



## The President's Desk – Gord Dol

*Summer is here. I trust that all your fields are under control and you are planning for some well deserved vacation time. With the current economic conditions and budget cutbacks, I'm sure everyone is feeling the pressure to do more with less.*

### Autumn Events...

#### Golfing for Grass

The 2009 Ontario Turfgrass Research Foundation Fundraising Golf Tournament is Monday, September 14th at The National Golf Club of Canada in Woodbridge, ON. For sponsorship and registration details, visit [www.otrf.ca](http://www.otrf.ca).

#### Field Day 2009

Mark your calendars for the STA's 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Field Day, Thursday, September 17th at Lions Park, Brantford, ON. Further details will be provided as they are confirmed. As always, the Field Day Committee is working hard to provide another great day of networking and education.



**E**arly this year, the Canadian government introduced a large stimulus package, "Canada's Economic Action Plan" ([www.wd.gc.ca/eng/11264.asp](http://www.wd.gc.ca/eng/11264.asp)). Part of this plan is the program known as RInC, the Recreational Infrastructure Canada program. This is a new infrastructure fund that will invest \$500 million in recreational facilities across Canada over a two-year period. This national initiative will provide a temporary economic stimulus that will help reduce the impacts of the global recession while renewing, upgrading and expanding recreational infrastructure in Canadian communities.

Projects approved under RInC can receive up to \$1 million in federal funding, which normally represents one-third of project costs. These investments in recreational infrastructure will stimulate the economy, create jobs and contribute to the health and quality of life in communities across Canada, now and in the future.

#### Staying Current

In late 2007 the Board of Directors initiated the development of a new strategic plan for the Sports Turf Association. Eight key strategies were identified and their accomplishment is of a progressive, ongoing nature. In April of this year, we reconvened to regenerate, refresh and refocus the passion that unites all of us who work for the common cause of the STA.

Our mission statement, used effectively, drives the association. We must ensure it is always relevant and reflective of our organization and the environment in which we work. With this in mind, our mission statement has been updated from ...*dedicated to the promotion of safe, natural*

*sports turf through education and professional programs* (November 2000) to ... *dedicated to the promotion of better, safer sports turf through innovation, education and professional programs* (April 2009).

Note the strategic removal of the reference to 'natural' sports turf. In his article in the Spring 2009 issue of *Sports Turf Manager*, Francois Hebert writes: "Today, synthetic turf has come to be seen by many not as a substitute to natural grass, but as a necessary tool in the sports field manager's arsenal to provide the public with quality playing surfaces."

As the synthetic turf industry grows in Canada, we must provide our members with the knowledge necessary for the construction and maintenance of this technology. To this end, you will begin to see the inclusion of a synthetic turf component in our educational events and print and web resources.

#### Educational Partnerships

Another one of our strategic planning initiatives is the creation and/or maintenance of partnerships. The Parks and Open Space Alliance (POSA) is a prime example. As I write this column, we look forward to the Alliance's 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Summer Operational Forum, June 24 in Oshawa, ON. In April of this year, 16 students participated in the first STA Sports Turf Management and Maintenance Course, one of the three courses required for the Parks and Open Space Professional Training Program – Level I. The second offering will be September 28-October 1 in Petawawa, ON. For details, visit [www.sportsturfassociation.com](http://www.sportsturfassociation.com).

Have a safe summer and don't forget the sunscreen! ♦