

# Research Round-up: CDGA's 2004 Results

*Over the years, the CDGA staff have been involved in a number of turf research projects, especially in cooperation with University of Illinois faculty. Our primary interest (working with Dr. Hank Wilkinson) is investigation of pathogenic organisms, and the techniques to prevent or alleviate disease symptoms. We have also worked on a number of other projects involving weed (and moss and algae) control, soil surfactants and wetting agents for localized dry spots, various aspects of using plant growth regulators, and investigation of new turf cultivars.*

Since our move to Midwest Golf House, we have also become more involved in cultivation of native and ornamental grasses, and have established test areas to try to find better grasses and management techniques to maintain unmowed, yet playable, primary rough areas. These "tall grass" projects are under the direction of Dr. Tom Voigt from UIUC (see "The Grassy Knoll" article in *On Course*, November 2002).

In this report, we are going to summarize some observations from our 2004 field tests, including the ongoing examination of PGRs for springtime *Poa annua* seedhead suppression, and control of fungicide-tolerant "Sclerotinia" dollar spot disease with the new generation of fungicides.

## ***Poa annua* Seedhead Suppression with PGRs**

We have completed our fourth year of testing products for springtime suppression of seedhead formation by *Poa annua*. For an overview of the topic and previous

results, see our articles published in the *USGA Green Section Record* (Volume 41, Number 4, July-August 2003, pages 21-26), and USGA Turfgrass and Environmental Research Online (<http://turf.lib.msu.edu/tero/v02/n07.pdf>). In past studies, we have confirmed some seed-head suppression with wetting agents (such as Aqua-Gro L), while the PGRs mefluidide (Embark) and ethephon (Proxy) have often given high levels of seedhead suppression. However, Embark treatments may result in unwanted phytotoxicity of greens-height turf, so recent studies have focused on Proxy, alone and in tank mixes with trinexepac-ethyl (Primo). In 2004, we looked primarily at timing and rates of Proxy (ethephon) + Primo Maxx tank mixes on putting green-height turf, including a reduced 3 oz./1,000 sq. ft. rate of Proxy.

Tests took place at Aurora C.C. (thanks to John Gurke, CGCS and Keith Krause for their assistance) under intensive putting green management conditions. In fact,

*(continued on page 13)*

**Table 1: Results of Proxy + Primo treatments on the second green at Aurora C.C.**

| PRODUCT               | RATE/1,000 SQ. FT. | DATE OF 1ST APP. | DATE OF 2ND APP. | DATE OF 3RD APP. | PERCENT OF <i>POA ANNUA</i> WITH SEEDHEADS, AVERAGE OF 3 REPS, BY DATE |        |       |        |        |       |       |        |
|-----------------------|--------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|--|--------|-------|--------|--------|-------|-------|--------|
|                       |                    |                  |                  |                  | APR 20   | APR 30 | MAY 6 | MAY 18 | MAY 27 | JUN 3 | JUN 9 | JUN 22 |
| 1. Untreated Control  | —                  | —                | —                | —                | 3.4  | 11.5   | 5.4   | 14.9   | 19.2   | 15.9  | 16.7  | 3.3    |
| 2. Proxy + Primo Maxx | 3 oz. + 1/8 oz.    | Apr 5            | Apr 20           | —                | 1.3  | 2.3    | 0.3   | 3.3    | 4.3    | 4.0   | 5.0   | 0.3    |
| 3. Proxy + Primo Maxx | 3 oz. + 1/8 oz.    | Apr 5            | Apr 26           | May 18           | 1.7  | 2.3    | 1.7   | 2.7    | 1.7    | 2.3   | 3.0   | 1.0    |
| 4. Proxy + Primo Maxx | 3 oz. + 1/8 oz.    | Apr 15           | May 3            | —                | 1.7  | 5.0    | 1.7   | 1.7    | 2.0    | 3.0   | 3.3   | 1.0    |
| 5. Proxy + Primo Maxx | 3 oz. + 1/8 oz.    | Apr 15           | May 6            | May 27           | 2.0  | 3.7    | 1.3   | 2.0    | 3.3    | 3.7   | 3.3   | 0.7    |
| 6. Proxy + Primo Maxx | 5 oz. + 1/8 oz.    | Apr 5            | Apr 26           | —                | 0.3  | 3.7    | 1.0   | 0.7    | 1.7    | 1.0   | 2.3   | 1.0    |
| 7. Proxy + Primo Maxx | 5 oz. + 1/8 oz.    | Apr 5            | May 3            | —                | 0.0  | 2.3    | 1.0   | 1.7    | 2.0    | 1.7   | 5.0   | 0.7    |
| 8. Proxy + Primo Maxx | 5 oz. + 1/8 oz.    | Apr 15           | May 6            | —                | 0.3  | 3.0    | 1.7   | 1.7    | 2.0    | 2.3   | 2.0   | 0.3    |
| 9. Proxy + Primo Maxx | 5 oz. + 1/8 oz.    | Apr 15           | May 18           | —                | 0.7  | 2.7    | 1.0   | 3.7    | 1.7    | 1.0   | 1.0   | 1.7    |
|                       |                    |                  |                  | LSD              | NS   | 3.9    | 2.5   | 4.0    | 3.6    | 3.6   | 3.7   | NS     |

