

# Sports Turf Managers Association Issues Awards of Special Recognition

The Sports Turf Managers Association issued awards of special recognition during its 9th Annual Conference and Exhibition held January 14-18, 1998, in Orlando.

**The Harry C. Gill Award**, STMA Groundskeeper of the Year, was presented to Eugene Mayer, technical training and support manager for the Scotts Company of Marysville, Ohio.

The Gill Award is one of the four Founders Awards, the most prestigious honors issued by STMA. It takes its name from one of the organization's original founders, a man legendary for his support of STMA's goals and standards. The award recognizes an individual's long-time service and commitment to STMA and to those same goals and standards.

Eugene Mayer has given extraordinary service to STMA. He has filled vital roles as a board member and as commercial vice-president, and he's just completing a two-year stint in the office of secretary. In addition, Mayer coordinated the annual conference as both committee member and exhibits chair. His commitment to STMA and his guidance of the association's growth and development have been outstanding.

**The Dick Ericson Award**, another of the Founders Awards, draws its name from the organization's first president (1981-1982). This award honors excellence in planning and execution of sports turf management.

The 1997 Dick Ericson Award recipient is Merton Johnson, California State University-Fullerton's sports turf manager. During his 30-year career in sports turf management, Johnson has made significant contributions to the facilities under his management and to the industry as a whole.

**The George Toma Golden Rake Award** takes its name from another STMA founder. Toma is a long-time STMA supporter who continues to serve as a mentor for many of those in the sports turf industry. The recipient of this award demonstrates the "and then some" spirit that is so much a part of Toma's approach to sports turf management. The recipient of the 1997 Golden Rake Award is Timothy Burke, director of parks and recreation in Bethel, Conn.

Burke started in the recreation department as a teen volunteer. He moved into a paid position, and eventually worked his way up to the directorship. He's held the position of director for 18 years. In that time, he has developed innovative programs that benefit the city's recreational facilities and outreach efforts. He also continues to be an active volunteer - always exhibiting the "and then some" spirit.

Burke's nomination for this Award was made on behalf of the Bethel Parks and Recreation Commission and the citizens of Bethel.

**The Dr. William H. Daniel Award** (formerly the Excellence in Research Award) is now included among the four Founders Awards. Its name honors the late Dr. Daniel for his pioneering efforts and long-term support of STMA, and for the pattern he set for educator involvement in the association. The Daniel Award for 1997 was presented to Dr. James Beard for his tremendous work in the fields of research and education in the sports turf industry.

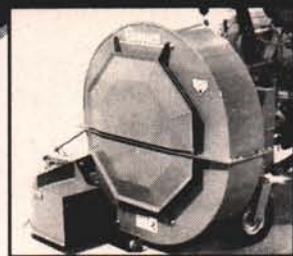
The STMA presented this year's **President's Award** to Mike Trigg, superintendent of parks for the Waukegan, Ill., Park District. The award acknowledges his outstanding efforts on behalf of STMA's raffle and auction held each year at the conference. Funds raised through these efforts have allowed STMA to greatly expand its scholarship program.

Finally, the winner of the **Outstanding Commercial Affiliate Award** for 1997 is the Toro Company of Minneapolis, Minn. The award extends appreciation for the company's long-standing and continuing support of STMA. Toro is a long-term advertising supporter of STMA's publications. The company's sponsorship reduces the production and mailing costs of the STMA newsletter, helps support the annual conference, and continues to promote professionalism within the sports turf industry.

## Chapter News

**MAFMO Chapter:** The MAFMO Chapter will hold a "Specification Writing Seminar" April 16, from 8 a.m. to 3

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