tomahawk ribeye. Top these off with smoked cremini mushrooms. Finish off your meal with a delectable deconstructed Churro that can't be missed. In addition to these main dining options, the resort also features several other eateries and bars, including The Hardy Room cigar bar, providing guests with a variety of dining and relaxation options throughout their stay.

When finally off the golf course, unwind in the Woodlands Spa and Salon where relaxation is made simple. Venture out onto the property by renting a bike, playing tennis, off-roading or try your hand at the Rod & Range Club. Adventure seekers can hit the river for some whitewater rafting on the Lower Yough River that offers Class III rapids.

Nemacolin resort has a rich history that adds to its allure as a premier destination. The property was named after Chief Nemacolin, a native Delaware Indian who trailblazed over and across the Laurel Highlands Mountains in the 1740s. The resort was founded by the late Joseph A. Hardy III in 1987, a prominent businessman and philanthropist who envisioned a luxurious retreat for relaxation and recreation. Under Hardy's guidance, the resort quickly grew and evolved to become one of the most sought-after destinations in the region. The grand property stands as a beacon of luxury and adventure in southwestern Pennsylvania. With its diverse lodging options, world-renowned golf courses, exceptional dining venues and rich history, the resort provides a unique and memorable escape for travelers. Whether you're hitting the links, savoring a gourmet meal, or simply unwinding in luxurious accommodations, Nemacolin resort promises an experience that is both enchanting and exhilarating.

To book your stay or gather more information, visit www.nemacolin.com.



GOLFChicago Directory

Golf Facilities of Interest to Every Golfer

Make sure when you play a course from our directory that you mention you saw it in the GOLFChicago Course Directory.



Abbey Springs

262-275-6113
One Country Club Dr.
Fontana, WI 53125
abbeysprings.org
Abbey Springs has been rated 4.5 Stars by *Golf Digest*. With spectacular views of Geneva Lake, Abbey Springs underwent a major green renovation in 2021, featuring state of the art 007 bent grass on all greens. Make your reservation at the web site above.



Arrowhead Golf Club

630-653-5800
26W151 Butterfield Rd.
Wheaton, IL 60189
arrowheadgolfclub.org
Arrowhead Golf Club is recognized for its beautifully maintained course and inviting atmosphere.
Arrowhead is a public course which offers impeccable golfing conditions at affordable rates on three separate par-72 18-hole layouts surrounded by forest preserve. The West, East, and South Courses feature new bunker renovations and enhancements. The practice area includes a lighted driving range, putting green, and chipping green. Group and individual golf lessons are available.



Balmoral Woods Golf Club

708-672-7448
26732 S. Balmoral Woods Dr.
Crete, IL 60417
balmoralwoods.com
Balmoral Woods offers a demanding, superbly conditioned, magnificent round of golf.
Laid out over 280 acres of wooded, rolling hills, the course will test the skill of golfers with its 6700-yard, 72.6 rated, 133-slope layout. It is a public 18-hole golf course, has hosted many local and state events and tournaments, and is the annual home of the Will County Amateur Championship. Check out our website for new rates, reservations, and more information. Follow us on instagram for the latest updates and events.



Belmont Golf Club

630-963-1306
2420 Haddow Ave.
Downers Grove, IL 60515
belmontgolfclub.org
The historic Belmont Golf Club is a scenic 9-hole par-36 course featuring mature trees, natural areas, elevation, and water hazards. A driving range with 24 hitting stations, a practice putting green, sand trap, and chipping area includes a 10-station covered shelter.



Fox Bend Golf Course

630-554-3939
3516 Route 34
Oswego, IL 60543
foxbendgolfcourse.com
Fox Bend Golf Course, Oswego Park District's fun and challenging public course, boasts lush fairways, mature trees, and challenging greens. This 6,925-yard par-72 course tests skills of all levels with well-positioned bunkers and water in play on 11 holes. Fox Bend has hosted three Illinois Opens, USGA Qualifiers, Illinois State Amateur Qualifiers, and is home to the annual Fox Bend Amateur. Visit foxbendgolfcourse.com for more information or to book your next tee time. Visit Christina's Pub & Grill before or after your round to enjoy spacious outdoor seating with great course views and American fare done right!



