Golf courses best for environment

A belief of a blade of grass is no less than the journeywork of the stars.

—Walt Whitman

With apology to the famed poet and esthetic values aside, there’s also the shine of dollar signs in those green shoots. A 1989 study rated turfgrass a $25 billion-plus per-year industry in the United States. It was estimated that more than 500,000 people made their living directly from the care and maintenance of turf in this country.

What must those figures now be?

Dr. Eliot C. and Beverly C. Roberts of The Lawn Institute in Pleasant Hill, Tenn., have compiled a fact-laden booklet, “Lawn and Sports Turf Benefits,” that explores several turf-related areas.

Golf courses command a strong share of the focus of the 31-page book which has gone into its fourth printing and, according to Ms. Roberts, has been sent by the American Society of Soil Producers to its members, to all Iowa legislators by several groups, and by the New Jersey and Florida Lawn Care associations and the Professional Lawn Care Association of America to their members.

“We found that there were a lot of books written about turfgrass but each would have one sentence about its benefits,” said Ms. Roberts. “We had fun putting it together and the response has been terrific.”

She said she even received a request for the book from a Western Australia organization that wants to start a sod farm and is meeting resistance with environmental groups. Extracted from the book are these choice paragraphs:

• Golf long has been the favorite game on turf. The game dates to the 1400s when the Dutch practiced a combination of winter horse and summer golf. By 1414, St. Andrew’s of Scotland had become a public golf course and still is public.

• Golf is played by millions of people worldwide as a means for exercise, relaxation, and as an avenue for business transactions.

• The first U.S. golf course was built before 1890. Today an estimated 23.4 million play 500 million rounds of golf a year in the U.S. By the year 2000, it is expected there will be 40 million golfers.

• Golf courses influence the tax base of the community. The properties surrounding a course reflect higher appraised values. The game of golf is second only to ‘United States of America’ in terms of dollars spent on turf. The game dates to the 1400s when the Dutch practiced a combination of winter horse and summer golf. By 1414, St. Andrew’s of Scotland had become a public golf course and still is public.

• Stone drainage is often the first step in reclaiming land. This is followed by a seed and fertilizer application and the establishment of turfgrass.

• Turf along airstrips reduces and prolongs engine life of planes. The first U.S. airport, located in College Park, Md., and many other fields that serve light aircraft still have turf runways.

• Grass binds the soil more effectively than any other plant. One single grass plant can grow a stem that is over three feet high. Grasses and people get on truly good terms.

• Turfgrass, therefore, helps recycle miles of water in our environment.

‘Evolution’ book in 2nd printing

The second edition of “Evolution of the Modern Green,” by Dr. Michael Hurdzan, is available from the American Society of Golf Course Architects. The four-part, full-color brochure presents current information on design, construction and maintenance of golf greens. Individuals responsible for golf course greens and others interested in how greens are built would find interesting Hurdzan’s discussions on the origins of greens as well as the engineering and inner workings of what is the most often discussed aspect of greens.

The brochure explains the various techniques used to build successful golf greens and provides the necessary information for the maintenance of greens. For a copy of the brochure, send a $3 check to the American Society of Golf Course Architects, 221 N. LaSalle St., Chicago, Ill. 60601.

Circle No 352

Ransomes brochure explains Jaguar series

A brochure on Ransomes’ new Jaguar 4000 series tractor is now available from the Johnson Creek, Wis., manufacturer. Easy-to-read, usable information is provided on all four mowers in the line, along with detailed specification data. The Jaguar 4000 incorporates what Ransomes terms “the best in rotary mowing technology.” Mowing decks of either 61 or 74 inches are available.

For more information contact Lead Inquiry Services, P. O. Box 633, Elm Grove, Wis. 53122. Circle No 353