



THE GROUNDS CREW

Spring newsletter from the Willowbrook Grounds Crew

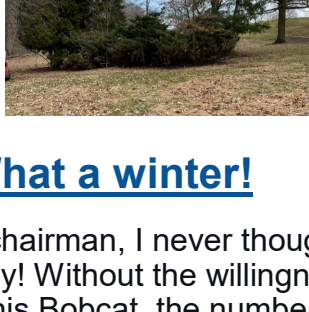
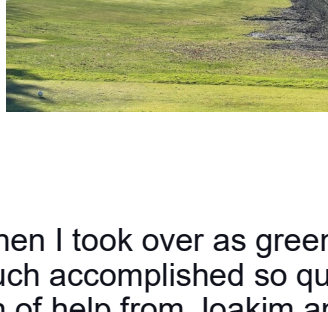
APRIL 2023

Top stories in this newsletter

Number 3

Trees

A longer course?



What a winter!

When I took over as greens chairman, I never thought we would get so much accomplished so quickly! Without the willingness of the crew and a ton of help from Joakim and his Bobcat, the number of projects we completed is impressive! In this newsletter, we will highlight some of the work we got accomplished this winter, and things we hope to accomplish before the start of the season.

Our new super Ryan and his assistant Zach are doing an amazing job! The team they have built is very excited for the grass to start growing and to groom our course in what we are hoping will be our best season ever! Number 9 is growing in better than we expected and it won't be long until we get to play what's going to be one of our best holes! We hope you enjoy the changes that are being made. Some of our bigger projects are listed below.

If you have any ideas or suggestions, please email me Tom@cps.golf

3 Changes on number 3

We drained the swamp to the left of the lake and added to the mounding theme. We also removed two of the large pine trees and the open look is fantastic. We will soon be growing rough grass in that area.

We also added draining to the Right side of the end of the fairway just short of the lake. This area was a trouble spot and the new draining is working great.

Finally, the mess in front of the tee box on the right tree line was also addressed. We pulled over 30 dead trees that had fallen onto the course. This will be high grass area and the new look off the tee is very pleasing to the eye.

Tree Removal

Tree removal is a hot topic in the golf course maintenance profession. There is a saying you can have nice trees or nice grass – Pick ONE....

Well, we all know we need both and it's a fine balance. Trees are costly on equipment and labor yet add some fantastic visuals that we all enjoy. So every tree that comes down is carefully considered.

This winter we removed several dead trees on the course, A massive dead tree to the right of the black tee on 7, 3 large pines on number 2, several unsightly and dead trees at the top of the range, and 4 trees

behind the new number 9 green. In addition, we trimmed trees on the right of 11 (just past the fairway bunker).

Who needs a longer course?

Can we get our course to a championship 7000+ yard course? Why should we?

Pick any course that has performed a course improvement or redesign and you won't find one that made their course shorter. With the young guns hitting it way too far, courses need to keep up with the times. The problem is these projects can be pricey!

Not to mention putting in a new black tee doesn't do anything for our red, gold, white, and even blue tee golfers, but it does provide opportunities to host events and more importantly attract new members. It's a proven fact and Willowbrook just so happens to have a few guys that want to see this happen and are volunteering their time to start the project.

The first step to get to our goal - Lengthen Number 13! Now I can't take credit for the idea. A long-time former member and many-time club champ Jim Anderson talked about this for years. Hopefully, Jim is smiling down from above now that the project is nearly complete.

Knowing we didn't budget for this project, Joakim and I had a goal to do it as inexpensively to the club as possible. I'm pleased to say we completed the project without using gas royalty or capital fund money. Further, we tried to limit the use of the staff as much as possible as they have their hands full this time of year. They, of course, couldn't resist helping us a bit and we leaned on Ryan to supervise us as we moved the dirt! We removed all the overgrown bushes behind 12 (see pic above) as well as the four trees in the left rough. We then spent several days moving and shaping dirt! Other than some SOD and some diesel fuel, we were able to source all the materials we needed from the existing inventory. Leftover parts from number 9 (specifically the old sprinkler heads we removed) leftover pipe and drainage, leftover pea gravel, and a big pile of old green plugs that were dumped to the left of 13 green made for the perfect topsoil. Joakim and I are clearly ready to get into the golf course construction business! (ok that might be a stretch) but to be honest, I think the project turned out great!

The best part of the project was the total cost to our members!

The only thing we had to purchase was some fuel for the bobcat and about \$800 worth of SOD

We will be able to use this tee box for 2 very exciting events we are hosting this year that will be attracting some of the best professional and amateur golfers in the country!

July 24—US Amateur Qualifier

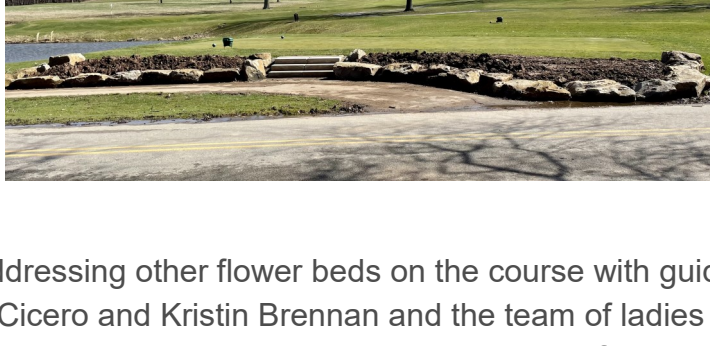
AUG 21— PA MID AM Qualifier



Other Nice Additions

New Landscaping and Steps.

We removed and replaced the steps on 11 and 12 tee boxes. While we where at it we added 2 nice flower beds on each side of the new steps.



We are addressing other flower beds on the course with guidance from Sue Cicero and Kristin Brennan and the team of ladies that volunteer their time to keeping the beds looking great! If your interested in joining that team, they are looking for volunteers.

New Tee Signs!

Special thanks to Larry Ross who came thru once again! Larry has made us new tee signs. They look fantastic! Thanks Larry!



*In closing, we have a few asks from the membership. These little things go a long way! If you see a divot, ball mark, an unraked trap, please take care of it. If we all do our part, the course will be even better! Finally, we ask they you place the sand rakes **IN** the bunkers and not on the grass.*

See ya on the course!

Tom Robshaw—Greens Chairman