

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Greg Petry



Did you know that three-fourths of the individual member associations and more than a third of corporate member associations in the United States have chapters, branches or state or local-affiliated organizations? For all intents and purposes, a chapter is defined as a branch of a state, regional, national or international association. Chapters play an important role in the delivery of an association's products and services. Chapters also are the principal players in membership development by the parent association, and vice versa. There is a mutual dependence.

Because of the interdependent role between STMA and its chapters, a healthy communication link between the two groups is the key to a mutually-fulfilling relationship.

Forming new chapters can be one of the most effective association membership development activities. It often results in quantitative membership

growth that may continue for several years, sustained by the group dynamic that accompanies new organizations. If done poorly, however, a new chapter may end up being a Trojan horse. Once the initial excitement dissipates, struggling chapters demand disproportionate staff and volunteer resources. This may engender a membership disgruntled by unexpected administrative responsibilities and burned-out leadership. To reduce our downside risk, STMA established and will enforce realistic minimum standards for forming a chapter.

While the national association and the chapter-to-be have a vested interest in a streamlined chartering process, some caution should be exercised. There is some ongoing paperwork to maintain: chapter rolls, checking account, meeting minutes, a newsletter (perhaps), etc. Some of the documentation required to start a new chapter includes the following: chapter bylaws; membership roster; dues payment record; names and addresses of chapter leaders; a minimum of 25 members to start—one-fourth must be national STMA members; and payment of the \$100 affiliation fee.

Vibrant chapters are instrumental to long-term membership stability and growth for STMA. In many national associations, the members perceive chapter activities as the most tangible benefit. It stands to reason, then, that the STMA must be concerned with the organizational health of its chapters.

The STMA staff, administrative support and help for ailing chapters is an area that we have to monitor. Despite the best intentions of STMA or its chapter leaders, not every chapter will succeed all of the time. Ailing chapters can do much to drain the resources of the national STMA.

An informed and motivated chapter leadership is the foundation for its development as a vital active chapter. Recognizing this, I encourage chapter leaders to attend the annual conference.

Roundtable discussions are held where chapter leaders can discuss the nuts-and-bolts responsibilities of their chapter positions. At the conference, chapter leadership can review the chapter handbook detailing chapter administrative procedures. Leaders can be cautioned about potential pitfalls in their job, in addition to being supported and motivated by members.

**Sports
Turf
Managers Association**

STMA CHAPTER NEWS

Iowa Chapter The Iowa STMA will hold a meeting at the Atlantic High School, Atlantic, IA, on Nov. 5 from 8 a.m. to noon. While the program will emphasize football field care at the high school level, the topics addressed will cover the broad scope of field maintenance. Chapter members, school, municipal and public-grounds personnel, and all others connected with sports turf field care are invited to attend. Registration will be held in the Atlantic High School auditorium.

For more information on this meeting, contact Dr. Eldon Everhart, (712) 755-3104. For information on the Iowa Chapter, or other chapter activities, contact Gary Peterson, (515) 791-0765.

Chesapeake Chapter The Chesapeake Chapter is currently reworking plans for the Regional Institute to be held in conjunction with the National

STMA. The date, location and details of the institute will be announced soon.

Chesapeake Chapter Board meetings are held the first Tuesday of each month from 4 to 6 p.m. Members are invited to attend.

For information on the chapter, or upcoming activities, call the Chapter Hotline, (301) 865-0667.

Southern California Chapter In conjunction with the National STMA, the Southern California Chapter will hold a Regional Institute at UCLA on Wednesday, Oct. 12. The institute will focus on building a winning team with coaches, administration and turf professionals. This event will combine education sessions, a tour of UCLA sports turf facilities, and a top-notch trade show.

Featured speakers will include: Dr. Jim Beard, chief scientist for the International

Sports Turf Institute Inc.; Steve Cockerham, superintendent of agricultural operations, UC Riverside and key member of World Cup Soccer's ACT team; Steve Wightman, turf manager of Jack Murphy Stadium, San Diego, CA; Neal Beeson, owner of Sports Turf & Facility Management Company, Anaheim, CA; and members of the UCLA coaching staff. Keynote speaker, UCLA Head Football Coach Terry Donahue, will present, "A Winning Game Plan."

For more information about the institute, call Dave Ashman, (310) 206-6662. For more information about the Southern California Chapter and upcoming activities, contact Chris Bunnell, (619) 432-2421.

Midwest Chapter In conjunction with the National STMA, the Midwest Chapter will hold the Midwest National Sports Institute at Northwestern