

STMA Year in Review

by Steve Guise

1999 has been another banner year for the Sports Turf Managers Association (STMA). The association is continuing to grow in new members and in the services it provides to its membership. The association has completed many short-term projects and moved forward on many long-term projects.

Here's an update on the year in review.

Membership Moves Up

Membership increases show that the STMA is a thriving, growing organization. A second-half of the year new member promotion at a special membership rate was offered via a Fax Blast (offered through Adams Business Media) for the first time this year and was very successful. STMA also continued the last quarter new member promotion. New members electing to join STMA during October, November, or December had their membership in effect from the point of joining through December 31 of the following year—at the one-year membership price.

Because of the last-quarter promotion, the official total for 1999 membership reached on September 30, 1999 was 1,579. Compare this to the membership total on September 30, 1998 of 1,254, and membership total on September 30, 1997 of 975. This is a very good base for future growth. Many potential members may just be waiting for a personal invi-



The STMA Board immediately following their hard hat tour of the hotel site under construction in preparation for deciding the site for STMA's 2001 Conference (top row, l to r: Bob Patt, Bob Campbell, Lynda Wightman, Steve Guise, and Tim Moore; bottom row, l to r: Murray Cook, Bob Curry, Rich Moffitt, and Tom Burns).

tation to join the STMA, so please do spread the word.

With more members, STMA can offer a stronger networking resource, provide more membership services, and gain greater recognition for its members within the green industry, within the sports world, with employers, and with the general public.

Chapters Show Real Action

The affiliation of four more chapters was announced at the 10th Annual STMA Conference & Exhibition, Jan. 13-17,

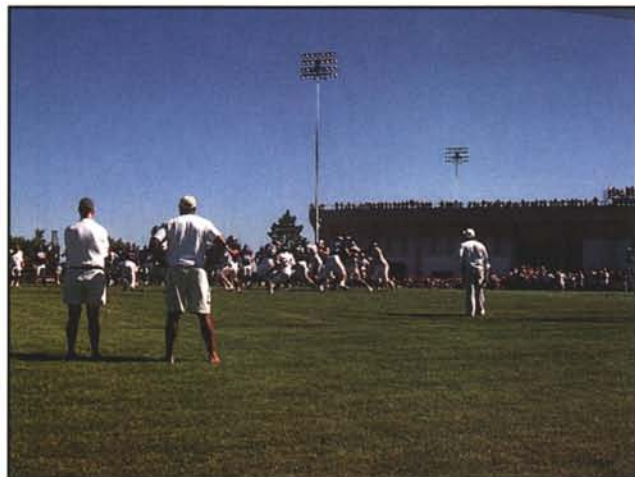
1999, which was held in Mesa, AZ. The Indiana, Tennessee Valley, North Texas, and Wisconsin Chapters joined the 12 chapters already affiliated: Colorado, Florida #1, Great Lakes, Iowa, KAFMO, MAFMO, Michigan, Midwest, Mid-South, Minnesota, Northern California, and Southern California.

There are new chapters forming in various areas, with several of these planning to reach official affiliation in the near future.

1999 also marked the first Chapter Officers Training Session (COTS). The



The Soccer Complex at Westminster (CO) City Park, STMA's 1998 Soccer Field of the Year in the Parks and Recreation Category.



Minnesota Vikings Training Camp—up close and personal—during the site tour at the Minnesota STMA Chapters annual wheels tour.

COTS is a combination educational forum and idea exchange session for the leaders of affiliated and forming chapters. Because of its success, a second annual COTS will be held on January 11, 2000, in conjunction with the 11th Annual Conference & Exhibition, Jan. 12-16, St. Louis.

Chapters are the core of regional networking opportunities and also network with each other. They offer close-to-home educational sessions, on-field workshops and demonstrations, and informative site tours. Many Chapters are strong supporters of their regional turfgrass associations. Chapters also give back to their communities through service projects.

Annual Conference & Exhibition Offers More

The STMA Annual Conference & Exhibition continues to grow in size and scope. The 1999 Conference in Mesa, AZ, last January was a great success. In the continuing effort to meet sports turf managers educational needs, the 2000 Conference will offer more choices of educational sessions and has added

an expanded workshop session to the schedule, while retaining the popular features of previous conferences, including the roundtable discussions. Though the number of available booth spaces was increased for 2000, the Exhibition is again a sell-out. The Conference will be held at the Regal Riverfront Hotel in St. Louis, MO, Jan. 12-16.

