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President's Message

Tom Ritter, CGCS

I both appreciate the opportunity am excited about serving as President of the MAAGCS in 2006. I look forward to working with and want to thank the newly elected 2006 Board for their commitment to the association this year. The best way I know that the Board and I can effectively serve it's members is for the members to communicate their concerns, ideas or questions to us and we will do our best to accommodate the needs of the majority of the members. We are here to serve you.

On that note, we have restructured the chapter meeting schedule this year by eliminating the June and early September meetings that have historically been poorly attended. We plan to hold the education seminar in March, the Superintendent/Assistant in April, and the Superintendent/Pro in May. The only scheduled summer event will be the family picnic in August. The Stewards of the Chesapeake will be held in late September this year followed by the Annual Championship in late October. The year will conclude with a mid-November golf meeting and the election meeting in December. The recent trend of lunch meetings or early dinner meetings will continue this year. With fewer meetings, it is my hope that attendance will be higher at each meeting and therefore opportunities for exchange of information with our peers should also increase at each meeting. I encourage those of you who are active to reach out and invite a neighboring Superintendent who isn't active or isn't a member to join you in attending a meeting this year.

I realize that with increased demands on our time and the current state of the golf business that it is becoming more and more difficult for Superintendents to leave the golf course for a day to attend a chapter meeting. But I also realize that for most of us that we now have multiple assistants and more turf students than in the past. I would ask all Superintendents to consider sending other staff members that your club is already paying MAAGCS dues for to represent your course at a meeting, and who knows, they may pick up a tidbit of information to bring back that can assist you in your operation.

I am sure most of you are aware of the current fundraising effort by the Maryland Turfgrass Council to produce a Turfgrass Survey. The last survey was in 1996 and needs to be updated to demonstrate to our legislators the scope and economic importance of our industry to the state in order to effectively compete for the tax dollars available. I heard Dr. Rick Brandenburg from N.C. State University tell the audience at Turfgrass '06 that the recent survey completed in North Carolina has had an enormous positive effect on the industry in his state. It is a powerful tool whose benefit will far outweigh it's cost. The estimated cost for the survey is \$120,000. If each of the nearly 200 golf courses in Maryland donated just \$500 toward the survey, we would be more than 75% of the way toward the goal just from the golf industry. I know that to expect this level of commitment is not realistic but you can see that some level of donation from a majority of golf facilities in the state will have a huge impact. Consider approaching the management at your club to request a donation. Try to convince your management team that this is just as important as the First Tee program or any of the other industry causes that your club is currently supporting. I would also invite our affiliate members to consider this as another way to support the turf industry. Contact MTC or visit their web site for more information.

I am honored to have the opportunity to serve as MAAGCS President this year and I believe that the members of this year's Board are willing and able to serve our association well. I hope that everyone can take some time this winter away from the golf course to recharge your batteries before the golf season is in full swing. I wish everyone a happy and healthy 2006 and I look forward to seeing everyone at our events this year.



Mid-Atlantic Association of Golf Course Superintendents

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*Published five times annually by the
Mid-Atlantic Association of
Golf Course Superintendents*

Turfgrass Matters
Quent Baria, CGCS - Editor

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