President’s Message

by Mike Schiller, President

1997 is fast becoming a banner year for STMA. Your Conference Committee is putting the finishing touches on plans for the 9th Annual Conference, "Meeting the Challenges," to be held January 14 - 18, 1998, in Orlando, Florida – and I’m REALLY EXCITED about it. The beautiful, new Disney facility, the Coronado Springs Resort, is our headquarters hotel. The multi-sports complex, Disney’s Wide World of Sports, is the center for our indoor trade show and outside demonstrations. We’ll not only tour the complex, but also see some "tricks of the trade" that allow them to handle "in the spotlight," back-to-back events.

This committee has really listened to your suggestions. There will be three topic choices for each of our concurrent sessions with something for you, whether you’re just starting out, already an experienced sports turf manager, or somewhere in between. The Round Table program has been expanded to three 30-minute segments, with even more choices of topics. Dynamic presenters on "Meeting the Challenges" include Reggie Williams, former NFL linebacker with the Cincinnati Bengals and now Vice President of Disney’s Wide World of Sports, and Captain Al Haynes, who piloted that "impossible" life-saving landing in Sioux City, Iowa, a task that flight simulators still can’t duplicate.

With the Board’s official recognition of the MAFMO Chapter at our July Board Meeting, STMA has welcomed two Chapters within this past year. A budding Chapter in Northern California is taking shape with a solid core of "founders" and 25 members already signed on.

The recommendations of your Awards and Scholarship Committee have been approved by the Board. They are calling for your thoughtful consideration of those individuals worthy of nomination for the four individual Founders Awards: The George Toma "Golden Rake" Award, the Dick Ericson Award, the Dr. William Daniel Award, and The Harry Gill Award. The Scholarship program has been expanded, making it even more worthwhile for students preparing for this profession. (See the article on page 12).