



Fun in the Sun

Last month, the Sports Turf Managers Association held its annual trade show and convention in Tampa, Fla., the twelfth such event in the association's history.

One common theme stressed by President Rich Moffitt was how far the association has come since its inception. From the initial session on Thursday, to the Awards Banquet on Friday, to the final luncheon on Saturday, Rich would start his speech by asking all the first time attendees to raise their hands. After surveying the scores of hands raised across the room, he would shake his head in amazement and say, "outstanding."

It was an outstanding event, made all the more wonderful by the weather. Getting on a plane in single digit weather and arriving in temperatures hovering around 70 degrees was a great way to start the trip. But it was the people in attendance that really made the week wonderful.

Including the exhibitors, there were over 1,000 attendees present at the convention. And all those first timers that Rich was amazed by? They numbered nearly 250 strong, a great indication of the growing influence of the STMA. Currently, the STMA boasts 23 chapters and more than 1,800 members.

Rich also mentioned that with each passing year, the convention becomes less and less a business trip and more of a family reunion. This being my second convention, I understand completely what he meant. I got to meet up with all the folks I met last year in St. Louis, and spend some time chatting and catching up. I spoke with last year's winner of the *sportsTURF* Manager of the Year award, Eugene Mayer; he informed me that he's a sheriff now back in Ohio. Imagine what the lawn will look like at the police station!

Speaking of the Manager of the Year award, I had the honor of presenting this year's award at the Awards Banquet. This year's recipient, Ross Kurcab, received a standing ovation and endless praise from his peers, proving how truly deserving he was of the award. A quick gem from Ross' acceptance speech: On describing his work ethic, he quoted his father, who told him, "You can either work or starve."

Besides the awards banquet, the highlight for me was meeting Eddie Seaward, the head groundsman at The All England Lawn Tennis & Croquet Club in Wimbledon. It was an honor to meet the man responsible for some of the most high profile sports surfaces in the world, with 600 million fans watching the tournament on television last year. Look for an article by Mr. Seaward on what it takes to manage the 34 courts of Wimbledon in an upcoming issue of *sportsTURF*.

For those of you who haven't attended a convention yet, I strongly encourage you to sign up for the event in 2002, when it will be held in Las Vegas. There's so much to learn about the profession at the sessions, workshops, and discussions, and even more to learn at the bar, in the restaurant, or, next year, in the casino. I'm already saving my quarters!

Michael SanFilippo
(847) 882-1942

Calendar of Events 2001

February 5-9

The Ohio State University Golf Course Maintenance Short Course, Holiday Inn on the Lane, Columbus, OH. Register at (614) 292-4230. E-mail: bloetscher.1@osu.edu.

February 6

Turfgrass Advocacy 2001, Lobby Day, Legislative Office Building et al, Albany, NY. Contact: New York State Turfgrass Association (NYSTA), PO Box 612, Latham, NY 12110; (518) 783-1229/(800) 873-TURF (8873); fax (518) 783-1258; nysta@nysta.org. Web site: <http://www.nysta.org>.

February 20-21

Southern Illinois Grounds Maintenance School, Gateway Convention Center, One Gateway Dr., Collinsville, IL. Contact: Ron Cornwell, 200 University Park Dr., Edwardsville, IL 62025; (618) 692-9434.

February 22-23

The Ohio State University Professional Lawn Care Short Course, Holiday Inn on the Lane, Columbus, OH. Register at (614) 292-4230. E-mail: bloetscher.1@osu.edu.

February 26

Southeast Regional Conference, Holiday Inn, Suffern, NY. Contact: New York State Turfgrass Association (NYSTA), PO Box 612, Latham, NY 12110; (518) 783-1229/(800) 873-TURF (8873); fax (518) 783-1258; nysta@nysta.org. Web site: <http://www.nysta.org>.