Game of Irons

630-303-9454
3041 Butterfield Rd.
Suite 104
Oak Brook, IL 60523
gameofirons.com
Game of Irons is Chicagoland's most exciting virtual golf experience! Be transported to over 200 world-famous courses in the comfort of a premium indoor facility with 16 hitting bays in over 18,000 sq. ft. - perfect for corporate events, parties, and club meetings. We offer a full bar with craft cocktails and amazing food. We invite you to try out our #1 rated simulators with moving floors that adjust to the course contours, auto ball tee and multiple turf types (fairway, rough and bunker).



Golf Factory

224-248-8163
63 Randhurst Village Dr.
Mt Prospect, IL 60056
golfactory.golf
The Golf Factory is a 9000-square-foot indoor golf haven created by golfers for golfers. Our vibrant space boasts top-tier indoor golf technology, including 10 state-of-the-art Trackman golf simulators. With over 350 golf courses, games, video, and practice modes, our facility caters to everyone from beginners to seasoned players. Apart from personal enjoyment, Golf Factory is an ideal venue for parties and corporate events.



Grand Geneva Resort & Spa

262-248-8811
7036 Grand Geneva Way
Lake Geneva, WI 53147
grandgeneva.com
Tee off on two award-winning 18-hole courses that make Grand Geneva Resort & Spa one of the Midwest's favorite golf destinations. Enjoy individual tee times offering dynamic pricing, private instruction led by certified PGA staff and fully customized group outings.



The Bluffs Public Golf Club

815-467-7888
24355 W. Bluff Rd.
Channahon, IL 60410
heritagebluffs.com
18 Holes: Par 72
Yardage: 5,035 - 7,171
Located near the intersection of Interstates 80 and 55 just south of Joliet, Heritage Bluffs is the pride of the Channahon Park District. The tranquil surroundings make a day playing golf fun and relaxing.
Along with our award-winning course we also feature a large all-grass practice range, along with a large putting green and a separate chipping green and bunker. After your round you can relax in our Grille Room or out on the patio, enjoying a full menu of delicious food and beverage choices.



Bullseye Golf Club

715-423-2225
2800 Ridgewood Trail
Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54494
bullseyegolfclub.com
Designed by Larry Packard featuring towering pines giving a feel of the Carolinas right in Central Wisconsin. The Wisconsin River provides a picturesque view for the finishing holes across our rolling terrain. Warm up before your round on our new 30,000 sq. ft. bent grass practice tee!



Cantigny Golf

630-668-8463
27W270 Mack Rd.
Wheaton, IL 60189
cantignygolf.com
Part of the Robert R. McCormick Foundation, Cantigny Golf opened in 1989 and is managed by KemperSports. A renovation of Cantigny's highly rated 27 holes begins in June 2024 with the Hillside nine, followed by the Woodside and Lakeside nines. Eighteen holes will remain open for play throughout the three-year project. Cantigny Golf Academy offers TrackMan Range technology, installed in 2023, plus club fitting and repair services, junior clinics, private lessons and climate-controlled hitting bays. Cantigny Youth Links is a 9-hole, par-3 course for families.



