

STMA MESSAGE



Happy Holidays to You

By Mike Schiller

Stop. Take a deep breath. Do you hear children laughing? Do you smell evergreen needles, hot chocolate and cinnamon-spiced apple cider? Doesn't that spiral of smoke weaving its lazy path into the sky mean a warm fire is glowing in the fireplace with a cozy spot waiting just for you?

No, you say? Things still are so hectic all you can see is the next playoff game or a field in need of renovation. Okay, get that major project underway. Seeing what needs to be accomplished and finding a way to make it happen is, after all, a big part of sports turf management.

But, before the old year spins away — way too fast for me anyway — and the New Year arrives, rearrange your busy schedule. Slow down enough to spend some holiday time relaxing with the people who are most important in your life.

As you look ahead to the new year, I'm sure you'll see it's a great time to be a sports turf manager. Advancing technology is providing newer and better equipment and supplies to help you improve the quality of your athletic facilities.

Sports activity is growing at all age levels and internationally. In the U.S., we have young children taking the field in organized soccer leagues while senior baseball and softball leagues

are thriving. Internationally, baseball, softball and football fields are taking shape along with the already extremely popular soccer fields.

Good, playable sports fields are becoming increasingly important both to provide a safe surface for less experienced players and to support increasing demands for on-the-field playing time. How you do your job impacts a lot of lives.

So, do resolve to do your best as a sports turf manager every day of the new year; to fine-tune your skills and always leave a field a little better than you found it. Integrate new ideas so you really can work smarter, not harder. Become a mentor to your staff members, helping them gain the skills and knowledge that will make their jobs easier and more rewarding. Get involved on a professional level. Join the Sports Turf Managers Association. Recharge your professional batteries at STMA's 9th Annual Conference & Exhibition, "Meeting the Challenges," in Orlando, Florida, on January 14-18, 1998. Participate in your regional STMA chapter. Explore the STMA Certification Program. Remember, the more you put into something, the more you get out of it.

And *do* resolve to do a better job during this New Year of letting those special people in your life know they are special to you.

Which leads me to a message to *you*. On behalf of the STMA Board, STMA committee members, Headquarters staff (and especially me), I wish each of you health, wealth and happiness this holiday season and throughout the new year. May this be The Holiday you've dreamed of, filled with fellowship, love and contentment.

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