

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Gil Landry Jr.

The first time I heard about a community taking pride in the sports turf industry was about four years ago at the annual Georgia Turfgrass Conference. Dr. Jack Hall of Virginia Tech talked about a ripple effect — how pride in the local high school football team demanded a top-notch field from its grounds manager. The competition made the pride spread to neighboring schools and communities.

Since that talk, I have often wondered what drives one community to have such a level of pride while other communities grapple with what they feel are “more important” issues.

What affects your attitude? Budget, expectations, planning? You can never rationalize an inadequate playing surface. It jeopardizes the athletes' safety and the profession in which you built a career. Budget costs and lack of manpower are not excuses to be conveniently employed, these are opportunities to excel.

Look at Scott Gaunky of Mundelein High School in Illinois who was highlighted in the August issue of *sportsTURF*. The article showed leadership, basic



sports turf knowledge, planning, cooperation, effort and, to coin George Toma's phrase, an “and then some” attitude.

Scott may have developed his skills to meet his challenges. He may have acquired some of his skills through STMA-sponsored workshops and demonstrations, networking with fellow members or interacting with a knowledgeable vendor. It seems Scott, like many of us, is constantly trying to improve.

So is Bill Whirly, city of Fort Collins, CO, who wrote about “being part of the solution,” and Steve Wightman of Jack Murphy Stadium in San Diego. Everyone mentioned here is an STMA member. I am proud to be a part of the same organization as these professionals.

Through a concerted effort from members like these over the last 18 months, STMA has worked hard to share its expertise through *sportsTURF* magazine. The STMA significantly impacted the August issue with an abundance of technical information.

If you are not a member of STMA, we would certainly encourage you to join. If professionalism is an integral part of your career, consider joining STMA at its National Conference in Baltimore this November. It may be the best show of pride you can exercise.

## Chapter News

**STMA Florida Chapter #1** — The Florida Turfgrass Association Conference and Show will run from September 26-29 in Tampa, FL.

A baseball seminar is being planned for October 15. The location, time and schedule of events will be announced soon.

For information on the South Florida Chapter or upcoming chapter activities, contact: John Mascaro (305) 938-7477 or Ed Birch (305) 938-0217.

**Chesapeake Chapter: STMA** — Chapter members are always invited to attend chapter board meetings, which are held the first Wednesday of each month.

Remember to mark your calendars

for the national STMA meeting on November 6-9 at Camden Yards. It's going to be great! The Chesapeake Chapter is putting together an information packet for those who would like to spend a few extra days in the Baltimore area or nearby Washington, DC. Contact the hotline for details (301) 865-0667.

**The New England Chapter: STMA** — In conjunction with the August 11 annual meeting and field day, the New England Chapter elected their leadership team. Election results are as follows:

President — Pierre Landry — field superintendent for the New England Patriots. Vice President — Jim Berardo — department maintenance foreman, East Lyme Parks and recreation, East Lyme, CT. Secretary — Mary Owen —

regional specialist, turf program coordinator, University of Massachusetts Cooperative Extension System. Treasurer — Bernie Keohan — superintendent of grounds, Harvard University.

A lifetime membership was presented to Charlie Mruk in appreciation for his more than 30 years of support to the industry through his work with the Massachusetts Turf and Lawngrass Association and through 30-plus years as agronomist and consultant for the Hercules Company. A scholarship has been established in his name in support of educational efforts.

An October 1 date has been set for the field day at Plymouth State College, Plymouth, NH.

NESTMA will be co-sponsoring a session with the Connecticut Parks and Recreation Association in early fall.

For information on the field day or the chapter, contact: Mary Owen, University of Massachusetts Cooperative Extension System at (508) 892-0382.

**Iowa Sports Turf Managers Association** — For information on the Iowa Chapter and its activities, contact: Gary Peterson (515) 791-0765.

**Midwest Chapter: STMA** — The Midwest Chapter is holding an aerification and topdressing workshop on September 23. The workshop will be held at Flick Park, Glenview Park District, Glenview, IL. Speakers include: Mike Moorman, maintenance supervisor, Glenview Park District on “Construction and Maintenance of Park District Athletic Fields,” Tom Voight, horticultural cooperative extension specialist, on “Benefits of Athletic Field Aerification,” and Monty Montague of Turfco Mfg., Inc. on “Factors to Consider for an Effective Athletic Field Topdressing Program.” For more information on the workshop, contact Don Michaels at (708) 526-0007. For information on the chapter, call: The Chapter Hotline (708) 439-4727.

**Colorado Chapter: STMA** — The Colorado Chapter will be hosting a workshop on September 16th at the University of Colorado, Boulder. Speakers for the day will cover ball field fertilization, new products for overseeding and how to strike a compromise between what the coach wants and what the field manager can do. Inspections of three natural turf fields and one AstroTurf field will be included.

For information on the chapter, contact: Ron Marten, Falcon Colorado School District 49, at (719) 495-3601.