

SPORTS TURF MANAGER

Official Newsletter of the Sports Turf Managers Association
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President's Message

We've Hit the Jackpot!

By Rich Moffitt

Wow! Are we ever On a Roll! The year is nearly over, and it seems to have flown by. Despite the September 11th terrorist attack and all that has resulted from it, this has been an extremely progressive - and productive - year for STMA.

This is your Association. It was formed because the STMA founders believed -- and sports turf managers everywhere agreed -- that sports fields could be improved through the sharing of knowledge and the exchange of ideas. The STMA Mission Statement is, "To be the recognized leader in strengthening the sports turf industry and enhancing members' competence and acknowledgement of their professionalism." As an Association, and an industry, our ultimate goal is providing the best sports surfaces for all levels of play.

To better understand how to achieve all this -- and how to better serve you -- we completed the first comprehensive All Member Survey in early 2001 and integrated the feedback from that Survey into the STMA Strategic Plan. The STMA Board and Committee Chairs analyzed their key initiatives as outlined in the overall Strategic Plan and developed action plans and timelines to carry out those initiatives.

Some of those initiatives were structural, organizational, or logistical items. For example, several of the Committees developed or refined existing written guidelines and implementation programs to make it easier for those who will be filling the leadership positions on these Committees in the future to follow the required procedures.

Some of the initiatives were a product of the growth and development of the Association. For example, the Chapter Relations Committee undertook a review and revision of the Chapter



Rich Moffitt

Manual to comply with the By-Laws and governmental requirement changes and to update the information to better serve existing and newly forming Chapters.

Some of the initiatives involved taking an idea or suggestion raised in the Survey or Strategic Planning sessions and developing it into a working program. An example of this is the member referral program introduced this October by the Membership Committee.

Many of the initiatives are communication and networking related, directly addressing our mission as expressed in the STMA Mission Statement. The best example of this is the newly revamped STMA Website: www.sportsturfmanager.com. It is already a more informative and interactive vehicle than the old version, and the Website Committee is continuing to enhance it and add new features.

And STMA has continued to expand and enhance those things the Survey feedback asked us to continue and to build on, such as the Conference. So for the STMA 13th Annual Conference & Exhibition, January 16 to 20, 2002, in Las Vegas, Nevada, the educational program is terrific, the trade show is bigger and better than ever, and the greatest jackpot is the networking. I hope to see you there!

On a personal note, I'm both proud and humbled to come to the close of this year of progress and the close of my term as President. I want to thank all the board members and committees who have put so much time and energy into

continued on page 3

Training is a Constant

by Greg Petry, Waukegan Park District

People are the key to success for any facility, department or business. Start right by hiring people who are willing and eager to learn and improve; those who want a career in the industry and expect to expend the time and effort necessary to move ahead. You want qualified individuals, with sufficient education and experience to fill the position for which they are hired - but - you don't want someone who thinks they already know everything they'll need to know.

Learning is a life-long experience.

Training and continuing education programs should provide useful and relevant information. Employees should want to participate in these programs and, by doing so, improve their skills and become more motivated to perform them.

Make training accessible. Most programs should be offered during "normal" working hours. Give personnel sufficient time to make arrangements to attend training sessions offered at other times or offsite. Training is a legitimate business expense. Employees should receive regular compensation for attendance at mandatory training programs. The organization must decide and establish a policy concerning time and expense reimbursement for optional career enhancement training opportunities.

Remember, effective training programs focus on both internal and external training.

Internal training keeps people aware of things going on in the organization. This would include training in broad areas such as new employee orientation, organizational policies and safety procedures, and in specifics such as proper use of upgraded computer systems, or how to fill out new forms for purchase orders or expense payment authorizations. The majority of these programs are conducted in-house by organization personnel.

You may set up on-going internal training pro-

*NEW Referral Program can earn you STMA Bucks!
Beginning October 1st - for a two year period -
every time your name is listed in the "referred by"
line of a membership application, you will receive a
coupon worth \$10 towards the purchase of STMA
merchandise, reference materials, Conference
Registration or your own membership dues.
Help YOUR association GROW and
reward yourself as well!*

grams which allow employees to "tap into" sessions as their skills reach specific levels or they move up to new positions. You may offer certain basic internal training programs several times during the year to meet the needs of different departments. You may have a training check-off system that provides one-on-one training in specific policies and procedures as an employee advances to a new position or takes on added responsibilities.

External training programs generally focus on a specific area such as customer service initiatives, diversity training or advanced technological issues which require the expertise of outside trainers.

These programs may range from single sessions that last a few hours, through one or two days of focused sessions, to extensive, multi-session, multi-year training.

External training includes sessions focused on proper operation of new equipment or machines. These are usually conducted by manufacturer or supplier personnel for all organizational personnel who will operate those units. Many organizations specify that such training be a part of the purchase contract for all new equipment.

External training extends to the continuing education programs offered through key industry-

continued on page 16

President's Message

continued from page 2

making STMA what it is today. I also want to thank Trusty & Associates, especially, Steve, Suz and Stephanie, for all the support and hard work they have done over the years. Without them, all the growth and provided services would not have happened. But most of all, I want to thank each and every member who makes up this great organization. You're the greatest. It gives me great pride to have been involved with STMA and see all the things we've accomplished for the sports turf industry and people. I still believe at the root of all our success is the people. I've made so many great friends and had a lot of fun. We've come a long way. Thank you for allowing me the honor of being President.

I wish you joy and blessings during the Holiday Season, and a productive and prosperous 2002.