*Note: There were no noticeable differences in turf color or quality among any of the treatments on any rating date.*



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the site in '04 was the no. 2 green at ACC, which was under normal playing conditions during the study. The green consists of 50-60% *Poa annua*, with the remaining turf comprised of various types of creeping bentgrass. Mowing height for this green was approximately 0.12" during the study, and it received standard fertilization and irrigation. Test applications were made beginning April 5 or April 15, with follow-up applications on a two- to four-week schedule (see Table 1). We noted the first seedheads on the site on the April 20 rating day. Application rates, timing and results are presented in Table 1. *Poa annua* seedhead production was rated visually as percent of *Poa* plants with visible flowering, not percent of total plot area with visible flowering. Since the green was mowed daily, seedheads were constantly being removed, which limited the total percentage of seedheads visible at any one rating date.

Peak seedhead production at Aurora C.C. occurred around May 27, then lingered through most of June. Treatments with Proxy + Primo tank mixes resulted in 80%-plus seedhead suppression when compared to untreated controls, most notably during the May 18 to June 9 rating period, when check plots were seeding more heavily. There were no strongly significant differences among application rates or different timing of applications in this study. However, some evidence materialized that the early, low-rate Proxy treatment (treatment #2 in Table 1) was starting to

fade by June 9, compared to the higher (5 + 1/8) rate applications made on April 15 and May 18 (treatment #9). A probable protocol for Proxy + Primo Maxx tank mixes on greens-height turf will be the lower 3 oz. + 1/8 oz. application rates applied on a three-week interval (treatments #2 - 5). Please note: depending on application rates, timing and biotypes of *Poa annua* present on your course, YOUR RESULTS MAY VARY!

### Control of Fungicide-Resistant and Sensitive Dollar Spot Strains

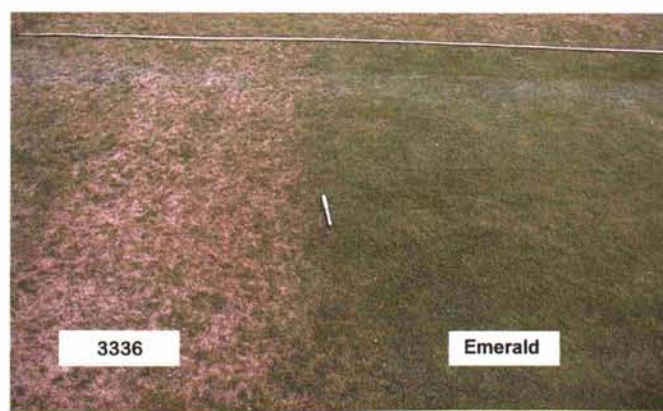
As most of you noticed firsthand, 2004 was a banner year for dollar spot. In most areas, the disease started early (May 10 here at Golf House) and stayed late, with outbreaks reported well into the first week of November. The extraordinarily mild summer (only three days reaching 90°), the warmer-than-normal fall, and heavy dews were the main environmental factors that led to such severe and long-lasting outbreaks. If there was one bright side, these conditions REALLY put the fungicides in our trials to the test, and showed which ones could withstand the most intense dollar spot pressure.

