

LONGEVITY IN BUSINESS | VITENSE GOLFLAND SINCE 1955

Vitense has provided golf, other fun for 60 years



2 HOURS AGO • [JILL CARLSON FOR THE STATE JOURNAL](#)

Sixty years ago, George Vitense had a vision of developing a multifaceted, affordable day-and-night family golf environment. While he built a large double-deck golf range, two 18-hole miniature golf courses and a nine-hole, par three golf course within a few years, today's version is much grander than anything Vitense could have imagined.

Joel Weitz, Vitense's grandson, operates the business today. Like his grandfather, Weitz, 53, is a professional golfer with the Professional Golfers Association of America. He saw the demand in the Madison market for expanded golf options. "The business evolved from a very small family operation located on farmland to a year-round family destination," Weitz commented.

In 2006, Weitz added a 20,000-square-foot building to provide a destination for year-round recreation and events. The building features the Vitense Grill, which serves breakfast, lunch and dinner. The Vitense Grill has a full bar and dining area. It also has two private access-controlled community rooms for birthday parties, company meetings and team-building outings, a covered patio, terrace, large flat-screen TV and a three-sided fireplace.

Vitense Catering offers in-house and off-premise catering for events. The catering operation also manages food and beverage operations at Reddan Soccer Park in Verona.

The indoor 18-hole Madison landmark miniature golf course features many unique Madison landmarks and businesses. The centerpiece is the Capitol building. Golf and then drive a remote-controlled boat on lakes Mendota and Monona, which surround the Capitol.

"Miniature golf appeals to a very diverse group of people spreading across all demographics," said Weitz. Families with small children, high school and college students and seniors are some of the demographics that Weitz mentioned enjoy mini golf.

In 2014, golf suites — a covered, heated golf range tee area — was added. Golfers can order food from the Vitense Grill delivered to the golf suites. When the golf course first opened, it was the state's first and only lit nine-hole golf course.

George Vitense was a Madison Sports Hall of Fame award recipient. He passed away in 1988. Weitz joined the company in 1992 after working as a CPA for seven years. Weitz, and his wife, Sarah, own the business. Their three children Heidi, 19, George, 17, and Charlie, 16, work at Vitense.

Golf lessons are another option at Vitense as part of the Golf Academy. Participants in the “Little Putterhead” program for ages 3 to 5 up to high-level golfers learn from the on-staff golf pros.

In addition to the two outdoor mini-golf courses — the California Course and the Wisconsin Course — baseball and softball batting cages, a water balloon game, a climbing wall and a trampoline game, Vitense now offers FootGolf, which is a new sport combining soccer and golf. The sport uses the same course used for golf. “I was intrigued by this concept in late 2012 and Vitense became the first certified facility to offer this sport in Wisconsin and in the Madison area,” said Weitz.

A 60th anniversary celebration will be held at Vitense on Sunday featuring special pricing on mini-golf, the golf course, driving range and other activities.

Vitense Golfland

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