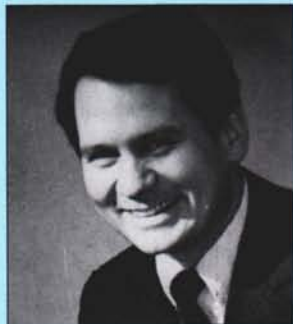


# THE FRONT OFFICE

## OPINION PAGE

### HELP FOR PARKS IS ON THE WAY



The doors are beginning to open for those responsible for maintaining parks. After speaking with the hard working volunteers at Sports Turf Managers Association (STMA) chapters across the country during the past few weeks, it's clear that an important transition is underway.

Once an organization consisting largely of stadium groundskeepers, STMA leadership at the national and chapter level is swinging over to park maintenance and university grounds

personnel. This is a healthy sign that help is on the way for our public park systems.

Having tried the front door, so to speak, with various national park organizations to reach those in charge of maintaining and often building our parks, we are switching over to the back door. A quick glance at STMA chapter rosters reveals that many park landscape managers are members.

They speak highly of local sports turf institutes and the hands-on information they receive at these events. Never before have they had the opportunity to see demonstrations of baseball infield preparation, field painting, topdressing, slit trenching, and other vital aspects of their jobs. Since the institutes are usually within driving distance, superintendents can bring along their foremen and crews so they too can witness the latest in sports turf management. Information is finally getting to the person who needs it most.

Those I've spoken to have previously tried other organizations and events to help them keep abreast of the latest sports turf technology. They report most of the discussion at park meetings is devoted to the needs of park and recreation directors. They have also tried golf course superintendents meetings. These are valuable inasmuch as golf has many similarities to athletic field maintenance.

Until now, their best source has been state turf field days and conferences, especially those which have devoted a part of their event to athletic turf. Sport turf institutes are designed specifically to pass along information overlooked by other conference organizers. They provide solutions developed by those in the field for everyday problems.

Park maintenance professionals are joining local STMA chapters and attending their events. Now, we know who you are and can begin to help you. This is the back door I mentioned before and it would not be there without the leadership of local chapters. The more chapters of STMA there are, the more we can do for parks. Help is on the way.

*Bruce F. Shank*

# EVENTS

## CALENDAR

### FEBRUARY

**26-27** Advanced Turfgrass Management Symposium: Golf Courses and Water Quality, Cook College, New Brunswick, NJ. Contact: Office of Continuing Education, Cook College, P.O. Box 231, New Brunswick, NJ 08903, (908) 932-9271.

**27-28** Athletic Field Maintenance Seminar, C Cook College, New Brunswick, NJ. Contact: Office of Continuing Education, Cook College, P.O. Box 231, New Brunswick, NJ 08903, (908) 932-9271.

**28** Third Annual Turf Management Seminar, Cuyamaca College, El Cajon, CA. Contact: Ray Meredith, (619) 670-3544.

### MARCH

**3-5** Massachusetts Turf Conference, Springfield Civic Center, Springfield, MA. Contact: (413) 549-5295.

**24** Sports Turf Institute and Grounds Operations Conference, Cal Poly, Pomona, CA. Contact: Dept. of Horticulture, Cal Poly, (714) 869-2219.

### APRIL

**13-14** Southeastern Turf Conference, Tifton, GA. Contact: Glenn Burton, Coastal Plain Station, (912) 386-3353.

See STMA IN ACTION for information on Sports Turf Managers Association Events.

Send announcements on your events two months in advance to editor, sportsTURF magazine, P.O. Box 8420, Van Nuys, CA 91409 or FAX to (818) 781-8517.