We conducted our fungicide trials at two sites: a bent/*Poa* fairway with known fungicide-resistant strains of dollar spot (Ridgemoor C.C.—thanks to Pete Hahn and staff for their assistance) and a newer, pure bentgrass fairway with known relatively sensitive strains (Midwest Golf

*As most of you noticed firsthand, 2004 was a banner year for dollar spot. In most areas, the disease started early and stayed late, with outbreaks reported well into the first week of November.*

House research facility). The plots were mowed at half an inch or less and were kept on a low fertility level of less than a pound of N applied throughout the season—a point that we will harp on later. Fungicides representing most of the major chemical classes were applied in our tests, including Bayleton and Banner (demethylase inhibitors), Curalan and

(continued on page 14)



Picture 1: October 22, 2004—Emerald controlling dollar spot in late fall, a full 38 days after last application. 3336 had very little effectiveness for much of the trial at the Golf House test site.



Picture 2: October 22, 2004—Like Emerald, 26 GT also controlled disease late into the fall on the Golf House plot. However, the last application was also made two weeks later than the last application of Emerald (September 27).



26 GT (dicarboximides), and Compass and Insignia (QoI strobilurins). We also included the new product Emerald, as well as a new biological product called Ecoguard. Fungicides were applied consecutively on 14- to 21-day intervals, except for one Ecoguard treatment that was applied every seven days.

For brevity's sake, **Figure 1** presents results from a selection of the more than 30 treatments. No treatment held dollar spot completely in check throughout the season on either plot; in fact, most plots rated over 10% infection throughout the

height of the disease pressure (late July – August). Emerald applied at the 0.13 oz./M rate was consistently the best-rated treatment over both sites, especially when applied preventatively. Chipco 26 GT and a mixture of propiconazole and Insignia were good-to-excellent performers in the study. Ecoguard did not provide adequate control when applied by itself, even on seven-day intervals. Many treatments, especially those at Golf House, worked well at the beginning of the season but gradually faded in effectiveness as the season wore on. This was most noted in the Cleary

3336 treatment at Golf House and our DMI treatments of Banner or Bayleton applied at the low rate and at a longer control interval.

Two things are of particular note on these plots: First, what the heck was going on at Golf House? Before the study began, a few isolates of dollar spot were tested and showed no resistance problems to any of the major classes of fungicides, including benzimidazole resistance, which is widespread throughout Chicago and much of the country. Therefore, one would think that control problems would have only occurred at the Ridgemoor site, and at Golf House everything should work like a charm. But that was simply not the case. One thing that could have happened is that the routine application of the same fungicide over and over at Golf House could have brought out the resistant strains of the pathogen (being tested in the lab right now). More than likely, however, it was probably our management of the Golf House plot that caused the discrepancy. Other than half a pound of N on April 14, that plot received no other fertilizer. Dollar spot, a low-N disease, simply took advantage of an underfertilized plant during a ripe environment. Conversely, the Ridgemoor plot had more fertilizer applied in the spring, and was fertilized and aerified again in late August to early September. The bottom line is that in order to realize the full benefit of a dollar spot fungicide, especially a true systemic, the plant must also receive adequate N.

Another notable result of the trial was the length of control into the fall of some of the products tested. On the Golf House plot, the Emerald plots were still obviously suppressing disease better than other treatments on October 22, even though the last application was made on September 13 (see **picture 1**)! During the same rating date, 26 GT was also suppressing disease although the last application was made later on September 27 (see **picture 2**). This result may give a clue on how to use these fungicides most effectively and stay away from the late fall outbreaks that many experienced this year.

