

On Course welcomes your letters on subjects covered in the magazine, matters of green industry interest and topics pertinent to the MAGCS/GCSAA. While each submission must carry a signature and identifying information, we will consider on a case-by-case basis withholding an author's name upon his/her request. Please note that the opinions expressed herein are those of the author(s) and not necessarily those of On Course or the MAGCS.

Greetings from Sunny Arizona!



Juanita and John Ebel

A special thank-you to editors Cathy Miles Ralston and John Gurke and all Midwest members for the December *On Course* issue. It has inspired me to tell you all how much I enjoyed it. While you are battling all that snow and cold, we are just having boring days of sunshine and 70°. Perfect golfing weather! Ho hum.

First of all, the *On Course* cover photo is a bit of photographic art. Tom Maple shot a perfect scene for the December cover. Thanks, Tom. Juncos have always been a favorite feathered friend of mine. I'm somewhat of an amateur bird-watcher, having been encouraged by Mr. Watson, a schoolteacher, many years ago. We tend to think of the robin as a harbinger of spring. Even the cardinal starts singing in February, stimulated by the increasing daylight. Years ago, when the

Chicagoland area was more rural and we had more open land, I remember meadowlarks returning while there was snow on the ground.

This said, the junco is my favorite forecaster. After a long, hot and sometimes troublesome summer, suddenly the first juncos would appear in my yard and I knew easier days were ahead. All through the winter, these little feathered friends would give me much pleasure watching them cope with extreme cold and snow at my bird-feeders. Somehow, they seemed to enjoy the winter. Then one day, as the snow melted away, they were gone, just as quickly as they had appeared in the fall. This was a sign that warmer weather was imminent. Spring and summer were a-comin'! Busy days ahead. We do not have juncos in southern Arizona and I miss them.

It was not just the *On Course* cover that pleased me, but its contents. The Bull Sheet (I'm still partial to that name) section is always of interest to me, but the December issue had two fine articles.

Brian Bossert's president's message is a reflection of his character and who he is. His appreciation of others and his gratuitous spirit show a true humility coupled with steadfastness and dedication to our profession. A fine message, Brian. It reminds all of us that we have had some help along the way.

Tony Rzadzki's story, "Looking for Greener Grass," was unique. As some of you might expect from me, the spiritual part of our being is highly important, but often neglected. Where you are going to spend eternity is a good way to jump-start that spirit. Tony's willingness to share his inner conflict and personal feelings took great courage. I compliment him and encourage others to share God's help in their lives. The life of the golf course superintendent is not always a piece of cake. When the pressures seem overwhelming, **taste the Lord and see that He is good!**

Finally, I would like to thank the MAGCS for sending me a Christmas card greeting! A very nice touch. You youngsters have a lot of class! Here's wishing you all a great and green new year.

John C. Ebel,
Retired Keeper of the Green