February 27-March 1

Western PA Turf Conference & Trade Show, Pittsburgh Expo Mart/Radisson Hotel, 101 Mall Blvd., Monroeville, PA. Contact: R. Eric Oesterling, Westmoreland

Calendar of Events 2001

County Cooperative Extension,
Donohoe Center, Donohoe Road,
RR 12, Box 202E, Greensburg, PA
15601, (724) 837-1402, or (502)
562-1962; fax (502) 562-1970.
Web site: <http://expo.mow.org>.

March 8

Western Regional Conference,
Radisson Inn, Buffalo, NY.
Contact: New York State
Turfgrass Association (NYSTA),
PO Box 612, Latham, NY 12110;
(518) 783-1229/(800) 873-TURF
(8873); fax (518) 783-1258;
nysta@nysta.org. Web site:
<http://www.nysta.org>.

July 20-22

Outdoor Power Equipment
Institute's (OPEI) 18th annual
International Lawn, Garden &
Power Equipment Expo (EXPO
2001), Kentucky Exposition
Center, Louisville, KY. Contact:
Sellers Expositions, 550 S. 4th
Ave., Louisville, KY 40202-2504;
(800) 558-8767 or (502) 562-
1962; fax (502) 562-1970. Web
site: <http://expo.mow.org>.

November 10-13

12th annual Green Industry
Expo (GIE), Tampa, FL. Contact:
Professional Lawn Care
Association of America, 1000
Johnson Ferry Rd., NE, Suite C-
135, Marietta, GA 30068-2112;
(770) 973-2019; fax (770) 578-
6071; info@gieonline.com. Web
site: <http://www.gieonline.com>.

November 13-15

Turf and Grounds Exposition,
Oncenter, Syracuse, NY. Contact:
New York State Turfgrass
Association (NYSTA), PO Box
612, Latham, NY 12110; (518)
783-1229/(800) 873-TURF
(8873); fax (518) 783-1258;
nysta@nysta.org. Web site:
<http://www.nysta.org>.

STMA Message

Sports
Turf
Managers Association
www.sportsturfmanager.com



Our Future Has Never Been Brighter

The STMA Tampa Conference was just a few days away as I was writing this message to you. I'd just checked in with Headquarters with my input on a few last minute conference details and for an update on the pre-conference attendance figures. After the phone call, I went back to writing and looked at the figures I'd jotted down.

Then it hit me. The number of preregistered attendees was greater than the total STMA membership numbers just five years ago. And this is just the tip of the iceberg in terms of our potential for growth.

Suppliers have recognized the sports turf industry as a strong and vital component of the green industry. They're making a concentrated effort to learn more about our unique needs and to tailor their products and services to meet those needs. It's a synergistic partnership with multiple benefits to those involved and, ultimately, to those who play on our fields.

Educators have recognized the sports turf industry as a unique sector for teaching and research, and as a viable job market for their students. They're digging into the "whys" of field maintenance issues and working together with sports turf managers to develop educational programs that address the "hows" of producing and maintaining superior athletic fields. It's another synergistic partnership with multiple benefits.

Students are entering turf and agronomic studies with an eye on the opportunities within the sports turf market. The excellence of these students pops off the pages of our scholarship applications and is proven in their job performance as they move into industry positions.

You, the sports turf managers, are the solid foundation on which all this growth is built. You're committed to excellence and will put out that extra effort George Toma calls "and then some" to provide the best possible sports surfaces for play. That dedication shines through whether your field users are million dollar professional athletes or five year olds starting their first game.

You readily share ideas to raise industry standards. You're the ones who take the time to test new products and equipment under actual use situations and provide your feedback on performance and possible improvements. You're the ones who continue to seek greater knowledge about the complex interactions between turfgrasses and soils and between field conditions and field use. You're the ones who mentor students in internships and first job situations and fan that spark of interest to a fire of commitment, and then continue to mentor as they move on to new opportunities.

Because of you, our future has never been brighter.

Rich Moffitt
STMA President
(314) 977-2956