Other dollar spot trials are currently underway or in the planning

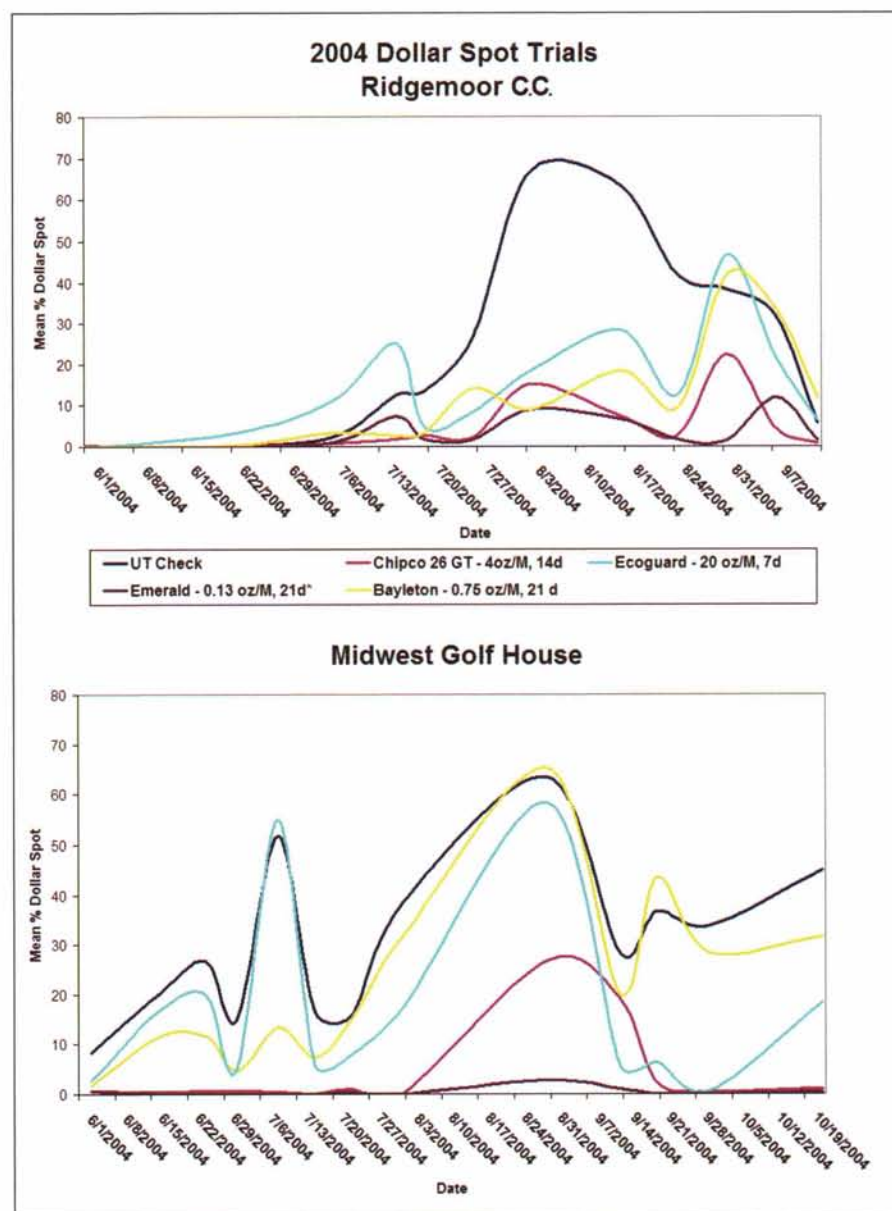


Figure 1: Dollar spot ratings for select treatments of the 2004 CDGA fungicide trials. \*Note: Application intervals for Emerald varied as some treatments were skipped.



stages at the CDGA. Preliminary investigation of the early spring and late fall fungicide-programming techniques for dollar spot control was started this year, but it is too early to give any solid results. Also, we are doing lab assays to determine levels of fungicide resistance throughout the area and get a feel for just how big a problem it is. Results from the resistance survey will be presented at this year's Illinois Professional Turf Conference during the USGA/CDGA workshop on the afternoon of December 1.