Cog Hill Golf & Country Club

866-264-4455
12294 Archer Ave.
Palos Park, IL 60439
coghillgolf.com
Cog Hill Golf & Country Club, a Jemsek Golf Facility, is a historic 72-hole public golf facility located 30 miles southwest of Chicago. The year-round facility includes a driving range equipped with lights and heated Toptracer stalls, two golf shops, patio dining, and a pavilion for events, along with a 280-seat banquet hall.
• Rated in "America's 100 Greatest Public Golf Courses" by *Golf Digest*
• 2020 GRAA Top 50 Public Range in the Nation



Harborside International Golf Club

312-782-7837
11001 S. Doty Ave. East
Chicago, IL 60628
harborsidegolf.com
Harborside International Golf Center, home to the Port & Starboard Courses, is Chicago's home for golf. Located minutes from Chicago's Loop, Harborside offers a premier golf experience in the Chicagoland area. Harborside is the only facility with two of *Golfweek's* "Best Courses You Can Play in Illinois" and is home to an expansive practice facility. Harborside is owned by the Illinois International Port District and managed by KemperSports.



The Haven Indoor Golf

708-671-8052
12317 S. Harlem Ave.
Palos Heights, IL 60463
thehavenindoorgolf.com
The Haven Indoor Golf & Bar is the only indoor facility in the Southwest Suburbs using Foresight GC Hawks! Our simulators are true game improvement simulators making us the premier facility in the Southwest suburbs.
Foresight Sports launch monitors use exact photometric measurements and image processing taken with a clear, direct view of the critical ball launch condition and club head into impact. The result? Our launch monitors measure – not estimate – club head data based on the club's triangulated face plane, delivering vastly more accurate results.



Heritage Oaks Golf Club

847-291-2351
3535 Dundee Rd.
Northbrook, IL 60063
heritageoaksgc.com
Conveniently located between the Edens Expressway and Interstate 294, 30 minutes north of Chicago. Featuring 27 holes of tree-lined golf, a practice range equipped with TrackMan® technology, our golf academy, and indoor golf simulators, Heritage Oaks offers something for everyone. With the elevated Acorn Grill + Terrace overlooking courses certified by the National Audubon Society, Heritage Oaks Golf Club welcomes you for golf, for a meal, or for a timeless experience.



The Highlands of Elgin

847-931-5950
875 Sports Way
Elgin, IL 60123
highlandsofelgin.com
The Highlands of Elgin has become a premier destination for thousands of golfers throughout the region. Nine new holes reclaim an old stone quarry, and take maximum advantage of the unique and dramatic landforms that were left behind, including a twelve-acre quarry lake. Four holes hug the top of the bluff thirty to forty feet above the water, providing golfers with incredible views and numerous shot options on each hole. The prairie-style clubhouse features an expanded golf shop, locker rooms, event rooms, and a full-scale food and beverage operation.





Kankakee Elks Country Club

815-937-9547
2283 Bittersweet Dr.
Saint Anne, IL 60964
elksgolf627.com

The Kankakee Elks Country Club is an 18-hole par-72 course. It is one of Illinois' premier Langford @ Moreau design courses, featuring some of the best green complexes in Illinois, 40 miles south of Chicago along the beautiful Kankakee River with very affordable rates.

Chose from one of our four tees to accommodate all levels of play.

Driving range, chipping area, and putting green with newly remodeled bar and snack shop.



Lake Arrowhead

715-325-2929
1195 Apache Lane
Nekoosa, WI 54457
lakearrowheadgolf.com

Located in the heart of Central Wisconsin, Lake Arrowhead boasts two of the Midwest's elite 18-hole golf courses. Here you have the rare opportunity to enjoy not just one, but two 4½ star championship golf courses in one incredible experience.



Naperbrook Golf Course

630-378-4215
22204 W. 111th St. / Hassert Blvd.
Plainfield, IL 60585
golfnaperville.org

Located in Plainfield, scenic Naperbrook Golf Course is a "links style" course that features rolling hills and wide fairways. Challenges in the way of ponds, a double green, and hidden bunkers await golfers of all levels. Additional amenities include a recently updated and expanded practice area featuring a one-acre turf range tee, large practice green, and practice bunker. Enjoy post-game refreshments on the picturesque patio. Naperbrook also offers lessons, outings, a well-stocked golf shop, and much more.



