



## Southern Hospitality

Last month, I traveled to Baton Rouge, LA to participate in the South East Conference Turf Managers Meeting. Jeff Kershaw and Harvey Crenshaw of Louisiana State University (LSU) hosted this year's meeting, which brings together college/university-level turf managers, researchers, and even assistant athletic directors (if you count Bucky Trotter) to discuss current issues and persistent problems.

I have to give these guys credit — they sure know how to throw a meeting. The group's small size created a casual and comfortable atmosphere, and I was able to have conversations with just about every attendee during the three-day event. Everyone made me feel very welcome, despite my Yankee origins.

Building lines of communication has been a persistent theme since I've been with the magazine, and the topic figured prominently at the meeting. In his recent article, "Growing Pains," Scott Gaunky asked, "Wouldn't it be great if you could get the coaches and others who use your fields into a classroom to educate them in turf survival?" The SEC meeting made great progress in this direction, and it came close to fulfilling Gaunky's wish.

LSU Athletic Director Joe Dean welcomed attendees to open the conference, before turning the floor over to Head Football Coach Gerry DiNardo. The Coach recognized the important role the grounds staff plays in LSU's program, and he expressed his appreciation. He and Kershaw acknowledged that they don't always agree, but both cited communication as a means to come to terms.

These guest presentations took up only a small fraction of the meeting's schedule, but they accomplished a great deal. To build bridges of communication, you must first build respect. Bringing coaches and athletic directors into these meetings allows them to more fully appreciate the scope of sports turf management. When these decision makers see sports turf managers coming together to share ideas as professionals, they may be more apt to listen when it comes time to make decisions about fields.

Professionalism was another major theme of the meeting. Dr. Gil Landry of the University of Georgia held an open discussion on the topic to gauge people's views.

Gil cited the STMA for its contributions to building respect and recognition for all sports turf managers. He joined Bob Campbell in urging attendees that were not already members to join the organization.

Attendees seemed to agree that certification was a good way to promote professionalism. Most were anxious to see what the final STMA Certification program will look like. The group agreed that professional conduct and appearance must be maintained both in the office and out on the fields, and that balancing these two sides of management is fundamental.

Overall, the meeting was a great success. Other speakers included Dr. Jeff Higgins of Percell Technologies, Dr. Grady Miller of the University of Florida, and Dr. Mike Goatly of Mississippi State University. I even wound up on the schedule by some dumb luck, but I won't bore you with the details.

**Steve Berens, Editor**  
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### August 17

Cornell Field Day, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY. Contact Joann Gruttadaurio: (607) 255-1792.

### August 18

Sports Turf Association's (STA) 12th annual Field Day, Guelph Turfgrass Institute, Guelph, ON, Canada. Contact STA: (519) 763-9431.

### August 18

University of Rhode Island Turf Field Day, Kingston, RI. Contact Dr. Bridget Ruemmele: (401) 874-2481.

### August 18

Michigan Turfgrass Field Day, Hancock Turfgrass Research Center, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI. Contact Kay Patrick: (517) 321-1660.

### August 18

Ohio State University (OSU) Turfgrass/Horticulture Research Field Day, OSU Turfgrass Research Facility, Columbus, OH. Contact Kevin Thompson: (888) 683-3445, ext. 3151.

### August 23-27

Floyd Perry's Groundskeepers Management Academy, Colonial Heights, VA. Other dates and locations: Aug. 30-Sept. 3, Orlando; Sept. 12-16, Dallas; Sept. 19-23, Denver; Oct. 10-14, Davis, CA. Contact Grounds Maintenance Services: (800) 227-9381.

### August 26

University of California (UC) Cooperative Extension Turf and Landscape Research Field Day, UC Bay Area Research and Extension Center, Santa Clara, CA. Contact Dr. Ali Harivandi: (510) 639-1271.

### September 14-15

Turfgrass Research Conference and Field Day and Landscape Management Research Conference and Field Day, University of California, Riverside, CA. Contact Susana Aparicio: (909) 787-4430.

