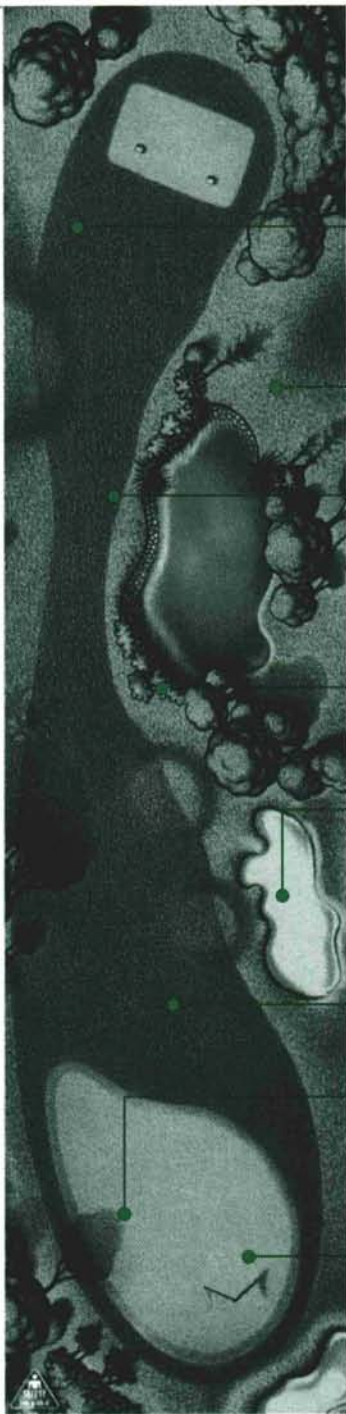


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The Midwest Association of Golf Course Superintendents is a professional organization founded in 1927 whose goals include preservation and dissemination of scientific and practical knowledge pertaining to golf turf maintenance.

We endeavor to increase efficiency and economic performance while improving and enhancing the individual and collective prestige of the members.

The MAGCS (Midwest Association of Golf Course Superintendents) member is also an environmental steward. We strive to uphold and enhance our surroundings by promoting flora and fauna in every facet in a manner that is beneficial to the general public now and in the future.

On Course with the President



Don Cross,
President, MAGCS

As I begin this message, it is a few short days from our venture to, what we hope will be, sunny and warm Orlando. Having worked outside for most of the winter, I'm definitely ready to enjoy a little more reasonable weather.

With this writing in advance of the Conference, it is difficult to comment as to the ultimate outcome of various events, but I will speculate nevertheless. The efforts of a dedicated and committed staff and board at GCSAA Headquarters have again provided its membership with the finest educational offering of any in our industry. A record number of seminars, numerous, timely topics in the concurrent sessions, the environmental forum, the Audubon workshop, and a trade show that continues to grow all provided us with ample opportunity to learn. The magical locale of Orlando served to further the overall success of this main attraction. We will return having made new contacts, being better prepared to solve special problems at our facilities, and possessing an invigorated and energized perspective. Before long, we'll be full swing into a new golf season; and the lessons we learned in Orlando

will, unquestionably, pay dividends throughout the year.

Congratulations are certainly in order for Bruce R. Williams, newly elected GCSAA President. The "Midwest" is very proud of his ascendancy through the positions of GCSAA office, and we can be assured that his professionalism and effective leadership will bode well for the association throughout this new year. We wish you the best, Bruce!!!

Hopefully, many of you had the opportunity to visit the MAGCS hospitality suite. Several months of planning and effort behind the scenes are required to insure that this is a successful event. In previous years, Al Fierst quietly and efficiently performed this duty; and this year, in the same manner, Brian Bossert carried on. Thanks for all your hard work, Brian! Of course, special recognition needs to be given to the many contributors to the Gold Tee Club, those who make it possible for us to enjoy our hospitality suite. We sincerely appreciate your support! Let us all, in positions of purchasing responsibility, be sure to remember these commercial members and reciprocate the support with our business.

Finally, as I am acknowledging efforts and contributions, there are two additional individuals who need to be recognized: Roger Stewart and Bob Maibusch. While the rest of us, generally, enjoyed the freedom to roam as we pleased during conference week, these two, once again, expended considerable time and effort with all of the GCSAA candidates. Their task was to meet individually with each candidate, discuss the issues, determine their views, and learn the goals each had for himself and GCSAA. At the caucus, Roger and Bob then reported their findings to those in attendance to determine how our votes would be cast at the Annual Meeting. Our voting strength has a significant impact on the outcome of elections and other voting issues; and we, the MAGCS, are fortunate to be able to make informed voting decisions because of them.

Complete details of the voting results and other issues will be presented at our next regular MAGCS meeting on March 12 at Oak Brook Hills. See you there!!!

Donald A. Cross, CGCS,
President, MAGCS





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Golf Courses — A Bluebird Paradise

by Ken Schar

Why are golf courses considered a good area to attract bluebirds? The reason in one word is “habitat.” Habitat is defined as “the region where a plant or animal (bird) naturally grows or lives.”

The habitat that the bluebirds like is open areas with scattered trees where the ground is not heavily covered with vegetation but is kept short by cutting. They especially like trees with a few low branches that they can use as a perch from which to scan the ground for insects, the main diet of bluebirds. The bluebirds have excellent eyesight! This is a plus for golf courses in that they can be environmentally friendly by relying less on pesticides and more on predators, such as the bluebirds.

Thus, golf courses have reduced their use of chemicals, because of these “predators,” and course maintenance time by using a variety of turf grasses and the use of native plantings, such as wildflowers, which attract the bluebirds.

