CHAPTERS INVIGORATE STMA

Last year was a crucial year for the Sports Turf Managers Association. A lot of industry people were worried about the state and future of STMA, including me. However, a much appreciated push from local chapters is bringing new life to this extremely necessary organization.

One of my biggest complaints about STMA was its lack of encouragement and support of local chapter formation. Chapters are often the backbone of industry organizations. They can get a national association through rough periods and vastly expand the range of services available to members. They bring local relevance to athletic field problems and solutions, represent the national cause on a "home town" basis, and are the eyes and ears of the organization. In the case of STMA, the chapters assist in organizing regional institutes, recruit new members, and address local problems with the assistance of the Extension Service and universities.

The Miami chapter broke the ice for STMA in 1989. Ed Birch with the Broward County (FL) School District and Tom Mascaro from Turf-Tee worked with STMA and the local Extension Service to launch a well-attended series of monthly educational meetings. Shortly thereafter, Chicago organized a chapter with the help of Ken Mrock from the Chicago Bears, Greg Petry of the Waukegan (IL) Park District, and Mike Schiller with Arthur Clesen, Inc.

In the past few months, chapters have been formed in Colorado and South Carolina. Tom Lujan at Mile High Stadium in Denver is president of the Colorado Chapter and Joe Wilson with the City of Greenville, SC is president of the South Carolina Chapter. Both new chapters have workshops or institutes scheduled for this summer.

Currently, chapters in Arizona, Iowa, and Maryland are going through the formation process. Harold Gentry with the City of Mesa is the president of the Arizona group. Gary Peterson with Iowa Cooperative Extension Service in Newton is the executive director of that group. Raymond Flood with the University of Maryland is the point man for the Maryland Chapter.

With a little encouragement, chapters could be formed in Ohio, Oregon, Washington, Michigan, New England, Texas, Missouri, Kansas, Minnesota, and California. For that matter, just about any major metropolitan area needs a local sports turf managers organization. All it takes is five or ten dedicated people to form one. It doesn't have to be formal or complicated. The Florida Chapter started out by meeting in a restaurant for lunch. Now the Extension Service provides a room every month.

STMA began as a few groundskeepers getting together in Harry Gill's room at the Purdue Student Union during the Midwest Turf Conference. The people gathered in his room decided that the sports turf industry needed its own association. You can do the same thing in your own home town.

Chapters are like children. They keep parents alert and active...on their toes, so to speak. That's what chapters seem to be doing for STMA. Now, it's up to STMA to nurture and guide them.

Bruce F. Shank

EVENTS

JUNE
9-12 Annual Convention of the National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics, San Diego Marriott, San Diego, CA. Contact: NACDA, P.O. Box 16428, Cleveland, OH 44116, (216) 892-4000.
24-25 Annual Turfgrass Summerfest, Washington State University, Puyallup Research and Extension Center, Puyallup, WA. Contact: Northwest Turfgrass Association, P.O. Box 1367, Olympia, WA 98507, (206) 754-0825.
27 Field Day, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY. Contact: New York State Turfgrass Association, P.O. Box 612, Latham, NY 12110, (800) 873-8873.

JULY
29 Turfgrass Field Day, South Farm, University of Missouri, Columbia, MO. Contact: Missouri Valley Turfgrass Association, 344 Hearnes Center, University of Missouri, Columbia, MO 65211, (314) 882-4087.
31 Griffin Field Day, Georgia Golf Course Superintendents Association, Griffin, GA. Contact: Karen White, GGGSA, P.O. Box 683, Watkinsville, GA 30677, (404) 769-4076.
31-2 American Sod Producers Association Summer Conference and Field Day, Red Lion Inn-Lloyd Center, Portland, OR. Contact: ASPA, 1855-A Hicks Road, Rolling Meadows, IL 60008, (708) 705-9898.

AUGUST
5-6 Summer Meeting, Georgia Golf Course Superintendents Association, Lake Lanier Islands Hotel and Golf Club, Lake Lanier Islands, GA. Contact: Karen White, GGGSA, P.O. Box 683 Watkinsville, GA 30677, (404) 769-4076.

Send announcements on your events two months in advance to editor, Golf & SportsTURF, P.O. Box 8420, Van Nuys, CA 91409. Fax: (818) 781-8517.