### Other Field Trial Notes

In 2003, Midwest Golf House received approval as a site for National Turfgrass Evaluation Program (NTEP) varietal and species tests. One of our trials is the 2003 National Bentgrass (Fairway/Tee) Test, which takes up about 2,400 square feet just to the west of the third green on the CDGA Sunshine Course. This trial consists of 28 bentgrasses, including seven colonial bents and several of the newest creeping bents, such as Alpha, Declaration,

Independence, LS-44 and Penneagle II. The remainder of the creepers are mostly numbered experimental lines. After one full growing season, entries with the best quality ratings include 'T-1' (Jacklin), '235050' (Lescro), '9200' (ProSeeds) and '23R' (Mountain View Seeds). There is also a great deal of variation to dollar spot and brown patch diseases, with the colonials showing the most dollar spot resistance and the least brown patch resistance (as expected).

Most *On Course* readers are probably aware of a new herbicide that is being tested for selective control of *Poa annua* in creeping bentgrass swards, namely Velocity (bispiribac-sodium). In cooperation with Dr Bruce Branham, we established a small Velocity trial on the second fairway of the Sunshine Course as a demonstration for the September 16th U of I Field Day. Velocity should be applied at very low rates (15 – 30 grams AI per acre) on bentgrass fairway-height turf, with repeat applications in mid-to-late summer giving the best results so far. Some yellowing or chlorosis is noted

on bentgrass, but it generally recovers within a few days (the *Poa* does not!). Plots that were treated in August and September were still showing suppression of *Poa* in early November (at this writing); treatments of 15 g AI/acre applied four times on a seven-day interval gave the best results in our Field Day demonstration trial.

We also conducted a small study of another experimental herbicide with a common name of 'mesotrione' (Callisto), which may be able to selectively remove creeping bentgrass from Kentucky bluegrass. We will probably investigate this material further in 2005, since we have lots of bent contaminating our low-mow Kentucky bluegrass fairway on the third hole. Stay tuned!



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Wayne Otto, CGCS.

# Remembering the “Wee One”

*Wayne Otto, CGCS was a leader in our industry. Can people love grass? This has always been a question that has eluded me. I now think the question has been answered. Wayne Otto did love grass. But more than that, he loved the people who loved grass. Wayne was unique. The minute you met him, you made a friend. He spent most of his life on golf courses until his passing on October 21, 2004. A smile would come on his face as soon as the subject of golf or golf courses entered the conversation.*

The Golf Course Superintendents Association of America has a code of ethics. Anyone who knew Wayne didn't have to read it . . . all you had to do was emulate him. Wayne was the first to be certified in Wisconsin. It was important to Wayne that every superintendent was viewed and treated as a professional. He never hesitated to be a part of the future of this great profession. He was determined to make it grow.

Wayne was a pioneer. The industry has spent millions to give superintendents the tools to produce turf that Wayne Otto was able to give the members of Ozaukee Country Club 30 years ago. Wayne was the first to use sand topdressing. He knew what the rest of us learned later; it is the answer to consistently smooth golf greens. He had fast greens before championships, bedknives before growth regulation.

Wayne was one of the first to realize how important it is to be an environmental steward and enthusiastically join the Audubon Program and be certified.

Wayne was president of the Wisconsin Golf Course Superintendents Association from 1977-1978. If Wayne could help a fellow superintendent or student, he was quick to be there to share his experience and knowledge. It didn't matter if you were at a nine-hole golf course or a big-buck country club. He treated you as an equal. He rejoiced in your success and shared in your disappointments.