Northern Bay Resort and Marina

608-339-2090 ext. 2
1844 20th Avenue
Arkdale, WI 54613
northernbayresort.com

Play where the pros play.

Experience our unique replica golf course inspired by the most celebrated holes in the game and situated on the shores of Castle Rock Lake.

Northern Bay offers all the amenities of a Wisconsin Dells resort without all the hustle and bustle. Bring your golf buddies to play our one-of-a-kind replica course, or relax around the lake with your family. However you choose to stay, we look forward to greeting you at Northern Bay. Get started and book your tee time.



Purdue's Kampen-Cosler Course

765-494-3139
West Lafayette, IN
purduegolf.com

The Kampen-Cosler Course, a Pete Dye design, is an 18-hole, links-style, par-72 championship course features large bent-grass greens, fairways, and tees. The layout is a challenge for golfers of all abilities with vast sand bunkers, native grasslands, ponds, and a natural celery bog. There are five sets of tees with the championship tees playing over 7,400 yards and the forward tees at 5,300 yards.

Kampen-Cosler, one of the top collegiate courses in the nation, has been awarded 4.5 stars on *Golf Digest's* "Places to Play." It receives high marks as one of the most difficult golf courses in Indiana.



The Sanctuary Golf Course

815-462-4653 (GOLF)
485 North Marley Rd.
New Lenox, IL 60451
golfsanctuary.com

Explore The Sanctuary Golf Course. Spanning 6,900 yards it offers a challenging experience. Also available is the Toptracer practice facility with 20 heated bays, along with a 30-station grass area and state-of-the-art short game and putting green. Unwind after your round at our Bunker Bar and Grill.



Sand Valley

888-398-8671
1697 Leopold Way
Nekoosa, WI 54457
sandvalley.com

Sand Valley is known for its three award-winning golf courses, Sand Valley, Mammoth Dunes, and the Sandbox, which were modeled after the great heathland courses of London. Enjoy dramatic views, a magnitude of strategic playing options, modern lodging, and a culinary experience to match.



The Shack Indoor Golf

847-904-2905
1717 Chestnut Ave.
Glenview, IL 60025
theshackgolfclub.com

The Shack Indoor Golf Club features TrackMan® simulator technology for an immersive golf experience. Enjoy delicious food and drinks from our full bar while practicing your swing. Perfect for socializing or improving your game, come and tee off at our state-of-the-art facility.



Pine Meadow Golf Club

847-566-4653
1 Pine Meadow Ln.
Mundelein, IL 60060
pinemeadowgc.com

Pine Meadow Golf Club is known for our beautiful 220 acres of fairways, greens, pine trees, and meadow areas.

Golfers of all abilities and ages enjoy the serene setting and fun playable design of the "Pine."

The Pine, due to its challenging design, has been host to all types of competitive events ranging from PGA Jr. League, to Men's and Women's State Ams, to Illinois PGA Championships.

This is truly a golf facility for everyone.



Prairie Landing Golf Club

630-208-7600
2325 Longest Dr.
West Chicago, IL 60185
prairielanding.com

Prairie Landing Golf Course is a prairie links style 18-hole course designed by Robert Trent Jones, Jr. The course has been rated 4.5 Stars by *Golf Digest* for "Best Places to Play." Prairie Landing Golf Club prides itself on offering the quintessential golf experience of the Chicago-land Area.



PrairieView Golf Club

815-234-4653
6734 N. German Church Rd.
Byron, IL 61010
prairieviewgolf.com

Recognized by many suburban golfers as a hidden gem, PrairieView Golf Club boasts beautiful views of restored dolomite prairie land that is well worth a short drive west out to Bryon, Ill. (south of Rockford). With challenging greens, dramatic bunkering, and supreme conditioning, the course will test the skills and nerves of every golfer. PrairieView is also home to PrairieFire Golf & Grill, a year-round Toptracer Range® with heated bays, lounge seating, and great food and drink selections.