Awards and Scholarship Committee Grows

Because of the record numbers of scholarship applications and Field of the Year entries received in 1998, the judging committees were split into two groups for 1999. A five judge panel was appointed for the Field of the Year Awards and a separate five judge panel was appointed for the four Founders Awards and the Scholarships. Each judge independently reviews and rates all materials submitted by applicants

in the designated areas. Each judge's evaluations are forwarded directly to STMA Headquarters. The judges for the two separate committees then review their evaluations via conference call to discuss the results of the independent judging and reach the final decisions.



George Toma and Mary Owen get an upclose look at field conditions.

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By-Laws Committee Updates By-Laws

After much work, the By-Laws Committee submitted updated by-laws for review by the STMA Board. Following the Board's approval in principle, they were subjected to the review of legal counsel. Following that review, the by-laws were submitted by mail to the membership for their review and their vote. The updated by-laws were approved by an overwhelming majority.

One of the major changes within the revised by-laws was the separation of the existing Category III membership that had included other schools, research, extension agents, and teaching. Category III is now other schools sports turf facilities managers. The research, teaching, and cooperative extension personnel are now within a separate Category VIII. This change adds another member to the STMA Board of Directors and ensures representation on

the Board for those sports turf managers at schools other than four-year colleges or universities (which are Category II members), as well as Board representation for those in research, teaching, or extension professions.

Education Committee Addresses Needs

The Education Committee continues to research the development of additional educational resources, such as a resource library and a speakers bureau.

Finance Committee Keeps Stability

The guidance and prudent direction of the finance committee and STMA Board have allowed STMA to increase member services and still increase the amount of funds put away in case of emergency.

Certification Committee Launches Program

After nearly three years of very hard work and countless hours of service, STMA's Certified Sports Field Manager program is up and running. In November, Certification packets were sent to all STMA members and to those non-members who had placed requests for packets. The first group testing will be held on January 16, 2000, in conjunction with the STMA Annual Exhibition & Conference in St. Louis.

Public Relations Outreach

STMA continues to work with our members to spread the word on the importance of our profession to those both within the green industry and to the general public. This outreach comes in the form of speaking engagements and written articles, participation in related green industry conferences, information provided for presentations or articles to those outside the industry, and the new web site (<http://sportsturfmanager.com>) that will be more accessible to those doing computer searches.

Looking Forward

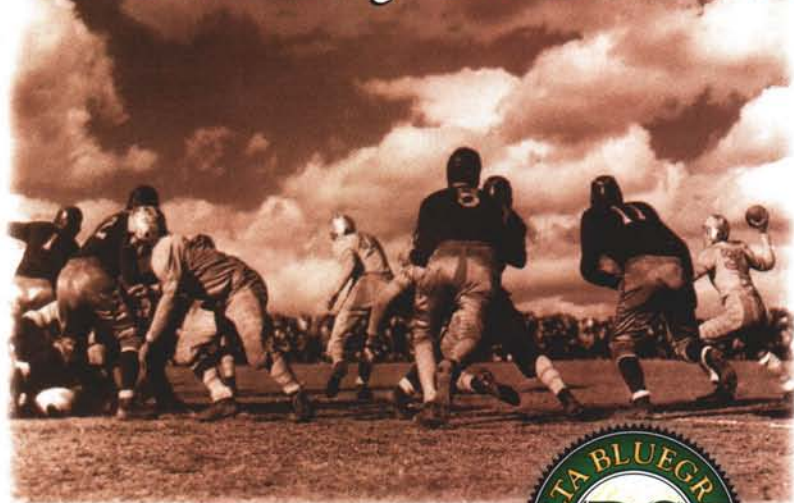
And, while we have come a long way during the past year, we also see much more to do in the future. Next month, we will explore some of those projects and dreams for the future.

Note: For information, contact STMA Headquarters at 800-323-3875.



Steve Guise is President of the Sports Turf Managers Association and Director of Business Development for Marina Landscape, Inc., Anaheim, California.

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