

They're for the birds, bats too

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tonwood (fixing axchandles, wooden bridges and building birdhouses).
The maintenance staff has recently formed an advisory group to work toward certification in the National Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary System. As part of this effort, the maintenance staff is expanding its focus on bluebirds and purple martins to include butterflies, bats and ducks. There is also an extensive feeding program featuring a dozen corn, wild birdseed and suet feeders, and teeter-totter squirrel feeders with whole dried corncobs attached.

The certification can also apply to recreational facilities such as municipal parks, but golf courses are mentioned many times in the literature.

"The program was set up to enhance the public perception of golf courses and their contribution to the nature, as well as to society," Hilton said. "Prestonwood Country Club has always had a strong commitment to the preservation of the environment and natural resources."

To receive the certification, they must take rigorous steps involving the use of pesticides, the preservation of wetlands, and water conservation and water quality management.

The public must become involved—school children will be invited to visit the bluebird trail. Country club members or neighbors are needed to monitor the structures to make sure they are being inhabited by the birds that the program is trying to attract.

Prestonwood officials are also encouraging nearby homeowners to become certified, by putting up things like hummingbird feeders and suet feeders.

Another golf course in Charlotte has already received the certification (the only one in North Carolina), so Prestonwood officials are in a hurry to be the next. It takes from one to three years to receive the certification, but since many of the requirements (such as bluebird houses) are already in place, Banks and Hilton say it should take them a year or less.

For the past three years, about 300 baby bluebirds were hatched and fledged. Last year, there were 360, Banks said.

The nine purple martin houses (which have 12 compartments each) are boarded up in winter after the birds fly south to prevent starlings or wrens from inhabiting the houses. In late February or early March, the doors are removed for the purple martins' return.

Banks has redesigned Hilton's original birdhouse, adding a side-latch to the house, which opens on the side instead of the top as in most birdhouses. The houses have a copper roof to keep them dry. He has also perfected the design for the bat house. So far only one house is up, but Banks plans to have six up by spring.

The bat houses will be placed near ponds, because bats love mosquitoes for dinner. A bat will eat about 2,000 mosquitoes in a day, Banks said.

The bat houses are like narrow beehives. There is insulation in the center so the bats can back up to the warmth. They hang their feet on nylon mesh after they crawl up into it.

"They like to crawl up into something," Banks said. The houses are placed 20 feet off the ground on metal poles, but bats would also like them if they were lower, he said.

Near the butterfly bushes, they plan to plant butterfly bushes to attract the colorful insects.

A bale of pine straw is placed under the bluebird houses several times a year. Banks said he could tell by looking at an uninhabited house if there really are bluebirds living there. If he finds sticks, mud, leaves or grass in the nesting materials, some other bird has taken over the house.

The bluebirds have three broods from February or March through August or September, Banks said. It takes 21 or 22 days from mating to sending the fledglings off to fly away. Each time, they make a new nest for the new set of babies. Banks and his staff help by removing the old nests and providing fresh bales of pine straw.

Squirrel protectors (which also work on snakes and cats) are put halfway up the poles on all birdhouses to prevent climbing.

The environmental plan will be sent off in late January or early February to the Audubon Society. The plan inventoried all of the wildlife found on the country club

site, and outlined an environmental plan for future improvements that would enhance the preservation of the environment and wildlife. The Audubon society will respond with an extensive list of requirements to be filled to meet the certification.

The six areas that must be addressed are environmental planning, wildlife and habitat management, integrated pest management, water conservation, water quality management and outreach and education.

Most of these areas are already being addressed. For example, the golf course crews spray fungicides, pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers only when necessary, and there are non-spray, protected areas which are classified as wetlands.

A group of students from N.C. State is already testing the water quality, before it enters the Prestonwood site, while it is there, and after it leaves. Crabtree Creek runs through Prestonwood.

Prestonwood has its own irrigation system from ponds. Cary water is only used for cleanup and that is well-controlled, Banks said.

The outreach and education aspect has been weakest. Folks interested in helping may call 467-6288 to volunteer.

Professors from area universities are consulting with the maintenance staff on the project. Dr. Charles Peacock of N.C. State University and Dr. Bud Smart of Duke University, both members of the Audubon Society, and Mark Johns, of N.C. State, who is also a member of the N.C. Wildlife Commission, have helped Hilton and Banks get the program off the ground. Brent Lineberger, a graduate of N.C. State in forestry and wildlife management, who now has his own company, was a consultant for the resource inventory done in 1996.

Banks has a Ph.D. in nuclear physics, and has been a member of the club since it opened. He recently took the job in the maintenance department to keep busy.

Hilton was the superintendent of golf courses beginning in 1987 before the club opened, but left in 1990 to take a job in Maryland and later in Williamsburg, Va., but came back in January of 1994. His title now is golf course construction superintendent.

Maintenance staff members are taking the lead in various categories for the certification. David Racine will head up the wildlife and habitat management area; Kurt Nitschke will take care of the integrated pest management; Jeff Koonce will handle water conservation; Dave Tandy will take care of water quality issues; and Jon Allen will lead the outreach and education effort.

