

CHRISTOPHER MARK The President's Desk



Greetings! I hope 1998 started well for all members and that they had an enjoyable holiday season. While the winter seems long, it certainly offers a good respite from the hectic fall and a break before the pace quickens in spring with field construction preparation.

Well, as you can see I am back. It was quite an honour to be re-nominated and re-elected as President. David Smith, who served as Vice-President, was to assume the President's position, but regrettably could not serve the Association in that capacity. David has established himself as an entrepreneur and quickly built a highly successful business (which of course comes as no surprise!) that takes up much of his time and translates into a great deal of travel all over the province. The Association thanks David for his contributions and support of the STA and wishes him continued success.

Also leaving the Board is Everett Nieuwkoop and Don Bridgman. Both of these gentlemen made superb contributions to the Association: Don as Treasurer and Everett as a Director. On behalf of the Association, sincere thanks, appreciation, and best wishes to Everett and Don.

I truly appreciate the confidence and support the Board has demonstrated in asking me to serve another term. It is a team effort and the Association can only operate under that principle. At the AGM on January 6, the Association elected Jane Arnett-Rivers as Vice-President and Harold Van Gool as Treasurer. I know the executive will be well served by the contribution of these two fine individuals. Speaking of fine individuals, it is a pleasure to announce that the newly elected Directors are Gordon Dol and Paul Turner. Gord and Paul have a wealth of knowledge and expertise related to sports field management and maintenance. We look forward to their assistance.

The 1998 AGM was very special this year as we presented Dr. R. Sheard with an Honorary Life Membership. It was marvelous to be able to acknowledge Bob's tremendous contributions to our Association in this way. Since Bob joined us, the Association has taken off, and Bob has been involved with most of our major accomplishments. He has always embod-

ied integrity, professionalism, a superb academic background, and an impressive stature in the areas of soils research and turfgrass science. It was most gratifying to hear in his acceptance speech that the award represents thanks not only for what he has done but also what *he will do in the future*. The Association is clearly a better organization because of Bob Sheard and we are heartened to know he will continue to assist us as we grow into our second decade of service.

It was wonderful to see so many members at the Ontario Turfgrass Symposium in January. It presented an excellent opportunity for networking and upgrading oneself on academic and practical issues in turf and the environment. Hats off once again to our valued equipment suppliers who continue to do an outstanding job with displays of their products and services. Congratulations to Belinda Jardim and Pam Charbonneau, along with many others, who work so hard to put together this worthwhile conference.

It was great to have Steve Trusty from the Sports Turf Managers' Association (STMA) address one of our sessions and inform us about what our U.S. colleagues are doing, particularly with respect to their certification program. I chatted with Steve after his talk and believe the certification program is an area in which the STA may wish to become involved.

No doubt 1998 will be a challenging year for our members. *Can you bleed a little more out of that stone. You must have a little more fat you can trim out of your budget.* I am sure these sayings will be repeated this year at budget time. Government downloading to municipalities, cutbacks in education funding at all levels, along with changes in the Education Act, will impact, or is already impacting many of our members. These remain uncertain times, especially as our members in the previous Metropolitan Toronto area make the transition to working in the mega city and all the changes and challenges that this situation implies. I wish everyone much success this year in their challenges both on and off the field. Yours for better, safer sports turf, ◆

— Chris Mark

DOL TURF RESTORATION LTD.

RR #2 Beeton, ON L0G 1A0
Tel: (905) 729-2012
Fax: (905) 729-2364
Toll Free: 1-800-794-9664

- Tile Drainage
- Silt Drainage
- Gravel Band Drainage
- Verti Drain Deep
Tine Aeration

- Top Dressing
- Overseeding
- Sodding
- Fine Grading

- Sports Turf Irrigation
- Sports Field & Infield
Reconstruction
- Soil Evaluation &
Fertilizing Programs

SPORTS TURF SPECIALISTS

Gord Dol, President

MEMBER S.T.A., O.P.A., O.R.F.A., O.G.S.A., C.I.A.