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Super-N-Site

In 1922 a fine country club was established with nine holes that overlooked the Fox River in McHenry, IL. Construction on the second nine holes began in 1925 and in 1926 a full 18-hole facility was presented to the membership for their enjoyment and leisure. The course was played in original form until 1953 when major renovations brought about the lengthening of several holes, numerous tree plantings, bunker renovations and improved greens. The club has since remained virtually unchanged except for aesthetic improvements around tee and green complexes.

The man behind the scenes that maintains and dedicates hard work to this beautiful and scenic layout is Bill Humphres. Bill came to McHenry Country Club about eleven years ago as an equipment technician. During his tenure he also worked outside with the grounds crew and discovered he had a real knack for both turf and machinery and enjoyed both aspects of the jobs. Bill got a degree in turf management from Rutgers while working at McHenry and shortly after completing his studies he was the ideal candidate to take over the helm as superintendent. Bill has been in charge at McHenry Country Club for the past four years. He is continuing in the footsteps of his mentor, Bob Lively.

While he is not busy working Bill likes to go for rides on his 2005 Harley Davidson Road King Classic. However, he spends most of his time with his family. His wife, Shoko, and daughter, Amber, are the receivers of much fond attention and precious time. Amber keeps him and his wife busy with the life of a seven year old daughter that is involved with gymnastics and swim meets. Bill has been on many trips to Japan and enjoys all aspects of the country including the food stating that sushi is probably his favorite type of food.

When asked for some fun facts and interesting information about the golf course he had three important points for those who will be visiting and playing the golf course in August. First, beware of the dogleg in the second fairway. There is a large oak tree at the corner that practically plays in the middle of the fairway. The tree can make second shots very difficult. Good luck to anyone that is unfortunate enough to be directly behind it. Second, the thirteenth green is a fun optical illusion. Putts look uphill but they are actually downhill. So, putting from the front of the green will actually be downhill even though the large hill behind the green makes you think otherwise. Ask about the transit as this has been verified by Bill and his crew. Finally, a very neat piece of golf history comes out of McHenry, IL. McHenry Country Club has a link to one of the most important pioneers in today's modern game of golf. Vale Adams was the golf pro at McHenry from 1962 to 1981 and continues as a member of the course today. His son, Gary V. Adams was the innovator of the modern metal wood, founding Taylor Made Golf, which was originally located in McHenry. Gary Adams went on to found two more companies featuring metal woods-Founders Club and McHenry Metals. The walking bridge on the signature 8th hole is dedicated to the memory of Gary Adams. Stop and

take a picture if you get a chance to commemorate the improvement in your golf bag over the historic persimmon wood club heads.

I got a real sense while talking with Bill that the membership at McHenry is a very tight-knit and friendly group. When asked what his favorite part about working at McHenry CC was his response, without hesitancy, was the wonderful membership. They are good, family-oriented, hard working people and take good care of each other. Having a good group of employers sure can make it easier to go to work even during the long hot days of summer. The hardest part about the course is not even course related. As many superintendents in the area can relate weather impacts us the most with the amount of time needed to compensate for good and bad weather and its impact on our family lives. That impact on family can be the toughest. Thankfully a shortened golf season and the opportunity to travel can help to make up for those summer short-comings.

One final thing that needs to be emphasized and was asked that it be included as it is the most important piece to this brief introduction; Bill would like to “thank all the people for the chances and opportunities to learn and grow in this business and be at McHenry Country Club – especially thank you to Bob Lively.”