Purdue's Ackerman-Allen Course

765-494-3139
West Lafayette, IN
purduegolf.com

The Ackerman-Allen Course, a Pete Dye design, is an 18-hole, parkland-style, par-72 championship golf course featuring large bent-grass greens, fairways and tees. The layout presents a challenge for golfers of all abilities with rolling hills, tree-lined fairways, white sand bunkers, and minimal water hazards. Ackerman-Allen offers five sets of tees with the championship tees playing over 7,500 yards and the forward tees playing at 5,300 yards.



Shepherd's Crook Golf Course

847-872-2080
351 North Green Bay Rd.
Zion, IL 60099
www.shepherdscrook.org

Shepherd's Crook has earned rave reviews as a course that is both challenging and exciting to play. Keith Foster, who has designed some of the most interesting courses built in the last 10 years, created a links-style course that feels like playing Ireland's Ballybunion or Waterville courses. The design reflects the golden era of golf course architecture of the 1920s and 30s, with bentgrass fairways, tees, and greens.

"Shepherd's Crook is routed with classic and strategic design principles that cut features naturally to the terrain. The vision of Shepherd's Crook returns golfers to the game's past." – Keith Foster, Architect



Springbrook Golf Course

630-848-5060
2220 W. 83rd St.
Naperville, IL 60564
golfnaperville.org

Springbrook GC commands some of the finest views of Naperville's open space and trails. This 18-hole parkland-style championship course was renovated in 2022, and is expected to reopen in mid-year of 2023 with exciting updates including new tees and bunkers. Work on your swing at the one-acre turf practice tee, or fine tune your short game at the large practice putting green or two short-game practice greens with bunkers. Enjoy post-game refreshments on the expansive patio with great views of the course. Springbrook also offers lessons, outings, a well-stocked golf shop, and more.

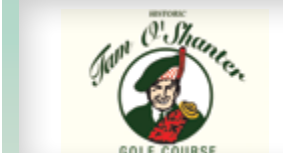


Stonewall Orchard Golf Club

847-740-4890
25675 W. Highway 60
Grayslake, IL 60030
stonewallorchard.com

Cutting through hundred-year-old oak and pine trees, Stonewall Orchard Golf Club has quickly become one of Chicago's most prolific public golf courses.

Since opening in 1999, the Arthur Hills-designed gem located in northwest suburban Grayslake has served as Final Stage Qualifying site for the U.S. Open, and currently sits in rotation with Olympia Fields and Medinah Country Club as host site for the Illinois PGA Section Championship held every Fall.



Tam O'Shanter Golf Course & Learning Center

847-965-2344
6700 W. Howard St.
Niles, IL 60714
golftam.com

One of the most important courses in popularizing the game of golf in America is located right here in Niles. In 1953, Tam O'Shanter Country Club hosted the first-ever nationally televised golf tournament.

Today, a public 9-hole par-33 course remains, maintained with the goal of providing playing conditions reminiscent of those Hogan, Palmer, and Nicklaus enjoyed years ago. Swing out for a scenic round and walk in the footsteps of legends at Tam O'Shanter!

Year-round instruction available!





University Ridge Golf Course

608-845-7700
9002 County Rd. PD
Madison, WI 53593
universityridge.com

University Ridge is home to the University of Wisconsin Men's & Women's Golf Teams. Since 2016, University Ridge has been the host site of the PGA Tour Champions, American Family Insurance Championship, which is hosted by Ryder Cup Captain Steve Stricker.

Play where the Badgers and the Pros play! University Ridge!



