

# THE FRONT OFFICE

## OPINION PAGE

### \$800 Million and Counting



Ten years ago, the concept of a magazine for sports turf managers started to take form. The Sports Turf Managers Association was a couple of years old and operated by Kent Kurtz out of a small room in his garage. A bunch of us, mainly the more famous groundskeepers in football and baseball, got together every chance we could at turf shows around the country. The

Midwest Turf Show was our favorite.

We felt overshadowed by the golf and lawn care industries. Our greatest reward was being on the best stadium fields in the country along with star players. Still, my pals wanted the recognition they deserved for making professional and amateur sports safe and on schedule. Unfortunately, we lacked the numbers to gain the attention of manufacturers.

Until this month, there has not been reliable data on the non-golf segment of the sports turf industry. The first-ever stab at documenting our size appears in this issue beginning on page 25. Have a look and send me your thoughts. It is absolutely critical to polish these numbers to the point that no company can dispute this industry's importance. Eight hundred million dollars should wake up a lot of people!

I admit, this important information was too long in coming. A lot of great people never got the recognition they deserved. Perhaps the most overlooked are the dedicated groundskeepers at schools, colleges and universities, and parks. They don't get autographs from million dollar players for their kids. Unless of course, one of the kids who used to play on their fields made the big time.

Unfortunately, we still get together only at golf and turf shows. But that can change too. Think about coming to Bradenton, FL, next winter for your own show. The only golf you'll have to discuss is your own round as you play.

Finally, let me just say that Matt Trulio is one of the finest journalists in this country. I miss his contributions already. He is still going to write now and then. The travel agents of the country are now benefitting from his penmanship and creativity.

*Bruce F. Shank*

# EVENTS

## CALENDAR

### AUGUST

**16** Wisconsin Turfgrass Field Day at the O.J. Noer Turfgrass Research and Education Facility, Madison, WI. Sponsored by the University of Wisconsin-Extension and the Wisconsin Turfgrass Association. Contact: Dr. Frank Rossi, (608) 262-1490.

### SEPTEMBER

**13-14** Annual Turfgrass & Landscape Research Conference and Field Days. University of California, Riverside. Contact Cindi McKernan, UC Riverside: (909) 787-3423.

**18-21** Florida Turfgrass Conference. Ft. Lauderdale, FL. Contact: (407) 898-6721.

**26-29** Northwest Turfgrass Conference, Salishan Resort in Glendon Beach, OR. Contact Northwest Turfgrass Association, (206) 754-0825.

### OCTOBER

**5-6** Southern California Turfgrass Expo. Orange County Fairgrounds, Costa Mesa, CA. Contact: (619) 723-0947.

### NOVEMBER

**6-9** International Irrigation Exposition. Atlanta, GA. Contact: the Irrigation Association (703) 573-3551.

**13-19** Ninth Annual Pacific Southwest Maintenance Management School. UCLA Conference Center, Lake Arrowhead, CA. Fee is \$610 and includes instruction, course materials, reference notebook, all meals and housing for the full five-day program. For information, call (800) 796-NRPA.

### DECEMBER

**5-7** Texas Turfgrass Association Conference and Show. Fort Worth, TX. Contact Shirley Duble at (409) 693-1656.

Send announcements on your events two months in advance to:  
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