What did Wayne like? Three answers:

Number 1: Golf

Number 2: Golf

Number 3: Golf

He liked and looked forward to his golf trips around the national with Rod Johnson, Chad Ball and Paul Bastron. He enjoyed playing GCSAA tournaments. It gave him the opportunity to meet superintendents and make new friends. He liked tacos and Mexican food; the hotter, the better. More than two days with Wayne, you were going to Conejito's, a Mexican restaurant in Milwaukee.

He liked Penn State. He was always proud of and grateful for the opportunity to be a graduate and to bond with the Penn State program. Wayne also liked Nebraska football and the Green Bay Packers.

Wayne enjoyed his retirement and his chance to be with superintendents through his work with Brookside Labs and Milorganite.

He loved his wife, JoAnn, who brought fulfillment into his life and who gave him love and purpose. She showed him, through travel, a world he would not have seen otherwise. He enjoyed their home and his life at home. Wayne liked to just go outside in his backyard and be creative. Together, they had a beautiful home inside and out. Wayne enjoyed being with Erik, JoAnn's son, and was proud of Erik's achievements as a golf course superintendent. He enjoyed being with his grandchildren.

Wayne enjoyed coauthoring the book, *Turfgrass Management: Tools and Techniques*. It was his opportunity to share with others, especially young people who followed in his footsteps and entered the profession he loved.

So why do we call him “Wee One”? When Wayne was in Scotland with Pat O'Brien, Stan Zontek and me, while playing St. Andrews, the caddies were walking ahead of us, making bets. One of the caddies said, “I'm putting my money on the wee one.” Many of us close to Wayne promised him before his death that his name would live on in this profession. Hence, the Wee One Foundation was established to help superintendents and their immediate families who face catastrophic illness without adequate insurance.

Wayne Otto, CGCS had a great peace and was grateful to all who were his friends. And his friends are grateful for the friendship he returned. Let Wayne Otto, CGCS, the Wee One, be ever remembered as a giant in our profession.





# the Bull Sheet

John Gurke, CGCS, Contributing Editor

## DATES TO REMEMBER

December 6 – GCSAA Education and the Northwestern Illinois GCSA present "Managing Turfgrass Root Systems in the North" and "Understanding Biostimulants" at the Ramada Plaza Hotel & Conference Center in Rockford, IL.

December 7-10 – 2004 Ohio Turfgrass Conference and Show at the Greater Columbus Convention Center. Call 888-683-3445 for information.

December 8 – Chicagoland AGCS luncheon and biannual budget swap at Lake Barrington Shores G.C., **Steve Cummins** host.

December 15 – Annual West Side Holiday Party at Dave & Busters in Addison, IL. Contact **Gary Hearn** at 630-773-4790 to secure your spot.

January 6-11 – 56th Annual Canadian International Turfgrass Conference and Trade Show at the Metro Toronto Convention Center. Call 905-602-8873 for info.

January 17-20 – Annual Michigan Turfgrass Conference at the Holiday Inn South in Lansing, MI. Call 517-321-1660 for details.

January 17-February 4 – The Rutgers Professional Golf Turf Management School Three-Week

Preparatory Short Course in New Brunswick, NJ. Call 732-932-9271, ext. 630 for details.

January 19-21 – 2005 Mid-Am Horticultural Trade Show at the Lakeside Center at McCormick Place in Chicago, IL.

January 19 – GCSAA Education and MAGCS present "Annual Bluegrass Management" one-day seminar at Midwest Golf House in Lemont, IL.

January 20 – GCSAA Education and MAGCS present "Managing Turfgrass Root Systems in the North" and "Localized Dry Spot and Wetting Agent Use" half-day seminars at Midwest Golf House in Lemont.

January 24 – MAGCS monthly meeting at Mount Prospect Golf Club, **Fred Behnke**, CGCS host. Again, a reminder that we are NOT at Arrowhead G.C. this year!

February 7-12 – Golf Industry Show at the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando, FL.

February 10-11 – MAGCS Award-Deserving Football-Field-Sized Hospitality Suite in Salons 11 and 12 of the Rosen Centre Hotel from 6 to 10 p.m. each night.