White Pines Golf Club

630-766-0304
500 W. Jefferson
Bensenville, IL 60106
whitepinesgolf.com

The White Pines Golf Club's two 18-hole championship courses, situated on more than 260 acres, have been a favorite among Chicago area golfers since 1928. The public course, owned and operated by the Bensenville Park District, is an excellent choice for players of all skill levels. Whether it's an evening at the lighted driving range, a casual round with friends, an outing or special event, White Pines Golf Club offers the perfect setting to get "away from it all." Enjoy food and drink at 37 Bar & Grill. Take advantage of Monday-Thursday tee time specials and book online!



Whitetail Ridge Golf Club

630-882-8988
7671 Clubhouse Dr.
Yorkville, IL 60560
whitetailridgegc.com

Experience a "tail" of two Nines at Whitetail Ridge Golf Club. Our Front Nine flows through a beautiful valley featuring a creek that splits through its relatively flat landscape. Our Back Nine begins on #10 with a climb up the slopes and follows the rolling hills into some towering trees. Finish your day in The Persimmon Room. This newly renovated space features an indoor/outdoor dining area with shareable dishes, scratch-made entrees, an extensive list of bourbons and whiskey, and the most spectacular sunsets around!



Wilmette Golf Club

847-256-9777
3900 Fairway Dr.
Wilmette, IL 60091
golfwilmette.com

Wilmette Golf Club is the closest 18-hole facility north of Chicago. This par-70 course will test all skill levels with the purest greens on the North Shore. A 30-station driving range and large putting green are available for working on your game. Enjoy a drink or dinner on the patio overlooking the 18th green at The Lawn. Contact us directly to book your next outing or special event. Take advantage of tee time specials by booking online at golfwilmette.com



X-Golf Kildeer

847-847-1723
20771 N Rand Rd Suite I-4
Kildeer, IL 60047
xgolfkildeer.com

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X-Golf Libertyville

224-504-2940
1177 S. Milwaukee Ave.
Libertyville, IL 60048
xgolf-libertyville.com

We spent 15 years engineering, learning from golf experts, and creating a simulator of unparalleled accuracy. The result? A completely new experience that lets golfers play on the world's top courses, compete in a wide variety of game formats, and of course – enjoy some of the best golf they've ever played in a high-energy indoor entertainment facility.

Whether a tee time or PGA Professional lesson, X-Golf has it all: a full bar with beer and cocktails, shareable appetizers, and courses designed for all ages and levels from amateurs to professionals.



X-Golf Orland Park

708-966-0486
15876 S. LaGrange Rd.
Orland Park, IL 60462
xgolforlandpark.com

We offer eight state-of-the-art simulators which are designed for golfers at all stages of their game. Whether you want to sharpen your game to gain that competitive edge or are just starting out and want to learn new skills without battling the outdoors, this is the place for you. The simulators can give you data about your swing and ball striking to improve your game and along with that, we can help you take your game to the next level by having a PGA-qualified Professional on our team.



X-Golf Schaumburg

847-380-1848
1100 American Ln.
Schaumburg, IL 60173
xgolf-schaumburg.com

We spent 15 years engineering, learning from golf experts, and creating a simulator of unparalleled accuracy. The result? A completely new experience that lets golfers play on the world's top courses, compete in a wide variety of game formats, and of course – enjoy some of the best golf they've ever played in a high-energy indoor entertainment facility.

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Chula Vista Golf Resort

From the first tee box, the 5,697-yard Coldwater Canyon Golf Course at Chula Vista appears to be a charming, playful and relatively easy challenge. Appearances, however, can be very deceiving as many holes are tightened by massive sand bunkers, lakes, mounds, and towering trees. The traditional-style front nine, built in 1923, is complemented by a Scottish links-inspired back nine that recently underwent a \$2 million renovation.

This family resort offers a wide variety of amenities, including a spa, arcade, dining options, and mini-golf. The property's marquee attractions are indoor/outdoor waterparks featuring an 80,000 sq. ft multi-level indoor facility and a huge outdoor facility highlighted by the 48-ft high, 268-ft. long Cyclone Extreme Waterslide.