### September 14-18

University of California-Riverside Extension seminar: "Turfgrass Management Intensive Institute," Riverside, CA. Contact Jan Crump: (909) 787-5804, ext. 1621.

### September 15

Texas Turf & Ornamental Field Day, Texas A&M-Dallas Research and Extension Center, Dallas, TX. Phone: (972) 231-5362.

### October 28

Sixth annual Southeast Texas Grounds Maintenance Conference, Montgomery County Fairgrounds, Conroe, TX. Contact Patti Jones: (409) 539-7822.

### November 9-11

Turf and Grounds Exposition: "Committed to Excellence: Plants, People, the Environment, and You," OnCenter, Syracuse, NY. Contact NYSTA: (800) 873-8873 or (518) 783-1229.

### November 13-16

Green Industry Expo, Baltimore Convention Center, Baltimore, MD. Contact Eleanor Ellison: (770) 973-2019.

### December 6-9

Ohio Turfgrass Foundation's 33rd annual Conference and Show, Greater Columbus Convention Center, Columbus, OH. Contact Kevin Thompson: (888) 683-3445, ext. 3151.

### December 7-9

Georgia Turfgrass Association's 30th annual Conference and Trade Show, Cobb Galleria Centre, Atlanta. Contact Sherry Loudermilk: (770) 975-4123.

## 2000

### January 12-16

STMA 11th annual Conference & Exhibition, St. Louis. Contact STMA: (800) 323-3875 or (712) 366-2669.

## STMA MESSAGE



## Field of Dreams

When I think about my favorite sport, baseball, I think back to the movie, *Field of Dreams*. The actual field used in the movie was built by Neal Beeson, a long-time California STMA member. I'm reminded of this field

when I look at our STMA 1998 High School Softball Field of the Year.

The award is a dream come true for Head Softball Coach Mark Cuthbertson, J.V. Coach Joe McLearn, and Freshman Coach Bruce Moritz. This coaching team doubles as the field's grounds crew. Their dream only became reality through lots of hard work — and it shows.

My congratulations on this well-deserved award go out to them, along with a thank you for reminding us how a school and community can combine efforts to produce and maintain better and safer fields. If you are also maintaining great fields, and think you may be pretty close to that award-winning status, please contact STMA Headquarters for information on entering your field for consideration.

This issue of *sportsTURF* is one for the library. There's an article detailing field maintenance techniques used by some of STMA's NFL members. I'm pleased to report that the number of STMA members with NFL and MLB facilities has increased over the last few years. We appreciate the more active role these individuals have taken in sharing their expertise with others in the industry. STMA will also continue to invite them to use the national association as a forum for their own networking. After all, that's what STMA is all about — sharing information and expertise to help all sports turf managers as they strive for uniform excellence in their own field conditions.

More good news — it's coming! After more than two years of hard work, the STMA Certification Committee is nearly ready to formally introduce the Certified Sports Field Manager Certification Program.

The Committee presented a block of materials for the STMA Board of Directors to review this past June, and it was approved. In late June, the Certified Sports Field Manager exam was tested by members of the Committee and several Chicago-area STMA members. At this point, the exam is going through its final review and it will be completed soon. The certification information package is in the final stages of development.

In conjunction with STMA's 11th Annual Conference & Exhibition in St. Louis, those who have met qualifying criteria, have completed the appropriate forms, and have been pre-approved to take the certification test will be able to do so January 16, 2000. The test will also be offered under proctored conditions at pre-approved testing locations throughout the year to those who are qualified and have been pre-approved to take the exam.

Even more good news — the Conference will again offer excellent educational sessions, time to interact with top industry suppliers, Seminar on Wheels tours, and opportunities to network with others in the industry. Get this great Conference on your calendars now: January 12-16, 2000.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephen Guise". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a white background.

**Stephen Guise, STMA President**  
**(714) 704-0403**