

SPORTS TURF MANAGER

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President's Message

We're on a Roll!

by Rich Moffitt, President

Wow and thank you! Wow for the record-breaking turnout we had in St. Louis, with a record number of full-Conference attendees, a record number of Exhibitors, and a record number of attendees at the Chapter Officers Training Session, the opening reception, the trade show reception, the Awards Banquet, the Annual Meeting, and in the educational sessions.

And THANK YOU, to each and every one of you who participated and made this STMA's best Conference ever. Thank you for coming to my city - the Gateway City - St. Louis. Thank you to those of you in the three busloads who joined in the Wednesday Seminar on Wheels tour. Most of all, thank you for being the great group of people you are, for the information sharing and networking that make our Conferences so incredible - and that keep us raising the level of field care to ever higher standards.

It's that networking that initially helped me get involved in STMA. As Director of Grounds and Materials Management for Saint Louis University, I'm responsible for all the grounds, including the athletic fields. In 1990, the University had only one turf sports field, a baseball field. It needed rebuilding and I was to take charge of rebuilding it. When I brought up the project to a colleague of mine, Dr. Dave Minner, who was at that time on the STMA Board of Directors, he told me STMA was filled with resources I could tap into, urged me to get involved, and supplied me with the names of several members to contact.

I followed up with phone calls to those people, who all gave me help, and also gave me the names and telephone numbers of others to contact. Thanks to all those people sharing so much of their time and expertise, I basically built a baseball field over the phone. Obviously, these were connections I wanted to keep. So I joined STMA, attended the next Conference and found it was like my phone experience, only better. It didn't matter that I



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was the new guy, with what at that time was a small sports field base; everyone was friendly, welcoming me to conversations and freely sharing information. I've not only developed a nationwide network of contacts, I've developed some great friendships.

So, thank you for all that and thank you to all the members of the STMA for the pleasure and honor of allowing me to serve as your President. As a member of your Board of Directors, I've been privileged to serve in several different positions: Membership chair, Treasurer, Conference Chair, and President-Elect. I've gained experience and insight in each of these positions and have had the opportunity to learn more about you - your needs and your wants.

Filling those wants and needs is what's ahead for our Association. One of your Board's prime goals is the development of a strategic plan that will allow STMA to expand our services to members in areas of communication, recognition, research, scholarships, and more. And to do all this while retaining the all-important networking factor, continuing to expand our membership, and retaining the strong financial position we've achieved.

We've already made tremendous strides over the last several years, including the development of our certification program. Working together, we can do even more to elevate the status of the sports turf manager nationally and internationally.