Devil's Head Resort, Merrimac

One of the Midwest's premier ski resorts is also home to two dramatically different 18-hole championship golf courses.

The first, located at the base of the ski hill, Prairie Glen Golf Course winds up, down, and across dramatic terrain, and features native grasses amidst forested land. Designed by Art Johnson, the course is highlighted by the 188-yd. No. 7. This dramatic par 3 initiates from an elevated tee in the middle of a forest and descends to a large green surrounded by sand.

Prairie Glen is complemented by a sister 18-hole layout appropriately named the Glacier Course, as rock outcroppings stretch out across the dramatic bluffs that made this area a ski destination.

Devil's Head is a four-season property that features hotel and rental condominium accommodations along with nature trails, indoor/outdoor pools and fine dining. The resort is located only 10 minutes away from Devil's Lake State Park, one of Wisconsin's most dramatic hiking properties that includes trails alongside a 500-ft. rock cliff.

Christmas Mountain Village

Like Trappers Turn, this four-season resort serves up 27 fun-filled and dramatic holes. The 6,786-yd. Oaks course is an 18-hole layout tightened by towering namesake oak trees as well as ample sand bunker-

ing. The Pines course is a short 9-hole tract perfect for family golf as fairway landing areas are generous. Both courses are meticulously groomed and are characterized by dramatically changing topography.

Located four miles from downtown, this elegant resort caters to families and large groups with cabins, villas, and cottages. Amenities include four outdoor pools, an indoor pool, fishing, bicycling, dining, and tennis courts.

The Dells Experience

No visit to the Dells area is complete without a stop at least a few of the attractions that have lured visitors to the area for generations. Noah's Ark Family Park is touted as the world's largest waterpark with 49 water rides, including its new 10-story-high attraction called Scorpion's Tail. Other favorite attractions are the aforementioned amphibious ducks which take guests on tours through the Upper Dells and its towering 100-ft. cliffs.

For complete information on the Wisconsin Dells area, request a free vacation guide book through the Wisconsin Dells Visitor & Convention Bureau via the web at www.wisdells.com.

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Wadsworth

continued from page 34

If Brent Wadsworth wasn't promoting golf, he was advancing trusted employees of his company.

His first hire in 1958 was John Cotter, who had a background in farming and heavy equipment. Cotter became Brent's "right-hand man," Eric said, working his way up from tractor hand and laborer to chairman of the board of directors. Cotter helped Wadsworth successfully complete its first project, Calumet Country Club, as well as its first 18-hole course, Silver Lake Country Club, near Akron, Ohio.

In 1962, Brent hired Paul Eldredge, who managed work teams and eventually advanced to divisional president until his retirement in 2000.

In the late 1960s, the Shapland brothers, Tom and Jon, added more stability, sweat, smarts, and swagger to the company. The Champaign natives and U of I graduates worked their way up, becoming two more Wadsworth employees who carved a shovels-to-suits path. Jon Shapland, who led the company's southeast division in Tampa for about 40 years, died in late August

For most of its existence, Wadsworth Golf Construction has been employ-

ee-owned, boasting a roster of people who don't mind getting their hands dirty.

"I think the key [for success] was giving the guys ownership of the company," Eric said.

"He always put quality and people ahead of anything," Myslinski said of the founder. "It was something to live by. He respected the industry as a whole, and he respected people who worked for our company. It was an honor to know him."

Brent Wadsworth cared only that you knew of his company's reputation. Quality work, quality people.

"He was really humble and tried to funnel that," Eric said of his father. "The idea was to do work for architects. Let them have the credit."

Karnick, 59, was hired by Cotter and is in his 35th year with the company. He counts 8 to 10 projects Wadsworth is involved with as fall approaches.

Bella Ridge, which is being built on a dairy farm and features views of Colorado's mountains, is set to debut next year. In Texas, plans are underway for the Freestone Club, an exclusive golf course community and resort at a picturesque state park about 90 miles south of Dallas.