Ron Gilmore, director of golf course operations, is the overall supervisor of the Audubon projects.

Elections Board reviews charges of slander

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what I was going to do to the town and town employees if I were re-elected. Several of these such attack letters were unsigned and clearly were an attempt to derail my positive campaign efforts and to create doubt in the minds of the voters as to my integrity, honesty and performance in office."

Mrs. Broadwell accuses Phyllis Newnam, who was seeking reelection to a District 2 seat, of being allied with Lumley, because she said her literature went through the same metered mail. She also accused Commissioner C.T. Moore of being involved in the mass mailings, because he was Mrs. Newnam's campaign manager.

Moore said he had no knowledge of the mailings.

"I don't know what she's going after, I know nothing about this. I do know that as far as I can tell, Phyllis didn't do it. I was hoping Margaret wouldn't be a bad loser and this would be over."

Mrs. Newnam said, "The only thing I have to say is I had nothing to do with any of it, and I know nothing about it."

In the complaint, Mrs. Broadwell said, "I was not re-elected on November 4, 1997, and I truly believe it was a direct result of a calculated effort on the part of Mr. Ernest Lumley (former mayor of Morrisville) and his small group of followers to unseat me for some ulterior motive."

Mrs. Broadwell enclosed copies of all of the flyers that were distributed before the election. Some

of the flyers accuse her of wanting to fire most of the town staff, and of wanting to serve as manager as well as mayor.

"Portraying me as that type of person was very offensive to me," Mrs. Broadwell said. "If the reader were to believe that, they must think I'm an idiot. It would make no good reasonable common sense. Second of all, I'm not super human, how in the world could anybody physically handle all those jobs at one time?"

She also objected to the accusation that she took \$50,000 from the town sewer fund. This refers to a

lawsuit filed against her husband and neighbors by the town about 10 years ago for refusing to grant easements for public sewer.

"We showed three different ways that we would give easement rights if they would shift the proposed line slightly," Mrs. Broadwell said. "They would not negotiate at all."

She added that to her memory, the town spent a total of \$70,000 in court for all four cases, and is unsure where the \$50,000 figure came from. She added that she does not own the land, but her husband had the land before they were married and her name was never added to it.

Gambling a 'snap'

Morrisville entrepreneur heads to market

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Erickson. He is senior tech leader for a mechanical group that makes batteries, chargers and car kits. He still keeps in touch with Welsh, who is still at Pratt-Whitney, on a regular basis.

There have been a lot of steps to get this far. First the men had the product tested at the University of Florida to see what the exact pressure was to break it. At first it was about 380 pounds, which wasn't close enough to suit them.

So they redesigned it. Parts of the halter are strong plastic; the jaws are stainless steel.

Once the design was complete, they developed an extensive marketing plan. They have received the promise of a loan from the Small Business Administration, which they may turn down because it is too restrictive, and have invested \$40,000 each of their own money.

They have secured quotes on the manufacture and have chosen Kaybe Products near Kernersville

to do the injection molding and assembly. The original injection mold will cost about \$60,000, but after that, the parts will be much cheaper.

"We figure we have to sell 40,000 to break even," Patterson said, but he said there is a large market for the product, and he will place ads in horsemanship magazines.

In the United States, more than three and a half million panic snaps were sold last year, he said.

"Of course, there's always a risk. But everyone we've shown it to has been favorable," he added. "We've shown it to horse equipment distributors and they say it is a good product. We've shown it to too many independent people who had nothing to gain."

If everything goes well, the first Turtle Snaps halters will be off the line and ready for distribution by mid-April.

For more information, look up their new web page: turtlesnaps.home.mindspring.com.

Cromwell recuperating

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making new blood cells. Because of the lack of white blood cells, the patient is more susceptible to infection.

Cromwell was reinjected with his own frozen marrow cells, from which the cancer had been removed, after his existing bone marrow was destroyed by a high dose of chemotherapy.

His wife, Joyce, is helping care for him and a friend is keeping his dog.

Cromwell said he would appreciate prayers. "I believe that God made the human body and God can do whatever he wants with it. He can make it well or not. The prayers of people who believe have an effect on that," he said. "They sometimes help God make a decision."

He is still hoping that Medicare will pay part of the \$80,000 bill for the transplant procedure. They have taken a second mortgage on their house because their primary insurance would not pay.

"They consider it after 10 years or more to still be experimental surgery," he said. "They get other things that can be experimental, they treat that. This, which has had a pretty good record of at least lengthening life, they call it experimental."

It is a good sign that Cromwell has not had to be hospitalized through the procedure. Ironically, they put him in the hospital with the flu a week or so before the transplant, but he was well enough to have the transplant soon after that.

Cromwell said he plans to be at the board meeting Feb. 9, but will check with his doctor first.

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Name: Frank Rhodes
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Occupation: Sales Manager, Raleigh

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Makes a mean batch of chili and loves to play golf
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