

UPDATE

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Sports Field
Managers Association of New Jersey



GREEN EXPO

2013:

Reflections



By Bernard Luongo

While driving home from Atlantic City on Thursday, December 12, I reflected on the past three days I spent at Expo 2013. It is the first time since I have been going to the Expo that I was able to attend all three days. I would like to thank my Facilities Director, Business Administrator and Board of Education for allowing me to go and, more so, for the insight that they have to recognize the value of the education that is offered at this event. It will only help us in the future to continue to deliver a quality product.

I remember the first time I went to the Green Expo five years ago. Back then I was only allowed to go for one day. When I walked into the registration area I was a bit nervous. Not knowing what to do and not knowing anyone. I was feeling quite lost actually. What a difference five years makes. I walked into the registration area this year and immediately saw three people from our association. All smiles on their faces and a smile on mine. Everything here feels like a sense of belonging. Sitting in Tiara B was another friendly face that I met three months ago at a field day. Everyone in this room was happy. Maybe it is because they are away from their employment. I think maybe it is because they feel a sense of belonging also. What a great place. This is what we do down here. It is bonding, making friends, and building lasting business relationships that will help you get through some rough spots in your career.

OH! Did I forget to mention the education? Three solid days of quality education from educators that are on top of their games in their fields. This place is like a supermarket of education all under one roof. All the pesticide credits you can imagine and,

also, those pesky, hard to get fertilizer credits. Everything you need to succeed is here. What a show.

When you are down here, make it a point to see the Rich Buckley and Sabrina Tirpak show. What a team these two make. They make Fairy Rings and Boring Beetles (no pun intended) interesting and hilarious. They should probably have their own HBO special.

I cannot continue to write without mentioning the trade show. If you are there early enough on day one, you can peek inside the Ballroom doors of A through D to see the many vendors setting up their wares. More familiar faces. For any of our members, if this was your first show, keep going, even if it is just for one day. It is important for your careers. It is important to see the vendors displaying their products and putting a face to the company.

Last but not least, I would like to thank our organization, the SFMANJ and the Board of Directors for recognizing and honoring NBC's grounds crew with Runner-up Field of the Year for our Varsity Boy's and Girl's soccer field. It is quite an honor and I cannot begin to tell you how much this means to the crew and myself. I thank SFMANJ for having such a program in place and the credibility that comes with the recognition of such an award. Membership, if you are not taking advantage of this program/contest, you are cheating yourself out of an opportunity to be recognized. Enter your field. Call, e-mail, write a letter if you need help entering. Everyone here is ready to help. We are all in the same business. This program/contest pays dividends for you, your crew and the organization where you work. Keep moving your program forward. That is a goal everyone should have. Until next time. **Keep on turfing!**

Bernard Luongo is Lead Groundsperson, Northern Burlington County Regional School District, Columbus, NJ; and SFMANJ member.