Back home, Wadsworth keeps busy with a complete renovation of Cantigny's

Hillside 9, with renovations of its Lakeside and Woodside layouts to come in subsequent years. Evanston Golf Club is undergoing renovations of its greens and tees. Urbana Country Club is in the midst of a complete renovation, including greens, tees, bunkers, drainage and grassing.

Edgewood Valley and Naperville Country Club are completing bunker renovations.

Business, yes, is booming. Dust isn't settling in the golf course construction business. While the recession forced Wadsworth to close its Florida office and consolidate its Pennsylvania office with Plainfield, the industry has bounced back.

"COVID is really what has allowed the industry to rally," Karnick said. "We're riding the wave. We've been able to keep rolling based on our reputation, the work that we've done locally and around the country, and a pretty loyal group of people working for us."

Like the building or renovation of any golf course, there will be hills, if not mountains or steep bunkers, to climb.

"I think the business is strong, as long as the industry stays strong," Karnick said. "We're going to survive some ups and downs."

Wadsworth Construction has done so for more than 65 years. Rakes don't rest.

Southwestern Michigan

continued from page 31

on pristine courses most of which were carved out of sand dunes. All are highly affordable. While not blessed with the dramatically hilly topography or cooler temperatures found a few hours away in Northern Michigan, this part of the state serves up plenty of great public golf at affordable prices only a short distance away from the Second City.

Built in 1965 originally as a 9-holer, Brookwood Golf Course in Buchanan expanded to 18 holes in the 1970s. The 6,452-yard layout is operated by the legendary father/son duo of George and Joe Thomas. George spent 15 years as golf coach at Notre Dame University and as a player led the 1981 Senior PGA Championship which was eventually won by Arnold Palmer. The course is characterized by rolling terrain and mature stands of trees. Make sure to stop in at the historic clubhouse which is a renovated 1930s-era barn.

The official qualifying venue for the Western Amateur from the 1970s through 2008, Lake Michigan Hills in Benton Harbor

is a spectacular course featuring great elevation changes, marshes and treacherous bunkers. Built upon a former fruit farm by Charles Maddox, Sr., the course has been rated as a four-star property by *Golf Digest* magazine.

Also in Benton Harbor, Point o' Woods is a private club that hosted the Western Amateur from 1971 to 2009 and again in 2019. The late Robert Trent Jones, Sr. considered the championship venue his finest design.

Hampshire Country Club in Dowagiac serves up two championship courses open to the public. The Hampshire course was built in 1961 over 144 acres of farm land by Lawrence Packard. Owner Rolfe Wells made the course a family operation and is maintained to this day by the second generation Wells family. Not quite as long as its sister course, Dogwood Trails stretches to 6,833 yards and was previously used for qualifying for the Western Amateur.

The 27-hole Indian Lake Hills Golf Course in Eau Claire is the story of three generations of ownership. The original owners the Steimle family built the 9-hole East Course in 1925. In the 1960s,

Oscar Kolberg carved the West Course through apple orchards. Steve and Lynn Miller added the North Course in 1992. The Millers continue to operate the complex which prides itself on impeccable conditioning.

Paw Paw Lake Golf Club in Watervliet, Orchard Hills Country Club in Buchanan, Pebblewood Country Club in Bridgman and the family-owned and operated Pipestone Creek Golf Course in Eau Claire round out the array of offerings across the region.

Long a vacation destination for Chicagoans seeking lake views and cooler temperatures, Southwest Michigan features long stretches of public beaches amidst rolling sand dunes. On your golf trip, consider a stop at Tiscornia Park which maintains two lighthouses. Microbreweries can now be found in towns across the area, including Round Barn Brewery & Public House in Baroda and Silver Harbor Brewing Company in the St. Joseph Social District.

For more information on golf packages, accommodations, and things to do in Southwest Michigan, visit the tourism office's website: www.swmichigan.org.



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