The bluebirds are a cavity-nesting bird and must have a house to live in. The use of a properly built bluebird house is a must, and there are many designs. (All of my houses are the front-opening slot type, which I call the Tuttle design.) They do not have to be fancy--homemade is fine--but follow an approved plan using the proper lumber. **DO NOT USE ANY GREEN-TREATED LUMBER!** The ability to inspect the inside of the house is a must; front or side opening houses are easy to inspect.

The location of the house is important. Face the house in any direction, but the opening should



Ken Schar checking a bluebird house among the wild flowers.

face a tree from 25 to 100 feet away. Never mount houses where insecticides or herbicides are used because they'll kill the insects that the bluebirds feed on (and also could kill the bluebirds).

The house should be mounted on a metal pipe or post covered by a PVC pipe to prevent animals (such as raccoons) from climbing

up to the house. The house should be 5 feet from the ground to the bottom of the hole in the box. Bluebirds are territorial; therefore, space the houses 100 yards apart.

The next step, and perhaps the most important, is a regular monitoring, i.e., checking of the houses at least once a week. Record your observations of what has happened. One of the reasons we monitor is because of two nonnative birds, the house sparrow and the starling. These two birds were imported from the old country and are not protected by our federal or state laws. They both will destroy the bluebird eggs or the young, so it is very important to never let these birds nest in your bluebird houses.

To monitor your trail means you visit and open every house. Watch the house as you approach. Gently tap the house before opening; maybe a bird will fly out. Upon opening the house, you will observe a simple, clean, usually cup-shaped, small, dry grass nest. It is a bluebird's nest. Leave that and close the house. However, if



Bluebird slot house with a nest.

(continued on page 14)

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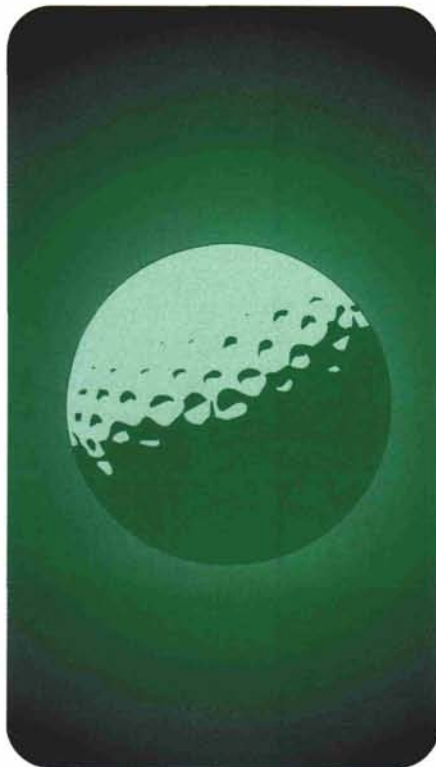


BOO! Nite Lite

by Gary Hearn, Salt Creek Golf Club

Welcome to the Dark Dimension. If you blink once, it might go away; if you blink twice, you might go away. Hey, doesn't this bring back memories of night watering — what is lurking in the shadow, "The Shadow" knows.

This isn't new to some superintendents, but to others, what the heck am I talking about? Here at Salt Creek Golf Club, Nite Lites weren't very spectacular either for the last 7 years. We could get about 2 outings per year with about 40 golfers per outing, but this year we encouraged corporation outings and had 11 outings that ranged from 40 to 125 golfers. With all these outings, I had to learn how to manage irrigation schedules,



course preparation, lighting the course, clean-up, and preparation for following morning golfers.

First, a brief description of the course. Salt Creek is a public course with two 9-holes that are mostly par 3s and short par 4s. The Blue course surrounds the White course, and most of the outings take place on the White course, which has small water hazards, a lot of open space, fairly flat terrain, and no outside lighting distractions.

Second, course preparation for Nite Lite. This year I learned very quickly how to prepare for this event. Remember, this is an outing — there will be drinking. A two-man crew sets out about 6 p.m. to avoid golfers, and starts

(continued on page 24)

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Director's Column

by Don Ferreri

PUBLIC RELATIONS

With the 1996 golf season fast approaching, our exposure to the public and our club members is once again heightened. All of us in the golf industry need to be aware of our professional image at all times. This is most important to our employers as well as ourselves when dealing with environmental issues. Keep in mind that your actions, positive as well as negative, are linked to all your peers in the eyes of the media and public perception.

In February, we (MAGCS) operated a trade booth at the Chicago Golf Show in Rosemont. I would like to thank all those individuals who volunteered their time

and resources to make this show a success. It is exposure in shows like this that allows our association to reach out to the public in a positive and professional manner.

During the summer of 1995, the MAGCS Public Relations Committee was kept very busy because of the horrid weather. I hope this coming season our efforts in the media will all be positive, and we will not have to educate golfers about what went wrong.

It will be the intent of our Public Relations Committee to promote golf courses as environmentally concerned sanctuaries preserving green open space. I believe our industry can overcome any stigma we have received in the past. I encourage all of you to help by utilizing your own resources in

the media along with your talents. Place press releases in your local papers on your Audubon efforts and achievements. Use the efforts of our national association to promote your course or business as environmentally friendly so we can educate our neighbors. Put positive articles in your club newsletter or bulletin. Sign up for community career nights at local high schools. Call into radio shows if the opportunity arises. There are plenty of free avenues to use in promoting your golf course and, overall, the entire industry. Use the new MAGCS brochure or issues of *On Course* to educate your club officials or developers. These methods are not difficult and can prove quite rewarding. Any interested members who wish to serve on the Public Relations

(continued on page 28)

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