To start things off, let's talk about a few recently attained Midwest milestones . . .

MAGCS members **Dan Sterr** of Stonebridge Country Club and **Steve VanAcker**, CGCS of Crystal Lake Country Club joined the hole-in-one fraternity in October. (It was reported, though not confirmed,

that Steve's was a 124-yard 3-iron with the wind at Prairie Isle G.C.)

It is my great pleasure to report that this year's Illinois Turfgrass Foundation Distinguished Service Award winner is **Dave Ward** of Coyote Run. The award was presented to the very deserving Mr. Ward during the IPTC at Pheasant Run Resort.

Also in October, **Jon Jennings**, CGCS of Chicago Golf Club once again competed in the Chicago Marathon and turned in a time of 3:18:44, 3:20 under the qualifying limit for the Boston Marathon. This time placed Jon #2,113 out of 33,125 runners, and after five prior attempts, he will finally have his opportunity to compete in the grand-daddy of all marathons in Boston next year.

Finally, **Gene Thompson**—former longtime MAGCS member at Indian Lakes Resort—achieved a somewhat dubious milestone when he turned 50 years old on October 26. We haven't quite figured it out yet, but this photo is either of Gene when he was much younger, or it is just another example of what can happen to you when you move to the deep south.



Congratulations to all on your prodigious achievements!

Also congrats to **Dan Murray**, CGCS and **Dave Behrman**, CGCS on recently having their courses featured in other industry publications. Dan and Settler's Hill G.C. in Batavia were highlighted in an article titled "Land Reuse—Creating Greenspace in an Urban Area" in *Turf Central* magazine in October. It appears Dan will be busy very soon, as the landfill on the site is scheduled to close in 2006 and the course will expand to 27 holes. Dave's course, Midlothian Country Club, was featured in October's *Golf Course News*, which described the complete refurbishment of the 82 bunkers on the 106-year-old course. Due to decades of tree growth,

(continued on page 20)





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dozens of fairway bunkers that had become meaningless were relocated as part of this project. Contractor **Golf Creations** broke ground immediately after Labor Day in 2003, and the bunkers debuted shortly after the course reopened for play in spring of this year.

MAGCS extends its sincerest sympathies to the family and many friends of Wayne Otto, who passed away on October 21 at the age of 65. Read more about the "Wee One" in Dan Quast's moving tribute on page 17 in this month's issue.

I'd like to take this opportunity to again express our thanks to those generous individuals and companies who have sponsored our events throughout this past year. Without the contributions of our commercial people, we could not have the good fortune of attending and enjoying the always first-class events that they sponsor, from monthly golf events to educational seminars to outings such as the Kane County Cougars game and fall dinner dance. You all truly are THE BEST!

Good news for ski and snowboard buffs: **Ted Sokolis** (retired MAGCS member) has moved to the Rockies. Ted and Avis Nosse's new address is P.O. Box 1046, 41 Legend Circle, Dillon, CO 80435, and their new phone number is 970-468-2726. Ted invites all Midwest supers who enjoy the winter sports to stop on

in—they have plenty of room, and there are no fewer than six world-class ski resorts within 50 miles of their home.

On Course magazine would like to congratulate the winners of the 2004 Ray Gerber Editorial Award and the 2004 Fred D. Opperman Editorial Award—Jon Jennings, CGCS and **Robert Graziano**, respectively. We also thank each and every MAGCS member who contributed to the magazine with an article or by serving on the Editorial Committee—it is your valuable input that drives this award-winning publication. Again, thank you!




investigate what changes might need to be made.

Finally, Kevin, Fred and Phil showed great insight in hiring Luke Cella as our executive director, a move that significantly enhanced our Association in the eyes of the GCSAA. Our Association is in great hands with Luke on board. He has allowed the Board of Directors to concentrate on their committees, thereby permitting them to expand their horizons to make the Midwest Association of GCS a proud organization that will allow our members to take their own leaps of faith towards success.



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